

EOAP Test Pit: 57

Location: Fairacres Convent, Iffley Fields

Date of Excavation: 2/05/13

Area of excavation: 1x1m

Weather conditions: Overcast, windy, raining

Excavators: OJB, JPS, LQ, RJ


Report by: Gill Mellor, Leigh Mellor and Olaf Bayer




Location and elevation: E452579 N204755 H59.74m OD

Introduction: One of a series of test pits excavated in 2012/2013 in the Iffley Fields area to locate extent of prehistoric activity identified by A.M. Bell in late 19C/early 20C. The site is located towards the base of a gentle East to West slope overlooking the Thames flood plain (see figure 2). This is the lowest lying of the three test pits in the grounds of Fairacres Convent. First Edition Ordnance Survey Mapping shows this area as being part of the grounds of Fairacres House constructed early 19C (see figure 3). A break of slope in this area of the garden is thought to relate to post-medieval quarrying and dumping.

Excavation summary: A substantial depth of topsoil (100) overlaid two probably natural deposits (101) and (102). (101) is likely to represent in-situ subsoil derived from the underlying solid geology while (102) is likely to represent the easternmost extent of terrace two of the Thames gravels.

Results:

Context	Type	Description	Soil sample	Comments/photo
100	layer	Matrix: Friable, damp mid grey brown, slightly clayey silt. Inclusions: Charcoal, rolled small flint gravel frags (water worn), fossil shell Finds: Glass, slate, earthenware, CBM, pottery Depth: 0.45m Boundaries: Indistinct to (101) below Contamination: Fine roots and worm intrusion Excavated: trowel and hand shovel	N/A	Topsoil/garden soil (100) facing north 

101	layer	<p>Matrix: Firm mid grey slightly silty clay</p> <p>Inclusions: Occ small (waterworn) stones. Small crushed limestone frags.</p> <p>Finds: Occ. crushed CBM, not retained</p> <p>Depth: 0.50m</p> <p>Boundaries: Clear to (102)</p> <p>Contamination: Occ fine roots & worms</p> <p>Excavated: Trowel & hand shovel</p>	N/A	<p>West facing man emerges from layer (101) into east facing photograph. Layer 101 is probably Head deposit shown on BGS mapping</p> 
102	layer	<p>Matrix: Friable wet mid yellowish orange sandy silty clay</p> <p>Inclusions: Fine & medium pebbles (frequent) down to pea grit, sub rounded 65%, gryphaea, shells</p> <p>Finds: N/A</p> <p>Depth: 0.30m</p> <p>Boundaries: Distinct vertical and horizontal boundaries to (101)</p> <p>Contamination: N/A</p> <p>Excavated: Trowel, hand shovel, mattock</p>	N/A	<p>Layers 101 and 102 – north and north east facing. Layer 102 is probably Second Thames Terrace</p>  

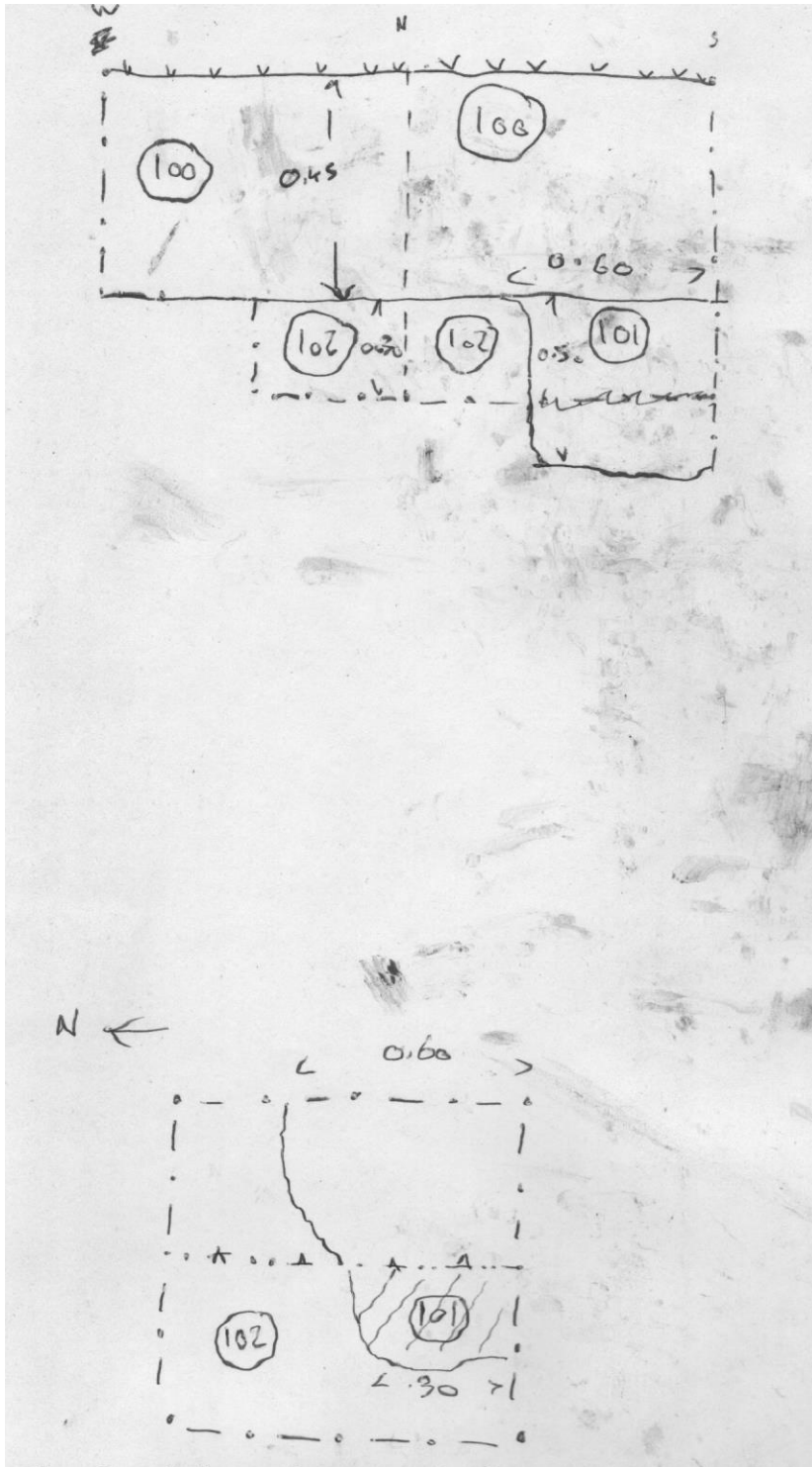


Figure 1: Sketch section and plan of TP57

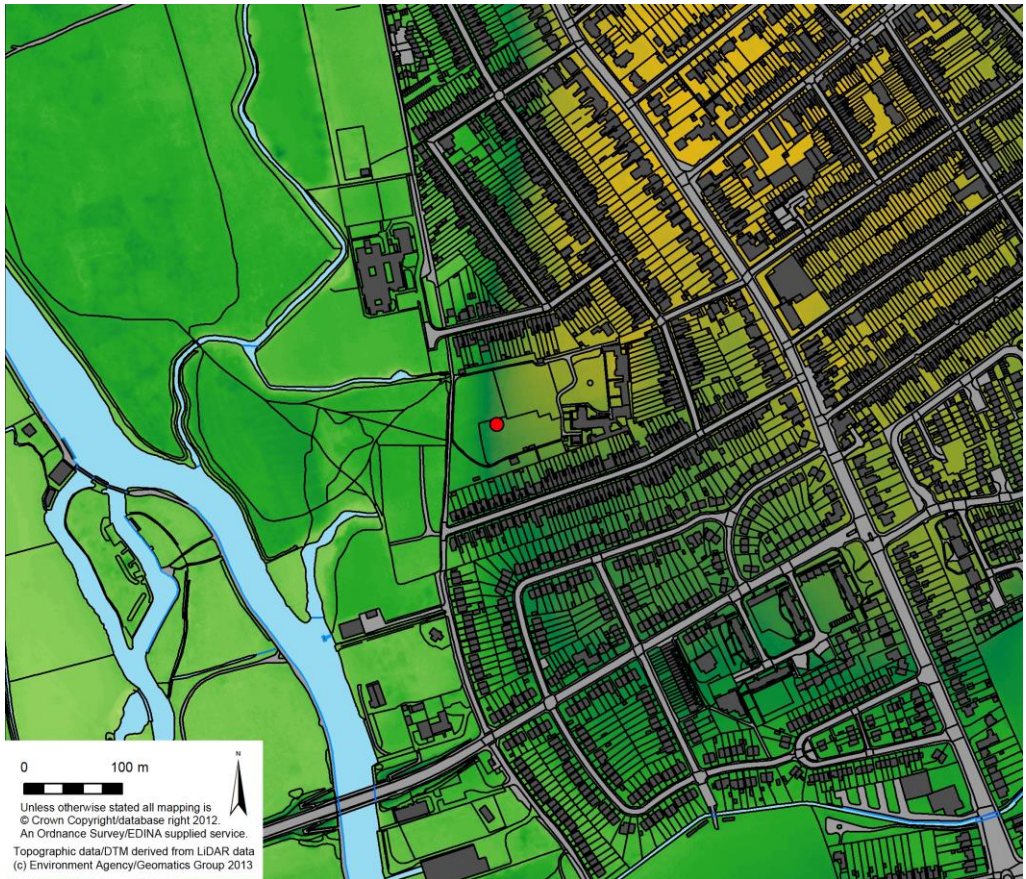


Figure 2: Test pit 57 location and topography

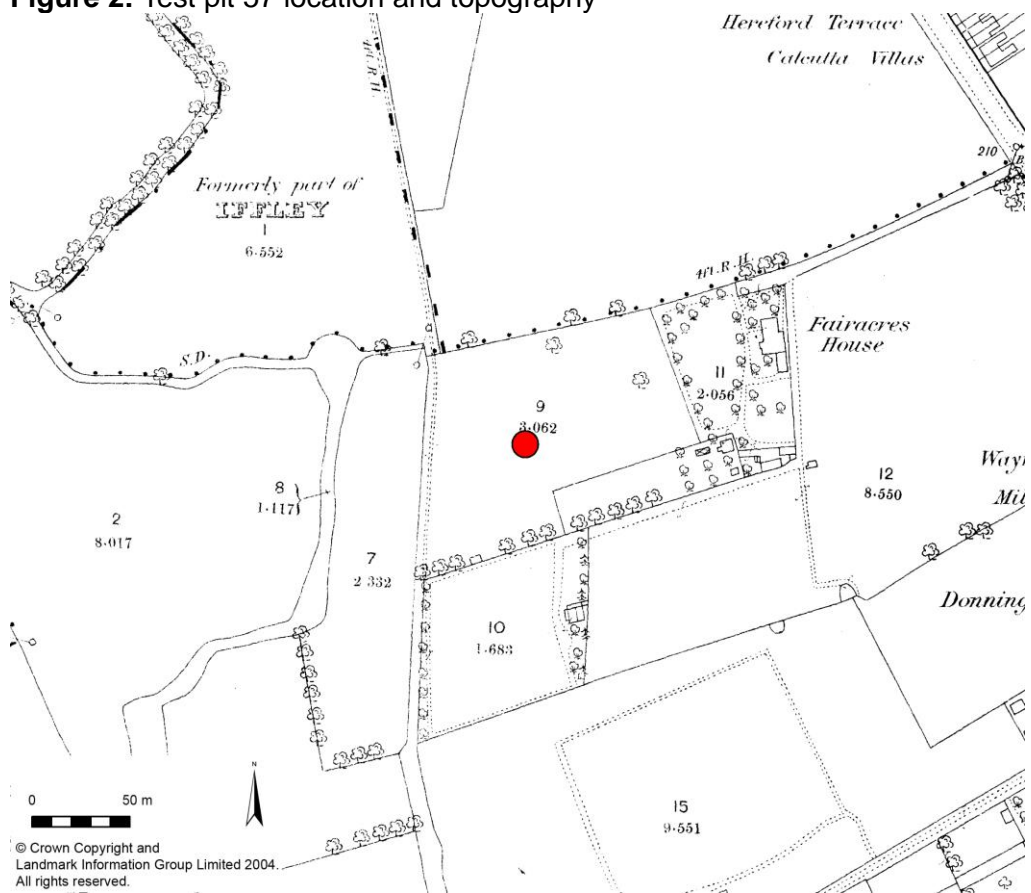


Figure 3: Test pit 57 c.1880 (Ordnance Survey First Edition Mapping)