



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 28 November 2025

by **P Storey BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 18 December 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/E5900/D/25/3373891

126 Corfield Street, Tower Hamlets, London E2 0DS

- 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 Anthony Koumi against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Tower Hamlets.
 - The application Ref is PA/25/00823.
 - The development proposed is one storey full width rear extension, a two storey front extension and whole house renovation including alteration to the existing window arrangement.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The description in the banner heading above is taken from the planning application form. The decision notice records that this was amended to read: *“Proposal for single storey full width rear extension, second storey extension, a two storey front extension and whole house renovation including alteration to the existing window arrangement”*. Based on the submitted plans and supporting details, I consider this amended description to more accurately reflect the development proposed. I have therefore determined the appeal on this basis.
3. The Council’s officer report confirms that the proposed front and rear extensions replicate those previously approved under a separate planning permission. Consequently, the matter in dispute is limited to the acceptability of the proposed second storey extension.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

5. The appeal site is a terraced house forming part of a 20th century residential complex between Corfield Street and Finnis Street, characterised by a consistent two-storey, red brick construction with pitched roofs. Whilst some properties feature later additions such as dormer windows and contemporary extensions, these remain subordinate to the prevailing two-storey scale and do not materially disrupt the established rhythm of the streetscape.
6. The appellant contends that the street lacks uniformity, citing stepped facades and ridge lines. My site observations confirm that such variations exist, but they are

minor and create only a gentle undulation rather than significant contrasts in height. The overall impression remains one of visual consistency.

7. The appellant refers to the three-storey building at 200 Finnis Street as justification for the proposal. However, that building occupies a corner plot and was specifically designed as a transitional element between taller and lower forms, as confirmed in its planning statement. It does not establish a precedent for increasing the height of the host dwelling, which sits within a distinct terrace context. The appellant also cites an example at English Street, but the current proposal must be assessed against its own site-specific considerations, which are not directly comparable to other locations. Similarly, the dormer window at 122 Corfield Street does not equate to a full additional storey and was constructed under permitted development rights, where different considerations apply.
8. The appellant further argues that the proposal complies with Class AA of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) (the GPDO) and that refusal undermines the spirit of permitted development legislation. However, this appeal concerns an application for planning permission rather than prior approval under the GPDO. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires decisions on planning applications to be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Compliance with GPDO provisions is therefore not a material consideration of sufficient weight to override clear policy conflict.
9. The proposed development would introduce a third storey that would break the established roofline, creating an incongruous and visually discordant feature when viewed from both Corfield Street and Finnis Street. This would erode the coherence and character of the terrace and the wider complex. While the appellant highlights design measures intended to reduce visual impact, such as stepping back the extension, aligning windows, and using timber cladding, these do not overcome the fundamental harm arising from the excessive height, massing, and visual conflict with the established built form. Although the proposal may not harm living conditions and the materials may be acceptable, these factors do not mitigate the overall harm to character and appearance.
10. For these reasons, I conclude that the proposed development would disrupt the established pattern of development and diminish the visual integrity of the streetscape, resulting in harm to the character and appearance of the area. It would conflict with Policy S.DH1 of the Tower Hamlets Local Plan 2031, Adopted January 2020, and Policy D3 of the London Plan, March 2021. Collectively, these policies require development to respect local context through appropriate scale, height, and coherent rooflines, and to follow a design-led approach that responds positively to local distinctiveness.

Other Matters

11. The appellant indicates that the proposed development would provide additional living space to meet the needs of a growing family and improve the functionality of the home by creating a more flexible and comfortable living environment. The appellant is a long-term resident, and the development would represent investment in the community by providing a larger dwelling and improving housing choice. These considerations are acknowledged to carry some weight in favour of the proposal.

12. However, this does not outweigh the significant harm identified in relation to the character and appearance of the area. The proposal conflicts with the development plan, and the weight attached to these material considerations would be insufficient to justify departing from it. Accordingly, these personal and practical benefits do not alter my overall conclusion on the appeal.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons given, the proposed development would conflict with the development plan as a whole and there are no considerations to justify a decision other than in accordance with the plan. I therefore conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

P Storey

INSPECTOR