

Bone

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A very small assemblage of animal bone was recovered during excavations at Willington, comprising 97 fragments of bone from archaeological contexts; the great majority were calcined. Unburnt bone is rare, due to the high pH of the substrate (5.9 where measured). An additional 86 fragments of unburnt bone were recovered from a single pit (C1949 fill 1203). These were all cattle bones, and probably represent an animal burial. The relative good condition of these indicates a recent deposition, and they are not considered to be of archaeological significance.

All hand recovered bone, and those fragments recovered from environmental sample processing have been scanned and, where possible, assigned to species. The animal bone is of variable but generally poor and fragmented condition. An assessment of the material was carried out in 2000, which concluded that little further work was possible. Two fragments from adjacent to Burnt Mound II, one showing cut marks and another with scrapes of uncertain provenance, have been illustrated as they are possible clues to function.

The largest quantity of bone was recovered from features of Middle Neolithic date. There is a bias towards survival of bone within burnt features, presumably because of preservational factors. Most of the bone fragments are mammalian but it was not possible to identify them with more precision (Table 1). From fragmentary tooth enamel it was determined that Ox was present, along with one possible sheep pelvis fragment within Group 803. The evidence is tentative but does suggest the keeping of domestic mammals.

Burnt Mound II is estimated to have been in use between 1290 and 1000 cal BC (95% confidence; See Scientific Dating Report). Larger pieces of unburnt bone were recovered from the palaeochannels in Zone 8 and adjacent to the Burnt Mound II. Ox and cattle-size bones were identified adjacent to Burnt Mound II, whilst fragments of horse, ox and pig are present in other palaeochannels. These included an incomplete horse femur, which had numerous fine parallel cut marks on the third trochanter, which was recovered from channel fills adjacent to Burnt Mound II.

Phase	Ox	Horse	Sheep?	Pig	cattle-size	Unident.	Total
Neolithic	20		1		10	50	81
LateNeo/EBA	1				2		3
Bronze Age	2				1		3
Roman		1					1
?Rom/Med				1			1
unphased	1				3	4	8
Total	24	1	1	1	16	54	97

Table 1: Fragment numbers of identified species.

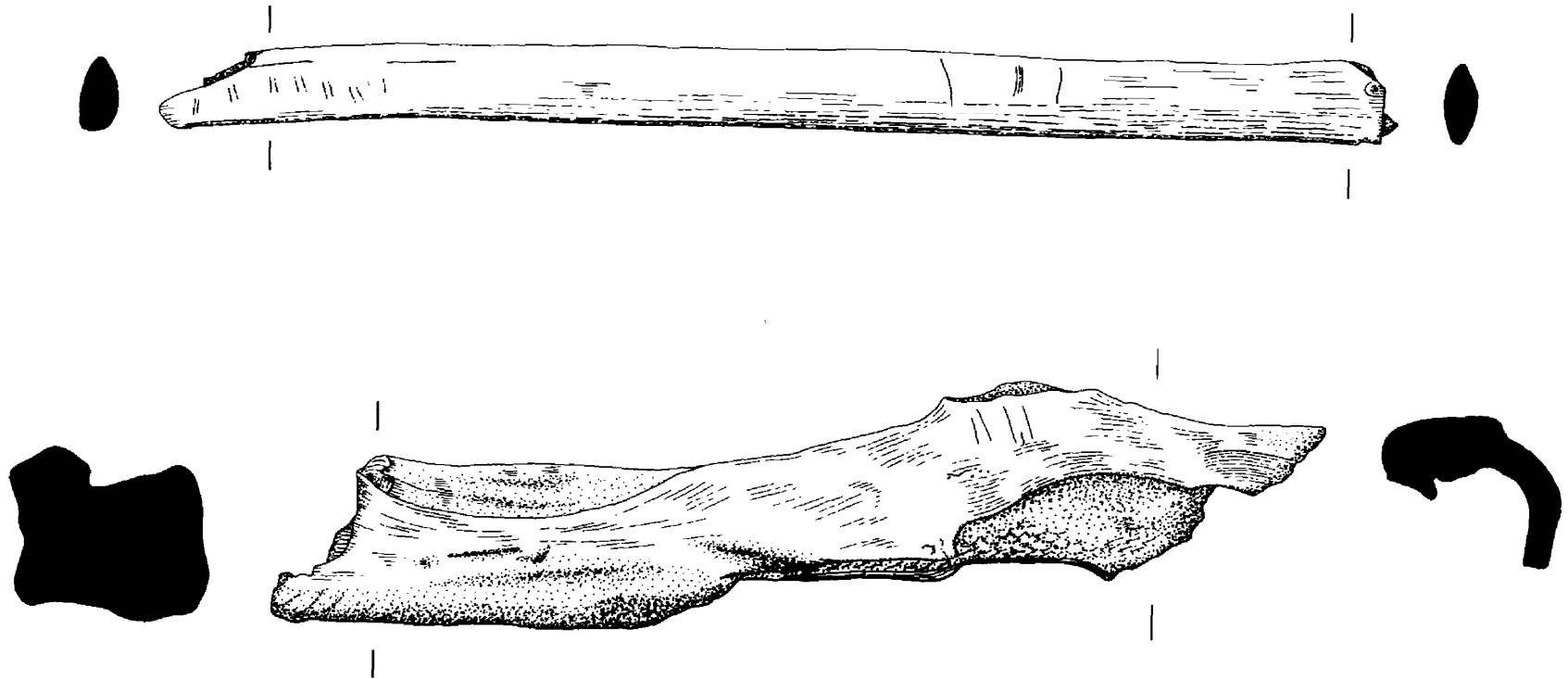


Fig. 1: Possible butchery marks on Horse/Ox rib top and Horse femur bottom (Femur 260mm)

Human bone

Simon Chapman

One fragment of adult human femur was recovered from the interface between channels J and M to the east of Burnt Mound II. The fragment may have derived from the infilling of either channel.

Group	Con	Frag.	Species	Bone	Notes
4566	4425	1	Human	femur, distal , frag	r, Bicond width 82.3mm - male
					Fused distal epiph = 23<yrs

Table 2: Human bone.