



NPWS

An tSeirbhís Páirceanna
Náisiúnta agus Fiadhúla
National Parks and Wildlife
Service

**Derogation Number
DER-BAT-2025-72
(Survey Derogation)**

**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 **Victoria Knight, Ecologist of Vincent Wildlife Trust, Donaghpatrick, Headford, County Galway, H91 PXY4** a derogation. It is stated that this derogation is issued:

- A. 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
- 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 **all bat species**



Terms and Conditions

1. This derogation is granted solely to allow the examination of potential bat roosts, including **all bat species and all roost types**, as necessary in order to undertake environmental impact assessments for property owners or developers or scientific study within the Republic of Ireland.
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**.
3. This derogation may be modified or revoked, for stated reasons, at any time.
4. The actions which this derogation authorises shall be completed between the **1st February – 31st December 2026, inclusive**.
5. The **Bat Roost Survey Protocol** as set out below must be adhered to, in order to ensure minimisation of disturbance to bats.
6. This derogation shall be produced for inspection on a request being made on that behalf by a member of An Garda Síochána or any authorised NPWS officer appointed under Regulation 4 of the Habitats Regulations.
7. On completion of the actions which this derogation authorises, all recordings of bat species affected will be made using the standardised data form provided below and must be submitted to the NPWS **within four weeks of the expiry date of this derogation**. Included with the below 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.**



Bat Roost Survey Protocol to ensure minimisation of disturbance to bats

1. For unknown roosts

- a) Check with owner/client re presence of bats.
- b) Check with Bat Conservation Ireland to determine roost records.
- c) Survey for external signs of bats and roost entry points. If positive signs, then treat as known /suspected roost.
- d) 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.

2. For known/suspected roosts

- a) Generic measures to include:
 - i. Avoid using roost illumination apart from torches.
 - ii. Talking in low tone is preferred to whispering.
 - iii. Bats seen in situ should be counted where possible and then left alone.
 - iv. Handling of bats to confirm identification is only used as a last resort and is subject to separate licencing under the Wildlife Acts (S.23).
 - v. Samples of droppings, dead bats etc. may be removed to facilitate species identification.
 - vi. Care to be taken to avoid cooling or warming effects as described below.
- b) During potential hibernation season (November-March), only one person should enter roost area. If any hibernating bats are seen to be showing signs of waking, then the roost survey will be abandoned immediately.
- c) During the breeding season, known breeding roosts should be avoided unless emergency work is required. This will usually be the subject of a separate derogation.



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For the Minister for Housing, Local Government & Heritage

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

30 January 2026

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





Derogation Assessment

Name of Applicant: Victoria Knight

Location/Name of Project: Survey sites throughout County Kerry

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 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 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 checked="" 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)(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’* 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 research and education aspect of Reason D. As outlined in the accompanying report titled “Supporting information”, the derogation is required to assist with monitoring Lesser Horseshoe Bats across 12 sites in Ireland. The objective of this monitoring activity is to ensure the structures on the sites are in good condition, continue to prevent predator access, and to track the bat populations.

The report further outlines how the monitoring of bat roosts is essential for detecting population changes and to investigate potential causes and to determine how best to prevent further losses.

The applicants have provided evidence as to the nature and scale of the research and education reasoning 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 Vincent Wildlife Trust (VWT) requires a derogation licence to carry out monitoring of 12 lesser horseshoe bat reserves owned and leased by VWT. The buildings host nationally important lesser horseshoe bat maternity and hibernation roosts as well as roosts of other species, including Common Pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*), Soprano Pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*), Leisler's Bat (*Nyctalus leisleri*) and Brown Long-eared Bat (*Plecotus auritus*).

The roost will be checked throughout the year for signs of disturbance, predation, or deterioration of the buildings, and to monitor the bat populations using the buildings.

Routine checks and monitoring are carried out throughout the year to ensure the structures remain in good condition, to prevent predator access, and to track the bat populations present. These activities include both external and internal building inspections, summer emergence counts, and, at our Kerry reserves, winter hibernation counts.

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.

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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)

Routine building checks will be carried out at the 12 lesser horseshoe bat reserves owned or leased by VWT to monitor for signs of disturbance, predation, or structural deterioration. These checks may occasionally require entering the buildings; however, this will be avoided during sensitive periods, such as when young are present. If entry is required at such times, it will be carried out in the evening after the bats have left to feed. Summer emergence counts and winter population counts for the National Bat Monitoring Programme will also take place. Winter counts will be conducted at the VWT’s Kerry roosts, where lesser horseshoe bats overwinter. These surveys are undertaken once each winter and involve entering the buildings to count the bats present. They are an essential element of the national monitoring scheme for this species and help to inform our conservation policy. Best practise will be observed when entering the roosts to minimise disturbance.

Repeated monitoring over many years has shown that the limited and carefully controlled entry to roosts, by experienced surveyors has no negative impact on the population's conservation status.

The derogation will not be detrimental to the maintenance of the populations of the species in question at a favourable conservation status in their natural range.

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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: January 30, 2026

Position: Ecologist