

**A WATCHING BRIEF AT LOWER FORGE WEIR,
CLEOBURY MORTIMER, SHROPSHIRE 2015**

by
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A report for
FISHTEK CONSULTING

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 In January and February 2015 repairs were carried out on a section of retaining wall at Lower Forge Weir on the River Rea at Cleobury Mortimer (NGR SO 6880 7476).

1.2 The site comprises the complex remains of a water management system associated with an ironworks of 16th to 19th century date known as the Lower Forge, Cleobury (Shropshire Historic Environment Record [HER] No. 04657). The site played an important economic role, both locally and nationally, and incorporated many of the new processes of iron production that developed, especially during the 18th century. Historical research and a site survey were carried out on the site by the Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England in 1991.

1.3 A short section of wall at the downstream end of the weir, on the true right bank was to be repaired. It was proposed to use a small amount of reinforced concrete to reinforce the bank and then replace the wall in a 'like for like' manner. A method statement for the repair work was produced by Castleford Engineering.

1.4 Because of the potential significance of the archaeological resource it was considered appropriate that these works should be accompanied by a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation. The archaeological work was to include a Level 1 photographic survey and a watching brief.

1.5 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.

1.6 The Archaeology Service, Shropshire Council, was commissioned by Fishtek Consulting to carry out the programme of archaeological work.

2 THE WATCHING BRIEF

2.1 The Level 1 photographic survey of the site was carried out in January 2015 before the repair works commenced.

2.2 A watching brief was carried out on the construction of the access into the bypass channel on which the wall to be repaired was situated. This involved the demolition of a short section of the northwest wing wall of a bridge over the channel. The dredging of the silts in the channel, and the removal of the upper courses of the weir at its southwest end were also monitored. The upper courses of the weir were seen to have been made with 20th century coping bricks.

2.3 The spoil from the construction of the access and the dredging of the bypass channel were used to fill a scour in the side of a mill pond (survey photos 4969 & 4972-4).

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

3 REFERENCES AND SOURCES CONSULTED

Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England, 1991: *The Upper Forge, Cleobury Mortimer*, RCHME report

Trinder, B, 1996: *The Industrial Archaeology of Shropshire, Appendix One*



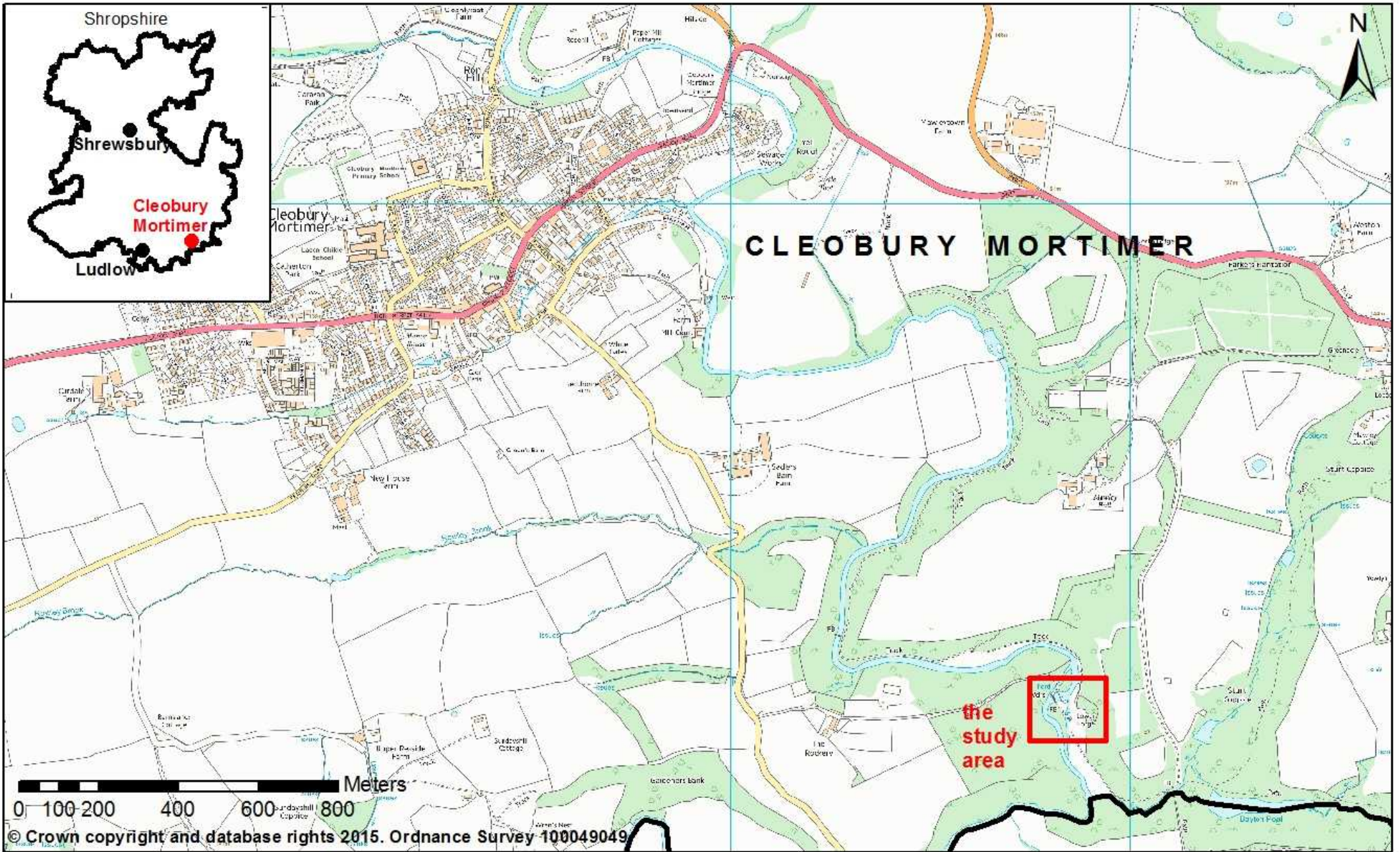
Photo 1: Creating the access into the bypass channel



Photo 2: The later courses of the weir at the end of the bypass channel removed



Photo 3: The spoil from the dredged channel used to infill the eroded side of the mill pond.

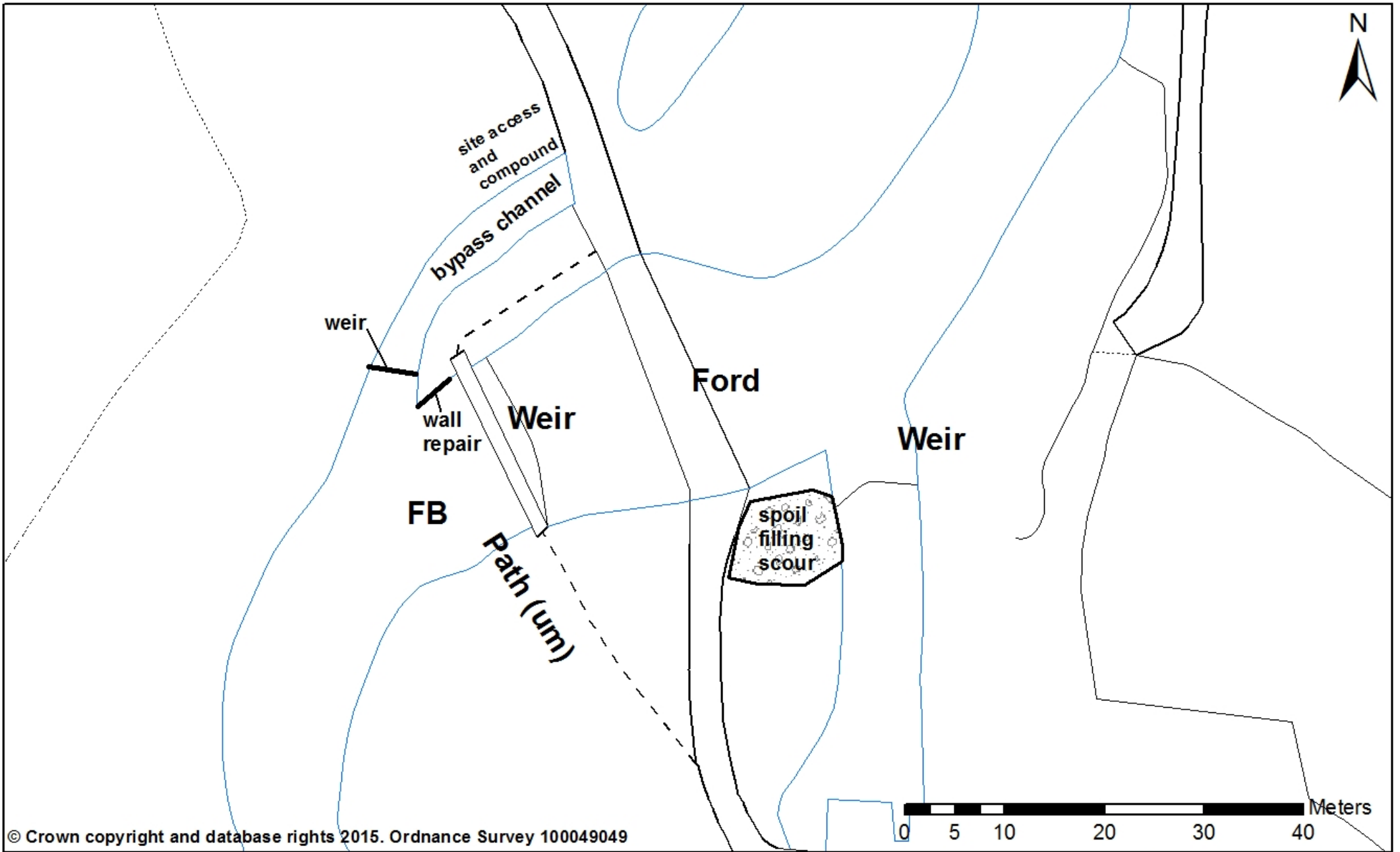


LOWER FORGE WEIR, RIVER REA, CLEOBURY MORTIMER 2015

Figure 1: The location of the study area

Archaeology Service,
Historic Environment Team, Shropshire Council,
Shirehall, Abbey Foregate, Shrewsbury,
Shropshire, SY2 6ND

Scale: 1:12,500



A Photographic Survey and Watching Brief at Lower Forge Weir, Cleobury Mortimer, Shropshire 2015

Lower Forge Weir, Cleobury Mortimer, Shropshire. Photographic Survey thumbnails



DSC04940



DSC04941



DSC04942



DSC04943



DSC04944



DSC04945



DSC04946



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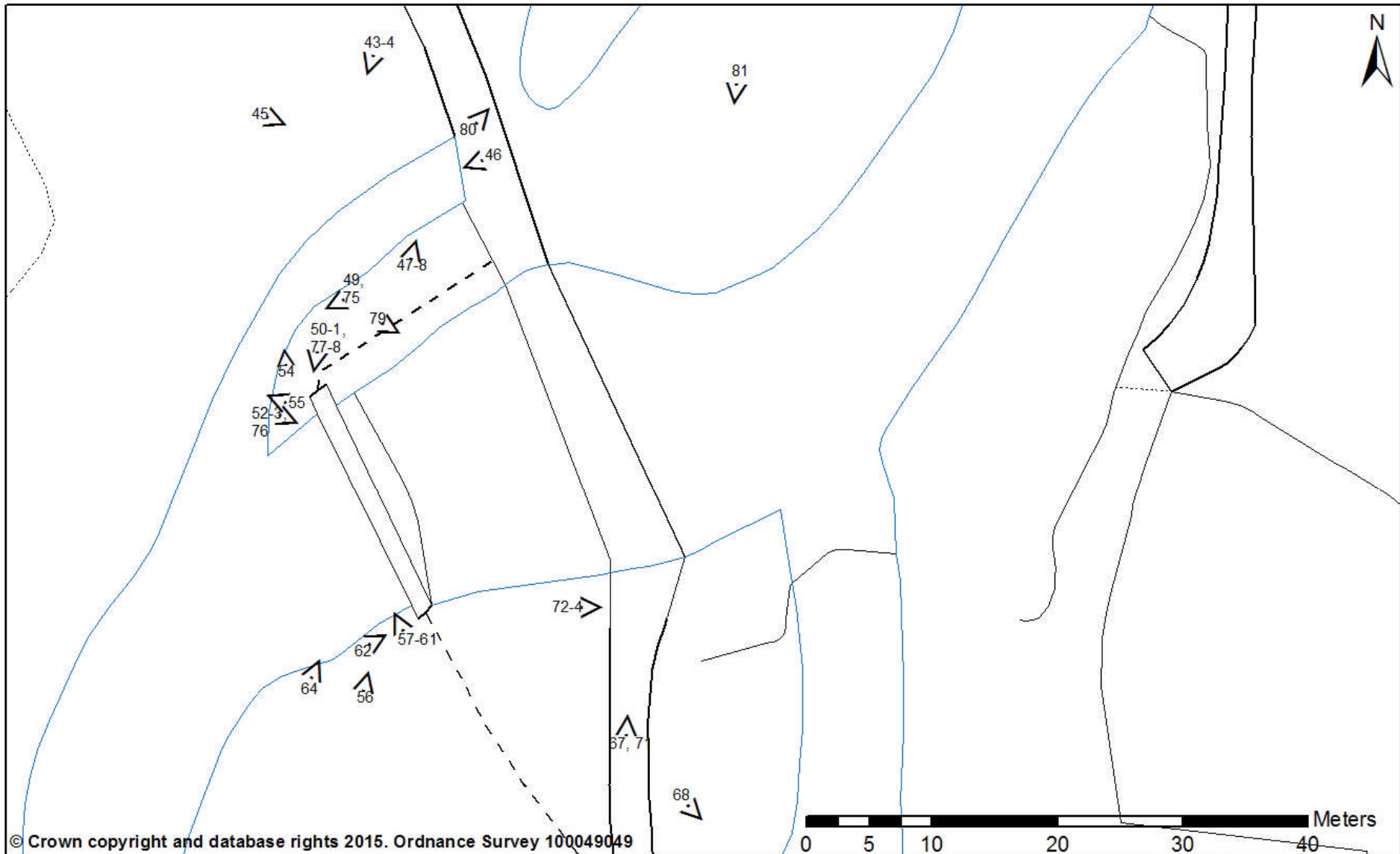
DSC04982



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A Photographic Survey and Watching Brief at Lower Forge Weir, Cleobury Mortimer, Shropshire 2015

Photo No	Description	Looking
4940	Main weir & bridge over bypass	SE
4941	Bridge over bypass	SW
4942	Bridge over bypass	SW
4943	Bypass channel	SW
4944	Bypass channel	SW
4945	Bridge over bypass	E
4946	Bypass channel	SW
4947	Bridge over bypass	NE
4948	Bridge over bypass	NE
4949	Wall at end of bypass	W
4950	Collapse in weir wing wall (top view)	S
4951	Collapse in weir wing wall (top view)	S
4952	Weir at end of bypass	W
4953	Wall at end of bypass	W
4954	Bypass channel	N
4955	Footbridge	SE
4956	Weir	N
4957	Collapse in weir wing wall	NW
4958	Collapse in weir wing wall	NW
4959	Collapse in weir wing wall	NW
4960	Collapse in weir wing wall	NW
4961	Collapse in weir wing wall	NW
4962	Footbridge S abutment	NE
4963	Collapse in weir wing wall	N
4964	Weir	NE
4965	Weir (panorama)	NW-NE
4966	Weir (panorama)	NW-NE
4967	Approach to ford/weir	N
4968	(Modern) bridge over mill-race	SE
4969	Wall/weir in mill-race	N
4970	Wall/weir in mill-race	N
4971	Approach to ford/weir	N
4972	Weir in mill-race	NE
4973	Weir in mill-race	NE
4974	Weir in mill-race - collapse	NE
4975	Wall at end of bypass	SW
4976	Weir at end of bypass	SW
4977	Collapse in weir wing wall (top view)	S
4978	Collapse in weir wing wall (top view)	S
4979	Weir	SE
4980	Bypass channel	NE
4981	Mill race & weir	S
4982	Ford/weir	SE
4983	Ford/weir	SE
4984	Ford/weir	SE
4985	Bridge over bypass	S



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Photographic survey 23/01/15: photo locations.
(Nos. refer to last two digits of photo nos.)

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