



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 23 February 2026

by **C Shearing BA (Hons) MA MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 25 February 2026

Appeal Ref: APP/B0230/Z/25/3376107

IMO Car Wash, Leagrave Road, Luton, LU3 1RJ

- 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 Wildstone Estates Limited against the decision of Borough of Luton Council.
 - The application Ref is 25/00950/ADV.
 - The advertisement proposed is erection of one digital display advertisement.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) at paragraph 141 makes clear that advertisements should be subject to control only in the interests of amenity and public safety, taking account of cumulative impacts. Regulation 2¹ states that 'amenity' includes aural and visual amenity, and Regulation 3(2) states that factors relevant to amenity include general characteristics of the locality.

Main Issues

3. The main issues are the effect of the proposal on amenity, with particular regard to visual amenity and effects on occupants of the nearby residential properties.

Reasons

Visual Amenity

4. The appeal site forms part of a wedge of land between Leagrave Road and the railway line, which is visually distinct from the residential area which extends along the opposite side of the road. This side of Leagrave Road contains a variety of vibrant commercial uses including a petrol station and car dealership close to the appeal site, and consequently this area is characterised by a variety of signage of varying sizes and designs and associated paraphernalia.
5. Despite these factors, the existing signage in the area is predominantly modest in scale and neither digital nor internally illuminated. The combination of the scale and digital nature of the proposal would therefore be in stark contrast with its surroundings, creating a visually incongruous and prominent feature. While this is perhaps the intention of the signage, its contrast with the established local character would be such that it would cause unacceptable harm to the character

¹ Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements)(England) Regulations 2007

and appearance of the area. While the proposal would be slightly lower than the adjacent totum sign, its effects on visual amenity would be substantially different given its overall scale and design. The examples of paper and paste posters elsewhere do also not provide assurances that the visual effects of the proposed advertisement would be acceptable.

6. For these reasons the proposal would be unacceptable in terms of its effects on visual amenity. The proposal would conflict with policies LLP1, LLP25 and LLP26 of the Luton Local Plan 2017 which are material to the decision and require, among other things, high quality design which responds positively to the townscape and that advertisements do not adversely affect the character or appearance of the area.

Residential Amenity

7. Residential properties on the opposite side of Leagrave Road would have a view towards the advertisement, and the above effects, arising from its heavy conflict with the established local character would be apparent. However, given the sign would be perpendicular to the street and given the distance of separation between the sign and those houses, together with the intervening street lights and structures, the proposal would not cause unacceptable harm to the living conditions of those properties. Levels of illuminance could reasonably be controlled by condition if the proposal were otherwise acceptable. The effects on residential amenity would therefore be acceptable.

Conclusion

8. The proposal would be unacceptable in terms of its effects on visual amenity and the appeal is dismissed.

C Shearing

INSPECTOR