



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 16 October 2025

by **C Butcher BSc MA MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 19 November 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/E3335/W/25/3370929

Roughwood, Coombe Lane, West Monkton, Taunton, Somerset TA2 8QZ

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr Peter Tait against the decision of Somerset Council.
 - The application Ref is 48/23/0039.
 - The development proposed is a replacement dwelling, replacement garage, new workshop and alterations to the existing entrance.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a replacement dwelling, replacement garage, new workshop and alterations to the existing entrance at Roughwood, Coombe Lane, West Monkton, Taunton, Somerset TA2 8QZ in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 48/23/0039, subject to the conditions in the attached schedule.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. While West Monkton does have a historic core, the area within the immediate vicinity of the appeal site contains dwellings that are of different ages and styles. Indeed, in recent times, it appears that the vernacular has changed somewhat through the introduction of more modern designs. During my site visit, I observed that a property very close to the appeal site, known as Ivywood, has a very contemporary appearance, including a flat roof and extensive timber cladding. The appellant has also provided details of a recent planning application for three homes immediately to the north of the appeal site¹. This application has recently been approved, and if built out, would further add to the provision of modern style homes in the area, including one which would have a flat roof. There are also further examples of these types of designs within the wider village streetscape.
4. The proposed dwelling before me would clearly also be of a highly modern appearance, with a flat roof, wooden cladding at first-floor level, and extensive glazing within the ground floor southern elevation. However, while there are buildings of a more historic appearance further to the south of the site, the variety of styles that exist in the immediate surrounds, including an example of a similarly modern design, means that the appearance of the replacement home would not

¹ Council ref: 48/23/0021

stand out as being incongruous or out of place, and it would therefore not detract from the character of the area. As a result, the fact that the proposed dwelling would be visible from the road at the enlarged access point, would not result in harm.

5. I therefore conclude that the proposed development would not conflict with Policy DM1 of the Taunton Deane Core Strategy September 2012, Policy D7 of the Taunton Deane Site Allocations and Development Management Plan December 2016, or Policy H2 of the West Monkton and Cheddon Fitzpaine Neighbourhood Plan 2021-2028. Taken together, the relevant aspects of these policies seek to ensure the new development is well designed and that it conserves existing character. There would also be no conflict with the District wide Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document, the relevant aspects of which have similar aims.

Other Matters

6. Given that the proposal is for a replacement dwelling which would be a similar size to the existing home, there would be no impact on phosphate levels within the Somerset Levels and Moors Ramsar site. As such, an appropriate assessment is not required in this instance.
7. The appeal site is close to the boundary of the West Monkton Conservation Area (the CA). The significance of the CA, insofar as it is relevant to this appeal, is derived from the evolution of the village over many years and the architectural styles and tastes of the time. The CA is centred around a historic core which contains several listed buildings whose significance is associated with their attractive appearance and historic use. During my site visit it was abundantly clear that, at most, the appeal site can be glimpsed from the very northern edge of the CA. In combination with the fact that the setting of the CA in this area is already characterised by homes which have a wide variety of styles and designs, I am satisfied that the proposal would not result in harm.
8. The appeal site is not visible from the various listed buildings within the CA, including the churchyard of St Augustine's Church. As such, their settings would also be unaffected. While the proposed home would likely be seen if one were to go to the top of the church tower, it would clearly be observed within the context of more modern homes, both nearby and further afield. There would therefore be no harm in this regard.
9. The appeal site is situated to the north of a home known as Hawksview. While the proposed dwelling would contain extensive glazing at ground floor level, this is already the case with the existing dwelling. Furthermore, there is already the possibility of some overlooking between the first floor living areas of each property and it is notable that the proposed dwelling would be no greater in height than the existing home. The distance between Roughwood and Hawksview is also generous and there is extensive natural screening on the boundary between the two properties. As such, it is apparent that any concerns in relation to privacy would be no greater than the current situation and there would be no additional harm in this regard.
10. The appellant has provided a Bat Survey (Quantock Ecology) which has identified the presence of a small day roost of Soprano Pipistrelle bats within the existing dwelling. The survey sets out that an application for a European Protected Species

Mitigation Licence (EPSML) will need to be approved by Natural England in order for the proposal to proceed. A condition can be imposed to prevent any works taking place to existing buildings before such a licence has been issued, or it has been concluded that a licence is not required. Based on the imposition of such a condition, I am satisfied that the proposal would not result in an unacceptable level of harm to protected species or other forms of wildlife.

Conditions

11. I have imposed conditions that identify the relevant timescales and plans in the interests of certainty. In the interests of sustainability, a condition in relation to water consumption is necessary. Conditions relating to materials, landscaping and trees are necessary in order to preserve character and appearance. A condition to ensure that the proposed garage is maintained for parking use is necessary to ensure sufficient parking provision on site.
12. A condition is necessary to require a licence from Natural England prior to any works taking place on existing buildings on site. I have not imposed conditions that require certain works to take place in order to protect bats as such works would be agreed with Natural England through the licencing process. Such conditions would not therefore be reasonable or necessary. However, I have found it necessary to impose a condition that would require the details of any external lighting to be agreed by the Local Planning Authority in the interests of protecting such species. Finally, a condition to require bird boxes and a bee brick is necessary in the interests of biodiversity.
13. I have not found it necessary to impose a condition that would remove permitted development rights. I have no reason to conclude that the utilisation of such rights would lead to harm and therefore such a condition would not be reasonable or necessary.
14. Where necessary, certain conditions have been set out as being 'pre-commencement' to ensure that critical aspects of the proposed development are properly addressed before any work begins.

Conclusion

15. The proposed development is in accordance with the development plan when considered as a whole. Having had regard to all matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

C Butcher

INSPECTOR

Schedule of Conditions

- 1) The development hereby permitted shall be begun within three years of the date of this permission.
- 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with drawings: SAS499-PL11 (Location Plan); Elevations (East and West) received by the Council on 23 Dec 2024; Elevations (North and South) received by the Council on 23 Dec 2024; Proposed Floor Plans received by the Council on 23 Dec 2024; Proposed Replacement Garage (dated Dec 2024); Proposed Site Plan (dated Dec 2024); Proposed Workshop (dated Dec 2024).
- 3) The dwelling hereby approved shall not be occupied until:
 - i. the optional requirement for potential consumption of wholesome water by persons occupying that dwelling in Part G of Schedule 1 and Regulation 36 of the Building Regulations 2010 of 110 litres per person per day has been complied with; and
 - ii. a notice specifying the calculated consumption of wholesome water per person per day relating to the dwelling as constructed has been given to the appropriate Building Control Body and a copy of the said notice provided to the Local Planning Authority.
- 4) Prior to installation of external materials and finishes, details of materials, including the provision of samples to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details and thereafter maintained as such.
- 5) A landscaping scheme shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to such a scheme being implemented. The scheme shall include details of the species, siting and numbers to be planted. The scheme shall be completely carried out within the first available planting season (1 October to 31 March) from the date of commencement of the development. Written confirmation of the completion of the landscaping scheme, in accordance with the approved details, shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority. For a period of five years after the completion of the landscaping scheme, the trees and shrubs shall be protected and maintained in a healthy weed free condition and any trees or shrubs that cease to grow or are uprooted shall be replaced by trees or shrubs of similar size and species.
- 6) The parking spaces in the garage hereby approved shall at all times be kept available for the parking of vehicles and shall be kept free of obstruction for such use.
- 7) Works to any of the buildings shall not in any circumstances commence unless the Local Planning Authority has been provided with either:
 - a. a copy of the licence issued by Natural England pursuant to Regulation 55 of The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 authorising the development to go ahead; or
 - b. a statement in writing from the licensed bat ecologist to the effect that he/she does not consider that the specified development will require a licence.

- 8) Where external lighting is to be installed, prior to construction above damp-proof course level, a lighting design for bats, following Guidance Note 08/23 - bats and artificial lighting at night (ILP and BCT 2023), shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The design shall show how and where external lighting will be installed. Lux levels should be below 0.5 Lux on key & supporting features or habitats. All external lighting shall be installed in accordance with the specifications and locations set out in the design, and these shall be maintained thereafter in accordance with the design. Under no circumstances should any other external lighting be installed without prior consent from the Local Planning Authority.
- 9) The following shall be incorporated into the site proposal with photographs of the installed features submitted to the Local Planning Authority prior to first occupation:
 - a. The installation of a minimum of two bird boxes around the site boundaries or on buildings will provide additional nesting habitat for birds e.g. Schwegler No 17 Swift Nest Box, Schwegler 1SP Sparrow Terrace, Schwegler 1B Nest Boxes, Schwegler 2H Robin Boxes, Woodstone Nest Box, Or a similar alternative brand. Tree boxes should be positioned approximately 3m above ground level where they will be sheltered from prevailing wind, rain and strong sunlight. Small-hole boxes are best placed approximately 1-3m above ground on an area of the tree trunk where foliage will not obscure the entrance hole. Swift and sparrow boxes should be positioned at the eaves of a building and can be incorporated into the fabric of the building during construction.
 - b. Installation of 1 bee brick.
- 10) Before development commences (including site clearance and any other preparatory works) a scheme for the protection of trees to be retained shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Such a scheme shall include a plan showing the location of the protective fencing, and shall specify the type of protective fencing, all in accordance with BS 5837:2012. Such fencing shall be erected prior to commencement of any other site operations and at least two working days' notice shall be given to the Local Planning Authority that it has been erected. It shall be maintained and retained for the full duration of works or until such time as agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority. No activities whatsoever shall take place within the protected areas without the prior written agreement of the Local Planning Authority.