

## **Assessment of finds from Willoughby Road, Boston (WRBO 04)**

### ***Alan Vince***

A single collection of iron slag from archaeological fieldwork carried out at Willoughby Road, Boston, by Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln) Ltd was submitted for identification and assessment.

### Description

#### **Iron**

The finds consist of four fragments of slag from context 206. The pieces are unwashed and have soil matrix adhering.

### Assessment

The slag appears to be smithing slag and includes one fragment which may be a “hearth bottom”, the term used for the pool of slag which accumulates in the forge below the working area upon which the air from the bellows plays. This interpretation is testable by removal of the adhering soil and testing it for glass slag bubbles and hammerscale, assuming that such tests have not been carried out on associated soil samples already. The slag should then be xrayed, to ensure that no artefacts have been incorporated into the slag and as a guide to the texture of the slag, from which details of the processes involved might be determinable.

If the slag comes from a well-stratified and datable deposit then it would be worthwhile submitting the slag, xrays and results of the hammerscale/glass spheres to a specialist on ancient iron-working for study.

The material is stratified and therefore should be retained for study. It is probably stable but may require a conservation assessment to recommend storage conditions, packaging and to assess the need for immediate treatment.