

The Old Rectory, Bolton by Bowland

Bat Scoping Assessment



Document Information

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Quality Control

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1.0	Draft	KSH	IH	N.Wilkinson	02/04/2026

Declaration of Compliance

This Bat Scoping Assessment has been undertaken in accordance with the Bat Conservation Trust *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists – Good Practice Guidelines* (4th Edition, 2023). The information has been prepared and provided in compliance with the CIEEM's Code of Professional Conduct (2022), British Standard 42020:2013: *Biodiversity: Code of Practice for planning and development*, and CIEEM *Guidelines for Ecological Report Writing* (2017).

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. TERMS OF REFERENCE

PBA Applied Ecology Ltd (PBA) was commissioned by Overton Architects to undertake a bat 'scoping' assessment at The Old Rectory, Bolton by Bowland, Clitheroe, to determine the ecological importance and likely use of the survey site by bats. The bat scoping assessment was required to provide information on the potential presence of bats, prior to the proposed works to renovate the existing building. The approach adopted follows current Bat Conservation Trust Guidelines: Chapter 4 – Preliminary Ecological Appraisal for Bats (BCT 2023).

On 23/03/2026, PBA conducted an internal and external scoping inspection of the building present on the survey site. This report details the findings of this survey, and provides details of any future survey or licensing work required as a result of these findings.

Of the UK's eighteen resident bat species, most will use the built environment at some point during their lifecycle, and some species are strongly associated with buildings. Appendix D features a diagram showing common roost sites within buildings. Some species (such as common and soprano pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus* and *P. pygmaeus*), roost in building crevices, while others (such as brown long-eared *Plecotus auritus* and Natterer's bats *Myotis nattereri*), prefer large cavities. Bats are most likely to be observed in and around buildings during the summer months, but may be present within buildings throughout the year.

Bats are protected by a number of EU and UK policies and Acts. All bat species are protected under Section 39 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), commonly referred to as the 'Habitats Regulations'. Importantly, the most recent amendments (the Conservation of Habitats and Species [amendment] [EU Exit] Regulations 2019), takes into account the UK's departure from the EU. Bats also receive protection under the 1981 Wildlife and Countryside Act (as amended), and the 2000 Countryside and Rights of Way Act. Consequently, it is a criminal offence to capture or kill a bat, disturb a bat whilst in a place of shelter or rest, or damage or destroy a bat's breeding site or resting place. A 'resting place' can include habitats or features which are used for short periods of time, for example, a feeding perch where a bat consumes its prey. The breeding sites and resting places of bats are collectively referred to as 'roosts and resting places'. It is important to note that bat roosts are protected **even when bats are not present**, and that prosecution could result in imprisonment, unlimited fines, and confiscation of vehicles and equipment.

Unless stated otherwise, the information provided within this report is valid for a maximum period of 24 months from the date of survey. If works at the site have not progressed by this time, an updated site visit may be required, in order to determine any changes in use of the site by bats.

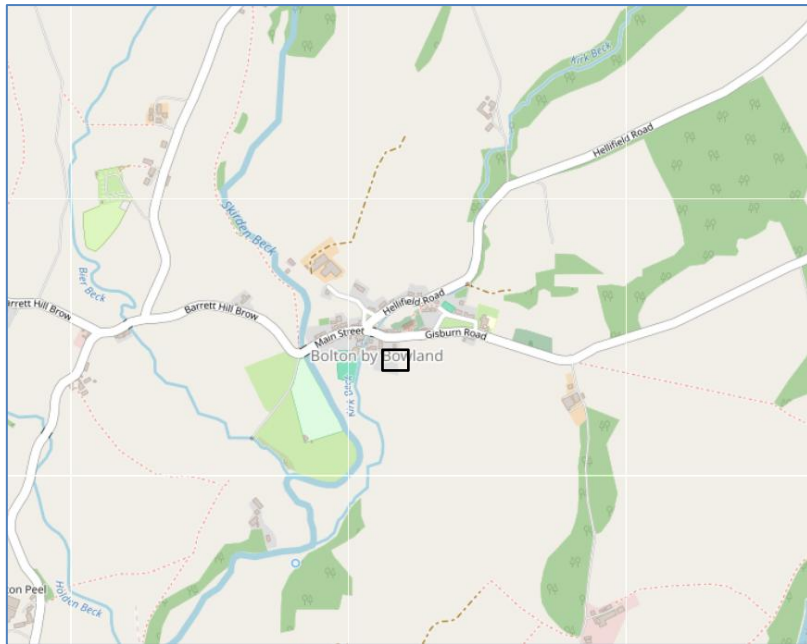


Figure 1: Site location (*OpenStreetMap, 2026*)

1.2. SITE DESCRIPTION AND CONTEXT

The survey site is located towards the south of Bolton by Bowland (SD 78585 49318, Figure 1). The site comprises the Old Rectory Building. The site is located within the Forest of Bowland AONB.

The wider landscape is dominated by agricultural fields, and some trees/woodland (Figures 1 & 2).



Figure 2: Site context (*Google Maps, 2026*).

1.3. DESCRIPTION OF WORKS

The proposed works are expected to include renovations to the building. These plans include works to the roof, stripping and re-slating the roof and installing of a new roof light.

2. APPROACH

2.1. BUILDING INSPECTION

The approach adopted follows current Bat Conservation Trust Guidelines: Chapter 4 – Preliminary Ecological Appraisal for Bats (BCT, 2023). The site survey consisted of an internal and external inspection of the building to locate potential bat roosts or building entry points, including voids, gaps, or cracks in the roof, walls, or ridge tiles. In addition, an internal and external search was conducted to look for field evidence of bats, such as droppings, insect remains, or grease or scratch marks on sills, doors, around eaves, or on roof verges. The ecologists conducting the scoping survey were Katie Holmes BSc and Oscar Wulf who are accredited agents under Neil Wilkinson's licence (2022-10971-CL18-BAT).

2.2. PERSONNEL AND SCHEDULE

Table 1: Scoping assessment details

Date	Start	Finish	Type of Survey	Personnel	Conditions	Equipment
23/03/2026	N/A	N/A	Internal and external building inspection	Katie Holmes and Oscar Wulf as accredited agents under Neil Wilkinson (2022-10971-CL18-BAT).	Dry, overcast, ~11°C	Maglite torch, digital camera.

2.3. QUALITY STANDARDS

The survey and reporting process is consistent with: The Bat Conservation Trust Good Practice Guidelines for Bat Surveys, Fourth Edition (BCT 2023); Bats: advice for making planning decisions (NE 2022); Natural England (formerly English Nature) Bat Mitigation Guidelines (Reason and Wray 2023); and, The Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) Professional Competency Framework: Competencies for Species Surveys: Bats (CIEEM 2013).

3. SURVEY RESULTS

3.1. BUILDING INSPECTION

3.1.1. INTERNAL INSPECTION

The roof structure is red brick walls with a membrane lined slate roof. Some sections of the building are fully open to the roof apex and others have ceilings and voids.

Within the void a hole was observed where the top of the wall meets the slate roof, where natural light was seeping through. It provides suitable access to the roof void for bats (Appendix C).

3.1.2. EXTERNAL INSPECTION

The exterior of the roof is slates with timber soffits. On the southern aspect of the building there are cracks in the fascia board around a pipe suitable for bats. On the northern aspect, a broken fascia board and tiles provide access to the roof void. On the northwestern aspect a gap behind the fascia board provides a feature suitable for roosting bats. Photographs of these photos are shown in Appendix C. There are also gaps under or between slates on the half gable.

3.2. HABITAT AND CONNECTIVITY

The surrounding habitat is determined to be of moderate suitability for a range of bat species. Mature trees and surrounding buildings provide additional roost opportunities. Foraging opportunities are associated with agricultural fields and gardens. Connectivity is provided by field margins and lines of trees.

3.3. ADDITIONAL SPECIES OF INTEREST

No evidence of additional protected species were observed on the site. No Invasive Non-Native Species (INNS) were observed on site.

4. INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

The building possesses multiple features with potential for roosting bats. There are a small number of access points to the roof void which could be utilised by cavity dwelling species. There are also features such as lifted fascia boards which could provide suitable roosting features for crevice dwelling species. Overall, the building is deemed to have **moderate potential** to support roosting bats.

5. ADVICE AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The proposed works include works to the roof of the building. These works may require disturbance of bats/roosts.

Whilst no current or recent evidence of bat activity was recorded by the survey, this assessment identified features that could be utilised by roosting bats. **The building is considered to have moderate potential for roosting bats and therefore two bat activity surveys are recommended.**

These surveys would aim to determine whether bats are present at the site, and if so, provide information on bat numbers, species, and how they are using the site. In line with current best practice guidance (BCT, 2023), emergence/re-entry surveys for maternity or summer roosts must be scheduled within the period May to August. Subject to favourable weather conditions, emergence/re-entry surveys for transitional roosts (i.e. those used outside of breeding), may be scheduled in April and September/October. Where practicable, activity surveys should be distributed across the survey season to ensure that any seasonal bat roosts are recorded. The approach adopted should follow that specified by the Bat Conservation Trust Guidelines: Chapter 7: Emergence/Re-entry Surveys (BCT, 2023).

Outcomes of activity surveys and implications for works:

- **No bat roosts identified** - no further survey or mitigation required. Works may proceed without further survey or need for a European Protected Species Mitigation Licence (EPSML).
- **Bat roost(s) identified** – Works may proceed, but only once a European Protected Species Mitigation License (EPSML) has been applied for and approved by Natural England. This will involve the creation of a mitigation plan to be followed throughout the works.

6. REFERENCES

- BCT (2023) 'Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines', Bat Conservation Trust, London.
- BSI (2013) 'Biodiversity - Code of practice for planning and development (BS 42020:2013)', British Standards Institution.

- CIEEM (2013) 'Technical Guidance Series. Competencies for Species Survey: Bats', Chartered Institute of Ecological and Environmental Management, Winchester.
- CIEEM (2017) 'Guidelines on Ecological Report Writing', Chartered Institute of Ecological and Environmental Management, Winchester.
- CIEEM (2022) 'Code of Professional Conduct', Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester.
- Reason, P.F. and Wray, S. (2023) 'UK Bat Mitigation Guidelines: a guide to impact assessment, mitigation and compensation for developments affecting bats. Version 1.1', Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Ampfield.
- Natural England (2013) 'Standing Advice Species Sheet: Bats'.

APPENDICES

Appendix A – Policy and Legislation

A number of statutory measures are in place to protect habitats and wildlife. These measures range from a global to local scale, and variously give protection to whole ecosystems or single species. Included below is a brief summary of the legislation and planning policy most applicable to the current project/works. Please note that this is not an exhaustive list, and the original texts should be consulted for further details.

All bat species are protected under Section 39 of *Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017* (as amended), which are commonly referred to as the '*Habitats Regulations*'. Importantly, the most recent amendments (the Conservation of Habitats and Species [amendment] [EU Exit] Regulations 2019¹), take account of the UK's departure from the EU. The Habitats Regulations give bats, their breeding sites, and resting places, a high level of protection.

Bats also receive protection under the 1981 Wildlife and Countryside Act (as amended) and the 2000 Countryside and Rights of Way Act, as well as under Annex IV of the Council Directive 92/43/EEC 1992 on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora (EC Habitats Directive). This directive lists animal and plant species of Community interest in need of strict protection, and includes all bat species.

In summary, it is a **criminal offence** to:

- ⇒ capture or kill a bat;
- ⇒ disturb a bat whilst in a place of shelter or rest; or
- ⇒ damage or destroy a bat's breeding site or resting place.

A 'resting place' can include habitats or features which are used for short periods of time, for example, a feeding perch where a bat consumes its prey. The breeding sites and resting places of bats are collectively referred to as 'roosts and resting places'. **Bat roosts are protected even when bats are not present.** Prosecution could result in imprisonment, unlimited fines, and confiscation of vehicles and equipment.

In certain circumstances, a license may be granted to allow an activity which would otherwise be an offence. This may include the destruction of a bat roost in order to perform certain essential building works. Regulation 53 of the Habitats Regulations allows licenses to be issued under certain (strict) circumstances. Regulation 53 allows for the circumvention of Article 12 of the Habitats Directive, which prohibits certain activities in relation to European Protected Species (EPS).

An EPS licence may be required for any activity which: (i) is likely to result in the deliberate capture, injury or killing of a bat; (ii) will result in the deliberate disturbance of bats; or (iii) will damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place used by bats. Disturbance of bats includes any disturbance that is likely to: (i) impair their ability to survive, breed, reproduce, nurture their young, or to hibernate; or (ii) affect significantly the local distribution or abundance of the species to which they belong.

A licence can only be granted if the following tests can be met:

- 1) the consented operation must be for "*preserving public health or public safety or other imperative reasons of overriding public interest including those of a social or economic nature and beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment*",
- 2) there must be "*no satisfactory alternative*",
- 3) the action authorised "*will not be detrimental to the maintenance of the population of the species concerned at a favourable conservation status in their range*".

When exercising their functions, local authorities must have regard to the requirements of the Habitats Directive, including during decisions on whether to grant planning permission.

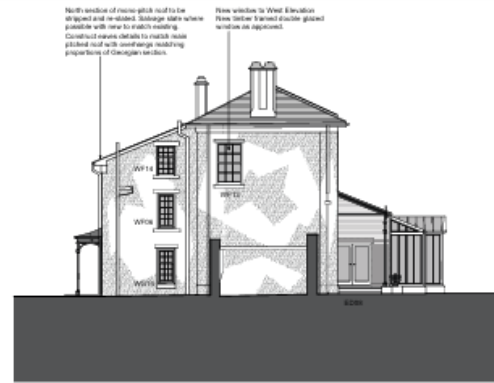
As an illustration of this, the judgement in the case of *Morge (FC) (Appellant) v Hampshire County Council* [2011] UKSC 2, is applicable. In this case, the Supreme Court concluded that if the Planning Authority concludes that the carrying out of the development for which permission has been applied for (even if it were to be conditioned), would be likely to offend Article 12(1) (by, say, causing the disturbance of a species with which that Article is concerned), then it must consider the likelihood of a licence being granted.

The licensing authority is Natural England. When considering the likelihood of a licence being granted, it may be helpful to view guidance on how Natural England applies the tests listed above, when considering planning applications which affect European Protected Species: <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/113030?category=12002> .

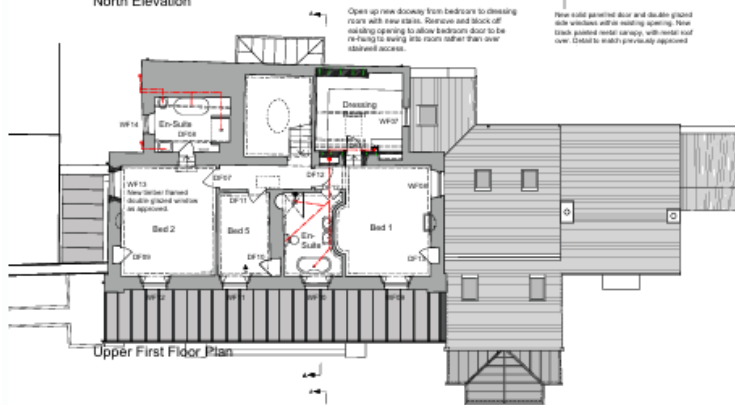
Appendix B – Site Plan



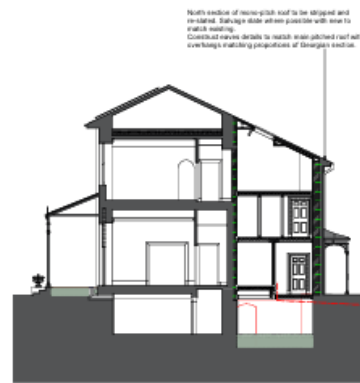
North Elevation



West Elevation



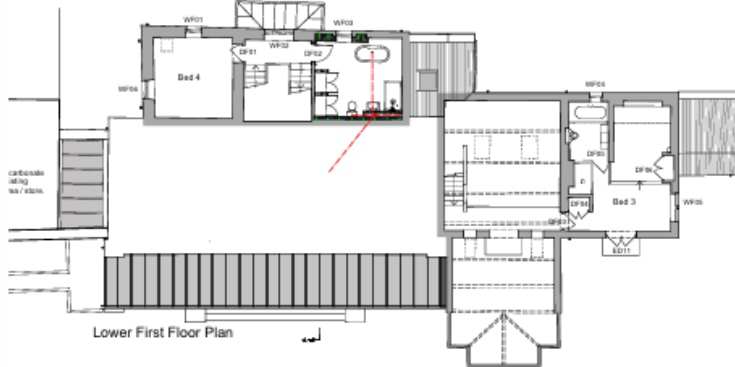
Upper First Floor Plan



Section A:A



East Elevation



Lower First Floor Plan



Red lines and hatching indicate illegal work carried out, including excavation of basement, underpinning of existing structure and new footings, removal of floor structures and partitions, removal of internal leaf of outer wall and the construction of new blockwork walls and floor structures. Stone bases and footings presumed to be original. Basement level is now below the water table and roads.

- Rev A - 10.07.20 - B1 - For general revision
- Rev B - 22.09.20 - B1 - Conservation rooflight and annotations added
- Rev C - 19.03.21 - B1 - Attention to ground use and gain
- Rev D - 20.07.21 - B1 - Attention to floor House Plan
- Rev E - 14.07.21 - B1 - Layout amended following client comments
- Rev F - 07.07.21 - B1 - Layout amended following client meeting



DO NOT SCALE FROM THIS DRAWING

NOTES: DIMENSIONS TO BE CHECKED AND VERIFIED ON SITE PRIOR TO CONSTRUCTION

THIS DRAWING IS THE SOLE PROPERTY OF OVERTON ARCHITECTS

THE BUILDING OWNER / REPRESENTATIVE MAY BE REQUIRED TO OBTAIN PLANNING PERMISSION TO ALTER THE BUILDING

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overtonarchitects

The Old Rectory, Bolton by Bowland

Proposed Upper Floor Plans, Section and Elevations

1:50

May 2025

2594/0109 F

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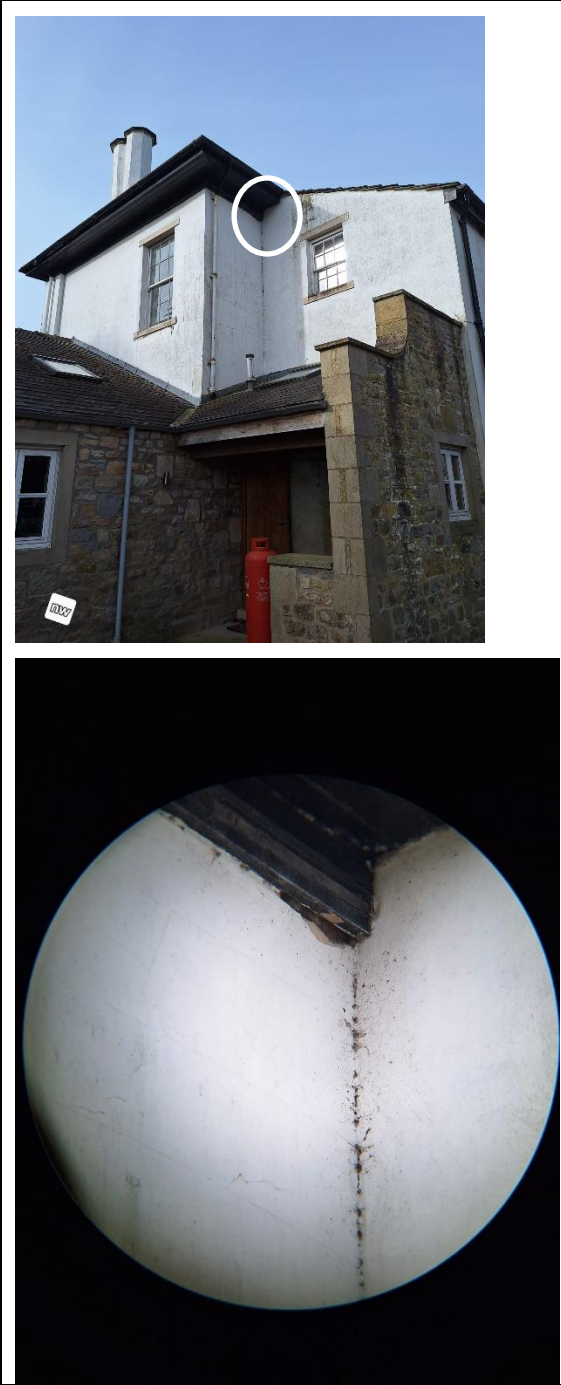
Mr and Mrs Read

Appendix C – Photographs & Target Notes

Photograph	Notes
	A hole in the roof is suitable to provide access to the roof void for bats.
	Southern aspect of the building. There are cracks in the fascia board around a pipe suitable for bats.

Photograph	Notes
	
	Southwestern aspect

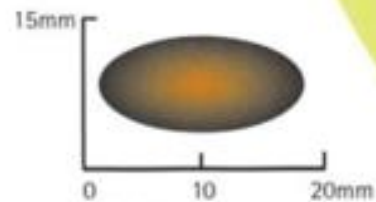
Photograph	Notes
	Northern aspect. A broken fascia board may provide access to the roof void.

Photograph	Notes
	Northwestern aspect. A fascia board with gaps behind provides a feature suitable for roosting bats and possible access point.

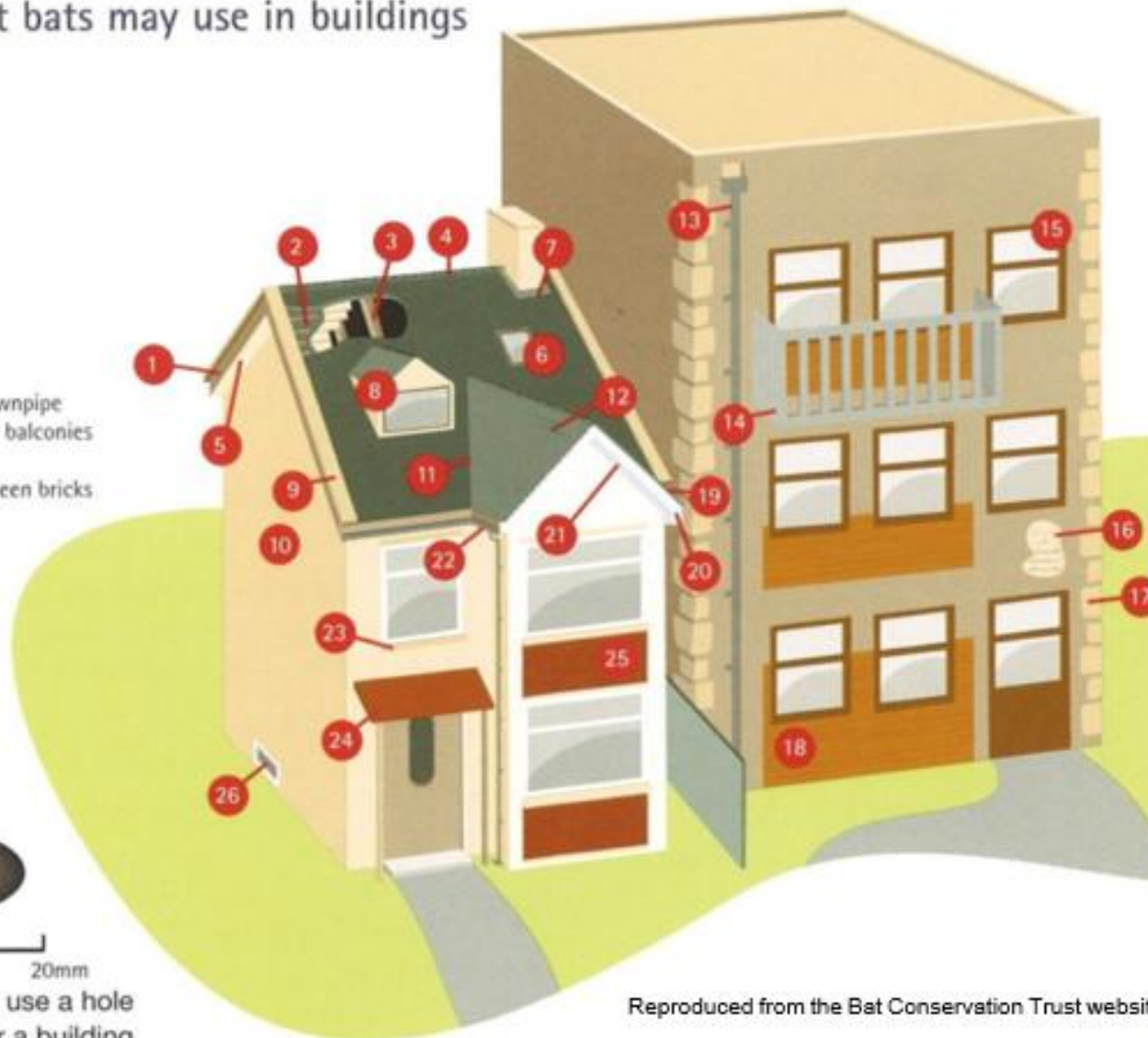
Appendix D – Possible roosting sites and access points for bats in buildings

Places that bats may use in buildings

- 1 Barge board
- 2 Roofing felt
- 3 Roof joists
- 4 Ridge tiles
- 5 Soffit
- 6 Attic
- 7 Lead flashing
- 8 Dormer window
- 9 Coping stones
- 10 Gable end
- 11 Valley
- 12 Broken tiles
- 13 Space between downpipe
- 14 Metal elements on balconies
- 15 Sash window
- 16 Loose mortar between bricks
- 17 Quoins
- 18 Wood cladding
- 19 End tiles
- 20 Fascia board
- 21 Eaves
- 22 Guttering
- 23 Window sill
- 24 Porch
- 25 Hanging tiles
- 26 Cellar



A pipistrelle can use a hole
this size to enter a building



Reproduced from the Bat Conservation Trust website