SITE SYNOPSIS

SITE NAME: MOTHEL CHURCH, COOLCULLEN

SITE CODE: 000408

This bat site is located in the loft of the Church of Ireland, Mothel, Coolcullen, Co. Kilkenny. A nursery colony of Natterer's Bat (*Myotis nattereri*) uses the loft and bell tower of the church. Over 100 bats were counted at the site in 1993 making it one of the biggest in the country.

The Natterer's Bat is an uncommon bat in Ireland, only several thousand are known from throughout the island. Body measurements include forearm 36-43mm, head and body 45mm, wingspan 270mm and weight 5-12g. It is distinguished from other species by the presence of a still fringe of hairs along the tail membrane, fairly long pink ears and bright white fur on its underside. Few nursery colonies are known and these are in a variety of buildings, including church and house roofs, stone barns and caves. Single bats or small numbers are found under bridges during the summer. During winter, a few Natterer's Bats have been found in underground sites. This species forages in woodlands where it catches insects in the air or off foliage or the ground.

As the national population of Natterer's Bats is estimated to be only several thousand, this nursery roost is of national importance and also of international importance. There are no immediate threats facing this roost.

The woodland to the east of the church is probably the preferred foraging area for this colony so any changes to this could adversely affect the colony.

6.11.2009