SITE SYNOPSIS

SITE NAME: CLONFERT CATHEDRAL

SITE CODE: 000244

Clonfert Cathedral (also known as St. Brendan's Cathedral) is a small church in Co. Galway belonging to the Church of Ireland which contains a large colony of Brown Long-eared Bats (*Plecotus auritus*). There may be over 100 bats roosting in the church roof, and they may be present all year round. The church is used for a variety of services, including Diocesan and Ecumenical services, as well as parish services which are held whenever there is a fifth Sunday in the month. It is also an historical monument as sections of the building may be 400-500 years old. The well documented Romanesque entrance and wattle-roofed variety vestry date back to 1162.

Due to the size of the colony, large quantities of droppings are scattered around the church when the bats fly around inside the building at dusk. This is a source of annoyance to the clergy and cleaning committee but it is unlikely that anything will be done to completely exclude the bats. Due to the size of the colony, this site is of national importance and possibly also international importance.

Brown Long-eared Bats are dependent on woodland for foraging and do not travel far from the roost site to feed. Any changes to existing woodland around the cathedral could adversely affect a colony of this size by reducing the availability of suitable foraging grounds.

5.11.2009