



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 28 January 2026

by J D Clark BA (Hons) DpTRP MCD DMS MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 6 February 2026

Appeal Ref: APP/H4315/D/25/3376840

6 Maple Grove, St Helens WA10 4AH

- 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 Gary Lally against the decision of St Helens Metropolitan Borough Council.
 - The application Ref is P/2025/0451/HHFP.
 - The development proposed is the erection of detached garden store following demolition of previous garden store.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. A consultation draft of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) was published on 16 December 2025 but given that this is at the consultation stage I do not consider it necessary to invite comments from the parties at this time. Any reference to the Framework is based on the current version, dated December 2024.

Main Issues

3. The main issues are the effect of the proposed garden store on (1) the character and appearance of the surrounding area; and (2) the living conditions of the occupiers of the neighbouring property, 4 Maple Grove, by reason of outlook.

Reasons

Character and Appearance

4. Maple Grove is a cul-de-sac comprising semi-detached houses. It is a narrow road but the houses are set back with parking areas to the front and, in some cases, to the side of the houses. The previous garden store has been demolished and the outbuilding has already been significantly constructed although not fully completed. It is a brick faced building with a mono-pitched roof. It is set back behind No 6.
5. Although I did not see any other outbuildings of this design in the cul-de-sac, it is set back from the road so that its impact on the street scene is limited. The height of the roof is noticeable due to its proximity to the boundary with next door, No 4 and the slightly higher land levels. The road rises in height from north to south so that No 6 is higher than No 4.

6. However, in the context of the street as a whole, given the set-back from the road, the building is not prominent or unduly intrusive. I therefore do not consider that the character or appearance of the surrounding area is unduly harmed. In this respect, no conflict with Local Plan¹ Policies LPD01 or LPD04 would occur in so far as they seek to respect, enhance and/or maintain the character and appearance of the existing building and the surrounding area in terms of scale, size, design and facing materials.

Living Conditions

7. The outbuilding is close to the boundary with No 4 and there is only a low fence between the two properties. As stated above, there is also a difference in land levels. The building is large in terms of both its length and especially its height. Both No 6 and No 4 have fairly wide gardens and given the location of the garden store and the position of windows to the rear of No 4, I do not consider that the building creates a sense of enclosure. However, it is large and prominent and visually imposing. Due to the orientation of the properties, the garden store is also likely to cause some overshadowing of No 4's garden.
8. I note that there was a hedge along this boundary which would have provided some screening. However, this has been removed and there is little room for re-planting within the application site. Given the height of the roof and its proximity to the boundary together with the difference in land levels, the garden store, is visually prominent and has a harmful effect on the outlook from No 4's rear windows and garden.
9. Therefore, the proposal would have a harmful effect on the living conditions of the occupiers of the neighbouring property, 4 Maple Grove. It conflicts with Local Plan Policies LPD01 and LPD04, which amongst other things, seek to avoid causing unacceptable harm to the amenities of surrounding residential properties and ensure development would not have an over-bearing or over-dominant effect on the outlook of neighbouring dwellings.

Other Matters

10. I note that the roof slope has been designed to accommodate solar panels. As the roof is south facing, this would be logical. The provision of solar panels would also be consistent with the advice in the Framework to support energy efficiency and low carbon heating². However, solar panels are not shown on the plans and they are not referred to on the planning application form. The roofing materials are described as grey roof tiles which I noted have been installed. Taking into account the advice for planning conditions in the Framework and the Planning Practice Guidance, it would not be reasonable to require them to be installed by way of a planning condition. In any event, no such condition is suggested or details of the solar panels supplied. There would therefore be no mechanism to make the appellant install them.
11. The appellant states that the height of the store is not dissimilar to the height that would be created by a parapet built under permitted development rights, complete with stone coping attached to the main house. However, this is not explained further and it is not clear what design, size or position is referred to. The

¹ St Helens Borough Council – St Helens Borough Local Plan Up To 2037 A Balanced Plan For A Better Future July 2022.

² Paragraph 167.

appropriate section of legislation that would allow such a development to be constructed as permitted development is also not quoted. I therefore have little information upon which to base any comparison. This matter therefore carries little weight.

Conclusion

12. Although I have not found harm in relation to my first issue, I have found harm with regard to the second one. Therefore, 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. Consequently, for the above reasons, the appeal should be dismissed.

J D Clark

INSPECTOR