

## **PLANNING APPLICATION NUMBER:P05/2760**

Type of approval sought	Listed Building Consent
Ward	St. James's
Applicant	Parkstone Developments Ltd
Location:	<b>THE OLD POST OFFICE, WOLVERHAMPTON STREET, DUDLEY, WEST MIDLANDS</b>
Proposal	<b>EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL ALTERATIONS TO FORM 22 APARTMENTS (NECESSITATING MINOR DEMOLITION OF A GLAZED ROOF AND INTERNAL PARTITION WALLS)</b>
Recommendation Summary:	<b>APPROVE SUBJECT TO CONDITIONS</b>

### **SITE AND SURROUNDINGS**

1. This application is for Listed Building Consent. The application for full planning permission (P05/2761) was refused by the Committee, at the previous meeting, on 21 March 2006.
2. No 200A Wolverhampton Street, Dudley, was formerly the Chief Post Office. Occupying a prominent corner position in the Dudley Town Centre Conservation Area, this grade II Statutorily Listed Building dates from 1909. Of three storeys plus basement, it is constructed of ashlar with quoined corners and rustication to the ground floor storey. Sash windows exist throughout the building generally in architraved surrounds with triple key blocks at the heads. Balconies, a coat of arms, pediment and modillioned eaves all make the building architecturally noteworthy.

### **PROPOSAL**

- 3 This current proposal submitted by Parkstone Developments Ltd, proposes external alterations to the rear of the building and alterations to the interior of the building (necessitating minor demolition of a glazed roof and internal partition walls) to create 22 apartments.

## HISTORY

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	<b>PROPOSAL</b>	<b>DECISION</b>	<b>DATE</b>
P04/1095	LBC for general external renovations, internal alterations and additions to form 12 apartments.	Approved with conditions	25/10/2004
98/50324	LBC for internal alteration associated with change of use to a restaurant/bar with staff accommodation and office suite.	Approved with conditions	17/04/1998
P05/2761	Change of use, External and Internal Alterations to form 22 Units	Refused	21/03/2006

## PUBLIC CONSULTATION

- 5 Details of the application have been advertised in the press and at the site for the statutory period.  
No responses have been received.

## OTHER CONSULTATION

- 6 In respect of this application Dudley MBC have consulted the following amenity societies:  
The Ancient Monument Society  
The Council for British Archaeology

The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings  
The Victorian Society

No responses have been received from the amenity societies.

## RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY

- 7 Policy HE4-Conservation Areas  
Policy HE6-Listed Buildings

## ASSESSMENT

- 8 In respect of this current application, pre-application consultation has taken place between the applicants' architects and your conservation officers.
- 9 Following the closure of the post office, Planning Permission and Listed Building Consent was granted in 1998 and the building was converted to and used as a bar/restaurant and nightclub for a short period under the name of Nulla Nulla. The establishment ceased trading here and the premises have remained unoccupied since December 2001.
- 10 Listed Building Consent was granted in 2004 for external renovations, internal alterations and additions to form 12 apartments. This approval was never implemented and instead the building has changed ownership. After undertaking an assessment of current local property market trends, the new owner has commissioned the architectural practise that presented the previous application, to modify the scheme to increase the number of apartments to 22. This has been achieved by reconfiguring the proposed internal layout and introducing apartments into the basement level.
- 11 As with the previously approved scheme it is still proposed to construct a disabled access ramp to one of the main entrances to Wolverhampton Street. The proposed use of the basement primarily for accommodation has meant that the new vehicular

entrance to the basement approved under the previous scheme has now been deleted from this current application. A much reduced level of parking is now proposed within the basement area accessed via a new doorway in the rear elevation at the end of the private driveway between this and the adjoining building in Priory Street. The glass doors in Priory Street that were formerly the entrance to the Nulla Nulla bar will now be removed along with the signage and artwork above the door. It is proposed that this aperture will become an area of fixed glazing. These are the only changes that have any impact upon the principal roadside elevations and they will therefore remain largely unaltered apart from necessary restoration, refurbishment and redecoration.

- 12 An inward facing elevation within the site will be altered by the addition of access balconies at first and second floor levels (as proposed in the earlier approved scheme) and the top section of a brick built lift shaft. There will be a small section of new wall constructed at second floor level to the rear elevation facing the service road. As this side of the building is of lower architectural status and unseen from the road this is not considered to be detrimental.
- 13 Within the site at ground floor level, the position of the former sorting area is marked by the presence of two pitched glazed north-lights, although the glazing element has, as a result of dilapidation, been covered over with boards and roofing felt. A detailed inspection of this structure has been commissioned and it has been concluded both by the applicant and your conservation officers that it is beyond repair. As the new development requires amenity space it has been decided to create a courtyard in this area with a canopy over which will identify where the sorting office and the glazed roof were located.
- 14 The applicant has respected the view of your conservation officer that the principal staircase should not be altered.
- 15 The proposed development is considered to meet the objectives of Policy HE4 and Policy HE6.

## CONCLUSION

16 After remaining unoccupied for over four years it is considered that a scheme that would not only comprehensively refurbish this landmark building but provide a beneficial use that ensures a long term economic viability, is to be welcomed. This current application has the advantage over the previously approved (but not implemented) scheme in that it will result in even greater retention of historic fabric to the interior of the building. It is considered that the proposals, which are reversible, would not be visually or physically detrimental to either the exterior or interior of the listed building.

## RECOMMENDATION

17 Approval subject to conditions.

### **Reason for Approval**

The decision to grant LBC has been taken with regard to the policies and proposals in the Dudley Unitary Development Plan set out below.

### **Unitary Development Plan Policy**

Policy HE4 – Conservation Areas

Policy HE6 – Listed Buildings

Conditions and/or reasons:

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this consent.
2. Any damage caused to the listed building in performance of the works permitted by this consent shall be made good.
3. Only alterations and demolition detailed and specified in this application will be permitted. All other existing fabric to the interior and exterior of the Listed Building shall be afforded adequate protection against damage or unauthorised removal at all times throughout the construction process.
4. Notwithstanding the approved drawings, the development shall not begin until samples and details of the type, dimensions, texture, colour and tooling of all materials (including extract vents and grilles and their siting) to be used in respect of the exterior of the building have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.
5. The development hereby permitted shall be built in accordance with the approved plans 2285/101, 2285/102, 2285/103b, 2285/104a, 2285/105 and 2285/106.