

EOXP TEST PIT 14

Rose Hill Allotments, Iffley: test pit dug in turf of central children's play area

Date of Excavation: 11-12 June 2011

Area excavated: 1 x 1m

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

Excavators: Corrine Grimley Evans, Swii Yii Lim, Pam England, Kinga Sipiora, Paulette and David Burns.


Report by: Pam England, Swii Yii Lim and the team.


GPS location and height above sea-level: SP 5292 0351, 80.0 OD

Summary of Excavation

Test pit 14 was located in the turf of the central children's play area, gently sloping to the west and much nearer the gently domed summit of Rose Hill. Historic Ordnance Survey maps show this area as agricultural land until the development of Abberbury Road. 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. The wash of material down the hill over time will have resulted in a loss of soil in this area.

Natural decayed bedrock and the overlying sandy clay was reached c 0.4m down from the surface. This meant the soil in the upper allotment was some 0.3m shallower than in TP13. The topsoil and subsoil showed little sign of very recent disturbance.

Context	Description	Comments
100	Turf: removed by hand. Depth 0.05m	
101	Topsoil: mattock and trowel, all material sieved. Dry, friable-compact, mid greyish brown gritty sandy silt. Root and worm activity. Depth 0.2m from surface. Inclusions: 3% round and sub round pebbles moderately sorted c. 60mm; frequent charcoal flecks 5%; v occasional shell inclusions 1%. Finds: c 2% of context; fragments of glass and slag 1%; abraded pottery sherds including glazed ceramics 2%; v occasional flint fragments. Few signs of recent disturbance.	Slightly stony former allotment topsoil. The area has not been used as an allotment for some time.  Looking south
102	Subsoil: dry, firm and compact mid yellowish brown gritty silty sand. Root and worm action. 0.40m from surface, 0.2m deep. Inclusions: frequent rounded and sub-rounded limestone cobbles c. 50mm, moderately sorted 5-7%; frequent	Less organic, sandier, stony and yellow, clay subsoil to (101).

	<p>charcoal 5%; rare shell inclusions 1%. Finds: Occasional pottery sherds, fragmentary and abraded; rare glass and flint fragments.</p>	
<p>103</p>	<p>Above natural. Damp (rain) sticky compact, mid orangey brown slightly sandy clay. Depth from 0.4m to 0.5m below surface. Base of 103 at 75.59 OD. Mattock and trowel. Natural from just below 0.4m from surface. Inclusions: more angular limestone cobbles than 102, 0.05 – 0.1m; fewer rounded cobbles. Finds: tiny orange fragments of CBM/pottery; couple tiny fragments glass; occasional fossil. Fewer finds than 102 and decreasing with depth: tiny fragments brought down into natural by worm and root action.</p>	<p>Natural sandy clay above bedrock. Sondage in SW corner: 0.5m². Proportion and size of limestone inclusions increases. Down to decayed limestone bedrock.</p>  <p>Looking north</p>