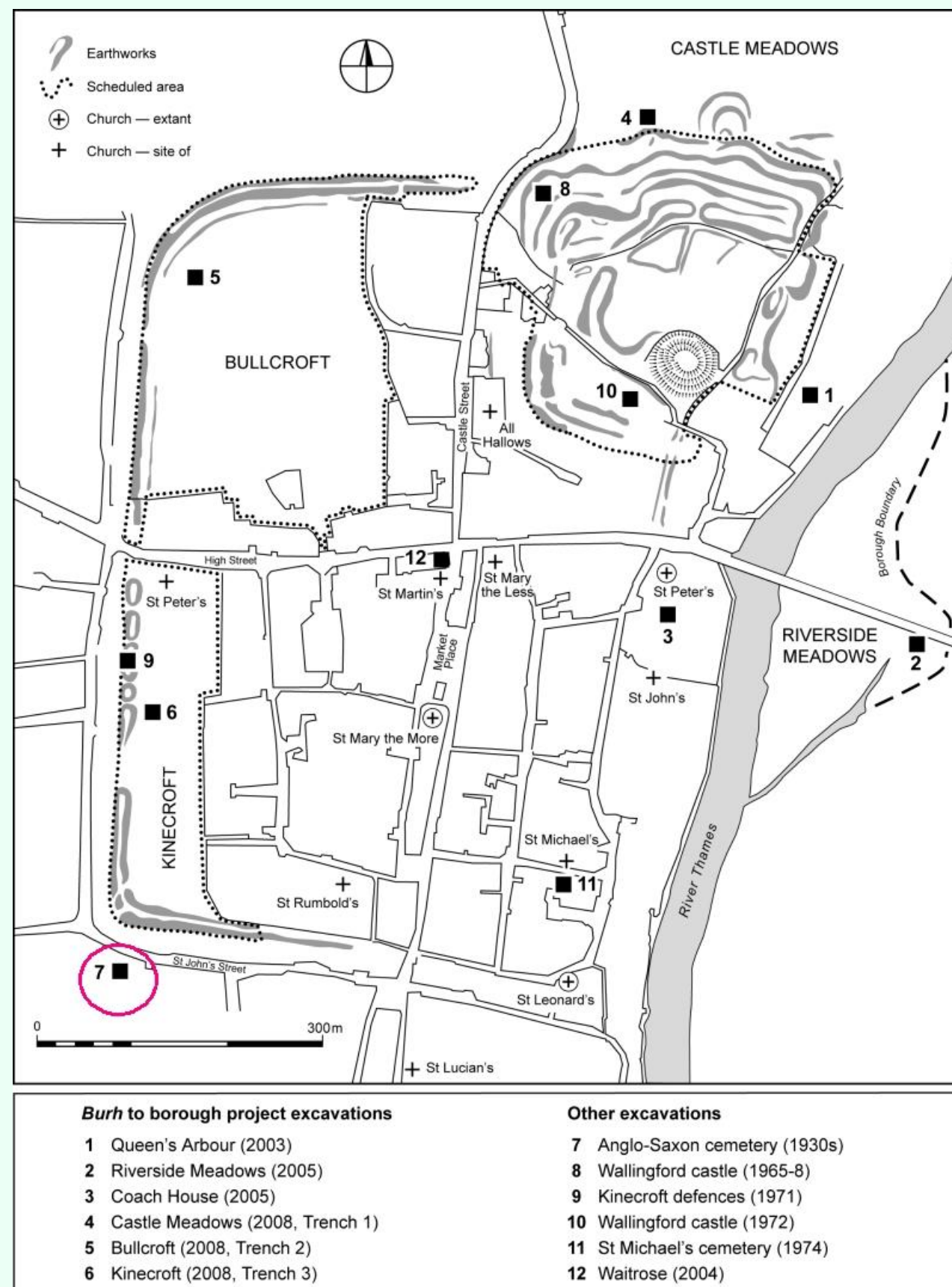


## THE EARLY ANGLO-SAXON CEMETERY, ST JOHN'S ROAD, WALLINGFORD



### The earliest inhabitants of Wallingford?

The early Anglo-Saxon cemetery lies just outside the SW corner of the ramparts of the Saxon *burh*, next to St John's Road. But while the *burh* is thought to have been built in the late 9<sup>th</sup> century, the cemetery is much earlier. The burials date from the early 5<sup>th</sup> to the late 6<sup>th</sup> centuries. Were these part of a first nucleated community here?

It was in 1894 that the first 3 inhumations were discovered. In 1910, during the construction of the Council School, a further 10 or 11 inhumations came to light. Then more inhumations and at least one cremation were found during building work on Mr Snow's land to the east between 1924 and 1932. That prompted Edward Thurlow Leeds, Keeper of Archaeology at the Ashmolean Museum (right), and Captain Musgrave of the Natural History Museum in Oxford to get involved. Between 1936 and 1938, 11 more inhumations and 5 cremations were found in their excavations. In 1938, Leeds published a report in the *Berkshire Archaeology Journal*.



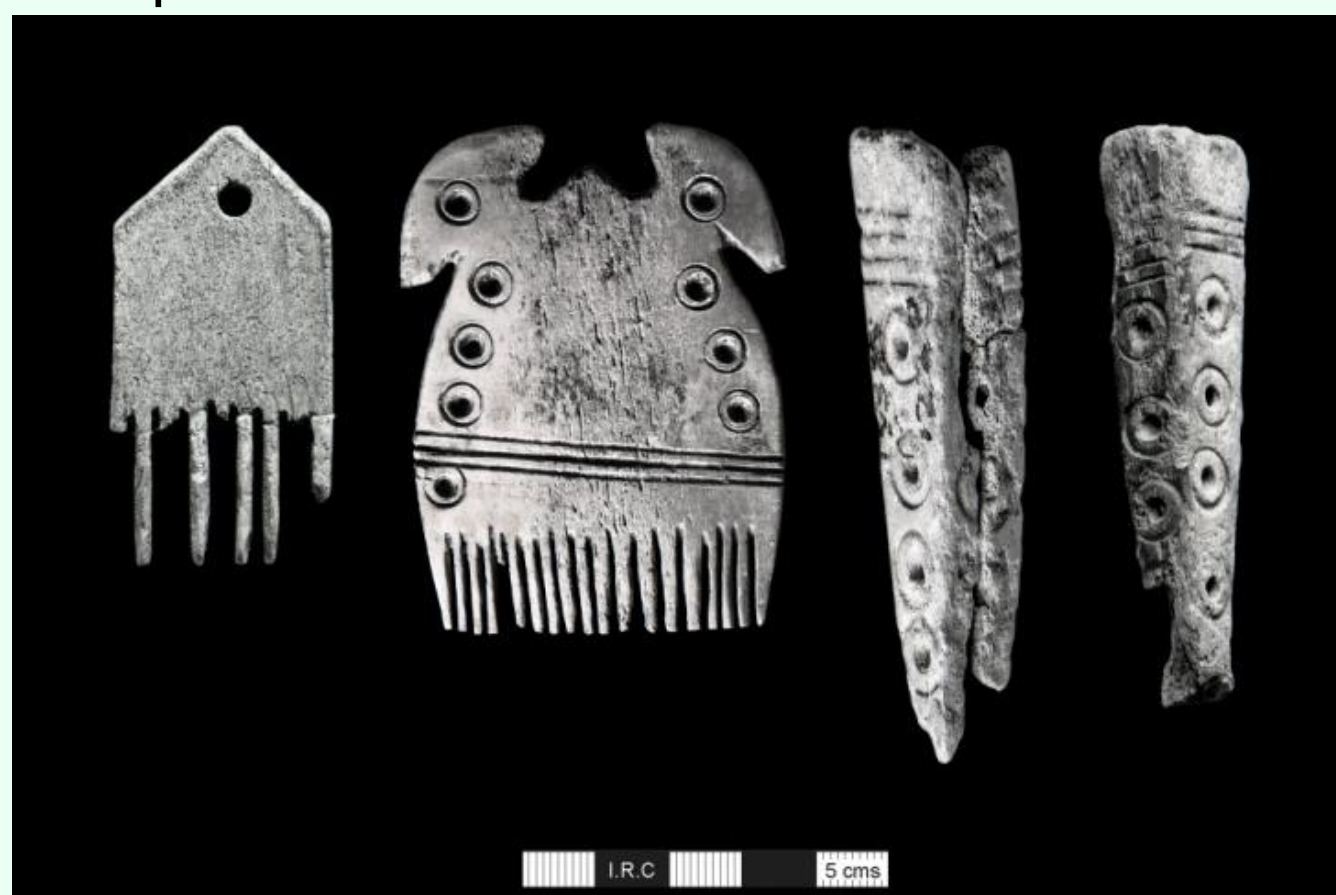
### The 1930s excavations

Altogether at least 26 inhumations and 9 urned cremations have been recorded. These may represent about a quarter of the total size of the cemetery. Both men and women were buried here, and there was an unusually high proportion of child burials.



### Current work

Since 2004, the Wallingford Burh to Borough Research Project has taken on the task of bringing the recording of this important site up to date. Finds from the 1930s excavations, like the bone objects (below) and necklace (right), have now been drawn or photographed, and an inventory of all finds compiled.



One grave contained two enigmatic cruciform mounts (both fronts and backs shown above). Once horse-harness fittings, these have been re-worked as a pair of brooches. The grave also contained a necklace indicating the wearer was a female.

The map (right) shows the distribution and orientation of recorded burials from all phases of excavation, relative to standing buildings. We do not yet know if there was a specific focus to the cemetery.

