

Background

I am a professional dog groomer with over 15 years experience and am looking to commence my own dog grooming business based in the rear garden of my property.

My business plan is predicated on a sole groomer servicing an average of 4 dogs per day with a maximum of 6 on any one day which will be very rare, this would only be in emergency scenarios where, for example, a dog's welfare is concerned. I intend to operate from 08.00 – 17.00 hrs Monday to Friday, and if required, from 08.00 – 12.00 midday Saturday. There will be **no** appointments on Sundays or public holidays.

As this is a one-to-one service, only one dog will be on-site at any one time. Client owners will drop off and collect their dogs and will not be permitted to wait on-site. My property has two car parking spaces so owners will not be parking on the road for either drop-off or collection.

Equipment

Dogs will be groomed in a professional and purpose-built dog grooming pod manufactured by one of the UK's leading manufacturers. It will be sited in my rear garden (please see site plan referred to below – Document 2) and will not be visible from the road or any adjoining properties due to the height of the current hedge bordering the property.

The pod is self-contained and fully insulated with excellent soundproofing qualities. The dimensions of the pod will be circa W2440mm (8 feet) x D2280mm (7.5 feet) x H2130mm (7 feet). Please refer to the manufacturer's description accompanying this application for pre-advice (**Document 1**). The pod takes up less than 10% of the rear garden and is fully portable and not a permanent building; it does not require any footings and is easily connected to existing services. It would appear that it meets all of the requirements as a permitted development and therefore should not require planning permission, however your advice and guidance on this would be appreciated.

It will be sited on the western boundary of my property, please see site plan attached (**Document 2**), and as mentioned above, it will not be visible from the road or adjoining properties. As can be seen from the plan, the pod will be situated well away from any nearby houses further reducing any impact on the neighbourhood. I attach a photograph (**Document 3**) showing the western boundary where the pod will be sited, as can be seen from this photograph, there is a wide drive between my property and the next-door neighbour.

The pod will contain the usual dog grooming equipment including a hydrobath and a dog dryer (blaster). The blaster I use, (Memows Dog Hair Dryer), employs innovative noise-reduction technology and has a maximum decibel output of just 70dcbs (please see attached description (**Document 4**) and will only be used inside the pod. Please note, a typical domestic hairdryer decibel level is between 80 – 90dcbs. I do not envisage any noise pollution being created from the operation of the pod.

Environmental Impact

I use paraben-free and hypoallergenic products, which are eco-friendly and which permit recycled waste water to be used in the garden. I have consulted with the Trade Effluent Specialist from the Bio Resources Department of the local water authority, Severn Trent Water Authority (STWA) and he has confirmed that whilst water discharges from dog grooming operations do constitute trade effluent under the Water Industry Act 1991, he has also concluded that the activity poses a low environmental risk, and therefore does not

require formal Consent to discharge. Please see the attached email from STWA Trade Effluent Bioresources Department (**Document 5**). Given the water efficiency of the hydrobath, the plan is to recycle the water for use in the garden. However, I can confirm that if in the future I need to discharge grey water into the local sewerage system, I would fully comply with the conditions attached to this conclusion. Additionally, where ever possible, I intend to recycle the collected dog hair as it is eminently biodegradable and excellent for use in making compost. I am also investigating the possibility of donating dog hair which is widely used in products dealing with oil spills. In any event, no waste will be disposed of using the residential service.

Impact on traffic flow

Based on the business plan, the traffic flow will be on average 16 journeys (each dog equates to 4 trips because clients cannot stay on site during grooming). This equates to less than 2 journeys per operating hour. Bearing in mind I will be the sole groomer working on only one dog at a time, the journeys would be well spaced out and therefore the impact on the local road network will be minimal. My research and analysis indicates that currently, Markfield and Field Head residents travel mainly to Ratby, Groby, Glenfield and Coalville to avail themselves of dog grooming services; the availability of a local service provider should therefore reduce the length of journeys made. Indeed, as I am specifically targeting the Markfield and Field Head neighbourhoods, I envisage some dogs being walked to the pod, so the above journey figures are the absolute maximum.

I understand that Wesley Way, Markfield, has a 30mph speed limit but also has less than 300 vehicles per hour at its peak. It would appear that the requirement for on-site turning would not be required as per paragraph 3.195 of the Leicestershire Highway Design Guide. As such, I am confident that this proposal does not conflict with paragraph 115 of the National Planning Policy Framework (December 2023) and hopefully, the Local Highway Authority (LHA) can confirm this. Should this not be the case, I would ask that LHA take into consideration, as it has done in other precedent cases, that there are a large number of properties within the vicinity of the site with similar access arrangements.

Impact on neighbours

Given the build technology of the purpose-built grooming pod and the equipment to be used, I do not envisage any annoyance to my neighbours. As detailed above, the siting of the pod ensures that it is quite some way from any neighbouring properties. There is an existing garden access point to the side of the garden where the pod is to be sited which will be used to enter the pod, this access point borders the wide driveway which means the neighbours will not see clients entering and leaving the garden.

The grooming pod is not visible from the road or adjacent properties as it will be hidden from view by the tall hedge which borders the property. The grooming pod is the size of an average garden shed and therefore will not impinge on any neighbour's light or create an eyesore.

The property easily accommodates 2 vehicles on the front driveway which will be used for clients cars when dropping off and picking up their dogs. The nature of the business plan means that there will never be more than 1 client's dog being groomed at anyone time and as stated above, the expected number of journeys per operating hour is less than 2. Clients will not be permitted to wait on site.

Advice sought

- Given the size and nature of the grooming pod, whether planning permission is required or not.
- Whether any further information is needed by the Council in order to secure a Certificate of Lawful Use.
- Any other advice and guidance the Council can give.