

Spring House Farm, Pendleton Supplementary Bat Survey

June 2026



Dunelm Ecology
consultant ecologists

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1 Introduction

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 Dunham Ecology Ltd was commissioned to undertake nocturnal bat surveys at Spring House Farm, Pendleton. A preliminary roost assessment (PRA) survey was carried out on 11 March 2026 as part of proposals to undertake repairs to several farm buildings including a Grade II listed barn. Remedial works would involve re-roofing, timber repairs/treatment, replacement of roof lights, minor repointing and repair/replacement of rainwater goods. No evidence of bats was recorded but three buildings (B1, B2 and B3) were assessed as having moderate roost potential and one building (B4) low potential. As such, the ensuing report (Dunham Ecology 2026) recommended that nocturnal surveys were carried out to give confidence in the initial negative survey result and to comply with best practice guidelines.
- 1.1.2 The current report presents the results of nocturnal bat surveys undertaken in May and June 2026 with an assessment of impacts and mitigation proposals. For context and a full description of site conditions as well as other species related measures, the initial protected species survey report should be referred to (Dunelm Ecology Ltd 2026).

1.2 Bat Ecology

- 1.2.1 There are 18 species of bat known to be resident (i.e. breed) in the British Isles, around six of which regularly occur in the Ribble Valley area. Habitat requirements vary widely, both on an individual and species level, although certain features, such as woodland, parkland, traditional pasture, marshes and areas of freshwater, are often focal points for foraging as insects are plentiful in these areas (Mitchell-Jones 2004). Bat roosts tend to be more common in areas where such habitats are present. Bats use linear features such as rivers, hedgerows, roads and woodland edges as landmarks in order to commute from one location to another (Schofield and Mitchell-Jones 2003).
- 1.2.2 Bats utilise different roosts at different times of the year. Between late October and March, bats hibernate; this requires an unexposed roost with a stable temperature, typically a cave, cellar or tunnel. Around March, the bats emerge and gradually move to their summer roosts, typically within man-made structures or suitable crevices in trees. During the spring and summer period, female bats gather together at maternity roosts to give birth and rear their young. Most births occur between late-June and mid-July, with the young able to fly within three to five weeks (Altringham 2003). By the end of August, most of the young bats are independent and the colony begins to break up (Schofield and Mitchell-Jones 2003). Mating takes place between August and December, either at the winter hibernation site or at autumn mating sites. The numbers of bats utilising these various roosts can range from single bats to hundreds of bats in a nursery colony or hibernation site (Altringham 2003).

1.3 Legislative Context

- 1.3.1 All British bat species are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act (WCA) 1981, which has been amended by later legislation, including the

Countryside and Rights of Way (CRoW) Act 2000 and the Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019. Taken together, the above legislation makes it an offence to:

- Intentionally or recklessly disturb a bat while it is occupying a structure or place which it uses for shelter or protection.
- Intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to any structure or place used for shelter or protection by a bat.
- deliberately capture, injure or kill a bat,
- deliberately disturb bats, in such a way as –
 - i) to impair their ability to survive, to breed or reproduce, or to rear their young, or
 - ii) to hibernate or migrate, or
 - iii) to affect significantly the local distribution or abundance of bats;
- damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place.

1.3.2 Under the 2019 Regulations it is an offence to damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place whether a bat is in occupation or not.

1.3.3 Seven native British bat species are listed as 'Priority Species' and are referred to as 'species of principal importance' for the conservation of biodiversity in England and Wales within Section 74 of the CRoW Act 2000 and Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006.

1.3.4 The effects of developments on protected species are considered in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Section 15 of the NPPF states that Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment through a range of measures including minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures and incorporating features which support priority or threatened species such as swifts, bats and hedgehogs. Local authorities in England are required to ensure that where significant harm resulting from development cannot be avoided (through locating on alternative sites with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for; planning permission is refused.

1.3.5 Finally, Circular 06/2005: *Biodiversity and Geological Conservation - Statutory Obligations and Their Impact within the Planning System* states that protected species and habitats are a material consideration in the planning process

2 Methods and Approach

2.1 Field Survey

- 2.1.1 The bat surveys were undertaken following methodologies prescribed in the Bat Conservation Trust's: *Bat Surveys Good Practice Guidelines* (Collins 2023); further details of which are provided below.

Nocturnal Survey

- 2.1.2 Two dusk emergence surveys were carried out on 20 May and 10 June 2026. The surveys aimed to record bats exiting target buildings and started 15 minutes before sunset and ended 90 minutes after sunset. The surveys were undertaken using full spectrum (Echometer Touch 2/Anabat Walkabout) detectors to view real time bat call sonograms. The surveys were also aided by the use of three Canon XA20-60 infrared cameras (each fitted with ancillary infrared torches (Nightfox XC5)) and two Pixfra A-613 thermal imaging cameras. The time of exit and the number of bats and species (if identifiable) were recorded; whilst any general bat activity in the area was also noted.

Table 1 Summary of Bat Survey Times and Weather Conditions

Survey	Date	Timings	Weather
Dusk emergence	20/05/2026	20:58 – 22:43 (sunset 21:13)	12-11°C, dry, gentle breeze, 100% cloud cover.
Dusk emergence	10/06/2026	21:24 - 23:09 (sunset 21:39)	11-10°C, dry, light breeze, 50% cloud cover.

2.2 Personnel

- 2.2.1 Both surveys were led by Jon Guarnaccio who has 23 years experience as a consultant ecologist and has held a Natural England level 2 bat survey licence since 2005. Jon was assisted by John Rowland and Sarah Rowley who are also licensed bat ecologists.

2.3 Survey Constraints

- 2.3.1 The surveys were undertaken at an optimal time of year under suitable weather conditions while all PRF were covered. As such, no limitations are associated with the survey.

3 Results

3.1 Field Survey

- 3.1.1 During the first nocturnal survey, two common pipistrelle bats were recorded emerging from barn 2 at 21:36 and 21:54. Both bats emerged from the unglazed first floor window on the east elevation of the barn (see image right). No bats were recorded emerging from any of the other farm buildings.
- 3.1.2 One common pipistrelle bat emerged at 21:54 from barn 2 during the second survey, but this time from a ground floor unglazed window on the barn's west aspect. A whiskered/Brandt's bat was also recorded entering the barn at 22:46 via the open window on the east side of the barn but the bat exited several minutes after. As per the first survey, no bats were recorded emerging from any of the other farm buildings
- 3.1.3 Generally low levels of foraging activity were recorded during both visits with most activity attributable to common pipistrelle bats. Additionally, a few soprano pipistrelle and Myotis spp. calls were detected.



4 Discussion and Recommendations

4.1 Introduction

- 4.1.1 This section evaluates the survey results. It uses this information to assess the potential impacts of the restoration proposals on bats, and to formulate appropriate conservation measures that would prevent, reduce or offset any significant adverse impacts, as well as identifying enhancement measures within the scheme. The impact assessment has been undertaken following guidelines presented in CIEEM's *Bat Mitigation Guidelines* (Reason and Wray 2023). In addition, the impacts have been assessed in the absence of mitigation, based on information collated during the bat survey and in consideration of the current development proposals.

4.2 Interpretation of Survey Results

- 4.2.1 Based on the survey results it is considered likely that barn 2 is used by low numbers (<5) of non-breeding common pipistrelle, bats as a day roost site with bats roosting inside the building. Exact roosting locations are unknown but wall crevices and gaps on wall tops are the most likely roosting spots.
- 4.2.2 The survey findings are not consistent with those of a maternity roost site as higher numbers of bats would have been expected, while the building lacks the stable temperature and high humidity conditions required for hibernation.
- 4.2.3 Common pipistrelle bats are common and widespread in Ribble Valley and the wider area and the roost site is assessed as being of **site** ecological importance (Reason and Wray 2023).

4.3 Impact Assessment

Short Term Impacts

Direct Mortality and Disturbance

- 4.3.1 Without the implementation of mitigation measures, individual or small numbers of common pipistrelle could be disturbed and/or possibly injured or killed during works. This action could, therefore, result in an offence under the legislation that protects bats and their roosts. However, since only low numbers of bats are considered likely to be present, the scale of impact is assessed as low at a site level.

Long Term Impacts

Roost Loss

- 4.3.2 The proposals could temporarily result in the loss of a day roost site. This loss is assessed as having a low negative impact at the site level given that bats are likely to utilise several other roost sites in their home range and bats would be able to roost in the barn once works are completed. Loss of the roost (even if temporary) would however constitute an offence under UK legislation.

Habitat Fragmentation and Isolation

- 4.3.3 No significant habitat changes are proposed to the surrounding semi-natural habitats and as such there are no impacts associated with fragmentation and isolation.

Post Development Interference Impacts

- 4.3.4 There are no lighting details available but inappropriate lighting has the potential to impact on foraging bats.

Predicted Scale of Impact

- 4.3.5 Potential adverse impacts on bats comprise the temporary loss of a common pipistrelle, non-breeding day roost, which is considered to be of low conservation status. Additionally, there is the potential for the injuring/killing and disturbance of bats during works. The proposals hold legislative implications in respect of bat protection, but, when assessed on a wider scale the overall negative impacts are assessed to be low in magnitude.

4.4 Mitigation and Compensation

- 4.4.1 All bats and their resting places are strictly protected by UK law which makes it an offence to kill, injure or disturb a bat and/or damage, destroy or obstruct access to a bat roost (whether bats are present or not). Certain procedures would, therefore, need to be undertaken to ensure that no offence is committed. This would principally involve obtaining a mitigation licence from Natural England once the necessary permissions have been granted and all conditions relating to wildlife have been discharged¹. The licence would permit an otherwise unlawful operation to take place, and it would oblige the applicant to adopt measures that would ensure negative impacts on bats are prevented, reduced or offset, and that the conservation status of the bat species is maintained.
- 4.4.2 The measures prescribed below are considered to be proportionate to the level of impact and status of the roost, and have been designed to reflect current best practice guidance. For non-breeding roosts of species such as pipistrelle spp., bats, there are no timing constraints, but roosting opportunities should be provided.

Sensitive Working Methods

- 4.4.3 All roof slates must be carefully removed by hand (B2 under the supervision of an ecologist) with a toolbox talk given to contractors beforehand to notify them of their obligations in respect of legislation and protecting bats. A woodcrete bat box would also be installed on a nearby tree prior to works commencing and should remain on site permanently. In the event of bats being encountered during the soft strip, they would be captured by hand by the ecologist and placed within the bat box. Builders and contractors would be prohibited from handling bats.

¹ Natural England can take up to 15 working days to process bat earned recognition licence applications and the licence cannot be applied for more than three months in advance of works commencing. The licence will need to be informed by up to date survey data and in this respect, further nocturnal survey work may be required if the licence application is not submitted before May 2027.

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- 4.4.4 Roof timbers to be treated with appropriate products authorised by Natural England <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/bat-roosts-use-of-chemical-pest-control-products-and-timber-treatments-in-or-near-them>. This should be done when bats are not present as even recommended products are toxic to bats when freshly applied

New Roost Creation

- 4.4.5 In addition to the bat box, it is recommended that bat access points are created within roofs and walls during the restoration process. This would include three bat ridge tile access points per a building (see roost detail 4A in appendix) and four stone wall top access points per an elevation (see roost detail 3 in appendix). Additionally existing deeper wall crevices (>100 mm) can be retained by inserting timber battens and pointing around these before removing the batten once mortar has started to set (see roost detail 6 in appendix). An appropriate bat friendly breathable membrane (which has a snagging propensity certificate) should be used to line the roofs.

4.5 Conclusions

- 4.5.1 The planning proposals would result in the disturbance and potential loss of a common pipistrelle day roost site which is considered to be of low conservation status. Overall, however, the impacts are likely to be of low significance, and they would be very unlikely to affect the conservation status of the local bat population, particularly following implementation of the mitigation measures. A Natural England licence would, however, need to be obtained to ensure that the development does not infringe bat legislation.

5 References

Altringham JD (2003). *British Bats*. Collins, London.

Collins J (ed) (2023). *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines*. Fourth Edition. BCT, London.

Dunelm Ecology (2026). Spring House Farm, Pendleton: Protected Species Survey. Unpublished report.

Reason PF and Wray S (2023). *UK Bat Mitigation Guidelines: A guide to impact assessment, mitigation and compensation for developments affecting bats*. CIEEM, Ampfield.

Schofield HW & Mitchell-Jones AJ (2003). *The Bats of Britain and Ireland*. The Vincent Wildlife Trust, Ledbury.



Plate 1 TI camera 1 post survey image



Plate 2 TI camera 2 post survey image



Plate 3 IR camera 1 post survey image



Plate 4 IR camera 2 post survey image



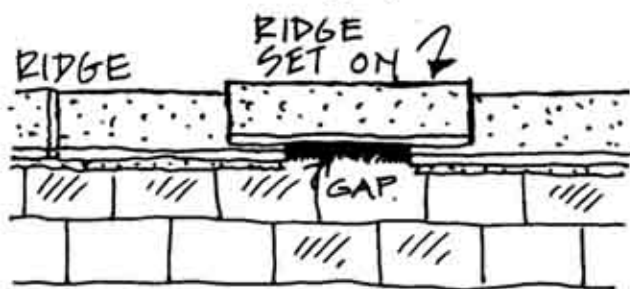
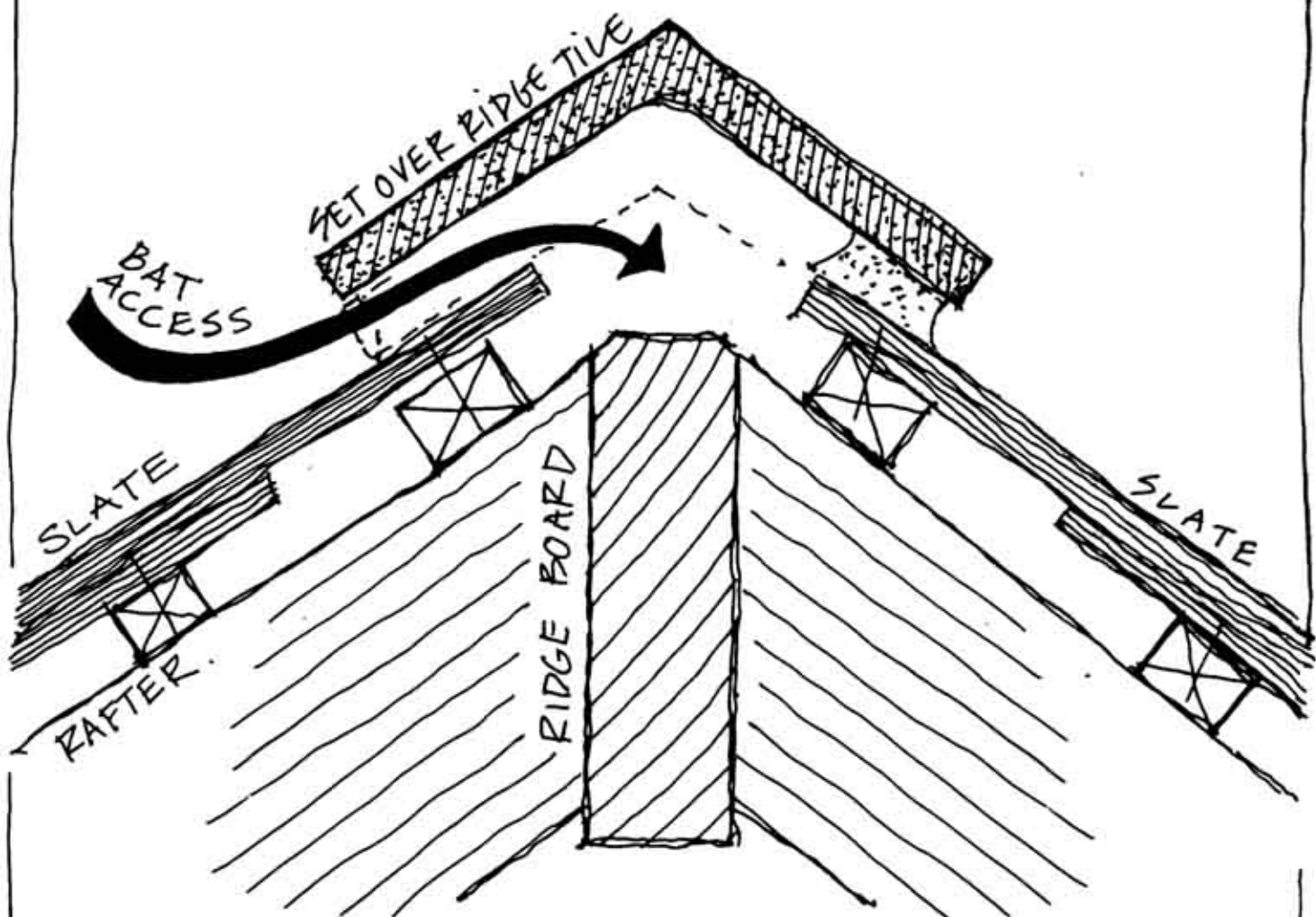
Plate 5 IR camera 3 post survey image

Spring House Farm, Pendleton
Supplementary Bat Survey



Plate 6 Access point 3

RIDGE TILE ACCESS DETAIL 4A



~ OPTION A ~

ROOF RIDGE SET ON TOP
OF GENERAL RIDGE TILES
TO FORM BAT ACCESS GAP.



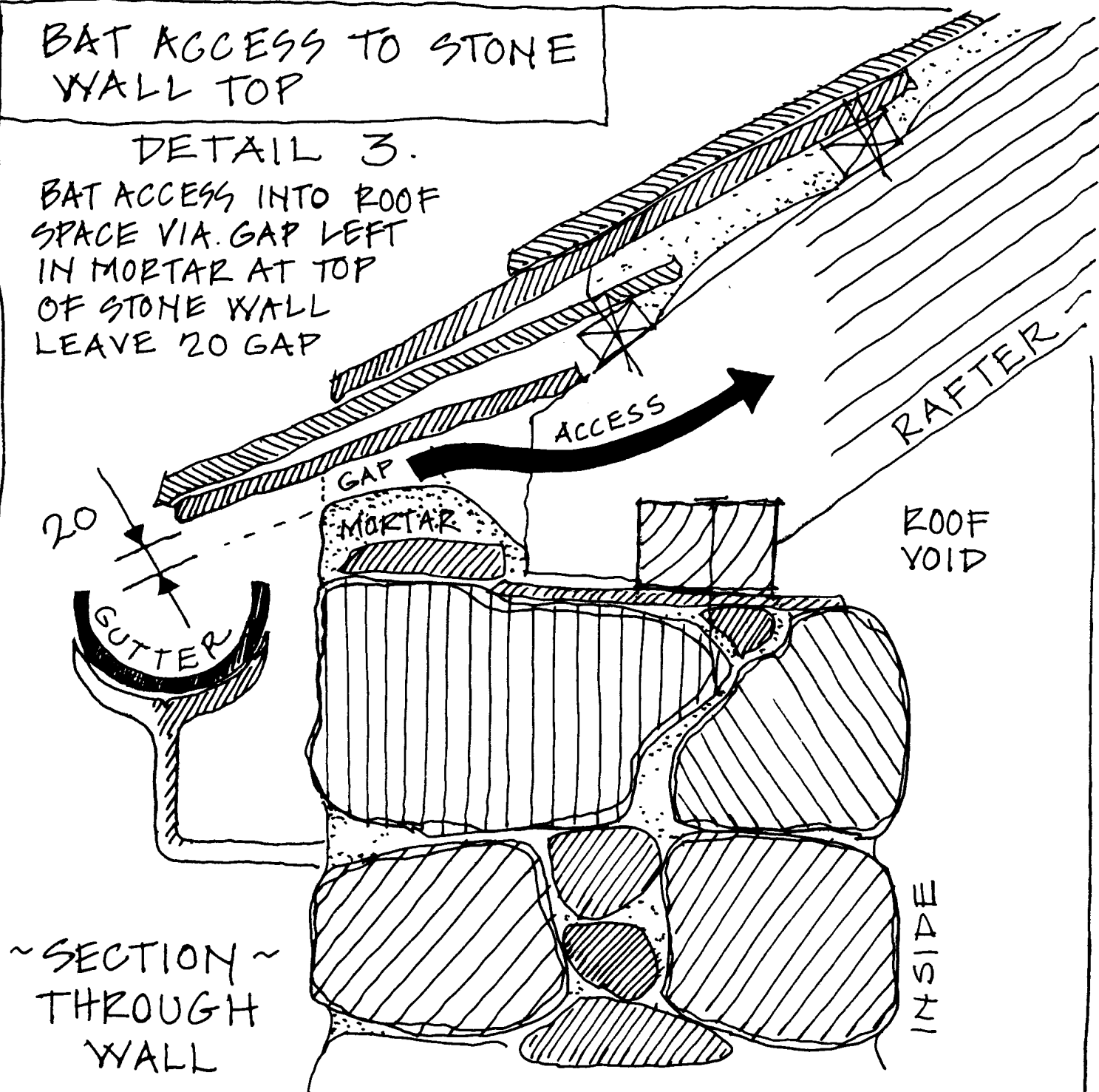
~ OPTION B ~

MAINTAIN 20MM MORTAR
GAP. & LEAVE A SECTION
OUT.

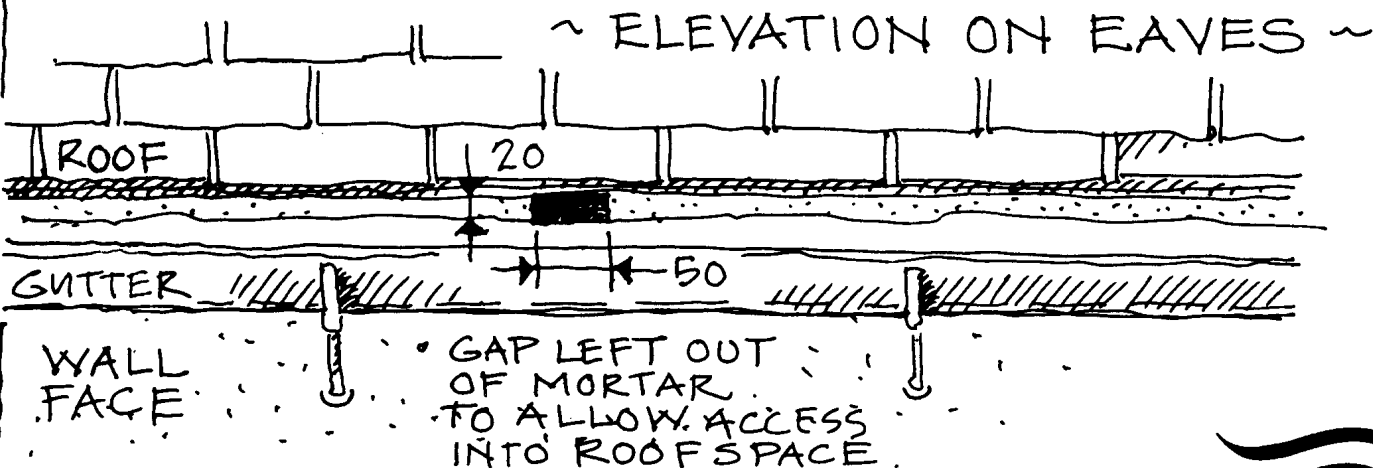
BAT ACCESS TO STONE WALL TOP

DETAIL 3.

BAT ACCESS INTO ROOF SPACE VIA GAP LEFT IN MORTAR AT TOP OF STONE WALL
LEAVE 20 GAP



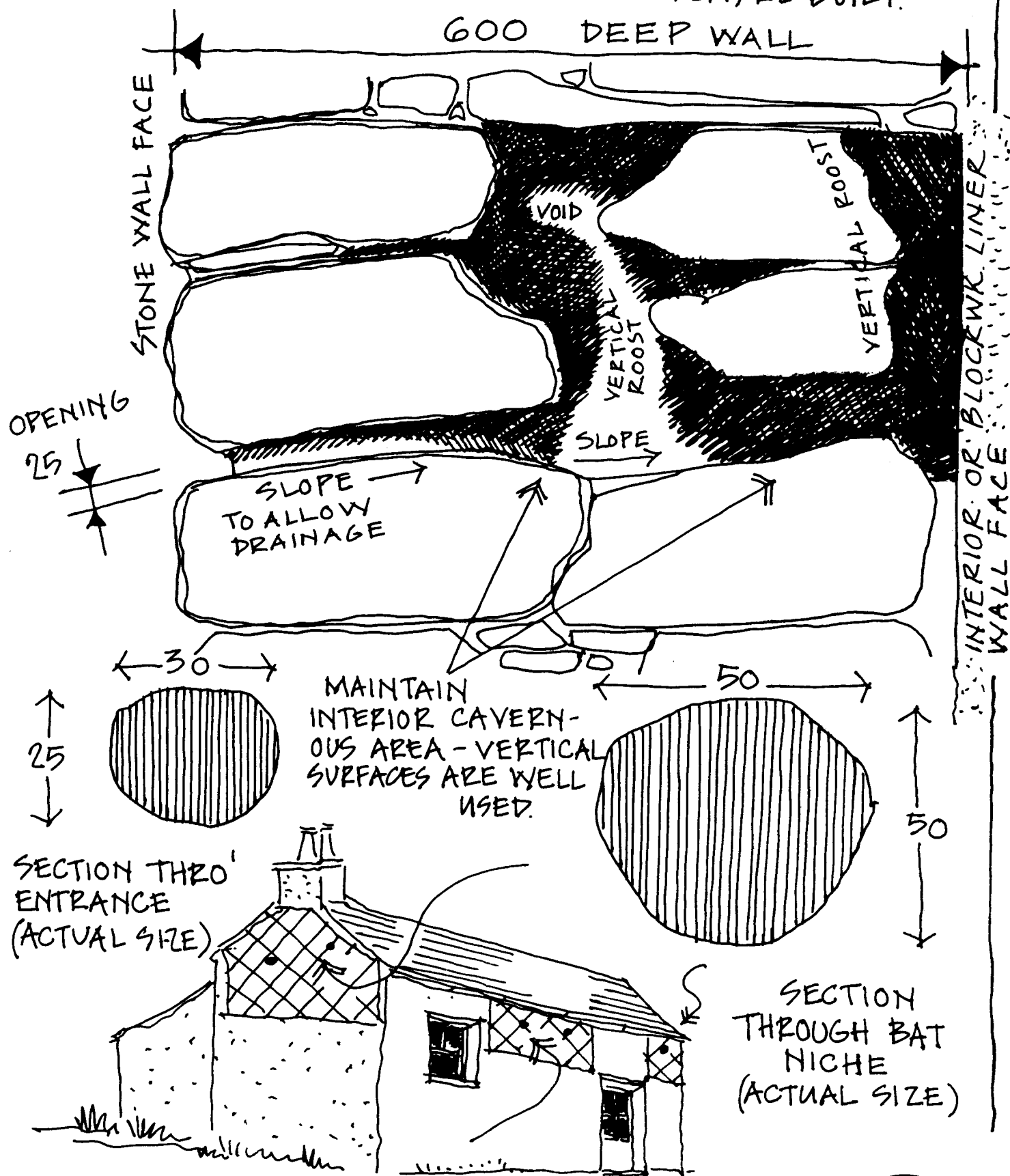
~ ELEVATION ON EAVES ~



SOLID STONE WALL BAT ROOST

SECTION THROUGH WALL
IE; BARN CONVERSION
WHERE THICK STONE
WALLS ARE BEING
KEPT/RE-BUILT.

DETAIL G



PROVIDE A SERIES OF THESE BAT NICHES
THROUGHOUT THE WALLS OF YOUR BARN
CONVERSION - HATCHED AREAS ARE IDEAL
LOCATIONS - AWAY FROM WINDOWS + DOOR.


ENGLISH
NATURE