SITE SYNOPSIS

SITE NAME: ARDAGH CHURCH, NEWCASTLEWEST (DISUSED)

SITE CODE: 000430

This bat site is located in the loft of the derelict church (Church of Ireland) outside Ardagh, Co. Limerick. It is listed as Ardagh Church but should more accurately be called Las Church, to prevent confusion with other churches in the nearby village. 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.

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. The major threats facing this roost are if the building deteriorates so that it is no longer suitable or if it is sold to a private individual who renovates the building which could disturb or exclude the bats.

The diet of the Natterer's Bats roosting at this site was studied in 1988 and revealed that the bats preferred insects taken off foliage and from the ground. Any changes to existing woodland or farmland in the vicinity of the roost could adversely affect a colony of this size.

6.11.2009