

PAL 12 Warleggan Down, Warleggan, Historic Environment Action Plan



Oak trees recolonising the downland in the area of lode-back working (Pete Herring, April 2008).

Location, geology and topography

Centred: SX 157699

Extent: 32 ha (79 acres)

Geology

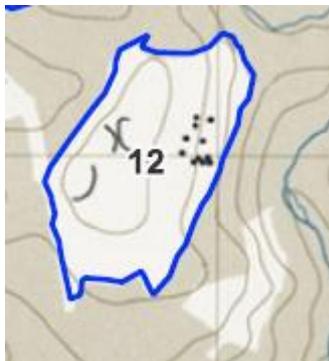
Granite, igneous bedrock formed between 330.9 and 272.3 million years ago during the Carboniferous and Permian periods.

Topography

A rounded downland to 250 metres (820 feet) high with steeper slopes to the E falling into the Dewey valley. Variably dense spreads of moorstones.

Current management and structures of ownership, commoners, etc:

The whole area is common land, the southern part of CL164, Hardhead Downs and Carburrow Tor.



- Prehistoric field and enclosure boundaries
- Stone banks and ramparts
- Hut Circle
- ◄ Long cairn (oriented)
- Cairn/barrow
- Stone Circle
- ⊙ Henge (with stone circle)
- Stone row
- _{SE} Stone Setting
- _{SI} Standing stone

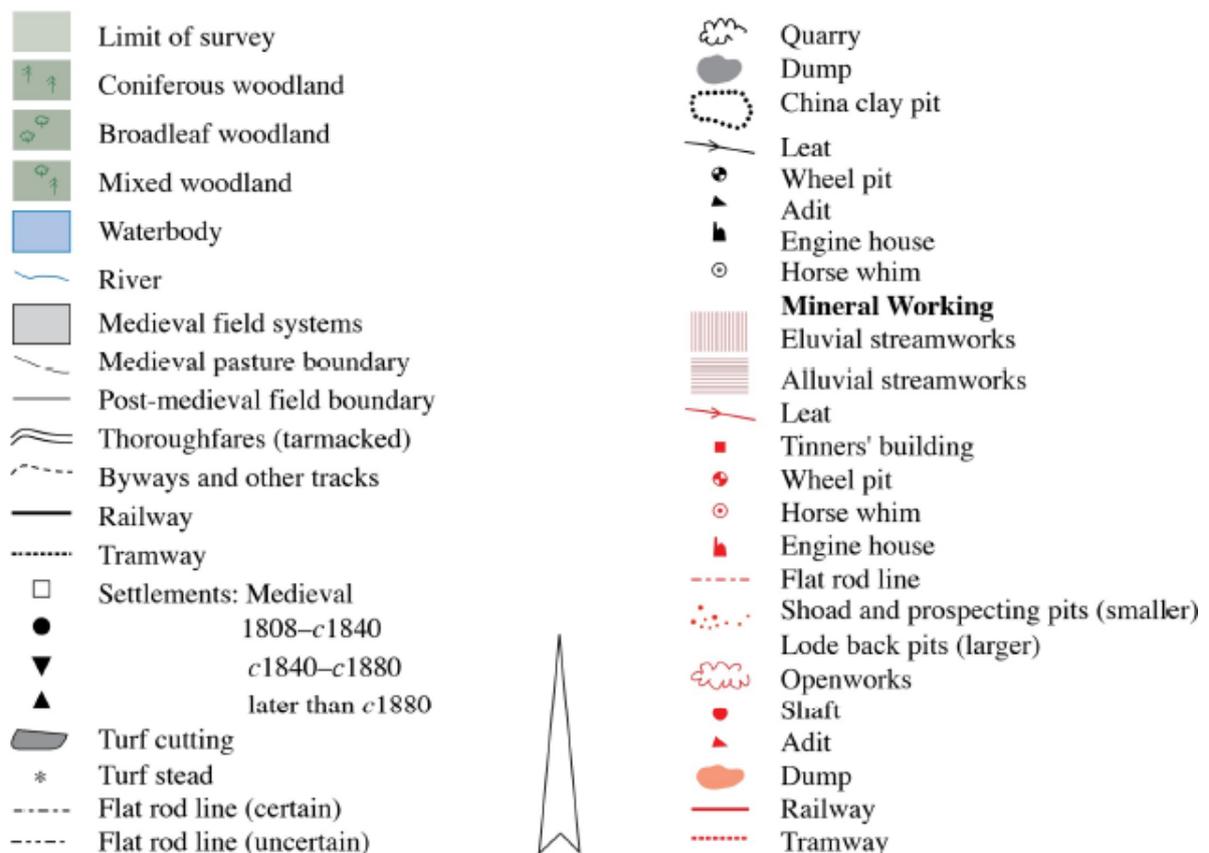
Extract from Prehistoric overview map (Johnson and Rose 1994, Map 1; reproduced with permission of Cornwall Council and Historic England).



- Cultivation ridges
- Medieval and post-medieval field boundaries, based on the O.S. 1808 two-inch MS map, and tithe maps.
- Medieval and post-medieval field boundaries found by air and ground survey.
- Embanked enclosure
- Surviving settlement, recorded before 1540.
- Surviving settlement, recorded between 1540 and 1808.
- Deserted settlement, recorded before 1540.
- ▲ Medieval longhouse
- △ Post-medieval dwelling (abandoned)
- Other medieval structure
- Other post-medieval structure
- LANK 1278 Cornish place name, and earliest recorded date.
- Hulker 1407 English place name, and earliest recorded date.
- ⋯ Parish Boundary c. 1840

Extract from Medieval and later landscape to c1808 overview map (Johnson and Rose 1994, Map 2; reproduced with permission of Cornwall Council and Historic England).





Extract from *Post-medieval and industrial overview map* (Herring et al 2008, Map 1; reproduced with permission of Cornwall Council and Historic England).

Land use history

Pre-1748

Warleggan Down is now a single block of rough ground bisected by an open-sided road running N-S and with lanes also running along its west and east sides. It has not always been so open as there are extensive archaeological remains of prehistoric and medieval fields.

The prehistoric fields, of curvilinear accretive form, probably Middle Bronze Age, are on the NW quarter, and the more extensive medieval strip fields containing the ridges of lazybeds are on the steeper and more sheltered eastern slopes. They probably belonged to Down House a settlement in place on the slope below them by 1393 (ICS Place-names Index).

The southern third of the Down has been disturbed by early tin mining, part of the Good Fortune operation recorded in 1613 and formerly known as David's Church and Brode Openwork (The Early Tin Industry, List of Foweymore Tinworks, [list-of-foweymore-tinworks](#)). This has the remains of openworks, lode-back pits and shode pits, as well as prospecting pits. It is likely that the reason the ground was not drawn into permanent field systems is that the remains caused such substantial disturbance that reclamation was beyond the means of pre-modern farmers.

Consequently, the land was brought into Warleggan manor's commons.

Thomas Martyn's 1748 map

This shows the road to Carburrow farm, on the west side of Carburrow Tor, as being open-sided where it crossed the down.

c1810 OS drawing

Only the western and eastern roads were shown, down being otherwise shown as open rough grassland but with the largest openwork shown towards its southern end.

c1840 Tithe Map

By 1840 the down was shown with the central N-S lane in place. The western half was itself divided by a line of stones and the downland to its west, TA 660, was recorded as 'Allotment on Common' and owned by William Bickford Coham, Esq, of Dunsland in west Devon, who also owned neighbouring Treveddoe, Carburrow and Whitewalls.

The eastern part, around three-quarters of the down, TA 662, was 'Warleggan Common' and was in multiple ownership (three members of the Symons family and Gordon William Francis Gregor, of Trewarthenick, near Tregony) but occupied as Common Lands. A sliver of land at the southern end of the down was defined on the map by a dotted line and was TA 659, called 'Parsons Corner', owned and occupied by The Rev Dalston Clements, rector of the parish church from 1836 to 1878

c1880 OS map

Land cover was rough grassland with clumps of furze, shown densest on the steeper eastern slopes. The boundstones shown on the Tithe Map were also on the OS map, and the main open work was recorded as an 'Old Quarry', as was one of the lode-back pits on the northernmost lode. A Gravel Pit was shown near the S edge of the down and a Clay Pit at the NE extremity.

c1906 OS map

No substantial change, except that both gravel and clay pits were no longer in use.

Modern

In January 1977 a meeting convened and chaired by the Commons Commissioner noted that the 1965 Commons Registration had produced 12 finalised entries of rights to graze Warleggan Down totalling '282 head of cattle, or 282 ponies, or 1410 sheep' ([Warleggan Down](#)).

Cattle, sheep and ponies still graze the down, in common, but numbers now grazing the down are nowhere near as high as this.

Historic Environment

Headlines

- Dominated by well-preserved **surface mining** on a lode in southern part of the area, with **shafts**, **openwork**, **lode-back pits**, **shode pits** and **prospecting pits**.
- **Prehistoric roundhouse settlement** with fragmentary **fields** on eastern slope.
- Fragmentary **prehistoric curvilinear field system** on higher NW slope.
- **Medieval strip fields** with extensive **lazybed ridging**, also on the eastern slope.
- Post-medieval boundstones

Summary of main heritage assets

Prehistoric ceremonial and ritual

No remains.

Prehistoric domestic and agricultural

A **prehistoric roundhouse settlement with 10 houses** that are levelled into the steep eastern slopes (MCO20467). Fragments of rectilinear fields.

Three large **probably Middle Bronze Age curvilinear fields** on NW slopes (MCO43987).

Medieval

The eastern half of the PAL has extensive remains of **medieval strip fields** and the earthworks of **lazybed ridging**. Strips with low slightly sinuous banks that depend from a top or perimeter hedge that runs c25m west of the modern road. An earlier road line or trackway ran N-S to the west of that perimeter. Strip fields and lazybeds show better on Lidar than on aerial photos and thus the aerial plotting in the HER; see extract from Archi Maps Lidar [Archi Maps Lidar](#) .

Industrial

Extensive remains of surface mining. The most substantial and most densely clustered remains are on a lode, or bunch of lodes that was more significantly worked 300m to the west as Treveddoe Mine, an enormous openwork (see Sharpe 2008, ***).

The Warleggan Down workings on that lode were known as Good Fortune. Good Fortune was recorded in 1613 and was formerly known as David's Church and Brode Openwork (The Early Tin Industry, List of Fowermore Tinworks, [list-of-foweymore-tinworks](#)). It include **prospecting pits** on the eastern slopes, **shode pits** on the summit of the ridge of Warleggan Downs, beyond the easy reach of water and thus no eluvial streamworks (MCO12110).

Lode-back pits cut through the shode pits. On the upper western slopes is an **openwork**, now circa 5.5m deep, and steep sided. Down slope on the east - west lode line are more **lode-back pits**. A fine run of essentially **contiguous prospecting pits** runs north - south from this area of lode back working.

There are **surface workings on three further lodes**, at c100m, 160m and 250m N of the southern lode (all with runs of lode back pits within clusters of shode pits). The northern lode includes a conjoined pair of lode-back pits (MCO12746).

A **gravel pit** (MCO43983), for rab used in surfacing roads, at the fork in the roads at the southern end of the PAL was shown on the 1882 OS map but appears to have become disused by 1906 as it was shown flooded then (OS).

Post-medieval and modern

Boundstones in a NNW-SSE line west of the centre of the Down with BC inscriptions from Bickford Coham (MCO64231, 64233, 64235, 64238) representing an 'Allotment on Common' as recorded in the Warleggan Tithe Apportionment (Moore 2024, 112).

Two other **boundstones** in the SW part of the area (MCO64232, 64234), have the letter T inscribed on them, possibly with reference to Treveddoe, either a right on the common or a sett bound for the Treveddoe mine (Moore 2024, 112-113).

Another **boundstone** at the southern end of the PAL has the letter R inscribed on it, possibly referring to the family Rodd (MCO64237), though it is uncertain whether they had land here (Moore 2024, 114).

A **milk churn stand** with concrete rendered top is beside the road just to the south of the entrance to Torhouse farm.

Intangible cultural heritage

Significance of landscape visibility

The ridge form of the down means there are few long views across it.

Both halves are textured by archaeological remains – mining pits and dumps on the west side and low earthworks of fields on the eastern, and in the northern half of the western.

Trees and furze are already shrouding some of the main mining remains and furze is increasing on the medieval fields.

Semi-natural Environment

Designations

Historic Environment

Scheduled Monuments

None

Heritage Assets assessed as being of National Importance

This part of Bodmin Moor was not covered by English Heritage's Monuments Protection Programme (MPP), undertaken in the 1990s and early 2000s.

The following sites which were assessed as satisfying the criteria for National Importance using the criteria employed by the MPP and were therefore proposed as candidates for formal assessment for Scheduling during the Evaluation of Bodmin Moor (Rose and Herring 1990).

Following the guidance in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) these non-designated heritage assets are demonstrably of equivalent significance to Scheduled Monuments. 'Substantial harm to or loss of [these] should be wholly exceptional' (NPPF, para 206).

The Good Fortune mine workings (MCO12110) including **prospecting pit, shode pits, lode-back pits**, an **openwork** and **surface workings on three further lodes**, at c100m, 160m and 250m N of the southern lode (all **lode-back pits** and **shode pits**). (MCO12746).

Natural environment designations:

Sites of Special Scientific Interest

NA

Special Areas of Conservation

NA

County Wildlife Site

Yes, NC/CN7/S2, 'Hardhead Down & Warleggan Down'.

Cornwall Conservation Areas

NA

Other designations

Common Land

Wholly within CL35, Warleggan Down.

CROW Access Land

Yes, whole PAL.

Registered rights of way.

None

Neighbourhood Development Plans

No.

Change between 2005 and 2025

(Overview derived from comparison of CCC 2005 aerial photography, available as a basemap on the Cornwall and Scilly Historic Environment Record, and the Airbus 2025 satellite imagery as viewed from Google Earth aerial photos.)

- Considerable increase in furze cover in the western half, and the establishment of dense cover of low furze on central ridge. Possibility of extensive furze cover in a few years' time.
- Some of the furze on the west side of the road will soon merge to create a closed canopy, preventing livestock moving other than through narrow passages, causing erosion.
- Trees are continuing to encroach, especially on the lower W, S and E slopes.

Issues

Spread of furze.

- Reducing the diversity of the ancient rough grasslands and their flora and fauna, including their invertebrates.
- Obscuring the more ephemeral archaeological remains.
- Will begin to cause erosion as vehicles and livestock are confined to ever narrower tracks.
- Encourage tick-borne diseases in livestock and wild fauna.

Opportunities

To better guide grazing levels on the common by closer understanding of the flora and fauna of the ancient semi-natural grasslands.

Recommendations

General approach

Retain open ancient semi-natural grassland with easy movement in all directions. Keep the important remains of the prehistoric and medieval fields and the Goodfortune mine clear of furze.

Specific recommendations

- Address the growth of furze on the prehistoric and medieval fields and the Goodfortune mine.
- Adjust grazing to push back the conversion to furze.
- Further archaeological recording
 - Goodfortune Mine has an interesting mix of mining methods and could be recorded more closely. Some of the northernmost workings are not covered by the Aerial Investigation and Mapping record included in the CSHER.

Adjusting the extent of the PAL:

LIDAR and other mapped resources on the historic environment have been examined. No change is required to the PAL extent; it includes the principal known archaeological remains on Warleggan Down.

References

Dudley, D., 1953-4, Sub-Rectangular Earthworks with rounded corners, *P.W.C.F.C.* **1.2**, 54-58

Farnworth, R., P. Herring, B. Tapper, and C. R. Farnworth. 2023a. The Rough Tor Effect: Early Prehistoric Monuments Focussing on Significant Tors in Cornwall, *Time & Mind*, **16:1-4**, 7-38

Appendix 1 2007 PAL text

12Warleggan Down

Historic Environment

Another typical small area of moorland set amongst improved intake. This PAL is divided into two portions by a road but still retains the character of one contiguous block of moorland.

The eastern portion of the Warleggan Downs PAL is dominated by a prehistoric round house settlement and associated field system. The 10 houses are spread over 1.5 hectares, all most apparent as platforms levelled strongly into the slope, and having only slight or very spread stony banks with no orthostats. Two of the houses are linked by a bank and two have short lengths of banks extending from them. These suggest that the settlement was originally associated with a field system which has been largely obliterated by medieval ridge and furrow cultivation which covers much of the area. Lengths of curvilinear bank on the hillside above may also be of prehistoric date. These banks can be followed over the road to the western portion of the downs.

Mining features are more prominent to the west, with prospecting pits, shode pits and lode back pits all present. On the upper western slopes is an openwork, circa 5.5m deep, and steep sided. Down-slope on the east-west lode line are more lode back pits. A fine run of essentially contiguous prospecting pits runs north-south from this area of lode back working. A short run of lode back pits within a cluster of shode pits lies around 250m north of this mine, on the same ridge. Another small cluster of shode pits is 50m west south west of this group, and there is a flooded shaft or deep lode back pit 100m to the north west.

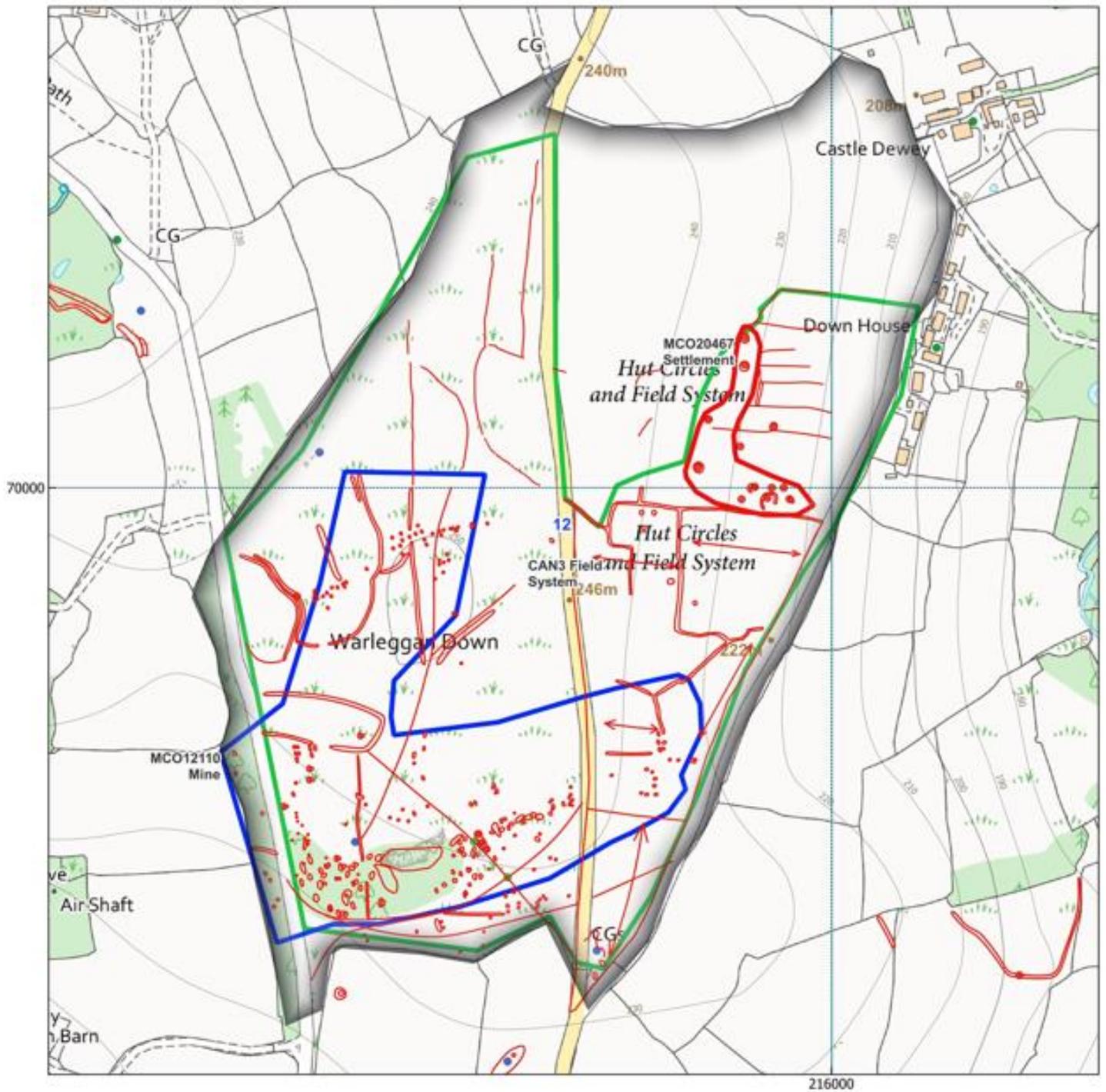
Natural Environment

Acid Grassland?, Fragmented Western Heath

Designations

No current HE or NE designations.

Vision



- PAL Areas
- Scheduled Monuments
- Scheduled Monuments @ Risk
- Feature Groups
- Prehistoric
- Medieval
- Post Medieval
- Aerial Mapping Transcriptions
- CSHER point data
- Prehistoric
- Early Medieval
- Romano British
- Medieval
- Post Medieval
- Modern

Dominant Habitat: Western Heath Mosaic

Habitat Change: Considerable

Notes: Considerable increase in furze cover in the western half, and dense cover on central ridge. Furze on west side of road will soon merge to create closed canopy, preventing livestock movement and causing erosion. Trees encroaching on lower slopes.

PAL 12 Warleggan Down

www.statement-heritage.com

Cornwall Council

Contains OS Data © Crown
Copyright, All Rights Reserved
2025 Ordnance Survey
AC000817921

