

**APPLICATION FOR DEROGATION LICENCE TO CONDUCT REPAIR WORKS TO DUNCANNON BRIDGE,
(CC-N72-001.00) CO. CORK.**

On behalf of Cumnor Construction Ltd, I wish to apply for a derogation licence to allow essential repair works to be conducted at Duncannon Bridge, Co. Cork, (517988 593188). This bridge has been surveyed for bats at least 3 times between 2019 and 2024 (see accompanying report).

A maternity roost of 12-16 Daubenton's bats *Myotis daubentonii* was recorded in several crevices under the westernmost arch, behind the downstream facing stones. These crevices and several other suitable crevices have been marked for retention for bats with red paint. The contractor (Cumnor Construction Ltd.) has been advised of the location of the bat roost and have affirmed that the marked crevices will be retained.

A further bat survey will be conducted immediately prior to any works being conducted. The repair works will be supervised by an ecologist on site.

This licence is being applied for

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.

This is the only option available for works. The bridge must be maintained to ensure the ongoing safety of the structure for traffic on this busy national route. If no repair works are conducted, the stability of the bridge will eventually be compromised. The bridge repairs can be conducted, whilst retaining the roosting sites used by the bats. The bats are roosting in several discrete crevices under the western arch. The retention of these crevices will have no impact on bridge stability. No suitable alternative exists. It is not economically feasible to construct another bridge structure or divert traffic to use an alternative route.

There is no suitable alternative. The repair works are necessary to maintain the safety of the bridge.

The proposed repair works to Duncannon Bridge will not be detrimental to the maintenance of populations of this species at a favourable conservation status in their natural range as required under Section 54 (2) of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations.

I have supervised the repair of hundreds of masonry bridges containing bat roosts over the course of my career. Bats have always returned to roost in retained crevices at these structures. Bat boxes on bridges have proven to be unsuccessful in attracting Daubenton's bats to roost in them. This species prefers to roost in natural crevices in the stonework under the arches of masonry bridges.

Dr Caroline Shiel

03/10/24

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.

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.

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.

As much information as possible to allow a decision to be made on this application.