

# James Reilly & Co Ltd

27 Drogheda Street, Balbriggan, Co Dublin

Tel: 01 8834270 : Fax: 01 8411474

Email: [jharmon@reillygroup.ie](mailto:jharmon@reillygroup.ie)



16 February 2021

Dept. Housing Local Government and Heritage  
Wildlife Licensing Unit  
National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS)  
90 North King Street  
Dublin 7

Re: Wild Birds Derogations for 2021.22 – NPWS Public Consultation Process

Dear Sirs

We have been advised by the local Balbriggan Community Committee about this Public Consultation Process and we hereby submit our submission. Our late father James (Jimmy) Reilly RIP wrote to you on several occasions about the issue of urban seagulls and the harm that growing colonies are doing in our community. He wrote to the Department and to former Ministers Heather Humphreys in 2016 and Josepha Madigan in 2017 and in 2018. Your new Minister Darragh O'Brien knows our family very well and he is fully informed on this issue as a constituency TD.

Firstly, we wish to acknowledge that the derogation granted by former Minister Humphreys in 2017 and continued since then has made a very important contribution towards dealing with many issues that are being caused by seagulls. These issues include public health, public safety, very serious and costly damage to property, and we believe that more needs to be done to put matters right.

It is our firm belief that this Derogation must be kept in place permanently to keep seagull colonies from nesting in places where they do not belong and never will belong. Notwithstanding the derogation, seagulls continue to cause problems in many parts of our town. Although the pandemic has closed us down for business since early 2020, our family and most of our staff live in the town and we know our customers personally. The issues from the birds are a constant topic of conversation from April through the summer. Many businesses and our schools continue to have problems with seagulls and several housing estates are badly affected by breeding colonies. As a fishing town, we are used to seagulls, but what has happened in recent years is not natural at all.

The problem began when Balleally landfill closed in 2013 and things have gotten worse ever since. Fingal County Council must have a role to play in the protection of public health and safety and we are aware that Ireland is very far behind in this respect compared to our neighbours. It is obvious that the situation can only get worse unless a proper approach to the issues is adopted. There is no wish whatsoever in our community to harm seagulls, but the birds must be prevented from doing the serious harm to our community that has been happening in recent years – before matters get any worse. What justification is there for not addressing this problem?

On behalf of our family business, of our staff and customers, and of our town in general we request that the current Derogation is perpetuated and that the relevant authorities come to grips with the urban seagull problem and deliver a reasonable and proportionate solution that prioritises and protects public health, safety and security of property - as this is in the immediate and long-term interests of the birds as well.

Yours sincerely,

Anthony Reilly  
The Reilly Group Ltd