

CUMBRIA AND THE LAKE DISTRICT

(comprising Cumbria, the Lake District National Park and part of the Yorkshire Dales National Park)

A Summary of Mineral Resource Information for Development Plans
Mineral Resources (South)
Scale 1:100 000

Compiled by D.E. Highley, B. Young, D.G. Cameron, P.J. Henney, D. Millward, D.J. Harrison, S. Holloway, K.A. Lacey and G. Warrington
Project Leader: D.E. Highley
Planning Consultant: J.F. Cowley, Mineral & Resource Planning Associates
Digital cartography by S.E. Wood and R.J. Cooper, British Geological Survey, Keyworth.

Production of this map was commissioned and funded by the Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions (Contract MP0624).

- PEAT**
 - Peat
- LIMESTONE**
 - Commonly occurring limestone (generally > 97% CaCO₃)
 - High purity limestone (> 97% CaCO₃)
- IGNEOUS ROCK**
 - Intrusive
 - Dolerite, Gabbro (Winn Sill, Carrock Fell Complex)
 - Granitic rocks (Shap Granite, Threlkeld Microgranite, Embition diorites)
- Extrusive**
 - Thermally altered (frost) volcanic rocks
 - Mainly andesite and tuff including Millin Park Formation
- SANDSTONE**
 - Kirkby Moor Formation, Coniston Group, Wray Castle Formation
- COAL**
 - Areas of shallow coal
 - Principal resource area - thick, closely spaced coals
 - Subsidiary resource
 - Opencast coal: Worked area
 - Fireclay (coincident with areas of shallow coal - Coal Measures)
- SLATE**
 - Lakeland blue-grey slate (Windermere Supergroup)
 - Lakeland green slate (Borrowdale Volcanic Group)
- EVAPORITES**
 - Gypsum / Anhydrite
 - D Bed outcrop (Extent of Eden Shales - St Bees Shales - Permian)
 - B Bed outcrop (in Vale of Eden and West Cumbria only)
 - Salt
 - Area influenced by groundwater solution - 'wet-rock head' (Extent of Preatsall Salt)
- COAL LICENCE AREAS (as at 01.08.00)**
 - Opencast coal site
 - Deep mine

Metaliferous Minerals

Historically two of the UK's foremost metal mining areas, the Lake District and North Pennines, lie wholly or partially within Cumbria but at present, apart from a very small amount of high-grade hematite for pigments, no metals are produced.

All the non-ferrous mines exploited vein-style deposits, with locally important replacement-style mineralisation in the Carboniferous limestones of the North Pennines. All known metaliferous deposits are now either exhausted or have not proven reserves or are currently uneconomic to exploit. The veins in the Lake District contained a wide variety of minerals producing copper, lead, zinc, tungsten and smaller amounts of antimony, arsenic, molybdenum, manganese and nickel. Pyrite was also extracted for acid production and large amounts of barytes and minor quartz have also been extracted in the North Pennines. A significant range of minerals were mined, mainly galena, sphalerite, barite, fluorite, whitell and iron ores. The last operating mines were Carnarvon Fell worked for tungsten until 1981, and Force Crag, worked for lead, zinc and barytes until 1982. In recent years modest quantities of barytes have been produced from vein and replacement deposits at Silverdale near Appleby.

Any future exploration for base metals is likely to be focused on stratatube deposits in Lower Carboniferous rocks.

Peat

Peat is an unconsolidated deposit of plant remains in a water-saturated environment such as a bog or fen. Bogs occur in areas where they are dependent on rainfall for supply of water and the vegetation is characterised by acid tolerant plant communities of which the genus Sphagnum is dominant. The two main types of bog are (i) raised bogs, characteristic of flat underlying topography and found on low plains and broad valley floors and (ii) blanket bogs which occur mainly in upland areas where conditions are cool and wet. Many lowland raised bogs have been designated as sites of international and national conservation importance.

About 98% of the peat extracted in the UK is used as growing media by amateur and professional gardeners. In Cumbria, three sites have extraction permissions; Bolton Fell, Wedholme Flow and Solway Moss. All are active raised bogs.

Slate

Slate is most commonly developed from fine-grained sedimentary rocks, such as mudstones, which have a well marked slaty cleavage due to the crystallisation and realignment of platy minerals within the rock mass. It is along this cleavage that the rock can be split, thus giving it its economic importance. Bodies of slate generally have a restricted occurrence within more extensive masses of less perfectly cleaved rock, which accounts for the large tips of waste commonly associated with the slate industry.

The Lake District has had a long history of slate production stretching back some 2000 years. Slate extraction has been based on two distinct products. The most famous is the Lakeland green slate obtained from the intensely cleaved volcanic rocks of the Borrowdale Volcanic Group in the central part of the Lake District. In addition, 'blue-grey slate' is also produced from evenly cleaved mudstones within the lower parts of the Windermere Supergroup.

Lakeland green slate has been obtained at a number levels in the Borrowdale Volcanic Group. The most important are shown on the map, including the most extensive slate belt extending from Coniston north-eastwards to Kinkorine, and on which most of the currently active quarries are based. The eastward extension of this belt, which contains a number of disused slate workings, cannot be defined until mapping of the area is complete.

Blue-grey slate is mainly used for roofing and a regular even cleavage is required; the best quality slate is found where the cleavage is perpendicular to the bedding. The Wray Castle Formation is extensively worked at the Kirkby Slate Quarry.

The resource areas shown on the map have a number of limitations. Firstly, they are generally of rock at or near surface. Locally, and particularly in the major valleys, the resource may be covered by a substantial thickness of drift. Secondly, the intensity and regularity of the cleavage varies across the outcrop or may be affected by intrusions or fracturing. The areas shown on the map thus provide only an indication of where suitable material may occur.

Gypsum / Anhydrite

Gypsum (CaSO₄·2H₂O) and anhydrite (CaSO₄) are naturally occurring forms of calcium sulphate which normally occur as beds or nodular masses up to a few metres thick. Gypsum is formed by the hydration of anhydrite at or near surface but passes into anhydrite at depth. Anhydrite is, therefore, much more extensive than gypsum.

In Cumbria, gypsum/anhydrite beds occur within mudstones of late Permian age (Eden Shales - St Bees Shales). Commercial extraction, mainly by underground mining, has been confined to two main areas: the Vale of Eden, and west Cumbria, near Whitehaven. Anhydrite was formerly mined on a large scale in both the Vale of Eden and at the Sandwith Mine, near Whitehaven for the manufacture of sulphuric acid. This process is no longer viable and mining operations for this use ceased in the mid-1970s. Today anhydrite is produced on a small scale at the Newbiggin Mine, near Kirkby Thore, for cement manufacturing.

Gypsum production has been confined to the Vale of Eden, in an area extending to the southern part of the Carlisle Basin. Current production is now confined to the Birkshead Mine, near Kirkby Thore. Output has declined because of the availability of desulphurisation from the Drax coal-fired power station in Yorkshire. Gypsum is used principally in the manufacture of plaster and plasterboard. A mixture of gypsum/anhydrite is also used as a retarder in the manufacture of cement.

Resources of gypsum/anhydrite occur only within the Eden Shales - St Bees Shales and these formations are shown on the resource map in the Vale of Eden and west Cumbria. The formations also occur in south Cumbria and in the Carlisle Basin but are unlikely to be of commercial future and are not shown on the map. In the Vale of Eden the inferred outcrop of one or more of the evaporite beds has also been shown where data are available. Anhydrite is highly unlikely to be of economic importance as a large-scale source of sulphur in the foreseeable future, if this future interest will be directed principally at gypsum rather than on beds that are close to outcrop.

Halite

Halite (rock salt; NaCl) occurs interbedded with mudstones in the Triassic Mercia Mudstone Group on Walney Island and beneath the Walney Channel and parts of western Barrow-in-Furness. The highest and thickest salt-bearing horizon (up to 110 m) is continuous with the Preatsall Salt of West Lancashire. The Walney Island safely supported a small brine pumping industry in the early part of the 20th century. However, the deposits are highly unlikely to be of economic interest in the future, either as a source of salt or for the development of storage caverns, because of the presence of wet-rock-head (upper surface subject to solution) and the fact that individual halite beds are relatively thin.

Crushed Rock Aggregate

Igneous rocks and hard sandstones are relatively widespread in Cumbria and some are sufficiently extensive, with desirable physical and mechanical properties, to form potential sources of crushed rock aggregate. However, many Cumbrian hard rock outcrops are too remote for commercial extraction and many also occur within the National Park. Igneous rocks and some sandstones are the source of high specification aggregates for road surfacing, due to their higher abrasion and polish resistance. However, production costs are higher for igneous rock and sandstone aggregates than for limestone, hence limestone is the preferred material for general purpose aggregate.

Igneous Rock

The Lower Palaeozoic igneous rocks in the area provide a large resource of crushed rock aggregate. Two main categories can be identified: fine-grained, dominantly extrusive volcanic rocks and coarse- to fine-grained intrusive rocks. The volcanic rocks form the bulk of the central and eastern Lake District, specifically the Borrowdale Volcanic Group and the Borrowdale Volcanic Group (BVG). Smaller areas of volcanic rocks occur in the Vale of Eden.

The BVG consists of a complex sequence of lavas, tuffs and sedimentary rocks composed of variably sized volcanic debris, which have widely differing rock properties. Andesite and basalt, which form the Eycott and the lower part of the BVG, have been relatively little worked as a source of aggregate. Andesite and basalt were formerly worked at Greenscoe, in the Furness ridge, south Cumbria. Tuffs are a major component of the upper BVG and certain types, such as the coarser welded tuffs, can produce high specification aggregate with very high polished stone values. This lithology is quarried at Ghyll Scar, near Miln, for road surfacing materials. Rock Piece Quarry, in the Cross Fell inlier, formerly produced a similar material, again from the upper BVG.

Of the coarse- to fine-grained, acid intrusive rocks, the largest bodies are the Eskdale and Ennerdale granites of the western Lake District. Smaller bodies that have been exploited include the Ship Granite, near a source of dimension stone, the Threlkeld Microgranite, worked for aggregate in Cumbria, formerly worked at Embition. Some rocks surrounding these intrusions have been baked by the heat of the magmas and converted into hard durable rocks called hornfels. The best example is at Shap Blue Quarry which exploits BVG andesites hornfelsed by the Shap Granite, and which are quarried to produce road surfacing, concrete products and railway track ballast. Basic intrusive rocks occur on Carrock Fell (gabro) and around Hawsewater (gabro and dolerite) and, in addition, there are numerous small intrusions of diorite, diorite and basalt, including the Winn Sill, which crops out along the Pennine escarpment and near Bartonport.

Sandstone

Traditionally valued for building purposes in Cumbria, the largest present day use of sandstones is in the aggregates industry, although relatively few sandstones in Cumbria are suitable enough to form important aggregate resources. In general, older, more indurated sandstones offer better potential sources where they are not weathered. Hard sandstones containing mineral and cement cements in a clay matrix are referred to as greywackes and this rock is typically highly resistant to polishing and has high polished stone values. Hence they are particularly valued by the Shap Granite, and which are quarried to produce road surfacing, concrete products and railway track ballast. Basic intrusive rocks occur on Carrock Fell (gabro) and around Hawsewater (gabro and dolerite) and, in addition, there are numerous small intrusions of diorite, diorite and basalt, including the Winn Sill, which crops out along the Pennine escarpment and near Bartonport.

Coal

The Coal Measures rocks of the West Cumbrian Coalfield have been the principal source of coal in the county. An isolated outcrop of Coal Measures rocks in the north-east of the county, around Midgillgill, has also been worked. Smaller amounts of coal have been, and continue to be, raised from pre-Coal Measures rocks in the north-east of the county. Future commercial interest in coal is likely to be confined to those deposits suitable for opencast extraction.

The main West Cumbrian Coalfield extends from Whitehaven, through Workington and Maryport, and thence eastwards to Aspatria and Bolton Low Houses. Coal Measures crop out east of this point but there is a progressive reduction in the number of seams and a marked deterioration in quality due to oxidation, which makes this part of the outcrop unworkable. These easterly Coal Measures, including poorly known Coal Measures rocks in the Vale of Eden, have been excluded from the map.

Deep-mining ceased in the West Cumbrian Coalfield with the closure of Hag Colliery at Whitehaven in 1988. An attempt to re-start underground mining at the Main Band Colliery near Whitehaven has so far proved unsuccessful. Large-scale opencast mining began in West Cumbria in 1958. Since then several large sites have been worked and extraction is currently taking place at Keeble Head, near Dinstington. The extent of the exposed coalfield, comprising closely-spaced coal seams within the Lower and Middle Coal Measures, is shown on the map.

Coal has also been produced from seams lower in the Carboniferous succession. The most important is the Little Limestone Coal, which lies beneath the limestone of that name in the Caddick and Aston areas. It is currently mined in the Aston area, although only the small Cloughy Colliery falls in Cumbria. The coal is shown as a subsidiary resource on the map.

Building Stones

A wide range of igneous, metamorphic and sedimentary rocks has been quarried in Cumbria for local use and a number has been exploited on a commercial basis.

Igneous

A variety of igneous rocks is found in Cumbria and is worked for aggregate but some have also been worked for building and decorative use. The Eskdale Granite (pink) and Threlkeld (grey) microgranites have been used for wallstone, but it is only the Shap Granite, quarried on Wastdale Fell, that has been exploited commercially for building and decorative purposes on a significant scale.

Sandstones

Lower Palaeozoic sandstones are now principally quarried for roadstone but have been widely used in the past for wallstone. Upper Palaeozoic and Triassic sandstones are the principal source of building sandstone quarried in Cumbria today. Carboniferous sandstones from the Millstone Grit Group were worked at Lambray and Grestygate but are now only quarried near Northend and Whitehaven. The Permian Permian Sandstone is quarried for building stone from quarries around Lazbyrie Fell, near Penrith. The Triassic sandstones of the St Bees Sandstone Formation are quarried around St Bees headland and, formerly, at Shawk Stone Quarry near Carlisle.

Limestones

Carboniferous limestones in the Kendal and Kirkby Lonsdale areas have been extensively used in the past for local building stone and three quarries still work the limestone for building purposes near Orton. Beds of fossiliferous limestone are worked at Uverton for decorative rock and ashlar.

Secondary Aggregates

The term 'secondary aggregate' is used to describe a range of materials which may be used as aggregate but which arise as wastes from a variety of activities. These may be considered under three main headings:

- Naturally occurring materials arising from mineral extraction and processing activities such as slate waste, colliery spoil, overburden and quarry/processing waste. Significant volumes of slate waste are present in Cumbria, derived in part from the roofing slate industry. Crushed and graded material can be used for Type 1 and 2 sub-base, large blocks for armour stone and smaller blocks for rip rap, drainage blankets, trench backfill, capping and binding layers as well as bulk fill for construction. The most extensive areas of slate waste are those in the Kirkby-in-Furness area.
- Colliery waste is mainly siltstone and mudstone but, in Cumbria, most old tips have been reclaimed or restored and hence sterilised in terms of resource potential. Ironstone tips have been worked for aggregates but are mostly restored, although some large tips remain. Small waste tips from former base metal mining operations occur in some areas but have variable compositions and the presence of sulphides presents a pollution risk if disturbed.
- Materials arising from industrial processes, such as slags and power station ash. Iron and steel manufacturing has ceased in Cumbria but small amounts of slag are still worked at Derwent Howe in Workington. There are no coal fired power stations in Cumbria hence no supplies of pulverised fuel ash or furnace bottom ash.

Construction and demolition wastes, which may either be natural or manufactured, such as highway arisings, road sub-base, concrete rubble and masonry. These are not considered further here.

Apart from slate waste there are limited resources of secondary aggregates in Cumbria.

Coalbed methane

Methane contained within coal is known as coalbed methane and is a potential source of energy. The gas content, permeability and total thickness of coal within the West Cumbrian Coalfield suggests that the coalfield could rate amongst the best coalbed methane prospects in England. However, normal mining operations will not liberate methane over extensive areas and exploration would need to be focused on virgin strata. A detailed study of mine plans would be required to determine whether any good prospects remain. The concealed extension of the Carboniferous Coalfield appears to have good prospects but there is not interest on coal seam permeability. The artificial vents left in abandoned coal mines are potential sources of 'coal mine gas'.

Conventional Hydrocarbons

The Carboniferous Northumberland / Solway Basin occurs in the northern part of Cumbria. The basin has gas-generating potential but oil-generating potential has not been proved. However, much of any oil and gas generated may have been lost already and, with a lack of good reservoir rocks, the prospects are not encouraging. Exploration activity to date in Cumbria has not been successful.

HYDROCARBON WELLS OF CUMBRIA

County boundary	Exposed Coal Measures	Concealed Coal Measures (Speculative - not proven)
1 EASTON 1 Operator: Edinburgh Oil & Gas Start date: 05.05.1989 Tested: Lower Carboniferous (Dinantian) Terminal depth: 2200 m Status: Plugged and abandoned with minor gas shows in Lower Border Group	2 BIGGAR 1 Operator: Ultramar Start date: 13.10.1990 Tested: Triassic (Mercia Mudstone Group, Sherwood Sandstone Group) Terminal depth: 644.6 m Status: Plugged and abandoned dry hole	3 WESTON 1 Operator: Ultramar Start date: 02.04.1989 Tested: Triassic (Sherwood Sandstone) Upper Carboniferous (Namurian) Lower Carboniferous (Dinantian) Terminal depth: 204 m Status: Plugged and abandoned dry hole
4 SILLIOTH 1 Operator: Ultramar Start date: 11.06.1973 Tested: Triassic (Mercia Mudstone Group, Sherwood Sandstone Group) Terminal depth: 1342 m Status: Plugged and abandoned dry hole	5 EASTON 2 Operator: Ultramar Start date: 12.10.1990 Tested: Triassic (Mercia Mudstone Group, Sherwood Sandstone Group) Terminal depth: 644.6 m Status: Plugged and abandoned dry hole	6 SILLIOTH 2 Operator: Ultramar Start date: 11.06.1973 Tested: Triassic (Mercia Mudstone Group, Sherwood Sandstone Group) Terminal depth: 1342 m Status: Plugged and abandoned dry hole

Clay and Shale, and Fireclay

Clay and shale are used mainly in the production of structural clay products, such as facing and engineering bricks, pavers, clay tiles and vitrified clay pipes. Brick manufacture is the largest tonnage use. Clay bricks are produced at one small plant in Cumbria, at Ashham-in-Furness and the clays used are weathered mudstones from the Ordovician Skiddaw Group, quarried at High Greenscoe.

Fireclays occur as the seathearts, or fossil soils, beneath coal seams and resources are confined to coal-bearing strata. The close association of coal and fireclay means that opencast coal sites are one of the few viable sources of the clay. Resources are, thus, coincident with opencast coal resources. Fireclays were valued as refractory raw materials but demand has fallen markedly since the late 1950s. Fireclays with low iron contents are now valued for the production of buff coloured bricks and pavers and are usually recovered as by-products of opencast coal operations. Only small amounts of fireclay are currently produced from opencast coal operations in Cumbria.

Limestone

Cumbria is an important source of limestone, with some 4.4 million tonnes quarried in 1995. Most is consumed in the construction industry as aggregate or fill, but high purity types are used in iron and steel manufacture and in the chemical industry. Limestones are a significant component of the geology of Cumbria, with examples from Ordovician to Jurassic age. However, large scale extraction of limestone is now restricted to those of Carboniferous age, notably the Lower (Dinantian) and Upper (Namurian) sequences and it is within these that resources are located. Many limestones are too thin to support modern quarrying and only limestone units with a consistent thickness > 10m are generally included. Where modern mappings is unavailable, e.g. between Shap and Raveston, the boundaries defined by Garrison (1912) and Harrison et al. (1991) are used. High purity limestones (> 97% CaCO₃) are identified separately. The main resource areas lie to the west and southwest of the Eden Valley. In south Cumbria, high purity limestones include the Red Hill Colliery, the Park and Urswick limestones. The last is the most actively quarried, mainly for aggregate, and both the Park and Urswick limestones are quarried at Dalton-in-Furness for industrial purposes and as aggregate. In central Cumbria, limestones dominate the Lower Carboniferous succession with the Scandal Beck, Ashfield and Kripe Scar limestone formations reaching up to 150 m in thickness. The overlying Namurian succession also includes the 20 m thick Great Limestone. The Kripe Scar and Potts Beck limestones are of high purity and the former has been extensively quarried, and is still worked at Hardendale Quarry, for the steel industry as well as for aggregate. In west Cumbria, limestones occur between Whitehaven and Cockermouth in a 200 m thick succession of Lower Carboniferous strata which is more argillaceous than that to the east and south. The Fourth and White limestones have the highest purity. In the Caddick-Perinth areas, both the Lower Carboniferous (the White, Fifth, Sixth & Seventh) and Namurian limestones (First form units > 10 m in thickness. In the Pennines, several thick limestone formations occur within the Aston Group, including the Melmurry Scar, the Great Scar and the Robinson limestones, all of which are also classed as high purity limestones. In north Cumbria, most Lower Carboniferous limestones are too thin to be exploited. Exceptions are the Penton/Greengate Well, the Harehill and the Buccugh limestones, although these outcrop in a very restricted area in the Liddell Water Valley. The Namurian Caddick Limestone is also > 20 m thick but again is restricted in area of outcrop.

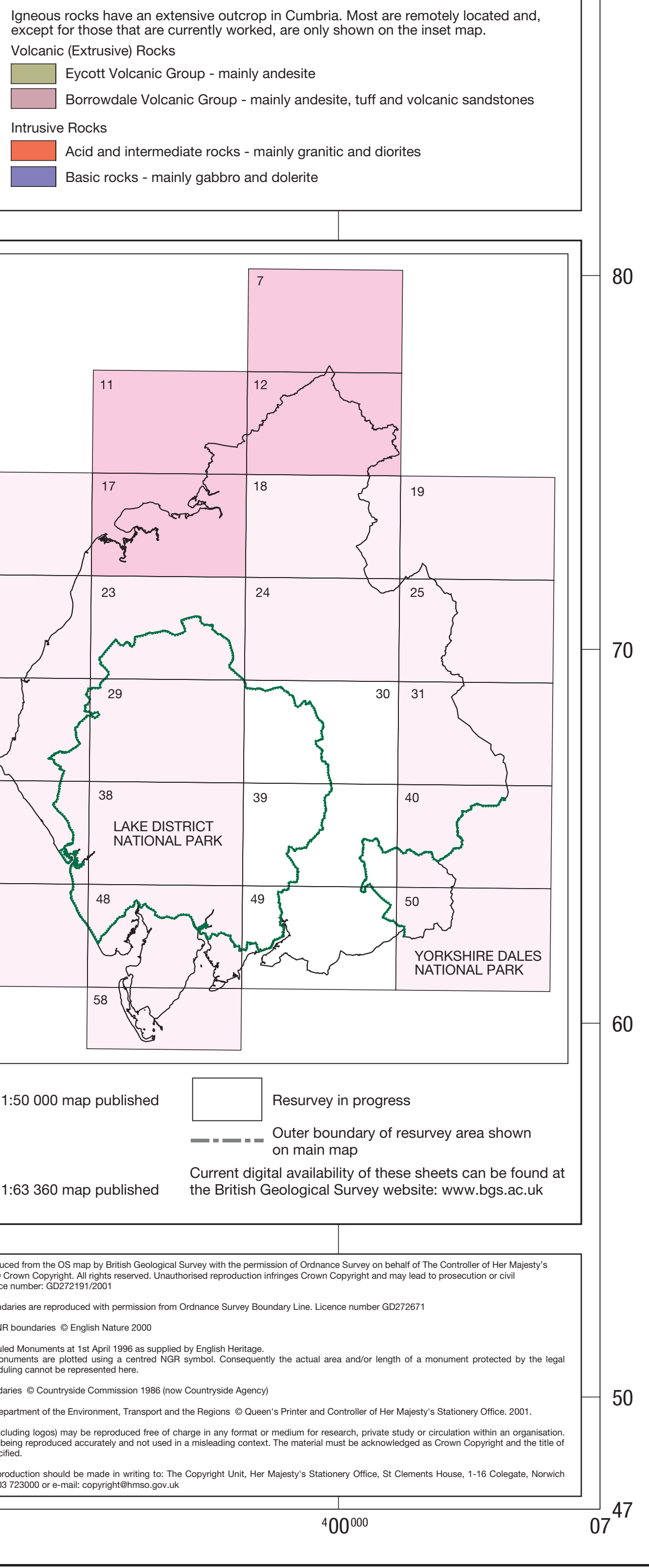
Igneous Rock Resources

Igneous rocks have an extensive outcrop in Cumbria. Most are remotely located and, except for those types currently worked, are only shown on the inset map.

- Eycott Volcanic Group - mainly andesite, tuff and volcanic sandstones
- Borrowdale Volcanic Group - mainly andesite, tuff and volcanic sandstones

Intrusive Rocks

- Acid and intermediate rocks - mainly granitic and diorites
- Basic rocks - mainly gabro and dolerite



ANS AND LIMITATIONS

The purpose of this map and associated reports is to show the broad distribution of mineral resources which may be of interest or potential to the user. It does not constitute a guarantee of the accuracy or completeness of the information shown. The user is responsible for the interpretation and application of the information shown. It is not intended to be used as a basis for legal proceedings. The user is advised to consult the appropriate authorities for further information and to verify the accuracy of the information shown. The user is advised to consult the appropriate authorities for further information and to verify the accuracy of the information shown.

The map was produced by British Geological Survey, Keyworth, Nottingham. It is based on data supplied by the British Geological Survey, Keyworth, Nottingham. It is based on data supplied by the British Geological Survey, Keyworth, Nottingham.

The map is based on data supplied by the British Geological Survey, Keyworth, Nottingham. It is based on data supplied by the British Geological Survey, Keyworth, Nottingham.

The map is based on data supplied by the British Geological Survey, Keyworth, Nottingham. It is based on data supplied by the British Geological Survey, Keyworth, Nottingham.

The map is based on data supplied by the British Geological Survey, Keyworth, Nottingham. It is based on data supplied by the British Geological Survey, Keyworth, Nottingham.