



Interim Report No 3

March 2002

Fieldwork and excavations at Daer Reservoir, 2001

OS Sheet NS 90 NE

Abstract

Describes further work on the Mesolithic sites, the discovery of other lithic scatters, features, burnt mounds and cairns within and around the Daer Reservoir, South Lanarkshire.

Introduction

This report should be read in conjunction with Interim Report No 1 (1995) and Report No 2 (2001), same title, available at Biggar Museum and the National Monuments Record of Scotland, see also a draft report on The History of Daer Valley (Ward 2002).

During another period of low water level within the Daer Reservoir in August and September 2002, the opportunity was taken to carry out further fieldwork. Previous campaigns had identified the need for a continuation of the project since repeated erosion had been identified with the reservoir. Further to this it was considered that a complete re-evaluation of the Daer Valley would be appropriate, since the last survey of the area by the same Group had taken place in 1990, when small parcels of land had not been walked (Fig 13). The principal objective is now to produce a new history of the Daer Valley from earliest times to the present; this will be completed after a final phase of fieldwork is accomplished during the next period of low water level within the reservoir. The draft of this is now available.

This report updates on all aspects of the Project

Legacy Reports 1

Daer Reservoir - Kirkhope Tower
Daer Reservoir - The Cairn Group
Daer Reservoir – Burnt mound
Daer Reservoir – Ring Cairns.
Daer Reservoir - Chert Knapping Site.
Daer Reservoir - Mesolithic Flint Knapping Site No 1, 1995.

Legacy Reports 2

Daer Reservoir - Mesolithic Flint Knapping Site No. 1.1997, 2000
Daer Reservoir - Burnt Mound deposit charcoal and date.
Daer Reservoir - Mesolithic Site No 2. 2999 [NS 9847 0798].
Daer Reservoir - Mesolithic Site No 3. 2999 [NS 9858 0829]
Daer Reservoir - ?Mesolithic chert knapping site. Site No 4 [NS 9855 0795].
Daer Reservoir – Lithic scatter - Site No 5 [NS 97150765]
Daer Reservoir – Lithic scatter - Site No 6 [NS 97130760]
Daer Reservoir – Lithic scatter - Site No 7 [NS 97120754]
Daer Reservoir – Lithic scatter - Site No 8 [NS 96800715]
Daer Reservoir – Lithic scatter - Site No 9 [NS 97150765]
Daer Reservoir – Lithic scatter - Site No 10 [NS 97130760]
Daer Reservoir – Lithic scatter - Site No 11 [NS 97120754]
Daer Reservoir – Lithic scatter - Site No 12 [NS 96800715]
Daer Reservoir – Lithic scatter - Site No 13 [NS 96770680]
Daer Reservoir – Lithic scatter - Site No 14 [NS 96740710]
Daer Reservoir – Lithic scatter - Site No 15 [NS 96780693]
Daer Reservoir – Lithic scatter - Site No 16 [NS 96780686]
Daer Reservoir – Lithic scatter - Site No 17 [NS 96770680]
Daer Reservoir – Lithic scatter - Site No 18 [NS 96730660]
Daer Reservoir – Lithic scatter - Site No 19 [NS 97050670]
Daer Reservoir – Lithic scatter - Site No 20 [NS 97050678]
Daer Reservoir – Lithic scatter - Site No 21 [NS 97330674]
Daer Reservoir – Lithic scatter - Site No 22 [NS 96750643]
Daer Reservoir – Lithic scatter - Site No 23 [NS 97050670]
Daer Reservoir – Lithic scatter - Site No 20 [NS 97500708]
Daer Reservoir – Cairn 1. [NS 98310794]
Daer Reservoir – Cairn 2.
Daer Reservoir – Cairn 3.
Daer Reservoir – Cairn 4. [NS 98290786]
Daer Reservoir – Burnt mounds`. [NS 98820797]
Daer Reservoir – Stone building [NS 96830710]

Legacy Report 3

Fieldwork and excavations at Daer Reservoir, 2001 [NS 90 NE]
Daer Reservoir – Site No 2. finds 2001
Daer Reservoir – Site No 24 [NS 9852 0836]
Daer Reservoir – Site No 9 lithic finds 2001
Daer Reservoir – Site No 10 lithic finds 2001
Daer Reservoir – Site No 25 lithic finds 2001
Daer Reservoir – Site No 26 lithic finds 2001
Daer Reservoir – Misc lithic find 2001
Daer Reservoir – Site No 26 lithic finds not plotted 2001.
Daer Reservoir – Misc. Lithic found in 2001
Daer Reservoir – Lithic found @ Cairn Group
Daer Reservoir – Site No 27 Cairn [NS 9858 0808]
Daer Reservoir – Site No 27 Cairn NS 9858 0808
Daer Reservoir – Fire Site (A), Site No 28 (Near Site No 1)
Daer Reservoir – Site No 29
Daer Reservoir – Test pits Nos1 and 2 at main cairn group
Daer Reservoir – Other new sites
Daer Reservoir – Medieval sites

Legacy Report 4a

Field survey in Daer Valley Interim Report No 4a

Fieldwork, Excavations and Research in Daer Valley and Reservoir, Clydesdale
OS Sheet NS 90 NE

Building No	Site name	Numbers	Numbers used Trenches
1	Coom post medieval	001 - 025	1, 2, 3
2	Coom burnt mound	026 - 050	4, 5a, 5b, 5c
3	Coom post medieval	051 - 075	6, 7
4	Coom post medieval	076 - 100	8, 9
5	Coom post medieval	101 - 125	10, 11, 12
6	Coom post medieval	126 - 130	13
7	Coom post medieval	131 - 135	14
--	Coom post medieval	Trench 14a not allocated a building number	
8	Coom BA stone circle	136 - 150	no excavation
9	Coom BA cemetery	150 - 200	15
10	Smithwood bastle	201 - 250	16
11	Wintercleuch bucht	251 - 275	17
12	Wintercleuch building	276 - 300	18
13	Wintercleuch bucht	301 - 325	19
14	Wintercleuch building	326 - 350	20, 21
15	Crookburn building	351 - 375	22
16	Hapturnell	376 - 400	23 (not completed)
17	Sweetshaw @ burn	401 - 450	24, 25
18	Sweetshaw @ burn	"	26
19	Sweetshaw @ burn	"	no excavation
20	Sweetshaw @ burn	"	27, 28
21	Sweetshaw @ burn	"	29, 30, 31
22	Sweetshaw on hill	"	32, 33
23	Shiel Burn	451 - 475 3	4, 35

Finds are catalogued in an alphanumeric system which gives the site location

Legacy Report 4B

Wintercleuch bucht and building

Trenches 17 - 21

Crookburn building Trench 22

Hapturnell 376 - 400

Trench 23

Burnt mound No 69

Burnt mound No 71

Sweetshaw @ burn 401 - 450

Trenches 24 - 31

Sweetshaw on hill Trenches 32, 33

Shiel Burn 451 - 475

Trenches 34, 35

Daer Reservoir Part 2 (of the 4th Interim Report)

Sites 1-3, 5 - 10, 12, 31 - 33, 37, 39 - 43

Daer Reservoir Site 82 Burnt mound discovered in 2004

[NS 97406 08399]

Daer Reservoir Site 83 Ring enclosure/cairn?

[NS 96695 06925]

Daer Reservoir Site 84 Chert lithic scatter

[NS 95292 10319]

Daer Reservoir Site 85 Chert lithic scatter

[NS 95196 10295]

Daer Reservoir Site No 85/1 Burnt mound

[NS 97438 08425]

Daer Reservoir Site No 85/2 Burnt mound

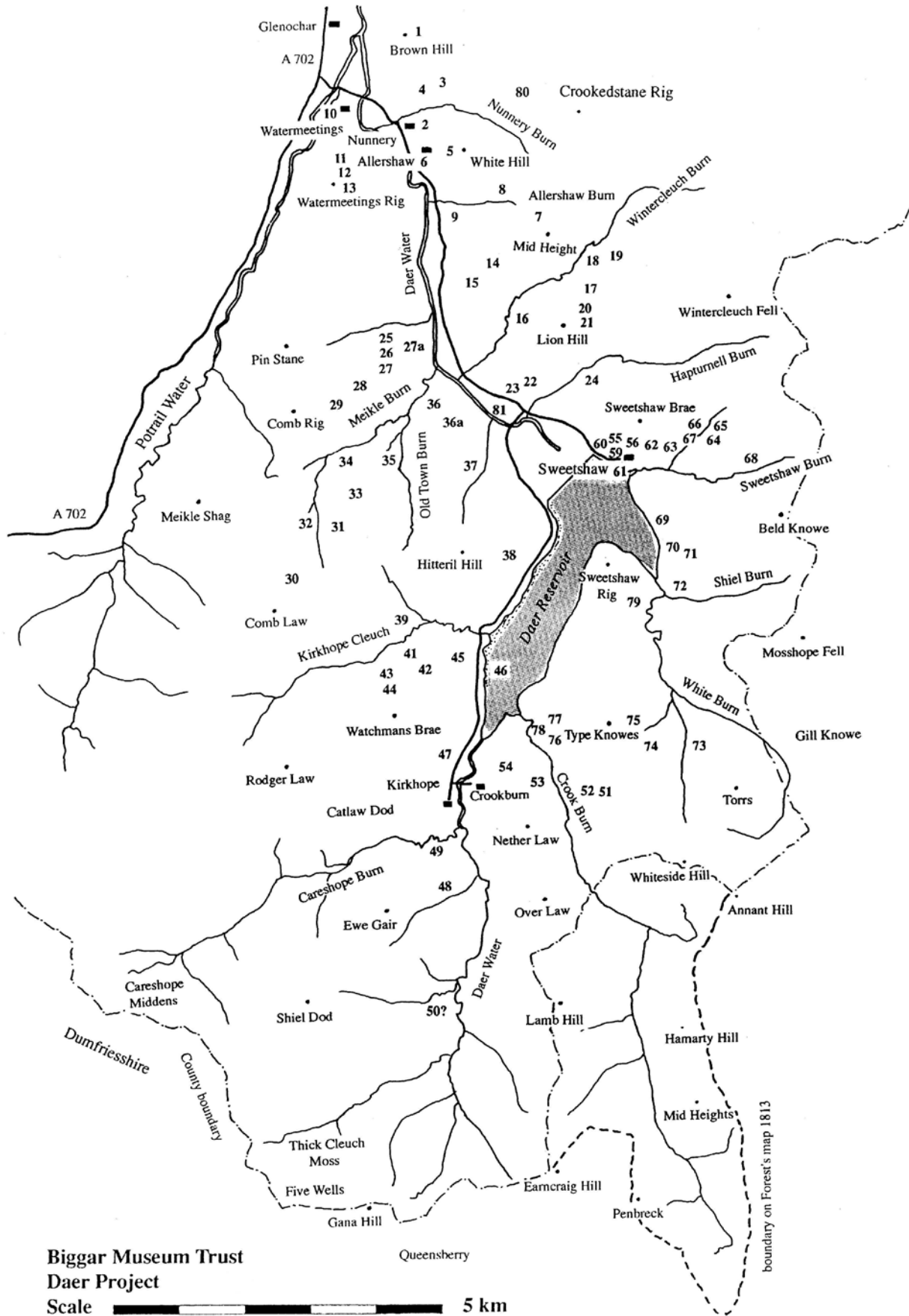
[NS 97374 08402]

Daer Reservoir Site No 85/3 Charcoal deposit

[NS 97405 08511]

Daer Reservoir Site No 85/4 Possible cairn site

[NS 97173 08372]



Biggar Museum Trust
 Daer Project
 Scale

5 km

Fig. 13

Sites No's 1 and 3

During 2000 it was again appreciated that the lithic scatter at Site No 3 had not been totally retrieved, but yet again, Site No 1 was thought to have been exhausted. The former was proved to be correct and the latter incorrect.

With reference to the plans of these sites given in the last Interim report, considerably more excavation has taken place between, around and on the previously excavated areas. This has resulted in more lithic material being retrieved and also of a further charcoal enriched feature at Site No 1 being found.

The lithic types for each site remain similar, that is to say that Site No 1 has produced flint, chert, mudstone and a peculiar blue coloured type of stone suitable for knapping, while the lithic at Site No 3 remains exclusively flint. The apparent lithic free zone between the two perceived separate sites does appear to be real, although a few isolated pieces have been found in the currently partially excavated area (this picture may eventually change).

The original baseline at Sites No's 1 and 3 continues in use.

It is intended that an area of approximately 50 metres square will eventually be excavated and which will join Sites 1 and 3 and extend from them upslope to the north west. To this end some ground between the sites has now been excavated and the rest of the proposed area has been cleared of surface boulders in preparation for a further campaign. (still waiting 2012!)

Due to the speedy inundation of the sites again, it was not possible to define the currently excavated areas precisely, however, the latest find spots are recorded, and mostly to within a radius of 1m or 1.5m diameter spreads. The final excavated area will be defined accurately at the next opportunity.

Predictions will not be made in this report as to whether or not the two sites are now exhausted of lithic as each area will be extended next season. It is now obvious that the lithics at Sites No's 1 and 3 have managed to penetrate down into the natural boulder clay, presumably through the process of bio turbation.

Full details of the locations of lithics are given in the appended catalogue, as before, the detailed description of lithic will be produced by Alan Saville in due course; however the following basic information will be of interest.

Site No 1

The lithic represents much the same patterns as was previously found, with a large number of microliths in the assemblages being consistent. Twelve flint, one chert and two 'bluestone' microliths were found. The bulk of the material was flint with only a small percentage of chert and mudstone, however, a particular spot (see catalogue) of about 2.5m diameter produced eleven 'bluestone' pieces including two microliths.

Of particular interest is a pebble rubber stone of greywacke, this has five facets produced by wear. This tool is the first large tool to be found on the Mesolithic sites, it is possible that it may be a residual object from a later period and therefore be co-incidental to the site.

The latest feature (F7) is a possible pit which measures 0.3m by 0.4m across and by 0.5m deep. It was distinctive from the surrounding area by the discrete charcoal fleck enriched fill; the 'pit' material was primarily clay although there was a slight soil composition to it, allowing the difference on colour and texture to be made to the underlying clay. Moss rootlets penetrated throughout the deposit as indeed they do over the entire site, where they penetrate down through the boulder clay. A quantity of lithic was found on and around the area of F7.

From a 7 litre sample of soil retrieved from F7, circa 2 grammes of small fragments of charcoal were hand picked from the 1mm residue, included was a fragment of hazel nut shell which is submitted for AMS radio carbon dating, this is particularly in order to help resolve the current problems with the true date for Site's No's 1 and 3.

The following identification of species types was made by Jennifer Millar of Glasgow University;

Corylus avellana (hazel) nutshell
 Corylus (hazel)
 Salix (willow)

Further lithic found at Site No 1 in August 2001

Quantity	Weight gms	Baseline	Offset	E/W	Diameter	Description
2	45	9.0	1.5	E	of scatter	Chert
22						Flint
1						Scraper
1						Microlith
24	6	12.0	5.0	W		

The above location was a previous sieving area; the lithic is therefore out of context.

12	2	not plotted				Flint
5	1	not plotted				Flint Flakes
1	1	9.0	2.5	E		Flint Flakes
16}	9	7.0	3.0	W		Flint Flakes
2}	"	"	"	"		Siltstone
1}	72	6.5	1.5	W	c 1.5	Core
3}	"	"	"			Flint
74}	"	"	"	"		Flint Flakes
1}	8	6.0	3.5	W		Flint Micro
12}	"	"	"			Flint Flakes
1}	<1	12.8	0.8	W		Flint Micro
1}	6.3	11.8	0.7	W		Flint Micro
4}	"	"	"			Flint Flakes
1}	11	5.5	2.0	W	1.5	Flint Flake retouched?
1}	"	"	"	"		Flint Micro
1}	"	"	"	"		Flint Micro Patinated?
162}	5.5	2.0		W	1.5	Flint Flakes

1}	4.5	Not plotted				Flint Micro
4}		Not plotted				Flint Flakes
38}	46.5	4.5	1.0	W	2.5	Flint Flakes
6}	"	"	"	"		Flint Flakes Edge damage?
3}	4.5	1.0		W	2.5	Flint Micro
9}	3	"	"	"	"	Blue Flakes
2}	"	"	"	"		Blue micros
7	4.5	4.5	1.0	W	c2.5	Silt Stone
1	1	4.5	1.0	W	c2.5	Chert Worked
1	347	4.5	1.0	W	c2.5	Rubbing Stone 5 facets
1	7	4.5	1.0	W		Quartz
1	<1	13.0	0.0	W		Chert Micro
1	10.5	3.0	3.0	W	c1.5	Flint Pebble
1	<1	3.0	3.0	W	c1.5	Flint Micro
1	1	3.0	3.0	W	c1.5	Flint Flake Worked ?
30	8	3.0	3.0	W	c1.5	Flint Flakes
5	4	3.0	3.0	W	c1.5	Chert Flakes
1	1	3.0	3.0	W	c1.5	Chert
1	1	3.0	3.0	W	c1.5	Blue Flake Worked ?
1	<1	3.0	3.0	W	c1.5	Silt Stone
1	1	3.0	3.0	W	c1.5	Agate
2	3	3.0	3.0	W	c1.5	Quartz
1	28	11.5	5.0	E		Agate
4}	19.0	2.0	1.0	E	c1.5	Flint Micro
2}	2.0	2.0		E	c1.5	Blue Stone Microliths
20}	2.0	1.0		E	c1.5	Flint Flakes
3}	2.0	1.0		E	c1.5	Blue Stone Flakes
1}	2.0	1.0		E	c1.5	Chert Flake
1}	2.0	1.0		E	c1.5	Silt Stone
New Pit F7 circa 1m diameter scatter						
		4.8	1.9	W		
		2	1.5			Chert Flakes
		50	27.0			Flint Flakes
		3	9.0			Flint Flakes
Down slope from Site 1, not plotted						
		5	10			Flint

Site No 3

At least thirteen microliths were found among the lithic collection which was almost exclusively flint; of particular note is a thin flake with two edges having tiny serrations. No further features were noticed in this area.

Further lithic found on Site No 3 in 2001

Quantity	Weight	Baseline	Offset	E/W	Diameter	Description of scatter
2	2	23.0	2.0	W	1.5	Flint
1}	19.5	24.0	1.0	W	1.5	Chert
8}	24.0		1.0	W	1.5	Flint
10	9.5	25.0	2.5	W	1.5	Flint
1	<1	26.0	0.0		1.5	Flint
24	6	26.5	0.0		1.5	Flint
3	3	27.5	3.0	W	1.5	Flint
1	2	27.5	3.0	W	1.5	Flint
4}	4	28.5	0.0		1.5	Flint
1}	28.5	0.0			1.5	Chert
4	2.5	28.5	1.5	W	1.5	Flint
5	8.5	21.1	2.0	E		Flint
2	2.0	21.5	1.5	W		Flint
8	5.5	23.0	0.0			Flint
2	2.0	22.0	0.5	E		Flint
2	4.0	25.5	1.2	E		Flint
1	8.4	25.5	1.5	W		Flint Scraper
2	1.0	25.5	1.5	W		Flint Microlith
46	18.4	25.5	1.5	W		Flint
1	4.0	25.5	1.5	W		Flint Edge Damaged?
1	1.0	25.5	1.5	W		Burnt Microlith
1	<1	26.3	0.0			Poss.Fl.Micro
18	23	26.3	0.0			Flint
1	<1	26.0	0.5	E		Poss.Fl.Micro
11	6	26.0	0.5	E		Flint
1	2	27.0	2.4	E		Flint serrated Blade

2	3	27.0	2.0	E		Edge Damage
22	22	27.0	2.0	E		Flint
9	9.4	29.0	1.0	E		Flint
1	4.4	29.0	1.0	E		Edge Damage
3	2.5	29.0	1.0	E		Microliths
21	8	27.0	2.5	W		Flint
1	4.5	27.0	2.5	W		Fl.Edge.Dam
2	0.1	27.0	2.5	W		Flint Micro
1	6	30.0	0.0			Fl.Edge.Dam
2	27.0	29.00 ??	on baseline			Flint Micros
37	19	27.0	29.00 ??	on baseline		Flint
5.						
6	7	27.5	1.0	E		Flint
28	32.5	26.5	0.0		c1m	Flint Flakes
1	<1	25.0	0.0		c1m	Flint Micro Burnt
1	<1	25.0	0.0		c1m	Flint Micro
62	21.5	25.0	0.0		c1m	Flint Flakes
1	<1		Not Plotted			Flint Micro Burnt
1	1		Not Plotted			Flint Micro
1	1.5		Not Plotted			Quartz Flake
20	13.5		Not Plotted			Flint Flakes
3	1.0	27.5	2.0	E	c1.5	Flint Flakes
1	3.5	28.0	5.0	W	x on stone	Flint Flakes
4	2.5	27.0	1.5	W	c1.5	Flint Flakes
1	5.0	27.0	1.5	W	c1.5	Flint Flake Worked
7	3.5	23.5	1.0	E	c1.5	Flint Flakes
1}	1.5	23.5	1.0	E	c1.5	Chert Flake
1}		23.5	1.0	E	c1.5	Flint Flake Worked

Site No 2

No further work was carried out on this site, although it was inspected and it would appear that there has been little significant erosion of the bank there since 2000. The earlier wet sieving areas, which were on top of in situ peat, were inspected, and a quantity of lithic which passed through the sieves was collected. This includes at least six tiny chert microliths. The remainder of the material was similarly tiny.

This does serve as a note of caution when sieving within the reservoir area with no control over the material passing through the sieves. Nevertheless, given all the circumstances, the writer is satisfied that a competent result has been achieved at this site.

Lithic found at Site 2 in 2001

6	1.5	Spoil	Chert Micros
52	23.5	Spoil	Chert Flakes
11	3.0	Spoil	Flint Flakes
1	6.0	Spoil	Agate
10	5.0	Spoil	Chert Flakes

Other sites

Previously recorded sites were checked and these produced some more material which is given in the catalogue here. During detailed searches of the beaches around the reservoir, several other sites and features have been recorded. Their NGR's are given in the catalogue and they will eventually be plotted onto one of the previously given location illustrations.

Site No 24 NS 9852 0836

This location of circa 20m scatter of primarily chert but including a flint scraper is c20m south west of the burnt mound deposit given on Fig 6 (previous report).

Quantity	Weight	Description
22	39.5	Chert
1		Flint Scraper
1		Edge Damage
22	47.4	Chert
7	9.5	Chert Flakes

Lithic found at Site No 4 in 2001

7	8	Chert Flakes
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Lithic found at Site No 9 in 2001

1}	17.5	Chert Scraper	
2}		Flint	
1}		Chert	
3	6.5	Tiny material on site	Chert Flakes
1	<1	Tiny material on site	Flint Flakes

Lithic found at Site No 10 in 2001

1	3	Flint	
3}		Brown Chert	
5}	14 total	Flint	

Lithic found at Site 25 in 2001

2}	17	50m E of Knoll	c5.0m dia	Pos.Chert.Cores
11}		NS 9683 0713	scatter	Chert

Lithic found at Site 26 in 2001 still to be plotted

The location of this site on the west side of the reservoir was not plotted but was marked by a cairn; the exact location will be fixed at the next opportunity. It lies in the vicinity of Sites 5 - 7. Of particular note is the flake of Arran pitchstone found here. This is the second flake of pitchstone to be found within the reservoir area.

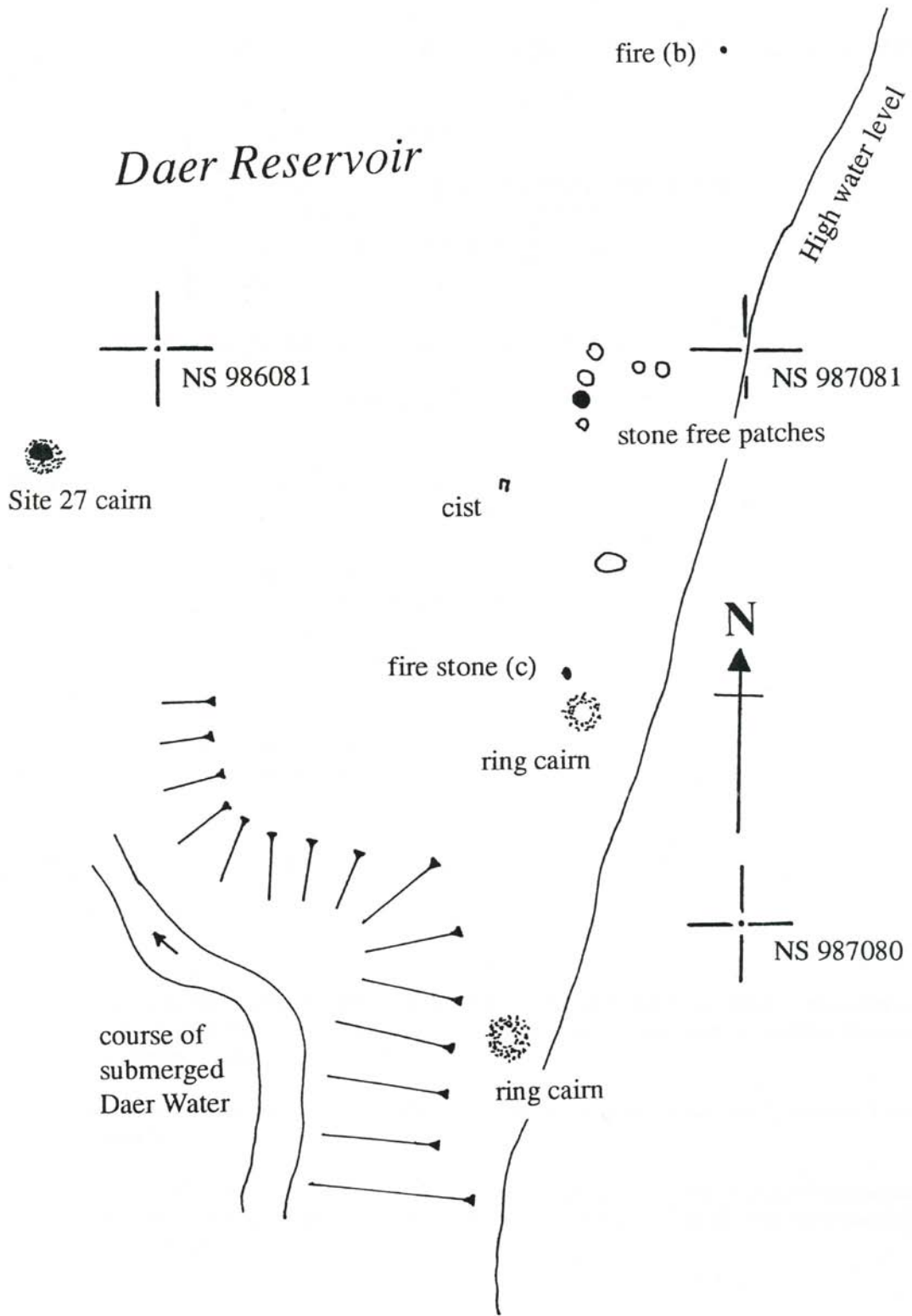
1	1	Pitchstone Grey	
1	10	Chert Core/Scraper?	
2	3.5	Chert worked?	
2	5.0	Flint	
80	88.5	Chert flakes	

Misc. Lithic found in 2001

1	3	circa NS 96750650	Haematite
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Lithic found @ Cairn Group

1	8.5	circa NS 9846 0845	Flint Scraper
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**Biggar Museum Trust
Daer Project 2001**

Scale  **50 m**

Fig. 14

Site No 27 Cairn NS 9858 0808 Fig 14

This cairn was briefly discussed in the 1995 Interim Report where it was described as a 'ring cairn'. The cairn is 4.5m in diameter by up to 0.75m high with boulders lying two or three deep. It is made against the upper edge of a massive erratic and 1m in from the upper edge of the cairn, but offset to the NE side, there is a depression which appears to have been a deliberate concept, rather than the product of being stone removed at a later time. Immediately on the upslope side of the pile the ground appears to be cleared of stone for an area of about 4m diameter. The general area is extensively covered in what is obviously the product of a former boulder field (such natural post glacial features are evident in many areas around Daer).

This time, the presence of reddened burnt stone was noted around the cairn, but most especially on the lower side of the erratic, and indeed, lying below the slight overhang of the large stone. Pot boilers of both greywacke and granite were found among a scatter of surface charcoal, some of which impregnated the thin, old ground surface of eroded soil. The ground surface was not totally blackened as one might expect from the base of a burnt mound. The greywacke potboilers would be the norm for this part of Scotland, but to find granite examples is unusual since granite is not a locally derived rock. The granite pot boilers must therefore have been brought to the site from elsewhere (to be verified). [It is now known the granite pebbles are locally derived in the drift geology, probably being derived from the Sanquhar area]

Although the pot boiler stones indicate that a 'burnt mound' activity has been taking place, there is no significant deposit of material to corroborate that. It may be possible that a more dense concentration of burnt material underlies the cairn, but that was not evident.

A 15 litre sample of soil was taken from the ground surface immediately below the erratic, the position where most charcoal was noted, and the rather superficial nature of the deposit was confirmed. From the sample, a sub sample of hand picked charcoal has been retrieved from a 1mm sieve, the charcoal weighs 55 grammes and comprises of the larger of the fragments from the total sample, and they are up to 6mm - 8mm in size. The residue, which is retained, surprisingly shows much unburnt small stones, not what would be expected from a normal burnt mound deposit where all of the material would show the effects of severe heating. The intention at this stage is only to have the charcoal identified for species. The assumption being made that the deposit most likely dates to the Bronze Age.

Charcoal identification was done by Dr Jennifer Millar, GUARD

- Corylus avellana (hazel) nutshell
- Corylus avellana
- Betula (birch)
- Salix (willow)

Finds at Site No 27

1	17.5gms	West Side of Cairn	Burnt, Type?
1	15.0gms	“ “	Quartz
3	2.5gms	“ “	Chert Flakes
1	-----	West side of cairn	fragmented greywacke pebble pot boiler
1	-----	West side of cairn	fragmented granite pebble pot boiler
1	-----	West side of cairn	split granite pebble pot boiler

Fire Site (A), Site No 28 (Near Site No 1) [not on plan] (33m from 0.0 base and 25m from 20.0 base)

The location of a fire site was detected by the presence of reddened heat cracked rock lying in a scatter of about 1.5m metre diameter. The location is down slope from Site No 1 and the following lithic was retrieved as a surface collected. The single piece of flint is similar to that from Site No 1 and may in fact be the product of wet sieving from that site, rather than being associated with the chert or the fire site.

A small section was cut through the deposit and peculiarly, the thin layer of old ground surface soil which lay below the burnt stones, showed no indication of burning as one may have expected. Nor was there any indication of scorching the rocky till below. The section revealed no trace of charcoal or discolouration of the soil by charcoal.

Two possibilities are considered here; the burnt stone had been dumped on the site or more likely the fire had been on the soil surface which has been washed out from below the burnt stones. Given the small but discrete assemblage of lithic it does seem reasonable to suppose that the fire was the focus of an activity involving the working of the chert. It would however, appear not to be associated with Site No 1 above, given the difference in lithic types, although this can only be a tentative conclusion.

1	<1	Flint
1	1	Silt Stone
11	15.5	Chert
1	68	Chert Pebble
6	18.5	Chert Flakes
1	15.0	Chert Brown

Site No 29

3}	53	NS96830705	c2.0	Chert Scrapers
8}		NS96830705	c2.0	Chert

Test pits at main cairn group

The ground between the cairns of the main cairn group has obviously been cleared of surface stone, indicating that the function of these particular cairns is almost certainly field clearance. In order to better understand the nature of the ground between the cairns two small pits were cut. Each was 0.5m square and was opened near to a cairn. The purpose of these pits was to establish if any old ground surface survived and if it would be possible to detect ard marks or other features.

Pit No 1 circa NS 9849 0855 Plates 25 & 26

This showed a depth of 100mm of re-deposited gravel and sand below which was 75mm of old ground soil with a peat cover. This lay on top of the undisturbed surface of the till.



Plate 25



Plate 26



Plate 27



Plate 28

Pit No 2 circa NS 9846 0846 Plates 27 & 28

This showed no relict ground surface at all, there was only about 250mm of re-deposited sand and gravels on top of the cleanly eroded surface of the till.

Each of the pits was opened in areas of similar surface appearance and on sloping ground. The pits demonstrate that the entire area is under varying erosion and deposition conditions, how localised these conditions are from these results is not possible to state. However, it would be unlikely that plough features will survive at this level within the reservoir. Higher up the slope and nearer to the edge of the reservoir the ground has been totally washed out and only the larger boulders remain among extensive gravel beach lines and deposits, which are re-deposits. Further down the slopes from the cairns, better soils may survive, but to some extent these will have podsolised by the extensive peat cover which, until the construction of the reservoir, covered the ground.

Other new sites within the reservoir

By reference to Fig 14 in this report, the location of more sites at the southern end of the east branch of the reservoir may be grasped.

Apart from the two fire sites, the possible cist and the small patches of clear ground may be more apparent than real.

The fire site (B) at the northern end of the area is shown by a patch of heat reddened rock; the fire has been small, circa 0.5m in diameter. There was no visible charcoal and the site was not disturbed by this work. The feature has been affected by the wash from the reservoir and is under active erosion, it lies on a slope and near to a spring course.

The fire site (C) is a large boulder (1.3m by 0.75m by 0.4m high) which lies within the general mass of boulders covering the area. It is distinctive by its upper surface being entirely reddened and heat fractured. The burnt surface indicates the ground level at the time of the fire. No charcoal, objects or other feature were found beside the boulder.

The possible cist consisted of a vertically positioned stone slab 0.75m long by 0.35m high with two small boulders at the northern end and three boulders at the west side, apparently forming three sides of a box, the open end being at the south. The interior was excavated and found to be the natural ground surface of rocks lying in the till. Given the general nature of the surrounding area where there are several slab like stones lying in vertical positions, it is possible that this feature is entirely natural.

A group of relatively stone free areas was noted on previous visits to the reservoir and these were re-considered this time. They are distinctive within the generally boulder strewn area as being patches of gravelly ground 3m to 4m in diameter. One of these was excavated to determine if they were anthropogenic in origin, however the results were inconclusive since the ground was cleared of about 0.1m of gravel, down to the natural till. No features or objects were found within the area. The patches lie on an area of only very slight gradient. It is possible they are the product of natural erosion within the reservoir.

The two 'ring' cairns located near the edge of the reservoir and noted in previous reports were also investigated. Each of the two internal areas was carefully trowelled down to determine if the piles were sepulchral in nature. In both cases the minimum of stone was removed from the internal spaces and the ground was soon excavated to the natural rocky surface above the till. It was clear that no pits had been created within the central parts of the cairns and the limited excavation of these areas indicated that the ground had not been cleared of stone prior to the construction of the cairns. No objects were found.

The reason for the apparent ring shape of these cairns remains uncertain. Field clearance is unlikely given the boulder strewn nature of the immediate environs of the three piles. They do however appear to be part of the suite of pre-historic features on the area, and it is possible that they may have functioned as funerary monuments. Perhaps for inhumation internment in the central area? A similar cairn on Sweetshaw Rig (Cairn 2) was given in the 2nd Interim Report.

Medieval sites

Two further medieval sites were located within the reservoir area. One, on the south bank of Kirkhope Cleuch, is a rectangular building represented by a few earth fast boulders forming a long west wall and a northern gable wall (PI 29). Trenches were opened on this site but unfortunately they were inundated before a drawn record could be made. Sherds of green glaze pottery and pieces of haematite were found but no details of the structure were located.

An area of cobbled floor surface which includes part of a drain or raised byre stance was also found on the beach to the south of the Kirkhope Tower site. Both these features will be re-visited at the next opportunity.

Field survey in Daer Valley Fig 13

In order to set the discoveries within the reservoir area and those immediately surrounding it into a better context, the entire valley was re-walked in the winter of 2001/2002, this encompassed the total water catchment area of the reservoir, including some forestry areas.

Several sites were located and recorded for the first time during an earlier survey of the area by the same group (Ward, 1990). At that time small areas of land were not inspected and it was also later suspected that some sites may have been missed due to inexperience by members of the Group.

The new survey has indeed located a few sites which were missed, and it has also produced numerous sites on the previously un-inspected ground. This serves as a lesson that there is always scope for re-visiting a landscape with a fresh view and a better level of knowledge.

All of the sites and monuments now recorded in the Daer Valley are given in a first draft report, the final version of which will stand as a 'History of the Daer Valley' report, this will eventually encompass all of the various aspects of fieldwork and research, which has been undertaken to establish a more comprehensive statement on the history of the valley.

A new and revised gazetteer of recorded monuments in Daer Valley is given in the Draft Report; The History of the Daer Valley (Ward, 2002)