### EOXP TEST PIT 41

Location of Test Pit: 6 Pine Close, Blackbird Leys, Oxford Date of Excavation: 22-23 June 2012 Area of excavation: 1.0 x 1.5m Weather conditions: Cloudy/sunny with occasional showers Excavators: 22.6.2012 - Jane Griffin, Roelie Reed 23.6.2012 - Catriona Manners, Tara Love, Roelie Reed Report by: Roelie Reed GPS Location and height above sea-level: SP 5600 0315, 67 OD

### Introduction

The test pit was in the back garden of the property. These houses were built in the 1950s according to the current house-holder; they have been in the property for approximately 8 years. According to Victoria Count History – History on Line: "The new housing estate of Blackbird Leys was brought into the county borough in 1957 and into the Parliamentary borough in 1960". (Accessed on line 26.06.2012).

The Roman road was less than 100m to the east of the property, but the area has been considerably remodelled over the centuries - most of it is probably under the current electricity substation. The owner said that the garden was never soggy or waterlogged so there must be good natural drainage.

#### **Excavation summary**

The natural was reached at a depth of approx. 0.26 m (slight variations across the test pit due to natural geology). None of the material was sieved as it appeared to be all post 1950s materials.

**Spit 1** (4100) consisted of turf and topsoil. It contained lots of evidence of burning and large pieces of charcoal primarily square pieces and for this reason assumed to be builders' remains/materials. This spit dug to a depth of 0.20 by trowel only.

**Spit 2** (4101) at a depth of approximately 0.26m a stony layer was found. At first it was thought that it wasman-made, but after clearing the whole  $1 \times 1$  m test pit area it became clear that this was a natural layer of lime stone with "drainage" holes. The landowners said that they had encountered the same situation when trying to dig a pond to the south east of the test pit. When trying to plant a small tree to the north west of the test pit had the same problem.

Extension to East by 0.50 m (4102) to a depth of 0.26 m – had the same aspects of (4100) and (4101) with similar finds and consistency. The soil was removed by trowel only and material was not sieved.

No plan or section drawings were made, but there are sketches of bedrock/drainage holes are on reverse of context sheets.

# Results

Spit/ context	Type of deposit	Description	Soil Sample	Comments
(41 00)	Layer	<ul> <li>Turf and top soil, friable, dark brownish black, sandy silt (20% sand, 80% silt) The soil contained plenty of roots and much evidence of worm activity.</li> <li>Inclusions: small amount of builders' rubble (15%), i.e. CBM, cement, tarmac, angular limestones; 0.02 – 0.07m (20%), rounded river pebbles; 0.01 – 0.04m (10%), charcoal (5%).</li> <li>Finds: CBM, slate, floor tile, wall tile, bone, Fe objects, modern glass and pottery, post decimalisation penny, part of toy Context changed at a depth of 0.20 m</li> </ul>	none	Evidence suggests domestic use. There is much evidence of burning at this level
(41 01)	Layer	<ul> <li>Friable, darkish brown, sandy silt (30/70%) Roots and worms still present</li> <li>Inclusions: Angular limestones – 10%, charcoal/ash 5%</li> <li>Finds: 2 sherds of modern tile, 1 sherd of floor tile</li> <li>Natural reached at a depth of 0.27m</li> </ul>	None	Natural limestone bedrock with drainage holes Sketch
(41 02)	Exten sion /layer	<ul> <li>0.50 m extension eastward</li> <li>Layer same as (41 00) and (41 01)</li> <li>Turf and topsoil darkish brown, sandy silt (20/80%), becoming slightly more sandy just above bedrock.</li> <li>Inclusions: Angular limestones 25% (0.02 - 0.07m), rounded river cobbles 10% (0.01 - 0.05m), small rounded stones(?) approx. dia between less than 5 mm to approx. 10mm (5%), charcoal (5%),burnt stone roots and worms</li> <li>Finds: coin, Fe objects, glass, porcelain, plastic tab (from bread packing, loaf of bread was 33 p and date was august (but no year), glazed wall tiles, roof/floor tiles sherds (lime stone).</li> </ul>	None	Natural, but drainage holes appear to be larger. Difference in colour due to dampness of sand. Sketch Taking the finds into consideration, it is possible that the garden was not put to lawn until late 1970s/early 1980s.

Finds from the layer		
Natural reached at a depth of 0.27 m		

## LIST OF PHOTOGRAPHS

No         Description           1837         Returfed           1836         Tara measuring           1835         Finds from 4102           1834         Stones fron 4102           1833         End of context 4102 and 4101           1831         Baulk looking south           1830         Baulk looking east           1830         Baulk looking east           1829         End of context 4102           1828         4102 looking north           1827         Natural whole tp looking west           1826         Natural facing west           1827         Natural facing west           1828         4102 looking west           1826         Natural facing west           1827         Natural facing west           1828         Close up natural           1820         Close up natural           1821         Close up natural           1822         Close up natural           1830         End looking west           1817         Last bits           1818         End looking west           1817         Last bits           1818         End looking at coin           1819         End stom 4102	LIST OF PHO	
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1790	Baulk looking west (east facing)
1789	End of context (4101)
1788	End of context (4101)
1787	Jane
1786	View We3st towards house
1785	View east from house