

**CYNGOR CEFN GWLAD CYMRU  
COUNTRYSIDE COUNCIL FOR WALES**

**SITE OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST CITATION**

**POWYS**

**CILIAU**

**Date of Notification:** 2000

**National Grid Reference:** SO 108429

**O.S. Maps:** 1:50,000 Sheet number: 148, 161  
1:10,000 Sheet number: SO 14 SW

**Site Area:** 2.1 ha

**Description:**

Ciliau is of special interest as an important breeding roost of the lesser horseshoe bat *Rhinolophus hipposideros*. The building is a grade II\* listed late 15th century hall house with 17th/18th century remodelling, situated 1km east of Erwood and 8 km south east of Builth Wells, overlooking the River Wye. In Britain, which is a European stronghold for this species, the lesser horseshoe bat is confined to Wales, the Welsh borders and south-west England. In Europe it has disappeared from most of its northern range since 1950 and colonies appear to be declining by up to 90 %. The decline in numbers of this species has been caused by loss of breeding and hibernation sites.

The site comprises the main house, which supports the nursery roost, and the grounds and associated woodland, which are used as feeding habitat by lesser horseshoe bats, and as a corridor to adjacent feeding habitats.

The house is used during the summer months by the bats in order to raise their young. The bats occupy both the roof space and parts of the first floor. Lesser horseshoe bats return annually to the same site and Ciliau has been used for many years. Recent counts suggest a population of between 150 and 200.

In addition, Ciliau also supports populations of soprano pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pygmaeus* and whiskered/Brandt=s bat *Myotis mystacinus/brandtii*.

**Remarks:**

All bats are listed under Annex IV and lesser horseshoe bat is also listed on Annex II of the Habitats and Species Directive. All bats are protected under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), and Schedule 2 of the Habitats Regulations 1994.

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