

**The Old Post Office, 50 Enford Hill,
Enford, Wiltshire**

**An Archaeological Evaluation
for Michael Fowler Architects**

by M J Saunders

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code EHW00/77

January 2001

Summary

Site name: The Old Post Office, 50 Enford Hill, Enford, Wiltshire

Grid reference: SU 1400 5153

Site activity: Evaluation trenching

Date and duration of project: 15th January 2001

Project manager: M J Saunders

Site supervisor: M J Saunders

Site code: EHW00/77

Area of site: c. 600 sq. m.

Summary of results: Negative results

Monuments identified: None

Location and reference of archive: The site archive is currently held by Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd, 47–49 De Beauvoir Road, Reading, Berkshire, RG1 5NR and will be deposited with Devizes Museum in due course.

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Report edited/checked by:	Steve Ford ✓ 16.01.01
	Melanie Hall ✓ 22.01.01

The Old Post Office, 50 Enford Hill, Enford, Wiltshire An Archaeological Evaluation

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Report 00/77

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out at The Old Post Office, 50 Enford Hill, Enford, Wiltshire (SU 1400 5153) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Michael J Fowler of Michael Fowler Architects, The Studio, West Grafton, Marlborough, Wiltshire, SN8 3BY, on behalf of their client, Mrs A Padgett. A planning application has been made to Kennet District Council (application no. K/40449) for the demolition of an existing fire-damaged listed building and its replacement by new housing. As the site has archaeological potential, a field investigation had been requested in the form of trial trenching. This is in accordance with the Department of the Environment's Policy and Planning Guidance Note, *Archaeology and Planning* (PPG16 1990) and Policy A2 of the Kennet Local Plan. The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Mr Duncan Coe, Archaeologist for Wiltshire County Archaeological Service. The fieldwork was undertaken by M J Saunders and Steve Ford on the 15th of January 2001. The site code is EHW00/77.

Location, Topography and Geology

Enford is situated on the edge of Salisbury Plain, to the north of Amesbury on the margins of the river Avon (Fig. 1). The site itself is located on the south side of Enford Hill, to the south-west of All Saints Parish Church (Fig. 2). It occupies a rectangular area of c. 600 sq. m and lies at an approximate height of 87.00m above Ordnance Datum but with a gentle slope down to the east. According to geological maps (BGS 1985) the underlying geology is river and valley gravel, although chalk was present in both the evaluation trenches.

Archaeological Background

The archaeological potential of the site has been highlighted in a brief provided by Wiltshire County Archaeological Service who advise the Local Planning Authority on matters relating to archaeology. The site lies within the historic core of the village and in close proximity to the Parish Church, the fabric of which includes Norman elements. Documentary sources indicate that the settlement was in existence by AD 934 and known as

Enedford and in 1086 (Domesday Book) as *Enedforde* meaning ‘duck ford’ (Mills 1998). A Palaeolithic hand-axe was found to the south-east of the development area.

Objectives and Methodology

The purpose of the evaluation was to determine the presence/absence, extent, condition, character, quality and date of any archaeological or palaeoenvironmental deposits within the area of development. The work was to be carried out in a manner that would not compromise the integrity of archaeological features or deposits which warrant preservation in-situ or might better be excavated under conditions pertaining to full excavation. Specific research aims were to determine if archaeologically relevant levels have survived on the site; to determine if archaeological deposits of any period were present; to determine if there were any Saxon or medieval deposits present and to determine the relationship between the upstanding structure and any below ground archaeology. This was to be achieved by digging two trenches, one 8m long and the other 2m long. The shorter trench was to be positioned against the wall of the existing building, while the longer trench was to be located elsewhere on the site. The trenches were to be dug using a mini-excavator fitted with a toothless bucket under constant archaeological supervision. Where archaeological features were certainly or possibly present the stripped areas were to be hand cleaned using the appropriate tools. Sufficient of the archaeological features and deposits exposed were to be excavated or sampled by hand to satisfy the aims of the brief. All spoilheaps were to be monitored for finds.

A list of trenches giving lengths, breadths, depths and a description of sections and geology is given in Appendix 1.

Results

The two trenches were dug in the positions shown on Figure 3 and their dimensions differed slightly from those originally proposed.

Trench 1 (Plate 1)

Trench 1 was positioned in the garden to the east of the existing building and aligned SW-NE (Fig. 3). It was 1.04m wide, 11.60m long. At the north-east end the trench was 1.37m deep and at the south-west end 1.50m deep. A water pipe crossed the trench diagonally at 3.5m from the south-west end and concrete was encountered between 9m and 9.70m, also covering a water pipe. Plinths of unexcavated ground were left in both these positions. The trench was excavated down to the level of the natural chalk and the stratigraphy found to consist

of a series of layers of dumping, including three thin layers of chalk overlying the bedrock. This made ground is presumably derived from the material removed when the old Post Office was terraced into the hill slope. No archaeological features were present and only modern china, glass bottles and a sherd of late post-medieval pottery were recovered from the spoil (not retained).

Trench 2 (Plate 2)

Trench 2 was dug against the north end of the front wall of the standing building to examine its foundations and determine whether any other below ground remains either related to or pre-dated this structure. The trench measured 2.00m by 2.90m and was 0.52m deep. Apart from some tree root or modern disturbance, no archaeological features or deposits were located and only modern material was recovered from the spoilheaps. The foundations of the old Post Office consisted of two courses of brickwork laid directly onto the natural chalk bedrock. No traces of an earlier building were discovered.

Conclusion

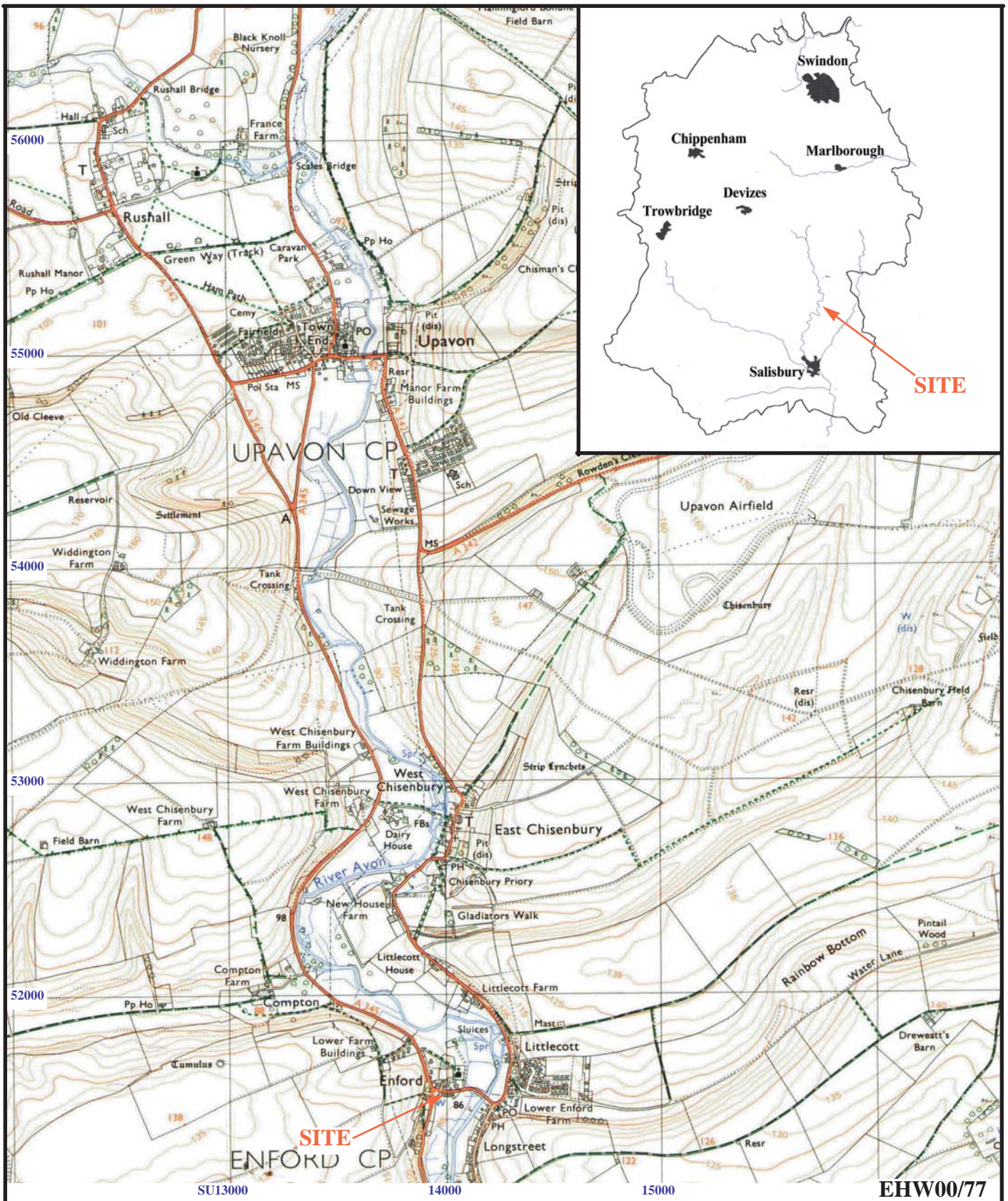
No archaeological features or deposits were found during the evaluation and only finds of modern date were recovered from the spoilheaps. The evaluation revealed that no earlier structure lay beneath the fire-damaged listed building.

References

BGS, 1985, *British Geological Survey*, 1:63360, Sheet 282, Drift Edition, Keyworth
Mills, A D, 1998, *Oxford Dictionary of English Place-Names*, Oxford University Press
PPG 16, 1990, *Archaeology and Planning*, Department of the Environment Planning Policy Guidance Note 16,
HMSO

APPENDIX 1: Trench details
0m at south or west end

<i>Trench No.</i>	<i>Length (m)</i>	<i>Breadth (m)</i>	<i>Depth (m)</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1	11.60	1.04	1.37 (NE) 1.50 (SW)	Series of dump layers present overlying natural chalk. No archaeological features or deposits present.
2	2.90	2.00	0.52	0.52m of made ground onto natural chalk. Post Office foundations comprised two courses of brick laid directly onto the chalk. No archaeological features or deposits present.



50 Enford Hill, Enford, Wiltshire, 2001

Figure 1. Location of site within Enford and Wiltshire.

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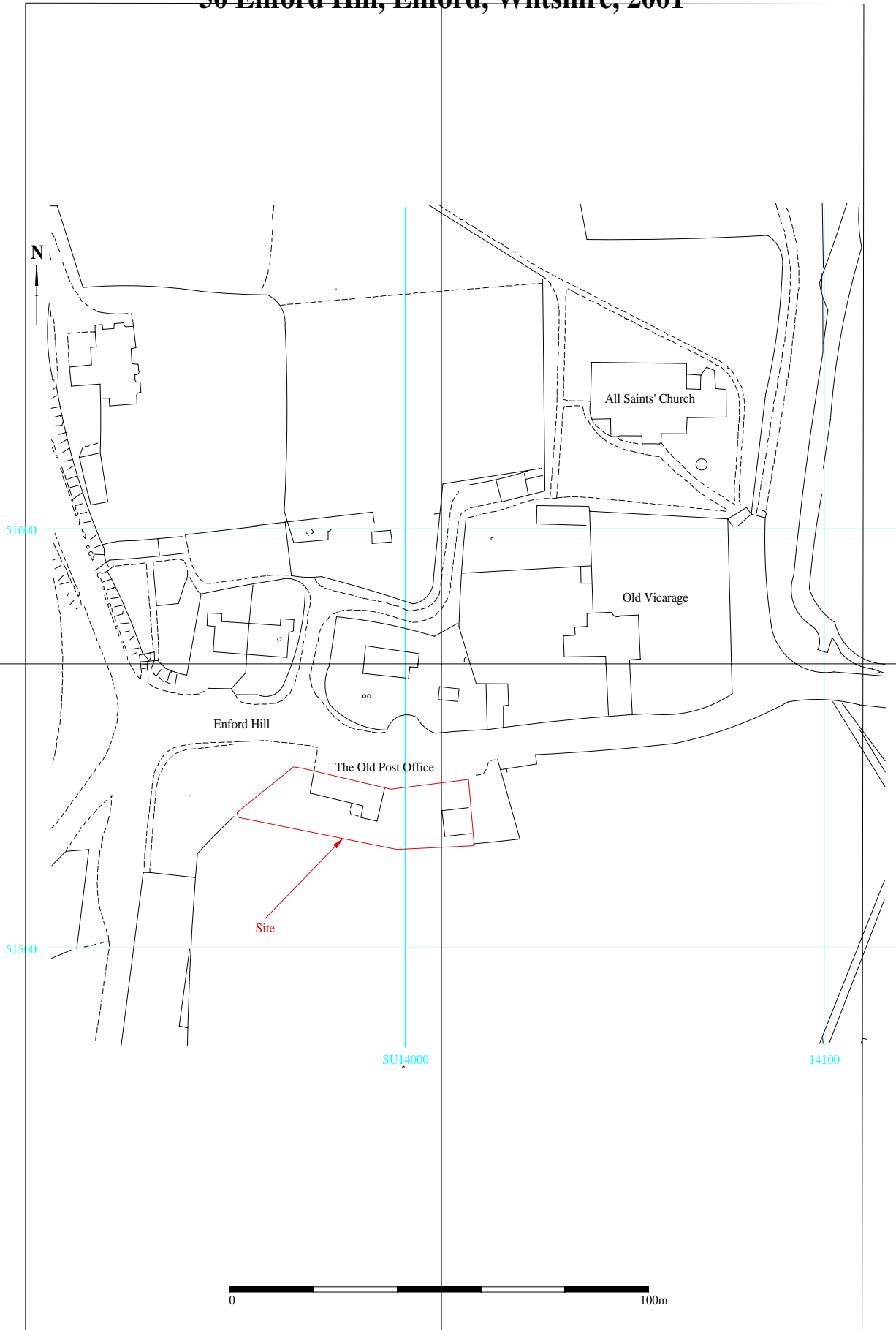


Figure 2. Location of site.

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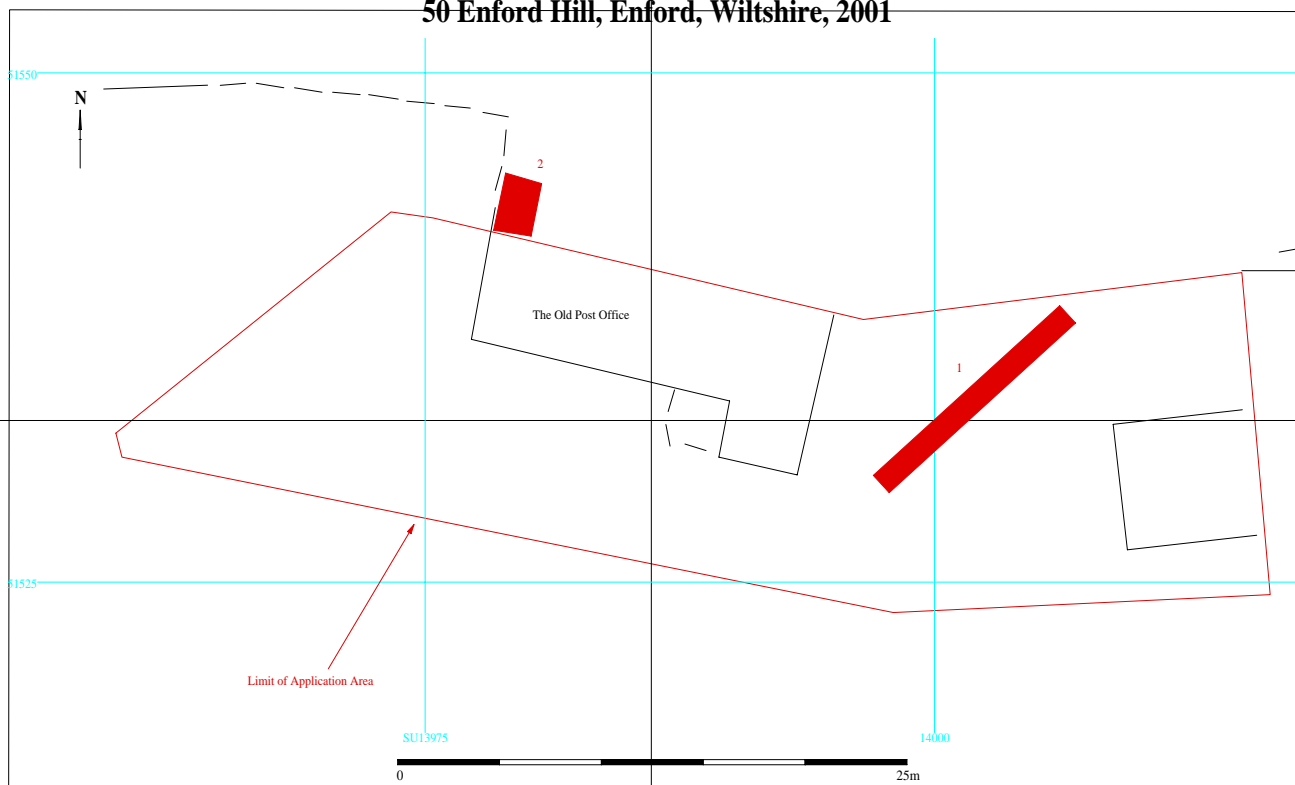


Figure 3. Plan of site showing location of trenches.

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