

EXTRACT FROM ENGLISH HERITAGE'S RECORD OF SCHEDULED MONUMENTS

MONUMENT: Two lead mines known as Winster Pitts and Drummer's Venture

PARISH: SOUTH DARLEY
WINSTER

DISTRICT: DERBYSHIRE DALES

COUNTY: DERBYSHIRE

NATIONAL MONUMENT NO: 27211

NATIONAL GRID REFERENCE(S): SK24696027

DESCRIPTION OF THE MONUMENT

The monument is located on the limestone hillside south of Winster village and includes the core areas of two distinct but immediately adjacent nucleated lead mines known as Winster Pitts and Drummer's Venture. Further mining remains survive outside the area of the scheduling and include shaft mounds and spoil heaps in surrounding fields. Although forming part of Winster Pitts and Drummer's Venture, these are not included in the scheduling due to their isolation from the core areas. Together Winster Pitts and Drummer's Venture form a complex lead mining landscape whose surface remains comprise both mine workings and associated ore works and the foundations of structures such as coes (small storage and processing buildings) and a possible counting house. Included in the mine workings are a number of discrete shafts with associated winding shafts, platforms for winding gear, a gin circle, and both intact and reworked spoil heaps. The ore works include dressing waste heaps, leats, ponds, a washing floor and a complex of approximately 20 buddles used in the separation of lead ore from other unwanted materials.

Both Winster Pitts and Drummer's Venture were worked from the mid-17th to the mid-19th centuries, although the main period of use appears to have been during the latter half of the 18th century when Winster was one of the most important mining centres in the Derbyshire orefield. Although adjacent, the two mines were entirely separate concerns worked by the people of Winster and Bonsall parishes respectively. This is demonstrated by the fact that an underground adit common to both is gated on the parish boundary. Lead ore from both mines appears not to have been smelted on site but to have been carted eastward to the area round Matlock, Ashover and Chesterfield. This may have been via the partly paved packhorse route which passes south eastward from the mine site to Bonsall.

A series of electricity pylons crossing the monument are excluded from the scheduling, although the ground underneath them is included. The fences and drystone field walls bounding and crossing the monument are specifically included in the scheduling as their removal would jeopardise the continued survival of a number of important mining earthworks.

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.

Nucleated lead mines are a prominent type of field monument produced by lead mining. They consist of a range of features grouped around the adits and/or shafts of a mine. The simplest examples contain merely a shaft or adit with associated spoil tip, but more complex and (in general) later examples may include remains of engine houses for pumping and/or winding from shafts, housing, lodging shops and offices, powder houses for storing gunpowder, power transmission features such as wheel pits, dams and leats. The majority of nucleated lead mines also included ore works, where the mixture of ore and waste rock extracted from the ground was separated ('dressed') to form a smeltable concentrate. The range of processes used can be summarised as: picking out of clean lumps of ore and waste; breaking down of lumps to smaller sizes (either by manual hammering or mechanical crushing); sorting of broken material by size; separation of gravel-sized material by shaking on a sieve in a tub of water ('jigging'); and separation of finer material by washing away the lighter waste in a current of water ('buddling'). The field remains of ore works vary widely and include the remains of crushing devices, separating structures and tanks, tips of distinctive waste from the various processes, together with associated water supply and power installations, such as wheel pits and, more rarely, steam engine houses.

The majority of nucleated lead mines with ore works are of 18th to 20th century date, earlier mining being normally by rake or hush and including scattered ore dressing features (a 'hush' is a gully or ravine partly excavated by use of a controlled torrent of water to reveal or exploit a vein of mineral ore). Nucleated lead mines often illustrate the great advances in industrial technology associated with the period known as the Industrial Revolution and, sometimes, also inform an understanding of the great changes in social conditions which accompanied it. Because of the greatly increased scale of working associated with nucleated mining such features can be a major component of many upland landscapes. It is estimated that several thousand sites exist, the majority being small mines of limited importance, although the important early remains of many larger mines have often been greatly modified or destroyed by continued working or by modern reworking. A sample of the better preserved sites, illustrating the regional, chronological and technological range of the class, is considered to merit protection.

Winstler Pitts and Drummer's Venture together form a well preserved and well documented nucleated lead mining complex, the importance of which lies primarily in its completeness and largely intact condition. Several important mine components are represented, including a well preserved gin circle and the greatest number of buddles surviving on any site in the Derbyshire orefield. In addition, there are the remains of several coes which are rare outside Derbyshire and thus important when they survive. The importance of the site is enhanced by its inclusion in a landscape of field barns and smallholdings generally held to be indicative of a mixed mining-farming economy. Both mines also form an important part of a vast regional mining network which is of itself considered to be of international historical importance.

MONUMENT INCLUDED IN THE SCHEDULE ON 02nd January 1997