



NPWS

An tSeirbhís Páircenna
Náisiúnta agus Fíadhúla
National Parks and Wildlife
Service

**Derogation Number
DER-BAT-2026-03 (amended)**

**EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES (BIRDS AND NATURAL HABITATS) REGULATIONS, 2011
(S.I. No 477 of 2011)**

DEROGATION

Granted under Regulation 54 of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011, hereinafter referred to as “the Habitats Regulations”.

The Minister for Housing, Local Government & Heritage, in exercise of the powers conferred on him by Regulation 54 of the Habitats Regulations hereby grants to **Mark McSorley of Dromoland Castle & Estate, Dromoland, Newmarket-on-Fergus, County Clare, V95 ATD3** a derogation. It is stated that this derogation is issued:

- A. In the interests of public health and public safety, or for other imperative reasons of overriding public interest, including those of a social or economic nature and beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment
- B. As there is no satisfactory alternative, and the action authorised by this derogation will not be detrimental to the maintenance of the population of **bats** referred to below at a favourable conservation status in their natural range.

This derogation authorises the following:

1. Roost disturbance
2. Actions authorised within the derogation

The derogation is issued in respect of the following **bat species**:

- | | |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| • Common Pipistrelle | Pipistrellus Pipistrellus |
| • Soprano Pipistrelle | Pipistrellus Pygmaeus |
| • Lesser Horseshoe Bat | Rhinolophus Hipposideros |
| • Leisler’s Bat | Nycatalus Leisler |



Terms and Conditions

1. This derogation is granted solely to allow the activities specified in connection with the works located at **Dromoland Castle Stables, Dromoland, Newmarket-on-Fergus, County Clare, V95 ATD3** for **Mark McSorley**
2. All activities authorised by this derogation, and all equipment used in connection herewith, shall be carried out, constructed and maintained (as the case may be) so as to avoid unnecessary injury or distress to any species of **BAT**. Anything done other than in accordance with the terms of this derogation may constitute an offence
3. This derogation may be modified or revoked, for stated reasons, at any time.
4. The mitigation measures outlined in the application report (**Derogation Licence – Supporting Information Dromoland Castle and Estate, Dromoland Co. Clare**) together with any changes or clarification agreed in correspondence between NPWS and the agent or applicant, are to be carried out. Strict adherence must be paid to all the proposed measures in the application.
5. The actions which this derogation authorise shall be completed between **1st January – 30th April 2026, inclusive**.
6. The works will be supervised by bat ecologist(s): **Marie Kearns & Gavin Fennessy with Karen Mullen under supervision**
7. All mitigation measures detailed in the bat report (including, but not limited to, the provision of a dedicated bat loft for the horseshoe bats integrated into the stable building; the provision of a Cathedine Night Roost, and the refurbishment of the Cottage Cellar as a hibernaculum for Lesser Horseshoe Bat) to be implemented in full with ongoing liaison with local NPWS staff
8. If this derogation addresses works that are subject of a planning application, no such works permitted under this derogation can occur until planning permission is granted.
9. If this derogation expires prior to works permitted under this derogation commencing, a new application must be sought in advance, including the provision of any updated data or reports.
10. This derogation shall be produced for inspection on a request being made on that behalf by a member of An Garda Síochána or an authorised NPWS officer appointed under Regulation 4 of the Habitats Regulations.
11. The local **NPWS District Conservation Officer – David Lyons**, davida.lyons@npws.gov.ie, must be contacted prior to the commencement of any activity, and if bats are detected on site during the course of the work, under the terms of this derogation.
12. On completion of the actions which this derogation authorises, all recordings of bat species affected will be made using the standardised Returns form and must be submitted to the NPWS **within four weeks of the expiry date of this derogation**. Included with the Returns form, a report will also be submitted to wildlife.reports@npws.gov.ie detailing results of works and success of mitigation. **Both documents must be submitted to constitute a derogation return.**



NPWS

An tSeirbhís Páircenna
Náisiúnta agus Fiadhúlra
National Parks and Wildlife
Service

For the Minister for Housing, Local Government & Heritage

(an officer authorised by the Minister to sign on his behalf)

21 April 2026

Any query in relation to this derogation should be sent to reg54derogations@npws.gov.ie





Derogation Assessment

Name of Applicant: Mark McSorley

Location/Name of Project: Dromoland Castle & Estate, County Clare, V95 ATD3 (Stables)

Tick the following prohibition as chosen on the application:

(a) Deliberately capture or kill any specimen of the relevant species in the wild	<input type="checkbox"/>
(b) Deliberately disturb these species particularly during the period of breeding, rearing, hibernation and migration	<input type="checkbox"/>
(c) Deliberately take or destroy eggs of the relevant species in the wild	<input type="checkbox"/>
(d) Damage or destroy a breeding or resting place of such an animal, or	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
(e) Keep, transport, sell, exchange, offer for sale or offer for exchange any specimen of the relevant species taken in the wild, other than those taken legally as referred to in Article 12(2) of the Habitats Directive.	<input type="checkbox"/>
(a) Deliberately pick, collect, cut, uproot or destroy any specimen of these species in the wild, or	<input type="checkbox"/>
(b) Keep, transport, sell, exchange, offer for sale or offer for exchange any specimen of these species taken in the wild, other than those taken legally as referred to in Article 13(1)(b) of the Habitats Directive.	<input type="checkbox"/>

Test 1: A reason(s) listed in Regulation 54 (a)-(e) applies to the proposed activity

i. Tick which reason the applicant claims should be applied to the derogation

(a) In the interests of protecting wild flora and fauna and conserving natural habitats,	<input type="checkbox"/>
(b) To prevent serious damage, in particular to crops, livestock, forests, fisheries and water and other types of property	<input type="checkbox"/>
(c) In the interests of public health and public safety, or for other imperative reasons of overriding public interest, including those of a social or economic nature and beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment,	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
(d) For the purpose of research and education, of re-populating and re-introducing these species and for the breeding operations necessary for these purposes, including artificial propagation of plants, or	<input type="checkbox"/>
(e) To allow, under strictly supervised conditions, on a selective basis and to a limited extent, the taking or keeping of certain specimens of the species to the extent specified therein, which are referred to in the First Schedule.	<input type="checkbox"/>



ii. Test 1: Conclusion

Please tick the following where it applies:

There is a valid reason(s) listed in Regulation 54 (a)-(e) which applies to the proposed activity:	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	No	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please outline your analysis below and state how the applicant has provided evidence to support your conclusion:

The application form and associated documentation provided by the applicant has been reviewed in full. The application relies on regulation 54(2)(c) *'in the interests of public health and public safety, or for other imperative reasons of overriding public interest, including those of a social or economic nature and beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment'* as the reason chosen for a derogation that they believe applies to the proposed activity.

In the detail provided, it is clear that the applicants are relying on the imperative reasons of overriding public interest, including those of a social or economic nature aspect of Reason C.

As outlined on page one of the accompanying report, the derogation is required to facilitate proposed works at Dromoland Castle and Estate, Dromoland, Co. Clare. The proposed works at the stables aim to provide guest accommodation, namely 12 rooms/suites as part of the estate and involve the renovation and conversion of the existing building. It is noted, on page 55 of the report that the current condition of the existing structure is not compatible with the proposed development.

The applicants have provided evidence as to the nature and scale of the public interest including those of a social or economic nature for the proposed works and the proposed activity is necessary to achieve these overall objectives. Based on the above this application has passed Test 1 and can now proceed to Test 2 |



Test 2: Absence of a satisfactory alternative

Please tick the following where it applies and add a comment below to support the recommendation:

The applicant has provided satisfactory evidence that alternative solutions have been considered and have given reasons why the proposed approach is the only satisfactory alternative:	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	No	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please outline your analysis below and state how the applicant has provided evidence to support your conclusion (If you wish to add additional conditions please complete pg. 6):

The documentation submitted by the applicant has been reviewed, including the evidence for alternative solutions.

The purpose of the derogation is to allow the following activity to take place: The upgrading of a stable building to provide hotel accommodation.

The specific situation that needs to be addressed is the works will result in the destruction of a roosting location for 3 Bat species.

The alternative solutions suggested by the applicant are:

“1. Do-Nothing” scenario – “In the absence of a plan for the Stables, this structure would continue to be used for golf storage/maintenance facility with a high level of activity from personnel, machinery and vehicles from early morning, including areas the bats use to roost in and access the building. At night, the site would continue to be lit up with obtrusive security lighting. The roost potential of the site would remain poor would likely be lost given the current use of the structure” – This assessment is accepted; the buildings currently are suboptimal for Bat usage.

Alternative Option 2 – “Roost avoidance was considered but is not feasible: the roost occupies the north building of the stables structure and is an integral part of the Stables and inseparable from necessary refurbishment works. In-situ retention during works would cause significant disturbance and risk of injury to bats, contrary to the legal requirement to avoid harm to protected species” – This assessment is accepted.

Alternative Option 3 – “The construction of a permanent stand-alone structure i.e., Bat House was considered but this was not a viable option for the following reasons. As part of the surveys to inform this report Lesser Horseshoe Bat roosting activity has only been recorded in two locations within the grounds of Dromoland Castle and Estate; the Stables (north building) and the Drain by the castle. No Lesser horseshoe Bat activity was picked up by the four externally placed passive bat detectors, one by Dromoland Lough to the north, one by a patch of woodland to the south, and two placed externally on the roof of the Dromoland Castle and the East Wing. As has been previously outlined, the Drain is considered to be a sub-optimal roosting site. The surveys have recorded consistent Lesser Horseshoe Bat activity at the Stables, despite the less than suitable internal conditions, and no significant roosts (e.g., maternity or large satellite roosts) have been recorded to date elsewhere within Dromoland. It is considered that the placement of a permanent Bat House structure, to mitigate for the loss of a

known roost for Lesser Horseshoe Bat within Dromoland, should be informed by detailed surveys on the activity of Lesser Horseshoe Bat within Dromoland and their commuting corridors. In the case of the proposed development, the programme of works does not allow for such surveys to be completed. Recognising the species' fidelity to established roosts, integrating a Bat Loft within the Stables as outlined in the Mitigation Approach section of the report offers the most robust solution" – This assessment is accepted, the apparent low level of Bat usage of the structure makes the provision of a Bat loft and 2 Cathedine night roosts acceptable mitigation measures. It's also noted that a previously closed cellar adjoining the walled garden is to be made accessible for Bats making it a suitable location for Bat usage during winter months.

The applicant has provided satisfactory evidence that alternative solutions have clearly been considered. As outlined on page 55-56 of the accompanying report. The applicant has considered 3 alternatives to the proposed option. These are the do nothing alternative and the option of retaining the roost during and after construction and the option of providing a stand alone alternative. Based on the assessment of the application documentation, it is regarded that the applicant has considered all available alternative solutions and at this time, no other alternative solutions are apparent.

Having weighed the possible solutions to solve the applicant's problem against the effects of a derogation on the species concerned, it is concluded that the application has passed Test 2 and can proceed to Test 3. |

Upon completion of your assessment, please return this Recommendation to WLU to continue the application process.



Test 3: Impact of a derogation on conservation status of the species

Please tick the following where it applies and add a comment below to support the recommendation:

The derogation would NOT be detrimental to the maintenance of the populations of the species in question at a favourable conservation status in their natural range.	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	No	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please outline your analysis below and state how the applicant has provided evidence to support your conclusion. (If you wish to add additional conditions please complete pg. 6)

The stables contains a day/night roost for a small number of lesser horseshoe bats. This species is in unfavourable conservation status. The proposed works would see the provision of a dedicated bat loft for the horseshoe bats integrated into the stable building as well as the provision of a Cathedine Night Roost, and the refurbishment of the Cottage Cellar as a hibernaculum for Lesser Horseshoe Bat.

Providing all the planned mitigation measures detailed in the bat report are implemented in full then there should be no significant negative impact on the conservation status of this species and the species may in fact benefit

If the answer above is Yes then the derogation may be granted, providing Tests 1 and 2 have also been met.

Upon completion of your assessment, please return this Recommendation to WLU to continue the application process.



Derogation decision

The application for a derogation under Regulation 54 of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations, 2011 (S.I. 477 of 2011), as amended, has been assessed by officials in the Department and the following decision has been made:

Tick box where appropriate:

There is no satisfactory alternative

and the derogation is not detrimental to the maintenance of the populations of the species to which the Habitats Directive relates at a favourable conservation status in their natural range.

Therefore, a derogation may be granted to the applicant, since it is—

(a) in the interests of protecting wild fauna and flora and conserving natural habitats

(b) to prevent serious damage, in particular to crops, livestock, forests, fisheries and water and other types of property,

(c) in the interests of public health and public safety, or for other imperative reasons of overriding public interest, including those of a social or economic nature and beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment,

(d) for the purpose of research and education, of repopulating and re-introducing these species and for the breeding operations necessary for these purposes, including the artificial propagation of plants, or

(e) to allow, under strictly supervised conditions, on a selective basis and to a limited extent, the taking or keeping of certain specimens of the species to the extent specified therein, which are referred to in the First Schedule.

OR This application has been refused as one or more of the conditions set out above have not been met



The following conditions should be attached to the derogation:

1. The works in the north building of the Stables structure will only happen outside the summer months (i.e. between 1st September to 30th April).
2. All mitigation measures detailed in the bat report (including, but not limited to, the provision of a dedicated bat loft for the horseshoe bats integrated into the stable building; the provision of a Cathedine Night Roost, and the refurbishment of the Cottage Cellar as a hibernaculum for Lesser Horseshoe Bat) to be implemented in full with ongoing liaison with local NPWS staff.
- 3.
- 4.

[add additional conditions where required]

Kate Greaney

Signed: .

Date: April 21, 2026

Position: Ecologist