

**T H A M E S      V A L L E Y**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL**

**S E R V I C E S**

**Leys Stables, Old Bix Road,  
Bix, Oxfordshire**

**Archaeological Evaluation**

**by Dan Bray**

**Site Code: LSB13/199**

**(SU 7323 8516)**

# **Leys Stables, Old Bix Road, Bix, Oxfordshire**

**An Archaeological Evaluation**

**for Mr Peter M Bradley**

by Daniel Bray

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code LSB 13/199

**November 2013**

## Summary

**Site name:** Leys Stables, Old Bix Road, Bix, Oxfordshire

**Grid reference:** SU 7323 8516

**Site activity:** Archaeological Evaluation

**Date and duration of project:** 4th October 2013

**Project manager:** Steve Ford

**Site supervisor:** Daniel Bray

**Site code:** LSB 13/199

**Area of site:** c. 350 sq m

**Summary of results:** Two trenches were excavated but no archaeological features were revealed and no finds of any date recovered.

**Location and reference of archive:** The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited with Oxford County Museums Service in due course.

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[www.tvas.co.uk/reports/reports.asp](http://www.tvas.co.uk/reports/reports.asp).*

Report edited/checked by: Steve Ford ✓ 13.11.13 Steve Preston ✓ 07.11.13
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# Leys Stables, Old Bix Road, Bix, Oxfordshire An Archaeological Evaluation

by Daniel Bray

Report 13/199

## Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out at Leys Stables, Old Bix Road, Bix, Oxfordshire (SU 7323 8516) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Peter M Bradley, The Old Barrel Store, Draymans Lane, Marlow, SL7 2FF.

Planning permission (P13/S2387/FUL) has been sought from South Oxfordshire District Council for the construction of a new access road on the site. Due to the potential for archaeological deposits to exist on the site a recommendation was made to the District Council to attach a condition to the application for a staged programme of archaeological works prior to the development. However the applicant started the development prior to the granting of planning permission and therefore an archaeological evaluation was requested to assess whether any archaeological features may have been present along the line of the new access road.

This is in accordance with the Department for Communities and Local Government's *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF 2012), and the District Council's policies on archaeology. The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Mr Richard Oram of Oxfordshire County Archaeological Service, advisers to the district on archaeological matters and designed in accordance with a brief supplied by him. The fieldwork was undertaken by Daniel Bray along with Dan Strachan on 4th November 2013 with the site code LSB 13/199. The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited with Oxfordshire Museums Service in due course.

## Location, topography and geology

The site is located on the southern side of Old Bix Road on the eastern side of Bix (Fig. 2). The site is currently used as a paddock and sits on the crest of a hill which initially slopes gradually from north to south and then becomes steeper further south outside of the site. The underlying geology is mapped as 8th (Upper Gravel Train) Terrace Deposits (BGS 1980). The site lies at a maximum height of 129m above Ordnance Datum.

## **Archaeological background**

The archaeological potential of the site has been highlighted in a brief for the project prepared by Oxfordshire County Archaeological Service (Oram 2013). In summary the site lies close to the site of a Roman settlement which was partly excavated in the 1950s and was of late Roman date and probably represents a farmstead or a small corridor villa. Later Saxon burials were also present. Old Bix Road itself is also considered to reflect the line of a Roman road between Dorchester-on-Thames and a river crossing at Henley-on-Thames.

## **Objectives and methodology**

The purpose of the evaluation was to determine the presence/absence, extent, condition, character, quality and date of any archaeological deposits within the area of development.

Specific aims of the project were:

to determine if archaeologically deposits of any period are present; and  
to determine if archaeological deposits of Roman or Saxon date are present which relate to the nearby villa.

It was proposed to excavate two trenches each measuring 15m long and 1.6m wide close to the position of the new access road. The trenches were to be excavated using a 360-type machine equipped with a toothless ditching bucket and supervised at all times by an archaeologist, with the spoil removed being monitored for finds. All potential archaeological deposits were to be hand-cleaned and sufficient of the archaeological features and deposits exposed were excavated or sampled by hand to satisfy the aims of the project.

## **Results**

Both trenches were dug, and although slightly wider than proposed were shortened due to the 15m root protection area imposed on a near by oak tree and restrictions caused by a electricity cable and septic tank (Fig. 3). The trenches were 10.30m and 10.40m in length and both measured 1.70m wide. A complete list of trenches giving lengths, breadths, depths and a description of sections and geology is given in Appendix 1.

### Trench 1 (Figs 3 and 4; Pl. 1)

Trench 1 was aligned NE - SW and was 10.30m long and 0.59m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.29m of topsoil and 0.30m of light to mid brown grey sandy silt subsoil overlying the light grey brown sand natural geology which changed to gravel at the north-eastern end. No archaeological features were present and no finds recovered.

### Trench 2 (Fig. 3; Pl. 2)

Trench 2 was aligned NE - SW and was 10.40m long and 0.66m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.16m of topsoil and 0.40m of subsoil overlying 0.10m of dirty gravel above the natural gravel geology. No archaeological features were present and no finds recovered.

### **Conclusion**

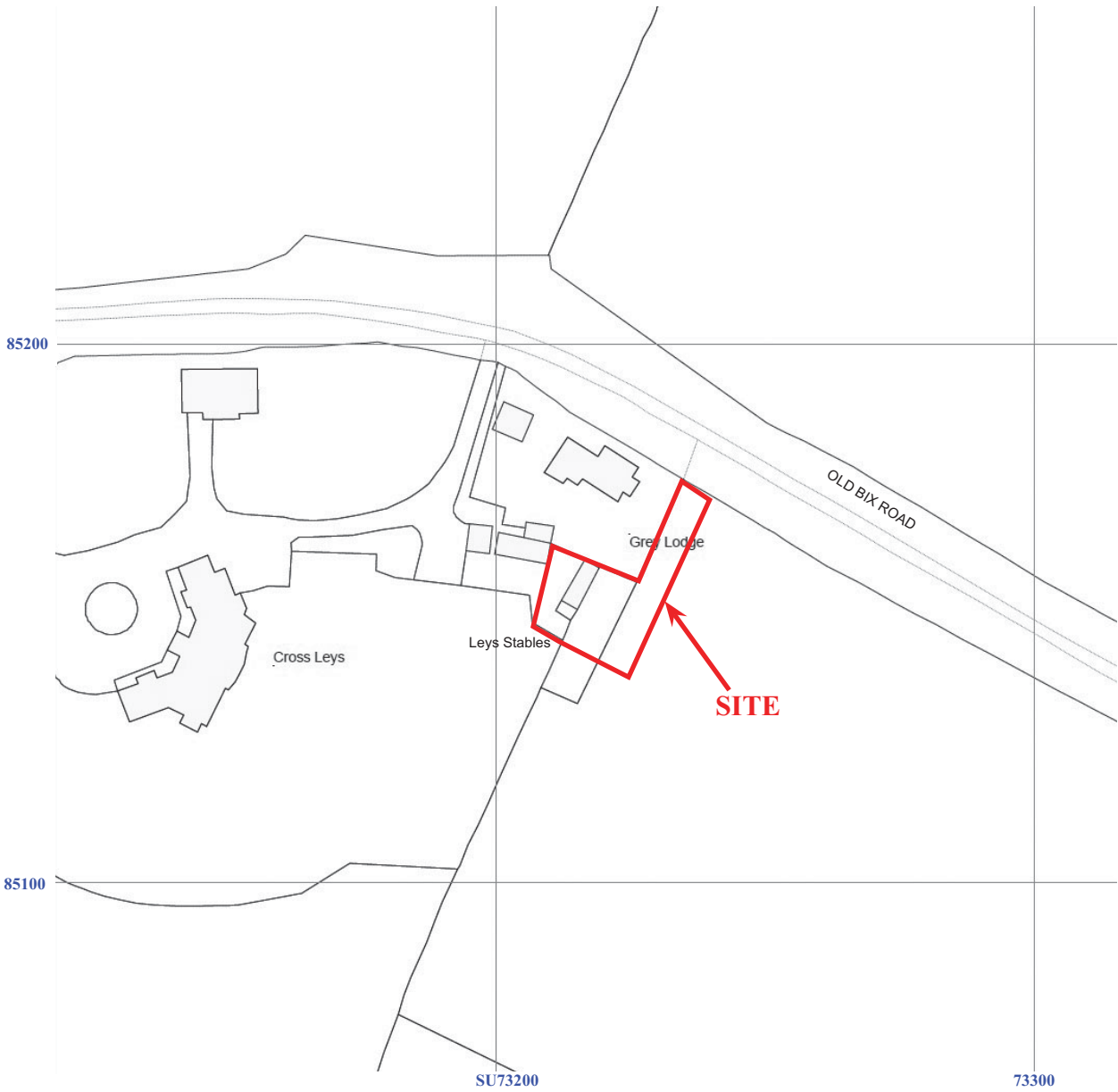
Despite the archaeological potential of the site stemming from its proximity to an excavated Roman settlement no archaeological features were revealed. No finds of any date were recovered from the subsoil or trench spoil, and it is therefore considered that the archaeological potential of the site is low.

### **References**

BGS, 1980, *British Geological Survey*, 1:50000, Sheet 254, Solid and Drift Edition, Keyworth  
NPPF, 2012, *National Planning Policy Framework*, Dept Communities and Local Govt, London  
Oram, R, 2013, 'Leys Stables, Old Bix Road, Bix, Design Brief for Archaeological Field Evaluation',  
Oxfordshire County Archaeological Service, Oxford

**APPENDIX 1: Trench details**

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Length (m)</i>	<i>Breadth (m)</i>	<i>Depth (m)</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1	10.30	1.70	0.59	0-0.29m topsoil; 0.29-0.59m light/mid brown grey sandy silt subsoil; 0.59m+ natural gravel geology. <b>[Pl. 1]</b>
2	10.40	1.70	0.66	0-0.16m topsoil; 0.16-0.56m subsoil; 0.56-0.66m dirty gravel; 0.66m+ natural sand and gravel geology. <b>[Pl. 2]</b>



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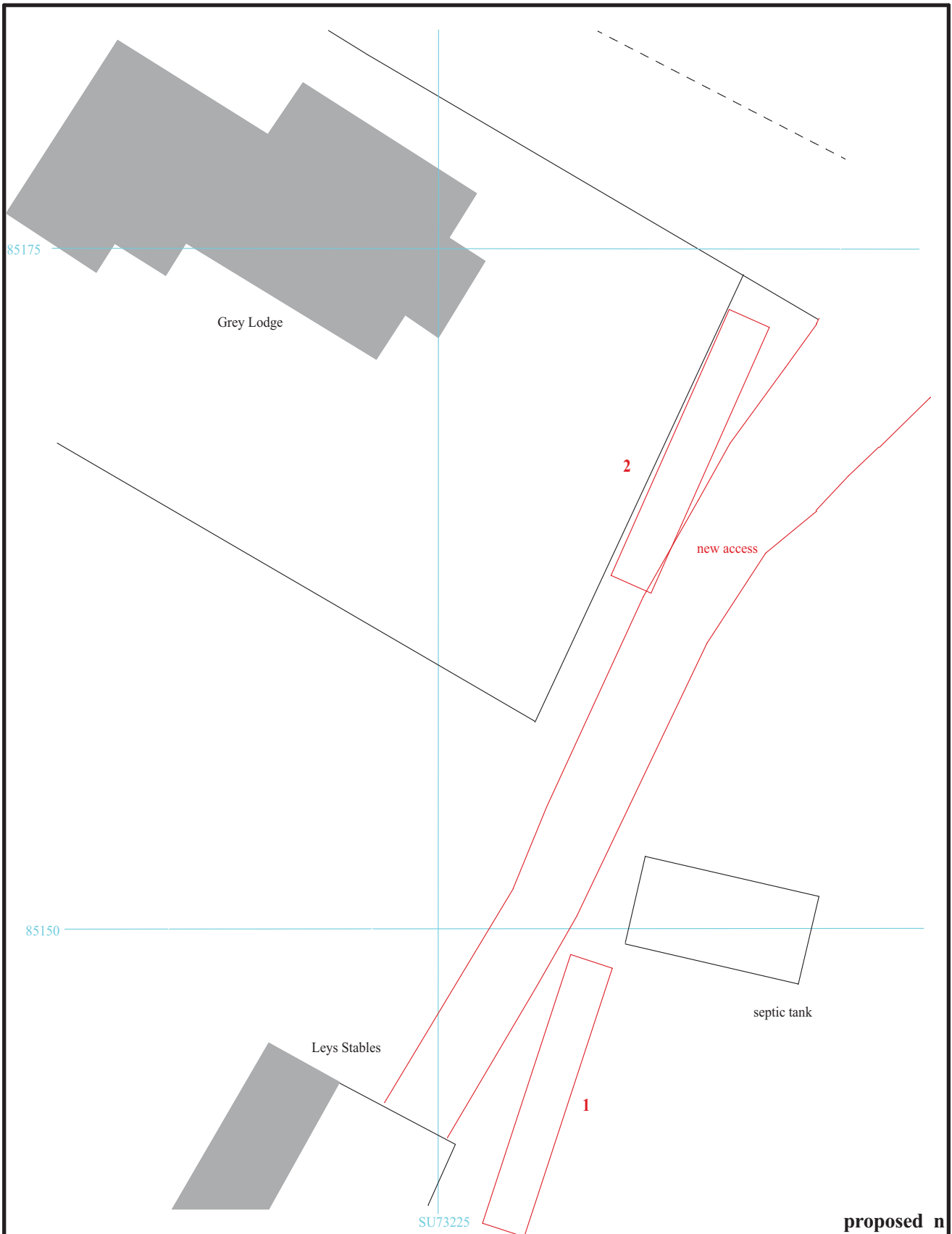
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Figure 2. Detailed location of site off Old Bix Road.

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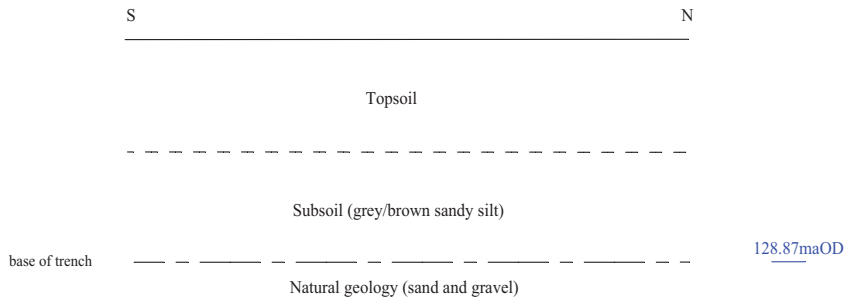
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Figure 3. Location of trenches.



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**Trench 1**



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Figure 4. Representative section.





Plate 1. Trench 1, looking north, Scales: 2m and 1m.



Plate 2. Trench 2, looking north, Scales: 2m and 1m.

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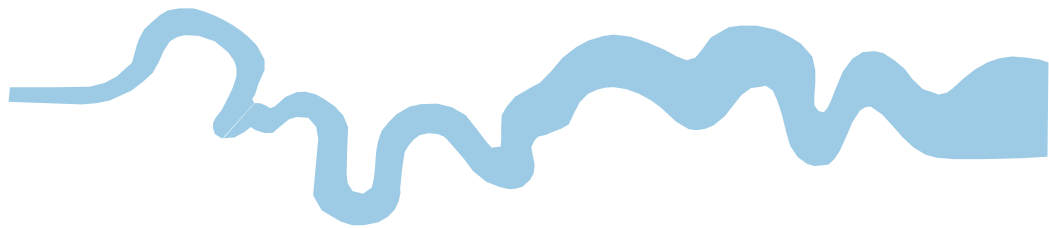
Plates 1 - 2.

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## TIME CHART

	Calendar Years
Modern _____	AD 1901
Victorian _____	AD 1837
Post Medieval _____	AD 1500
Medieval _____	AD 1066
Saxon _____	AD 410
Roman _____	AD 43
Iron Age _____	BC/AD 750 BC
Bronze Age: Late -----	1300 BC
Bronze Age: Middle -----	1700 BC
Bronze Age: Early -----	2100 BC
Neolithic: Late .....	3300 BC
Neolithic: Early .....	4300 BC
Mesolithic: Late .....	6000 BC
Mesolithic: Early .....	10000 BC
Palaeolithic: Upper .....	30000 BC
Palaeolithic: Middle .....	70000 BC
Palaeolithic: Lower .....	2,000,000 BC





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