

## TEST PIT 25

### Village Hall, Railway Lane, Littlemore, OX4 4NL

**Area Excavated:** 1 m x 1 m  
**Date of Excavation:** 3 & 4 September 2011  
**Conditions:** Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup>, dry, overcast/sunny  
Sunday 4<sup>th</sup>, rain overnight, but dry and cloudy during the day  
**Excavators:** Louise Bailey, Gillian Mellor, Leigh Mellor, Charlotte Michael, Iain Dickson, David Pinches, Roelie Reed  
**History:** Maggie Willis  
**Report by:** The team/RR  
**GPS Location and height over sea level:** SP 5357 0275; 69.6m OD

### Summary of Excavation

The test pit was located to the north of the village hall in the back garden. Extensive building work has taken place – a large patio and a garden shed have been constructed. There are also several trees – the large hazel tree in the middle of the lawn has been coppiced in the past. Much of the garden area showed signs of disturbance by building activities and we attempted to find the least disturbed location.

The test pit was dug to a depth of 0.46m (69.09 above OD) which was assumed to be the natural geology. A probe was used to a depth of 0.33 m, but no bedrock was found. The natural geology was similar to that found at the Ark-T centre back garden, i.e. yellow sand with dark specks (mottled effect) in Test Pit 6 (EOX) AKT2.

The ground had a gentle downward slope towards the north and this was also visible in the stratigraphy in the test pit.

Context No	Description	Comments
100	<b>Turf layer</b> – removed by hand. Approx depth 5 cm.	
101	<b>Garden topsoil</b> – loosened by spade, but removed by trowel. Material not sieved. Dark brownish-black organic sandy silt, (80% silt, 20% sand) with some tiny patches of yellowish/brown sand. The soil contained small roots and evidence of worm activity.  <b>Inclusions:</b> Some flecks of charcoal, shells and stones and pebbles. Sizes: rounded pebbles from 2 – 6 x 5 x 4 cm Broken limestone pebbles with similar dimensions as above Tabular limestone cobbles, sizes varying between 4 x 4 x 1.5 cm to 12 x 9 x 2 cm. Rounded limestone cobbles: 6 x 4 x 4 cm Limestone material representing approx. 5% of deposit.  <b>Finds:</b> CBM, slate, tile, mortar, bone, Fe objects, gryphea, IPC, pottery (kept).	  Evidence suggests domestic use.

	<p>Modern glass and pottery (not kept).</p> <p>Context number changed at depth of 0.20 m</p>	
<p><b>102</b></p>	<p><b>Layer</b> of mid yellowish brown soil which was firmer than context 101 above. Composition is still sandy silt although the percentage changed to 60% silt, 40% sand, with small limestone flecks. Material not sieved.</p> <p><b>Inclusions:</b> Occasional charcoal specs Limestone and river pebbles (rounded and tabular, – sizes as in <b>context 101</b>). Mainly concentrated at junction with 101. Quartzite pebbles and flints were also present.</p> <p>About 50% rounded quartzite cobbles, some apparently chopped, sizes ranging between 3 x 4 x 5.5 cm, 3 x 6 x 5 cm to 9 x 5 x 5 cm.</p> <p><b>Finds:</b> CBM, floor tile, modern and medieval (or earlier) pottery, plaster, coloured and plain glass, nails and other ferrous objects, bone, snail shells, (lime?) stone with hole, possible iron stone</p> <p>Context changed at a depth of 0.31 m.</p> 	<p>The majority of the Fe objects were found near the cobbles and appear to be the result of agricultural equipment striking the larger cobbles and parts broken off.</p> <p>There was evidence of either tree root channels (some dead root was found) or small animal burrowing in this layer. Most of the shells were found in these burrows/ channels and a selection of the shells was collected for analysis.</p> <p>It had the appearance of a laid surface possibly over boggy ground, although not like a path, more like keeping a muddy patch dry. Some stones seem to have been placed with flat side down.</p> <p><i>Sketch plan</i></p>
<p><b>103</b></p>	<p><b>Layer</b> of brownish yellow silty sand (80% sand, 20% silt), much more compacted than context 102 but still friable.</p> <p><b>Inclusions:</b> Flecks of charcoal, few flints, rounded river and quartzite pebbles (approx. 20%). Size of pebbles: smallest pea-size, largest 10 x 8 x 5 cm.</p> <p>A sondage was started at a depth of 0.35 m as there were no finds in this layer, and compaction was getting harder, no pebbles/stones found in western half, but still some on eastern side – i.e. slope direction. Sondage size 0.50 m on south side.</p> <p>In sondage: small lenses of grey clay, and dark</p>	 <p><i>Sketch plan and section drawing</i></p>

	<p>red sand (geology). No pebbles found in sondage, but contained angular lime stones (less than 10%). No roots or worms at this depth.</p> <p>Spade was used due to compaction. Soil was sieved but no finds.</p> <p>At a depth of 0.44 m a probe was used to see if bedrock could be found (length of probe 0.33 m). No resistance was encountered and it was decided that this was the natural. Bedrock was not reached.</p>	<p>Re-turfed</p> 
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GPS readings:

GPS0001, 453573.183, 202748.406, 69.586  
GPS0002, 453572.208, 202748.389, 69.516  
GPS0003, 453572.211, 202747.441, 69.400  
GPS0004, 453573.191, 202747.362, 69.614  
GPS0005, 453573.134, 202748.308, 69.266  
GPS0006, 453572.278, 202748.349, 69.259  
GPS0007, 453572.261, 202747.805, 69.090  
GPS0008, 453572.288, 202747.478, 69.115  
GPS0009, 453573.162, 202747.446, 69.139  
GPS0010, 453573.128, 202747.812, 69.155