

MAPLECROFT FARMHOUSE, BARDFORD-ON-AVON, WILTSHIRE

Heritage Statement



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BARDFORD-ON-AVON,
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October 2025

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Heritage Statement

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Maplecroft Farmhouse, is a Grade II listed building forming part of a farmstead group located standing on the east side of Bath Road, the A363, approximately 1.5km north of the centre of Bradford-on Avon, Wiltshire. The owner of the property is seeking to build a small addition to the north gable of the house.

1.2 Forum Heritage Services has been commissioned to make an assessment of the heritage significance of the house and the potential impact of the proposals upon that significance and to prepare a Heritage Statement in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Bob Edwards BSc (Hons) PG Dip. IHBC MCIfA, Director of Forum Heritage Services, visited the property in September 2025 and subsequently prepared this report.

1.3 This report will present:

- A brief background history to the site
- A description of the listed building
- Policy and guidance background
- An assessment of the significance of the listed building following Historic England's *Statements of Heritage Significance Assessing Significance in Heritage Assets* (Historic England Advice Note 12, 2019)
- An assessment of the potential impact of the proposals upon the significance of the listed building
- Conclusions

2.0 BACKGROUND

2.1 The development of Maplecroft is illustrated by the series of historic maps beginning with the Tithe map of c.1840 and subsequent Ordnance Survey maps (Figures 1 -



Figure 1
Tithe map, c.1840
The farmhouse is shown as a large block to the west side of the farmyard, the rear wall of the present Maplecroft Farmhouse being the east elevation of the building shown on the map. The northern part of the block is shown as being divided from the main block to the south.



Figure 2
Ordnance Survey 1st edition 25" map 1888.
Little change from the Tithe map is shown on this map apart from the division within the farmhouse creating two separate parts, a linear block to the east and a L-shaped block to the south and west. By this date the element to the east had been extended or at its northern end.

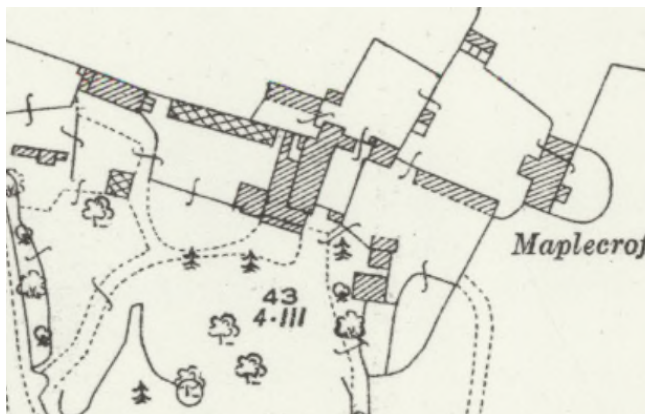


Figure 3
Ordnance Survey 3rd edition 25" map, 1924.
No evident changes had been made to the footprint of the farmhouse by 1924.

2.2 Maplecroft Farmhouse was added to the *List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest* at Grade II in 1974 under the name 110 Bath Road. The building is described in the *List* as:

Farmhouse-cottage attached to rear of "Maplecroft" and facing south east. C17. 1 storey plus attics in gables. Rubble with freestone dressings. Modern pantiled roof with 2 asymmetrically placed gables. Original 5-light windows in centre gable with moulded stone mullions. 2 other windows in gables are casements in wooden frames. Ground-floor has 3 sash windows (including 1 pair), glazing bars intact. Moulded 4-centred archway towards the middle.

2.3 There is a long planning history to Maplecroft Farmhouse including an application relating the collapse of 65% of the building in 1990 (W/90/01599/LBC) and subsequently for the construction of a new house set forward of the original building incorporating part of the former front wall into the rear elevation (W/97/00645/LBC) (Figure 4). Photos from c.1995 show the farmhouse as being roofless and in ruins (Figure 6). In 1998 works were underway to reconstruct the front elevation (Figure 6) with the former front elevation of the farmhouse becoming the rear wall of a new house, Figure 7 showing the new house under construction (photos in the possession of the owner).

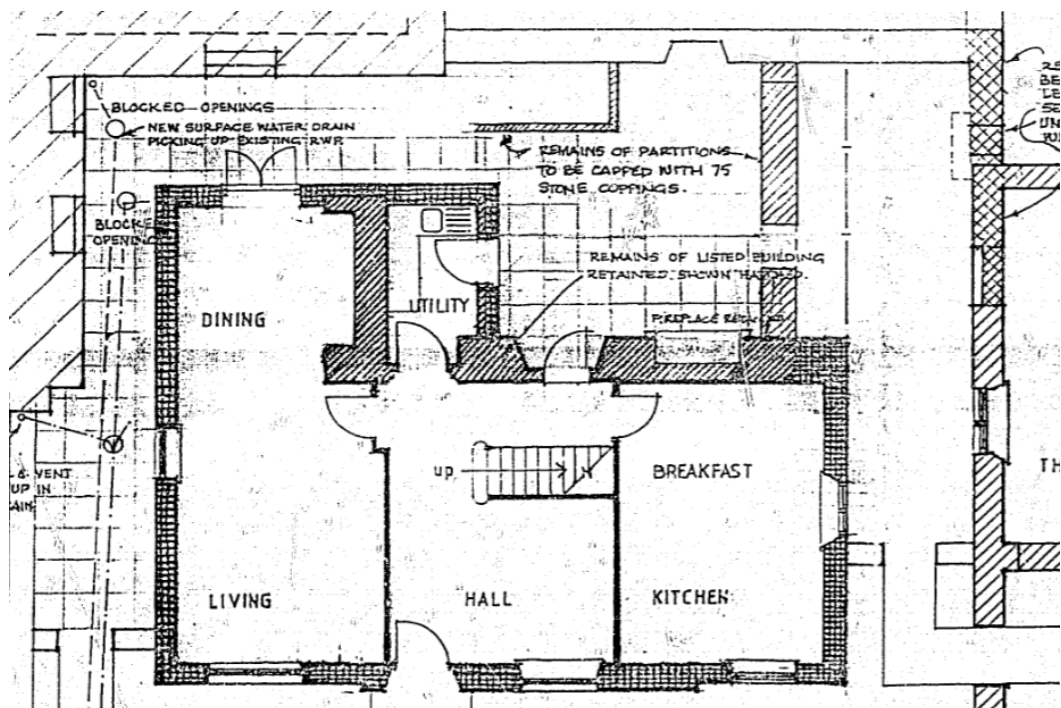


Figure 4 Approved plan showing the new house set forward of the original cottage (W/97/00645/LBC).



Figure 5 Maplecroft Farmhouse c.1995 when the building was roofless and in ruins.



Figure 6 The front elevation of the former farmhouse during reconstruction in 1998.



Figure 7 The new house set in front of the former front elevation of the farmhouse under construction in c.1998.

3.1 The house known as Maplecroft Farmhouse is a modern house built c.1998 apart from the rear wall which is the original front elevation of the former farmhouse, and the stack facing into the present dining area (Figure 7). The modern house broadly reflects the form of the original listed building, but it is not a replica (Figure 8).

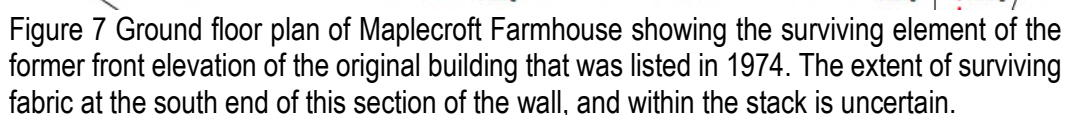




Figure 8 The front, east elevation of the modern house.

- 3.2 Within the house the original stone doorway with a four-centred arch is visible within the central hallway (Figure 9). The left-hand jamb clearly includes some presumably original moulded sections at lower level with plain chamfered masonry forming the majority of the door frame (Figure 10). A stone-mullioned window survives at first floor level, and within the dining area of the southern wing there is a fireplace with a stone lintel although this is supported by a modern steel. The proposed plan of 1997 (Figure 4) and soot blackening of the brickwork indicates that this is largely part of the original farmhouse.
- 3.3 To the rear part of the former internal face of the former front wall of the farmhouse is exposed within a small courtyard. This section of the wall includes a fireplace which retains a cast iron range (Figure 11).



Figure 9
The original door to the former farmhouse now forming the back wall of the house.



Figure 10
Detail of the left-hand jamb of the original principal entrance to the former farmhouse.



Figure 11 The west, formerly internal face of the northern part of the original front elevation which now faces into a small, enclosed yard area.

4.0 POLICY & GUIDANCE BACKGROUND

4.1 The Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 sets out the statutory approach to the management of historic buildings and areas and requires special regard to be given to the desirability of preserving a listed building and any features of architectural or historic interest it possesses, and its setting, under Section 66 – a matter the Courts have held should be afforded considerable importance and weight.

4.2 The statutory approach is reflected in Policy CP58 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy, adopted January 2015 (CS) and Policy 99 of the Draft Local Plan Review: Ensuring the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment which has ‘weight’ following submission to the Secretary of State in late October 2024.

4.3 Paragraph 207 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2024 (NPPF) states that:

In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets’ importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance.

4.4 Paragraph 212 advises that when considering the impact of development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to its conservation whilst para. 208 states that local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this assessment into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise conflict between the heritage asset’s conservation and any aspect of the proposal.

4.5 Historic England’s *Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 2* (March 2015) states that understanding the nature of significance is important for understanding the need for and best means of conservation. Understanding the extent of that significance leads to a better understanding of how adaptable a heritage asset may be and provides the essential guide

as to how policies should be applied. The following descriptive appraisal will evaluate the building against Historic England's criteria for heritage values set out in *Statements of Heritage Significance Assessing Significance in Heritage Assets* (Historic England Advice Note 12, 2019):

Archaeological interest

There will be archaeological interest in a heritage asset if it holds, or potentially holds, evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point.

Architectural and artistic interest

These are interests in the design and general aesthetics of a place. They can rise from conscious design or fortuitously from the way the heritage asset has evolved. More specifically, architectural interest is an interest in the art or science of the design, construction, craftsmanship and the creation of buildings and structures of all types. Artistic interest is an interest in other human creative skills, like sculpture.

Historic interest

An interest in past lives and events (including pre-historic). Heritage assets can illustrate or be associated with them. Heritage assets with historic interest not only provide a material record of our nation's history but can also provide meaning for communities derived from their collective experience of a place and can symbolise wider values such as faith and cultural identity.

- 4.6 The selection of buildings for addition to the statutory *List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest* is informed by a set of criteria set out in the revised *Principles of Selection for Listing Buildings*, (DCMS, 2018). These criteria have also been considered in this assessment.

5.0 ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Designations

- 5.1 Maplecroft Farmhouse is a Grade II listed building and so is regarded as a building of significance in a national context.

Assessment of Significance

Archaeological interest

- 5.2 The only elements of Maplecroft Farmhouse which have archaeological interest are the remnant of the original front elevation of the farmhouse which now forms part of the rear wall of the present house and the stack within the rear wing. The surviving section of historic masonry does not represent the complete elevation of the former farmhouse as the historic masonry stops just south of the entrance, and it has evidently been rebuilt to the upper part of the wall. The fireplace has evidently been partly reconstructed but historic fabric survives to the back of the fireplace at least. Other than reflecting the presence of the original farmhouse, the masonry will hold relatively little archaeological evidence which would contribute to the understanding of the date or development of the building, and it does not merit further expert investigation or analysis.

Architectural interest

- 5.3 The sections of historic masonry at the rear of the present house has some surviving details such as the moulded stone to the jamb of the original front door and the stone mullion window at first floor level, but given the extent to which the archway door has been rebuilt using new stone work, the extensive rebuilding at upper level, and the modern intervention to the fireplace facing into the dining area, the architectural interest of these remnants of the original building is relatively low.
- 5.4 The modern house is not a replica of the form and detail of the original house, although it is of a similar scale, has a stone arched principal doorway and gables to the front elevation. Whilst having a similar character, the modern house is now a detached from the larger

element of the house now called Maplecroft, and it has no architectural interest in heritage terms.

Historic interest

5.5 The remnant of the probable 17th century former farmhouse has a degree historic interest in that it possibly reflects the original part of the later much larger farmhouse, the original being relegated to a secondary element, possibly used as part of the service to the larger Maplecroft or used as a separate cottage. Although this section of historic masonry represents only a fragment of the original front elevation, it does provide some illustrative historic interest for the form, scale and relationship to Maplecroft, and so has a modest level of historic interest, probably at lower end of medium at best.

5.6 On the basis of the present understanding there are no individuals of importance in a national context linked to Maple Croft Farmhouse and so, at present there is no associative historic interest.

Summary of Significance

5.7 In 1974, when Maplecroft Farmhouse was added to the List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest, it was evidently a standing building which was roofed and possibly occupied. It is evident that the building had collapsed and was in ruins by c. 1995 at which time, little more than the masonry of the ground floor of the front wall at and part of the stack at ground floor level appears to have survived. In 1998 this former front elevation was partly rebuilt and consolidated and subsequently became part of the rear wall of a new house built to the east of the former farmhouse. It is clear that not all of the length of the front wall of the original farmhouse survives and it is considered that, given the extent of loss of the original listed building, the remnant which does survive does not retain sufficient special interest to merit its designation as a listed building.

5.8 The extensive loss of heritage interest in this case means that it is considered that the building should be removed from the statutory list.

6.0 PROPOSALS & ASSESSMENT OF IMPACT

Proposals

- 6.1 The proposal is to remove the majority of the north wall of the modern house and to construct a narrow single-storey lean-to addition within the gap between Maplecroft Farmhouse and Stable House to the north (Figures 12 and 13).
- 6.2 The masonry to be removed to enable this small extension is modern, constructed in 1998, and has no heritage significance. There will be no impact on historic fabric.
- 6.3 The small extension will have very little visibility and, being constructed in masonry, with a mono-pitched tile roof, it will not appear incongruous in terms of the character of the present house.
- 6.4 Given that the present farmhouse is substantially a modern building which does not retain special architectural or historic interest, the proposed alteration will not cause harm to the significance of the designated heritage asset.

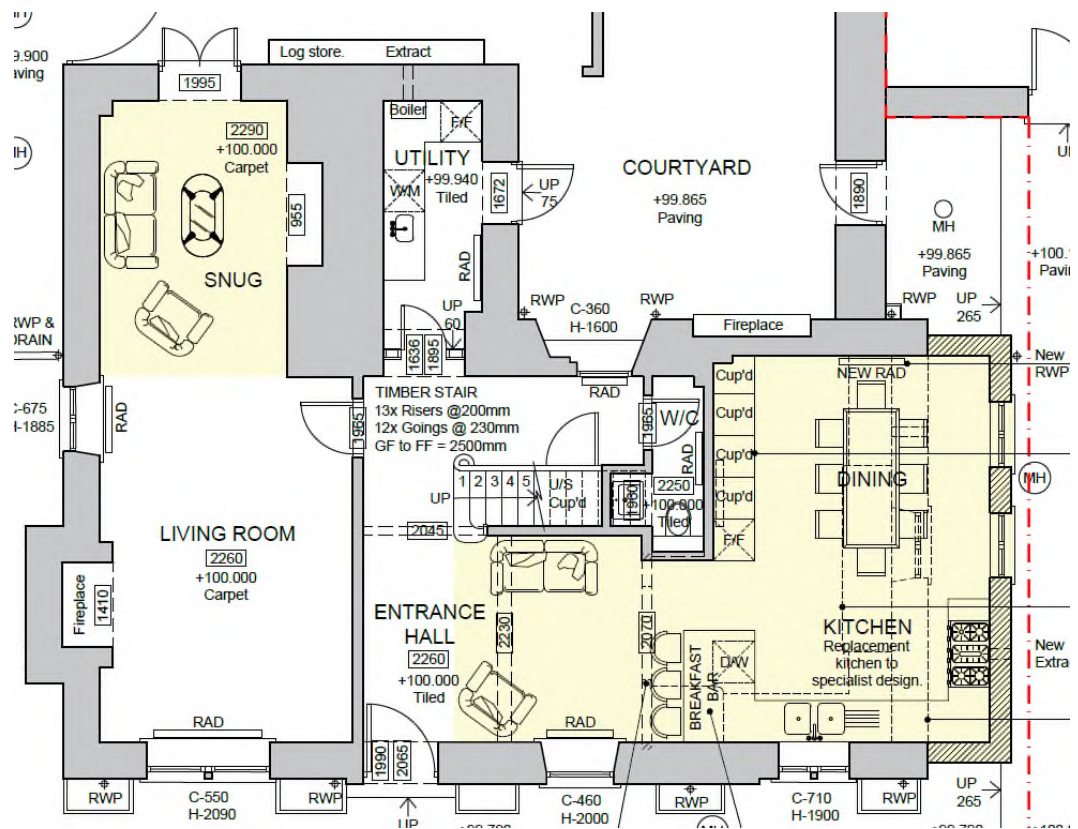


Figure 12 Proposed ground floor plan.



Figure 13 Proposed front, east elevation.

7.0 CONCLUSION

- 7.1 The house called Maplecroft Farmhouse that was designated as a listed building in 1974 has been reduced to a fragment of its front elevation, possible part of the stack within the rear wing and, presumably, elements of its fabric in the walls of the now detached Maplecroft. The remnant of the front elevation and the stack do not retain sufficient special architectural or historic interest to merit the designation of the house as a listed building.
- 7.2 In 1998 a new house was built incorporating the rebuilt remains of part of the original front elevation. The fabric and form of this modern house do not hold heritage significance. The proposed alteration relates to this modern fabric and will not result in any harm to the historic elements of the building. The gap between the house and the adjacent Stable House is a modern creation – the farmhouse formerly extended up this element.
- 7.3 Accordingly, I can find no conflict in the proposed development with the statutory duty in Sections 66 or 72 of the Act, National Policy in the NPPF or Core Policy 58 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy, adopted January 2015 and Policy 99 of the Draft Local Plan Review and conclude that the application should be allowed.