

## **APPENDIX 11: ASSESSMENT OF ANIMAL BONE**

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### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 Animal bones were recovered from hand excavation and from bulk samples taken on site.
- 1.2 The study of the material was carried out to study the following fieldwork event aims:
- *Recovering palaeo-environmental remains from ditches and other features;*
  - *Provide information on Iron Age land use, environment and economy;*

### **2. Methodology**

- 2.1 Animal bones were recovered by hand-collection on site and through wet-sieving bulk samples taken in the field. All hand-collected animal bones were washed and air-dried, then bagged and labelled as context groups. Bulk samples were washed using a modified Siraf tank fitted with 1.0mm and 0.25mm flexible nylon mesh to retain the residue and flot fractions respectively. These fractions were visually sorted for floral and faunal remains, and labelled as individual sample groups. Identifications of species were made using the MoLSS Environmental Archaeology Section reference collection.
- 2.2 All contexts containing faunal remains were analysed and recorded onto the MoLAS Oracle animal bone database, subsequently transferred to the RLE Datasets. No sub-sampling of contexts was carried out.

### **3. Quantification**

- 3.1 A total of 0.74kg, approximately 80 fragments, of animal bones were hand recovered from five contexts, and an additional 0.09kg, or 154 fragments, were wet-sieved from five soil samples. Within the hand collected assemblage, 47 fragments were identifiable to species and body part. These included seven bones with potential for study of age-at-death, and two showing evidence of butchery. No measurable or worked bones were recovered. Nine fragments within the sieved assemblage could be identified to species and body part. The tables below show this information by context, and show overall preservation and fragmentation for each context.
- 3.2 The second table shows the percentage of identifiable fragments represented by all of the specified species groups. All contexts are recorded in the table, including environmental samples. It is evident that cattle and sheep/goat represent the major proportion of identifiable fragments with only a few fragments of pig present. Other species include amphibians and small mammal(s).

### **4. Provenance**

- 4.1 Most of the bones were moderately well preserved, while fragmentation levels were generally moderate to high. Just two out of the 10 hand-collected and wet-sieved context assemblages contained material in good condition, while eight assemblages were in moderate condition. The latter condition describes bones with some surface abrasion. It can certainly be suggested that the majority of this material had been disturbed following deposition. Indeed, a high proportion of these bones are likely to represent disturbance, with two out of the 10 hand-collected and wet-sieved context assemblages containing material in good condition, and eight assemblages in moderate condition. The latter condition describes bones with some surface abrasion. Three assemblages provided average fragment sizes of greater than 75mm, while the remaining seven collections mainly contained smaller fragments. These results suggest that there may well have been some disturbance of the faunal material after deposition, although adverse soil conditions could also be cited as causatory agents. There was no evidence of burning or gnawing.
- 4.2 The material derives from the Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age (4 fragments), Early Iron Age (80 fragments), Mid Iron Age to Roman (18 fragments) and Saxon (131 fragments) periods.
- 4.3 The prehistoric and ?Roman material all derived from pits; the Anglo-Saxon material was all associated with human burials.

## **5. Conservation**

- 5.1 No conservation work is necessary on the animal bones. It is recommended that all material be retained for the next stage of the analysis and for any future comparative work.

## **6. Comparative material**

- 6.1 The Iron Age to Roman material could be usefully compared with that from other sites on the CTRL from either side of the Medway. The Anglo-Saxon material should be compared to that from Saltwood and other contemporary sites on the CTRL and also the rather sparse Saxon London burial assemblages from the Royal Opera House and Bull Wharf.

## **7. Potential for further work**

- 7.1 Post-excavation study of this material has potential to directly address Fieldwork Event Aims 5 and 6.
- *Recovering palaeo-environmental remains from ditches and other features;*
  - *Provide information on Iron Age land use, environment and economy.*
- 7.2 Detailed recording of the material in terms of species, skeletal element, modification and age-at-death will mainly provide a degree of insight into the nature of local meat diet and animal exploitation, together with very limited data on the local habitat.

## 8. Bibliography

None

*Table 21: Assessment of Animal Bone – quantity of identifiable bones, age, measurements and butchery*

<b>Context</b>	<b>S.No</b>	<b>N. iden.</b>	<b>N. Ageable</b>	<b>N. Butch.</b>
41	1	4	0	0
102	0	1	1	0
103	0	5	1	0
105	0	1	0	0
305	0	0	0	0
315	22	0	0	0
323	24	0	0	0
342	0	40	5	2
342	11	5	0	0
378	23	0	0	0

S.No - sample number.

N - approximate number of bones.

Iden - bones identifiable to species/species group

