



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 20 May 2025

by Graham Wraight BA(Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 29 May 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/J2373/Z/25/3361264

Esso Petrol Filling Station, Preston New Road, Marton, Blackpool FY4 4XQ

- The appeal is made under Regulation 17 of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 (as amended) against a refusal to grant express consent.
 - The appeal is made by Mr Benjamin Porte (Clear Channel UK) against the decision of Blackpool Council.
 - The application Ref is 25/0029.
 - The advertisement proposed is installation of internally illuminated 48-sheet D-Poster advertisement.
 - Illumination to comply with Institute of Lighting Professionals' PLG05/23 (see planning statement).
 - Frequency of images to be no greater than once every ten seconds.
 - No moving images, video or flashing lights to be displayed.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on amenity.

Reasons

3. The substantial road infrastructure leading to the junction with the M55 motorway is notable in the area closest to where the proposed advertisement would be located. Nonetheless, the surrounding area has an open feel, with a field in the backdrop of where the proposal would be located and a large, landscaped verge on the opposite side of the road beyond which industrial premises are found. Existing signage, including that at the petrol filling station (PFS) itself, is generally understated and this limits the impact it has on the visual amenity of the area.
4. The proposed advertisement would share an awkward relationship with the built form of the PFS due to its size and positioning. It would be higher than the kiosk building and squeezed into a relatively small area between that building and the public highway. Furthermore, the presence of a large illuminated digital display would not be characteristic of the relatively limited number of smaller, static advertisements present in the area. As a result of these factors, it would be an out of character and visually dominant feature within the surrounding area, resulting in significant harm to the visual amenity of the area.
5. Although the advertisement would be visible only from one direction in terms of movements down the public highway, the impact would be considerable in that direction. I acknowledge that illumination levels could be controlled and that the appellant offers that the proposed display could be switched off between the hours of 11:00pm and 06:00am. Both of those matters could be controlled by way of

planning conditions and whilst they would reduce any potential impact, they would not overcome the overall harm caused by the proposal. The appeal site is not in a conservation area or close to any listed buildings. I also do not concur with the Council that there would be harm to residential amenity, because the nearest dwellings are positioned well away from the appeal site and angled so their front elevations would not directly face it. However, those considerations do not justify an otherwise harmful development.

6. For these reasons, I conclude that the proposed advertisement would cause significant harm to amenity due to its size, positioning and internal illumination. I have taken into account Policy CS7 of the Core Strategy 2016 and Policies DM17 and DM23 of the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies 2023 and the Signage Supplementary Planning Guidance 2018 which seek to protect amenity, and so are material to the case, together with paragraph 141 of the National Planning Policy Framework. Given I have concluded that the proposal would harm amenity, the proposal conflicts with these policies.

Other Matters

7. It is stated that digital signage is a more sustainable method of display, however this would be in comparison to a traditional poster billboard which is not present at the appeal site. This consideration does not therefore offer any weight in support of the appeal proposal.

Conclusion

8. For the reasons given above, the appeal should be dismissed.

Graham Wraight

INSPECTOR