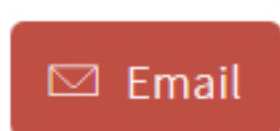


Warcop Army Training Estate National Mapping Programme project



The Ministry of Defence's Army Training area at Warcop, Cumbria, was surveyed as part of the National Mapping Programme (NMP). The project was undertaken between July and September 2002, at the request of Defence Estates. An area of approximately 74 square kilometres was mapped as a first stage in enhancing the training area's management plan.



Prehistoric settlement at the head of Stow Gill, photographed on 13-JUL-2006. The site is visible as earthworks on the eastern slopes of Scordale Valley (NMR 20555_050) © Historic England

The project

The land rises from the valley of the River Eden over to the Pennine hills. Numerous becks dissect the fells and moorland areas, which are covered in blanket peat. Most of the area lies within the North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). Some parts are designated Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

The NMP project discovered a number of new sites, whilst at the same time accurately mapping known sites, some of which were already scheduled. The mapping enabled Defence Estates to produce and put in place an Integrated Land Management Plan. This included a conservation plan for the archaeology within the military training area.

The data provided the basis for further fieldwork and ground survey that could evaluate the condition of the archaeological sites. This helped to produce an integrated record within a Geographic Information System (GIS).



Extensive post medieval lead-mining remains in the Scordale Valley visible on a photograph taken on 13-JUL-2006. In the foreground are dams and leats, providing the water necessary for lead mining and processing (NMR 20555/27). © Historic England

Archaeological features

Large areas of the training estate are currently used for pasture, primarily sheep grazing. However, there has been settlement in the past, ranging from the Bronze Age to post medieval. The military features relating to the army's use of the training estate are also interesting.

There are several possible prehistoric settlements at Warcop. Some sites lie at the base of limestone ridges, which would offer them some shelter. Others are in more exposed positions, such as at Stow Gill. Here a possible prehistoric settlement survives as low stone walls. There are hut circles, a group of enclosures and a field system.

The Scordale Valley was extensively exploited for lead during the 18th and 19th centuries. Some mines were also worked for barites (a mineral with many industrial uses). Some mines were reopened for this purpose in the 20th century. There are extensive industrial remains surviving. These include mine shafts, spoil heaps, tramways, buildings, with their associated crushing mills and systems of leats and dams.

Warcop Army Training Estate was established in 1942 as a tank gunnery range. It was refurbished in 1994 with new ranges and is still actively in use for military training. Features associated with this military activity include a firing range, targets, trenches and bunkers as well as numerous shell grazes.



20th century military features below Roman Fell photographed on 16-JUL-2000. Features include a firing range, targets, trenches and bunkers as well as numerous shell grazes, damaging a medieval farmstead (NMR 17467/31) © Historic England