



Test Pit 14: 64 Main Street, SK 39917 05025

Test Pit 14 (Figure 1) was excavated in the rear garden of 64 Main Street, set back 50m 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 late 20th century.



Figure 1: Test Pit 14 during excavation. Looking south-west



Figure 2: Test Pit 14 fully excavated, looking north

During the excavation, 0.1m of turf and brownish grey sandy silt topsoil (Layer 1) was removed (Figure 2). Beneath was 0.3m of greyish brown sandy silt (Layers 2-4) and 0.2m of orange brown clayey sand subsoil (Layers 5-6). The natural substratum, greyish orange sandy clay, was reached 0.6m below the ground. No archaeological features were recorded.

In all, 71 individual finds (334g) were recovered from the test pit (Table 1). Two sherds of High Medieval pottery (12th to 14th century) were found. No other pottery was found in the test pit. Other finds included modern building material, typically small fragments of handmade brick and tile made locally from the late 18th century onwards. Iron nails, screws and part of a packaging strap, and plastic garden waste were also found in the upper layers. A small group of animal bone was also present and included shaft fragments from medium sized mammals which exhibited signs of butchery. A worked flint was of probable Bronze Age date.

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 14th 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 noticeable absence of late medieval, 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 still faintly visible in the garden around the test pit.

The worked flint was debitage, a flake removed during tool manufacture and maintenance. 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 Paul and Judith Boston for the test pit location. Excavation was carried out over two days on September 10-11, 2022 by Hannah, Judith and Paul Boston.

Table 1: The finds from Test Pit 14

Layer	Category	No	Description	Phase*	Comments
1	Building material	18	Red ceramic building material	Modern	Typically small fragments of handmade brick and tile, probably made locally from late 18th century onwards
1	Building material	1	Iron screw	Modern	Modern 2.5" Phillips flat-headed screw
1	Garden waste	8	Modern plastic	Modern	Includes broken plant pot, plant labels and plastic coated wire
2	Bone & shell	1	Misc. animal bone	Undated	Shaft with butchery marks
2	Building material	10	Red ceramic building material	Modern	
2	Building material	1	Iron nail	Undated	Handmade, square shafted
2	Building material	1	Iron strap	Modern	12mm wide, metal packaging strap

Layer	Category	No	Description	Phase*	Comments
3	Bone & shell	1	Misc. animal bone	Undated	
3	Building material	6	Red ceramic building material	Modern	
3	Building material	5	Iron nails	Undated	Handmade, square-shafted
3	Garden waste	7	Modern plastic	Modern	Includes sweet wrappers, plastic coated wire, melted pale blue plastic
4	Bone & shell	1	Misc. animal bone	Undated	Shaft with butchery marks
4	Building material	7	Red ceramic building material	Modern	
4	Building material	1	Iron nail	Undated	Handmade, square shafted
4	Flint	1	Secondary flake	Bronze Age	Nicks on edge irregular, probably plough damage
4	Pottery	1	Potters Marston ware	High Medieval	AD 1100-1300/50+
4	Pottery	1	Chilvers Coton 'C' Ware	High Medieval	Chilvers Coton, Warwickshire AD 1200-1475

* 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)