

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

**SITE OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST CITATION**

**SWANSEA**

**PENRICE STABLES AND UNDERHILL COTTAGE**

**Date of Notification:** 1991

**National Grid Reference(s):** SS 496884  
SS 498885  
SS 503881

**O.S. Maps:** 1:50,000 Sheet number: 159  
1:25,000 Sheet number: SS 48 and SS 58

**Site Area:** 0.08 ha

**Description:**

This is a composite lesser horseshoe bat *Rhinolophus hipposideros* roost in the grounds of the Penrice Estate, Gower and is comprised of part of the stable block, the roof of Underhill Cottage and Penrice Castle cave. Both the stable block and the cottage are used by over 100 bats during the Summer months, making this one of the most important breeding sites for this species in Britain. Penrice Castle Cave is used by lesser horseshoe bats as a hibernaculum.

The lesser horseshoe bat has declined substantially in Western Europe this century and is now extinct, or nearly extinct, in a number of countries where there were formerly thriving populations. Although the species has now disappeared from much of its former range in England, populations in Wales still appear to be reasonably strong. The breeding roosts at this site rank amongst the 8 largest lesser horseshoe roosts in Wales. The colonial habits of bats make them particularly vulnerable to catastrophic extinction and sites such as Penrice are thus of considerable importance both in the British and European context.