



APPENDIX 13-4

**EXCAVATIONS DATABASE
ENTRIES**

EXCAVATIONS DATABASE ENTRIES

1996:326 - LEABEG, CASTLEARMSTRONG, CORNAFURRISH and CORRAHBEG, Offaly

County: Offaly

Site name: LEABEG, CASTLEARMSTRONG, CORNAFURRISH and CORRAHBEG

Sites and Monuments Record No.: N/A

Licence number: 96E0150

Author: Nora Bermingham, Irish Archaeological Wetland Unit, Department of Archaeology, University College Dublin

Site type: Road - class 1 togher

Period/Dating: Iron Age (800 BC-AD 339)

ITM: E 618982m, N 728762m

In the summer of 1993 the IAWU carried out a survey of the Lemanaghan group of bogs located to the north-east of Fermoy, Co. Offaly. Bord na Mona have been extracting peat from this group of bogs in different stages since the 1950s. In Castletown Bog, situated in the eastern part of Lemanaghan, a single-plank walkway was identified close to the field surface where Bord na Mona had cut drains through the site at regular intervals, causing extensive surface damage to the site. The site was traced for 384m and was oriented north/north-northeast/south/south-south-west. A dendrochronological sample yielded a date of AD 665±9 (Q9253).

As the IAWU were returning to the Lemanaghan area in 1996, the site was targeted for further investigation. Two short cuttings were opened along the length of the togher, which had been reduced in length by 47m between August 1993 and July 1996. The emphasis of this short excavation was on the recovery of a more extensive structural record and the retrieval of further dating samples.

In Cutting 1 (9m x 4m) the superstructure was composed of two longitudinally laid planks. These timbers were radially and tangentially split oak planks and had minimum lengths of 3m and 3.5m. The surviving end of one of the planks sat directly on a single transverse, tangentially split oak plank, 1.09m long. At each end of the cutting a yew roundwood, transversely laid, was located. These measured between 2.9m and 3.3m in length. Elsewhere in the cutting the composition of the substructure was different owing to the presence of a shallow pool. A series of short roundwoods and split timbers had been closely set and retained by pegs on slightly higher and drier ground just to one edge of the pool. These formed a small platform over which the upper timber was placed. The pool was filled in with strips of oak bark and large amounts of oak wood-chips. The pegs ranged in length from 0.8m to 1.4m.

An oak plank with a surviving length of 4.4m formed the superstructure of the site in Cutting 2. This timber was c. 0.3m wide and 0.1m thick. An empty mortice survived close to the intact end of the plank. The substructure at this part of the site was very simple and consisted of two transverse oak planks, located towards either end of the upper timber, and occasional wood-chips. Two longitudinal roundwoods with a peg on one side were also uncovered, but it could not be determined whether they were superstructural or substructural elements.

Further variation in site construction was recorded at fifteen other locations along the line of the site. The record was restricted to what was visible either on the field surface or in the drain face. Single longitudinal planks were the most common form of superstructure. There was one instance of two longitudinal planks lying parallel to one another. At three sightings a series of parallel roundwoods, ranging in number from two to seven, formed the superstructure. Substructural elements, which were not visible to the same extent as the upper elements, were largely transverse roundwoods.

Two further dendrochronological dates were returned for the site: AD 667±9 (Q9280) and AD 684±9 (Q9279). The three dates from the site can be considered to be contemporary and demonstrate that the site was of single-phase construction.

This mid-seventh-century togher is still in the process of being destroyed. The site requires protection and/or more extensive investigation.

1996:327 - LEMANAGHAN, Offaly

County: Offaly

Site name: LEMANAGHAN

Sites and Monuments Record No.: N/A

Licence number: 96E0151

Author: Ellen O'Carroll, Irish Archaeological Wetland Unit, University College Dublin

Site type: Road - class 1 togher

Period/Dating: Multi-period

ITM: E 617927m, N 726455m

A short excavation was carried out on a multiphase togher in Bord na Mona's Derrynagun bog, Co. Offaly, in July 1996. Extensive milling and drainage in that bog had exposed a substantial togher constructed from gravel, large flagstones, split timbers, roundwood and brushwood. The excavation was carried out to establish a chronological framework for the site and to understand the nature and the sequence of construction; its relationship to an ecclesiastical settlement on a nearby dryland island at Lemanaghan was also addressed.

The togher ran for 750m from the island at Lemanaghan across the bog. A cutting 10m wide and 2m long was established over part of the site in which all known construction layers were present. The excavation revealed five phases of construction. The earliest phase was a longitudinal plank walkway of three split oak planks, measuring 1m wide and 0.52m deep. This phase was dendrochronologically dated to AD 653 ± 9 (Q9281).

Phase 2 consisted of a layer of redeposited boulder clay directly on top of the planks. It was 3.4m wide and measured 0.4m at its deepest point. The boulder clay layer was very compact and was composed of coarse sand, pebbles and round stones. It had a cobbled surface, with larger cobbles flanking the edges to form a kerb. Outwashes of gravel and clay into the peat were also associated with this phase.

Phase 3 was constructed of three layers of wood forming a substructure and a superstructure. The substructure was of brushwood and roundwoods. This was overlain by a superstructure of horizontally laid split oak planks, with large amounts of brushwood and a small amount of roundwood intertwined over and under them. Two heavy roundwoods and an associated double row of posts defined the edges. The total width of this structure was 4.2m and the depth varied from 0.25m to 0.3m. This phase has been dendrochronologically dated to AD 1158 ± 9 (Q9282).

Directly above Phase 3 was a layer of Sphagnum peat up to 0.17m in depth. The development of this peat may indicate the abandonment of the site for a period of time, although heather noted in the peat indicates that the surface of the site might have been relatively dry. Phase 4, which lay on top of this, consisted of another layer of redeposited boulder clay. It was up to 2.6m wide and 0.12m deep. It consisted of sticky clay, coarse sand, pebbles, stones and some very degraded brushwood.

The final phase of construction, Phase 5, consisted of a layer of large, flat sandstone flags up to 2.16m wide and 0.2m deep.

This togher was in use for over 600 years, as indicated by the dendrochronological dates. The first phase of construction, the plank walkway, is broadly contemporary with the establishment of the monastery by St Manchan on the island in AD 645. The earliest phase of the togher may have been associated with the monastic establishment, but as the site developed and expanded it probably became part of a network of routeways across the large expanses of bog in the midlands.

Analysis of the peat, wood and boulder clay is currently being undertaken and will be published in the full excavation report.

1997:App3 - IRISH ARCHAEOLOGICAL WETLAND UNIT FIELDWORK 1997—COUNTIES OFFALY, WESTMEATH AND MAYO, Offaly

County: Offaly

Site name: IRISH ARCHAEOLOGICAL WETLAND UNIT FIELDWORK 1997—COUNTIES OFFALY, WESTMEATH AND MAYO

Sites and Monuments Record No.: N/A

Licence number: —

Author: Conor McDermott, Nóra Bermingham, Ellen O'Carroll and Jane Whitaker, Irish Archaeological Wetland Unit, Department of Archaeology, UCD

Site type: Excavations - miscellaneous

Period/Dating: Multi-period

ITM: E 619211m, N 720627m

During the summer of 1997 the IAWU continued its surveys of Bord na Móna-owned bogs in the midlands. Surveys of Tumbeagh Bog, Lemanaghan Works, Co. Offaly, and Bellair Works in counties Offaly and Westmeath were completed, and a survey of Boora Works, Co. Offaly, was started. All of the area covered is owned by Bord na Móna (BnM). Licensed excavations were carried out on a pitfall trap containing red deer remains at Coolcarta East, Co. Galway, and a post row in blanket peat at Drumcullaun, Co. Clare (Excavations 1997, Nos 20 and 196 respectively). An investigation was carried out on a corduroy road at Sharragh, Co. Tipperary (No. 558, Excavations 1997), as well as an assessment of a disturbed crannóg at Frenchgrove, Co. Mayo (see below).

In each bog surveyed a standard IAWU survey strategy was used. BnM bogs have parallel drains set approx. 15m apart and every second drain is walked giving a survey interval of approx. 30m. On the first walk sites are identified and their locations marked. These are then revisited to carry out recording, sampling and the instrument survey. The process is completed rapidly as the bogs are in production, which can reduce the surface area by up to 0.2m per year.

The completed surveys have now identified over 715 sites in Lemanaghan Works, and 17 sites in Bellair Works, and to date the Boora survey has produced 31 sites. This brings the total number of sites known from bogs in north-west County Offaly to over 910, including a small number known prior to the IAWU surveys.

Tumbeagh Bog, Lemanaghan Works

Lemanaghan Works is situated, for the most part, north of the Clara–Ferbane road in north-west County Offaly (see Offaly 6" sheets 7 and 15). It covers approximately 1300ha, which forms part of a larger raised bog complex in the area. The survey of Lemanaghan Works began in 1993 and was completed in 1997 with the survey of Tumbeagh Bog. This bog produced 96 new archaeological sites.

The majority of sites occur in two bands with a number of outliers. The first is located at the northern end of the bog close to the road dividing Tumbeagh from Kilnagarnagh Bog. Here there are a large number of sightings distributed across the bog in a north-east/south-west direction. Most of these contain planks and there are a small number of distinct sites which can be traced for some distance across the bog. A number of dendrochronological dates have been obtained, all of which fall between 1050 BC and 900 BC.

The second band of sites runs north–south along the south-western side of the bog. The density of sites along this band is low although the density increases towards the south. The sites in this area are also more substantial and some can be traced across a number of drains. Trackways and deposits of worked wood were identified, and a perforated wooden shaft was recovered. A sample of one of the sites has been sent for radiocarbon dating.

1998:553 - LEMANAGHAN, Offaly

County: Offaly

Site name: LEMANAGHAN

Sites and Monuments Record No.: N/A

Licence number: 98E0464

Author: Conor McDermott, Irish Archaeological Wetland Unit, Department of Archaeology, University College Dublin

Site type: Road - class 1 togher

Period/Dating: Medieval (AD 400-AD 1600)

ITM: E 616588m, N 728129m

An excavation was carried out as part of an assessment and mitigation project in Bord na Móna's Lemanaghan Bog, Boora Works, Co. Offaly. The work was carried out between 13 October and 5 November 1998 and concentrated on a single-plank walkway and three lesser structures.

The plank walkway was first identified in 1993 during field survey carried out by the Irish Archaeological Wetland Unit, when it was traced for 454m. During the 1998 assessment the site was traced further and was finally identified as surviving intermittently over a length of 870m. The site runs in a north-south direction, and at its northern end is a zone of 25 other smaller sites to the east and west. The excavations were concentrated along a 360m length at the southernmost end of the site.

The assessment recorded visible traces of the site at fourteen locations, and nine cuttings were established. On excavation the wood in the three most southerly cuttings (Nos 1-3) proved to have been redeposited by heavy machinery. This wood was roughly aligned on the projected line of the site and represented its former presence in the general area. Cuttings 4 and 5 each produced a single in situ peg indicating the line of the site, as well as fragments of disturbed and redeposited wood. Cuttings 6-8 produced the best surviving evidence of the structure of the sites.

In each cutting the site had been truncated by Bord na Móna drains and severely damaged and partly removed by surface milling. The general pattern of construction revealed in these cuttings showed an upper surface of single longitudinal planks laid end to end supported two layers of substructure. None of the upper planks survived intact, but the excavated evidence indicates that they ranged from c. 4m to 6m long, with mortises cut through the ends, through which pegs were driven. Supporting each end of the planks was an upper substructure of single transverse roundwoods or split timbers c. 1.1m long. The lower substructure consisted of pairs of longitudinally laid timbers c. 1.5m long set c. 0.5m apart, supporting each of the upper substructural timbers. The end of each of the superstructure planks was therefore supported by three timbers and additional lesser timbers as well as supporting pegs.

Cutting 9 produced no surviving horizontally laid timbers; however, a number of pegs survived indicating a continuation of the pattern of construction identified in other cuttings.

This form of trackway construction has not been excavated before and samples submitted for dendrochronological dating provided a date of after AD 590.

1998:554 - TUMBEAGH BOG, Tumbleagh, Offaly

County: Offaly

Site name: TUMBEAGH BOG, Tumbleagh

Sites and Monuments Record No.: N/A

Licence number: 98E0452

Author: Nóra Bermingham, Irish Archaeological Wetland Unit, Department of Archaeology, University College Dublin

Site type: Burial

Period/Dating: Undetermined

ITM: E 615569m, N 729425m

In mid-September the Irish Archaeological Wetland Unit was carrying out pre-mitigation surveys for Bord na Móna in the Lemanaghan group of bogs between Clara and Fermoy in County Offaly. During a resurvey of Tumble Bog a member of the field crew, Cathy Moore, discovered what were soon to be confirmed as human remains. The remains lay on the milled surface of the bog and were visible as a small flap of damaged skin with crumbs of body fat. Initial inspection showed that skeletal material was present, and a disturbed tarsal bone was recovered from the field surface.

Consultation between Dúchas, the National Monuments Service, the National Museum of Ireland, Bord na Móna and the Irish Archaeological Wetland Unit culminated in an excavation designed to recover the in situ remains; to search for ex situ human remains and artefacts; to recover any associated archaeological objects and identify any associated features; to undertake a sampling project for palaeoenvironmental purposes, which included samples for beetle, pollen and ash content analysis as well as a peat stratigraphic survey. In addition a metal-detection survey was carried out, as well as film documentation of the excavation process. The excavation was carried out in close cooperation with Dr Máire Delaney of Trinity College Dublin.

The excavation involved trowelling c. 25m of the field surface on which the remains were found; shovelling and raking of the heavy, loose peat cover of the field immediately to the west of the find field; searching by hand a nearby stockpile for redeposited material; and defining the extent of in situ human remains by the digging of regularly placed hand-dug test-pits, followed by isolation of the human remains in a block of peat around which the excavation proceeded.

The raking of the peat on the adjacent western field produced a single, decalcified rib. The stockpile investigation resulted in the discovery of fragments of human skin as well as a lumbar vertebra, a left patella and the unfused proximal epiphyses of the left and right tibiae. The retrieval of these stray bones indicated that the body had already been extensively destroyed and served to verify that it had once been complete. Hand-dug test-pits, excavated at half-metre intervals over an area of 3m x 3.5m, resulted in the definition of the extent of the in situ remains. These consist of either a left leg, tightly flexed, or the lower parts of a right and left leg. Skin and the proximal left tibia were visible once all disturbed peat had been removed from over the remains.

Immediately adjacent to the in situ remains a number of artefacts were recovered, which include a horizontal worked roundwood running in a northerly direction away from the area of the knee, three to four short lengths of worked brushwood, and a wooden withy as well as a stake that appeared to have been driven into the peat adjacent to the knee. In addition the metal-detection survey resulted in the recovery of four tiny strips of non-ferrous metal. Three were found within 1m of the in situ remains, and the fourth c. 5m distant. All were retrieved from disturbed, loose peat. The metal-detection survey also included the adjacent fields and stockpile, but no further finds were recovered.

Once the site was cleared of artefacts a 2m-wide and 1m-deep moat was excavated around a 1m x 1m peat block in which the remains had been isolated. The moat facilitated the lifting of the remains and allowed a pollen monolith to be taken and a peat stratigraphic study of the peat deposits in which the remains lay to be carried out, as well as fulfilling the archaeological requirement of determining the presence or absence of associated archaeological features (absence in this case).

On completion of the moat excavation the 1m x 1m x 1m peat block was reduced in size to facilitate lifting. The reduced-size block, 1.2m x 0.6m x 0.5m, was secured within a wooden frame filled by expanding polyurethane foam, which hardened to form a shell around the block. The secured block was removed to the National Museum and stored in a fridge. The peat block is to be excavated later in the Museum.

1999:735 - CASTLETOWN BOG, Castlearmstrong, Offaly

County: Offaly

Site name: CASTLETOWN BOG, Castlearmstrong

Sites and Monuments Record No.: N/A

Licence number: 99E0288

*Author: Ellen O'Carroll, ADS Ltd.
 Author/Organisation Address: Windsor House, 11 Fairview Strand, Fairview, Dublin 3
 Site type: Road - class 3 togher
 Period/Dating: Undetermined
 ITM: E 617185m, N 728865m*

This site was an area of degraded brushwood. A cutting 1m x 2m was placed over the site, and excavation revealed sixteen dispersed brushwoods with no particular arrangement. Three pieces of brushwood at the northern end of the cutting represented the remains of pegs. One of the pegs had a toolmarked end. The wood represents the substructural remains of a brushwood togher.

1999:736 - CASTLETOWN BOG, Castlearmstrong, Offaly

*County: Offaly
 Site name: CASTLETOWN BOG, Castlearmstrong
 Sites and Monuments Record No.: N/A
 Licence number: 99E0289
 Author: Ellen O'Carroll, ADS Ltd.
 Author/Organisation Address: Windsor House, 11 Fairview Strand, Fairview, Dublin 3
 Site type: Road - class 3 togher
 Period/Dating: Undetermined
 ITM: E 617193m, N 728885m*

This site was the remains of a brushwood togher on the surface of a Bord na Móna production field. Excavation revealed the remains of the upper elements of a linear brushwood togher and a lower layer of pegs. The togher was 1.32m wide, 60mm deep and 15m long. The wood was concentrated at the northern end of the cutting and was two layers deep. The upper layer was composed of some milled and broken longitudinals between 5mm and 47mm in diameter. The longitudinals were laid approximately north-west/south-east. There was also some transverse brushwood placed over and under the longitudinals. The transverses were slightly larger than the longitudinals, up to 50mm in diameter. This upper layer of wood represents the walking surface of the togher.

A second layer of wood was revealed underneath a thin peat layer. This context consisted mainly of pegs between 10mm and 40mm in diameter. The pegs were also clustered at the northern side of the cutting. Toolmarks were recorded and sampled from both of the wood layers. All were simple, multi-faceted, chisel-cut points.

1999:737 - CASTLETOWN BOG, Castlearmstrong, Offaly

*County: Offaly
 Site name: CASTLETOWN BOG, Castlearmstrong
 Sites and Monuments Record No.: N/A
 Licence number: 99E0290
 Author: Ellen O'Carroll, ADS Ltd.
 Author/Organisation Address: Windsor House, 11 Fairview Strand, Fairview, Dublin 3
 Site type: Road - class 2 togher
 Period/Dating: Undetermined
 ITM: E 617169m, N 728838m*

This site was a brushwood togher on the surface of a Bord na Móna production field. Excavation revealed the remains of a linear brushwood togher, two layers deep, secured into the peat with pegs. The togher was 0.95m wide and 0.13m deep. The first layer comprised both longitudinal and irregularly placed brushwood, five to seven rods wide and three rods deep. The togher was best preserved at its eastern end and quite disturbed at its western end from a combination of exposure to the elements and Bord na Móna milling. The brushwood rods ranged in diameter from 20mm to 50mm. There were several pegs noted around the edge of this togher, and some twig infill was recorded between the brushwood. The pegs were set into the peat at angles of 35-50°.

A second layer of wood was excavated underneath the upper brushwood, which consisted of an abundance of twigs, several pegs and some irregularly placed brushwood. These pegs averaged 20mm in diameter. Bark was present on over half the wood excavated. The site was traced along the Bord na Móna field surface for 20m.

1999:738 - CASTLETOWN BOG, Castlearmstrong, Offaly

County: Offaly

Site name: CASTLETOWN BOG, Castlearmstrong

Sites and Monuments Record No.: N/A

Licence number: 99E0291

Author: Ellen O'Carroll, ADS Ltd.

Author/Organisation Address: Windsor House, 11 Fairview Strand, Fairview, Dublin 3

Site type: Road - class 1 togher

Period/Dating: Undetermined

ITM: E 617215m, N 728868m

This site was a 5m-by-5m cutting placed within a zone of brushwood structures. The area previously could not be defined into individual, separate structures. The excavation revealed four wooden structures.

Site A was a small puddle togher, which was excavated in its entirety. It was constructed of layers of small brushwood and twigs to make a compact structure. The peat related to this site is indicative of a very wet environment. This togher was constructed to cover a very wet area of peatland to facilitate safe crossing. No pegs were associated with this togher, which suggests that the structure may not have been intended to be permanent.

Site B was a compactly constructed trackway composed of twigs, brushwood and pegs four layers deep. Bord na Móna milling had destroyed some of the upper elements of this site. The trackway was 0.16m deep and 32m long, and its maximum width was 0.9m. The site curved around an orange sphagnum area of *Sphagnum cuspidatum* peat, which probably represents a pool or area of open water at the time of its construction.

Site C was the milled remains of a brushwood togher constructed of two layers. The superstructure, which was the actual walking surface of the togher, was constructed using long, straight brushwood. The substructural layer was composed of lighter brushwood and some small twigs. The site was very disturbed in the central portion. Track C was traced for 1m to the north of the cutting and then petered out. This site was visible in the section of the drain face to the south of the cutting but could only be traced for another 1m after this. The total length of this togher was 8m.

Site D represented the remains of a sparsely constructed togher. This togher was only present at the north-western and south-eastern end, as milling had destroyed the middle portion. The track was 0.8m wide and 90mm deep. The superstructure was constructed of approximately ten longitudinally placed brushwood rods. The brushwood measured 15–40mm in diameter, and they were spaced c. 50mm apart.

A substructural layer was excavated underneath at the south-eastern end of the cutting. It was composed of six pieces of brushwood averaging 30mm in diameter. There was a bed of twigs also associated with the wood. This twig bed was 0.2m in diameter and was not as compact as the twig beds associated with Site B. There were two pegs associated with the togher, which were found at the south end of the cutting. Bark was present on 60% of the wood and twigs. Two toolmarked brushwoods were recorded from this layer. This track was visible on the field surface to the north of the cutting for c. 1.5m. It was also visible in the drain section to the south and was traced from there for another 1.2m. The total length of this togher was 8.5m.

All of the tracks described above were found very close together and appear to be running in the same general direction. They could only be traced for a maximum distance of 32m, and it is possible that

they were laid down across a short stretch of particularly wet bog that could not otherwise have been crossed.

1999:739 - CASTLETOWN BOG, Castlearmstrong, Offaly

County: Offaly

Site name: CASTLETOWN BOG, Castlearmstrong

Sites and Monuments Record No.: N/A

Licence number: 99E0292

Author: Ellen O'Carroll, ADS Ltd.

Author/Organisation Address: Windsor House, 11 Fairview Strand, Fairview, Dublin 3

Site type: Road - class 3 togher

Period/Dating: Undetermined

ITM: E 617236m, N 728806m

This site was an area of brushwood. Three clusters of brushwood survived in the cutting, the least damaged pieces at the southern end. They were placed longitudinally and measured 15–45mm in diameter. Some pegs and transversely laid twigs were also found at this end of the cutting. The twigs functioned as packing material in between the longitudinals. The remaining brushwood in the cutting was substructural in appearance and was more irregularly arranged, with several peg-like elements. The wood represented the remains of some superstructural and substructural elements of a brushwood togher. The site was traced for 11m.

1999:740 - CASTLETOWN BOG, Castlearmstrong, Offaly

County: Offaly

Site name: CASTLETOWN BOG, Castlearmstrong

Sites and Monuments Record No.: N/A

Licence number: 99E0325

Author: Ellen O'Carroll, ADS Ltd.

Author/Organisation Address: Windsor House, 11 Fairview Strand, Fairview, Dublin 3

Site type: Road - class 2 togher

Period/Dating: Undetermined

ITM: E 618037m, N 729184m

Excavations revealed a large roundwood lying east-west 0.13m in maximum diameter, which narrowed gradually towards its western end. The roundwood was exposed for 1.27m in the cutting but could be traced outside the cutting to measure 1.65m in total length. The roundwood was orientated on an east-west axis, with several small fragments of wood at its eastern end. Several other milled and disturbed pieces of wood could be traced on the same field surface to the north. The track could be traced for 16.46m by the presence of disturbed pieces of wood on the Bord na Móna field surface.

The wood excavated in this cutting represented the remains of a linear brushwood togher. The roundwood may have been a transverse timber placed under the main track. The presence of the milled wood on the Bord na Móna field surface indicates the last remnants of this togher.

1999:752 - KILLAGHINTOBER BOG, Tumbleagh, Offaly

County: Offaly

Site name: KILLAGHINTOBER BOG, Tumbleagh

Sites and Monuments Record No.: N/A

Licence number: 99E0446 and 99E0447

Author: Ellen O'Carroll, ADS Ltd.

Author/Organisation Address: Windsor House, 11 Fairview Strand, Fairview, Dublin 3.

Site type: Road - class 1 togher

Period/Dating: Bronze Age (2200 BC-801 BC)

ITM: E 615241m, N 729385m

These sites were recorded as two separate trackways during the reassessment survey in 1998. Excavations in 1999 revealed that they were actually both the same site, a linear plank trackway traced across the Bord na Móna fields for a length of 420m. This plank trackway has been dated by The Queen's University of Belfast Radiocarbon Laboratory to 940 BC.

The site varied slightly in composition along its length, as did the level of preservation. Eight cuttings were placed along the length of the site, which was a simple trackway construction composed of longitudinal oak planks laid end to end and underlain at the northern end by transverse planks. The average diameter of the superstructural walkway planks was 0.25m. The superstructural planks were quite substantial and would have acted as a flat walking surface to facilitate safe crossing over the bog. There were no evidence of pegs or mortices in these cuttings, and the impression one gets from its simple construction is that this site was not intended to have been in use for a long period of time.

This trackway appears to differ slightly at the southern and northern ends. The cuttings excavated on the southern side exposed a linear plank trackway constructed of split oak planks laid end to end. The trackway appeared to be quite disturbed at certain locations, and there was no evidence of mortices, pegs or supporting transverses. The cuttings excavated at the northern end of the trackway showed evidence of transverse supports underneath the plank walkway in the form of planks and roundwoods. The above evidence suggests that transverse supports were required at the southern end of the bog to prevent the plank walkway from sinking, as it may have been much wetter in this area.

1999:753 - KILLAGHINTOBER BOG, Tumbleagh, Offaly

County: Offaly

Site name: KILLAGHINTOBER BOG, Tumbleagh

Sites and Monuments Record No.: N/A

Licence number: 99E0448

Author: Ellen O'Carroll, ADS Ltd.

Author/Organisation Address: Windsor House, 11 Fairview Strand, Fairview, Dublin 3

Site type: Road - class 3 togher

Period/Dating: Undetermined

ITM: E 616591m, N 729403m

This site was the remains of a brushwood togher on the surface of a Bord na Móna production field. A cutting measuring 1.5m x 2m was established over the site. Excavation revealed the milled remains of the upper elements of a linear brushwood togher and two lower, substructural layers of brushwood, pegs and twigs.

The brushwood togher measured 1.7m in maximum width and was traced for a length of 14m. The site was composed of a milled superstructural brushwood and roundwood layer and a lower, substructural layer orientated east-west. The superstructural layer of the togher was badly milled. It was composed of two roundwoods and around eleven brushwoods, as well as several outlying fragments. Half of the elements run transversely, and half of them were placed longitudinally. There were also three pegs associated with this layer, one of which was worked to a simple chisel point.

Two lower, substructural layers were revealed underneath the milled upper surface. The lower layers were composed of brushwood averaging 15mm in diameter, pegs and some twig packing. The pegs were found along the edges of the togher. Some were worked to a point at one end.

The remains of a leather shoe were found on the Bord na Móna field surface c. 70m south of this togher. The shoe had been exposed on the field surface for some time and had been badly damaged. A cutting was placed around the shoe, and the area was trowelled, but there was no evidence of any wood. There was no indication of wood in the surrounding area. It is possible that this shoe was originally associated with the togher (99E0448) and became dislodged during Bord na Móna milling.

1999:755 - TUMBEAGH BOG, Tumbeagh, Offaly

County: Offaly

Site name: TUMBEAGH BOG, Tumbeagh

Sites and Monuments Record No.: N/A

Licence number: 99E0378

Author: Ellen O'Carroll, ADS Ltd.

Author/Organisation Address: Windsor House, 11 Fairview Strand, Fairview, Dublin 3

Site type: Road - class 2 togher

Period/Dating: Prehistoric (12700 BC-AD 400)

ITM: E 615497m, N 729210m

This linear brushwood, roundwood, hurdle and plank togher varied in composition along its length. The site was a compact linear arrangement of wood five layers deep in places. The togher was orientated on an east-west axis. The wood extended to 1.9m wide, but the main body of the togher was tightly compacted and had a width of 0.55m and a depth of 0.01m.

*The upper walking surface of the track was composed of five roundwoods and around ten brushwoods, with a small amount of interspersed twigs. Several of the roundwoods were broken along their length, possibly owing to pressure from the overlying peat. There were numerous brushwood outliers around the track. These outliers possibly fell away from the track in antiquity. The only evidence for pegs was a split brushwood, which had tooling at one end and may have functioned as a peg. There was very little bark present on the wood. After the upper layer of wood was removed a second layer was recorded underneath. This was a compact arrangement of roundwoods, brushwood, twigs and wood chips up to four brushwoods deep in places. This lower layer was composed of smaller elements, with only one roundwood recorded. The wood was densely packed together owing to the presence of small brushwood and twigs. There were a lot of aquatic-loving plants such as *Menyanthes trifoliata* (bog bean) recorded throughout this layer of wood.*

A hurdle panel was laid down alongside the brushwood togher at its eastern end. At this point a Bord na Móna drain truncated the hurdle panel, so its true length could not be established. The panel comprised a moderately tight weave of single rods over single sails. The hurdle was 0.95m wide and 50mm deep. The hurdle structure was probably constructed on dry land and then transported onto the bog and laid down alongside the brushwood/roundwood trackway in an area where it was particularly wet.

*This site was traced along the Bord na Móna field surface for a length of 32m and had been milled slightly along some of its length. This track could have supported a human's weight in an area that we know was very wet because of the presence of *Menyanthes trifoliata* (bog bean) in the peat. There were some substantial lenses of bog ore found in and around the trackway. Although there has been no evidence for the exploitation of these ores for industrial purposes, parallels for such activities can be seen in Holland. Middle Bronze Age trackways excavated by Casparie in Holland were constructed to provide access to areas of bog iron ore in the peat.*

1999:756 - TUMBEAGH BOG, Tumbeagh and Killaghintober, Offaly

County: Offaly

Site name: TUMBEAGH BOG, Tumbeagh and Killaghintober

Sites and Monuments Record No.: N/A

Licence number: 99E0406

Author: Jane Whitaker, ADS Ltd.

Site type: Road - class 1 togher

Period/Dating: Bronze Age (2200 BC-801 BC)

ITM: E 615590m, N 729987m

This site was excavated as part of the 1999 Bord na Móna Archaeological Mitigation Project. The site was a linear plank trackway that had been identified at the drain edges and across the field surfaces of Tumbeagh Bog at twenty sightings for a distance of over 350m. The site was dated to 949±9 BC (QUB-

9524). Three cuttings were excavated, two at both ends of the site and one in the middle portion. Cutting 1 was in the townland of Tumbleagh, and Cuttings 2 and 3 were in the townland of Killaghintober.

The site ran across the bog in an east-north-east/west-south-west direction almost parallel to the small modern road from Cappanalsosset crossroads to the village of Doon. Its depth below surface varied from 0m to 0.7m. Its construction remained fairly consistent: either single- or double-placed longitudinal planks supported by transverse planks and held in place with pegs. While the main line of the site ran in an east-north-east/west-south-west direction, it would appear that there were at least two junctions. One of the junctions was found at Cutting 2 and ran southwards from the line of the site for 13m. The second ran northwards from Cutting 3 and was traced for a distance of 20m.

The first of the three cuttings measured 2.5m x 5m and was on the western side of the bog. At this location the site was visible at the drain edge as a linear plank with the remains of a mortice 50mm below the field surface. The site appears to slope downwards from west to east at this point. The site was composed of a single radially split longitudinal supported by three transverse planks. One of the transverse planks had a damaged mortice with an in situ peg, 435mm long and 18mm in diameter. Another peg was found in the cutting, close to the eastern baulk. This was a squared oak peg 0.43m long and 50mm x 25mm in diameter.

The second cutting measured 2.5m x 6m and was placed at one of the central sightings of the togher. This sighting contained a north-south scattering of planks and roundwoods spread for a length of 11m along the field surface at the drain edge. This location was chosen for excavation to establish whether this spread of material reflected a change in the construction of the trackway or whether there was more than one site present at this location. Two disturbed plank toghers were exposed in this cutting, which represented the first of two possible junctions along the length of the site and had a similar construction to that of the site exposed in Cuttings 1 and 3. The main line of the plank togher was found in the northern end of this cutting, while the junction ran away from it in a south-east/north-west direction. The remains of two longitudinal planks and a transverse plank fragment were exposed. There were two squared oak pegs 37mm and 42mm in diameter set at 70° off vertical to the east of the transverse plank. These pegs were similar to the squared peg from Cutting 1.

The south-east/north-west-running togher was also quite disturbed and was composed of three longitudinal and two transverse planks. One of the transverse planks underlay and the other overlay the longitudinals. Two of the longitudinals had regular square-cut mortices.

The third cutting, 2.5m x 5m, was established at the best-preserved part of the site, at the eastern extent of the plank trackway close to the drain edge. This cutting contained two longitudinal planks, laid side by side, both of which had square-cut mortice holes at their eastern ends. One of the mortices contained a squared oak peg, with a smaller peg inserted alongside it to keep it in place. The eastern part of the cutting contained a scattering of plank fragments and four pegs along the line of the site, which represented the last remains of the site. The pegs were 39-40mm in diameter, and their lengths ranged from 0.62m to 0.97m. The absence of longitudinal planks in the eastern part of the cutting is not unusual as it is possible for wetland sites of this nature to become displaced in antiquity owing to the waterlogged conditions in the surrounding bog.

Milled longitudinal and transverse planks were found on the field surface 5m to the north of Cutting 3. These timbers represent the second of the two possible junctions mentioned above. These timbers ran in a north-south direction, from the nearby dry land towards the excavated site. This site was similar in composition to the excavated site. It was composed of two upper longitudinal planks supported by transverse and irregularly laid planks and was traced for a distance of 20m.

1999:757 - TUMBEAGH BOG, Offaly

County: Offaly
 Site name: TUMBEAGH BOG
 Sites and Monuments Record No.: N/A
 Licence number: 99E0404
 Author: Jane Whitaker, ADS Ltd.
 Site type: Structure - peatland
 Period/Dating: Undetermined
 ITM: E 615397m, N 729687m

Excavations were carried out in Tumbeagh Bog, Co. Offaly, as part of the 1999 Bord na Móna Archaeological Mitigation Project.

This site was initially recognised as an irregular grouping of brushwood rods and pegs visible on the field surface. It was composed of small rods and pegs with no discernible orientation or construction pattern. The wood was concentrated in an area measuring 2.5m x 2.8m. The site appeared to have a single construction phase and was 0.08–0.12m deep. It was composed of over 300 irregularly laid brushwood rods, approximately 50% of which were pegs. These were set into the peat at angles of 70° to 90°, and most were broken in several pieces. These elements varied from 0.04m to 0.46m long, none having diameters of more than 20mm. From the broken nature of the pegs, the site appears to have been disturbed by both the milling process and the weight of machinery passing over it.

From its small size, lack of orientation and the large quantity of pegs, it appears that the site may have been a small platform. The surrounding field surfaces were investigated, but it would appear that the whole site was contained within a 2.5m-by-2.8m area. A small gravel knoll c. 20m in diameter was found 30m to the east of the excavated site. This knoll is the highest point in the bog, rising c. 8m above the surrounding production fields. The underlying peat conditions would suggest alternating wet and dry conditions at the time of the platform's construction. It is hoped that further analysis will provide a more conclusive explanation for the construction of the site in this location.

1999:758 - TUMBEAGH BOG, Offaly

County: Offaly
 Site name: TUMBEAGH BOG
 Sites and Monuments Record No.: N/A
 Licence number: 99E0405
 Author: Jane Whitaker, ADS Ltd.
 Site type: Road - class 3 togher
 Period/Dating: Undetermined
 ITM: E 615897m, N 729367m

This excavation was carried out in Tumbeagh Bog, Co. Offaly, as part of the 1999 Bord na Móna Archaeological Mitigation Project.

The site was initially identified as a small brushwood togher on the surface of a Bord na Móna production field. A small cutting, 1m x 2m, was excavated and revealed the remains of a narrow, linear, brushwood togher. The site was composed of longitudinal brushwood and roundwoods placed side by side to provide a walking surface. This site was 0.33m in maximum width and three to four rods wide. The rods ranged from 20mm to 90mm in diameter, and their upper surfaces had been machine damaged. The substructure appears to have consisted of some irregularly placed brushwood underlying the upper longitudinals. Several of the elements had toolmarks that varied in type from pencil points to wedge and chisel points.

The surrounding field surfaces were investigated to establish the full extent of the site, which was traced for a length of 8m. The site did not appear on the adjoining field surfaces, although it is possible that it was originally longer and had been destroyed by peat production.

1999:734 - CASTLETOWN BOG, Castlearmstrong, Offaly

County: Offaly

Site name: CASTLETOWN BOG, Castlearmstrong

Sites and Monuments Record No.: N/A

Licence number: 99E0287

Author: Ellen O'Carroll, ADS Ltd.

Site type: Road - road/trackway

Period/Dating: Undetermined

ITM: E 617183m, N 728845m

The following excavations (Nos 734–43 and 752–58 below) were carried out in the Lemanaghan area of County Offaly as part of the Bord na Móna Archaeological Mitigation Project. They were undertaken to resolve known archaeological sites so that Bord na Móna could resume peat production in areas that had been cleared of archaeology. The fieldwork took place from June to September 1999.

The Lemanaghan complex of bogs is north of the River Brosna, between the towns of Ballycumber and Ferbane. This work concentrated in Castletown (99E0287–92), Tumbleagh (99E0377–8 and 99E0404–6) and Killaghintober bogs (99E0444–8), in which a total of eighteen excavations, comprising 35 individual cuttings, were completed. Areas of brushwood structures found close to each other were excavated in Castletown Bog (99E0287–91), as well as a linear plank trackway (99E0326). Three brushwood toghers (99E03778 and 99E0405), a brushwood platform (99E0404) and a linear plank trackway (99E406) were excavated in Tumbleagh Bog. Three linear plank trackways and a brushwood togher were excavated in Killaghintober Bog (99E0444-8).

Castletown Bog, Castlearmstrong

This site was a brushwood togher that extended on the Bord na Móna field surface for a distance of 31m. Excavation revealed a partially milled brushwood togher 0.75m wide and 0.23m deep. The site was composed of three layers of wood overlying each other. The upper layer was a substantial layer of longitudinal brushwood rods infilled with packing material and held in place with pegs. The upper longitudinals were ten to twelve rods wide and three to four rods deep at the best-preserved section of the togher. The longitudinals all ran in a north-west/south-east direction and measured 10–45mm in diameter. The spaces between the longitudinals were infilled with a packing material of twigs and small brushwood. This layer was the upper walking surface of the togher.

The brushwood associated with the second and third layers was less substantial than the upper longitudinals. The size of the wood ranged from tiny twigs to brushwood rods up to 42mm in diameter. The brushwood averaged 20mm in diameter. There were more twigs in this layer. Most of the brushwood and twigs ran longitudinally. The twigs along the western extent of the cutting had a more haphazard arrangement. Pegs were found along the outer edges of the trackway, preventing horizontal movement of the togher. The togher was traced for 25m. It is possible that it was constructed across a short stretch of particularly wet bog that could otherwise not have been crossed.

1999:743 - KILLAGHINTOBER BOG, Castlearmstrong, Offaly

County: Offaly

Site name: KILLAGHINTOBER BOG, Castlearmstrong

Sites and Monuments Record No.: N/A

Licence number: 99E0445

Author: Ellen O'Carroll, ADS Ltd.

Site type: Road - class 1 togher

Period/Dating: Early Medieval (AD 400-AD 1099)

ITM: E 619211m, N 720627m

This linear plank trackway was traced across the Bord na Móna field surface for a length of 450m. Four large cuttings were placed along its length. Each cutting produced similar constructional evidence and preservation qualities.

The trackway was a substantial construction consisting of three layers of structural elements. The upper, walking surface was constructed of split oak planks laid end to end and pegged into the peat at each end through a mortice hole. These pegs were found beside the substructural transverse timbers and would have prevented the upper plank from slipping off the substructure. Owing to the weight of the overlying peat and the Bord na Móna milling machinery, the plank had sunk into the peat and was found at the same level as the substructural timbers. The planks were also broken in several places along their length and had fallen off the underlying transverses.

The upper plank walkway was supported at regular intervals by a two-layered substructure. This substructure was composed of roundwood transverse timbers underlain by longitudinal plank runners. These planks were radial split oaks c. 2m long.

*A dressed rod was found on the north-western side of the trackway. It was driven vertically into the peat. It was 20mm in diameter and 1.2m long. The top end of the rod was slightly bent, while the bottom end was stepped and then pointed. There were areas of poorly decomposed sphagnum peat with inclusions of *Menyanthes trifoliata* (bog bean), which suggests that these were very wet areas, probably pools, at certain locations beside the track. There were also areas of *Eriophorum* (bog cotton) above and around the trackway, which suggest drier conditions.*

The construction methods of this trackway can be clearly demonstrated from the excavations along its the length. The substructural transverses; which consisted of a layer of roundwood and plank transverses underlain by longitudinal plank runners, supported the plank walkway and elevated it off the wet peat.

This trackway has been dendrochronologically dated by The Queen's University of Belfast to AD 596–7. The track can be traced from the dryland at Killaghintober to an island in the centre of the bog and appears to link up with a trackway of similar date and construction excavated by the IAWU in 1998 on the opposite side of the island (Excavations 1998, 176, 98E0464). The site then runs towards Lemanaghan Island, which houses the remains of St Mella's cell (a small Early Christian rectangular oratory), St Manchan's church and Early Christian grave slabs. Although this work is only at a preliminary stage, it is probably true to say that this trackway was associated with the construction of the monastery on the island, as it was founded sometime before St Manchan's death in AD 665.

2000:0829 - CORHILL BOG, Lisdermot, Offaly

County: Offaly

Site name: CORHILL BOG, Lisdermot

Sites and Monuments Record No.: N/A

Licence number: 00E0333

Author: Ellen OCarroll, ADS Ltd.

Author/Organisation Address: Windsor House, 11 Fairview Strand, Fairview, Dublin 3

Site type: Road - class 1 togher

Period/Dating: Early Medieval (AD 400-AD 1099)

ITM: E 613222m, N 727636m

Excavations were carried out in Corhill Bog, Co. Offaly, as part of the Bord na Móna Archaeological Mitigation Project. These excavations were undertaken to resolve known archaeological sites so that Bord na Móna could resume peat production in areas that had been cleared of archaeology. The field season ran from June to August 2000. This licence covered the excavation of three separate trackways that were found close to each other. The sites lay in Corhill Bog, which is south-east of the Fербane–Athlone road.

Three cuttings were set out along the length of a single plank walkway. Excavation revealed a linear plank trackway, traced across the Bord na Móna fields for a length of 140m. The site varied slightly in composition along its length, as did the level of preservation. In general the site was composed of longitudinal oak planks laid end to end and underlain in certain places by transverse planks. The upper planks would have formed the walking surface of the trackway, and the underlying transverses distributed the weight of the upper planks and raised them off the wet peat. Pegs located in mortice holes were noted in one of the cuttings. These pegs would have stabilised the trackway and prevented it from moving in the peat. The plank walkway was 3m wide, but the actual walking surface of the single planks averaged 0.4m. This site has been dated to AD 626±9 (Q-9295).

The fourth cutting excavated revealed the remains of two destroyed linear brushwood routeways (Sites A and B) located on the Bord na Móna field surface. The two sites were quite similar in construction and were composed of sparsely arranged roundwood, brushwood and pegs. The majority of the wood was laid transversely, but some of it was laid haphazardly, possibly owing to disturbance. Site B was located at the opposite side of the drain to Site A and ran parallel to it. The site was also composed of a dispersed spread of roundwood, brushwood and pegs. The roundwoods measured between 0.07m and 0.1m in diameter, and the brushwoods averaged 0.04m in diameter. Most of the elements were orientated transversely; there were some smaller brushwoods orientated longitudinally. The sites were located c. 0.8m above the plank trackway (AD 626), which separates the plank trackway and the brushwood/roundwood sites by c. 1000 years. Both Sites A and B were traced in an east–west direction for approximately 400m.

Two excavations (see Excavations 2000, Nos 830 and 832), located c. 150m east of Site A and B, were carried out by Jane Whitaker this season. The sites exposed in these excavations were similar in type and size to what was uncovered in the excavations carried out in Cutting 3. Through evidence from these excavations, it can be said that No. 830 is a continuation of Site A and No. 832 is a continuation of Site B.

2000:0830 - CORRHILL BOG, Lisdermot, Offaly

County: Offaly

Site name: CORRHILL BOG, Lisdermot

Sites and Monuments Record No.: N/A

Licence number: 00E0399

Author: Jane Whitaker, ADS Ltd.

Author/Organisation Address: Windsor House, 11 Fairview Strand, Fairview, Dublin 3

Site type: Road - class 1 togher

Period/Dating: Undetermined

ITM: E 613536m, N 727509m

This excavation was carried out in Corhill Bog, Co. Offaly, as part of the 2000 Bord na Móna Archaeological Mitigation Project. This site was traced for a length of approximately 40m during the 1996 IAWU field survey; this season's work increased its length to over 80m. The 1996 survey recorded several other sites along the same field surface with very similar construction, orientation and composition. At that time these sites were not linked because they meandered along the field surface in a north-west/south-east direction and did not appear to be crossing the shortest stretch of bog. One of these additional sightings was also chosen for excavation within the mitigation strategy document and was subsequently excavated by Ellen OCarroll (see Excavations 2000, No. 829). In effect, the current excavation, along with 00E0333 (Track A) (see Excavations 2000, No. 829) has resolved ten previously recorded structures.

Two cuttings, both measuring 3m x 2m, were excavated. At both cuttings the site was visible on the field surface as an irregular scatter of dried-out brushwood rods. There was very little peat cover remaining over the site, and the majority of this was very dried out. It had a high sphagnum content with some inclusions of ericaceous root and patches of fibrous sedge material. Very little peat was removed from either cutting as some of the brushwood was already exposed on the field surface.

The first cutting excavated revealed a broken, longitudinal brushwood with four fragmentary transverses. There were also four small pegs associated with the transverse elements. The site appears to have been c. 1.3m wide. The brushwood rods varied from 10mm to 40mm in diameter and from 0.15m to 1.3m in length. A light brown peat bordered the southern edge of the site. This peat was poorly humified and contained a large amount of undecomposed sedge material, some eriophorum and patches of sphagnum. The site was placed directly over a darker, more decomposed peat with a higher eriophorum content and less sedge material and sphagnum than the adjoining peat.

There was a higher density of wood present in the second cutting, and the site was 1.25m wide at this location. There were several longitudinal elements supporting some fragmentary transverse elements with occasional pegs. The elements ranged in diameter from 0.02m to 0.47m, and all were broken.

This togher was almost completely destroyed by machine damage and subsequent exposure to the elements. It appears to have been originally composed of transverse brushwood rods supported by longitudinal brushwoods and roundwoods. It varied in width from 1m to 1.3m and ran in a north-west/south-east direction. It did not travel in a straight line but meandered along the field surface. This may be due to the local ground conditions at the time of its construction. The peat with the higher sphagnum content (therefore wetter) along the edge of the site indicates that the site was constructed along the driest rather than the straightest stretch of bog. Environmental samples were taken from both cuttings, and it is hoped to evaluate this theory at a later date. The orientation of the site is interesting in that it appears to provide access into the bog rather than serving as a crossing-point. It is proposed to date a sample from Cutting 2, which will then be compared to 00E0333 (Track A) excavated by Ellen OCarroll, to confirm the true length of the site (see Excavations 2000, No. 829).

2000:0831 - CORHILL BOG, Lisdermot, Offaly

County: Offaly

Site name: CORHILL BOG, Lisdermot

Sites and Monuments Record No.: N/A

Licence number: 00E0439

Author: Jane Whitaker, ADS Ltd.

Author/Organisation Address: Windsor House, 11 Fairview Strand, Fairview, Dublin 3

Site type: Platform - peatland

Period/Dating: Undetermined

ITM: E 613563m, N 727471m

This excavation was carried out in Corhill Bog, Co. Offaly, as part of the 2000 Bord na Móna Archaeological Mitigation Project. This site was first recorded in 1996 by the IAWU when it was identified as a 'puddle togher', composed of a central spread of interwoven pieces of longitudinal brushwood, up to two rods deep, within a band 0.67m wide. It was noted that much of the wood was broken; some was identified as alder and hazel; there was a large amount of wood exposed on the field surface; and the association of material was difficult to determine. At the time of the field survey there was a possible second, more fragmentary sighting of this site 8m to the south-east.

The volume of material described in 1996 had reduced significantly in the interim, so much so that excavation revealed that a single roundwood, in very poor condition, was the only surviving remains of this site. It was 0.85m long and 0.51m in diameter and was orientated north-north-east/south-south-west. A cutting measuring 2m x 2m was established to investigate the presence or absence of further wood close to this roundwood, but nothing further was revealed. The roundwood was set into peat that contained patches of sphagnum and eriophorum. It was identified as ash and was otherwise too fragmentary for a dating sample.

2000:0832 - CORHILL BOG, Lisdermot, Offaly

County: Offaly

Site name: CORHILL BOG, Lisdermot

Sites and Monuments Record No.: N/A

Licence number: 00E0441

Author: Jane Whitaker, ADS Ltd.

Author/Organisation Address: Windsor House, 11 Fairview Strand, Fairview, Dublin 3

Site type: Road - class 1 togher

Period/Dating: Early Medieval (AD 400-AD 1099)

ITM: E 613466m, N 727559m

This excavation was carried out in Corhill Bog, Co. Offaly, as part of the 2000 Bord na Móna Archaeological Mitigation Project. This site was recorded in the 1996 IAWU survey as a brushwood and roundwood togher and was traced for a length of over 40m. As with 00E0399 (see Excavations 2000, No. 830), the length of the site has been doubled by this season's work. This site was very similar in many ways to No. 830. It was identified along a single field surface and ran in a north-west/south-east direction. It was recorded as being 2m in width and was composed of transverse brushwood and roundwood rods. The central portion of the site was the best preserved and was noted to contain heavier elements. As with 00E0399, there were several additional sites along the same field surface, with similar construction, orientation and composition. It should be noted that the two linear structures 00E0399 and 00E0441 were located on adjacent Bord na Móna production fields. This site also connected with the second of two toghers exposed in a cutting excavated by Ellen OCarroll (see Excavations 2000, No. 829, Track B). This excavation, along with No. 829 (Track B), has resolved eleven structures that had previously been separately recorded.

The first of two cuttings excavated was located at the westernmost extent of the site. This cutting, measuring 2m x 3m, contained two transverse roundwoods. There was very little peat cover remaining over the site, and as a result these roundwoods had been badly damaged by the milling process and were very dried out. They were 57mm and 78mm in diameter and were 0.32m and 0.85m in length. Neither element was suitable for a dating sample, but it is hoped to have them analysed for species identification. Along the northern side of the cutting beyond the northern tips of the roundwoods the peat had a high eriophorum content.

The second cutting was established to the east of the first. There was also very little peat cover remaining at this location, and excavation revealed badly milled transverse brushwood rods with a single longitudinal roundwood. The brushwood rods ranged from 16mm to 27mm in diameter and from 0.28m to 0.87m in length, while the longitudinal roundwood was 0.08m in diameter and 0.62m in length. The peat along the northern extent of the wood, as in Cutting 1, contained a high quantity of eriophorum. Several locations running westwards between the two cuttings were examined using test-trenches and revealed material similar to that exposed in Cutting 2.

The material uncovered in these two cuttings was very fragmentary. Close examination of the remaining material along the field surface, combined with examination of the IAWU record sheets, would appear to indicate that there are several sites previously recorded as individual sites that link up to form a single linear structure. These sites were all located on the field surface, and all were composed of brushwood and roundwood elements. Their construction appears to have been transverse brushwood rods laid across longitudinal brushwood and roundwood elements. The longitudinal elements were laid roughly north-north-east/south-south-west, although the exact orientation changes in places as the site meanders along the field surface. There are a few places where no evidence for the togher remains. None of these gaps are greater than 5–10m. It must be noted that drainage and the subsequent milling process have created an artificially level ground surface. Any original ground surface undulations have since been erased, which may explain the 'gaps' in the togher as it was recorded in July 2000. It is proposed to use dating and species identification to confirm what the investigation of the field surface and the constructional similarities appear to suggest—that this

excavation, along with No. 829, Excavations 2000, (Track B), has resolved eleven previously recorded structures.

2000:0833 - CORHILL BOG, Lisdermot, Offaly

County: Offaly

Site name: CORHILL BOG, Lisdermot

Sites and Monuments Record No.: N/A

Licence number: 00E0460

Author: Ellen OCarroll, ADS Ltd.

Author/Organisation Address: Windsor House, 11 Fairview Strand, Fairview, Dublin 3

Site type: Platform - peatland

Period/Dating: Early Medieval (AD 400-AD 1099)

ITM: E 613267m, N 727632m

Excavations were carried out in Corhill Bog, Co. Offaly, as part of the Bord na Móna Archaeological Mitigation Project. These excavations were undertaken to resolve known archaeological sites so that Bord na Móna could resume peat production in areas that had been cleared of archaeology. The field season ran from June to August 2000. This licence covers the excavation of a brushwood and roundwood platform located at the south-western side of Corhill Bog. This platform is among a number of similar platforms excavated in the area (see Excavations 2000, Nos 834–6). They were located close together and lay on a natural gravel ridge within the bog.

The platform was composed of tightly packed brushwood rods and one large roundwood to the west of the cutting, which was also the limit of the site on that side. The brushwood was in poor condition where the wood was exposed on the surface of the bog. Elsewhere, especially around the central area of the platform, the wood was in moderate condition with some bark still surviving. The platform was shown to consist of two layers. The brushwood, 200 rods in total excavated from the first layer, averaged 0.03m in diameter, while the roundwood measured 0.1m in diameter. The length of the brushwood averaged 0.8m, while the roundwood measured 1.66m in length. Most of the elements were laid in a north–south direction, except for an occasional one that ran in an east–west direction. Some outliers or disturbed pieces of brushwood were located in the eastern side of the cutting. There do not appear to have been any pegs associated with this structure.

After removing the upper longitudinal elements a further 100 elements were revealed underneath. These brushwoods were smaller, ranging from 0.01m to 0.02m in diameter and averaging 0.06m in length. There was no specific orientation to this layer, and it was not as densely packed as the upper layer. Twigs were noted in this lower layer also.

The platform, which was excavated in its entirety, measured 2m by 2.15m and was 0.02m deep. It was located on the field surface, and its upper surface had been milled. It is possible that the wood was laid down to serve as a small, dry platform for hunting or for the collection of a particular type of organic material located in the raised bog peat.

2000:0834 - CORHILL BOG, Lisdermot, Offaly

County: Offaly

Site name: CORHILL BOG, Lisdermot

Sites and Monuments Record No.: N/A

Licence number: 00E0461

Author: Ellen OCarroll, ADS Ltd.

Author/Organisation Address: Windsor House, 11 Fairview Strand, Fairview, Dublin 3

Site type: Platform - peatland

Period/Dating: Early Medieval (AD 400-AD 1099)

ITM: E 613238m, N 727573m

Excavations were carried out in Corhill Bog, Co. Offaly, as part of the Bord na Móna Archaeological Mitigation Project. These excavations were undertaken to resolve known archaeological sites so that

Bord na Móna could resume peat production in areas that had been cleared of archaeology. The field season ran from June to August 2000. This report describes the one-week excavation of two small brushwood platforms. These sites were first recorded as a brushwood and roundwood trackway in 1996 during the Irish Archaeological Wetland Unit field survey and traced for a length of 60m.

Excavation revealed that the site was not a linear structure but a series of small platforms. There were two platform structures (Sites A and B) excavated in two 2m x 2m cuttings at either end of the trackway (as the method statement, completed prior to excavation, recommended). These platforms are among a number of similar platforms excavated in the area (see Excavations 2000, Nos 833, 835–6). They were located in close proximity and lay on a natural gravel ridge within Corhill Bog. One of the platforms was located on the field surface; the other was located under 0.4m of peat.

Site A was beside a drain and could be seen protruding from the drain face. The site had been cut by the drain, leaving only the southern side remaining. Over 0.4m of peat was removed to reveal the site. The platform was composed of two distinct layers. The upper layer consisted of longitudinally placed brushwood and one transverse brushwood, which ran the maximum width of the site. The transverse weaved through the longitudinals. The lower layer of the platform consisted of tightly packed brushwood rods and some small twigs used to infill the gaps. The brushwoods were three deep in places and were placed both longitudinally and transversely. Four pegs were also noted during excavation. The site measured 1.8m in width and was 0.6m in depth. Its length could not be determined as it was cut by the drain on the northern side; however, it could not have measured more than 2.8m as it was not noted in the opposite drain face. The certainty that the southern side of the platform ends in this cutting comes from the fact that nearly all of the ends of the longitudinal brushwood were worked. The worked ends were recorded, and most of them were worked to chisel-points. The facets were cut with a metal axe, and one of the worked ends had a raised signature present.

Site B was c. 45m to the south of Site A. This platform structure was on the field surface and had been slightly milled. The platform was quite similar in construction to that excavated at Site A. It was composed of roundwood (30%) and brushwood (70%), which were for the most part longitudinally laid. This platform was composed of one distinct layer, and there were seven transverses revealed that wound in and out of the longitudinals. The structure resembled a haphazardly constructed hurdle panel. The platform was excavated in its entirety and measured 3m by 2m in total. Site A has been radiocarbon dated to between AD 783 and 1149 to 2 sigma (UCD-0102).

The two platforms were probably constructed around the same time period, although the dating of Site B will confirm this. It is possible that the sites were intended to serve as a small dry platform for hunting or other such activities.

2000:0835 - CORHILL BOG, Lisdermot, Offaly

County: Offaly

Site name: CORHILL BOG, Lisdermot

Sites and Monuments Record No.: N/A

Licence number: 00E0463

Author: Ellen OCarroll, ADS Ltd.

Author/Organisation Address: Windsor House, 11 Fairview Strand, Fairview, Dublin 3

Site type: Structure - peatland

Period/Dating: Medieval (AD 400-AD 1600)

ITM: E 613326m, N 727544m

Excavations were carried out in Corhill Bog, Co. Offaly, as part of the Bord na Móna Archaeological Mitigation Project, in order to resolve known archaeological sites so that Bord na Móna could resume peat production in areas that had been cleared of archaeology. The field season ran from June to August 2000. This report describes the one-day excavation of thirteen pieces of wood. This site was first recorded as being the remains of a brushwood and roundwood trackway during the IAWU field survey in 1996. Excavation revealed thirteen pieces of degraded brushwood on the field surface; the upper surface of the wood had been milled. It was situated in an area measuring 0.95m north-south by 1.95m.

Three of the more substantial elements ran north–south; the rest ran east–west. The brushwoods averaged 0.02m in diameter and were between 0.1m and 0.3m in length. They did not form any coherent structure. One of the larger brushwoods was cut to a chisel-point and was single-faceted.

The wood may represent the remains of a brushwood trackway, but, as there was very little wood found in the surrounding area, it most likely represents extraneous material from the larger platform structures excavated to the west.

2000:0836 - CORHILL BOG, Lisdermot, Offaly

County: Offaly

Site name: CORHILL BOG, Lisdermot

Sites and Monuments Record No.: N/A

Licence number: 00E0468

Author: Jane Whitaker, ADS Ltd.

Author/Organisation Address: Windsor House, 11 Fairview Strand, Fairview, Dublin 3

Site type: Platform - peatland

Period/Dating: Early Medieval (AD 400-AD 1099)

ITM: E 613219m, N 727554m

This excavation was carried out in Corhill Bog, Co. Offaly, as part of the 2000 Bord na Móna Archaeological Mitigation Project. This site was first recorded in section in 1996 during the LAWU field survey. It was visible on opposing drain faces, immediately below the field surface. It was constructed of light hazel rods, six to seven rods deep in places. The cutting size and location were determined in the mitigation strategy document prepared by Dúchas The Heritage Service and the National Museum.

The 2m x 2m cutting was placed on the field surface over the location recorded in 1996. The site was composed of narrow brushwood rods ranging from 9mm to 26mm in diameter with a minimum length of 0.19–1.53m (the site was cut at an oblique angle by the drain). Most of the elements were laid in a north–south direction. Only six pegs were revealed; four of these were located at the southern tips of the brushwood rods and held the rods in place. These pegs were 20–40mm in diameter. Most of the 45 upper rods had evidence for woodworking at their southern tips, all of which were chisel-points. Most of these were simple, single-faceted chisel-points, although some were multi-faceted. There was little evidence for bark on any of the elements.

After the upper longitudinal elements were removed, a further 35 elements were revealed. Similarly, these ranged from 9mm to 28mm in diameter and from 0.9m to 0.69m in length. None of these elements had any remaining bark, and, like the upper layer, most had evidence for woodworking. These again were all chisel-points.

This site was located in a part of Corhill Bog that had a large number of the more enigmatic site types. This site was primarily identified as a ‘puddle togher’, a term that has been used in the past to describe wood/bundles of wood thrown over a particularly wet patch of bog. The peat directly underneath this site does not appear to have been too different to the peat at the south of the ends of the brushwood rods. It is possible that the wood was intended to serve as a small, dry platform for hunting.

2000:0837 - CORHILL BOG, Lisdermot/Straduff, Offaly

County: Offaly

Site name: CORHILL BOG, Lisdermot/Straduff

Sites and Monuments Record No.: N/A

Licence number: 00E0400

Author: Ellen OCarroll, ADS Ltd.

Author/Organisation Address: Windsor House, 11 Fairview Strand, Fairview, Dublin 3

Site type: Road - gravel/stone trackway - peatland

Period/Dating: Medieval (AD 400-AD 1600)

ITM: E 613427m, N 727868m

Excavations were carried out in Corhill Bog, Co. Offaly, as part of the Bord na Móna Archaeological Mitigation Project. These excavations were undertaken to resolve known archaeological sites so that Bord na Móna could resume peat production in areas that had been cleared of archaeology. The field season ran from June to August 2000.

This site comprised a gravel-and-wood trackway, which could be traced across the width of Corhill Bog for over 400m. The trackway was located on a natural rise in the peat bog. In total, 15m of this trackway was excavated at four different locations. The unexcavated areas were recorded at intervals along its length, and a comprehensive record of the stratigraphy of the trackway was obtained. Excavation revealed that the trackway varied in composition along its length, as did the level of preservation. In one cutting it was composed of brushwood underlain by gravel; in another it was composed of just brushwood; and at other locations the trackway was composed of just gravel. It measured up to 1.8m in width, and its depth varied depending on materials used in the construction. The wood layer for the most part overlay the gravel and consisted of gnarly brushwood, twigs, bark and layers of tree leaves. In one of the cuttings the wood was arranged transversely across the width of the site and was delineated by larger roundwoods that ran longitudinally. In other cuttings there does not appear to have been any particular arrangement to the wood. The gravel consisted of sub-angular, small, coarse pebbles, some of which had degraded to a coarse sand. The largest pebbles measured 45mm by 20mm, and the smallest 5mm by 5mm.

A small number of flagstones were excavated along the length of the trackway. They were probably laid down to add further stability to the walking surface. This trackway may have been constructed to facilitate safe crossing across the bog as well as providing access to and from a series of wooden platform structures (see Excavations 2000, Nos 819–26) excavated at the southern end of this trackway.

As the site was located c. 1m over the plank trackway described in No 829 Excavations 2000, dated to AD 626, an approximate calculation of the date for the gravel and wood trackway would be around the 15th or 16th century AD.

2000:0838 - CORHILL BOG, Lisdermot/Straduff, Offaly

County: Offaly

Site name: CORHILL BOG, Lisdermot/Straduff

Sites and Monuments Record No.: N/A

Licence number: 00E0400, 00R057

Author: Ellen OCarroll, ADS Ltd.

Author/Organisation Address: Windsor House, 11 Fairview Strand, Fairview, Dublin 3

Site type: Road - gravel/stone trackway - peatland

Period/Dating: Medieval (AD 400-AD 1600)

ITM: E 613427m, N 727868m

A metal-detection survey took place along the length of site 00E0400. Because of the location of this site within the peat strata, a medieval date was suggested for the trackway. The detection device used for the survey was a White's Quantum II. The detection device was first tested to see how effective it would be in the peat environment. A key was placed in the peat at various levels, and the detector proved effective up to a depth of 0.2m.

All field surfaces along the length of the gravel and wood trackway were walked systematically. An area 10m either side of the trackway was laid out, and then the area within was walked at 2m intervals. No metal artefacts of archaeological interest were retrieved. Some modern Bord na Móna machinery parts were the only metal objects located. The trackway was over 0.4m deep in places, and the metal-detection device only worked efficiently to a depth of c. 0.2m. As a result the possibility of finding metal artefacts underneath the site was unlikely.

2000:0839 - CORHILL BOG, Lisdermot/Straduff, Offaly

County: Offaly

Site name: CORHILL BOG, Lisdermot/Straduff

Sites and Monuments Record No.: N/A

Licence number: 00E0432

Author: Ellen OCarroll, ADS Ltd.

Author/Organisation Address: Windsor House, 11 Fairview Strand, Fairview, Dublin 3

Site type: Road - class 1 togher

Period/Dating: Bronze Age (2200 BC-801 BC)

ITM: E 613717m, N 727673m

Excavations were carried out in Corhill Bog, Co. Offaly, as part of the Bord na Móna Archaeological Mitigation Project. These excavations were undertaken to resolve known archaeological sites so that Bord na Móna could resume peat production in areas that had been cleared of archaeology. The field season ran from June to August 2000. This site was excavated at the north-eastern side of Corhill Bog and represented the remains of a linear plank trackway. Subsequent tracing and investigation revealed that the trackway actually crossed the width of the bog as it was also recorded on its south-western side, although no excavations were carried out in that area.

In total, 20m of this trackway was excavated. It was a fairly simple construction comprising a linear plank superstructure laid end to end and then underlain and supported by a roundwood transverse substructure. The substructural transverses supported the plank walkway and elevated it above the wet peat. The superstructural planks were pegged into position through mortices. The trackway was 1m wide and up to 0.25m deep. Two cuttings at the far north-western side of the bog revealed broken oak planks, disturbed pegs and wood chips.

It was clear from these excavations that the trackway was very disturbed at the far north-eastern end of the site, possibly owing to the nature and type of peat on which it was constructed—a fen peat, which is extremely wet. There was evidence for these wet conditions in the form of *Menyanthes trifoliata* (bog bean), which only grows in open water.

The plank walkway was traced for over 420m, and a record was made at every Bord na Móna drain that bisected the trackway (i.e. every 14m). This site has been dated to 910±9 BC (Q-9292).

2000:0840 - CORHILL BOG, Rashinagh, Offaly

County: Offaly

Site name: CORHILL BOG, Rashinagh

Sites and Monuments Record No.: N/A

Licence number: 00E0462

Author: Ellen OCarroll, ADS Ltd.

Author/Organisation Address: Windsor House, 11 Fairview Strand, Fairview, Dublin 3

Site type: No archaeology found

Period/Dating: N/A

ITM: E 613226m, N 727813m

This site was recorded as a puddle togher measuring 1m by 2.33m during the Irish Archaeological Wetland Unit survey in Corhill Bog in 1996. After extensive investigation and clearing of milled peat it was apparent that there were no surviving remains of the site in the area.

2013:122 - Castlearmstrong, Leabeg and Lemanaghan, Castletown Bog, Offaly

County: Offaly

Site name: Castlearmstrong, Leabeg and Lemanaghan, Castletown Bog

Sites and Monuments Record No.: N/A

Licence number: 13E0217

Author: Jane Whitaker

Site type: Road - class 1 togher, Road - class 2 togher and Road - class 3 togher

Period/Dating: —

ITM: E 617346m, N 729377m

A re-assessment field walking survey was carried out in Curraghmore Bog in August 2013 on behalf of Bord na Móna. Castletown Bog is located 3km west of Ballycumber and 5km east of Ferbane, Co Offaly and is part of the Boora Group of Bogs. It measures c. 150ha in size and has been in production since 1992. It is part of an area collectively known as Lemanaghan Bogs comprising the adjoining Killaghintoher, Lemanaghan, Corhill and Derrynagun Bogs.

There are 86 records of sites, recorded during the 1998 LAWU survey, in the Archaeological Survey of Ireland database in Castletown Bog. These comprise one Early Medieval Road – Class 1 Togher (OF007-215) from the townlands of Castlearmstrong, Cornafurrish and Corrabeg, three Road – Class 2 Toghers from Leabeg and Castlearmstrong, sixteen Road - Class 3 Toghers from Castlearmstrong and 66 now redundant records of smaller sites which were mainly composed of worked and unworked wood in situ.

Excavations were carried out in Castletown Bog in 1999? by ADS during the first season of BnM mitigation at which time 8 toghers, a platform, a plank trackway (road class 1 – togher) and wood remains were excavated under eight excavation licences. These sites were Early to Late Medieval in date.

The Re-Assessment survey on Castletown Bog was carried out in August 2013 by ADS at which time three sites were recorded. The Plank Trackway/Road Class 1 Togher OF007-215 mentioned above was relocated and recorded as OF-CTN001a-g across 10 production fields. The majority of the sightings were exposed on the field surface apart from sighting OF-CTN001a which was recorded in section in the drain face of a higher, former stockpile, field. The other two sites were short lengths of Road Class 3 toghers, one of which OF-CTN002a-b, was located close to the northern limit of the BnM production bog close to the enclosure site OF007-049 while the other, OF-CTN003a-b, was located in the southern extent of the narrowest part of the bog in an area where there were numerous sites recorded previously.