There has been a dispute often repeated, whether the road shall go by Lyddington or Stoke park. It has been more than once ordered, that as the difficulty of Stoke park way is the hills, we should first, level the two hills between Upppingham and the brand, which will shew in some measure what the expence will be, and how convenient when done, to this determination. I think we ought to stand and if it ever was not, must unless we give notice of repealing that order. In the mean time it may be of use to lay together the reasons on both sides, which may be done much better coolly at home than in the hurry of a meeting.

For the Lyddington way is said, 1st. It is the levellest road. 2d. It does the least damage to the fields for from the top of the Brand to the end of Lyddington, crosses no field, whereas Stoke park lies all on steep from the beginning of Lyddington pasture. 3d. that Lyddington way will cost less making for all across the brand will want nothing, and the rest of the way there is plenty of gravel, beside as there is no other considerable road at Lyddington, they can afford to allow more than 3 days statute work for the road, and the town is not obliged to be mended by the turnpike but the Stoke will want mending almost all the way. for the brand hills must be lowered or it will not be payable, and that red stone being apt to crumble there are no good materials but at the gravel pit against Stoke grounds it is a long carriage to the ends. 4th. It cannot go by Stoke Park for that is only a bridle way. beside the act says it is to mend the Post road which goes through Lyddington. 5th. the road ought to benefit as many towns as may be.

For the Stoke park way 1st. it is the nearest. 2d. it is over the finest ground; 3d. the hills may be lowered. 4th. It will be a damage to Upppingham to have the road go through Lyddington being higher to Upppingham to have the road go through Lyddington being higher and further land it will take less mending. 6th. It will cost less keeping when once made; 7th. Lyddington teams will bear up the road with muck cart.

The 1st. argument for Lyddington way 8th. for Stoke park we may put together; hills being very inconvenient for carriages, which we should encourage to come our road. now in this the Lyddington way is at present best, for there is only one hill down the brand, answered by Sally hill the other way, whereas there are two steep hills beside in the Stoke park way, which are scarce practicable. There is only one way to cure this, which is to level the Stoke hills, this is to be done two ways, 1st. by actually
lowering the hills by taking off earth from the top of the hill and laying it at the bottom to raise it. This is an effectual way, but I doubt very expensive; the brand hill & stoke park are incapable of it, for I suppose nobody thinks of digging a hollow way quite across the brand, or from stoke park to the gravel pits. lyddington cow pasture being a short hill may indeed be served so. let us see the expence, a bridge over each hollow may be easily made, and the earth from the top of the hill will make a terrace to take off 12 of the bottom of the hill, then as for the top, a cubit yard is reckoned a load, and if the top must be lowerd 12, we cannot lay the breadth of the hollow to dug less than 12 yards, for the banks must not be left perpendicular, this breadth and depth will want lowering about 200 yards long, in all 200 into 12. in 4 cubit yards of loads of earth. 

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digging, carrying and spreading will hardly cost less than 6; but we will lay it at 4 a load 9600 grains is 160#. this with half the charge of building the two bridges which must have along wall at each end for supporting so high a made bank, will be the expence of forming half a mile of road between the two hollows, which when settled will still want covering, and the hill will still remain \(\frac{1}{3}\) of its present height. the brand and stoke park hills as I said will not be actually, but as they are higher than the cow pasture to make make them convenient ought to have as much laid out of them, let us see now supposed them done what will be the case; all the upper parts of the hills being actual deep hollow ways. if there comes a great snow driven with an east wind, it will be fill'd and the road absolutely impassable. the other way is without lowering the top of the hills only to take off the earth at the brow, and lay it at bottom this is easily done and without much expence, but though it will make the hills passable they will be still inconvenient as the hills having only 12 raised at bottom will still remain \(\frac{1}{3}\) of the present height, and steep. now if a team comes from the south caldecot he will the lyddington way come on level ground above 2 miles and then has one high hill up the brand; and if going southward no hill to go up at all only one down. the stoke park way 4 of amile from caldecot begin to ascend. the gally hill is pretty steep and cannot be alterd, and is a long draught. all ascending quite to stoke park this hill will always answer, the ascending quite to lyddington hill, when you are at top you have 2 hills still to go down.
and up, which will be inconvenient. I have been the longer on this article, because it is my full belief we shall never be at the expense of actually lowering the hill, and if we do not it will never be good. The 2nd reason for Lyddington way, the damage done to the fields I don’t think there is much difference; the way from Lyddington to towns end to ash hedge corner is ½ mile, the Stoke park way is over the cow pasture, all the ground the road is made of is of course taken from the pasture, but crossing huff is not so much damage as plowed lands, and if the hill is really lower such a hollow way will secure droves from trespassing but it will be some inconvenience to have the pasture partially such a great ditch however the main stress does not begin till Stoke park corner and from thence to ash hedge is not very different distance from the Lyddington way. The 3rd reason for the Lyddington way, and 2nd ¼ for Stoke park, all relating to the charge belong to one another. The Stoke park way being firm ground from the Brand to Stoke park, if it was not hilly would be easily mended, but as it is hilly it will take as much levelling as the expense would be on a level although worse ground, the part from Stoke Park to Nelson is but thirty and I do not think will take much less than the lower way. The Lyddington way goes up down the hill, so the Brand will want not spending being as good as we can make it, unless it be a little smoothing down the hill, and at bottom near the town through the town will want mending, but seems to have a good foundation; the mile and half from Lyddington to ash hedge is clay and as such will require to be well covered yet does not seem to me worse than ordinary, for it is not boggy nor has any great torrent coming down to tear up the road. On the whole it does not appear to me that Lyddington way will take more mending than Stoke park will, will mending and levelling; supposing materials alike how that is I know not. The gravel pit by Stoke grounds is a long way from the Brand, and unless that slanty place by the spring in the beginning of Lyddington cow pasture is a natural bed of flints I question whether there are any good materials at that end. What the people of Lyddington say that the turnpike is not obliged to mend through the town, and that Lyddington will allow more than 3 days, statute work that way, seems not well grounded. We are to mend from Uppingham to Lockingham & Lyddington town is part of the way; and though there are instances where turnpikes do not mend through a town, in general I think they do. As to the 4th reason for Lyddington way, I suppose we cannot properly go a horse way only; these
who have been acquainted with that part know best whether Stoke park way is so by right, or only that waggons did not much choose to go it, that Lyddington is the old post way does not signify much, for we are not confined to that otherwise we could go by Manton which undoubtedly is no part of it. Then the 5th for Lyddington way, and 4th for Stoke park. I think we as commissioners for the road should not enter into a quarrel between two towns, but what is best for the road; I think if we can benefit any town without hurting the road, it is proper to do it, but the benefit of the road ought chiefly to be regarded, but Uppingham need not much fear Lyddington, for though some few should call there, Uppingham is the principal place, both as being the market, and it is better situated for the roads, being on the crossing of the 2 roads. The first argument for Stoke park way is that it is the nearest, and on measuring, it is one furlong nearer in 3 miles, but in this there seems to me to be objection against that way; for Stoke park is so much nearer the straight line, that the reason it saves only one furlong must be, that the distance is increased by going up hill and down, which is much the worst way of lengthening the road; and as we thought the Martinsthorp way not eligible because of the hills, though it saves 2 furlongs in 2 miles, so Stoke park way seems less eligible, because it saves less distance, and lies over much worse hills, and such as we shall have much ado to make any better than Gunthorp is now.

The 6th and 7th arguments for Stoke park way are indeed the strongest for a road which lies through a great open field town, will necessarily be more carted, and consequently more worn, so that though I think it is probable Lyddington way will cost no more making, not perhaps so much as Stoke park way because the hills will cost so much lowering, yet I think it must cost more keeping. But that will not in my mind balance the inconvenience of the hills which still remain, for as hilly roads are inconvenient especially for carriages though Lyddington way may cost most mending it will bring more passengers along the road than will pay for it. The Lyddington people say, as they have other considerable road, they can afford more than 3 days statute work, and as it is through their town where there is so much stress, it is reasonable they should, we might such an agreement with them, or as the chief wear is when the roads are wet, that they shall not cart much between Martinsmas & Lady day except in a frost.