

Evaluation of possible metallurgical residues from Finmere (FFF 00.151)

Material

1039	MIA	gully 1040 rh(b1)
2042	BA?	ringditch 2043
2028	MIA	ringditch 2029
1130/1133	MIA	ditch c2

Comments

The four samples are all of material which is very similar in appearance. The slags are pale grey or white, vitreous, with abundant small vesicles and inclusions of rock fragments. The rock fragments are dominantly of chert or flint and range up to about 2cm. This is a material which has been heated to sufficient temperature for the finer-grained components to fuse, without noticeable degradation of the coarser fraction. In my opinion it is likely that this is a lime-rich material with a low softening point (as might be expected with the clays from this part of England), and with the abundant vesicles produced by carbon dioxide driven off the heated lime particles. Several of the pieces show curved re-entrant surfaces, suggesting that they may be a form of daub. There is no indication (without chemical analysis) of metal-enrichment. It seems likely, therefore, that they represent some form of overheated daub rather than a metallurgical residue. Such material might be structural, but it is equally possible that it derives from the superstructure of an oven or hearth.