

Tear Drop Boulder

Eskdale Granite

Overview Map

Grid Ref -139 015

Introduction & Aspect

Perched aloft a gentle fell side in a quiet corner of Eskdale, commanding an unparalleled panoramic view of Mitterdale, western Eskdale and on towards Barrow and the Irish sea sits a granite boulder of pure quality.

It was not too long ago that this great block was completely enveloped by the dense pine woodland of the Mitterdale Forest, which even now hovers a mere 20m to the rear of the block. Fortuitously though, a swathe of the plantation was cut down, probably sometime in the last 10-15 years, to reveal this section of gorgeous hillside and the hidden treasures within.



Image: *Land of Milk and Honey* 7c/V9.

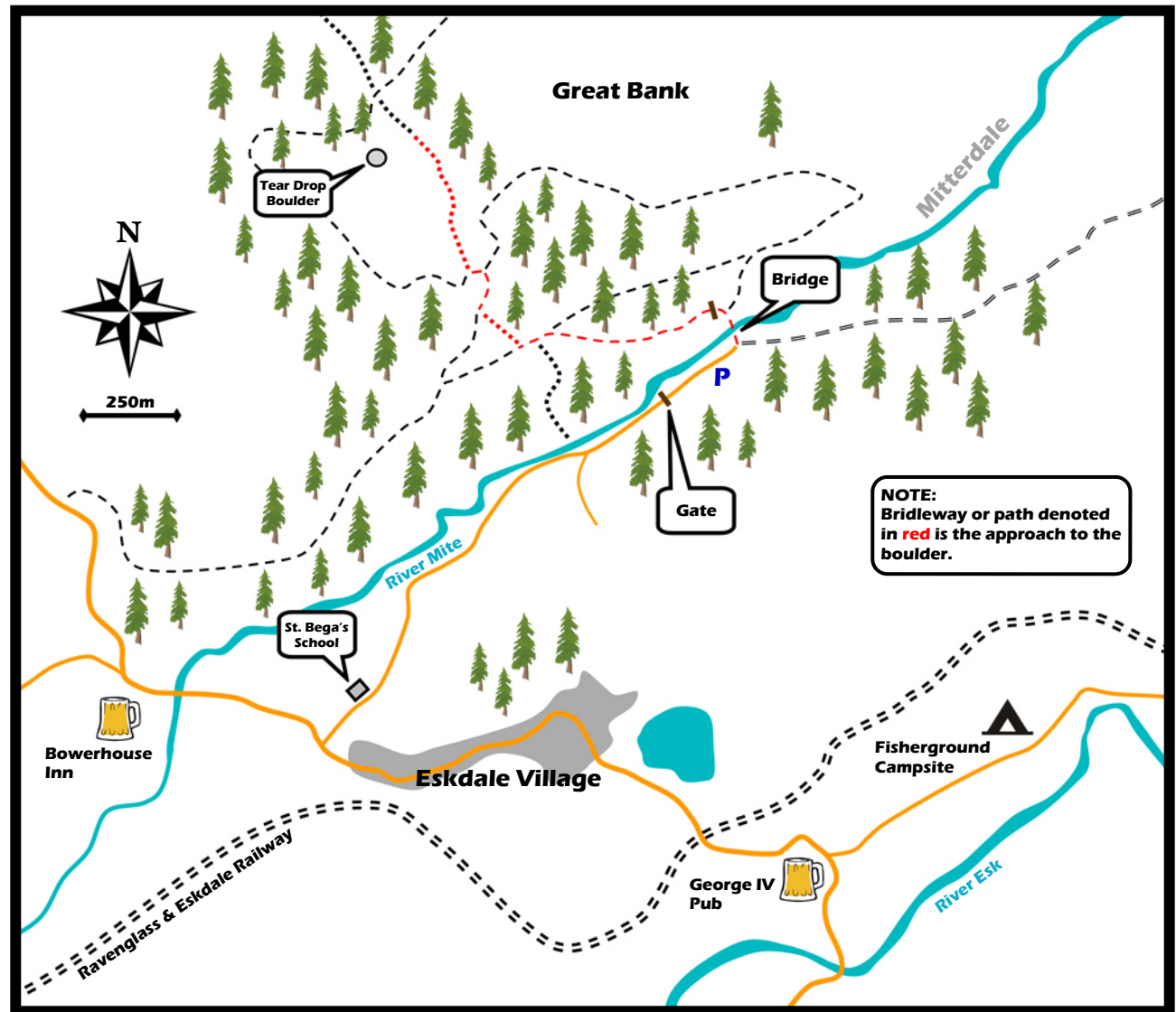
As well as a great view and near perfect position, the boulder is a straightforward and very pleasant 1.5km walk from the parking, so no Alpine starts required. Due to the fact it is a single block (although there may of course be others lurking in the woods or below the steep slopes of nearby Great Bank) there is obviously only a limited number of climbs, so a half day will suit most people. The boulder faces southwest and as such gets sun for much of the day. It's also well ventilated and for the most part dries quickly. That said, the north face of the block is currently a bit green, which does slow drying on some problems, most notably the arête section of *Land of Milk and Honey*. This should improve as the block receives more traffic.

As with all the granite in Eskdale, that of the Tear Drop is rough and pretty aggressive, so good skin is a must before any visit. On top of this, reasonable conditions will be required to get the most from the boulder, as most of the harder climbs have steep sections and involve sloping holds.

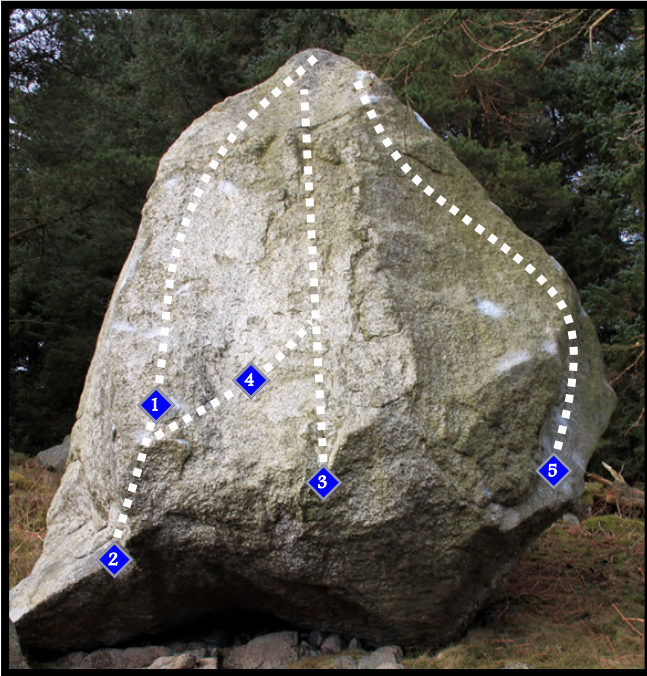
Approach

In spite of its backwater location the boulder is pretty easy to locate, particularly if you are already familiar with the location of the popular Fisherground bouldering circuit. From the south or west: head north at the King George IV pub, over the railway, past the Outward Bound Centre and through the village of Eskdale. As you leave the upper end of the village look out for a narrow RH turn, signed to St. Bega's CE Primary School. Follow this small lane past the primary school without deviation to the road's end at an open grassy area and bridge, approximately 1.5km (1 mile) from the school.

Park here, cross the bridge and take the LH bridleyway, via a gate, into the woods. Continue for 500m whereupon a good path veering up the hillside away from the main bridleyway is reached. Follow this for 150m to where it links into another bridleyway and turn right. After a short distance you come to a major fork, take the left turn but almost immediately look out for a public footpath heading direct up the hillside through a large open area. The boulder can be seen at the top of the slope in front of the treeline. Follow the path up the hill and when level with the block make a beeline for it.

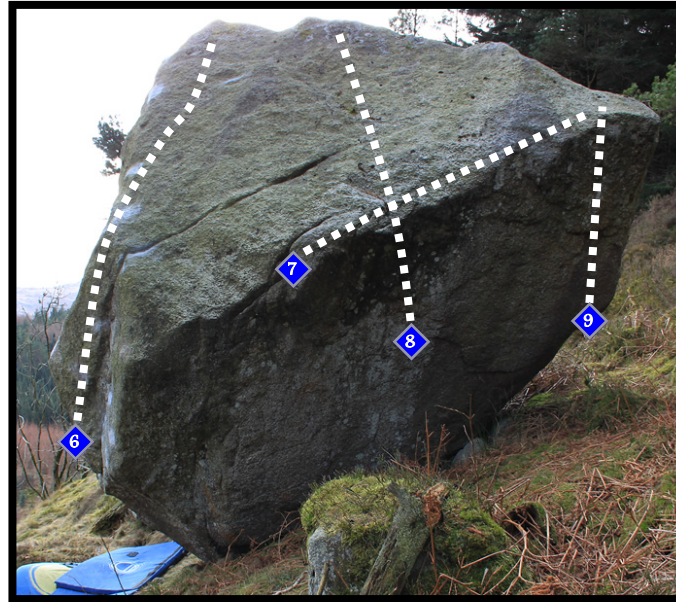


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South Face

- 1) **◆ Diamond Reign** (7b/V8) Climb the fantastic arête on its right side via a superbly technical sequence to a high, but relatively straightforward, finish at the apex of the block. One of the best in the Lakes and solid at the grade. ***
- 2) **◆ Diamond Reign SDS** (7b+/V8) SDS A couple of big moves from a tilted edge down to the left add to the quality of this already excellent problem. ***
- 3) **◆ Dry Your Eyes** (6c+/V5) From a high but good edge climb the wall direct to the summit of the block via a gaston. **
- 4) **◆ Dry Your Eyes SDS** (7a+/V7) SDS Start sitting at the base of the left arête and make a couple of moves to the lip before traversing right to the good edge and finish as per the stand. **
- 5) **◆ Land of Milk & Honey** (7c/V9) This wonderful climb starts in the hanging dihedral and makes a series of tenuous and off balance slaps on rough slopes to gain the arête. Now continue up the left side of the arête to a highball finish on the front face. ***



North Face

- 6) **◆ Land of Milk & Honey Monsters** (7b+/V8) Start as per LoMaH but on reaching the arête dispatch a series of delicate moves to gain the thin upper slab and follow the right side of the arête to the top of the block. ***
- 7) **◆ Phil's Traverse** (6c/V4) Start at a good hold, just left of centre on the north face, and traverse the lip all the way to the right side of the block before topping out via a tricky mantle. Very good but can get dirty. *
- 8) **◆ Tear Drop Mantle** (6a/V2) Another corker which climbs the centre of the north face starting at an obvious good hold. **
- 9) **◆ Max Payne** (7b+/V8) SDS Climb the north side of the end prow via a dyno to the lip, starting from a hold on the arête/prow and sharp undercut down to the left. Painful!



West Face

- 10) **◆ Project SDS** Climb the short end prow face-on via some small rough holds.
- 11) **◆ The Shield** (3/V0) SDS Use the hanging shield to surmount the slab and on up to the top.
- 12) **◆ Pit & Slab** (4/V0) SDS Start low on a horizontal brushed edge and make a move to a good hold, turn the lip and finish up the scooping slab.
- 13) **◆ Tear for Fears** (6b+/V4) SDS Start at a good fin-like hold pull on and move to the right side of the slab. Now follow a vague diagonal rib and marginal footholds up to meet the arête. Very good but a few pads are preferable. **
- 14) **◆ Western Slab** (3/V0) Climb the centre of the slab direct to the top of the block. *
- 15) **◆ Tear Drop Arête** (6c/V4) Starting off the block, gain the left side of the arête and follow it to the top of the block via a highball finish above a less than favourable landing. *