



NPWS

An tSeirbhís Páircenna
Náisiúnta agus Fíadhúrla
National Parks and Wildlife
Service

**Derogation Number
DER-BAT-2026-151**

**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 **Limerick Gaelic Grounds Limited of Gaelic Grounds, Ennis Road, Limerick, County Limerick** 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**:

- | | |
|------------------------|----------------------------------|
| • Lesser Horseshoe Bat | Rhinolophus Hipposideros |
| • Brown Long-Eared Bat | Plecotus Auritus |
| • Natterer’s Bat | Myotis Nattereri |
| • Common Pipistrelle | Pipistrellus Pipistrellus |
| • Soprano Pipistrelle | Pipistrellus Pygmaeus |
| • Daubenton’s Bat | Myotis Daubentonii |
| • Whiskered Bat | Myotis Mystacinus |



Terms and Conditions

1. This derogation is granted solely to allow the activities specified in connection with the works located at **Prospect Hall, Tonbaun, Crecora, County Limerick, V94 DN40** for **Limerick Gaelic Grounds Limited**
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. In addition, the Minister reserves the right to revoke the derogation where updated information indicates that the basis upon which the derogation was granted has materially changed.
4. The mitigation measures outlined in the application report (**Limerick GAA Training Centre at Crecora County Limerick Bat Survey**) 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 September – 31st December 2026, inclusive**.
6. **NPWS should be notified of occupancy and of any necessary future measures required**
7. The works will be supervised by bat ecologist(s): **John Curtin with Rowan Curtin under supervision**
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 Regional Manager – Áine Lynch**, aine.lynch@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.**



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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)

26 March 2026

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





Derogation Assessment

Name of Applicant: Limerick Gaelic Grounds Limited

Location/Name of Project: Prospect Hall, Tonbaun, County Limerick, V94 DN40

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>
(d) Damage or destroy a breeding or resting place of such an animal, or	<input 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 two of the accompanying report, a derogation is required to assist with proposed works at a site approximately 5km south of Limerick City and 2.3km west of Crecora, Co. Limerick.

The objective of these works involves the construction of a sports training facility including the construction of a two-storey pavilion as well as the refurbishment of a currently unoccupied residential building on behalf of Limerick GAA. The report further outlines on page 30 that the proposed works aims to “provide a state-of-the-art training centre for Limerick GAA for academy and senior groups from U14 to Senior including Hurling, Camogie and Ladies Gaelic Football”. By doing this, it will also “benefit the health and wellbeing for people throughout the county.”

The report highlights one of the aims of the Limerick County development plan Objective SCS1 O20 – Protection of Sports Grounds/Facilities being to “ensure new developments provide enough playing fields, protect existing sports grounds, and promote integrated, accessible community recreation” with this proposed development meeting this stated objective.

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 construction of a sports training facility including the construction of a two-storey pavilion as well as the refurbishment of a currently unoccupied residential building on behalf of Limerick GAA.

The specific situation that needs to be addressed is the works will impact upon bat roosting sites.

The alternative solutions suggested by the applicant are:

1. “Do-Nothing”- this is not satisfactory to the applicant because it means their intended development would not proceed.
2. Adding bat boxes won’t work or be a replacement for roost to be lost so unsatisfactory to NPWS or conservation of bats

In relation to solutions 3 and 4 below are direct quotes from the developers supporting document which I would accept as reasonable.

3. Solution 3 Retention of roosts in existing residential building and tree - The proposed project (if it proceeds) will see an increase of lighting close to the existing roosts. Some treelines and hedges will be lost during the construction phase however significant woodland creation is proposed in other sections of the site as well as the creation of wetland ponds. If the existing roosts were retained only, it is highly likely woodland species such as Brown Long-eared, Myotis and Lesser Horseshoe bats will find the site less favourable as a roost site.
4. Solution 4 (from section 5.2.4 of supporting doc.) Retention of roosts and creation of purpose built bat roost building. – The unoccupied residential building within the site contains several roosts within attics that will be viable post construction with some modifications including the instillation of bat access slates and bitumen felt membrane after roof repairs have been carried out. It is the surveyors experience that despite these efforts, given the increased human activity in the area, it is likely that woodland bats such as Brown Long-eared, Myotis and Lesser Horseshoe bats will not find the site as attractive. As such a purpose- built bat roost building will be constructed to the northwest in an area close to the proposed

wetland ponds, woodland in a dark zone. It is likely that Pipistrelle species will persist in the original roosts given these species are less impacted by light

The applicant has provided satisfactory evidence that alternative solutions have clearly been considered. As outlined on pages 9-10 of the application and the accompanying report. *A number of alternative solutions, including the "do-nothing alternative" were examined by the applicant.*

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. However, it is essential that all compensatory measures, mitigation and associated monitoring outlined in the Bat Survey report supporting the application are implemented in full to ensure no long term adverse effects on the bat population. This includes a condition that all lighting of pitches and walkways will cease at 22.30 hrs or earlier everyday. Also there is a commitment that if occupancy falls lower than the baseline identified in the report, measures will be required to rectify the situation and that these will take place. NPWS should be notified of occupancy and of any necessary future measures required

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)

Minor roosts for Lesser horseshoe bat (LHB), soprano and common pipistrelles, long-eared bats and Natterer’s bat were identified on site. LHB is in unfavourable conservation status nationally, while the other species are in favourable conservation status.

Although the proposed renovations will remove the current sub-optimal roosting opportunities, the planned mitigation measures include proposals to provide enhanced long-term suitable bat roosting in a new dedicated bat house. This will likely improve the roosting opportunities for the bat species on site.

Provided the mitigation measures are implemented in full, and in particular the early construction of the new bat house plus the careful installation of the proposed bat-sensitive lighting plan, the works will not be detrimental to the maintenance of the populations of the species in question at a favourable conservation status in their natural range

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.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

[add additional conditions where required]

Signed: *Kate Greaney*

Date: March 26, 2026

Position: Ecologist