

Watching brief at land adjacent Willersley Hillfort, Broadway (WSM 23280)

M R Glyde BSc PIFA

13 January 2000

<i>Client</i>	Midlands Electricity
<i>Site address</i>	land adjacent Willersley hillfort, Broadway
<i>National Grid Reference</i>	SP 1111 3836
<i>County Sites and Monuments Record reference</i>	WSM 23280
<i>Brief produced by</i>	Planning Advisory Section Archaeological Service
<i>on</i>	13th August 1998
<i>Date(s) of fieldwork</i>	Week beginning 14 September 1998

Previous archaeological work on the site

The site is situated to the west of Willersley hillfort (WSM 1446); Fig 1, which is scheduled ancient monument on the border of Worcestershire and Gloucestershire, and mainly in the latter county. It is a large fort of Iron Age date, variously described as either univalve or bivalve, which suggests that it has not studied in any detail. Some ridge and furrow earthworks (WSM 10087) are located to the south of the site.

No previous fieldwork is known on the site itself.

Previous archaeological work on associated sites

In general the area in the vicinity of the site is recorded as being much disturbed by quarries (presumably for stone), and by the construction of a golf course.

Aims

The aim of the watching brief was to observe and record archaeological deposits, and to determine their extent, state of preservation, date and type, as far as reasonably possible. The fieldwork was carried out during the installation of poles for a revised power line route.

Geology and Soils

The soils belong to Elmton and Denchworth soil series respectively at the east and west ends of the new power line route. The former are easily cultivatable, and the latter are most useful for winter cereals (Beard *et al* 1986). From east to west along the line of the route

these overlie Inferior Oolite, Cotswold sand, and Upper Lias deposits

Method

Groundworks consisted of bore holes into which the wooden pylons were set. In addition two pits, used to embed a stay, were mechanically excavated adjacent to the bore holes. These pits were c.2.5m long by 0.8m wide and in excess of 2.5m deep.

All trenches were observed, however due to their small area and great depth it was not possible to clean exposed surfaces.

The watching brief follows the general specification for watching briefs (County Archaeological Service 1995)

Deposit description

Only the upper 1m of deposits could be accurately described as access to the trenches was not possible on the grounds of safety. All trenches displayed mixed and disturbed layers indicative of the unstable nature of slope. The location of the ground disturbance recorded is shown in Fig 2.

Pylon 1

The spoil from the two bore holes was observed but no artefacts were seen.

The two stay holes excavated on opposite sides of the bores hole revealed remarkably different deposits. Pit 1 had a shallow topsoil made up of a stony sandy loam which was yellow orange in colour. Sealed beneath was a clean, very sandy deposit with occasional eroded lias stone. This was observed to the bottom of the pit c. 2 m deep.

Pit 2 again had a shallow topsoil c. 0.3m deep which sealed a more compact stony sandy loam c. 1.5m deep. Natural stone bedrock was then encountered.

Neither bore holes or pits produced any artefacts.

Pylon 2

Bore holes for pylon 2 again produced no artefacts and only a single stay pit was available for observation. This had a slightly deeper topsoil at c. 0.35m over a mixed compact sandy / stony loam.

Pylon 3

Bore holes for pylon 3 produced no artefacts.

The staypit for this pylon cut across a linear hollow visible as an earthwork. The topsoil was shallow c. 0.2m over a compact stony sandy yellow orange subsoil c. 1.75m deep. This was clean but very mixed. The natural was lias stone.

Discussion

Evidence from all the bore holes and stay pits showed clear evidence that the land has been subjected to land slides in the past. This is

further evident from the local, rippled topography. No archaeological deposits or features were observed.

Summary

A watching brief was undertaken immediately to the west of Willersley hillfort (SP1111 3836 - WSM 23280), on behalf of Midlands Electricity. No deposits of archaeological significance were observed.

The Service has a professional obligation to publish the results of archaeological projects within a reasonable period of time. To this end, the Service intend to use this summary as the basis for publication through local or regional journals. The Client is requested to consider the content of this section as being acceptable for such publication.

Acknowledgements

The Service would particularly like to thank Peter Davis and Alison Lovegrove (Midlands Electricity Plc) for their assistance in carrying out this project, and Group 4 for allowing access.

The fieldwork was undertaken by Michael Glyde BSc PIFA.

Archive

The archive consists of:

3 Fieldwork progress records AS2

Bibliography

Beard, G R, Cope, D W, Jones, R J A, Palmer, R C, Whitfield, W A D, 1986 *Soils of Worcester and the Malverns district (sheet 150)*, Memoirs of the Soil Survey of England and Wales, Harpenden

County Archaeological Service 1995 *Manual of Service practice: fieldwork recording manual*, internal report 399, County Archaeological Service, Hereford and Worcester County Council, Worcester

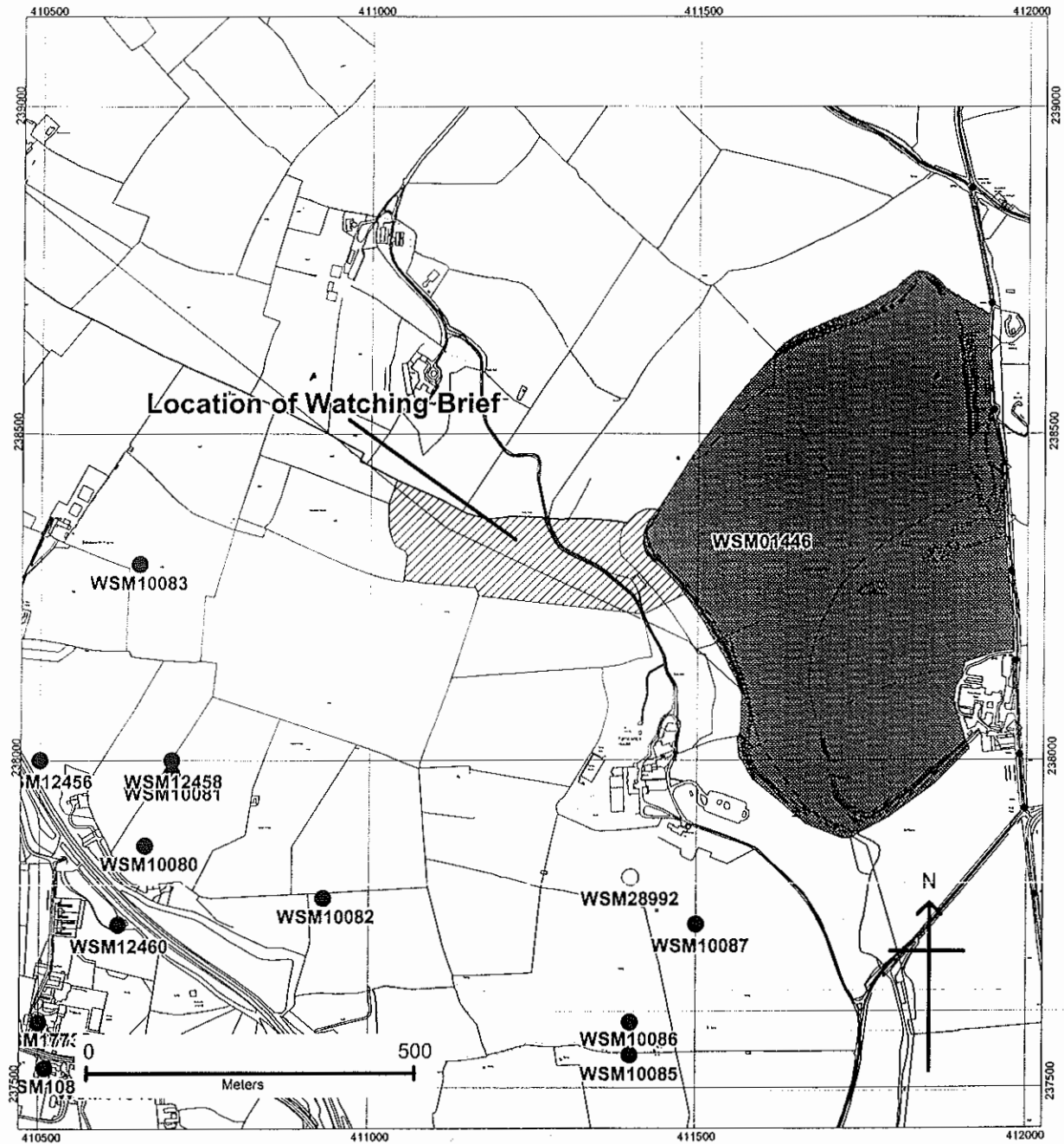
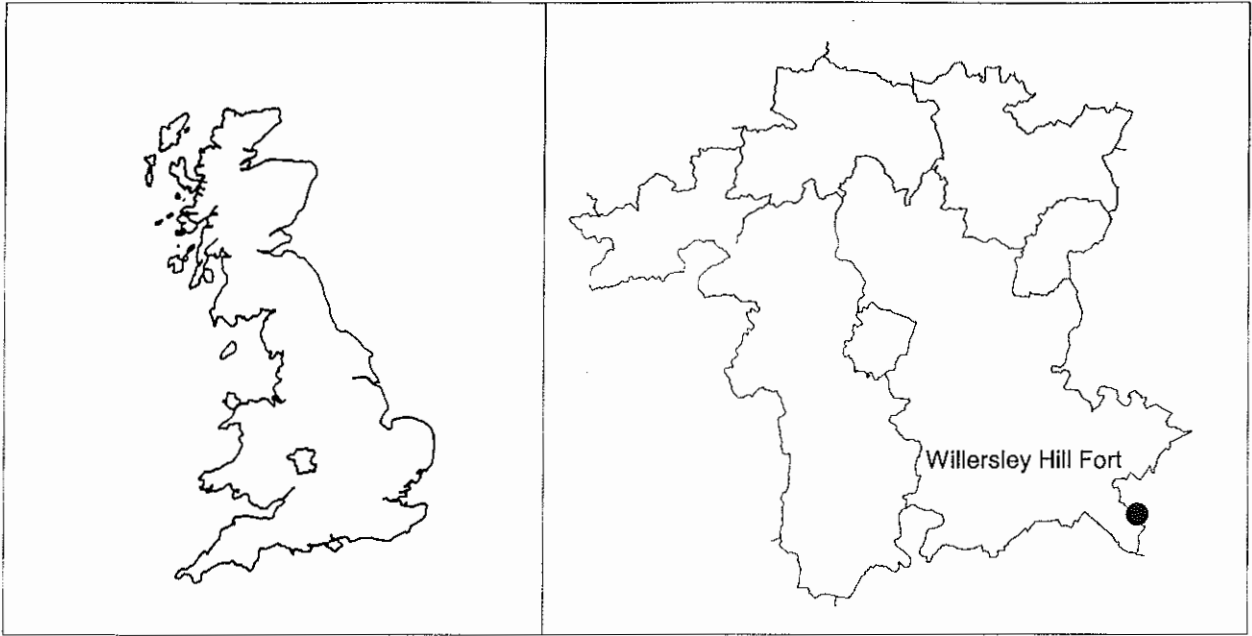


Figure 1: Location Plan

Crown Copyright

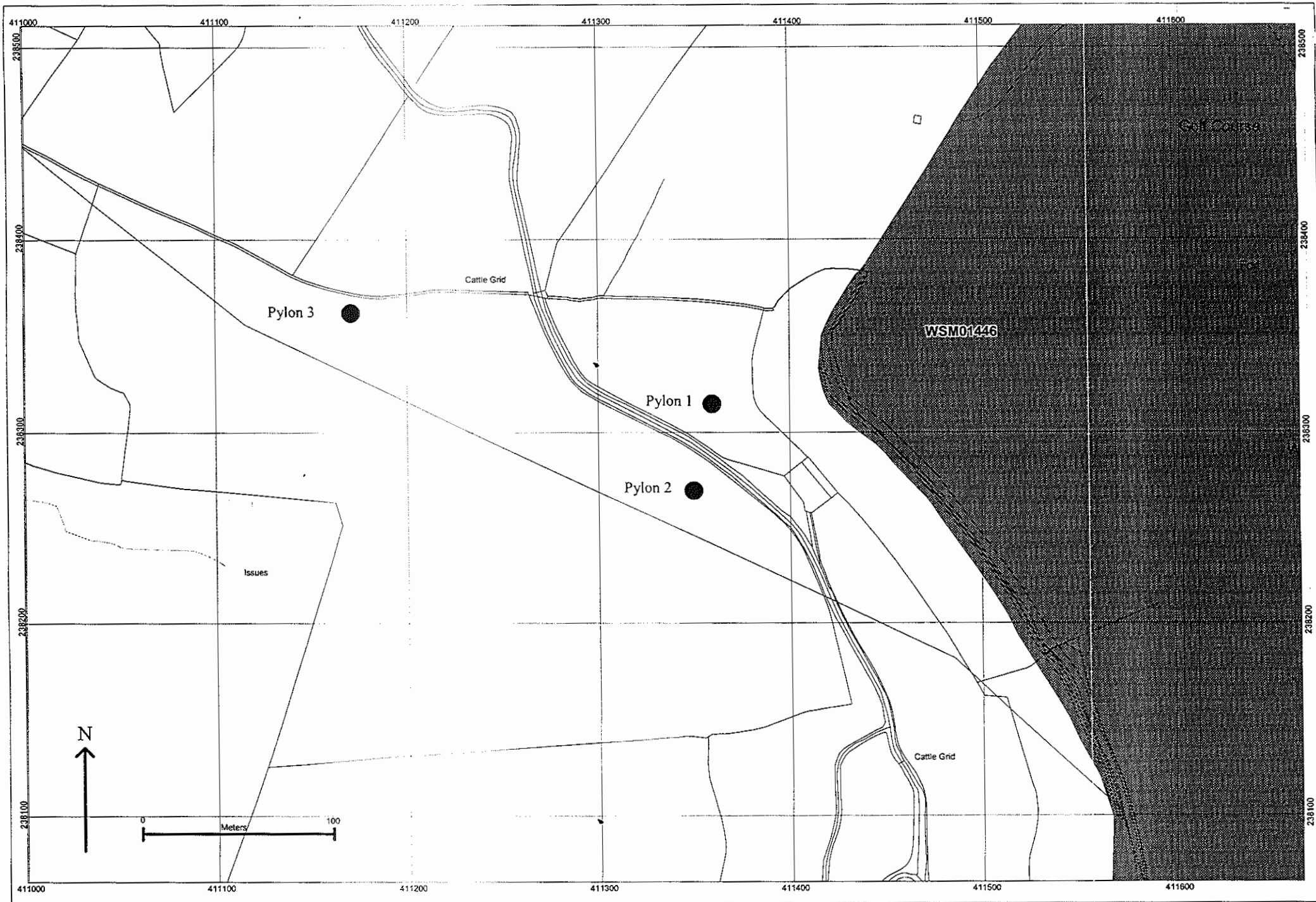
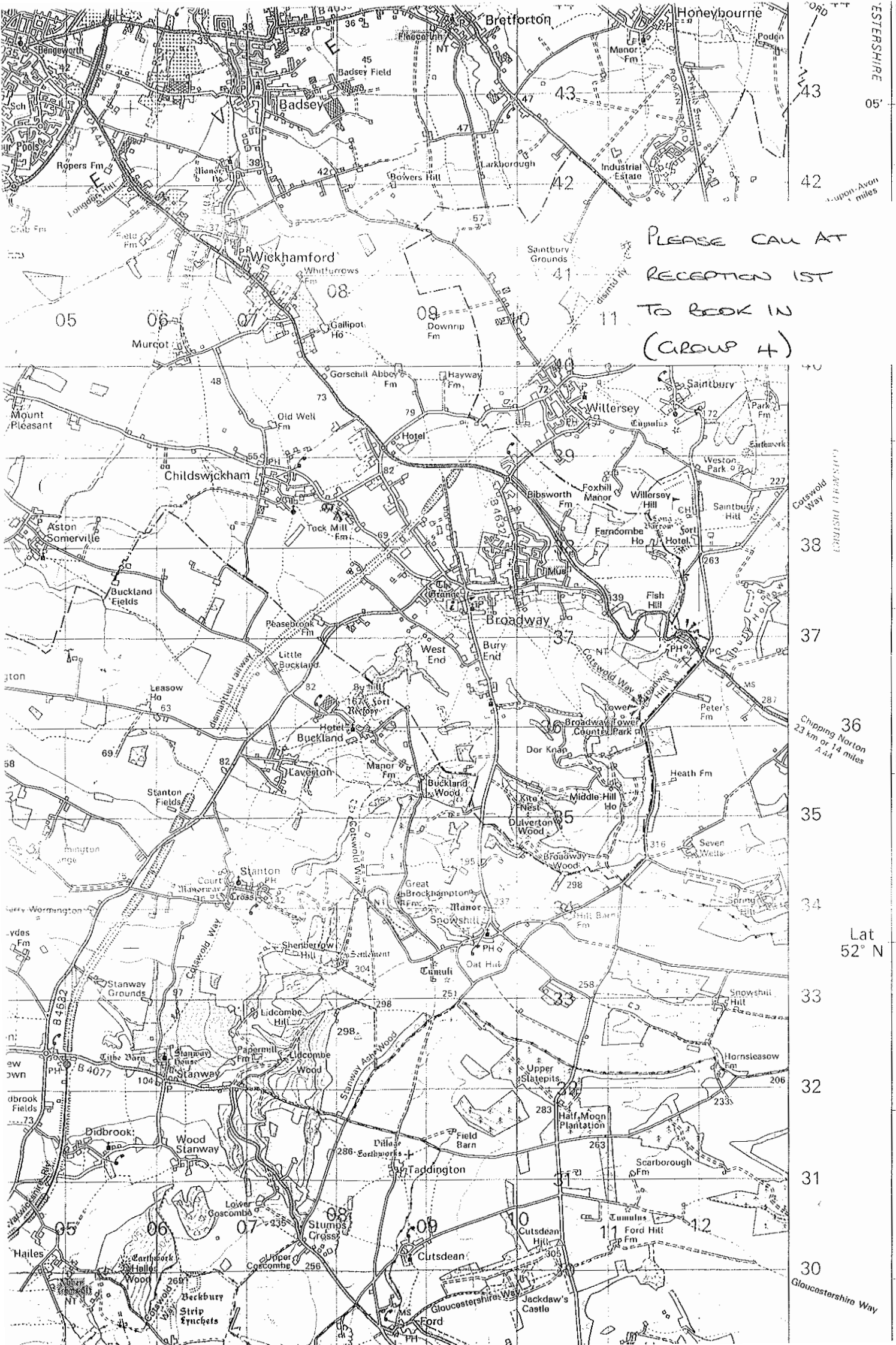


Figure 2: Location of pylons and associated works.



PLEASE CALL AT
RECEPTION 1ST
TO BOOK IN
(GROUP 4)

ESTERSHIRE
05'
43
42
41
40
38
37
36
35
34
33
32
31
30
Cotswold Way
Chipping Norton
23 km or 14 miles
A 44
Lat 52° N
Gloucestershire Way