



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 30 October 2025

by J Smith MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 3 November 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/E2530/W/25/3371708

17 Taunton Road, Bourne, Lincolnshire PE10 0XE

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Olga Warelis-Sulwinska against the decision of South Kesteven District Council.
 - The application Ref is S25/0836.
 - The development proposed is change of use from residential to a mixed use of residential and dog grooming.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. I acknowledge that several interested parties have questioned whether the appellant holds ownership of the land in question. The Council has determined the application, and accordingly, I have assessed the proposal based solely on the reasons cited for refusal. As the appeal has been dismissed, providing the appellant additional time to clarify land ownership would not have altered the outcome of my decision.

Main Issues

3. The main issues are:
 - the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area;
 - the effect of the proposed development on the living conditions of the occupants of 11 and 15 Taunton Road, with specific regard to noise and disturbance and privacy; and,
 - whether it has been demonstrated the existing use of the appeal site is required.

Reasons

Character and appearance

4. The appeal site relates to a triangular piece of land which divides an area of hardstanding between 11 and 15 Taunton Road. The site is also host to a silver birch tree. Taunton Road is predominantly made up of two storey red brick dwellings, as is the wider estate.

5. The proposed development would present itself as a portacabin, with a glazed frontage oriented towards the highway. Structures of this nature are not characteristic or common within the existing streetscape. Owing to the open gap between 11 and 15 Taunton Road, and the absence of any intervening structures, the building would be clearly visible from the street. Moreover, the position of the proposed building on a triangular grassed area would diminish the site's softer visual qualities and detract from its contribution to an otherwise predominantly hardstanding parking environment. Owing to the shape of this grassed area, in this position, this building would also appear confined.
6. It is contended that bushes and climbing plants could be used to conceal the proposal, with its colour finished in grey or brown. I am not convinced that such mechanisms would overcome the harm of the overall alien appearance of the building proposed sited in an unusual position.
7. Overall, the proposed development would appear incongruous within its surroundings. Its placement would further accentuate this discordance, resulting in a structure that would appear out of place and visually disconnected from the established character of the red brick and the form of this residential housing context. To conclude, the proposed development would conflict with Policy DE1 and SP3 of the South Kesteven Local Plan 2020 (LP). These policies seek for development to make a positive contribution and to be in keeping with the character of the area.

Living conditions

Noise

8. The proposed use of the building is to accommodate dog grooming services. Upon review of the submitted plans, it is noted that the internal layout includes provision for two cages, thereby enabling the accommodation of at least two dogs within the premises at any given time. The building is proposed to be located between Nos. 11 and 15 Taunton Road. Due to its siting, customers would be required to park their vehicles, remove their dogs, and proceed on foot along the shared driveway situated between these properties.
9. By their nature, dogs can be vocal animals, and noise arising from barking within the proposed building, which would potentially involve multiple dogs at any given time would be expected. Additional noise sources would include vehicle engines arriving at the site, car audio systems, the closing of vehicle doors, and further barking as dogs are transported to the pod. An extractor fan is also proposed on the side elevation of the building. Although modest in scale, it would nonetheless contribute to the overall noise output. This cumulative disturbance would occur in very close proximity to, and be directly experienced by, the occupants of 11 and 15 Taunton Road.
10. I acknowledge that the appeal site is situated within a residential setting, where certain sources of noise, such as vehicle movements and domestic pets, are not inherently uncommon. It is accepted that residents in the area own cars and that dogs are a typical household pet. However, the presence of customer visits, involving both vehicular activity and the presence of dogs, would result in a level of noise and disturbance that exceeds what is ordinarily expected in this context.

11. The appellant has indicated that customer frequency would be low and that the grooming pod would not operate during the summer holidays. Nevertheless, there is no enforceable mechanism to guarantee that such limitations would be upheld throughout the lifetime of the development. Even with such restrictions in place, the cumulative impact of several customer visits per day at the lower end would still give rise to a level of noise and disturbance within this residential environment, close to the aforementioned neighbouring occupiers.
12. It has been suggested that soundproof panels could be installed within the grooming pod. However, no technical specifications or supporting details have been provided to enable an assessment of their effectiveness. Even if such information were available, it would not address the external noise generated by customers arriving in vehicles and walking their dogs to the proposed building. This activity would occur near to 11 and 15 Taunton Road and would continue to result in a level of disturbance inconsistent with the residential character of the area.
13. It has been asserted that noise arising from the proposed development would only be perceptible when neighbouring residents are in their gardens. However, given the close proximity of the adjacent properties and the potential frequency of customer arrivals and departures, combined with the noise generated by dogs within the pod and its associated extraction system, it is likely that such disturbance would also be experienced from within the dwellings at 11 and 15 Taunton Road. There is no compelling evidence before me to suggest otherwise.

Privacy

14. Access to the proposed development would be via the space situated between 11 and 15 Taunton Road, where no boundary features currently delineate the respective driveways. Customers approaching the appeal site would walk along Taunton Road, passing directly in front of the windows which serve these neighbouring properties. While this would result in a noticeable increase in pedestrian activity associated with the development, the presence of individuals on the public footpath would be comparable to that of any member of the public walking along Taunton Road, unconnected to the proposal.
15. Upon leaving Taunton Road, customers would proceed along the hardstanding situated between No. 11 and 15 en-route to the proposed grooming pod. Both properties feature ground-level windows positioned at eye level. Given the limited separation between the central point of this hardstanding and these windows, there is a clear potential for overlooking into these dwellings to occur where customers would walk. This level of intrusion would be caused by individuals who are not neighbouring residents and who, under the current circumstances, would have no reason to access this shared space.

Conclusion

16. To conclude, the proposed development would cause harm to the living conditions enjoyed by the occupants of 11 and 15 Taunton Road, with specific regard to noise and disturbance and privacy. It would therefore conflict with Policies DE1 and SP3 of the LP. These policies seek to ensure that development has no adverse impact on the amenity of neighbouring users, with particular regard to noise and loss of privacy.

Open space

17. The parcel of land in question comprises a modest area of landscaped space that separates the hardstanding between 11 and 15 Taunton Road. This soft landscaping serves to soften the visual impact of what would otherwise be a continuous expanse of paved car parking. Policy OS1 of the LP states that all existing open space, including informal natural areas, shall be safeguarded from development.
18. Policy OS1 stipulates that development proposals affecting existing open space must satisfy specific criteria. In this instance, the proposed development would not result in the enhancement or expansion of open space or recreational facilities. It has not been demonstrated that the appeal site is exempt from the standards outlined in Policy OS1. Furthermore, there is no persuasive evidence before me to confirm that an equivalent replacement provision would be delivered within the locality, nor has it been established that the site does not contribute to habitat value or support any species.
19. It is contended that No. 11 has removed green space to the front of their property to create a further parking space, yet no enforcement action has apparently been undertaken. However, it is not for me in the realms of this appeal to come to a view on this matter.
20. To conclude, the proposed development would conflict with Policy OS1 of the LP, the requirements of which have been discussed above.

Other Matters

21. The appellant has proposed that the development would benefit local residents by providing access to a nearby dog grooming service. To encourage uptake, it is suggested that a discount would be offered to residents of Elsea Park. It is argued that this would reduce reliance on private vehicles, thereby contributing positively to the environment and alleviating traffic congestion. Additionally, the appellant has suggested a donation to the Elsea Park Community Trust for the planting of a tree, intended to offset the loss of vegetation resulting from the proposed development. However, these considerations do not mitigate the harm I have identified, nor is there a suitable mechanism before me to ensure that such matters would be secured or delivered.
22. The appellant has made reference to another dog grooming salon and a Lincolnshire Army Cadet Force building. While operational details of that dog grooming business, along with images of both examples have been provided, there is no substantive evidence before me to confirm that these do benefit from planning permission. Furthermore, there is insufficient information to assess the relevance of the other dog grooming salon to the main issues of this appeal scheme, or to understand the rationale behind any decision, if permission has indeed been granted. Each planning application must be considered on its own merits, and in the absence of such supporting information, I am unable to draw any meaningful conclusions from the examples presented.
23. The appellant has sought to address highways related matters within their submitted evidence. However, upon review of the appeal, I note that the Council did not express any concerns regarding highway issues in its officer report. In the

absence of compelling evidence to the contrary, I find no justification to adopt a different position.

24. Concern has been raised regarding the Council's handling of the application. However, this falls outside the scope of matters for consideration within the context of the main issues of this appeal decision. The appellant notes that they did not require the grooming pod to conform precisely to the proposed plans. The Council evaluated the proposal based on the materials provided by the appellant, as have I. Ultimately, it remains the appellant's responsibility to put forward a scheme that is appropriately designed to meet the requirements of the LP.
25. The appellant has detailed their engagement with their neighbours prior to applying to the Council for planning permission. Regardless of any discussions undertaken before an application was made, residents have the right to make representations on planning applications once notified by the Council. Whilst representations are taken into consideration, ultimately, an assessment of the scheme against the LP must be made.

Conclusion

26. For the reasons given above and taking all material considerations into account, the appeal should be dismissed.

J Smith

INSPECTOR