

18 Rickfield, BA15 1PP

Design and Access Statement



1. Introduction

The proposal seeks permission to extend and reconfigure the existing dwelling at 18 Rickfield in order to improve its functionality, environmental performance and relationship with its garden, while remaining sympathetic to its context and neighbouring properties.

The objectives of the scheme are to:

- Improve the thermal performance and sustainability of the dwelling as a whole
- Adapt the internal layout to better meet the long-term needs of a family home
- Improve access to and usability of the rear garden
- Enhance the appearance of the property through considered design, materials and landscaping

The property is not listed and lies outside the Bradford-on-Avon Conservation Area.

2. Site and Existing Dwelling

The property is located towards the end of a cul-de-sac and sits on a steeply sloping site, resulting in a very low and discreet street presence. Due to this topography, the majority of the building is largely screened from public views.

Constructed in the 1970s, the house has not been significantly altered, if at all since its original build. It has an “upside-down” arrangement, with living spaces on the upper level and all but one of the four bedrooms below. The existing entrance leads directly into a small kitchen, with no dedicated porch,

There is currently no direct access to the rear garden from the living areas, other than through the existing front door.

3. Proposed Development

Scale and Form

A modest side extension is proposed to the west of the existing dwelling. The extension measures approximately 51 sqm, increasing the total internal floor area from 152 sqm to 203 sqm, within a generous plot of approximately 950 sqm.

Due to the natural slope of the site, the extension is split-level but remains single-storey in height, stepping down with the landform rather than introducing additional bulk.

Layout and Use

The proposal includes a reconfiguration of the existing internal layout alongside the extension.

- The upper level will accommodate an enlarged kitchen and improved circulation, creating a more practical family living space.
- A new connection is formed to the existing garage block, enabling the lower level of the garage to be used as a home office / studio. Both occupants work from home and require dedicated workspace.
- The lower level of the extension will accommodate two children's bedrooms. No additional bedrooms are proposed; the dwelling will remain a four-bedroom house.

- All four bedrooms will be grouped at the lower level, while living spaces are consolidated at the upper level.
- A former bedroom and bathroom at the upper level are re-purposed to provide a much-needed entrance porch, boot room, WC, laundry and utility space.

Terraces and Garden Access

The roof of the lower-level extension will form a terrace serving the upper level, providing safe and direct access to the rear garden. This resolves a significant existing constraint, whereby garden access from the living spaces is currently indirect and impractical.

A rear balcony is also proposed off the upper living area. This element was the subject of a pre-application enquiry (ENQ/2025/01714), which confirmed that a balcony of similar scale is acceptable in principle, particularly given the approved example at No. 16 Rickfield and comparable arrangements on nearby streets, including Grove Leaze, Hare Knapp and Meadowfield.

The terrace and balcony are intended primarily as functional garden access and outdoor amenity space, rather than high-intensity entertaining areas.

4. Landscaping

The existing rear garden is steep and largely unusable. To help address this, terraces and decking are proposed to create modest, level areas that work with the slope rather than against it.

Extensive planting is proposed to soften the built form, enhance privacy, and visually integrate the development into the surrounding valley landscape. Natural materials and planting are prioritised to ensure the landscaping appears established and informal over time.

5. Visual Impact and Neighbour Amenity

Street Scene

Due to the property's low position relative to the road and its discreet frontage, the development will have minimal impact on the street scene. Additional planting will further soften views from public vantage points.

Privacy and Overlooking

Careful consideration has been given to neighbouring amenity, particularly in relation to No. 16 Rickfield.

Key factors include:

- A separation distance of approximately 12.5 metres between the western edge of the proposed terrace and the main dwelling at No. 16
- Only one facing window at No. 16, which is an obscured bathroom window
- The significantly higher ground level of No. 16 relative to No. 18, which reduces overlooking potential
- Existing mature boundary planting providing a substantial green buffer

Additional mitigation is proposed in the form of:

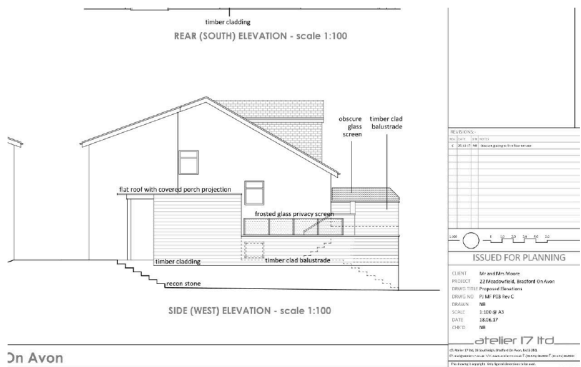
- Timber slatted privacy screens
- Evergreen climbing plants to provide year-round screening

Given the topography and existing conditions, there is no direct overlooking into neighbouring habitable rooms. Similar terrace relationships exist within the surrounding area, including examples on Meadowfield and Hare Knapp. At 22 Meadowfield (17/07570/FUL), privacy

concerns were successfully mitigated through screening in a comparable situation. Please see image below.



5 Hare Knapp



22 Meadowfield 17/07570/FUL



3 Hare Knapp

Details of surrounding properties where similar conditions exist.

The primary outlook from the proposed terrace is towards the garden/valley, not neighbours. The approach taken seeks to balance usable outdoor space with a high level of respect for neighbouring privacy.

6. Sustainability

The proposal includes a comprehensive upgrade to the building fabric and services to significantly improve energy efficiency and long-term sustainability.

Measures include:

- External wall insulation to retained walls
- Upgraded insulation to floors and roofs
- New high-performance windows and doors throughout
- Installation of photovoltaic panels on east- and west-facing roofs, and the garage roof
- Replacement of the existing heating system with an air-source heat pump

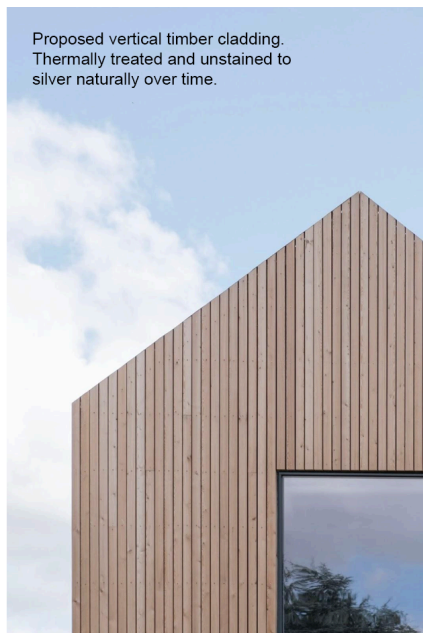
Natural materials will be used where possible, and the overall approach follows a fabric-first strategy to reduce energy demand and future running costs.

7. Materials

The existing stone-faced concrete blockwork will be externally insulated and finished with a combination of natural timber cladding and lime render in a warm, muted palette reflecting the tones of Bath stone in the surrounding area.

The existing concrete tiled roof will be replaced with a dark grey metal roof. The same material will be used on the extension. Photovoltaic panels will be discreetly positioned and screened from public view where necessary.

Windows and doors will be powder-coated aluminium in a dark grey finish, consistent with nearby dwellings that have been renovated.



8. Access

The existing driveway at the front of the property is cracked, visually unappealing, and will be resurfaced and improved. The existing dangerously steep and sloping stone steps that currently lead from the public highway to the property will be landscaped over, and the secondary, existing concrete steps will be used as the main pathway to the new front door. These steps will be widened, re-surfaced and visually improved.

No changes are proposed that would adversely affect highway safety.

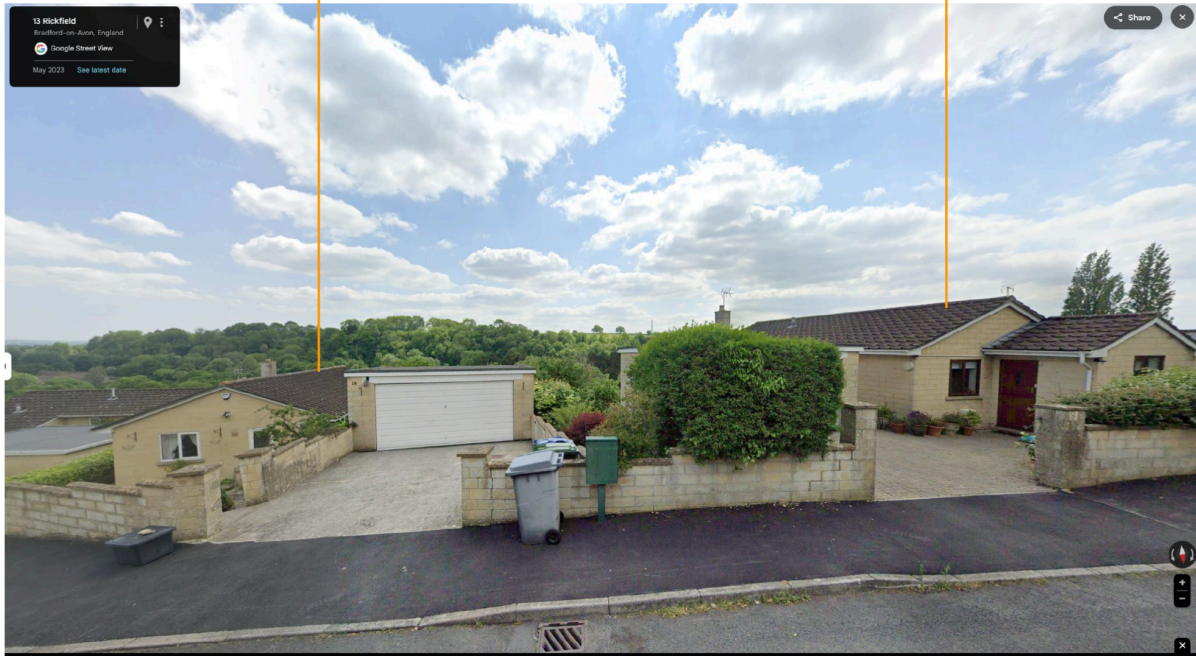
9. Summary

The proposal represents a considered and modest improvement to an existing dwelling of its era. It responds positively to the site's topography, improves sustainability, enhances residential amenity, and respects the character of the surrounding area.

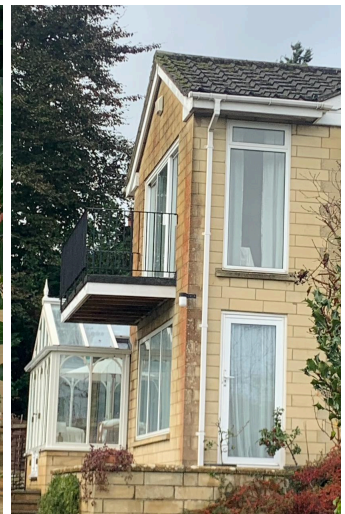
With limited public visibility, no increase in bedroom numbers, and careful attention to neighbour privacy, the development is considered to be a balanced and appropriate form of residential enhancement that will result in a more functional, efficient and visually cohesive home.

18 Rickfield

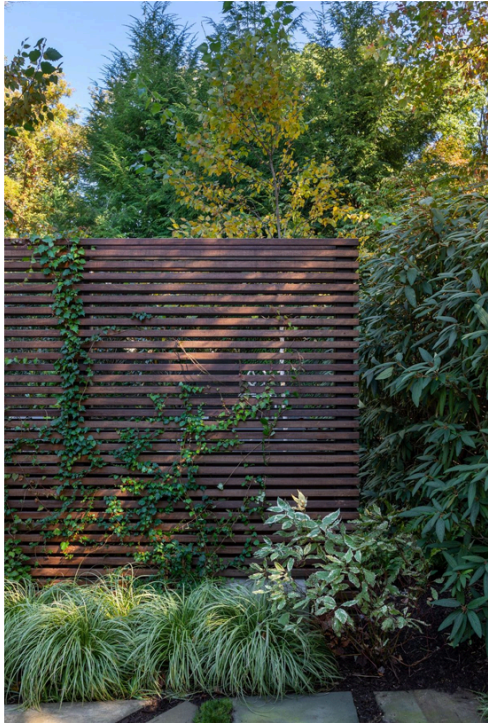
16 Rickfield



Google street view showing the relationship between 18 and 16 Rickfield regarding their relative positions on the sloped topography of the street.



Examples of balconies and roof terraces from the neighbouring properties



Design precedent references for the privacy screening around the decking.

A combination of timber slats running horizontally, with some sections of trellis.

Screens to be up to 1.8m high

Planting species:

Star Jasmine (*Trachelospermum jasminoides*)

Evergreen Clematis (*Clematis armandii*)

Screens and planting will be permanent and maintained.



Existing winter view looking west from the proposed deck position, towards the boundary with
16 Rickfield



Examples of neighbouring timber-clad houses.: