

Bat Survey Report
Ballycoolen Cottage, Sport Ireland Campus
Ballycoolen Road, Dublin 15



May 2026
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1. Introduction

Bat surveys were undertaken by Ecologist Aidan Murphy MSc. on the 15th & 23rd July 2024 with follow-up surveys on the 6th & 27th May 2026. The surveys were commissioned by Deborah D'Arcy Ecology, on behalf of Sport Ireland for proposed refurbishment works. The objectives of the bat surveys were to:

- Evaluate the suitability of the existing buildings on site to support roosting bats;
- Determine the presence or absence of bats within the buildings and, where present, assess the nature and significance of any roosts identified;
- Assess the likely effects of the proposed development on bats and their roosting habitats; and
- Recommend appropriate mitigation measures to avoid, minimise, or compensate for potential impacts.

This report has been prepared to support an application for a derogation licence under Regulation 54 of the Habitats Regulations. It presents the findings of desktop studies and ecological surveys undertaken for the site, and evaluates the proposal against the three derogation tests outlined under Regulation 54 (National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS), 2025).

Aidan has worked for ten years as a freelance ecologist with survey experience including bats, birds, freshwater & terrestrial invertebrates, and botanical surveys. Aidan holds an M.Sc. in Ecological Assessment, University College Cork, Cork. (2015).

Aidan is trained in bat handling and capture methods (BCI) and currently holds a NPWS bat disturbance/ Survey Licence, (NPWS Bat Survey Licence No.: DER-BAT- 2026-192. Expiry date: 31st December 2026).

2. Legislation and Bats

All bat species are protected by law in Ireland at a national and European level. Nationally, the Wildlife Act 1976 (amended 2000) makes it an offence to wilfully interfere with, or destroy, the resting or breeding place for bats. All species of Irish bats are listed under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife Act (1976) making it an offence to:

- Intentionally kill, injure, or take a bat
- Possess or control any live or dead specimen or anything derived from a bat
- Wilfully interfere with any structure or place used for breeding or resting by a bat
- Wilfully interfere with a bat while it is occupying a structure or place which it uses for that purpose.

The EU 'Habitats' Directive (92/43/EC; transposed into Irish law by EC Birds and Natural Habitats Regulations (S.I 477 of 2011) provides legal protection for bats and their roosts at a European Union level. In addition, the Irish government are signatories of the 1979 Bonn 'Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals' and the 1982 Convention on the 'Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats'. Ireland must also fulfil commitments under the 1991 'Eurobats Agreement' for the conservation of bats in Europe. Under the EU Habitats Directive, lesser horseshoe bats are listed as an Annex II species (afforded special protection). All other Irish bat species are listed in Annex IV (general protection) of this directive.

Regulation 51(2) of the 2011 Regulations provides – *“(2) Notwithstanding any consent, statutory or otherwise, given to a person by a public authority or held by a person, except in accordance with a licence granted by the Minister under Regulation 54, a person who in respect of the species referred to in Part 1 of the First Schedule—*

- (a) deliberately captures or kills any specimen of these species in the wild, (b) deliberately disturbs these species particularly during the period of breeding, rearing, hibernation and migration, (c) deliberately takes or destroys eggs of those species from the wild,*

*(d) damages or destroys a breeding site or resting place of such an animal, or
(e) keeps, transports, sells, exchanges, offers for sale or offers for exchange any specimen of these species taken in the wild, other than those taken legally as referred to in Article 12(2) of the Habitats Directive, shall be guilty of an offence."*

The grant of planning permission does not permit the commission of any of the above acts or render the requirement for a derogation licence unnecessary.

3. Site Location and Description

The site is located on Ballycoolen road, Dublin 15, on the grounds of Sport Ireland Campus. It is comprised of a vacant two-story building (dwelling), with a single-story extension to the rear and 2no. detached outhouses (sheds). The buildings are located within an overgrown garden bounded on the northern boundary by an entrance driveway coming off Ballycoolin road leading into the Sport Ireland campus and by Ballycoolen road on the eastern boundary. The site is bounded by hedging and low stone walls on the other two boundaries. It is proposed to refurbish the dwelling which requires repairs and maintenance.

The nearest protected areas are: South Dublin Bay SAC (Site code: 000210), 11.7 km to the east and South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA (Site code: 004024) 9.5 km to the east. The SAC does not have bat species listed as a *Qualifying Interest*. The nearest pNHA is the Royal Canal pNHA (site code: 002103), 1.9 km south. The site centroid is ITM: 709534 740059 and occupies an area of circa 0.1 hectares.

Figure 1. Development site location



4. Methodology

4.1. Desktop study

Records from the National Biodiversity Data Centre (NBDC) for the site and surroundings were extracted and reviewed for bat records. Such information can identify bat species that may occur within a proposed development site or in the surrounding areas. It should be noted that an absence of records is likely to reflect an absence of survey data and cannot be taken as confirmation that a particular species is not present in the site or the surrounding area.

4.2. Field study

4.2.1. Preliminary Roost Assessments

The assessment of the site buildings was undertaken according to the Bat Conservation Trust (BCT) Guidelines (2023)¹. An assessment was carried out on 15th July 2024, with a follow-up survey on 6th May 2026. The external assessments were conducted during daylight hours from ground level. Binoculars were used for wall sections and roofs over 4 m in height. Internal inspections of the structure were carried out on the same days. The surveys identified any potential roost features or evidence of use by bats. Evidence for bats sought are dead and live animals, droppings, discarded insect remains, urine stains, and greasy marks at entrances to structural crevices and gaps where bats may possibly roost. General bird activity and signs of nesting birds were also noted during these surveys.

Following the BCT Guidelines, features within buildings were assigned as having either a 'none, negligible, low, moderate or high' status in terms of their potential to provide bat roosting opportunities, referred to in the BCT Guidelines as the presence of 'Potential Roost Features' (PRFs). The criteria for assessing the potential suitability of the site for bats (Collins, 2023) are set out in Table 1 below

Table 1. Criteria for Assessing the Potential Suitability of the Site for Bats, Collins (2023)

Tree Category	Description / Roosting habitats
None	No habitat features on site likely to be used by any roosting bats at any time of the year
Negligible	No obvious habitat features on site likely to be used by roosting bats
Low	A structure with potential roosts used by individual bats opportunistically. Not enough space/shelter for larger numbers of bats for hibernation and roosting A tree of sufficient size and age to contain PRFs but none seen from the ground
Medium	Structure or tree with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by bats due to their size and shelter, but unlikely to support a roost of high conservation status
High	Structure or tree with one or more potential roost sites that are obviously suitable for use by large numbers of bats on a more regular basis and potentially for longer periods of time due to their size, protection and surrounding habitat

¹ *Bat Surveys: Good Practice Guidelines, 4th edition, Bat Conservation Trust (Collins, 2023).*

4.2.2. Dusk emergence surveys watches

Dusk emergence surveys of the buildings were undertaken by Aidan Murphy in July 2024 and May 2026 to determine the presence or absence of roosting bats. The surveys involved monitoring the buildings for bats emerging from potential roost access points and recording any associated bat activity. Each survey commenced approximately 20 minutes before sunset and continued until approximately 70 minutes after sunset.

Weather conditions during the surveys were favourable for bat activity, comprising dry, calm and mild conditions with air temperatures within the optimum range for bat survey work. Survey details are provided in Table 2. A brief shower occurred 10 minutes before sunset on the 27th May 2026 survey but is not considered likely to have affected the survey.

Surveyor positions were selected to maximise coverage of the buildings, with particular focus on roof structures and other features considered to have potential to support bat roosts or provide access points for bats. Surveys were undertaken using an Anabat Scout full-spectrum bat detector and an Echo Meter Touch Pro bat detector.

In addition to the emergence surveys, infrared (IR) and thermal imaging cameras were deployed to supplement visual observations and improve the likelihood of detecting emerging bats. The equipment comprised two Canon XA infrared cameras and two Pixfra Arc A613 thermal cameras. Cameras were positioned to monitor potential bat access points and other features of interest, with the infrared cameras supplemented by external IR illuminators to enhance image quality in low-light conditions.

Video recordings were reviewed following completion of the surveys. Bat echolocation calls were manually analysed using Wildlife Acoustics Kaleidoscope Viewer Pro software and identified to species level where the recorded call characteristics allowed reliable determination.

Table 2. Details relating to bat surveys conducted on site in July 2024 and May 2026

Date	Survey Type	Survey Times	Weather	Temperature (°C)
15 th July 2024 (Sunset 21:45)	Dusk Emergence	21:30 – 22:50	40% cloud, no rain, no wind	15°C-13°C
23 rd July 2024 (Sunset 21:34)	Dusk Emergence	21:15 – 22:50	10% cloud, no rain, no wind	17°C-15°C
6 th May 2026 (Sunset 21:02)	Dusk Emergence	20:30 – 22:30	20% cloud, no rain, no wind	14°C-12°C
27 th May 2026 (Sunset 21:35)	Dusk Emergence	21:05 – 22:45	70% cloud with 5-minute shower, no wind	21°C-20°C

4.2.3. Bird Exclusion Methodology

Following the completion of the 2024 bat surveys, a programme of bird exclusion was undertaken in advance of the proposed refurbishment works. Prior to the installation of exclusion measures, the building was inspected and confirmed to be free of active bird nests. Bat surveys had previously established the absence of bat roosts within the structure. Bird-exclusion netting was subsequently installed at key locations to prevent access to potential nesting opportunities, with particular attention given to the eaves and other features capable of supporting nesting birds.

The exclusion measures have been maintained in situ and continue to prevent nesting birds from accessing the building pending the commencement of refurbishment works.

5. Results

5.1. Desktop study results

Records from the National Biodiversity Data Centre (NBDC) (<https://maps.biodiversityireland.ie/>) within 2 km of where the site is located were extracted and reviewed (accessed on 26/5/2026). The records are presented in Table 4 below. The NBDC database search returned records for 5 no. species of bat: Leisler's bat (*Nyctalus leisleri*), soprano pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*), common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*), brown long-eared bat (*Plecotus auritus*) and Daubenton's bat (*Myotis daubentonii*).

Table 3. Nearest bat records from NBDC within 2 km radius

Grid reference/ distance from site (100 m resolution)	Species	Recorder	Date of last record	Database
O109398 1.3 km E of site	Common pipistrelle Soprano Pipistrelle Leisler's bat	Scott Cawley - EIA survey	02/08/2005	National Bat Database of Ireland
O092393 0.8 km SW of site	Common pipistrelle Soprano Pipistrelle	Brian Keeley - Donna Mullen	31/07/2008	National Bat Database of Ireland
O0939 0.9 km SW of site	Leisler's bat	Brian Keeley	31/07/2008	National Bat Database of Ireland
O083389 1.9 km SW of site	Common pipistrelle Daubenton's bat	Faith Wilson	11/08/2008	National Bat Database of Ireland
O087384 1.9 km SW of site	Common pipistrelle Soprano Pipistrelle Leisler's bat Daubenton's bat Brown long-eared bat	Faith Wilson	09/10/2007	National Bat Database of Ireland
O091381 1.9 km S of site	Common pipistrelle Soprano Pipistrelle Leisler's bat Daubenton's bat	Tina Aughney Faith Wilson	02/05/2022 09/10/2007	National Bat Database of Ireland
O094380 1.9 km S of site	Common pipistrelle Soprano pipistrelle Leisler's bat	Tina Aughney	02/09/2021 28/07/2021	National Bat Database of Ireland
O095380 1.9 km S of site	Common pipistrelle Soprano Pipistrelle	Tina Aughney	02/09/2021	National Bat Database of Ireland
O096380 1.9 km S of site	Common pipistrelle Leisler's bat	Tina Aughney	02/09/2021	National Bat Database of Ireland
O093383 1.7 km S of site	Daubenton's bat	Daubenton's volunteer	11/08/2006	National Bat Database of Ireland
O094381 1.8 km S of site	Daubenton's bat	Aine Lynch	10/08/2008	National Bat Database of Ireland
O078393 1.9 km E of site	Common pipistrelle Soprano pipistrelle Leisler's bat	Colm Clarke	25/08/2015	National Bat Database of Ireland

Additional bat records in the vicinity

1. Surveys undertaken by Sean Meehan (May 2021) confirmed a bat roost within Stable Block A of the Longbarn development, located 0.7 km south-west of the site. Subsequent surveys by Aidan Murphy confirmed continued use as a Leisler's bat maternity roost, with 52, 43 and 45 bats recorded emerging in May 2021, July 2022 and May 2023 respectively. The roost is understood to have been unoccupied during 2024 and 2025.
2. Common pipistrelle, soprano pipistrelle and Leisler's bats were recorded by Aidan Murphy during a bat activity survey of the nearby Velodrome site, 0.6 km west of the subject site, on 5 July 2022.
3. Common pipistrelle, soprano pipistrelle and Leisler's bats were recorded by Aidan Murphy foraging in the vicinity of the gatehouse building within the Sport Ireland Campus, 370 m south-east of the site, on 25 June 2024.

Bat Conservation Ireland's habitat suitability index

In addition, Bat Conservation Ireland's habitat suitability index², available to view on the NBDC online mapping portal, classifies the landscape within which the site is located, as having a medium suitability for bats, with a score of 23.33, see Table 4 below.

Table 4. Bat Conservation Ireland's habitat suitability index

All Bats	23.33	Leisler's bat	41
Common pipistrelle	39	Whiskered bat	19
Brown long-eared bat	26	Daubenton's bat	19
Soprano pipistrelle	35	Nathusius's bat	14
Lesser horseshoe bat	0	Natterer's bat	17

5.2. Field study results

5.2.1. Daytime Roost Inspections- Buildings

The two- storey dwelling has old stone walls with sections of brick and a slate tile roof with one chimney stack. It is in overall poor condition and has been subject to continuing vandalism over recent years and has been boarded up to provide further protection. The building was netted up to deter nesting birds in advance of proposed refurbishment works to building. No physical signs of roosting bats were recorded in any of the structures.

- The slate roof has frequent missing/ slipped slates
- Ridge tiles have missing mortar especially on the eastern side
- The two dormers on the front elevation are in poor condition with rotten fascias and gaps around lead flashing
- The attics are shallow (less than 1 m in height and subject to light ingress from misaligned slates).

The dormer roof spaces are inaccessible. The building interior rooms have no bat roost potential. The outhouses are open and draughty; they lack the structural elements which would provide suitable roosting areas for bats, no suitable roosting crevices noted.

² Lundy, M.G., Aughney, T., Montgomery, W.I., & Roche, N. (2011) *Landscape conservation for Irish bats and specific roosting characteristics*. Bat Conservation Ireland. Accessed 26th May 2026.

Photographs of Ballycoolen Cottage and outhouses



Plate 1. West elevation (right) and north elevation (left)

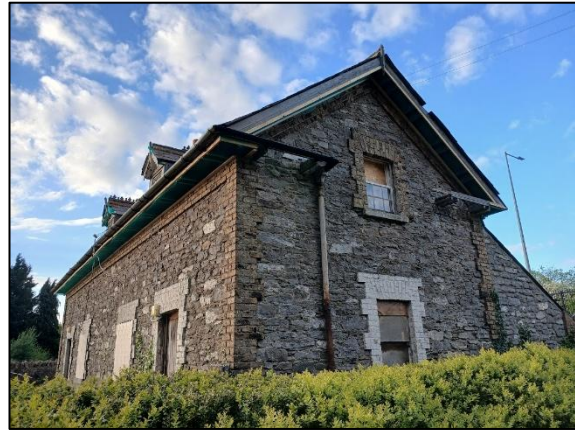


Plate 2. West elevation (left) and south elevation (right)



Plate 3. South elevation (left) and east elevation (right)



Plate 4. East elevation (left) and north elevation (right)



Plate 5. North dormer indicating the emergence point of a single soprano pipistrelle bat (red arrow)



Plate 6. Interior of first floor room with boarded up dormer window (blue arrow) and approximate location of roost (red arrow)



Plate 7. Ground floor room, windows have been shuttered



Plate 8. First floor room with southern dormer (centre)



Plate 9. Historic signs of birds nesting noted: roof has been repaired in recent years, no signs of bats or birds observed



Plate 10. The roof is unlined, with the underside of the slates exposed. Attic shows no signs of bats



Plate 11. Southern outhouse. No signs of bats noted. Outhouse interior lacks the structural elements which would provide suitable roosting areas for bats with a lack of crevices and shelter from light and draughts. A single barn swallow's nest was recorded on 6th May 2026



Plate 12. Northern outhouse interior. No signs of bats noted. Outhouse interior lacks the structural elements which would provide suitable roosting areas for bats with a lack of crevices and shelter from light and draughts



Plate 13. Nighttime view of building exterior, rear and side (east and north elevations). The building is subject to significant light pollution from the adjacent street lighting on Ballycoolen road.



Plate 14. Building exterior rear and side (east and south elevations). Ballycoolen Road on right

5.2.2. Bat Emergence/ bat activity surveys

July 2024 Surveys:

No bats were observed/ recorded emerging from any of the buildings on site.

May 2026 Surveys:

A single soprano pipistrelle was observed emerging from the northern dormer during both the 6th May and 27th May surveys. On each occasion, the bat exited from the same location, indicating continued use of the roost. The bat echolocated upon emergence on 6 May before flying south. During the 27th May survey, no echolocation calls were detected at emergence and the bat departed in a westerly direction. Given the consistent emergence location and the observation of only a single bat on both survey nights, it is considered likely that the same individual was recorded during both surveys.

In addition, Leisler's bat and common pipistrelle were recorded during the surveys. Together with soprano pipistrelle, these species represent a typical suburban bat assemblage and are all common and widespread throughout Ireland. All bat species recorded during surveys are Annex IV species under the EU Habitats Directive and all have a *Favourable Status* in Ireland.

5.2.3. Evaluation of Survey Results

Preliminary roost assessment (PRA)- Buildings

A detailed inspection was undertaken of the exterior and interior of the buildings to look for features that bats could use for entry/exit & roosting and to search for signs of bats. No signs of bats were observed but potential roost features (PRFs) were noted in the main building. This building has suitable gaps in the roof slates, soffits and facias and is considered to have medium to high potential for supporting a bat roost (Collins, 2023).

The outhouses were assessed as having low suitability for bats. While they offer some potential bat roosting features, such as wooden rafters and joists that may favour species such as brown long-eared bats (*Plecotus auritus*), the open structure allows excessive daylight illumination and draughts into much of the outhouse interiors. The structures are considered to have low potential for supporting a bat roost.

Bat emergence and bat activity survey

The bat roost inspection completed in May 2026 found that the two-storey dwelling offers suitable roosting opportunities for bats and could support a small day roost. Owing to the exposed nature of the site, which faces out into open grassland and playing fields to the west, together with the presence of significant artificial lighting in the surrounding area, the building is considered unlikely to support a roost of high conservation significance.

No evidence of bat occupancy was identified within the dwelling or associated outbuildings during the survey.

A single soprano pipistrelle was observed emerging from the northern dormer of the dwelling during each of the two dusk emergence surveys undertaken in May 2026, confirming the continued occupation of the roost.

The dwelling has been confirmed to support a roost of a single soprano pipistrelle, a widespread and common bat species in Ireland. Based on the survey findings, the roost is considered to be of low conservation significance. This assessment is consistent with the criteria outlined by Marnell and Kelleher (2022), whereby roosts supporting individual bats or small numbers of common species, and which do not function as maternity, hibernation or other important seasonal roosts, are regarded as being of low conservation importance.

The national population of soprano pipistrelle is estimated at 1.2–2.7 million individuals and is considered to be increasing significantly in Ireland (Roche & Langton, 2024). Monitoring data indicate a strong positive trend in the species since the commencement of the Irish Bat Monitoring Scheme.

Common pipistrelle and Leisler's bat have been recorded in low numbers flying within the vicinity of the site in the 2026 surveys, but none were observed foraging or commuting within or immediately adjacent to the site boundary. The building and surrounding garden are exposed to substantial artificial illumination from street lights along Ballycoolen Road, together with intermittent disturbance from passing vehicular traffic. This lighting environment is considered suboptimal for many bat species and is likely to constrain commuting and foraging activity in the immediate area. Consequently, the site is considered less likely to support roosts of species sensitive to artificial lighting or roosts of elevated conservation importance.

Site evaluation

Bat species diversity recorded at the site was relatively low, with only three species identified during surveys, namely common pipistrelle, soprano pipistrelle and Leisler's bat. The NBDC online mapping portal classifies the surrounding landscape as being of moderate suitability for bats based on Bat Conservation Ireland's Habitat Suitability Index. However, the number of species recorded on site was lower than might be expected within a landscape of moderate suitability, suggesting that local site conditions may be less favourable for a wider range of bat species than the broader landscape context would indicate.

The present surveys carried out in May 2026 are a 'snapshot' in time and the absence of a species, or evidence of their presence, does not preclude their presence at a later date.

6. Potential Impacts & Mitigation

The proposed refurbishment works include alterations to a section of the dwelling containing a confirmed soprano pipistrelle roost. Emergence surveys confirmed the presence of a single soprano pipistrelle roosting within the northern dormer structure. In the absence of mitigation, the proposed works have the potential to disturb an individual bat and affect a roost of low conservation importance.

7. Potential Impacts & Mitigation

7.1. Derogation Tests

Test 1. Reason for the Derogation:

The requirement to undertake the proposed works arises from two separate but related obligations.

Firstly, the works are required in response to a Section 11 Notice issued by Fingal County Council under the *Derelict Sites Act 1990* (as amended) (Appendix B). The Notice identifies works that must be completed within an agreed timeframe. Following consultation with Fingal County Council, a revised programme of works has been agreed, requiring completion of the specified works by the end of 2026. The appointed contractor is scheduled to mobilise during the week commencing 27 August 2026, with all works to be completed by 11 December 2026. The duration of the programme reflects recent experience of undertaking comparable conservation works to heritage structures.

Secondly, the structure is included on the Fingal County Council Record of Protected Structures (RPS No. 938). As such, the owner has statutory obligations under the *Planning and Development Act 2024* to protect, maintain and prevent the deterioration of the structure. The proposed works are necessary to fulfil these obligations and to ensure the long-term conservation of the protected structure in accordance with the requirements of the planning authority.

The proposed works comprise essential repair and maintenance measures being undertaken with the agreement of the Fingal County Council Conservation Officer. The works are required to address identified conservation and structural issues and are being carried out in accordance with the recommendations of the planning authority. While the dwelling supports a confirmed soprano pipistrelle roost, surveys established that this comprises a minor roost used by a single individual and is therefore of low conservation significance in accordance with Marnell et al. (2022). Accordingly, the implementation of the proposed repair works, together with the mitigation measures outlined in this report, will not adversely affect the conservation status of the species at either the local or national level.

Intended use: The scope of the current works is to undertake essential repair work to the external fabric of the structure and address the identified dereliction issues. In the short term it is not intended to make the structure habitable. Subject to future studies and funding availability the use of the structure to support campus activities will be investigated. Any future use subject to any necessary statutory applications. It is likely that the structure will be used to support residential accommodation on campus.

Accordingly, the proposed works are required both to comply with the Section 11 Notice issued under the *Derelict Sites Act 1990* (as amended) and to meet the statutory duty to safeguard and maintain a protected structure

Test 2: Absence of Alternative Solutions

A number of alternatives were considered in relation to the proposed works.

The option of undertaking no works was examined. However, this is not considered a feasible alternative. The building is currently in a deteriorated condition and is subject to ongoing weathering, including water ingress and damage arising from exposure to wind and rain. In the absence of remedial works, the condition of the structure would continue to decline, resulting in further deterioration of the building fabric and potentially compromising its long-term viability. Furthermore, as the structure is included on the Record of Protected Structures, there is a statutory obligation to maintain and safeguard the building from avoidable deterioration.

An alternative location was also considered. However, the proposed works relate to the repair and conservation of an existing protected structure and, by their nature, cannot be undertaken elsewhere. Relocating the works to another location would not address the deterioration of the structure or fulfil the obligations arising under the *Derelict Sites Act* and the *Planning and Development Act*.

Alternative design solutions were considered where practicable. The proposed works have been developed to minimise impacts on the confirmed soprano pipistrelle roost and will incorporate mitigation measures, including the installation of suitable bat boxes for crevice-dwelling species in adjacent trees, 50 m south. Given the nature of the defects requiring repair and the conservation requirements associated with the protected structure, no alternative design solution has been identified that would achieve the objectives of the project while entirely avoiding disturbance to the roost.

Accordingly, no satisfactory alternative solution exists that would allow the required repair and conservation works to proceed while fully avoiding impacts on the bat roost.

Test 3: Impact of the Derogation on Conservation Status

The national population of soprano pipistrelle is currently estimated at between approximately 1.2 and 2.7 million individuals and is considered to be increasing in Ireland (Roche & Langton, 2024). Surveys undertaken at the site confirmed the presence of a minor roost used by a single soprano pipistrelle. No evidence of a maternity roost was identified.

In the absence of mitigation, repair works affecting the confirmed roost location could result in disturbance to, injury of, or mortality of an individual bat if undertaken while the roost is occupied. Such an impact would represent a minor adverse effect at a site level. However, given that the roost supports only a single individual and is of low conservation significance, any such impact would not be significant in the context of the local population and would be negligible at the regional and national scales.

The mitigation measures outlined in the supporting report have been designed in accordance with established best-practice guidance (Marnell *et al.*, 2022) and will ensure that impacts on bats are avoided or reduced to the greatest extent practicable. The proposed works will also provide

alternative roosting opportunities through the installation of suitable bat boxes for crevice-dwelling species in adjacent trees, 50 m south.

Accordingly, the proposed works, when undertaken in conjunction with the prescribed mitigation measures, will not be detrimental to the maintenance of soprano pipistrelle at a favourable conservation status within its natural range, either locally or nationally, as required under Regulation 54(2) of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (as amended).

7.2. Mitigation Measures

Based on the criteria set out in Marnell et al. (2022), the bat roost present within Ballycoolen Cottage is considered to be of low conservation significance. The guidance for roosts of this conservation category recommends:

Flexibility over provision of bat boxes, access to new buildings etc. No conditions about timing or monitoring.

Measure 1: Timing of Works

While there is no requirement to impose seasonal timing restrictions in this instance, the potential for disturbance to individual bats can be minimised through the implementation of appropriate precautionary measures during the works. The Bat Mitigation Guidelines for Ireland (Marnell et al., 2022) identify the period between 1 September and 1 May as the preferred time for undertaking works to structures supporting summer roosts where no maternity colony is present.

In the present case, works are required to commence on 27 July 2026 in order to comply with the agreed project programme and the requirements of the local authority in relation to the refurbishment of the protected structure. Delaying commencement until September would result in a significant postponement of the project and could jeopardise the agreed construction schedule. Surveys undertaken in May 2026 confirmed the presence of a single soprano pipistrelle day roost and found no evidence of a maternity colony. Given the low conservation significance of the roost and the absence of breeding bats, it is considered that the proposed works can proceed during the summer period, subject to the mitigation measures outlined below, including a pre-construction bat inspection and ecologist-supervised soft removal of the affected roof section. These measures will ensure that the risk of injury or mortality to bats is minimised.

Measure 2: Alteration Works to the Existing Dwelling

Immediately prior to the commencement of works, the dwelling shall be inspected by a suitably qualified bat specialist to determine whether bats remain present within the structure. The inspection may comprise a daytime inspection and/or a dusk survey, as deemed appropriate by the bat specialist.

Where no evidence of current bat occupation is identified, works may proceed. Should bats be confirmed as present, works affecting the roost area shall be postponed until the bats have naturally vacated the structure.

Prior to the commencement of works, the bat specialist shall provide a toolbox talk to the contractor and site personnel. This briefing shall outline the potential presence of bats, the legal protections afforded to bats and their roosts, and the procedures to be followed should bats be encountered during the course of works.

If a bat is discovered during the works, all works in the immediate vicinity shall cease immediately. The bat shall be left undisturbed, and the NPWS and the project ecologist/bat specialist shall be contacted for advice before works recommence.

Measure 3: Provision of Bat Roosting Features within adjacent woodland trees

The dwelling supports a day roost used by a single soprano pipistrelle. As soprano pipistrelles are crevice-roosting bats, the provision of replacement crevice features is considered an appropriate mitigation measure.

Accordingly, bat boxes suitable for crevice-dwelling species shall be installed within the mixed broadleaved woodland 50 m south. These features will maintain the availability of roosting habitat within the site and provide alternative roosting opportunities following completion of the works. Following completion of the works, the bat boxes will be inspected by the licensed bat ecologist to confirm correct installation. Photographic records will be retained and made available to NPWS upon request. Given the low conservation significance of the roost and the provision of replacement roosting features within adjacent woodland, no further monitoring is considered necessary unless required by a condition of the derogation licence.

Measure 4: Lighting

No additional external lighting shall be installed in the vicinity of the bat boxes installed in the adjacent woodland. Existing ambient light levels arising from Ballycoolen road and vehicular traffic will not be increased as a result of the proposed development.

8. Conclusion

The proposed refurbishment works are scheduled to commence on 27 July 2026 and be completed by 31 December 2026. Surveys undertaken in May 2026 confirmed the continued use of the dwelling by a single soprano pipistrelle day roost, with no evidence of a maternity colony or other roost of elevated conservation significance.

The dwelling is therefore considered to support a roost of low conservation value. Subject to the granting of a derogation licence and the implementation of the mitigation measures outlined in this report, including pre-construction inspections, ecologist-supervised soft removal of the affected roof section, and the provision of replacement roosting features within adjacent woodland, the proposed works are not expected to result in significant adverse effects on bats.

The proposed mitigation will maintain the availability of suitable roosting habitat in the local area and the development is therefore considered unlikely to adversely affect the conservation status of soprano pipistrelle bats at either the local or national level.

9. References

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Appendix A - Infra-red and thermal camera still images



Plate A1. Thermal camera still image showing the west and south elevations



Plate A2. Thermal camera still image showing the west and north elevations.



Plate A3. Infra-red camera still image showing the south and east elevations at end of dusk emergence survey



Plate A4. Infra-red camera still image showing the north and east elevations at end of dusk emergence survey

Appendix B – Correspondence with Fingal County Council

Comhairle Contae Fhine Gall
Fingal County Council

An Roinn Forbartha Eacnamaíochta,
Fiontraíochta, Turasóireachta
& Cultúir

Economic, Enterprise, Tourism and
Cultural Development Department



The Secretary
National Sports Campus
Development Authority Of I.I.S. Building
National Sports Campus
Abbottstown
Dublin 15

RECEIVED 11 NOV 2025

CORRESPONDANCE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE DERELICT SITES ACT 1990, AS AMENDED.

Derelict Sites Reference: DS 25.96	Date: 07/11/2025
Location: Former Gate Lodge, Abbottstown Sports Campus, Sheephill D15 Y9EH	LEA: Blanchardstown/Mulhuddart

Dear Sir/Madam

In pursuance of its functions under the above-mentioned Acts, as statutory authority, the County Council for the County of Fingal carried out an inspection on this property referenced above on 22/10/2025.

In accordance with said Act you, as the authority with responsibility for this site, have a statutory duty to take all reasonable steps to ensure that the land does not become or does not continue to be a derelict site.

In line with the provisions of Section 6 of the Derelict Sites Act 1990, as amended, you are hereby served a statutory notice under Section 11 of said Act.

You are required to carry out the works detailed within the enclosed Section 11 Notice within 6 weeks of the date of this letter, as referenced above, in order to appropriately address the poor condition of this property.

The list of measures contained within the Notice is not exhaustive. It is your responsibility to bring this site up to a standard that does not detract to a material degree from the amenity, character or appearance of the land in the neighbourhood.

Representations regarding this statutory notice can be submitted by email to Derelictsites@fingal.ie within 14 days of receipt of this notice.

Áras an Chontae, Sord, Fhine Gall, Co. Bhaile Átha Cliath
County Hall, Main Street, Swords, Co. Dublin K67 X8Y2
t: (01) 890 5000 e: derelictsites@fingal.ie www.fingal.ie



Failure to address the issues outlined above may result in additional statutory notices being served on you under the Derelict Sites Act 1990, as amended, and/or the site being added to the Derelict Sites Register.

Non-compliance with the requirements of this notice shall permit Fingal County Council to take such further steps as the Council considers reasonable and necessary, up to and including entry on to the land by authorised persons, to give effect to the terms of this notice and we may recover any expense thereby incurred from you as a simple contract debt in any court of competent jurisdiction.

In the event of the site being entered on the Derelict Sites Register, a Derelict Sites Levy, charged at 7% of the market value of the site will be charged to you each year the site remains derelict. The local authority is also permitted to consider acquiring your property compulsorily or by agreement.

Upon completion of the required works outlined above you are requested to submit confirmation in writing via email to derelictsites@fingal.ie that the works are complete so that a further inspection can be carried out.

Signed on Behalf of Fingal County Council



For Senior Executive Officer

FINGAL COUNTY COUNCIL

DERELICT SITES ACT 1990 (as amended) – SECTION 11 NOTICE

**NOTICE OF NECESSARY MEASURES REQUIRED TO BE CARRIED OUT TO
PREVENT LAND FROM BECOMING OR CONTINUING TO BE DERELICT**

To: National Sports Campus
Development Authority Of I.I.S. Building
National Sports Campus
Abbotstown
Dublin 15.

RECEIVED 11 NOV 2025

Fingal County Council, being of the opinion that the land referred to hereunder is a Derelict Site within the meaning of the Derelict Sites Act, 1990 (as amended), hereby give notice to the registered owner of the site located as detailed below of the necessary measures required to be carried out at said location in order to ensure the land does not become or does not continue to be a derelict site as defined under the Derelict Sites Act, 1990 (as amended).

Measures:

- As the property is a Protected Structure (RPS 938) you are advised to engage a conservation professional to specify and direct the works to be undertaken. Fingal County Council's Conservation Office is to be consulted in relation to the works prior to their commencement.
- The existing window opes in the front ground level façade of the building should be reinstated with the appropriate glazing treatment following best practice conservation.
- Any damaged windows, their frames and glass panes are to be repaired or replaced, following best conservation practice and the woodwork painted.
- The existing door opes in the front façade should be reinstated with suitable doors.
- The gutters should be carefully cleaned, inspected for damage, and repaired as required.
- The weeds and vegetation along the base of the main structure wall should be carefully cleared.
- All ivy should be removed from the property and the garden walls.
- All waste and debris should be removed from the curtilage of the property and disposed of in legal manner.
- All overgrowth should be cut back to an appropriate level and disposed of in a legal manner.

- Works should be carried out to repair and secure the roof that follow best conservation practice (e.g. repair of original or historic materials rather than replacement or where replacement deemed necessary it is on a like-for-like basis).

You are required, under Section 11(4) of said Act, to carry out the above-mentioned measures within 6 weeks of the date on this notice.

Dated this 7th day of November 2025



For Senior Executive Officer