

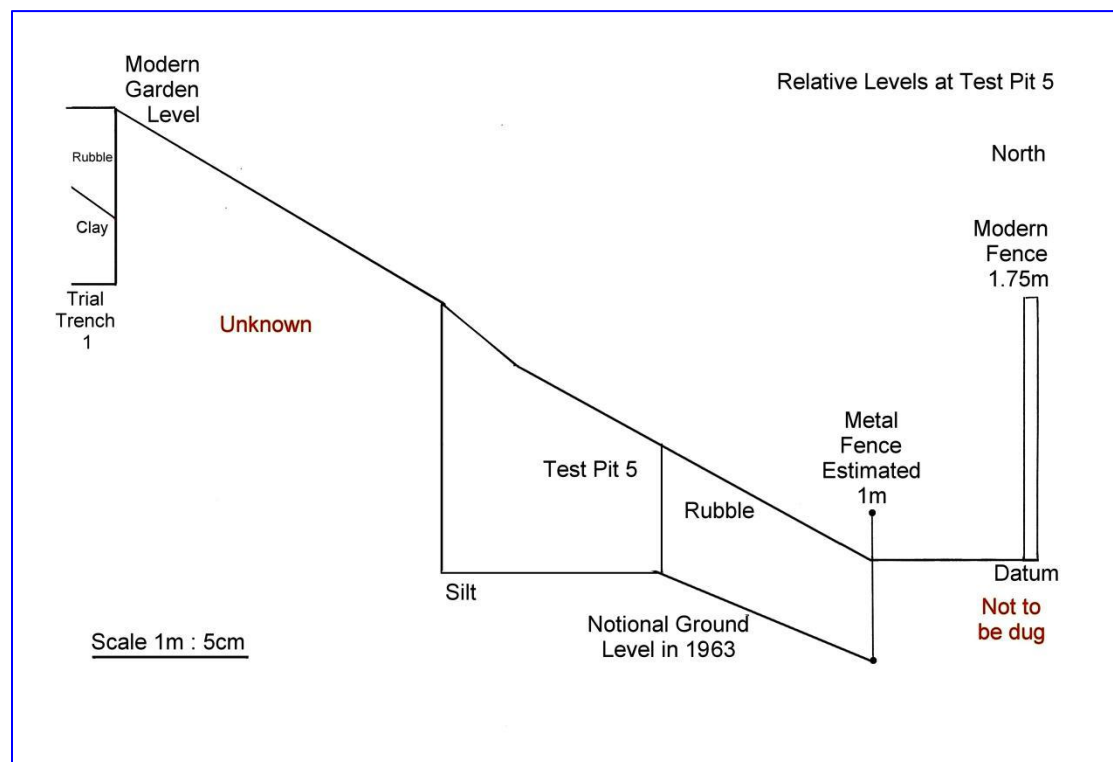
Wirksworth Archaeological Society

Progress Report July 2024

Work continues at Ian Avenue with the kind support of the Beacham family. We are in the process of developing Test Pit 5 which is located on the slope of the garden in order to see if it contains a retaining wall, which, if so, would be an archaeological feature, not a modern one.

I have noted the site, which slopes down from south to north, is covered in builder's rubble from the construction of the houses in Ian Avenue in 1963.

A sketch of the view of this shows the slope:



Slope looking west as at 27th July 2024

Prior to the house building, the original ground level up to 1963 was much lower than it is now and it is an essential part of our work to understand it. In developing Test Pit 5 we need to work up the slope and given the nature of the rubble it is necessary to provide shuttering in the test pit for safety.

Currently the bottom south edge of the Test Pit contained a layer of stones which have proved to be more modern tipping as these stones are mixed with heavy breeze blocks and have also brick sherds under them, although they seem to be the very lowest (i.e earliest) context of this activity, because this context does not seem to contain the Marley Tile which is so common immediately above it. Below this is the silty soil which represents the pre 1963 field surface.



Test Pit 5 showing the timber shuttering and collection of rough stone and breeze blocks tipped here.

Despite sieving everything from this context, finds were limited to post medieval pottery, a little green glass, bits of brick and some unusual kinds of metal working slag.

As can be seen from the sketch view of the slope, there is a need to close the gap between Test Pit 5 and Trial Trench 1. This is far easier said than done given the slope and a laurel hedge on the slope and can only be accomplished by stepping.

The examination will continue presently.