

**Progress Report February 2025**

Work has restarted at Ian Avenue for the new dig season, now that the weather has improved somewhat. We've realigned Test Pit 7 slightly to miss a tree stump which is in the way and the test pit is now 1.2 metres deep. We've put a sondage in (smaller hole in the corner) and this is at 1.6 metres deep. We're still not deep enough and we will now need to construct some shuttering to enable us to achieved the desired depth.



Example materials in the upper rubble (C03)

1. Sherd of medieval gritty ware (1050-1250);
  2. Handmade nail;
  3. Sherd of orange tile
  4. Brick sample;
  5. Clay pipe stem sherd.
- Samples of Marley Tile and other modern materials have already been taken.

However, the nature of the rubble in the sondage is slightly different from the Marley Tile inclusive rubble above it, with only a little brick and more redeposited grey clay and soil rather than the orange fawn clay and soil which is typically in the rubble. This upper rubble contains everything from tarmac to gravel, clay to sand and dressed stone to brick. The sondage, however, doesn't contain Marley Tile, sand or gravel. Even though its only about half a metre square it has brought out the largest collection of pottery we have had so far, we have seven sherds, including more medieval sherds to go with others from last year's dig season. Note: these are not in their correct historical contexts - they are the result of the builder digging the place up.



Pottery sherds from the sondage

1. Worn black coated ware;
2. Unknown worn white ware;
3. Grey brown gritty ware (medieval);
4. Olive green glazed ware (1200-1375);
5. Splash glazed ware (1075-1225);
6. Victorian stoneware

Just a further note about contexts. We seem to have a difference in the rubble materials between the context down to 1.2 metres and the sondage down to 1.6 metres. In the upper part of Test Pit 7 we have lots of builder's materials mixed with Marley roof tile, but in the sondage we seem to have slightly different materials with no Marley roof tile. The interpretation of this might be (usual list of caveats as long as an elephants trunk) that Bob the Builder has come in early in 1963 and started work and done a bit of levelling of what was there, so he could lay out the foundations and get on with the house. The building of the house might go on for several months at which point the house is up and then he dumps all the rest of his rubble including the Marley Tile in the garden to level it. For this reason there would be no really obvious horizon between two contexts for us to find, but the slightly different materials may enable us to separate two contexts, one earlier and lower, one later and upper, representing two distinct building activities, close together in time.

The general significance of this is that we're still in builder's rubble yet again: we've not reached the original field surface and we need to.