

Design, Access & Heritage Statement

Redcroft
33 Rochdale Road
Middleton
Greater Manchester
M24 2PT



**Forming Part of Listed Building Consent Application
March 2015**

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Our Ref	Your Ref	Date	Written	Checked	Signed
ROEWTHI/149/RED	-	26.03.15	RH	AG	AG

1 List Description

- 1.1 MIDDLETON ROCHDALE ROAD SD 80 NE (north-west side) 2/22 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.

2 Significance

- 2.1 The significance of the grade II listed building can be summarised into four areas.

- The primary significance lies in the building's aesthetic and use of materials, which:
 - helped re-shape the Arts and Crafts movement and domestic architecture generally towards an overt vernacularism, which quickly spread across the western world to become England's only internationally important architectural style;
 - which also became popularised across the country by ordinary builders, as evident elsewhere in the conservation area;
 - acted as catalyst for other changes in architectural style and the development of modernism; and,
 - built in 1891 (not 1895 as in the list description) it is one of the earliest examples of a fully-formed Arts & Crafts vernacular styled building.
- A secondary associative significance lies in the building being designed and lived in by influential architect Edgar Wood, for almost his entire career from 1891 to 1916. For many years his studio occupied the attic space, where he developed many of his pioneering designs. It is likely that Wood received significant visitors from the Arts & Crafts world at Redcroft.
- The third area lies in the building's contribution to the group of six Edgar Wood designed buildings which illustrate the emergence of modern style architecture (See Appendix C).

- Finally, there is its significance to the Middleton Town Centre Conservation Area, both in townscape terms and in relationship to other traditional buildings, which inspired the design of Redcroft.

It is certain that this significance may grow over the coming years as Wood's architectural impact is re-discovered.

3 Design Concept and Philosophy

- 3.1 These proposals form a Heritage Lottery Funded, Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI) grant, aimed at helping communities regenerate deprived towns and cities across the UK by improving their built historic environment. They have been drawn up guided by good conservation practice and Rochdale MBC Unitary Development Plan Policy BE/14 Alterations And Extensions To Listed Buildings, see Appendix D.
- 3.2 The THI grants are based on both restoration and repair. A conservation schedule has been drawn up to address repair problems. In addition, the primary significance of the building resides in the its aesthetic and architectural style and we feel that the restoration of lost but stylistically significant features, which help with the interpretation of the building as a whole, is appropriate and justifiable.
- 3.3 There is a Heritage Lottery Fund Townscape Heritage Initiative grant to fund the scheme which has been given on the basis that this restoration work is undertaken (subject to the THI budget). The Rochdale MBC Conservation Officer stipulated the restoration requirements. Consequently, the scheme is in accordance with Rochdale MBC conservation advice.
- 3.4 Appendix A shows a photograph taken from Volume 6 of the publication 'Moderne Bauformen', dated 1907, a German architecture and interior design magazine. Along with descriptive material taken from a wide range of sources, this represents the best evidence of how the building looked some 12 years after its construction, whilst Edgar Wood was living there, and forms the basis of our proposals. Appendix B shows the building in 2014.

Proposals with Direct Impact on the Building's Character

4 Chimney Stacks

- 4.1 Tall chimneys are a trait of Edgar Wood designs. In a practical sense they take the chimney above the roof line ensuring enough suction to draw the smoke up through the stack. They are however much taller than is required for this purpose, which suggests an aesthetic, architectural device.
- 4.2 Firstly, and most importantly, the tall thin forms offer a sense of balance and visual relief to the rather stout building(s) and bulky bay windows.
- 4.3 Secondly they give a sense of dramatic effect, and parallels can be drawn with true vernacular buildings where chimneys were a display of wealth and prestige.



Extract from 'Moderne Bauformen' Vol 6. 1907

- 4.4 Unfortunately the chimneys have and still are experiencing some lean, and there is good reason to believe that their heights have been reduced due to fear of collapse.



Redcroft: 06.10.2014

- 4.5 We therefore propose to consolidate the existing stacks, removing the lean which can be attributed to an original design flaw and lack of reinforcement. Subsequently, we will rebuild the chimneys to their original height, with internal steel bracing to prevent any future lean.

This will restore their dramatic effect and the sense of balance they lend to the building as a whole.

- 4.6 New bricks will be carefully chosen to complement the existing, a sample of which will be provided to the conservation officer for approval.

5 Boundary Wall

- 5.1 The picture from *Moderne Bauformen* publication (published 1907) depicts a low level rubble sandstone wall with timber fence above. In its current form, the low level rubble sandstone wall remains with a white limestone block wall above.
- 5.2 The stark contrast between the rough low level rubble wall and smooth limestone wall with its straight lines, at first made us doubt the authenticity of the upper wall as an Edgar Wood intervention.
- 5.3 Closer inspection however shows that there has been architectural consideration in its design, with nibs providing depth and perspective framing the house when viewed from the road.



Area of Historic, Low Level, Lime Render

- 5.4 An inspection of the wall to Cleworth Road suggests that the lower sandstone wall was once rendered, as a small area of lime render, which one would suspect is at least pre 1940, was discovered.
- 5.5 When viewed holistically with the upper limestone section of the wall, a rendered lower section would provide a subtly contrasting uniformity, characteristic of an architect of Edgar Wood's skill.

- 5.6 In discussions with the Edgar Wood Society, it became clear that the change from wooden fencing to the limestone wall marked a radical development of Edgar Wood's architectural style around 1902 where he began developing what subsequently became 'modernism'. The limestone wall is thus of great significance as an historical marker. Its earlier rubble base was rendered to make it match the limestone above.
- 5.7 With this in mind, we propose to undertake some consolidation of the wall to isolated areas where it has significantly subsided, whilst retaining the undulation and dilapidated aesthetic, which was no doubt conceived by the architect, but preventing future collapse.
- 5.8 The white limestone is badly stained, a result of of airborne pollutants from traffic and carbon sulphation. We therefore propose to use the TORC cleaning system, which uses a mixture of low pressure air, water and a fine, inert particulate to gently remove the staining and will not damage the stone.
- 5.9 Cleaning the limestone will, in an aesthetic sense, allow us to apply a naturally hydraulic lime render to the lower section of the wall restoring it uniformity and making the boundary wall a feature of the building as a whole once more.

6 Gate and Surround



1970's Archive Photograph of Gate, Surround and Path
(Courtesy of Heritage Trust for the North West)

- 6.1 The original Wood designed timber gate and surround have sadly been lost and replaced with a pedimented mild steel substitute. The original gate represented an

important aspect of the design as a whole, as the craftsman made feature encompasses the philosophy of the arts and crafts movement.

- 6.2 We propose to remove the existing modern mild-steel gate and surround and introduce a new, aesthetically precise replication of the original. We are confident that we have enough photographic evidence, both from the *Moderne Bauformen* publication and from archive photographs taken in the 1970's to do this.
- 6.3 It will both restore this important arts and crafts feature allowing the building to be read as intended by the architect, but also unite the repair/restoration of boundary wall, the aspect of the building most visible to the passing public.

7 Path

- 7.1 The original stone and brick path from the road to the principal door has been replaced with a modern concrete alternative.
- 7.2 The homogenous concrete detracts from the buildings significant aesthetic and can clearly be seen by passing visitors. We therefore propose to replace it with a new stone and brick path to match the original as shown in the 1970's picture on page 5.
- 7.3 From the photographic evidence and past works to 36 Mellalieu Street, we are confident that the stone used for the path is Rossendale Blue, a local sandstone. Samples of the stone and the bricks will be available for approval from the conservation officer.

8 Windows

- 8.1 The white glazing bars of the original windows formed a prominent feature of the buildings aesthetic. Sadly, on the most part, these have been lost and replaced with new timber windows of a poor quality, which are now suffering badly from rot.
- 8.2 We therefore propose to remove the existing poor quality frames and replace them with new joinery grade Douglas fir (a quality, slow grown softwood) timber windows with the same glazing bar arrangement as shown in the historical photographs. Where original/historic windows and glazing exist they will be conserved.
- 8.3 There are 74 windows on a relatively small building; this leads to major heat loss and internal condensation, a major factor in the poor condition of the existing timber windows.
- 8.4 We therefore propose to 'Slimlite', shallow profile double glazing, which will allow us to upgrade the building's thermal efficiency, dramatically reduce internal condensation and keep the glazing bars slender (20mm), in line with the historic photographs.
- 8.5 It will have very little visual impact on the building's aesthetic significance, as the shallow profile double glazing will not be seen without very close inspection.

9 External Painting

- 9.1 Research by the Edgar Wood Society shows that Wood's external colour schemes universally used white paint for all metal work, such as downpipes and gutters, and a white limewash for timberwork such as doors, porches and window frames. It is proposed to reinstate a white colour scheme.

10 Access

- 10.1 The proposals do not affect access into or around the building.

Appendix A
Historic Photograph c.1910



Extract from 'Moderne Bauformen' Vol 6. 1907

Appendix B

**Redcroft as Existing
Photograph Taken: 06.10.2014**



Redcroft
06.10.2014

Appendix C

Significance of Redcroft as part of a chronological series of houses (see paragraph 2.1)

Extract from *'Here, by experiment': Edgar Wood in Middleton* by David Morris
Published by Manchester University Press, Bulletin of the John Rylands Library.
Volume 89, Number 1 / Autumn 2012, page 158

"Wood's outstanding buildings belongs to a wider legacy of continuous architectural development, with specific lines of experiment into the design of houses, churches and schools. A remarkable cluster of six houses illustrates in miniature the passing of a most significant moment in European architectural history: **Redcroft** and Fencegate, Briarhill, 3448 Rochdale Road, 5153 Rochdale Road, The Studio and 36 Mellalieu Street vividly demonstrate the emergence of twentieth-century modernism from the break-up of nineteenth-century historicism, each succeeding design being simpler and clearer (Plate 15)."

EDGAR WOOD IN MIDDLETON

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Plate 15 The emergence of modernism. Top left: Briarhill, 37–39 Rochdale Road (archive photograph provided by Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council); top right: Redcroft and Fencegate, 33–35 Rochdale Road (*Moderne Bauformen*, 6 (1907), 59); middle left: 34–48 Rochdale Road (*Moderne Bauformen*, 6 (1907), 61); middle right: 51–53 Rochdale Road (archive photograph provided by Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council); bottom left: The Studio, 1 Towncroft Avenue (archive photograph provided by David Morris); bottom right: 36 Mellalieu Street (archive photograph provided by Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council).

Appendix D

Planning Policy

BE/14 ALTERATIONS AND EXTENSIONS TO LISTED BUILDINGS

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Development proposals affecting the character of a Listed Building must not harm the architectural value or historic interest of the host building, its curtilage and the surrounding area. In particular, applications for Listed Building Consent involving alterations and extensions (and repairs where materials and/or techniques differ from the original) will need to demonstrate, through the provision of detailed plans, that:-

- a. Account has been taken of the scale and proportions of the host building, and its relationship to other buildings and their setting;
- b. Sympathetic and high quality materials are used;
- c. Internal spaces, features and fixtures are retained; and
- d. Appropriate detailing is employed throughout, particularly the arrangement and design of fenestration and appropriate roof forms.

In cases where Listed Building Consent for alteration or extension is given, and where it is appropriate to record the character of the building before works commence, a condition may be attached to such consent, or a legal agreement sought with the applicant relating to a proper programme of recording.

19.31 The character and historic significance of a Listed Building can easily be damaged by unsympathetic alterations even of a relatively minor nature. Specialist advice and guidance to building owners, developers and contractors before and during building works, will continue to form a formal part of the Council's role in the conservation of Listed Buildings, whether Listed Building Consent is required or not.

19.32 Where such consent is required, detailed drawings clearly indicating the existing form of the building and the precise changes proposed, including items such as a schedule of works, must be submitted. Listed Building owners should ensure that appropriate advice and expertise is employed in preparing and submitting a proposal.

19.33 Where unauthorised work to a Listed Building has been carried out, i.e., without first obtaining Listed Building Consent, an application for the retention of the works will be required - following the same procedures as for other Listed Building Consent applications. Consent will not be granted merely to recognise works already carried out and the proposal will be rigorously assessed against all relevant criteria. If works are not of a suitable standard or type, consent will not be granted. In such circumstances, a Listed Building Enforcement Notice may be issued or prosecution in accordance with Government's planning policy guidance may be initiated.

19.34 These provisions will be applied, where appropriate, in conjunction with those for Policy BE/13 'Changes of Use to Listed Buildings'. The provisions of Policy NE/4 'Protected Species' will also be applied where appropriate.

Appendix E

Additional Photographs

Photographs on pages 14 to 17 courtesy of Andy Marshall

Photographs on pages 18 to 20 courtesy of Edgar Wood Society













