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A5 Weeford to Fazeley Improvements:  
Cultural Heritage Section

by  
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## **A5 Weeford to Fazeley Improvements: Cultural Heritage Section**

### **Summary**

*An archaeological assessment was carried out along the preferred route of the A5 Weeford to Fazeley Improvements Scheme, including the area of the proposed grade separation works at the A5/A38 junction. The study comprised a desk-based assessment and a preliminary walkover survey of the line of the preferred route. The aim of the assessment was to determine the known and potential survival and significance of cultural heritage remains within the Study Area, and to provide recommendations for any necessary further archaeological recording, so that a mitigation strategy can be formulated ahead of construction. The assessment identified features of possible Romano-British and medieval date, that may be affected by the works. It also identified areas of unknown potential that require further investigation.*

### **1.0 Introduction**

This assessment was undertaken by BUFAU during October 2000 under commission by Weeks Consulting. It comprises an archaeological assessment of the A5 Weeford to Fazeley Improvements Scheme, which involves the construction of a new dual carriageway road to the north of the existing stretch of the A5 trunk road between Weeford and Fazeley, in Staffordshire, and proposed grade separation works at the A5/A38 junction. This will consist of the construction of a dual two-lane carriageway underpass and slip roads. The assessment accords to the *Design Manual for Roads and Bridges Volume 11* (Department of Transport 1993) and comprises a Stage 2 assessment, updating previous work carried out by W.S. Atkins (1993).

### **2.0 Location of Study Area**

The preferred route lies to the north of the A5 trunk road between Weeford and Fazeley, bypassing Hints Village (Fig. 1). The Study Area comprises an area of 500m either side of the preferred route option, in order to ensure that archaeological sites with potentially extensive below-ground remains are adequately assessed. The Study Area also includes a 500m radius around the A5/A38 junction roundabout, and a 500m area either side of the stretch of the A38 between the roundabout and Blackbrook Farm (Fig. 2), in order to fully assess the impact of the proposed grade separation works.

### **3.0 Geology and Topography**

The solid geology of the Study Area consists of Hopwas Breccia at Hints Hill, Mercia Mudstone to the east, and Kidderminster and Bromsgrove Sandstones to the west. Superficial alluvium and glacial deposits overlie much of the area. The land within the Study Area is mostly gently undulating, with an area of relatively steep southeasterly sloping land between Hints and Hints Hill. The principal land uses are agriculture (mainly arable), woodland and quarrying (W.S. Atkins 1993).

#### **4.0 Objectives**

The aims of the assessment were to determine the known and potential survival of the cultural heritage resource within and around the proposed road improvement scheme, and to assess its significance in a local, regional, national or international context as appropriate. The assessment identifies the need for any further archaeological work in advance of the scheme, and identifies requirements for any *in situ* preservation of remains, or for their recording in advance of, or during, construction.

#### **5.0 Method**

Sites will be discussed in separate sections according to the type of source which led to their identification. These sections are:

- Sites and Monuments Record data
- Cartographic Evidence
- Place and Field Name Evidence
- Listed Buildings
- Aerial Photographs
- Walkover Survey
- Borehole Data

A general historical background of the Study Area is provided, derived from published and unpublished primary and secondary sources.

A preliminary walkover survey was undertaken along the line of the preferred route, in order to assess any visible indications of the presence of archaeological features, such as ridge and furrow, or earthworks.

The definition of 'archaeological sites' should be taken to include upstanding remains, earthworks, buried features, palaeoenvironmental evidence and artefact scatters that may indicate the location of an archaeological site. Historic or Relic landscape is included in order to set any sites within a broader context. This includes, *'all the physical remains of human interaction with nature through time, or the pattern of field and farm'* (PPG15, taken from English Heritage Archaeological Division Research Agenda 1997, 25). There has been no detailed assessment of listed buildings, although the locations of those within the Study Area have been given. The assessment has been carried out in accordance with the guidelines laid out in *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Desk-Based Assessments* (Institute of Field Archaeologists 1999).

#### **6.0 Assessment of Site Value**

The archaeological sites affected by the proposed route are categorised according to importance, or potential importance, as follows:

- Sites of national importance, usually Scheduled Ancient Monuments;
- Sites of regional importance;

- Sites of local importance;
- Sites of limited importance.

The Secretary of State for the Environment's published Non-Statutory Criteria for the Scheduling of Ancient Monuments (PPG16: Annex 4 1990) and the English Heritage Guidance on the New Approach to Appraisal (1998) have been used to determine levels of significance. Cropmarks of unknown, but probably Romano-British, date, have been classed as being of regional importance.

## **7.0 Sources**

- The Staffordshire Sites and Monuments Record (SMR). This is the primary source of existing archaeological information.
- Published and unpublished documentary and cartographic sources were consulted at Staffordshire County Record Office and Lichfield Joint Record Office.
- Other published sources were consulted in the University of Birmingham Library, including secondary historical and archaeological sources and the published reports of fieldwork.

## **8.0 Historical and Archaeological Background**

All SMR numbers referred to in the text can be found with more detailed description in Section 9.1.

### ***8.1 Prehistoric***

Recorded prehistoric archaeology is not well represented within the Study Area. The numerous cropmarks identified are of unknown date, but are perhaps more likely to belong to the Romano-British period given their locations in proximity to Watling Street. The Offlow barrow lies outside the Study Area to the northeast of Shenstone, and Staffordshire County Council have suggested that Knox's Grave Lane is a prehistoric track; this lane runs east-west just outside the northern boundary of the Study Area (Atkins 1993).

### ***8.2 Romano-British***

It is likely that the Study Area was part of a larger area of land that was farmed during the Roman period. Romano-British farms and fields have been discovered near Shenstone, and the quantity of probable enclosures, pits and ditches identified as cropmarks from aerial photographs, combined with numerous metal-detector finds of Roman date and the likelihood of ribbon development existing along Watling Street, point to a high probability of there being further undiscovered sites dating from this period. It is also possible that cropmarks may represent sites of prehistoric date that remained in use, or were re-used, during the Romano-British period. This is a common phenomenon

encountered on many archaeological sites, such as Grange Park in Northants, an Iron Age settlement, the site of which later saw Romano-British and Anglo-Saxon activity (BUFAU, forthcoming). The western edge of the Study Area also includes the junction of Watling Street and Rykniel Street (the A38), another major Roman Road. The proximity of the Roman town of Letocetum (at modern Wall), to the west, also emphasises the strong probability that there will be hitherto unknown Roman archaeology within the Study Area. In AD 48, Scapula, the second Roman governor of Britain, established a forward base at Letocetum. It has been suggested that Hints and Weeford, along with about 15 other settlements, formed a Roman or sub-Roman district based on Letocetum (Palliser 1976).

Little archaeological evidence exists for the immediate post-Roman period, despite the use of Watling Street as a frontier against the invading English and, 200 years later, against the Danish (Atkins 1993).

### ***8.3 Medieval***

Deserted medieval settlements are found throughout Staffordshire, and a considerable number of these are concentrated along the River Tame. It is believed that about one village in two vanished from this area of the county, mainly in the period between 1334 and 1524 (Palliser 1976). Swinfen, north of Weeford, Packington, northeast of Hints, and Thickbroome, to the southwest of Weeford, are all deserted settlements (Fig. 3). Thickbroome (SMR 2083) may lie partly within the Study Area, in the vicinity of Thickbroom Farm, Weeford. It is not mentioned in the Domesday Book, but is referred to in documents dating from 1327 and 1332, and is shown on maps dating from 1577 and 1682 (Figs. 4 & 5). It was probably deserted in the 17th century (Bate and Palliser 1971).

Weeford (SMR 2593) and Hints (SMR 2485) were themselves medieval settlements, but as there has not been any archaeological investigation within the two villages, the limits of the earlier medieval settlements are not known. Weeford had a moated medieval hall (SMR 3118) and also contains the site of a medieval chapel (SMR 9701), mentioned in 1563. The building presently on this site is the 19th-century St. Mary's Church. Hints Village is within a Conservation Area. The Domesday Book refers to the medieval settlement (SMR 2485) as one of 15 places collectively assessed under the Manor of Lichfield, which together had 82 villages and smallholders.

### ***8.4 Post-medieval***

Metal working was taking place along the bank of the Black Brook and the Bourne Brook in the early post-medieval period. Iron was worked at Hints from the 16th century and there was still a hammer mill and forge there (SMR 1125) until the early-18th century. There was also a slitting mill (SMR 2085) to the southeast of Weeford, near Bourne House, and a forge (SMR 1699) and water mill (SMR 1122) at Hints. The millpond belonging to this mill was later converted into an ornamental fishpond (SMR 4976). The

brook would have provided the necessary power to make mill-reliant industries a large part of the post-medieval development of Hints.

## **9.0 Results**

### ***9.1 Sites and Monuments Record***

31 sites recorded on the SMR lie within or very close to the Study Area. Medieval sites within Hints have been included, despite their location just outside the Study Area, because of their group value as part of the medieval settlement within Hints Conservation Area. All identified sites are listed and assessed below. Their locations can be seen on Fig. 6.

#### ***Cropmark***

**Site Number:** 1

**SMR Number:** 4877

**Grid reference:** SK 1290 0510

**Description:** Sub-rectangular enclosure of unknown date with possible internal features, seen as cropmark. Lies just outside Study Area but may encroach into it and may be part of a larger complex of archaeological features. This site has been the subject of geophysical investigation and will shortly be the subject of a separate archaeological field evaluation by BUFAU.

**Value:** Regional importance.

**Potential impact:** Low.

#### ***Cropmark***

**Site Number:** 2

**SMR Number:** 3623

**Grid reference:** SK 1340 0490

**Description:** Large rectangular enclosure north of A5, with rounded corners visible. Of possible Roman date.

**Value:** Regional importance.

**Potential impact:** Medium.

#### ***Watling Street Roman Road***

**Site Number:** 3

**SMR Number:** 5150/1140

**Grid reference:** SK 1700 0296

**Description:** The existing A5 follows the line of Watling Street, which ran from London to Chester, passing through the Roman Town of Letocetum. It should be anticipated that a high quantity of buried archaeology from the Roman period, including settlement remains, may lie along the route of this road.

**Value:** Regional importance.

**Potential impact:** High.



***Cropmark***

**Site Number:** 4

**SMR Number:** 4907

**Grid reference:** SK 133 041

**Description:** Linear cropmark feature of unknown date, lying against the western edge of the A38, north of Weeford Lodge.

**Value:** Regional importance.

**Potential impact:** High.

***Deserted Medieval Settlement***

**Site Number:** 5

**SMR Number:** 2083

**Grid reference:** SK 130 038

**Description:** Suggested location of the site of the deserted medieval settlement of Thickbroome.

**Value:** Regional importance.

**Potential impact:** Low.

***Milestone***

**Site Number:** 6

**SMR Number:** 3663

**Grid reference:** SK 133 039

**Description:** Post-medieval/Imperial milestone with metal plate.

**Value:** Local importance.

**Potential impact:** High.

***Ice House***

**Site Number:** 7

**SMR Number:** 3664

**Grid reference:** SK 1290 0340

**Description:** 'The Grove' post-medieval/Imperial Ice House at Manley Hall. Probably lies just outside Study Area.

**Value:** Local importance.

**Potential impact:** None.

***Cropmark***

**Site Number:** 8

**SMR Number:** 2063

**Grid reference:** SK 1400 0449

**Description:** Probable Prehistoric or Roman pit alignment running approximately east-west, north of the A5. Lies along, and just south of, the proposed route of the new road.

**Value:** Regional importance.

**Potential impact:** High.

***Blackbrook Bridge***

**Site Number:** 9

**SMR Number:** 1105

**Grid reference:** SK 1343 0364

**Description:** Site of post-medieval (17th-century) wooden footbridge at Weeford. Was destroyed by floods and replaced by a single span stone cart bridge between 1700 and 1750.

**Value:** Local importance.

**Potential impact:** None.

***Cropmark***

**Site Number:** 10

**SMR Number:** 2065

**Grid reference:** SK 1393 0439

**Description:** Northeast corner of double-ditched enclosure lying against northern side of A5 and just south of preferred road route. Of probable Roman date.

**Value:** Regional importance.

**Potential impact:** Medium.

***Site of chapel***

**Site Number:** 11

**SMR Number:** 9701

**Grid reference:** SK 1414 0388

**Description:** Site of medieval chapel in Weeford, mentioned 1563. Present building is 19th-century St Mary's Church.

**Value:** Local importance.

**Potential impact:** None.

***Medieval Settlement***

**Site Number:** 12

**SMR Number:** 2593

**Grid reference:** SK 1410 0390

**Description:** Weeford (Weforde) early medieval settlement. Domesday Book mentions land for four ploughs at Weeford, Burweston and Littlebeech. Possible that former extent of settlement went beyond bounds of current one.

**Value:** Local importance.

**Potential impact:** None.

***Moated Hall Site***

**Site Number:** 13

**SMR Number:** 3118

**Grid reference:** SK 1415 0372

**Description:** Site of medieval moated site of Weeford Hall. Exact location uncertain.

**Value:** Local importance.

**Potential impact:** None.

*Site of Mill*

**Site Number:** 14

**SMR Number:** 2085

**Grid reference:** SK 147 035

**Description:** Site of post-medieval slitting mill, near Bourne House. Marked on Yates' map of Staffordshire (Fig.7).

**Value:** Local importance.

**Potential impact:** None.

*Cropmark*

**Site Number:** 15

**SMR Number:** 2064

**Grid reference:** SK 1469 0464

**Description:** Prehistoric or Roman pit alignment running approximately north-south.

**Value:** Regional importance.

**Potential impact:** Low.

*Cropmark*

**Site Number:** 16

**SMR Number:** 1416

**Grid reference:** SK 1524 0460

**Description:** Ring Ditch cropmark of unknown date, possibly Prehistoric or Roman, at northern edge of Study Area. Part of complex of cropmarks, including SMR Nos. 1414 and 1415, which may extend further southwards into Study Area.

**Value:** Regional importance.

**Potential impact:** Medium.

*Cropmark*

**Site Number:** 17

**SMR Number:** 1415

**Grid reference:** SK 1532 0463

**Description:** Two parallel linear features of unknown date, possibly Prehistoric or Roman, at northern edge of Study Area. Part of complex of cropmarks, including SMR Nos. 1414 and 1416, which may extend further southwards into Study Area.

**Value:** Regional importance.

**Potential impact:** Medium.

*Cropmark*

**Site Number:** 18

**SMR Number:** 1414

**Grid reference:** SK 1540 0457

**Description:** Rectangular cropmark enclosure of unknown date, possibly Prehistoric or Roman, at northern edge of Study Area. Part of complex of cropmarks, including SMR Nos. 1415 and 1416, which may extend further southwards into Study Area.

**Value:** Regional importance.

**Potential impact:** Medium.

*Site of Forge*

**Site Number:** 19

**SMR Number:** 1699

**Grid reference:** SK 1547 0286

**Description:** Site of post-medieval forge, Hints.

**Value:** Local importance.

**Potential impact:** None.

*Rock Outcrop*

**Site Number:** 20

**SMR Number:** 1121

**Grid reference:** SK 1567 0330

**Description:** Rock outcrop known as Gold's Clump, at Hints. Classified and described by Page (1908) as a circular tumulus with a diameter of 175-180 feet and 19-30 feet in height. Plot also described it as a barrow in 1686. However, it is now considered to be a natural rock outcrop.

**Value:** Limited importance.

**Potential impact:** None.

*Medieval Settlement*

**Site Number:** 21

**SMR Number:** 2485

**Grid reference:** SK 15807 02862

**Description:** Early medieval settlement of Hints. Domesday Book refers to it as one of 15 places collectively assessed under the Manor of Lichfield, which together had 82 villagers and smallholders. Possible that former extent of settlement went beyond bounds of current one.

**Value:** Local importance.

**Potential impact:** Low to medium.

*Site of Water Mill*

**Site Number:** 22

**SMR Number:** 1122

**Grid reference:** SK 1561 0291

**Description:** Site of corn mill in Hints, on site of post-medieval (pre-1601) water mill and medieval millpond. The watermill had been destroyed by 1852, and no surface evidence of it has survived 18th-century landscaping. The millpond was probably converted into an ornamental fishpond (SMR No. 4976).

**Value:** Local importance.

**Potential impact:** None.

***Medieval Cross***

**Site Number:** 23

**SMR Number:** 1123

**Grid reference:** SK 1577 0289

**Description:** 3m<sup>2</sup> medieval stone cross base in cemetery of St. Bartholomew's Church in Hints.

**Value:** National importance.

**Potential impact:** None.

***Mansion***

**Site Number:** 24

**SMR Number:** 1124

**Grid reference:** SK 1578 0278

**Description:** Manor or mansion house called 'Hynts Hall,' sold to Ralph Flyer in 1601. 18th-century additions.

**Value:** Local importance.

**Potential impact:** None.

***Fishpond***

**Site Number:** 25

**SMR Number:** 4976

**Grid reference:** SK 15558 02830

**Description:** Post-medieval ornamental fishpond in Hints, probably created by enlarging earlier millpond (SMR No. 1112).

**Value:** Local importance.

**Potential impact:** None.

***Landscape Park***

**Site Number:** 26

**SMR Number:** 40073

**Grid reference:** SK 1630 0280

**Description:** Post-medieval landscape park around Hints Hall. Area not built over.

**Value:** Local importance.

**Potential impact:** None.

***Findspot***

**Site Number:** 27

**SMR Number:** 3628

**Grid reference:** SK 1680 0420

**Description:** 1st-2nd century AD Roman coins: 5 sesterti and 3 denarii. Found by metal detector in 1976 in parish of Wigginton, just outside the northern edge of the Study Area, but included because of their relevance in the broader context of the area around Watling Street.

**Value:** Local importance.

**Potential impact:** None.

***Forge and Mill***

**Site Number:** 28

**SMR Number:** 1125

**Grid reference:** SK 1669 0234

**Description:** Site of post-medieval forge and hammer mill in Hints parish, south of A5. In 1607, a pasture called 'Hammer Mill Close' was sold, and it is shown on Yates's map of 1775 (Fig.7). 19th-century maps and surface evidence indicate an iron forge with associated cottages. Shown as 'Hints Forge' on First Edition Ordnance Survey map.

**Value:** Local importance.

**Potential impact:** None.

***Findspot***

**Site Number:** 29

**SMR Number:** 1417

**Grid reference:** SK 1704 0374

**Description:** Roman pottery sherd (samian ware) found in field north of proposed road route.

**Value:** Local importance.

**Potential impact:** None.

***Cropmark***

**Site Number:** 30

**SMR Number:** 1680

**Grid reference:** SK 1699 0337

**Description:** Rectangular cropmark enclosure with rounded corners, and linear feature, both of unknown date, north of Watling Street. From description on OS card, it could be a possible Roman fort with connecting road to Watling Street. However, doubt has been cast on this interpretation, and reinterpretation and a possible programme of fieldwalking has been suggested by J. Gould. Lies within the line of the proposed new road.

**Value:** Regional importance.

**Potential impact:** High.

***Cropmark***

**Site Number:** 31

**SMR Number:** 2086

**Grid reference:** SK 1860 0300

**Description:** Cropmark interpreted as possible enclosure by J. Gould. Also, linear features near A5, including a triple linear feature which could be a pit alignment, but unclear. Lie just outside northeastern edge of Study Area, but there remains the possibility that features may extend further into the latter.

**Value:** Regional importance.

**Potential impact:** Medium.

## **9.2 Cartographic Evidence**

Tithe maps and Awards for Weeford, Hints and Fazeley were examined. The Hints Tithe, from 1847, (Fig. 8) covered a substantial part of the Study Area and provided details of ownership, occupation, contemporary land-use, and field-names. The Tithes for Weeford (1843, Fig. 9) and Fazeley (1848, Fig. 10), although less detailed, provided similar information. Just over 50% of the land within the Study Area shown on the Hints Tithe map was in use as arable land, and just over 25% was given over to permanent pasture. About 12% was meadow land and about 10% plantation. One field, south of the A5, contained ozier beds. The field-names are discussed in Section 9.3.

No enclosure maps could be examined due to the absence of parliamentary enclosure for Hints, Weeford and Fazeley. Neither were any estate maps for these areas held by Staffordshire County Record Office.

Features of possible archaeological interest shown on the Ordnance Survey First and Second Editions, from 1882 (Fig. 11) and 1902 (Figs. 12 & 13) respectively, are listed below (and their locations can be seen on Fig. 6.). This list also includes other features identified by W.S Atkins (1993).

### ***Former kiln site***

**Site Number:** 32

**SMR Number:** None.

**Grid reference:** 1300 0425

**Description:** 'Brick Kiln Covert' shown on First Edition Ordnance Survey map. Possibly the site of a former kiln.

**Value:** Local importance.

**Potential impact:** Medium-high

### ***Clay Pits***

**Site Number:** 33

**SMR Number:** None.

**Grid reference:** 1315 0435

**Description:** 'Old Clay Pits' shown on First Edition Ordnance Survey map.

**Value:** Local importance.

**Potential impact:** Medium-high.

### ***Prehistoric Track***

**Site Number:** 34

**SMR Number:** None

**Grid reference:** SK 1350 0530

**Description:** Staffordshire County Council have suggested that Tamworth Lane and Knox's Grave Lane, outside the northern edge of the Study Area, form a possible prehistoric track (Atkins 1993).

**Value:** Local importance.

**Potential impact:** None.

***Gravel Pit***

**Site Number:** 35

**SMR Number:** None

**Grid reference:** SK 1480 0370

**Description:** Gravel pit shown on First Edition Ordnance Survey map.

**Value:** Local/Limited importance.

**Potential impact:** None.

***Clay Pit***

**Site Number:** 36

**SMR Number:** None.

**Grid reference:** SK 1670 0300

**Description:** Old Clay Pit shown on First Edition Ordnance Survey map.

**Value:** Local/Limited importance.

**Potential impact:** None.

***Quarry***

**Site Number:** 37

**SMR Number:** None.

**Grid reference:** SK 1690 0415

**Description:** Staffordshire County Council have suggested that this is the site of an old quarry (W.S. Atkins 1993). Labelled 'The Devil's Dressing Room' on First Edition Ordnance Survey. Lies just outside the northern edge of the Study Area.

**Value:** Local importance.

**Potential impact:** None.

***Marl Pit***

**Site Number:** 38

**SMR Number:** None.

**Grid reference:** SK 1755 0275

**Description:** Old Marl Pit shown on First Edition Ordnance Survey map.

**Value:** Local/Limited importance.

**Potential impact:** None.

***Marl Pits***

**Site Number:** 39

**SMR Number:** None.

**Grid reference:** SK 1725 0260

**Description:** Old Marl Pits shown on First Edition Ordnance Survey map.

**Value:** Local/Limited importance.

**Potential impact:** None.



28 Spring Hill (arable)	173 Cow Pasture (arable)
29 Square Close (arable)	176 Calves Croft (pasture)
30 Honey Field (arable)	177 House Close (arable)
31 Six Acre Close (arable)	178 House Close (arable)
32 Wood Close (arable)	179 Cheatleys Close (arable)
33 Rough Close (arable)	180 Lower Field Piece (arable)
34 Hopwas Wood Close (arable)	180a Upper Field Piece (arable)
35 Hop House Close (arable)	
36 Hill Top (arable)	
37 Ridding (arable)	

The following interpretations are taken from Field (1993).

*Bushey Head:-*

The term 'head' in a field-name often refers to the result of the process of the turning of a plough at the end of a selion which leaves a deposit of soil, that gradually becomes a mound appreciably higher than the strip, often called a plough headland. However, 'Bushey' usually relates to scrubland. It is possible that this field was scrubland which was then changed to arable land, and may contain ridge and furrow.

*Coney-Gree:-*

This name comes from the Middle English 'Coninger,' which means 'rabbit warren.'

*Honey Field:-*

May refer to the production of honey, either in hives or wild bee nests, or could refer to a stickiness in the soil.

*Spring Hill:-*

May allude to a small water-source.

*Ridding:-*

Refers to clearance of woodland.

South of the A5 five fields include the name 'Wall.' If this is not a reference to the nearby town of Wall, then they could point to the existence of ancient earthworks or buildings, which is plausible given the proximity of these fields to Watling Street. However, these potential sites are not likely to be affected by the preferred route.

#### **9.4 Listed Buildings**

Fourteen Grade II Listed Buildings exist within the Study Area. These are listed below, although not described in detail. Due to an access problem with the relevant database at the SMR, the majority of the buildings cannot be described so they have been listed according to their location, and the correct identification numbers have only been

ascribed to them where possible. Where descriptions could not be accessed, these have been taken from W.S. Atkins (1993). None of the listed buildings will be directly affected by the preferred route. The Reference Numbers given are not related to the SMR numbers, but are part of a separate list.

### **WEEFORD**

#### ***Blackbrook Farm House***

**Ref. Number:** 97040

Mid 18th-century redbrick farmhouse, situated on the east side of London Road (A38). The architect James Wyatt was born here in 1747.

#### ***Weeford Lodge***

**Ref. Number:** 11645

1830's redbrick lodge at entrance leading to Thickbroom Barn on the west side of London Road.

#### ***Church of St. Mary***

1802 parish church with late 19th-century chancel.

#### ***Stable and splay walls***

#### ***Stable block***

#### ***Cartshed***

#### ***Cartshed***

Four buildings forming a large coach staging post complex northeast of Weeford House Farm and immediately north of St. Mary's churchyard. Three of the buildings date from the early 19th century, are of red brick, and have been included for their group value.

#### ***Bucks Head Farm***

**Ref. Number:** 13985

North side of A5.

### **HINTS**

#### ***Manor Farm***

**Ref. Number:** 13684

Mid 18th-century farmhouse with 20th-century alterations, on east side of School Lane. Has group value together with associated farm buildings.

#### ***Church of St. Bartholomew***

19th-century parish church, overlooking the valley to the south.

***Cross in parish churchyard***

17th-century base with 2m high shaft and crucifixion.

***Floyer Memorial in parish churchyard***

1759 chest tomb.

***Memorial in parish churchyard***

Early 18th-century chest tomb.

***Bangley Lodge***

**Ref. Number:** 12832

South side of A5.

***9.5 Aerial Photographs***

Staffordshire County Council Development Services Department, including the SMR, holds full sets of vertical aerial photographs covering the Study Area for 1947, 1963, 1971, 1981/2 (all black-and-white) and 1991 (colour). Their collection of oblique aerial photographs were briefly examined for coverage of the Study Area. The following photographs covered cropmarks identified in Section 9.1.

**Ref.** SK 1504/1

**NGR:** SK 154 045

**SMR No:** 1414, Hints, linear features/enclosure  
(BUFAU No:18).

**Ref.** SK 1304/3

**NGR:** SK 139 044

**SMR No:** 2065, Weeford, double-ditched enclosure  
(BUFAU No:10).

**Ref.** BBX7E

**NGR:** SK 186 030

**SMR No:** 2086, Fazeley, enclosure  
(BUFAU No:30).

**Ref.** SK 1802/1

**NGR:** SK 188 026

**SMR No:** 2086, Fazeley, extensive cropmarks  
(BUFAU No:31).

### 9.6 Walkover Survey

A preliminary walkover survey was undertaken of fields lying within the direct line of the preferred route, where access to these had been permitted. Each field inspected was given a unique number (Fig. 15). *Pro forma* record sheets were used to record each field. A brief description follows, giving current land-use and a description of any known or potential archaeological features.

**Field Number: 1**

**Land-use:** Arable

**Archaeology:** Evidence of a former field boundary running approximately north-south across the field was noted.

**Field Number: 2**

**Land-use:** Pasture

**Archaeology:** SMR 1680 (BUFAU No:30), an enclosure and linear feature noted as a cropmark on aerial photographs, lies within this field. There was a pronounced slope upwards into the southwest corner of the field, which created a plateau of higher ground. This looked to be natural in origin, although some low, ridge-like aspects of it may have been associated with the cropmark. The grass, currently being grazed by cattle, was of uneven height, which made close observation of the field difficult. A wide linear depression ran approximately northwest-southeast through the field; this is shown as a brook on the First and Second Edition Ordnance Survey maps, although this particular section is shown as a dotted line, perhaps indicating that it was no longer extant as a water-course.

**Field Number: 3**

**Land-use:** Arable

**Archaeology:** No archaeology evident.

**Field Number: 4**

**Land-use:** Pasture

**Archaeology:** This field formed part of an unnatural-looking landscape that also comprised fields 5, 6 and 7. The ground rose quite steeply to the northern edge of the field, creating a linear area of lower ground running approximately east-west across the field.

**Field Number: 5**

**Land-use:** Pasture

**Archaeology:** The ground sloped steeply up to the northeast, creating an artificial-looking mound. This mound, and others like it in the surrounding fields, created a landscape in which it looked as though quarrying may have taken place at some time in the past. The fields were on the border of a currently operational quarry. Possible low, linear ridges were noted running from the gateway in the south into the field and a large patch of nettles existed on 'bumpy' ground in the western area of the field, on the lower ground. These may have grown up in association with the small area of woodland behind,

but it is important to bear in mind that nettles often grow over disturbed ground, such as that overlying former building foundations.

**Field Number: 6**

**Land-use:** Pasture

**Archaeology:** Raised mound running approximately east-west through field. Possible remains of widely-spaced ridge-and-furrow exist at eastern end of field.

**Field Number: 7**

**Land-use:** Pasture

**Archaeology:** Raised, steep-sided linear mound running east-west at northern end of field. Another at southern end, although less steep, leaving a strip of lower ground running alongside the woodland to the north.

**Field Number: 8**

**Land-use:** Pasture

**Archaeology:** Nothing specific noted. Ground quite uneven with long grass and some scrub, with patches of nettles. Slopes steeply down to southwest corner.

**Field Number: 9**

**Land-use:** ?Pasture

**Archaeology:** Continuation of quarry-like land with steep-sided mound that rose to the north, east and west, leaving an area of lower ground between. Stoney, mossy ground. It has been suggested that this and its surrounding area are part of an old quarry (Entec 1999).

**Field Number: 10**

**Land-use:** Arable

**Archaeology:** Raised wooded bank in northeast corner. Most of field was fairly flat, with gentle slopes. Possible very truncated ridge-and-furrow existed, running north-south in western central area, but this was not clear.

**Field Number: 11**

**Land-use:** Arable

**Archaeology:** Field was planted with vegetable crop, so there was no visibility in the south of it. To the north the land was naturally undulating.

**Field Number: 12**

**Land-use:** Arable

**Archaeology:** Nothing noted.

**Field Number: 13**

**Land-use:** Arable

**Archaeology:** Nothing noted.

**Field Number:** 14

**Land-use:** Pasture

**Archaeology:** This field contained the site of a cropmark identified from aerial photographs (SMR 2065; BUFAU No:10), comprising the possible corner of a double-ditched enclosure against Watling Street/A5, in the south-west corner of the field. In this area, the ground is quite uneven and 'bumpy,' perhaps slightly more so than in the rest of the field.

**Field Number:** 15

**Land-use:** Arable

**Archaeology:** Part of cropmark (SMR 2063; BUFAU No:8), identified as a possible pit alignment, extends from this field into Field 16, to the west. However, both fields were under crop at the time of the walkover survey, so could not be investigated

**Field Number:** 16

**Land-use:** Arable

**Archaeology:** Part of cropmark (SMR 2063; BUFAU No:8), identified as a possible pit alignment, extends from Field 15, to the east. However, both fields were under crop at the time of the walkover survey, so could not be investigated

### **9.7 Borehole Data**

A Borehole Survey carried out on behalf of W.S. Atkin, showed the presence of some organic and carbonaceous deposits, encountered between 1.30m and, in one instance, 18.45m below the ground surface, at the extreme eastern end of the Study Area, to the north of the A5. As the Black Brook flows to the south of the A5, it is unlikely that any waterlogged deposits associated with it will be encountered along the line of the preferred route.

### **10.0 Discussion**

A result of this assessment is the recognition of the extent and limitations of current knowledge, especially with regard to the identification of areas where no systematic previous research has been carried out, where field conditions such as dense crop or vegetation may conceal important remains, and where the geology in certain areas has precluded the visibility of cropmarks from aerial photographs.

Although there has been an absence of archaeological investigation in the Study Area, it is reasonable to say that there is a great likelihood of encountering hitherto unknown Romano-British sites within it. The presence of a considerable number of cropmarks at the western end of the Study Area would seem to corroborate this. The lack of cropmarks in the eastern half of the Study Area is probably due to the fact that the geology comprises Mercia Mudstone (formerly Keuper Marl) in this area, which generally precludes the visibility of such features. This is further emphasised by the fact that the

- **Fieldwalking**  
A programme of non-intensive fieldwalking should be targeted on those areas of arable land along the line of the preferred route where anomalies have been identified by geophysical survey. This should be focused mainly on surface artefact collection.
- **Trial-trenching of Cropmark Sites**  
A programme of trial-trenching should be carried out in the fields where cropmarks lie close to, or within the line of, the preferred route, prior to the construction of the road. This should be carried out subsequent to the programmes of geophysical work and aerial photographic rectification. The results of the trial-trenching will determine whether any further excavation will be necessary.
- **Trial-trenching of Further Areas of Potential**  
Trial-trenching will also need to be carried out in other areas of potential, which may be identified by geophysics, fieldwalking and aerial photographic rectification.

The implementation of these recommendations will enable the formulation of a mitigation strategy. Depending on the results of the Stage 3 work, the strategy may include excavation in advance of the start of works, and a watching brief during the topsoil-stripping stage of the works.

## **12.0 Acknowledgements**

This report was written by Sarah Watt and edited by Lucie Dingwall, who also managed the project. The figures were prepared by Nigel Dodds. Thanks are due to Chris Wardle, the Heritage Data Manager at Staffordshire County Council, the staff of the Staffordshire Record Office and Lichfield Joint Record Office, and to Weeks Consulting for commissioning the work.

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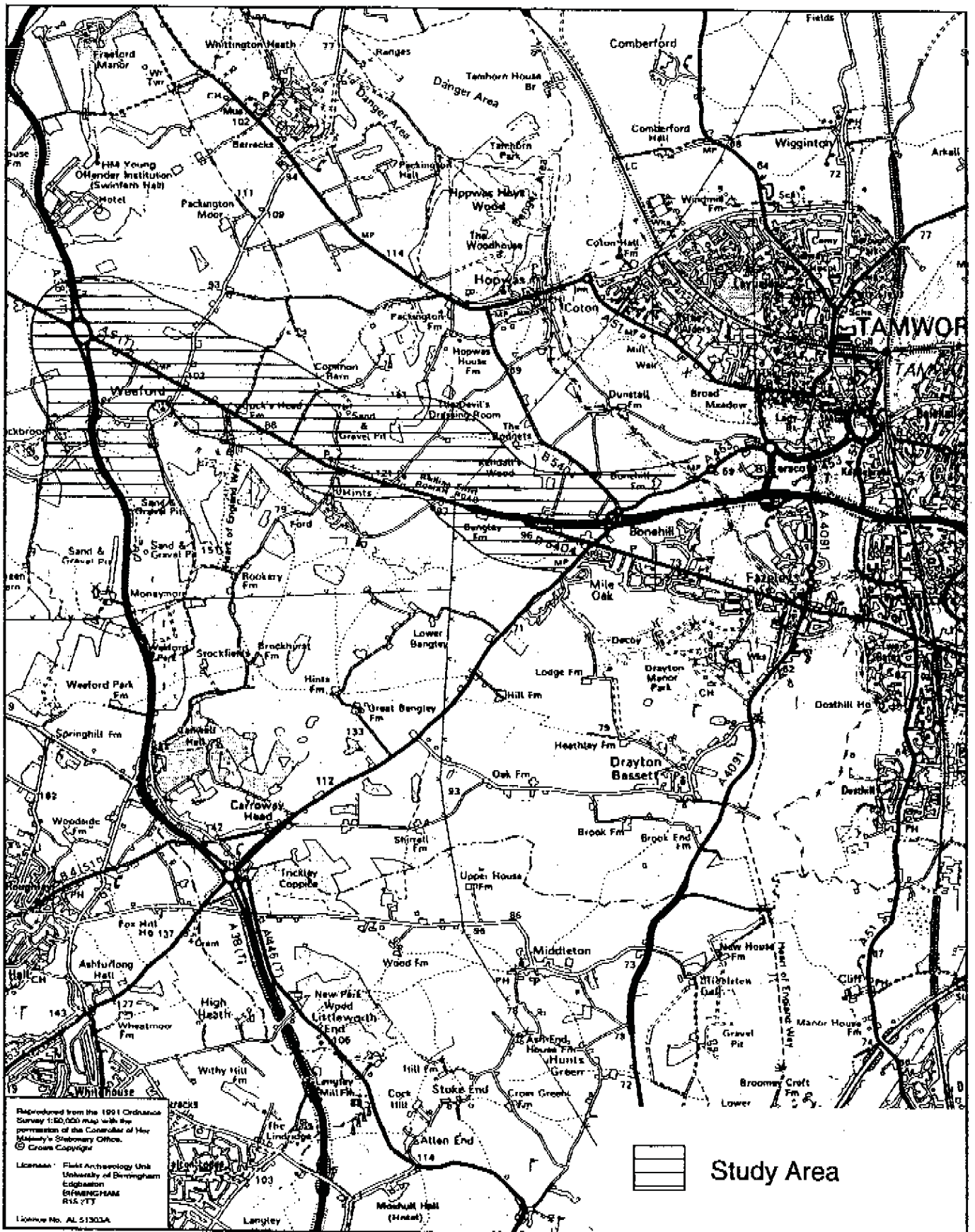


Fig. 1

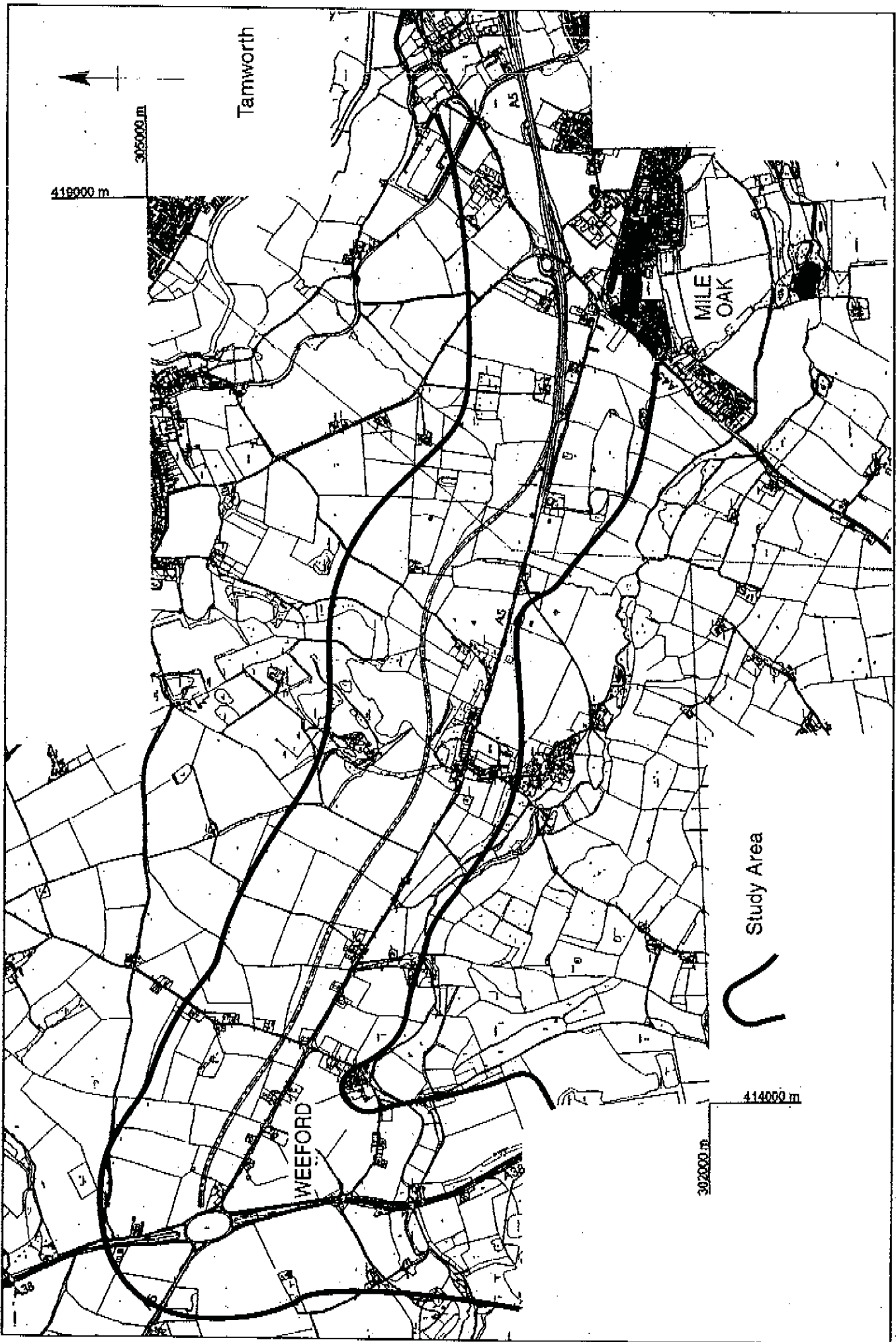


Fig.2



Fig.3

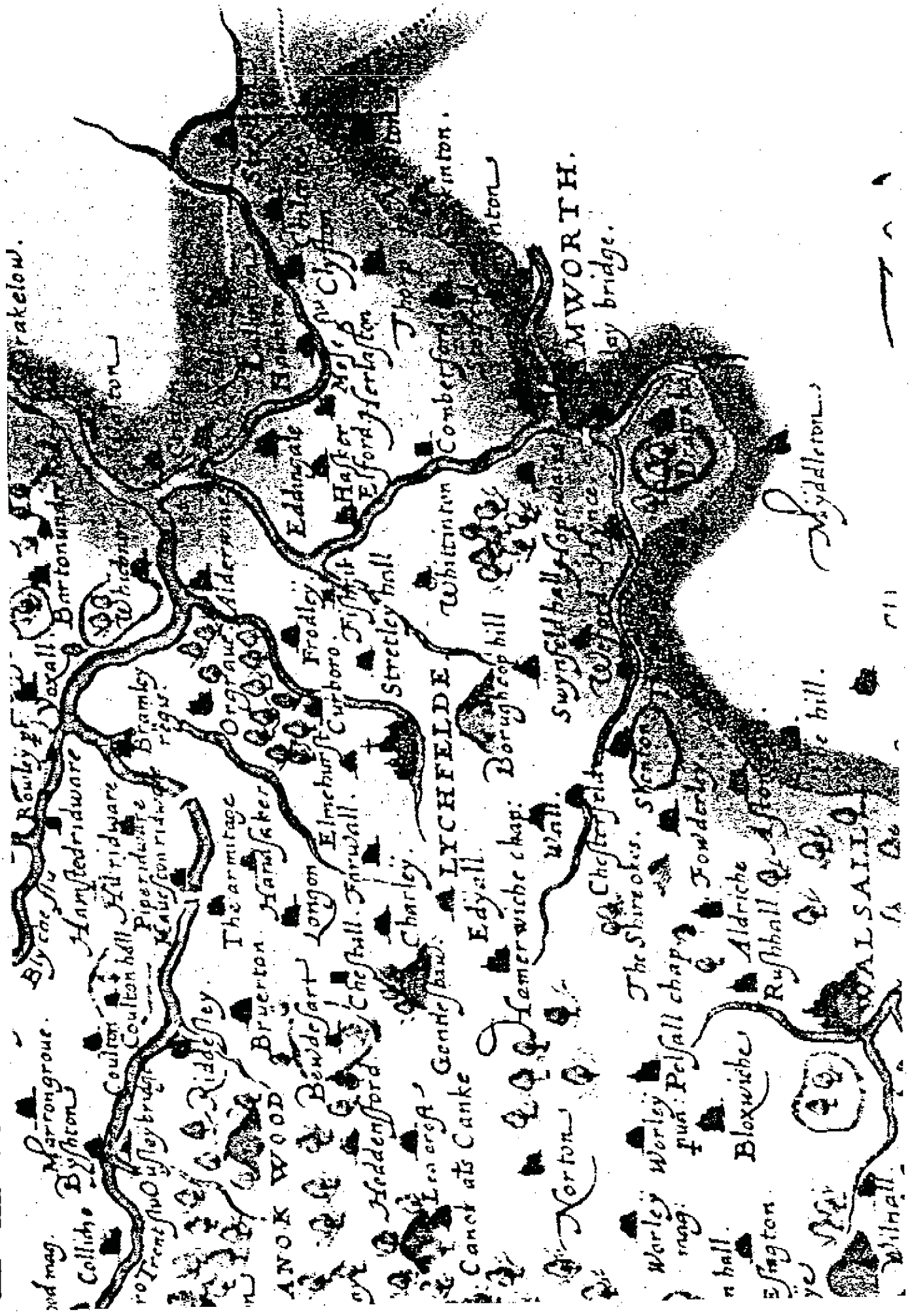


Fig.4



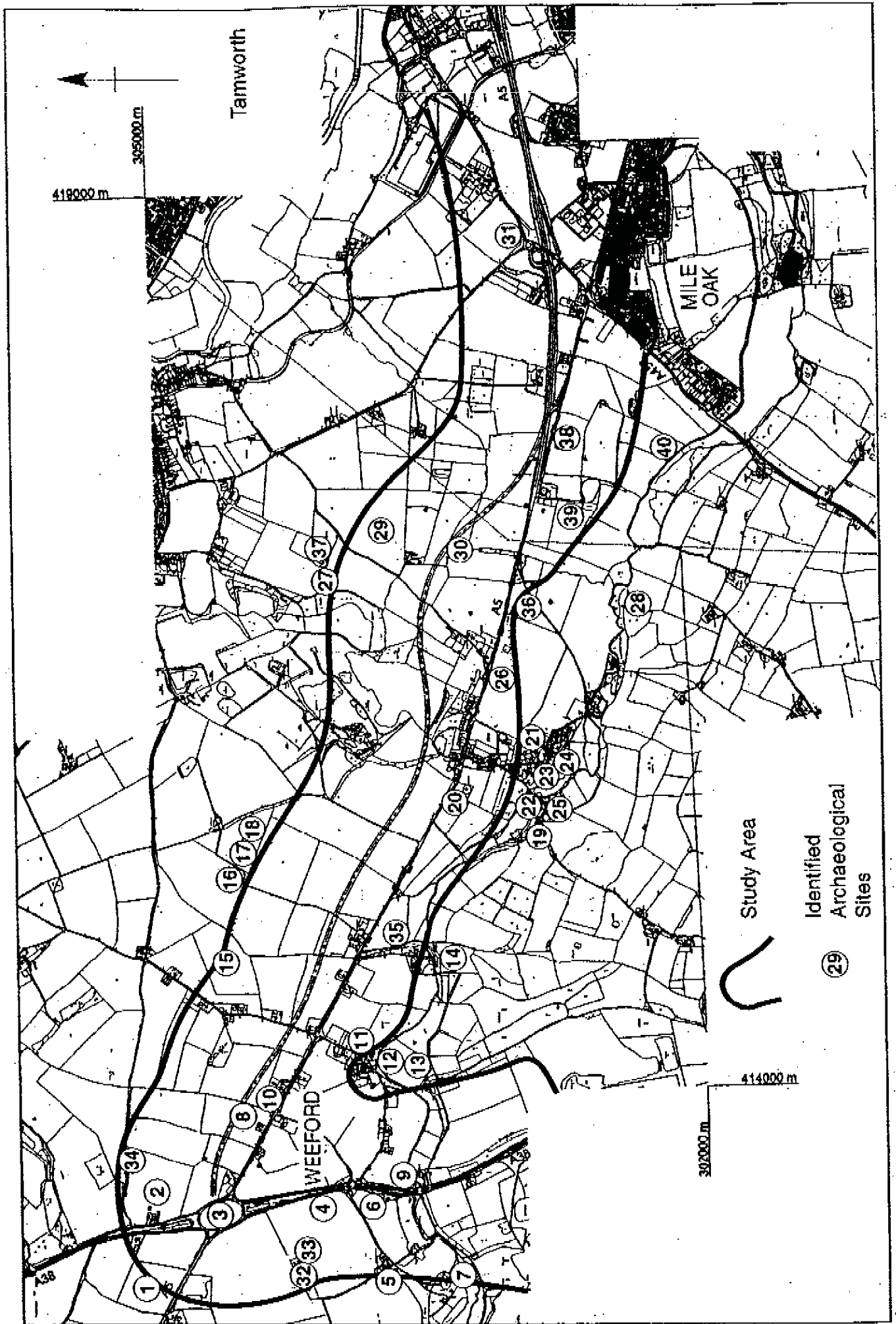


Fig.6

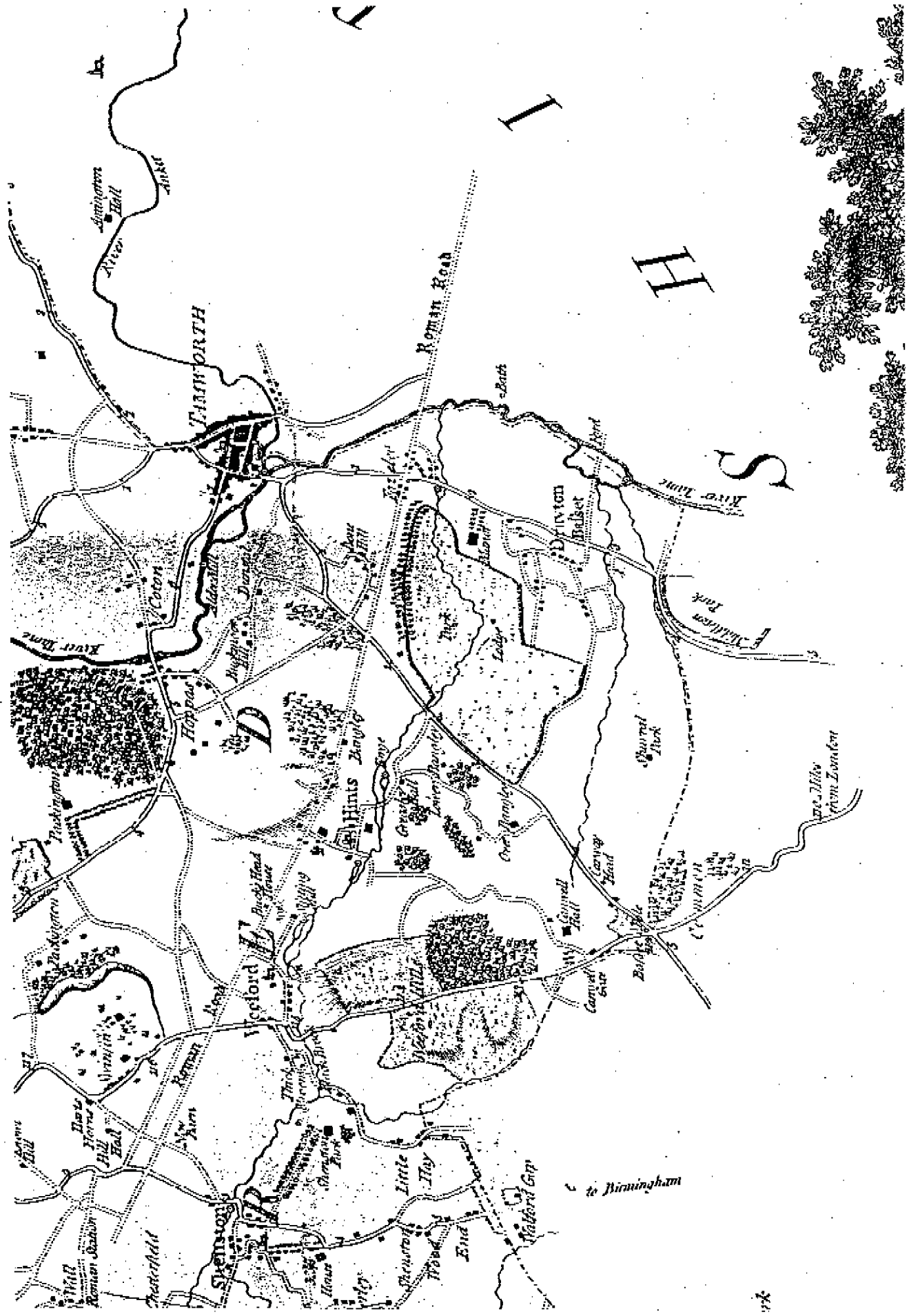


Fig. 7

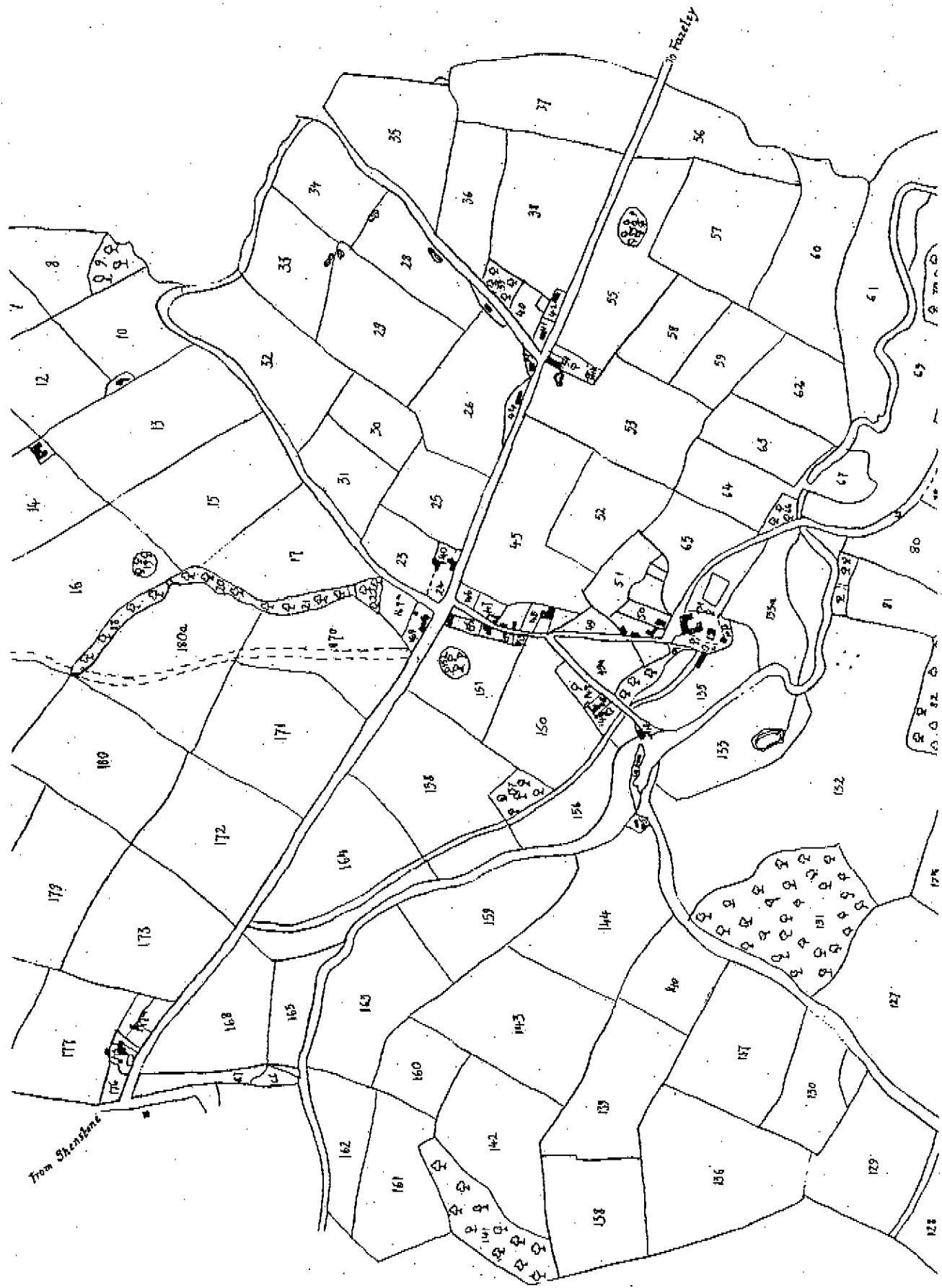


Fig.8



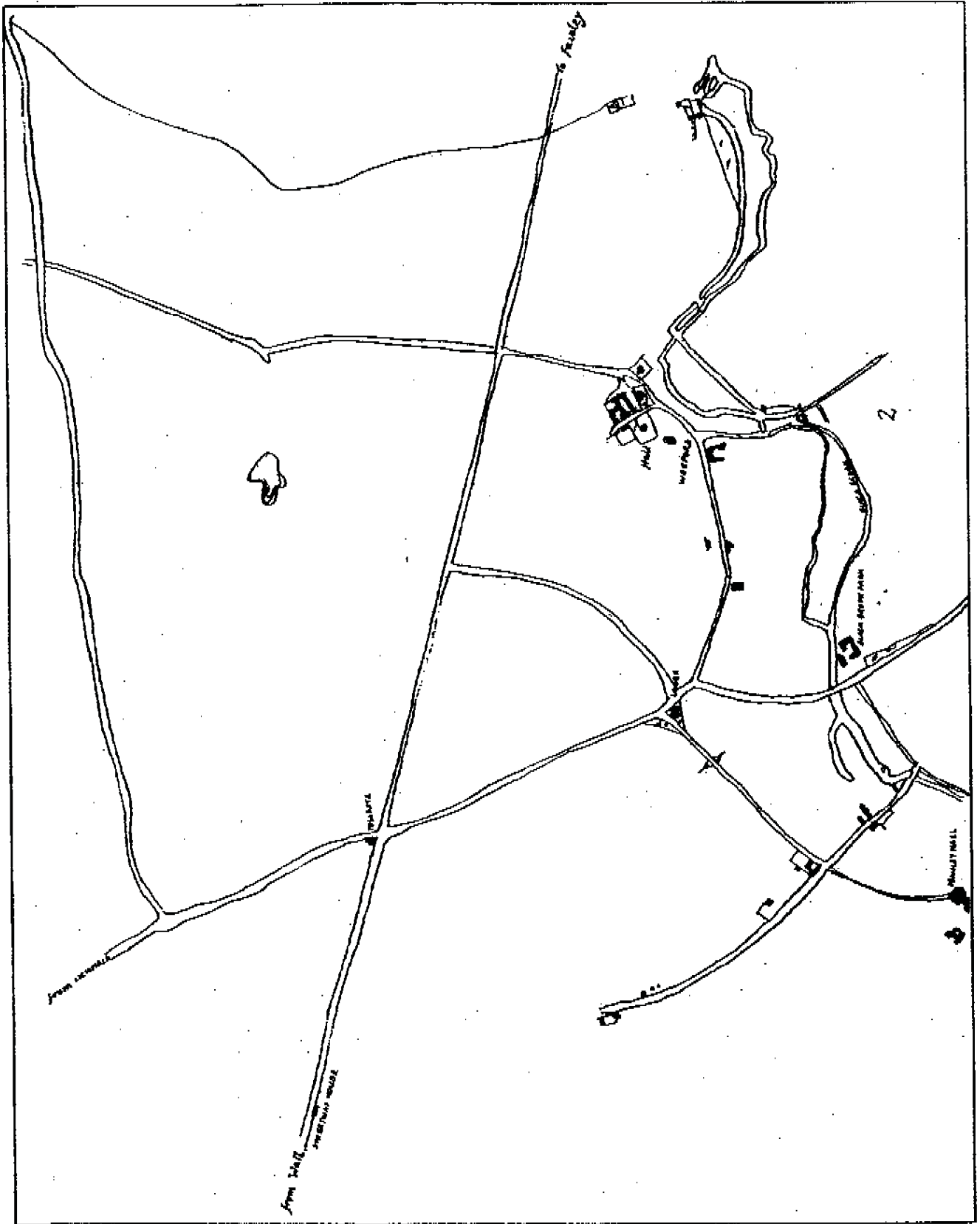


Fig.9



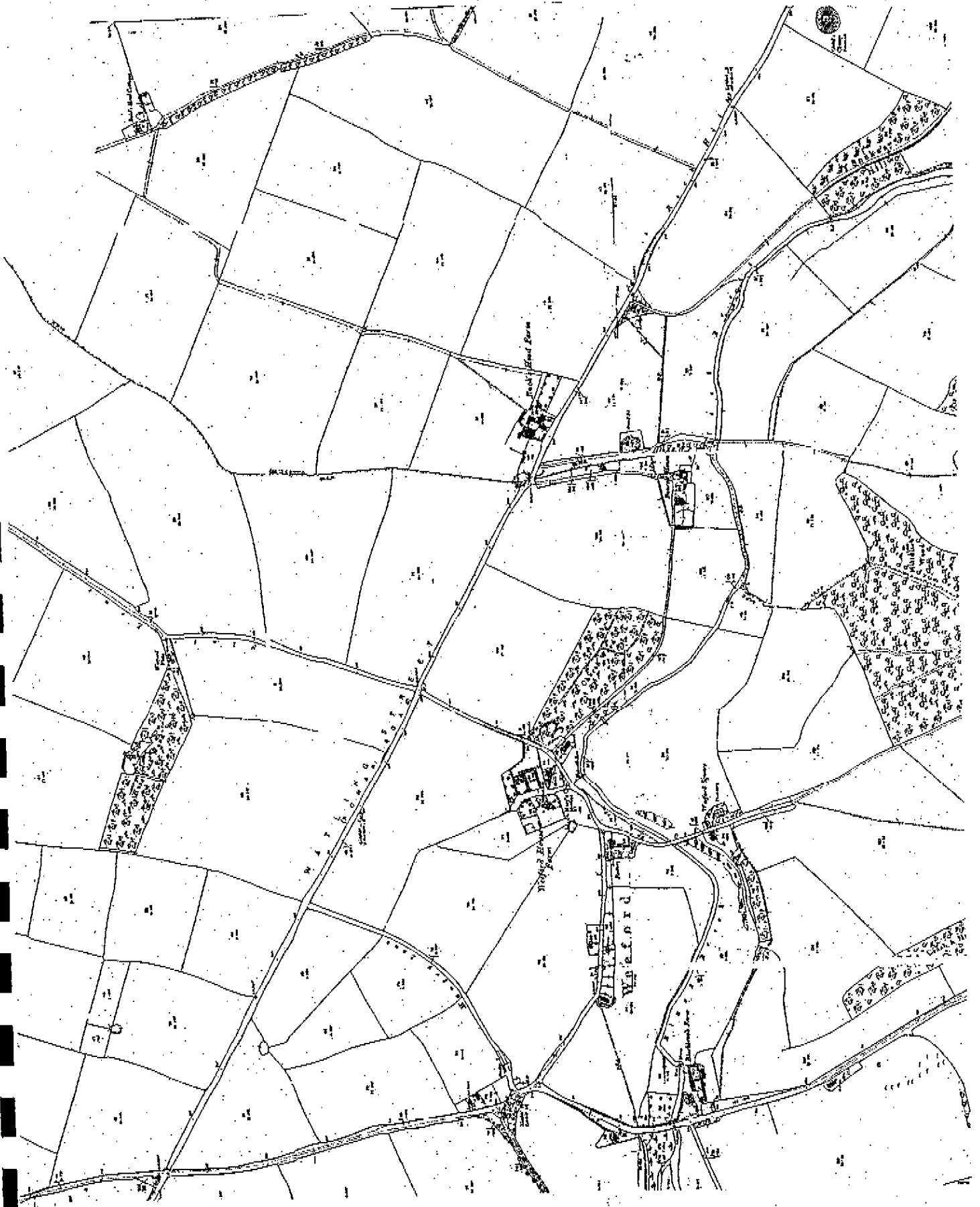


Fig.12

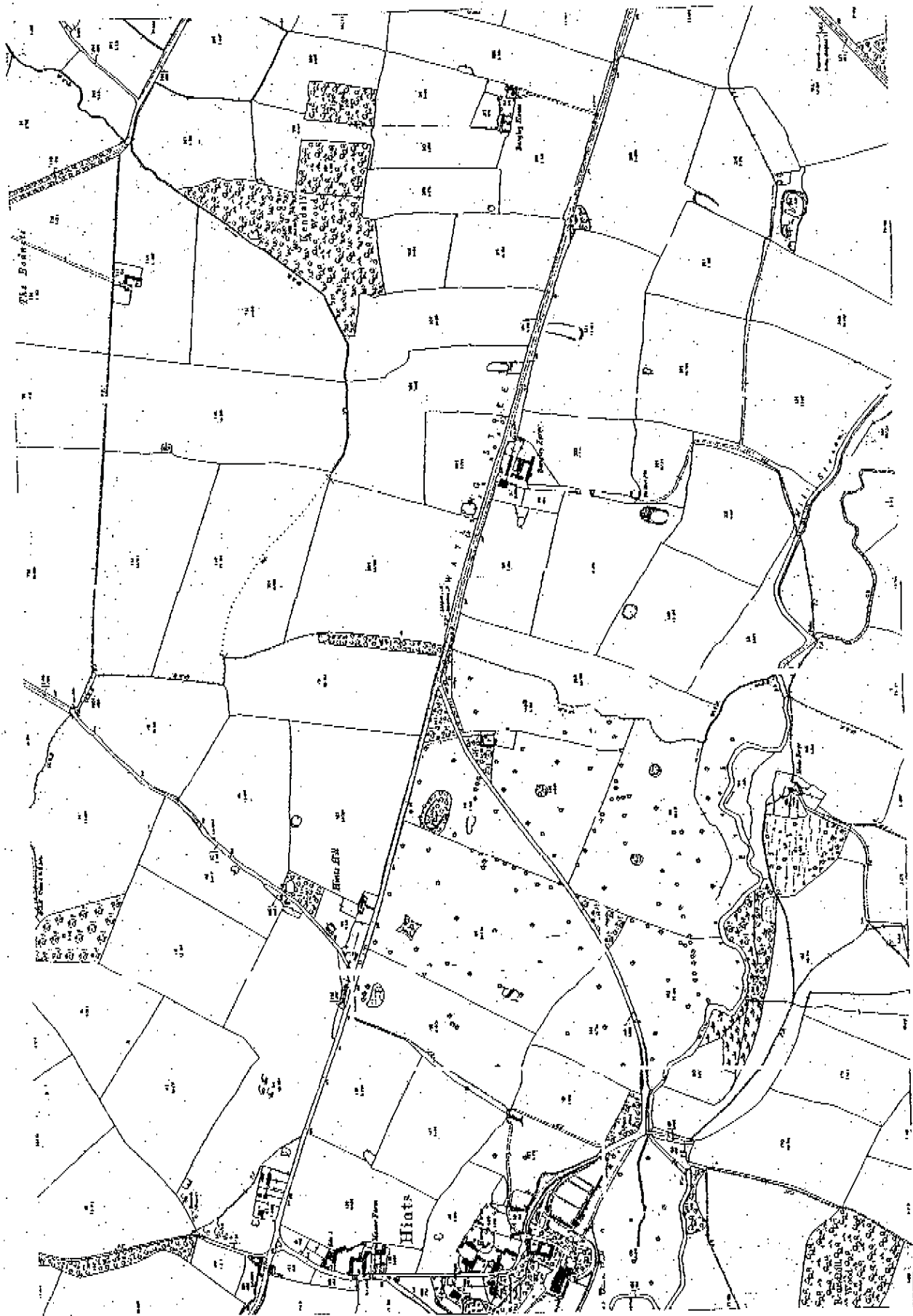


Fig. 13

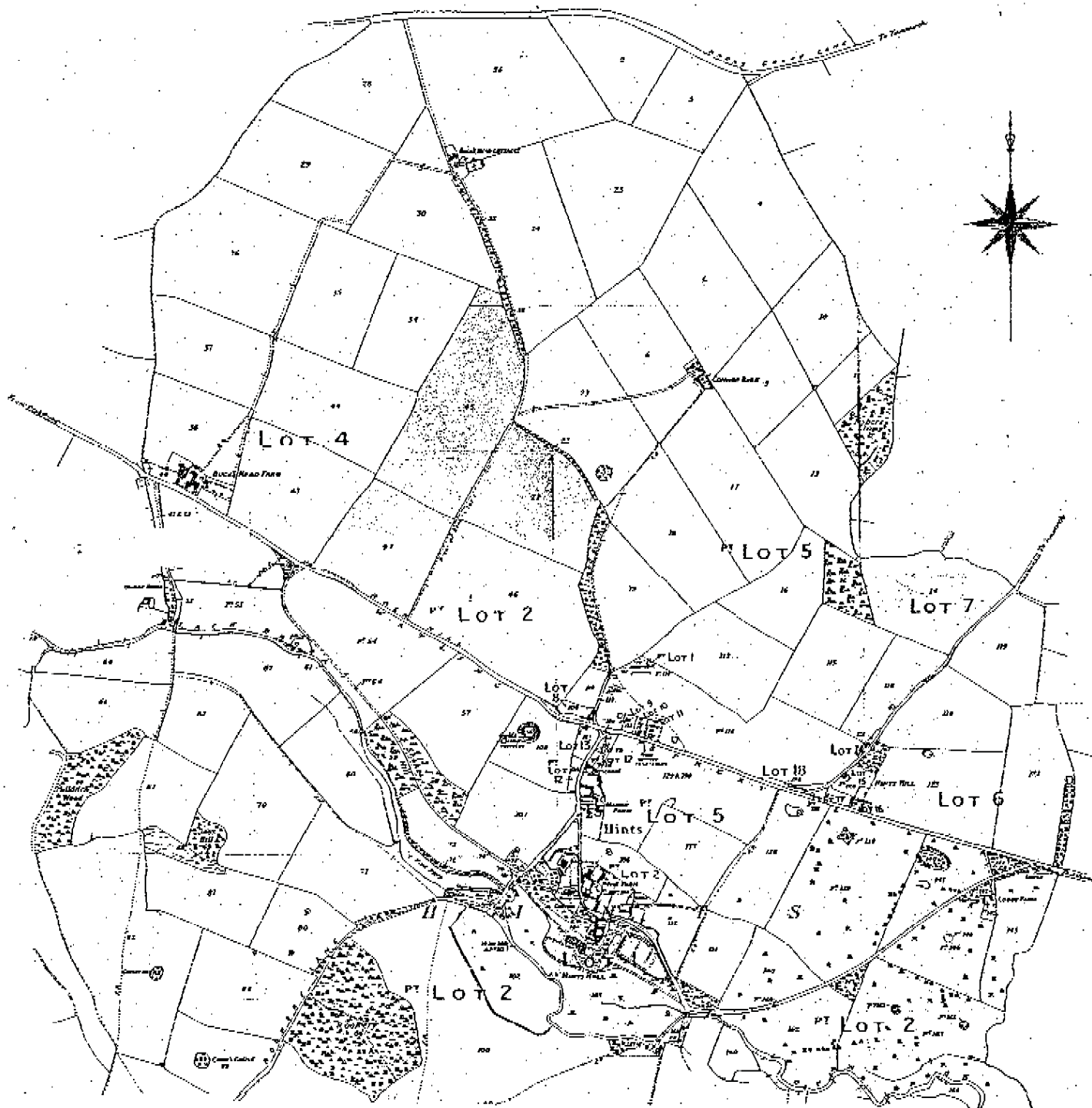


Fig.14

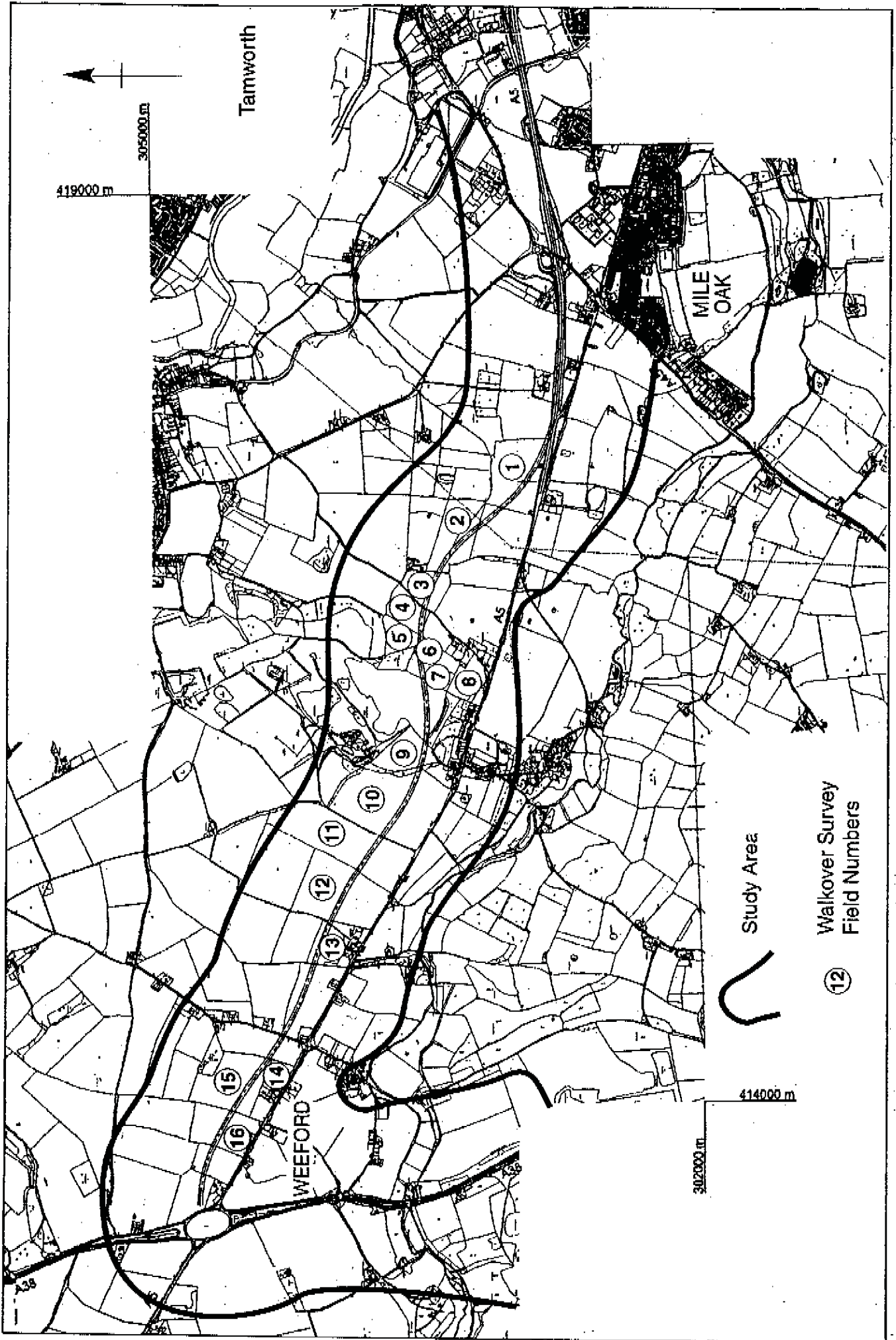


Fig.15