



Does building a basement need planning?

I hope to build a basement – approx. 6m x 15m – in my large garden on a sloping site; will I need planning permission or can I build it under Permitted Development (PD) rights?

The 2008 revision to the General Permitted Development Order (GDPO) which governs Permitted Development rights does not make specific reference to basements.

An appeal lodged in 2009 sought to demonstrate that basements are Permitted Development if they meet the same requirements as above-ground extensions, e.g. the distance built from the rear of the house. The inspector agreed with this position in his initial assessment.

However, in order to develop the basement, a large amount of material would need to be excavated and removed from the site. In the case of the appeal, the inspector considered that this would constitute an engineering operation and would therefore require planning permission, as there is nothing in the GDPO that considers such works to be Permitted Development. Therefore, the inspector overruled his initial assessment by concluding that the basement would require planning.

Due to the scale of your proposal and the possibility that retaining structures may be needed, I would consider that this would again be an engineering operation and that planning permission would be required. Talk to your local planning authority.