

Ecological Pre-Commencement Surveys

**Pre-construction survey of Cable Route and
Cleanrath Wind Farm at Derrineanig,
Co. Cork**



Planning & Environmental Consultants

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1 INTRODUCTION

McCarthy Keville O’Sullivan were commissioned by Cleanrath Windfarm Ltd., to undertake Otter and Badger surveys prior to the construction of a windfarm and grid connection route at Cleanrath. The site location and survey area (grid connection route and development footprint) is shown in Figure 1.1.

The purpose of these surveys were to satisfy the pre-construction survey requirements, in relation to otters and badgers as per commitments made in all the various planning documentation and consolidated in the CEMP of Planning Reference No. 15/06966 (ABP Ref. PL 04.246742).

1.1.1 Objectives

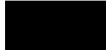

The objectives of this site visit and report are summarised below:

- Identify signs of otter usage and otter breeding holts within 150 m upstream and 150 m downstream of watercourses within the footprint of the windfarm development and along the grid connection route.
- Identify badger setts within the footprint of the windfarm development and along the grid connection route.
- Produce maps of findings.
- Report on findings of field surveys.

1.1.2 Statement of Authority

The surveys were undertaken on the 13th, 14th and 15th of November 2018 by Julie O’Sullivan (BSc, MSc) and on the 10th Sept 2018 by Pat Roberts (B.Sc., MCIEEM) of McCarthy Keville O’Sullivan Ltd. This report has been prepared by Julie O’Sullivan and David McNicholas (B.Sc., M.Sc., MCIEEM). Julie has four years professional experience. David has over eight years professional consultancy experience and is a full member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM). This report has been reviewed by Pat Roberts (B.Sc. Environmental Science, MCIEEM) who has over 13 years’ experience in management and ecological assessment.

Map Legend

-  Cleanrath Development Footprint
-  Derragh to Cleanrath WCs



MAP TITLE: Cleanrath Wind Farm and Grid Connection		MAP NO.: Figure 1.1	SCALE: 1:30,000 @ A3
PROJECT TITLE: Cleanrath Wind Farm, Co. Cork		OS SHEET NO.: N/A	DATE: 26-11-2018
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2 METHODS

2.1 Field surveys

During the field survey, potentially suitable habitat for badgers was searched for evidence of setts, tracks and signs. All proposed works areas were walked for signs of badger or setts, including a 150m buffer around each turbine.

Otter surveys were undertaken at all locations where the proposed construction footprint occurs in close proximity or crosses watercourses. Watercourses were searched for a distance of 150m adjacent to any works or crossing point.

All results were recorded using a Garmin Montana 650 hand-held GPS to mark grid reference locations.

All surveys were undertaken with reference to the following guidelines:

- Ecological Surveying Techniques for Protected Flora and Fauna during the Planning of National Road Schemes (NRA, 2009)
- Guidelines for Assessment of Ecological Impacts of National Road Schemes (NRA, 2009)
- Guidelines for the Treatment of Otters Prior to the Construction of National Road Schemes (NRA, 2006)
- Guidelines for the Treatment of Badgers Prior to the Construction of National Road Schemes (NRA, 2006)

2.2 GIS Mapping

Maps were produced using GIS Software application packages (MapInfo (Version 10.0)) detailing the location of all records identified during the survey.

3 RESULTS

3.1 Otter Survey

No potential tree roots, riverbank excavations or rock formations with the potential to support an otter holt (breeding or resting site) (Reid *et al* 2013) were found within the survey area. Many of the watercourses within the survey area comprise of field drains and are too small to provide significant otter habitat. However, evidence of otter usage (otter slide and spraints) was recorded during the survey at a number of locations where suitable habitat occurred. The results of the otter survey are presented in Table 3.1, Table 3.2 and in Figure 3.1. No other signs were identified at any of the other watercourse crossings shown in Figure 1.1.

Table 3.1 Otter survey results – development footprint

Development foot print		
Location on site	Grid reference	Comment
Bridge over the River Toon	W 20739, 70999	Spraint on bridge
East of Derrineanig hill	W 20998, 69552	Spraint on rock




Table 3.2 Otter survey results – Watercrossings along grid connection route.

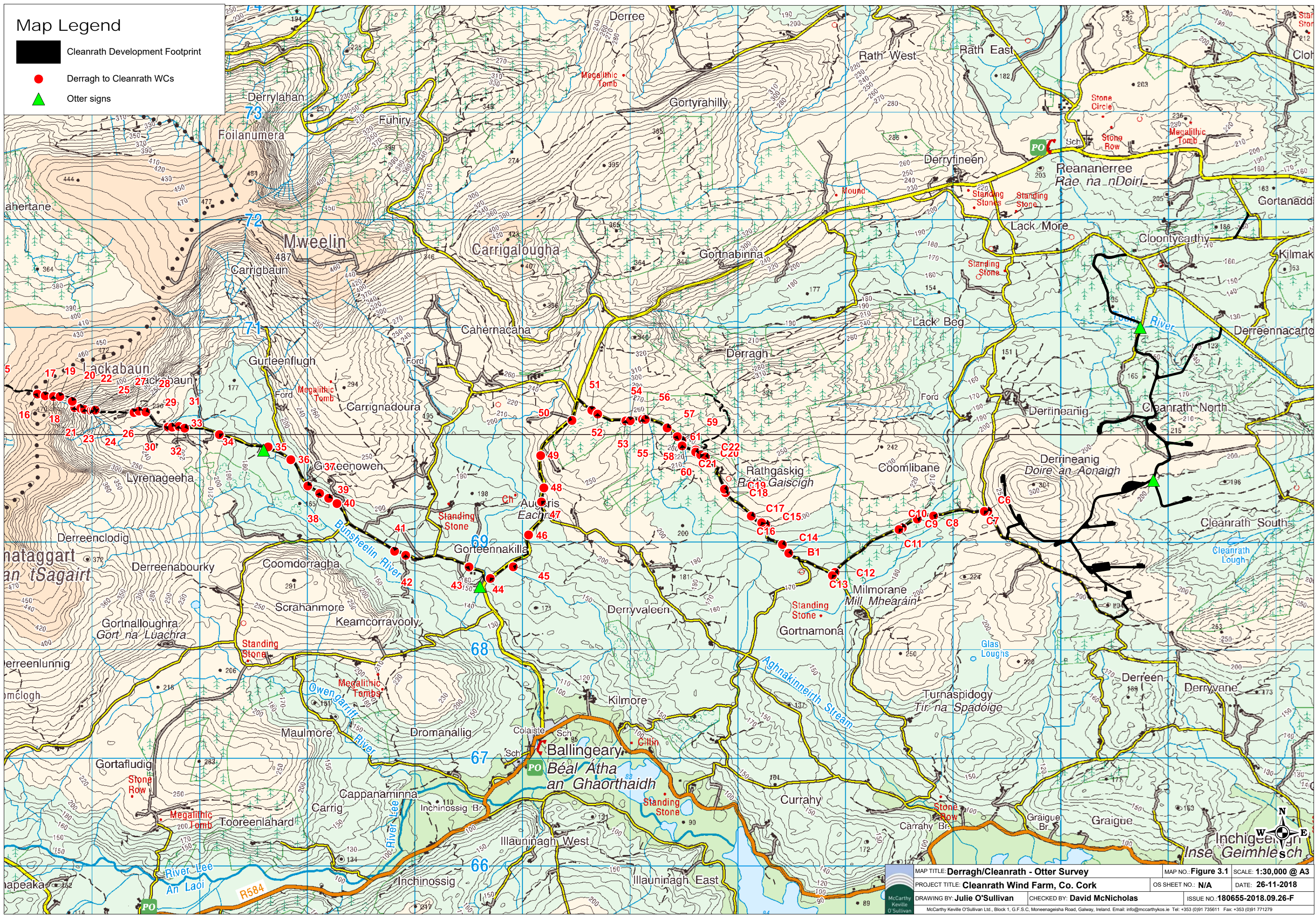
Watercrossings		
WC number (see Figure 1.1)	Grid reference	Comment
44	W 14603, 68593	Spraint on rock on the bank of the Cathair Na Cáithe River
35	W 12597, 69861	Otter slide; recorded on the banks of the Bunsheelin River


3.2 Badger Survey

No signs of badger or badger setts were recorded during the survey. Much of the heathland habitat within the development footprint does not provide good quality badger habitat, with large areas of rocky outcrop and shallow peat/soils.

Map Legend

-  Cleanrath Development Footprint
-  Derragh to Cleanrath WCs
-  Otter signs





MAP TITLE: **Derragh/Cleanrath - Otter Survey**
PROJECT TITLE: **Cleanrath Wind Farm, Co. Cork**
DRAWING BY: **Julie O'Sullivan**
CHECKED BY: **David McNicholas**

MAP NO.: **Figure 3.1** SCALE: **1:30,000 @ A3**
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4 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Otter and Badger

During the pre-commencement walkover surveys of the site, signs of otter were recorded at 4 locations across the study area. These were associated with existing watercourse crossings. No additional signs of the species were recorded i.e. spraints on rocks along the river channel, prints, slides or holts. Although signs of otter recorded during the visit suggest that the species does occur in the area, there will be no impact on the resting or breeding places of the species as a result of the scheduled works as no holts (breeding or resting places) were recorded. Impacts are therefore likely to be restricted to temporary disturbance during the construction phase.

No evidence of badger was recorded during the surveys and there are therefore no predicted impacts on the species as a result of the scheduled works.

5 REFERENCES

Reid, N., Hayden, B., Lundy, M.G., Pietravallo, S., McDonald, R.A. & Montgomery, W.I. (2013) National Otter Survey of Ireland 2010/12. Irish Wildlife Manuals No. 76. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, Dublin, Ireland.

Ecological Surveying Techniques for Protected Flora and Fauna during the Planning of National Road Schemes (NRA, 2009)

Guidelines for Assessment of Ecological Impacts of National Road Schemes (NRA, 2009)

Guidelines for the Treatment of Otters Prior to the Construction of National Road Schemes (NRA, 2006)

Guidelines for the Treatment of Badgers Prior to the Construction of National Road Schemes (NRA, 2006)