

8. LITHIC ASSEMBLAGE

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8.1 Introduction and methodology

A total of 16 pieces of chipped stone were recovered during the works undertaken at Grantown Road. The entire collection was macroscopically examined, and a general characterisation of the material was undertaken. A complete catalogue of the material is given in the associated record. A selection of artefacts is illustrated (Illus 20).

8.2 The assemblage

The assemblage consists of six pieces of flint and ten pieces of quartz (see Table 3). All are of local derivation. The flint ranges in colour from pale grey to red and is typical of material found along the eastern Scottish seaboard. The assemblage is relatively fresh in appearance with little in the way of patination or heat damage. Where present, the cortex has a rolled and water-worn appearance suggesting that it was obtained from the nearby shoreline or from a river. Two modified artefacts were recovered in the form of a chisel arrowhead (SF 33) and a notch and snap microburin (SF RT 7).

The chisel arrowhead (SF 33) from Pit [1127] was fashioned on a large blade or flake blank. The arrowhead had a denticulated cutting edge along its distal end. Semi-invasive, bifacial retouch was applied along the right lateral edge, with semi-abrupt regular retouch being present along the ventral left

lateral edge. The retouch was applied to aid hafting as was the partial thinning of the proximal end, which removed the bulb of percussion. The denticulation applied to the cutting edge of the piece is rare on Scottish arrowheads of this type. It is possible that the artefact was re-purposed as another tool such as a sickle blade. Chisel arrowheads are part of a group often referred to as *petit tranchet* derivative points (Clark 1934). Types such as (SF 33) are considered to be Middle Neolithic in date (Ballin 2017: 23), which agrees with the radiocarbon date from hazelnut shell (SUERC-94886) returned for this feature of between 3091 and 2922 cal BC at 2-sigma.

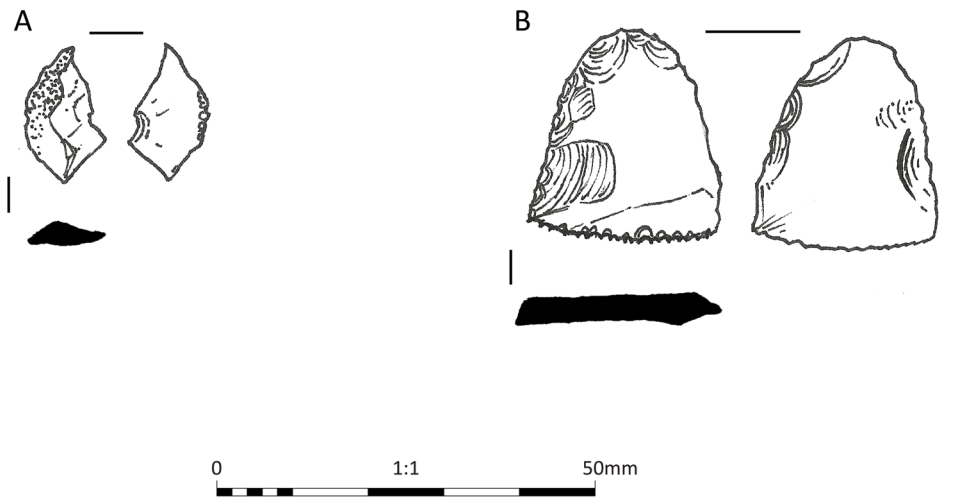
The notch and snap artefact from Pit [1129] is of Late Mesolithic date. Such artefacts are considered waste products from the production of geometric narrow blade microliths. The pit from which the microlith was recovered was radiocarbon dated to the Early Neolithic and the microlith may be redeposited.

8.3 Distribution and discussion

A similar small lithic assemblage was recovered from earlier works at Grantown Road undertaken between 2002 and 2013 (Engl 2016). This produced locally derived lithic material of Late Neolithic/ Early Bronze Age date from a series of stratified pit deposits. The current works have produced earlier lithic material dating to the Later Mesolithic and Middle Neolithic which corresponds broadly with the earliest features on site, though the solitary Later Mesolithic artefact is likely to represent redeposited material.

Table 3 Lithic assemblage

Type	Flint	Quartz	Total
Flake	2	0	2
Blade	1	0	1
Chip	1	0	1
Shatter	0	10	10
Microburin (notch & snap)	1	0	1
Chisel arrowhead	1	0	1
Total	6	10	16



Illus 20 Lithics: (A) notch and snap microburin (SF RT 7), Context (1130); (B) chisel arrowhead (SF 33), Context (1128)