

Unlocking
Buckinghamshire's Past



Thornborough...

a Roman crossroads



How to get to Thornborough

Walk Level:

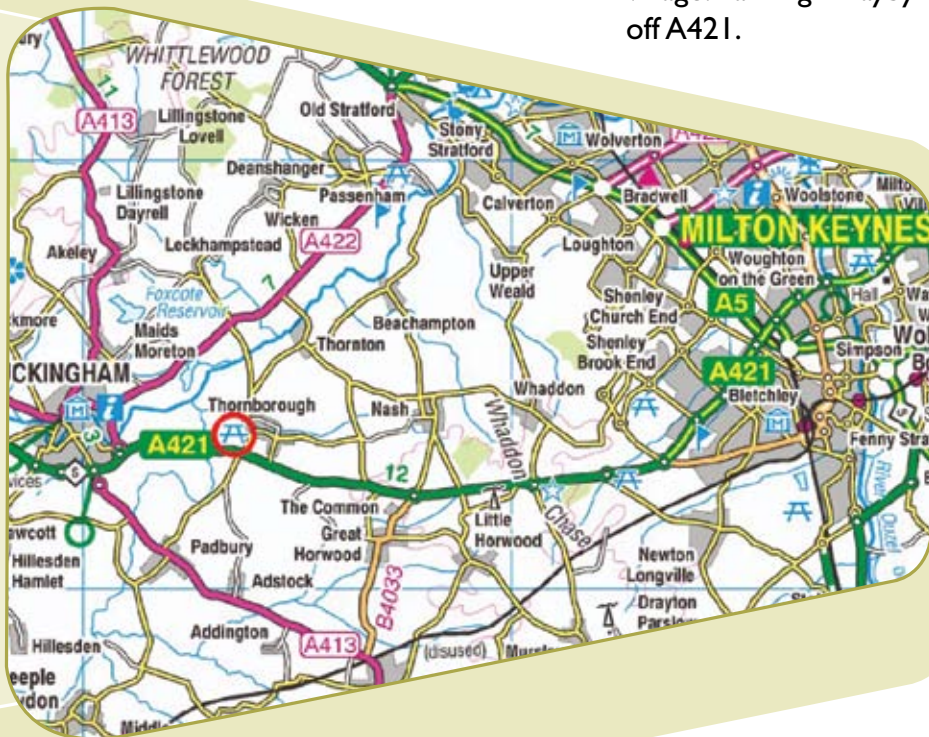
Walking outside the car park is on footpaths with stiles. Flat.

By bus:

32 on A421 from Buckingham and Milton Keynes.

By road:

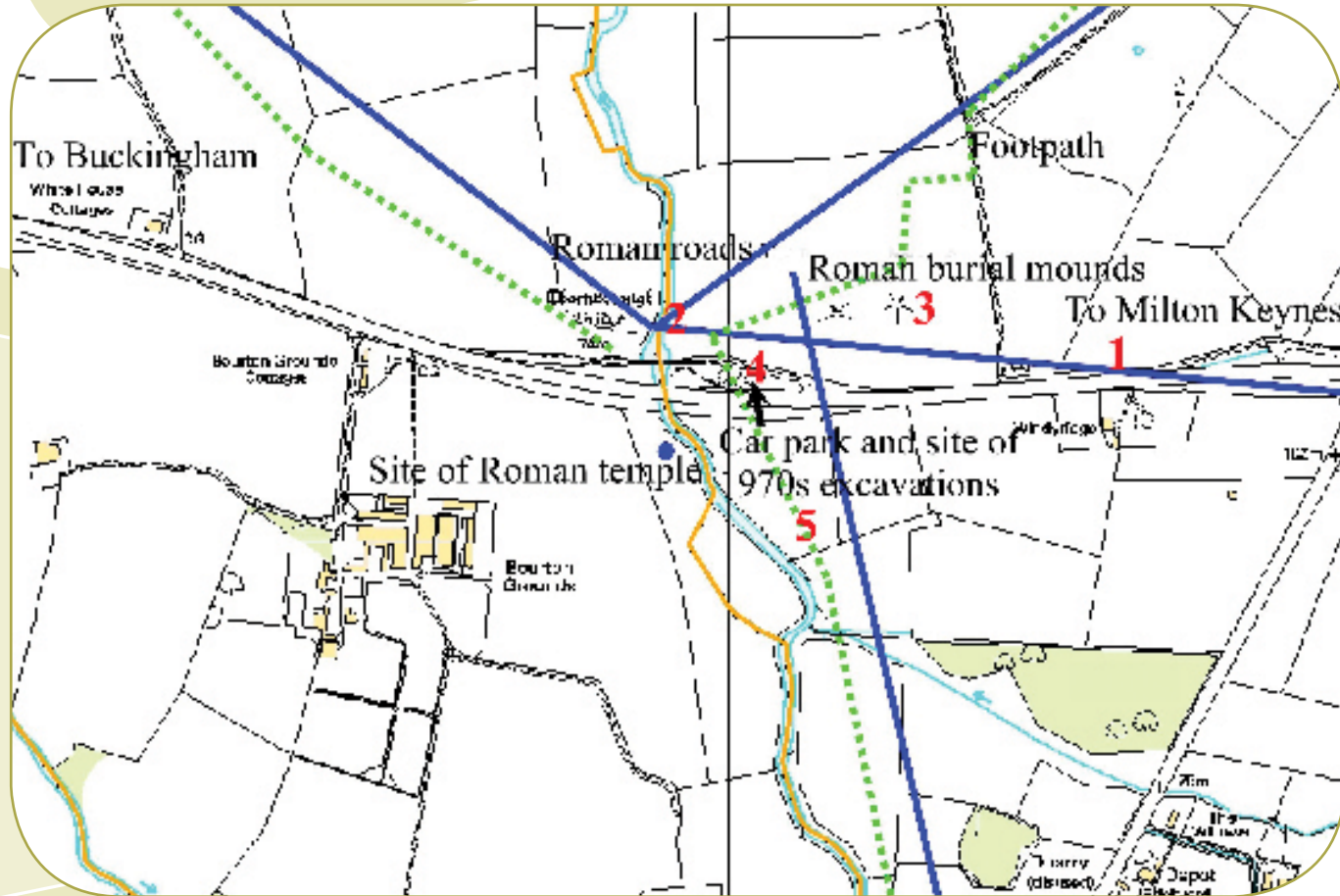
Off A421 between Buckingham and Milton Keynes, closer to Buckingham than the Folly Pub and the turn off for Thornborough village. Parking in layby off A421.



There is information about a longer circular walk on the site. Otherwise, the A421 on which you arrived on the site is based on one of the Roman roads (1) that passed over the River Twin (2) close to the medieval bridge. The A421 was a Roman road from the Roman town of Magiovinium (near Milton Keynes) on Watling Street (the A5) to the west. It was joined at this river crossing by roads from the north and south, as seen in excavation in the 1970s. The 1970s excavations also uncovered two ends of a road about 10 metres wide on either side of the River Twin, and a ford made from lime-stone blocks held in place with wooden stakes. Three oak piles were found on the east bank, possibly the supports for a footbridge.



Route Map of Thornborough



Take the footpath into the field on the right to see the Roman burial mounds (3). Both of the barrows were dug into in 1839-1840. One had been dug previously but the other contained a cremation burial. Pottery, bronze and glass vessels, gold jewellery, wine jars and iron weapons were also found, dating to the 2nd century AD.

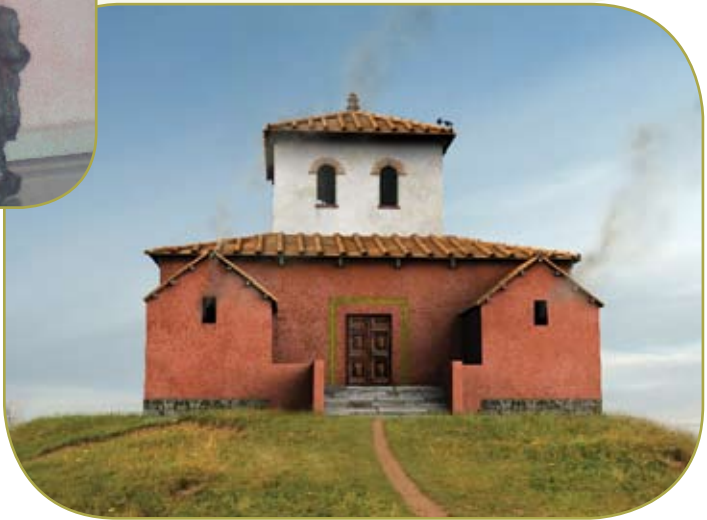


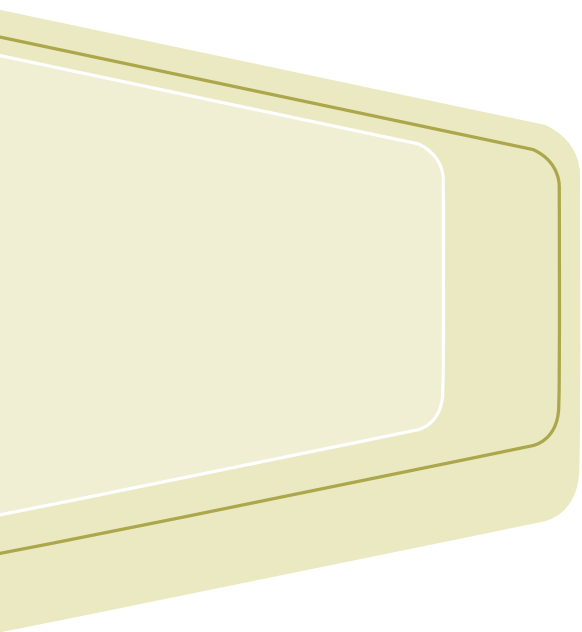
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Go back to the car park, which is on the site of the cremation cemetery excavated in the 1970s (4). A small cremation cemetery was found in the 1970s. Seven 1st century AD cremations were found in a rough circle. Each burial Contained Samian pottery and some contained glass vessels and other pottery. The cremations may have had low mounds on top, so they could be seen from the road.



If you take the footpath from the back of the layby and cross the A421 carefully you can look over the River Twin to the spot where a Roman temple used to stand (5). A 3rd century AD temple was found here at Bourton Grounds, on the south side of the A421, in the 1960s. Worshippers gave coins at the temple to ensure good fortune. An Isis figurine was later found there in 1981, suggesting worship of this Egyptian goddess also took place here.





Produced for the County Archaeological Service, Buckinghamshire County Council,
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For more information visit: <http://ubp.buckscc.gov.uk>

Information from: Johnson, A.E 1975. Excavations at Bourton Grounds, Thornborough
1972-3. Records of Buckinghamshire 20 (1). 3-56.

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