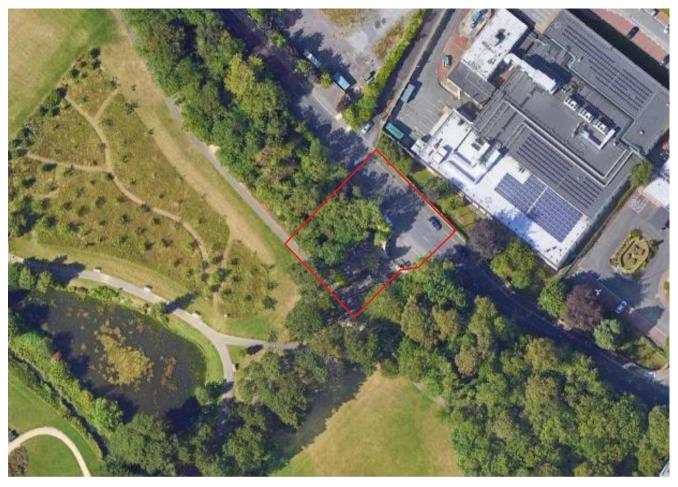


Bat Fauna Survey for a Proposed Development of Sports & Community Facilities at Cabinteely Park, Co. Dublin.



7th August 2024

Prepared by: Bryan Deegan (MCIEEM) of Altemar Ltd. **On behalf of:** Dún Laoghaire—Rathdown County Council .

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SUMMARY

Survey date:

Structure: The only onsite intact structure is the gate-lodge in the centre of the site which is to be restored. A small brick ruin to the rear of the bungalow is deemed to be of low bat roosting potential. It is also proposed to build a changing pavilion of approx. 50m². Location: Cabinteely Park, Co. Dublin. Bat species present: None Roosting. Minor foraging within the proposed site along the treeline. **Proposed work:** The proposed development will provide community facilities for local clubs and groups and ensure a long-term and sustainable use for the gate-lodge, a Protected Structure. The entrance will be enhanced with natural stone paving, planting and street furniture. Impact on bats: The proposed development will not significantly change the local environment. However, some of the existing vegetation will be removed including several trees of low to moderate roosting potential. However, no bat roosts will be lost or impacted due to this development and the species expected to occur onsite will persist. Minor loss of foraging areas will be noted along the woodland edge. However, this is not deemed to be significant. The residual impact is considered to be minor adverse/not significant in the short term and minor adverse negative in the long term. Survey by: Bryan Deegan

14th May 2024.

Receiving Environment

Background

The proposed development will provide community facilities for local clubs and groups and ensure a long-term and sustainable use for the gate-lodge, a Protected Structure. The entrance will be enhanced with natural stone paving, planting and street furniture.

Changing Pavilion:

A new changing pavilion building (approx. 50 sq. m) is proposed to the north of the existing gate- lodge. This will include two changing rooms with team storage areas, an accessible toilet and small plant rooms. The structure will be a high-quality timber framed modular unit with robust aluminium doors, zinc seamed or fibreglass roof with skylights and external cedar cladding. It will include photo-voltaic panels on the roof and incorporate rain water harvesting.

Gate-Lodge:

The gate-lodge will be faithfully restored for community usage in accordance with conservation principles under the direction of a grade 1 conservation Architect. It will include meeting rooms, a small kitchenette and a toilet. The poorly constructed modern extension will be demolished so that the building can standalone again in the parkland setting. The building will be approximately 75 sq. m when the extension is removed.

Entrance:

The existing entrance will be enhanced with natural stone paving, appropriate ornamental planting, seating and other street furniture. The use of sustainable urban drainage will be incorporated.

The site location, landscape, layouts and elevations are demonstrated in Figures 1-3.

Arborist

A Tree Constraints Plan and a Tree Protection Plan have been prepared by Arborist Associates Ltd. to accompany this planning application. The tree constraints plan and tree protection plan are demonstrated in Figures 4 & 5.

Lighting

No lighting report or drawings have been prepared in relation to this project, as the only new lights to be erected are within the proposed building. As outlined by DLR Parks 'It has no windows (with the exception of roof lights) and unlikely to ever be used past dark.'

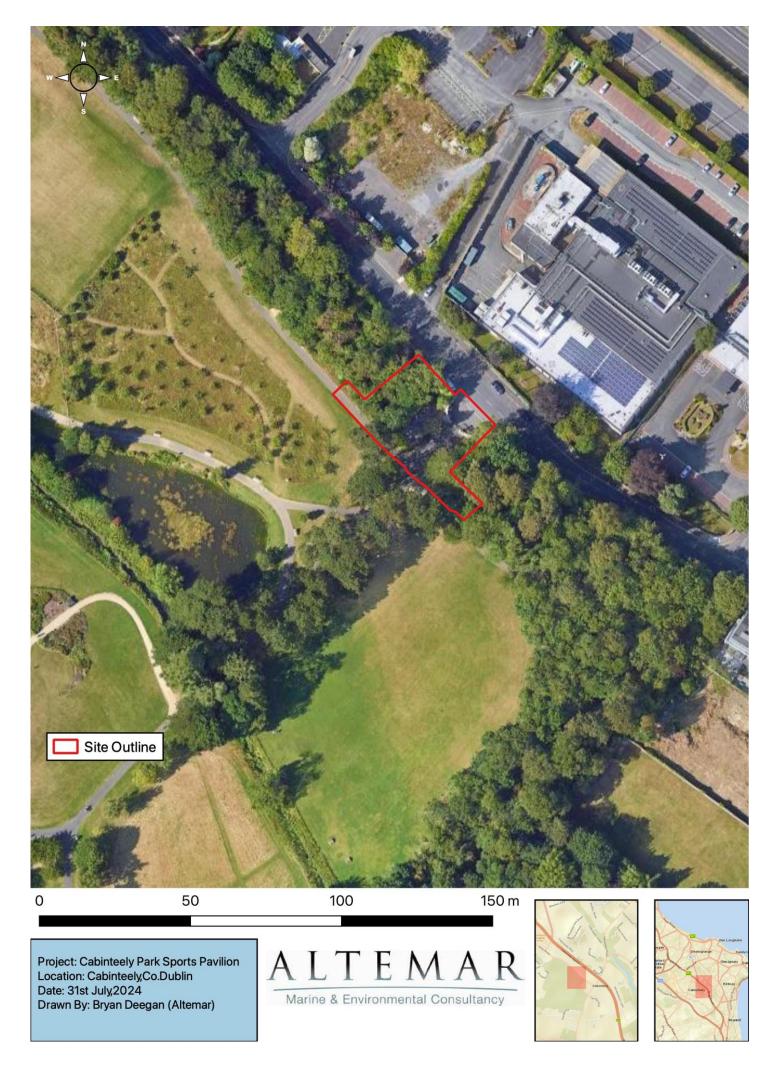


Figure 1. Proposed site outline

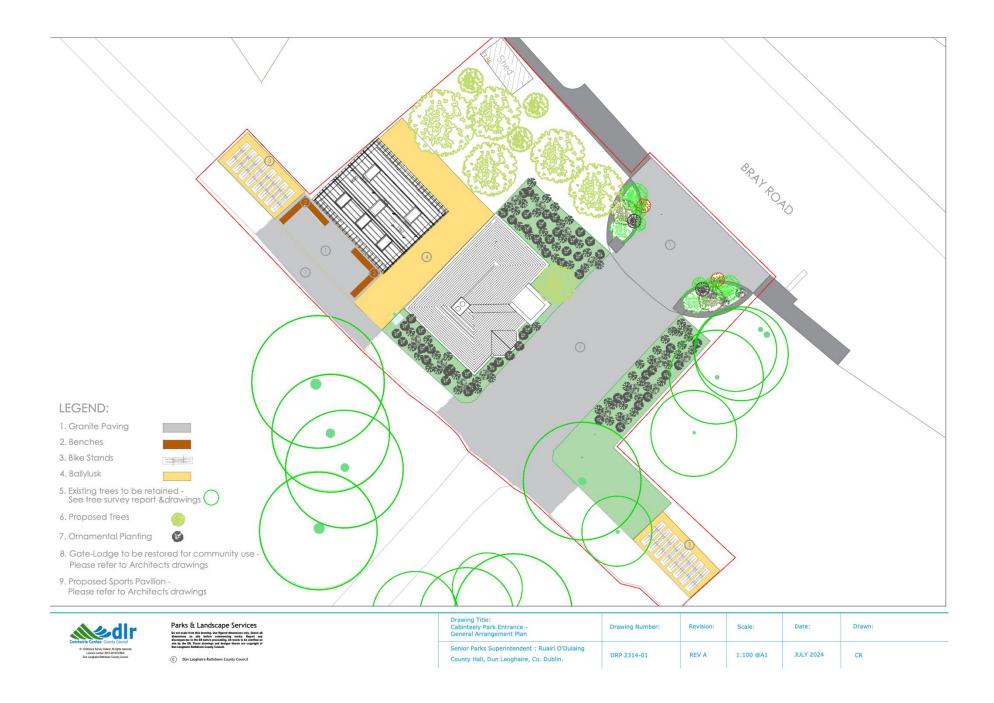


Figure 2. Proposed landscape and site outline.

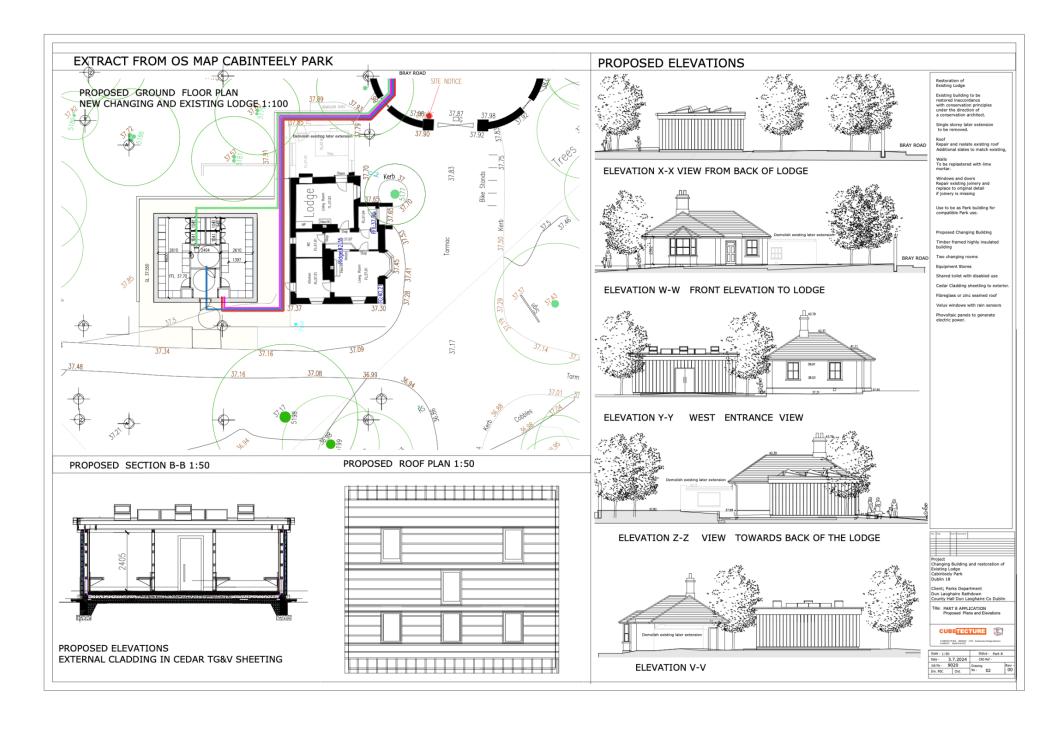


Figure 3. Proposed Site Plan and Elevations

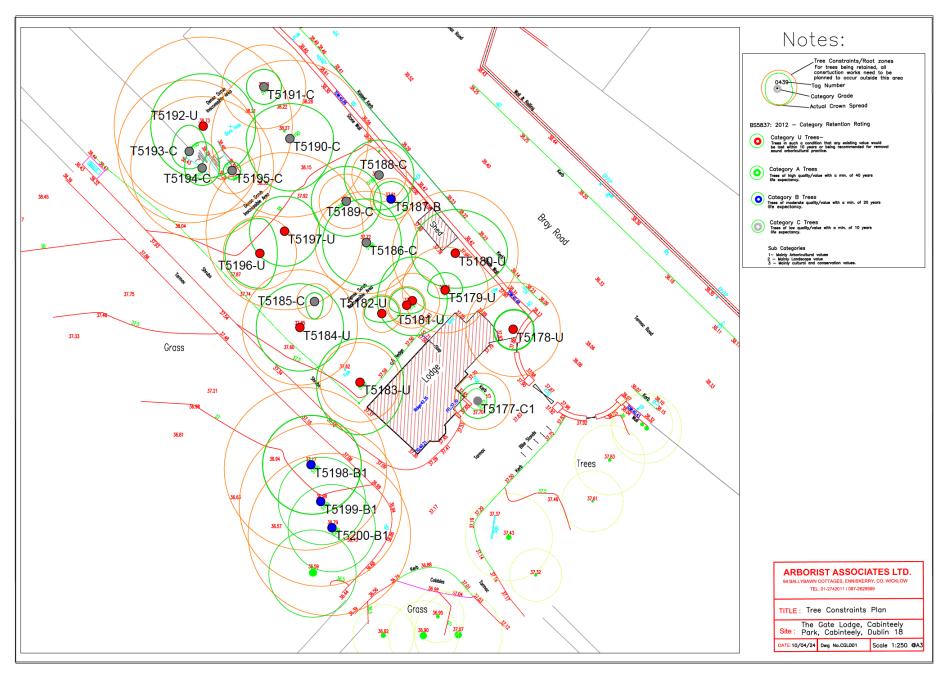


Figure 4. Tree Constraints Plan

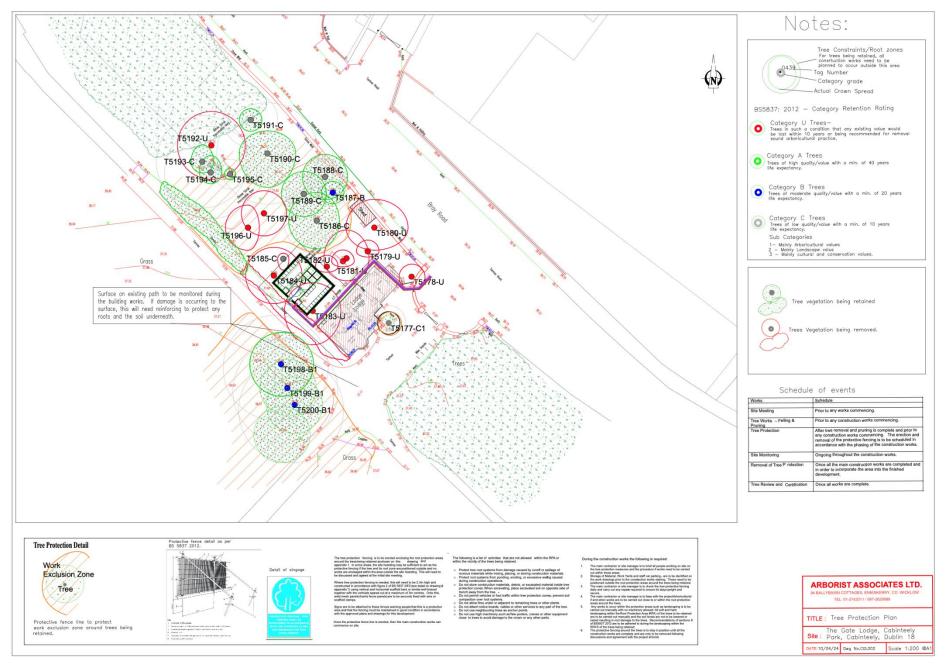


Figure 5. Tree Protection Plan

Competency of Assessor

This report has been prepared by Bryan Deegan MSc, BSc (MCIEEM). Bryan has over 30 years of experience providing ecological consultancy services in Ireland. He has extensive experience in carrying out a wide range of bat surveys including dusk emergence, dawn re-entry and static detector surveys. He also has extensive experience reducing the potential impact of projects that involve external lighting on Bats. Bryan trained with Conor Kelleher author of the Bat Mitigation Guidelines for Ireland (Kelleher and Marnell (2022)) and Bryan is currently providing bat ecology (impact assessment and enhancement) services to Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council primarily on the Shanganagh Park Masterplan. The desk and field surveys were carried out having regard to the guidance: Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists – Good Practice Guidelines 3rd Edition (Collins, J. (Ed.) 2016) and Marnell, Kelleher and Mullen (2022), Bat Mitigation Guidelines for Ireland V2 (which update and replace the Bat Mitigation Guidelines for Ireland published in 2006).

Legislative Context

Wildlife Act 1976 (as amended by, inter alia, the Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000).

Bats in Ireland are protected by the Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000. Based on this legislation it is an offence to wilfully interfere with or destroy the breeding or resting place of any species of bat. Under this legislation it is an offence to "Intentionally kill, injure or take a bat, possess or control any live or dead specimen or anything derived from a bat, wilfully interfere with any structure or place used for breeding or resting by a bat, wilfully interfere with a bat while it is occupying a structure or place which it uses for that purpose. "

Habitats Directive- Council Directive 92/43/EEC 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora has been transposed into Irish Law, including, via, *inter alia*, the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (as amended). See Art.73 of the 2011 Regulations which revokes the 1997 Regulations.

Annex II of the Council Directive 92/43/EEC 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (EC Habitats Directive) lists animal and plant species of Community interest, the conservation of which requires the designation of Special Areas of Conservation (SACs); Annex IV lists animal and plant species of Community interest in need of strict protection. All bat species in Ireland are listed on Annex IV of the Directive, while the Lesser Horseshoe Bat (*Rhinolophus hipposideros*) is protected under Annex II which related to the designation of Special Areas of Conservation for a species.

Under the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (as amended), all bat species are listed under the First Schedule and, pursuant to, *inter alia*, Part 6 and Regulation 51, it is an offence to:

- Deliberately capture or kill a bat;
- Deliberately disturb a bat particularly during the period of breeding, hibernating or migrating;
- Damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of a bat;
- Keep, sell, transport, exchange, offer for sale or offer for exchange any bat taken in the wild.

Bat survey

This report presents the results of site visit by Bryan Deegan on the 14th May 2024. A bat emergent and detector survey was carried out. An internal inspection of the buildingwas also carried out. Trees on site were examined for bat roosting potential.

Survey methodology

As outlined in Marnell et al. 2022 'The presence of a large maternity roost can normally be determined on a single visit at any time of year, provided that the entire structure is accessible and that any signs of bats have not been removed by others. However, most roosts are less obvious. A visit during the summer or autumn has the advantage that bats may be seen or heard. Buildings (which for this definition exclude cellars and other underground structures) are rarely used for hibernation alone, so droppings deposited by active bats provide the best clues. Roosts of species which habitually enter roof voids are probably the easiest to detect as the droppings will normally be readily visible. Roosts of crevice-dwelling species may require careful searching and, in some situations, the opening up of otherwise inaccessible areas. If this is not possible, best judgement might have to be used and a precautionary approach adopted. Roosts used by a small number of bats, as opposed to large maternity sites, can be particularly difficult to detect and may require extensive searching backed up by bat detector surveys (including static detectors) or emergence counts.' In relation to the factors influencing survey results the guidelines outlines the following 'During the winter, bats will move around to find sites that present the optimum environmental

conditions for their age, sex and bodyweight and some species will only be found in underground sites when the weather is particularly cold. During the summer, bats may be reluctant to leave their roost during heavy rain or when the temperature is unseasonably low, so exit counts should record the conditions under which they were made. Similarly, there may be times when females with young do not emerge at all or emerge only briefly and return while other bats are still emerging thus confusing the count. Within roosts, bats will move around according to the temperature and may or may not be visible on any particular visit. Bats also react to disturbance, so a survey the day after a disturbance event, may give a misleading picture of roost usage.'

The survey involved the methodologies outlined in Collins (2016) which included the roost inspection methodologies i.e. external methodology outlined in section 5.2.4.1 and the internal survey outlines in section 5.2.4.2 of the guidelines. In addition, the methodologies for Presence absence surveys (Section 7) was carried out for dust emergent surveys.'

As outlined in Collins (2016) 'The bat active period is generally considered to be between April and October inclusive (although the season is likely to be shorter in northern latitudes). However, because bats wake up during mild conditions, bat activity can also be recorded during winter months.'

Survey Results

Trees as potential bat roosts.

A ground level roost assessment was carried and used to examine the trees on site for features that could form bat roosts. Potential roosting features include heavy ivy growth, broken limbs, areas of decay, vertical or horizontal cracks, cracks in bark etc. Several of the trees on site, primarily ash, had features that would be considered to be of importance to roosting bats. This was primarily as a result of heavy ivy growth up the main trunk of the trees. As seen in the arborist report several trees will have to be removed. These include ash that have dieback. No bats were observed emerging from these trees but they are considered to be of low to moderate bat roosting potential and will have to be assessed for bats prior to felling.

Emergent/detector surveys.

An emergent/detector surveys was carried out by Bryan Deegan on the 14th May 2024. The detector survey was undertaken within the active bat season and the transects covered the entire site multiple times during the night. Weather conditions were good with mild temperatures of greater than 10°C after sunset. Winds were light and there was no rainfall. Insects were observed in flight during both surveys.

As outlined in Collins (2016) in relation to weather conditions 'The aim should be to carry out surveys in conditions that are close to optimal (sunset temperature 10°C or above, no rain or strong wind.), particularly when only one survey is planned.... Where surveys are carried out when the temperature at sunset is below 10°C should be justified by the ecologist and the effect on bat behaviour considered.' There were no constraints in relation to the surveys carried out. All areas of the site were accessible and weather conditions were optimal for bat assessments.

At dusk, bat detector surveys were carried out onsite using an *Echo meter touch 2 Pro* detector to determine bat activity. Bats were identified by their ultrasonic calls coupled with behavioural and flight observations.

Minor activity was noted on the treeline boundary by two soprano pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*) and one common pipistrelle bats (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus sensu lato*) No bats were noted emerging from the bungalow on site. Bat activity was noted in the fields outside of the subject site boundary and included Leisler's (*Nyctalus leisleri*). No bat activity was associated with the buildings on site. Streetlighting from the main road shines directly on to the bungalow roof.

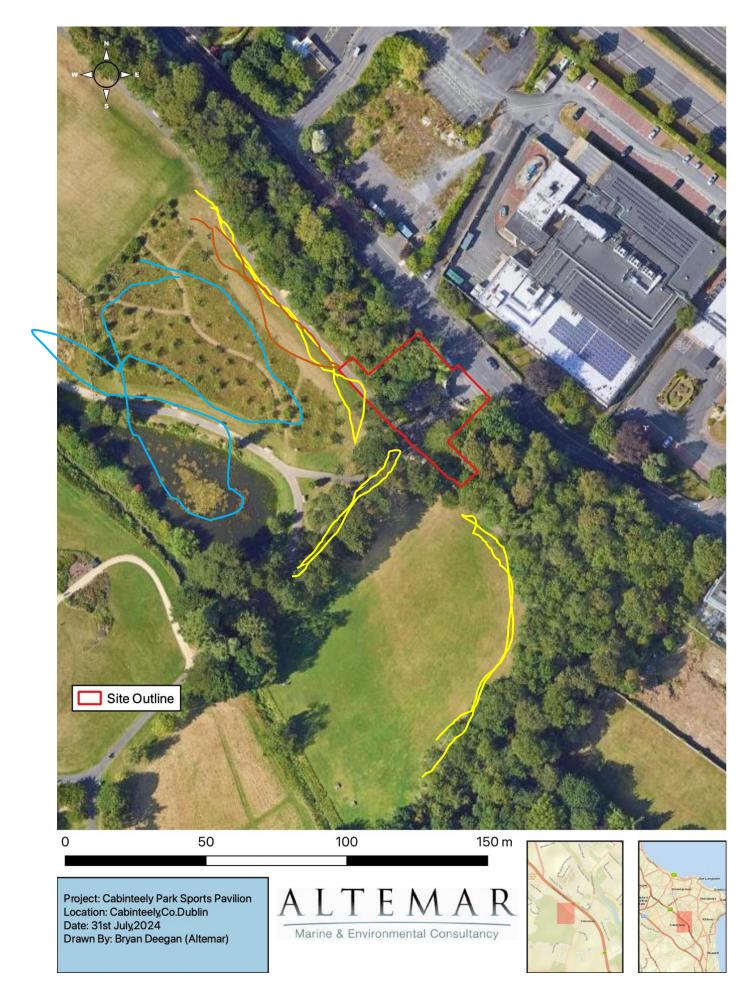


Figure 14. Bat foraging. Soprano Pipistrelle (Pipistrellus pygmaeus) (yellow), Common Pipistrelle (Pipistrellus pipistrellus sensu lato) (orange) and Leisler's bat (Nyctalus leisleri) (Blue).

Building Inspection

The bungalow on site was examined for evidence of bats roosting. No evidence of bats utilising the building on site was noted. It should be noted that the building is in good condition with few entrances to allow bats to enter. However, two slates are dislodged on the roof that could allow bats to enter the building.



Plate 1. Missing slate on roof.



Plate 2. Interior



Plate 3. Interior

Bat assessment findings Review of local bat records

The review of existing bat records (sourced from National Biodiversity Ireland Records Database) within a 2 km² grid, reference number O22H, encompassing the study area reveals that six of the nine known Irish species have been observed locally (Table 1). The National Biodiversity Data Centre's online viewer was consulted in order to determine whether there have been recorded bat sightings in the wider area. This is visually represented in Figures 6-9. The following species were noted in the wider area: Daubenton's Bat (Myotis daubentonii), Natterer's Bat (Myotis nattereri), Lesser Noctule (Nyctalus leisleri), Nathusius's Pipistrelle (Pipistrellus nathusii), Common Pipistrelle (Pipistrellus pipistrellus sensu stricto), Soprano Pipistrelle (Pipistrellus pygmaeus) and Brown Long-eared Bat (Plecotus auritus) (Figures 6-9).

Table 1: Status of bat species within a 2km² grid encompassing the subject site (Reference no. O22H)

Species Name	Date of last record	Title of Dataset	Designation
Brown Long-eared Bat (Plecotus auritus)	06/05/2017	National Bat Database of Ireland	Protected Species: EU Habitats Directive Protected Species: EU Habitats Directive >> Annex IV Protected Species: Wildlife Acts
Common Pipistrelle (Pipistrellus pipistrellus sensu stricto)	06/05/2017	National Bat Database of Ireland	
Daubenton's Bat (Myotis daubentonii)	06/05/2017	National Bat Database of Ireland	Protected Species: EU Habitats Directive Protected Species: EU Habitats Directive >> Annex IV Protected Species: Wildlife Acts
Lesser Noctule (Nyctalus leisleri)	06/05/2017	National Bat Database of Ireland	Protected Species: EU Habitats Directive Protected Species: EU Habitats Directive >> Annex IV Protected Species: Wildlife Acts

Natterer's Bat (Myotis nattereri)	17/09/2005	National Bat Database of Ireland	Protected Species: EU Habitats Directive Protected Species: EU Habitats Directive >> Annex IV Protected Species: Wildlife Acts
Soprano Pipistrelle (Pipistrellus pygmaeus)	06/05/2017	National Bat Database of Ireland	Protected Species: EU Habitats Directive Protected Species: EU Habitats Directive >> Annex IV Protected Species: Wildlife Acts



Figure 6. Daubenton's Bat (Myotis daubentonii) (purple), Natterer's Bat (Myotis nattereri) (yellow), and both Daubenton's Bat and Natterer's Bat (orange) (Source NBDC) (Site location – red circle)



Figure 7. Lesser Noctule (Nyctalus leisleri) (purple) and Nathusius's Pipistrelle (Pipistrellus nathusii) (yellow) (Source NBDC) (Site location – red circle)



Figure 8. Common Pipistrelle (Pipistrellus pipistrellus sensu stricto) (purple), Soprano Pipistrelle (Pipistrellus pygmaeus) (yellow) and both Common Pipistrelle and Soprano Pipistrelle (orange) (Source NBDC) (Site location – red circle)



Figure 9. Brown Long-eared Bat (Plecotus auritus) (purple) (Source NBDC) (Site location – red circle)

Evaluation of Results

The bat surveys comply with bat survey guidance documentation including Marnell et al (2022) and Collins (2016). No bats were observed emerging from trees or buildings on site. No evidence of bats roosting in buildings was noted. No bat activity was noted proximate to the brightly lit bungalow. However, common species of bats i.e. Common Pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus sensu lato*), soprano pipistrelles (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*) and Leisler's (Nyctalus leisleri) bats were recorded in the vicinity of the subject site. and noted in the fields outside of the subject site boundary. No trees of high bat roosting potential were noted on site. However, several ash of low to moderate roosting potential (ash with dieback) were noted.

Potential Impact of the development on Bats

The proposed project will not impact on a bat roost. Several trees of low to moderate bat roosting potential will be felled and will need to be inspected for bats prior to felling. No external lighting is proposed in the development. Mitigation measures will be required to limit light spill during construction to protect bat foraging areas. Enhancement measures are proposed due to the loss of areas of bar roosting potential

Mitigation Measures

As outlined in Marnell et al. (2022) "Mitigation should be proportionate. The level of mitigation required depends on the size and type of impact, and the importance of the population affected." In addition as outlined in Marnell et. al (2022) 'Mitigation for bats normally comprises the following elements:

- Avoidance of deliberate, killing, injury or disturbance taking all reasonable steps to ensure works do not harm individuals by altering working methods or timing to avoid bats. The seasonal occupation of most roosts provides good opportunities for this
- Roost creation, restoration or enhancement to provide appropriate replacements for roosts to be lost or damaged
- Long-term habitat management and maintenance to ensure the population will persist
- Post-development population monitoring to assess the success of the scheme and to inform management or remedial operations.'

As no evidence of a bat roost was noted in any of the onsite trees, no mitigation measures in regard to these animals are needed during the proposed construction works. There is also no requirement for a *National Parks and Wildlife Service* derogation licence application to allow the planned works. As a precaution, if lighting is required at any stage during construction, all lighting will be done sensitively on site in consultation with a project ecologist, with no direct lighting of woodlands or main bat foraging areas. Three bat boxes will be places within the woodland area.

Predicted Residual Impact of Planned Development on Bats

The proposed development will not significantly change the local environment. However, some of the existing vegetation will be removed including several trees of low to moderate roosting potential. However, no bat roosts will be lost or impacted due to this development and the species expected to occur onsite will persist. Minor loss of foraging areas will be noted along the woodland edge. However, this is not deemed to be significant.

The residual impact is considered to be minor adverse/not significant in the short term and minor adverse negative in the long term.

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