

**A12, Pound Lane, Capel St. Mary
(CSM 023)
Archaeological Monitoring Report no. 2004/194
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Summary

Capel St. Mary, A12, Pound Lane (TM/1005 3752; CSM 023) The route of a new link road at Pound Lane, Capel St. Mary was subject to a programme of archaeological monitoring. Soil stripping operations were observed at various points along the route in order to identify and record any archaeological deposits present. No finds or features were in the course of monitoring.

(Linzi Everett for S.C.C.A.S. and Atkins Consultants Ltd.; report no. 2004/194)

Introduction

A new link road at Capel St. Mary (Fig .1), required a programme of archaeological monitoring of the proposed 1,200m road line. The proposed route ran through cultivated land between TM 0962 3733 and TM 1035 3765, at a height of around 40m OD. The archaeological potential for the site was based on its location 350m south of the A12 which follows the line of a Roman road. In addition, the eastern end of the proposed development joins the road to Bentley, which forms, in part, the parish boundary and which is likely to have at least medieval origins. The western end of the link road is within 400m of a medieval green with evidence of contemporary settlement.

The area was subject to a documentary search and a fieldwalking survey in 1996, the latter of which identified no concentrations of artefacts which might suggest the presence of buried archaeology. However, a low level of material spanning several thousand years was recovered, scattered over the study area.

The specification for the archaeological work was defined by Atkins Consultancy for Suffolk County Council Highways in consultation with Jude Plouviez of the Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, Conservation Team, based on an Environmental Assessment produced in 1996 and updated in 2003. A series of monitoring visits were made during December 2004 while soil-stripping operations were in progress. The work was carried out by members of the SCCAS Field team and was funded by Atkins Consultants Ltd.

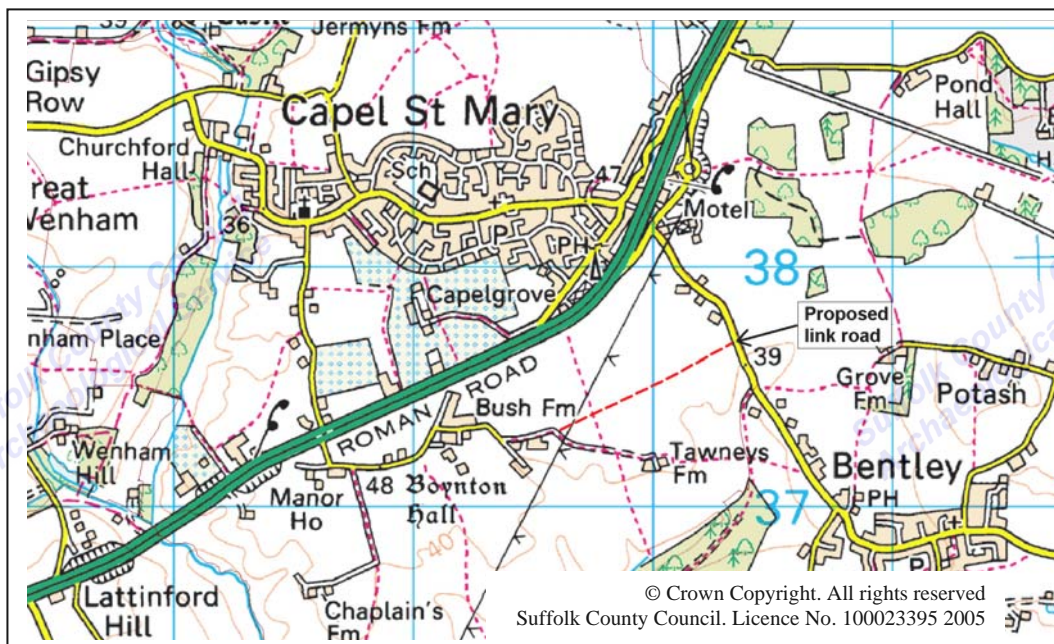


Figure 1: Site location

Methodology

The road line was stripped to the required formation level, which occurred at the level of the natural subsoil or below. The topsoil was stripped by a bulldozer, followed by a 360° mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket which stripped off the subsoil down to the formation level. Intermittent visits were made to the site to monitor progress and study the machined surfaces. The site was recorded under the SMR code CSM 023. The excavation archive will be deposited in the County SMR at Shire Hall, Bury St Edmunds.

Results

The topsoil removed was a greyish brown sandy loam some 300mm thick on average, and containing occasional fragments of modern ceramics. This sealed a layer of pale orange brown subsoil c.250mm thick overlying an orange brown natural sandy gravel. The road strip was not continuously monitored but even where a stripped area had already been covered by the time of a visit, sections were still visible either side of the route. No features were seen cutting either the subsoil or the natural within the stripped areas or the vertical sections observed, nor were any artefacts recovered from the topsoil or subsoil.

Discussion

Deep ploughing is known to have been carried out on this site but it is impossible to say what effect this has had, if any, on archaeological deposits which may once have been present. The low density of material culture found in topsoil during the fieldwalking survey, added to the lack of evidence seen during monitoring visits, suggests that little of archaeological significance was ever present within the monitored area.

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References

Abbott, C., 1996, *A Fieldwalking Survey at Capel St. Mary, near Ipswich*, SCCAS Report no. 96/8

Newman, J., 1996, *A12 Pound Lane, Capel St. Mary Link Road* SCCAS Report no. 96/84