



DARTMOOR TRAINING AREA

Environmental Appraisal

Introduction

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 In addition to using its freehold land, The Ministry of Defence (MoD) carries out training on the Dartmoor Training Area (DTA) using land held under license primarily from the Duchy of Cornwall. The license expires in 2012 and this Appraisal forms an essential pre-cursor to any decision on re-negotiation.
- 1.1.2 As part of the process and prior to re-negotiation of the license, confirmation is required by the Secretaries of State for Defence and Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) that:
- there is a clear military need for both live firing and dry tactical training; and
 - the management of DTA for military activities will continue to be sensitive to environmental, farming and public access issues and is thus sustainable in the long term.
- 1.1.3 This Environmental Appraisal (EA) follows on from the EA Scoping Report¹ (posted on DTA website at <http://www.dartmoor-ranges.co.uk>) which outlined the issues and proposed scope for the EA. The approach to the full EA process is outlined in **Section 1.2** and described in detail in **Chapter 4** of this report.
- 1.1.4 DTA consists of approximately 13,000 hectares (ha) of mostly open moorland and a further 35,000 ha of walkover rights. Of the 13,000 ha some 1,356 ha is MoD freehold, the remainder being held on licenses from other landowners.
- 1.1.5 To the north, the Okehampton, Willsworthy and Merrivale areas provide both live and dry training. To the south, the Cramber and Ringmoor areas provide dry training only. Beyond these areas, extensive tracts of unenclosed land are used for access by foot only. Two camps, the larger at Okehampton, the second at Willsworthy, support the training.
- 1.1.6 DTA falls within the Dartmoor National Park (DNP) boundary, occupying about 14% of the total national park area and about 25% of Dartmoor's open moorland. Much of DTA also carries environmental designations at both European and national level. **Figure 1.1** (following this chapter) shows the location of DTA and **Figure 1.2** indicates the DNP boundary, designated training areas (i.e. areas within the blue lines) and camps.
- 1.1.7 Military training has taken place on Dartmoor since the early 1800s. Artillery firing started in 1875 and Okehampton Camp was built in 1892. The area was used extensively for tactical exercises with live ammunition during the Second World War. An old, dilapidated hutted camp at Willsworthy was replaced by the existing building in 1995.
- 1.1.8 The Defence Lands Committee (Nugent Committee) undertook a complete review of all MoD land holdings in 1973; this was followed in 1975 by a non-statutory public inquiry, conducted by Lady Sharp GBE, into the continued use of Dartmoor for military training.

¹ Entec UK Ltd, September 2006, Dartmoor Training Area: Scoping Report for an Environmental Appraisal examining the effects of continuing military training on Dartmoor.

Recommendations made in the Sharp Report² resulted in an area to the south of DTA known as “Southern Ringmoor” being replaced by dry training facilities around Cramber Tor. The amount of time available for live firing was reduced when the Duchy License was renegotiated in 1991 and in 1998, live firing with artillery high explosive shells ceased. However, a report,³ commissioned by the MoD in 2005, concluded that, “*there is a continuing need to retain DTA in order to meet a significant proportion of the increased light force training demand*”.

- 1.1.9 DTA is prioritised for the training of light forces and the conduct of dismounted exercises. The main users are units based in the South West of England, principally the Royal Marines (RM).
- 1.1.10 DTA also hosts the Ten Tors and Jubilee Challenge event, which takes place in May of each year. The Ten Tors and Jubilee Challenge are not linked to military training on DTA, although MoD facilitates the event. Issues examined in relation to this event are discussed in **Appendix 1.1** and will form part of a separate report to the Dartmoor Steering Group (DSG)⁴ by Commander 43 (Wessex) Brigade, the event’s military organiser. These activities take place alongside agriculture (grazing of sheep, cattle and ponies) and recreation. Through the Dartmoor Commons Act 1985 and DNP Authority (DNPA) negotiation with land owners, extensive access by foot or horse is available to the public. Additional land around the northern areas of DTA and within Cramber Training Area has been designated for open access under the *Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CROW)*. Further explanation of both military and non military activity is provided in **Chapter 2**.

1.2 Approach

- 1.2.1 The approach adopted for this EA is based on that used for the assessment of effects associated with developments for which Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is required for projects falling under the requirements of the *Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (England and Wales) Regulations 1999* (hereinafter referred to as the *EIA Regulations*).
- 1.2.2 The *EIA Regulations* are normally applied to certain types of development or activities that require planning, or other consents, because they could have environmental effects that are likely to be significant. In this case, there is no development or change that would trigger the *EIA Regulations*. Furthermore, MoD sought legal advice regarding the appraisal work. It is considered that the re-negotiation of the license does not amount to a renewal of the use of the land in accordance with Circular 12/96 and therefore an EIA is not required. Further information on the legal advice is outlined in **Chapter 4**. The assessment process that is used for an EIA development or activity however, is seen as a suitable model to apply to the EA of the potential effects of the continuation of military training at the steady state level of activity beyond 2012.

² Sharp (1977), The Continued Use of Dartmoor by the Ministry of Defence for Military Training Purposes. Cmnd 6837.

³ The Continuing Need for Military Training on Dartmoor, RPS June 2005.

⁴ The role of the DSG was set by Parliament in 1978. It requires the DSG to keep under review the progress made on the recommendations contained in the Sharp Report (Comd 6837) and the best possible reconciliation of the requirements of military training, conservation and public access. The DSG also considers matters referred to it by the Working Party and any reports prepared by the Working Party. The DSG reports annually to the Secretaries of State for Defence and the Environment. Membership of DSG is included on the DTA website (www.dartmoor-ranges.co.uk).

- 1.2.3 Whilst in this case there is no development or change requiring an EIA under the *EIA Regulations*, each EA topic has been considered in the context of fluctuations in the nature and intensity of activities, occurring over time. The underlying assumption for the EA is that post 2012, activity will continue to occur up to the thresholds against which the current license agreement was made.
- 1.2.4 While wishing to maintain the link to the EIA process it is recognised that in the absence of a 'development', the statutory framework of the *EIA Regulations* does not apply. In view of this, the term EA is used to replace EIA and Environmental Statement (ES) which is the product of the EIA process. Further information on the approach to the EA is outlined in **Chapter 4**.

1.3 Project Team and Consultation

Project Team

- 1.3.1 The EA project team has drawn on resources and expertise from the following organisations.
- Defence Training Estates (DTE) (Military Training Need and Definition).
 - HQ DTA (Training Facilities and Activities, Dartmoor Land Use).
 - Ten Tors Organisation (Ten Tors and Jubilee Challenge Facilities and Activities).
 - Defence Estates Environmental Support Team (Cultural Heritage, Nature Conservation, Public Access and Recreation).
 - Entec UK Ltd (Air Quality, Landscape and Visual Effects, Noise, Socio-economics; Soils, Geology and Groundwater; Surface Water, Traffic and Transport, EA Report Production).
 - RPS (various reports produced on behalf of DTE).

Consultation

- 1.3.2 The consultation process, which commenced prior to issue of the Scoping Report, will continue beyond the publication of the final EA report, with the opportunity for continuing dialogue via the DTA website and through the forum provided by the DSG. DTE has established a process through which stakeholder comments on the EA have been collated, reviewed and taken into account as required. The consultation process, which commenced prior to issue of the Scoping Report, will continue beyond EA report and addendum stages, with the opportunity for continuing dialogue via the DTA website and through the forum provided by the Dartmoor Steering Group (DSG). The DSG will debate the EA as part of its wider remit, which is to seek to reconcile the requirements of conservation and public access with the need for, and sustainability of military training on Dartmoor. The DSG reports annually to the Secretaries of State for Defence and for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. Further information on consultation is outlined in **Chapter 4**.
- 1.3.3 The project team wishes to express its gratitude to organisations and individuals who have provided responses during the Appraisal. A full list of consultees is included at **Appendix 1.2**.

1.4 Definitions of Live Fire Training and Dry Training

1.4.1 Discussions subsequent to the publication of the Scoping Report have demonstrated a general lack of understanding of live fire and dry training. Definitions of these 2 activities are outlined below.

Live Fire Training

1.4.1.1 Live Fire training involves the use of live ammunition against fixed and moving targets. It can be divided into 3 progressive stages.

- **Stages 1-3:** Firing on ranges with individual fixed firing points and fixed targets. Examples of these types of ranges are a gallery range or an Electric Target Range (ETR). These facilities are used for initial training and confirmation of skills before progressing to more advanced and demanding levels of marksmanship training.
- **Stage 4:** Firing on ranges with a variable number of fixed firing points employing a variety of realistic firing positions and fixed targets. An example of this is an Individual Battle Shooting Range (IBSR) which seeks to replicate the types of firing positions found on the battlefield. These facilities are used for intermediate training, for revision and for confirmation of skills before progressing to more demanding field firing.
- **Stage 5:** This stage is sometimes referred to as Live Fire Tactical Training (LFTT). Field firing ranges which allow free manoeuvre within a movement box in response to a given tactical situation using live ammunition. Neither firing points nor targets are fixed. This activity, combined with the application of marksmanship skills, marks the culmination of field marksmanship training. Limitations are imposed by the application of arcs of fire, targets can be placed anywhere within these left and right arcs.

1.4.1.2 In addition, there are ranges for specialist weapons such as hand held anti-tank weapons which have fixed firing points and targets many of which are moving targets. Specialist targetry and weapons templates dictate that these ranges cannot be used for other forms of shooting. These weapons can also be used on Field Firing areas as long as the safety template fits the area being used and suitable targetry is available.

Dry Training

1.4.1.3 Dry training, which is sometimes referred to as Blank Fire Tactical Training, refers to activities undertaken without the use of live ammunition. In many cases no ammunition is used at all, as is the case with adventure training, orienteering, first aid and a number of other activities but participants do require access to a training area. Where blank ammunition and pyrotechnics (light, noise and smoke) are used the activity is similar to that undertaken in LFTT but can be two sided as no live ammunition is used.

1.5 Report Structure

1.5.1 The EA report consists of:

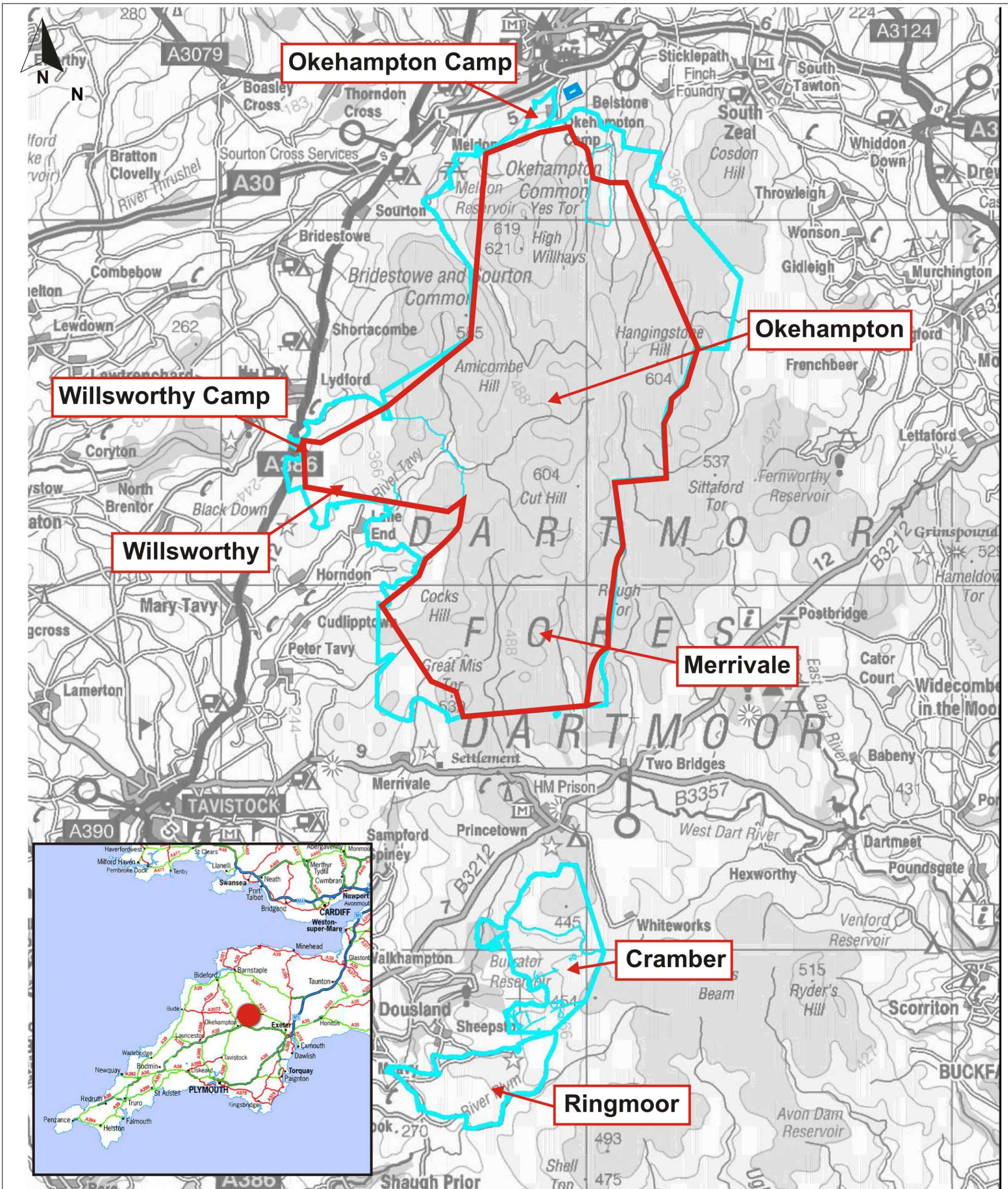
- A non technical summary describing the main aspects of the Appraisal and its findings;
- A main EA volume (this report); and
- Separate appendices providing supporting information (Volume 2).

1.5.2 The remainder of this Volume is as follows.



- **Chapter 2** describes the existing DTA environment including an explanation of land ownership, licensing and lease arrangements, and provides a description of military activities. The geographic extent of military activities and hence the EA study area is also described. The Chapter concludes with a summary of the existing environmental management undertaken by DTE at Dartmoor.
- **Chapter 3** explains the need for training on Dartmoor and the alternatives to the use of DTA, providing a summary of the detailed information provided by DTE
- **Chapter 4** details the approach to preparing the EA.
- **Chapters 5 to 15** cover each of the environmental topics identified for inclusion in the EA following the scoping stage and associated consultation.

1.5.3 A **Glossary** of abbreviations and definitions is included **after Chapter 15** in this Report. This includes explanations of the military terminology used in the main text and is intended to supplement the footnotes used throughout the EA Report.

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Key

-  Dartmoor Training Area boundary
-  Range danger area boundary

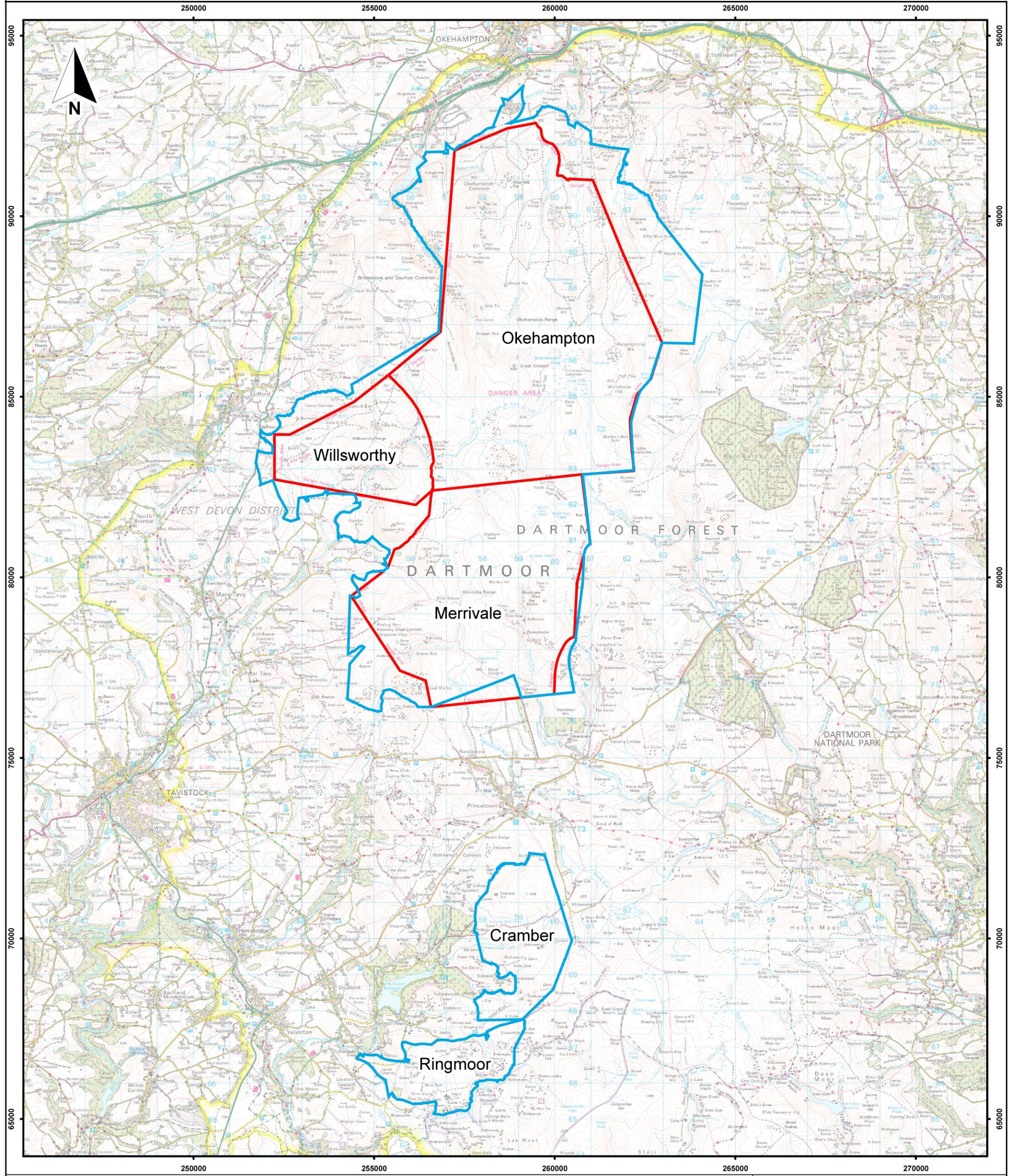
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Defence Training Area
Environmental Appraisal

Figure 1.1
Location Plan

0 km  5 km

September 2007
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- Key:**
- Dartmoor Training Area
 - Range Danger Areas

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Dartmoor Training Area
 Environmental Appraisal

Figure 1.2
 Dartmoor Training Area

0 5 Kilometers
 Scale: 1:100,000 @ A3

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Entec