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Wildlife Licensing Unit,
Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage
National Parks and Wildlife Service
Wildlife Licensing Unit, R. 2.03
90 North King Street
Smithfield
Dublin 7 D07 N7CV

Re: Application for derogation licence at Rathmore, Baltimore, Co. Cork

Dear Sir/Madam,

DixonBrosnan have completed an application for a derogation licence at Rathmore, Baltimore, Co. Cork on behalf of our clients Jackie and Peter Hunt. The applicant is seeking permission for the demolition of the refurbishment, alteration and extension of an existing dwelling house, the demolition of an extension to the dwelling and of two sheds one of which is attached to the house and the other a separate open faced metal former hay barn as well as associated site works (See attached bat report for full details). These works will require the refurbishment of a building which appears to support a small maternity roost for Common Pipistrelle. A bat survey report which has been submitted with this application includes mitigation measures to prevent impacts on roosting bats including the provision of bat boxes to create alternative roosting habitat (See attached).

This derogation licence falls under the following category:

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.

The proposed development site involved the refurbishment of an old farmhouse c.1.5km from Baltimore village. The farmhouse has been in Jackie Hunt's [nee Sweeney] family since the 1920's and the family have lived in the area for 7 generations or more. The house is unoccupied since 2016 and is running into a state of disrepair.

It is proposed that the house and outbuildings will be renovated and extended, to make a dwelling which, in the short term, will be a holiday home and in the longer term a permanent retirement home. Jackie Hunt is living abroad at present, has no dwelling in Ireland and wants to return to Ireland to retire to her home place. In the absence of development the house is likely to fall into dereliction.

11.1 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.

The dwelling/building (which supports the maternity roost) which is proposed for refurbishment is in a state of disrepair, with continued deterioration recorded between 2022 and 2024 site surveys. It is noted that the building/shed onsite which are earmarked for demolition are in an advanced state of disrepair (roof/walls absent) and as a result they do not provide roosts for bats. In the absence of development (i.e. a do-nothing scenario), the main dwelling house is likely to continue to deteriorate and in the medium-long term is unlikely to provide roosting habitat for bats.

11.2 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.

A range of mitigation measures have been proposed to ensure there will be no detrimental effects to Common pipistrelle populations. The provision of bat boxes will provide alternative roosting sites for a range of common bat species. Full details of the mitigation measures are included in the bat report which accompanies this planning application (see attached).

11.3 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.

Detailed mitigation measures as well as a landscape plan, lighting mitigation and the provision of bat boxes have been included with this application. It is noted that Carl Dixon MSc (who will be the supervising ecologist) has considerable experience with bats and has been involved in design and management of a Lesser Horseshoe Bat roost at Ballycrovane, Co. Cork in consultation with Ian McDermott MSc of Cork County Council.

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

See details of application and bat mitigation measures in attached report.

Yours sincerely,



Director: Carl Dixon BSc (Ecology), MSc. (Ecological Monitoring)