

EOXP TEST PIT 59

Location: St George's House, Littlemore

Date of Excavation: 15 June 2013

Area of excavation: 1.0 x 1.0m

Weather conditions: Sunny spells, heavy shower at midday

Excavators: KU, PS, TS, ES, SF, HS, HW, RR

Report by: RR

GPS Location and OD: SP 5391 03299 73m OD

Introduction

The test pit was dug in the garden to the east side of the house which was thought to be the most likely to be undisturbed. St George's House is one of the oldest buildings in the village. The owners have researched its history and advised that the house appears on a map dated 1611 but probably built slightly earlier. Some of the stonework incorporated in the building could originate from the dismantling of buildings after the dissolution in the early 1520s of nearby Minchery Priory. The building has extremely shallow foundations and is built directly on the high limestone bedrock. Much of the garden surrounding the house have been altered considerably with the bringing in of modern, especially to the back and west of the house - see Test Pit 60 report.

Excavation summary

The natural bed-rock geology was reached at a depth of between 0.18 - 0.35m. Context (100) consisted of turf and topsoil. Context (101) began c 0.15m below the turf-top and was between 0.03 – 0.0.19m deep. The first layer consisted of a very thin layer of humic topsoil after which the remains of a previously laid patio/path was found under which a levelling layer of sand containing slate slabs, small river pebbles and modern pottery fragments, Bakelite, nails, CBM and a possible "Grog" sherd.

Context (101) below was a fine grained mottled brown sand containing limestone and bedrock over approximately 40% of the test pit. Some of the bedrock showed signs of disturbance which was thought to be due to an earlier lean to/porch or a fence line.

No plan was made, but there are sketches on the reverse of the context sheets. Two section drawings were made of the NW facing and SE facing sections.

Results

Spit/ context	Type of deposit	Description	Soil Sample	Comments
(100)	Layer	Turf (0.02m) and remains of patio .with sandy levelling layer to a depth of 0.14 – 0.16m Inclusions: Small well rounded river pebbles (10%), slate slabs (10%), occasional charcoal flecks and mortar Finds: Modern glass, pottery, Bakelite, Fe, CBM: overall 5% Possibly 1 sherd of "Grog" Boundaries: Clear to bedrock on	N/a	

		western side of the trench, diffused to (101). Occasional worm disturbance.		
(101)	Layer	<p>Friable medium reddish brown fine grained orangey brown mottled slightly silty (5%) sand together with outcrop of bedrock. Inclusions: Limestone cobbles</p> <p>Finds: none</p> <p>At a depth of 0.18 – 0.35m, it was decided that the natural had been reached.</p>	N/a	There was some indication of earlier disturbance of the bedrock.