

<b>14/00066/COU</b>	<b>Change of sue of single domestic garage to dog grooming salon (retrospective) at 31 Tower Hill Road, Corby</b>
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**Background.**

The application came about as a response to an enforcement investigation. The use has been present since 2005 and a complaint was received in 2013. Permission is needed as, although small-scale, the use exceeds that normally associated with a residential activity.

**Description.**

This is a detached house with a double garage (only one of which is in use for dog grooming). There is off-street parking sufficient for 3 cars outside the garage plus a 4<sup>th</sup> in the remaining garage. The road is a fairly busy but wide road serving a school, pub and other houses. There is a large parking lay-by opposite.

The proposal is to retain a use that has been present since 2005 (approaching 9 years of use). Inside the garage there is washing and drying equipment. A range of 3 to 5 dogs per day are groomed. Dogs are delivered by customers and collected on completion.

The applicant's submission includes 2 supporting letters from customers commending the professional and friendly service provided.

**Site History.**

None

**Policies**

Corby Local Plan 1997 Saved Policy P1(J) :

Commercial development should ensure that there will be no adverse effect on people living in the locality.

CSS Policy 13: aims to protect the amenities of neighbours.

National Planning Policy Framework 2011 para. 21: encourages flexible working practices such as the integration of residential and commercial uses within the same unit.

**Consultation**

Environmental protection: No objection, commenting .

"I can confirm that Environmental Services has received a single Service Request from a neighbour of this business in the summer last year... (we sent) a log sheet to the complainant and a letter to the alleged perpetrator. ... a completed log sheet was received on 12th September 2013. No other complaint has been received for this established business and there is no active investigation of any ongoing noise nuisance allegations."

NCC Highways: No objection

**Advertisement/Representations**

1. Site Notice. 13.02.14.
2. Neighbour Notification: No's 29, 30 Tower Hill road were notified
3. Summary of Representations:
  - a. Support: 2 letters of from 63 The Lawns and 33 Tower Hill Road:
    - No undue traffic impact, odours, visual impact, loss of privacy, nor nuisance. Well managed premises.
    - Convenient for pensioners
    - The area has a pub and a school, so the use is not noticeable in traffic terms
  - b. Objection: 3 letters of from 29 Tower Hill Road, 6 & 8 Tavern Walk.
    - Adverse parking issues, customers have no regard for residents

- Increase in traffic
- Dog mess on grass
- Noise of barking, noise of machinery
- The area has a school and the use adds to such peak time traffic
- Operates at unsociable times: weekends  
(Reference also made to non planning concerns: restrictive covenant/operators of business have another house)

## Report

The use has been visited on more than one occasion by Planning Officers, and by Environmental Protection (dog control) with a conclusion that it is:

- professionally run
- of a very low level of intensity and appropriate for this detached residential property.

The use is noticeable to neighbours, but the level of harm reported by objectors is considered to be overstated. It should first be noted that the use has persisted for a period approaching 9 years; complaints have only been received in the past year. The acceptability of the use is aided by the house being detached, and the entrance to the dog grooming area being a discreet side garage door.

Noise. Some dogs when placed in strange surroundings and in the company of other pet animals in similar circumstances are likely to suffer some initial distress especially due to the absence of their owners. However these are not boarding kennels nor offer a 'day nursery' service for dogs. It is of a far lower intensity of use with closer control of dog behavior as would be necessary to undertake a normal grooming operation. There is less distress for a dog given the nature of grooming as they are returned to their owners on completion (with no more than 4 dogs present at any one time). It is possible that on occasions neighbours would hear dogs barking (greeting returning owners etc.) but this is assessed at being inside normal acceptable tolerances for this residential property.

Noise from drying equipment is said to be audible, but this will be similar to a household tumble dryer. It is accepted that the noise (a slight hum) will proceed for longer duration than for normal domestic machinery, but again such continuity is not at such a level where a real nuisance is demonstrated.

Traffic. There is no objection from the Highway Engineer. The use will attract slightly more traffic than for a house during day time hours, but given the low level of activity, the arrival and departure of vehicles is not at such a level where clear harm may be presented. This is particularly the case given off-street parking at the premises (3 clear spaces) and sufficient on street parking, including a lay-by opposite. The street already has a high level of traffic attracted by the school and pub, so at certain busy times the use of the Grooming salon would really not be noticeable. Use at weekends may be more noticeable, but again within acceptable tolerances.

Disturbance from general activity at unsociable times. The general comings and goings of customers and the operation of machinery is said to lead to disturbance to neighbours. It may be noted that one neighbour (No 29) objects whilst the other (No 33) supports the use. For the reasons given above, use into the early evening or at weekends is not held to be a nuisance.

In the unlikely event that the activity proceeds at unsociable hours, then action may be taken by Environmental Health (*awaiting further comments - to be checked*)

Employment advantages. The use is environmentally acceptable and carries the additional advantage of offering some employment, albeit at a small scale. The employment suits the personal circumstances of the operators (eg caring for an ageing parent), and offers a low cost service that is popular with customers.

## Recommendation:

### Approve.

1. The use shall be limited to a single garage area only.

2. The use shall not take place other than between the hours of 0700 – 1900 hours Monday to Saturday, 0900 to 1300 Sundays and Bank holidays.

**Reason for 1 & 2:** To prevent an over-intensive use of the site to prevent harm to the amenities of adjoining residents and to comply with Policy 13 of The North Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategy.

**Reasons for Approval:**

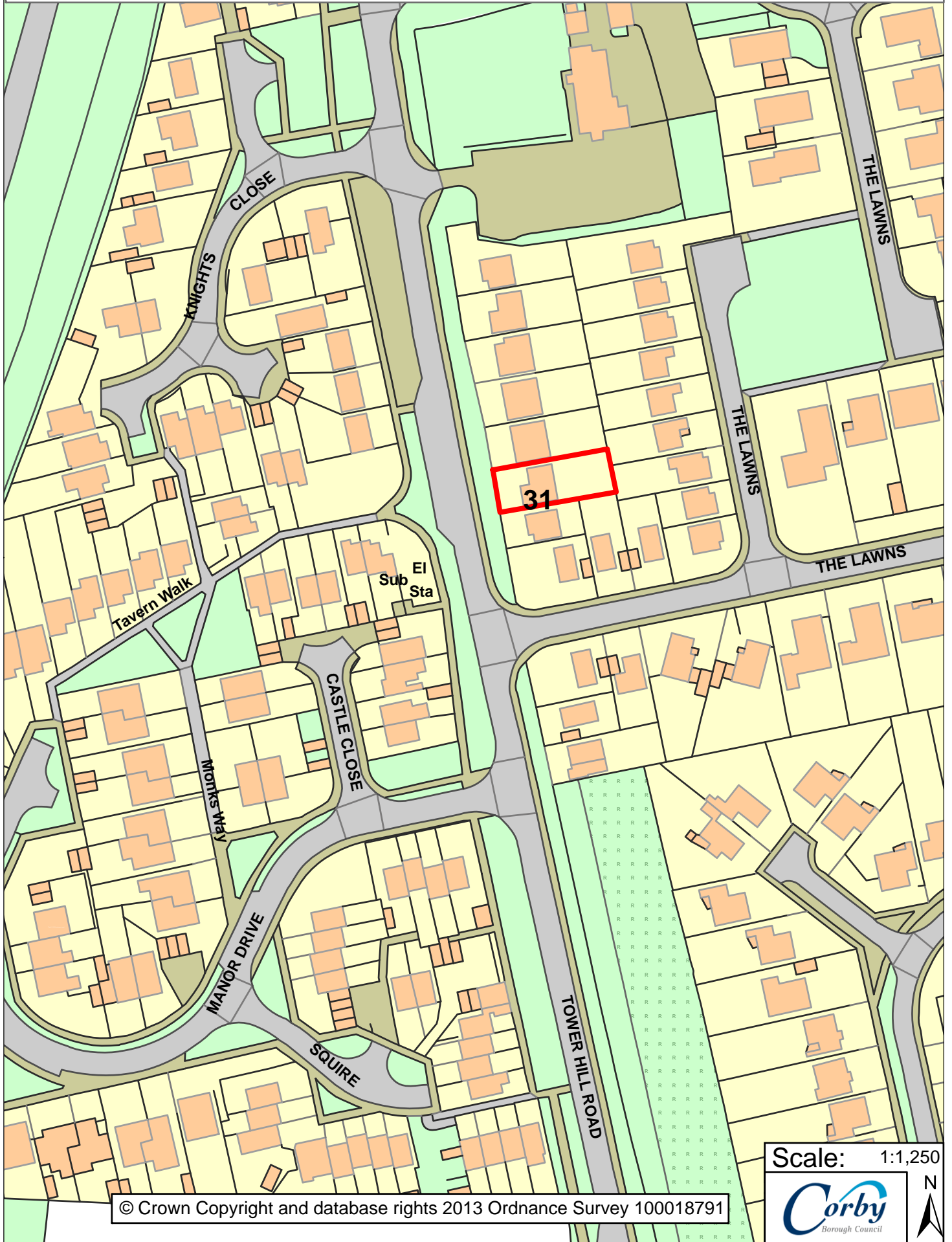
The use has been assessed against normal environmental standards and is held to be a suitable 'working from home' activity, of a scale and intensity that suits this detached residential property. It is hereby consistent with Saved Policy P1(J) of the Local Plan, Policy 13 of the Core Spatial Strategy, and paragraph 21 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

**Officer to Contact:**

Gordon Smith

# 31 Tower Hill Road

14/00066/COU



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Scale: 1:1,250

