

**Derogation Number
DER-BAT-2026-180**

**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 **Aine Marie Ni Fhaolain of Cork Educational Training Board, Coachford College, Glebe, Coachford, County Cork, P12 DY92** 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**



Terms and Conditions

1. This derogation is granted solely to allow the activities specified in connection with the works located at **Coachford Community College, Glebe, Coachford, County Cork, P12 DY92** for **Aine Marie Ni Fhaolain**
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 (**Bat Derogation Licence Supporting Document MCOH – Coachford Community College**) 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 November– 31st December 2026, inclusive**.
6. The works will be supervised by bat ecologist(s): **Sara Fissolo**
- 7.
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 Conservation Ranger – Louis O’Sullivan**, louis.osullivan@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 tScribhís 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)

22 April 2026

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



Derogation Assessment

Name of Applicant: Aine Marie Ni Fhaolain

Location/Name of Project: Coachford Community College, County Cork, P12 DY92

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 checked="" 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 five of the accompanying report, the derogation is required to assist with proposed works at Coachford Community College, Coachford, Co. Cork.

The objective of these works involves the demolition of the existing structures onsite and the construction of a new multi-storey pupil post primary school. The report further outlines on page 23 that Coachford “ is listed as a Key Villages in Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028 with 95 new units required for the Plan Period” leading to a population increase for the area. A post primary school with increased student capacity is required to facilitate this population increase from a social and public interest perspective.

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 demolition of the existing structures onsite and the construction of a new multi-storey pupil post primary school in Coachford Co. Cork.

The specific situation that needs to be addressed is: there is a bat roost of c.4 individuals within the building

The alternative solutions suggested by the applicant are:

1. “Do-Nothing” scenario: If the demolition works were not to go ahead, the new school building and yard would not be built. This would considerably impact the development of Coachford village and could impair quality of education in the future. This would be contradictory with the plan and strategy cited in the Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028 However, the roost would likely continue to be used by bats. Regional NPWS assessment: approved
2. Alternative 1: Timing of the Proposed Demolition – Winter. Undertaking the demolition works in winter was considered during the planning of the demolition strategy. While this would be the ideal scenario because no bats are likely to be present in the roost at that time of the year, this option is unsatisfactory. The demolition works will depend on multifactorial elements, but notably the school schedule. It is planned to construct the new school prior to demolishing the old one, to allow for minimal disruption of the school year. During these works, the school will function as usual. It is therefore expected for the demolition of the main school building, where the roost lies in, to occur during the summer break, unless unforeseen delays modify the program. Regional NPWS assessment: approved
3. Alternative 2: Timing of the Proposed Demolition - Active bat season. In the likely case that the demolition is carried out during the active bat season, the following plan is proposed: The current roost entrances will be blocked during winter Nov-Dec 2026, when the roost is vacant. This way, no bats will be able to re-enter the roost location. To ensure that no bats are present during demolition, a pre-commencement survey will be carried out the day before demolition. A small pipistrelle roost will be permanently lost. However, the design of the project will allow to mitigate for the roost lost, and the proposed mitigations will limit the risk of harming bats during demolitions. Artificial roosting options will be installed in the vicinity of the previous roost location, as well as at other locations on the site. Further,

the school yard will be enhanced and new foraging and community habitat will be created. Regional NPWS assessment: approved

The applicant has provided satisfactory evidence that alternative solutions have clearly been considered. As outlined on pages 23/24 of the accompanying report (DERBAT - 250438 - Supporting Information - 24.11.2025) a number of alternative viable 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.

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)

A small pipistrelle roost is present within one of the buildings on site. Both common and soprano pipistrelles are widespread and abundant in Ireland and are in favourable conservation status. These species are also adaptable and quick to occupy new roosting features. Suitable and proportionate mitigation has been proposed, including the provision of alternative roosts in the form of bat boxes and sensitive lighting. Providing these mitigation measures are implemented, I am satisfied that 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: .

Date: April 22, 2026

Position: Ecologist