

Examination of Slag from Stanwell, Heathrow Airport

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Five samples of slag (AM 817442-6) were examined. AM 817442, 817444 and 817445 were samples of fuel ash slag which is formed by a high temperature reaction between fuel ash and silicon rich materials such as clay or sand. It is often associated with metalworking hearths but can be produced in any fire which reaches a sufficiently high temperature. AM 817443 included a small piece of iron (probably smithing) slag and some fragments of hearth lining and AM 817446 consisted of more pieces hearth lining and a fragmentary iron object. The hearth lining could have been from either an iron smithing hearth or iron smelting furnace.

Small quantities of iron smithing slag are found on almost all iron age or later settlement sites. The presence of a single piece of slag and a few fragments of hearth lining does not, therefore, provide sufficient evidence for any comment on metalworking activity on or near the site to be made.