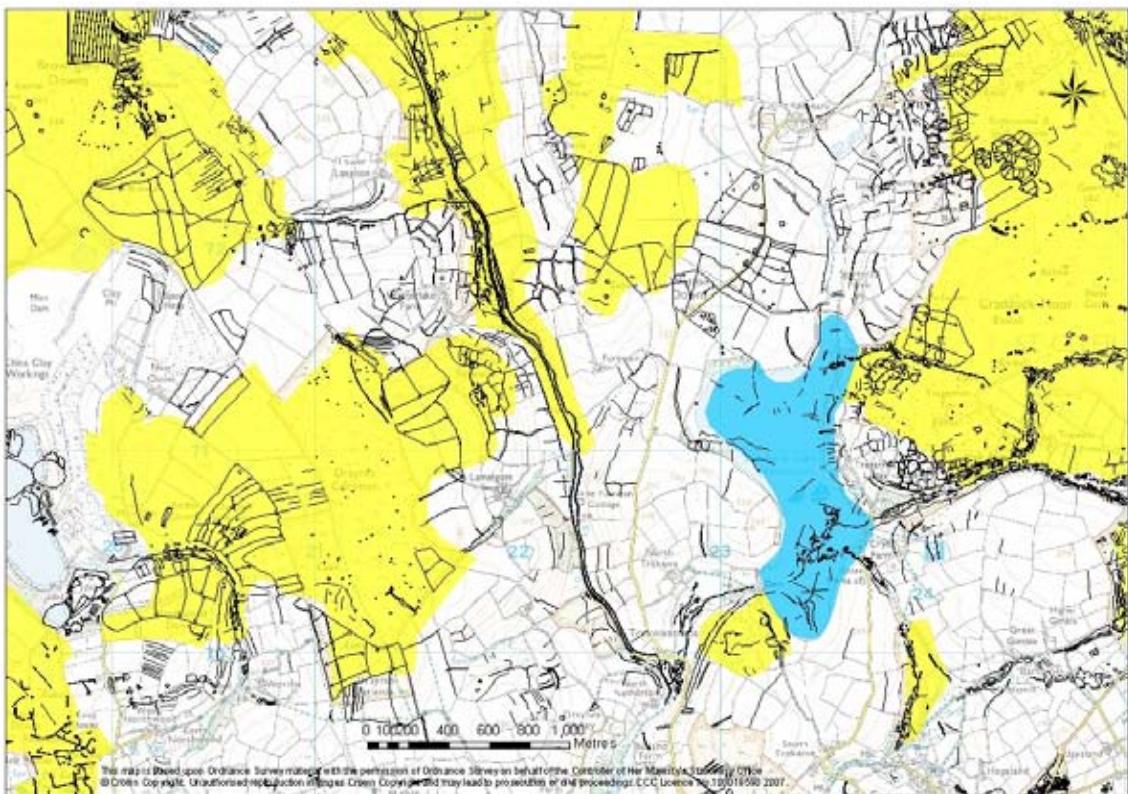


Recording the relict landscape on Bodmin Moor

Like much of the moorland in the South West, Bodmin Moor was extensively occupied in the past. Many remains of former settlement, farming and industry lie undisturbed to prove this. Unlike lowland Cornwall, subsequent activity has not swept away most of what has gone before and the moor's preserved landscapes represent an exceptionally rich and diverse archaeology.

A comprehensive survey of the relict archaeology on Bodmin Moor was carried out by the Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England and Cornwall Archaeological Unit during the late 1970s and early 1980s. This was a pioneering survey because the area was initially mapped from specially commissioned aerial photos and the resulting plots formed the basis for more detailed survey in the field – the first time these techniques had been used in combination to record such an extensive landscape.

Even in an area like Bodmin Moor, subject so recently to such detailed archaeological survey, we still recorded a large amount of new information during Cornwall's National Mapping Programme. The main reason for this is that the Bodmin Moor Survey focused only on areas of moorland rough ground and consulted a limited range of aerial photos, all taken around 1980. By examining photos taken from the 1940s to the 1960s, we were able to identify many archaeological features in what was then moorland but which, by 1980, had been taken into agriculture.



The archaeological landscape around Sibblyback Reservoir. Moorland areas are shown here in yellow. These had been previously surveyed in the 1980s; most of the features elsewhere were added during Cornwall's National Mapping Programme, including those now under water in the reservoir itself (shown in blue).