



### Test Pit 18: 97 Main Street, SK 40077 05239

Test Pit 18 (Figure 1) was excavated in the front garden of 97 Main Street on the north-west corner of the junction of Main Street and Barton Road. 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. The test pit was sited close to the former toll house for the Hinckley to Measham turnpike road (1759-1872) which was situated on the wide verge in front of 97 Main Street.



Figure 1: Test Pit 18 during excavation. Looking south-east. The toll house was situated on the grass verge to the rear of the photo.



Figure 2: Test Pit 18 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 this was 0.2m of greyish orange clayey sand subsoil (Layers 3-4). The natural substratum, greyish yellow clayey sand, was reached 0.4m below the ground. No archaeological features were recorded.

In all, 278 individual finds (1.563kg) were recovered from the test pit (Table 1). One sherd of High Medieval pottery (13th-14th century) was found, along with a large assemblage of post-medieval and modern pottery (18th-19th century). Other finds included a large amount of modern building material, typically small fragments of handmade brick and tile made locally from the late 18th century onwards. Handmade iron nails, pieces of clay tobacco pipe (including a complete pipe bowl of mid-19th century date), and modern window and bottle glass were also present. Two worked flints were of probable Bronze Age date.

The test pit was sited to assess the potential for activity in the area around the junction of Barton Road, Bosworth Road and Main Street, known today as Carlton Gate, and particularly activity associated with the toll house for the former turnpike. Most of the finds from the test pit can be best associated with use of the toll house, which was constructed after the passing of the Derby, Leicester and Warwick Roads Act 1759 (33 Geo. 2 c.47) in 1760. The toll house operated two gates, one across the east end of Main Street to control access from Carlton onto the turnpike, and one across Barton Road to control traffic moving along the turnpike itself (Liddington 2020). The road ceased to be a turnpike in 1872 and later Ordnance Survey maps from 1885 and 1903 suggest that the toll house was divided into two properties which were demolished in the mid-20th century. Pottery included a range of table wares and kitchen wares, consistent with domestic habitation in the area from the mid-18th to the early 20th century.

The single sherd of medieval pottery was consistent with the area being under cultivation from at least the 13th century through to the 15th century. The sherd was abraded, suggesting that it was 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 absence of pottery from the 16th and 17th centuries probably suggests that this agricultural land was taken out of cultivation in the 16th century and turned over to pasture. This is consistent with faint traces of ridge and furrow still visible in fields to the west of the test pit.

The two worked flints were debitage, flakes removed during tool manufacture and maintenance. Both were retouched, indicating that they had been used as crude tools, including one awl-like piece. 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.

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Table 1: The finds from Test Pit 18

Layer	Category	No	Description	Phase*	Comments
2	Building material	63	Red ceramic building material	Modern	Typically small fragments of handmade brick and tile, probably made locally from late 18th century onwards
2	Building material	2	Iron nails	Undated	Handmade, square shafted
2	Clay pipe	1	Clay tobacco pipe stem fragment	Modern	2.4mm bore
2	Flint	1	Secondary flake (broken)	Bronze Age	Retouch on

Layer	Category	No	Description	Phase*	Comments
2	Glass	18	Green bottle glass	Modern	
2	Glass	8	Clear bottle glass	Modern	
2	Glass	4	Clear window glass	Modern	
2	Pottery	28	Iron-Glazed Earthenware	Post-medieval	Chilvers Coton / Ticknall 17th-19th century AD
2	Pottery	2	English Brown Salt-Glazed Stoneware	Post-medieval	Staffordshire AD 1670-1900
2	Pottery	31	Modern earthenwares	Modern	AD 1800+
3	Building material	42	Red ceramic building material	Modern	
3	Building material	1	Brown-glazed ceramic drainage pipe	Modern	
3	Clay pipe	1	Clay tobacco pipe bowl	Modern	Oswald type 27, thin brittle bowl with leaf pattern on rear of bowl and flat based spur, 1.6mm bore, c. 1780-1820
3	Clay pipe	1	Clay tobacco pipe stem fragment	Modern	2.4mm bore
3	Glass	2	Clear bottle glass	Modern	
3	Glass	12	Green bottle glass	Modern	
3	Pottery	37	Iron-Glazed Earthenware	Post-medieval	Chilvers Coton / Ticknall 17th-19th century AD
3	Pottery	1	English Brown Salt-Glazed Stoneware	Post-medieval	Staffordshire AD 1670-1900
3	Pottery	7	Staffordshire Creamware	Post-medieval	AD 1730-1850
3	Pottery	1	Modern earthenwares	Modern	AD 1800+
4	Building material	7	Red ceramic building material	Modern	
4	Flint	1	Spurred secondary flake?	Bronze Age	Retouch on - awl-like piece (opposed retouch)
4	Pottery	1	Chilvers Coton 'C' Ware	High Medieval	Chilvers Coton, Warwickshire AD 1200-1475
4	Pottery	4	Iron-Glazed Earthenware	Post-medieval	Chilvers Coton / Ticknall 17th-19th century AD
4	Pottery	2	Modern earthenwares	Modern	AD 1800+

\* 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)