

# Causey Arch Picnic Area

## What is special?

The world's oldest surviving single arch railway bridge stands high above a wooded gorge. The arch spans over 100ft, stands 80ft tall and beneath it runs Causey Burn. If you stand under the archway it sounds as though the water is running above your head!

Ralph Wood, a local master mason, built the arch in 1725-26 to link Tanfield collieries with the main waggonway on the River Tyne. He didn't have much faith in his own work; tradition reports that he was so worried the bridge would collapse he jumped to his death from it before it was even completed. Throughout the site there is evidence of its railway past; a replica of an 18th century coal waggon, a concrete bollard marking the former location of Bobgins pumping engine and a series of panels explaining the early waggonways.

Since the railway closed, the area has been recolonised by nature. Woodland paths lined with wildflowers overlook an ancient tree canopy. A large variety of birds live in the woodland and visitors are rewarded with a wonderful chorus of birdsong.



18th Century Causey Arch: Durham Record Office. Ref D/X 632/1

[more info...](#)

**Contact the Countryside Service**  
telephone: 0191 372 9100  
email: [countryside@durham.gov.uk](mailto:countryside@durham.gov.uk)  
[www.durham.gov.uk/countryside](http://www.durham.gov.uk/countryside)



**Area:** 52 acres (21 hectares)

**Total length of Easy Access route:** 0.3 mile (500 metres)

**Grid Reference:** NZ 205 562

**Map:** Ordnance Survey Explorer 308

### Directions:

Approximately 13 miles northwest of Durham City centre. Sited on the A6076 between Stanley and Sunniside. It is signposted from the road. Nearest postcode NE16 5EG

**Parking:** Large car park. Four disabled parking bays. No coaches - coaches should park in the A6076 northbound lay-by outside the site

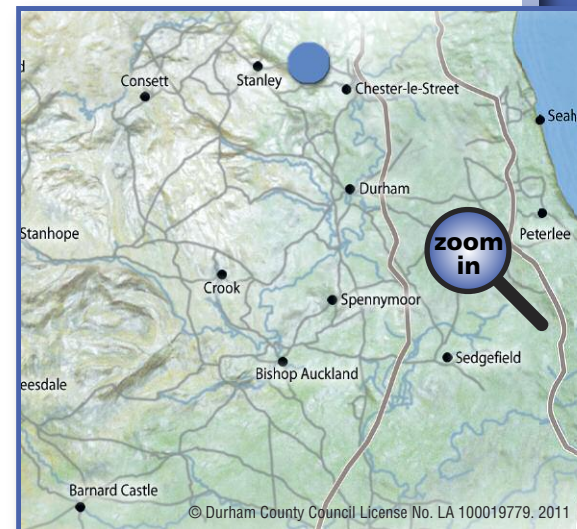
**Public transport:** Services x30, x31 (Go North East). No Sunday Service. Bus stop is at the entrance to the site, there are no drop kerbs. The Tanfield Railway passenger service stops next to the Arch [www.tanfield-railway.co.uk](http://www.tanfield-railway.co.uk)

**Dogs:** Allowed under control. Please clean up after your dog

**Designation:** UK Woodland Assurance Scheme certified, scheduled monuments, Local Wildlife Site

**Suitable for:** Walkers, wheelchair users

**Habitats:** Ancient woodland, running water, grassland



*Whilst every effort has been made by Durham County Council to ensure accuracy of information, the Council cannot accept any liability resulting from omissions or inaccuracies.*

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## Accessibility statement

Causey Arch has a linear Easy Access route from the car park to the Arch. It is a minimum of 1.6 metres wide, is tarmaced and has seats at regular intervals. There is one steep gradient from the car park but after that it is virtually flat. There are long paths on both sides of the wooded gorge allowing you to wander around this site. An Easy Access route enables visitors who are less mobile to enjoy wonderful views over the Arch and the gorge below. Part of this route is shared by vehicles so take care and use the pedestrian refuges when necessary. The other paths are undulating, vary in width and have quite a lot of steps. Care must be taken where the paths cross the railway track.



Blackbird



Bluebell



Wood anemone



Woodpecker



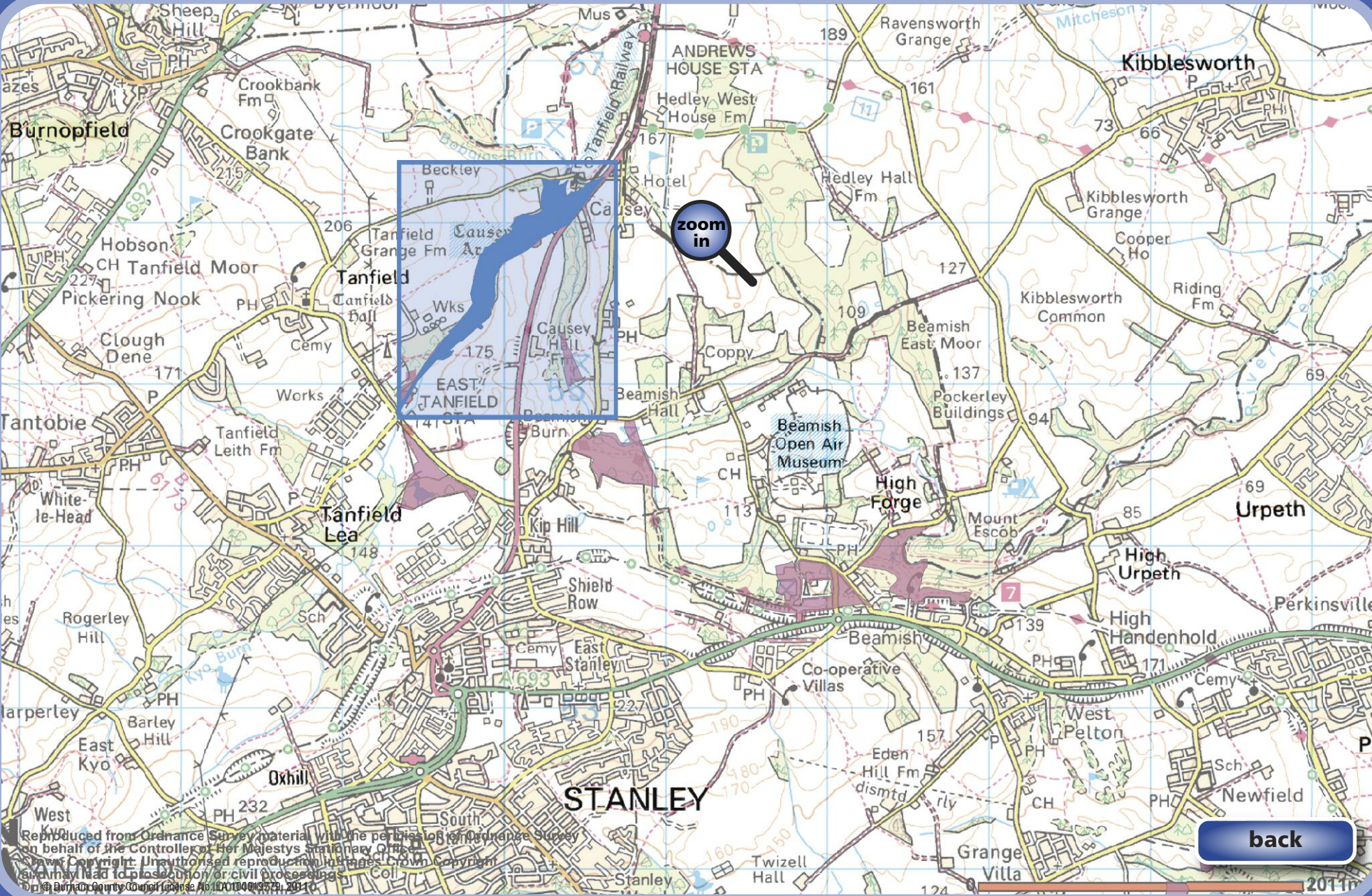
Waggon replica



Lesser celandine

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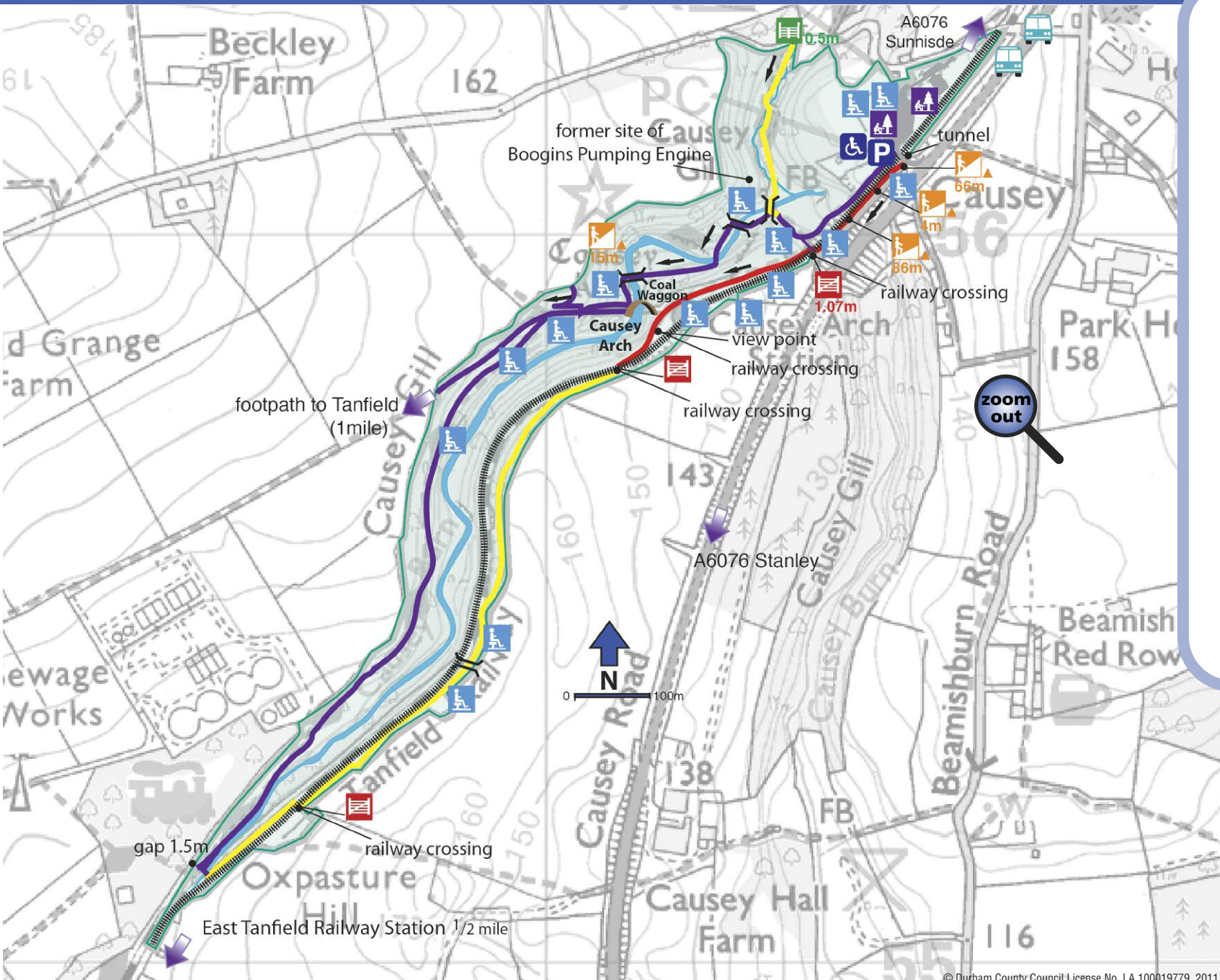
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## KEY

- Picnic Area
- Seat
- Steep Slope Up 1:10-1:10
- Medium Slope Up 1:20-1:10
- Parking
- Disabled Parking
- Bus Stop
- Stile
- Gate
- Hard Sealed Surface/  
Easy Access Route
- Hard Unsealed Surface
- Bare Earth
- Direction of Travel
- Railway
- Bridge

zoom out

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