Technical report: biological remains from excavations at Ballinaspig More 5, N22 Ballincollig bypass scheme, County Cork, Republic of Ireland (site code: 02E1033)

by

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Summary

Small quantities of biological remains recovered from deposits of ?Bronze Age to early modern date, encountered during monitoring works for the N22 Ballincollig bypass scheme, at Ballinaspig More 5, County Cork, were submitted for analysis.

The submitted remains were restricted to small quantities of charred plant remains (mostly cereal grains) and of no interpretative value.

KEYWORDS: BALLINASPIG MORE 5; N22 BALLINCOLLIG BYPASS SCHEME; COUNTY CORK; REPUBLIC OF IRELAND; TECHNICAL REPORT; ?BRAZNE AGE; 1800S FARM COTTAGE; CHARRED PLANT REMAINS; CHARRED GRAIN

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Introduction

An archaeological excavation of deposits encountered during the initial stages of the
monitoring programme for the N22 Ballincollig bypass scheme, County Cork,
Republic of Ireland, was undertaken by Archaeological Consultancy Services Ltd
(ACS).

The site at Ballinaspig More 5 comprised numerous archaeological features relating to
two possible Bronze Age structures and a further structure that was probably a farm
cottage dating from the 1800s.

Small quantities of biological remains recovered from the processing of bulk
sediment samples were submitted to PRS for analysis.

Methods

The soil samples were placed onto 1 mm nylon mesh in a sieving tank. The light
organic fraction was washed over through a 2 mm sieve into a 500 micron sieve to collect
the flots. Each of the soil samples was put through this system twice to ensure
that as much material as possible was recovered.

The sediment samples were processed by ACS prior to delivery to PRS and only the small
quantities of recovered plant remains were submitted for analysis. These remains were
examined and identified as closely as possible.

Results

The results are presented in Feature number order. Archaeological information, provided
by the excavator, is given in square brackets. The sediment descriptions were also supplied
by the excavator.

Feature 30 [fill of posthole from semi-circular structure]
Sample 18
Dark greyish brown silty clay, with frequent stone inclusions and occasional charcoal flecks.
A single wheat grain, perhaps of emmer, Triticum dicoccum Schrank, was recovered.

Feature 1005 [pit fill]
Sample 13
Loose, mid to dark brown silty clay, with frequent charcoal and occasional stone inclusions.
There was only a little charcoal (to 5 mm) and ?cereal fragments.

Feature 1121 [?remains of plank-built wall in curvilinear slot trench]
Sample 143
Mid greyish brown sandy silt with approximately 35% charcoal.
The plant remains consisted of some rather ‘silted’ grains of cereals (16 barley (Hordeum), 2 ?wheat, and
15 indeterminate) and a single earthworm (Oligochaeta sp. indet.) egg capsule, apparently mineral-
impregnated.

Feature 1143 [fill of (?waste) pit]
Sample 134
Dark brown silty sand, with a number of pottery sherds and stone inclusions.
There was a single wheat grain, perhaps emmer.
Feature 1173 [primary fill of hearth]
Sample 125

Reddish orange oxidised clay.

The recovered assemblage comprised a few poorly preserved charred cereal grains (two barley, one wheat, and five indeterminate or fragmentary).

Feature 1177 [?remains of plank-built wall in curvilinear slot trench]
Sample ? (no sample number)

Mid greyish brown sandy silt with approximately 35% charcoal.

There was a small group of charred cereals, very ‘silted’ and mostly rather damaged, of about 3.3 cm$^3$ in volume, and all apparently barley.

Discussion

The submitted remains were restricted to small quantities of charred plant remains (mostly cereal grains) and of no interpretative value.

Retention and disposal

All of the material should be retained as part of the physical archive for the site.

Archive

All material is currently stored by Palaeoecology Research Services (Unit 8, Dabble Duck Industrial Estate, Shildon, County Durham), along with paper and electronic records pertaining to the work described here.

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