

## A LATE IRON AGE–EARLY ROMANO-BRITISH FIELD SYSTEM AND BURIAL AT THE BOURNE, TWYFORD, WINCHESTER

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*illustrations by* S E JAMES

In 2011 Wessex Archaeology carried out a programme of phased archaeological work comprising evaluation, excavation and a watching brief at The Bourne, Bournefields, Twyford, Winchester (NGR 448553 125164; WINCM: AY422), in connection with proposals to develop the site for housing (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned and funded by Hazeley Developments Ltd. Full details of the results of the work are provided in the archive report (Wessex Archaeology 2012), and a summary is presented here.

An initial evaluation of the development area revealed an undated grave (1014) containing a supine and extended inhumation burial (1015), aligned east to west, on the southern edge of the site. A subsequent area excavation recorded the grave and examined its immediate surroundings (Fig. 1). The burial was that of an adult (*c.* 35–40 year old) female, with a high level of dental pathology including infection and signs of anemia, that radiocarbon dating indicates was probably made during the later 1st century BC or early 1st century AD (110 cal BC–cal 60 AD (at 95% confidence 2025±29 BP; SUERC 42529)).

The grave appears to have been isolated and did not lie within or seem to be associated with a formal cemetery. However, it lay approximately 5m south and parallel to an east to west ditch (1023), 1.85m wide and 0.5m deep, close to a 0.8m wide gap in the ditch. The ditch contained Late Iron Age/early Romano-British pottery, animal bone, a whetstone and a fragment of neonatal bone in the upper fills, all in relatively fresh condition, probably deriving from settlement nearby. This date is consistent with the radiocarbon result for the burial. Isolated burials of this date are often associated with significant field/land bounda-

ries and drove ways, and this example may well be just such a case, near to a causeway in what was probably a boundary ditch.

The ditch formed the southern edge of a ‘Celtic’ field system of which two east to west aligned strip lynchets (103 and 107) contained plough-abraded sherds of Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age pottery. This field system appears to represent a continuation of undated lynchets, recorded from aerial photography, that extend northwards across Twyford Down towards St Catherine’s Hill. Work in advance of the construction of the M3 motorway across Twyford Down (Walker and Farwell 2000) indicated that ancient woodland probably persisted in the area until the Late Bronze Age when field systems were first established. This pattern of land use is less well represented in the Middle Iron Age, although there is clear evidence for extensive re-use in the Late Iron Age and Romano-British periods.

The inhumation burial at The Bourne may have post-dated the use of the ‘Celtic’ field system in this area, but the adjacent ditch was probably still sufficiently visible to have influenced the location of the grave. The burial is earlier than the known site of a villa, of Flavian date, which is recorded approximately 500m to the south.

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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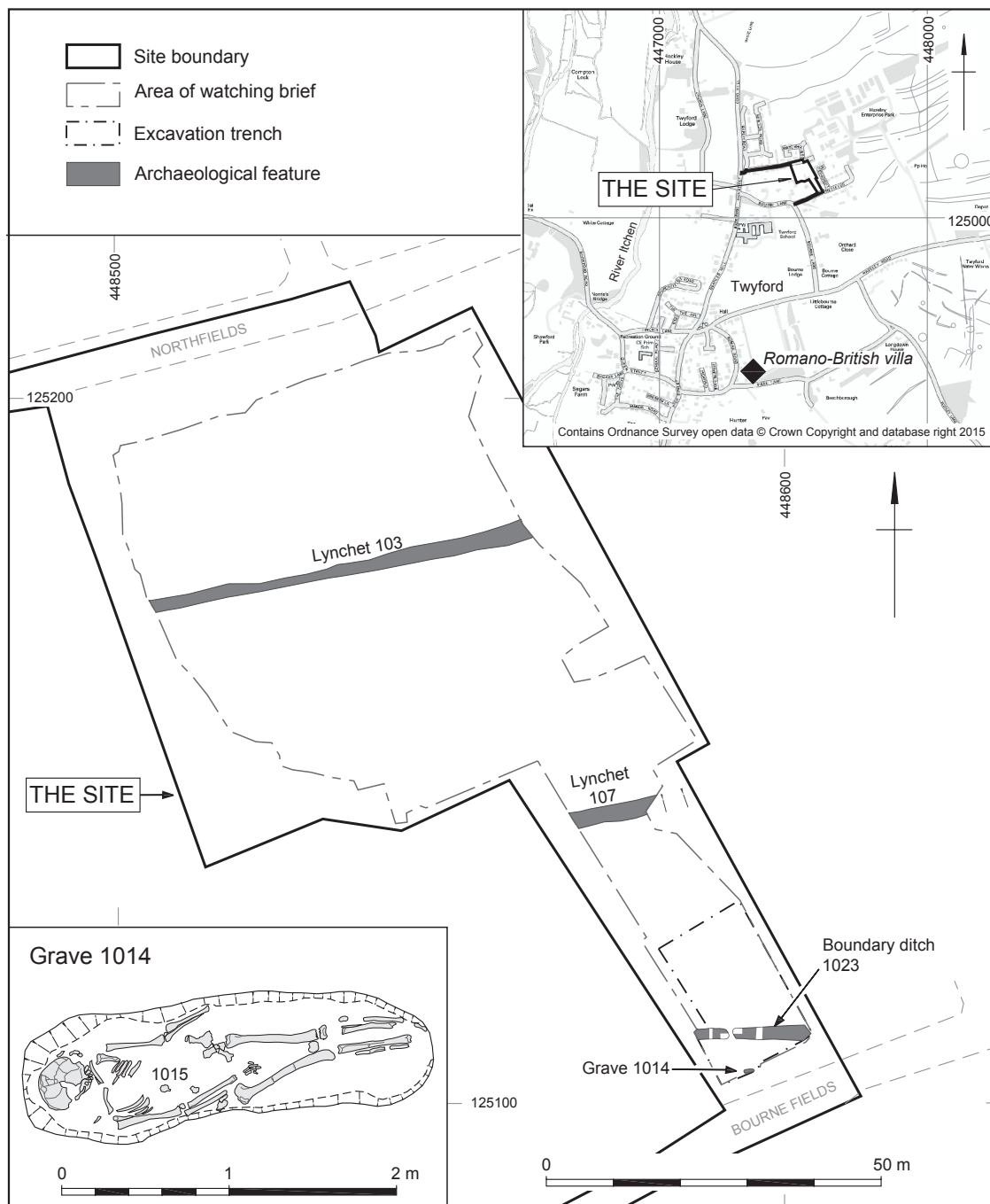


Fig. 1 Location of the site and excavation area, with detail of the inhumation burial

behalf of Wessex Archaeology initially by Paul McCulloch and then by Richard Greatorex and Damian de Rosa. Gareth Chaffey, Phil Harding and John Powell, assisted by Tom Wells and Andy Sole, were involved in the various stages of the fieldwork. Phil Harding assisted by various specialists including Kirsten Egging Dinwiddy, Michael Grant, Lorrain

Higbee and Lorraine Mephram, was responsible for the analysis and reporting. This note was compiled by Phil Andrews, edited by Alistair Barclay and the illustration is by S E James. The site archive (WA 73300–2) will be deposited with the Winchester Museum Service under the accession number WINCM: AY422.

#### REFERENCES

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