

Case Name: Former Independent Labour Party Club, Milton Street, Middleton, Manchester

Case Number: 1422116

Background

An application to consider the former Independent Labour Party Club, Milton Street, Middleton, for listing has been received, precipitated by a live planning application for conversion to ten flats.

The building has not previously been assessed for listing. It stands in the Middleton Town Centre Conservation Area and is included in a List of Buildings of local Importance by the LPA.

Asset(s) under Assessment

Facts about the asset(s) can be found in the Annex(es) to this report.

Annex	List Entry Number	Name	Heritage Category	EH Recommendation
1	1422300	Former Independent Labour Club, Middleton	Listing	Add to List

Visits

Date	Visit Type
28 August 2014	Full inspection

Context

The applicant has requested that the former Independent Labour Party Club be assessed for listing due to a combination of its being a rare political building type relating to the rise of the working class Labour Party, and a building designed by Edgar Wood, the only significant Edwardian modern movement architect.

There is a live planning application for conversion to ten flats (14/00821/FUL) which has a target determination date of 7th October 2014. The building has not previously been assessed for listing. It stands in the Middleton Conservation Area and the applicant states that there is a guided Edgar Wood visitor trail which takes people around his buildings in Middleton, including this one.

Assessment

CONSULTATION

Due to there being a live planning application, the building has been prioritised as an urgent case and the consultation period for the Consultation Report was shortened to seven days. The applicant, owner of the leasehold and owner of the freehold, the local planning authority, HER, and interested parties in the form of the Victorian Society and the Twentieth Century Society were consulted. The applicant responded that they had done a search of the National Heritage List for England (NHLE) and could not find anything equivalent. Therefore it has 'rarity' value. The leasehold owner's agent responded on their behalf to say that they accept the content of the report and await the outcome. The LPA replied that the report is very detailed and they have no further comments to make. The HER replied that they had no records on the building. The freehold owner, the Victorian Society, and the Twentieth Century Society did not respond.

DISCUSSION

In order to be designated, the former Independent Labour Party Club must demonstrate special architectural or historic interest in a national context (Principles of Selection for Listing Buildings, March 2010). Political club buildings are not mentioned as a specific type in English Heritage's Selection Guides, but gentlemen's clubs, working men's clubs and institutes are mentioned in the Commerce and Exchange Buildings Selection Guide (April 2011). Institutes are also briefly mentioned in the Culture and Entertainment Selection Guide (April 2011). Relevant considerations may include date, rarity, alterations, and historical association.

The former Independent Labour Party (ILP) Club was built in 1911-12 to designs by the architect Edgar Wood. Though this appears to be a relatively late date for such buildings, it was purpose-built for a political party that had been in existence for less than twenty years. Independent Labour Party members were largely drawn from the working classes and consequently had few resources to call upon. Working-class meeting places such as working men's clubs and institutes were usually housed in modest adapted premises and very few have survived with sufficient interest to merit designation. The Middleton building was funded by the local textile workers who made up the membership of Middleton ILP. An illustration and floor plans dating from 1910 in the *American Architectural Review* show a handsome, two-storey, symmetrical building with a veranda, and housing a variety of types of rooms. This suggests that the ILP had aspirations of grandeur, but in the event Edgar Wood designed what they could afford. Nonetheless it is of interest in social history terms as it shows that the ILP was established enough as a political party by this stage for branches to consider commissioning their own purpose-built branch building.

The resulting club as built was very modest in form, being a single-storey, rectangular building with attached porch in a stripped, sparse idiom, which contained just two main rooms; a club room and a hall. However, it was nevertheless designed by an architect rather than a jobbing builder and a very idiosyncratic one at that. Edgar Wood (1860-1935) was closely associated with Middleton, having been born there and living there for a large portion of his life. The neighbourhood contains a number of his buildings, though his designs were also built elsewhere, mostly in the north of the country. Wood's architectural sympathies lay with the progressive movements of the day, from the Arts and Crafts Movement (he was a founder of the Northern Art Workers Guild in 1896), through Art Nouveau, and then his avant-garde designs of the early C20, anticipating the Expressionist architecture of the 1920s and Art Deco of the 1930s. Pevsner described him as the most progressive of all the Edwardian architects, whose designs were at the cutting edge of European contemporary architecture. He gained a considerable national and international reputation during his lifetime, notably in Germany where his designs were frequently published. Since then his work, which was predominantly domestic, became largely forgotten over the course of C20. However, there is a renewed interest in his work, which, especially in the case of his later buildings, was highly individual and forward looking. Prior to 1903, Wood's designs had been inclined to the romantic and picturesque. After this date they became more rational and much more restrained in character, and from 1906 he designed a series of buildings employing reinforced concrete construction. One of these buildings was the austere house he designed in 1906 at 36 Mellalieu Street, Middleton (Grade II), which remarkably for its date, has a flat, concrete roof. Also in Middleton are Elm Street School and the remains of Durnford School, both 1908-10 and Grade II*, which use flat, concrete roofs, giving the buildings an appearance more in keeping with the 1930s than pre-First World War. He presently has 48 listed buildings to his name; three at Grade I, seven at Grade II*, and the remainder at Grade II.

The ILP Club was built within this context and has a number of elements which are characteristic of Wood's designs. Although the main building has a double-pitched roof with small roof slates in the Arts and Crafts manner, the porch has a flat, concrete roof, as do the two large, canted bay windows, and the gable walls have stepped parapets. Additionally, the bays are placed towards the south end of the building on both long elevations, creating an irregular massing when seen from the road, though largely symmetrical when seen from in front of the south entrance porch. The bays themselves are a typical motif used by Wood on his houses; he often, though not always, raised them up through the eaves level. In form these particular bays closely resemble the canted bay at 36 Mellalieu Street, both having shallow, brick pilasters to the angles. But while the house had more domestic timber, mullion and transom frames with leaded lights, the club has small-pane glazing, which, together with the wide, concrete lintels, give an almost industrial appearance. Although the window frames are known to be replacements, they appear close enough to those in an historic photograph to think that they appear as intended. The main hall is lit by five, tall, round-headed windows, originally to both side elevations. This shape of window was not used by Wood for his houses, but was used for his Elm Street School. Again, the club window frames have been replaced, but a drawing by Wood of the Elm Street School shows that the small-pane glazing with sunburst glazing to the window heads was his intention. The subtle detailing, such as the brick window pilasters, lintel blocks and narrow brick edging to the semi-circular element, is also typical. The stepped gable parapets, formed by subtly-projecting pilasters of varying widths, is a notable innovation by Wood; such a motif is not known to have been used elsewhere on his earlier buildings and certainly wasn't used by any other English architects at this time. In appearance it suggests the inter-war Art Deco period rather than the early C20. Thus a small, brick building built to a very

tight budget still succeeds in demonstrating Wood's radical, progressive tendencies, which caused Pevsner to regard him as ahead of his time.

Viewed from Milton Street, the original building appears largely intact as built. The later, flat-roofed, c1930s extension does not markedly infringe upon it other than obscuring the central doorway, but not the semi-circular overlight, of the north gable wall. However, the 1960s extension has resulted in a degree of alteration to the east, long elevation. While the bay window remains intact, the round heads of the hall windows have been lost on this side, though the window positions remain, one now a doorway. Rectangular clerestorey windows have also been inserted relating to the 1960s extension. Inside, a degree of recent stripping-out has already taken place. Some of the removed partitions related to the later use as a nursery, but the loss of the cross partition between the hall and club room is unfortunate, though verified by the simple cornice in the hall.

The modest nature of buildings that can be verified as being associated with the Independent Labour Party is such that they don't tend to be listed. There are at present no known listed examples. The ILP Institute in Nelson, Lancashire (1906), assessed for listing in 2013, is of no particular architectural merit. Examples of Liberal and Conservative Clubs are listed as these tend to have more architectural quality as the branches could raise greater funds. In addition, though not strictly political, there are a few listed working men's clubs. These include the Cobden Working Men's Club, Kensal Road, London of 1880 by Pennington and Brigden: a much grander building, and the earliest known purpose-built working men's club. Also listed is the later working men's club in Ashford, Kent. Built in 1927-8, and designed by Sir Edwin Lutyens, it too is a very modest, single-storey building, but listed for the added interest of the architect.

While the modest nature of the Middleton ILP Club is typical of the building type, it is the only known example to have been designed by a renowned architect. Edgar Wood was a contemporary of Lutyens, and had this is his only known political club building. Many of his buildings were bigger commissions designed for more affluent clients, but Wood was sympathetic to the ideals of the ILP. Although a small, pared back building designed on a strict budget, it displays a number of progressive details which are characteristic of his work and raise it above the sum of its parts for a building of its date and type. The alterations which have occurred to the building need to be considered carefully to decide whether they outweigh the design. It is known that the original building only had two main rooms and it is likely, given the financial circumstances of the ILP, that the interior was basic, most probably along the village hall format. In these circumstances it is unlikely that there was ever much in the way of internal fixtures and fittings to lose. The alterations to the east, side elevation are the most detrimental. This is mitigated to a degree, however, due to it being on the side which in effect forms the rear of the building. Taking all these factors into consideration it is considered that the original Edgar Wood building of 1911-12 does meet the criteria for listing in the national context.

The c1930s extension, possibly designed by Wood's partner, J Henry Sellers, has undergone some alteration and does not possess special interest. The 1960s nursery extension is of standard, very modest, design for its date. In recommending the extent of designation, we have considered whether powers of exclusion under s.1(5A) of the 1990 Act are appropriate, and consider that they are with regard to both the c1930s extension and the 1960s extension. This is clear in the proposed List Entry.

CONCLUSION

After examining all the records and other relevant information and having carefully considered the architectural and historic interest of this case, the criteria for listing are fulfilled with regard to the original ILP Club designed by Edgar Wood. It is therefore recommended for listing at Grade II.

REASONS FOR DESIGNATION DECISION

The former Independent Labour Party Club of 1911-12 to designs by Edgar Wood, is recommended for listing at Grade II for the following principal reasons:

- * Architect: born in Middleton, Edgar Wood became an architect of considerable national and international renown during his own lifetime, his work characterised by careful detailing and avant-garde innovation;
- * Historical Interest: the club was built for the Middleton branch of the Independent Labour Party, a working-class political party (and a key component of the early Labour Party) which had been in existence for less than twenty years;
- * Architectural Interest: while modest the ILP Club demonstrates the idiosyncratic characteristics of Wood's early-C20 innovative designs.

Countersigning comments:

Agreed: this building is the work of a remarkable architect, Edgar Wood, working on a tight budget for an historically significant client, the Independent Labour Party. Despite its modesty it demonstrates Wood's inventiveness and merits designation in the national context.

NFB 18.ix.14

Further Comments:

Agreed, this building should be added to the List. Although modest, it has the interest of being designed by a noted architect and the historic interest of its association with the early Labour Party. Tony Calladine. 30 Sept 2014

Annex 1**List Entry****List Entry Summary**

This building is listed under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended for its special architectural or historic interest.

Name: Former Independent Labour Club, Middleton

List Entry Number: 1422300

Location

Former Independent Labour Party Club, Milton Street, Middleton, Manchester, M24 5TU

The listed building(s) is/are shown coloured blue on the attached map. Pursuant to s.1 (5A) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 ('the Act'), structures attached to or within the curtilage of the listed building (save those coloured blue on the map) are not to be treated as part of the listed building for the purposes of the Act.

The building may lie within the boundary of more than one authority.

County	District	District Type	Parish
	Rochdale	Metropolitan Authority	Non Civil Parish

National Park: Not applicable to this List entry.

Grade: II

Date first listed:

Date of most recent amendment:

Legacy System Information

The contents of this record have been generated from a legacy data system.

Legacy System: Not applicable to this List entry.

Legacy Number: Not applicable to this List entry.

Asset Groupings

This List entry does not comprise part of an Asset Grouping. Asset Groupings are not part of the official record but are added later for information.

List Entry Description**Summary of Building**

Former Independent Labour Party Club. 1911-12. Edgar Wood. Common brick, small Westmorland green slates, concrete dressings and flat roof to porch.

Reasons for Designation

The former Independent Labour Party Club of 1911-12 to designs by Edgar Wood, is listed at Grade II for the following principal reasons:

- * Architect: born in Middleton, Edgar Wood became an architect of considerable national and international renown during his own lifetime, his work characterised by careful detailing and avant-garde innovation;
- * Historical interest: the club was built for the Middleton branch of the Independent Labour Party, a working-class political party (and a key component of the early Labour Party) which had been in existence for less than twenty years;
- * Architectural interest: while modest the ILP Club demonstrates the idiosyncratic characteristics of Wood's early-C20 innovative designs.

History

The Middleton Independent Labour Club was designed by Edgar Wood in 1911 and built in 1912. The Middleton Guardian reported its opening on 27th July 1912 and described the building as containing a spacious hall, large club room and all modern conveniences, being well provided with windows and a complete electric installation, and with a bowling green and gardens. A plan and elevation drawing dated 1910 had previously been published in the American Architectural Review, which showed a grander, two-storey building with a club room, library, ladies' room, two committee rooms and two cloakrooms on the ground floor, and a public hall on the first floor. The Club as built was a simpler, single-storey building.

The Independent Labour Party was founded in 1893 following a conference in Bradford chaired by Kier Hardie. In 1900 the ILP joined with trade unions and other socialist groups to form the Labour Representation Committee, which became the Labour Party in 1906. To begin with the ILP provided Labour's grass roots activists and a significant number of its parliamentarians, until the Labour Party introduced its own individual membership in 1918. Though Edgar Wood's background was Liberal, he was sympathetic to Middleton's Independent Labour Party, giving a talk on architecture in 1905 and designing the header for The Herald, the branch's newspaper.

The architect Edgar Wood (1860-1935) was born in Middleton and after qualifying in 1885 initially set up a practice in Middleton. He later had practices in Oldham and Manchester, but continued to live in Middleton for fifty-six years and many of his buildings are concentrated in the area. The majority are domestic, both middle-class houses and working-class terraces, with several churches and small commercial buildings. Although his practice flourished, Wood always ran the business on a personal scale, designing, detailing and supervising the work himself. In 1903-5 J Henry Sellers joined Wood in an informal partnership. By 1910 Wood was playing a less active role in the practice, finally retiring in 1923 and moving to Italy where he died in 1935. Wood's architectural sympathies lay with the progressive movements of the day from the Arts and Crafts Movement (he was a founder of the Northern Art Workers' Guild in 1896), through Art Nouveau, and finally with his avant-garde designs of the early C20, anticipating the Expressionist architecture of the 1920s and Art Deco of 1930s. 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.

The Middleton Independent Labour Club is first shown on the 3rd Epoch, 1:2500 OS Lancashire map published in 1922; the south porch is shown, though the canted bay windows at the south end of east and west elevations are not. This appears to be an oversight as the bays are part of the original design and appear on historic photographs of the building. At this time the bowling green is identified and the building is marked as 'Pavilion'. The original building is also shown on the 4th Epoch 1:10560 OS Lancashire map published in 1932, but by 1955 the north extension had been built. It is not known exactly when this flat-roofed extension was added. At some point in the early 1930s the building passed from the ILP to the Council, who used it as a children's nursery. It may have been at this stage that the extension was built. It is possible that J Henry Sellers designed the extension, but this has not been verified.

During the 1960s a second flat-roofed extension was built for the nursery abutting the east side of the building. It continued to be used as a nursery, and more recently as a family centre, until it was closed and sold by the Council in 2012. Prior to being sold the Council undertook re-pointing in lime mortar, repair to the top of the south gable, and replacement of rotten windows and the porch door.

Details

Former Independent Labour Party Club. 1911-12. Edgar Wood. Common brick, small Westmorland green slates, concrete dressings and flat roof to porch.

PLAN: a single-storey, rectangular building running north-south of six bays, the southernmost bay on both east and west sides having a large canted bay. At the south end is a small, rectangular, flat-roofed entrance porch. Cornicing suggests the main building was originally divided into two rooms with a room at the south end lit by the two bay windows and a larger hall lit by the five bays beyond. Beneath the south room is a basement. The porch is likely to have contained cloakrooms.

EXTERIOR: the building stands on the east side of Milton Street. It is built of mottled common bricks in stretcher bond and is single-storeyed with a double-pitched roof of small, Westmorland green slates and stepped, brick north and south gables which rise above the roofline. The west, roadside elevation is of six bays. The first to fifth bays have tall, round headed windows. They are flanked by very shallow, brick pilasters which rise from a very shallow plinth topped by a row of headers and containing regularly-spaced, square, louvred, ventilation bricks. The pilasters have concrete impost blocks from which round-headed arches formed from a single row of headers spring. The windows have slightly-projecting concrete sills with shallow brick aprons beneath rising from the plinth. The timber window frames have small pane glazing with sunburst glazing to the semi-circular heads. The sixth bay has a wide canted-bay which rises to a concrete-coped parapet above the eaves level of the roof. The angles of the bay are separated by very shallow, brick pilasters which are continued up to the parapet coping. The bay has a large, rectangular window with narrow, rectangular windows in the flanking, angled planes, all sharing a slightly-projecting concrete sill band and a deeper, flush, concrete lintel band. The windows have timber frames with small-pane glazing. Beneath the central window is a wide, rectangular opening at ground-floor level with a metal, louvred grate. The concrete-coped parapet is continued round the south-west corner. The south gable wall has subtly-projecting, wide pilasters which form a stepped parapet with concrete coping. The central, tallest step has pierced detailing. The brickwork of the small, four-bay, rectangular porch is bonded into the main building and it has a flat roof. The left-hand side is set in from the south-west corner of the main building and flush with the south-east corner. The doorway is in the second bay and is raised with a short flight of concrete-topped steps with plain iron railings. Above the square-headed doorway is a very shallowly-recessed panel. The timber door has two fielded panels with an upper row of three window lights. To either side of the doorway, in bays one and three, are windows with slightly-projecting concrete sills and segmental-arched heads. Bay four has a similar, narrower window. The windows have timber casements of two horizontal lights and a single light. There is a cast-iron drainpipe between the third and fourth bays. Recessed on the west and east elevations are the projecting, canted bay windows. Abutting the east bay is the 1960s single-storey, flat-roofed, brick extension. A single bay contains a doorway reached by a flight of steps, and to its right is a projecting block with a flat-roofed w.c. abutting its west side. The ground-floor level of the north gable wall is obscured by the later c1930s extension*. Above is a stepped, concrete-coped parapet which is lower than the south gable parapet. The steps and projections of the parapet differ from those of the south gable. Just above the roof of the extension is a central, semi-circular overhead, which is above the original doorway in the north gable wall. It has sun-burst glazing. The east elevation of the original building is largely obscured by the 1960s, flat-roofed nursery extension*, but above the roofline of the latter are five rectangular windows, now boarded. At the left-hand end the parapet of the bay window is visible, as is the concrete lintel band. Unlike the west bay window this does not run the full width of the bay, but finished to the right of the large, central window.

INTERIOR: the porch retains a wide, inner doorway into the main building with a door of three horizontal panels. At present the roof structure is visible at the south end of the main building. It has king post roof trusses with raking struts and bolted iron straps, and a single purlin to each side. The bay windows have rolled steel joists across the openings which the southernmost roof truss is bolted to. The left-hand angled plane of the east bay window contains a doorway which also cuts into the return wall. It leads into the nursery extension corridor, but is likely to be original as there is no evidence for a blocked in window above and the lack of a window in this plane is respected by the treatment of the external concrete lintel band, which stops short. It has a plain, board door with a glazed light. To the left of the doorway is a cupboard with panelled, double doors. On the north side of the cupboard are the basement steps with the top step in line with the position of a partition cross wall (now removed), dividing off the main, five-bay hall. The hall has a simple cornice on its west, north and south sides, now missing from the east side. The window jambs continue down to floor level with recessed panels beneath the windows. The windows on the east side have been altered when the 1960s extension was built. They were truncated with flat tops and the second-bay window has been altered to a doorway. The 1960s extension roof now abuts the exterior wall above the truncated windows and smaller, rectangular windows have been inserted above the roof level. The altered windows have timber frames with small pane glazing. The north end wall has a wide central doorway with a timber architrave and

double doors. Above, but detached from the doorway, is the semi-circular overlight. Each side of the doorway is a wide, round-headed niche.

EXCLUSIONS*: the c1930s, flat-roofed extension abutting the north gable wall of the original building, and the second, 1960s, flat-roofed extension abutting the east, side elevation of the original building and the earlier extension are excluded from the listing.

Selected Sources

J H G Archer, Edgar Wood (1860-1935) A Manchester 'Art Nouveau' Architect, 1966

John H G Archer, Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, Wood, Edgar (1860-1935), architect,
<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/printable/61675>, 18th August
2014

Map

National Grid Reference: SD8684006177



© Crown Copyright and database right 2011. All rights reserved. Ordnance Survey Licence number 100019088.

The above map is for quick reference purposes only and may not be to scale. For a copy of the full scale map, please see the attached PDF - 1422300_1.pdf