



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 28 October 2025

by M J Francis BA (Hons) MA MSc MCIfA

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 21 January 2026

Appeal Ref: APP/X5990/Z/25/3364904

Lancaster Gate Station, Bayswater Road, London W2 2UE

- 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 Nathan Still of In Focus Public Networks Limited against the decision of City of Westminster Council.
 - The application Ref is 25/01188/ADV.
 - The development proposed is display of two internally illuminated LCD screens measuring 1065mm x 1895mm and 392mm x 698mm.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and express consent is granted for the display of two internally illuminated LCD screens measuring 1065mm x 1895mm and 392mm x 698mm. 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 and the additional conditions in the schedule at the end of this decision.

Preliminary Matters

2. The development is described, on a joint application for planning permission and advertisement consent, as 'to install an open access communication hub, following the removal of an existing communication apparatus, as illustrated in the attached documentation'. The Council has granted planning permission¹ subject to conditions, therefore, that is not being considered in the appeal. However, as the appellant's description refers to the development as a whole, I have used the description from the Council's decision notice in the banner heading above as it relates directly to the advertisement consent.
3. Notwithstanding this, the Council has referred to the proposal having two advertisements, although the appellant asserts that only the large screen on the eastern elevation constitutes an advert. The other, smaller screen, is a touch screen to enable communication and the making of calls via a traditional handset. However, as set out in Appendix A: Hub unit specification, it also provides wayfinding around the city, access to emergency services, shortcuts to the most often used apps, and links to local Council services. In addition, Appendix F provides details of a community channel, the example being the Greater Manchester Mayors Charity, that enables free space to be given on the interactive screen to promote this and potentially other charities.

¹ Ref 25/01187/FULL

4. I understand that the communication apparatus cannot function without the touch screen, which is part of the hub structure, however, it would in part be for the purposes of, advertisement, announcement or direction. Therefore, I find that the second LCD screen falls within the definition of an advertisement, as reflected in my decision above.
5. The Council refer to the City Plan Partial Review which has been subject to examination. However, I have limited information before me on the stage at which the examination has reached, and in any case no particular policies subject to the review have been drawn to my attention by the main parties. Therefore, it is of very limited weight in my decision.
6. The Advertisement Regulations state that control may be exercised only in the interests of amenity and public safety. The Council raised no concerns in relation to public safety, other than suggesting conditions. Based on the evidence and my site visit, I see no reason to take a different view.

Main Issue

7. Therefore, the main issue in this appeal is the effect of the proposed advertisements on the amenity of the area.

Reasons

8. The appeal site is located outside the Lancaster Gate tube station. The modern station frontage, with glazing at the lower level and dark metal louvres above, is attached to and situated between the elevation of the Royal Lancaster Hotel (RLH). This has big, square windows, set in a façade of white stone. In front of the station is a phone box, which it is proposed would be replaced by the communication hub, and a totem information sign. Close to the station is a metal bus shelter. The Bayswater Road outside the station is wide, with three lanes, plus bus lanes.
9. The site is opposite the Royal Parks Conservation Area (RPCA). This includes Kensington Gardens, Hyde Park, Green Park and St James' Park. The special interest and significance of the RPCA, in relation to this appeal, derive from their historic interest as an extensive chain of pleasure grounds developed over the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries.
10. Kensington Gardens, which lies immediately to the south of the site, is a Grade I Registered Park and Garden (RPG). Originally hunting grounds, and with much of the land taken from Hyde Park, it became the private gardens of Kensington Palace, used by the royal family from the 17th century. Insofar as relevant to this proposal, its special interest and significance derive from its historic use as royal pleasure grounds, now a public park. With extensive areas of grass, and a series of paths radiating from the numerous gates that provide entrances to the park, it contains the large Round Pond and the Long Water. Architectural interest arises from the numerous listed structures and statues. The appeal site is outside both the RPCA and the RPG.
11. To the rear of the site, which excludes the triangular area drawn around the RLH to the north, is the Bayswater Conservation Area (BCA). The special interest and significance of the BCA derive from it being an area of residential housing, mostly terraced, but with some villas, which developed from the early 19th century over

some seventy years by varying estates and speculators. Whilst a variety of architects were involved, which has resulted in varying architectural details, the buildings are all in an Italianate style. This has created a unified layout of streets and squares. The area now contains many large blocks of flats and a number of hotels.

12. The existing kiosk has a non-illuminated panel for the display of poster advertisements. Instead, the proposed hub, which would be smaller in area than the existing kiosk, although 130mm higher, would have two LCD screens. That on the east elevation would be for advertisements, and a screen on the west elevation for the communication hub and information point.
13. Although the illuminated signage would be more obtrusive than the existing poster signage, and the Council refers to few advertisements being located within this area, the hub would be outside a tube station, with a contemporary frontage. Both the tube station and the adjoining hotel would result in light spill. Moreover, this stretch of road has many streetlamps sited relatively close together which would be lit throughout the night.
14. The advertisement screen would be automatically changed by a remote server. It would have a light sensor to control light levels during the day, which would adjust depending on times of the year and environmental conditions. Moreover, it would be switched off between midnight and 6.00 hours. Notwithstanding this, the road is busy and on a bus route, with many vehicle movements during the day and night.
15. Whilst much of the area is residential, on the Bayswater Road, the width of the carriageway and volume of traffic, as well as large numbers of pedestrians walking along the pavement, creates a busy, urban environment. Therefore, visually, the character of the wide pavement area outside the station, containing the existing phone box, totem information sign, as well as a bin, post box and tall lamp posts, differs from that around it. Whilst this stretch of road is straight, the size and position of the proposed hub, close to a small tree, would result in it being viewed within the context of the building it is located next to.
16. This is because there is a visual separation from this side of Bayswater Road to that of Kensington Gardens, delineated by its' iron railings and overhanging trees on the other side. Entering through Marlborough Gate into the calm, verdant and formal surroundings of the gardens with its historic structures and fountains, provides a distinct contrast. Although from some angles the screens would be seen against the backdrop of Kensington Gardens, the distance between the hub and the gardens and the change in character from that outside the tube station, means that it would not harm the visual amenity of the area. Moreover, I saw that the screens would not be readily visible from within Kensington Gardens.
17. Therefore, whilst the proposed advertisements are in the wider setting of the designated heritage assets, they do not harm the significance of the RPCA and the RPG. Moreover, its position outside Lancaster tube station and the Royal Lancaster Hotel, clearly separated from the BCA, means that it would not harm the significance of this conservation area either.
18. The Council refers to the effect of the proposal on the grade II listed, 61-64, Bayswater Road (the LB). This short terrace of houses, finished in stucco, and three and four storeys in height, dates to c.1865-70. Its significance is derived from its historic and architectural interest representing a late 19th century terrace

overlooking the park and with projecting Corinthian porches, canted ground floor bay windows and first floor balconies, it provides an imposing grandeur to the streetscape. The setting of the LB is limited to the area of Bayswater Road from where it can be visually appreciated as an historic terrace demonstrating the evolution of domestic architecture in the area. Furthermore, the terrace is situated next to a tall block of flats on the corner of Lancaster Terrace. This, combined with the wide roads and the traffic island outside Marlborough Gate, and the distance between the proposed advertisements and the listed building, visually separates it from the appeal site. Consequently, in the context of this appeal, the proposal would not be within the setting of the LB and therefore its significance would not be harmed.

19. Therefore, based on the matters and reasons above, I conclude that the proposal would not harm the visual amenity of the area.
20. In accordance with the Regulations, I have considered the provisions of policies 38, 39, 40 and 43 (G) of the City of Westminster City Plan 2019-2040, 2021, in so far as they are relevant. These policies collectively require heritage assets and their settings to be conserved and enhanced in a manner appropriate to their significance, for proposals to relate sensitively to period and architectural detail and positively contribute to Westminster's townscape and streetscape, and for advertisements to make a positive contribution to amenity.

Conditions

21. I have considered the conditions suggested by the Council against the advice in the Planning Practice Guidance and amended them where necessary. Whilst the Council has recommended a condition that the structure shall not come closer than 0.45m of the carriageway edge, this is a condition of the planning permission and so it is not necessary to repeat it. Moreover, this decision relates to the advertisements only, not the hub.
22. To avoid unnecessary light and images throughout the night, and to protect the visual amenity of the area, condition 1 would ensure that the large advertisement is switched off for specific hours during the night. To prevent moving, animation or video images, condition 2 is necessary to not distract drivers. Additionally, condition 3 is necessary to ensure that the intensity of the illumination is within the recommended industry guidance.

Conclusion

23. For the reasons given above, and taking into account all matters raised, the appeal is allowed.

M J Francis

INSPECTOR

Schedule of Conditions

In addition to the five standard conditions in the Regulations:

- 1) The advertisement on the eastern elevation shall be switched off between the hours of 00:00 and 06:00.

- 2) The screen displays shall only show two dimensional static images, shall contain no moving images, animation, video or full motion images or audio and no image or lighting colour shall resemble any traffic sign, colour or signal.
- 3) The intensity of the illumination of the advertisements permitted by this consent shall be no greater than 300 cd/m² between dusk and dawn, consistent with guidance set out in the Institute of Lighting Professionals publication: 'The Brightness of Illuminated Advertisements', 2023.

END OF CONDITIONS