

Nocton & Dunston

Start:	<i>Potterhanworth recreation ground car park, Queensway, off Moor Lane</i>
Nearest Post Code:	<i>LN4 2EA</i>
Grid Ref	<i>TF055664</i>
what3words	<i>stood.trials.imported</i>
Refreshments	<i>The Chequers public house, Potterhanworth, and the Red Lion public house, Dunston (half-distance). Check opening hours.</i>
Getting there:	<i>Potterhanworth lies on the B1202, south east from Lincoln. The free car park is accessed by an easily-missed drive (Queensway) on the east side of Moor Lane, just north of the village centre</i>
Distance:	<i>8.25 miles / 13.2km</i>
Route Description:	<i>A pleasant walk, using a mixture of field paths, woodland and quiet lanes. Generally level walking, passing through the villages of Dunston and Nocton.</i>

The Walk

From the car park drive, turn left, continue to the road junction where you go left. Walk a short distance, then take a footpath left immediately after the chapel. Follow the well-defined path passing through three kissing gates, continuing ahead between fields to reach a driveway[A].

Cross, pass through a kissing gate and continue down to a stile and footbridge, beyond which, follow the path heading towards the wood and going through a hedge boundary. Now pick up the left boundary, cross a footbridge and continue to a track junction. Turn right, then immediately left, over a footbridge and into Potterhanworth Wood [B]. Follow the path through the wood to a track junction [C] and turn right, then continue to a lane where you turn left. Walk for a short distance to a bend in the road beyond a bridge.

Turn right here onto a track and continue to a track junction where you go right. Before reaching the wood, turn left at the next footpath sign [D] and follow the path with a stream on the right.

You are following the Car Dyke, thought to have been constructed early in the second century AD by Roman engineers for drainage purposes to produce more fertile land for corn crops. This 85 mile long ditch roughly marks the western edge of the Fens, running from Washingborough near Lincoln to Peterborough.

On reaching a road, go left and continue to Wasps Nest where, at a left bend, go right, into Cyclone Way – a private road (with Public Bridleway) that runs through James Dyson's Beeswax Farm Estate [E].

Follow the road until it goes right, through a gate and here walk ahead on a grass path, bearing right into woodland to a track junction. Go left, then in a short distance turn right onto a broad waymarked footpath, which you follow between fields. On reaching a cross-track continue on to cross a footbridge [F] and onwards in the same direction, heading towards Dunston. Beyond the next footbridge, turn left and in a short distance you reach a residential road. Walk to a road junction – Back Lane. Turn left, then left again to reach the 17th century Red Lion pub [G]. You may wish to stop here, if not, a little further on there is a pleasant grass area by a stream that makes a good halfway picnic spot. To reach it, continue beyond the pub along Front Street to its junction with Fen Lane.

The walk continues along Front Street, which bears right, eventually meeting Chapel Lane. Turn right, and in a short distance right again, into Middle Street. In a few yards, take the signed surfaced path left, and continue to Back Lane (again). Go right, and in a short distance left, onto a bridleway (just before a school).

Follow this to reach an estate road (Cyclone Way again). Notice the metal structure opposite [H].

Nocton Estate lies in the heart of Lincolnshire's prime potato growing land, and it was for that reason that Frank Smith, the founder of Smith's Crisps, bought the estate in 1936. The 8,000 acre farm was equipped with a light railway system which covered the whole area. The surplus track from WW1 proved to be a very efficient and effective way of transporting goods and materials around the estate.

Nocton owned two steam locomotives for use on their 'potato railway' and both locomotives would have required water during their daily operation – and standpipes such as this were used for topping-up.

There was also a steam traction engine that powered the threshing machines during the 1940's and this would probably have required water during its operation too. Most of the railway artefacts have now gone, but this water standpipe, recently restored, bears testament to a way of farming from a bygone era.

Now continue ahead, crossing a broad driveway to reach the village of Nocton. Turn right, passing the Post Office on the left, then go ahead to reach the sundial **[I]** on the village green.

The sundial was designed to commemorate Queen Elizabeth II's Golden Jubilee. The hours represent Nocton's history through the ages; while on the base of the gnomon is inscribed the family name of each household in 2002.

A little further on, there is seating and beyond that, the church, if you want a break; however your route is along a surfaced path that starts by the pair of cottages (on your left, when approaching the sundial). This becomes a private road – The Avenue, which leads you to Potterhanworth Road. Cross to the opposite pavement and follow the road right, out of the village.

Beyond Manor Court, on the left, you lose the safety of the pavement and you are faced with a 450-metre stretch of unpleasant road walking. Whichever side of the road you choose to walk, you must be on the left as you approach a blind bend **[J]** as your route leaves the road here, taking a track left, with trees to your right. Continue ahead as the track goes left, following waymarks to reach the village of Potterhanworth. Pick up the pavement and follow the road up the hill, passing the church on the left.

Opposite is the converted water tower which was built in 1903 as part of an innovative water supply system from a borehole in a nearby field.

A short distance further, you reach your outward route **[K]**, passing The Chequers pub on the left. Keep going, passing Station Road left, then just after a lane on the left (The Paddocks), look for Queensway on the right – take that to reach your transport.

