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**From:** Morrison, Jennifer [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 25 October 2018 11:49  
**To:** Mark Taylor  
**Subject:** RE: Lambton D Pit Wooden Waggonway

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Hi Mark

Apologies for the delay in replying. I have been on holiday.

The wagonway has never been put forward for scheduling because it isn't at risk *so long as* the new road does not affect it. In order to realistically get something scheduled these days there has to be a demonstrable risk to it or it has to be one of HE's current research topics. Had it been at risk then I definitely would have put it forward for scheduling with SCC's agreement.

When I've provided comments on the road scheme in the past, I've always worked on the premise that the Lambton D Pit Waggonway is of equivalent significance to a scheduled monument due to its excellent state of preservation (the survival of timbers), its extent and its age. In the revised NPPF a non-designated heritage asset of archaeological interest which is demonstrably of equivalent significance to scheduled monuments is covered by footnote 63, which says that they should be considered subject to the policies for designated heritage assets (ie paras 195 and 196).

Because I have worked on the premise that the waggonway is of equivalent significance to a scheduled monument, I have always insisted that it is protected from development, avoided by the road and left in-situ. This is still my opinion.

When it was excavated in 1995, the wagonway was the best preserved and most substantial early wooden railway remains found in the UK. At the time only three other examples of preserved wooden wagonway had been recorded and published – Bersham Ironworks near Wrexham; Bedlam Furnace, Ironbridge and Killhope Lead Mine, Weardale. All of these were later in date than Lambton D Pit.

Over 150m of timber trackway survive at Lambton, in four tracks, and four others survive as timber impressions on the trackbed. Points and check rails survive and a brick rail-head platform. Several large timber baulks of unknown function lie beside the tracks and drains of various types, including a run of hollowed-out tree trunks.

We have since found an earlier surviving timber wagonway – the Willington Waggonway of 1785, which was excavated in 2013. However this does not diminish the importance of Lambton as the sites are very different in form and Lambton is much more extensive in size than Willington.

In summary, I would argue that the Lambton Waggonway is of national importance, is of equivalent significance to a scheduled monument, and thus should be considered subject to the NPPF policies for designated heritage assets (ie paras 195 and 196).

However, if this was challenged, I am not sure if the waggonway would actually need to be put forward for scheduling and for HE to say that it was a genuine candidate for designation, in order to prove that it was ‘demonstrably of equivalent significance to scheduled monuments’. I don’t really want to go down that route unless it was absolutely necessary as it’s a lot of work. Plus, in the event of it being turned down for scheduling, this would effectively give a green light for an amazing archaeological site to be destroyed.

The other issue is that we don’t know how the timbers have survived since they were exposed to the elements in 1995. It was the coal waste that was protecting them. I don’t know how the site was backfilled after the excavation, but if water has got to the timbers, decay may have occurred.

I hope that this helps.

Jenny

**Jennifer Morrison MCI(A)**

Tyne and Wear Archaeology Officer

Newcastle City Council

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