**Application Number** 19/00736/FUL

**Site Address** 87 Windsor Avenue, Worcester, WR2 5NB

**Description of Development** Change of use from 3 bedroom house (C3) to 4 bedroom HMO (C4).

**Case Officer** Mrs Sally Watts | **Applicant** Big Fish Properties Ltd

**Ward Member(s)** St. John Ward | **Agent** Big Fish Properties Ltd

**Reason for Referral to Committee** Ward Member referral | **Expiry Date** 25 November 2019

**Key Issues** The principle of development and whether the proposal would be sustainable form of development having regard to the 3 dimensions of sustainable development in terms of its economic role, social role and environmental role.

**Web link to application** [https://plan.worcester.gov.uk/Planning/Display/19/00736/FUL](https://plan.worcester.gov.uk/Planning/Display/19/00736/FUL)

**Recommendation** The Deputy Director - Economic Development and Planning recommends that the Planning Committee grant planning permission subject to the conditions set out in section 9 of the report annexed at Appendix 1.

1. **Background**

1.1 At the meeting of the Planning Committee on 21st November 2019, the case officer’s report outlined the planning policy context for the proposal and considered the material considerations.

1.2 The Planning Committee deferred consideration of the application for clarification of HMO data and accuracy of the HMO calculation; this included checking the 100 metre radius is correct, understanding the inclusion of properties in the radius and the information provided.

1.3 The agent acting on behalf of local objectors listed a number of local streets within his representation to the Planning Committee. Having listened to the audio recording of the meeting, the roads stated, plus other adjacent roads, have been studied in terms of the number of HMOs and proximity to the site. He also questioned the number of properties included in the HMO calculation- as such this has been reviewed and checked for accuracy.

1.4 A copy of the previous report to the meeting of the Planning Committee on 21st November 2019 is attached as **Appendix 1**

1.5 For clarity I have provided Section 5.9 of the HMO SPD which sets out the methodology used for the calculation of the threshold percentage.

5.9. The number of properties will be calculated using the Council’s GIS (Geographic Information Systems) mapping software. Each property has a unique location point...
defined on the Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG) and the location point of the proposed HMO will be the centre of the 100m radius. The number of residential properties falling within the 100m radius of the proposed HMO will be assessed by totalling the location points falling within that defined radius. For properties that fall partly within the 100 metre radius, they will only be included if the location point, as depicted on the LLPG, falls within this buffer.

1.6 In all maps the red x marks the application site, green pentagons are existing HMOs.

2. **Is the HMO calculation correct?**

**Accuracy of the 100 metre radius**

2.1 Provided is a screenshot of the HMO calculation which is automatically generated by the Local Planning Authority’s GIS mapping system. This is the information that Officers use to check the current position in terms of HMOs in the local area and the GIS Officer has made a tool within the GIS system that automatically provides the current percentage of HMOs within the 100 metre radius of the site.

2.2 As advised in the discussion of the previous committee meeting, I have measured this-as I did previously for Councillor Udall- to show confidence that the 100 metres is accurate and a screen shot of this is given below.

![Screenshot of HMO calculation](image)

Figure 1- calculation of existing HMO within 100m radius of application site

**Analysis of HMOs in the local area**

2.3 During the discussion the number of HMOs within the radius compared with the number locally was felt by members to be unclear. The representative for the objectors gave figures (taken from the publicly available list of licenced HMOs) as examples of the proliferation of HMOs locally.
2.4 The data given has been checked and considered. Below in the form of a table, further information is presented to members to give a wider understanding of HMOs locally, both in terms of proximity and relationship to the site. The relationship is important as the location of the proposal in Windsor Avenue is within a cul de sac and the rear boundary adjoins allotments which fall within the 100m radius but do not include residential activity, as clearly seen in figure 1. As a result of the location of the proposal not all properties in Windsor Avenue fall within the 100m radius.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Road name</th>
<th>Total number of properties in road</th>
<th>Total number of HMOs in road</th>
<th>Notes</th>
<th>Percentage of HMOs within the road</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Windsor Avenue</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td>11.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woodstock Road</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
<td>22.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blenheim Road</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td>13.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buck Street</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td>10.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sanctuary Close</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Penhill Crescent</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Potentially 7 as application 19/00740/FUL recently approved.</td>
<td>5.7 (6.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laugherne Road</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Penmanor Close</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sapphire Crescent</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Members will note from the final column that these percentages are within the road name not within a 100m radius of the proposal property.

Penhill Crescent

2.5 The Crescent is unusual in its nature being a U shape with Sapphire Crescent in the middle. The West of Sapphire Crescent has 73 properties and to the east of Sapphire Crescent are 33 properties. This is represented in figure 2 below for a spatial understanding of HMOs locally.
2.6 The mapping software also has a heat map which gives a clear spatial impression of clustering locally where there are higher densities of existing HMOs present.
2.7 During the discussion at the meeting of the Planning Committee on 21st November 2019, the number of HMOs for Windsor Avenue was raised specifically and requested to be confirmed. This has been cross checked with the HMO licencing list and GIS and are considered correct.

2.8 Figure 4 below is a map which shows the distances to the local HMOs in Windsor Avenue, as well as the nearest HMOs in adjacent streets.

![Figure 4: Map showing Windsor Avenue and surrounding HMOs and relative distances](image)

Please note- The properties within the 100m HMO radius have a pink UPRN and the properties outside the 100m HMO radius are yellow/orange.

3. **Conclusion**

3.1 I can confirm that the assessment regarding local HMOs has been carried out in accordance with the methodology set out in the HMO SPD. The HMO calculation therefore would result in 4 HMO properties out of 40 dwellings, (threshold level of 10% if approved) within the 100 metre radius.

3.2 There are a high number of properties locally that operate as HMOs. This is demonstrated spatially and in the table provided as well as the heat map, which shows this clearly. The intensification of the properties in occupation as HMOs may be considered to be excessive by residents of Windsor Avenue as there are 10 HMOs within Windsor Avenue itself. However, the policy is clear on the calculation of the 100 metre radius.

3.3 The continued officer view is that the immediate area local to the application site, partly by virtue of its location adjacent to the allotments, does not have a significantly high level of HMOs which would warrant a refusal.
3.4 On reflection and in consideration of these matters and for the reasons detailed in the report annexed at Appendix 1, the Officer recommendation remains to grant planning permission.

3.5 Officers consider that the additional information provided in this report covers all of the matters raised at the meeting of the Planning Committee on 21st November 2019. However, if Members require any further information or clarification please contact the Case Officer prior to the meeting.