



Test Pit 11: 55 Main Street, SK 39728 05052

Test Pit 11 (Figure 1) was excavated in the front garden of 55 Main Street on the north side of Main Street. Maps dating from the mid-19th century show that the test pit was located to the rear of a row of cottages and a smithy which were all demolished in the early and mid-20th century. The current dwelling was built in the late 20th century. Photographs of the cottages show that they were brick built with slate and thatched roofs, of late 18th or early 19th-century date.



Figure 1: Test Pit 11 during excavation. Looking east



Figure 2: Test Pit 11 fully excavated, looking north

During the excavation, 0.2m of brownish grey sandy silt topsoil (Layers 1-2) was removed (Figure 2). Beneath was 0.3m of mixed greyish orange sandy silt, dark brownish grey silty gravel, cinder, charcoal and building rubble (Layers 3-5) and greyish orange sandy clay (Layers 6-7). The natural substratum, mixed greyish yellow clay and greyish orange clayey sand, was reached 0.7m below the ground.

In all, 499 individual finds (18.194kg) were recovered from the test pit (Table 1). A small but significant assemblage of High Medieval (13th-14th century) and Late Medieval (15th-mid-16th century) pottery was found, as well as a large assemblage of post-medieval and modern pottery (16th-19th century). Other finds included a large amount of modern building material, typically fragments of handmade brick and tile made locally from the late 18th century onwards. Hand- and machine-made iron nails, modern garden waste, and modern window and bottle glass were also present. Unique items included carbon rods from modern batteries, a safety pin, a washer and a grommet, all modern. A small assemblage of animal bone was also found. A worked flint was possibly a scraper of Bronze Age date.

The test pit was sited to assess the potential extent of medieval and post-medieval activity around St Andrew's Church. The medieval pottery suggests that there was activity in the vicinity in the 13th-15th centuries. This is consistent with test pits nearby, which have produced similar assemblages. Together, they suggest a focus of medieval settlement in the area along Main Street immediately around the church and Manor House Farm. Post-medieval and modern material from the test pit, dating from the 16th century onwards suggests that this occupation continued to the present day. How this relates to the row of cottages formerly occupying the site remains unclear. The layer of soil and building rubble in the test pit (Layers 3-5) can probably be associated with the demolition of these late 18th/early-19th-century buildings in the 20th century. The majority of the medieval pottery (13/19 sherds) came from undisturbed soil layers beneath this demolition layer. Their presence, and the presence of 16th-early 18th century pottery in the soil strongly supports the idea that the cottages replaced earlier structures which may have been of medieval date.

The worked flint was a potlid (a flint which had naturally split from a larger nodule through thermal contraction and expansion). Its flaked margin may suggest that it was used as a scraper. The rather impromptu nature of the material may suggest a Bronze Age date and the flint represents a low-level 'background noise' of prehistoric activity in the wider landscape.

Many thanks to Peter Gannon for the test pit location. Excavation was carried out over two days on September 10-11, 2022 by Adrian Child, Mick and Isabella Edwards, and Esther Shaw.

Table 1: The finds from Test Pit 11

Layer	Category	No	Description	Phase*	Comments
2	Bone & shell	2	Misc. animal bone	Undated	
2	Building material	50	Red ceramic building material	Modern	
2	Building material	2	Iron nails	Undated	Handmade, square shafted, 1"
2	Garden waste	2	Modern plastic	Modern	Hard black plastic, rim of bucket/container?
2	Glass	30	Clear bottle glass	Modern	
2	Glass	4	Clear window glass	Modern	
2	Household	1	Washer	Modern	12mm diam

Layer	Category	No	Description	Phase*	Comments
2	Household	1	Grommet	Modern	30mm diam
2	Pottery	3	Iron-Glazed Earthenware	Post-medieval	Chilvers Coton / Ticknall 17th-19th century AD
2	Pottery	1	Staffordshire Manganese Mottled Ware	Post-medieval	AD 1680-1780
2	Pottery	1	Staffordshire Creamware	Post-medieval	AD 1730-1850
2	Pottery	26	Modern earthenwares	Modern	AD 1800+
3	Bone & shell	6	Misc. animal bone	Undated	
3	Building material	2	Iron nails	Modern	Machine-made
3	Building material	2	Iron objects	Undated	Too corroded to identify
3	Building material	61	Red ceramic building material	Modern	Includes nib tile 11mm thick
3	Building material	1	Cement roof tile	Modern	
3	Building material	3	Iron nails	Undated	Handmade, square shafted, one = 1.5"
3	Garden waste	1	Foil bottle top	Modern	
3	Garden waste	2	Modern plastic	Modern	Black moulded grommet and pale green plastic comb fragment
3	Glass	1	Clear window glass	Modern	
3	Glass	14	Clear window glass	Modern	
3	Glass	5	Clear bottle glass	Modern	
3	Pottery	1	Midland Purple Ware	Late Medieval	AD 1370-1550
3	Pottery	6	Iron-Glazed Earthenware	Post-medieval	Chilvers Coton / Ticknall 17th-19th century AD
3	Pottery	1	Staffordshire Manganese Mottled Ware	Post-medieval	AD 1680-1780
3	Pottery	18	Modern earthenwares	Modern	AD 1800+
4	Bone & shell	2	Misc. animal bone	Undated	
4	Building material	31	Red ceramic building material	Modern	
4	Flint	1	Utilised potlid (secondary)	Bronze Age	Flaked margin, possible scraper
4	Garden waste	1	Foil bottle top	Modern	
4	Glass	9	Clear window glass	Modern	

Layer	Category	No	Description	Phase*	Comments
4	Glass	1	Clear bottle glass	Modern	
4	Household	1	Carbon rod from battery	Modern	Carbon rod with cu alloy cap, 5mm diam. 55mm (full length), broken
4	Pottery	1	Chilvers Coton 'C' Ware	High Medieval	Chilvers Coton, Warwickshire AD 1200-1475
4	Pottery	1	Midland Purple Ware	Late Medieval	AD 1370-1550
4	Pottery	3	Iron-Glazed Earthenware	Post-medieval	Chilvers Coton / Ticknall 17th-19th century AD
4	Pottery	1	Staffordshire Manganese Mottled Ware	Post-medieval	AD 1680-1780
4	Pottery	10	Modern earthenwares	Modern	AD 1800+
5	Bone & shell	4	Misc. animal bone	Undated	
5	Building material	23	Red ceramic building material	Modern	
5	Building material	3	Iron nails	Modern	
5	Building material	1	Decorative floor tile	Modern	
5	Glass	1	Blue bottle glass	Modern	Probably from a poison bottle
5	Glass	4	Clear bottle glass	Modern	
5	Glass	11	Clear window glass	Modern	
5	Household	1	Safety pin	Modern	
5	Pottery	1	Chilvers Coton 'A' Ware	High Medieval	Chilvers Coton, Warwickshire AD 1250-1395
5	Pottery	1	Chilvers Coton 'C' Ware	High Medieval	Chilvers Coton, Warwickshire AD 1200-1475
5	Pottery	1	Cistercian Ware	Late Medieval	AD 1450/75-1550
5	Pottery	1	Midland Yellow Ware	Post-medieval	Ticknall AD 1500-1725
5	Pottery	11	Modern earthenwares	Modern	AD 1800+
6	Bone & shell	3	Misc. animal bone	Undated	Includes pig vertebrae
6	Building material	4	Iron nails	Undated	Handmade, square-shafted
6	Building material	51	Red ceramic building material	Modern	
6	Glass	1	Clear bottle glass	Modern	
6	Glass	1	Brown bottle glass	Modern	

Layer	Category	No	Description	Phase*	Comments
6	Household	1	Carbon rod from battery	Modern	Carbon rod with cu alloy cap, 5mm diam. 27mm long, broken
6	Pottery	3	Chilvers Coton 'A' Ware	High Medieval	Chilvers Coton, Warwickshire AD 1250-1395
6	Pottery	2	Chilvers Coton 'C' Ware	High Medieval	Chilvers Coton, Warwickshire AD 1200-1475
6	Pottery	2	Midland Purple Ware	Late Medieval	AD 1370-1550
6	Pottery	2	Iron-Glazed Earthenware	Post-medieval	Chilvers Coton / Ticknall 17th-19th century AD
6	Pottery	8	Modern earthenwares	Modern	AD 1800+
7	Bone & shell	17	Misc. animal bone	Undated	
7	Building material	10	Red ceramic building material	Modern	
7	Building material	1	Iron nail	Undated	Handmade, square-shafted, 1"
7	Pottery	1	Chilvers Coton 'A' Ware	High Medieval	Chilvers Coton, Warwickshire AD 1250-1395
7	Pottery	3	Chilvers Coton 'C' Ware	High Medieval	Chilvers Coton, Warwickshire AD 1200-1475
7	Pottery	1	Midland Purple Ware	Late Medieval	AD 1370-1550
7	Pottery	1	Cistercian Ware	Late Medieval	AD 1450/75-1550
7	Pottery	1	Midland Blackware	Post-medieval	Ticknall AD 1550-1725
7	Pottery	1	Unclassified post-medieval earthenware	Post-medieval	AD 1550+
u/s	Building material	13	Red ceramic building material	Modern	Inc. unfrogged bricks measuring 236x115x42mm, 115x62mm & 112x74mm

* Phasing: Bronze Age (2600-700 BC), Roman (AD 43-410), High Medieval (1100-1400), Later Medieval (1400-1550), Post-medieval (1550-1800), Modern (1800-present)