

FORMER BAPTIST CHAPEL & ASSOCIATED LAND STOW HILL NEWPORT



HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT IN CONSIDERATION OF CONVERSION TO RESIDENTIAL USE

for

Linc Cymru Housing Association

September 2021

SUBMISSION V1

HERITAGE VISION LTD

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1. PURPOSE OF THE STATEMENT

1.1 Overview

1.1.1 This heritage impact assessment (HIA) follows on from the initial heritage appraisal and impact assessment for the proposed residential development of the site of the C19, former *Stow Hill Baptist Chapel*, commonly known as the *Zanzibar Night Club*, listed grade II, and its associated land, that was prepared for Linc Cymru Housing Association in April 2020 (*Heritage appraisal & initial impact assessment in consideration of conversion to residential use*, Heritage Vision, April 2020). The HIA summarises the heritage significance of the listed building further to the findings of the detailed appraisal of April 2020; the appraisal, duly updated, is included at Appendix A of this HIA. The proposed development is briefly described. The impact assessment then reviews how the proposed development impacts upon the identified significance of the listed chapel and its setting.

1.1.2 The HIA is produced in accordance with the requirements of *Planning Policy Wales, Edition 10, December 2018* paras. 6.1.9 and 6.1.13, as noted below, and in accordance with *Planning Policy Wales Technical Advice Note 24: Historic Environment and Managing Heritage Impact in Wales, May 2017*, Cadw:

Para. 6.1.9 Any decisions made through the planning system must fully consider the impact on the historic environment and on the significance and heritage values of individual historic assets and their contribution to the character of place.

Para. 6.1.13 Applicants for listed building consent must be able to justify their proposals, show why the alteration or demolition of a listed building is desirable or necessary and consider the impact of any change upon its significance. This must be included in a heritage impact statement, which will be proportionate both to the significance of the building and to the degree of change proposed.

1.2 Author

The HIA has been prepared by Nichola Burley, Dip Cons Arch, MRTPI, IHBC, Heritage Vision Ltd, an appropriately qualified and experienced building conservation, design and planning professional for whom HESPR accreditation has been obtained from the IHBC. Further details of qualifications and experience may be obtained at www.heritagevision.co.uk.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1 The site is in a prominent location on one of the oldest and most significant routes in Newport. Stow Hill links the historic crossing of the River Usk with the top of the hill where the town's original castle was located and where the settlement's principal place of worship, St Woolos Church, Newport Cathedral, is located. Until the mid C19 It was principally a rural route lined with sporadic houses after then it was developed intensely with terraces of houses; the terrace housing rises to four and five storeys close to the site. The Victorian character and high status of Stow Hill is well preserved and it is rightly included in the *Newport City Centre Conservation Area*. Whether it was because it was the principal route from the town centre to the town's principal place of worship cannot be said, but Stow Hill is notable for its clustering of places of worship, notably the Baptist chapel and the neighbouring Roman Catholic St Mary the Virgin Church and the former Wesleyan Church, now the Bethel Community Church, all C19 and all listed grade II. The cluster of large, architecturally prominent churches on Stow Hill is an important part of the character and appearance of the conservation area.
- 2.2 Unlike the bulk of Newport's Victorian architecture which is of a Gothic style, the chapel adopted a grand, classical façade. The novel, prominent façade may well have helped to attract passers-by to enter and join the congregation of the substantial chapel with its capacity for 1000 people. The façade remains as a prominent and interesting feature on Stow Hill; it makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area.
- 2.3 While the neighbouring Roman Catholic and former Wesleyan churches have remained in use as places of worship, the chapel became redundant in the 1930's. It first became a social club and went on to become a notable nightclub in the 1970's hosting one of the early gigs of the Sex Pistols in 1976. The interior of the building is understood to have been significantly altered and the rear of the building was redeveloped. The chapel became unviable as a night club venue in 2010 and has been vacant since. In 2015 planning permission and LBC were granted for the demolition of all of the chapel other than the façade with the site of the chapel and the land to the rear being redeveloped as housing. The proposal has not been implemented. In 2018 the building and the neighbouring Wesleyan chapel were gutted by fire. The chapel is now an unstable structure but remarkably the Stow Hill façade has survived and is considered to be salvageable.

- 2.4 The land to the rear of the Baptist chapel was its burial ground and was bound by rows of small, terraced houses; none of this remains. The rear of the chapel is now merely a rudimentary parking area opening on to North Street, the main street that runs parallel with Stow Hill. Views to the very utilitarian rear elevation of the chapel that was developed in the mid C20 are apparent from North Street. The rear elevation is an unattractive, undistinguished, utilitarian, piece of construction. North Street was cleared of much of its dense housing in the mid C20 to allow a wider road and a car park to be constructed. The North Street car park is immediately opposite the chapel's cleared area. The rudimentary cleared area at the rear of the chapel, the unattractive, utilitarian rear elevation of the chapel and the North Street Car Park are parts of the conservation area and the setting of the conservation area that make a negative contribution to its character and appearance.
- 2.5 The neighbouring Bethel Community Church in the former Wesleyan Church, listed grade II, has obtained listed building consent and planning permission to repair their building further to the fire. The work to reinstate the building will be simpler and arguably more successful, potentially being able to retain more historic fabric, if works to clear the unsalvageable parts of the chapel are cleared at the same time.
- 2.6 A January 2021 engineer's assessment advises that the façade would benefit from the removal of the failing structure to the rear which has been left to collapse of its own free will since the 2018 fire. While the façade is propped and supported on the Stow Hill side further to the fire, no work has been possible at the rear of the building or the rear of the façade to secure it.
- 2.7 In 2015 the demolition of all but the façade of the chapel and the redevelopment of the site for housing was approved; this was an open market housing scheme which has not been implemented. The proposed development is a funded proposal to provide housing to satisfy local need. It is a more intense development than the 2015 approved scheme as it seeks to provide a large number of one and two bedroom flats to help address housing need in Newport. The development comprises the retention and conservation of the chapel's façade, the provision of Block A, a five storey block of apartments behind the façade, Block B a two and three storey block of apartments along the southern boundary of the site with an elevation on North Street and car parking and amenity areas both at the heart of the site and along its northern boundary.

- 2.8 Proposed Blocks A and B are of modern design. The block's elevations comprise bands of light and dark grey brick, grey standing seam cladding, feature panels of white render and portrait proportion windows to tie in with the fenestration pattern of the area, fitted with grey, PVCu window frames. The bulk of the block is capped with a flat roof with a shallow eaves detail. Behind the façade pediment and on the elevation addressing North Street pitched, gable end roofs are introduced to tie the blocks into the architecture and character of the area and the form of the chapel's façade.
- 2.9 The North Street elevation of Block B, the view into the heart of the site, the neatly detailed bin and bike shed on the opposite side of the site entrance to Block B and the termination of the view with the five storey, rear elevation of Block B, is found to be an attractive composition that enhances the conservation area through appropriate scale and detailing for both Stow Hill and North Street. Block B and Block A, in views of the rear of the former Wesleyan church, listed grade II, are not found to harm the significance of the church.
- 2.10 On Stow Hill, Block A will not be apparent at roof level to the north of the chapel façade, other than for a glimpse of conservation roof lights in the north roof slope. Block A will be apparent as a new street frontage to the south of the chapel. Block A replaces the current, much altered, C19 building set between the chapel and the church. It comprises a feature, white rendered panel and grey brick, four storey elevation with the fifth storey finished with standing seam cladding. The fifth floor extends from just below the pediment eaves of the chapel's façade and masters the sloping roof behind the pediment. While the elevation of Block A is set back from the chapel's façade it will dominate the southern side of the chapel.
- 2.11 At present it is not possible to specify the conservation of the façade as it is not safe to fully explore its detailing and its original form is not fully understood. A conservation and restoration statement needs to be conditioned as part of any planning and LBC approval requiring a full analysis of the façade and subsequently its appropriate repair and restoration in order to conserve the façade for the enjoyment and interpretation of future generations.

- 2.12 The proposed development is understood to be viable. No other viable proposal has come forward since the building was abandoned in 2010. The building is in a frail condition further to alteration, abandonment and then a fire. Only the façade appears to be worthy of conservation. The demolition of the body of the chapel and the neighbouring building to the south is understood to be unavoidable and cannot be safely assessed any further due to fire damage making the building unstable. The North Street elevation of the proposal is found to be an enhancement of the conservation area and not to harm the significance of the neighbouring former Wesleyan church, listed grade II. Works to conserve and restore the façade can be conditioned to be undertaken when safe access to the façade can be gained. Block A is not found to physically harm the façade and to cause no harm to the character and significance of the façade on its north side. Block A where it becomes a façade on to Stow Hill by virtue of its elevation treatment and height is found to harm the significance and character of the listed chapel and the setting of the neighbouring listed church.
- 2.13 It is for the planning balance to decide whether the harm that is identified to the chapel's façade, to the character of the Stow Hill part of the conservation area and the setting of the neighbouring listed church, by the junction of Block A with the south side of the façade and the design of its Stow Hill elevation, is outweighed by the public benefits of the scheme which include the conservation of the façade of the listed chapel and the enhancement of the North Street part of the conservation area.

3. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT – BACKGROUND & OBJECTIVES

- 3.1 The former Baptist Chapel, its setting and its history, is described in detail in the April 2020 Heritage Vision appraisal; the bulk of that report is included within Appendix A of this HIA. In summary, the building that is generally referred to as *Zanzibar*, a name that relates to its past use as a nightclub, was once a grand place of worship on Stow Hill, the main street between the commercial core of Newport and the city's cathedral at the top of Stow Hill. Stow Hill is notable for its cluster of places of worship, each seemingly competing for worshipers and each using architecture to provide prominent and attractive buildings with facades to welcome and inspire their congregations. The chapel became redundant as a place of worship in the 1930's; it first became a social club and then a night club. The interior of the building was much altered by its C20 uses, but its grand, classical façade remained as a prominent feature on Stow Hill. In 2018 the chapel caught fire and it, along with the neighbouring, C19, former Wesleyan Methodist Church, also listed grade II, were gutted. The façade survived the fire, the body of the chapel did not. The appearance of the chapel's facade on Stow Hill is an important feature within the Newport City Centre Conservation Area. The façade of the former chapel makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area.
- 3.2 There are approved plans for the repair of the neighbouring listed church further to the fire damage to allow its return to use as a successful, much loved, community church. It would be preferable and advantageous for the historic fabric of both buildings for demolition work for the church and chapel, further to the fire, to be progressed at the same time.
- 3.3 Today the chapel retains its façade, but in an increasingly poor condition with the bulk of the joinery missing and stonework beginning to fail; engineers advise that it is at an increasing risk of failure. The building is in too dangerous a condition for the interior to be accessed but it is a safe assumption that the interior and rear of the building have been lost further to their later C20 uses and then the fire. The need for housing in Newport remains high. The proposed development is the provision of housing to satisfy local need while preserving the façade of the C19, Baptist chapel, so that its

presence and significance is conserved for the enjoyment and interpretation of today's and future generations.

4. HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

4.1 Overview

The summary of the history and description of the building and its setting provided below is based upon the appraisal carried out by Heritage Vision in April 2020, with some updates to that detail. The updated appraisal is provided at Appendix A of this statement.

4.2 Early origins – archaeological potential

The Newport area has been settled since the Bronze Age. Stow Hill was established from early times as a route from the river crossing up the hill to the site of an early castle and church. The castle was later moved to the river but the early place of worship on the hill was developed to become what is now Newport Cathedral, St Woolos church. Stow Hill, which the chapel fronts, is therefore a key early route in the area. The site seems likely to be in an area of high archaeological potential due to its likely early settlement, but also due to its previous use as a burial ground therefore any application for development is likely to require an archaeological assessment and any approval for development is likely to include archaeological watching briefs. There is however no apparent above ground fabric that predates the 1863 Baptist chapel.

4.3 Character of the Conservation Area: Stow Hill

4.3.1 Overview

The Stow Hill area of the Newport City Centre Conservation Area makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the area both through its history and appearance. Elements of the site however detract from the character and appearance of the conservation area and its setting and make a negative contribution to the area. The rear of the site has been cleared to create a rudimentary parking area. The rear of the building was redeveloped for its social and night club use with uncompromising, utilitarian construction. No historic fabric is apparent at the rear of the site. The rear of the site offers opportunities for the enhancement of the conservation area.

4.3.2 History

- i. Stow Hill is an historically important route in Newport that links the river crossing and the commercial core of the town at the bottom of Stow Hill, at its northern end, with the settlement's principal place of worship at the top of the hill, at its southern end. The route had a high status in the C19 which is evidenced by the quality Pennant paving and raised pavements that line the street.
- ii. Stow Hill was intensely developed in the C19, changing from a rural route with sporadic housing to a road lined with dense terraces of housing interspersed with places of worship. Close to the chapel, housing rises to four storeys, further north, closer to the heart of the town, buildings rise to five storeys and have commercial premises on their ground floors. The street retains much of its character and its busy nature. Trams ran up and down the street in the early – mid C20. The Victorian and early C20 character of the Street remains along most of its length.
- iii. The route from the commercial core of the town to the top of the hill, is notable for the number of C19 places of worship along its length. In particular, there is a remarkable cluster of places of worship around the site of the Baptist chapel. Firstly, the Roman Catholics constructed a small chapel in 1812 and then the current Early English Gothic style church in 1839, St Mary's, listed grade II. John Wesley is understood to have established a Methodist 'room' on the site of the Baptist chapel by 1839 when he first visited Wales. The Baptists constructed the classically detailed chapel that remains today in 1863, listed grade II. In 1874 the Wesleyan Church, in Decorated Gothic style, north of the development site was constructed. In addition, there are numerous other places of worship along the roads off of Stow Hill. It is as if the denominations were grouping to compete for the attendance of worshipers on the route from the heart of the town to the Anglican St Woolos church at the top of the hill.
- iv. The street has suffered from some C20 development that detracts from its character and appearance. The site of the Baptist chapel is affected by C20 development that detracts from the character of the area. South east of the chapel an area has been cleared to provide a rudimentary parking area. Opposite the chapel, to the east, buildings were cleared in the late 1960's to permit a new service road, an extension of School Lane, to serve the businesses that front the newly pedestrianised section of Commercial Street off

to the east. Adjacent to the chapel, to the north, a bland, concrete, flat roofed, three storey office building with horizontal bands of glazing was developed in the 1970's. To the west of the chapel, to the rear, the original burial ground and neighbouring terraced housing have been lost and North Street has been cleared of many of its C19 terraces of houses to provide a wide road and a car park with some new terraced housing being provided in the late C20. The immediate setting of the chapel detracts from the conservation area and would benefit from enhancement.

4.3.3 Summary

Stow Hill is a well preserved, predominantly Victorian, high status, key route in Newport. In proximity to the chapel the street is lined with tall buildings and notably two other C19, listed places of worship, of Gothic architecture, both listed grade II. However, the immediate location of the chapel and its associated land has been blighted by C20 clearance and by an incongruous 1970's office building and would benefit from redevelopment that can enhance the conservation area.

4.4 The Baptist chapel, listed grade II

4.4.1 Classically detailed facade

The chapel stands out in the predominantly C19, Gothic architecture detailing of the Stow Hill area by virtue of its grand, classical façade. It is disappointing not to have been able to identify the patrons of the chapel and to find out why the classical form was adopted as such a departure from the generally adopted Gothic architectural style for the area. The façade has survived remarkably well and is worthy of conservation and repair both for the quality of its detailing and its construction as well as for its presence as evidence of the clear statement of prominence and grandeur that the General Baptist congregation wished to make on Stow Hill. No clear evidence of the original detailing of the façade has been found. An etching which appears to show the chapel in the C19, for which the provenance is not clear, appears to show detailing that contrasts with a glimpse of the facade in a photograph that is believed to date from the earlier part of the C20. It is only through the careful assessment of the fabric of the façade that its original form can be assessed and subsequently the appropriate reinstatement of the façade can be proposed.

4.4.2 Body of the chapel

The chapel's Stow Hill façade is in a reasonable condition but it is the only part of the building that retains any architectural or historic interest. The rear, sides, roof, interior and grounds of the historic chapel have been obliterated by change, demolition and fire damage. Not even the original footprint of the chapel remains discernible. Assessment by engineers in January 2021, included at Appendix B of this statement, confirms that the building is in a perilous condition and that its careful demolition carried out in a way that will enable the retention of the façade is the only way to proceed with the development of the site that will allow the conservation of the façade. To delay demolition places the remaining fabric of the façade at increasing risk of loss and ultimately collapse.

4.4.3 C20 history of the chapel

The chapel as the *Stowaway Night Club* does have a degree of significance in the history of Punk Rock in the UK as it hosted an early gig for the Sex Pistols in October 1976 following their rise to acclaim in London in Spring of 1976. No evidence of the night club as it existed then remains. A blue plaque on the building may well be the best way to recall this surprising part of the history of the building.

4.4.4 Summary

- i. Stow Hill Baptist Chapel is unusual along Stow Hill for its classical detailing. The chapel's grand, classically detailed façade is remarkably well conserved when its fall from use as a chapel in the 1930's, its use as a nightclub in the later C20, abandonment since 2010 and major fire damage in 2018, is considered. However, the original form of the façade is unclear as an etching and an early photograph appear to contradict each other with regard to window and elevation detail. It is only through careful assessment of its fabric that the original form of the façade can be suggested. The façade is the only part of the historic chapel that remains in a condition that it is practical to conserve. The rear of the building is so badly damaged further to the 2018 fire that full assessment of its structural integrity is not possible but what assessment has been possible in January 2021 by the project engineers indicates that the rear of the building should be cleared as soon as possible to permit the shoring up of both sides of the façade and any length of the return walls that may be possible in order to avoid their loss.

- ii. Removal of the collapsed body of the building at this stage would also be beneficial to the conservation and repair of the neighbouring former Wesleyan church, also listed grade II.

4.5 Small building to the south of the chapel

The small building to the south of the chapel, between it and the neighbouring former Wesleyan church, has changed significantly over time. It is known to have been a two storey building with a gable end, pitched roof running parallel with Stow Hill and a chimney stack in the party wall with the chapel, in the 1930's. The building may have been a manse or offices for the chapel. It may be that some historic fabric remains in this structure, only close observation will reveal this. It is however unlikely that the remaining structure is of sufficient integrity to retain, particularly after the fire.

4.6 North Street elevation of the site

The North Street elevation of the site, comprising the car park and C20, utilitarian, rear elevation of the extended chapel building, makes a negative contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area and harms the setting of neighbouring listed buildings. The gap in what was a continuous façade of development along the east side of North Street and in its place the presence of the site's rudimentary car park and the bulky, utilitarian rear elevation of the former chapel, are incongruous and detract from the character and appearance of the conservation area.

5. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT - DESCRIPTION

The proposed development is the demolition of all structures on the site other than the façade of the chapel and a short section of the north elevation return from the façade, the construction of a new block behind the façade, Block A, and the construction of a second block along the southern boundary of the site, the boundary with the Bethel Community Church which has a North Street frontage, Block B. An amenity area is provided at the heart of the site along with a small amount of parking. The blocks to be contemporary in detail. The blocks to provide 37 one bed and two bed apartments to satisfy identified, local, housing need. Access to be provided from North Street and 18 parking spaces to be provided alongside a small amount of amenity space. The façade of the chapel to be carefully assessed and repaired. Figures 1 – 11. See application for most up to date details.

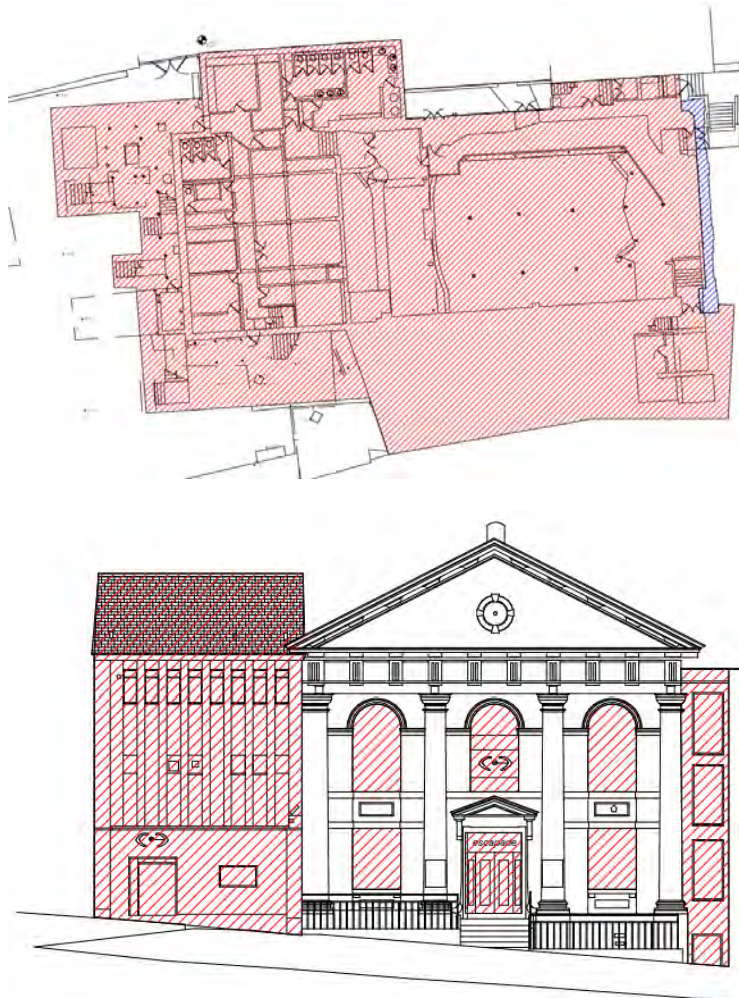


Figure 1. Demolition plan, areas marked red to be demolished, façade marked in blue on the plan drawing to be retained – see application for up to date details

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Figure 2. Proposed site plan: Block A developed to the rear of the chapel façade, Block B addressing North Street, accessed primarily from North Street, 18 parking spaces, amenity space



Figure 3. Proposed Stow Hill elevation: repaired façade, 5 storey apartment block to the rear (lower ground floor not shown). Façade to be repaired. White painted timber windows to be introduced into the façade and a timber door copied from the existing door



Figure 4. Rear elevation of five storey Block A with the pediment of the chapel beyond

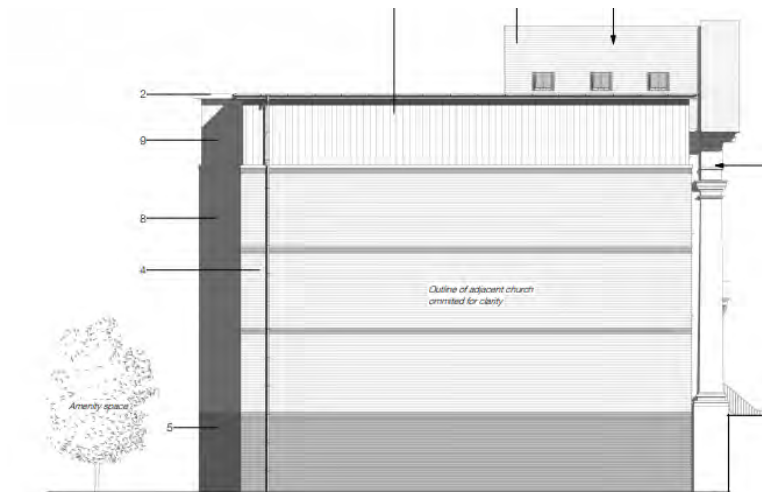


Figure 5. South elevation of Block A set between the church and chapel

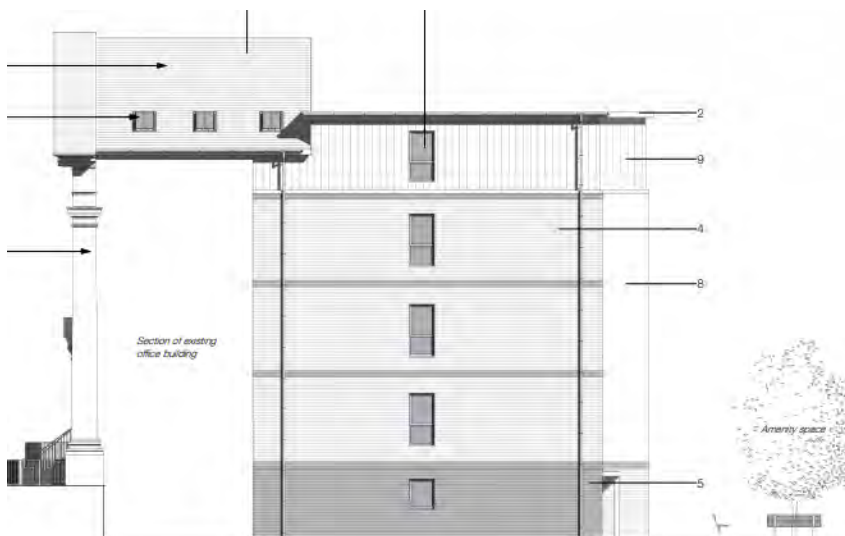


Figure 6. North elevation of Block A addressing the office block to the south

Schedule of materials	
1.	Black UPVC Rainwater goods
2.	Grey UPVC fascias
3.	Blue / black fibre cement roof tiles
4.	Light grey colour facing brickwork
5.	Dark grey colour facing brickwork
6.	Solider course string course in dark grey brickwork
7.	Grey UPVC casement windows - to new build elements
8.	Smooth white render
9.	VMZINC standing seam cladding
10.	Composite entrance doors with glazed panel

Figure 7 . Block A proposed materials other than for the historic façade



Figure 8. North Street elevation – west end of Block B



Figure 9. North elevation of Block B looking north into the site



Figure 10. Section through the site

Schedule of materials

1. Black UPVC Rainwater goods
2. Grey UPVC fascias
3. Blue / black fibre cement roof tiles
4. Light grey colour facing brickwork
5. Dark grey colour facing brickwork
6. Solider course string course in dark grey brickwork
7. Grey UPVC casement windows - to new build elements
8. Smooth white render
9. VMZINC standing seam cladding
10. Composite entrance doors with glazed panel

Figure 11 . Block B proposed materials

6. IMPACT ASSESSMENT

6.1 Change of use to residential

The listed chapel has not had a use since 2010. The building has been vacant and decaying for 11 years. Residential use was proposed in 2012 and approved in 2015 but that scheme was not implemented. No alternative viable use for the building has come forward since 2015. It is essential that a viable use for the building is permitted that will enable the conservation of what little historic fabric remains. The proposed use is understood to be viable and possible to introduce in a way that permits the conservation of the façade and any parts of the return walls that can be salvaged. Subject to the change of use to residential use being able to conserve the Stow Hill façade and if possible any part of the return walls and to the new elements of the development not detracting from either the significance and character of the listed building, not harming the settings of the neighbouring listed buildings and as a minimum conserving the character and appearance of the conservation area, the change of use to residential is appropriate.

6.2 Demolition of the rear of the building

6.2.1 Photographs of the interior of the building prior to the fire in 2018 show what a poor condition the building was in, how little historic fabric remained and how the general plan form of the chapel had been lost. Anything that did remain would not have survived the fire. The January 2021 engineer's assessment of the condition of the building, included in full at Appendix B of this statement, advises that the fabric of the building is in an increasingly fragile condition and that demolition of the rear of the building to permit better support of the façade is the preferable way forward. It is felt that there is adequate professional advice to confirm that the rear of the building should be demolished in order to permit the proper support and conservation of the façade. A condition may be added to any permission requiring the wall returns to be retained if possible; potentially having an archaeologist and engineer on site during demolition to ascertain whether wall return can be retained.

6.2.2 Demolition of the building at an early stage will also help with the conservation of the neighbouring listed church.

6.3 Demolition of the building to the south of the chapel

The original form of the small building to the south of the chapel is not clear. An early photograph, figure A 51, appears to show a two storey house with a chimney stack in the party wall with the chapel. No evidence has been found of the use of the building. It could have been a manse or offices to the chapel but there is no evidence to support this. The mid C20 elevation is not considered to have any heritage significance. It is unlikely that any historic structure beneath the cladding will be in a sufficiently good condition to warrant its retention and conservation further to the 2018 fire. It is proposed to demolish the building including its Stow Hill elevation. The building is not listed and there is no information about its past association with the Baptist Chapel to suggest that it is a curtilage structure of the listed chapel. If the demolition permits the conservation of the listed chapel façade and the neighbouring former Wesleyan church, then it is considered to be justifiable

6.4 Treatment of the façade of the listed chapel

- 6.4.1 The 2015 planning approval and LBC for the redevelopment of the site for residential use included the carefully considered conservation of the façade including paintwork removal, stone conservation and the replacement of the windows and front door to the form that is shown in the illustration of the building as it was believed to have been in the C19, figure A 50. The proposed treatment of the façade in the current proposal is noted in the current proposal drawings as *retained façade, white painted timber windows, timber doors to match the existing. and style and proportions as historical photographs.*
- 6.4.2 The original appearance of the façade is not known. No clear evidence of its early form has been found. The only way to assess its likely original form is to assess what fabric remains. The fabric can only be safely assessed once the rear of the fire damaged building has been cleared away and the façade fully supported.
- 6.4.3 A physical assessment of the façade to help understand its original form and a subsequent conservation and restoration statement detailing the final proposed form of the façade can be a condition of any approval for the development to the rear of the façade.

6.5 Impact of Block A

- 6.5.1 Block A replaces the body of the chapel behind the Stow Hill façade and the building to the south of the chapel that abuts the boundary with the neighbouring Bethel Community Church, figures 1 – 7, 12. The five storey building has a scale that ties in with the four to five storey scale of development along Stow Hill

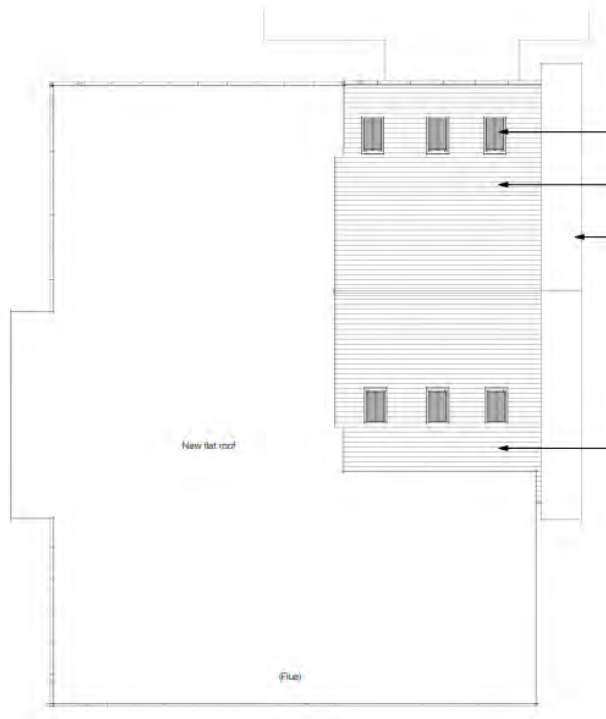


Figure 12. Roof plan of proposed Block A

- 6.5.2 Behind the pediment of the façade the block has a slate covered, pitched roof, inset with conservation rooflights. This roof will enhance and conserve the pediment of the façade.
- 6.5.3 Block A rises from the current basement level of the flat to provide five storeys of accommodation. The bulk of the block is capped with a flat roof set at a level just above the eaves of the façade's pediment. On the north side of the façade, coming up Stow Hill, the new flat roof is set back and will not be seen. On the south side of the façade, coming down Stow Hill and approaching on School Lane, the flat roof will be seen set above the level of the eaves of the facades pediment. The presence of the flat roof above the eaves of the pediment will detract from the prominent and grand character of the façade of the chapel.

6.5.4 The grey brick, white render and standing seam detailing of the rear and sides of Block A continues to the proposed Stow Hill elevation of the block. On the north side the side elevation will hardly be noticed as its set close to the 1970's office block. On the south side of the block and on the Stow Hill elevation, the detailing will be highly prominent and feature in the setting of the listed chapel and the neighbouring listed church. It is considered that the height of Block A to the south of the façade where it will be seen set just behind the façade, with its eaves set above the eaves of the pediment and the detailing of the elevation, particularly the feature white rendered panel, will make the elevation overly prominent and will harm the significance of both the listed chapel and the neighbouring listed church.

6.5.5 The proposed rear elevation of Block A is a more coherent and balanced composition than the current utilitarian rear elevation of the former chapel. The elevation will enhance the North Street part of the conservation area in comparison to the current built form on the site and will not harm the significance of the listed chapel or the setting of the neighbouring listed church.

6.6 Impact of Block B, car parking, bike and bin stores

6.6.1 Block B with an elevation on North Street rises to three storeys with the building being cut into the slope of the land. The block is of a similar detail to Block A. Block B, car parking, bin and bike stores are placed in the rudimentary car park on North Street that currently detracts from the settings of the listed chapel and church and makes a negative contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area. Block B and associated amenities replace the rudimentary car park and parts of the utilitarian rear of the chapel building.

6.6.2 The proposed residential block in providing a coherent façade to North Street is found to represent an enhancement of the conservation area and the settings of the listed chapel, and neighbouring listed church.

6.7 Development of the former burial ground

The OS Town Plan of 1884 clearly records that land to the rear of the chapel was a burial ground. This land has subsequently been developed and cleared. Any future development will need to acknowledge the likely presence of graves and plan for excavations accordingly.

7. CONCLUSION

- 7.1 The former Stow Hill Baptist Chapel, listed grade II, set within the Newport City Centre Conservation Area, despite redundancy as a place of worship since 1930, its use as a night club for c. 35 years, its abandonment and vacancy since 2010 and a major fire in 2018 has retained its grand, classical façade on to Stow Hill. The classically detailed façade of the chapel in close proximity to the Gothic, mid C19 Roman Catholic church of the St Mary the Virgin, listed grade II and the neighbouring former Wesleyan church, also listed grade II, is a remarkable grouping on Stow Hill which makes a positive and important contribution to the character and appearance of the city centre conservation area. The rear of the building is understood to be beyond salvage and its removal would aid the repair and conservation of the neighbouring listed church and the façade. The façade of the building is in an increasingly fragile state and is in urgent need of repair if it is not to be lost.
- 7.2 The redevelopment of the site with 37 small apartments to help satisfy local housing need is understood to be a viable proposal that can afford to conserve the façade of the chapel. The proposed development in demolishing the failed body of the chapel and redeveloping the site of the chapel and its associated land with two blocks, Block A relating to the chapel and Block B that will provide a new frontage of to North Street, is found to enhance the North Street part of the conservation area. Block A rises to five storeys in keeping with the character of Stow Hill. The west side of Block A is not found to harm the listed chapel, neighbouring listed church or the conservation area. The south side of Block A due to its height in relation to the pediment of the chapel's façade and the detailing of its elevation on to Stow Hill is found to detract from the significance and character of the listed chapel, the neighbouring listed church and the conservation area.
- 7.3 It is for the planning balance exercise to decide whether the harm that is identified to the listed chapel and neighbouring listed church and the character and appearance of the conservation area, by the junction of Block A with the south side of the chapel's façade and the design of its Stow Hill elevation, is outweighed by the public benefits of the scheme which include the conservation of the façade of the listed chapel and the enhancement of the North Street part of the conservation area.

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APPENDIX A

Description of the location, setting, form and history of the former chapel to identify the building's heritage significance

- A1. Location
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 - A2.2 Stow Hill
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 - A5.10 Proposed partial demolition and conversion to residential use, approved 2015
 - A5.11 Fire damage 2018

A1. LOCATION

A1.1 The former Baptist chapel, listed grade II, is located on Stow Hill, the historic route that leads south from High Street linking the historic Newport Bridge crossing of the River Usk with the city's principal place of worship, St Woolos Church, Newport Cathedral. The chapel and its associated land to the rear, is at the heart of the historic core of Newport, figure A1. The site is at the northern end of Stow Hill, closer to the city centre, High Street and bridge than to the cathedral.



Figure A1. Location of the former Baptist chapel at the heart of Newport © Google Earth

A1.2 The chapel and its associated land that make up the proposed development site is on the west side of Stow Hill towards its northern end where the street joins the square at the junction of High Street, Commercial Street, Bridge Street and Skinner Street, figure A2.



Figure A2. The chapel and associated land on the western side of Stow Hill south of the junction with four of the city's key routes © Google Earth

A2. DESCRIPTION– IMMEDIATE SETTING

A2.1 Newport City Centre Conservation Area

Located within the *Newport City Centre Conservation Area*, figure A3, the area in which the chapel and its associated land are located is described in the *Newport City Centre Conservation Area Appraisal* (CAA) prepared by Newport City Council, Consultation Draft, April 2018. The description provided in the CAA is augmented in this statement by observations from a site visit made in early Spring 2020.



Figure A3. Newport City Centre Conservation Area © Newport City Council

A2.2 Stow Hill

A2.2.1 As detailed in Section A3 of this statement, Stow Hill is one of the oldest routes in Newport, linking the crossing of the River Usk to the north east with the cathedral up on top of the hill to the south west. The hill is comparatively steep; from the top there are views to the open countryside and hills off to north of Newport, figure A4. The cathedral at the top of the hill is surrounded by green space and trees, by spacious, mainly C18 and C19 houses with gardens and by smaller cottages, figures A4, A5. The southern end of Stow Hill near the cathedral is very much a residential area with houses of generally two stories, a few of three stories, interspersed with trees and gardens.



Figure A4. View north down Stow Hill across the city centre, from just below the cathedral, the road principally lined with detached houses with gardens © Google Earth



Figure A5. Detached and terraced houses, mainly in gardens, around the cathedral which is set within a tree lined yard © Google Earth

A2.2.2 By contrast to the residential, comparatively low density development at the top of Stow Hill, the northern end of Stow Hill, where the chapel is located, is densely developed. Density and height of development along Stow Hill increases with proximity to its northern end. Just south of the site, houses are C19, of various styles, in long terraces, of three stories, set hard up against the street, giving this part of the street a very dense grain, figure A6. Immediately to the south of the chapel is the Bethel Community Church, a C19, gothic, detailed former Wesley Church, listed grade II, which like the chapel was burnt out in 2018, figure A7, see para 5.2.4 below.



Figure A6. Stow Hill just south of the chapel, looking north towards the chapel and High Street, with the spire of the neighbouring community church apparent, lined with terraced, three storey houses set hard up against the street



Figure A7. Bethel Community Church, former Wesleyan Methodist Church, listed grade II, neighbouring the chapel to the south, prior to the fire in 2018

A2.2.3 The character of the street changes to the north of the chapel, as the street nears the city centre. The buildings are still C19 but are now more ornate, rise to four storeys and have commercial premises on the ground floor: shops, services, restaurants and pubs, figure A8. However, immediately to the north of the chapel and opposite it there is C20 development. To the north is a 1970's office building: flat façade, bands of glazing, cream brickwork cladding a concrete frame and a flat roof, figure A9. Opposite the site is an open area used as a car park, figure A10. Adjacent to the car park is a plaque and war memorial recording the loss of a drill hall from part of the car park area and the loss of the men who left from the drill hall to fight at Ypres, the majority of whom did not return to Newport, figure A11. The open area was created as part of the remodelling of roads in the area in the 1970's, as detailed in Section 6 of this statement.



Figure A8. Stow Hill just south of the junction with High Street, lined with four storey buildings with commercial ground floors © Google Earth



Figure A9. 1970's office building immediately to the north of the site. © Google Earth



Figure A10. Open area in use as a car park, cleared in the 1970's as part of road remodelling plans,



Figure A11. The war memorial on the northern boundary of the former drill hall site, now a car park opposite the development site

A2.2.4 The immediate setting of the chapel is in stark contrast to the remainder of the principally residential street; it is a veritable riot of Victorian, nostalgic styling displayed in three places of worship, including the chapel, and a public swimming pool. Opposite and slightly north of the site is the C19 St Mary's Roman Catholic Church, listed grade II, in an Early English Gothic style, figure A12. South of the site is the former Wesleyan Church of 1884, listed grade II, in a Decorated Gothic style figure A7. North of the former Wesleyan Church is the site of the former civic swimming baths now converted to community use, figure A13, the baths replace an 1890 Neo-Tudor composition swimming baths building. The site itself, a former Baptist Chapel, built in 1863, listed grade II, has a grand Classical façade, figure A14. A quite remarkable grouping of styles in such a small area. The Wesleyan Church is the home of the Bethel Community Church. The church also suffered from the 2018 fire which gutted the chapel. Plans have been approved to rebuild the listed church as notably its spire survived the fire.



Figure A12. Early English Gothic, St Mary's Roman Catholic Church, listed grade II, just north east of the chapel



Figure A13. Site of the Civic Swimming Baths, north of the former Wesleyan Church, south of the chapel, now in use as a community support hub, replacing the original Neo-Tudor baths, figure 54



Figure A14. The former Baptist Chapel, listed grade II facing on to Stow Hill; the, a grand classical façade, with the fire damaged neighbouring church, listed grade II, beyond, to the south

The street is lined with high quality Pennant paving and along much of the street beyond its northern commercial end the pavement is raised and lined with metal railings. The status and functional importance of Stow Hill to Newport City Centre is readily apparent from the nature and the quality of the buildings that line the street. There are a very high number of listed buildings along the street, figure A15. Stow Hill can be seen to a very important part of the history of Newport where there is a high density of listed buildings, including the former Stow Hill Baptist Chapel. Notably the chapel is part of a collection of places of worship of varying architectural styles. The character and appearance of the street is worthy of protection and is rightly designated as a conservation area with the grouping of the places of worship including the chapel being a particular point of interest.

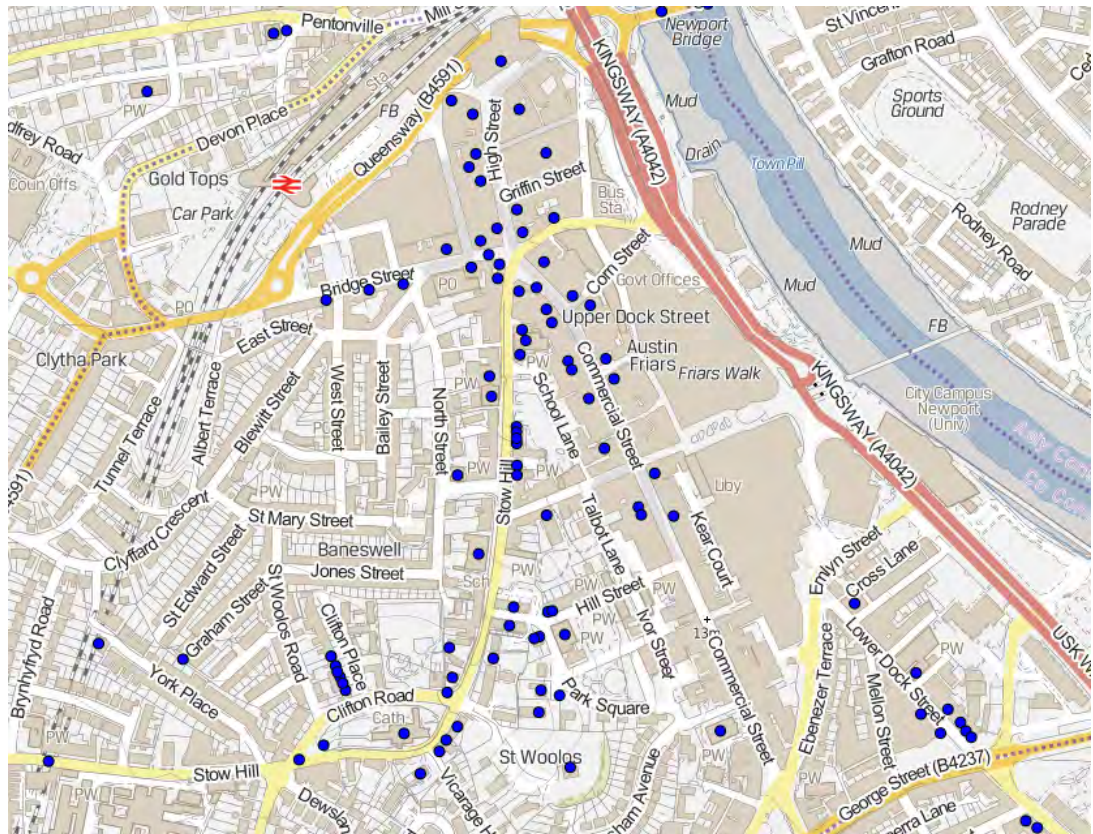


Figure A15. The density of listed buildings stretched out along Stow Hill, (shown by blue dots) © Cadw

A3 DESCRIPTION – WIDER SETTING OF STOW HILL

A3.1 Overview

While Stow Hill is reasonably well conserved with many of its fine C19 and earlier buildings and features remaining, the city to the west and east of the street is less well conserved. By the 1960's clearance of dense terraces of houses had begun to permit the construction of wider roads and car parks. In the later C20 Newport's economy went into decline further to the collapse of traditional industries. Since 2003 there has been major investment, notably seeking to regenerate the river corridor.

A3.2 North Street

North Street runs parallel to Stow Hill and bounds the land to the rear of the chapel. As detailed in Section A5 of this statement, North Street developed as a through route that was densely lined with terraces of houses. Opposite the land to the rear of the chapel is a large car park that had been created by 1968; this car park remains as an unsightly feature in the townscape, figure A16. Further south, towards the junction of Havelock Street which links through to Stow Hill, North Street has a little more of its early character preserved with a C19 terrace of small houses remaining alongside an 1878, Presbyterian Chapel, listed grade II, figure A17. Elsewhere along North Street modern terraced housing has replaced C19 terraced houses, figure A18. Strangely the conserved terraces of C19 houses on the east side of North Street and the listed chapel are excluded from the City Centre Conservation Area, while the site and the modern terrace of houses are within the conservation area, figure A19.



Figure A16. Car park on the west side of North Street opposite the land to the rear of the chapel
© Google Earth



Figure A17. Listed chapel on the corner of Havelock Street and North Street and C19 terraced housing to the north, not within the City Centre Conservation Area



Figure A18. Modern terraces of houses on the west side of North Street opposite Havelock Street



Figure A19. The land to the rear of the chapel abutting North Street with C19 houses to the north. The land and the modern housing beyond the C19 terrace are within the City Centre Conservation Area.

A3.3 Havelock Street

Havelock Street, to the south of the chapel, links North Street with Stow Hill. It is a short length of street, once lined with dense terraced houses and their gardens. Today the street has lost the houses to the north and there is a utilitarian infill building on the south side of the street. The incongruous infill is in the City Centre Conservation Area but the chapel is not, figure A20.



Figure A20. Havelock Street looking east from North Street towards Stow Hill

A3.4 School Lane and Commercial Street

Commercial Street runs roughly parallel with Stow Hill off to the east; it is a later developed street than Stow Hill. Today the street is the pedestrianised shopping heart of Newport, figure A21. The street retains some C19, ornate commercial buildings with what would have been accommodation on the upper floors, alongside C20 replacement buildings. School Lane links Stow Hill and Commercial Street; originally it was a dead end lane just leading to a school, today it is a service road serving the rear of shop premises on Commercial Street and its link to Stow Hill in the 1980's permitted the pedestrianisation of Commercial Street, figure A22. The whole of School Lane and the northern end of Commercial Street are within the City Centre Conservation Area.



Figure A21. Commercial Street, looking north, east of Stow Hill: pedestrianised shopping area of the City with C19 and C20 buildings



Figure A22. Left photo – southern end of School Lane that existed pre 1980's. Right photo – the area between Stow Hill and Commercial Street that was cleared to create the link to Stow Hill, showing the rear of buildings fronting Commercial Street with their loading bays

A3.5 Charles Street

School Lane is linked to Stow Hill to the west by Charles Street, a busy, steeply sloping street lined with shops that rises to join Stow Hill, figure A23. It is a well conserved street which retains much of its C19 commercial character. While both sides of the street are well conserved, it is just the northern side of the street that is within the City Centre Conservation Area.



Figure A23. Charles Street looking east towards the river from Stow Hill. Both the north and south sides of the street are well conserved but only the north (left side of the photograph) is included in the City Centre Conservation Area

A3.6 High Street, Bridge Street and Skinner Street

The northern end of Stow Hill culminates at a major nodal point of the city: Bridge street comes in from the west, figure A24, High Street runs off to the north, figure A25, Skinner Street runs off to the north east towards the river, figure A26, and Commercial Street leads back to the south east. The pedestrianisation of Commercial Street and the subsequent paving over of the carriageway has allowed the creation of a public space on the south east side of the five way junction, figure A27. All of the streets are characterised by grand, ornate C19 architecture but it is High Street and the south side of Skinner Street that have the tallest and grandest buildings, rising to four storeys in places.



Figure A24. Bridge Street, a street of a smaller scale with buildings of just two and three storeys



Figure A25. High Street, looking north, a wider street than Stow Hill with buildings rising to four storeys



Figure A26. Skinner Street, looking east, with its grand southern side with buildings rising to four storeys



Figure A27. The late C20 public space created at the northern end of Commercial Street and Stow Hill, looking north

A3.7 The Chartist Tower and C21 regeneration

Although not immediately neighbouring the chapel, a prominent feature of the area, is the Chartist Tower, figures A9, A22: a 1966 office block, located at the north east end of Commercial Street, figure A28. The tower provides 15 storeys of accommodation and rises to just under 55 meters. The name Chartist refers to the Chartist rebellion which occurred in Newport in 1839, a stand for universal suffrage that was the largest armed rebellion in the UK. The tower is currently undergoing refurbishment to become a luxury hotel with both private and Welsh Government investment. The view from the top of the tower illustrates the development that is going on along the river corridor to help regenerate the City, including the innovative City Footbridge, figure A29. The footbridge and works along the river were part of the projects undertaken by *Newport Unlimited* an urban regeneration company created in 2003 to help counter the impacts of the decline in heavy industry and manufacturing in the city; the project attracted £230 million of private investment to the area. The Chartist Tower refurbishment is a continuation of private investment in the area.



Figure A28. The Chartist tower now and an artist's impression of it once refurbished



Figure A29. View from the Chartist Tower of the City Footbridge and river corridor investments and enhancements

A4. DESCRIPTION - THE CHAPEL & ITS ASSOCIATED LAND

A4.1 Extent of the site

The extent of the chapel and its associated land, which makes up the development site, is shown at figure A30. Comparison with early maps, notably the 1884 Town Plan, figure A31, shows that the site extends to cover the site of the former Baptist chapel and its burial ground, a long garden along the northern boundary of the site, three buildings, most probably houses, facing onto North Street, a row of what appear to be 11 very small houses named Providence Place along the southern boundary of the site and a building to the south of the chapel that addresses Stow Hill.

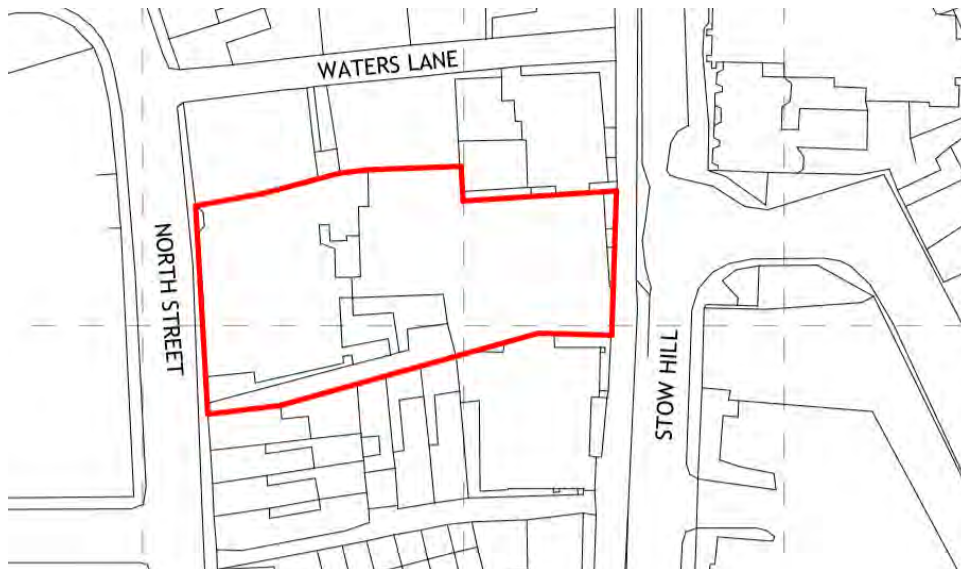


Figure A30. Extent of the site

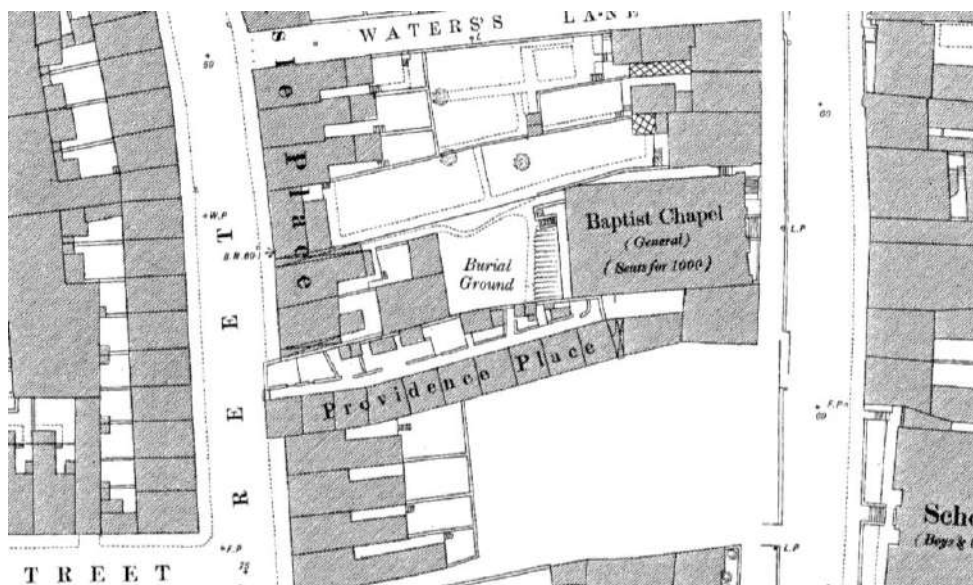


Figure A31. OS Town Plan 1884

A4.2 Former Baptist Chapel, listed as *Zanzibar Club* – list description

The building on the site was listed as the *Zanzibar Club* on 2nd May 1980. The listing advises that the reason for designation was: *Listed for contribution of grand classical front to Stow Hill conservation area.* The list description is noted below. The description refers only to the Stow Hill façade. The façade remains today as described below:

Grand temple front of 3 bays, based on Italian Renaissance models. Stucco; Roman Doric. Heavy pediment with oculus. Doric entablature and pilasters. Doorway with bracketed pediment. C20 extension to L.

A4.3 Stow Hill elevation

A4.3.1 Historic facade

The Stow Hill elevation, as described in the list description, comprises a very fine, classically detailed façade set beneath a pediment, figure A32. The façade however has been altered and denuded of detail in recent years and further to the 2018 fire. The following matters detract from the character and significance of the façade:

- the provision of thick layers of paint, recorded as being colours *fudge*, *treacle* and *suede* in an LBC approval 06/621
- the close abutment of the modern structure to the south which masters the historic construction – see para. 5.3.2.
- Loss of windows
- Damage to stonework – it is not clear whether the stonework should be painted as it seems that different areas of stonework have different finishes, figure A33
- Loss of original steps, figure A34
- Poor condition of the door case, unlikely survival of the doors behind the boarding to the doorway further to the fire, figure A35
- Pediment ventilation oculus with damaged stone surround, figure 36
- Abutment of the neighbouring office building, see para. 5.3.3.
- Presence of alarms, spotlights, CCTV cameras, signs, figure A32

The detailing to the façade, despite its apparent lack of maintenance and survival of the 2018 fire, appears to be in a remarkably good condition.



Figure A32. Grand classical façade of the former Baptist chapel, listed grade II



Either struck stucco to imitate freestone or coursed freestone beneath the paint

Apparent rusticated stonework beneath the paint



Figure A33. Apparent differing areas of stonework detailing beneath the paint



Figure A34. Original step finishes lost. Steps covered in slip resistant, modern tiles.



Figure A35. Doorcase in poor condition. Boarding over the door concealing the entrance and possible doors.



Figure A36. Ornate iron ventilation grill within the pediment oculus with damaged stone surround

A4.3.2 Modern extension to the south

A utilitarian facade, reaching up to the base of the pediment of the historic facade has been applied to the building between the facade and the plot of the neighbouring former, Wesleyan church, figure A37. Figure A37, taken prior to the 2018 fire, shows the cladding mastering the detailing of the historic facade. A view of the building today shows a gable pediment on the north side of the building, figure A38. A view of the roof plan prior to the 2018 fire, figure A39, shows that the gable relates to the building on the south side of the chapel. The cladding to what may be a traditional building beneath, detracts from the significance of the Baptist Chapel, listed grade II, and harms the setting of the neighbouring listed, former Wesleyan church.



Figure A37. Modern, utilitarian extension, possibly concealing early fabric, on the south side of the historic facade, mastering the historic detail of the facade. Photo from before the 2018 fire.



Figure A38. Gable apparent on the south side of the chapel



Figure A39. Roofplan showing the gable roof running parallel with the street to the south of the chapel and pitched roof on the southern building. Photo taken prior to the 2018 fire © Google Earth

A4.3.3 Modern office building abutting on the north side

The 1970's office building on the north side of the chapel is built against the historic building, figure A40. This abutment has removed the ability to access the rear of the site along the north side of the building as existed in 1884, figure A31. The office building is not characteristic for Stow Hill but it was in place at the time of the listing of the Baptist chapel so is part of the established setting of the listed building.



Figure A40. The neighbouring 1970's office building attached to the north side of the Baptist chapel, part of the established setting of the listed building

A4.4 Rear elevation

While the front elevation addressing Stow Hill retains much of its historic form and detailing and is worthy of listing, the rear elevation is unrecognisable as an historic building, figure A41. The rear elevation bears no resemblance to the form of the original chapel recorded on the 1884 OS Town Plan, figure A31. It is not known exactly when the rear of the building was altered so significantly; it was between the production of the OS maps of 1937 and 1968, but no records of the alteration and extension of the rear of the building can be found. The rear of the building does not have any architectural or historic interest. The only historic fabric apparent is the gable ends to the building to the north of the chapel, as annotated on figure A41. All of the historic structures to the rear of the chapel that appear on the 1884 OS Town Plan have been lost. There is no evidence remaining at the rear of the site of a burial ground, gardens or houses. The rear of the development site is now a car park, figure A42.



Figure A41. Rear of the historic chapel made up of mid-late C20 construction the only historic fabric present is the gables of the building between the chapel and church.



Figure A42. The Car park on the rear of the site accessible from North Street, the former site of houses and the burial ground

A4.5 Roof plan and construction

The roof plan of the historic chapel is clear from an aerial photograph taken before the fire, figure A39. The photograph shows a characteristic, simple pitched, gable end roof extending back from the pediment, running perpendicular to North Street and Stow Hill with a gable end, pitched roof running parallel to Stow Hill over the building to the south of the chapel. The rear of the historic structure was extended by a square tower, understood to have been a fly tower for use of the building as a theatre between 1937 and 1968; the tower has a flat roof. The roof structure is known to have been in a poor condition before the 2018 fire further to a video posted on U Tube by a group that gained illegal access. The photo of a collapsing roof taken as a still from the video is included at figure A43.



Figure A43. Image of part of the failing roof structure prior to the 2018 fire taken from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QVJ7g2Xw1Hg>

A4.6 Interior

- A4.6.1 It is not possible to enter the building due to its dangerous condition further to the fire. A recent aerial photograph taken after the 2018 fire shows that the roof has collapsed into the building, figure A44. Even prior to the fire the interior of the chapel had been so altered that the Conservation Officer, Newport City Council made the following comments in a consultation response in relation to a previous development proposal ref 12/0794 : ... *surveys have revealed that the interior of the building has been completely removed as a result of late twentieth century redevelopment of the building for new uses as a theatre and then night club, and the building has now been vacant and deteriorating for some years.*



Figure A44. Aerial photo of the roof after the 2018 fire

A4.6.2 Footage on U Tube of the interior of the building prior to the 2018 fire shows no historic fabric remaining in place other than a number of steel supporting columns, presumably supporting the ground floor from a basement level, figure A45.



Figure A45. Metal columns in-situ, prior to the 2018 fire, believed to be carrying the ground floor
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QVJ7g2Xw1Hg>

A5. HISTORY – FABRIC, CARTOGRAPHIC & ARCHIVE EVIDENCE

A5.1 Early history of Newport

Archaeological evidence reveals that Bronze Age fishermen settled around the fertile estuary of the River Usk and later the Celtic Silures built hillforts overlooking it. In AD 75, on the very edge of their empire, the Roman legions built a Roman fort at Caerleon, to the north of Newport, to defend the river crossing. According to legend, in the late 5th century Saint Gwynllyw (Woolos), the patron saint of Newport and King of Gwynllwg founded a church at the top of Stow Hill; the church that went on to become Newport Cathedral that remains today. The church was certainly in existence by the 9th century and today is the seat of the Bishop of Monmouth. The Normans arrived from around 1088–1093 to build the first Newport Castle, on Stow Hill, and river crossing downstream from Caerleon. The original Newport Castle was a small motte-and-bailey castle on the hill in the park opposite Newport Cathedral. Stow Hill is therefore a very established route, as it links the river crossing with both the early castle and the settlement's principal place of worship.

A5.2 1750 map showing the prominence of Stow Hill

The *Newport City Centre Conservation Area Appraisal, Consultation Draft, April 2018*, (CAA) published by Newport City Council, includes a map of the City of 1750, figure A46. The map shows High Street linking the bridge crossing with the northern end of Stow Hill, as exists today. Stow Hill can be seen to be less densely and more sporadically developed than High Street; appearing to remain rural in character.

A5.3 Early C19 development of Newport & Stow Hill

A5.3.1 The Newport CAA includes a map of 1835, figure A47, which shows how the dense settlement was developing around the High Street area. Stow Hill by comparison appears to have retained its sporadically settled character. The Tithe map of c.1840, figure A48, shows the area of Stow Hill where the development site is located with an apparent built-up edge to the street. The Baptist chapel is not recorded.

A5.3.2 The website of the neighbouring Bethel Community Church, www.bethelnewport.co.uk, advises that John Wesley first visited Wales in 1739 and during that visit referred to Newport as having *the most insensible and ill-behaved people* he had met with in Wales. It is stated that Wesley established a Methodist 'room' in Newport most probably on the site of the chapel. The room may well have been in place at the time of the c. 1840 tithe map.

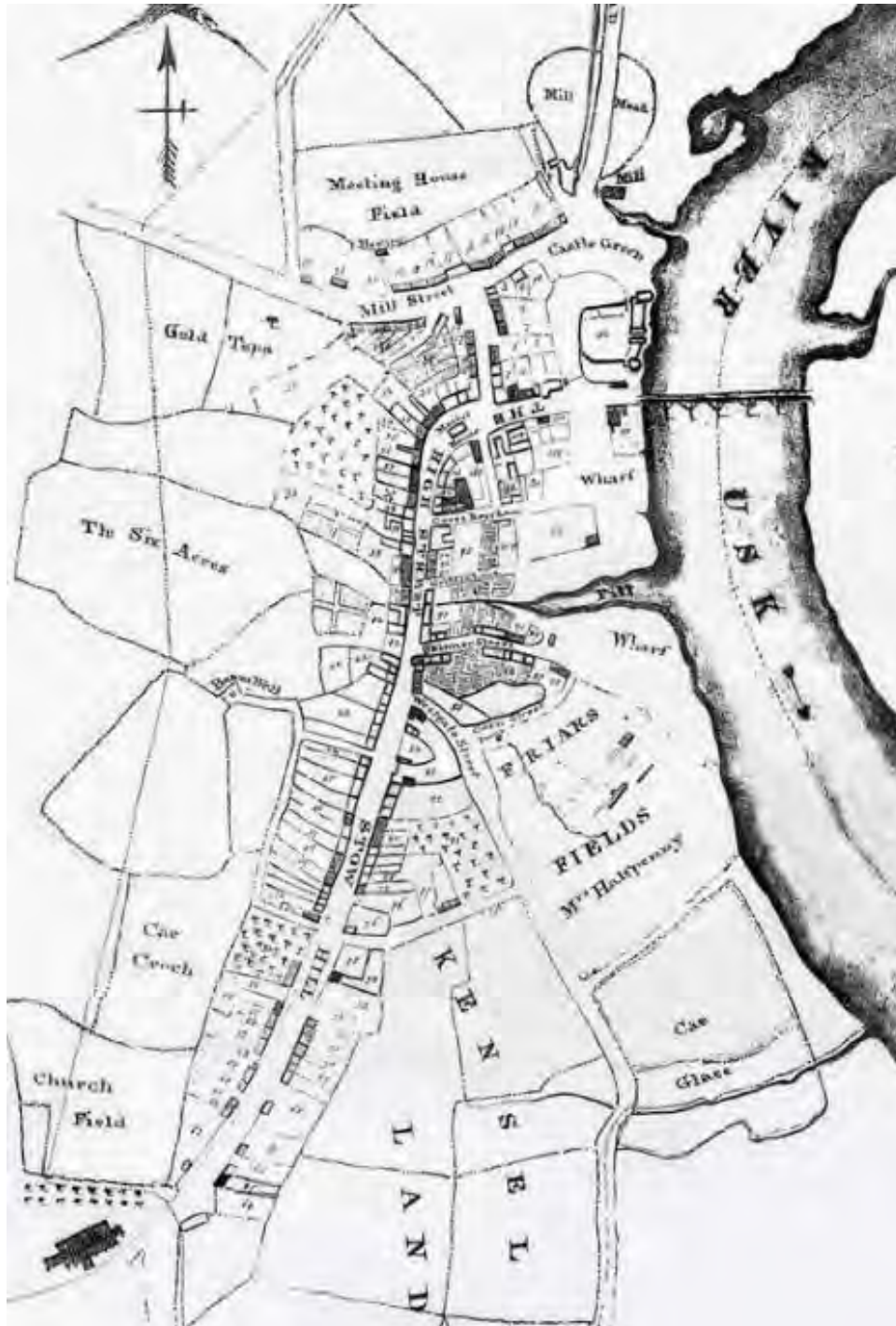


Figure A46. 1750 map of Newport © Newport City Council



Figure A47. 1835 map of Newport. Stow remains as sparsely developed part of the settlement © Newport City Council



Figure A48. c. 1840 tithe map showing an apparent built up edge to Stow Hil but no depiction of the Baptist chapel

A5.4 1863 construction of the Baptist chapel

A5.4.1 Archives reveal that a Baptist chapel was constructed on Stow Hill in 1863 further to a design by the architectural practice Habershon & Pite. The history of the *General Baptist* congregation that funded the chapel is not known.

A5.4.2 Habershon & Fawckner or Habershon, Pite & Fawckner was an architectural practice active in England and Wales from the 1860s, particularly in Cardiff and the South Wales area. They had offices in London, Cardiff and Newport, designing a large number of houses, villas and non-conformist chapels. The firm (preceded by W.G. & E. Habershon) were architects for the Tredegar Estate in South Wales. They laid out large parts of Cardiff with parallel streets of villas for the middle classes. They were responsible for over 1700 houses. In Newport the company built three Anglican churches and at least fourteen chapels between 1857 and 1907, including Summerhill Chapel, figure 49, which is of a similar age to the Stow Hill chapel but is much simpler. The interior of Summerhill is well preserved, figure A49, suggesting how the interior of the Stow Hill chapel may have appeared. The Havelock Chapel, figure A17, south of the development site was also designed by the practice.



Figure A49, Summerhill Baptist Chapel, Newport by the same architects as the Stow Hill chapel and of a similar age

A5.4.3 In comparison to the fairly humble and conservative designs of the Summerhill and Havelock Chapels, the Stow Hill Chapel must have been striking with its bold and grand classical detailing, figure A50. The C19 image of the church is taken from the *Structural Review*, Mann Williams Consulting Civil and Structural Engineers, August 2013 submitted to the Council in support of the 2015 development proposals for the building.

A5.4.4 The C19 illustration at figure A50 shows just how grand and different the building must have appeared on Stow Hill, quite raising the status and character of Stow Hill and introducing a novel architectural style to what was then a town rather than a city. The 1884 OS Town Map records that the chapel served the *General Baptist* denomination; it may be that this movement of Baptists sought to support a grander architectural style?



Figure A50. Illustration of the Baptist Church, the provenance of the illustration and the factual accuracy of the image is not known, it is taken from the August 2013 structural survey, the image contrasts with the an early C20 photograph, figure 51

A5.4.5 The C19 illustration shows the stonework detailing as remains today so it seems reasonable to suggest that the window and door details are also correctly recorded. The windows are shown as three central circles to the upper windows and two to the lower windows with marginal glazing bars; a style that is characteristic for the 1860s. The six panelled pair of doors would also seem to be appropriate for the time. The image shows the northern, side elevation with round head windows similar to the front façade windows. The illustration also shows finial features on the pediment; these were still in place up until the 2018 fire and are shown clearly in the 1970's photo at figure A61.

A5.4.6 The side elevation of the chapel in figure A50, appears to be shown as rubble stone while the front elevation is depicted as smooth suggesting that the front elevation was either ashlar or rendered. An historic print included on the website of the neighbouring church, www.bethelnewport.co.uk, figure A51, shows the elevation with an apparent striped appearance suggesting some use of stone or render to create a polychromatic effect. The presence of a strong horizontal banding is still apparent despite the thick finish applied to the façade, figure A52. The image at figure A51 also appears to show bracketed cills to first floor windows of the chapel and a chimney in the party wall with the two storey building to the south of the chapel.

A5.4.7 The historic photograph at figure A51 throws doubt on the accuracy of the print at fig A50. The only way to assess the original form of the façade is to carefully reveal and record it.



Figure A51. Apparent polychromy in the form of horizontal bands



Figure A52. Apparent horizontal bands remaining

A5.4.8 The OS Town Plan of 1848, copied again below at figure A51 below for convenience, shows that the chapel was large with a capacity of 1000, built for the *General Baptists*. It shows that there was access down an alleyway with steps along the north side of the building. The building appears to have been constructed on a bank that was battered to the rear of the building. A Burial Ground is detailed to the rear of the building.

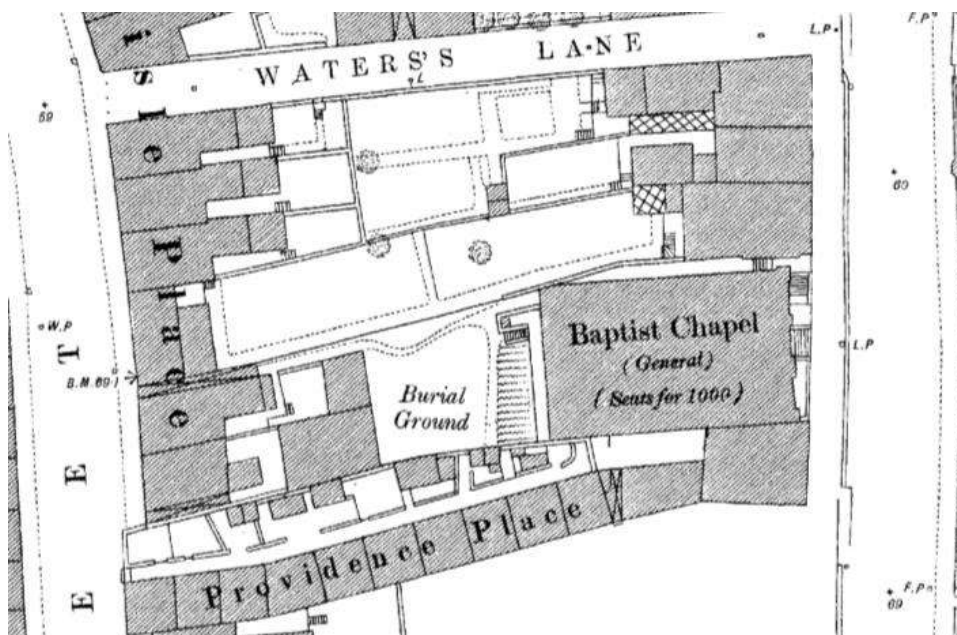


Figure A53. OS Town Plan 1884

A5.4.9 The wider OS map of 1884, figure A54, shows how Newport developed at an astonishing speed between the time of the c. 1840 tithe map and the late C19. Newport was booming on the back of the success of traditional industries in the area. The map shows the Stow Hill and Havelock Baptist Chapels and the Roman Catholic Church in place while the site of the Wesleyan Church remains vacant. The site which was to become the civic swimming baths is shown as a reservoir.

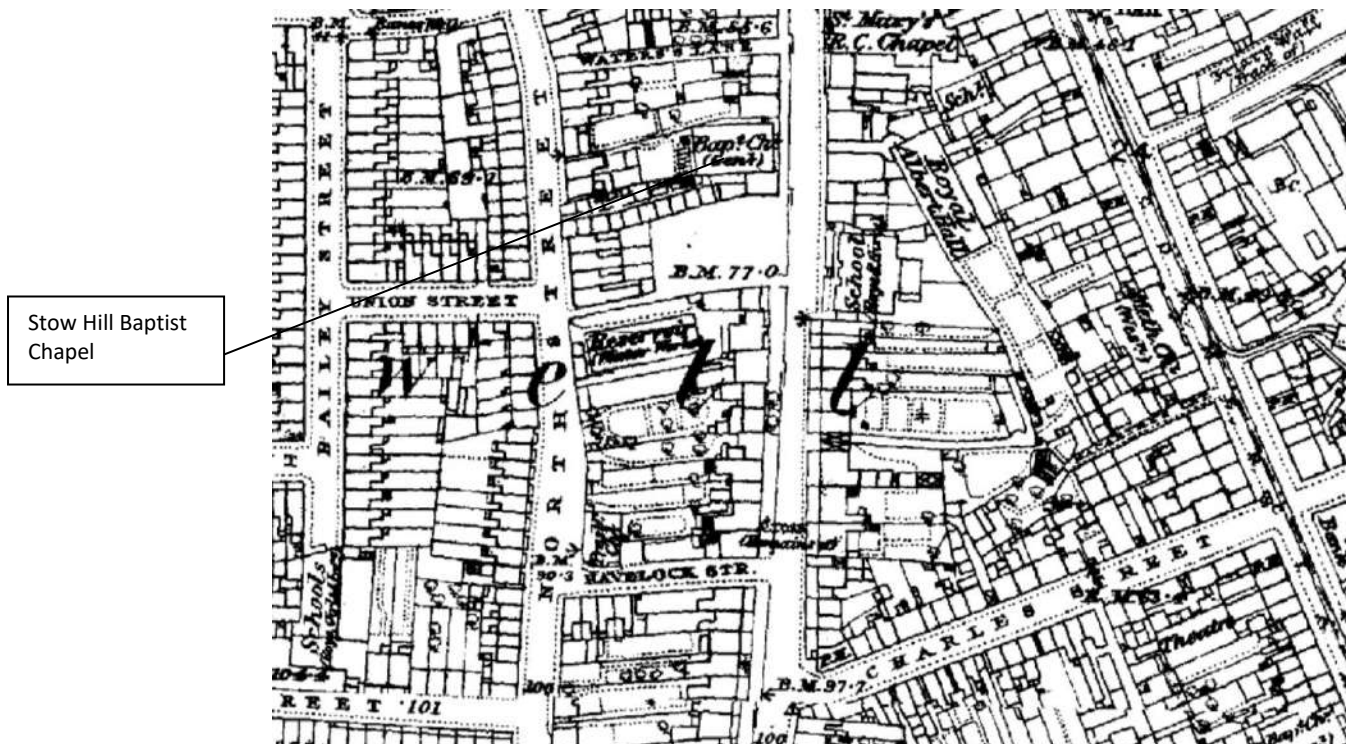


Figure A54. OS map 1884

A5.5 Early C20

The OS map of 1902, figure A55, shows that the Wesleyan church south of the Chapel had been developed and the reservoir had been developed as the town's swimming baths. The swimming baths had an ornate Neo-Tudor style, figure A56. The baths were extensive including two swimming 'ponds', turkish baths and slipper baths. By 1902 Stow Hill, in just a short section of the street, comprised the Early English Gothic Style Roman Catholic Church, the Grand classical façade of the Baptist Chapel, the Decorated Gothic style of the Wesleyan Church and the Neo-Tudor swimming baths. This part of Stow Hill must have stood out as a place of high architectural endeavour. Stow Hill also featured tram lines; first for horse drawn trams and then, after c. 1900, electric trams, figure A55.

Stow Hill Baptist
Chapel

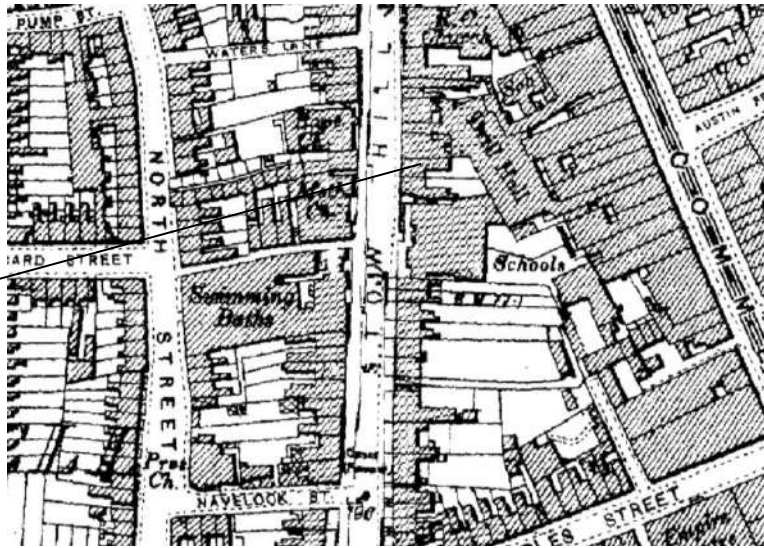


Figure A55. OS Map 1902



Figure A56. Stow Hill Neo-Tudor swimming baths 1890 © Newportpast.com



Figure A57. 1932 photo of Stow Hill showing the tramlines still in place in the carriageway
© Francis Frith

A5.6 Mid C20

The OS map of 1920 – 21, figure A58, shows little overall change to the development pattern of the area. The site of the Baptist chapel includes a building on what had previously been identified as its burial ground but otherwise there is no change to the development in and around the site. The OS map of 1937, figure A59, shows a seemingly larger building to the rear of the chapel. The 1937 map shows that Providence Place, what is believed to have been a row of small houses south west of the chapel, has been demolished. It also appears that the building between the chapel and the church has been redeveloped as the footprint appears to have changed. The chapel is believed to have remained in use as a place of worship at this time.

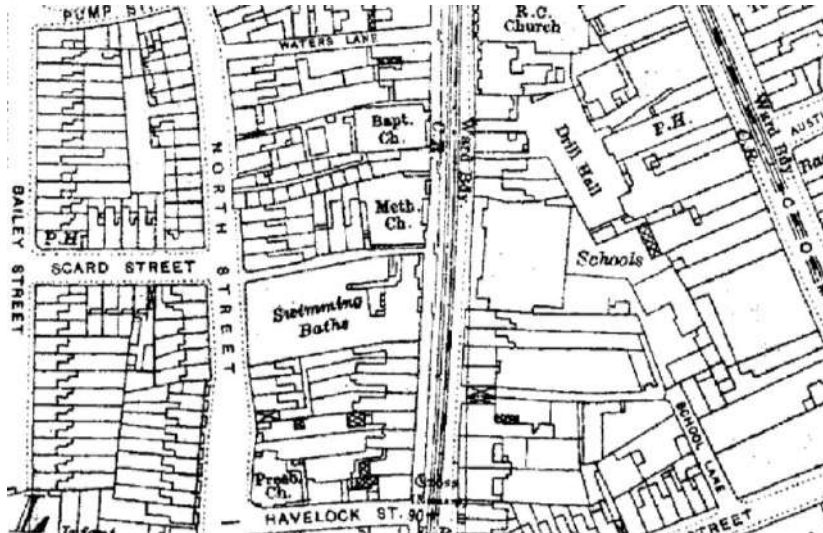


Figure A58. OS map 1920 – 1921

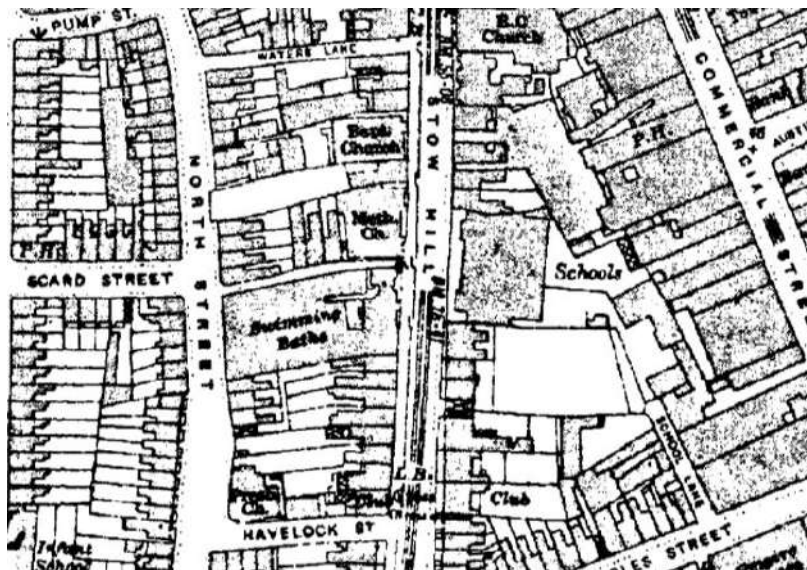


Figure A59. OS map 1937

A5.7 OS map 1968

A5.7.1 The OS map of 1968, figure A60, shows significant changes both to the site of the chapel and its wider setting. The North Street car park has been created through the demolition of the houses that fronted the western side of the street.

A5.7.2 The site is no longer recorded as a chapel, it is now recorded as *St Mary's Social Club*. It has not been possible to find out any information about this club. It is not known whether it is related to St Mary's Catholic Church on the opposite side of the road. It appears that the rear extension to the chapel that remains today was in place by this time. In addition, what are believed to have been houses along the western side of the site have been demolished allowing access to the rear of the site from North Street. It appears that the land associated with the building on the site at that time also had direct access to Waters Lane to the north. To the north of the former chapel three houses remain fronting on to Stow Hill, rather than the office building which is in place today.



Figure A60. OS map 1968



Figure A62. 1976 poster advertising The Stowaway as Newport's newest rock venue

A5.9.2 An article written by Johnny Perkins in the *Telegraph & Argus*, 8th August 2018, a former DJ at the Stowaway Club, confirms that the nightclub was in place in the late 1970's: *In the late 70s I saw the Sex Pistols play a gig at the Stowaway, figure A63, ... It was the Stowaway when I was there, but it's been called Brooklyn Heights, Zanzibar, Lazars and it was originally a church and community hall - St Mary's. The article describes the interior of the building at the time: There were three sections to the place then. It was the Stowaway in a big ball room. Out the back there was the Speakeasy, which was a gay bar. Then the Inn Place was in the basement.*



Figure 63. The Sex Pistols performing at The Stowaway in 1976

A5.9.3 A photograph from the late 1970s, figure A64, shows that the appearance of the chapel and its northern extension that remains today had been established by that time. The chapel retained its three finials at that time.



Figure 64. The appearance of the former chapel and its northern extension in the late 1970s

A5.9.4 The former chapel remained in use as a nightclub up until 2010. The nightclub traded under a number of names: *Zanzibar*, *Lazers*, *Brooklyn Heights*, *At Heights 2000* and finally *Escapade*. The nightclub business became unviable in 2010. The business closed in 2010 and the building has not been occupied since.

A5.10 Proposed partial demolition & conversion to residential use – approved 2015

In 2012 a proposal for the demolition of all but the façade of the chapel, the construction of a new block behind the chapel to create 18 flats, the provision of a new terrace addressing North Street to provide 5 flats and 2 houses, with parking and amenity space between the chapel block and the houses, was submitted to Newport City Council, application ref: 12/0793, 12/0794. After much debate and review of the detail of the proposal, the application was approved on 5th August 2015, with a 5 year expiry period. Figure A65. The development has not been pursued and the building and site have been left vacant since 2010.

[illegible]

A5.11 Fire damage 2018

On 15th June 2018 a fire broke out in either the neighbouring church or in the chapel; this is understood to have been caused by arson. The fire quickly spread through both buildings, figure A66. Both buildings were gutted. Even less historic fabric than existed as the time of the 2015 planning approvals now remains in and on the chapel. Notably the finials have been lost from the roof, figure A67. It seems unlikely that even if there was any original joinery within the building prior to the fire that any will remain now.



Figure A66. The fire in the chapel and church



Figure A67. The pediment after the fire with the finials no longer apparent

APPENDIX B

Engineer's assessment of the
condition of the
former Baptist chapel

January 2021

TECHNICAL DESIGN NOTE



Project name	Former Zanzibar Night Club, 40 Stow Hill, Newport		
Design note title	Recommendation for commencement of demolition		
Author	Lewis Osborne - Principal Structural Engineer		
Revision	R00		
Date	18 January 2021	Approved	☐

Hydrock are appointed as the Structural Engineers for the redevelopment of the former Zanzibar nightclub site at 40 Stow Hill, Newport.

With consideration of previous safety and stability concerns raised by Newport council in relation the façade of the burned out nightclub (Martin Hughes to Jason Evans, 22 Sep 2020), it is our professional opinion that delays to structural demolition and façade retention and remediation can only have a negative effect on the stability and integrity of the structure and thus any health and safety risk to the general public.

There is notable vegetation growth both at the base of the front façade, at high level and at numerous locations throughout the remaining structure. This vegetation will bloom further over the coming spring and summer of 2021 which will contribute to the deterioration of the remaining structure.



There is further risk that internal framing, roof and floor structures that are partially collapsed and currently hanging in a state of limbo, at perpetual risk of collapse, could cause destructive damage to the primary structural walls should they collapse during bad weather conditions or due to fatigue. This would constitute a health and safety risk to the general public and also a risk of damaging neighbouring properties.

Hydrock recommends that demolition take place at the earliest opportunity so as to alleviate any current and developing health and safety risks associated with the current and deteriorating state of the structure.

It is the full intention and endeavour of the design team to ensure the safe retention of the main front façade of the building as this is recognised to constitute historic and cultural value to the local community.

Fortunately, access for the installation of restraining temporary works is feasible to the front face and can be instated prior to full demolition of the building behind.

TECHNICAL DESIGN NOTE



There has been discussion on the possibility of retaining the party wall flanking the neighbouring church site. Any supporting retention system that might be implemented to ensure the stability of this wall in isolation from its buttressing structure would need to be constructed post demolition of the old nightclub as no other access is available. Furthermore, currently safe access is not achievable to obtain detailed or comprehensive survey data on the remaining structure or its condition.



It is Hydrock's professional opinion and CDM responsibility to highlight that the stability of the wall may not be guaranteed during demolition and strip out as the process of demolition may render the existing party wall unstable. This constitutes a health and safety risk to construction personnel and risk of damage to the neighbouring church structure.

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