



THE UNIVERSITY
OF BIRMINGHAM

**An Archaeological Watching Brief
Parish Amenities Scheme
Clifton Campville, Staffordshire, 1999**

Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit



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1996

PARISH AMENITIES SCHEME - CLIFTON CAMPVILLE

Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit was commissioned to carry out a watching brief on two fields (centred on NGR SK 254 108) in Clifton Campville, Staffordshire (fig. 1). The two fields were being developed as part of a 'Millennium Greens' project funded by the National Lottery, with the original proposal being for the Southern field to be developed as a playing field, and the Northern field to be developed as a wild flower garden with a pond. The Southern field (fig. 2), known as *Broomy Close*, was pasture in 1840. This field contains substantial ridge-and-furrow which would have been destroyed by the creation of a level playing field. Therefore it was agreed that the ridge-and-furrow would be preserved by levelling up the field using an inert fill known as 'hoggin'. This had already been completed by the time the watching brief took place.

The Northern field (fig.2) was known as *Near Coney Gray*, which indicates that the field was likely to have been used for rabbit warrens (coneygreave or coneygree being the usual names for rabbit warrens). Post-medieval rabbit warrens often occur as low mounds in which the warrens were created. There are two low mounds on the western side of the field. Therefore the original aim of the watching brief was to observe and record any evidence of the rabbit warrens whilst the field was being stripped. The original plan for a pond to be excavated had been abandoned.

Stripping of the field took place on 16th and 17th March 1999. An archaeologist was on site for 1.5 of these days. It was decided that the two obvious low mounds in the west of the field would be left *in situ*. The area stripped was approximately 80m x 60m, with a path being left through the middle. The topsoil was removed by machine to a depth of approximately 10-15cm. The topsoil was a brown silty loam with some stone. It contained occasional sherds of post-medieval pottery and modern glass fragments. The top of the subsoil was found in some areas of the site. This was a red sand with gravel. No discrete features could be seen within the subsoil exposed.

It can be concluded that no archaeological remains have been destroyed by the development. No evidence was visible when the field was stripped, and both the ridge-and-furrow and the possible rabbit warren mounds have been preserved *in situ*. As the land is to be used only for recreational purposes, it seems unlikely that either of these remains are threatened and therefore further archaeological fieldwork or research will not be necessary.

Josh Williams, Birmingham Field Archaeology Unit, December 1999.

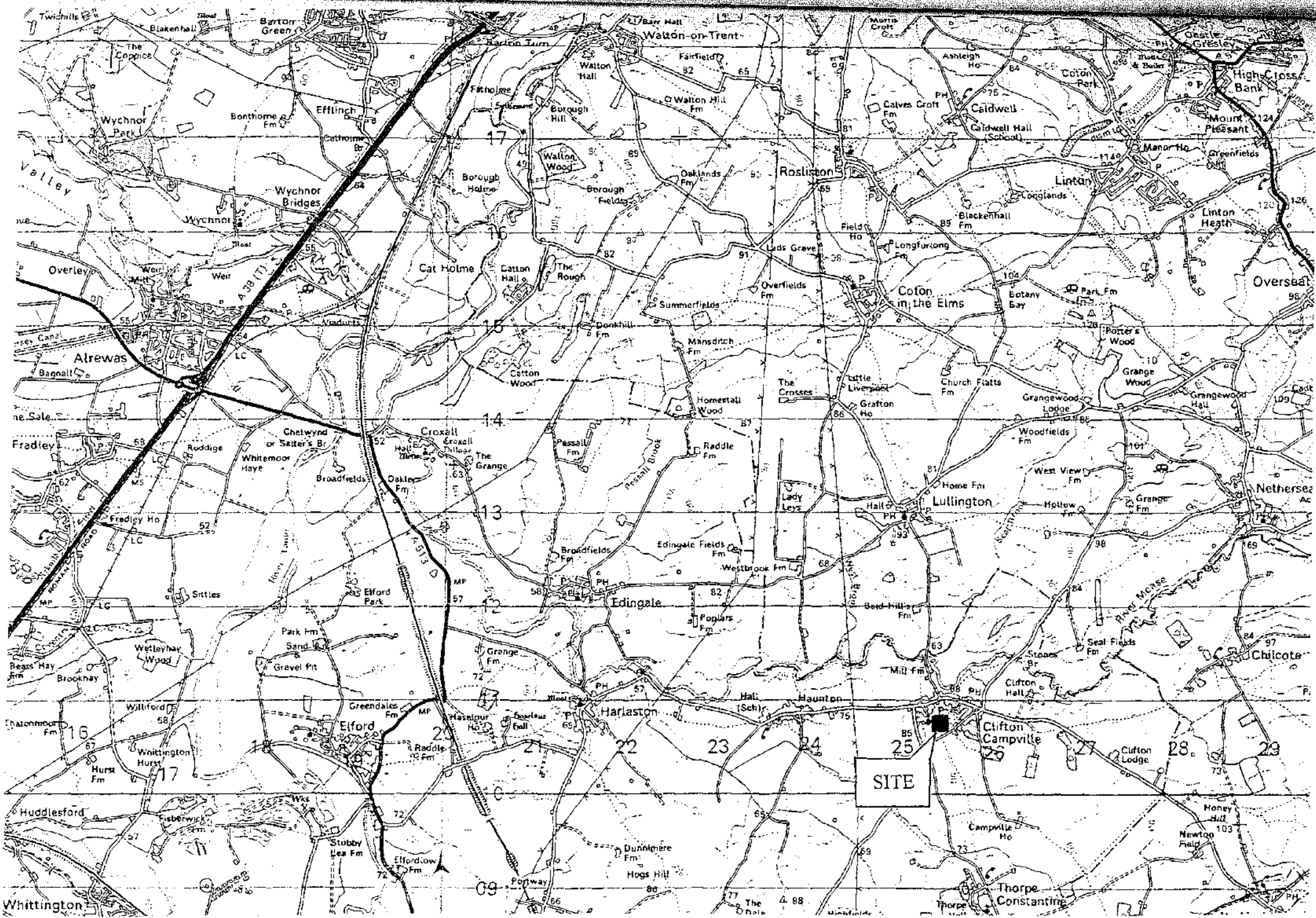


Figure 1

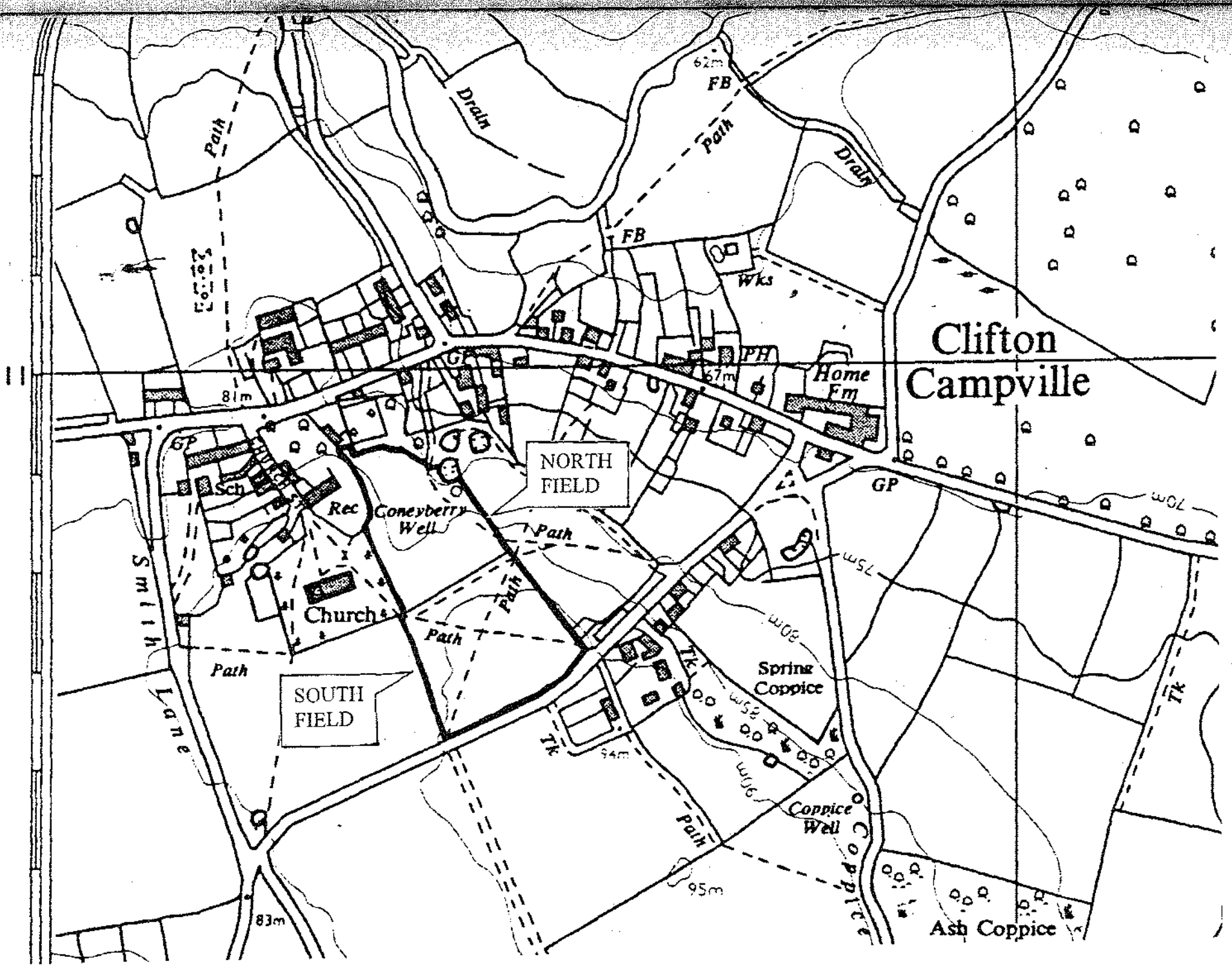


Figure 2