

Rosedale partly on Old Railway Path (East Side)

6½ mls (10.5km), 4½ hrs

Transport **M6 Outward** (from Pickering Library via Rosedale Abbey) – your suggested start point is further on up the dale on the Moorsbus, about 3 min on the bus after leaving Rosedale Abbey. Ask to be set down about 250m after a landmark “water tank” (an enclosed Yorkshire Water service reservoir on right hand side) at a track into woodland on left hand side, with a wooden fingerpost signed Public Footpath Hill Cottages. [On the bus between the water tank and your drop-off point, you’ll pass on the right an open area, a gated farm access track to West Northdale Farm, and just after that a handgate with a wooden fingerpost overlooking North Dale]

Return from Rosedale Abbey **M6**

Map 1:25,000 OS Explorer OL26

Start Knott Road, North Dale - Grid ref. start point SE 718 978

Overview

This walk begins by briefly overlooking North Dale, a lesser known more remote branch of Rosedale, before heading towards Rosedale itself and the start of the old railway path (east side). This reclaimed well surfaced trackbed runs contouring with superb views along the length of the east side of the dale, then it curves around the head of the dale to continue to run back along the length of the west side - but your route on this walk cuts down into the dale about half way to return to Rosedale Abbey.

The walk has been colour-coded ‘blue’. Despite its somewhat challenging ‘orange’ distance, it is relatively easy to navigate and mostly on the level, with one sharpish descent down to the river then an ascent but only a quarter of the way up the other side. The terrain is mostly good track with somewhat rougher grassy path/track. It has been allocated a generous time ‘allowance’.

Walking boots still recommended, as are walking poles.

There are refreshments and toilets about 3mls en route at Dale Head Farm, and in Rosedale Abbey itself. Find a welcome tree trunk to perch on for a picnic after 3.75mls in the dale, or just settle on the verge of the railway path overlooking Rosedale.

In mid to late Victorian times, Rosedale saw a population burst from a scattered rural 558 inhabitants to an industrialised 2398 in twenty years, as a result of its ironstone mining. Along each side of the dale ran a railway line serving the mines and the kilns which calcined (roasted) the ironstone before the ore was transported in railway wagons to supply the blast furnaces of the north-east. (This story forms the core of the Land of Iron Project.) Since the 1920s the dale has reverted to being green and rugged with ruins of its industrialised past, and Rosedale Abbey itself welcomes visitors (two cafes and a pub Coach House Inn, toilets, original glass workshop, and campsites). It is probable that the name of the valley derives from a personal Viking name “Rossi”, or a word meaning ‘horse’, or another word ‘rhos’ meaning ‘moor’. So no roses in Rosedale.

Route

- Alight by a wooden fingerpost (signed Public Footpath Hill Cottages) 250m on left after a “water tank” on right on a rising lane (called Knott Road on the OS map)

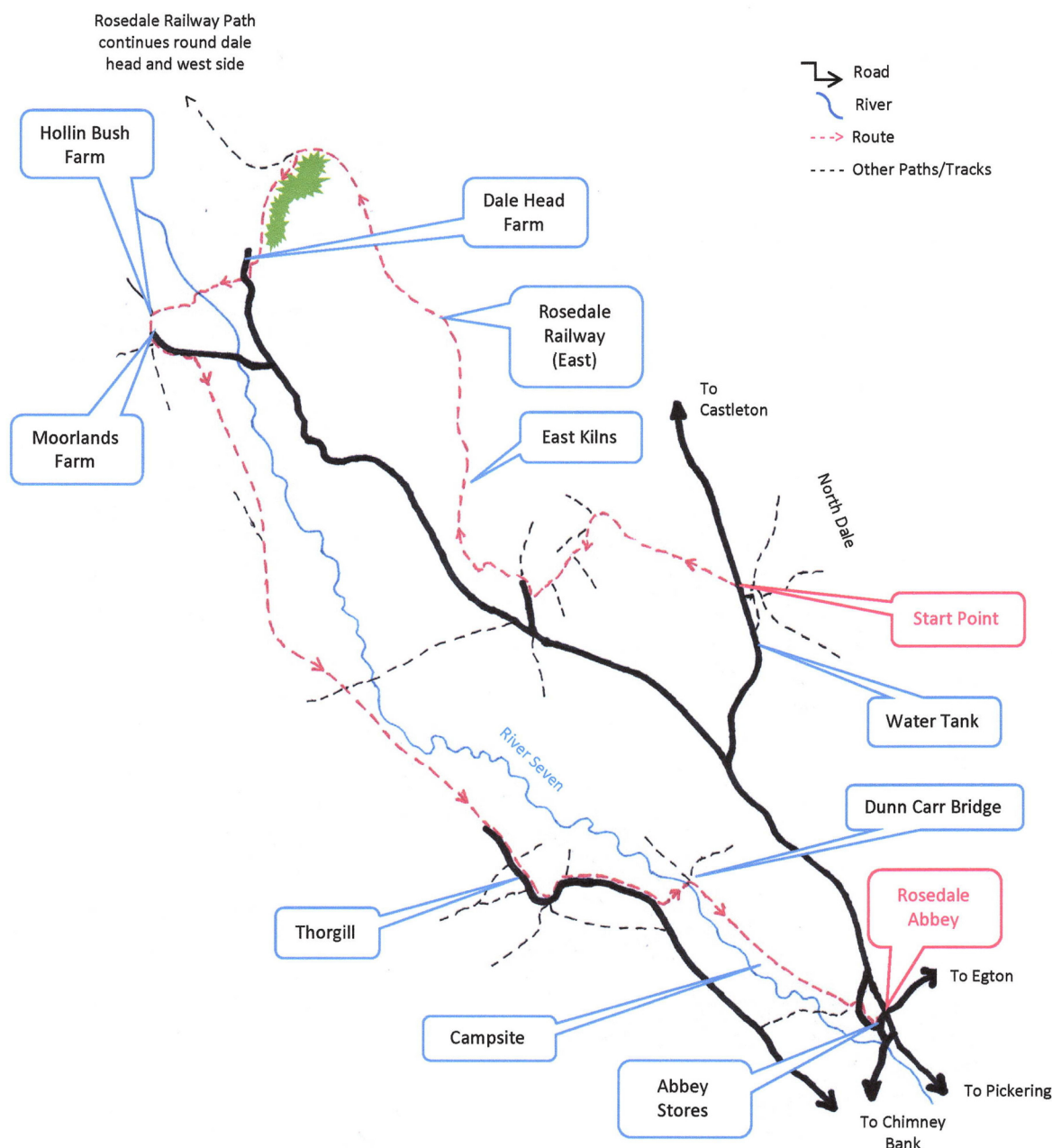
Although you head off into woodland from your start point, you might like to take a peek over lovely North Dale first from over the fence on the opposite side of the road (or even better at a vantage point from just 30m back at the handgate). North Dale has remained remote and un-touristy; it feels wild without being wilderness. Inspired by this landscape the northern and international sculptor Andy Goldsworthy (commissioned by a local estate

owner) has created a series of stunning artistic / architectural 'installations' dotted around the dale exploiting previously ruined stone buildings. The project is known as "Hanging Stones" and the installations may be visited (on a 6ml loop walk) only by booking, as they are otherwise locked.

- Set off from your start point along a good maintained track through woodland – this used to be a former tramway linking with the old railway line
- In just over 750m (and about 70m after a bend left in the track over a stream), strike left downhill off the maintained track on a woodland path – there is a wooden fingerpost but at the time of writing this had broken and was leaning against a tree [Note that the track continues ahead but ceases to be a right of way here]
- In 150m emerge through a field gate to almost immediately curve right in front of the boundary wall of a house (marked Clough House on the map)
- In less than 150m pick up a farm access track ahead, which meets another access track at a T-junction in 300m, turn right uphill passing a farm on left
- At the top go straight ahead through a field gate (ignoring a blue bridleway up right), follow the track for 180m to join the old Rosedale Railway Path proper (which is a Concessionary Bridleway), views now opening up

1ml (1.75km)

- Follow this old trackbed for 2.25km passing former ironstone mines and impressive ruined kilns – you'll find excellent interpretation panels at the site of these remains



- Having just crossed a curving high embankment round the head of a woodland, strike left downhill off the railway path (there is a private sign for Dale Head Farm at the top)

2½ mls (4km)

- Take care down this steep (but maintained surface) descent, at the bottom curving right round the back of a large barn to emerge at Dale Head Farm
- Turn left slightly downhill on the farm access lane for just 60m then turn right through a gate in a wall
- Follow this narrow path for 90m to a gate then ahead for 170m straight across a field, curving down quite steeply right at the bottom to a bridge over the River Seven
- Climb quite steeply for 40m (some helpful steps) then gently for another 170m across a field towards the top right hand corner to a gate onto a farm lane in front of farm buildings (Hollin Bush Farm)
- Turn left and follow lane for 130m then dog-leg left then right on lane through Moorlands Farm
- In 150m leave the lane through a field gate on right (with a wooden fingerpost showing Bridleway) to pick up 'Daleside Road (Track)' (as marked on map)

[About 500m after leaving the lane - ie. from start of track 'Daleside Road' - and just after going through a gate, find a large log beside the track on left that serves as a good perch for a picnic or just a rest]

3½ mls (5.5km)

- Follow the obvious track through several gates for 1.75ml (2.75km) (quite rough then eventually stoned surface) past several farms to enter Thorgill hamlet, now on tarmac lane

5¼ mls (8.25km)

- About 600m after leaving Thorgill (and after passing a farm track entrance left down to Low Thorgill Farm on a bend) take a path off the lane left across a field through a gate, with a wooden fingerpost signed Dunn Carr Bridge
- After crossing the bridge, at a junction of paths turn right
- Follow this path up and then alongside a campsite below on your right
- After 400m from bridge, go through a gate to join a site road through the campsite itself
- In 550m - just after passing on right an open grass area with some children's playground equipment - at a crossing of ways, turn left on a grass/stony path to go through a metal kissing gate in a wall in just 40m
- Emerge onto a road in Rosedale Abbey, turn right then* follow curving left to find the village green (plenty of shade) and Abbey Stores café (there's another café at far end of village green)

6½ mls (10.5km)

Opposite Abbey Stores, you'll see the parish church (with an external bell) and behind it there are the ruins of the priory (there was never actually an abbey in Rosedale Abbey) - only a turret, staircase and stone seat or sundial remain of the original small Cistercian priory founded in 1154 (served by nuns who are credited with being the first to raise sheep commercially in the area) and dissolved in 1536. The priory's stonework has been raided over the years to be absorbed into the church and local houses.

To find the pub Coach House Inn, after turning right out of the campsite onto the road in the village itself * keep going straight ahead (ie. not curving round left to Abbey Stores) to a slanting T-junction, head right and the pub is just after on the left (about 170m from Abbey Stores)

- For return to Pickering, [Moorsbus M6](#) stops outside (just before) Abbey Stores

With thanks to Peter Lockwood.