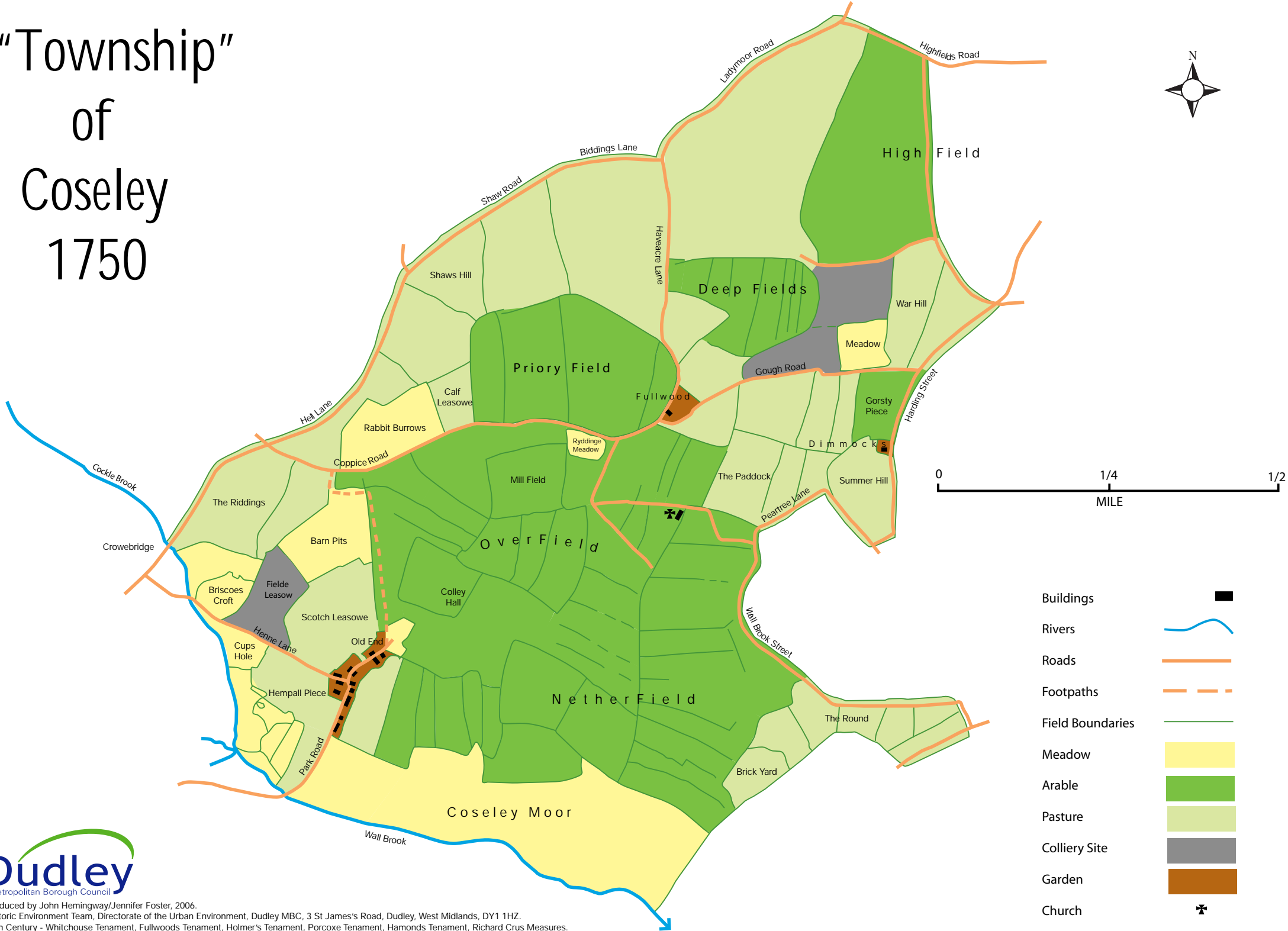


"Township" of Coseley 1750



Coseley Township

Coseley Township is in the parish of Sedgley and within the county of Stafford. The place-name is derived from two elements in Early English (Anglo-Saxon): *Cole* – a personal masculine name and *leah* – a woodland estate. The boundaries of Coseley are Wall Brook in the south and west. Shaw Road and Biddings Lane in the north, Rainbow Street, Skidmore Road and Harding Street, Summerhill Road, Peartree Lane, Wallbrook Street and Fountain Lane in the east. The geology of the area is the coal measures, particularly the 20 foot seam.

Coseley is first recorded in a Lay Subsidy of 1292 when *Jno Adams de Colseleye* and *Geoffrey Cosleye* were first mentioned. They were woodsmen working for the Baron of Dudley. By the late medieval period the landscape of the township was divided into three sections: Coseley Moor that ran along the Wall Brook, and a huge open arable field divided into Upper and Lower Field, which ran as far north as Ivyhouse Lane and Gough Road. North of the lane/road were three semicircular fields: Priory Field in the east, Deepfield due east of it and High Field which was subdivided by the township boundary with Bradley. In between these lay pasture lands.

Settlement was scattered in Coseley and there does not seem to have been a main settlement in the township, the largest one and probably the oldest one was at Old End (Masons Bank). As far as is known there was never a settlement called Coseley only a township! Another small settlement was Fullards End, at the junction of Ivyhouse Lane and Gough Road on the north side of the Upper Open Field.

Although it is envisaged that coal mining had occurred in the medieval period, as of yet there is very little evidence of it. From the 16th century there are references to individual yeomen farmers operating their own coal works by licence from the lord of the manor. They are also involved in nail making and making locks. In 1625 William Persehouse of *Colsley*, a yeoman farmer, let his *coleworkes* and *mines of iron* to John Bennett for 16 years in a pasture called *Fielde Leasowe*.

During the 17th century the settlements appear to be forming a lineal development along the various lanes. With this rise in population came a demand for a local church. When Joseph Eccleshall, was ejected from the living of Sedgley for his refusal to accept the terms of the Act of Uniformity of 1662, he came to Coseley, and was instrumental in founding the Old Meeting House, which can claim to have been the first place of public worship in the district. In the next two hundred years, non-conformity continued to grow in Coseley. The Baptists built chapels at Darkhouse, Providence, and Ebenezer, and the Strict Baptists at the Coppice. Wesleyan Methodism was established at Thumpers Lane and Mamble Square (where the present Roseville Methodist Church had its origins); and Primitive Methodism at Upper Ettingshall and Wallbrook.

From the second half of the seventeenth century, coal mining and ironworking began to develop quickly, shown by the agreements between landowners and mining speculators that grew after the Civil War. This increased when James Brindley constructed his Birmingham Canal, which brushed the north boundary of the Township. This canal wound around the contours of the high ground, but when

Thomas Telford straightened it in 1837, it ran through the middle of the Township via a tunnel.

With the improvement of transport came the building of new iron foundries and furnaces. Edward Sheldon started a business at what was later to be known as Cannon Foundry. Other industrial concerns followed, including the Priorfield Blast Furnaces of H.B. Whitehouse, also near the canal. When the Oxford, Worcester, Wolverhampton Railway was built in 1848-9, and further lines subsequent to this, the communication improved by leaps and bounds. This led to the whole area being involved in industry of one kind or another.

Coseley was some distance away from All Saints Church in Sedgley, so in 1829 Christ Church was built. In 1832, the year of the first great Cholera outbreak in Coseley, it was inaugurated as a parish church. In February 1834, Christ Church Schools were opened, in an attempt to educate more of the young. The Township took over its own administration in the 1860's when the Coseley Urban District Council was formed and industry continued to rule right up until the First World War. The place-name Rosehill was derived from a house of that name on the south side of Ivyhouse Lane in the 19th century.

After the war enormous changes occurred. The most important was the construction of the Birmingham-Wolverhampton New Road, which crossed the centre of the Township from south to north. By now the collieries and iron factories were beginning to fail, which meant more spare land could be used for new streets and housing. Jubilee Park was built on what had been an old colliery site and the general movement in constructing houses on these old sites began. By the end of the 20th century Coseley was mainly an area of domestic housing.

John Hemingway, 22nd February 2005.

Notes: The base material for the composition of the 1750 map is the parish map of 1826, with other material gathered from local histories and documentary research.

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