



Test Pit 12: Field behind 36 Main Street, SK 39757 04904

Test Pit 12 (Figure 1) was excavated in a ‘Christmas tree’ plantation to the rear of 36 Main Street, set back 130m on the south side of Main Street. Maps dating back to the mid-19th century show that this has been agricultural land for the past two centuries.



Figure 1: Test Pit 12 during excavation. Looking south



Figure 2: Test Pit 12 fully excavated, looking east

During the excavation, 0.1m of brownish grey sandy silt topsoil (Layer 1) was removed (Figure 2). Beneath was 0.3m of greyish orange clayey silt subsoil mixed with a large number of large rounded cobbles and brick rubble (Layers 2-5). The natural substratum, greyish orange sandy clay, was reached 0.5m below the ground. No archaeological features were recorded.

In all, 152 individual finds (1.745kg) were recovered from the test pit (Table 1). Two sherds of medieval pottery (12th – 15th century) were found, as well as a larger assemblage of post-medieval and modern pottery (18th – 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, and a piece of clay tobacco pipe.

The test pit was sited to assess the potential for pre-medieval activity beyond the expected extent of Carlton's medieval and post-medieval village core, and to investigate an obvious line of cobbles and building rubble crossing the field on a north-west to south-east alignment. Finds recovered from the test pit were consistent with the area being under cultivation from at least the 12th century through to the 15th century. Medieval pottery sherds were typically small and abraded. This suggested that they were circulating in plough soil for a prolonged period of time. Rather than representing nearby habitation in the medieval period this pottery was likely imported from elsewhere, perhaps included in domestic refuse used to manure the fields surrounding the village. The dearth of early post-medieval pottery (16th – 17th century) may suggest that this agricultural land was taken out of cultivation and turned over to pasture for a period. This is consistent with well-preserved ridge and furrow still visible in fields to the east of the test pit. However, 18th and 19th century pottery and the absence of well-preserved ridge and furrow in the test-pit field might suggest a mixed cycle of cultivation and pasture.

The line of cobbles and building rubble had no obvious structure to them and are unlikely to be a field boundary or path. They are more likely to be the remains of a shallow field drain which has been disturbed by repeated ploughing.

Many thanks to Trevor Dolman for the test pit location. Excavation was carried out over two days on September 10-11, 2022 by Daniel and Oliver Langley, Wendie Love and Bernie Wright.

Table 1: The finds from Test Pit 12

Layer	Category	No	Description	Phase*	Comments
2	Building material	6	Cement roof tile	Modern	
2	Building material	22	Red ceramic building material	Modern	Typically small fragments of handmade brick and tile, probably made locally from late 18th century onwards
2	Pottery	5	Iron-Glazed Earthenware	Post-medieval	Chilvers Coton / Ticknall 17th-19th century AD
2	Pottery	9	Modern earthenwares	Modern	AD 1800+
3	Building material	7	Cement roof tile	Modern	
3	Building material	31	Red ceramic building material	Modern	
3	Clay pipe	1	Clay tobacco pipe stem fragment	Modern	2.4mm bore
3	Pottery	1	Midland Purple Ware	Late Medieval	AD 1370-1550

Layer	Category	No	Description	Phase*	Comments
3	Pottery	6	Iron-Glazed Earthenware	Post-medieval	Chilvers Coton / Ticknall 17th-19th century AD
3	Pottery	4	English Brown Salt-Glazed Stoneware	Post-medieval	Staffordshire AD 1670-1900
3	Pottery	7	Staffordshire Creamware	Post-medieval	AD 1730-1850
3	Pottery	2	Modern earthenwares	Modern	AD 1800+
4	Building material	29	Red ceramic building material	Modern	
4	Pottery	1	Potters Marston ware	High Medieval	AD 1100-1300/50+
4	Pottery	4	Iron-Glazed Earthenware	Post-medieval	Chilvers Coton / Ticknall 17th-19th century AD
5	Building material	15	Red ceramic building material	Modern	
5	Pottery	1	Iron-Glazed Earthenware	Post-medieval	Chilvers Coton / Ticknall 17th-19th century AD
-	Building material	1	Red ceramic building material	Modern	

* 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)