

Irish Water Report

Leixlip Water Treatment Plant, Co. Dublin
Upgrade Works
Bat Survey and Walkover Ecological Survey
December 2021



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Introduction

Background

Glan Agua, on behalf of Irish Water, intend to undertake proposed works to install acid and lime dosing facilities at Leixlip Water Treatment Plant (WTP), Co. Dublin.

The Aim of this report

This report is in reply to FI Request Item No.5 (3) and FI request item 1(d).

(3) A bat survey of the proposed existing workshop and (defunct) Activated Carbon Building, which is to be demolished.

(d) The report suggests sub-optimal surveys were carried out in February 2021. The Planning Authority request a more recent survey at an appropriate time. Although it is not ideal, an ecological walkover in December is preferred to a survey carried out in February due to the stages in plant growth.

Methodology

A daytime, out of season bat survey consists of a thorough survey of the buildings, looking for any signs that bats are using the building or have used them in the past. These signs include droppings, feeding remains, scratch marks, urine stains, and actual sightings, as well as potential access points and roost sites such as holes, cracks, and crevices.

The buildings had excellent light and it was possible to access all areas. The buildings had flat roofs and no attic spaces were present.

The ecological walkover survey is used to assess the overall condition the site and its surrounding vegetation.

Ecologists Biography

David Fallon has degrees in Environmental Science, Forestry along with a research Masters in ecological restoration. He has been working as an ecologist for 20 years and is experienced in both vegetation surveys and bat surveys. He has completed bat surveying and handling courses with Bat Conservation Ireland.

Surveys

Bat Survey

FI Request Item No.5 (3)

(3) A bat survey of the proposed existing workshop and (defunct) Activated Carbon Building, which is to be demolished.

A daytime bat survey was carried out on December 14th, 2021, of the buildings at the Leixlip WTP proposed existing workshop and (defunct) Activated Carbon Building, which is to be demolished. This survey was carried out by a fully qualified, experienced bat surveyor.

The surveyed buildings are small, one is a small extension to another building, are concrete structures and have recently been re-roofed.

There is no potential for bats to use these structures as there are no cracks or holes that they could occupy and a thorough survey of them found no evidence of bats using the structures in any way.

Although bats are hibernating in December and are inactive, if they were using the site during the summer months or for hibernating, evidence of their presence would be visible in the form of droppings and insect remains. No evidence of their presence was found on site.

Ecological survey

FI request item 1(d)

(d) The report suggests sub-optimal surveys were carried out in February 2021. The Planning Authority request a more recent survey at an appropriate time. Although it is not ideal, an ecological walkover in December is preferred to a survey carried out in February due to the stages in plant growth.

An ecological survey was conducted on the site on December 14th, 2021. All sections of the site were not accessible to the surveyor on the date.

Impact of the construction on the vegetation of the site is minimal as construction is confined to existing buildings and hard standing areas.

The survey confirmed that no invasive species listed on the Third schedule were on site.

Discussion and conclusions

The surveys outlined in this report were carried out in response to FI Request Item No.5 (3) and FI request item 1(d) in relation to the proposed works at Leixlip Water Treatment plant.

No bats, or possible bat roosts were observed on site. Although the survey was not carried out at the best time of year for bat surveys, owing to the facts that bats are in hibernation during the winter months, it is accepted protocol to access buildings for the presence of bats during the winter months. No bats were found to be using the buildings in question and no evidence that they ever used the buildings were found. Bats generally prefer buildings with cavities and crevices in which they can easily hide, no such cavities or crevices were located and the fact that the buildings were mass concrete structures would also make them less favourable to bats due to concrete structures being prone to rapid temperature fluxes, bats prefer buildings where temperatures are more constant.

The vegetation survey was also carried out in December and although December is not the optimal time of year for vegetation surveys, invasive species would be observed if they were located on the site. No invasive species listed on the Third schedule were observed

