



Historic England

Farmstead and Landscape Statement

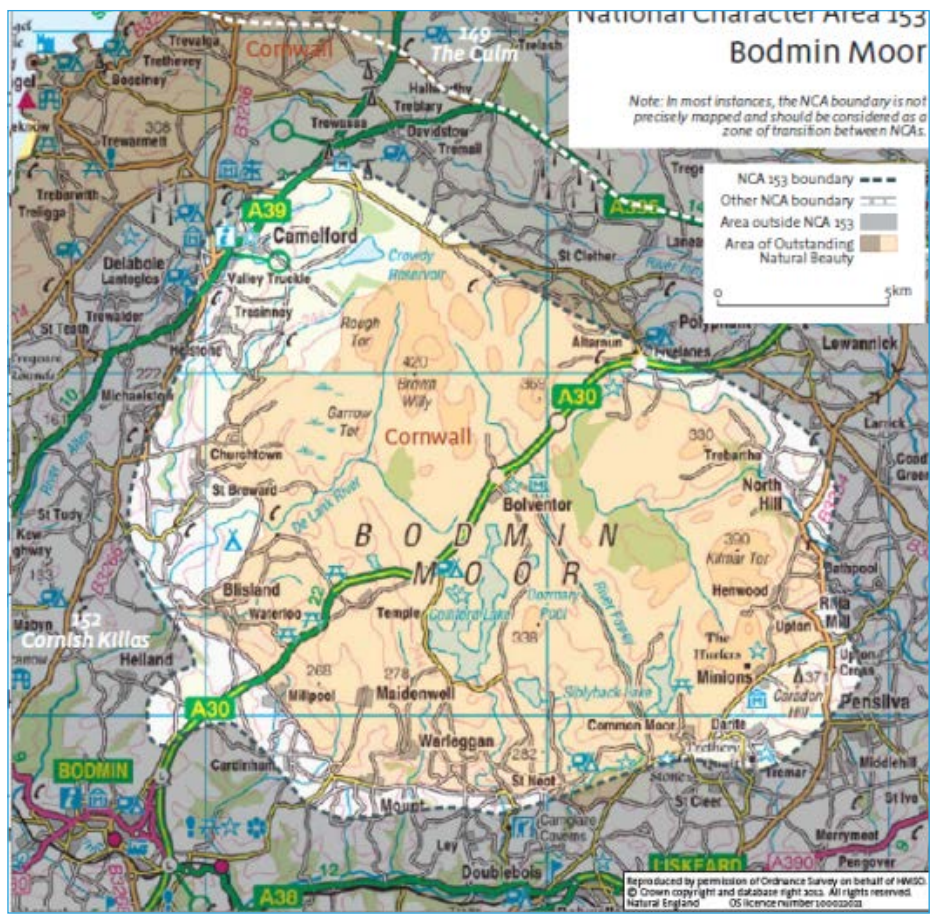
Bodmin Moor

NATIONAL CHARACTER AREA 153



Introduction

The Farmstead and Landscape Statements will help you to identify the historic character of traditional farmsteads and their buildings in all parts of England, and how they relate to their surrounding landscapes. They are now available for all of England’s National Character Areas (NCAs), and should be read in conjunction with the NCA profiles which have been produced by Natural England using a wide range of environmental information (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-character-area-profiles-data-for-local-decision-making/national-character-area-profiles>). Each Farmstead and Landscape Statement is supported by Historic England’s advice on farm buildings (<https://historicengland.org.uk/farmbuildings>), which provides links to the *National Farmsteads Character Statement*, national guidance on **Farm Building Types** and a fully-sourced summary in the *Historic Farmsteads: Preliminary Character Statements*. It also forms part of additional research on historic landscapes, including the mapping of farmsteads in some parts of England (see <https://historicengland.org.uk/characterisation>).



The Bodmin Moor Area, with the numbers of neighbouring National Character Areas around it.

Front cover: The well-defined landscape enclosed from medieval strip fields at Bowithick from the south-east (see map on p.6), showing moorland in the foreground. Photo © Historic Environment, Cornwall Council, 2007; F77-089

Summary

See the National Farmsteads Character Statement for a short introduction to the headings below, including maps and tables.

Bodmin Moor lies in the eastern half of the Cornwall Peninsula, flanked by the A39 and Camelford to the north-west and Liskeard to the south-east. The exposed upland granite moorland landscape provides a strong contrast to the surrounding countryside, with expansive views. Less than 0.5% of the Character Area is urban, approximately 7% is wooded, with 23% of the area as common land; this area has lost over half of its unenclosed land since 1945. Around 71% of the Character Area falls within the Cornwall Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and nearly 40% is designated Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), whilst 4% is within the Caradon Mining District part of the Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape World Heritage Site.

Historic character

- This area is dominated by moorland beef and sheep farms, mainly located on sheltered valley sides just off the open moorland. There is tilled land in moor-edge valley and barton landscapes – even there, it is much given to sown grass, turnips and other fodder crops.
- There are mainly isolated farms, but a number of small hamlets and church towns are found off the main areas of moorland; there was intensive colonisation of the moors from the 11th to 14th centuries and then the early to mid-19th century – linked to part-time employment and the rapid growth of mining, china-clay working and quarrying.
- The predominant pattern is of piecemeal enclosure of infields close to farmstead clusters and settlements and outfield areas located in large fields.



Bodmin Moor landscape. Photo © Ann Reynolds

- Farms benefitted from access to extensive areas of moorland, where they grazed their livestock and sometimes built summer huts to house those looking after them. There is large-scale and regular enclosure of moorland as well as smallholdings of the 19th century on moorland, especially on the central downs.
- Drove ways from the yards lead out to the open moor, passing through medieval then post-medieval intake fields.
- This is a key area for medieval longhouses; linear farmsteads, including many small-scale miner-farmer examples; courtyard plans are dispersed and loose, commonly with a combination barn to just one side of the yard; there are many examples of larger, improved courtyard steadings.
- Buildings are predominantly granite, thick set and low lying. Ranges of animal houses set beside enclosed yards reflect a reliance on stock.
- Most 19th-century farmsteads were modest, often with the principal farm building, the chall barn, attached to one end of the dwelling and small stables, cow houses or shippons, pigsties and cart sheds arranged around cobbled yards with mowhays and gardens beyond. There are few orchards in this area.
- There are some field barns and 19th-century outfarms, some of which may relate to former transhumance huts on the higher moor.

Significance

- Most farm buildings are late 18th- to 19th-century, although the farmsteads themselves may well be medieval in origin. Farmhouses tend to be earlier, with some dating to the 17th century.
- Traditional farm buildings are rarely used for their original functions now, with large metal and timber sheds for overwintering becoming a common site on the working farms.
- A relatively lower rate of conversion does mean that historic buildings within the core of the majority of the farms remain intact, with good survival of local vernacular and retention of original features.

Present and future issues

- In this National Character Area, the Photo Image Project (2006) recorded 25% of listed working farm buildings converted to non-agricultural use (the national average being 32%). The area is also noted as having a high number of buildings in declining or derelict condition.

Historic development

- Farmers made use of the upland moors of Bodmin Moor for seasonal grazing and fuel: these areas result from clearance in the Neolithic and Bronze Ages and retain the highest concentrations of prehistoric settlement and ritual sites and features, as well as medieval and later features (such as pasture boundaries, lynchets, lazybeds and ridge and furrow) associated with the expansion and contraction of land use.
- The acidic soils are predominantly gravelly and peaty but with patches of brown earths capable of cultivation in the lower-lying areas.
- Cattle and sheep rearing formed the major element in the agricultural economy of the area, farms benefitting from access to summer grazing on the moors where the huts of those looking after them (e.g. at Roughtor Moors) can be found. The dominance of livestock production by the mid-19th century involved

a majority of the land being laid to grass, and turnips and other fodder crops being grown on arable to feed cattle and in turn enrich the land with their manure. Some of the more fertile brown earths in low-lying areas (for example the Lynher Valley) were more intensively cultivated. Cattle numbers increased still further from the 1870s.

- A period of renewed colonisation with farmsteads and hamlets between the late 11th or 12th, and early 14th centuries and contraction from the latter period resulted in widespread remains of medieval field systems, hamlets and farmsteads of longhouses and barns. Colonisation was subject to much local variation, a major period with small farms and smallholdings in the early to mid-19th century being linked to part-time employment and the rapid

growth of mining, china-clay working and quarrying. The mining industry was part of a mixed economy, with many miners having smallholdings. Evidence for mining (in the form of engine houses, shafts and dumps, etc.) is most strongly concentrated on the eastern and southern fringes of the moor.

- In the 19th century, enclosure and settlement outstripped even that of the later medieval recolonisation – about half of all the settlements on the moor c 1907 had been formed after c 1800, many or most taken out of heathland which had apparently never previously been improved.
- This area has experienced massive change post-1945 – large conifer plantations and the loss of nearly half of its unenclosed moorland by the 1990s.

Landscape and settlement

- The dominant character is of the broad, open moorlands with rocky granite tors.
- On the higher ground, the banks are generally treeless, but trees become more common on the lower and more sheltered ground as both forestry plantations and as clumps and shelterbelts around farmsteads. There are several large conifer plantations on exposed ground, especially in the eastern half.
- The predominant settlement pattern comprises scattered farmsteads and hamlets, including a high proportion of medieval or earlier origin in the more sheltered parts. Some settlements comprised isolated groupings known as townplaces – hamlet groups of two or three farmsteads surrounded by early field systems.
- High-status barton farms were often sited next to the church, or in isolation, but normally close to the edge of the Moor. Evidence of deserted settlements and of former dwellings in present farms indicates that farming hamlets formed the basic unit of settlement, many of which continued to contract from the 14th to the 19th centuries to form the farmsteads of today.
- This ancient pattern of settlement is intermixed with small, nucleated settlements, a minority evident by the late 11th century but most developing in the 12th and 13th centuries and in some cases (for example Minions and other mining hamlets in the south-east) not until the industrialisation of the late 18th to 19th centuries.
- The predominant pattern is of piecemeal enclosure of infields close to farmstead clusters and settlements and outfield areas located in large fields or enclosures subject to intermittent cultivation and sometimes retaining strip fields. Enclosure was largely complete by the 17th century, many fields retaining curved shapes of medieval strips to at least one of the longer sides (for example Fernacre, Brown Willy).
- Small-scale but very regular enclosure, often with drystone walling, is associated with mining and quarrying settlements in the south-east of the area, for example at Minions, Henwood and Upton Cross.
- There is some large-scale and regular enclosure from the 19th century on moorland, especially on the central downs, often

accompanied by an associated farmstead, usually loose courtyard or cottage and small barn in plan, centrally placed within the field system.

- The extensive early to mid-19th-century enclosures, often smallholdings for part-time industrial workers, were generally smaller than earlier farms; small-scale farmsteads and smallholdings are the result.

Farmstead and building types

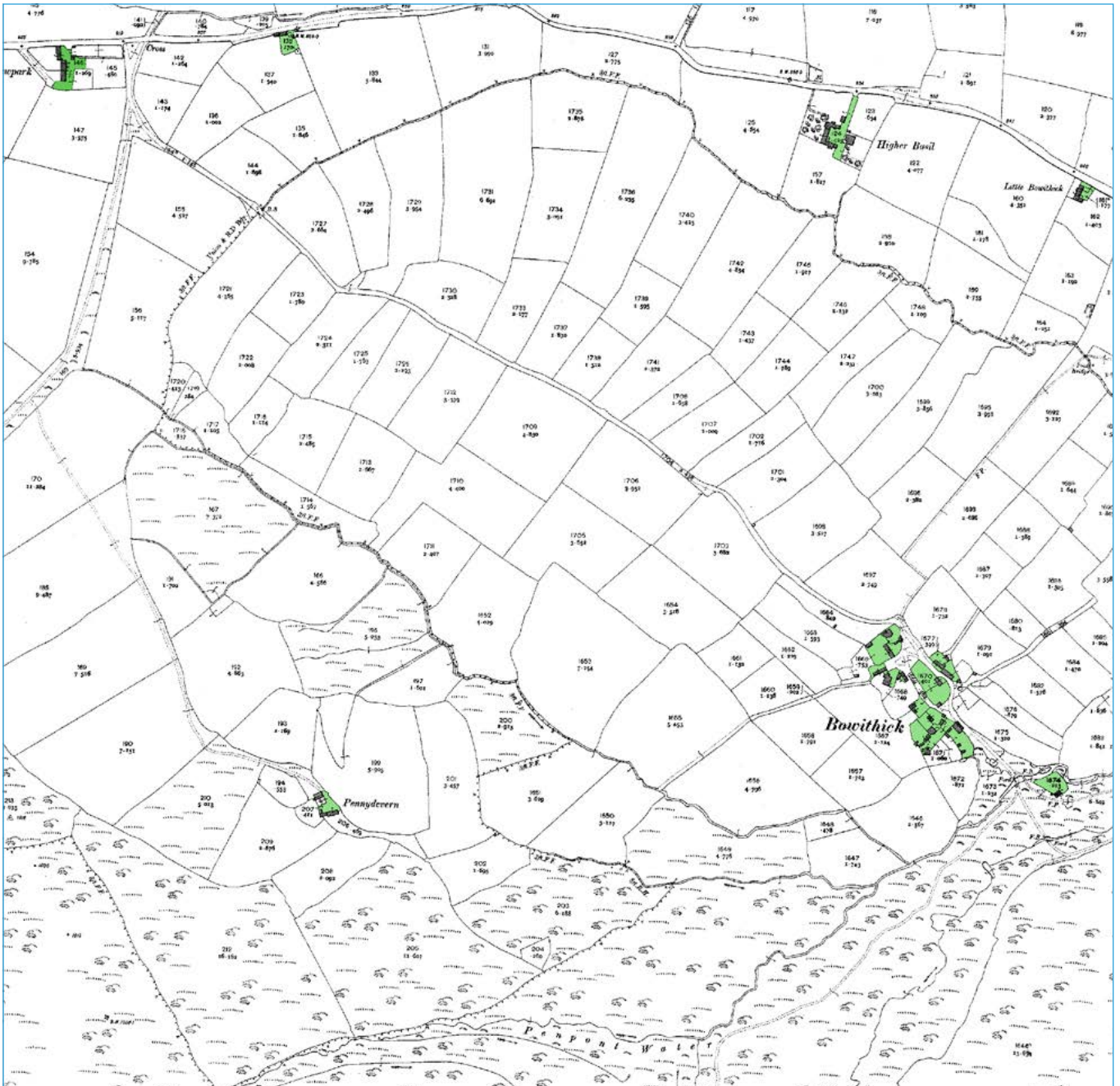
- Excavation and field survey (for example Garrow Tor and Brown Willy) has revealed the layout of abandoned medieval hamlets which had a characteristic mix of steadings arranged around cattle yards and longhouses of different sizes with one or two detached outbuildings, including a small barn.
- There was widespread rebuilding of farmsteads in parallel with amalgamation of holdings and yard feeding of cattle in the 19th century, with earlier buildings largely confined to linear and high status farmsteads.

The predominant pattern is of:

- Linear farmsteads which display great variation in scale, including many small-scale, miner-farmer examples and some evidence for pre-18th-century longhouses.
- Loose courtyard layouts, commonly with a combination barn to just one side of the yard sometimes larger in scale.
- Regular courtyard layouts, to overall L-plans and including large-scale examples with buildings to three or four sides of the yard.
- All farmsteads contain a mowhay for ricking corn, hay, turf and furze; most have high-banked vegetable gardens, but very few have orchards.
- The 19th-century farmsteads were modest, often with the principal farm building, the chall barn attached to one end of the dwelling and small stables, cow houses or shippons, pigsties and cart sheds arranged around cobbled yards with mowhays (rickyards for hay, corn, turf, bracken and furze) and gardens beyond.

Key buildings are:

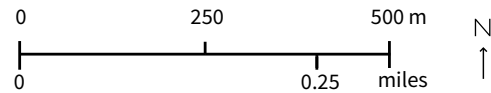
- Two-storey chall barns with barns and hay storage, accessed by external steps, above housing for cattle.
- Bank barns dating from the late 18th to mid-19th centuries, these being distinct from chall barns in that they are accessed from natural or artificial banks. They are part of a wider development in the south-west peninsula.
- Wheel houses or evidence of water power (leats, reservoirs, water wheels, etc.) for horse-powered threshing and fodder-processing machinery; many barns had light engines which have left little trace
- Some detached stables (generally small in scale) and granaries
- Low and small-scale buildings close to farmhouse, commonly pigsties and calf houses
- Some field barns and 19th-century outfarms
- Very simple transhumance huts on the higher moor, reflecting its use for extensive summer grazing
- Industrial smallholdings; despite the overwhelming scale and landscape impact of the mining and quarrying within the Moor, especially in the south around Caradon Hill, the main effect was on the creation of new settlements and smallholdings in and around the hamlets outside the Moor (in the Cornish Killas NCA) – Pensilva being the classic example. An exception may be the area around Bolventor, where at least some stimulus may have come from local clay-working.



Maps are based on 2nd edition 25" Ordnance Survey maps, which show farmsteads after the last major phase in the building of traditional farmsteads in England.
© Crown Copyright [and database rights] 2020. OS 100024900



Farmstead, showing the buildings in black and the boundaries of the main yards (highlighted in green), working areas and gardens.



The settlement and manor of Bowthick is first recorded in the Domesday survey of 1086. The map shows a discrete island of anciently enclosed land with well-defined boundaries (which the parish boundary follows on three sides); three farmsteads, all with dispersed or loose courtyard plans, are grouped around an extended central space along a droveway leading to the moorland to the south. The moorland retains evidence of extensive abandoned medieval settlement and field systems.

To the south-west is evidence of piecemeal encroachment (lower left) with a small, simple farmstead comprising a cottage and L-plan combination barn and outbuilding range.

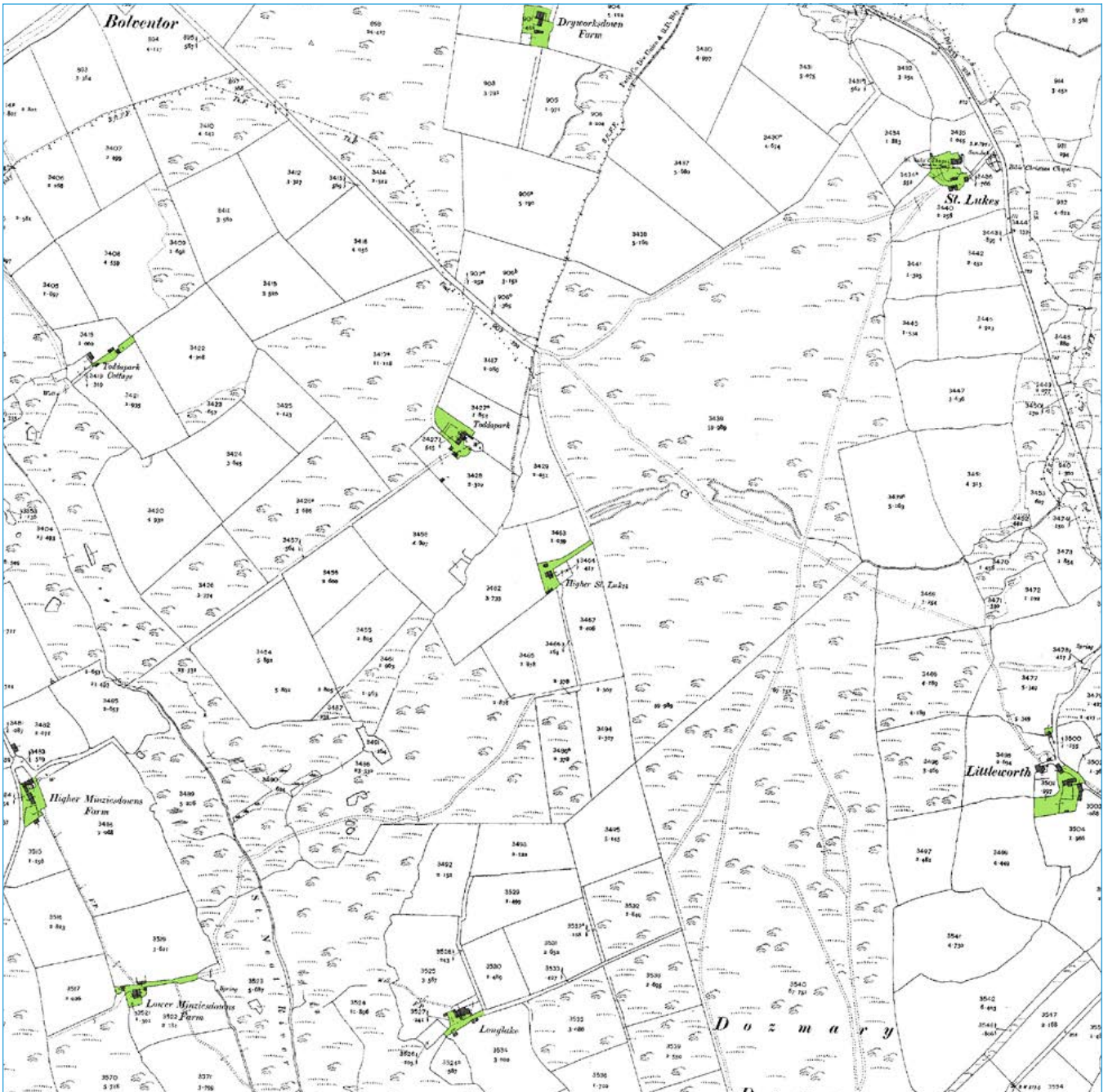
Both landscapes contrast greatly with the mid- to late 19th-century planned regularity of both the enclosures and the farmyards at New Park (top left) and the courtyard farmstead at Higher Basil (top centre).



Looking north-westwards to Colliford across Dozmary Pool. Only a few farms are visible within the intake fields, where one hundred years ago there would have been nine or ten small farms (contrast this photograph with the map on page 8). Photo © Historic Environment, Cornwall Council



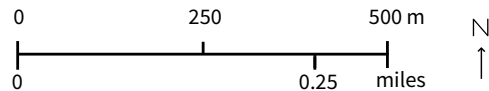
A characteristic dispersed multi-yard plan. Small, single-storey outbuildings around edges of paddocks or yards are another characteristic feature. Photo © Historic Environment, Cornwall Council, 2012; F101-043



Maps are based on 2nd edition 25" Ordnance Survey maps, which show farmsteads after the last major phase in the building of traditional farmsteads in England.
© Crown Copyright (and database rights) 2020. OS 100024900



Farmstead, showing the buildings in black and the boundaries of the main yards (highlighted in green), working areas and gardens.



Dozmary Part of the extensive area of 19th century enclosure immediately south of Bolventor, reflected in the names ('Bold Venture', Littleworth). Most new tenants were tin-streaming workers, as recorded in the 1851 Census. Most holdings were created from isolated plots of intake, initially with a single building. The area of intake gradually increased in the later 19th century to create the field systems present today. Many of these farms were abandoned following the creation of Colliford Reservoir, leading to the development of a handful of the sites into larger farm complexes (but still quite small compared to most of the medieval farms on the moor). Medieval farms and intake located along a valley between the higher open moorland and shared grazing of Manor Common and Metherin Downs. All have enclosed droveways leading from the yard straight on to the moor.



Former smallholdings line the village street in Pensilva, St Ives. These worked holdings of about 5 acres, in contrast to the large planned courtyard farmsteads in the surrounding landscape. Photo © Historic Environment, Cornwall Council, 2006; F72-102.



Garrow: remnant of a large hamlet – 17th-century farmhouse, 19th-century bank barn, small dispersed yard (other structures such as pigsties, bee boles etc. built into hedge banks). Remains of five to six medieval long houses. These early settlements combined domestic quarters with barns. It is the later use of such sites that often saw the conversion of longhouses wholly to barns or dwellings. Photo © Emma Trevarthen



In many of the hamlets there are signs of some element of planning, for instance signs of roads being diverted either around, or as in this case, into the site. Photo © Historic Environment, Cornwall Council, 2012; F101-058



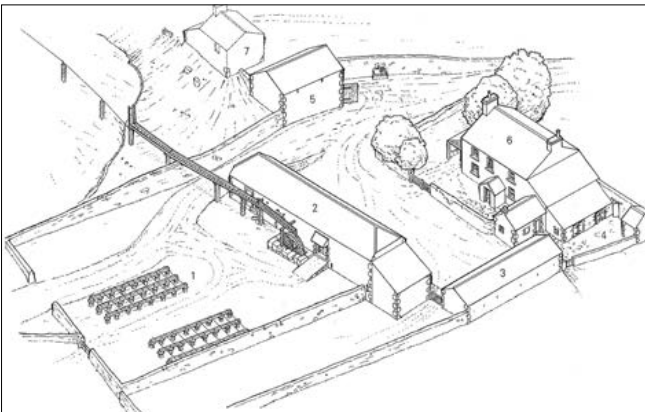
Longhouse in dispersed-plan farmstead at Stonaford which developed around a lane to the moor. Photo © Historic England 29013/008



Post-1841 farmstead at Tredwen with the farmhouse set to one side of the yard. Photo © Historic Environment, Cornwall Council, 2012; F101-036



Early 19th-century planned regular courtyard U-plan farmstead at Trebartha, set within reorganised fields. The high-status house faces south. Modern sheds are sited in the old mowhay, north of the large combination barn and the cattle yard. Photo © Historic England NMR 29015/014



Carkeet, St Cleer. A 19th-century, improved farmstead – note the leat running to the mill wheel on the side of the barn – in anciently enclosed land on the edge of Bodmin Moor; the mowhay is the open yard to the left with aligned rick bases. (From Barnwell, P.S. & Giles, C. (1997) *English Farmsteads 1750–1914*, RCHME: Swindon)



The same site from the air in 2015 – the mowhay evidenced today by its position and form rather than any features within it. Photo © Historic England 29014/031



Early 19th-century (shown on 1840 tithe map) improved regular courtyard at Ivey attached to 17th-century house – house, walled yard, cart house facing out into access roads, combination barn reached by ramp. Photo © Ann Reynolds



The farmyard at Ivey, with a combination barn and adjoining shippons; range to left, originally an open-fronted shelter shed for Ivey: Fatstock with granite piers, was converted into a cow house for dairy cattle around 1900. Photo © Ann Reynolds



Garrow: Mid-to late 17th-century two-room and cross passage plan at Garrow. Granite rubble with large moorstone quoins. Slate roof. Note the bread oven. Photo © Nick Cahill.



Garrow: The 18th-century outshot to the rear of Garrow may have originally been used as a calf house – internal evidence of partitions/large granite troughs still in situ. Photo © Emma Trevarthen.



Pontus Peace (formerly Ponton's Piece), Gonamena. Farmhouse and cottage with pigsty lean-to, remodelled in the mid-19th century from an earlier, possibly linear, farmstead (recorded in 1699). The Gonamena tramway adjoins the site, its occupants probably once mixed farming with industrial by-employment. Photo © Historic Environment, Cornwall Council.



Entry to mowhay with upper-floor access to mid-late 19th-century bank barn at Garrow, which faces west with two entrances on the front and a partition to left of centre, dividing the barn in two. Photo © Emma Trevarthen.



Bee boles constructed within hedge around farmyard, Garrow. Photo © Emma Trevarthen.



Bee boles constructed within hedge around farmyard, Ivey. Photo © Emma Trevarthen.



Near Trevadlock. Mid-19th-century combination barn. Photo © Eric Berry.



Near Trevadlock. Mid-19th-century cart shed. Photo © Eric Berry.



Granite piers and lintels. Photo © Ann Reynolds.



Pontus Peace (formerly Ponton's Piece), Gonamena. Slate hanging was often used as extra weathering on top of stone and cob walling. Photo © Historic Environment, Cornwall Council.



Granite bases for mangers/partitions set in a rough cobbled floor. Photo © Emma Trevarthen.



Rag slate roof; vertical granite posts, moorstone laid to horizontal courses. Photo © Eric Berry.



Pigsty built from sharp-angled quarried stone and timber shutters for feed. Photo © Eric Berry.



Five-bar, doubled diagonal-brace, Cornish-style wooden gate. Photo © Eric Berry.



Late 19th-century stables with hit-and-miss ventilators and stable doors. Photo © Eric Berry.

Materials and detail

- Traditional buildings are generally of granite, both moorstone and quarried, and slatestone (beyond the granite edge) with slate roofs (generally larger, rag slate) and some slate-hanging. There is some use of cob, including

some important pre-19th-century fabric. Granite is used as posts, lintels, etc.; hedges and walls are of granite – consumption walls and clearance cairns are in and around farmstead sites.



Historic England

This guidance has been prepared by
This guidance has been prepared by Jeremy
Lake and the Cornwall Historic Environment
Service (Nick Cahill, Emma Trevarthen and Ann
Reynolds) with Eric Berry.

Please refer to this document as:
Historic England 2020 Farmstead and Landscape
Statement: Bodmin Moor. Swindon: Historic
England.

For more guidance on farmsteads and
landscapes in Cornwall see the Cornwall
Historic Farmsteads Guidance at [https://
www.cornwall.gov.uk/environment-and-
planning/strategic-historic-environment-
service/guidance/technical-guidance/
cornwall-historic-farmsteads-guidance/](https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/environment-and-planning/strategic-historic-environment-service/guidance/technical-guidance/cornwall-historic-farmsteads-guidance/)

We are the public body that looks after
England's historic environment. We champion
historic places, helping people understand,
value and care for them.

Please contact
guidance@HistoricEngland.org.uk
with any questions about this document.

HistoricEngland.org.uk

If you would like this document in a different
format, please contact our customer services
department on:

Tel: 0370 333 0607
Email: customers@HistoricEngland.org.uk

All information and weblinks accurate at the
time of publication.

Please consider the environment before printing
this document

Product code: 52267 RRL code: 157/2020
Publication date: February 2020 © Historic England
Design: Historic England and Chantal Freeman, Diva
Arts