

Deputation to Planning Committee Submitted by Councillor Gwen Robinson

In asking for this application to be brought to you for consideration I would firstly like to stress that I am not against businesses being run from residential premises per se, indeed cottage industry has been the back bone of British society for a very long time.

However, in this instance, and for this type of business, I do not believe that it is conducive to a harmonious neighbourly environment and that it will have an adverse impact on neighbours by way of noise disturbance and an increase in traffic, which is out of the ordinary.

Hearing specialists say that, and this is only a summary, “getting used to it” or “accommodation” is a serious indicator of hearing loss. Also, that excessive noise is a stress factor that can lead to increased blood pressure, cardiovascular disease, ulcers, headaches, and sleep disorders. Studies into a noisy environment show that it can facilitate increased annoyance and aggression.

There are three things we need to note about hearing loss: it is gradual, cumulative, and irreversible. Here is a brief description of how hearing loss occurs:

...Noise literally wears out the ears. Sound travels as pulsating waves of air pressure. Those waves strike the ear drum and their vibrations travel through the bones of the middle ear to the inner ear, or cochlea. In the cochlea, approximately 30,000 hairlike protrusions signal the auditory nerves to the brain. These hairs can recover from infrequent, brief exposures to intense noise but if they're continually subjected to it, they break down and no longer respond to sound.

Occupational safety experts measure the potential harmful effects of noise in terms of total exposure in an 8-hour workday

Sound Level	Exposure Limit
85 dB(A)	8 hours
88 dB (A)	4 hours
91 dB (A)	2 hours
94 dB (A)	1 hour
97 dB (A)	

Sound Level	Exposure Limit
	30 minutes
100 dB (A)	15 minutes
103 dB (A)	7.5 minutes
106 dB (A)	3.75 minutes

What is noticeable on this scale is that when noise reaches above 85 decibels, it becomes hazardous, and only a total of 15 minutes of noise at 100 decibels is considered safe in an eight-hour workday. That's 15 minutes for the whole day. When we subject ourselves to unsafe levels of noise, we risk hearing loss. Likewise, any prolonged noise exposure above 85 decibels is considered a significant stress factor.

For this particular business there will be two main sources of noise pollution, notably, dogs barking and the high velocity dryers used in the grooming process.

Barking:

Barking: An average sized dog barks at 120db, a Bichon at 102db. As the scale shows for the Bichon that will be approximately a 10 minute exposure limit for the day. For the average size dog and using the scale given at 112db the time reduces to 93 seconds.

An average sized dog barks at 120db, a Bichon at 102db

I have considered distance and used my own personal experience of the impact of noise pollution on my own personal amenity space.

High velocity forced air dryers

One of the most significant sources of noise in the grooming environment is that produced by high velocity, forced air dryers. The average levels of these range from 94.8 to 108 db. Again, that exceeded the top end of the scale.

Dog grooming advisory sites recommend the wearing of industrial strength hearing protection while the dryers are on. I don't believe that we can expect neighbours to do

this as they go about their business in their amenity space; a space that is considered outside or partly outside and one which allows individuals to carry out household and leisure activities.

It may be that during the cold, wintry months, doors and windows would be closed. Undoubtedly this will reduce the noise pollution. However, during the warmer times, and those heatwave occasions, doors and windows will be open to prevent the animals from overheating. Neighbours will want to enjoy their outside space and this tranquillity will be seriously compromised.

Increase in traffic

Fabian Close and surrounding areas are very constrained. There is little to no on street parking. Should the applicant have visitors, not related to this business, the customers will need to find alternative parking. I'm informed that, for various reasons, not all owners choose to leave their pets and return later to collect them.

I thank you for your time and consideration on this application