

Cumbria RIGS Group

Cumbria RIGS Group is a voluntary geological conservation group working to record and look after important geological sites.



HODBARROW POINT RIGS

Hodbarrow Lagoon is the largest coastal lagoon in north-west England and is an important RSPB reserve.

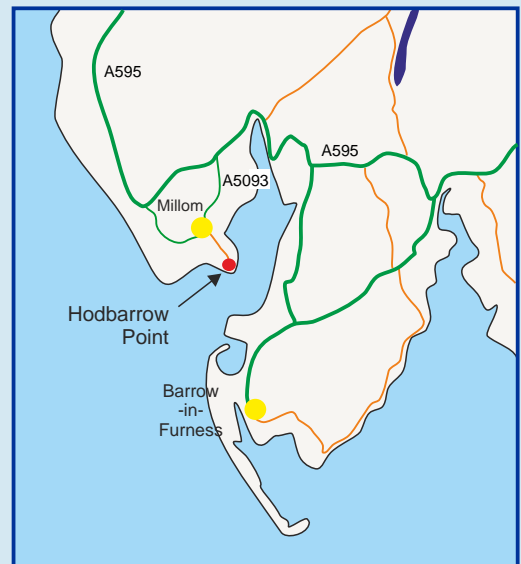
The Lower Carboniferous Limestones at Millom contained one of the largest bodies of hematite ever discovered and in 1855 two men Nathaniel Caine and John Barratt formed the Hodbarrow Mining Company in order to exploit the recently discovered body of hematite. The quality of Hodbarrow hematite was very high, with an iron content between 55% and 65%. In the 1860's the average output from the mine was 3000 tons per week.



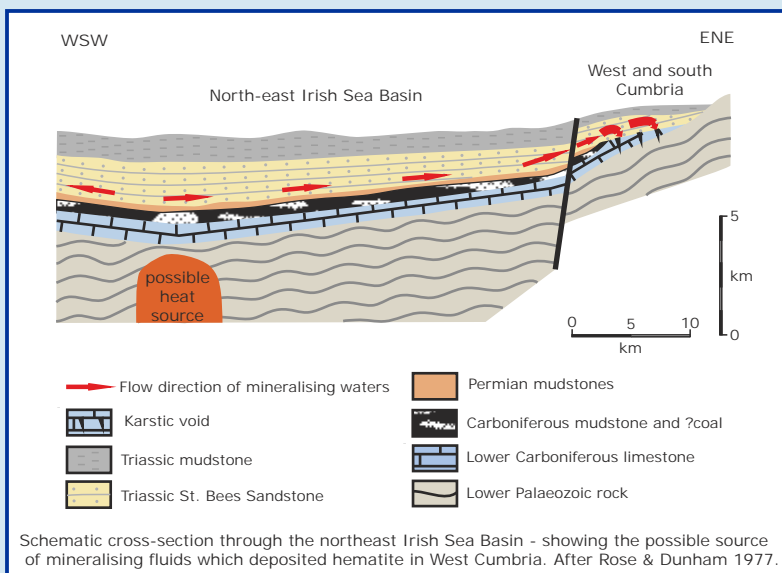
Aerial view of Hodbarrow Point



Mineralised fault at Hodbarrow Point



To get there by car: From Millom town square, continue east beyond the pedestrian crossing, taking the second right (Mainsgate Road signposted for Hodbarrow RSPB). Continue for about 0.5 mile, turning left by the lagoon for the car park.



Kidney ore from Hodbarrow Mine



Outer barrier

Hodbarrow lagoon

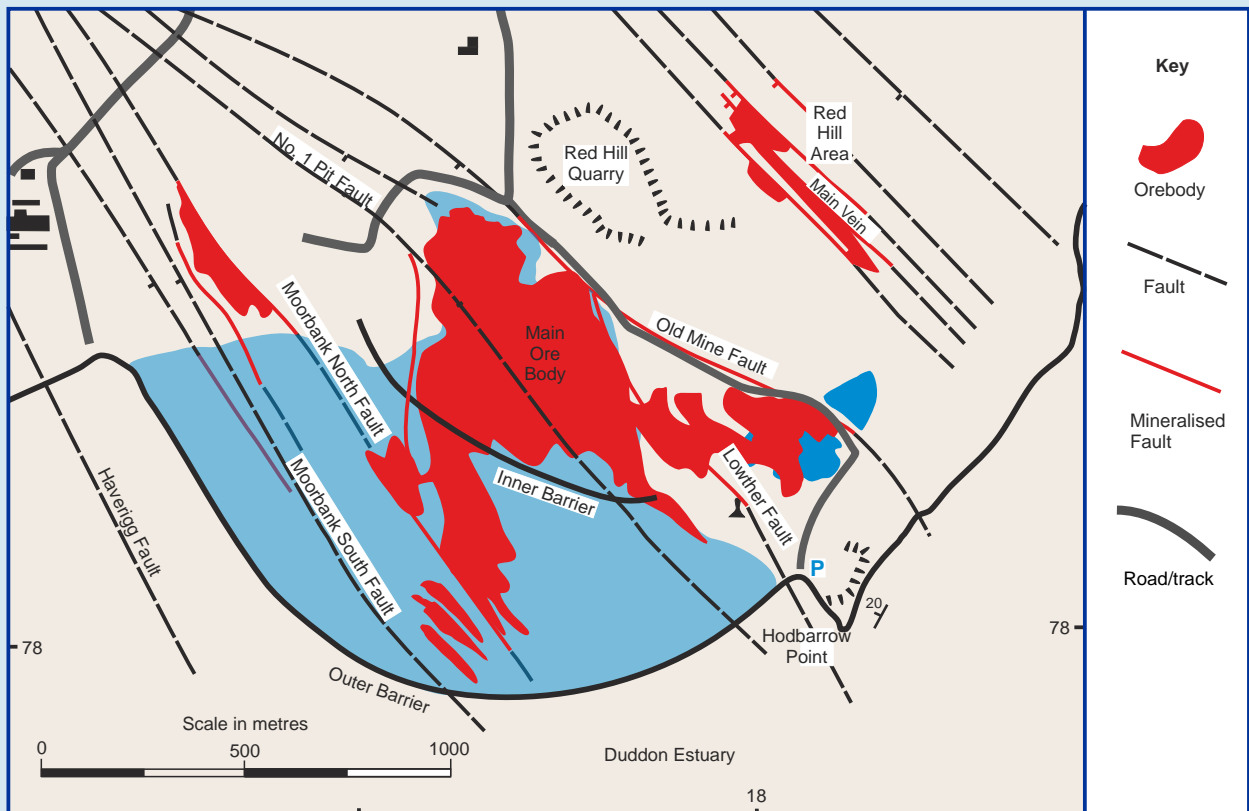
In 1890 to prevent the growing risk of sea water flooding into mine shafts, the Inner Barrier was constructed, but by 1894 it began to collapse. In 1909 the limestone roof of the workings collapsed and the centre of the Inner Barrier slumped by 26 feet. A second sea defence, the Outer Barrier, was built in the early 1900s to allow the mine to move seawards and protect the workings from the sea. The final cost of the Outer Barrier was £588,430 5s 2d and was borne by the Hodbarrow Mining Company.



Millom Iron Works



The Hodbarrow's inner barrier in 1910



Map of Hodbarrow Mining area showing the iron ore deposits