

The “Store” and the Salami-Slicing of the Fourth Level

The area labelled “Store” must not be treated as an incidental or unimportant part of the proposal. It is a substantial space of approximately 31.6 m² which, together with the approximately 41.25 m² garden room, would enclose around 73 m² of fourth-level floorspace.

At present, the lowest-level “Garden room” structure has already been constructed, while the enclosure described as the “Store” is conspicuous by its absence. Application 2026/91657 would provide the walls and external doors necessary to create that additional enclosed space.

Its proposed double-skin, insulated construction appears more substantial than would ordinarily be necessary for a basic cold store. That does not prove an intended habitable use, but it would make the space considerably more capable of later incorporation into the domestic accommodation. This is especially significant because the applicant’s May 2024 statement expressly proposed using the withdrawn basement as “an annex, gym or for storage”.

The planning concern is therefore not resolved simply by attaching the label “Store” to the space. Room labels do not determine the physical nature, planning effect or future adaptability of development. Kirklees must assess what is actually being constructed: a large, enclosed and insulated part of an additional fourth level, within substantially the same volume previously proposed as a basement.

There is a clear risk of the development being advanced through **salami-slicing**. The substantial built form is secured in stages, with each successive application then presented as only a limited alteration to what has previously been permitted.

AK Planning’s justification for the garden room demonstrates precisely how this process operates. Its present argument is effectively that, because the raised terrace and its supporting structure have already been allowed, enclosing the space beneath requires only a little more development and can be treated as a minor amendment. If the walls, insulation and doors of the “Store” are now permitted, a later application could employ the same reasoning: the room already exists, so the next change is only a minor alteration to an approved store.

The sequence would therefore be:

1. a storey-sized podium or basement volume is omitted or removed from the approved house drawings;
2. the supporting structure and raised terrace are constructed;
3. the space beneath is enclosed incrementally as a garden room and “Store”; and
4. any later conversion or incorporation into the dwelling is presented as a minor change to already approved rooms.

Viewed individually, each stage may be described as modest. Viewed cumulatively, the result is the reinstatement of the withdrawn basement and the creation of a four-storey dwelling.

That is why application 2026/91657 must not be assessed only as the enclosure of a terrace or by reference to the room names shown on the latest plan. Kirklees must assess the “Garden room”, and “Store” together, against the original lawful scheme and the applicant’s documented May 2024 basement proposal.

My objection expressly relates to the whole lowest-level arrangement—not merely the area labelled “Garden room”. Permitting the store enclosure now would establish yet another physical and lawful baseline from which a further purportedly “minor” application could proceed. That cumulative progression is the very planning harm that must be examined before any part of the present fourth-level proposal is approved.