

**A WATCHING BRIEF AT ROSEHILL WEIR, RIVER REA,
CLEOBURY MORTIMER, SHROPSHIRE 2015**

by
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A report for
FISHTEK CONSULTING

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 In January 2015 alterations were made to a weir at Rosehill, Cleobury Mortimer (NGR SO 6752 7628) to create a riffle/cascade to distribute the head-drop of the weir over a greater length of channel (Planning Ref. 14/04438/FUL).

1.2 The weir stands on the River Rea and is associated with the remains of a Paper Mill (Shropshire Historic Environment Record [HER] No. 15795) and a substantial stone lined head race leading to the mill. Papermaking was a major 19th century local industry, with available Ordnance Survey maps indicating that the mill buildings were standing by at least 1832. Whilst the paper mill may have been constructed in the early 19th century, alongside the mill race and the weir, an earlier date cannot be ruled out. The paper mill burnt down towards the end of the 19th century, and the mill race has since silted up.

1.3 Whilst it is likely the construction of the present weir is directly related to the use of the paper mill in the 19th century, it was considered possible that earlier structures survived beneath the current weir. As a consequence, the site was deemed to have low to moderate archaeological potential, and it was a condition of the planning consent that the groundworks be accompanied by an archaeological watching brief. The Archaeology Service was commissioned by Fishtek Consulting to carry out the watching brief.

1.4 The aim of the watching brief was to allow for the preservation by record of any archaeological remains that might be encountered during the groundworks.

2 THE WATCHING BRIEF

2.1 The removal of the existing weir and associated groundworks were carried out under archaeological supervision. An access to the weir was made through the silts in the top end of the mill leat immediately behind the weir. This involved the removal of up to 0.4m depth of the silt that had filled the channel. The removal of the upper courses of the weir were monitored. No earlier structures or features were seen during this process.

2.2 No other significant archaeological features or deposits were recorded during the watching brief.



Photo 1: The mill leat, looking towards the weir



Photo 2: The removal of the weir starting.



Photo 3: The removal of the weir in progress

