

Bat Survey
Ciara & Declan Kerins
Creevymore
Cliffony
Co. Sligo
2026



Ecological Services

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Bat Licence No: DER/BAT 2026-194

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Introduction

Ciara & Declan Kerins of Creevymore, Cliffony County Sligo has requested a bat survey of a cottage, shed and hay barn in response to a Further Information request from Sligo County Council Planning Department. The property is located to the east of Cliffony along a road of other houses but in an agricultural setting with hedgerows and trees along boundaries. A river runs to the west of the property which connects to the wider landscape and the sea. Fig 1, 2, 3, & 4.

The proposal is to renovate and extend the cottage and replace the shed and hay barn with a garage. Fig 5.

Fig 1: Location of the property in Creevymore, Cliffony County Sligo.

Irish grid reference: G 71366 53717 ITM: 571319 853730.



Fig 2: View of the cottage (south east face) proposed for renovation at Creevymore, Cliffony County Sligo.



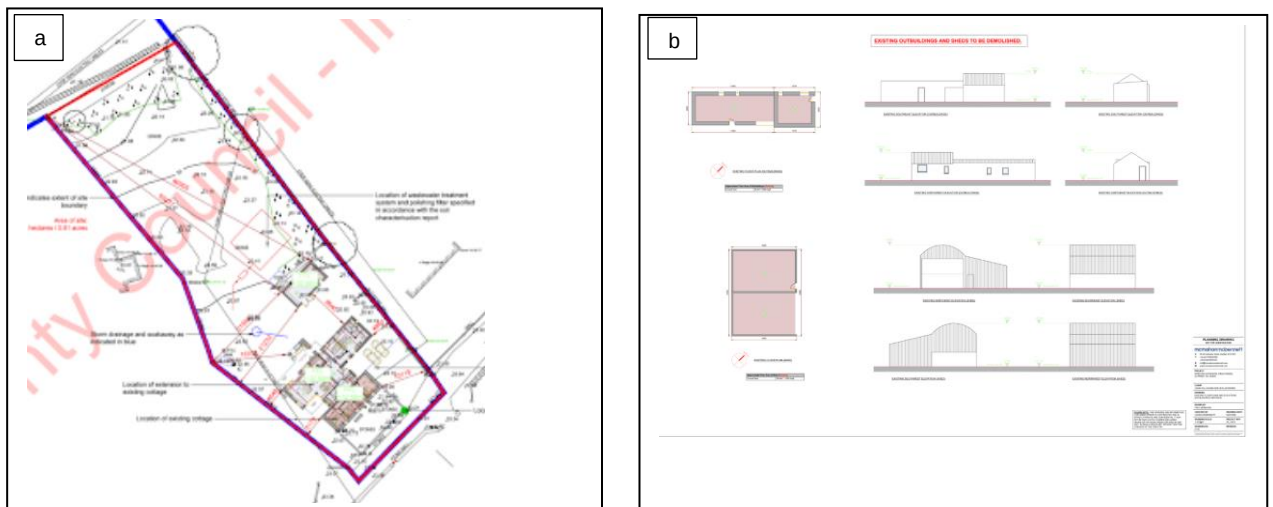
Fig 3: Rear view (south west) of the cottage with shed behind.



Fig 4: The hay barn and shed at Creevymore, Cliffony.



Fig 5: (a) Plans for the proposed development. (b) Elevations for the garage. (Planning ref: 2660143).



Bats in Ireland

In summer many of Ireland's nine breeding species of bat use built structures and trees for maternity roosts. Here they raise their pup in a colony of females until the autumn when the young are self-sufficient. In autumn when the young are independent, some or all of the roost disperses into smaller roosts, commonly amongst trees containing cracks and crevices.

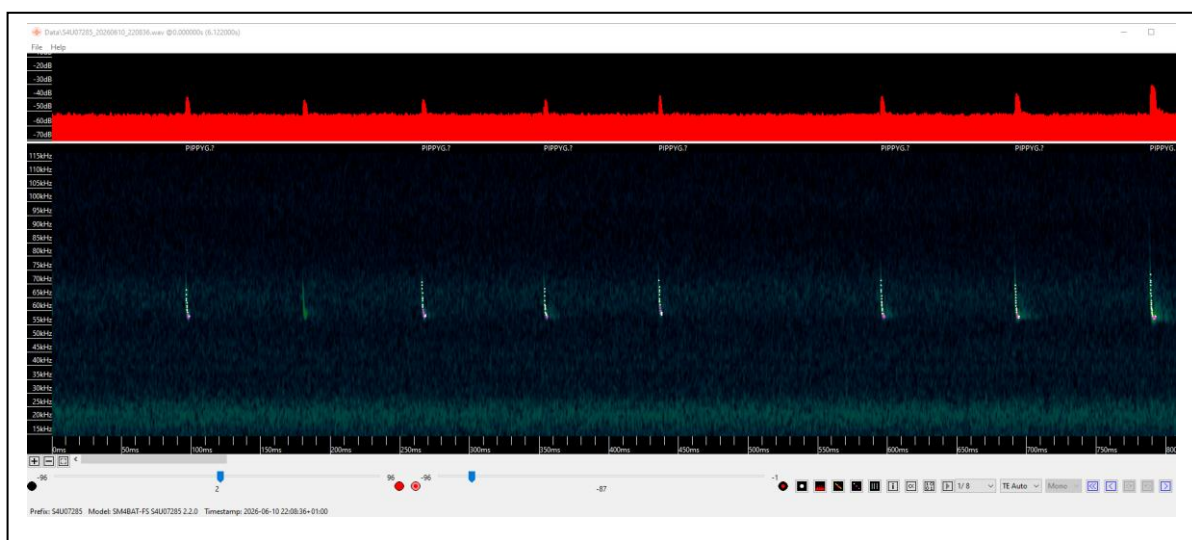
In winter, bats gather for hibernation, often in a separate location from the maternity roost. These locations, such as tree cavities, caves, souterrains, or deep stone walls are chosen because of even temperatures, which allow the bats to stay in torpor and conserve energy.

Bats have developed a highly sophisticated echolocation system that allows them to avoid obstacles and catch insects. When they are flying, bats produce a stream of high-pitched calls and listen to the echoes to produce a sound picture of their surroundings. See Fig 6.

Due to the roosting behaviour of bats in Ireland, it is appropriate that this site is surveyed for bats. It contains potential in its buildings, trees and hedgerows and bounding river for roosting and foraging bats.

All Irish bats are protected under national and EU legislation (The Wildlife Act 1976, the Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000, and European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011). Both the animals themselves and their roosts are protected and it is an offence to disturb or interfere with them without a licence.

*Fig 6: Sonogram of a Soprano Pipistrelle (Pipistrellus pygmaeus) recorded foraging at Creevymore, Cliffony, County Sligo
This is an image representing the sound a bat emits when echo locating, when they are commuting, foraging and communicating with each other.*



Methods

A bat survey was carried out at the property at Creevymore, Cliffony, County Sligo on the 10/06/2026. The three structures were inspected inside and out for signs of use by bats, looking for bat faeces, prey remains, corpses, wall staining, and suitable roosting crevices.

A bat dusk survey, using bat detectors – Echo Meter touch, Batscanner and 3 static Song Meters was carried out. The Song Meter 4 were placed at points to the west, east and north-east of the structures and were set to record from a half hour before sunset for the duration of the survey.

An infra-red camera was set to record during the survey to the west capturing the house and shed gables and roofs. Fig 7. A second camera was placed with a view of the rear stone wall of the shed.

A second dusk survey was also carried out on the 15/06/2026 to confirm the roost location of a Soprano Pipistrelle within the hay barn. An infra-red camera was set to record the view of the entire interior of the hay barn, while the second focused on the stone/ concrete block wall of the shed.

All recordings were downloaded and analysed using Kaleidoscope software and the infra-red footage inspected for bat activity.

Fig 7: Infra-red camera recording footage of the west gable of the cottage and shed along with SM4 7285.



Weather/ Sunset

The dusk survey work was carried out in winds F1, 60 to 100% cloud, and mostly dry with temperature 13.5°C. There was a smattering of raindrops at times during the survey.

The second evening was dry with a temperature of 17°C, wind F2, 0% cloud.

Sunset was 22.07pm and 22.09 for the two survey nights.

Results

Inspection results

During the inspection of the house and sheds no obvious sign of bats were found.

The attic had no bat droppings visible and the ridge board was covered in cobwebs. No droppings or dead bats were found in the sheds or hay barn.

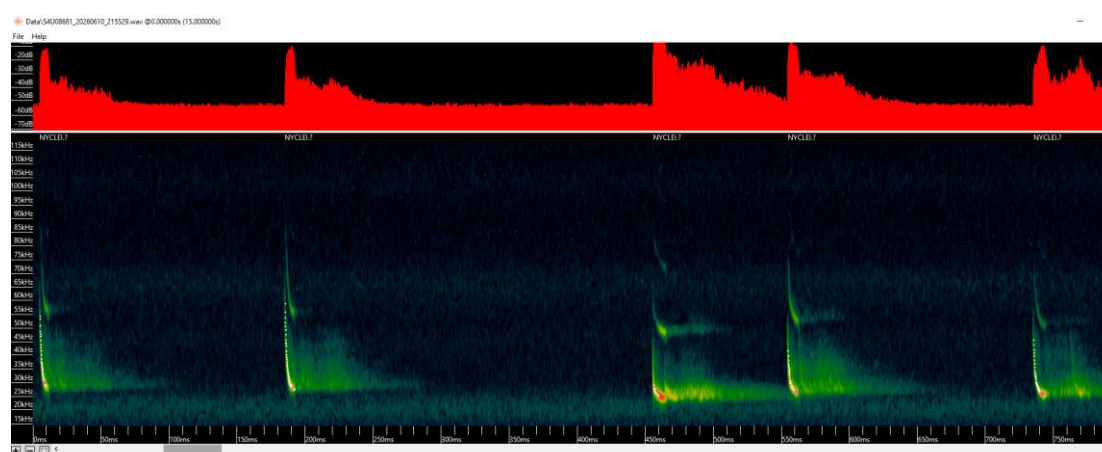
Swallows were nesting in the stone shed in one section and two juvenile robins were also present. Pigeons were roosting in the hay barn.

Bat activity survey

Three species of bat were encountered during the dusk surveys. Soprano Pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*), Common Pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*) and Leisler's bat (*Nyctalus leisleri*).

The first bat of the night noted was a Leisler's bat at 21.55. Fig 8. Its origin was unknown until the second night's survey when it was observed emerging from the hay barn. Then a Common Pipistrelle flew from the south and foraged briefly around the site. This was then replaced by a Soprano Pipistrelle who was flying around inside the hay barn after it emerged. It was then determined on the second nights survey that it was roosting behind a bracket on the back wall (west) of the barn. This Soprano Pipistrelle bat foraged around the site, along the riparian vegetation and along the bounding hedgerows throughout the survey.

Fig 8: Leisler's bat (*Nyctalus leisleri*) roosting and foraging at the site in Creevymore.



Song Meter Results

Song Meter 4, 7285 located to the west of the site recorded Common Pipistrelle, Soprano Pipistrelle, Leisler's and a single Whiskered bat pass (*Myotis mystacinus*) at 22.47pm.

Song Meter 4, 7990 to the east of the site recorded the passing over Common Pipistrelle, Soprano Pipistrelle and Leisler's bats.

Song Meter 4, 8681 to the north east of the site recorded Common Pipistrelle, Soprano Pipistrelle, Leisler's and a single Whiskered bat pass (*Myotis mystacinus*) at 22.53pm.

Levels of activity at the site were low apart from the foraging Soprano Pipistrelle.

Infra-Red Camera

Infra-red footage from the 10/06/2026 did not show any emerging bats from the west side of the site or the rear of the stone/concrete block shed.

The second night's survey was focused on the hay barn to determine where the bats noted on the 10/06/2026 were specifically roosting.

Camera 1 captured a Leisler's bat emerging from the south west or back wall of the barn. It was behind a triangular bracket near the roof top on the left. Ten minutes later a Soprano Pipistrelle emerged from the matching bracket on the right hand side of the rear wall of the hay barn. Fig 9.

Fig 9: Location of roosting bats at the hay barn in Cliffony. Leisler's on the left and Soprano Pipistrelle on the right. See the blurred still, captured from video footage of the emerging Leisler's bat. 🏠



Summary

Four species of bat were recorded from the site at Creevymore, Cliffony, Co Sligo. Two of these species, Soprano Pipistrelle and Leisler's bat were both roosting in the hay barn. There was one of each bat. No other roost location was determined.

Swallows were nesting in the stone shed. It has been noted by Bird Watch Ireland that Swallow numbers are in decline and every effort to support a nesting pair in the future should be made.

Recommendations

As part of the proposed development in Creevymore, Cliffony, Co Sligo, the sheds and hay barn would be removed to make way for a cottage extension and garage. It is proposed that the hayshed will be removed in the winter months when both bats will have left and two bat bricks will be incorporated into the garage when built to provide alternate roosting locations for the bats found in the hay barn.

Examples of bat bricks may be found at: <https://www.nhbs.com/search?q=bat+bricks>.

Depending on the finish of the garage various options are available. The bricks should be installed as high as possible and on the south and/or west aspects.

Lighting

Appropriate lighting for the site is crucial in terms of keeping area as dark as possible for foraging and commuting bats and for minimising light pollution in general.

Bats are not blind, and if there is too much light, their vision can be reduced, resulting in disorientation and interruption of foraging. This is especially the case for Myotis bats which were found to forage beside this site. If lighting is necessary for navigating the building at night, low level, low height, sensor, timed lights should be used.

Guidelines for lighting should be used from the following sources:

Bat Conservation Trust: This updated document can be downloaded free from the ILP website: <https://www.theilp.org.uk/documents/guidance-note-8-bats-and-artificial-lighting/>

Bat Conservation Ireland https://www.batconservationireland.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/BCIrelandGuidelines_Lighting.pdf.

While many lighting solutions are possible, the following ideals should be adhered to:

- The avoidance of direct lighting on trees, hedges shrubs. All lights should be amber in colour and lack UV elements.
- Directional lighting – that is, lighting only at the intensity and direction it is needed.
- Height of lighting columns – The lower the light column, the less light spillage.
- Duration of lighting – Lights should only be on when in use or for health and safety purposes. The use of timers and sensors are ways of controlling this.

Future Landscaping

It would be a positive gain for biodiversity at the site if native species were planted as part of any future landscape plan. Species such as Rowan (*Sorbus acuparia*), Guelder rose (*Viburnum opulus*) or Holly (*Ilex aquifolium*) would be suitable specimens.

A derogation licence has been prepared and sent to National Parks and wildlife Licence department.

Evidence to support the Derogation Tests

Test 1 - Reason for Derogation

This young couple and baby are looking to redevelop an old family cottage to raise their own family. There are two single roosting bats in the hay barn which is in the footprint of the re-development - a Soprano pipistrelle and a Leisler's, which will be accommodated in the new build, and provided with temporary bat boxes while the development works are ongoing. Given the housing crisis affecting Ireland at this time, providing housing is of high public interest and this will see an otherwise unused site back into useable living. The proposed redevelopment will upgrade the older cottage to modern building standards and energy efficiency as per the Sligo County development plan 2024-2030. It will also provide local employment opportunities and secure a home for skilled returned emigrants in the country.

As is outlined below, the actions granted by the derogation are not expected to harm the conservation interest of the species in question.

Test 2 - Absence of Alternative Solutions

Do-Nothing Alternative:

The hay barn is in the footprint of the proposed redevelopment of the house and garage. The garage construction will provide a longer lasting roost location, with the built in permanent bat bricks, for the two single bat species, than the degrading tin hay barn structure.

Test 3 - Impact of a derogation on Conservation Status

The derogation will have no negative impact on the conservation status of the species, as it is a single individual Soprano Pipistrelle and a single individual Leisler's bat species in a temporary roost in an old hay barn. In the current Red List of Terrestrial Mammals (Marnell et al. 2019), all Irish bat species are considered to be of good conservation status, and of 'least concern'.

Alternative roost locations will be provided for the two individual bats found on site, in a permanent location which will be of more robust duration than the metal structure of the hay barn and temporary roost boxes for the duration of works.

References

Andrews Henry, Bat Tree Habitat Key (2018), Bat Roosts in Trees. A Guide to Identification and Assessment for Tree-Care and Ecology Professionals.

Bat Conservation Trust: This updated document can be downloaded free from the ILP website: <https://www.theilp.org.uk/documents/guidance-note-8-bats-and-artificial-lighting/>

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Sunrise and sunset times - Accuweather.com