



Test Pit 13: 58 Main Street, SK 39866 04999

Test Pit 13 (Figure 1) was excavated in the rear garden of 58 Main Street, set back 60m on the south side of Main Street. Maps dating back to the mid-19th century show that this was agricultural land until the present house was built in the early 20th century.



Figure 1: Test Pit 13 during excavation. Looking south-east



Figure 2: Test Pit 13 fully excavated, looking north

During the excavation, 0.2m of turf and brownish grey sandy silt topsoil (Layers 1-2) was removed (Figure 2). Beneath was 0.3m of greyish orange clayey silt subsoil (Layers 3-5). The natural substratum, greyish orange sandy clay, was reached 0.5m below the ground. No archaeological features were recorded.

In all, 62 individual finds (242g) were recovered from the test pit (Table 1). Two sherds of Roman pottery (2nd – 4th century AD) were found in Layer 4 together with an undated piece of red ceramic building material in Layer 5. Small assemblages of medieval pottery (12th – 15th century) and post-medieval and modern pottery (17th – 19th century) were also present. Other finds included modern building material, typically small fragments of handmade brick and tile made locally from the late 18th century onwards, and modern bottle glass.

The test pit was sited to assess the potential for pre-medieval activity in an area of known ridge and furrow beyond the expected extent of Carlton’s medieval and post-medieval village core. 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 post-medieval and modern pottery may suggest that this agricultural land was taken out of cultivation and turned over to pasture. This is consistent with the well-preserved ridge and furrow still visible in fields to the south of the test pit, and in the garden around the test pit.

The Roman pottery was also small and abraded, and again this suggests that it was introduced to the soil as domestic waste used to manure fields. It represents a low-level ‘background noise’ of Roman activity in the wider landscape, perhaps associated with a small farmstead located 125m to the west, behind 42-44 Main Street.

Many thanks to Barbara Cooper for the test pit location. Excavation was carried out over two days on September 10-11, 2022 by Liam Ellett, Summer Ellett Payne, Louise Payne and Robin Matthewman.

Table 1: The finds from Test Pit 13

Layer	Category	No	Description	Phase*	Comments
1	Building material	2	Red ceramic building material	Modern	Typically small fragments of handmade brick and tile, probably made locally from late 18th century onwards
1	Glass	1	Clear bottle glass	Modern	
2	Building material	6	Red ceramic building material	Modern	
2	Pottery	1	Iron-Glazed Earthenware	Post-medieval	Chilvers Coton / Ticknall 17th-19th century AD
2	Pottery	1	Modern earthenwares	Modern	AD 1800+
3	Building material	40	Red ceramic building material	Modern	
3	Glass	1	Clear bottle glass	Modern	
3	Glass	1	Green bottle glass	Modern	
3	Pottery	2	Cistercian Ware	Late Medieval	AD 1450/75-1550

Layer	Category	No	Description	Phase*	Comments
3	Pottery	1	Midland Blackware	Post-medieval	Ticknall AD 1550-1725
3	Pottery	1	Staffordshire Manganese Mottled Ware	Post-medieval	AD 1680-1780
4	Pottery	2	Roman pottery	Roman	2nd - 4th century AD
4	Pottery	1	Potters Marston ware	High Medieval	AD 1100-1300/50+
5	Building material	2	Red ceramic building material	Undated	Possibly Roman?

* 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)