



APPENDIX 12-3

***HUMAN REMAINS AT
BALLIVOR BOG REPORT***

Licence Number: 03E1221

**Investigation
of the Find Spot of Partial
Human Remains
in Ballivor Bog,
County Meath**

By
Eoin Corcoran

Client
Bord na Móna

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in Ballivor Bog,
County Meath**

Licence Number: 03E1221

Director: Eoin Corcoran for ADS Ltd.

INTRODUCTION

Partial human remains of a torso, head and upper arms were recovered at Bord na Móna's Ballivor Works on 21st February 2003. The remains were believed to have originated from a production field that is currently in use for the stockpiling of milled peat for later use. The remains were disturbed and later during the stockpile removal process. This process consists of the transferral of the loose peat into rail carriages by a mechanical excavator. The rail carriages then transport the peat into the works where it is tipped into a storage shed. The peat is then moved along a series of conveyor belts that pass below magnets before being run over a screen called a tramp screen. This screen removes any large waste organic matter. The waste material is known as 'tramp material'. The human remains were found in the collecting point of the 'tramp material'. The remainder of the 'tramp material' was retained and isolated for future examination at the request of Dúchas and the National Museum of Ireland (NMI).

The find spot is located in the townland of Clonycavan approximately 1.5km southeast of the Bord na Móna offices at Ballivor Works (Fig 1). It is approximately 250m west of the edge of the production bog. The Bord na Móna Archaeological Liaison Officer Seamus O'Rourke informed ADS Ltd. that he is confident that they have isolated the area from which the remains originated. An area measuring approximately 300m in length had been marked out with posts to prevent machinery driving on the field. The probable find spot is within an area 100m long within the 300m long cordoned off area. It is thought that the bucket of the mechanical digger

may have disturbed the body from the field below, removing it along with the stockpile material.

Jane Whitaker and Moira O'Rourke of ADS Ltd. and Ann Lynch of Dúchas systematically walked the area during a field visit on the 28th February 2003. They found that although the stockpile had been removed, an amount of loose, waste peat covered the entire area and that numerous machine marks were visible across the field where it appeared that the machine had cut into the original field surface.

On the 12th August 2003 a team of one supervisor, one site assistant and two archaeologists under the direction of Eoin Corcoran (licence number 03E1221) investigated the find spot for further archaeological and human remains.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION OF FIND SPOT

The 100m long area was lightly shovel scraped to remove the majority of the loose peat cover. The area was then swept to remove the remaining loose peat. The marks of the machine bucket were clearly visible on the field surface. No archaeological remains were visible following the shovel scrape and the sweeping. The whole 100m long area was then lightly trowelled with special attention being paid to the machine marks given the likelihood that the body had come from the field beneath the stockpile (Plate 1).

The loose peat that was removed from the field surface has been retained and isolated by Bord na Móna with the original 'tramp material' for future examination. No archaeological remains were recovered from this area.

CONCLUSION

No remains were found during this thorough investigation of the probable find spot. It is possible that the body may have come from a slightly different area on the bog or that the body was originally deposited in this fragmentary state. Analysis of the remains will help to determine if the remains were damaged by the action of a machine or were damaged in antiquity. The tramp material and the loose peat from the field surface remain to be examined.

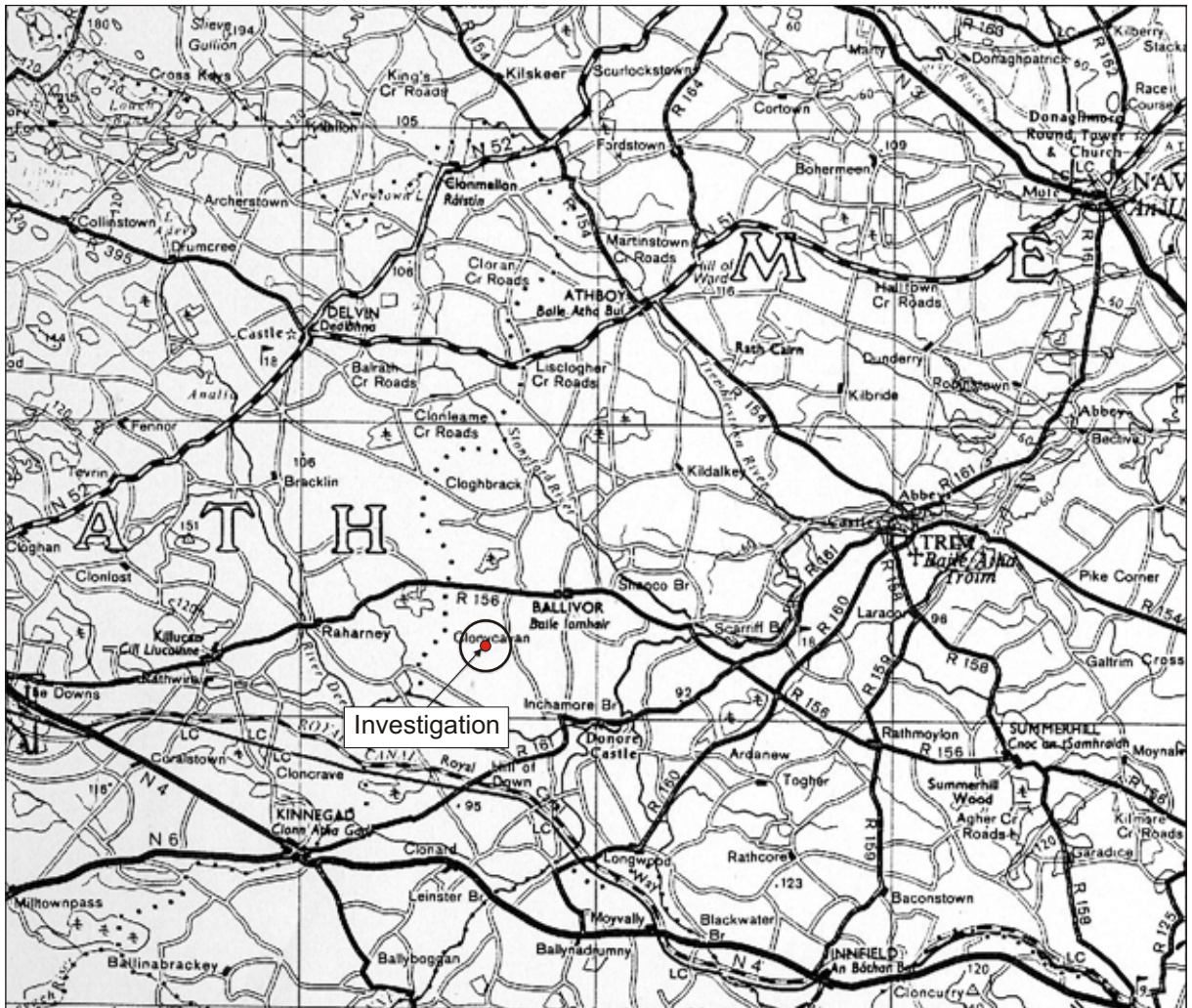


Fig. 1 General location map.

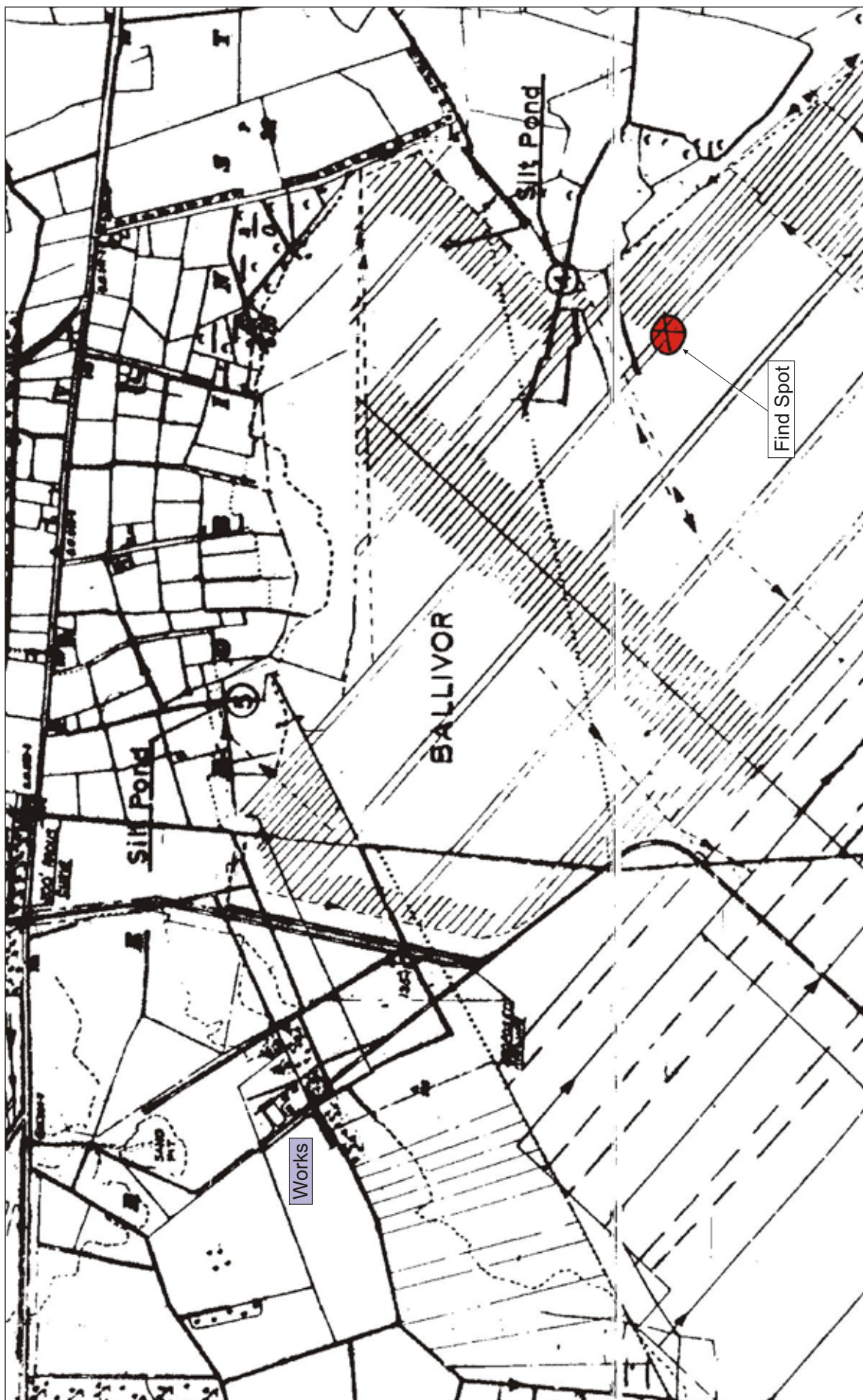


Fig. 2 Bord Na Mona map of Ballivor Bog with finds spot.



Plate 1 Investigation of find spot in Ballivor Bog (03E1221).