SITE SYNOPSIS

SITE NAME: COOTEHILL CHURCH

SITE CODE: 000003

This bat site is located in the Church of Ireland church in Cootehill, Co. Cavan. A nursery colony of Natterer's Bats (*Myotis nattereri*) use the loft and bell tower of the church. The colony is estimated to number approximately 30 bats but is probably larger.

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 270 mm 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 woodland where it catches insects in the air or off foliage on the ground. As the national population of Natterer's Bats is estimated to be only several thousand, this nursery roost is of national importance.

Natterer's Bats are dependent on woodland so any changes to existing woodland around the town could adversely affect the colony by reducing the availability of suitable foraging grounds.

4.11.2009