

‘HILLCREST’, 37 ROCHDALE ROAD
MIDDLETON, M24 2PT

HERITAGE STATEMENT



HUL Ref: 2409.1600 | 29 May 2025

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HS1 LISTING DESCRIPTIONS

REVISION SCHEDULE					
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Heritage Statement has been produced by **heritage** unlimited to support a planning application at 37 Rochdale Road, Middleton. Consultation with Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council has been ongoing following the change in ownership of the property with a view to progressing with the repair and refurbishment of the listed building.
- 1.2 The property is a grade II listed building, identified by the listing entry number (LEN) 1447739, and was originally named 'Hillcrest'. The building was designed by Edgar Wood and is one half of a pair of semi-detached properties of Wood's innovative Art Nouveau style. The closely mirrored half of the building at 39 Rochdale Road is called 'Briarhill'. The two properties are jointly listed. First designated on 5th September 2017, the building dates back to 1892 and was designated owing to its identification as an important building in the development of Wood's architectural style, an early example of Art Nouveau design, and a grouping of his buildings in Middleton. The building is located within the boundary of the Middleton Town Centre Conservation Area, which is a designated heritage asset.
- 1.3 No.37 Rochdale Road is a residential property, although was for a period used as a hotel. It is currently vacant following a phase of construction works being implemented by the previous owners that were halted by the HSE on the grounds of unsafe working practices. The building has incurred condition issues relating to its incomplete state and vacancy, namely water ingress, pigeons nesting internally, and acute localised issues relating to vegetation growth and open joints to the masonry.
- 1.4 The intention is to repair and refurbish the building so that its features can be reinstated in order to restore the original appearance of the exterior as closely as possible and strengthen its aesthetic relationship with its adjoining semi-detached partner property at no.39 Rochdale Road.
- 1.5 Other nearby buildings by Edgar Wood which have group value with 37 and 39 Rochdale Road are listed below:
- Semi-detached houses Redcroft and Fencegate, at nos.33 and 35 Rochdale Road designated grade II in 1987 (built 1891)
 - Terraced properties nos.34-48 Rochdale Road (built 1898)
 - Semi-detached houses nos.51 and 53 Rochdale Road (built 1900)
 - Arkholme, Towncoft Avenue designated grade II in 2007 (built 1901, modified 1905)
- 1.6 Listed Buildings and conservation areas are defined by the National Planning Policy Framework 2024 (NPPF) as designated heritage assets. As the proposed development affects one or more heritage assets, paragraph 200 of the NPPF requires a Heritage Statement to support a planning application. This document has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the NPPF.



- 1.7 The purpose of a Heritage Statement is to identify the significance of any heritage asset affected by the proposed development, the impact the proposed development will have upon the identified significance and justification for the proposed development. The Heritage Statement also needs to assess the proposed work in accordance with the statutory tests provided in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.
- 1.8 This Heritage Statement should be read in conjunction with architectural plans and other supporting documents, which form this planning application.
- 1.9 This report has been compiled by Frances Woodgate MA(Hons), MArch, ADPPA and is based on a site visit and desk-based research carried out in October 2024.



2.0 SITE LOCATION AND CONTEXT

- 2.1 No.37 Rochdale Road is situated on the west side of the street within the northern portion of Middleton Town Centre, Rochdale. Bordered to the pavement by red brick garden walls with stone banding and crescent form between piers, the property is set back from the road and has a garden to the front (east) and rear (west).
- 2.2 Situated immediately to the north of nos.33 and 35 Rochdale Road, and directly opposite nos.34-38, collectively also by Edgar Wood, the building has a group context on the street and contributes to the character of the Middleton Town Centre Conservation Area.
- 2.3 Rochdale Road, the A664, is a busy main road connecting Middleton to Manchester to the southwest and the A627(M) and Rochdale to the northeast and is also a bus route.
- 2.4 The building comprises of three storeys and a basement, with generous proportions and an imposing presence being taller than most surrounding buildings in the residential area.

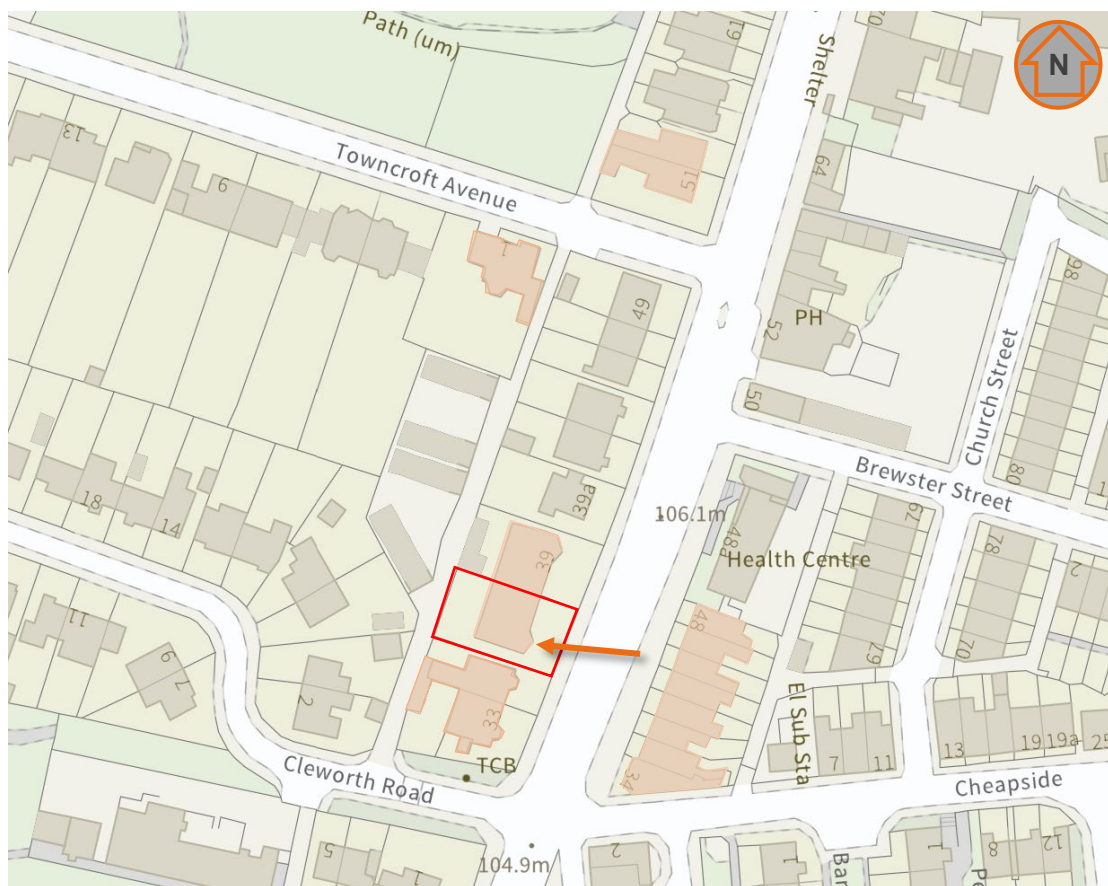


Fig.1: Location plan identifying the site at no.37 Rochdale Road with a red outline and the building shown by the arrow, plus other buildings by Edgar Wood in the local area shaded orange.

Current Context

- 2.5 The building is vacant following the halting of construction works by the HSE relating to proposals being implemented by the previous owners. At the time of purchase, it appeared that planning permission was still in place, however as pre-commencement conditions had not been discharged and the works did not match the approved plans, the permission was void.



Fig.2: Site photograph with no.37 Rochdale Road on the left and no.39 on the right, with their shared gable in the centre. The party wall is indicated by the dashed blue line. The poor condition of the building is evident with the dismantled bay and boarded up doorway.

- 2.6 In liaison with the local authority, proposals have been prepared for the reinstatement of the bay front, repairs to the brickwork, rebuilding of the outer leaf of the rear elevation, new fenestration to incomplete window openings and other repairs needed, in association with the sub-division of the property into two dwellings.
- 2.7 The previous consent was granted for the conversion of the property into two dwellings and part of the sub-dividing party wall had been constructed, along with the rebuilding of the rear elevation in blockwork. The previous owner's proposals were only partially executed, and there were anomalies in the plans. Therefore, a thorough review of the existing building fabric against both plans of the proposals and the building before the works was necessary.
- 2.8 The current proposals prioritise the repairs and reinstatement of features necessary to enhance the appearance of the external elevations and restore as closely as possible the original character of the building.

- 2.9 Internally, the layout of the building has been prepared with consideration to retaining the original wall layout and making use of the 'as found' layout, owing to concerns over the structural integrity of the building following the previous owner's unsafe work practices. The internal wall layout has previously been identified as largely intact, and it will be important to conserve this as the interior scheme has otherwise been lost baring a few fragmentary survivals.
- 2.10 The current proposals are heritage-led, with all surviving lathe and plaster ceilings and walls to be conserved and repaired in situ, and use of appropriate materials and detailing, which will be discussed further in the proposals section.





Fig.3: Rear elevation showing the rendered finish and square headed window openings. The adjoining brickwork of 39 Rochdale Road shows the original appearance.



Fig.4: View of the front elevation showing the hoarding to the location of the dismantled two storey bay. The projecting timbers to the former flat roof in front of the arched Diocletian window are a concern, as are the exposed joist ends to the first floor. High level vegetation to the side elevation was identified as urgent work to prevent further deterioration and the potential for masonry falling from the building.

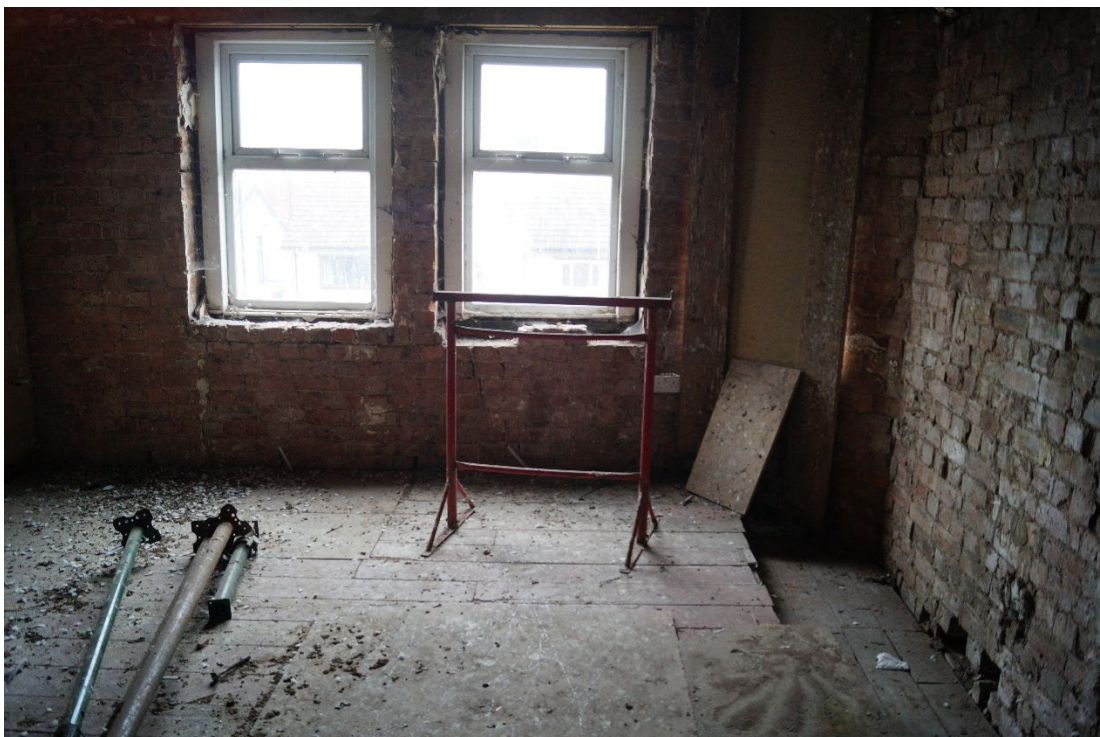


Fig.5: Internal view of the second floor showing the bare brickwork and exposed floor boards.



Fig.6: Internal view of the Diocletian window at second floor level showing daylight visible to the valley.



Fig.7: Internal view of the first floor to the front showing the bare walls and removed ceiling. The opening in the wall on the lefthand side is a former fireplace position.



Fig.8: Internal view of the first floor to the rear showing the bare walls and removed ceiling. The projecting bay in the centre of the photograph is a chimney breast and former fireplace position.



Fig. 9: Internal view of the ground floor at the foot of the stairs. There may be historic context to the balustrading behind the infill panel.



Fig. 10: Internal view of the partially constructed party wall to the entrance hall at ground floor level. The concrete blocks have been laid flat instead of in the normal vertical orientation.



Fig. 10: Internal view of the fragment of green hearth tiles remaining to ground floor front room, which will be replicated as closely as possible in new tiles for reinstating the fireplace in this room.



Fig. 11: Internal view of decorative ceiling to ground floor stair well to be retained and carefully repaired in situ.



Fig.12: Internal view of ground floor beneath the stairs looking towards the rebuilt rear wall.

3.0 IDENTIFIED HERITAGE ASSETS

- 3.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires that all heritage assets affected by the proposed development are identified and their significance, which includes setting, are described. The level of 'harm' the proposed works will have to the identified heritage assets also needs to be determined within the context of a Heritage Statement.
- 3.2 As identified above 37 Rochdale Road is grade II listed, lies within the Middleton Town Centre Conservation Area, and is located in close proximity to other listed buildings/structures by Edgar Wood. Details of these designated heritage assets are provided below, and the listing descriptions are provided in full in **HS1**.

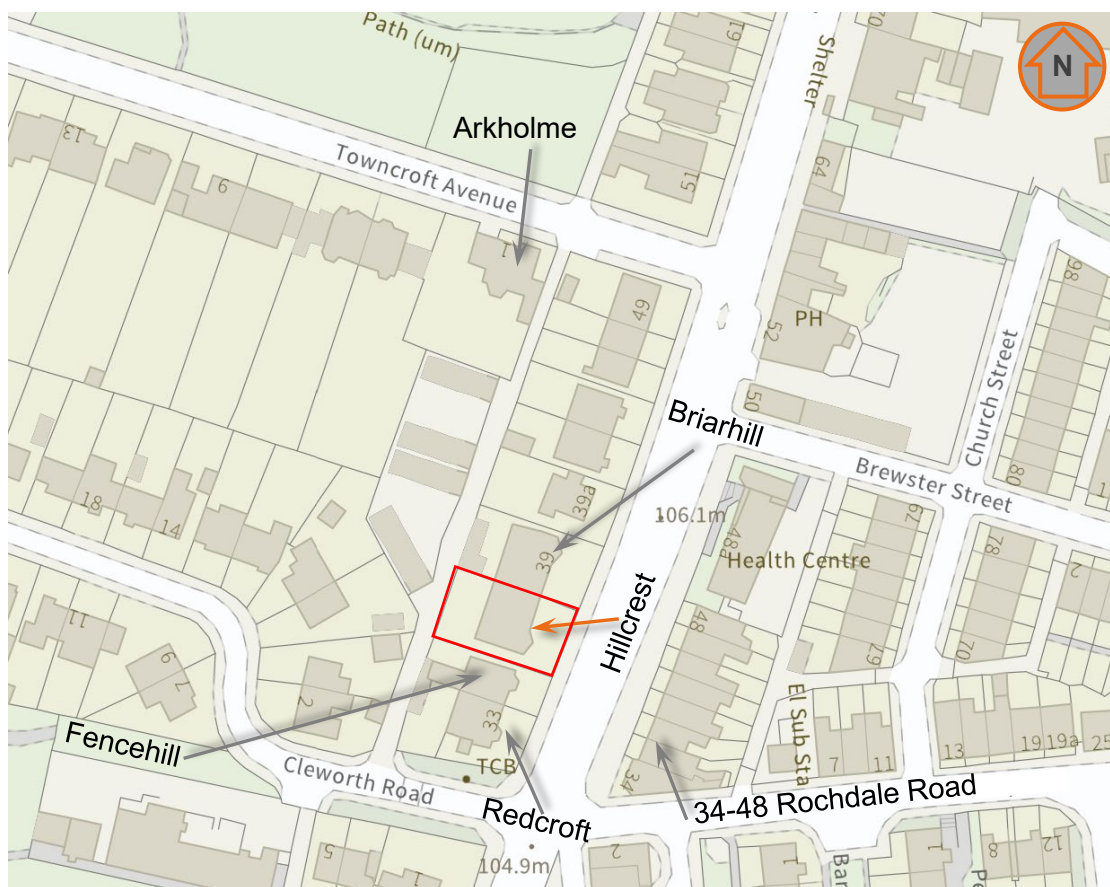


Fig.13: No.37 Rochdale Road, 'Hillcrest', is identified by the orange arrow, with the other heritage assets in the environs labelled by name and indicated by grey arrows. Arkholme is a detached property, Fencehill and Redcroft are semi-detached, 'Hillcrest' no.37 Rochdale Road and Briarhill no.39 are semi-detached, and nos.34-48 comprise a terrace.

37 and 39 Rochdale Road – ‘Hillcrest’ and ‘Briarhill’

3.3 The listing description by Historic England states the following reasons for the grade II designation of nos.37 and 39 Rochdale Road:

- Architectural interest: * As an excellent example of innovative design for the period, sharing many characteristics with the most avant-garde designs of the time in continental Europe and anticipating elements of the architect’s later pioneering Modernist design;
- For the good survival of the internal planform and retention of many interior decorative features, particularly at Briarhill;
- For the strong visual and historical relationship with the adjacent pair of Redcroft and Fencegate (NHLE no. 1162377) by the same designer (who lived in Redcroft until 1916), and close proximity and shared features with two of Wood’s other listed buildings at 51-53 Rochdale Road (NHLE no. 1356254), and Arkholme (NHLE no. 1391983);
- Historical interest: * For their attribution to the internationally renowned architect Edgar Wood.

3.4 The buildings are co-listed as a pair of semi-detached townhouses but are commented on individually below as they have been in separate ownership and have differing degrees of intactness.

37 Rochdale Road – ‘Hillcrest’

3.5 Built in 1892 of machine made red brick in English garden wall bond with terracotta detailing, the three storey elevation of 37 Rochdale Road has a prominent presence on Rochdale Road. Noticeably taller than its neighbouring predecessor at Redcroft and Fencehill, the building’s central gable projects above the eaves line for further emphasis, and as a substantial residential property it was large enough to serve as a small hotel, the White House Hotel, in the later 20th century.

3.6 Originally flanked by chimneys to its exposed gable end, 37 Rochdale Road has a strongly defined semi-detached form with its adjoining partner building 39 Rochdale Road. The building was designated in 2017, following research into the work of Edgar Wood that identified the building as being of international design significance.

3.7 As a creative architect, Wood employed a blending of features and styles across his buildings and 37 Rochdale Road had both Queen Anne and Art Nouveau design characteristics. He created symmetrical arrangements though the symmetry was rarely absolute, so there were subtleties between each half of the semi-detached properties. For example, at 37 Rochdale Road, the entranceway matched that of 39 Rochdale Road, as did the Art Nouveau door, but it was painted in a darker colour than at 39 Rochdale Road.

3.8 The building is grade II listed to reflect its importance as a transitional building by Wood and for its group value with 39 Rochdale Road and Wood’s architectural legacy in Middleton. Currently vacant and in poor condition, the building is awaiting sensitive refurbishment. The listing description noted that Hillcrest has lost most, but not all, of its interior features. Its



exterior was more intact at the time of listing, though is currently in a poor condition owing to the dismantling of the bow window bay and incomplete works to the rear elevation.

39 Rochdale Road – ‘Briarhill’

- 3.9 As the partner of 37 Rochdale Road, 39 Rochdale is also an imposing residence in red brick and terracotta from 1892. The building had additional detailing of stained glass panels to the upper lights of the ground and first floor windows and also had a full interior scheme by Wood; however, the stained glass has been lost through window replacement.
- 3.10 The listing description notes that ‘Briarhill’s interior is relatively little-altered and retains several key elements of its original Art Nouveau decoration. As in Hillcrest the innovative and highly efficient planform remains largely intact, in which the entrance hall continues through to a rear access, crossing the foot of the stair that runs across the house.’
- 3.11 The loss of the original stained glass windows at Briarhill has removed a key decorative element to the front elevation, which has been lamented by heritage groups both locally and nationally as the importance of the building as a pioneering Art Nouveau building has only relatively recently been understood.
- 3.12 The building is grade II listed to reflect its importance as a transitional building by Wood and for its group value with 37 Rochdale Road, and Wood’s architectural legacy in Middleton. The building is currently occupied as a House of Multiple Occupancy.

Middleton Town Centre Conservation Area

- 3.13 Designated in 1978, the Middleton Town Centre Conservation Area covers a large area of almost sixteen hectares over the northern part of the town centre.
- 3.14 Middleton developed between the larger settlements of Manchester, Rochdale, Bury and Oldham, all participating in the textile industry. The name may well have been derived from its location being at the mid-point between neighbouring settlements. This local industrial economy was the driving force behind the development of the town. However, the town had rural origins and has a more open feel than many textile towns with a good number of larger properties in generous plots with a more suburban character.
- 3.15 Both silk and cotton were worked in the town, though with silk being the predominant of the two. Therefore, the architecture of the town reflects both industrial urban architecture and more rural residential characteristics, something that may have come to Edgar Wood’s mind when he built the vernacular Redcroft and Fencegate in the vernacular style and then Hillcrest and Briarhill in a more urban form next door.
- 3.16 Use of red stock brick and slate is common in the area, and there is a good mix of residential and commercial properties within the conservation area providing an active streetscape. The conservation area appraisal identifies that the buildings of Edgar Wood make a significant contribution to the character of the conservation area, with their evolution in architectural style and unique detailing.



- 3.17 Within the Conservation Area Appraisal, nos.37 and 39 Rochdale Road were identified as being at risk, and the buildings are being monitored closely by both Rochdale Council and the local Middleton Heritage Group.
- 3.18 It was fortunate that nos.37 and 39 were included within the conservation area boundary as this afforded them protection in the absence of their individual listing which followed later than most of Edgar Wood's other buildings in the area.



Fig.14: Map showing the site in relation to the boundary of the northern portion of the Middleton Town Centre Conservation Area. The area protected by the conservation area boundary is shaded in green.

Other nearby buildings by Edgar Wood

Nos.33 and 35 Rochdale Road

- 3.19 Nos.33 and 35 Rochdale Road, known as Redcroft and Fencegate respectively, comprise a pair of semi-detached properties by Edgar Wood immediately to the south of no.37 Rochdale Road.
- 3.20 The houses are less symmetrical in their appearance than nos.37 and 39 Rochdale Road, with Wood employing a vernacular Arts & Crafts style, however both no.33 and no.35 feature angled window bays with stone mullioned windows.

- 3.21 The listing description notes that Redcroft was Wood's own home up until around 1916, a short time before his retirement in 1920. The building was designated grade II in 1987. Unfortunately, following settlement damage, Fencehill was demolished and rebuilt so has lost its integrity. Redcroft was spared and retains a high level of intactness.

Nos.34 to 48 Rochdale Road

- 3.22 Designed by Edgar Wood in 1898, this asymmetric terrace is directly opposite nos.37 and 39 Rochdale Road and provides a mix of houses and shops with accommodation above.
- 3.23 Featuring gables and steeply pitched roofs, the terrace forms a strong linear group along the street. And in conjunction with nos. 33 and 35, and nos.37 and 39 opposite, they form an important and close grouping of buildings by Edgar Wood.



Fig.15: 34-48 Rochdale Road, image from Architects of Greater Manchester showing the original oriel window which has since been lost.

Arkholme, Towncroft Avenue

- 3.24 Also referred to as 'The Studio', this 1901 building was a photography studio, designed for the Jackson studio, and this unusual use is one of the reasons for its designation. The building utilises simple forms and materials and is an important building within the cluster of buildings by Edgar Wood in the local area.
- 3.25 The use of reinforced concrete for a flat roof in combination with brick walls is of interest, along with steeply pitched roofs over the main portion of the building. The asymmetrical composition is characteristic of Wood's designs, and the building makes a positive contribution to the conservation area.
- 3.26 In 1905, the building was adapted as residence but retains much of the character of the original building, with the exception of a 1950s garage addition. It was designated grade II in 1987.

36 Mellalieu Street

- 3.27 Designed by Edgar Wood with J H Sellers and built in 1906, the two-storey house at 36 Mellalieu Street features a full reinforced concrete flat roof, showing a progression from a partial flat roof at Arkholme. It is noted in the listing description that this property is the first house by Edgar Wood to feature a flat concrete roof, giving it technological interest.
- 3.28 The blending of new materials with the traditional brick, timber mullions and leaded glass, lends further importance to this building as a transition in design approach. It was designated grade II in 1987.



2.11 UNDERSTANDING

- 2.12 This section explores the development of the building through map regression and desk-based research to inform the understanding of 37 Rochdale Road, and its local context. It also provides current context for the property as identified and recorded during on-site assessment.
- 2.13 Below are archive maps arranged in chronological order to document the development of the site.

Map Regression



Fig.16: Tithe map of 1839, before the building was built, with the plot numbered 436 recorded as belonging to Reverend Richard Durnford Rector (Glebe) and occupied by John Haigh. The approximate location of the site is indicated by the arrow.



Fig.17: Ordnance Survey map of Middleton, Surveyed 1848, Published 1851. The approximate location of the site is indicated by the arrow.



Fig.18: Ordnance Survey map of Middleton, Surveyed 1889, Published 1891. The approximate location of the site is indicated by the arrow.



Fig.19: Ordnance Survey map of Lancashire, Surveyed 1907, Published 1910. No.37 Rochdale Road is indicated by the arrow. The rectangular outline to the northwestern boundary relates to the outbuildings shown on subsequent maps.



Fig.20: Ordnance Survey map of Lancashire, Revised 1915, Published 1922. This map shows the archway to the southern elevation of the building and outbuildings and garden walls to the west and east of the property. No.39 also has a pair of outbuildings to the west side. The site of No.37 is indicated by the arrow.





Fig.23: Ordnance Survey map of Lancashire, Revised 1970, Published 1970. The site of no.37 Rochdale Road is outlined in red.

Aerial Photography

- 2.14 Below are a series of modern day satellite images taken above the site which provide context for the recent unauthorised works to the building prior to the purchase by the current owner.



Fig.24: Satellite image of the building from above in 2017 showing the garden overgrown.



Fig.25: Satellite image from March 2021, the bow window is still visible in this image. Roof repairs appear to have reduced the freckled appearance of the polychromatic slate roofing, which appears as a more even grey colour to the section behind the bow window gable.



Fig.26: Scaffolding present in this satellite photograph of April 2022, indicating the dismantling of the bow window. The flat roof structure to the front garden is presumed to be the site office for the contractors.



Fig.27: The windows to the bow are no longer visible in this satellite photograph of June 2023, indicating the bow window is no longer in situ.

Morphology

- 2.15 Originally designed as a generously proportioned semi-detached town house with adjoining no.39, the built form of no.37 Rochdale Road has not been extended. However, the building was remodelled internally in the late 20th century to become the White House Hotel and was subsequently refurbished in the early 21st century. The naming and address of the hotel as White House Hotel 37-39 Rochdale Road may have led to the buildings being overlooked at the earlier time of listing other local buildings by Edgar Wood, as his names for the properties as 'Hillcrest' and 'Briarhill' had been obscured. The hotel closed around the time of the refurbishment and the building became vacant. Following sale by auction, the building is still vacant and awaiting repair and refurbishment.
- 2.16 Despite repairs to the roof and bow window in 2008, settlement cracking led to safety concerns, and the front curved bay was dismantled in 2022 with the masonry set aside for later reinstatement. The garden boundary wall also shows a number of settlement cracks and there are signs of similar movement to other properties along the street, suggesting changes to the local ground conditions over time.
- 2.17 The flanking chimney stacks to the south elevation have been lowered, likely corresponding to the closing off of the fireplaces internally.
- 2.18 In summary, the building footprint is as its original form and consistent with the historic maps for the site. The changes to the building have been predominantly internal, with localised external changes to chimneys and fenestration.

Archive Images



Fig.28: Edgar Wood's original design illustration as featured in the industry magazine 'the Architect', edition 20th October 1893. Of note here is that the banding detail between the windows and the central gable, plus the chequered cornice beneath the central gable are defined with more contrast than is apparent in the as-built red brick and terracotta elevations, where this effect is more subtle owing to its expression in change of format/coursing rather than colour. However, the boundary walls show clearly defined banding in stone, so perhaps there was a change of material choice during construction.

- 2.19 Research by the Edgard Wood Society and others has brought to light published images such as the watercolour illustration above which provide the context for Wood being at the forefront of architectural design in the late 19th and early 20th century.
- 2.20 This image shows the inglenook to the fireplace at Briarhill to the far right of the image, which is notably absent at the southern end of Hillcrest. This would seem to be owing to the requirement for structural ties in this location at Hillcrest, indicating early movement of the structure, as the ties were not present in the image so remedial rather than designed into the scheme.
- 2.21 In the photograph below, the outer flanking chimneys at Hillcrest (left) are taller than their counterparts to the north of Briarhill (right), perhaps giving them more status in lieu of the lack of an inglenook. Edgar Wood did employ subtle deviations from absolute symmetry to give his compositions movement and dynamic interest, so this may have been intentional.



Fig.29: Archive photograph from Middleton Local Studies Library from the 1970s showing the original fenestration of sashes with four panes over one to the majority of the windows and six panes over one to the wider central windows to the frontage and the bay. The upper lights to the windows of Briarhill (right hand half in the photograph) at ground and first floor levels were of stained glass with stylised briar motifs, sadly lost. The polychromatic roof slates are apparent in this photograph. The crown form chimney pots seen here have been retained to the central chimney clusters, but 37 Rochdale Road has since had its outer chimneys lowered.



Fig.30: Archive photograph from Middleton Local Studies Library from the 1980s showing that the windows of 37 Rochdale Road had been replaced by this time and the stone surround to the entrance doorway covered over.

Edgar Wood

- 2.22 Born in 1860, Edgar Wood enjoyed drawing in his youth and although he had artistic talent, he chose to pursue architecture rather than work purely as an artist. His creative endeavours included handicraft work – producing furniture, stained glass, sculpture, metal and plaster work – which would have given him an appreciation of using materials and designing furnishings for his buildings. His artistic background and handiwork was in keeping with the Arts & Crafts ethos, which informed his architectural practice.
- 2.23 By all accounts, Edgar Wood was a talented architect but one who chose smaller projects and worked away from the limelight, and it has only been relatively recently that his contribution to stylistic development on an international level has fully been realised through research. It was this appreciation that has led to the study of the building, its designation and the celebration of his buildings in the local area with special plaques.
- 2.24 David Morris writes “Edgar Wood was a remarkable architect whose work lies mainly in and around his home town of Middleton, midway between Manchester and Rochdale. He was a leading Arts and Crafts practitioner with an international standing yet is almost completely absent from present-day narratives of the movement.”
- 2.25 His artistic flair would have been a contributory factor in his avant-garde approach to his architectural designs, blending motifs and developing transitional styles that led to his work being featured in the international architectural press and thus having a stylistic influence outside the local, regional and national arena.

- 2.26 In 1893, Wood moved his architectural practice from 15 Queen Street, Oldham, to 78 Cross Street, Manchester. As an Arts & Crafts practitioner, he set up an Arts & Crafts association in 1894-1895 and went on to found the Northern Art Workers Guild in 1896 which led to Manchester becoming a creative hub for the region.
- 2.27 He lived in Middleton, and it is here that his buildings are most numerous and form a strong chronological grouping showing the development of his architectural style. Noted for his contribution to the development of the Art Nouveau style and the modernist style of architecture, Wood's architectural influence goes beyond each individual building into the evolution of the wider aesthetic styles on an international basis. This has led to the celebration of buildings by him in his hometown of Middleton, of which nos.37 and 39 Rochdale Road are one.

Owners of Hillcrest and its use

- 2.28 The first owner of Hillcrest was Henry Simpson Batey, residing there with his wife and daughter between 1893 and 1937. He was the warden to the rector of Middleton, the Rev T E Cleworth so Hillcrest was a convenient home for his working life.
- 2.29 The accommodation was generous and allowed for staff quarters to the second floor, family bedrooms to the first floor and family living spaces on the ground floor.
- 2.30 Following Batey's death in 1937, the property left the family and continued as a private residence until the late 20th century when it was converted into the White House Hotel. The generous number of bedrooms on the first and second floors facilitated an easy conversion with the addition of bathroom accommodation. Though regrettably, the work required to achieve this use led to some inappropriate interventions and the modernisation of the interior to the loss of the original interior by Edgar Wood.
- 2.31 In the early 21st century, the hotel closed, and the building has been vacant since. It was sold off to a developer and was in the process of being refurbished when works were halted on safety grounds. The building was then auctioned off to the current client, who seeks to bring it back into beneficial use as two residential dwellings.



5.0 PLANNING LEGISLATION AND POLICIES

Planning Legislation

- 5.1 As the property is a designated heritage asset, works which affect the character or the setting of the listed building should be assessed against the relevant legislation and policies contained in the NPPF as well as policies contained in the local plan.
- 5.2 The legislative framework for the preservation and enhancement of listed buildings is set out in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Historic England, defines preservation in this context, as not harming the interest in the building, as opposed to keeping it utterly unchanged.
- 5.3 In 2014, a ruling by the Court of Appeal (Barnwell Manor Wind Energy Ltd v East Northants District Council, English Heritage and the National Trust) made clear that to discharge this responsibility, decision makers must give considerable importance and weight to the desirability of preserving the setting of listed buildings (and by implication other heritage assets) when carrying out the balancing exercise of judging harm against other planning considerations, as required under the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 5.4 Another ruling made in May 2017 by the Court of Appeal (Barwood Strategic Land II LLP v East Staffordshire Borough Council and the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government), upheld a High Court ruling, that subordinates National Planning Policy Framework development presumptions to the statutory authority of an up-to-date local plan, as the NPPF is no more than ‘guidance for decision-makers, without the force of statute behind it. Paragraph 13 of the decision states, *‘The NPPF is the Government’s planning policy for England. It does not have the force of statute, and, ought not to be treated as if it did. Indeed, as one might expect, it acknowledges and reinforces the statutory presumption in favour of the development plan, and it also explicitly recognizes and emphasizes its own place in the plan-led system of development control. Its “Introduction” acknowledges that “[planning] law requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise”, and that “[the NPPF] must be taken into account in the preparation of local and neighbourhood plans and is a material consideration in planning decisions”. Paragraph 12 recognizes that the NPPF “does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making”. Paragraph 13 describes the NPPF, correctly, as “guidance for local planning authorities and decision-takers”, which, in the context of development control decision-making, is “a material consideration in determining applications”. Paragraph 215, in “Annex 1: Implementation”, says that “due weight should be given to relevant policies in existing plans according to their degree of consistency with [the NPPF] (the closer the policies in the plan to the policies in [the NPPF], the greater the weight that may be given)”*, but this too is guidance for decision-makers, without the force of statute behind it’.



- 5.5 Therefore, by implication, this judgment again emphasises the relative importance of sections 16 and 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 in making planning decisions in relation to development that affects listed buildings and conservation areas. The works preserve the listed building in accordance with Sections 16(2), 66(1) and 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Area) Act (1990), being the minimum statutory test.
- 5.6 Section 16(2) relates to listed building consent applications and determines: “In considering whether to grant listed building consent for any works the local planning authority or the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.”
- 5.7 Section 66(1) relates to planning applications and states, ‘In considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses’.
- 5.8 Section 72(1) relates to land or buildings in a conservation area and states, ‘special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area’.
- 5.9 As a minimum, the tests provided require the works to preserve the listed building, its setting, or the character and appearance of the conservation area. Historic England defines preservation in this context as not harming the interest in the heritage asset(s), as opposed to keeping them utterly unchanged.

National Planning Policy Framework (2024)

- 5.10 As mentioned above, there is a need to carry out a balancing exercise of judging harm against other planning considerations as required under the NPPF. The NPPF sets out the Government’s planning policies for England and how these are to be applied. The guiding principle of the document is a presumption in favour of sustainable development and the protection and enhancement of the historic environment is embedded in this approach.
- 5.11 Sustainable development is defined as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the needs of the future. Paragraph 8 of the NPPF breaks down this definition into three objectives: economic, social, and environmental. Within the environmental objective, sustainable development needs to contribute to ‘protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment’.
- 5.12 Paragraph 20 of the NPPF contains Strategic Policies, which provide an overall strategy for the pattern, scale and quality of development and make sufficient provision for the conservation and enhancement of the natural, built, and historic environment.



- 5.13 Section 16 of the NPPF contains policies relating to conserving and enhancing the historic environment. Within this section (paragraph 207), the Local Planning Authority requires the applicant to describe the significance of any affected heritage asset including any contribution made by their setting as part of an application.
- 5.14 Significance is defined in Annex 2 of the NPPF, as the value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its archaeological, architectural, artistic, or historical interest. Significance also derives not only from the asset's physical presence but also from its setting. Setting of a heritage asset is the surroundings in which the heritage asset is experienced, the extent of which is not fixed and can change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to significance of an asset.
- 5.15 Impact from a proposed development to the significance of a designated heritage asset needs to be evaluated, NPPF paragraph 212, states, 'When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance'. NPPF paragraph 206 identifies that alteration, destruction, or development within the setting of a designated heritage asset can result in harm to, or loss of, the significance of the asset and that such loss requires a clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of a grade II listed building should be exceptional and substantial harm or loss of grade I and grade II* listed buildings should be wholly exceptional.
- 5.16 NPPF Paragraphs 214 and 215 define the levels of harm as substantial or less than substantial. The National Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) provides useful guidance on assessing harm in relation to these definitions and gives the following example, 'In determining whether works to a listed building constitute substantial harm, an important consideration would be whether the adverse impact seriously affects a key element of its special architectural or historic interest. It is the degree of harm to the asset's significance rather than the scale of the development that is to be assessed. The harm may arise from works to the asset or from development within its setting'. The PPG quantifies substantial harm (NPPF paragraph 214) as total destruction while partial destruction is likely to have a considerable impact but, depending on the circumstances, it may still be less than substantial harm or conceivably not harmful at all. Anything less than total destruction needs to be evaluated on its own merits, for example, the removal of elements to an asset which themselves impact on its significance may therefore not be harmful to the asset. The PPG advises works that 'are moderate or minor in scale are likely to cause less than substantial harm (NPPF paragraph 215) or no harm at all'. However, it is important to consider each development in its own context as the PPG also identifies that minor works have the potential to cause substantial harm to the significance of an asset.
- 5.17 Paragraphs 214 and 215 refer to 'public benefit' as a means to outweigh the loss of or harm to a designated heritage asset. The PPG identifies that public benefit may follow many developments and as such this benefit could be anything that delivers economic, social or



environmental progress which are the dimensions to sustainable development defined by NPPF Paragraph 8. The PPG states, 'Public benefits should flow from the proposed development. They should be of a nature or scale to be of benefit to public at large and should not just be a private benefit. However, benefits do not always have to be visible or accessible to the public in order to be genuine public benefit'. Public benefits may include heritage benefits such as:

- Sustaining or enhancing the significance of a heritage asset and the contribution of its setting.
- Reducing or removing risk to heritage asset.
- Securing the optimum viable use of a heritage asset in support of its long- term conservation.

5.18 The three points above relate to NPPF Paragraph 210, which requires the Local Planning Authority to take these points into account when determining applications. Although, there is no defined list of public benefits, examples of public benefit for a designated heritage asset may include:

- The restoration of a listed building.
- The improved setting of a listed building.
- The enhancement of a conservation area.
- Bringing a vacant listed building back into beneficial use.

Local Planning Policy

5.19 As well as legislation and national planning policies, Rochdale Borough Council has a Local Plan which addresses built heritage in general but also identified the importance of Edgar Wood's buildings in Middleton stating: 'Middleton derives much of its identity and visitor appeal from a fascinating heritage, including Edgar Wood's buildings, and conservation initiatives will be supported by the Core Strategy'. The Local Plan policies relevant to 37 Rochdale Road are as follows:

Local Development Plan

Policy P2

P2 - Protecting and enhancing character, landscape and heritage

1. We will protect and enhance the borough's character, the distinctiveness of its town centres, housing areas and countryside, and the qualities of its landscapes, utilising the considerable potential of these assets in development and regeneration schemes. We will do this by:



e. Conserving and enhancing townscape character.

2. We will protect the borough's heritage by:

a. Conserving, enhancing and promoting key heritage assets, both statutory and non-statutory, including consideration of their wider settings. Key heritage assets of the borough include:

i. Four outstanding conservation areas: Central Rochdale, Middleton and Littleborough town centres and Rock Nook / Summit;

ii. Other designated assets such as listed buildings, conservation areas, registered parks and scheduled ancient monuments;

iii. The heritage of the Co-operative movement, the Rochdale Pioneers and the Labour movement;

iv. The Edgar Wood and J. H. Sellers cultural heritage;

v. The heritage of the seventeenth and eighteenth century vernacular tradition; and

vi. The engineering heritage, including mills, canals and railways.

b. Conserving, enhancing and utilising other non-statutory heritage assets of local interest, be they buildings, parks, gardens or archaeological sites, including promoting their sensitive restoration;

c. Using heritage assets positively and intelligently to strengthen identity and image and support the visitor economy, particularly in development and regeneration schemes; and

d. Prioritising the conservation of heritage assets at risk from decay, giving special attention to designated heritage assets in this regard.

G1 - Tackling and adapting to climate change We will address climate change and ensure growth does not increase CO2 emissions by:

Promoting the efficient re-use of buildings, especially those of heritage value, and the recycling of construction waste.



6.0 ASSESSING SIGNIFICANCE

- 6.1 Significance of a heritage asset is defined by the NPPF (2024) as the value of a heritage asset placed on it by current and future generations because of its heritage interest. This interest may be archaeological; architectural; artistic or historical. The setting of a heritage asset also contributes to its significance and is defined by the NPPF as the surrounding in which a heritage asset is experienced. In comparison, Historic England's Conservation Principles (2008) uses evidential; aesthetic; historical and communal values to define significance. These different set of values have been combined for the purpose of this report.
- 6.2 Part 4 of British Standard 7913:2013 Guide to Conservation of Historic Buildings provides information on heritage values and significance. In context, this document states, 'A wide range of factors can contribute to the significance of a historic building. As well as physical components, significance includes factors such as immediate and wider setting, use and association (e.g., with a particular event, family, community or artist and those involved in design and construction)'.
- 6.3 Identifying the values of an asset allow us to understand the degree of significance and inform us of the potential impact the proposed works will have to the heritage asset and its setting. These values may be tangible, the physical fabric of the building, capable of being touched, or viewed such as its landscape. Also, the value may be intangible through a past event or an association with a person.
- Evidential (archaeological) value relates to physical aspects of the site which provide evidence from the past. This can be with built form or below ground archaeology.
 - Historical value is the extent to which the asset is associated with or illustrative of historic events or people.
 - Aesthetic (architectural/artistic) value includes design, visual, landscape and architectural qualities.
 - Communal value includes social, commemorative, or spiritual value, local identity, and the meaning of place for people.
- 6.4 The assessment of significance draws upon information contained in the section on Heritage Assets and uses the values defined above to establish the level of significance detailed below:
- Features of the asset which contribute to the principal historical and architectural interest are considered to be of **high significance**.
 - Features of the asset which noticeably contribute to the overall architectural or historical interest and may include post construction features of historic or design interest are considered to be of **medium significance**.



- Features of the asset which make a relatively minor contribution to the historic and architectural interest are considered to be of **low significance**.
 - Features which do not contribute to the historic and architectural interest of the asset, and in some cases may even detract from the significance are therefore considered to be either **neutral or detracting**.
- 6.5 The primary guiding document for assessing setting is The Setting of Heritage Assets: Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning 3 (2017), produced by Historic England is the primary guiding document for assessing setting.
- 6.6 Setting varies from asset to asset and cannot be generically defined. Changes to the setting of heritage assets may be positive such as replacing poor development which has compromised the assets setting. It is likely that the setting of an asset has changed over time from the dynamics of human activity and natural occurrences such as weather.
- 6.7 The importance setting makes to the contribution to the significance of the heritage asset is often related to how the heritage asset is seen in views. This can include views looking towards the heritage asset or from the heritage asset looking outwards and may include relationships between the asset and other heritage assets, natural or topographical features. Assets may also be intended to be seen from one another in designed landscapes for aesthetic reasons.
- 6.8 Historic England's Good Practice Advice 3, The Setting of Heritage Assets (2017), notes a staged approach to proportionate decision-taking, with relevant NPPF paragraphs along with guidance contained in the National Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) for their implementation, providing the framework for the consideration of changes affecting the setting of heritage assets which should be assessed proportionately and based on the nature, extent, and level of the heritage asset's significance.
- 6.9 The Guidance recommends a five-step approach to the assessment of the effect of development on the setting of heritage assets as follows:
- Step 1:** identify which heritage assets and their settings are affected;
 - Step 2:** assess whether, how and to what degree these settings make a contribution to the significance of the heritage asset(s);
 - Step 3:** assess the effects of the proposed development whether beneficial or harmful, on that significance;
 - Step 4:** explore ways of maximising enhancement and avoiding or minimising harm;
 - Step 5:** make and document the decision and monitor outcomes

Significance of the Heritage Assets

- 6.10 In this section, the significance of the property, the setting and nearby heritage assets are addressed in turn. The listing description for 37 Rochdale Road and other designated assets are included in Appendix **HS1**.

Significance of 37 Rochdale Road

- 6.11 No.37 Rochdale Road forms part of the architectural legacy of Edgar Wood, whose own house, Redcroft, and other buildings located nearby are identified as a group representing an important body of his work. The international influence of Edgar Wood has only recently been understood, as highlighted by the research of the Heritage Trust for the North West which evidenced the publication of Wood's design for nos.37 and 39 Rochdale Road in 'the Architect' British industry magazine in 1893. Wood's watercolour illustration of Hillcrest and Briarhill also featured in '*The American Architect & Building News*' [International Edition] dated 18th November 1893. This published image was uncovered by the Edgar Wood Society during research undertaken in the latter part of 2015 and provides context for Wood's international stylistic influence.
- 6.12 Wood's design would have been seen by significant young British and European architects as a result of being published in these two journals. On one hand, *the Architect* had been supported during this time by Norman Shaw's pupils in the guise of the Architectural Illustration Society and has also been noted as a likely favourite of the young C. R. Mackintosh.¹¹ On the other hand, interest in the U.S. Shingle Style undoubtedly cemented the Boston-based journal's popularity with other contemporaries such as M. H. Baillie Scott and C. F. A. Voysey during the late 1880s and early 1890s (Source: Heritage Trust for the North West).
- 6.13 Furthermore, the Heritage Trust for the North West writes: "Hillcrest & Briarhill had a greater radical edge and a larger number of new forms than most, if not all, of its British equivalents when published in 1893. It was an astonishing design from a continental perspective. Its interest to those following the emergent radicalism in British domestic design - whether they were based at home or in foreign cities such as Brussels, Paris, Darmstadt or Vienna - should therefore not be underestimated or downplayed."
- 6.14 Wood's work was exhibited at the Architectural League of New York in 1900 and at the international exhibitions of Turin and Budapest in 1902. He was published in foreign architectural journals as well as in British publications read abroad. The *Architect and Engineer of California* [Horace G Simpson] used Wood's Long Street Methodist Schools (1899) as late as 1917 to illustrate progressive design in education.
- 6.15 Rochdale Borough Council had already produced signage for the other buildings by Edgar Wood in the locality, identifying them as part of a group and highlighting their significance.



- 6.16 “The discovery that in 1893 Hillcrest & Briarhill were illustrated and described in architectural publications in Britain, USA and across Europe via an International Edition is *game-changing*. Wood’s innovative design for Hillcrest and Briarhill was thus seen by architects across the western world. The influence of the Hillcrest & Briarhill design can therefore be observed at national, regional and local scales. Its pioneering architectonic forms were subsequently used in both art nouveau and art deco design. Hillcrest & Briarhill thus comprise one of the earliest art nouveau designs in the world, fractionally predating Victor Horta’s famous Hotel Tassel, Brussels (UNESCO World Heritage List). They represent a uniquely British approach to art nouveau which adds interest and context to European *fin de siècle*.” Source: Assessment of Significance, Heritage Trust for the North West, 2016.
- 6.17 The physical **evidential value** of 37 Rochdale Road medium externally and low-medium internally. This is owing to the dismantling of the curved bay, currently awaiting reassembly, and the historic replacement of the windows, which have diminished the intactness of the elevations. Internally, several phases of refurbishment have removed almost all of the original interior back to bare brickwork, with only localised fragments of finishes remaining. These include a section of decorative plasterwork work to the stairwell, some lathe and plaster to ceilings and walls, a fragment of decorative paintwork on plaster and damaged glazed tiles from a former hearth.
- 6.18 The **historical value** of 37 Rochdale Road is high, through its association with Edgar Wood and its being part of a key period in which the Art Nouveau style was emerging on an international basis. The building has both high associative and high illustrative value for its position in the chronological development of Wood’s architecture and also within the transition period of stylistic traditions of the time.
- 6.19 The **aesthetic value** of 37 Rochdale Road in its original form would have been high. At the current time, its aesthetic value is low-medium owing to its incomplete state. It is intended to carefully reinstate the curved bay to the front elevation and reinstate brickwork to the rear of the building to return the appearance of the building as closely as possible to its original appearance. This would have the positive impact of increasing its aesthetic value and enhancing both its appearance and significance.
- 6.20 The **communal value** of 37 Rochdale Road relates largely to its group value and the contribution it makes within Middleton Town Centre Conservation Area. The building is directly opposite the listed terrace of houses and shops nos.34-48 Rochdale Road, also by Edgar Wood, and as such is a landmark building for local people.
- 6.21 As a partner building to 39 Rochdale Road, 37 Rochdale Road has group significance, and has further group significance as an important building within the cluster of local buildings designed by Edgar Wood. The publishing of the design by Wood in the international architectural press highlights the cutting edge nature of his design and ascribes international significance to nos.37 and 39 Rochdale Road. The building is also nationally important, as reflected in its statutory listing.



- 6.22 In summary, as a grade II listed building, 37 Rochdale Road is a designated heritage asset of national importance and **high significance**.

Significance of 39 Rochdale Road

- 6.23 The significance of 39 Rochdale Road is attributed to its association with Edgar Wood and its range of heritage values as highlighted below.
- 6.24 The physical **evidential value** of 39 Rochdale Road is high owing to the survival of the external elevations excluding the windows, and its interior detailing as recorded in the listing description. The building also evidences later phases of building works which record the prevailing stylistic fashions and requirements of their respective time periods.
- 6.25 The **historical value** of 39 Rochdale Road is high, through its association with Edgar Wood and its being part of a key period in which the Art Nouveau style was emerging.
- 6.26 The **aesthetic value** of 39 Rochdale Road is high, in particular the Art Nouveau doorway designed by Wood.
- 6.27 The **communal value** of 39 Rochdale Road relates largely to its group value and the contribution it makes within Middleton Town Centre Conservation Area. The building is directly opposite the listed terrace of houses and shops nos.34-48 Rochdale Road, also by Edgar Wood, and as such is a landmark building for local people.
- 6.28 As a partner building to no.37 Rochdale Road, no.39 Rochdale Road has group significance, and has further group significance as an important building within the cluster of local buildings designed by Edgar Wood.
- 6.29 In summary, as a grade II listed building, 39 Rochdale Road is a designated heritage asset of national importance and **high significance**.

Significance of the Setting

- 6.30 The setting of 37 Rochdale Road is of **high significance** as the building is a grade II listed heritage asset and forms part of the grouping with 39 Rochdale Road, and as part of Edgar Wood's local historic buildings.
- 6.31 However, owing to the incomplete phase of building works associated with the previous owner, the garden areas around the property currently have an intrusive impact on the setting of the listed building and its counterpart at no.39 Rochdale Road.
- 6.32 To the front, the building retains the distinctive garden boundary walls designed by Edgar Wood with curved sections between piers separating the front garden from the pavement. To the rear, the garden is essentially a yard with access to the lane beyond and a brick arch separating the two.



- 6.33 The existing landscaping is of poor quality and therefore there is scope to enhance the setting by upgrading both hard and soft landscaping within the proposals.
- 6.34 The wider setting of the building on Rochdale Road comprises the Middleton Town Centre Conservation Area, which is a designated heritage asset and is discussed further below.
- 6.35 The character of the setting is of a residential street interspersed with local shops and amenities. The road is on a bus route and a busy road connecting Middleton with Manchester and Rochdale.
- 6.36 The juxtaposition between 37 and 39 Rochdale Road and neighbouring 33 and 35 Rochdale Road shows two distinct styles by Edgar Wood. Nos. 37 and 39 Rochdale Road are urban in style whereas nos.33 and 35 Rochdale Road are smaller scale and more rural in character. Their contrasting appearance in style, materiality and form creates a lively composition which would almost certainly have been entirely intentional on the part of Wood, and this composition continues on the opposite side of the road with his terrace of nos.34-48.



Fig.31: Photograph showing nos.33 and 35 Rochdale Road (left) in context with nos.37 and 39 Rochdale Road (right). The repair of no.37 Rochdale Road would enhance the setting of nos.33 and 35.

- 6.37 As the setting is integral to the grade II listed building and adjacent listed building and also contributes to the character of the conservation area, the setting is of **high significance**.

Significance of Middleton Town Centre Conservation Area

- 6.38 The boundary of Middleton Town Centre Conservation Area demarcates the historic core of the town and envelops the following buildings by Edgar Wood:
- Semi-detached houses Redcroft and Fencegate, at nos.33 and 35 Rochdale Road designated grade II in 1987 (built 1891)
 - Terraced properties nos.34-48 Rochdale Road (built 1898)
 - Semi-detached houses nos.51 and 53 Rochdale Road (built 1900)
 - Arkholme, Towncoft Avenue designated grade II in 2007 (built 1901, modified 1905)
 - 36 Mellalieu Street designated grade II in 1987 (1906)
- 6.39 As a designated heritage asset, Middleton Town Centre Conservation Area is of **high significance** as the building is a grade II listed heritage asset and forms part of the grouping with 39 Rochdale Road, and as part of Edgar Wood's local historic buildings.

Significance of the Group of Edgar Wood Buildings

- 6.40 As an architect of national and international standing, Edgar Wood is an important architect and to have a large cluster of buildings within a small geographic area in a close chronological sequence is unusual. This gives the cluster of his buildings in Middleton a high group significance as they collectively record his stylistic development.
- 6.41 David Morris writes "A stylistic appraisal of his surviving Middleton area buildings draws attention to his individual development of Arts and Crafts architecture, a pinnacle of which was Long Street Methodist Church and Schools... Finally, a small cluster of Middleton houses summarizes Wood's architectural journey, illustrating his incremental transition from Arts and Crafts to early Modern Movement architecture."
- 6.42 "On Fencegate, Wood used the Briarhill motif of a two-storey bay rising through the eaves to a dormer, repeating it again on 51-53 Rochdale Road to the north, thereby connecting the three quite differently styled buildings. The inspiration for this unusual arrangement may have been Hopwood Hall (listed Grade II*), a multi-phase courtyard house where there are two examples. Its interior has several Jacobean panelled rooms of great individuality, which were once extravagantly supplied with matching furniture. Wood made sketches of the joinery, implying that it was also a source of his Jacobean motifs."
- 6.43 Whilst all of Wood's buildings in Middleton form a group as a body of work by one architect, Morris identifies a common motif between nos.33-35, nos.37-39 and no.51-53 Rochdale Road which creates a sub-group of semi-detached properties of stylistic significance within his portfolio of residential properties.
- 6.44 Therefore, no.37 has group value with no.37 as a cojoined semi-detached property, as well as wider group value with nos.33-35 and nos.51-53. The relationship no.37 has with these neighbouring and nearby buildings adds to its historic context and significance.



7.0 PROPOSED WORKS AND ASSESSMENT

Current Context

- 7.1 The building is currently vacant with the window openings to the rear boarded over, temporary protection to the roof and doorways secured against trespassers. The previously dismantled front bay is being stored inside the building for future reinstatement.



Fig.32: Front elevation showing the condition of the building with front bay removed and security boarding to doors and windows. This view shows the boundary wall to the street.

- 7.2 There are localised condition issues relating to settlement cracking, vegetation growth and blocked rainwater goods. Internally, the building has suffered damage from water ingress to the rear at second floor level, rot to a section of timber cornice and pigeon guano. Urgent works were identified for removal of the rotten timber to prevent spread and also work to secure the temporary roof covering to the rear, plus resealing of openings.

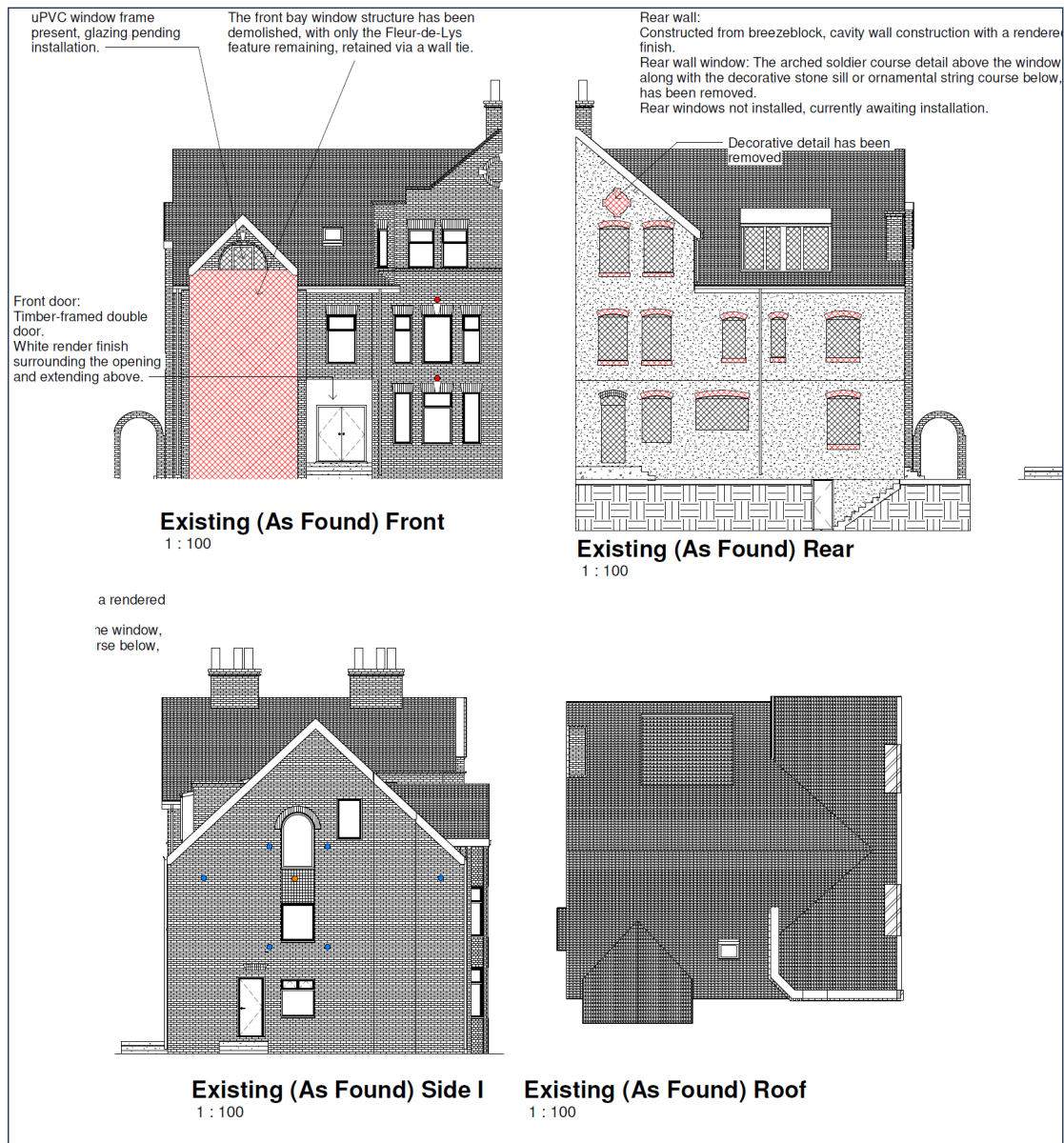


Fig.33: Existing 'As Found' elevations and roof plan, with the red hatching identifying missing features.

- 7.3 Internally, the building has been stripped back to bare brick and floor boards by the previous owners. Structural steelwork was installed to the northern end of the building on the second floor. It was noted that some of the structural ties in the building had been cut, which would likely have contributed to some of the movement in the structure. Thomasons, a CARE Accredited Structural Engineer, are providing specialist structural input for the historic structure and their report should be referred to for more information on this aspect.

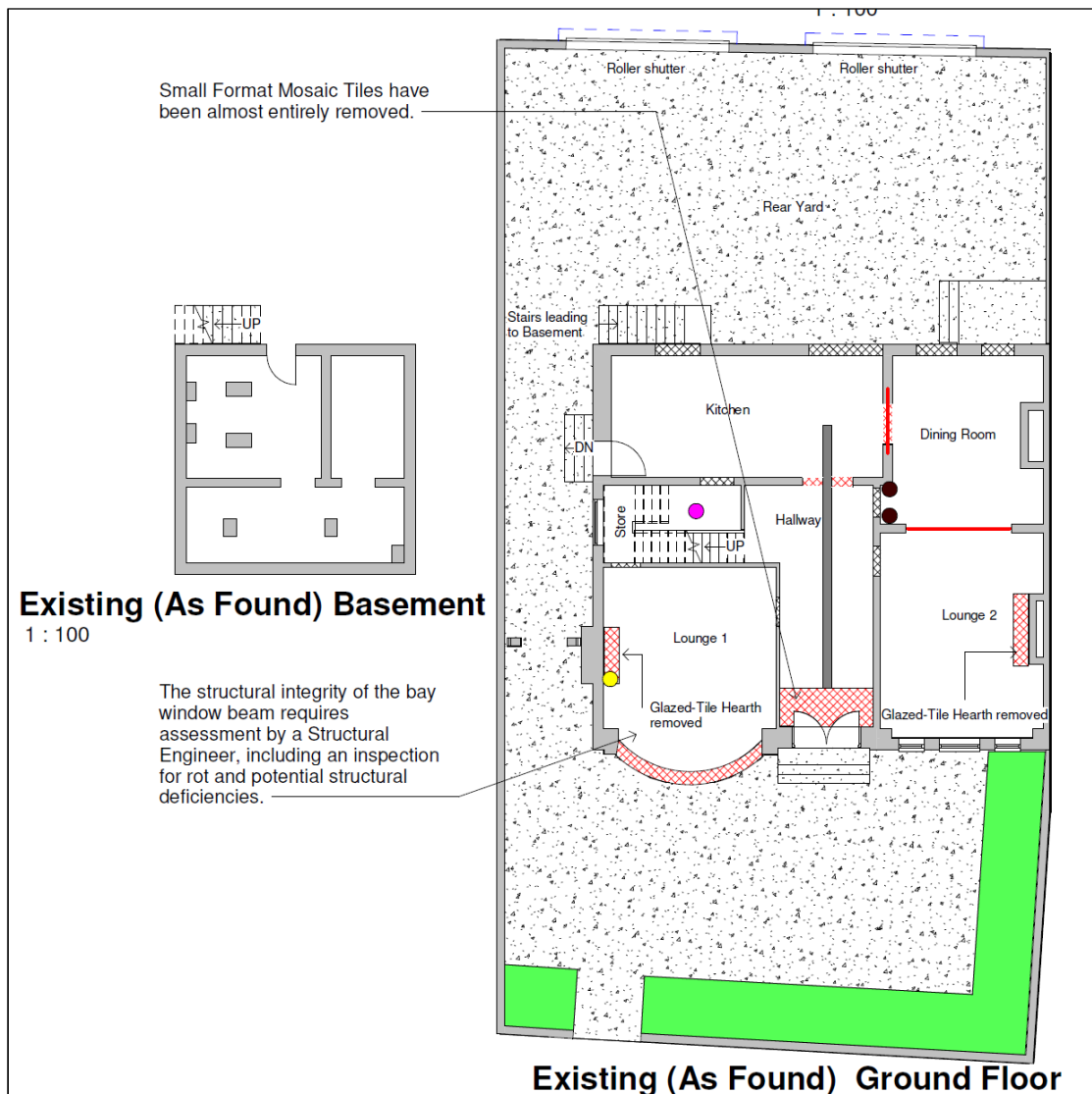


Fig.34: Existing 'As Found' floor plans, with the red hatching identifying missing features, removal of internal walls and flooring associated with the previously implemented works.

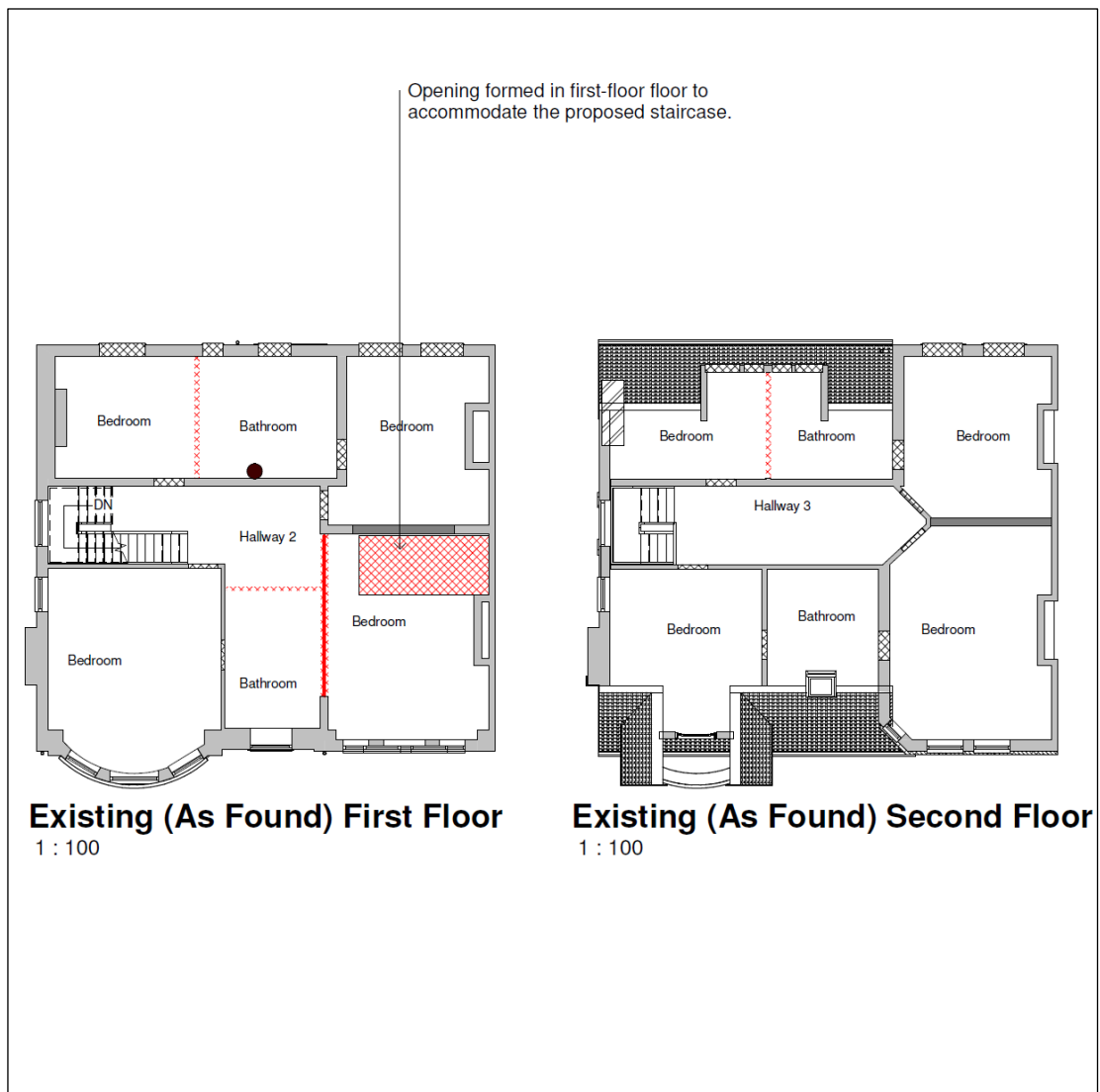


Fig.35: Existing 'As Found' floor plans, with the red hatching identifying missing features, removal of internal walls and flooring associated with the previously implemented works.

- 7.4 Wood designed the building with six bedrooms on the first floor and six bedrooms on the second floor, with fire places to the four bedrooms in the corners of the property on both floors and with the smaller inner bedrooms being unheated in both. These smaller bedrooms lent themselves to being bathrooms in the later hotel configuration.
- 7.5 The building requires extensive work to bring it back into a habitable condition, including new building services, and also to raise both the condition and improve the appearance of the building commensurate with its significance with appropriate new finishes throughout.
- 7.6 The proposals for the refurbishment of the building have been developed in dialogue with Rochdale Borough Council, with the aim of restoring the external elevations back to their original appearance as closely as possible and for the interior to be made liveable. The proposals for achieving this aim are outlined below.

Proposed Works

- 7.11 The client seeks to proceed with the principle of sub-division of the property into two apartments as per the previously approved scheme. However, the detailing of the sub-division has been reviewed following careful consideration of heritage constraints on site, so there are some changes when comparing the current proposals with the previous owner's scheme.
- 7.12 The existing front entranceway will be the primary entrance to both properties, with a shared lobby behind to access the two front doors. A sub-dividing party wall between the two entrance doors divides the hallway in two to form the separate access routes into the proposed two dwellings.
- 7.13 The existing internal wall layout has largely been retained so as to minimise the changes to the listed building.
- 7.14 Externally, the proposals focus on the repair of the elevations with the reinstatement of the double height curved bay to the principal elevation to Rochdale Road, the masonry for which is stored on site, and remedial work to the rear elevation.
- 7.15 The rear elevation was rebuilt by the previous owner in blockwork. It is proposed to remove the outer blockwork leaf replace it with brickwork detailed to match no.39, including the reinstatement of features that have been lost. The aim is to enhance the appearance of the rear elevation by reinstating its original character as closely as possible. This will include the installation of timber window frames on this elevation, and the opportunity to improve the performance of the external envelope will be taken by incorporating insulation to the cavity as part of the rebuilding works.



Fig.36: Proposed elevations showing the reinstatement of the bay to the front elevation and doorway to match no.39 Rochdale Road (left), and the rebuilding of the rear elevation in brickwork with new timber framed windows and reinstatement of arched brick window heads and decorative motif. The dormer window is also being replaced.



Fig.37: Proposed side elevation and roof plan. The side elevation has a new door but is otherwise as existing. The roof is being repaired with minimal changes: renewal of the existing rooflight and replacement of the dormer window on a like for like basis.

- 7.16 The existing windows to the front elevation will be retained, however the curved bay will require new windows which will be in timber to enhance the presentation of the listed building. The drawing by Wood gives the original glazing appearance which will be matched as closely as possible.
- 7.17 Localised repointing works will be undertaken where repairs are required along with replacement of rainwater goods and rodding of the drainage system to ensure effective rainwater disposal. Replacement of poor quality cementitious repairs associated with previous alterations will be made good in matching brick and lime mortar to prevent future condition issues associated with hard cement.
- 7.18 Internally, all surviving lathe and plaster walls and ceilings will be retained and repaired in situ like for like. Exposed brickwork and blockwork walls will be replastered with reinstatement of suitable skirting and cornice details to resemble the archive images of the building's interior.

Assessment and Impact

- 7.19 Reinstatement of the bow window bay to the front elevation will enhance the both the aesthetic appearance and functionality of the building by completing the external envelope to the front elevation. Arguably the most important part of the building, the front elevation also forms the setting of no.39 Rochdale Road, so this reinstatement benefits both buildings. This work would constitute an enhancement to the existing condition and presentation of the listed building and its co-listed semi-detached partner building.

7.20 Rebuilding of the outer leaf of the rear wall would similarly enhance the aesthetic appearance of the building and bring it back to a closer match with the original exposed brick elevation. Again, this reinstatement of brickwork, including arched window heads and decorative ring motif would be an enhancement to the building and in turn raise its significance. Whilst original fabric has been lost in previous work, reinstatement in commensurate materials will enable the representation of the building close to its original form and would undo the intrusive alteration of the rendered blockwork outer leaf by the previous owners.

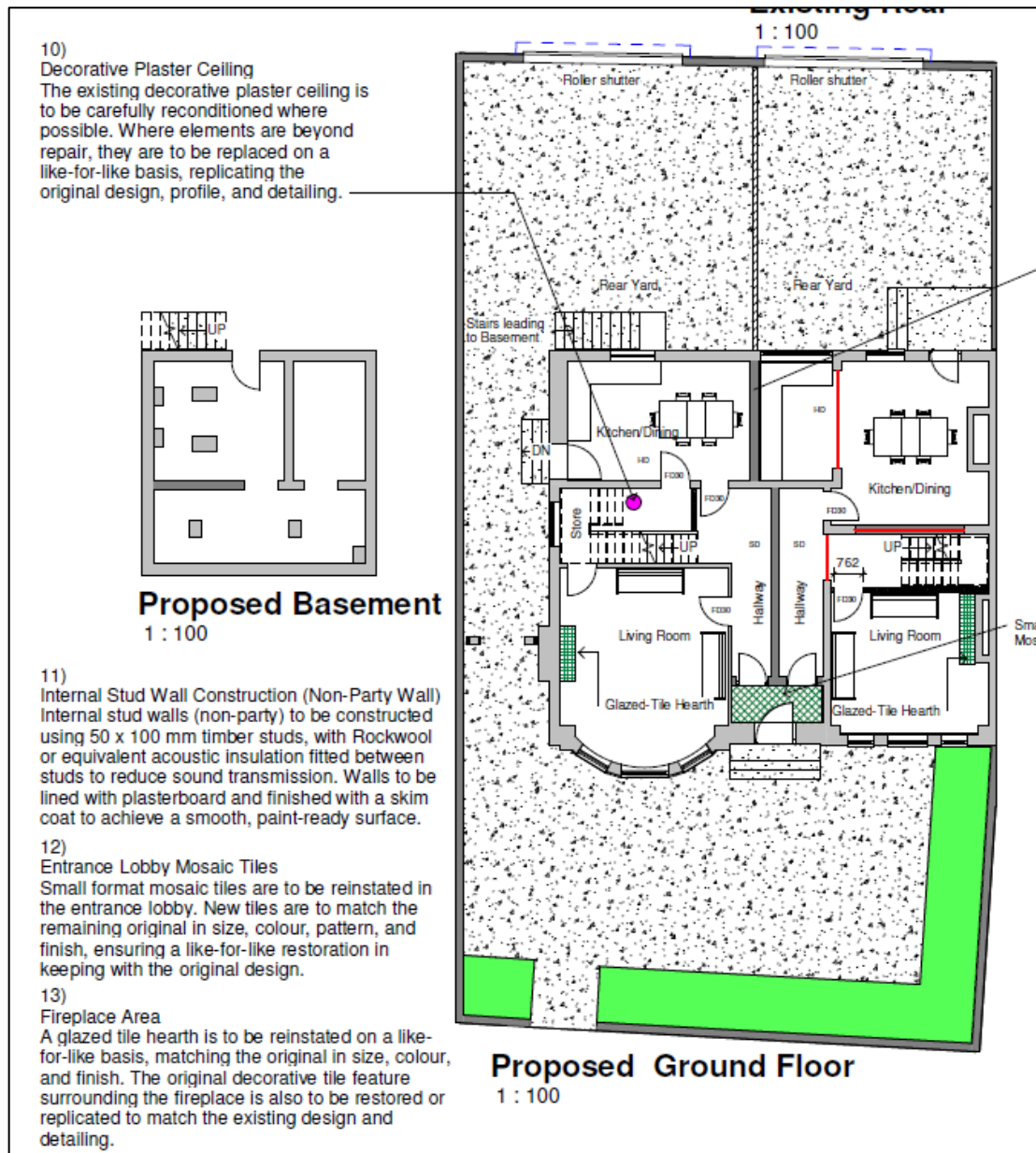


Fig.38: Proposed ground and basement floor plans.

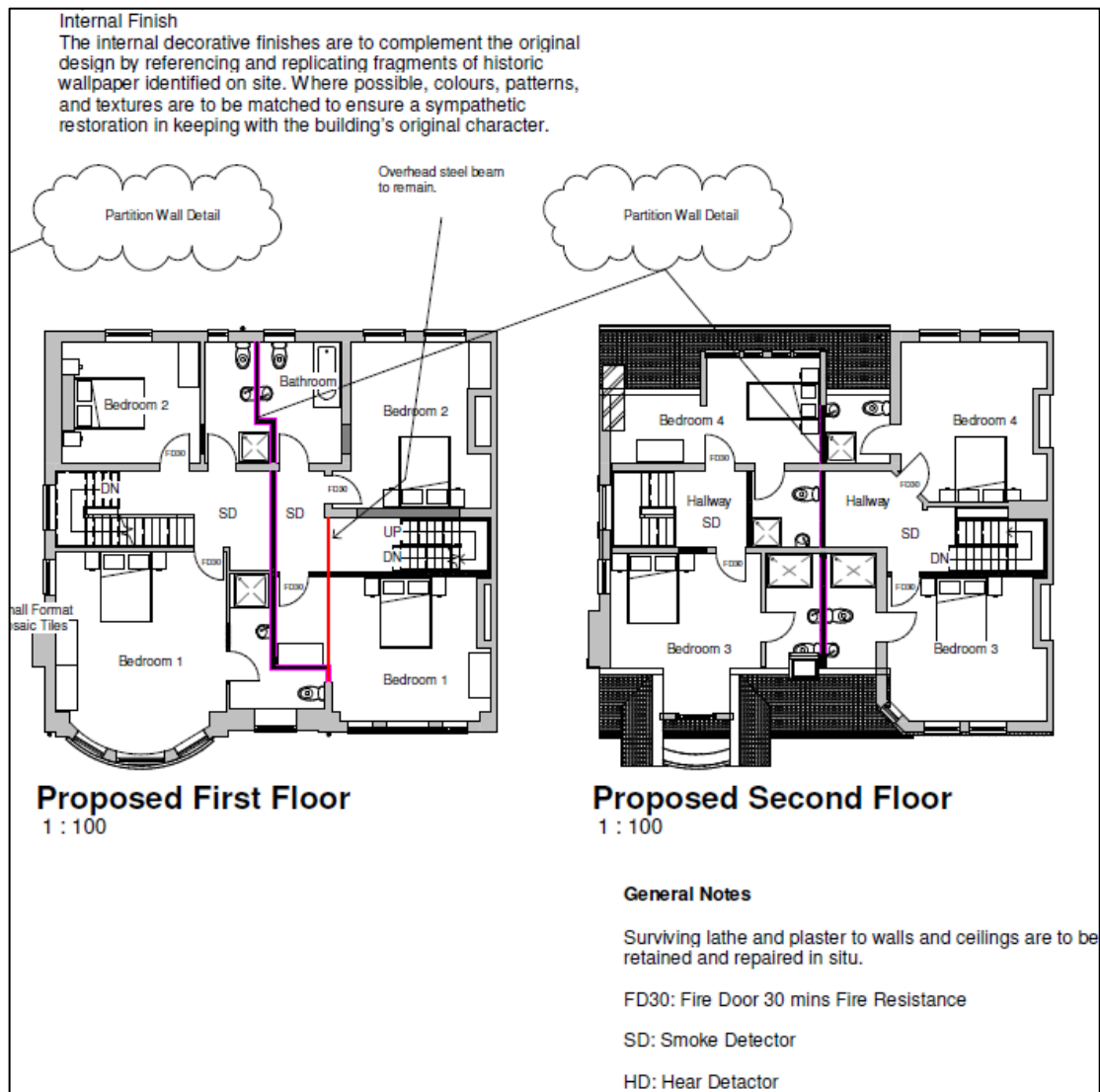


Fig.39: Proposed first and second floor plans.

- 7.21 By providing timber windows to the bare openings, the original fenestration pattern can be reintroduced to further enhance the building's appearance and reinstate the appearance as designed by Edgar Wood. This would have a positive impact on the appearance and significance of the building.
- 7.22 Internally, the original wall layout will be respected and the new accommodation configured accordingly. However, owing to structural concerns, it could be detrimental to remove the blockwork inserted in the previous phase of works as it could cause further damage to the building. Therefore, it was agreed on site with Rochdale Borough Council that the internal blockwork can be retained, but any new work would be in traditional and compatible materials.
- 7.23 The works will involve structural repairs to address the settlement damage and counter the effects of the structural ties being cut. This would be as per the advice of a CARE Accredited structural engineer to ensure that the solution is appropriate for the historic fabric and building technology employed in the construction.

- 7.24 As the interior fixtures and fittings had already been removed at the time of purchase, there is insufficient material available on site for matching and reinstating of those features. However, the green glazed hearth tiles to the ground floor front room will be matched as closely as possible for a restoration of that fireplace, which would be aesthetic only as the chimney has been closed off in previous repair work.
- 7.25 Where lathe and plaster remains to walls and ceilings, this will be retained and repaired in situ. Of particular note, is the section of decorative plaster ceiling in the stairwell at ground floor level where damage can be carefully repaired and missing portions sensitively replicated to consolidate and complete the ceiling. This would preserve and enhance this original feature.
- 7.26 The survival of a fragment of the original painted decorative scheme of a rose is on plaster and therefore most likely original to the building and may therefore be part of Edgar Wood's decorative design. Its preservation within a frame was deemed inappropriate by the local authority as it could more easily be removed from the building and lost. A means for securing it in situ and protecting it will involve advice from a conservation specialist.
- 7.27 Bringing the listed building back into beneficial use is vital for its ongoing conservation, as habitation helps to create a stable internal environment and encourages maintenance activities to be carried out regularly, two aspects that vacant buildings do not benefit from. Making the listed building habitable is therefore a public benefit.



Fig.40: Comparison of the previously approved floor plans and the current proposed plans showing only minor adjustments to the internal partitions, for example on the first floor to avoid sub-division on the line of the window. The proposals are therefore very similar to the previously approved scheme.

- 7.28 The subdivision of the building has already been partially implemented, and the scheme had obtained approval from the local authority previously indicating that the principle of subdivision was acceptable in heritage terms with regards to both the NPPF and local planning policy. With there being a total of 12 bedrooms in the property as originally designed, it is unusually large in the area, hence its suitability for previous use as a hotel. Two smaller homes would provide a more balanced number of bedrooms to more easily find new residents to occupy the homes.
- 7.29 Whilst there would be physical intervention in localised parts of the interior of the building relating to the subdivision, the exterior requires very little change, which is fortunate as it is more sensitive to change owing to it containing more original fabric. Furthermore, works to the exterior would impact on the other half of the listed building at no.39 Rochdale Road, so changes that deviate from the original should be kept to an absolute minimum to retain the relationship and designed composition.
- 7.30 Overall, the proposed works to the listed building will have a positive impact on the condition and appearance of the building by reinstating its original appearance as closely as possible and securing its long term future in its original use as a residential property. The proposal would also enhance the setting of the neighbouring listed building no.39 Rochdale Road, as well as improving the presentation of the building within the Conservation Area.
- 7.31 No.37 Rochdale Road is an important contributor to the Middleton Town Centre Conservation Area, so its enhancement with the reinstatement of original features would be beneficial to the character of the Conservation Area and also enhance the setting of neighbouring heritage assets nos.33 and 35 Rochdale Road (grade II listed), and nos.34-38 Rochdale Road opposite. In short, the proposals benefit the listed building itself and all the related heritage assets, designated or otherwise.



8.0 CONCLUSION

- 8.1 Paragraph 208 of the NPPF advises Local Planning Authorities that the significance, including setting of any heritage asset relating to the proposals is assessed. This document has described the heritage assets within the environs of the proposed works, and their significance.
- 8.2 It is understood that that clients have inherited the building as a shell and are making best endeavours to work closely with Rochdale Borough Council and heritage specialists to ensure the building is cared for appropriately and works implemented to the required standard.
- 8.3 The proposals seek to repair the listed building and reinstate the dismantled bow window on the principal elevation, along with remedial works to the rear of the building to reinstate its original character and appearance as closely as possible using original material for the bow and commensurate materials for the rear. The internal works utilise the existing wall layout to ensure that it is preserved, along with retention and in situ repair of existing lathe and plaster and surviving fragments of the original decorative scheme.
- 8.4 With regards to the proposal meeting the statutory tests provided by Section 16(2), 66(1) and 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the minimum requirement is to preserve the setting; building; features of special architectural or historic interest of listed buildings. In this context, on balance the proposal preserves the special interest in the grade II listed building for the reasons described above and in section 7 of this report.
- 8.5 It should be remembered that Historic England defines preservation in this context as not harming interest in the heritage assets, as opposed to keeping them unchanged.
- 8.6 With regards to NPPF paragraphs 205-208, public benefit is required to offset any harm caused to designated heritage assets. As the listing description notes, the interior is almost devoid of historic features, and the existing wall layout is only incurring minor localised changes in the proposal, so that the impact of internal works is minimal. The level of harm associated with the sub-division is considered to be **low and less than substantial**, with the following public benefit identified to **offset the low level of harm**:
- Bringing the vacant listed building back into optimal use
 - Enhancing the appearance and setting of listed building 37 Rochdale Road
 - Enhancing the setting of listed building 39 Rochdale Road
 - Enhancing the setting of listed building nos. 33 and 35 Rochdale Road
 - Enhancing the setting of the Middleton Town Centre Conservation Area
- 8.7 In regard to local policies, the local plan states that proposals must preserve the special interest of the listed building as well as its setting. The proposals achieve compliance with this policy through design choices which have been informed by an understanding of the significance, character, and morphology of the property. As the proposal does not include



works to the principal elevation of the building or which are visible from the public realm, the character and appearance and important views through the area will not be impacted; the special interest of the listed building and its setting is therefore preserved.

- 8.8 In conclusion, the proposed works meet the requirements of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Area) Act 1990, the NPPF, and local planning policies. It is therefore requested that the listed building consent application be approved.



9.0 SOURCES

Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (2024), *National Planning Policy Framework*.

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Area) Act 1990

Ordnance Survey maps (various dates)

Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (2018) <http://planning.guidance.communities.gov.uk/blog/guidance/conserving-and-enhancing-the-historic-environment/> / National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2019 revision) / National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG 2019) / National Design Guide (2019)

Historic England (2017) *The Setting of Heritage Assets: Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning 3 (Second Edition)*

Historic England (2008) *Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment*

Historic England Advice Note 10 on Listed Buildings and Curtilage (2018)

Assessment of Significance, Heritage Trust for the North West (2016)



HS1

Listing Descriptions

Listed Building Name	Hillcrest and Briarhill
Address	Statutory Address 1: 37 Rochdale Road, Middleton, Rochdale, M24 2PT Statutory Address 2: 39 Rochdale Road, Middleton, Rochdale, M24 2PT
List Entry Number	1447739
Grade	II
Date First Listed	05 September 2017
National Grid Reference	TL8478133930

Listing Description

Summary

A semi-detached pair of houses of 1892 by internationally-renowned architect Edgar Wood, in red brick with slate roofs and with highly individual and innovative design including elements found in the earliest Art Nouveau houses in the world.

Reasons for Designation

Hillcrest and Briarhill, a semi-detached pair of houses of 1892 by Edgar Wood, are listed at Grade II for the following principal reasons:

Architectural interest: * As an excellent example of innovative design for the period, sharing many characteristics with the most avant-garde designs of the time in continental Europe and anticipating elements of the architect's later pioneering Modernist design;

* For the good survival of the internal plan-form and retention of many interior decorative features, particularly at Briarhill;

* For the strong visual and historical relationship with the adjacent pair of Redcroft and Fencegate (NHLE no. 1162377) by the same designer (who lived in Redcroft until 1916), and close proximity and shared features with two of Wood's other listed buildings at 51-53 Rochdale Road (NHLE no. 1356254), and Arkholme (NHLE no. 1391983);

Historical interest: * For their attribution to the internationally-renowned architect Edgar Wood.

History

Hillcrest and Briarhill (Nos 37 and 39 Rochdale Road, respectively) were built in 1892, the year after the adjacent Redcroft and Fencegate (NHLE no. 1162377); the architect, Edgar Wood, lived in Redcroft until 1916. With their Art Nouveau features Hillcrest & Briarhill are among the earliest such designs in the world, fractionally predating Victor Horta's Hotel Tassel in Brussels (UNESCO World Heritage List). In 1893, Hillcrest and Briarhill were illustrated and described in architectural publications in Britain, the USA and Europe.

Hillcrest's first owner, Henry Simpson Batey, lived there until his death in 1937. In the late C20 it became the White House Hotel. In the early C21 it underwent substantial renovation. The hotel ceased trading early in the C21 and is presently (2017) unoccupied. After a short occupancy by Arthur Edwin Jones, Briarhill was lived in by Thomas Mills Chadwick, and later two of his daughters, from around 1900 until 1960. It is still a family home.

The first map on which the houses are marked is the 1909 1:2,500 Ordnance Survey map. This shows the L-shaped ancillary building in the rear garden of Briarhill, continuing (as a linear range only) in the garden of Hillcrest, where its southern end is aligned with a wall running from the rear of the house. A similar cross-wall divided the front garden into a small northern portion and a larger southern one. The northern boundary of Briarhill's garden lay further to the north than at present, with a second ancillary building in the north-west angle, linked to the north-west corner of the house by a short wall dividing the front garden from the rear. A small rear porch is shown to Briarhill only. The 1922 edition shows the same arrangement, with the addition of a wall at Hillcrest dividing front from rear gardens, just forward of halfway along the end wall. The 1955 1:1,250 map does not mark the rear porch or any of the garden dividing walls. Maps of 1960 and 1970 show the same.

Externally, both houses have had nearly all of their sash windows replaced with casements (in PVC at Hillcrest and timber at Briarhill). Sadly, at Briarhill, this removed the bulk of what might have been the first comprehensive Art Nouveau glazing scheme in the world, in which the upper sashes of the front windows had sinuous glazing bars and upper lights filled with leaded and coloured glass in a stylised representations of briars. Large timber gates have been replaced by slender

modern metal versions, and the railings within the boundary wall cut-outs are not original. All of the rainwater goods and their ornamental fixings have been repainted in alternatives to their original white colour, and some replaced in PVC. The site has varying ground conditions, and measures to combat differential movement were integrated during the build, probably because movement began to occur almost immediately. Numerous ties run through the building, with decorative pattress plates on the elevations.

Hillcrest has had major internal works including some drylining and tiling, and has lost most, but not all, of its interior features. A small area of surviving painted plaster shows it originally had a sophisticated Art Nouveau painted scheme. A recess on the back wall of the dining room (probably originally with a serving hatch) is now knocked through to the kitchen. Externally, the two tall end chimneys were lowered in 2008 to the level of the roof and slated over. The Hillcrest entrance Art Nouveau stone panel has been covered over, but remains intact. The rear wall of the house and the garden walls have been rendered.

Briarhill's chimneys are only partly lowered. Several original internal doors have been boarded with hardboard and some fireplaces have been removed. Interior pine woodwork, originally transparent-varnished, has been painted or stained in darker colours. In the morning/withdrawing room the chimney breast of the semi-inglenook fireplace has been removed, and as with Hillcrest, the recess on the back wall of the dining room is now knocked through to the kitchen. The original plaster at Briarhill appears to have survived beneath subsequent wallpaper, and it is believed that a similar painted colour scheme to that of Hillcrest survives much more intact here.

Edgar Wood (1860-1935) was born and educated in Middleton, Lancashire. After qualifying as an architect in 1885, he established a practice in Middleton and then subsequently at Oldham and Manchester. Pevsner described him as the most progressive of all Edwardian architects whose designs were at the cutting edge of European contemporary architecture, and he gained a considerable national and international reputation, notably in Germany. A highly individualistic architect, he is internationally recognised as a pioneer of Modernism, his style developing through the idiosyncratic application of vernacular features, Arts and Crafts design, and an Art Nouveau style largely independent of continental influence. He is noted for his use of broad surfaces making use of colour, texture and massing rather than applied ornament for visual interest, but this is the

only known example of his work where this is achieved in bright red brick. His designs, with individualistic and efficient internal plans influencing the overall form of the building, were unconventional at the time. During his career, Wood designed many highly-regarded buildings; more than 45 are currently listed, seven at Grade II* and three at Grade I.

Details

A pair of semi-detached houses of 1892, by Edgar Wood.

MATERIALS: Ruabon brick and terracotta, red brick, stone, Welsh and Westmorland slate.

PLAN: a rectilinear range aligned roughly north-south, with central cross-wing.

EXTERIOR: standing to the west of Rochdale Road and immediately to the north of the pair 'Redcroft and Fencegate' (Nos. 33 and 35 Rochdale Road) and a short distance to the south of 'The Studio' and Nos. 51 and 53 Rochdale Road, all by the same architect and all listed.

The front faces east to the road and comprises a central three-storey cross-wing, with a block of two storeys plus an attic to each side. The walling is in orange Ruabon brick and terracotta (some painted), the roofing in five different colours of Welsh and Westmorland slate, laid randomly and with blue clay crested ridging including occasional decorative finials. Unless otherwise stated, windows are modern casements (in PVC at Hillcrest and timber at Briarhill).

The central block is gabled with a ball finial and kneelers, and has canted corners where it projects above the roofs to either side. Above this can be seen the front face of a chimney stack of Ruabon brick with a cornice and string course. The upper storey has a window in each canted face, each with two windows adjacent on the front face, with a terracotta sill-band. The first and ground floor each have two triple windows, each window having a single terracotta sill. The lintels are all slightly-projecting, splayed brick very shallow segmental arches, except for the front windows of the top floor which have flush, flat brick lintels. The central lintels of each window of the lower two floors have projecting brick 'keystones'.

The central gable has three bands of square terracotta blocks, the lowest of which is aligned with a blind oculus with projecting keystones at the compass points. Below the oculus, a further band

runs out on either side to form the top course of a parapet, which has the same terracotta coping as the gable. Below this solid course, the parapet comprises three bands of alternating square blocks and brick panels of equal size, each band slightly offset from the one below; in the central area they are offset to the right, but on the canted corners and the side returns, offset to the left of the band below. A string course matching the coping forms the base of the parapet. Each storey has two bands of square blocks running across the windows; the brickwork is all in stretcher bond.

Each side block comprises an entrance bay with a first-floor window, and a gabled bay with a two-storey bow front with a parapet partly concealing an attic window in the gable. The entrance bays are slightly recessed and have the same detailing as the central block. The bow fronts however are in header bond, and divided into three by slender brick pilasters between the windows and at the outer edges, where they are angled. The pilasters are enlivened by sloping terracotta blocks, flush at the top and projecting at the base, which are placed just below the lintels of each storey. The parapet is coped, with capitals to each pilaster. All the lintels are flush brick with projecting terracotta keystones, and terracotta sills match the coping. The attics have Diocletian windows (original at Briarhill, with a six-light central casement). A low projecting plinth runs across the frontage. Pattress plates of three different designs are distributed symmetrically across the façade, those over the central ground-floor bow windows with characteristic Art Nouveau lines. Briarhill retains original cast-iron rainwater goods with hopper heads and some fixing plates in flowing Art Nouveau style.

The left entrance surround is concealed by white-painted render and has a projecting concrete doorcase. The right entrance (to Briarhill) retains its original Art Nouveau character, although the surround is faced in later tiles. An exaggerated keystone is carved with lilies. Beneath this is an overlight of five lights, with a basket-arch head and flowing transom which is gently-arched in the centre. The overlight is leaded, and retains coloured tulips from the original glazing scheme. The door is part-glazed, with a three-light oval window in the upper section, three lights below this with concave heads following the curve of the window above, a transom with decorative letterbox retaining briar decoration, and three rectangular lights at the foot. Three-light sidelights reach down to transom level, where the surround steps in.

A short return at the left is in the same stretcher-bond Ruabon brickwork, changing to dark red common brick at the full height chimney breast, now slated over. Adjacent to the left of the

chimney breast is an attic window. Slightly to the left of the ridge is the stair window, in a double-height opening with Ruabon brick round-arched lintel and projecting blocks in the manner of a Gibbs surround, and two lights divided by a central panel of hung slates. Below this at ground floor is an inserted window (over-boarded at the time of inspection) with a blocked basement window below, and to the left a side door inserted across a blocked former window, with concrete steps. The truncated rear chimney stack projects just inside the verge, at the left; its front (east) face has a recessed central channel, the remnant of what was originally a single tall blind arch. Four pattress plates of the same design are distributed evenly around the stair window, with one between the ground and first floor in the Ruabon section at the right, and another at the same height at the extreme left. Rising from the ridge of the central block are the south faces of two other eight-flue stacks; the right-hand (front) one of Ruabon brick and blind-arcaded with a cornice and a string course forming the imposts for the arches, and six crown pots; the left-hand one of common brick with a string course and cornice and six crown pots.

Returning at the left again, the rear is a simplified version of the front façade. At the left the common brickwork is visible, to the right it is concealed by white-painted render. The whole wall is flush, with no canted corners to the second floor, and sloping dormers to the attic. Each house has its own small oculus window in the gable, which has projecting purlins supporting overhanging verges; the oculi each have keystones at N, E and W compass points only. A very small square chimney stack projects from the left-hand eaves of the gable, and is truncated. At the left and right verges are the truncated rear chimney stacks, each with a recessed central channel which originally had an arched head. The west face of the rear stack of the central block is the same as its south face, with string course and cornice.

Within this rear face, Briarhill is divided into four bays, with a window at ground and first floor in bays (from the left) 1 and 2, a window at first floor and an entrance with side light in bay 3, and in bay 4, two windows at each of the three floors. Sills are plain stone, all with white paint*, and the lintels are all segmental arches of Ruabon headers. The entrance has an overligh of four lights and a four-panelled door with an upper vision-light of five fanned panes. Cast-iron rainwater goods remain in place. Cellar windows are found in bays 1 and 2, with small areas and both retaining original casement windows. The rear of Hillcrest originally mirrored that of Briarhill but the ground-floor window in (from the right) bay 2 is blocked, the former entrance in bay 3 has been converted

to a window, and in bay 4 one window has been lowered and the other converted to a doorway. There is also a cellar entrance in bay 1, accessed by steps from the south, and a window with an area in front of it in bay 2.

Returning to the left, the north wall of Briarhill is stylistically similar to the south wall of Hillcrest, but with some significant differences. At the left, the chimney breast is much wider and in Ruabon brick. A narrower stack rises from eaves level, also in Ruabon brick, and continues above the verge, although it is truncated above this. The chimney breast has a parapet with terracotta copings at eaves level, which steps up adjacent to the stack. A central pilaster is also coped at eaves level, giving these steps the appearance of merlons in a crenellated parapet. An attic window mirrors that of Hillcrest, with a stone lintel and terracotta sill. Adjacent to the chimney breast, the stair window is also double-height, but the projecting blocks of the surround are of white-painted stone and continue around the arched head, with moulded imposts. The upper window is an original, horned vertical sliding sash with four panes in the upper light and a single-pane lower light, and has a moulded stone sill. Between this and the first-floor window (a replacement casement) is a panel of fish-scale slates, now painted red. The lower window has a plain stone sill. Beneath this the brickwork above the side-entrance surround is rendered and painted. The entrance has a similar surround to the stair window, with moulded imposts to the basket arch with keystone. Like the front entrance, the surround steps in at sill-level of the sidelight, with imposts at this level. The fascia over the door has carved scrolls meeting in the centre. The door has two vertically-boarded horizontal panels and an eight-light oval vision panel, and original knocker. To the right of the doorway is a slender window with arched head matching the blocked window on Hillcrest's south face, and plain stone sill. Pattress plates match those of Hillcrest's south wall.

INTERIOR: The interior to Hillcrest is largely devoid of historic features, but a small patch of decoratively-painted plaster survives, and a small area of Lincrusta wallpaper with a strapwork design incorporating fleurs-de-lys, together with some cornices (above later inserted ceiling frames), quarry-tile floors (some over-tiled), lath-and-plaster partitions and some window architraves. The original internal plan-form, mirroring that of Briarhill, is however largely intact.

Briarhill's interior is relatively little-altered and retains several key elements of its original Art

Nouveau decoration. As in Hillcrest the innovative and highly efficient plan-form remains largely intact, in which the entrance hall continues through to a rear access, crossing the foot of the stair that runs across the house. A side entrance under the stairs connects with the hall, and accesses service rooms arranged along the rear wall. Beyond the stair, the entrance hall forms a lobby which connects a secondary kitchen door to the rear entrance. The entrance hall in particular forms a set-piece in which Elizabethan and Jacobean influences are combined to create an Art Nouveau overall aesthetic. The arched ceiling matches the profile of the fanlight and is thickly decorated with plasterwork flowering plants, while the doorways have lintels with pointed upward-curving heads. The cellar door is original, with three horizontal panels, the bottom one having the same upward-curving point as the door head. The morning/drawing room retains the projecting ceiling to its ingle nook, which is individualistically decorated with slender pilasters with capitals. The bow window, which gives maximum direct sunlight in the morning, has a double arch which springs from imposts which also have upward-curving chevron-type mouldings. The stair is original and overtly vernacular in character, with a heavy newel with a delicate turned centre and a turned cylindrical finial. The moulded handrail is supported by plain posts with a mid-rail, and unmoulded chunky scrolls run beneath the handrail to the posts. Pendants and embedded half-finials match the newel. Modern kitchen fittings have been inserted in the former rear lobby. The original kitchen retains its original cast-iron cooking range faced with rich ceramic tiles.

Elsewhere including the upper floors the interior retains many features of interest including the majority of the good-quality internal timber door and window surrounds, skirtings and ceilings, covings and mouldings, original doors (some with later over-boarding), and at least two original fireplaces. Archaeological survey indicates that the original plaster remains, and given the high likelihood that this house had a similar painted colour scheme to that of Hillcrest, this is likely to survive much more intact beneath the subsequent wallpaper. The cellar also retains some original flooring, fire surrounds and windows.

SUBSIDIARY FEATURES: the original boundary walls survive on the south and east and between the front gardens, along with the gate piers at Hillcrest. The eastern boundary wall has a stone plinth and bands separated by brickwork, and moulded terracotta coping. It is deeply scalloped, with non-original iron railings* in the concavities. The gate piers to Hillcrest have stone caps carved with lilies matching the entrance keystone, and terracotta finials. The gates* are modern

replacements.

The original ancillary buildings in the rear gardens have been heavily altered. Modern gates and shutters* have been installed in the western boundary on modern piers*.

*Pursuant to s1 (5A) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 ('the Act') it is declared that the aforementioned items are not of special architectural or historic interest.

Listed Building Name	Redcroft and Fencegate and adjoining Wall
Address	33 and 35 Rochdale Road, Middleton, M24 2PT
List Entry Number	1162377
Grade	II
Date First Listed	23 March 1987
National Grid Reference	SD 87063 06612

Listing Description

Nos. 33 and 35 (Redcroft and Fencegate) and - adjoining garden wall. - II 2 houses. 1895. By Edgar Wood. Brick, rendered on the first floor, with stone dressings and clay tile roof. Total of 4 bays and 2 storeys with attics and a wing to the rear. Dentilled first floor band. Canted 2-storey bay windows in bays 1 and 4, the latter rising through the eaves to be terminated in a coped parapet. Each has 7-light flat-faced stone mullion windows with leaded lights on each floor and transoms on the ground floor only. Door in bay 3 with glazed panels, side lights and an elliptical-arched head with brick and stone voussoirs. Brick-mullioned windows in bay 2 with semi-elliptical lights above. 4 and 2-light mullioned first floor windows and a 6-light window in the gable which spans over bays land 2 and is balanced by a gabled dormer window in bay 4. Ridge and gable chimney stacks. Symmetry is consciously avoided, the porch to Redcroft being on the left return. Brick-mullioned windows to sides and rear. The garden wall is of alternating Portland stone and iron-railed sections on a rubble base. It incorporates a gate portal with ogee lintel. Redcroft was the home of Edgar Wood until about 1916.



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informs change