

## EXTRACT FROM ENGLISH HERITAGE'S RECORD OF SCHEDULED MONUMENTS

MONUMENT: Oxlow Rake lead mines

PARISH: CASTLETON  
PEAK FOREST

DISTRICT: HIGH PEAK

COUNTY: DERBYSHIRE

NATIONAL MONUMENT NO: 29961

NATIONAL GRID REFERENCE(S): SK12097977 - SK13618090

### DESCRIPTION OF THE MONUMENT

The monument includes the earthwork, buried, standing and rock cut remains of Oxlow Rake, a post-medieval lead mining complex. The monument is a linear feature which includes the rake and a number of intermediate concentrations of activity including Old Moor Mine and Clear The Way Mine. The term rake is given to extraction and ore processing features which follow the line of a lead bearing vein, this was a typical form of lead mining in the Peak District.

Oxlow Rake is aligned north east to south west on ground which gradually slopes to the south west. Geologically, the rake follows the line of lead bearing veins which cut across the Bee Low Limestones and outcrop to the west of Oxlow Rake and Old Moor Mine.

Workings on Oxlow Rake have been documented from at least 1709 when it is recorded that 'John Bradley's Grove on Oxlow was in production'. However, another branch of Oxlow Rake, known as Daisy or Deasy Rake was recorded on the Castleton enclosure map of 1691 suggesting that lead working in this area started before this date.

The mines would have been worked under the jurisdiction of the Barmote Courts, the legal administrative unit governing Derbyshire lead mining. The Derbyshire system of mining was largely based on local mining customs and consisted of individual groups of miners or small mining companies working relatively short lengths of the vein.

The monument survives as a series of earthwork, buried, standing and rock cut remains which include belland yard walls (substantial walls built around processing areas in order to prevent cattle straying and eating grass contaminated by lead), ruined coes (stone built shelters or sheds), open cuts (veins worked open to daylight), a bouse team (a bin into which ore was stored before processing), water channels, washing floors, leats, buddling dam (an earth dam used in the process of separating small sized ore from adhering dirt (buddling)), crushing floor (an area where ore was crushed ready for further treatment), gin circle (remains of horse powered winding apparatus) and the remains of a horizontal winding engine.

Towards the eastern end of the monument are the remains of Old Moor Mine. Here, a belland yard wall surrounds the remains of a crushing floor, a gin circle and several shafts including the main engine shaft. The shaft mounds are the result of extraction, but despite their long history suggest low level mining technology.

Clear The Way Mine which is centred at national grid reference SK12908038, is enclosed by another belland yard wall which surrounds an area of open cuts and very large undisturbed hillocks of waste material. The remains of an engine shaft which is known to be 330ft (100.5m) deep, survives just south of a large bulge in the northern side of the belland yard wall.

To the south west of Clear The Way Mine, and continuing to the south west end of Oxlow Rake, are a series of hillocks made up of limestone deads (waste rock which contains no ore or insufficient quantities to warrant extraction) and finely crushed vein material. The hillocks are particularly large and virtually undisturbed. Steep sided open cuts are also a characteristic feature of this section of the monument. At national grid reference SK12608010 the well preserved remains of a bouse team associated with the remains of washing floors and water leats are evident. Bouse teams are particularly rare in Derbyshire and are more generally associated with 19th century lead workings in the Northern Pennines. Included in this area of activity are the remains of coes and ore bins and at national grid reference SK12157980 are the remains of a late 19th century winding engine bed which is believed to have been used in conjunction with a trial sinking beneath the Peak Forest Sill which outcrops immediately to the west.

The modern track surface is excluded from the scheduling although the ground beneath this is included.

## ASSESSMENT OF IMPORTANCE

Approximately 10,000 lead industry sites are estimated to survive in England, spanning nearly three millennia of mining history from the later Bronze Age (c.1000 BC) until the present day, though before the Roman period it is likely to have been on a small scale. Two hundred and fifty one lead industry sites, representing approximately 2.5% of the estimated national archaeological resource for the industry, have been identified as being of national importance. This selection of nationally important monuments, compiled and assessed through a comprehensive survey of the lead industry, is designed to represent the industry's chronological depth, technological breadth and regional diversity.

Lead rakes are linear mining features along the outcrop of a lead vein resulting from the extraction of relatively shallow ore. They can be broadly divided between: rakes consisting of continuous rock-cut clefts; rakes consisting of lines of interconnecting or closely-spaced shafts with associated spoil tips and other features; and rakes whose surface features were predominantly produced by reprocessing of earlier waste tips (normally in the 19th century). In addition, some sites contain associated features such as coes (miners' huts), gin circles (the circular track used by a horse operating simple winding or pumping machinery), and small-scale ore-dressing areas and structures, often marked by tips of dressing waste.

The majority of rake workings are believed to be of 16th-18th century date, but earlier examples are likely to exist, and mining by rock-cut cleft has again become common in the 20th century. Rakes are the main field monuments produced by the earlier and technologically simpler phases of lead mining. They are very common in Derbyshire, where they illustrate the character of mining dominated by regionally distinctive Mining Laws, and moderately common in the Pennine and Mendip orefields; they are rare in other lead mining areas. A sample of the better preserved examples from each region, illustrating the

typological range, will merit protection.

The mining remains on Oxlow Rake are particularly well preserved and include a diverse range of components relating to the mining of this vein. Rake workings of such veins are now rare, and this example is one of the best preserved examples in the Peak District. The standing, earthwork, buried and rock cut remains provide evidence for both the historical and technological development of what was once a far more extensive, multi-period mining landscape. They incorporate a wide range of mining and processing features which enable the development of the mine working and its chronological range to be reconstructed. The large rake, shafts, hillocks and other features provide evidence for methods of extraction whilst other processing areas will contain deposits showing the effectiveness of these techniques. The mining remains also provide an insight into the Derbyshire Barmote Court system of mining and the constraints this imposed on the miners of the area.

MONUMENT INCLUDED IN THE SCHEDULE ON 20th June 2000