



## UK Tentative List of Potential Sites for World Heritage Nomination: Application form

Please save the application to your computer, fill in and email to:  
[UKTL.Application@culture.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:UKTL.Application@culture.gsi.gov.uk)

The application form should be completed using the boxes provided under each question, and, where possible, within the word limit indicated.

Please read the [Information Sheets](#) before completing the application form. It is also essential to refer to the accompanying [Guidance Note](#) for help with each question, and to the relevant paragraphs of UNESCO's *Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention*, (OG) available at: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/guidelines>

Applicants should provide only the information requested at this stage. Further information may be sought in due course.

### (1) Name of Proposed World Heritage Site

The Laxey Valley

### (2) Geographical Location

Name of country/region

United Kingdom – Crown Dependency – Isle of Man

Grid reference to centre of site

OSGB243210485220 (The Great Laxey Wheel); 54° 14' 19"N, 4° 24' 26"W

Please enclose a map preferably A4-size, a plan of the site, and 6 photographs, preferably electronically.

### (3) Type of Site

Please indicate category:

Natural  Cultural  Mixed  Cultural Landscape

### (4) Description

Please provide a brief description of the proposed site, including the physical characteristics. 200 words

The village of Laxey and the Laxey valley continues to be an area for tourism, transport and industrial heritage which is one of the iconic sites of national identity for the Isle of Man.

Laxey was the centre of a lead and zinc-mining industry which was once one of the most important to be worked in Britain, and at the time, in the world.

The Isle of Man mostly consists of a contorted and heavily mineralised sedimentary rock formation of Ordovician date (up to 490 million years old) known as the Manx Group. Lead, zinc, copper and iron were all exploited, some from prehistoric times, and mining remained commercially viable until the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

These industries flourished despite technical difficulties caused by the distorted rock strata and the lack of wood or coal to smelt ores or to power pumps, winding gear or ore-crushers.

Manx miners came to be some of the most respected 'hard-rock' miners in the world, and from the 1820s onwards water was increasingly harnessed to provide power to waterwheels, turbines and compressors. This reached its acme in 1854 with the construction of the Great Laxey Wheel, also known as the Lady Isabella (after the then British Governor's wife). The same water powered flour and textile mills, and the growing community spawned a miners' cooperative and a church.

The Laxey mines also became a tourist attraction: there was a viewing platform on the top of the Lady Isabella, and the public could view the industrial complex from a mountain tramway.

### (5) History

Please provide a short summary statement of any significant events in the history of the site. 200 words

The earliest documentary references to leadmining on the Isle of Man date from the mid 13<sup>th</sup> century onwards, and show that the Kings and Lords of Man took a close interest in their mining assets.

Work began at Laxey in the late 1700s. The original mine entrance lies where the ore-bearing formation broke the ground surface. Shafts and adits were added in the following decades, as workings extended 2.5km up the valley and up to 670m below ground level.

From 1828, a waterwheel was used to pump water from the mineworkings, and was soon adapted to raise rock and ore from underground. Around a dozen wheels were eventually built, the largest being the Lady Isabella completed in 1854. Water-powered turbines were also used extensively for winding duties and to power a compressor which drove the miners' drills underground. The use of turbines for both applications put Laxey near the forefront of mining technology in Britain. Water was also used, uniquely, to power the Man Engine, a hoist designed to raise and lower the workforce nearly 570m below ground.

After around 150 years of feverish activity and development, the Laxey mines ceased to be viable, and closed in 1929.

**(6) Why do you think this site should be inscribed as a World Heritage Site?**

Give reasons. 200 words

The Laxey Valley represents a unique microcosm of 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century industrial expertise. Its focus is on industrial development, exploitation and production in the context of innovation, tourism and the social issues of the times. Key to this are the waters of the Laxey Valley whose energy is ingeniously harnessed time after time to support mining, ore preparation, transport, mills and harbour. Underground is a maze of shafts and adits from which were drawn lead, silver, zinc and copper in significant quantities. Drawing on developing technology and mass tourism, the valley also has unique surviving heritage transport and tourism developments which were integrated with the industrial and other developments. The Great Laxey Wheel may be the largest surviving water wheel in the world – but the Laxey Valley is much more than simply the wheel.

The area identified also supports rare and protected plant, animal and bird species and in its upper reaches a significant area of sub-alpine species. The place name “Laxey” means “salmon river” and the river continues to support these and other fish species today.

**(7) Please say why the site has Outstanding Universal Value and specify the main features which underpin its importance. 200 words**

The site is a cultural landscape which is connected to the development of mineral exploitation, the ingenious harnessing of water power, industrialisation, community development, transport and tourism. It is a unique natural and cultural landscape with international connections. Its significant components are the water catchment and mechanisms for capturing the energy of the water flow; the mineral significance of the area, specific mining remains including the Snaefell mines, the Great Laxey Mines (above and below ground), the Great Laxey Wheel (the largest surviving water wheel in the world), the mineral processing areas from the washing floors to the harbour, the heritage transport links (including to the top of the highest mountain – Snaefell), woollen mill and flour mill, the presence of important rare species and the whole relationship between landscape and tourism.

**(8) Outstanding Universal Value**

Please state which of the [10 UNESCO criteria for Outstanding Universal Value](#) the proposed site meets, and describe briefly why the criteria were chosen. Please see criteria note at the end of the form.

UNESCO criterion	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Why was this criterion chosen? 100 words
(i)	<input type="checkbox"/>	
(ii)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The Laxey Valley exhibits human interaction with an area of significant mineral and water resources which show the ingenuity of industrial and tourism development over a core period in the 19 <sup>th</sup> , 20 <sup>th</sup> and 21 <sup>st</sup> centuries. Through mineral exploitation, the efficient use of water power, the establishment of mines, mills, transport systems – all connected to the development of tourism. The modern Valley has significant cultural and natural heritage attractions.
(iii)	<input type="checkbox"/>	
(iv)	<input type="checkbox"/>	
(v)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The history of the area shows it was rich in mineral and water resources – but poor in fuels. The innovation of industry resulted in the very effective development of multiple users of water power at a time when tourism was a developing and integral part of the economy. Whilst mineral exploitation has ended – probably for ever – tourism has progressed from the mass tourism of the 19 <sup>th</sup> and 20 <sup>th</sup> centuries to a niche tourism based on the cultural and natural heritage of the area with

<b>UNESCO criterion</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>Why was this criterion chosen?</b> 100 words
		heritage transport systems, industrial archaeology and protected rare species in the Valley.
(vi)	<input type="checkbox"/>	
(vii)	<input type="checkbox"/>	
(viii)	<input type="checkbox"/>	
(ix)	<input type="checkbox"/>	
(x)	<input type="checkbox"/>	

**(9) Authenticity (for cultural or mixed sites only)**

Authenticity concerns the current state of conservation of a cultural or mixed site; especially whether its importance, its Outstanding Universal Value, is still obvious from its physical condition. Please outline the condition of the site. 200 words

Laxey looks quite similar to how it did when mining activity came to an end in 1929, except for the removal of most of the spoilheaps. Extensive remains of buildings and some machinery still survive, focussed around the iconic Lady Isabella, the largest working waterwheel in the world.

The Lady Isabella has been the subject of careful preservation and maintenance, whilst most of the other significant buildings survive as roofless shells conserved to appropriate standards as historical structures; the Lady Isabella is specifically protected as an Ancient Monument. Below ground, the mines are partially flooded but are potentially accessible under controlled conditions. Both above and below ground a local mines research group has been instrumental in undertaking investigations, safety work and recording.

The core area of mining activity is in single ownership and is publicly accessible as a heritage attraction. The system of lades, which allowed available water-power from the surrounding valleys to be harvested and brought to the mines, is still traceable.

The other surviving remains and structures – the washing floors, mills, tourist tramways and the harbour whence the ore was exported for processing – allow clear and full understanding of mining activity and its social and economic consequences through the 150 years that it dominated this community.

## **(10) Integrity**

For cultural or mixed sites, please state how much original fabric is included in the proposed site, and its condition. For guidance on how the test of integrity is met for natural sites under criteria (vii) – (x), please refer to the OG 90-94. Information Sheet 6 also provides help on this point. 200 words

A high proportion of the significant mining infrastructure which operated as the Laxey mines is preserved within the core area described above. The proposed WHS site contains the majority of other mining remains, as well as associated and related buildings and structures.

The Lady Isabella is intact except for conservation-standard repairs to stonework, structural timber and metal fittings where decay and wear and tear have taken place in the 150 years since its construction. Most other mine buildings survive as stable ruins with varying levels of management. Some mining machinery survives, particularly unique pieces such as the Man Engine. Significant buildings in the village which were constructed for purposes ancillary to the mining industry survive, sometimes in alternative use. Where destruction has occurred, a significant body of archive photographs and other records allow understanding and interpretation.

The mine workings survive below ground and have been explored and investigated where not flooded.

The Snaefell Mountain Railway and Manx Electric Railway still function as tourist attractions, running original rolling stock which includes the oldest working tramcar in the world. It provides unique views of the mines and the landscape and geology which gave rise to one of the richest lead and zinc mines in the world, and to the waterpower which enabled them to be exploited.

## **(11) Are there other examples of this kind of site already on the World Heritage List?**

Yes  No

If yes, please list. 100 words

Cornwall and West Devon mining landscape – though only some parallels in terms of some of the aspects of the site

**(12) What distinguishes this site from other similar sites?**

150 words

This is not simply a hard rock and mineral mining site, but a cultural landscape which begins with geology and water catchment and draws on human ingenuity in relation to those resources which made major use of water power drawing from a wide catchment area to exploit mineral, but also drew in significant tourism developments through the industrialisation of the area all of which in their own right are valuable heritage assets. This landscape could be said to focus on the largest surviving water wheel in the world – but involves so much more both above and below ground and in terms of industrial exploitation, the development of tourism and the protection of significant landscape and wildlife.

**(13) How does the site contribute to meeting UNESCO’s priorities for a balanced World Heritage List?**

200 words

The site draws on the relationship between a community and its landscape over time. It is not about monuments – though there are significant structures and achievements in their own right – but about the interaction between people and place and how the combination of mineral exploitation and tourism from early times to the present day have shown human ingenuity and enabled rare species to be protected.

At an international level there are potential links between the story of mineral exploitation and miners because of direct connections with Cornwall, South Africa and Australia; and with the development of tourism and early mechanised transport systems.

**(14) What benefits do you think World Heritage Site inscription would bring?**

Please indicate the main opportunities and benefits.

Education	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Tourism	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Regeneration	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Conservation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Protection	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Other benefits	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please describe. 100 words.

The programme of work towards WHS designation would increase the clarity and integration protection, conservation and management arrangements for the Valley in an integrated way. It is expected that successful bids would be made for regeneration funding from the Isle of Man Government and that the tourism and educational potential of the area would be consolidated by taking a landscape approach rather than one which concentrates on individual sites.

**(15) Are there any known threats to the proposed World Heritage Site?**

Yes  No

Please indicate any proposed developments, or other potential impacts on the site.

Impact	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Please describe. 100 words for each issue.
Development	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Part of the site is in a Conservation Area and the majority within open countryside all of which is tightly restricted in the types of development which are allowed
Environmental	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The majority of the land is open land, most of which is grazed. Countryside Care schemes and current grazing and farming regimes are sympathetic to the environmental value and biodiversity of the area, recognising also its cultural heritage value.
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	

**(16) Legal Protection**

Please list any legal and other protections, including cultural and natural designations, which cover the whole or part of the proposed site. 200 words

Listed Ancient Monuments  
Registered Buildings  
Conservation Area  
Protection by Government ownership

**(17) Ownership**

Please list the main owners of the site, where possible.

Manx National Heritage (represented by this application)  
Department of Environment, Food and Agriculture, Isle of Man Government  
Department of Infrastructure, Isle of Man Government  
Department of Community, Culture and Leisure, Isle of Man Government  
Department of Economic Development, Isle of Man Government  
Laxey and Lonan Heritage Trust

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Do the owners support the application? Yes  No

A statement of support from the principle owners of the proposed site should be attached to the application, preferably electronically.

**(18) Local Authority support for the site**

Please list all Local Authorities with an interest in the proposed site.

Laxey Village Commissioners  
Lonan Parish Commissioners

Does the proposed site have local Authority support? Yes  No

Please attach a statement of support from each one in relation to the application.

Please indicate whether the site is included in the local plan/s by specific policies.

Yes  No  Partly

Please describe. 200 words.

The area is included within the Local plan for Laxey though not yet as a specific area in its own right with this boundary – but as a number of component sites. In addition protection is given under planning for the conservation area, archaeological sites and for the majority open land which is regarded as countryside within which there is a presumption against development.

### **(19) Stakeholders**

Please list the main parties with an interest in the site. 100 words

Manx National Heritage  
Department of Environment, Food and Agriculture, Isle of Man Government  
Department of Infrastructure, Isle of Man Government  
Department of Community, Culture and Leisure, Isle of Man Government  
Department of Economic Development, Isle of Man Government  
Laxey & Lonan Heritage Trust  
Laxey Parish Church

### **(20) How will the Site be managed?**

Please outline the management arrangements for the proposed World Heritage Site, including where the responsibilities lie. 200 words

Manx National Heritage has been asked by the Council of Ministers of the Isle of Man Government to take the lead in this application and already undertaken initial consultation with the key owners and stakeholders. A stakeholder group will be developed and a management committee based upon key owners will be established under the auspices of Manx National Heritage to develop management principles and arrangements.

### **(21) Funding: the nomination**

Please indicate how the preparation of the nomination would be funded.  
100 words

The funding for the nomination would come through Manx National Heritage (the Isle of Man Government's natural and cultural heritage agency) and draw upon a number of Government and charitable sources.

**(22) Funding: management**

Please outline how the future management would be funded. 100 words

The management of the site would be funded through Manx National Heritage and drawing upon existing resources primarily allocated to the Government Departments which own and manage most of the land in the area identified. Further stakeholder engagement and support would be handled through a heritage forum chaired through Manx National Heritage.

**Name and Contact Details of Applicant**

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Telephone	01624 648000
Email	

Completed applications should be forwarded, preferably in electronic format, to the World Heritage Team, Department for Culture, Media and Sport at the following email address: [UKTL.Application@culture.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:UKTL.Application@culture.gsi.gov.uk)

Any material that cannot be sent electronically should be sent to the following address:

World Heritage Team, Department for Culture, Media and Sport  
2-4 Cockspur Street  
London  
SW1 5DH

The closing date for applications is 11th June 2010

## UNESCO's criteria for the assessment of Outstanding Universal Value (para 77 of the Operational Guidelines)

- (i) represent a masterpiece of human creative genius;
- (ii) exhibit an important interchange of human values, over a span of time or within a cultural area of the world, on developments in architecture or technology, monumental arts, town-planning or landscape design;
- (iii) bear a unique or at least exceptional testimony to a cultural tradition or to a civilization which is living or which has disappeared;
- (iv) be an outstanding example of a type of building, architectural or technological ensemble or landscape which illustrates (a) significant stage(s) in human history;
- (v) be an outstanding example of a traditional human settlement, land-use, or sea-use which is representative of a culture (or cultures), or human interaction with the environment especially when it has become vulnerable under the impact of irreversible change;
- (vi) be directly or tangibly associated with events or living traditions, with ideas, or with beliefs, with artistic and literary works of outstanding universal significance.
- (vii) contain superlative natural phenomena or areas of exceptional natural beauty and aesthetic importance;
- (viii) be outstanding examples representing major stages of earth's history, including the record of life, significant on-going geological processes in the development of landforms, or significant geomorphic or physiographic features;
- (ix) be outstanding examples representing significant ongoing ecological and biological processes in the evolution and development of terrestrial, fresh water, coastal and marine ecosystems and communities of plants and animals;
- (x) contain the most important and significant natural habitats for in-situ conservation of biological diversity, including those containing threatened species of outstanding universal value from the point of view of science or conservation.