

Introduction and methodology

All finds recovered on site during the excavation were retained, cleaned and marked where appropriate. They were then quantified according to material type within each context and the assemblage was scanned to extract information regarding the range, nature and date of artefacts represented. The excavation produced a large quantity of iron working slag and a small group of other finds including two sherds of prehistoric pottery, a flint flake, a medieval potsherd and a spindle whorl. The finds are summarised in Table 1, below.

| Context | Context Description | Slag | | Iron ore | | Worked flint | | Fired clay | | Prehistoric pottery | | Medieval pottery | |
|---------|--------------------------------|------|--------|----------|------|--------------|----|------------|----|---------------------|----|------------------|----|
| | | No. | Wt | No. | Wt | No. | Wt | No. | Wt | No. | Wt | No. | Wt |
| 2 | Colluvium | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | 9 |
| 4 | Spread of iron smelting debris | 33 | 45607 | 7 | 1013 | | | 1 | 9 | | | | |
| 7 | Buried soil | | | | | 1 | 1 | | | 1 | 9 | | |
| 17 | Sample no. 23 | 12 | 32365 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 48 | Tertiary fill of pit [27] | 5 | 3487 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 50 | Sample no. 13 | 10 | 4019 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 68 | Fill of pit [13] | | | | | | | | | 1 | 8 | | |
| 74 | Upper fill of furnace [20] | 7 | 17856 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 77 | Fill of furnace [14] | 1 | 13000 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Total | | 68 | 116334 | 7 | 1013 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 9 | 2 | 17 | 1 | 9 |

Table 1: Summary of finds by context (weights in grams)

Slag and iron ore by Tim Young

See separate slag report.

Worked flint

A single prehistoric flint flake (1g) was recovered from context 7, buried soil. This is an incomplete tertiary flake of mottled light and mid-grey flint. The flint is not diagnostic of a particular period, but is most likely to be of later Neolithic or Early Bronze Age date.

Fired clay

Context 4, spread of iron smelting debris, produced a spindle whorl which has been fashioned from a piece of broken pottery. The spindle whorl is circular and very slightly convex with a central hole which has been drilled from both sides. It has an external diameter of 41mm and an internal

diameter of 8mm. The fabric is an oxidised light slightly orangey-brown throughout and contains common very small white inclusions. This has the appearance of South Gaulish samian ware which has entirely lost slip entirely. Although this object was found in association with Anglo-Saxon iron smelting debris, the reworking of pottery sherds into spindle whorls is a more usual feature of the Roman period, Anglo-Saxon spindle whorls commonly being made from worked bone, antler, or cast in lead. The whorl is, however, in good condition, and it seems unlikely that it is residual. Perhaps it represents the opportunistic reuse of a piece of Roman pottery.

Prehistoric pottery

Two sherds (17g) of prehistoric pottery were recovered during the excavation, one from context 7, buried soil, and the other from context 68, fill of pit [13]. The two body sherds are made from a similar fabric and may have formed part of the same vessel, although they do not conjoin. The fabric contains abundant fine mica, sparse sub-rounded iron ore up to 3mm and sparse sub-angular quartz up to 2mm. Both sherds are highly abraded, with oxidised orange-brown external surfaces and reduced dark grey-brown cores and internal surfaces. There are traces of a residue on the internal surface of the sherd from context 68. The sherds are Middle or Late Bronze Age in date.

Medieval pottery

A single sherd of medieval pottery (9g) was recovered from context 2, colluvium. This is a body sherd from an Upper Greensand-Derived coarse ware cooking jar. This type of pottery was made for a long period of time with little variation in fabric, and as there is nothing diagnostic about this sherd it could date from anywhere between the late 10th century and c. 1400.