

EOXP TEST PIT 12

Iffley and Rose Hill Test pit weekend

26 Abberbury Road: owner Tina Read

Date of Excavation: 11-12 June 2011

Area excavated: 1 x 1m

Weather conditions: sunny and dry, 11/6; overcast with torrential rain in afternoon, 12/6

Excavators: Cate Frieman, Lucy Fletcher, Paula Tansley, Nick Hedges, Tara Love.

Report by: Cate and the team.



GPS location and height above sea-level: SP 5307 0360, 85.0 OD

Summary of Excavation

Test pit 12 was located in the garden of 26 Abberbury Road in a lawn sloping very gently up to the south. The area of lawn in which the test pit was dug was part of an old orchard, of which a few trees survive in the back gardens on this side of Abberbury Road; the garden is approaching the highest point of Rose Hill and backs on to the allotments. Historic Ordnance Survey maps show this area as agricultural land until its development in the twentieth century. There is known Iron Age and Romano-British archaeology within half a kilometre including burials, domestic surfaces and Roman kiln sites focused on Annesley Road on the north-eastern flanks of Rose Hill.

The topsoil contained many finds: flint and pottery, as well as a Roman coin (with the head of the Emperor Posthumus 260-69). On the second day limestone bedrock was reached under thin sterile subsoil. There has clearly been a considerable shift of soil down slope over the centuries leaving this area with a thin covering of soil. All the pits on Abberbury Road have yielded Roman material and underline the extensive as well as intensive nature of the settlement in that period.

Context	Description	Comments
100	Turf layer: removed by hand. Depth 0.05m	
101	Topsoil: loosened by spade, removed by trowel, all material sieved or sorted by hand. Damp, friable-compact dark brown silty clay. 0.2m deep; base 0.25m below surface. Root activity, bioturbation. Increasingly stony with depth. Inclusions: many small rounded and angular limestone pebbles c. 0.03m and limestone flecks c. 10%; charcoal 1%; occasional limestone cobbles; and frost-shattered flint 1%. Finds: 3% context. Roman coin small find 1; Copper fragment, small find 2; red	Dark clayey topsoil, not worked over recently, with many stones and tree roots. Finds fragmentary and abraded. A heavily landscaped area previously farmed.

	pottery; Bakelite; clear and coloured glass; CBM; glazed ceramic; metal wire.	
102	<p>Sterile subsoil above natural, most dug in sondage: damp, compact yellowish orange slightly sandy clay (80%) with iron pan. Base in sondage 0.4m below surface. Root disturbance.</p> <p>Inclusions: >1% charcoal fragments at top surface; 50% angular limestone pebbles c. 0.1m.</p> <p>Finds: None.</p>	<p>Small sondage 0.11 - 0.15m deep in SW corner 0.5m² confirmed that subsoil came down onto natural rubble limestone with yellow clay.</p>  <p>Looking west</p>



The team looking north-east: from left Nick, Tara, Lucy, Cate and Paula