

## PLANNING APPLICATION NUMBER:P05/2664

Type of approval sought	Full Planning Permission
Ward	St. James's
Applicant	Sandpiper Estates Ltd
Location:	<b>FORMER FIRE STATION, TOWER STREET, DUDLEY, WEST MIDLANDS, DY1</b>
Proposal	<b>CONVERSION OF FIRE STATION BUILDING TO 22 NO. SELF CONTAINED FLATS AND ASSOCIATED PARKING.</b>
Recommendation Summary:	<b>APPROVE SUBJECT TO A 106 AGREEMENT</b>

### SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

- 1 Existing former fire station building within Dudley town centre made of brick and stone, three storeys, with large glazed openings to the front previously used for vehicle storage. Site fronts Tower Street. The building is symmetrical, with projecting elements to either end with pedestrian doors at ground level opening in from the street. Pitched roof includes dormer style windows to the rear.
- 2 Side access to north side of site, with surfaced parking area to rear, with some outbuildings previously used in connection with the fire station use of the site.
- 3 To side is police station, with workshops and outbuildings to other side and rear. The site lies opposite a public car park.

### PROPOSAL

- 4 Conversion of building into 22 flats. These would be laid out with stairs at either end of the building in the forward projecting elements, leading to flats within these towers at each level, and along the second and third floors. These latter floors would contain a corridor along the

centre, parallel with the frontage of the building, leading to flats to the front and the rear. In the central part of the building, at ground and first floor would be five units over two storeys. These are referred to as duplex units, and would each contain their own set of internal stairs, with living accommodation at ground floor and bedrooms at first floor. These would each have their own front door opening onto the front parking court, and retain the glazed front elements that were previously the vehicular door openings.

- 5 The fenestration and external appearance of the building would remain largely unaltered. To the front would be an off road parking area, with additional parking provision to the rear of the building, utilising the existing access to the north of the building. The rear parking area also provides for some police parking provision which would be retained as is currently used.

## HISTORY

APPLICATION No.	PROPOSAL	DECISION	DATE
92/51689	Replacement drill tower	Granted	10/12/92
84/51475	Alterations to front elevation	Granted	13/9/84
DB/68/4646	Erection of computer centre and fire station	Granted	28/3/69

## PUBLIC CONSULTATION

- 6 One letter received from West Midlands Police raising the following concerns:

- \* prematurity of development
- \* operational issues during construction/ownership issues

## OTHER CONSULTATION

- 7 **Traffic & Road Safety:** No objection subject to conditions

- 8 Environmental Protection:** No objection subject to condition
- 9 Town Centre Manager:** Concern raised regarding the level of on site parking provision
- 10 Historic Environment:** No objection subject to conditions:  
The Historic Environment Team supports the retention and re-use of this Locally Listed Building. The proposed conversion to residential has been handled largely sensitively and is supported. The proposal to replace the existing metal-framed windows (that are an essential component of the building's post-war character) is not supported and HET recommend that either the existing windows be refurbished and if necessary augmented by secondary glazing or new double glazed metal frame windows are secured and installed to the same pattern. The window company 'Crittall' offer this option. The proposed use of plastic is incompatible with UDP Policy HE6 (as it adversely affects the character of a locally listed building) and Policy HE4 (as it would have an adverse impact upon the character of the Dudley Town Centre CA)
- 11 Urban Design:** No objection received

## RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY

DD1 Urban design

DD4 Development in residential areas

DD6 Access and transport infrastructure

DD8 Provision of open space, sport and recreation

DD11 Water courses

DTC2(iv) Dudley town centre street blocks: Block 4: Tower Street/Ednam Road

AM11 Cycling

AM12 Pedestrians

AM14 Parking

H1 New housing development  
H3 Housing assessment criteria  
H6 Housing density  
HE1 Local character and distinctiveness  
HE4 Conservation areas  
HE5 Buildings of local historic importance

The site lies within the Dudley town centre street block 4 on the UDP proposals map

The building is on the local list of notable buildings

PPS1 Delivering sustainable development  
PPG3 Housing and draft PPS3 Housing  
PPG15 Planning and the historic environment

## ASSESSMENT

### Principle

- 12 Policy DTC2(iv) seeks to resist inappropriate development within the town centre, and therefore seeks certain uses within this area, which include residential. Further, the retention and re-use of existing buildings, especially those on the local list, is also supported in principle by planning policy.
- 13 Therefore, the proposal is considered to be acceptable in principle subject to the details of the scheme being compliant with the relevant policy criteria.

### Density

- 14 The draft PPS3 published in December 2005 suggests that increased densities above 70dph are appropriate within sustainable town centre locations such as this. The proposal would represent development at a density of 129dph, and given that the surrounding area is very varied in

character, that the reuse of an existing building is proposed, and the site's town centre location, this is considered to be acceptable, subject to the details of the proposal.

#### Design, layout and amenity

- 15 The proposed layout and external appearance is considered to be sympathetic to the existing building, and of an acceptable internal layout such that the historic interest, local interest and integrity of the fabric of the building would be retained within an appropriate new use.
- 16 The proposal would not cause any detrimental impact on any surrounding residential amenities, nor on those of the future occupiers of the proposed development, due to its siting and design.

#### Historic environment

- 17 As the external appearance of the building would be subject to only minimal alterations as a result of the proposed development, and the use of the external spaces would be similar to their current uses, it is not considered that the proposal would result in any detrimental impacts on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.
- 18 The replacement windows proposed, however, are not considered to be appropriate to the character of the building and its surroundings, and therefore a condition is recommended below that alternative, more appropriate window materials and styles are used. These would be agreed in consultation with the HET.

#### Parking and highway safety

- 19 The quantity of parking provision shown on the proposed plans falls a little below the maximum standard but is considered acceptable by the traffic and road safety team, due to the siting of the building in this accessible and sustainable town centre location, and the provision is therefore considered to be sufficient.

## Contributions

- 20 The proposal would attract a requirement for contributions towards the provision of off-site open space, and therefore a S106 legal agreement would be required.
- 21 The development proposed is not considered to be premature, or prejudicial to future development in the area, due to the enclosed nature of the site and the lack of significant alteration to its layout and appearance.
- 22 Issues of ownership and joint management/operation of the site are not material planning considerations. The correct notices have been served, and therefore these issues are outside the planning remit and matters for resolution between the developers and the police.

## CONCLUSION

- 23 The proposal is considered to be compliant with policy and unlikely to cause harm to the amenities of the surrounding area, and therefore is considered acceptable.

## RECOMMENDATION

- 24 It is recommended that the application be approved subject to:
- a) The applicant entering into a Section 106 Legal Agreement for a contribution to off-site recreational public open space enhancement
  - b) The following conditions, with delegated powers to the Director of the Urban Environment to make amendments to these as necessary
  - c) In the event that the Section 106 agreement has not been completed within two months of the resolution to grant approval, the application will be refused if appropriate.

## ***Informative***

Whilst the approved plans are noted in condition 5 above, the installation of uPVC windows does not form part of the approved details, as noted in condition 4.

Reason for approval

The decision to grant planning permission has been taken with regard to the policies and proposals in the adopted Dudley UDP (2005) and to all other relevant material considerations.

Conditions and/or reasons:

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.
2. Prior to the commencement of development, the means of access and area shown for car parking shall be shown on a plan to be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The building shall not be occupied until the area shown for car parking has been constructed, graded, levelled, surfaced, drained and marked out in accordance with the approved details and that area shall not thereafter be used for any purpose other than the parking of vehicles associated with the proposed development.
3. Prior to the commencement of the development hereby approved, details of the treatment of the openings in the existing elevations, to include design, style, materials and colours shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out in complete accordance with the approved details, and retained for the lifetime of the development.
4. The development hereby permitted shall be built in accordance with the approved plans 040, SK1-02, SK2-01, SK04-001A, SK44-003, SK4-004A, SK4-005A and SK4-007A unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
5. Development shall not begin until a scheme for protecting the proposed dwellings from noise from \*\*\*\*\* has been submitted to and approved by the local planning authority, and all works which form part of the scheme shall be completed before any of the permitted dwellings is occupied.