SITE SYNOPSIS

SITE NAME: DURRA CASTLE

SITE CODE: 000033

Durra Castle is an old tower castle near O'Brien's Big Lake, east of Barefield, Co. Clare. Although the castle is in a poor state of repairs and is used as a cattle shelter, one darkened passage on the second floor is used during the summer months by a small colony of female and juvenile Lesser Horseshoe Bats (*Rhinolophus hipposideros*).

This is a site of national importance. The highest number of bats recorded at this site was 75 in August l983 – 50 were counted there in August l987 while only 36 were recorded in l993.

Although less than l00 bats have been recorded at this site, it is one of the few nursery sites at the eastern edge of the distribution of the Lesser Horseshoe Bat in Ireland. It is possible that, if the site was protected with a grille, numbers could exceed l00 bats and the site would become one of international importance.

It is also important because of the close proximity of suitable foraging habitat.

4.11.2009