ENVIROPLAN CONSULTING LIMITED

October '25

Title

Bat Roost Inspection Report

Development Description

"The proposed renovation and extension of 2 No. 3 bed semi-detached dwellings and the construction of 2 No. 3 bed semi-detached dwellings, connection to existing site services and all ancillary site works"

Location

Ennis Road, Gort, Co. Galway

Applicants

Galway County Council

Prepared by:

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1 Introduction

This Bat Roost Inspection Report has been prepared by a licensed ecologist Edel Hardiman (B. Sc) in consultation with James O' Donnell (BA, MRUP, Dip APM). This has been prepared on behalf of Galway County Council who are applying for planning permission for a development which will involve the "*proposed renovation and extension of 2 No. 3 bed semi-detached dwellings and the construction of 2 No. 3 bed semi-detached dwellings, connection to existing site services and all ancillary site works*" at Ennis Road, Gort, Co. Galway. This report includes a roost inspection conducted in July 2025.

Figure 1.1 Indicative extent of application site outlined in red

The application site currently features 2 no. existing semi detached houses to the east of the site with associated landscaping and hardstanding areas to the rear of the dwelling. There are 3 no. sheds in the centre of the site. The Ennis Road and associated streetlighting is to the east of the site. The site is enclosed by dwellings, with the Burren View housing estate to the west and one off dwellings to the north and south of the site. Lisk Ireland Manufacturing is to the east of the site. There is suitable vegetation to the west of the site for commuting and foraging bat species however the built-up development in the immediate vicinity of the site would negatively impact local bat species and deter bat species from this location.

The bat survey and assessment were informed by a desk study and in accordance with the following guidance documents:

- Marnell, F., Kelleher, C. & Mullen, E. (2022) Bat mitigation guidelines for Ireland v2. Irish Wildlife Manuals, No. 134. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, Ireland
- NRA/TII (2006a) Best Practice Guidelines for the Conservation of Bats in the Planning of National Road Schemes. National Roads Authority
- NRA/TII (2006b) Guidelines for the Treatment of Bats during the Construction of National Road Schemes. National Roads Authority
- Collins, J. (ed) (2016) Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists – Good Practice Guidelines (3rd Edition). The Bat Conservation Trust, England.
- Mitchell-Jones, A.J. and McLeish, A.P. (eds) (2004) Bat Workers' Manual (3rd Edition). JNCC. England
- CIEEM (2013) Competencies for Species Surveys: Bats. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management. England

1.1 Aim of Survey

This report aims to:

- Examine the existing building onsite and assess its suitability for potential bat roosts.
- Identify species of bat (if any) using the existing building.
- Examine potential impacts of the proposed development on bat species.

1.2 Legislative Context

All Irish bat species are protected under the European Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) and are listed under Annex IV of that directive. In addition, Lesser Horseshoe bat (*Rhinolophus hipposideros*) is also listed on Annex II of the directive. The Habitats Directive has been transposed into Irish law through the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (S.I. No. 477 of 2011). EU member states are required to designate some Special Areas of Conservation (SAC's) for species listed under Annex II in order to protect them. Irish bat species are also protected under national legislation in the form of the Wildlife Acts 1976-2017.

Under Irish law it is an offence to:

- Deliberately capture or kill a bat
- Deliberately disturb a bat
- Damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of a bat

To undertake works at a roost site, agreement must be reached with the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) and a derogation licence must be granted before works commence.

1.3 Statement of Competency

The bat roost inspection and assessment were carried out by ecologist Edel Hardiman (B. Sc.).

Edel is a qualified ecologist and has obtained a Bachelor's degree in Environmental Science (BSc Hons) at the University of Galway. Edel has completed Appropriate Assessment Screening Reports, Natura Impact Statements, Ecological Impact Assessments, Bat Survey Reports and Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Reports for a wide range of public and private sector projects. She has conducted Bird Surveys and Bat Surveys in the Republic of Ireland. She is a registered member of CIEEM.

James O' Donnell is a qualified Town Planner and Project Manager with over 25 years planning experience in both the public and private sector in the west of Ireland, including 6 years experience as a local authority planning officer. James has particular experience in the project management and delivery of a wide range of complex planning applications requiring environmental and ecological assessment, in accordance with the requirements of the EU Habitats Directive and EIA Directives.

2 Methodology

To assess the impacts of any project and associated activities, an understanding of the ecological baseline conditions prior to and at the time of the project proceeding is required. Ecological Baseline conditions are those existing in the absence of proposed activities (CIEEM 2018).

The following sections outline the methods utilised to establish the baseline ecological condition of the application site.

2.1 Desk Study

A desk study of the subject site was undertaken to collect any available information on bats and to identify any habitats and features likely to be used by bats. The following sources were consulted:

- Review of aerial photography of the study using Geohive (map.geohive.ie)
- Review of EPA appropriate assessment tool (https://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/AAGeoTool)
- Review of Site-Specific Conservation Objective maps (https://dahg.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=63b6a14f5b164b289ad87048f71532b8)
- Review of online web-mappers: National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS),
- A search of the NBDC database was undertaken

2.1.1 National Biodiversity Data Centre (NBDC)

A search of the NBDC database was carried out for records of bat species within 1km hectad M4501 where the study site is located. The results of the search are shown in **Table 2.1.**

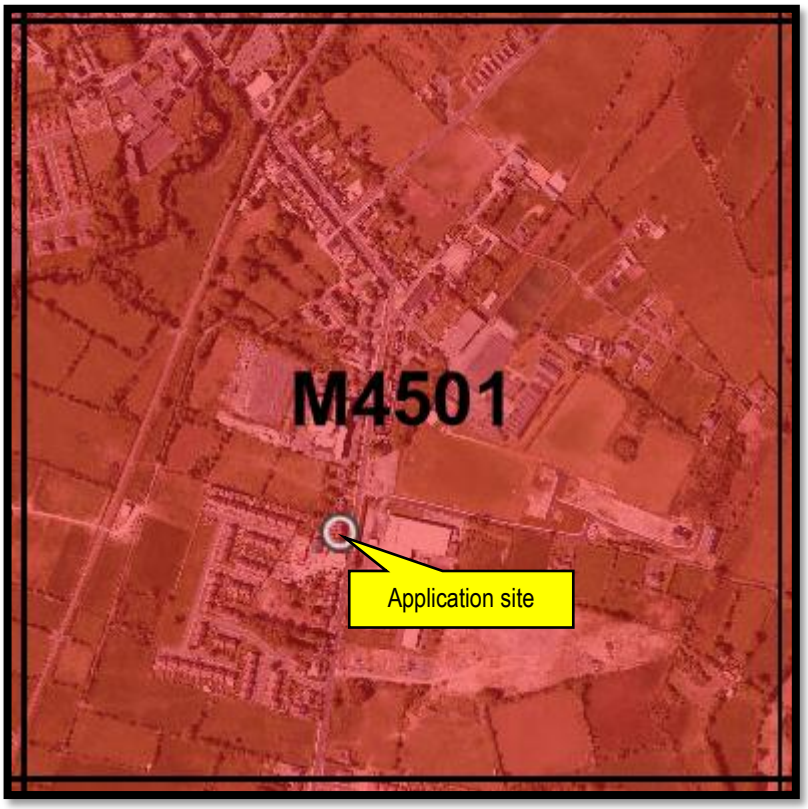

Figure 2.1 Extent of the 1km hectad M4501

Table 2.1 NBDC bat records for hectad M4501

Species Name	Scientific Name	Suitability Index[1]	Conservation Status
Brown long-eared bat	*Plecotus auritus*	72	EU Habitats Directive: Annex IV; Wildlife Acts 1976-2017
Lesser Noctule (Leisler's)	*Nyctalus leisleri*	63	EU Habitats Directive: Annex IV; Wildlife Acts 1976-2017
Lesser Horseshoe bat	*Rhinolophus hipposideros*	52	EU Habitats Directive: Annex II & IV; Wildlife Acts 1976-2017
Common Pipistrelle	*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*	56	EU Habitats Directive: Annex IV; Wildlife Acts 1976-2017
Soprano Pipistrelle	*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*	52	EU Habitats Directive: Annex IV; Wildlife Acts 1976-2017
Whiskered bat	*Myotis mystacinus*	61	EU Habitats Directive: Annex IV; Wildlife Acts 1976-2017
Daubenton's bat	*Myotis daubentonii*	52	EU Habitats Directive: Annex IV; Wildlife Acts 1976-2017
Nathusius's bat	*Pipistrellus nathusii*	0	EU Habitats Directive: Annex IV; Wildlife Acts 1976-2017
Natterer's bat	*Myotis nattereri*	66	EU Habitats Directive: Annex IV; Wildlife Acts 1976-2017

A desk-study of the proposed site shows that there is suitability for all species of Irish bats however, highest suitability is indicated for Brown Long-Eared Bat, Natterer's Bat and Leisler's Bat.

[1] The maps are a visualisation of the results of the analyses based on a 'habitat suitability' index. The index ranges from 0 to 100 with 0 being least favourable and 100 most favourable for bats. The maps are constructed using spatial units of the OSi National Grid. The index presented is for all species combined, in addition to the individual species' indices.

Table 2.2 Species- specific roost types- (Source *Bat Mitigation Guidelines for Ireland (2022))*

Species	**Summer/maternity roosts**	**Hibernation sites**
Lesser horseshoe bat *Rhinolophus hipposideros*	Horseshoe bats require large roost areas with flight access into them, where they hang free. Normally require associated sheltered light-sampling areas.	Most dependent on underground sites. May use cellars or other areas with appropriate temperature and humidity
Brandt's bat *Myotis brandtii*	Crevice dweller, but may enter roof voids and fly around	Found hibernating underground, though most individuals probably elsewhere
Daubenton's bat *Myotis daubentonii*	Hole dweller. May enter roof voids and roost at apex. Relatively rare in houses, but may use castles, tunnels etc.	Found hibernating underground, though many individuals probably elsewhere
Whiskered bat *Myotis mystacinus*	Crevice dweller, but may enter roof voids and fly around	Found hibernating underground, though most individuals probably elsewhere
Natterer's bat *Myotis nattereri*	Crevice/hole dweller; may require light-sampling areas. Frequent in crevices in timbers in old barns.	Found hibernating underground, though most individuals probably elsewhere
Nathusius' pipistrelle *Pipistrellus nathusii*	Crevice dweller.	Rarely recorded. In buildings? In quite exposed places
Common pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus*	Crevice dweller, but sometimes enters roof voids. Does not normally require light-sampling areas	Hibernates in a variety of places, which may be quite exposed. Frequently in cavities in buildings, rarely underground
Soprano pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pygmaeus*		
Leisler's bat *Nyctalus leisleri*	Crevice/hole dweller. Sometimes in buildings, but unlikely to fly inside.	Little known; probably tree cavities, occasionally underground
Brown long-eared bat *Plecotus auritus*	Hole dwellers. Readily fly within roof voids. Often in crevices by day, although sometimes in the open.	Found in tree holes, roofs and underground.

3 Survey Methodology

3.1 Roost Inspection

A bat roost inspection of the proposed development site was undertaken by ecologist Edel Hardiman (B. Sc) on the 18th of July 2025. A detailed visual inspection was conducted on arrival; this was undertaken to assess the suitability of the existing building and associated sheds as a roosting habitat.

Habitats were classified according to *A Guide to Habitats in Ireland* (Fossitt, 2000). The entire building and associated sheds were inspected and walked and the potential for suitable roosting habitats to occur were assessed based on the '*Negligible, Low, Moderate and High*' classification described in Table 4.1 of *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines* (Collins (ed.), 2023).

The visual inspection focused on the existing building and associated sheds on the site which consisted of an external and internal survey of the building and associated sheds focusing on gaps, cracks and crevices and potential entry and exit points for bats on the exterior of the building and associated sheds.

3.2 Limitations of Survey

The survey was carried out in accordance with the most appropriate guidance, "*Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists Good Practice Guidelines (BCT, 2016)"* and *"Bat Mitigation Guidelines for Ireland (Kelleher and Marnell, 2022)".* The roost inspection was carried out with the aid of torches with a focus on gaps, cracks and crevices and potential entry and exit points for bats throughout the building and associated sheds.

There were no survey constraints, and it was considered that a comprehensive survey effort was achieved.

Season	Roost type	Inspection	Bat detectors and emergence counts
Spring (Mar – May)	Building	Suitable (signs, perhaps bats)	Limited, weather dependent
	Trees	Difficult (best for signs before leaves appear)	Rarely useful
	Underground	Suitable (signs only)	Static detectors may be useful
Summer (June-August)	Building	Suitable (signs and bats)	Suitable
	Trees	Difficult	Limited; use sunrise survey
	Underground	Suitable (signs only)	Rarely useful
Autumn (September –November)	Building	Suitable (signs and bats)	Limited, weather dependent
	Trees	Difficult	Rather limited weather dependent; use sunrise survey?
	Underground	Suitable (signs, perhaps bats)	Static detectors may be useful
Winter (December-February)	Building	Suitable (signs, perhaps bats))	Rarely useful
	Trees	Difficult (best for signs after leaves have gone)	Rarely useful
	Underground	Suitable (signs and bats)	Static detectors may be useful

Figure 3.1- Extract from "*Bat Mitigation Guidelines for Ireland (2022)"*

4 Description of Baseline Environment

4.1 Designated Sites

The closest Special Areas of Conservation include the Coole-Garryland Complex SAC and the Lough Cutra SAC, of which the Lesser Horseshoe Bat *(Rhiniolophus hipposideros)* is a Qualifying Species. The site does not lie within a Lesser Horseshoe Bat Foraging Range. The closest Lesser Horseshoe Bat Foraging Range identified to the development site is approximately 1.7 kilometres north of the application site within the Coole-Garryland Complex SAC and 1.6 kilometres south of the application site associated with the Lough Cutra SAC.

(Source-https://dahg.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=63b6a14f5b164b289ad87048f71532b8).

A desk-study of the proposed site shows that there is suitability for all species of Irish bats.

Figure 4.1: Site location in relation to Lesser Horseshoe Bats Foraging Range (*Rhinolophus hipposideros)*

4.2 Characteristics of the Study Area

The application site is located in Gort, Co. Galway. Ennis Road is to the east of the site and there are several residential dwellings along this road. Gort Community School and Community Playground are to the northeast of the site.

The application site currently features 2 no. existing semi detached houses to the east of the site and associated hardstanding areas (BL3). There are 3 no. sheds in the centre of the site. A small overgrown lawn (GA2) is located to the front of the existing building to the east of the site, while there are treelines (WL2) and scrub (WS1) to the west of the site. The site is 0.1164 ha in size.

Vegetative species recorded on site include Brambles (*Rubus fructicosus*), Ivy (*Hedera hibernica*), Common nettle (*Urtica dioica*), Dock leaves (*Rumex Obtusifolius*), and Common ragwort (*Jacobaea vulgaris*).

Figure 4.2 Habitat Map

Plate 4.1 Looking west at the existing building on site

Plate 4.2 Looking east at the rear of the existing building on site

Plate 4.3 Looking west at the shed no.1 on site

Plate 4.4 Looking south at the shed no.1 on site

Plate 4.5 Looking west at the shed no.2 on site

Plate 4.6 Image of the interior of shed no.2 on site

Plate 4.7 Looking south at the shed no.3 on site

Plate 4.8 Image of the interior of shed no.3 on site

5 Bat Survey Results

5.1 Roost Inspection Results

A bat roost inspection of the proposed development site was undertaken by ecologist Edel Hardiman (B. Sc) on the 18th of July 2025. A detailed visual inspection was conducted on arrival; this was undertaken to assess the suitability of the existing building and associated sheds as a roosting habitat.

Habitats were classified according to *A Guide to Habitats in Ireland* (Fossitt, 2000). The entire site was walked and the potential for suitable roosting to occur were assessed based on the '*Negligible, Low, Moderate and High*' classification described in Table 4.1 of *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines* (Collins (ed.), 2023). Potential suitability for roosting habitats for bats on this application site was deemed to be 'low'.

The visual inspection focused on the existing building and associated sheds on the site.

An external survey was conducted prior to entering the building and associated sheds. The exterior of the building and associated sheds was inspected from ground level, with focus on gaps, cracks and crevices and potential entry and exit points for bats on the exterior of the building and associated sheds. The search included the ground, walls, roof (all of which were fully intact excluding shed no. 3). From this initial external survey, it was noted that this building had a low roost potential, due to the maintained exterior. From the initial external survey of sheds no. 1, 2 and 3, these were also deemed to have a low roost potential as these sheds featured roofs that were composed of sheets of galvanised steel. Galvanised steel roofs are not suitable for roosting bats considering the temperature fluctuations and lack suitable roosting crevices. The shed walls did not note any suitable crevices/ roosting areas for bat species.

An interior search was then carried out. The interior search of the building and associated sheds was carried out with the aid of torches and focused on walls (in between the cracks and crevices), floors and the roof. During this survey, it was noted that the interior of the building had very few entry and exit points for bat species as the building is in good condition. During the internal inspection it was also noted that there were no visual signs of a roost including staining/greasing, bat droppings, and insect wings. This was also concluded for sheds no. 1 and 2. There were very few entry and exit points for bat species and these sheds featured several cobwebs. Shed no.3 featured a galvanised roof in poor condition and there was a large hole in the centre of the roof. However, no bat indicators were noted despite this potential entry point. There was no staining/greasing, bat droppings, and insect wings observed on any of the buildings on site.

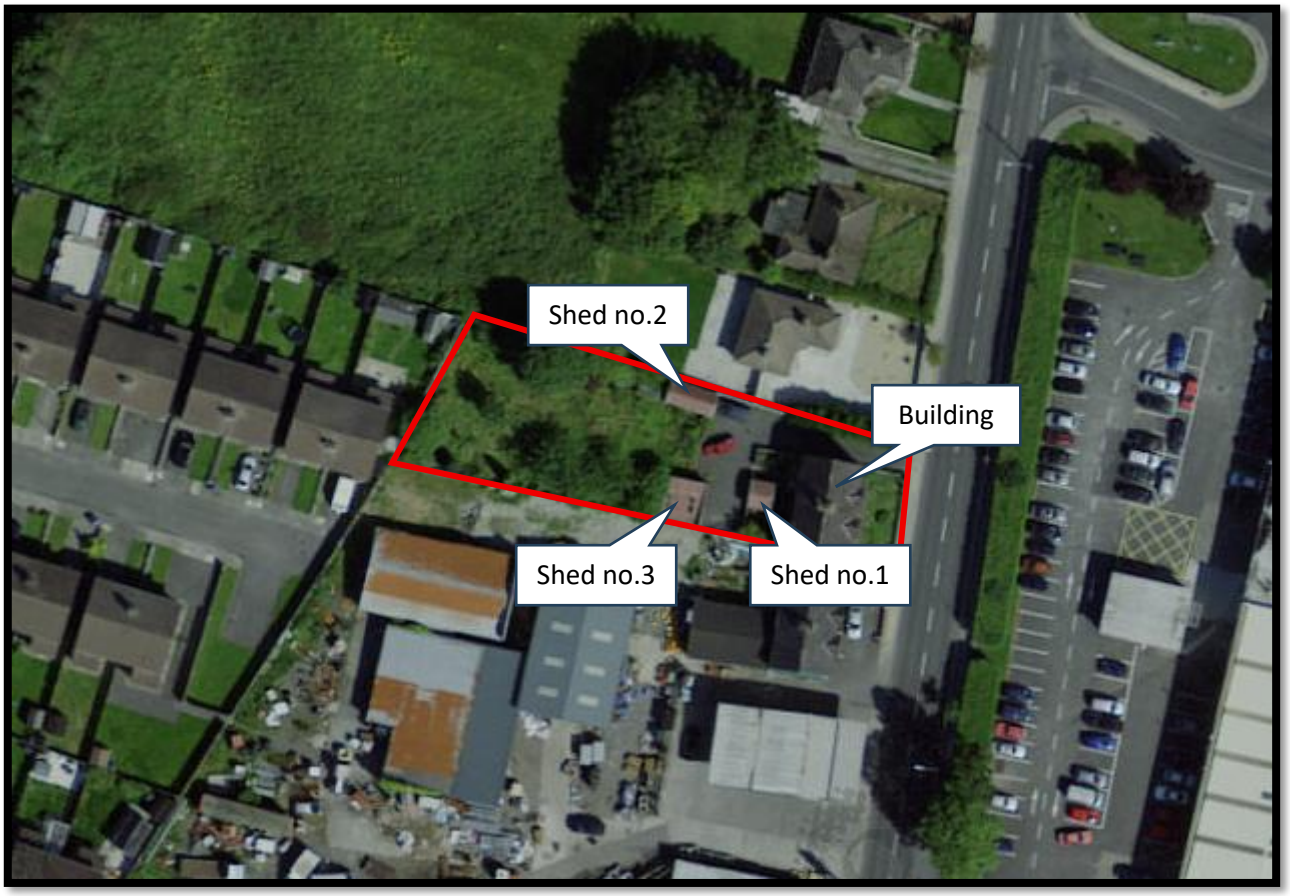

Figure 5.1 Buildings inspected for potential bat roosts

6 Discussion

There were no visual signs of a bat roost on site including insect wings, bat droppings, or greasing/staining. Both the external and internal roost inspection were surveyed for signs of a bat roost. The surveys were caried out with the aid of torches and focused on potential roosting areas throughout the building. The results stated above show that no bats are likely roosting on site. There was no staining/greasing, bat droppings, and insect wings observed in any of the buildings on site.

It is noted that the application site does not lie within a Lesser Horseshoe Bat foraging range. The conclusion of this roost survey has deemed the building and associated sheds on site to have a low suitability for roosting bat species and therefore no impacts on bat species are predicted.

7 Impact Assessment & Mitigation Measures

Results of the roost inspection showed no visual signs of a bat roost onsite during the site inspection.

7.1 Lighting and Construction Measures

- If outdoor lighting is to be installed, motion sensor lighting will prevent unnecessary lighting at this location.
- No artificial lighting should be installed around linear features such as hedgerows, treelines and stonewalls.
- All lighting during the construction phase is to be minimal where possible.
- No lighting should remain on after construction works on site have finished each day.
- Where possible stay out of area where no work is to take place.

8 Conclusions

The report details the findings of a roost inspection completed as part of a planning application which will seek permission for the "*proposed renovation and extension of 2 No. 3 bed semi-detached dwellings and the construction of 2 No. 3 bed semi-detached dwellings, connection to existing site services and all ancillary site works*" at Ennis Road, Gort, Co. Galway.

The survey did not observe any signs of bats having a roost site (within the buildings or sheds) during the daylight inspection survey. There were no visual signs of a roost including insect wings, bat droppings or staining/greasing.

It is noted that the application site does not lie within a known Lesser Horseshoe Bat foraging range. Considering this, and the proposed nature of the works, no impacts/effects are predicted on the Local Lesser Horseshoe Bat populations and their feeding habitats.

The conclusion of this roost survey has deemed the building and associated sheds on site to have a low suitability for roosting bat species and therefore no impacts on bat species are predicted.

9 Bibliography

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Wildlife Acts 1976-2017