

Biggar Archaeology

Bringing the past to the present



Excavations at Weston Farm 2003 - 2004

Interim Report

Part of the Pre-History North of Biggar Project by Biggar Museum Trust

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Abstract

Further excavations at Weston Farm have revealed an extensive area of Mesolithic activity, involving the production of chert and flint microliths. Early and Late Neolithic pottery was also found, the former in probable association with pitchstone. Sub surface features were revealed in the form of pits and old ground surfaces from which dateable charcoal was retrieved, in particular large quantities of hazel nutshells. One pit filled with hazel nutshell has been radiocarbon dated to 6035BP and another pit to 7920BP, some other pits may be Early Neolithic in date.

Introduction

The site (Figs 1, 2 & 3) lies at NT 03476 4611, OS 1,10,000 Map Sheet NT 04 NW. Lying at a through gate in an old drystone dyke where a post and wire fence conjoin at a right angle, the site covers parts of three arable fields, and is a natural, fairly level terrace which measures approximately 60m NW by 40m SE, it curves on the eastern side where the break of slope drops down to the valley floor to the edges of the fields. The ground slopes up from the site to the west, towards Fir Park where several other Mesolithic sites have been identified by both field walking and excavation (Ward, 1998 & 1999).

The plough soil varies in depth from c 0.25m to 0.3m deep, it lies directly over the substrate which is distinctly orange coloured sand and boulder clay with patches of iron pan staining, with weathered and freshly broken rock derived from the parent rock, which comes nearly to the surface. There is no sub soil on any of the areas excavated. The solid geology is sandstone from the Upper Old Red Sandstone period.

Field walking in 1999, when the southernmost field here was ploughed, discovered this site (although see below for other fieldworker) and a significant assemblage of lithic material including microliths were retrieved. However, lithic including microliths were found on the tractor ruts in the field to the north, this field was ploughed in 2000 and then the concentration of material there was confirmed. The separate field to the northwest has not been inspected as a ploughed field and according to the farmer; it is unlikely to be ploughed in the foreseeable future.

The reason for excavation by pre-determined trenches was to establish a chronology and typology for the lithic, and to determine if in situ archaeological deposits survived. Given the abundance of lithic, it seemed that a multiple period site existed. Dateable contexts were particularly desirable to establish a time scale and if possible to accurately date typological lithics and features by C^{14} .

The work was carried in evenings and weekends between 2003 and 2004.



Fig.1

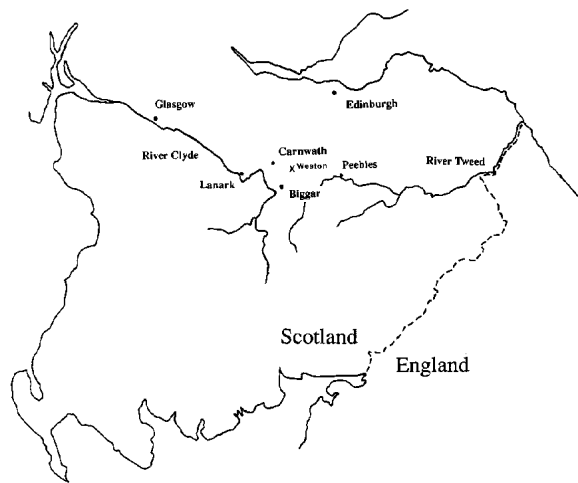


Fig.2

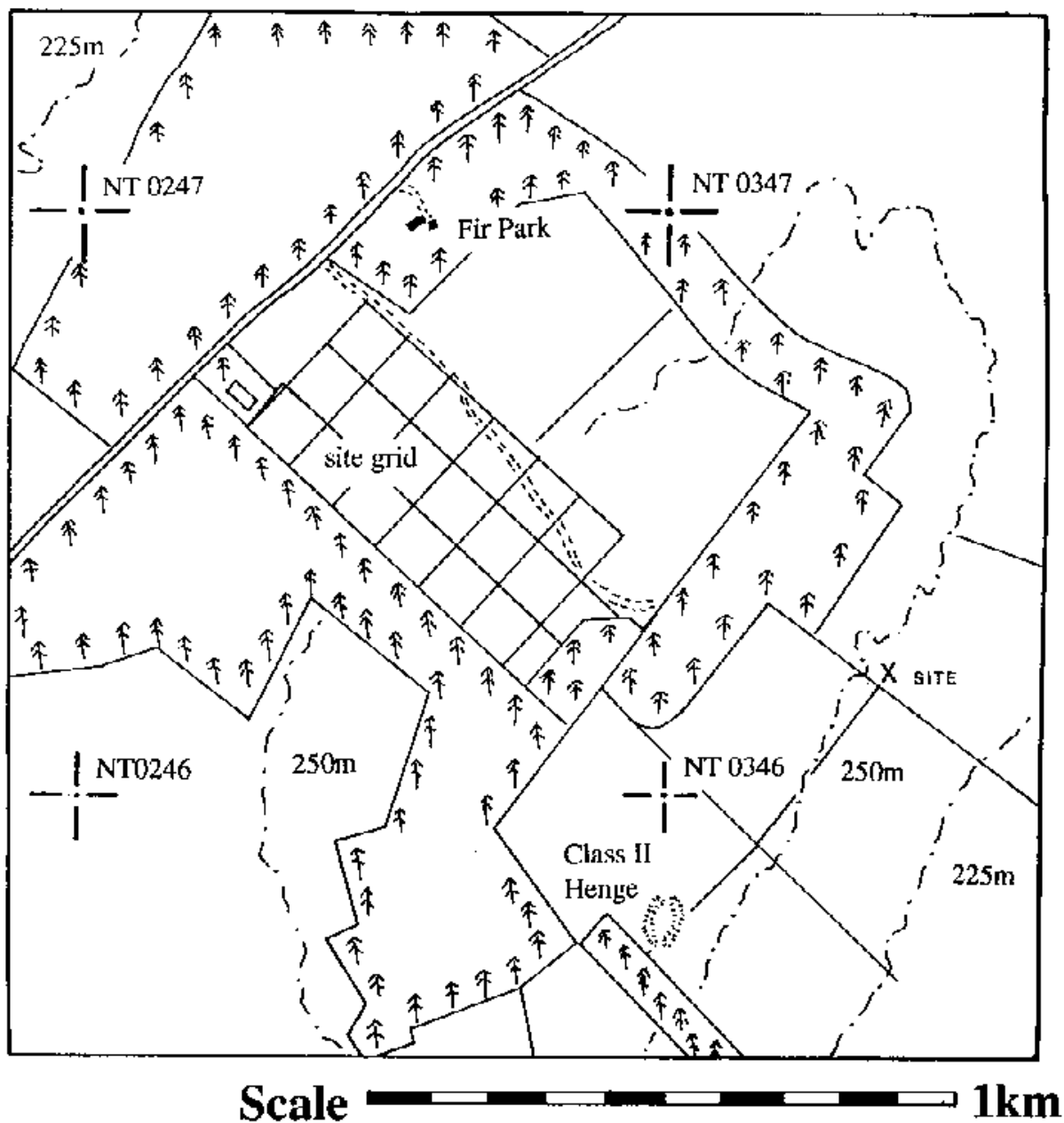


Fig.3 Showing X = site under discussion. Site grid = 1998 fieldwalking.

Methodology

Trenches

The fields had recently been ploughed and had been under arable cultivation for a considerable time, nevertheless it was considered possible that dateable contexts may have survived the plough in close proximity to the dyke, where mechanised ploughing may not have disturbed them, and possibly also further from the dyke.

Trenches 1, 2 & 3 were therefore placed abutting the dyke, T5 was run parallel with the post and wire fence, T2 was joined with T5 because the wall was already robbed out at that place. The other trenches were sited to sample parts of the terrace. Trench sizes and locations were somewhat arbitrarily decided upon to give a reasonable coverage of the area, thus allowing a better chance of establishing an understanding of the site. All of the trenches were aligned NW/SE with the boundary wall for convenience.

The turf and plough soil were removed by spade, and because of the high density of finds, the turf had to be reduced to fibre, with all soil being removed. The soil was then dry sieved through 1cm grids to remove larger stone and archaeological lithic, and then worked through 2mm sieves. For the most part in year 2003, almost freakish dry weather conditions prevailed, this and the nature of the sandy soil allowed even the smallest debitage to be collected by sieving. In year 2004 the conditions were completely different, with much rain; this meant that a lower percentage of the smallest lithic was retrieved. When the top soil was cleared, the ground was then carefully hand trowelled down to natural, which is a red to orange, sandy sub stratum with occasional stones and boulders embedded. The underlying solid geology is Upper Old Red Sandstone.

The ground was biologically active below the plough soil with worms and rootlets. All trenches were therefore excavated into the upper level of the substrate. A tiny percentage of small finds were located in the substrate, but because of the disturbance, especially by worms, it was not certain that these items were actually in situ. Therefore they were recorded to the blocks similar to the plough soil finds.

Charcoal

Features were revealed by the difference in colour and texture of soil, and in the case of ancient archaeological contexts, these were betrayed by charcoal enriched soil, seen against the background of the natural sand. Features were either bulk sampled or half sectioned and sampled. The charcoal was extracted from the soils by flotation and collection in 3mm, 2mm and 0.3mm sieves. Residues less than 3mm have been retained. Larger pieces of charcoal were handpicked for selective identification of species and for dating samples to be prepared. The larger charcoal has been bulk weighed in grammes. No work is intended on the finer material at this stage. Much of the charcoal is noted as having a mineralised iron incrustation resulting from deposition conditions, being found below the plough soil and above the natural sandy sub stratum where iron pan accumulates.

Lithic/ finds

The bulk of the lithic was retrieved from the plough soil zone and finds were recorded to discretionary blocks (fig 5), which differed in size for various trenches.

The few lithics deemed to be in situ were similarly recorded, but material obtained from ascertained features was recorded to these contexts.

The lithic was washed and sorted by grading into the following forms: pebble, chunks, irregular flakes, regular flake/blade, core/amorphous core, microlith/possible microlith, scraper, knife, arrowhead, notched flake, spalls, hammer stone.

Definitions:

Pebble	Lumps of raw material from which pieces have been removed at random.
Chunks	Irregular shaped removals
Irregular flakes	Removal with no regular edge
Regular flake/blade	Flakes with parallel sides
Microlith	Pieces with modified edges
Spalls	Very small debitage

All lithic has been counted in the groupings but the statistics include material of differing size within each category.

Stone types were predominantly the local radiolarian chert, with flint (various types and colours), agate, other chalcedony, pitchstone, mudstone, greywacke, quartzite and sandstone being present as modified lithic. Unless otherwise stated in the finds lists, all material is radiolarian chert, the colour of which may vary from brown to the usual blue/grey varieties.

Professional analysis of the finds assemblage will be necessary to realise the full potential of its significance. The Biggar Archaeology Group do not have the competency to describe pre-historic lithic to a professional standard, therefore the listings given here are principally for numerical purposes only, for typology, the lists are known to be inconsistent in description.

Pottery

Pottery was dried at room temperature and only lightly brushed to remove soil.

Bone

Some of the features contained burnt bone fragments, which were mostly collected during the soil washing process. For the most part the bone is extremely small and probably not large enough for any meaningful analysis, however a few pieces are up to 30mm and some form is evident in certain pieces. The bone will be submitted for analysis.

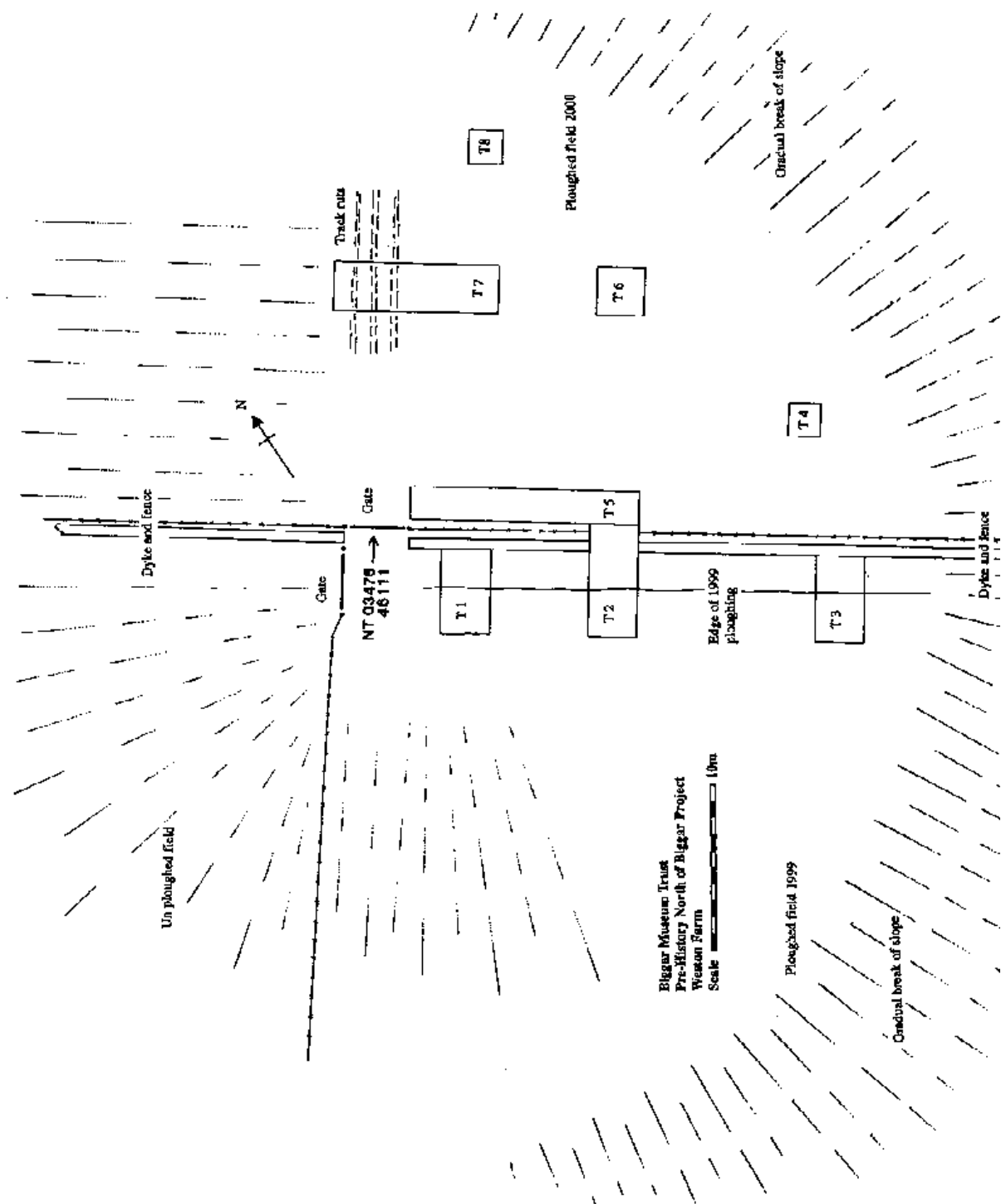


Fig 4 Trench location plan

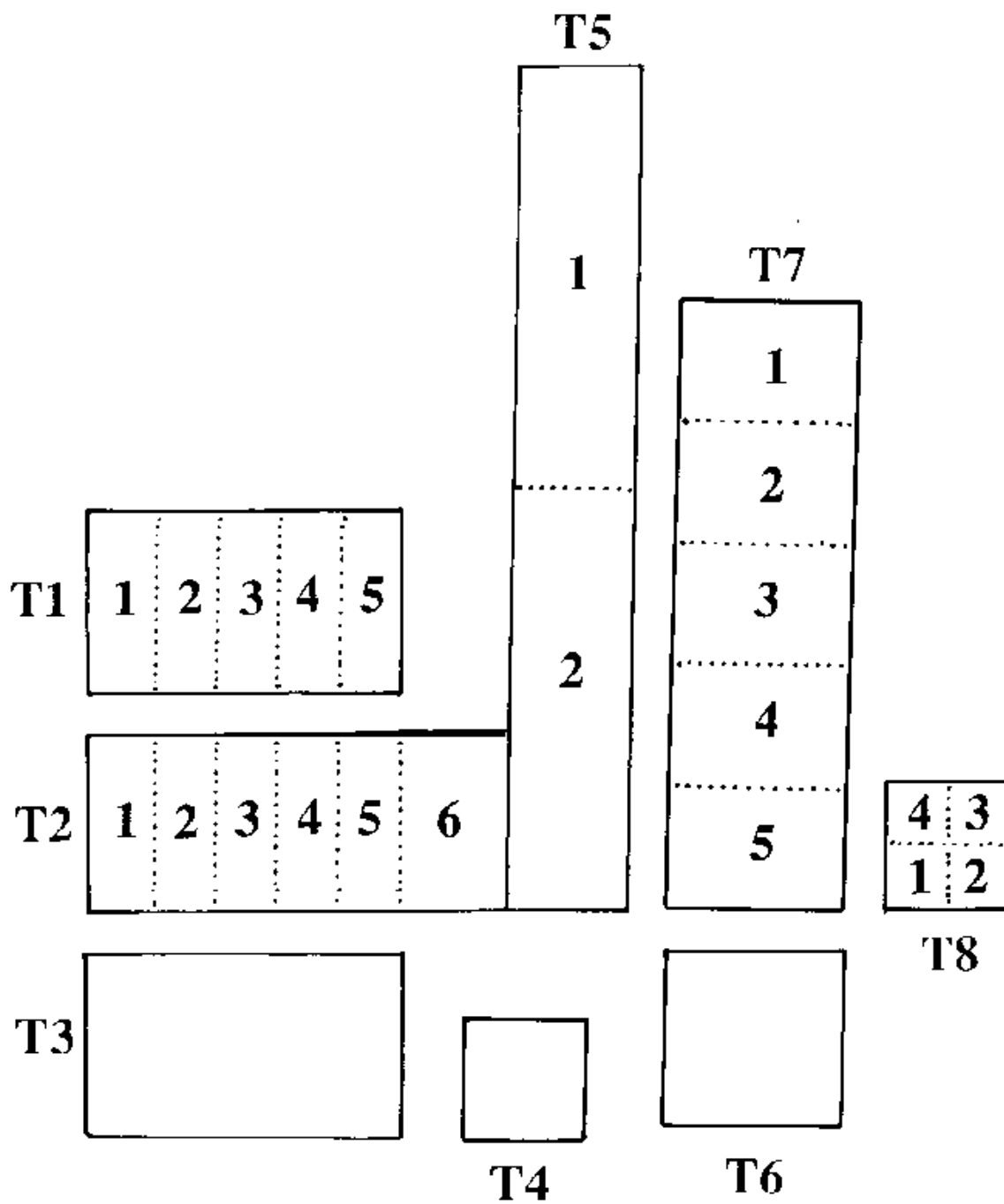
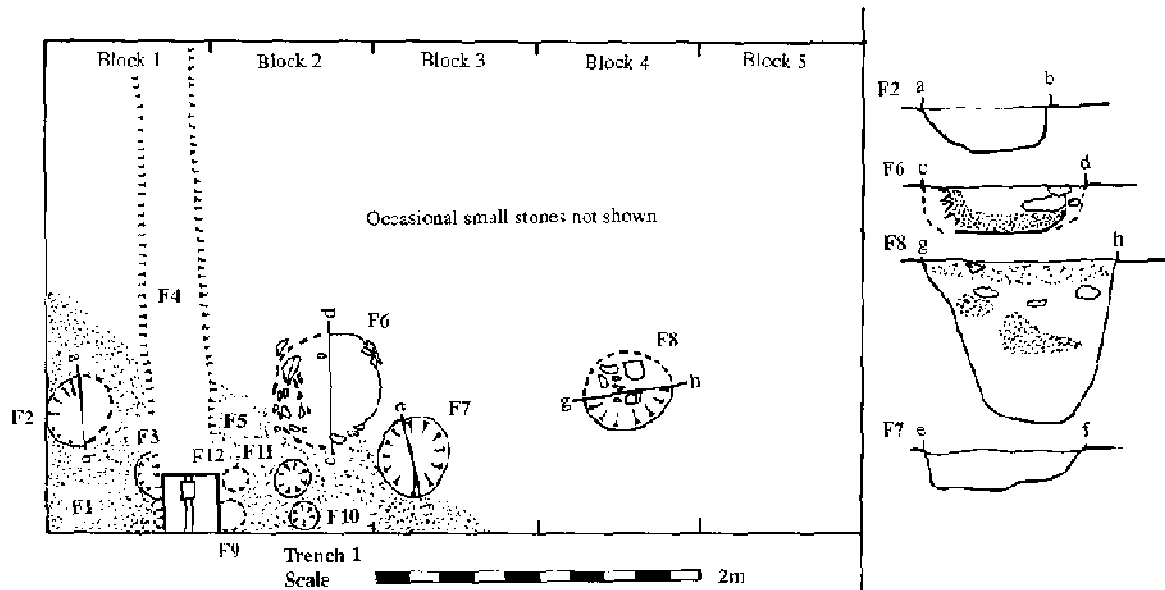


Fig 5 Trench sub divisions for recording plough soil finds. See Fig 4 for actual positions of trenches.

Fig 6



Trench No 1 (2004) Plates 1 & 2



Plates 1 & 2 looking north showing features appearing and excavated. Note the drain backfill F4 running across the trench and cutting pit F3 and spreads F1 & F5.

Excavation details of trenches 1 to 8

Trench No 1

The trench measures 5m by 3m, the long axis extending south from the dyke. For the purposes of recording lithic from the plough soil, the trench was sub divided into five blocks measuring 3m by 1m. However, unfortunately during post excavation lithic processing, blocks 2 and 4 appear to have been mixed, giving disproportionate numbers in the lists below for those two sections. Given that the ground has been under cultivation for an extended period of time, the lithic over the area must have been repeatedly disturbed. Nevertheless the intention was to record finds in a way to highlight any concentrations and determine if they correlated to the proximity of features.

The system was to a large extent arbitrary but some meaningful results may have been achieved. Notwithstanding the mixing of the two blocks of lithic it can be seen that the number of objects was less nearer to the dyke and this probably does reflect the fact that the features and finds are closely associated.

In Block 1, which produced the largest concentration of material from the plough soil, another important consideration must be taken into account. The area had been truncated by a relatively modern drain (F4) (late 19th/early 20th centuries), which also unfortunately cut through several of the in situ archaeological features. The backfill of the drain contained the lithic which had been disturbed and backfilled, and only those finds in the very small excavated section of the drain were retrieved, therefore the number of finds for Block 1 would have been enhanced if the drain had not existed, or if it had been totally re-excavated.



Plate 3 Microliths from T1/Block1

Plate 4 Microliths from T1/F1

Summary of tool finds in Trench 1

The totals for different tool types identified by the excavators are:

Scrapers	28 of	flint and chert
Knives	7 of	flint and chert and with one 'slug' knife
Microliths	64 of	being 43 of chert and 21 of flint

The bulk of the lithic type is chert, which is the normal situation for this part of Scotland. The only other exotic type is the single flake of Arran pitchstone, but this is considered to be residual from the Neolithic activity known on the site (see below).

List of finds:

Trench 1 Block 1

Chunks	75 of	
Flakes + spalls	c1100 of	
Amorphous Cores	14 of	
Scrapers	6 of	
Hammer stone Fragment	1 of	
Slug Knife	1 of	
Chert Microliths	17 of	Plate 3
Flint Microliths	8 of	Plate 3
Flint	60 of	
Flint Cores/Scrapers	17 of	
Flint Amorphous Core	1 of	

Trench 1 Block No 2

Flakes + spalls	c1400 of	
Amorphous Cores	25 of	
Chert Microliths	16 of (one notched)	
Flint Microliths	9 of	
Possible Tool	1 of	
Chunks	86 of	
Pebbles	45 of	
Flint	230 of	
Scrapers	10 of	
Chert Knives	2 of	
Flint Knives	2 of	
Pitchstone	1 of	

Trench 1 Block 3

Chert	c800 of	
Cores	3 of	
Chunks	69 of	
Amorphous Cores	22 of	

Scrapers	8 of
Chert Microliths	4 of
Chert Knife	1 of
Flint	84 of
Flint Knife	1 of
Flint Microliths	4 of

Trench 1 Block 4

Pebbles	8 of
Cores	3 of
Amorphous Cores	2 of
Chunks	60 of
Flakes	c140 of
Chert Microliths	2 of
Flint	28 of
Flint Scraper	1 of

Trench 1 Block 5

Chert Flakes & Spalls	264 of
Scrapers	3 of
Modified Piece	1 of
Chunks	66 of
Chert Microliths	4 of
Flint Microliths	2 of
Flint	25 of
Agate	2 of
Cores	8 of
Pebbles	5 of
Amorphous Cores Flint	1 of
Amorphous Cores Chert	4 of

Several obvious pre-historic features were located, most of them in the southeast corner of the trench, and apart from F8, forming a cluster of pits and surfaces there.

F1 Plates 1 & 2 Fig 6

This was a thin old ground surface (OGS), varying up to 50mm thick, and lying immediately below the plough soil and over the natural sandy ground. It was characterised by the presence of charcoal including a few hazel nutshell fragments and the following lithic. The relatively high proportion of microliths is interesting since it reverses the numerical trend of chert over flint. The proportion of flint to chert here in situ was greater than 50%, and this can also be compared to the numbers found in the plough soil from the whole block where the chert was hugely dominant.

F1 could be distinguished from F3 (pit) prior to excavation of each deposit; the latter appeared to be richer in charcoal. A few hazel nutshell fragments are present in samples retrieved from each context. Charcoal from F1 was got from a bulk sample and weighed 35 grammes for material up to 20mm in size. Eighteen fragments of hazel, seven of oak and 28 hazel nut shells were identified from the sample.

It is highly likely that F1 and F5 are the same original context, being spreads of charcoal and lithic from a floor? surface or sweepings from one? The features are only separated by the modern drain (F4), although F5 did contain a higher proportion of hazel nutshell fragments than F1. Both features were compacted and with both lithic and charcoal being occasionally lightly cemented by iron pan. The layer of F1 continues into the unexcavated sides of the trench.

F1 finds

Chert	80 of	
Chert Core	1 of	
Flint	50 of	
Chert Microliths	4 of	Plate 4
Flint Microliths	10 of	Plate 4
Some Lithic was in concretion with iron pan.		

F2 Plates 1, 2, 5, Fig 6

This was a pit that measured c 0.4m in diameter by 0.15m deep. It had steep and gradual sides and with a flat base. The pit was half sectioned on its southern half and the fill was shown to be a dark compacted charcoal enriched soil of homogenous appearance. From a basal sample of the sectioned half, a sample of c 48 grammes of charcoal up to 25mm in size was recovered. Six fragments of birch, seventeen of hazel, one of willow and 327 hazel nut shells were identified from the sample.

F2 finds

Chert	60 of	
Chert core	1 of	
Flint	40 of	
Chert Microliths	1 of	
Flint Microliths	4 of	
Burnt bone	tiny fragments	



Plate 5 showing pits F2 & F3 with the drain F4

F3 Plates 1, 2, 5, fig 6

This was a pit which had been halved by the digging of the drain (F4). It was excavated totally and was shown to have been a bowl shaped pit with gradual sides and which measured c 0.2m deep by 0.3m in diameter. The fill was a fairly homogenous, compacted dark charcoal enriched soil; a sample of c50 grammes of charcoal measuring up to 10mm and containing hazel nut shells was retrieved. Thirty four fragments of hazel, ten of willow and five hazel nut shells were identified from the sample. Also within the fill was a small quantity of burnt bone, the largest of the tiny fragments is 10mm but a tiny piece of round section bone is present, c 3mm in diameter and possibly indicating the remains of a small animal or bird.

F3 finds

Chert	30 of
Flint	2 of
Chert Microliths	2 of
Flint Microliths	1 of

F4 Plates 1, 2, 5 & 9 Fig 6

When this feature was first encountered it was thought to be a plough truncation because the colour and texture of the drain backfill was identical to the ground on each side of it, apart from the areas of F1 and F5, these being darkened by the presence of charcoal. When the ridge of about 0.4m wide by up to 75mm high was completely highlighted, it was then suspected as being a trench backfill. A 0.4m length of it was excavated to show that it was indeed a drain ditch with a clay pipe 1m below the surface of the plough soil. The hand dug ditch probably dates to the late 19th or early 20th century judging by the style of the fauceted earthenware pipe. Unfortunately the drain trench cut through the features above mentioned and also just clipped F9. However, what is clear, is that it now contains any of the pre-historic lithic it disturbed, as back fill.

F4 finds

Chert	13 of
Flint Burnt	1 of

The length of this drain is unknown; however it was not recognised in Trenches 2 and 3, which should have lain in line with it. Since these trenches were excavated and backfilled before T1, it is now uncertain whether the drain manifested itself as a feature but was not recognised, perhaps because the backfill in these trenches was identical in colour and texture to the adjoining ground (as indeed it was in T1, apart from the charcoal of F1 & F5), or that it did not extend to the other trenches. The former explanation appears to be the more likely.

F5 Plates 1 & 2 Fig 6

The area between F4 and extending past F7 at the edge of the trench was strewn with hazel nutshell lying in a compacted matrix of charcoal enriched dark soil, also containing an abundance of lithic. The relationship between F5 and the four features F9 – F11 was unclear since F9 and F12 were not excavated. F5 is however judged to be a continuation of F1 and to have been truncated by the drain. It certainly continues into the east side of the trench. The in situ lithic produced 24 microliths with yet another higher than normal ratio of flint items to chert. Charcoal weighing 65 grammes and up to about 15mm in size was retrieved from the bulk sample and which may have skimmed the upper surfaces of F9 – F12. A token amount of burnt bone too small for analyses was also found.

F5 finds

Chert	260 of	Chert Microliths	14 of
Chert Core	3 of	Flint Microliths	10 of
Flint	65 of	Burnt Bone	
Quantity of small flakes & spalls			

F6 Plates 1, 2, 6 & 7 Fig 6



Plates 6 & 7 showing F6 before and after excavation.
Note the ridge of F4 on the left and the denser charcoal at the base of the pit with its stone content around the edges.

This was a pit of c 0.5m in diameter with fairly steep sides and a depth of 0.15m and having a flat base. It was half section on its northern side. Before excavating into the pit it could be seen to have a ring of small angular stone around its perimeter. These were shown to extend down the sides of the pit and some were contained within the fill. They may be interpreted as post packing stones given that they were located around the edges of the pit. The upper fill of this pit was similar in consistency to the others described above; however, the basal layer was black as a consequence of the

denser quantity of charcoal it contained. The bulk sample from the excavated part of the pit produced 90 grammes of charcoal up to 25mm in size, however it contained no nutshell. Thirty five fragments of hazel and fifteen of willow were identified from the sample. Another observation is the fact that the pit contained only a small quantity of lithic compared to other pits including F7 below.

A fragment of hazel charcoal from the base of F6 was radio carbon dated; the result was 7920⁺40BP -26.1 ‰, 7030BC (95.4%) 6650BC {SUERC-6467/ GU-13037}.

F6 finds

Chert	c30 of
Flint	4 of

F7 Plates 1, 2 Fig 6

This was a slightly oval shaped pit, which measured 0.45m by 0.4m; it had steep and gradual sides and reached a depth of 0.12m. The fill consisted throughout of a dark soft soil, similar to the topsoil of the field and which was completely different in texture from all the other pits. Lithic was retrieved throughout the fill, which on realisation that it was not pre-historic – was eventually completely excavated. Because of the absence of charcoal and the unconsolidated nature of the fill, this pit is interpreted as being relatively modern, the lithic having been re-deposited from the surrounding area, which was abundant with it.

F7 finds

Chert	50 of
Chert Core	1 of
Flint	7 of
Flint Microliths	1 of

F8 Plates 1, 2, 8 Fig 6

This pit was relatively isolated from the rest of the ancient in situ archaeological deposits. It was however the largest feature in the trench being 0.6m by c0.5m wide and 0.5m deep. The sides of the eastern excavated half were gradual and the compacted fill was similar to those described above, excepting that there were patches containing more dense concentrations of charcoal, and some small stones made up the fill with a layer of stones on the upper surface.



Plate 8 showing F8.

The base of the pit was filled with fine sand. The east side of the pit was bulk sampled and this produced about 20 grammes of charcoal up to 20mm in size. Ten

fragments of hazel, fifteen of willow and 72 hazel nut shells were identified from the sample. Also contained throughout the fill but most especially nearer the base was a quantity of burnt bone, some of which measures up to 15mm and may be identifiable. From a relatively small quantity of lithic in the fill, given the size of the pit, four microliths were recovered.

F8 finds

Chert	40 of
Flint	10 of
Chert microliths	2 of
Flint microliths	2 of
Burnt bone	fragments

F9 Plate 9 Fig 6

The drain had clipped this pit, and the section, which was shown, revealed it to be bowl shaped and 0.13m deep. The upper surface measures 0.2m by 0.25m and the fill was charcoal enriched dark soil. It was not excavated.

F10 & F11 Plate 1, 2 & 9 Fig 6

The two pits were detected after F5 had been removed, they were 0.2m and 0.25m in diameter and both were about 0.15m deep. A sample of 75 grammes of charcoal was retrieved and from these forty two fragments of hazel, seven of willow and 142 hazel nut shells were identified.



F10 & F11 finds

Chert	c50 + spall
Flint	13 of
Flint microliths	1 of

Plate 9 showing F3, F4, F9, F10, F11, F12 and edge of F6.

F12 Plate 9 Fig 6

A discrete patch of charcoal enriched soil measuring 0.2m in diameter was presumed to be another pit. It was not excavated.

Discussion

Trench 1, the last to be dug on the project, produced the most archaeological features and clearly the in situ archaeology continues away from the south east corner. F7 may be dismissed as not being pre-historic. The other pits have a strong leaning to be

connected with Mesolithic activity if the numerous microliths are anything to go on, although whether they are contemporary is uncertain. Perhaps F8 being slightly isolated may belong to a different period, but the cluster of features in the corner of the trench are considered to be most likely of a single activity.

The three main pits are fairly equidistantly spaced; the centres of F3 and F6 are 1.6m apart, while F6 and F8 are 1.8m apart and the pits form a fairly straight line, F6 being slightly to one side. Their function is not certain, but postholes cannot be ruled out, however, each pit is different in character and they may be more likely to represent some other purpose than having been structural. The other smaller pits could also conceivably be postholes but given the limited excavation, it is difficult to draw conclusions. The early date for F8 would probably rule out its function as a post hole. The fact that so many microliths (fifty two) were found in situ in the pits and the spread around them may imply that the various pits did not contain posts, but rather were used for some other unknown purpose, with the detritus of a possible knapping floor finding its way into the pits?

It seems likely that knapping was taking place in the area of the features and that hazel nuts were being consumed here. The burnt bone is also possible evidence for food consumption and may help with interpreting the pits as being associated with food preparation and/or storage.

Fully half the trench was devoid of features and it may be taken that none existed, other than perhaps a spread of material with in situ lithic. The plough soil depth around the trench was consistent at 0.3m deep, and the upper level of F4 backfill, (the drain), had not be truncated by ploughing (as it may have been in T2 and T3), therefore any ploughing that has taken place since the drain was installed, and that certainly was before mechanised ploughing, has not destroyed anthropogenic features.

Trench No 5 produced no particular features, which 'line up' with Trench 1 and it may be assumed that the obvious activity that has taken place in the area of T1 extends to the southeast but not necessarily to the north.

Bone from the trench will be analysed and this may help firm up theories as to what was happening here.

The charcoal species however suggest mixed oak woodland and the relative abundance of willow may have been derived from the valley floor where the River Medwin flows, this may have been used in shelter construction.



Plate 10

The excavated features have been backfilled with clean sharp sand to preserve them; copper date tags have been inserted to assist any future archaeologists (Plate 10).

Trench No 2 Fig 4 & 5

The trench measures 6.5m by 3m, the long axis extending from the dyke. Since the dyke was almost totally robbed out at this point, the trench was extended on to conjoin with Trench 5. It was subdivided into five blocks of 3m x 1m and one of 3m x 1.5m, the latter at the dyke, for recording finds. No features were located. As may have been assumed it is clear that many artefacts are sealed below the dyke. Interestingly, a fragment of roll moulded sandstone was located in the base of the dyke. This is most likely a fragment of doorway from the nearby site of Todholes Tower, presumably a 16th century castle with no known history. It is therefore probably that much more of the building lies re-cycled within the drystane dyke.

Summary of finds:

Trench 2 Block No 1 see Plate 11

Pebbles	19 of
Chunks	c 350 of
Irregular flakes	c 110 of
Spall	c 800 of
Cores	8 of
Scrapers	3 of
Microliths	28 of
Flint	c 80 of
Flint knife	1 of
Flint leaf arrow	1 of
Quartz/agate	10 of

Trench 2 Block No 2 see Plate 12

Pebbles	58 of
Chunks	380 of
Irregular flakes	70 of
Spall	c 1100 of
Cores	13 of
Scrapers	2 of
Flint	90 of
Microliths chert	24 of
Pitchstone	1 of
Quartz	6 of
Quartzite H Stone	1 of
Greywacke 'smoother'	1 of
Sandstone 'smoother'/whetstone	1 of (2 of conjoining parts)

Trench 2 Block No 3

Pebbles	27 of
Chunks	250 of
Irregular flakes	170 of
Spall	c 800 of
Core	8 of
Scrapers	4 of
Flint	90 of
Flint knife	1 of
Microliths chert	29 of
Microliths flint	4 of
Quartz	7 of
Agate	9 of
Quartzite	2 of

Trench 2 Block No 4

Pebbles	21 of
Chunks	c 300 of
Irregular flakes	c 120 of
Spall	c 700 of
Cores	6 of
Scrapers	5 of
Flint	92 of
Microliths	25 of
Quartz	6 of

Trench 2 Block No 5

Pebbles	45 of
Chunks	360 of
Irregular flakes	180 of
Spall	c 1000 of
Cores	14 of
Scrapers	3 of
Flint	120 of
Microliths chert	13 of
Microliths flint	5 of
Pitchstone	1 of
Agate	2 of
Quartz	6 of
Quartzite H Stone	1 of

Trench 2 Block No 6 (below dyke)

Pebbles	13 of
Chunks	130 of
Irregular flakes	20 of
Spall	c 300 of
Cores	8 of
Scraper	1 of
Flint	45 of
Microliths	8 of

Trench 2 Block 6 (north of dyke)

Chunks	96 of
Irregular flakes	34 of
Spall	c 150 of
Cores	6 of
Scrapers	2 of
Flint	34 of
Microliths chert	11 of
Microliths flint	2 of
Agate	1 of

Trench 2 (from spoil heap)

Misc' chert	c 70 of
Core	1 of
Scraper	1 of
Flint	11 of
Microlith flint	1 of



Plate 11 T2/Block 1 various



Plate 12 T2/Block 2 microliths

Trench No 3 Plate 13 Fig 6

The trench measures 5m by 3m, the long axis extending from the dyke.

This trench was opened and completed while a herd of cattle were in the field, unfortunately it was not possible to fence the area adequately, and this resulted in the trench being excavated in an ad hoc manner due to the disturbance caused by the animals. Consequently the finds are not plotted to any specific area within the trench. Due to the unprecedented wet weather of August 2004, it was not possible to sieve the soil as was done in the other trenches; this may have resulted in some tiny material not being recovered and possibly some small microliths also. No archaeological features were located after the plough soil was removed and no finds were made below the plough soil, in the natural horizon.

Trench 3 (total area)

Pebbles	50 of
Chunks	c500 of
Irregular flakes	c350 of
Spall	c260 of
Scrapers	15 of incl' 2 of flint
Cores	20 of
Flint	139 of
Microliths chert	33 of
Microliths flint	4 of
Flint flake, large	1 of
Flint flake, notched	1 of
Flint borer?	1 of
Chert borer?	1 of
Siltstone flake, retouched	1 of
Quartzite fragments	4 of
Modern slag (railway)	2 of



Plate 13 Trench 3 various
Scrapers, borers, microliths, flint flakes



Plate 14 Trench 4 flint knife
Later pre-historic

Trench No 4 see Plates 14 & 15 Fig 7

The trench measures 2m by 2m. Five features were located and the finds are recorded to the entire area of the trench. The pottery from here is burnished Early Neolithic ware, typical of the style found in other part of Clydesdale and nearby at Fir Park on Weston Farm. Small pieces of burnt bone have eroded edges and will probably not be identifiable, they probably indicate food consumption. Although there was the usual range of microliths in this trench, the flint knife (Pl 14) along with the pottery represents later pre-history.

Summary of finds:

Pebbles	36 of
Chunks	c 210 of
Irregular flakes	155 of
Spall	c 700 of
Cores	10 of
Flint	69 of
Microliths chert	26 of + 1 of (found in 2004 at the edge of the backfilled trench)
Microliths flint	5 of
Quartz	3 of
Agate	6 of
EN sherds	3 of
Burnt bone	9 of tiny fragments
Flint knife	1 of (found in 2004 at the edge of the backfilled trench)

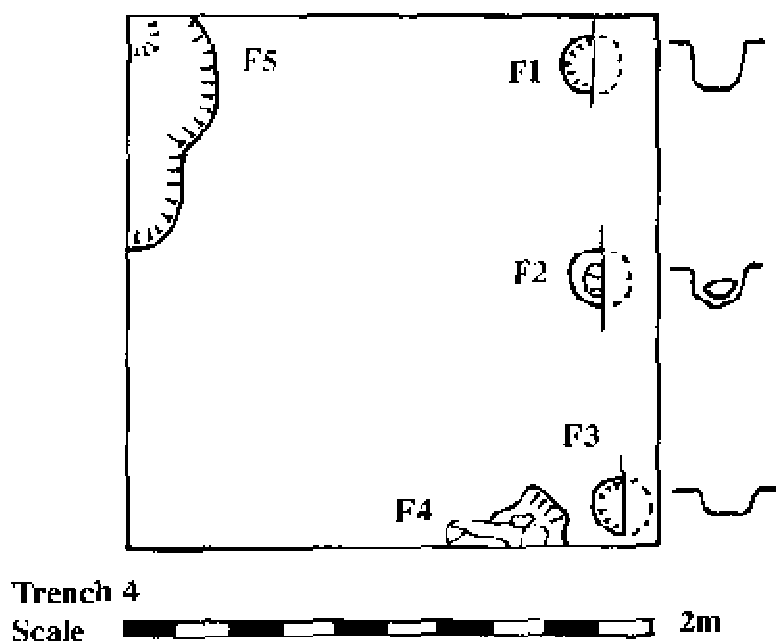


Fig 7

Trench 4 Features Fig 7 Plate 15

F1 was a pit which measured 0.22m in diameter by 0.2m deep. It had steep sides and a flat base. The half section produced the following identified charcoal: 8 of hazel, 21 of hazel nut shell and 12 of oak, from a total sample of 7 grammes.

F2 was a pit which measured 0.22m in diameter by 0.16m deep. It had steep sides and a rounded base and had a stone lying on the base. The sectioned half produced the following identified charcoal: 4 of hazel and 2 of hazel nut shells from a total of less than a gramme of charcoal.

F3 was a pit which measured 0.22m in diameter by 0.1m deep. It had gradual sides and a flat base. The sectioned half produced the following identified charcoal: 4 of hazel and 31 hazel nut shell from a total sample of 5 grammes.

F4 was an amorphous shaped pit which could not be satisfactorily excavated due to stones in the fill and which lay out with the designated trench. However, what could be seen was a pit with gradual sides and reaching a depth of 0.15m. The excavated portion produced the following identified charcoal: 6 of hazel, 401 of hazel nut shell, 1 of elm and 13 of oak from a total of 25 grammes. Nine tiny fragments of burnt bone weighing only 0.05 grammes were found in all areas of the pit.

F5 was evidently a rabbit burrow containing plough soil.

The pits F1 – F3 formed a straight line 0.6m apart and are of a size and uniformity to allow their interpretation as being post holes. However, without more secure dating evidence (which is possible) it will remain unclear as to what period they belong. Given their apparent relationship, it is likely that they are contemporaneous, possibly with F4 also.

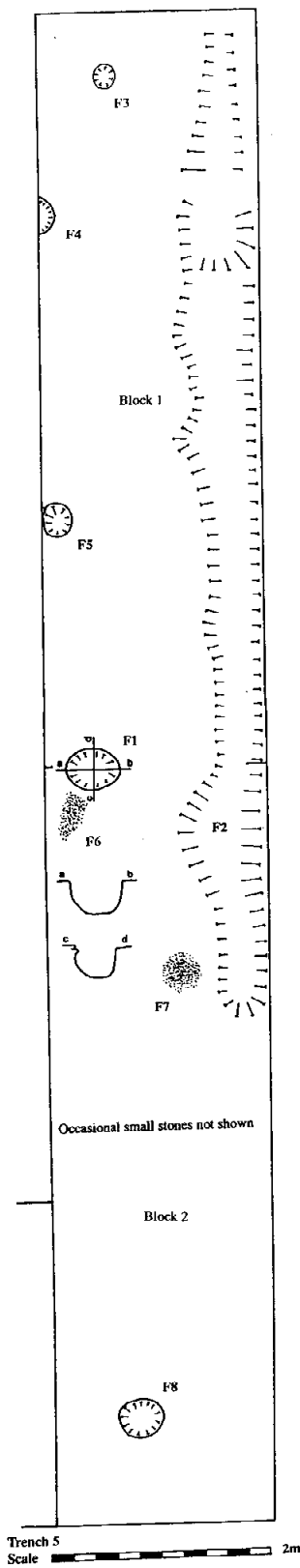


Fig 8 Trench 5



Plate 15 Trench 4 Features before excavation



Plate 16 Trench 5



Plate 17 Trench 5 F1 pit

Trench No 5 Fig 8 Plates 16 & 17

The trench measures 14m by 2m, the long axis running parallel with and adjacent to the post and wire fence. The trench was divided into two 7m long blocks for recording plough soil finds:

Trench 5 Block 1 (1metre to 7metres from north to south)

Pebble	39 of	
Irregular flake	c 230 of	
Inner flake	c 150 of	
Brown chert flakes	c 190 of	
Cores	40 of	
Scrapers	11 of	
Microliths chert	29 of	
Microliths flint	4 of	
Flint	c 240 of	
Pitchstone	3 of	
Quartzite fragments	7 of	(for the entire trench)
Quartz	3 of	
Misc', coal	3 of	

Trench 5 Block 2 (8metres to 14metres from north to south)

Pebble	116 of	
Irregular flake	c 1800 + 220 of (c 2020 in total)	
Brown chert flake	72 of	
Cores	12 of	
Inner flake	286 of	
Microliths chert	18 of	
Microliths flint	7 of	
Flint	218 of	
Flint blade	1 of (with sickle gloss?)	
Pitchstone	4 of	
Misc' / quartz	c 40 of	

Trench 5 west end of trench surface find on grass

Microlith chert	1 of
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F1 Fig 8 Plate 17

F1 was a discrete oval shaped pit with steep sides and a rounded base. It measured 0.5m by 0.4m and was 0.3m deep. The pit was totally excavated and contained 25 litres of material which consisted for the most part of hazel nut shells and other charcoal, including some round wood, within a matrix of dark soil. The fill was homogenous in appearance and was excavated in arbitrary layers of upper; middle and base, and nut shell was abundant in all. Over 500 grammes of charcoal were

retrieved from the total sample and the charcoal from 'west middle' (145grammes) was submitted for identification. Eighteen fragments of hazel, two of willow and 834 hazel nut shell fragments were identified. A few tiny fragments of burnt bone were also retrieved.

A fragment of hazel nut shell from F1 'west middle' was radio carbon dated; the result was 6035⁺40BP -24.5 ‰, 5050BC (95.4%) 4800BC {SUERC-3562/ GU-12117}.

F1 finds

F1 (upper)	Chert 49 of	Microlith chert 1 of	Flint 2 of
F1 (west side)	Chert 23 of	Quartz 1 of	
F1 (west upper)	Chert 17 of		Flint 2 of
F1 (west middle)	Chert 29 of		Flint 1 of
F1 (base)	Chert 40 of		Pitchstone 1 of
F1 middle	Bone < 1 gramme		

The lithic from the pit is not unusual except for the pitchstone. This is somewhat surprising as pitchstone has been found in relative abundance in various projects by the Biggar Group. With this exception, all the evidence strongly indicates that Arran pitchstone was being acquired (for some unknown purpose) in the Early Neolithic period, but here, apparently sealed in the base of a Mesolithic pit is this example. This may now mean that some pitchstone found in fieldwalking and with no other contextual information, may also be of the Mesolithic period.

It would appear that this pit had been deliberately filled with the organic remains of a single episode which involved the consumption of hazel nuts and, conjecturally, if more bone was originally included, other foodstuffs. Judging by the dispersal of lithic throughout the contents of the feature, it seems that the filling of the pit was not selective to the burnt material but rather ad hoc and mixing the charcoal and lithic together. The obvious scenario would be the cleaning up of a floor surface, near a fireplace and where knapping had taken place (see F6 & F7 below).

F2

This feature was a prominent irregular shaped gully which ran for 9.5m and the full length of Block 1, and parallel with the trench and the dyke. It measured up to 0.75m wide and its depth varied to 0.5m deep. Natural angular stone protruded into its course. The stony soil fill of the trench was the same as the plough soil and although it contained numerous finds of lithics, it is not considered to be pre- historic in origin. Although the feature was not apparent prior to excavation, a surface gully is evident both above and below the excavation area and similarly running parallel with the dyke. It is concluded that this is an old boundary ditch which probably pre-dates the dyke and may originally have been complimented by a turf bank, now gone.

F3, F4, F5 & F8 Fig 8

These were all small pits which were filled with plough soil and although some lithic was retrieved from them, the consistency and nature of their fills suggest that they are of relatively recent origin, consequently they were not sampled.

F6 & F7 Fig 8

These were discrete lenses of charcoal measuring 0.4m by 0.3m one of which lay almost adjacent to F1 pit. Hazel nut shell was obvious when they were excavated. Twenty two chert flakes and a total of 17 grammes of charcoal came from F6, the charcoal was submitted for analyses and from that a fragment of hazel and one from oak along with 120 hazel nut shell fragments were identified. Why this patch should be found in isolation is unclear, but taken with the similar F7, it may indicate that larger surfaces have been removed at some point, presumably by later agricultural activity.



Plate 18 Trench 5 Block 1



Plate 19 Trench 5 Block 1



Plate 20 Trench 5 Block 2



Plate 21 Trench 6

Note the possible rough out for a barb and tang arrowhead on the right.



Plate 22 Trench 6



Plate 23 Trench 6



Plate 24 Trench 6



Plate 25 Trench 6

Trench No 6 Figs 4, 5 & 9 Plates 21 - 25

The trench measures 3m by 3m.

Summary of finds: entire trench

Pebbles	51 of
Chunks	c 850 of
Irregular flakes	c 70 of
Spall	c 2000 of
Cores	12 of
Scrapers	13 of
Brown coloured chert	c 100 of
Notched chert	2 of
Flint	c 270 of
Pitchstone	16 of
Microliths chert	83 of
Microliths flint	22 of
Flint knives	10 of
Barb & Tang arrow chert?	1 of
Quartz	17 of
Quartzite H Stone	1 of

Quartzsite fragment	1 of
Mudstone	2 of
Jasper	3 of
EN sherds	3 of + fragments
Grooved ware	1 of

Trench 6 Finds from Features

F1	Chert 13 of	Flint 4 of	
F2	Chert 7 of	Flint 2 of	
F3	Chert 13 of	Quartz 1 of	Bone < 1 gramme

Trench 6

The finds from the trench were recorded to the entire area which sloped 0.3m down from west to east.

Three features were revealed;

F1 was a prominent circular shaped pit which measured 0.6m in diameter; it had gradual sides and reached a depth of 0.3m below the substrate. The fill of this pit was entirely plough soil with a few small stones and although some lithic was retrieved from it, it is considered to be of relatively modern origin judging by the composition of the fill.

F2 was a rabbit burrow.

F3 was a thin lens of dark soil with macro charcoal causing the discolouration. It was not sampled.

This area of the site produced an extraordinary assemblage of finds (see above) which covered all periods of pre history prior to the Iron Age. The Mesolithic material in the form of microliths is high even for the general area, the abundance of pitchstone and knives probably represent the Neolithic which itself is seen as being Early and Late judging by the pottery styles of burnished and grooved wares respectively (but see F1 Trench 5 above for pitchstone find). The barb and tang arrow head may be ascribed to the Bronze Age. Another peculiarity is the abundance of brown coloured chert, normally only seen as occasionally pieces among assemblages of the usual blue/grey varieties. Clearly an episode of knapping the more unusual brown variety had taken place. Expert lithics analyses will throw some more light on this material.

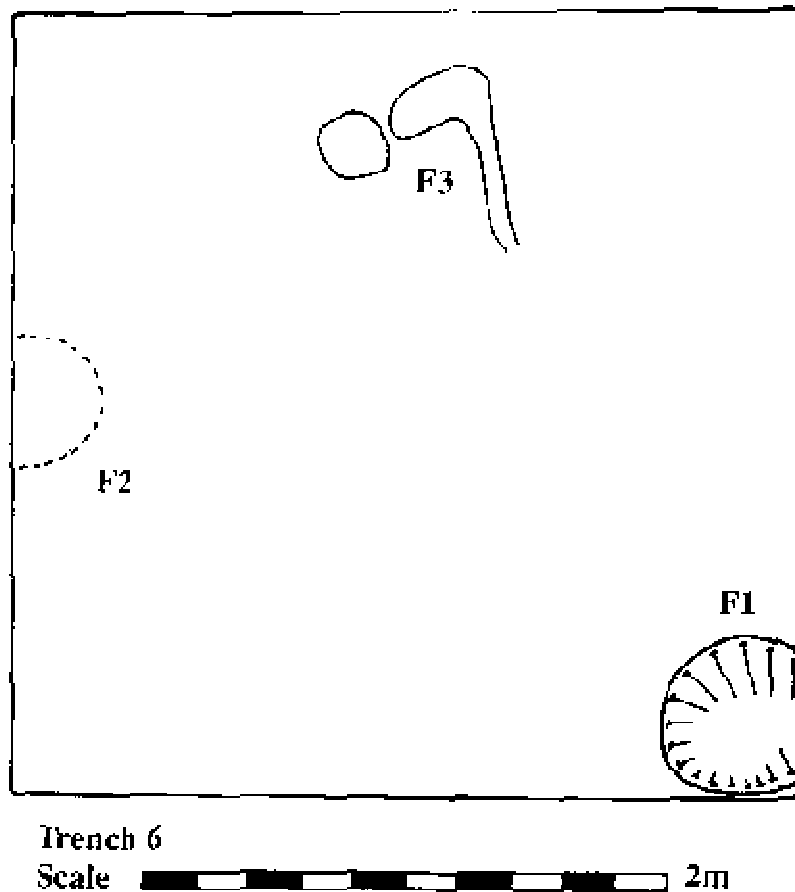


Fig 9

Trench No 7 Fig 10 Plates 26 - 28

The trench measures 10m by 3m the long axis running parallel with T5.

The trench was divided into 5 blocks of 3m by 2m for recording finds (see fig 5)

The surface of the ground dropped 0.5m down from west to east over the length of the trench, and the plough soil was only 0.1m at the upper end but gradually deepening to 0.3m at the lower end. Clearly the usage of the upper part as a track way had caused some downward movement of soil and presumably finds.

Trench 7 Block 1

Pebble	38 of
Chunk	296 of
Irregular flake	240 of
Spall	690 of
Cores	7 of
Scraper chert	3 of
Scraper flint	1 of

Microliths chert	13 of
Microliths flint	3 of
Flint	86 of
Pitchstone	2 of

Trench 7 Block 2

Pebble	33 of
Chunk	150 of (large pieces)
Chunk	500 of (smaller pieces)
Irregular flake	550 of
Spall	900 of
Cores	12 of
Scraper chert	26 of
Scraper flint	4 of
Microliths chert	3 of
Microliths flint	3 of
Flint	110 of
Pitchstone	5 of
Agate	3 of
Quartz	4 of
Sandstone rubber	1 of
Greywacke rubber	1 of
Burnt bone	1 of

Trench 7 Block 3

Pebble	75 of
Chunk	950 of
Irregular flake	c 2000 of
Spall	500 of
Cores	19 of
Scraper chert	8 of
Scraper flint	7 of
Serrated flint flake	1 of
Notched flake	1 of
Chert disc?	1 of
Microliths chert	63 of
Microliths flint	6 of
Microlith	1 of (found adjacent to trench in grass)
Flint	170 of
Pitchstone	12 of (+ 1 of possible)
Agate	3 of
Jasper	1 of
Quartz	4 of

Greywacke axe? / Hammer 1 of (half of)

Greywacke whetstone 1 of

Burnt bone 3 of

Trench 7 Block 4

Pebble 26 of

Chunk 950 of

Irregular flake c1010 of (large)

Irregular flake c 701 of (smaller)

Secondary flake 550 of

Spall 2692 of

Cores 26 of

Scraper chert 6 of

Microliths chert 75 of

Microliths flint 17 of

Flint 180 of

Flint knife 1 of

Pitchstone 8 of

Agate 3 of

Quartzite poss' Hammer 1 of (3 pieces of)

Greywacke whetstone 1 of

Rubbing stone 1 of

Siltstone 1 of

Burnt bone 16 of

Trench 7 Block 5

Pebble 53 of

Chunk c 800 of

Irregular flake c 480 of

Spall 2600 of

Cores 15 of

Scraper 9 of

Microliths chert 59 of

Microliths flint 11 of

Microliths (possible) 9 of

Flint c 260 of

Pitchstone 21 of

Quartzite fragments 6 of

Greywacke Hammer stone 1 of

Burnt bone 1 of

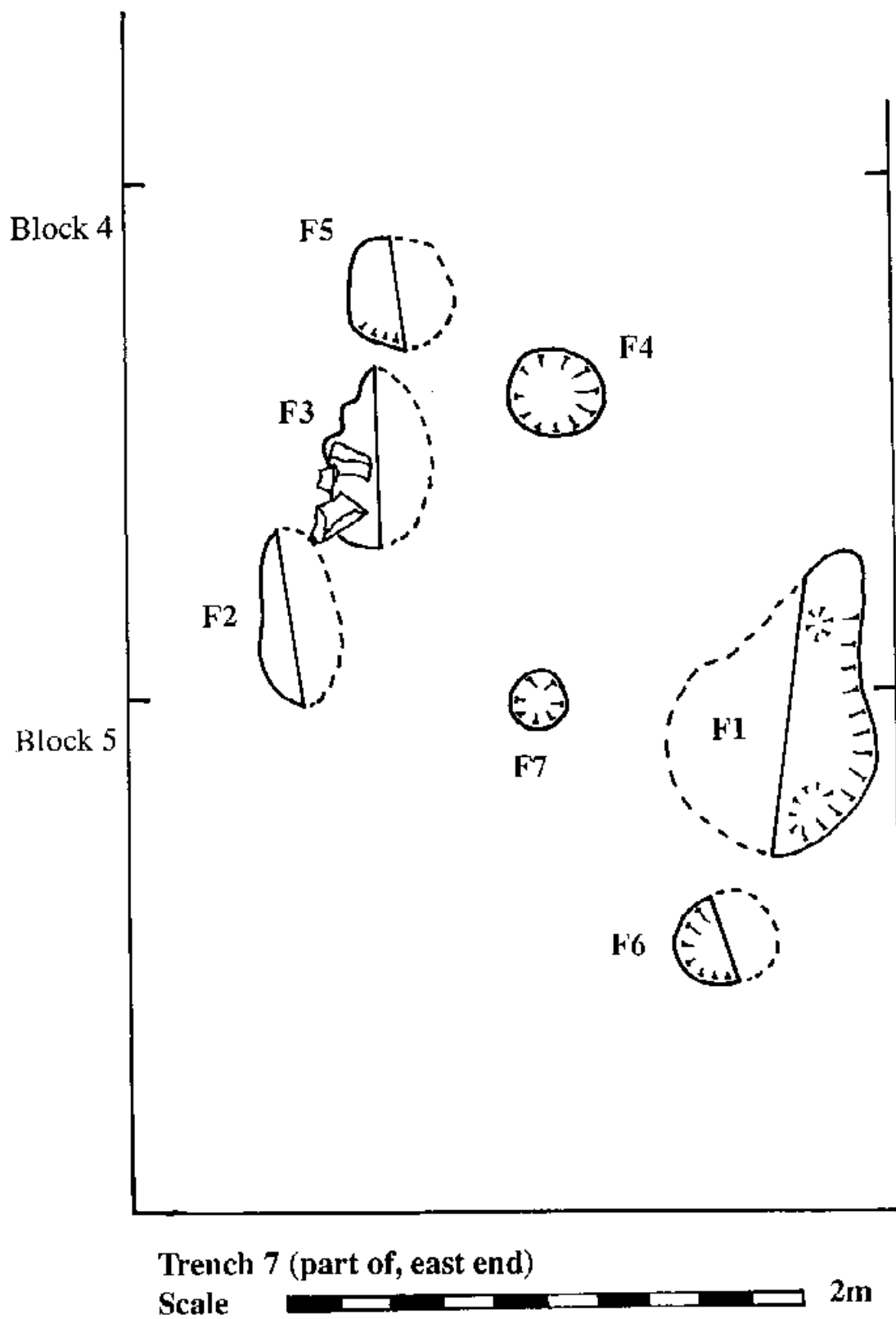


Fig 10

Trench 7

The features, all pits of varying size and shape were located at the lower eastern end, in Blocks 4 & 5, where, interestingly, the largest number of microliths was found.

F1

This was seen as a pear shaped spread of charcoal enriched soil prior to excavation, it measured 1.3m long by 0.8m at its widest point. When sectioned it was shown to be a shallow pit only 75mm at its deepest, with gradual sides and with two small areas deeper than the rest. Fragments of charcoal identified from the two samples taken were;

Upper: 20 of hazel and 31 of hazel nut shell, from a total of 19 grammes.

Base: 3 of hazel, 46 of hazel nut shell and 17 of oak, from a total of 8 grammes.

F1 upper finds

Chert	c 100 of
Flint	1 of
Pitchstone	1 of
Microliths	4 of
Scraper	1 of

F1 base finds

Chert	15 of
Flint	1 of
Microlith chert	1 of

F2

This feature was 0.6m by 0.3m and 0.28m deep, it had vertical sides and a rounded base and it was filled with a dark sandy, stone free plough soil and was evidently a rabbit burrow; nevertheless the following finds were retrieved from the fill;

Chert	60 of
Flint	2 of
Microlith flint	1 of
Microlith chert	2 of

F3

This oval shaped feature measured 0.7m by 0.4m when first identified as a charcoal enriched spread of soil. It had gradual sides and reached a depth of 0.17m. Stones within the feature were shown to have been naturally occurring and protruding from the substrate, the original excavators had therefore dug past them without removing them to create the pit. Identified charcoal from two bulk samples taken from the sectioned half were:

13 of hazel, 375 of hazel nut shell, 1 of cherry type and 6 of willow from a sample which totalled 20 grammes in weight.

15 hazel, 345 of hazel nut shell, 1 of alder, 1 of cherry type and 3 of willow from a sample which totalled 10 grammes.

The finds were as follows:

Chert	69 of
Flint	2 of
Scraper flint	1 of
Microlith chert	1 of
Bone	c 3gms

F4

This pit measured 0.3m in diameter by 0.15m deep. Similar to F3 above, this pit had inexplicably been cut past protruding stones which were left in situ; they appeared as packing stone around the pit sides but were shown to be naturally in situ. Soil samples were retrieved in two layers from the entire pit, the upper sample produced the following identified species from a total 7 grammes of charcoal; 16 of hazel, 76 of hazel nut shell and 4 of willow, the basal sample produced 10 of hazel and 45 of hazel nut shell from a sample of only 3 grammes.

The finds from the features were:

Chert	18 of	
Flint	2 of	
Sandstone pebble	1 of	
Bone	c 3gms	from the upper sample and,
Chert	2 of	
Flint	1 of	
Bone	<1 gm	from the basal sample

F5

This rather irregular shaped pit measured 0.5m by 0.5m, it measured only 75mm deep and it had steep to gradual sides on the sectioned half. Although some charcoal was evident in the fill, none was identified. There were no finds in the sectioned half.

F6

Feature 6 was a circular pit measuring 0.35m in diameter by 0.14m deep, it had gradual sides. From the sectioned half, the identified charcoal from a 5 gramme sample was 8 of hazel, 15 of hazel nut shell and 11 of oak, the charcoal fragments were covered in a mineralised coating, derived from the soil. The finds amounted to 36 pieces of chert.

F7

Feature 7 was a bowl shaped pit which measured 0.25m in diameter by 0.1m deep. Three pieces of chert were found in the fill which was totally excavated.



Plate 26 Trench 7 Block 5



Plate 27 Trench 7 Block 5



Plate 28 Trench 7 Block 5



Plate 29 Diggers at Trench 8

Trench 7 discussion

The absence of features in the upper side of trench 7, apart from any surface spreads which may once have existed, cannot be attributable to the erosion caused by the area being used as a track through the gate. Sub surface pits would still probably have been evident in the boulder clay. Clearly the upper area had been denuded of soil which must have migrated down slope, along with any finds lying in it.

It would be tempting to suggest that the larger volumes of lithic in the lower three blocks owed their existence to the presence of the features, however, the probably soil creep must be taken into consideration and may in part at least be responsible for the higher numbers recorded to these blocks.

The high incidence of pitchstone may also be evidence of its association with the Mesolithic, although this must be treated with some caution as the nearby Trench 6 clearly demonstrated a Neolithic presence in the area.

The presence of bone fragments may be taken as food consumption along with the copious evidence of hazel nuts.

Although the cluster of features have not been dated, it may be implied that some at least are associated judging by the charcoal in their fills. For example willow and hazel were found in F3 and F4 and oak was found in both F1 and F6.

The variety of shapes and sizes of features do not particularly help with understanding the function of the area, although it may be assumed that they are unlikely to represent structural pits for posts, possible storage in association with food consumption seems the best explanation.

As with Trench No 1 further C¹⁴ dates would probably help in understanding the relationships between the pits, the analyses of finds may be less helpful given the large quantities involved and the possibility of different periods being represented in this area.

Trench 8 Fig 4 & 5

Trench No 8

The trench measures 2m by 2m and finds were recorded to each square metre block.

Summary of finds:

Trench 8 Block 1

Chert	86 of
Chert Spalls & Flakes	
Chert Scrapers	7 of
Chert Core	1 of
Chert Microliths	4 of
Flint	44 of
Pitchstone	2 of
Siltstone	2 of
Pottery	1 of

Trench 8 Block 2

Chert	80 of
Chert Core/Scrapers	5 of
Chert Microliths	3 of
Flint	44 of
Burnt Flint	9 of
Pottery	1 of

Trench 8 Block 3

Chert	c80 of
Chert Scrapers	2 of

Flint	38 of
Flint Microliths	3 of
Pitchstone	3 of

Trench 8 Block 4

Chert (+ spalls	100 of
Chert Core/Scrapers	8 of
Chert Microliths	3 of
Flint	100 of (11 burnt)
Flint Scraper	1 of
Pitchstone	1 of
Burnt Bone	1 of

Locations lost!

Microlith chert	1 of
Microlith flint	1 of
Bone	1 of

Trench 8

It would appear that the lithic concentration is beginning to fall off at this side of the overall terrace, judging by the relative low numbers of microliths. However, flint forms a large component of the assemblage here and the six pitchstone pieces are also interesting as indicating a much larger scatter of that lithic in this area. Scrapers are also relatively abundant.

Finds from the area by fieldwalking in 2000.

A large assemblage of surface lithic was retrieved from the area when it was first walked; the full list is given in the earlier reports on Weston Farm. A summary of some of the diagnostic types is given here simply to illustrate the magnitude of the material lying in the ground:

Chert microliths	14 of	Flint microliths	4 of
Chert scrapers	23 of	Flint scrapers	7 of
Chert cores	c130 of	Flint cores	4 of
Hammer stones	4 of		

General discussion and conclusion

Although it was clear to the excavators that considerable evidence of the past was available on the site judging by the presence of so much lithic, the results from the excavations, both in terms of finds numbers and the in situ archaeological features, was very surprising indeed.

Two of the original objectives were realised; to test for surviving archaeological deposits in close proximity to the dyke and also further away. However there was no distinction in the preservation of deposits, indeed, spreads of material were only located away from the immediate confines of the dyke. Therefore plough damage was consistent over the areas excavated.

The evidence of these excavations and the finds from previous fieldwalking clearly show an extended and prolific Mesolithic occupation on the site. An Early Neolithic activity, although less extensive than the earlier period was also demonstrated and a single grooved ware sherd points to the later Neolithic. The Bronze Age barb and tang arrowhead/s may be purely co-incidental.

Although only two radio carbon dates were carried out, they do indicate the long time scale of the site in Mesolithic terms and the evidence of larger stone tools and pottery extend the occupation into the Neolithic period. Without a detailed analyses of the lithic and certainly some more radio carbon dates it is not possible to elaborate on that broad time range for occupation here. However the microliths especially should prove to be a valuable collection of types which can be set in the context of early to late Mesolithic.

The two fields upon which the bulk of the overall site lies have been walked in detail, and what is obvious from the results is that this location has been favoured as a discrete spot upon which to settle. The topography has without doubt been a consideration, being a natural terraced area on an otherwise gentle slope all around. The nearby spring downhill to the south east may also have been a contributory factor of attraction to the site.

At least two other concentrations of Mesolithic material were found in the southern field and taken with these, and indeed the numerous Mesolithic scatters found in Fir Park just over the hill to the west, it is patently clear that the general area was considered a good place to pitch camp in Mesolithic times.

Each of the locations has been shown to be fairly discrete in lithic distribution, and certainly chert has been the dominant stone type used in the earlier periods. However, at this location flint has also played an important part in the lithic assemblage. There is certainly a considerable range in microlith styles here, which when compared as an assemblage, and then examined against the material from other nearby locations will surely give a valuable insight on the range of styles and their chronology. This will lead to a better understanding of when and possibly why these locations were chosen to camp on.

The microlith assemblage may prove to be particularly interesting as it contains numerous tiny examples and also examples which, while being re-touched, are curved; it is possible that some of these objects while being manufactured were immediately rejected as being of no use. This may explain why so many microliths were found here.

Because detailed searches have now been made on the ploughed ground around Weston Farm a distribution map of sites is emerging and equally important, is that large areas are apparently devoid on lithic scatters. Although several fields are still to be inspected, there are also large areas of unimproved pasture which has never been under the plough. Therefore a bias in distribution emerges and this must be taken into consideration when discussing how a location has been settled, albeit temporarily as seasonal camps. Nevertheless, what has now been discovered here points to the value of dedicated searches of particular packages of landscapes, resulting in sites being seen in much less apparent isolation.

The approximate area of the oval shaped terrace is c 2250 square metres and the total excavation area is 120 square metres; only circa 5% of the terrace. Therefore it is not difficult to imagine how much archaeological material still lies in the ground, and there must also be a considerable number of extant features covering different periods and functions, still relatively undisturbed.

That plough truncation of archaeological features has happened seems beyond doubt, and what this project demonstrates is that ancient deposits still do survive below plough soils. However, there can also be little doubt that modern cultivation techniques with heavier and more powerful ploughing machinery, must be taking a serious toll on what does survive. There can be little doubt that the surviving archaeological deposits in these circumstances are subject to a new phase of threat, and which may in some cases entirely erase them from the landscape.

The features which were considered to be of more recent origin; the field drain and the open gully are straight forward, however the various pits which appeared not to be pre-historic are more problematic to explain. The area of the site has obviously attracted activities which involved digging these pits, but for what purpose and exactly when remains unclear. The installation of fencing stobs does not appear to be the explanation.

Sites with pits full of hazel nut shell such as that at Trench 5/F1 strongly suggest a longer occupation than a day or two; such features seem to imply that extended periods of site occupation were taking place. The reason why so much carbonised nut shell should become a pit fill is of course conjectural, one would assume that it has been a deliberate act to dispose of the material in such a way, however, it is equally possible that it is no more than coincidence that an abandoned pit could be filled up

with whatever is at hand at a particular moment. Nor can one assume seasonal activity, since hazel nuts can be stored and retrieved at a later date and perhaps a limited quantity could be transported with the group.

The sites which the Biggar Group have been discovering are now producing evidence of the hunter gatherers migrations routes and camp sites in the landscape. It can be stated that typical inland sites are no longer necessarily to be found along river courses or loch sides, instead sites are being found high on hill sides (eg see the Daer reports; Sites No's 84 and 85 this web site) and on more open valleys, all quite removed from river side locations. This new picture is being enlarged each year as further discoveries are made.

A point perhaps worth making is that there is no evidence of seaside travellers, in the form of sea shells for instance, although such material may not survive the acidic inland soils of Scotland. However, it would be interesting if radiolarian chert could be found on coastal locations indicating that travellers were returning with material from the inland sites.

The lithic scatters most probably represent knapping sites, although dumping grounds for sharp and dangerous material is a possibility, nevertheless, whatever the case, the actual camp sites must be very close to hand. Perhaps, in the future but with adequate resources, larger areas should be excavated around these lithic scatters in the hope of establishing the actual living areas.

This work is published here as a stand alone report in the first instance. It will soon be included into a final interim report on the entire Weston Farm Project, which is itself part of the Pre-History North of Biggar Project; a long term fieldwork endeavour attempting to establish exactly where earlier pre-historic evidence lies in this part of Lanarkshire.

Since the Weston project began by the Biggar Group in 1998, it was brought to their notice that fieldwalking over a number of years had previously taken place by Mr R S Murray in the early 1980's. Although the finds were not systematically spot recorded, certainly some objects were found on the ground discussed in this report. Part of this assemblage is now in the Museum of Scotland and part has been disposed via Treasure Trove to Biggar Museums. An unpublished report was prepared for the material held by the National Museums (McCartan, 1988) and it is hoped that this significant assemblage may be included in a final report on the Weston Farm project.

Acknowledgements

This work and the previous fieldwork at Weston Farm carried out by the Biggar Archaeology Group were permitted by land owner Mr McDonald Lockhart. Farmer Mr Kerry Coombs assisted with animal management when possible to allow work to proceed. Many people from out with the formal group, and including members of the Biggar and Motherwell Young Archaeologists Clubs helped with the excavation and sieving. All are recorded in the site archives and in the photographic record. Denise Dudds and Joy McBain cleaned, bagged and recorded the finds assemblages. David Oxley assisted with the desk top publishing of this report.

The writer processed all soil samples from which the charcoal was identified by Dr Jennifer Miller and Susan Ramsay of GUARD. The writer was also responsible for all site recording and management of the entire project.

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Ward T 1999 Pre History North of Biggar Project, Fieldwalking 1999 Weston and Newbigging Mill Farms {plus addendum for 2000} (Interim) Biggar Museum Trust

Appendix I

The project was recorded on 35mm colour slide film, some parts in digital stills and some parts in digital video.

Appendix II

It has not yet been possible due to time constraints to properly assess the implications of either the features or the lithic assemblage gathered from this project and given the fact that neither the author of this report nor any of the Group are competent to describe lithic assemblages, attempts at meaningful interpretation would be flawed. However to give an impression of what has certainly been found in the excavations, minimum numbers of chert and flint scrapers and microliths are given below, this will at least allow the reader to appreciate the scale of the assemblage in that respect.

Chert scrapers	143 of	Flint scrapers	34 of
Chert microliths	545 of	Flint microliths	117 of

The next report will include the results from the entire Weston Project, giving a better understanding of the discoveries made here and their context within the known archaeological landscape.

