

LONGSTONE EDGE, BARROWS 1996.

Sub Sites: **High Rake.**

County: **North Derbyshire.**

Site Code: **472.**

Grid References: **SK 2088 7341.**

Parish: **Bakewell.**

FLINT REPORT.

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Note:

Since the assemblage totals 100 pieces figures have not been expressed as relative percentages. The conventional term patina is used throughout this catalogue to avoid confusion between the term's cortex and the process of cortication. Patina is here used to refer to a visible discoloration and /or waxy staining of a flints surface.

Introduction: (see table 1).

The combined flint assemblage from the excavation of Barrows 1 and 2 totals, 100 (119.5g) struck pieces of flint and chert plus 24 (31.3g) pieces of un-struck natural flint and chert. Seventy-three of the struck pieces came from the area of Barrow 1 and 21 from the area of Barrow 2, a further 6 pieces came from areas the topsoil in Areas 8 and 11.

The retouched component of the assemblage totals 10 pieces (table 1); 1 edge retouched blade (small find 72457), 1 piercer / retouched point (small find 5103), 1 spur (small find 5161), 3 scrapers (small finds 5070.1, 72550 & 72395), 1 leaf arrowhead (small find 72835), 1 barbed & tanged? arrowhead (small find 72827) and 2 microliths (small finds 5103 & 72734). The remaining 90 pieces can be considered to be knapping debitage. All of the retouched pieces come from Barrow 1. The arrowheads, microliths, piercer and the side (left) end scraper (small find 72550) all came from pre-mound/cairn deposits.

Assemblage Traits:

Despite the residual nature of much of the material, the majority of the assemblage has not been subjected to extensive edge damage and abrasion consistent with the nature of its deposition. Fourteen of the struck lithics are in a fresh state it is notable that this material comes from subsoil deposits and particularly from the Barrow 1, Cist fill in and around the area of skeletons 75502/75503. Only 28 of the pieces have been broken. Seventeen of the broken pieces come from Barrow 1 area; 9 come from Barrow 2 and the remaining 2 pieces are unstratified. Barrow 2 has produced a higher proportion of broken pieces than (42.8% Vs 23%) Barrow 1, however this trait appears to be directly related, to a higher proportion of the Barrow 2 material being derived from unstratified contexts and Bateman's backfill. The distribution of broken pieces does not appear to be age related but it is clear that half of the retouched implements are broken; furthermore it is notable that only 1 distal fragment was recovered. This example was a flake from the Barrow 1 mound (context 1052, small find 5087.3).

Non of the debitage possesses macroscopic traces of edge use wear. In contrast 7 of the 10 retouched pieces appear to have been used. These comprise all 3 scrapers, both of the microliths; the edge retouched blade and the retouched point. Traces of, burning are evident on 8 pieces (small finds 5076, 5090.2, 5134.2, 72055, 72097, 72536, 72581, 72583). All burnt pieces are debitage (flakes, chunks & chippings) and the degree of burning is variable. Three burnt pieces come from Barrow 2 (2 unstratified, 1 subsoil) and 3 from Barrow 1. The burnt material from Barrow 1 comes from the area of Cist 1055. Traces of patina are present on 55 pieces. Thirty-nine are from the Barrow 1 area; the Barrow 2 area produced 13 examples. Three patinated pieces came from other areas.

In most instances the patination is dense and light grey to white in colour. The trait does not appear to have any spatial or temporal, relationships. Contexts associated with burials contain a mixture of both patinated and unpatinated material.

Raw Material:

Raw material appears to have been scarce since both flint and chert has been utilised.

Twenty-two pieces of chert have been struck. The chert is coarse grained and tends to be olive black (Munsell 5Y 2/1) in colour. Chert occurs locally in the Carboniferous Limestone. The chert appears to be evenly distributed, throughout all contexts and occurs in both barrows. The chert has not been employed in the production of retouched implements and no period specific utilisation can be discerned. However there is a slight tendency for chert to occur in Barrow 1, phase 2 and Barrow 2, phase 4.

Of the seventy eight pieces of struck flint, 61 are of a medium grained olive grey (Munsell 5Y 4/1) coloured raw material that is characteristic of that obtainable from till deposits in the Yorkshire and Lincolnshire Wolds. The remaining 17 pieces are of a markedly coarser granularity. This material appears to be slightly more prevalent in early Bronze Age phases.

Lithic Reduction Technology:

With the exception of an unclassifiable, possible core, fragment (small find 5072.2, context 1050) from the Barrow 1 fissure (area 12) no other cores or core rejuvenation flakes were recovered. The quality of knapping is generally low with only 10 of the pieces exhibiting traces of platform preparation. The majority of the flint and chert has been knapped via the application of hard hammers. Over half of the struck material comes from tertiary stages of lithic reduction.

Barrow 1 produced 10 tertiary pieces and Barrow 2 produced 42. The distribution of tertiary debitage appears to slightly favour Neolithic and Beaker contexts, i.e. subsoil's and burials. It is notable that Barrow 1 subsoil (context 1053, small find 5145) produced 2 tertiary spalls that refit. This demonstrates that a limited degree of knapping / tool trimming had taken place prior to the construction of the Barrow. The debitage has a tendency to be small and squat, most pieces having an average length of c11-16mm. The average breadth has a bi-modal distribution with pieces falling into either the 11-12mm or 16-18mm range.

The Scrapers:

The scraper assemblage comprises 1 side and 2 side and end (1 broken) varieties. All three examples have been manufactured on flakes and come from Barrow 1. Two come from the mound and 1 from the cist. The examples exhibit a dense white to grey patina and would appear to have been used. The flaking is fine, convex and scalar, with primary flake edge angles ranging from 55°, 60° and 65°. It is uncertain what substance the scrapers were used on, although skins and plant fibres are the most probable.

The Arrowheads:

Two arrowheads were recovered, 1 leaf type and 1 barbed and tanged. Both examples are poor and have been manufactured on a markedly coarse grained chalcedonic flint, that can almost be classed as chert. The arrowheads come from the tumble (context 1097) of the Barrow 1 enclosure wall. They are both damaged and are clearly residual.

The leaf arrowhead (small find 72835) is a very poor basal fragment with minimal flaking. The barbed and tanged example (small find 72827) is technically only a tanged variety since it does not possess barbs. The type is notable for possessing 4 minute, crude serrations down its lateral margins. The tang has been broken but the tip is intact. It cannot be determined whether the projectile has

been fired. The type is not listed as a notable form in Green's (1980) corpus. Serrated pieces are rare, however some Scottish barb and tanged arrowheads have serrated edges. In most instances the serration of the Scottish examples is far finer than on the Longstone piece. One of the closest parallels is a specimen in the collections of the National Museum of Scotland at Edinburgh. The piece comes from Urquhart near Elgin (Evans 1897, 387, fig 325) in Moray. Notably, this piece was manufactured on chalcedonic flint and was found with un-serrated examples. The Longstone, tanged arrowhead (small find 72827) has been manufactured on a type of flint consistent with material found in the Yorkshire and Lincolnshire Wolds but the precise source of the Longstone flint is not certain. Similar edge serrations are present on other local prehistoric implements. The Bateman collection contains a serrated edge dagger (Howarth 1899, 39: J.93-154 [I.211]) c.11cm long and manufactured on white flint. The piece came from Nether Low, Chelmorton in Derbyshire.

The Microliths:

Barrow 1 contained 2 microliths; a small flake edge blunted point (small find 5103) and an obliquely blunted point (small find 72734) made on a bladelet and possessing ancillary retouch. These came respectively from, the fill of Cist 1055 and subsoil. Both have been manufactured on till flint.

Chronology:

Despite the small size of the assemblage, it does appear to contain a broad variety of, chronologically discreet items.

Based primarily on the Barrow 1 assemblage, the lithic component includes pieces from at least 4 separate archaeological phases. These phases are: -

- 1) Middle to Later Mesolithic
- 2) Early to Middle Neolithic
- 3) Beaker (Later Neolithic / Early Bronze Age)
- 4) Early Bronze Age

The most chronologically diagnostic pieces in the assemblage are the microliths and arrowheads. The microliths are of typological forms that fall within the broad blade - narrow blade division and as such they probably date from the middle of the Mesolithic. The leaf arrowhead (small find 72835) fragment is indicative of an early to middle Neolithic date. Such pieces are frequently found in assemblages association with Peterborough ware. The tanged arrowhead (small find 72827) is typically a Beaker form. Small scraper assemblages cannot be dated with any great degree of accuracy, however on stylistic and metrical grounds the Longstone examples are similar to ones most frequently found in early Bronze Age and Beaker assemblages. The same date would encompass the remaining retouched component. The small size and lack of clear preparation and flake scars on the debitage is suggestive of an early Bronze Age date, although one or two of the flakes and blades appear to be Neolithic. The inclusion of chert in the assemblage may be significant; Hart (1984, 35) has demonstrated that local chert appears to have been exploited to a lesser degree in the Neolithic than in the later Mesolithic and early Bronze Age.

In all instances the Mesolithic material can be considered residual when incorporated into the Barrows. It is probable that the majority of the assemblage is Beaker and early Bronze Age. A discrete middle to later Neolithic pre-barrow phase may be present in the sub-soil with a minor residual mid Mesolithic background scattering. The presence of possible later Neolithic flintworking in Barrow 1, sub-soil deposits gives a pre-cairn terminus ante quem of later Neolithic.

Discussion:

The mix of material is a fairly close match to the assemblage from the nearby barrow at Wigber Low (Phillips, 1983: 61-66). The shortage of distal flake and blade fragments indicates that although flint knapping was being conducted in pre-barrow phases, the degree of knapping was limited. The most significant elements of the lithic assemblage are the arrowheads and microliths. The Longstone, tanged arrowhead (small find 72827) has been manufactured on a flint that can be found in the Yorkshire and Lincolnshire Wolds but the source of the raw material is not certain and the possibility of a long distance import cannot be ruled out. However one would normally expect imported pieces to be of a higher quality. It should be noted that projectile points are often found in their area of usage. The leaf type (small find 72835) may have been lost prior to the Barrows construction and the tanged (small find 72827) example may have been lost during the construction of Barrow 1.

The small size of the Barrow 2 assemblage and the lack of retouched implements may be related to the prior removal of flints by Bateman. Bateman's backfill contained 4 pieces of debitage, so it must be considered probable that Bateman left debitage but retained retouched tools. This may require further analysis of the Bateman Collection and Archive in the Sheffield City Museum.

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TABLE 1. Longstone Edge, Barrows, North Derbyshire; Composition of the Flint Assemblage:

Flint ID	Total	Broken	Edge -Use	Weight in gms	Barrow & Feature Type												U/S						
					Barrow Mound		Barrow Subsoil		Barrow Quarry -Pit		Barrow 1 Stone Mound & Cairn		Barrow 1 Enclosure- Wall Excarnation- Deposit		Barrow 1 Cist Skeletons, Food Vessel Burial Mound Burials (MB)				Disturbed Topsoil / Backfill Barrow 1 Fissure (F) Barrow 2 Grave (G)				
DEBITAGE					B1	B2	B1	B2	B1	B2	B1	Cairn	B1	Exc	Cist	Sk	FV	MB	B1	F	B2	G	?
Cores	1	1		2.3																1			
Chunks	9	NA		58.6	1	1	1						1		1	1			1		1		1
Chipping's	12	NA		2.8	1	1	4			1					1	2					1		1
Spalls	3	NA		0.3		1	2																
Flakes	60	20		36	9	4	6	3		1	3	1	1	2	10	5		2	1	3	5	1	3
Blades & Bladelets	5	2		1.4	1*	1	1									1							1
RETOUCHED																							
Edge Retouched Blades	1	1	1	1.5	1																		
Piercers / Points (Edge Ret)	1	NA	1	3.4			1																
Spurs	1	1		1.7														1					
Scrapers	3	1	3	4.8	2										1								
Arrowheads - Leaf	1	1		2.7									1										
Arrowheads - Barb & Tang	1	1		2.1									1										
Microliths	2	NA	2	1.9			1								1								
Total = 100		28	7	119.5	15	8	16	3		2	3	1	4	2	14	8	1	3	2	4	7	1	6

Natural = 24 pieces (31.3g).

*= 1 from uncertain contextual integrity.

B1 = Barrow 1.

B2 = Barrow 2.