Bat Mitigation Strategy

Proposed Development at Moygaddy House, Maynooth, Co. Meath

15 October 2026

NM Ecology Ltd - Consultant Ecologists
38 Maywood Avenue, Raheny, Dublin 5
Website: www.nmecology.com
[redacted]

Table of Contents

1 Introduction 2

1.1 Assessment Brief 2

1.2 Statement of authority 2

2 Bat Survey 2

2.1 Methods 2

2.2 Appraisal of potential roost features 3

2.3 Survey results 3

3 Proposed development 4

4 Assessment of Potential Impacts 5

4.1 Direct impacts on roosting bats 5

4.2 Indirect impacts foraging areas or commuting routes 5

5 Proposed mitigation measures 5

6 Conclusion 6

7 Details of proposed licence 6

7.1 Dates and persons responsible 6

7.2 Considerations relating to Regulation 54 6

1 Introduction

1.1 Assessment Brief

A planning application was submitted in 2026 for alterations to Moygaddy House, a protected structure (RPS: 91558) located near Maynooth in Co. Meath. The main structure of the dwelling will be retained, but a contemporary extension on its north-eastern side will be demolished as part of the proposed development.

NM Ecology Ltd was engaged in August 2026 to carry out a bat survey of the extension. A small bat roost was discovered, which can be excluded prior to demolition works. As these works will disturb a bat roost, they will require a derogation licence issued in accordance with Regulation 54 of the *EC (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations* 2011 (as amended). In this document we provide information to support the derogation process.

1.2 Statement of authority

All surveying and reporting was carried out by Nick Marchant MCIEEM MSc, the principal ecologist of NM Ecology Ltd. He has nineteen years of professional experience, including sixteen years as an ecological consultant, one year as a local authority biodiversity officer, and two years managing an NGO in Indonesia. He has an MSc in Ecosystem Conservation and Landscape Management from NUI Galway and a BSc in Environmental Science from Queens University Belfast. He is a member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, and operates in accordance with their code of professional conduct.

He regularly carries out bat surveys for projects throughout Ireland and Northern Ireland, and has completed training courses in *Bat Identification and Survey* (Bat Conservation Ireland, 2008), *Bat mitigation for construction projects* (Bat Conservation Trust, 2014) and *Bat handling, mist netting and harp trapping* (Bat Training UK, 2014).

2 Bat Survey

2.1 Methods

Survey methods were undertaken in accordance with the Bat Conservation Trust's *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines* (4th edition, Collins et al 2023). An initial external daytime inspection of the buildings was carried out on 28 August 2026, followed by an emergence survey on the same day. Bats were observed emerging from the structure during the first survey, so on a precautionary basis a second survey was carried out one week later on 4 September 2026. Weather conditions were suitable for bats on each occasion.

A Batlogger M2 (Elekon AG) was used as the primary detector and a Guide TK611 thermal monocular as a night vision aid, set to record for the duration of the surveys.

2.2 Appraisal of potential roost features

A Heritage Impact Assessment for Moygaddy House was prepared by Mesh Architects and submitted as part of the planning application. Relevant excerpts from the document are reproduced below.

> *"Moygaddy House is a three-bay, two-storey-over-basement house, built circa 1850-1860, with a hipped roof and pilastered porch. It is a well-built example of a mid-Victorian estate manager's house, displaying good quality but standard detailing for its type and date. The scale is compact relative to the landed estate houses of County Meath: it is explicitly not a grand country house but rather a functional, well-built residential building serving the management of the adjacent Carton Estate.*
>
> *…*
>
> *The proposed extension to Moygaddy House comprises a contemporary wing positioned to the rear and east of the existing house, with a small two-storey element accommodating a visitors bedroom suite. The design approach is unambiguously contemporary: flat roof, horizontal massing, extensive glazing connecting the interior of the house back to the parkland setting."*

In the context of bats, the roof and fascia / soffit of the original house are in good repair and there are no obvious crevices or cavities. The basement is fully sealed and inaccessible to bats. Due solely to the age of the building it is considered to be of moderate suitability for bats.

The existing extension was built in the 1970s and has a flat roof of torched-on felt over a light timber structure. There are no obvious crevices or cavities in it, and it is considered to have low suitability for roosting bats.

2.3 Survey results

2.3.1 First emergence survey (28 August 2026)

Air temperature was 16 ^{o}C and there was no wind or rain.

Two Leisler's bats were observed emerging from the fascia of the extension at different locations: one from the south-eastern side above a window and the second from the north-eastern side at the junction between the fascia and chimney stack. As the bats were roosting separately they are considered unlikely to be females associated with a maternity roost.

No bats emerged from any other part of Moygaddy House.

Occasional foraging activity by Leisler's bat, soprano pipistrelle and common pipistrelle was recorded.

2.3.2 Second emergence survey (4 September 2026)

Air temperature was 13 °C and winds were light.

No bats were observed emerging from the extension or any other location on Moygaddy House.

As before, occasional foraging activity of soprano pipistrelle and common pipistrelle was recorded, with single records of Leisler's bat and a *Myotis* species.

2.3.3 Evaluation

Two Leisler's bats emerged from the extension during the first survey, confirming that the structure is used by roosting bats. However, the bats emerged from different locations, suggesting that there were two small roosts used by individual bats. This is typical of male bats that roost individually during summer months, in contrast to female bats that form breeding / maternity roosts of multiple individuals.

Bats were not recorded emerging from the structure during the second survey. Conditions were suitable for bat foraging at the time, because foraging / commuting activity by four species was recorded during the survey. Roost switching is relatively common in non-breeding bats, and appears to be the most likely explanation for the absence of bats during the second survey.

Overall, it is concluded that the extension is used on a non-continuous basis by two Leisler's bats, likely solitary males. There is no evidence to suggest that the structure is used by breeding bats, i.e. a maternity roost.

3 Proposed development

The applicant has applied for permission to demolish the contemporary extension and construction new extensions to the property. The development description is as follows:

"(Protected Structure Ref: 91558) planning permission sought for removal of rear three-storey flat roof extension / chimney, construction of part two-storey extension to rear with walkway, lift, bedroom, wc, dressing room, terrace and green roof at first floor and part single storey extension to the rear with walkway, lift, utility, laundry, gym, wc, cloakroom on the ground floor. Single storey extension to the side and rear of dwelling comprising living, dining, kitchen, pantry, cloakroom with green roof and rooflight, detached car port with 2 parking spaces, landscaping works and all associated site development works. Retention planning permission is sought for replacement domestic wastewater treatment system and associated percolation area"

4 Assessment of Potential Impacts

4.1 Direct impacts on roosting bats

The demolition of the extension could potentially kill or injure bats, and would destroy a known roost. This would constitute an offence under the *European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (as amended)* and the *Wildlife Act* 1976 (as amended).

No other aspect of the proposed development would have direct impacts on bats.

4.2 Indirect impacts foraging areas or commuting routes

Low to moderate levels of bat foraging activity were recorded in the garden to the north-east of Moygaddy House. The surrounding landscape consists of agricultural lands and mature woodlands of high suitability for bats, notably Carton Estate to the south-east. The proposed development will not require significant tree / hedgerow removal, so it will not materially alter any foraging habitats.

There is some existing pedestrian access lighting in the parking area and along pathways. It is installed on bollards and directed downwards to ground level, and thus would have minimal effect on bats. Additional lighting will be installed around the new extensions, but it will be similar in character to existing lighting and is not expected to alter bat foraging / commuting behaviour.

For these reasons, potential impacts on foraging / commuting bats are expected to be negligible.

5 Proposed mitigation measures

Impacts on roosting bats will be minimised through the provision of alternative roost spaces and the manual removal of any bats occupying the structure.

Prior to the commencement of construction works, two bat boxes will be installed on mature trees in an undisturbed location approx. 100 m from the house. This will provide alternative roost spaces in an undisturbed location during construction works, including any live bats removed from the structure.

In addition, two concrete bat boxes will be built into the new structure to provide long-term alternative roosting opportunities as close as possible to the original location. These boxes will be accessible when construction works are complete.

The demolition of the extension will commence under the supervision of the scientific agent (Nick Marchant). Access will be provided at height using either scaffolding or a mobile elevated working platform. The roofing felt and timber frame will be dismantled slowly in the presence

of the ecologist, and if any bats are uncovered the scientific agent will carefully capture them, transfer them to a cotton holding bag and move them to a bat box elsewhere in the property. This will ensure that no bats are killed or injured during demolition works. When all potential bat roost features have been inspected the ecologist will give the all-clear to continue demolition works using any other methods.

Only 2 Leislers bats were recorded during surveys in 2026, likely non-breeding males. Therefore, it is not necessary to avoid work during the breeding season (typically May to August, inclusive). If demolition was to occur during winter months, the bat mitigation work would be timed for periods of relatively warm weather (i.e. air temperatures above 10 °C) when bats would be unlikely to be in torpor.

6 Conclusion

Overall, it is concluded that the extension is used on a non-continuous basis by two Leisler's bats, likely solitary males. There is no evidence to suggest that the structure is used by breeding bats, i.e. a maternity roost.

The proposed mitigation measures will ensure that bats are not killed or injured during demolition works, and will provide a range of alternative roost spaces within the property. The derogation licence would permit the destruction of the roost space. As a result, there will not be a significant impact on roosting bats, and no legal offence under the *EC (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations* 2011.

7 Details of proposed licence

7.1 Dates and persons responsible

The applicants are the McLoughlin family. The scientific agent will be Nick Marchant of NM Ecology Ltd. It is intended that the licence would commence immediately, and be valid until 31 December 2027. It will be renewed annually until demolition works are complete

7.2 Considerations relating to Regulation 54

Under Regulation 54 of the *EC (Birds and Natural Habitats) Directive* 2011 (as amended), a licence can only be granted for certain reasons, where there is no satisfactory alternative, and where the actions will not be detrimental to the conservation status of bats. The key considerations under this regulation are outlined below.

Regarding Regulation 54(2), the purpose of the licence would be under item (c), "*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 justified as follows:

- The building is a protected structure of local / county importance (RPS 91558). It was originally built in 1850 - 1860, but the existing extension on its north-east side was built in the 1970s. It is of no architectural value and visually prominent, so its removal will improve the aspect of the original structure. The new extension will be a subordinate modern addition, clearly differentiated from the original fabric. Further details are provided in the accompanying Heritage Impact Assessment (MESH Architects 2026)
- The following is also noted in the Heritage Impact Assessment: *"The proposed residential extension supports continued family occupation of Moygaddy House, which is the most effective means of securing the long-term maintenance of the Protected Structure and preserving the integrity of the wider estate ensemble"*
- The roof of the existing extension is constructed of light timber and plaster, which may ultimately perish and allow bats into the living space for the house, posing a hygiene and safety consideration.

An alternative design involving the retention of the contemporary extension is not considered satisfactory. The existing extension is of no architectural merit and is visually prominent. Its removal will conserve the original structure and provide a clearer contrast between the original house and modern extension, consistent with modern approaches to conservation architecture.

Finally, the actions outlined in this licence would not be detrimental to the maintenance of the populations of the species at a favourable conservation status. This mitigation strategy will prevent death or injury to any bats. Even if bats were harmed, it would not have a negative effect on their conservation status. In the current Red List of Terrestrial Mammals (Marnell et al. 2019[1]), all Irish bat species are considered to be of good conservation status, and of 'least concern'.

[1] https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/publications/pdf/Red%20List%20No.%2012%20Mammals.pdf