



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 12 November 2025

by K Jones BA (Hons) DipLA CMLI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 04 December 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/Y1110/D/25/3370018

21 Rosebarn Avenue, Exeter, Devon EX4 6DY

- 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 & Mrs Wopshott against the decision of Exeter City Council.
 - The application Ref is 25/0179/FUL.
 - The development proposed is rear ground floor extension, alteration to existing roofs including replacing and raising ridge of primary roof structure, alteration to front porch, replacement windows, new windows, internal alterations.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The appeal was made in the name of the appellants' agent, Harriet Ziegler. The agent has confirmed that it should proceed in the name of the appellants, Mr & Mrs Wopshott and I have proceeded on that basis.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers at 23 Rosebarn Avenue, with particular regard to daylight and outlook.

Reasons

4. Rosebarn Avenue comprises a series of large, detached and semi-detached houses with narrow gaps between adjacent properties. Numbers 21 and 23 Rosebarn Avenue follow this pattern. At first floor level, a dormer window serving as the only window to a bedroom in No 23 faces the side wall of No 21 at close proximity. Amongst other changes, the proposed roof extension would substantially increase the height of the facing side elevation of No 21, changing the hipped roof to a taller gable wall.
5. With regard to daylight, the bedroom is a habitable room, which, while potentially less sensitive to changes in daylight than a living room, is nonetheless a room designed for living, sleeping or recreational use. In this context, the parties agree that the proposal would contravene the principles of the BRE daylight guidelines¹, finding that the new ridge height would place development at an angle of approximately 61° relative to the centre of the bedroom window. This is considerably over the recommended maximum of 25°.

¹ Site Layout Planning for Daylight and Sunlight: A guide to good practice (BR209:2011)

6. Although these guideline figures are advisory, the existing roofline sits just above the 25° threshold, noticeably reducing the amount of natural light reaching the window. The proposed extension would significantly increase the height of this facing wall, and bring the currently hipped section of the roof closer to the neighbouring dwelling. Even with the reduced surface area of a triangular gable wall, this would result in a marked reduction in daylight reaching the bedroom window.
7. The view from the bedroom at No 23 is already dominated by the facing wall, with parts of the hipped roof, gardens and sky visible from certain angles. While this outlook is relatively poor, it does not justify further deterioration of existing living conditions. The proposed significant increase in the height of the facing wall would make it very difficult to see anything other than the close side elevation of No 21 from within the bedroom. This would create an outlook that feels wholly oppressive. While the current occupier of No 23 supports the proposal, the harm to living conditions at that property is a matter which, if the appeal were allowed, would affect all future occupiers of the property.
8. Parts of the proposal would not affect the living conditions in the neighbouring property. However, taken together the changes would lead to a marked reduction in daylight reaching the bedroom window at No 23 and a substantial deterioration in its outlook, resulting in an unacceptable impact on living conditions and diminishing enjoyment of the property. For these reasons I conclude that the proposed development would unacceptably harm the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers at 23 Rosebarn Avenue, with particular regard to daylight and outlook. This would conflict with Saved Policy DG4 of the Exeter Local Plan First Review, which, amongst other matters, seeks to ensure a quality of amenity which allows residents to feel at ease within their homes and gardens.

Other Matters

9. The Council has found no unacceptable harm regarding the overall character and appearance of the proposals, including the effect of the height of the roof on the street scene, and I do not disagree with its assessment. However, this is a neutral matter which does not weigh in favour of the appeal. Although the existing dwelling lacks symmetry, its design does not detract from a street scene that features a mix of symmetrical and asymmetrical properties of varying ages and styles. The limited visual benefits of its redevelopment would therefore not be sufficient to outweigh the harm to neighbouring living conditions. While there would also be benefits in terms of internal living and circulation spaces, as in general planning is concerned with land use in the public interest, these personal benefits carry limited weight in favour of allowing the appeal.

Conclusion

10. The proposal conflicts with the development plan and the material considerations do not indicate that the appeal should be decided other than in accordance with it. I therefore conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

K Jones

INSPECTOR