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## Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 28 April 2025 by E Nutman BA (Hons)

### Decision by D Hartley BA (Hons) MTP MBA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 16<sup>th</sup> July 2025

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### Appeal Ref: APP/J1535/D/25/3359642

### 101A Wolstenholme, Honey Lane, Waltham Abbey, Essex EN9 3AU

- 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 Florin Gjolaj against the decision of Epping Forest District Council.
  - The application reference is EPF/2164/24.
  - The development proposed is described as a “proposal for a two-part double-storey front extension and skylights along the rear roof slope”.
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### Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

### Appeal Procedure

2. The site visit was undertaken by a representative of the Inspector whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeal.

### Preliminary Matters

3. There is a discrepancy between the submitted existing drawings for the dwellinghouse and the dwellinghouse that exists on the appeal site now. When I undertook my site visit, I observed that a single storey side extension was in the final stages of construction. This is not shown on the existing plans, nor is it referenced in the appeal documents. Notwithstanding this, I have made my recommendation based upon the existence of the single storey side extension, although it has not been a determinative matter in decision making terms.

### Main Issue

4. The main issue is whether the proposal constitutes good design and its effect on the character and appearance of the area.

### Reasons for the Recommendation

5. 101A Wolstenholme is located on Honey Lane. The dwellings along this street consist of predominantly two-storey properties. However, there are also a number of bungalows and chalets, with some that have limited visibility within the street due to their siting between two-storey properties. The appeal site, however, is one of the last detached chalet type dwellinghouses in a row of five. These chalets all vary in form and design, but are nonetheless all low level, and so are not generally screened by two storey dwellinghouses when experienced in the street-scene. The appeal property benefits from a generously sized driveway to the front, and a garden to the rear.

6. The appeal property is not imposing in the street. Its scale and sense of open space around it adds positively and distinctively to this part of the street particularly when considered alongside the other chalets/bungalows on this side of the road.
7. The Council's reasons for refusal are concerned with the proposed alterations to the property's frontage. The Council do not raise a specific objection to the proposed skylights to the rear elevation of dwellinghouse. I find that this part of the proposal would be acceptable in planning terms when considered in isolation.
8. Policy DM9 of the Epping Forest District Local Plan 2011-2023 (2023) sets out a requirement that all development be design-led and that such development relates positively to its surrounding context.
9. I acknowledge the appellant's view that the proposal respects the existing scale and form of the dwellinghouse by maintaining the existing ridge height and, in this regard, the design synergy that exists in respect of other nearby properties. In isolation, the hip-to-gable roof conversion would be acceptable, as it would not significantly increase the size of the property, and similar roof forms can already be seen to the neighbouring chalets. However, the matching ridge height seen to the proposed front two-storey element would result in excessive bulk and dominance which would lead to the resultant dwellinghouse appearing unacceptably 'top-heavy' in design terms.
10. The appellant provides examples of properties along Honey Lane, demonstrating that there is not one singular clearly defined or coherent character existing. I agree that the design of properties along the street varies widely. I also note that many of these properties benefit from front extensions. However, in varying degrees these are all stepped down from the ridge height of the main roof plane and so generally appear subservient in scale.
11. This demonstrates how the proposal, whilst retaining the existing height, would appear as 'top heavy'. Whilst the extension would not excessively protrude forward of the existing principal elevation, the continuation of ridge height would result in an extension that appears excessive in bulk, significantly transforming the softer and less imposing existing frontage which seeks to define the character of the host property. This bulk and incongruous appearance would be further exacerbated by the proposed extensive glazing to the front. It would highlight the 'top heavy' appearance and is not a characteristic which is prevalent in this part of the street.
12. I agree that the proposed matching materials would respect the existing character of the host dwelling. However, this would not negate the harm that I have identified would be caused to the host property and the character and appearance of the area.
13. For the above reasons, I conclude that the proposed front extension would not maintain or enhance the appearance of the host dwelling and would have an adverse impact upon the street scene by virtue of its excessive bulk and dominant design feature. It would not constitute good design. Therefore, when the proposal is considered as a whole, it would conflict with Policy DM9 of the adopted 2023 Epping Forest District Local Plan 2011-2023, and chapter 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2024 (as amended, which, amongst other matters, seeks high quality design that respects local character and distinctiveness.

### **Conclusion and Recommendation**

14. For the reasons given above and having had regard to all other matters raised, I recommend that the appeal should be dismissed.

*E Nutman*

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

### **Inspector's Decision**

15. I have considered all the submitted evidence and my representative's report and on that basis the appeal is dismissed.

*D Hartley*

INSPECTOR