

PAL 16 Draynes Common and Lamelgate, St Neot, Historic Environment Action Plan



Aerial view from March 2025 of the roundhouses on Lamelgate (right) and lazy beds (left) (courtesy Airbus, via Google Earth Pro).

Location, geology and topography

Centred: SX 213714

Extent: 18 ha (45 acres)

Geology

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

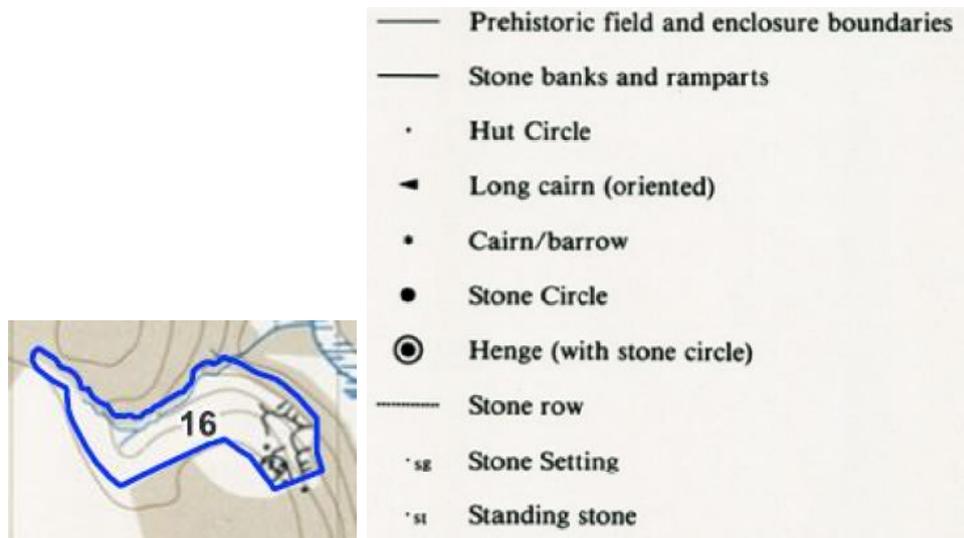
Topography

A valley-side PAL. Lamelgate is on the very steep western side of the Fowey Valley at one of its several narrow pinch points. Within the PAL the ground here falls from 264m (866 feet) to 212 metres (695 feet) in just 230 metres.

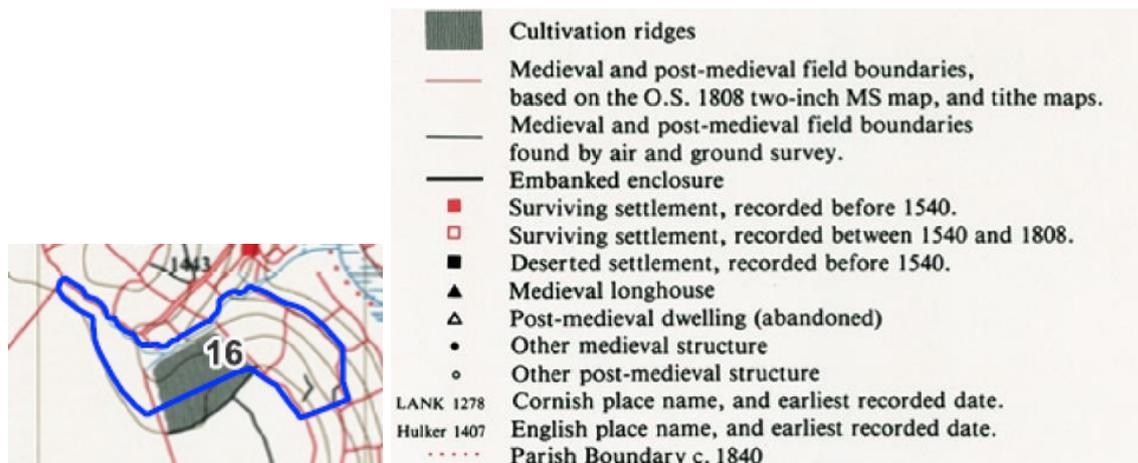
The part of Draynes Common within the PAL is on the gentler NE slopes of a ridge though it steepens around the head of a short tributary of the Fowey.

Current management and structures of ownership, commoners, etc:

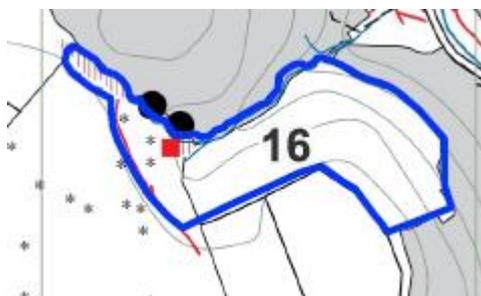
The enclosed land of Lamelgate is privately owned land while the remainder is part of CL130m Draynes Common.

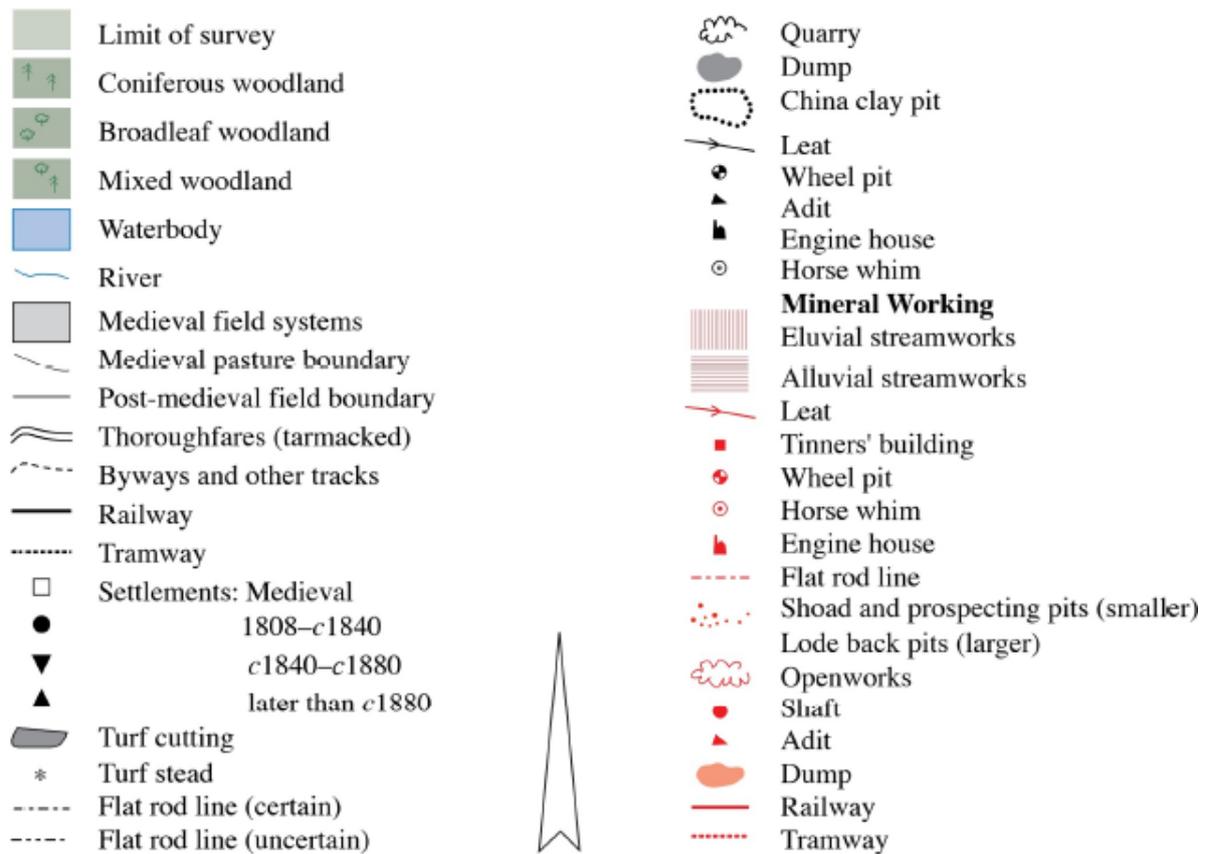


Extract from Prehistoric overview map (Johnson and Rose 1994, Map 1; reproduced with permission of Cornwall Council and Historic England).



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

Draynes was a Domesday manor, with 60 acres of pasture, possibly the area now known as Draynes Common. Lamelgate is a later medieval farming hamlet now a single farm; the earliest surviving record is from 1380. It is a Cornish name, possibly including the element nans, valley in the first part of the name, perhaps responding to the narrow valley here.

A probably Middle Bronze Age accretive curvilinear field system survives in the northern fields at Lamelgate. A part of them was later overlain by medieval cultivation ridges, spade-dug lazybeds.

On Draynes Common a well-preserved eluvial stream works with a leat and a tinners' building may be later medieval.

Thomas Martyn's 1748 map.

The area of Draynes Common was shown as open ground. Lamelgate had already been reduced from a hamlet to a single farmhouse.

c1810 OS drawing

'Drains Down' was shown as open rough grassland crossed by several unfenced lanes. The part of the Pal within Lamelgate was already an enclosed field.

c1840 Tithe Map

The Draynes Common part of the PAL was within TA 2837, Dreyne Common and was included under Commons and Wastes in the St Neot Tithe Apportionment.

The land at Lamelgate, however, was privately owned, and the PAL falls into two parcels of land shown on the Tithe Map. The eastern, smaller field (TA 1025) was part of the enclosed medieval field pattern and its land use was given as Arable. Its name Down Field indicates, however, that it was either against or taken in from open ground, and its use as arable may have been very occasional. The larger field (TA 1028) was called Ball, possibly to reflect how rounded the hill appears, and land use was Pasture, which would have probably been rough pasture. The enclosure is within a ring fence and may be regarded as a hamlet or home common.

c1880 OS map

The land cover was shown as rough grassland with clumps of furze. None of the archaeological remains were recorded.

c1906 OS map

No substantial change. Around this time the numerous turf steads that lie on Draynes Common would have been created.

Modern

Still common grazing of the rough ground of Draynes Common. The rough ground on the back of Ball at Lamelgate was improved and divided by fences into rectangular fields in the 20th century.

Historic Environment

Headlines

- Probably **Middle Bronze Age field system** with at least **12 roundhouses** at Lamelgate.
- Possible early medieval transhumance hut
- **Well-preserved eluvial tin streamworks** on Draynes Common, with **leat** and **tinners' building** and secondary digging for **shode**.
- Areas of **medieval fields with extensive lazybeds** in the Lamelgate valley.

Summary of main heritage assets

Prehistoric ceremonial and ritual

No remains.

Prehistoric domestic and agricultural

A probably **Middle Bronze Age field system** with at least **12 roundhouses** (5 to 8 metres internal diameter, and levelled into the slope), on the steep NE slopes of Lamelgate. Around 8 fields including one ovoid enclosure that contains 9 of the roundhouses

Medieval

A small rectangular building in the valley at the NE side of Draynes Common has been Scheduled as an **early medieval transhumance hut**. It has not been excavated and there is also a possibility that it may be a tinners' building.

A large area (4 hectares) of **lazybeds** on the northern slopes of Lamelgate (MCO22210). A second smaller area of **lazybeds** to the NE is fitted into remnant of the prehistoric field system (MCO38004).

Industrial

A well-preserved **eluvial streamworks** in the shallow valley NE of Draynes Common (MCO24131) includes Gerrard Types B and C type dumps as well as a **leat** bringing water from the SE. See above for a possible **tinners' building** near the SE end.

There are **prospecting pits** on the N slopes of Lamelgate that did not lead to industrial development

Post-medieval and modern

There are at least 53 **turf steads** on Draynes Common, the turf probably having been cut as skimmies.

Significance of landscape visibility

The prehistoric roundhouses and fields at Lamelgate are well-preserved but are vulnerable to being overwhelmed by the furze, as are the eluvial streamworks.

Designations

Historic Environment

Scheduled Monuments

NHLE 1007474 **Prehistoric regular aggregate field system with incorporated enclosure and stone hut circles 550m NNW of Lamelgate Farm**

NHLE 1007779 **Medieval transhumance hut on Draynes Common, 500m south-west of Westerlake Farm**

Heritage Assets assessed as being of National Importance

The following sites 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).

- A well-preserved **eluvial streamworks** in the shallow valley NE of Draynes Common (MCO24131).

Natural environment designations:

Sites of Special Scientific Interest

NA

Special Areas of Conservation

NA

County Wildlife Site

Yes, part of NC/CN7/S6.2, Fowey Valley Mire.

Cornwall Conservation Areas

NA

Other designations

Common Land

Lamelgate is privately owned land while the remainder is part of CL130m Draynes Common.

CROW Access Land

Yes, whole PAL.

Registered rights of way.

No.

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.)

- Relatively little change.
- Furze in streamworks on Draynes Common has increased.

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 Lamelgate prehistoric roundhouse settlement and its fields clear of furze.

Specific recommendations

- Address the growth of furze on the roundhouse settlement and its fields and the eluvial streamworks.
- Adjust grazing to push back the conversion to furze.

- Further archaeological recording
 - Examine the roundhouse settlement and fields

Adjusting the extent of the PAL:

LIDAR has been examined. No change required to PAL extent; it includes the principal known archaeological remains on Draynes Common and Lamelgate.

References

Appendix 1 2007 PAL text

16Part Draynes Common and Lamelgate

Historic Environment

One of the smallest PALs on Bodmin Moor. The PAL is dominated by a well preserved round house settlement and its associated field system.

The settlement comprises nine houses and an associated fragmentary field system, covering 5 hectares of a steep north east slope. Seven of the houses lie within an oval enclosure which is formed by a ragged stony bank and stony cultivation lynchet. Their internal diameters range from 4.0m to 8.6m and most are levelled into the hill slope. Successive field boundaries radiate down-slope around the north east and east sides where the ground drops away steeply. They delineate a system of prehistoric fields which covers the lower slopes, linked to the enclosure and with some additional medieval walls. Field walls are mostly turf covered stone and earth banks 1.0 - 2.0m wide and up to 0.7m high.

Towards Draynes Common, there is a large area of medieval ridge and furrow cultivation. On the common itself are the well preserved remains of eluvial streamworking, bounded by a large leat. A small building has been interpreted as the remains of a medieval transhumance hut.

A large number of turf steads (peat stack platforms) cover the common, some of which are within this PAL.

Natural Environment

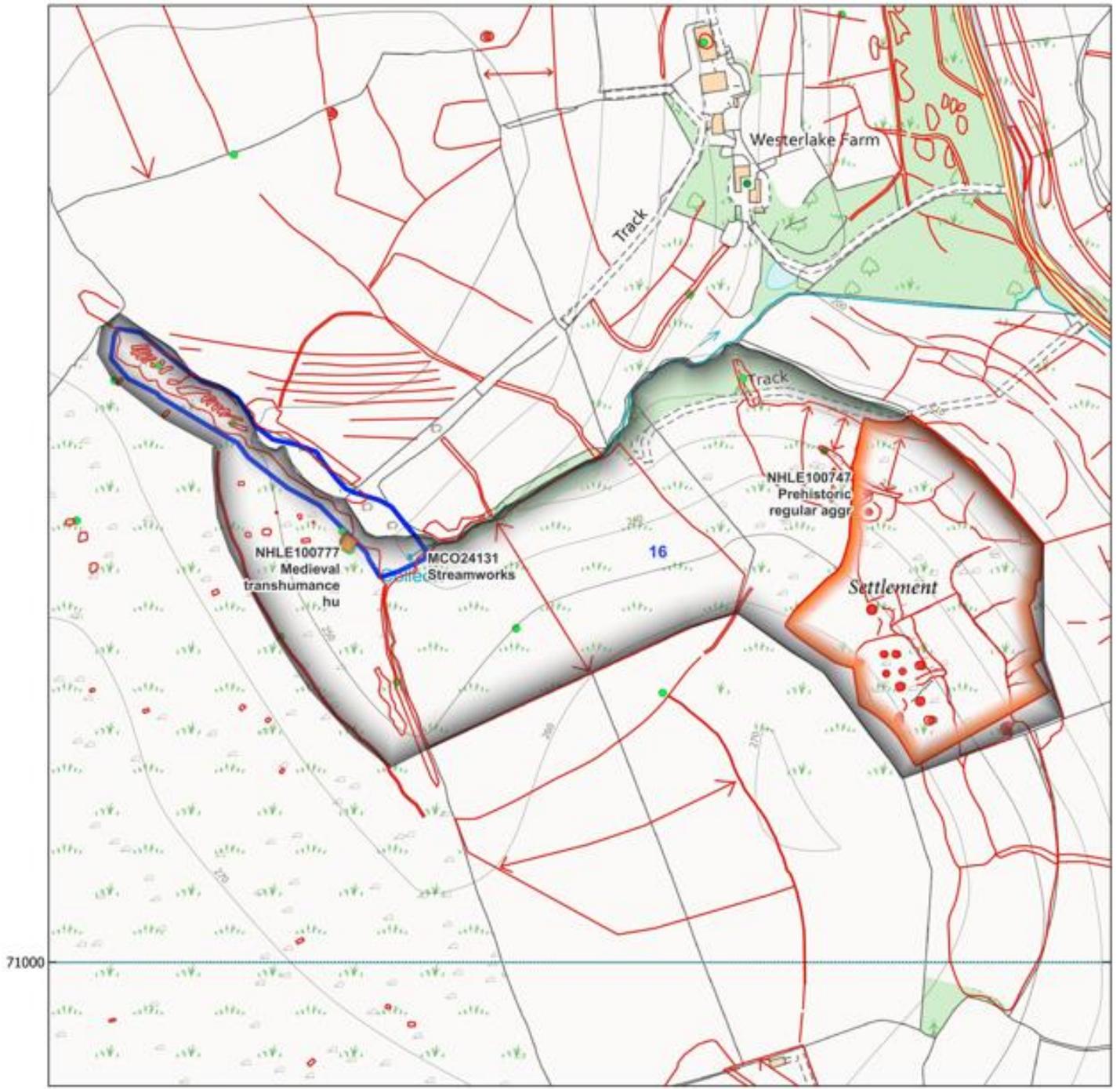
Fragmented Wet Heath and Western Heath

Designations

The field system and settlement is Scheduled (No. 15258), as is the Medieval transhumance hut on Draynes Common (No. 15276).

No current 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: Little

Notes: Relatively little change.
 Furze in streamworks on Draynes Common has increased.

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