

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 28 November 2016

by Alison Partington BA (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 1st December 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/J2373/Z/16/3157377

11 Talbot Road, Blackpool FY1 1LB

- The appeal is made under Regulation 17 of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 against a refusal to grant express consent.
 - The appeal is made by Mr Mike Nordwind against the decision of Blackpool Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 16/0353, dated 14 June 2016, was refused by notice dated 5 August 2016.
 - The advertisement proposed is 1 high level LED screen.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and express consent is granted for the display of the high level LED screen as applied for. The consent is for five years from the date of this decision and is subject to the five standard conditions set out in the Regulations.

Procedural Matter

2. The application sought consent for a total of 4 different advertisements on the appeal property. The other three were granted express consent, and so this appeal only relates to the high level LED screen which was refused.

Main Issue

3. The main issue in the appeal is the visual impact of the proposed advertisement on the host property and the surrounding area.

Reasons

4. The site is within the Town Centre Conservation Area, and near to a number of listed buildings. Sections 66(1) and 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 require that special attention must be paid to the desirability of preserving the setting of listed buildings, and preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the conservation area. A strict control over the display of outdoor advertisements should therefore be maintained.
 5. The area in which the appeal property is located is a busy commercial, retail and leisure area that forms part of the town centre, and is a busy pedestrian and vehicular thoroughfare. The area contains a wide variety of illuminated and non-illuminated advertisements both on buildings and within the street scene. Buildings in the vicinity are large scale buildings of several storeys. The appeal property is a 3 storey modern building located on the north side of
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Talbot Square which I understand has recently been refurbished. In contrast to the fine architectural detailing found on the adjacent buildings, the appeal property has a clean and simple form.

6. The sign would be located to one side of the upper floors of the building. Its long linear form would reflect the form of the windows found on the property, and would maintain the strong vertical emphasis of the building. The size of the screen would not be out of scale with the host property, and so it would not appear as an overly dominant feature on it. As such it would not be detrimental to the visual appearance of the building or the surrounding area.
7. Although its position above the ground floor level, means it would be above the general level of advertisements within the street scene, given the larger high level screen already located on the nearby North Pier, it would not appear out of keeping. As the screen would be aligned parallel to the façade of the building it would not be particularly visible when approaching in either direction along Talbot Road. Nevertheless, the regularly changing of colourful advertisements would draw attention to the building, when approaching along Corporation Street, or in Talbot Square. However, this would be no different to the way the screen on the North Pier attracts attention when in Talbot Square, or when approaching along Talbot Road or The Promenade. I observed that this did not have a detrimental impact on the visual amenity of the area.
8. Consequently, I consider the appeal scheme would preserve the character and appearance of the host property, the surrounding Town Centre Conservation Area, and the setting of the nearby Listed Buildings. It would therefore not be detrimental to visual amenity. I have taken into account Policy LQ13 of the *Blackpool Local Plan 2001 – 2016 (adopted June 2006)* which seeks to protect amenity, and so is material in this case. Given I have concluded that the proposal would not harm amenity, it does not conflict with this policy.
9. It has been suggested that the screen is less acceptable than the one on North Pier because of the likely nature of the advertisements that would be displayed. However, there is no indication that the content would be harmful to amenity or public safety, which the *National Planning Policy Framework* indicates are the only two matters that should be taken into consideration when controlling advertisements.
10. For the reasons set out above, I conclude the appeal should be allowed.

Alison Partington

INSPECTOR