

**Supporting Information for Bat Derogation Licence Application  
for Shane Brien covering period 17<sup>th</sup> April 2026 to 31<sup>st</sup> December  
2026 (inclusive)**

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## **1. Introduction**

### **1.1 Objective of the proposed works**

This derogation licence is being sought for conducting bat-related surveys in relation to ecological assessments for plans and projects and biodiversity studies. Some of these surveys require entry into known or suspected bat roosts at various times of the year to determine the presence or absence of bats and the status of the roost site. In conducting ecological assessments in relation to bats, it is important to identify and assess the use of a suspect roost and bat roosting features and to document this.

This derogation licence will be used for survey only, **Shane Brien** would be considered a suitability trained and proficient ecologist and will maintain the welfare of the bat(s) and insure minimum level of disturbance as possible. The granting of the derogation will not be will not be detrimental to the maintenance of the population of any bat species.

### **1.2 Name, qualifications and relevant experience of scientific staff, including trainees, involved in the preparation of the application and those responsible for carrying out the proposed activity**

Shane Brien BSc, MSc, ACIEEM

Shane has undertaken a variety of bat-related surveys in relation to environmental impact assessments for proposed developments under his previous employer Scott Cawley Ltd. and as part of Dublin Bat Group. These have been a part of varying projects ranging from infrastructure (N6 GCRR, MetroLink, DART+ Coastal) to residential developments, some examples can be listed below in relevant experience. Some of these surveys required entry into known or suspected bat roosts at various times of year to determine the presence or absence of bats and the status of the roost site. All surveys followed Bat Conservation Trust guidance (Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines 4th edition; Collins, 2023) and Irish guidance. He is considered a trained bat ecologist, including internal and external building roost inspections, tree roost identification and inspection, and use of endoscope. Shane has been a valued member in BCI voluntary surveys which included Daubenton's survey, Pilot Woodland Monitoring Scheme and BATLAS 2020.

#### **EDUCATION**

Level 5 QQI European Community Development, Capacity Ireland (2017)

MSc Ecological Assessment, University College Cork (2016)

BSc (Environmental Science) (Hons.), National University of Ireland, Galway (2015)

#### **EMPLOYMENT HISTORY**

2024 ongoing Self-employed Ecologist

2023 to 2024 Senior Consultant Ecologist, Scott Cawley Ltd, Dublin

2019 to 2023 Consultant Ecologist, Scott Cawley Ltd., Dublin

2019 to 2019 Curlew Action Team Assistant, National Parks and Wildlife Service, Dublin

2018 to 2019 Consultant Ecologist, Coillte, Wicklow

## RELEVANT BAT EXPERIENCE

Previous self-named wildlife licences

Bat derogation licence (all bat species) - **DER-BAT-2025-207** nil record return, 0 bat species affected by that derogation (returned 23<sup>rd</sup> December 2025)

Bat handling licence by hand and hand net (all bat species except lesser horseshoe bat) - **Licence No. C062/2025** expired 31st December 2025 (returned 23rd December 2025)

Photography/film licence a protected wild animal – **Licence No. 114/2025** expired 31st December 2025 (returned 24th December 2025)

Named derogation licences (project specific)

- **DER-BAT-2023-17** – Handling training under the guidance of Neil Middleton, internal training as member of Scott Cawley Ltd.
- **DER-BAT-2025-06** – Surveyor as member of Scott Cawley Ltd, Shane Brien found Soprano Pipistrelle roost during emergence survey and photographed roost location (from ground level) that was added into Bat Mitigation Strategy report.
- **DER-BAT 2022-38** – Roof removal at Kilmainham Mills, Kilmainham, Co. Dublin (2022). Supervision of works under licence to remove roof tiles. No bats or evidence found during works, when overseen by Shane Brien, as member of Scott Cawley Ltd.
- **DER-BAT 2020-73 & DER/BAT 2022-45** – Roost disturbance, Emo Court, Emo, Co. Laois. Included supervision of enabling works at basement level Emo Court, an active brown long-eared roost. Photographs of bats, no handling was required during overseeing works by Shane Brien, as member of Scott Cawley Ltd.
- **DER-BAT 2020-20** – Proposed Strategic Housing Development, Harbour Road, Dalkey, Co. Dublin (2019). Supervision of roof tile removal of known bat roost, Shane Brien handled bat during roof removal and transferred to bat box. Shane also monitored and returned Year 1 (2021) and Year 3 (2023) bat box checks. Return by Scott Cawley Ltd.

Other bat related experience

- **Santry River Restoration and Greenway Project Bat Surveys, Dublin** (2025): transects along Santry River over several nights.
- **Stepaside, Dublin** (2025): two emergence surveys for update of land development zone following completion of new build estate.

- **Throughout Dublin, MetroLink (2018-2022):** Internal inspections of buildings, bat activity surveys in fields and emergence/re-entry at buildings, coordinating new team members to carry out update of surveys.
- **Refurbishment Works, The Coast Guard Cottages, Dún Laoghaire, Co. Dublin (2020).** Internal and external building inspections of proposed refurbishment works on uninhabitable cottages. No bat evidence.
- **Grangecastle, Co. Dublin Planning Application SD20A/0121 (2020):** Pre-demolition survey for bats and overseeing demolition of farmhouse building. No bat evidence.
- **Proposed Light Changes, Kiltarnan ski slopes, Co. Dublin (2019).** Internal and external building inspections near proposed lighting upgrades. Bat activity surveys included. No bat evidence from buildings.
- **Harbour Road, Dalkey, Dublin (2019):** Bat activity surveys. Roost presence or absence. Monitoring bat boxes from pre-construction to operation.
- **Newcastle Bat Monitoring Project, Newcastle, Co. Dublin (2016-2019):** Undertook roost presence/absence surveys on a series of buildings in Newcastle during the 2019 year to monitor roost characteristics in the village.
- **Bat Conservation Ireland, Pilot Woodland Monitoring Scheme, Knocksink Wood SAC, Wicklow (2016-2017):** Designed a transect suitable to capture a representative area of the woodland and follow the recommended guidelines by the project manager. Used automated detectors to identify all bat species and highlight areas of bat activity within Knocksink Wood SAC.

#### **MEMBERSHIP OF PROFESSIONAL BODIES AND LEARNED SOCIETIES**

Bat Conservation Ireland (BCI) and Dublin branch; Associate Member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM); Botanical Society of Britain and Ireland (BSBI) and member of BSBI Committee for Ireland (CFI), current joint secretary; British Bryological Society (BBS) Dublin Naturalists Field Club (DNFC); the Conchological Society of Britain and Ireland; Birdwatch Ireland.

#### **1.3 If this application is for the carrying out of surveys that may cause disturbance, qualifications of all involved must be provided and trainees must be clearly identified**

**Shane Brien** (Supervisor) – Qualifications listed above

## 2. Background of proposed activity

This derogation licence is being sought for conducting bat-related surveys in relation to ecological assessments for plans and projects and/or biodiversity studies.

Some of these surveys require entry into known or suspected bat roosts at various times of the year to determine the presence or absence of bats and the status of the roost site. In conducting ecological assessments in relation to bats, it is important to identify and assess the use of a suspect roost and bat roosting features and to document this.

Preference to identifying these elements would be conducted via non-intrusive methods such as ground visual assessment, manual/automated detectors during emergence/re-entry surveys and use of an IR camera. However, this may not be feasible in hard to view or difficult to access areas and may require close inspections of potential roost features in trees/ crevices or entry into a suspected bat roost. This can confirm if features are suitable for potential roosting bats and/or if there is evidence of bats, using torchlight and an endoscope in a careful and sensitive manner.

This derogation licence would aim to inform potential mitigation measures and strategies.

All surveys will follow UK and Ireland good practice guidelines as outlined by CIEEM, Bat Conservation Ireland and Bat Conservation Trust.

Shane Brien is a trained bat ecologist, including internal and external building roost inspection, tree roost identification and inspection training, and endoscope training. He has prepared derogation licences for bats and their roosts, and overseen the discharge of licence obligations. While at Scott Cawley, Shane experienced bat handling training under the guidance of Neil Middleton, as part of internal training.

This license is not specific to any location and will support Shane Brien's work as a Freelance ecologist.

Shane Brien is requesting a licence to carry out the following activities restricted under the Wildlife Act and Birds and Natural Habitats Regulations 2011:

- To carry out bat roost surveys (Country-wide) including entry to known roosts to collect scientific data
- To use endoscope to explore inaccessible locations in structures and trees

Shane Brien has undertaken a variety of bat-related surveys in relation to environmental impact assessments for proposed developments. Some of these surveys require entry into known or suspected bat roosts at various times of year to determine the presence or absence of bats and the status of the roost site. Often new bat roosts are only revealed during surveys and in the absence of a Licence the survey must be ceased, preventing collection of useful information.

A licence is therefore requested to enter roosts as part of standard bat surveys.

### 3. Full details of proposed activity to be covered by the derogation

- **Species covered by the Derogation:** All Bat Species throughout Republic of Ireland
- **Maximum number of individuals affected:** Unknown at present
- **Maximum number of breeding or resting sites affected:** Unknown at present

This derogation licence is being sought for conducting bat-related surveys in relation to ecological assessments for plans and projects and biodiversity studies. Some of these surveys require entry into known or suspected bat roosts at various times of the year to determine the presence or absence of bats and the status of the roost site. In conducting ecological assessments in relation to bats, it is important to identify and assess the use of a suspect roost and bat roosting features and to document this.

This derogation licence will be used for survey only, for Shane Brien, who is considered a suitability trained and proficient ecologist and will maintain the welfare of the bat(s) and ensure minimum level of disturbance as possible.

Shane Brien has in the past been granted general derogation licences for bats which has been involved in works listed as either Full Licensee or Trainee under supervision of a named Full Licensee – work is for a) Entry into a known or suspected bat roost; b) The use of an endoscope to explore inaccessible structures (crevices) and trees of suspected bat roosts; c) Photographing bats within roosts for scientific and research purposes (within the Republic of Ireland). Used for identifying potential bat roosting sites and to record the presence of roosting bats, while separate derogation licence(s) will be applied for on a project specific basis where required.

Shane is a trained bat ecologist that has undertaken internal and external building roost inspections, tree roost identification and inspections, and use of an endoscope. He has provided information toward preparation of derogation licences for bats and their roosts, and overseen mitigations specified in derogation licence obligations.

Shane Brien will follow a strict protocol outlined below to ensure the minimum disturbance:

#### **Protocols for the Protection of Bats During Works**

Bat Roost Survey Protocol to ensure minimisation of disturbance to bats (this does not cover health and safety risk assessments which are carried out)

#### **For unknown roosts**

- Check with owner/client re presence of bats.
- Survey for external signs of bats and roost entry points. If positive signs then treat as known /suspected roost.
- Entry to possible roost should be made cautiously especially if survey is carried out in the winter period when signs of bats may be difficult to find. Should signs of bats be noted then treat as a known/suspected roost.
- Use of endoscope is to treat crevice/tree cavity as suspected roost, with insertion being conducted in a slow manner

**For known/suspected roosts Generic measures to include:**

- Avoid using roost illumination apart from torches
- Talking in low tone is preferred to whispering
- Bats seen in situ should be counted, photographed only if necessary and then left alone
- Handling of bats to confirm identification is only used as a last resort. This may be necessary for suspected Whiskered/Brandt's bat roosts
- Samples of droppings, dead bats etc may be removed to facilitate species identification
- Care to be taken to avoid cooling or warming effects as described below

During potential hibernation season (November-March), only one person will be permitted to enter roost area. If any hibernating bats are seen to be showing signs of waking, then the roost survey will be abandoned immediately.

During the breeding season, known breeding roosts will be avoided unless emergency work is required. This will only be conducted under a separate granted derogation licence associated with the works.

**Photography in roosts**

The following protocols will be complied with to minimise the risk of injury or death to bats being photographed or filmed:

- Photography will not take place in nursery areas of roosts.
- Photography will be minimised in roosts and will comprise taking high-resolution photographs using a standard digital camera with flash at a minimum distance of 3 metres from the bats. This will allow images to be zoomed digitally rather than putting the flash close to bats
- No bats will be handled during photography
- Video footage may be taken of bats emerging from roosts or swarming around roosts and stills taken from this footage
- Use of endoscope is to treat crevice/tree cavity as suspected roost, with insertion being in a slow manner.
- Photograph will be taken if bat is present and best identifiable
- These measures will serve to minimise disturbance of bats in their roosts by taking photographs.

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#### **4. Ecological Survey and site assessment**

Not required as application for derogation licence is for survey only purposes.

## 5. Evidence to support the Derogation Tests

### 5.1 Test 1 – Reason for Derogation

**2c) 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:**

- i) Where the reason is for public health and public safety, summarise the evidence provided to support this reason (e.g. documentary evidence of the risk from a chartered structural engineer, tree surgeon, Garda Síochána, qualified health professional etc.)

This derogation licence is being sought for conducting bat-related surveys in relation to ecological assessments for plans and projects and biodiversity studies. Some of these surveys require entry into known or suspected bat roosts at various times of the year to determine the presence or absence of bats and the status of the roost site. In conducting ecological assessments in relation to bats, it is important to identify and assess the use of a suspect roost and bat roosting features and to document this.

This derogation licence will be used for survey only, for Shane Brien, who is considered a suitability trained and proficient ecologist and will maintain the welfare of the bat(s) and ensure minimum level of disturbance as possible. He has entered a number of roosts, under previous general survey derogation licences from previous employer and specific derogation licences, including DER-BAT-2023-17 – Handling training under the guidance of Neil Middleton, internal training as member of Scott Cawley Ltd. The granting of the derogation will not be detrimental to the maintenance of the population of any bat species.

The nature of the work Shane Brien is involved in is to determine the presence or absence bat species of a site to ensure that the bat species is taken fully into consideration for any proposed changes to the site or to evaluate any existing processes that may place protected bat species at risk.

- ii) Where the reason is 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”, summarise the nature of the public interest and how this outweighs the conservation interest of the species under strict protection.

The nature of the work Shane Brien is involved in is to determine the presence or absence of bats. If present, bats should have full consideration of any proposed changes to the site or to evaluate protected species that may be at risk with any existing processes. Preference to identifying these elements would be conducted via non-intrusive methods such as ground visual assessment, manual/automated detectors during emergence/re-entry surveys and use of an IR camera. However, non-intrusive methods are limited by hard to view or difficult to access areas which then require close inspections of potential roost features in trees/crevices or entry into a suspected bat roost. This can confirm if features are suitable for potential roosting bats and/or if there is evidence of bats, using torchlight and an endoscopic in a careful and sensitive manner. This aims to gather as much information as possible to inform potential mitigation measures and strategies.

All surveys will follow UK and Ireland good practice guidelines as outlined by, Bat Mitigation Guidelines for Ireland, CIEEM, Bat Conservation Ireland and Bat Conservation Trust.

If Shane Brien is unable to conduct these intrusive survey methods to establish the presence or absence of bat species (with confidence), then there would be a lack of accurate information to propose appropriate recommendations or suitable mitigation measures. Notably if the structure or tree has the potential of deteriorating and posing a health and safety risk if no action is done in a timely manner. This would also put a financial burden on Shane Brien (as a freelance ecologist), the client and the project and cause delays if planning permission is required. As much information gathered from both non-intrusive and intrusive methods would assist in maintaining a favourable conservation status for bat species that could be affected.

## **5.2 Test 2 – Absence of Alternative Solutions**

### Do-Nothing:

Alternative solutions were considered, and none are available in this instance.

In a do-nothing scenario (where a derogation licence is not granted), Shane Brien would be unable to undertake essential ecologist work involving protected bat species. As bats are a protected species, the absence of a licence would prevent him from carrying out accurate surveys and assessments in accordance with best practice, as outlined in ‘Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th Edition)’, Collins (2023).

Without the ability to conduct licenced inspections, no accurate or verifiable data could be collected to inform research, education, or evidence-based recommendations for clients. The lack of information would undermine the provision of appropriate mitigation advice in planning and conservation. It may also create health and safety risks if there is delay in assessment causing deterioration, particularly where the structural condition of buildings or trees are compromised.

Failure to obtain this scientific information would ultimately hinder efforts to ensure “the maintenance of the populations of the species concerned at a favourable conservation status in their natural range”. In contrast, granting this licence enables Shane Brien to carry out internal and external preliminary roost assessments, seasonal bat surveys, and preconstruction checks of trees and buildings using an endoscope and internal/external inspection to verify the presence of bats in a suspected roost.

Shane Brien can then, with confidence and more robust information, propose appropriate recommendations, suitable mitigation measures to minimise impacts on bats. The licence will also allow him to monitor bat boxes which have been erected as mitigation for projects, ensuring they are functioning effectively and, where necessary, facilitate the safe handling and transfers of bats to alternative boxes if damage occurs (separate handling licence has also been applied for by Shane Brien).

### Emergence or re-entry surveys only

Shane Brien has considered other non-intrusive methods such as emergence surveys. However, non-intrusive methods are limited by hard to view or difficult to access areas which then require close inspections of potential roost features in trees/crevices or entry into a suspected bat roost. The Bat Mitigation Guidelines for Ireland (2022) suggests a potential roost be searched extensively, particularly less obvious roosting bats in small numbers.

In relation to trees, Collins (2023) guidance states that dusk emergence is “not a suitable method for presence/likely absence surveys unless other reasons prevent close inspection”. And implies a

potential roost feature (PRF) inspection with an endoscope as being more valuable than an emergence survey only. Bats can switch into unoccupied tree roosts after initial surveys. Preconstruction checks on a tree (if safe to do so) before works commence would result in valuable information to provide recommendations and guidance to tree workers and prevent a wildlife crime from happening if a bat is present. Shane Brien having this licence would be to carry out his role and oversee initial mitigation measures for tree removal are upheld, no bats are injured and no wildlife crime is committed.

In relation to buildings, internal inspection is essential for identifying the type of roost present and estimating the number of bats using the structure. Where all internal areas (including voids and crevices) can be thoroughly examined and no evidence of bats are found, Collins (2023) notes that no further survey effort is required. However, if the internal inspection cannot confidently rule out the presence of bats, then additional emergence surveys should be undertaken. The need for these surveys is guided by the building's potential to support roosting bats, as indicated by the findings of the internal inspection. And Collins (2023) also outlines an ecologist should hold a survey licence covering the relevant activities, as a potential disturbance during initial potential roost assessments. Internal inspection provides invaluable information in establishing the likely presence or likely absence of bats. Without this critical information, suspected or known roosts within trees or buildings may deteriorate over time, increasing the risk of losing a potentially viable roosting habitat (before any emergence or re-entry surveys are conducted). Conducting an internal preliminary roost assessment helps address limitations associated with relying solely on emergence or re-entry surveys, providing a more complete and reliable understanding of the bats use within a structure.

### **5.3 Test 3 – Impact of a Derogation on Conservation Status**

The licence is not restricted to a specific location and will support Shane Brien in carrying out his ecological work. Its purpose is to enable Shane Brien to contribute to the maintenance and enhancement of the Favourable Conservation Status of all bat species in Ireland. The derogation will be used for survey purposes only. Shane Brien is a suitably trained and competent ecologist who will prioritise bat welfare and ensure that any disturbance is kept to an absolute minimum. The granting of this licence will not adversely affect the conservation status or population of any bat species.

Shane Brien will adhere to a strict protocol, as outlined below, to ensure minimal disturbance:

#### Protocols for the Protection of Bats During Works

Bat Roost Survey Protocol to ensure minimisation of disturbance to bats (this does not cover health and safety risk assessments which are carried out)

For unknown roosts

- Check with owner/client re presence of bats.
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- Handling of bats to confirm identification is only used as a last resort. This may be necessary for suspected Whiskered/Brandt's bat roosts
- Samples of droppings, dead bats etc may be removed to facilitate species identification
- Care to be taken to avoid cooling or warming effects as described below

During potential hibernation season (November-March), only one person will be permitted to enter roost area. If any hibernating bats are seen to be showing signs of waking, then the roost survey will be abandoned immediately.

During the breeding season, known breeding roosts will be avoided unless emergency work is required. This will only be conducted under a separate granted derogation licence associated with the works.

#### Photography in roosts

The following protocols will be complied with to minimise the risk of injury or death to bats being photographed or filmed:

- Photography will not take place in nursery areas of roosts.
- Photography will be minimised in roosts and will comprise taking high-resolution photographs using a standard digital camera with flash at a minimum distance of 3 metres from the bats. This will allow images to be zoomed digitally rather than putting the flash close to bats.
- No bats will be handled during photography.
- Video footage may be taken of bats emerging from roosts or swarming around roosts and stills taken from this footage.
- Use of endoscope is to treat crevice/tree cavity as suspected roost, with insertion being in a slow manner.
- Photograph will be taken if bat is present and best identifiable.

These measures will serve to minimise disturbance of bats in their roosts by taking photographs.

Shane Brien has carried out a wide range of bat-related surveys (even under previous derogation licences) to inform ecological impact assessments for proposed developments. Certain surveys require entry into known or suspected bat roosts at different times of the year to establish the presence or absence of bats and to assess the status of the roost. New roosts are frequently identified during such work. Without an appropriate licence the survey must stop immediately, preventing the collection of important ecological information.

A licence is therefore requested to enter roosts as part of standard bat surveys.

## **6. Evidence to support the Derogation Tests**

**Applicants must include details of how they propose to verify whether the derogations have been implemented correctly and whether they achieved their objective, using scientifically based evidence, and, if necessary, how the applicant will take corrective measures where required.**

This derogation licence is being sought for conducting bat-related surveys in relation to ecological assessments for plans and projects and biodiversity studies. Some of these surveys require entry into known or suspected bat roosts at various times of the year to determine the presence or absence of bats and the status of the roost site. In conducting ecological assessments in relation to bats, it is important to identify and assess the use of a suspect roost and bat roosting features and to document this.

**This derogation licence will be used for survey only.** Shane Brien would be considered a suitability trained and proficient ecologist and will maintain the welfare of the bat(s) and insure minimum level of disturbance as possible. The granting of the derogation will not be will not be detrimental to the maintenance of the population of any bat species.

Shane Brien will follow a strict protocol, as outlined above, to ensure the minimum disturbance and that the conditions of the derogation licence are implemented correctly.

Monitoring of species will occur as standard, as and where any projects have been commissioned where this is a requirement.

**Applicants should provide details of proposed reports to be submitted to the NPWS including the results of monitoring**

Shane Brien ensures that Annual Returns from any Derogation Licences granted and any Bat Reports submitted to clients concerning Bat Activity, Roosting, Bat Box Schemes, and/or the results of monitoring, as appropriate, are submitted routinely to the NPWS at the end of every Full Season.