

EOXP TEST PIT 36

Location of Test pit: 5 Grebe Close, Greater Leys, Oxford

Date of Excavation: 12/13 May 2012

Area excavated: 1m x 1m

Weather conditions: Very fine.

Excavators: Jenny Wells (householder), Steve Nicholson, Susan Matthews, Craig Byron, Nick Daisley, Ann Catten, Chris Catten, Trevor Saint.

Report by: Steve Nicholson and team.

GPS location and height above sea-level: SP 5524 0216, 65m OD

Introduction

The test pit was dug in the lawn of the back garden. The house is part of a modern housing development which is less than approx 20 years old. Prior to the house being built it was farmland. This area is known to be part of a Romano-British pottery industrial area, with nearby Roman roads.

Excavation summary

The test pit reached a maximum depth of 0.66m within a 0.5m x 0.5m sondage in the N-W corner. At 0.66m the natural grey clay was reached. All the excavated soil was sieved down to 0.42m, then some hand sorting in the sandy clay layer. From turf down to 0.42m it looks like very organic dark garden soil.

Context (100) spade and trowel used, the pit de-turfed and taken down to 0.12m. Soil was consistently red-brown silty clay organic. Looks like it ahas been disturbed / turned over, maybe during house building and/or farm work.

Results

Spit / Context	Type of deposit	Description	Soil sample	comments
Context (100)	layer	Level at top: turf, bottom: 0.12m. Spit garden soil. 1Mx1m. Compaction wet friable. Colour red brown. Composition silty clay. Inclusions sandstone, flint inclusions 10-60mm about 5%, some rounded pebbles, irregular shapes, broken flints – angular. Finds pottery frags, steel wire, charcoal, one piece blue china 10mmx10mm. Boundaries indistinct with (101), sandy clay. Level at top: turf, bottom: 0.12m. Spit garden soil. 1Mx1m. Compaction wet friable. Colour red brown. Composition silty clay. Inclusions sandstone, flint inclusions 10-60mm about 5%, some rounded pebbles, irregular shapes, broken flints – angular. Finds pottery frags, steel wire, charcoal, one piece blue china 10mmx10mm. Boundaries indistinct with (101), sandy clay. Contamination worms, grass roots, ants. Physical relationships above turf, below (101). Spade / trowel used. Heavy garden soil mixed with clay. Possibly introduced garden soil when house built.		

Spit (101) trowel used and taken down from 0.12m to 0.32m: soil dark brown garden soil, with clay and sand: turned over during farm and/or building work.

Spit / Context	Type of deposit	Description	Soil sample	comments
Spit (101)	layer	Top 0.12m, bottom 0.32m. Spit garden soil. 1Mx1m. Compaction wet firm friable. Colour dark brown. Composition garden soil 80%, clay <10%, sand <10%. Inclusions stones <5%, 10mm – 40mm some rounded, most angular. Finds charcoal lots of small pieces <10mm, small <50mm pieces of pottery, 10mm x 10mm piece china blue surface. Boundaries diffuse with (100). Contamination frequent worms, grass roots, rotted small tree roots. Above (100), below (102). Dug with trowel. Garden soil wet mixed with clay, including clay lenses. Garden soil possibly introduced.		

Context (102) trowel dug from 0.32m to 0.42m. Dark brown garden soil, possibly introduced and /or disturbed by modern building or farming.

Spit / Context	Type of deposit	Description	Soil sample	comments
Context (102)	layer	Top 0.32m, bottom 0.42m. Garden soil layer. 1M x 1m. Compaction wet friable. Colour dark brown. Composition clay 25%, sand 10%, silt 65%. Inclusions small stones <1%, small amounts charcoal <1%. Finds charcoal, small pot frags, glass, shell, slate, all small amounts. Boundaries diffuse. Contamination roots, worms, grubs, small rotted tree roots. Above (101), below (103). Trowel dug. Garden soil possibly introduced.		

Context (103): sondage in North-West corner 0.5m x 0.5m. The garden soil layer became far more sandy, approx. 50% sand and 50% clay. Very few finds: spade and trowel used.

Spit / Context	Type of deposit	Description	Soil sample	comments
Context (103)	layer	Top 0.42m, bottom 0.66m. Sandy clay layer. 0.5m x 0.5m sondage in NW. compaction wet friable. Colour yellow, reaching grey natural clay at 0.66m. Composition clay 50%, sand 50%. Inclusions round pebbles, shell frags, small amounts charcoal, all <1%. Finds tiny pot frags, charcoal, shell, all small amounts. Boundaries much more sandy at 0.42m, very gray at 0.66m. Contamination roots and worms. Above more dark garden soil, below gray clay natural. Dug with spade and trowel. Some sieving and some hand sorting due to heavy clay.		



Looking North





Looking North

