

Derogation under Regulation 54

Application for Oisín O
Sullivan to carry out surveys

Date: 16/01/2026

O'DONNELL 
ENVIRONMENTAL



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1 Supporting Information

1.1 INTRODUCTION

A Derogation under Regulation 54 is sought to disturb bat species while conducting survey works. This derogation is being sought to conduct survey work during which there is a likelihood of encountering bat species. The nature of the survey work is widespread and varied.

Internal inspections of structures containing bats or likely to contain bats will be carried out using the methodologies described in Marnell et al., 2022, CIEEM InPractice Issue June 2025, and Collins et al., 2023.

1.2 RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

Oisín O Sullivan is a Senior Ecologist a Qualifying member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (advancement to full membership of CIEEM is currently under review). Oisín was awarded a BSc in Ecology and Environmental Biology at University College Cork in 2020. Oisín has experience in bat surveys for a large variety of projects including wind farms both onshore and offshore, residential, and linear infrastructure. Oisín has previously been licensed by NPWS to disturb bats (2021 – 2025), photograph mammals (2021 – 2025), and handle bat species (2023 - 2025).

Oisín has extensive experience in bat species identification through

- Acoustic surveys
- Internal inspection with endoscope
- Species ID in the hand using physical features
- Collection of faecal samples for genetic analysis.

From 2021 to present Oisín has used these survey methodologies, under licence when required, to identify activity, behaviour and resting places for all Irish bat species in a wide variety of habitat contexts.

1.3 BACKGROUND TO PROPOSED ACTIVITY

Oisín is a full time Senior Ecologist. As part of this role using methodologies described in the introduction is required across varying site and planning contexts. As an Ecologist, previously bat-licenced 2021 to 2025, this licence is required in day-to-day work to survey and research protected bat species potentially encountered across projects. These surveys are intended for the best interest of wildlife to better help developers comply with National and EU legislation.

1.4 DEROGATION TESTS

<i>Explanation as to why the derogation licence sought is the only available option for works and no suitable alternative exists as per Regulation 54 of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations.</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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<p>Oisín O Sullivan intends to apply for a personal bat survey/roost disturbance licence. This licence application is intended to be year-round for all bat species across all counties in the Republic of Ireland.</p> <p>As an Ecologist, previously bat-licensed from 2021 to 2025, this licence is required in day-to-day work to survey and research protected bat species potentially encountered across projects. These surveys are intended for the best interest of wildlife to better help developers comply with National and EU legislation.</p> <p>Alternative solutions were considered, and none are available in this instance. The alternative 'do-nothing scenario' in this instance is remaining without licence to appropriately survey bat species through entering their roosting spaces. Surveys would therefore be required to be non-invasive. The results from non-invasive surveys may lead to inaccurate results (species, numbers etc.) and resultant improper assessment mitigation. This would serve to potentially negatively impacts protected bat species.</p>	
<p><i>Evidence that actions permitted by a derogation licence will not be 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 as is required under Section 54(2) of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations.</i></p> <p>Under the actions of this licence, if granted, appropriate and thorough survey of protected bat species will be facilitated. This will ensure the appropriate level of mitigation is applied to developments based on the high-confidence of results gathered.</p> <p>It is considered with best available information that the proposal will not be detrimental to the maintenance of the bat populations at a favourable conservation status in their natural range and that the proposal will not have a detrimental effect on the local bat populations.</p>	☒
<p><i>Details of any mitigation measures planned for the species affected by the derogation at the location, along with evidence that such mitigation has been successful elsewhere.</i></p> <p>There are no site-specific measures or specific roost location for which this application applies to. All roost surveys carried out will be non-destructive and minimally invasive, with cognisance to guidelines set out in Marnell et al. (2022) and Collins (2023).</p>	☒
<p><i>As much information as possible to allow a decision to be made on this application.</i></p> <p>Oisín O Sullivan BSc (Hons) has been a bat-licensed surveyor for the previous four calendar years under the following licences: DER/BAT 2021-44; DER/BAT 2022-70; DER/BAT 2023-77, DER/BAT 2024-27, and DER/BAT 2025-191. Additionally, Oisín was licensed for the capture and handling of bat species in 2023, 2024, and 2025 (C231/2023; C14/2024; C075/2025).</p> <p>Oisín has extensive on-the-job experience in bat roost surveys and bat handling, for which he has been licensed for also. Under the previous survey licences, Oisín has undertaken a wide range of roost surveys across the Republic of Ireland targeting a wide range of bat species, including Lesser Horseshoe Bat.</p>	☒

In addition to learning appropriate roost survey techniques 'on-the-job', Oisín has read and understood relevant guidelines including Marnell et al. (2022) and Collins (2023) regarding roost surveys of both structures and trees.

Listed below are select examples of relevant training and work undertaken by Oisín O Sullivan in relation to protected bat species:

Echoes Ecology Scotland – In May 2022 attended a bat handling course provided by Echoes Ecology in Scotland, which included the handling of common and soprano pipistrelles, Daubenton's bat, whiskered bat, and brown long-eared bat..

Voluntary contribution to Portuguese “National Roosts of Importance – winter monitoring 2024” – In March 2024 assisted in a ringing and biometrics monitoring program for mines in Northern Portugal. This involved the handling, ringing, and recording of biometrics for; *Miniopterus schreibersi* and *Rhinolophus ferrumquinum* along with the disturbance of *Rhinolophus hipposiderous*, *Rhinolophus Euryale*, *Myotis blythii*, *Myotis emerginatus*, *Myotis myotis*, and *Tadarida teniotis*.

Unnamed lesser horseshoe bat maternity roost in Co. Clare – In collaboration with NPWS ranger Elaine Keegan surveys were undertaken targeting a Lesser Horseshoe Bat maternity roost for both roost population monitoring in 2023 and 2024 These surveys also established their absence in winter to allow emergency structural repairs and predator proofing on the building to conserve and retain the roost. There was an increase in population in the roost from 2023 to 2024.

Cahercon House – In 2025 a combination of all acoustic surveys, internal inspections and handling were used to establish species presence and fully characterise the use of a building in County Clare in which multiple species were roosting. Four targeted emergence surveys and an exhaustive internal inspection was carried out over the course 2025. Oisín and his colleagues were able to establish species populations within the building and also their movement to different roosting locations throughout all seasons. Hibernation, maternity, and transitional roosting locations and populations were all established and defined within the building.

1.5 MONITORING IMPACTS OF DEROGATION

Monitoring the impacts of this derogation will be done through standard submission of derogation returns. During standard reporting of survey works undertaken with use of this derogation the results will show the level of disturbance under the derogation in methodology sections.

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