

Project Planning Pack

RICHARD RUDDICK ARCHITECTS



INTRODUCTION



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We believe that great design transforms lives.

As an RIBA Chartered architectural practice, we specialise in creating bespoke homes, extensions, renovations, and commercial spaces that are innovative, sustainable, and tailored to your vision.

This planning pack is designed to guide you through the architectural process, helping you to articulate your aspirations and understand the steps involved in bringing your project to life.

If you have requested this document, it is safe to assume you are in the initial stages of your project and researching the best way to go about achieving your perfect space.

This pack gives you an outline of the process, key hints and tips, and provides you the best opportunity for you to assess if you are ready to embark on the project.

WHAT WE WILL COVER

A Project Roadmap

The Importance Hiring The Right People

FAQ's

How To Create A Design Brief

Building Cost Estimator

What We Can Do For You

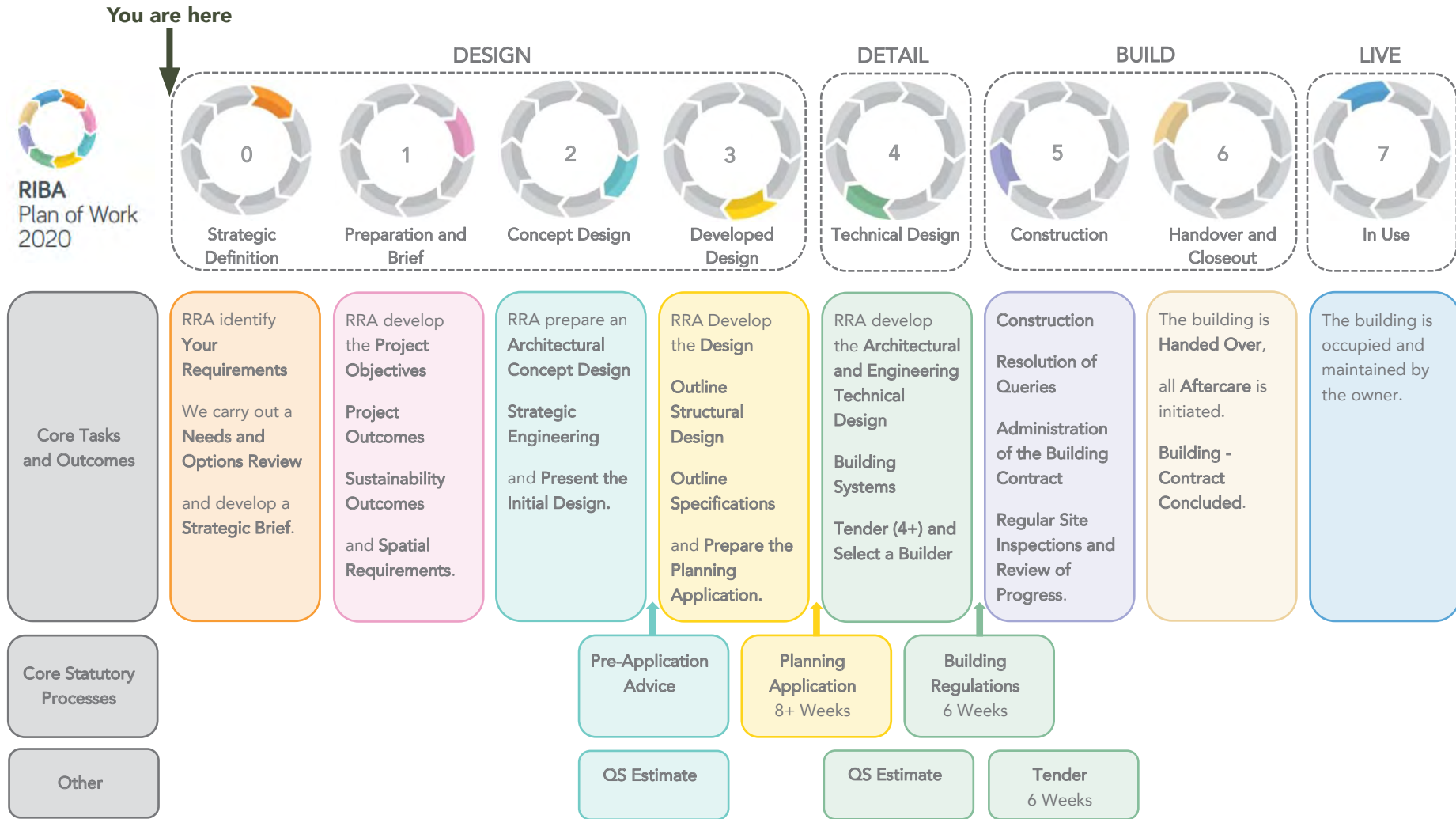
Project Examples

"Time spent in preparation is seldom wasted"
Jeffrey Archer - Author

PROJECT ROADMAP

The project roadmap has been developed using the RIBA Plan of Work 2020 to explain the most common route to procure building projects.

Its aim is to highlight the key stages during the project.



DO I NEED AN ARCHITECT?

Whether it's building your dream home, renovating a space, or developing a commercial property, one critical decision can make or break the success of the endeavor: hiring a qualified architect.

People spend their life savings building their dream home or renovating, why wouldn't they invest in a qualified architect?

Often misunderstood as merely "designers," architects are, in fact, project leaders, strategic thinkers, problem-solvers, and essential partners in creating functional, sustainable, and aesthetically pleasing spaces.

The practice of architecture isn't currently protected but the title 'Architect' is. A common misconception is that anyone practicing architecture must be qualified, unfortunately this is not the case.

We hope that you choose to work with us but the ARB Register provides a list of all fully qualified architects – if they aren't on this list, they are not an architect.

You wouldn't have surgery without a surgeon, why would you build without a qualified architect?

So what's the difference?

Criteria	ARB-Registered & RIBA-Chartered Architect	Unregulated Architectural Designer
Qualifications	Must complete at least 7 years of formal training and pass ARB Part 1, 2, and 3 exams. RIBA membership requires additional professional development.	No formal qualifications required. Background varies from self-taught experience to partial architectural education.
Regulation & Oversight	Regulated by the Architects Registration Board (ARB) and the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA), ensuring high ethical and professional standards.	Not subject to any formal regulatory body, meaning no mandatory standards or disciplinary procedures.
Legal Protection	The title "Architect" is legally protected under the Architects Act 1997. Clients have legal recourse for malpractice.	No legal restrictions on using the title "Architectural Designer." No regulatory framework for client protection.
Design Quality & Innovation	Highly trained in advanced design principles, sustainability, and spatial efficiency. RIBA membership requires ongoing professional development.	Design skill varies widely. Some may be experienced, but others may lack the formal training to provide high-quality, innovative solutions.
Planning & Building Regulations	Fully trained in UK planning laws, building regulations, and health & safety requirements. Designs are more likely to be approved by local authorities.	Knowledge of regulations varies. Mistakes can lead to rejected applications, redesigns, or safety concerns.
Project Management & Coordination	Can oversee projects from concept to completion, working with contractors, engineers, and planning authorities. Architects can provide contract administration.	May offer project management but often lacks formal training in handling complex contracts, legal matters, or risk management.
Insurance & Liability	Must have Professional Indemnity Insurance (PII), protecting clients in case of errors or disputes.	No legal requirement to carry insurance, leaving clients financially exposed if issues arise.
Cost Considerations	Fees are generally higher due to extensive training, expertise, and regulatory compliance. However, they add long-term value by preventing costly mistakes.	Generally cheaper, making them attractive for small projects. However, unforeseen costs can arise due to design flaws, regulatory issues, or legal disputes.
Suitability	Ideal for projects of all sizes, ensuring compliance, design excellence, and project efficiency.	More suited to small-scale, low-budget projects where design complexity and regulatory requirements are minimal.

The success of your project could hinge on this!



Click here to check the Architects Register



Click here to check the RIBA Status of the practice

"An architect will deliver so much more value for money in your design (storage, clever circulation, beauty, imagination) it's as though their services come entirely for free."

Kevin McCloud - Grand Designs Presenter

FAQ's

It goes without saying that you need to get the right professional, person, and practice for your project; it is pivotal for the success and enjoyment of a project.

Here are some of the most common questions we are asked and how we answer them.

Do I need an architect for my project?

Architects add value to any project using their expertise in design, planning applications, and construction processes, helping you maximise your budget and get the best out of your space.

How much does it cost to hire an architect?

Architect fees vary depending on the project size, complexity, and level of service required. Fees can be a fixed price, a percentage of the construction cost, or hourly. We provide clear fee structures, which are tailored to your individual needs.

Typically an architect (full service) and all other consultants will add up to around 10-15% of the construction costs, depending on complexity.

How long does the design process take?

The timeline varies depending on project complexity, typically 4-6 weeks. It is critical not to rush the design stage as it affords us the time to get the most out of your space and produce the best design possible.

How involved will I be in the design process?

Your input is essential, after all, it's your house! We collaborate closely with clients so we can align designs with their needs, lifestyle, and budget.

Can you help me find a builder?

Yes, we have a network of trusted contractors and assist in a competitive tender process to find the right builder for your project. All contractors on our list have passed our due diligence checks.

Do you provide project management during construction?

Yes, we offer project management services, overseeing the construction process, coordinating with contractors, and ensuring the project is built as designed. We are experts in contract administration and construction contract law, helping projects to run as smoothly as possible.

How do I get started?

Book our Needs and Options service or an initial consultation with us!

QUESTIONS?

BOOK
A CALL WITH US
NOW

HOW TO CREATE A BRIEF

One of our key skills as architect's is problem solving, couple this with our creativity and we have the ability to make your space function smoothly, to create connections between inside and out, and find space where others can't.

We need to get to know you and one of your first tasks is to convey what you would like to achieve from your project. Where these questions might not answer everything, they are the first step to identifying what your aspirations are for the project.

Take a step back, think about your home and think about how you would like it to feel once we are done.

Fill in the brief, and don't forget to save and email it back to us!

Question	Your Answer
What are your main goals for this project? e.g. more space, better functionality, aesthetic upgrades, sustainability.	
What style of architecture would you like? e.g. Contemporary, traditional, eclectic.	
Do you have a Pinterest board? Share it with us!	
Are there any specific features or materials you want to include?	
Do you have any functional needs or challenges to address? e.g. Storage, lighting, accessibility.	
Do you want to have all work done at once, or is this a long-term masterplan for your house?	
What is your budget range for this project?	
What is your ideal timeline for completion?	

"An expert knows all the answers - if you ask the right questions."
Levi Strauss - Levi Strauss & Co. (Levi's)

BUILDING COST ESTIMATOR

One of the first questions we are asked as Architects is, How much is this going to cost? Well, that's a great question!

The cost of a project can vary significantly, factors such as the level of specification you require, if the property is listed, if local builders are busy, and global economics affecting materials costs, to name just a handful.

Having completed hundreds of projects, we have put together a cost estimator, so that you have an early impression of what your project may cost.

Further cost analysis should be conducted by a quantity surveyor or contractor based on a developed design, when you are ready to move forward with the project, and of course, we can help you with this!

NEW BUILD HOUSE

YOUR ESTIMATE

QUALITY	STANDARD	MID-RANGE	HIGH-END	AREA	COST
Cost per SQM	2,100	2,350	2,600+		
100 SQM	210,000	235,000	260,000+	-----	
150 SQM	315,000	352,000	390,000+	-----	
200 SQM	420,000	470,000	520,000+	-----	

SINGLE STOREY EXTENSION

YOUR ESTIMATE

Cost per SQM	2,200	2,450	2,700+		
15 SQM	33,000	36,750	40,500+	-----	
30 SQM	66,000	73,500	81,000+	-----	
45 SQM	99,000	110,250	121,500+	-----	

TWO STOREY EXTENSION

YOUR ESTIMATE

Cost per SQM	2,000	2,200	2,500+		
30 SQM	60,000	66,000	75,000+	-----	
60 SQM	120,000	132,000	150,000+	-----	
90 SQM	180,000	198,000	225,000+	-----	

REFURBISHMENT

YOUR ESTIMATE

Cost per SQM	800	1000	1200+		
30 SQM	24,000	30,000	36,000+	-----	

Prices approximate and representative of January 2025 in NE England, on non-specialised projects
 A Quantity Surveyor should be appointed as part of your project, or cost plans sought at RIBA Stages 2-4
 All prices +VAT at the appropriate rate
 New build houses are VAT 0% rated on construction in January 2025

"The bitterness of poor quality remains long after the sweetness of low price is forgotten."
 Benjamin Franklin

HOW WE CAN HELP YOU

Choosing us means partnering with a practice that blends visionary design with deep environmental consciousness. Our approach is rooted in creating sustainable, human-centred spaces that not only meet your functional needs but also inspire and elevate daily living. With years of experience, we understand that each project is unique, and we take the time to listen to your vision, ensuring that every design detail aligns with your goals and lifestyle.

With a reputation for excellence, we are dedicated to delivering beautiful, functional, and sustainable architectural solutions tailored to your needs. Let us turn your vision into reality with thoughtful design and unparalleled expertise.

Whether you are considering embarking on a project or if you are ready to push the button and create an amazing space, our flexible options mean that you can choose how to make a start.

We hope this planning pack has helped you to get a clearer idea of where you are and your next steps, but please feel free to email or call us to discuss your options going forward.

On the next page we have outlined our design packages so that you can understand what we can provide. If you would like to explore any of these, please contact us and we can take you through them, so that we can tailor our quote to fit your individual needs. These are:

Needs and Options Review

A great package for those still considering options, this is a consultation with one of our fully qualified architects, allowing you to explore ideas and possibilities with minimal outlay.

Best for – People not sure if they would like to go ahead – People looking to or in the process of purchasing a new property.

Planning and Building Regulations

The perfect package for those who only need our design expertise and are looking to manage the project themselves.

Best for – People with experience in construction project management or that have a relationship with a reputable builder.

Full Architectural

Our full service provides complete management of your project from start to finish, including design, coordination and management of your selected contractor.

Best for – People who would like an expert on hand to safeguard their project and to be there to monitor quality and cost.

SERVICE OPTIONS

	Service	Needs and Options	Basic	Full
RIBA STAGES 0-1	Site and Context Review	✓	✓	✓
	Planning or Permitted Development Guidance	✓	✓	✓
	Planning Requirements Appraisal	✓	✓	✓
	Design Advice & Options	✓	✓	✓
	Complete Design Process Overview	✓	✓	✓
	Drawings – We will provide you with a copy of any sketch designs	✓	✓	✓
	Design Summary	✓	✓	✓
RIBA STAGES 1-3	A full survey measured survey of your property or site		✓	✓
	A 3D digital twin of your existing property/site		✓	✓
	Design development through RIBA Stages 0-3, all in 3D industry leading software		✓	✓
	Expert guidance on any other consultants required		✓	✓
	Planning application submission		✓	✓
RIBA STAGE 4	Tendering and management of consultants such as structural engineers		✓	✓
	Detailed design including construction detailing, electrical and plumbing layouts		✓	✓
	Submission of the technical documents to building control for building regulations approval		✓	✓
RIBA STAGE 4+	Production of a tender package			✓
	Tendering to approved contractors			✓
	Tender analysis and appointment of a contractor			✓
RIBA STAGES 5-6	Written client-contractor contracts			✓
	Contract administration			✓
	Site monitoring			✓

Services We Provide

- Principal Designer Duties
- Party Wall Notices
- Quantity Surveyor Cost Estimates
- Interior Design
- Bespoke Joinery Design

When you appoint us you get

- Access to our specialist suppliers such as:
 - Kitchen designers and suppliers
 - Bathroom designers and suppliers
 - Flooring and tile suppliers
 - Bespoke joinery suppliers
- Access to our specialist consultant network that you will likely require to complete your project.
- Our network of contractors.



"Architecture should speak of its time and place, but yearn for timelessness."
Frank Gehry - Architect



HAVING AN ARCHITECT OVERSEE THE PROJECT ON SITE

Having your architect stay involved during the build gives you peace of mind. Here's how:

- **Quality control:** Your architect checks that the work matches the drawings and is being done to the right standard. If something's off, they can catch it early.
- **Problem-solving:** If issues come up on site (they often do), your architect can step in quickly with practical solutions, saving time, money, and stress.
- **Clarity for the builder:** Architects help answer questions from the contractor and make sure everyone's on the same page.
- **Protecting your interests:** They act as your representative, making sure the builder sticks to the agreed plan and that you're only paying for work that's been properly done.

Without a contract, you're relying on trust and verbal agreements, which can get messy if something goes wrong.

You could end up overpaying, facing delays, or dealing with unexpected changes that weren't agreed in writing.

Tendering the Project

- We send the project out to a shortlist of our vetted, approved contractors.
- The shortlist is chosen based on who we think is best suited for the project — we consider things like location, project size, and the type of construction involved.
- All contractors on our approved list have already passed our due diligence checks.
- Each contractor sends back a tender that includes their pricing, earliest possible start date, and how long they expect the work to take.
- We carefully review each tender to make sure everything has been included, and that we're

Appointing a Contractor

- Once we've helped you choose the right contractor for you, we agree on a start date and get the contracts in place.
- We'll pick the most appropriate option from the JCT suite of contracts.

The Contract

- Instead of a deposit, we issue a Letter of Intent to get things moving.
- The contract defines roles, responsibilities, and timelines, so there's less room for misunderstandings.
- It gives you protection if something goes wrong, delays, poor workmanship, cost overruns, etc.
- It includes payment terms, meaning you're not paying upfront, but only for work that's been completed and checked.

Once Work Begins On Site

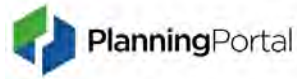
- We'll visit the site regularly to check on quality and help the contractor with any queries.
- We manage valuations for payment, meaning contractors are paid in arrears, only for work we've inspected and signed off on.
- We hold back a 5% retention from the contractor until the work is finished. 50% of this is released on completion of the project and the remaining is released once any defects are made good at the end of the rectification period; this is usually 6–12 months, depending on the contract.
- When everything's complete, we issue a Certificate of Completion.

USEFUL RESOURCES

Here are some handy resources to help you understand and start to plan your project.



Your best resource is your architect!



Planning Portal - Do I need permission

A useful website to guide you on the most up to date planning information.



Health and Safety Executive (HSE)

As someone undertaking a project, you have certain responsibilities under the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015. Don't worry! We can take on these responsibilities for you.



Architects Registration Board (ARB)

Check you are appointing the right professional. If a name appears on this list, they are an architect, if it doesn't, they are not.



Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA)

Check to see if an architect has the benefit of RIBA Chartered Status. This gives you comfort in levels of service, training and expertise.



Historic England

Check if your building is listed.



Pinterest

Why not start a Pinterest board and share it with us. The more we know your likes and dislikes, the better our design!



Instagram

There is plenty of inspiration on Instagram.



Don't forget to give us a follow here!

Sample Projects

RICHARD RUDDICK ARCHITECTS



WYLAM

NORTHUMBERLAND

A full refurbishment of a home in Wylam, Northumberland.

Opening up the ground floor of the house with a contemporary extension allows for contemporary living and connectivity with the outside space.

A contemporary dormer complements the new addition.

Connections with the terraced garden have been achieved by incorporating large panels of glazing, along with a stepped patio area leading to a garden room with outdoor kitchen and terrace.



TYNEMOUTH

NORTH TYNESIDE

Adding a touch of the contemporary to this 1930's semi-detached in Tynemouth!

We have taken what was a 1930's semi-detached with no links to the garden and transformed it with use of a contemporary extension, replacing a run-down conservatory, along with a matching dormer to the roof.

The extension opens up the back of the house and provides a generous open-plan kitchen-diner-lounge space that opens up onto the newly landscaped garden.

Alterations throughout the rest of the property make it work better for the family, including a ground floor wet-room for showering after a long day at the beach!



HEBRIDES

SCOTLAND

A bespoke new build home on the Hebridean Isles.

This house is cutting edge and contemporary, yet contemplative and calm; set within the rugged landscape and nestles itself amongst exposed rocks and undulating terrain.

Although striking and stark in appearance, the house features superior insulation and airtightness, as well as renewables and feature fires to keep you warm.

Who wouldn't want to site in here on a rainy day, watching the world tick away.



NORTHALLERTON

NORTH YORKSHIRE

An exceptional development near Northallerton, North Yorkshire, breathing new life into disused and dilapidated farm buildings through thoughtful transformation into modern barn homes.

This project delivers three generous residences, with one featuring a carefully designed extension to further enhance its living space.

A blend of sensitive restoration and strategically integrated contemporary elements ensures that these historic barns are not only preserved but elegantly reimagined for modern living.



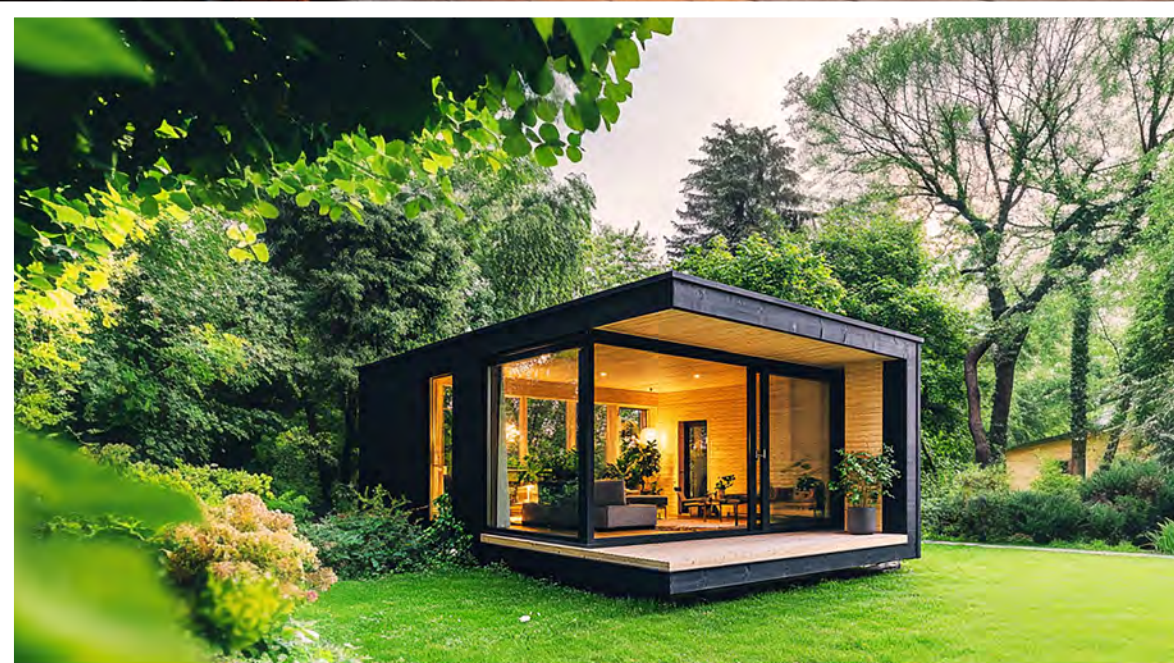
GARDEN ROOMS

We have become specialists in the design and delivery of garden rooms of all shapes and sizes.

Our garden rooms range from simple garden offices, to gyms and saunas; some even include bespoke outdoor kitchens.

Through careful design, we can tailor a garden room to fit any space. Our bespoke joinery and contractor network allows us to design and install seamlessly.

Some garden rooms do need planning, so get in touch with us to discuss yours!



AMBLE

NORTHUMBERLAND

A bespoke new-build property in the coastal town of Amble, Northumberland.

The house has been carefully positioned on the site to allow for generous internal proportions, while remaining below the ridge height of the adjacent dwellings.

The design responds to the site and uses the existing topography to form an elongated proposal with split levels to the first floor. The effect, a cascading building that remains lower and therefore subordinate to the adjacent dwellings.

The first floor features a balcony that has been positioned to the East of the site, providing a connection with the adjacent trees and providing views over open landscape.



HEXHAM

NORTHUMBERLAND

Set in the beautiful Northumberland countryside, this wonderful conversion uses a mixture of traditional and contemporary architectural materials to bring the design to life.

An intensive planting scheme helps to ground the design and provides a huge biodiversity net gain for native flora and fauna.



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RIBA 

Chartered Practice