

Former Baptist Chapel,
North Street, New Romney.

Conversion to a dwelling

Planning Statement

Incorporating

Design and Access Statement

And

Heritage Statement

Jennifer Owen & Associates Ltd.

1. Introduction.

1. It is proposed that the former Baptist Church in North Street New Romney will be converted to a single bedroomed dwelling. The proposed conversion requires a small alteration to the ground floor western elevation to accommodate a bin store whilst obscure glass will replace existing glazing in the groundfloor windows and two skylights added to the north facing roof. The internal alterations will follow the existing arrangements. The Chapel will continue largely unaltered.

2. Principle of residential development.

1. The proposal has been the subject of pre application advice, see Appendix 1, which considered that the principle of residential use was acceptable in this location which is within the settlement boundary of New Romney. This is in accordance with the Core Strategy settlement hierarchy and NPPF.

3. Core Strategy Policy SS3f and NPPF para 92.

1. In 1986 The Baptist Chapel worshippers changed the name of their community to the Romney Marsh Christian Fellowship and in 2000 became the Romney Marsh Community Church. The website for the Church details the history of the community. In 1825 the Baptist Church was founded and in 1832 a local farmer gave the land and the Baptist Chapel was built and further extended in 1886. In 1962 there were only 27 worshippers but by 1986 with the change of emphasis and name the church grew and the Chapel building was no longer big enough to accommodate the growing numbers and meeting and services were held in local school halls. In 2000 the building opposite the Chapel was purchased and renamed The Centre. Subsequently the rooms have been refurbished a modernised. Importantly the building now houses a new worship centre. Consequently the former use of the Baptist Chapel now take place in a building which allows flexibility of use,

provides for modern requirements and is less costly to run and maintain. It is thus the case that the Baptist Chapel building is no longer required for its previous community use. Furthermore, in the light of the history set out above it is likely that the Chapel building has not been used to any great extent for a number of years

2. In respect of other potential community uses the building has been marketed by Community Church for six months specifically looking for a community use. During this period the Church had only one interested party and this was a single artist who wanted to use the premises for an art studio. This is strictly not a community use and in any event the interest did not result in a firm offer. The Community Church is well placed to know the local community and its needs so the fact that they failed to find a community user for the premises is strong evidence that there is no demand for the type of premises offered by the former Baptist Chapel. Furthermore, following the failure of the Community Church to find a user Childs estate agents were instructed to market the building specifically for a community use. This was done for six further months and no community user was found. The details of this process can be found in a confirmation letter from Childs at Appendix 3.
3. A survey of available community uses premises and facilities has also been undertaken and the results can be seen at Appendix 2. In particular the development of the facilities at the Marsh Academy has provided for flexible accommodation in a modern building at competitive rates. The survey also demonstrates that many other rooms and facilities are available in the town.
4. A survey of existing community groups has also been undertaken and the premises they are operating from identified (see Appendix 2). It is clear from the survey that the community groups are currently established and operating out of facilities which are modern or refurbished, flexible and represent much better opportunities than that of the former Baptist Chapel.

5. Overall the loss of the Chapel building for community purposes does not infringe Core Strategy Policy SS3f nor NPPF para 92 as the existing uses have been relocated. New Romney is well endowed with modern flexible spaces for community use. No community groups have been identified which need the building. Due to the opening of the Community Church in a former non community use building there will be no net loss of community space in New Romney as a result of the Baptist Chapel being converted to a dwelling.

4. Parking.

1. It is not possible to provide car parking spaces without causing major alterations to the building and impact on the conservation area. This is because it would be necessary to take down the front of the Chapel to provide the space there being no vehicular access to the rear or sides of the Chapel. However, there are no parking restrictions in North Street and overall the parking associated with a single bedroomed dwelling will be significantly less than that associated with the use of the Chapel for religious services or some other community use.

5. Amenity space.

1. For similar reasons as set out above that on site parking cannot be provided neither can private amenity space. However, the site is centrally located and open space is available to the east at the end of North Street within a 100m of the site. The new dwelling will only have one bedroom and so will not be suitable for families needing amenity space.

6. Design and Access Statement

1. Features

- i. Building size, age style and condition. The Building is a simple late nineteenth century chapel. It provides accommodation on two levels totalling 186 sq m.
- ii. Boundaries. The boundaries are either the building itself or brick walls.
- iii. Adjoining buildings and sites. To the west of the site lies a small terrace of cottages and to the east lies two modern detached dwellings.

2. Access

- i. Approaches to the site. The site is accessed directly from North Street and by a side entrance along the eastern elevation.
- ii. Car parking. Parking will be on street, see above.
- iii. Entrances. There are two entrances. The main entrance is onto North Street and a second entrance at the rear on the eastern elevation. Disabled access is possible.
- iv. Access within the building. Accommodation is on two levels with access by stairs.

3. Layout

- i. Internal arrangements. The accommodation will comprise one large living space on the ground floor with the two meeting rooms at the rear converted into a kitchen dining area.
- ii. Windows. All windows will remain as existing but with obscure glass added to the ground floor level windows. Two new velux windows are to be added to the north facing roof. No additional over or inter looking of adjacent properties is expected because no changes other than the velux additions are proposed.

4. Scale/appearance

- i. Size. The building will remain the same size as it is currently as no substantial changes to the external appearance are proposed.
- ii. Relationship to surrounding development. The building will retain its existing relationship with the surrounding development as no substantial changes are proposed.

7. Heritage Statement.

1. The Chapel lies within the New Romney conservation area and this is the key issue with respect to heritage considerations.
2. Conservation area. New Romney is the largest settlement on Romney Marsh. Originally it was a seaport and was a key “Cinque Ports” during the rule of the Plantagenets. As the harbour silted up during the Middle Ages it declined but re emerged in later years, following the drainage of the marsh and increasing agricultural prosperity, as a small market town.
3. The New Romney Conservation Area (CA) Appraisal summarises the special interest of the main CA as being its role as the town’s historic core which straddles the High Street whilst Cannon Street covers a smaller cluster of historic buildings. Together the two areas encompass 50 listed buildings and one scheduled ancient monument. The principal buildings are the Norman Church of St. Nicholas, the medieval remains of St John’s Priory, the C17th Assembly Rooms, the Georgian Town Hall and the various inns.
4. Contribution to the character and appearance of the area. In 1832 a local farmer donated land to allow the building of the Baptist Chapel. The building was enlarged in 1886 and has remained in that form to date. The front elevation of the building which is largely all that can be seen due to the large hedge to the west and recent building to the east is a simple design of two

round headed windows flanking an arched doorway. The building is finished in unpainted render.

5. The former Baptist Chapel sits on the edge of the CA and is located in North Street. It is some way from the core areas of interest which are along the High Street and at its junction with Ashford Road. The Chapel is not a listed building but in 2007 when the Conservation Area Appraisal was written the Chapel was considered as a component of the best group of historic buildings in North Street although it should be noted that the Appraisal did not consider it to be worthy of listing.
6. Impact of the proposal on the conservation area. The proposed conversion of the building to a one bedroomed dwelling retains the existing profile of the building and all its external characteristics. There is some minor change to the west elevation to accommodate a bin store but this will not impact on the principal elevation in North Street. It is proposed that the lower levels of the windows will have current glazing replaced with obscured glass. Again this is not expected to impact on the general appearance of the building. Overall the proposed changes are of such insignificance that the impact on the Conservation Area and indeed the building itself will be negligible.

8. Conclusions

1. The proposed development complies with the development plan. Specifically in respect of the principle of residential development with a settlement identified as suitable for this purpose within the settlement hierarchy, protection of the New Romney Conservation area and leading to no net loss of community facilities. Consequently the proposed development also complies with national policy asset out in NPPF. Planning permission should be granted without delay.

Appendix 1, Photographs.



TYPICAL INTERNAL



EXISTING KITCHEN



UPSTAIRS MEETING ROOM (TO BE BEDROOM)



THE BAPTIST CHAPEL



NEW COMMUNITY CENTRE OPPOSITE CHAPEL

Appendix 2, Pre App consultation

Jenny Owen

To: tony.bates@andersonnconsulting.com
Subject: RE: Baptist Church

----- Original Message -----

Subject: Baptist Church
Date: 2018-09-21 15:45

To: <tony.bates@andersonnconsulting.com>

Dear Tony

In response to your enquiry regarding conversion of the Baptist Chapel, North Street, New Romney to a dwelling, I can provide the following advice.

The first objective for the proposal to convert the Baptist Church into a dwelling, would be to establish that the loss of this community facility would be acceptable. As I understand it the facility is currently vacant and the services it provided have been relocated. It would be necessary as part of any forthcoming planning application to submit a statement to set out what efforts have been made to continue the community use of the building. This could include evidence of approaches made to local groups and service providers to ascertain if there is a demand for the facilities that the building provides. It is also usually expected that you can demonstrate the building has been appropriately marketed as a community facility for at least 6-9 months for lease or sale. The reason that we request this is because it is necessary to demonstrate there is no longer a need for the facility, or to show that alternative community facilities are available elsewhere that make it clear that there would be no net loss of facilities for the local community. Policy SS3f. of the Core Strategy is relevant in this regard, and paragraph 92 of the NPPF 2018.

Assuming this can be satisfactorily addressed, then the principle of converting the building into a dwelling would be acceptable.

You have said in the submitted statement that there are no plans to alter the external fabric of the building. We welcome that, as we would not support the domestication of the external appearance of the building through changing the openings, installing cladding and constructing roof dormers etc. It is an attractive building, and it would be important that the external appearance and simple form is maintained as it is, so that it continues to add interest to the streetscene, and that its historic use is easily understood. This is particularly important as the site is in the conservation area, and the building is a well-established element that makes an important contribution to the character and appearance of the historic environment.

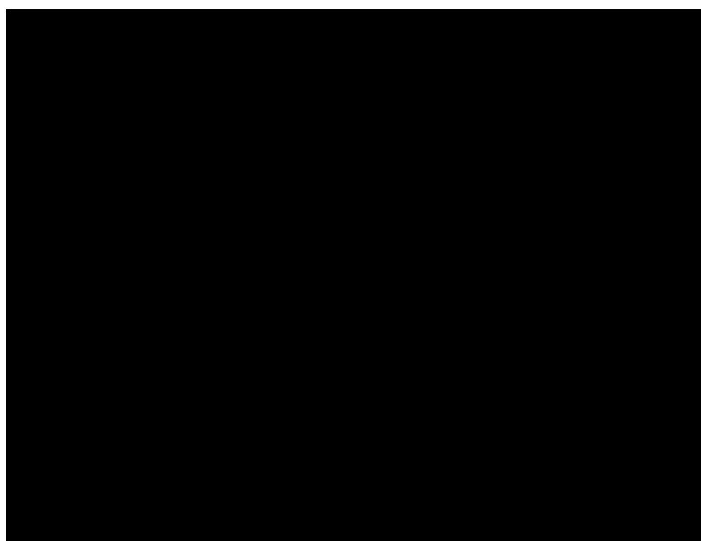
Consideration would need to be given to the layout so that the windows serving habitable rooms avoid interlooking/overlooking with the adjacent properties, to prevent significant loss of privacy for neighbouring occupiers. One area of concern would be the amount of outdoor amenity space for future occupiers, and this would need to be addressed in any forthcoming planning application.

It would be wise to discuss with Kent Highways officers before submitting an application, as to whether the conversion would not need to make provision for parking. Presumably there would be a net decrease in parking demand from the existing use.

If you progress the scheme to the submission of a planning application, you would need to submit a fee of £462, as well as full plans and elevations of the building existing and proposed. It would be important to submit a proposed block plan, showing the access, and boundary treatments (fences etc), the windows in the building, and the windows of the adjacent buildings. You would also need to submit a Planning Statement to justify the proposal, including covering the loss of the community facility discussed above. It would also be necessary to submit a CIL form, the CIL charge would only be for any new floorspace being created.

The views expressed in this letter/email are a personal opinion and are not prejudicial upon any subsequent planning decision that the Council may make in respect of this property.

I trust this is helpful



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Appendix 3, Letter from Childs Estate Agents

C.R. CHILD

EST. 1929

& PARTNERS. ESTATE AGENTS

Residential Sales, Commercial Sales and Valuations

Mr Tony Bates
Anderson Consulting Ltd
Eaton Heights
Castle Road
Hythe
Kent
CT21 5HB

25th October 2018

Dear Sirs

Re: The Chapel, North Street, New Romney, Kent TN28 8DW

Following your recent visit to my office I am able to confirm that the Chapel, North Street, New Romney was marketed by our clients for in excess of six months themselves in the hope that they would attract another church or organisation who would want to retain the Chapel for community use. This bore no fruit and our client then instructed us to market with the directive that we were to try and find a purchaser who would use it for the community, we also were unsuccessful after a period of a further six months, eventually finding a purchaser who wished to change its use to residential subject to planning.

I trust that the enclosed is sufficient for your requirements, but should you require clarification on any points please do not hesitate to contact me.

You

Keith Rogans FNAEA
Managing Director



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Appendix 4, Community Facilities Availability

New Romney Community facilities

1. Romney Marsh Day Centre.
 - i. Over 55 day centre including cooked lunch, transport and a variety of activities.
 - ii. Exercise classes
 - iii. Tai Chi.
 - iv. Complimentary therapies
 - v. Hairdressing
2. New Romney Children's Centre, Craythorne Lane
 - vi. Baby Hub.
 - vii. Stay and Play
 - viii. Employment support group
 - ix. Community warden drop in
3. Romney Marsh Resource Centre, Mountfield Industrial Estate
 - x. Conference centre can be meeting room, theatre style or board room
 - xi. Can cater for 15, 25 or up to 50 people.
 - xii. On site cafe for catering
4. Romney Marsh Community Church, located immediately opposite the former Baptist Chapel in North Street. It is understood that activities originally taking place in the former Baptist Chapel have now relocated to the Community Church.
 - xiii. Church services
 - xiv. Pulse Drop in (14+ years old)
 - xv. Food Bank
 - xvi. Rainbow Toddlers
 - xvii. Friday Club (7-11 years old)
 - xviii. Friday Pulse (11-13 years old)
5. Marsh Academy Leisure centre.
6. Gym
7. Group exercise studio

8. Cross training room
9. Weights room
10. Relaxation suite
11. Sports hall
12. Squash courts
13. Outside courts and pitches

14. Marsh Academy Theatre, seating up to 247.

15. The Marsh Academy Community Hub (MACH)

xix. Various room sizes (6 to 40 persons) and layouts. Facilities including catering available.

9. St Nicholas Church, New Romney. Currently re ordering part of the church to allow flexibility.

1. Church services
2. Concerts
3. Book sales with coffee
4. Flower festivals
5. Art exhibitions
6. Soup kitchen

10. New Romney Methodist Church, The High Street.

1. Church services
2. Every Thursday a none denominational pop in event

11. New Romney Old School. Houses the towns museum and provides room for social and cultural activities. Has two rooms for hire and kitchen.

12. Other venues

1. Romney Hythe and Dymchurch railway, New Romney Station.
2. Littlestone Golf Club, function room up to 80people ballroom style or 100 theatre style, on site catering.

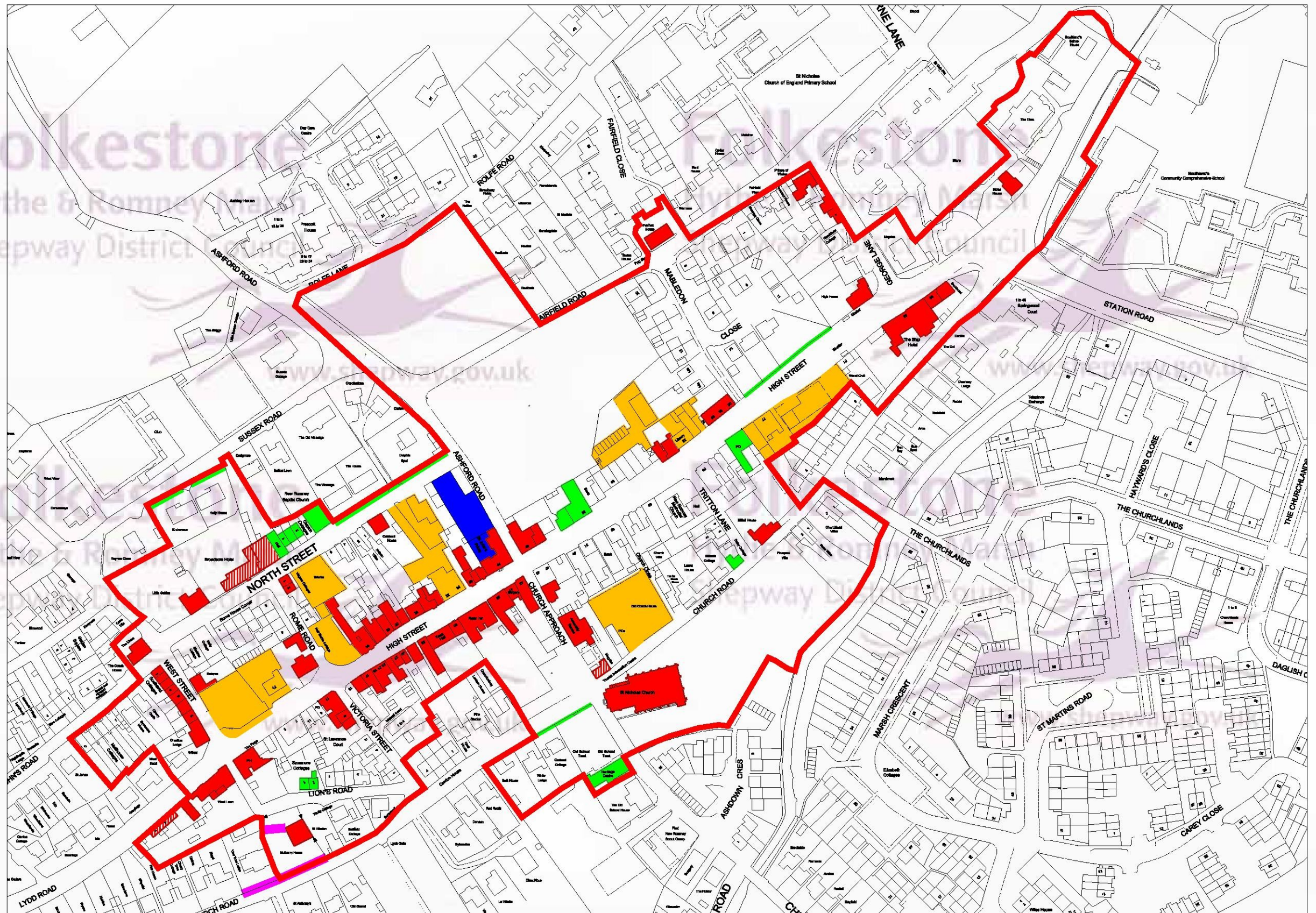
3. The Assembly Rooms, the High Street. Substantial main hall with two kitchens
4. The Maude Pavilion, Station Road

13. Community groups and their facilities not identified above.

1. Explorers, Scouts, Cubs and Beavers, Church Lane.
2. Marsh Spiritual Connections, Assembly Rooms.
3. Wellness workshop, Assembly Rooms.
4. Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce, Assembly Rooms.
5. Romney Marsh Model Engineering Society, Rolfe Lane.
6. Romney Marsh Am Dram, Marsh academy theatre.
7. New Romney Bowls Club, Sussex Road.
8. New Romney History Society, The Old School.
9. New Romney Allotment Association, Church Lane.
10. New Romney Youth Football Club, The Maude Pavillion.
11. Pilates, Marsh Academy and Romney Marsh Day Centre
12. Yoga, Marsh Academy

Appendix 5, Conservation Area Appraisal Map

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NEW ROMNEY 1 CONSERVATION AREA HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT ANALYSIS 2008



Conservation Architecture & Planning 			
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JOB TITLE New Romney Conservation Area Appraisal			
DRAWING TITLE Historic Environment			
SHEET SIZE A3	DATE March 2007	SCALE NTS	
DRAWN SEB			