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Middleton Conservative Club

Heritage Statement

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Revision Schedule

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March 2025

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REVISION NOTES	

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Inspire Design and Development have been instructed to prepare a Heritage Statement to accompany a planning application to Rochdale Borough Council for the change of use of the former Middleton Conservative Club to a new community and events space.
- 1.2 The purpose of this Heritage Statement is to consider both the historic build environment and landscape in which the site is location, identifying key features, materials, style, etc., and to assess to what extent the impact of the development can be mitigated through appropriate design to be in-keeping with the surrounding historic environment.

Assessment Methodology

- 1.3 The aim of conservation is to sensitively manage the change to a building or place to ensure that its significance is protected, but also revealed and enhanced so that future generations can understand its significance. Significance can be lost through insensitive alterations or partial demolition, but it can also be enhanced through well-informed and considered change which can bring positive public benefits.
- 1.4 This Heritage Statement consists primarily of a desktop study using the National Heritage List of England, DEFRA's *MAGIC* map, historic maps, and the Local Planning Authority's *Middleton Town Centre Conservation Area Appraisal*, produced by the Middleton Heritage and Conservation Group, and published in January 2008 by Rochdale Borough Council.

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

- 2.1 The site is located within Middleton Town Centre, with the property known as 77 Long Street, Middleton, M24 6UN. The site has a total area of 0.3ha, and comprises a detached 2-storey building, a small car park to the front, and a disused bowling green to the rear. A small row of shops exists underneath the car park, with frontage immediately onto Long Street.
- 2.2 The site is currently accessed off Long Street, one of the primary urban routes through Middleton Town Centre. The site forms part of the Middleton Town Centre Conservation Area, as shown in the below figure. While the building itself is not a listed building, it is identified by the Local Planning Authority as a *Building of Local Importance* due to its architectural features and historic interest.

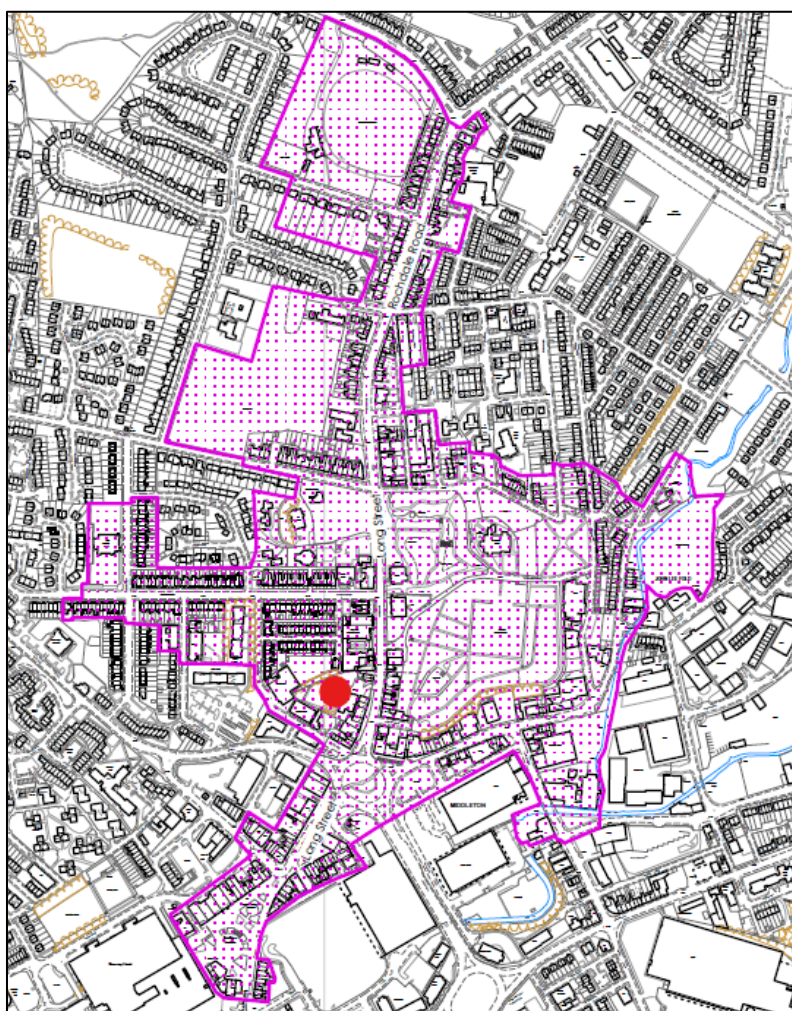


Figure 1 - Middleton Town Centre Conservation Area (site shown in red).

- 2.3 The Middleton Town Centre Conservation Area covers approximately 16ha in the northern part of the Town Centre. This area was the focus of pre-industrial Middleton before later development shifted the centre towards the south. The main route through

the Conservation Area is Long Street, stretching from Assheaton Arms at Market Place, north towards King Street, where it becomes Rochdale Road. While the Conservation Area is aligned around the north-south axis of Long Street, the physical character is dominated by the Parish Church, large open spaces, and many suburban style buildings with historical links to the pre-industrial Middleton township.

- 2.4 Middleton has a rich history dating back to the medieval period. It was first recorded in the Domesday Book of 1086 and later became known for its textile industry during the Industrial Revolution. The town played a key role in cotton production and silk weaving, contributing to the growth of Manchester as a textile hub. Middleton is also notable for its historic buildings, including St Leonards Church, which dates back to the 15th Century. Over time, the town evolved into a residential and commuter area, benefiting from its proximity to Manchester while retaining its distinct local character.
- 2.5 The application site is the former Conservative Club, a former working men's club which provided recreation and education to working class men and their families. The club closed in 2012, 180-years after it first opened. Its most recent use was as the Kohinoor Banqueting Hall, which has ceased operations. At present, the building is in disrepair, with the main windows boarded up, and the ground largely unkempt.



Figure 2 - The Former Conservative Club of 77 Long Street.

3.0 CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS

- 3.1 The site sits within the historic Town Centre of Middleton and is within the Conservation Area which encapsulates much of the frontage along Long Street. Middleton itself is a small town of diverse character with an exciting blend of historic architectural features of medieval, industrial and modernist styles. The town was also home to the famous architect Edgar Wood (1860-1935), who was regarded as the most important avant-garde architect in the north of England. It is therefore essential to conserve these important architectural buildings for the enjoyment of present and future generations.

Middleton Town Centre Conservation Area

- 3.2 The Town Centre Conservation Area was first established in 1978 to preserve the town's historic buildings and heritage. The Conservation Area encompasses notable landmarks such as St Leonards Church, Jubilee Library, and the Old Grammar School. The application site lies to on the southern edge of the Conservation Area, where Long Street meets Eastway at Assheaton Way, and sits within the *Long Street Character Area*.
- 3.3 The Long Street axis provides a varied and atmospheric urban mix of the built from with the surrounding spaces. The line of shops to the southern most tip of Long Street provides an eclectic backdrop with a vernacular feel, enhanced by the multiple heights of the buildings and frontages. A linear 'funnel' effect is created by the tight formation of properties rising up the hill when viewed from the southern edge of Long Street, as visualised in Figure 2, below.



Figure 3 - View of Long Street, looking North. (Application site of the left of the photo).

- 3.4 The hierarchical journey up Long Street reveals the gated garden courtyard of Long Street Methodist Church, and the ancient walkway of Church Brow, before opening into

Jubilee Park. The Middleton Library's Victorian architecture is on display as one travel north towards the Old Boars Head. The experience as one moves from south to north is of a gradual opening of the streetscape.

- 3.5 Long Street is characterised by two-three-storey traditional red-brick buildings, with examples such as the New Inn Public House, and the former Middleton Conservative Club (the application site). It is this massing when combined with the topography of Long Street which creates the linear 'funnel' effect one experiences along this thoroughfare.



Figure 4 - The New Inn Public House.



Figure 5 - Looking south on Long Street from the Long Street Methodist Church.

Statutory and Non-Statutory Designations

- 3.6 A search for statutory and non-statutory designated sites within 250m of the application site was undertaken. This search area was chosen as it was considered to be representative of the proportion of the local visual envelope which may be impacted by the potential development of the site.
- 3.7 A list of listed buildings and scheduled monuments are shown in the below table, following a review of the Historic England's *National Heritage List for England* (<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/>).

Table 1 - List of Heritage Assets within 250m of Application Site.

Title	List Entry ID	Grade	Distance from Site
83-87 Long Street	1481123	II	20m
Royal Bank of Scotland	1068505	II	85m
Long Street Methodist Church & Long Street Methodist Sunday School	1068504	II*	70m
Former National School	1068503	II	95m
Providence United Reformed Church	1162278	II	155m
Staircase and Exedra in Jubilee Park	1356230	II	195m
Church of St Leonard	1162332	I	225m
Ye Olde Boars Head Public House	1162256	II*	135m
Former Independent Labour Club	1422300	II	220m
The Old Rectory	1309684	II	220m

- 3.8 A review of DEFRA's *MAGIC Map* shows no other statutory designated sites within the 250m study area.

Former Middleton Conservative Club

- 3.9 77 Long Street (the application site) is not a listed building; however, it is considered an important building within the Middleton Town Centre Conservation Area. The former Conservative Club listed within the Conservation Area Appraisal as a *Building at Risk*.

The appraisal notes that the building remains in good condition, but its surroundings have changed, noting that the historic and well-proportioned building has become isolated from the street-scene.

- 3.10 The building formerly used by the Middleton Conservative Club, a former working men's club which provided recreation and education to working class men and their families. The club closed in 2012, 180-years after it first opened. Its most recent use was the Kohinoor Banqueting Hall.
- 3.11 The building showcases a smooth faced red brick on the front and side elevations and has a plinth wrapping around the building, with off-white render on the side elevations. A two-storey extension was granted in 1995. Ornamented brick lintels above the windows with stone lintels below complement the grand design of the building, with the main entrance distinguished through a wider opening and stone ornamentation above it.
- 3.12 The roof is a mixture of several types, with slate tiles on the pitched roofs, corrugated zinc towards the back of the building, and an EPDM for the extension, with dark lead work upstands and cast iron black rain water pipes. The windows and external doors are currently boarded up, but are surrounded by white timber fixtures, a typical architectural feature of this character area. Recent imagery shows the building to be in disrepair.

4.0 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 4.1 The proposed development seeks full planning permission to convert the existing Middleton Conservative Club into a new multi-use function space for events such as weddings, ceremonial gatherings, and other community events. It is proposed to carry out internal refurbishments and external renovations to the existing historic façade of the former Conservative Club.
- 4.2 A new two-storey extension will provide suitable access to both floors of the building. The extension will provide a Part K compliant staircase and a new Part M compliant lift service. The side extension will also provide a new lobby and reception area for guests.
- 4.3 A new car park is proposed to the rear of the building, which will be accessed via a ramp that will connect to the existing front car park. The new car park will provide a total of approximately 37no. parking spaces and will utilise sustainable drainage techniques. The area to the rear of the car park will be retained for biodiversity and ecological enhancement.
- 4.4 The proposed use will be similar to the previous extant use as a banqueting hall and recreation club, as it will cater for community events with an approximate capacity of 350 guests, including weddings, ceremonial gatherings, and cultural events.
- 4.5 The proposed development will focus on creating a two-storey side extension with car parking with ramped access which will enable the former Conservative Club to be revitalised into a new community and cultural events venue. The proposed extension will use design cues from the existing local context and inspired by the works of Edgar Wood.
- 4.6 The extension is needed to create an entrance that is accessible from both outdoor levels and provide larger back-of-house facilities such as washrooms, bridal rooms, prayer rooms, and social spaces. The design will also incorporate Part M access arrangements including a lift and accessible washrooms, securing the long-term future operation of the building.
- 4.7 The proposal does not seek to make any significant alterations or changes to the external façade of the existing Conservative Club building. The new extension will be set back from the existing building so as to highlight the simple and elegant beauty of the existing non-designated heritage asset. The extension will make use of traditional red brick with timber framed windows so as to provide a building design which is

appropriate for the location within the Long Street Character Area and elevates and improves the existing historic environment which it sits within.

- 4.8 The Middleton Town Centre Masterplan of 2022 recognises the importance of bringing buildings back into life through creative re-use and enhancements of facades and creating attractive spaces. The proposed development seeks to achieve these aspirations.
- 4.9 Vehicular access from Long Street is to be retained as the primary access route. A total of 21no. parking spaces will be provided within the existing *lower* car park, with a further 37no. parking spaces provided by the proposed *upper* car park, which will replace the derelict and disused bowling green. To access the upper car park, a new ramped access is proposed. Figure 6 provides a 3-D visual of the proposed ramped access, the proposed side extension, and the side elevation of the existing building. The proposed ramp will be finished in a tarmacadam surface, with retaining walls finished in traditional red brick.



Figure 6 - Proposed Two-Storey Side Extension and Ramp (*Architecture Unknown*).

- 4.10 The proposed upper car park design will be led by the blending of the need for parking, and ecological retention by using permeable surfaces on the parking areas, and soft landscaping such as native trees and shrubs. The car park will also include a state-of-the-art sustainable drainage system, utilising several above-ground SUDS techniques, including raingardens and a central swale.



Figure 7 - Proposed Two-Storey Extension and Existing Conservative Club.



Figure 8 - Visual of the Secondary Entrance from the Upper Car Park and Ramped Access.

5.0 HERITAGE ASSESSMENT

5.1 In order to assess the impact of the proposed development will have on the importance and setting of a heritage asset, it is necessary to first consider the significance of that asset. Significance is defined within the NPPF and derives from both the heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting. It is considered as the equation of the cultural, social, and/or natural heritage values that make up the importance of a building or place to both present society, and future generations.

5.2 Paragraph 13 of the PPG *Historic Environment* goes further on how to assess the significance of a heritage asset, and the importance of its setting:

The extent and importance of setting is often expressed by reference to the visual relationship between the asset and the proposed development and associated visual/physical considerations. Although views of or from an asset will play an important part in the assessment of impacts on setting, the way in which we experience an asset in its setting is also influenced by other environmental factors such as noise, dust, smell, and vibration from other land users in the vicinity, and by our understanding of the historic relationship between places.

5.3 The aim of conservation is to sensitively manage the change to a building or place to ensure that its significance is protected, but also revealed and enhanced so that future generations can understand its significance. Significance can be lost through insensitive alterations or partial demolition, but it can also be enhanced through well-informed considered change which can bring positive public benefits.

Assessment Methodology

5.4 As the proposed development does not propose to make changes to the fabric of a listed building, any impact will be a result from a change to the setting of these heritage assets. However, the assessment does need to consider to what extent the impact of the development will change the setting of the non-designated heritage asset of the former Conservative Club. The setting of the Conservation Area will also be altered through the addition of the proposed side extension and new access ramp, and therefore the impact of this will also be assessed. The setting of a heritage asset is defined within Annex 2 of the NPPF as *"the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced"*.

5.5 *The Historic Environment Good Practice Advice Planning Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets*, published by Historic England in 2017, provides guidance on the

assessment of the setting of heritage assets. The guidance document details a Staged Approach to Proportionate Decision-taking to assess the contribution of setting to the significance of a heritage asset. The staged approach applies the following steps:

- i) Identify which heritage assets and their settings are affected.
- ii) Assess the degree to which these settings make their contribution to the significance of the heritage asset(s) or allow significance to be appreciated.
- iii) Assess the effects of the proposed development, whether beneficial or harmful on that significance or on the ability to appreciate it.
- iv) Explore ways to maximise enhancement and avoid or minimise harm.
- v) Make and document the decision and monitor the outcomes.

5.6 *The Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 2* provides further guidance when assessing the significance of a heritage asset. *Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance* published by Historic England in 2008 sets out the range of heritage values which may be attached to places and therefore contribute to their significance:

- Evidential Value – The potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity.
- Historical Value – The ways in which past people, events, and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present – both illustrative and associative.
- Aesthetic Value – The ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual simulation of place.
- Communal Value – The meanings of a place for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience or memory.

5.7 Additionally, the scale applied for an assessment of significance is set out below:

- High – An aspect of value that *strongly* contributes to the significance of place.
- Medium – An aspect of value that *will have some* cultural importance and will make a modest contribution to the significance of place.
- Low – An aspect of value that will make a *slight (yet still noteworthy)* contribution to the significance of place.

Identification of Heritage Assets

5.8 Heritage Assets within a 250m radius of the application site are identified within Table 1 of Section 3 of this report. The site sits within the visual envelope of 83-87 Long Street (Grade II), which lies immediately to the northeast corner of the site. The site could also be considered to be visible from some aspects of the Long Street Methodist Church

and Long Street Sunday School (Grade II*). Therefore, the assessment will focus on the significance and impact upon the setting of these listed buildings and the wider Long Street Character Area, and the existing Conservative Club Building itself.

- 5.9 The application site is not considered to be clearly visible from The Old Rectory, Royal Bank of Scotland building, the Former National School, The Olde Boars Head Public House, the Staircase of Jubilee Park, or the Church of St Leonard, and as such no in-depth assessment has been made in relation to these heritage assets.

6.0 ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE AND CONTRIBUTION TO SETTING

- 6.1 To understand the significance of the heritage assets listed above, an initial desk-based assessment has been conducted. The Middleton Town Centre Conservation Appraisal lists the following significant historic characteristics:
- A significant architectural heritage that prevails in the character of the buildings, dating back to the 12th Century, including elements of Romanesque, Gothic, Tudor, and Arts and Crafts movements.
 - A town which preserves its surviving medieval footprint.
 - A strong influence and collection of buildings from the famous architect Edgar Wood. Most notably the design of Long Street Methodist Church.
 - A rich history of the textile industry, reflected within the building design of the town centre.
- 6.2 The setting of the Conservation Area is characterised by the historic topography, architectural variety, and vast open green spaces which creates a 'suburban' feel to the area, despite its industrial heritage. The framed vista along Long Street evokes a visual interest in building hierarchy, creating a historically layered unique blend of urban and rural characteristics; from the tight medieval street pattern, opening into the leafy, open, green space of Jubilee Park.
- 6.3 The building massing along Long Street is varied but cohesive, reflecting the different historic periods of architecture, while maintaining a harmonious streetscape. The scale, density, and form of buildings change as one moves along the street. The southern end of Long Street, near Market Place, and the application site, has a denser urban grain, with narrow fronted, tightly packed commercial buildings, typically two-three stories high. The skyline of Long Street is also dynamic with alternating gables, chimneys, and varied roof pitches.
- 6.4 The building materials on Long Street reflect a mix of traditional, Georgian, and Arts and Crafts influences, with brick, stone, and slate being the most predominantly used materials. Edgar Wood would often use common brick to emulate handmade brick, most notably on the Long Street Methodist Church. Stone is used on more significant buildings such as the Parish Church of St. Leonard, and the former National School. Roofing materials include stone slate on older buildings, with Welsh blue slate most commonly used after the introduction of canals and railways. Some clay and concrete tiles can be seen for architectural effect.

- 6.5 The application site is located within the southern area of Long Street, within the Long Street Character Area. The existing building is described as a Regency-period (circa 1830) building with polite classical architectural features. Originally built as a large family residence, before being converted in the Conservative Club in early 20th Century, it has red stock brick façade with stone Baroque trimmings. The building has lost much of its visual prominence since the 1960s commercial developments have taken place on the frontage onto Long Street. The encroachment of the shopfronts along Long Street has isolated the building, making it feel set back and detached from the overall street scene.
- 6.6 The Middleton Town Centre Conservation Area possesses a high level of evidential and illustrative historic value in terms of the surviving-built form which contributes to the overall character of the area. This significance is enhanced by the setting of the many listed buildings and non-designated heritage assets. Furthermore, the Conservation Area Appraisal, and management of development, has assisted to preserve the quality of the materials which detail different periods of the growth of the town, contributing to the overall aesthetic value of the Conservation Area.

83-87 Long Street

- 6.7 The buildings of 83-87 Long Street are located approximately 20m from the application site. The buildings are Grade II listed and first listed in May 2022 with the description *"former domestic loomshop and houses, late C18, with alteration to the ground floor to two shops in late C19, ad C20/C21 alterations"*.

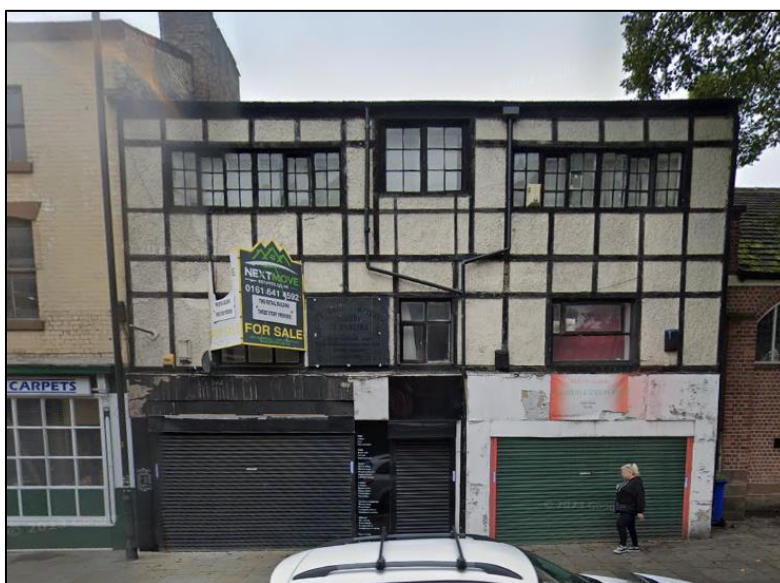


Figure 9 - 83-87 Long Street.

- 6.8 The buildings are described as a Georgian-era ground of buildings, with No. 87 Long Street standing out due to its rare Yorkshire Lights Fenestration; a rare horizontal sliding sash window type commonly found in 18th Century industrial and workshop buildings. These buildings were associated with weaving and small-scale industry and are some of the last remaining examples of this vernacular style in Middleton.

Long Street Methodist Church and Sunday School

- 6.9 The Long Street Methodist Church and Sunday School is a Grade II* listed building, designed by Edgar Wood in 1901, and first listed in September 1969. It is considered an Arts and Crafts masterpiece, showcasing an expressive Art Nouveau-influenced style, particularly in the brickwork and fenestration. The building consists of a church, school buildings, and meeting rooms, all arranged around a gated courtyard and gardens.
- 6.10 The building design uses a holistic design approach, where Wood designed not just the structure, but also the fixtures, fittings, stained glass, and stonework. Brick tumbling details on the south elevation showcases Wood's interest in Flemish construction techniques. The church includes a bell tower, intricate wooden altar chairs, and uniquely designed railings.



Figure 10 - Long Street Methodist Church and Sunday School.

- 6.11 The building is considered to have a high degree of historic value due to its architectural importance, and association with Edgar Wood, combined with its social and religious history. The Church is a key example of Edgar Wood's work, serving as a focal point within Middleton for education, social gatherings, and worship to the working-class communities of the town. However, the building is identified within the Conservation Area Appraisal as a building at risk, due to the decline of congregation numbers and lack of funding for necessary repairs.

7.0 IMPACT OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT UPON SIGNIFICANCE

- 7.1 The following assessment considers the impact of the proposals, whether beneficial or harmful, on the significance of the identified heritage assets and the ability to appreciate it, as identified within Step 3 of the *Historic Environment Good Practice Advice Planning Note 3*.

Impact on Middleton Town Centre Conservation Area

- 7.2 The application site is located in the southern edge of the Middleton Town Centre Conservation Area, within an elevated position, but set back from the main thoroughfare of Long Street. Consideration has been given to the impact the development may have on the importance of the Long Street Character Area, as described within Section 6 of this report, and the Middleton Town Centre Conservation Area Appraisal.
- 7.3 While the application site is set back from Long Street, it plays a key role in the streetscape of the area. Glimpses of the second storey and roofline of the former Conservative Club building can be seen as one travels north along Long Street, but its front façade is precluded drastically by the shops along the site frontage of Long Street. Only when one stops and looks west towards the site, standing opposite the southbound carriageway of Long Street, can one fully appreciate the building, as seen in figure 11.



Figure 11 - View of the site from Long Street, looking west.

- 7.4 The proposed extension is to be set back from the main existing building, in order to maintain a minimal impact on the Long Street frontage and highlight the visual presence of the existing Conservative Club building. This will further reinforce the building hierarchy of the Conservative Club as the main feature building on the site, with the

ancillary extension acting as a secondary feature to provide the ancillary facilities to allow for the continued functioning of the Conservative Club as a new cultural and community events venue.

- 7.5 As shown in figures 6 and 7, the proposed extension will comprise two-storey, traditional brick building with timber framed windows so as to provide a building design which is appropriate, and well related to the existing built form of Long Street, complementing the design of the existing Conservative Club building. The Main Entrance of the Conservative Club building will remain in use for the future proposed use, with a secondary entrance provided within the building extension to be used for accessible access, and entry from the rear car park.
- 7.6 The proposal will include a ramp access to the rear car park. The ramp will sit to the north of the proposed building extension, and will be suitably set back, in line with the building extension so as not to detract from the prominence of the main existing Conservative Club building. The ramp will be finished in a tarmac surface, consistent with the existing car park and access road of the Conservative Club, with retaining walls finished in traditional red brick, complementing the local context of the site and wider lower Long Street character area.

Impacts to Views along Long Street

- 7.7 The views one experiences along Long Street have been heavily documented in the above sections of this report, and within the Conservation Area Appraisal. As the proposed building extension will be set further back from Long Street, the existing Conservative Club building will screen the proposed building from Long Street significantly, with only glimpses of the proposed building extension and the ramped accessed visible when looking from the junction of the site access off Long Street. As such, the impact of the proposed development on the Long Street Character Area are likely to be minimal.

Impact on 83-87 Long Street

- 7.8 The setting of 83-87 Long Street is mostly confined the surrounding built environment on Long Street. It forms part of the long-terraced nature of the streetscape. The building is buffered to the application site by the neighbouring properties of 79-81 Long Street. Therefore, the visual envelope of the proposed development is unlikely to affect the setting of 83-87 Long Street by any measurable degree. As such, the impact on the setting of 83-87 Long Street is likely to be minimal.

Impact on Long Street Methodist Church and Sunday School

- 7.9 The application site is located to the south of the Long Street Sunday School, which abuts the northern boundary of the site. The Methodist Church and Sunday School site slightly lower than the bowling green area which comprises part of the application site. The northern boundary of the site is well screened by mature existing trees and vegetation, which breaks up the overall visual envelope of the Methodist Church and Sunday School.
- 7.10 When standing on the bowling green looking north, as shown in Figure 12 below, one can see a brief glimpse of the gable and chimney of the Methodist Church, with the roof of the Sunday School only slightly evident through the dense vegetation. The proposed development does not seek to increase the height of the existing Conservative Club, and the proposed extension will be a 2-storey structure to mimic the existing massing on the site. The levels of the proposed rear car park will not be increased, and therefore, the visual envelope looking north towards the Methodist Church and Sunday School will not be altered. Furthermore, the proposed development seeks to retain the mature trees and vegetation along the northern site boundary to maintain the visual screening between the application site and the Sunday School gable. This will also maintain the visual reception one experiences standing on Lever Street looking south (figure 13).



Figure 12 - View from the Bowling Green looking North towards the Methodist Church and Sunday School.



Figure 13 - View standing on Lever Street looking South towards the Site, with Chimney and Gable of the Methodist Church (seen in figure 12) in the foreground.

- 7.11 Consequently, it is considered that the proposed development would have a slight change to the setting of the Long Street Methodist Church and Sunday School, the alterations would not be significantly obvious from the surrounding streetscape. The frontage of the Long Street Methodist Church and Sunday School would not experience any change to its setting as a result of the proposed development.
- 7.12 The proposed development, including the conversion of the derelict bowling green into a new car park would not negatively impact on the setting of the listed building. Rather, it is thought that the proposed car park will enhance the overall setting of the listed building, by bringing the neighbouring land back into a viable use to support the longevity of the former Conservative Club as a functional car park. The car park is proposed to be surfaced using permeable surfacing, and make use of a state-of-the-art sustainable drainage system, providing opportunities for a central swale and use of raingardens to break up the parking areas, providing sustainable drainage and enhancements for biodiversity. It is considered that this conversion from the site's current derelict state would complement the surrounding historic built environment.

8.0 MITIGATION AND MONITORING

- 8.1 In accordance with Step 4 of the *Historic Environment Good Practice Advice Planning Note 3*, ways to maximise enhancement and avoid or minimise harm should be explored.
- 8.2 The proposed building extension will be set back from the existing building line of the former Conservative Club in order to minimise visual impact from Long Street, maintaining the Conservative Club's visual hierarchy to the secondary extension. The proposed building extension will be no more than two-storeys to maintain cohesion with the surrounding built form.
- 8.3 The proposed materials palette is in accordance with the local context. The proposed extension is to be finished in a traditional red-brick, identical to the finish of the existing former Conservative Club building, taking architectural cues from both the existing building, and other buildings within the Conservation Area, where appropriate. This material choice will ensure the proposed development will preserve and enhance the setting of the Conservation Area and surrounding listed buildings.
- 8.4 Further planting is proposed within the rear car park, in the form of rain gardens, to provide visual enhancement to the car park, and break up the parking areas to ensure minimal visual impact of parked cars on the surrounding setting. Planting is also proposed to be retained on the north, west, and southern boundaries around the periphery of the site. This will maintain the dense screening from the existing mature trees along the north boundary where the site joins onto the Long Street Methodist Church and Sunday School.

9.0 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 This Heritage Statement has been prepared to support a planning application to Rochdale Borough Council for the proposed change of use of the former Middleton Conservative Club to a new community and events space. The Heritage Assessment has been undertaken to assess the impact of the proposed development on the importance and setting of the nearby heritage assets and the wider Middleton Town Centre Conservation Area.
- 9.2 This Heritage Statement consists primarily of a desktop study using the National Heritage List of England, DEFRA's *MAG/C* map, historic OS mapping, and the Local Planning Authority's *Middleton Town Centre Conservation Area Appraisal*, produced by the Middleton Heritage and Conservation Group, published in January 2008 by Rochdale Borough Council.
- 9.3 The Heritage Assessment concluded that:
- The proposed development will not significantly impact on important views within the Middleton Town Centre Conservation Area.
 - The proposed extension will be set back from the main existing structure to maintain visual prominence of the existing former Conservative Club building and minimising the impact on views along Long Street.
 - The existing mature trees, particularly along the northern boundary near Long Street Methodist Church, will be preserved to maintain the area's visual character.
 - The proposed development will not have a significant impact on the setting of listed buildings, including 83-87 Long Street, or the Long Street Methodist Church.
 - The proposed development will use contextually appropriate materials to maintain visual cohesion with the surrounding built form of the Conservation Area.
- 9.4 The proposed development seeks to reactivate a disused space within a prominent location of the Conservation Area. The development aims to bring the former Conservative Club building, which has been identified as a *building at risk*, back into use as a community events space, aligning with local and national conservation policies, which promote the reuse of historic buildings, and the aims of the Middleton Town Centre Conservation Area Appraisal.
- 9.5 The proposals would not have a detrimental impact upon the setting of the Conservation Area, or heritage assets, or the ability for one to appreciate their historic value. Support is therefore encouraged from the Local Planning Authority.