

# Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 24<sup>th</sup> February 2022

**by N McGurk BSc (Hons) MCD MBA MRTPI**

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

**Decision date: 17<sup>th</sup> March 2022**

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**Appeal Ref: APP/J2373/Z/21/3284478**  
**115 Promenade, Blackpool, FY1 5BD**

- 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 Alight Media Ltd against the decision of Blackpool Council.
  - The application Ref 21/0740, dated 13 August 2021, was refused by notice dated 27 September 2021.
  - The advertisement proposed is installation of 1 x 48 sheet gable mounted digital advertising display unit, measuring 6.4m wide x 3.4m high and comprising pressed metal frame with sealed LED screen.
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## Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

## Procedural Matter

2. The appellant considers that the Council has failed to work in a professional and proactive manner in respect of the planning application the subject of this appeal. This is a matter between the appellant and the Council.

## Main Issue

3. The main issue in this case is the effect of the advertisement on visual amenity.

## Reasons

4. The appeal property is a prominently located building along the Promenade, on the opposite side of the road to Central Pier. As such, it is situated along the "Golden Mile," in the heart of one of Blackpool's busiest commercial and leisure areas.
  5. The appeal property is a commercial building that has seen a variety of uses, most recently as a retail outlet. Evidence has been provided of signage associated with businesses at the site.
  6. The area can be described as "brash and bright." It is characterised by the presence of uses related to Blackpool's leisure and entertainment attractions. Consequently, there are plentiful examples of prominent and colourful advertisements in the vicinity of the site. The property itself has been painted bright pink and this, together with its art deco-style architectural features, results in a building that draws attention to itself.
  7. During my site visit, I observed that, whilst there is a plethora of advertisements in this and the wider area, large scale advertisements,
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particularly those with LED screens, tend to appear to form part of the large-scale leisure assets where they are located. I also observed during my site visit a number of digital information screens which, whilst prominent, are clearly for public benefit – for example, providing directions to car parks and public information messages – rather than for general advertising.

8. The proposed advertisement would comprise a large LED screen located high up on the highly prominent north-facing gable of the appeal property. As such, it would draw the eye, during day and night, as an unduly dominant feature on a highly prominent building. Further, I find that, as a large and prominent LED screen, not directly associated with an immediate large scale leisure asset, it would appear as an incongruous and visually intrusive addition.
9. Further to the above, the scale, prominence and visually intrusive appearance of the proposal would add significantly to the existing commercial clutter in the immediate area, which includes small poor-quality advertisements, canopies and roller shutters.
10. Also, I consider that the proposed screen would fail to respond to and would appear to jar with, the appeal property's architectural features and would simply appear as a very large and prominent advertisement imposed onto the property's north facing gable.
11. Taking all of the above into account, I find that the advertisement would be detrimental to visual amenity. This is contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework; to Core Strategy<sup>1</sup> Policy CS7; and to Local Plan<sup>2</sup> Policies LQ1 and LQ13, which together amongst other things, protect visual amenity.

### **Other Matters**

12. In support of the advertisement, the appellant draws attention to other signs elsewhere. However, there is little to lead me to conclude that the circumstances relating to these signs are so similar to the advertisement proposed as to provide for direct comparison. However, notwithstanding this, I have found above that in this case, the proposed advertisement would be detrimental to visual amenity and hence the decision below.

### **Conclusion**

13. For the reasons given above, the appeal does not succeed.

*N McGurk*

INSPECTOR

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<sup>1</sup> Blackpool Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy 2012-2027 (2016).

<sup>2</sup> Blackpool Local Plan 2001-2016 (2006) (Saved 2009).