



An
Bord
Pleanála

Inspector's Report

ABP-316944-23

Development	Retention for advertising signs. Change of use from garden to use as an enclosed yard with portacabin extension to credit union building. Significant new information received on 15/03/23.
Location	Connect Credit Union, Main Street, Kilsaran, Dundalk, Co. Louth
Planning Authority	Louth County Council
Planning Authority Reg. Ref.	22323
Applicant	Connect Credit Union Limited
Type of Application	Retention permission
Planning Authority Decision	Split decision
Type of Appeal	First Party
Appellant	Connect Credit Union Limited
Observers	None
Date of Site Inspection	28 th February 2024
Inspector	Trevor Rue

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1.0 Site Location and Description

- 1.1. The application site is located in the built-up area of Kilsaran, about 1.2 kilometres to the south of the centre of Castlebellingham and about 14 kilometres to the south of Dundalk. The site is on the eastern side of the R132 road which runs through Kilsaran.
- 1.2. The site, with a stated area of 0.893 hectares, is occupied by a credit union building and a hard-surfaced area, together with a gravelled yard enclosed by a lapped metal fence. A coated aluminium portacabin within the yard area is attached to the credit union building by a link corridor. There is signage on the western elevation of the building facing the road. A free-standing totem sign is located near the road edge.
- 1.3. About 50 metres to the south of the site, on the opposite, western side of the R132, there is a parking area with a low wall on its northern boundary. There is a billboard with steel angle supports on the outer side of the wall.

2.0 Proposed Development

- 2.1. Permission is sought for retention of:
 - change of use from garden to use as an enclosed yard and associated boundary walls;
 - the single storey portacabin extension to the existing credit union building;
 - two advertising scroll signs on the upper part of the front elevation of the building;
 - an advertising sign in the front window of the building;
 - the double-sided totem advertising sign on the site frontage; and
 - the double-sided advertising sign on the western side of the R132 approximately 50 metres to the south west of the credit union building.

3.0 Planning Authority Decision

3.1. Decision

3.1.1. On 6th April 2023, Louth County Council granted retention permission subject to conditions for the two scroll signs, for the use of the garden area as an enclosed yard with boundary walls and for the upper floor area of the credit union building including roof lights. The Council refused retention permission for the totem sign, the digital advertising sign in the front window, the portacabin and the advertising sign on the western side of the R132.

3.1.2. The reasons for refusing the specified elements of the development were:

1. *The double-sided totem sign along the public road and the digital advertising sign on the front elevation of the building, by reason of their illuminated nature and associated levels of luminance from same, together with the double-sided advertising sign on the western side of the R132 (50m from the site) would result in adverse impact on the visual amenities and character of the area and would in an adverse impact on the residential amenity of the residential properties in the vicinity of the site. Furthermore, the double-sided totem sign by reason of its location, interferes with sightline visibility at the entrance of the site onto the public road resulting in a traffic hazard. These advertisement structures would result in an overall proliferation of signage and advertising displays at the subject site. Such development would set an undesirable precedent for other such similar development and would be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.*
2. *The portacabin structure, in the absence of demonstrable need for this accommodation and by reason of its design, scale and form represents a substandard and haphazard form of accommodation. Such development would set an undesirable precedent and would be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area. This structure should be removed within three months of the date of this decision.*

3.2 Planning Authority Reports

Planning Reports

- 3.2.1. A planner's report was produced on 26th May 2022 and, following the submission of further information by the applicant, it was updated on 31st March 2023. These reports provided the reasoning for the authority's decision. They described the site, set out the planning history and relevant planning policies, and summarised consultation responses and third party submissions. Among the planning considerations assessed were design and traffic.
- 3.2.2. The planner's reports reached the following conclusions relevant to these matters:
- The first floor rooms in the credit union building and the four roof lights illustrated on the submitted plans do not have planning permission. The application was amended to include these elements and the applicant paid the additional fee. The applicant indicated that this area had not been used as an office/boardroom in a year as this use is now based in its office in Blackrock, Co. Louth. The first floor is used for storage and a small canteen, which is acceptable. Fifty per cent of the first floor area has a ceiling height of 2.4 metres, which provides an adequate standard of accommodation and ventilation. Fire safety and disability access are matters for Building Control.
 - The car parking area is sufficient. The planner is not unduly concerned about ownership of the land to the rear of the credit union building as no works are proposed in this part of the site.
 - The yard is 9.7 metres wide and 27.51 metres deep. It is enclosed by a steel colour-coated fence to the western (roadside) boundary and a nap rendered wall with concrete capping to the other boundaries. The change in use involves reconfiguration of site boundaries of the credit union and the dwelling to its north. The planner is satisfied that the enclosed area is used as a yard only.
 - The portacabin is 3.09 metres wide and 8.58 metres deep. Its flat roof height is 2.8 metres. It has metal insulated panel external walls. The link structure is 2.8 metres long and 1.15 metres wide. The portacabin is a substandard and haphazard form of accommodation, the need for which has not been adequately demonstrated. Given the temporary nature of the structure and

having regard to the fact that the previous boardroom and office were relocated, there is sufficient space in the credit union building at first floor level to provide for the office accommodation currently in the portacabin.

- The fabric scroll signs are attached to the building with stainless steel supports. They measure 1.24 metres in height and 0.39 metres in width. When assessed in their own merit, they are not considered to result in adverse visual impact on the building or on the visual or residential amenities of the area.
- The sign in the front window is 0.9 metres in height and 1.65 metres in width. A site inspection was carried out in the evening outside the opening hours of the credit union. This is a digital sign and the display changed every 10 seconds during the inspection. The sign emits a bright light which impacts on the visual amenity and character of the area. It is a distraction to road users. It adversely affects the residential amenity of the dwellings immediately opposite. The light reflects on the front windows of these houses. Even when viewed from the opposite side of the road, the luminance was excessive.
- The totem sign is 1.2 metres wide to the base, 1.08 metres wide at the top and 3.58 metres in height. It is unduly prominent in the streetscape and results in visual clutter. Although not stated on the submitted plans, the sign is illuminated. It has an adverse impact on the visual amenities and character of the area, as it is within 40 metres of two dwellings on the opposite side of the road which are protected structures, and on the amenity of the residents.
- While the applicant has illustrated sightline visibility of 49 metres in each direction from a point 2.4 metres back from the road edge, it is considered that the totem sign, positioned exactly 2.4 metres back from the road edge, interferes with available visibility and results in a traffic hazard.
- The advertising sign to the south west of the credit union is 2.44 metres wide. Its overall height is 2.23 metres, including the steel supports, which are 1.05 metres high. While the applicant has noted that this signage structure has been in place for over 40 years, it does not have planning permission. The sign is not considered necessary and results in visual clutter and proliferation of signage associated with the credit union. It is unclear whether the applicant has the consent of the landowner.

Other Technical Reports

3.2.3. The Council's Infrastructure Section had no objection to the development, subject to retention of the visibility splays shown on the site layout plan and disposal of surface water in accordance with the Development Plan.

3.2.4 Uisce Éireann commented that the development did not require a water service connection or a waste service connection and was not likely to cause overloading potentially impacting receiving waters. It had no objection to the development.

3.3. Third Party Submissions

3.3.1. Mr John Carroll objected to the application on grounds of light disturbance from the advertisement sign in the front window and the spotlights/security lights on the roofline of the building. He said these lights beam into the front upper bedrooms and front lower living rooms of the house he lives in, which is straight across the road from the credit union, causing health concerns due to sleep deprivation.

3.3.2. Another third party said it appeared that the planning application was lodged on the back of a warning letter issued by the Council. Whilst he supported regularisation of the unauthorised works, several concerns remained:

- The additional applicable fee for retention of the first floor area does not appear to have been paid and the retention of the kitchenette/canteen was not mentioned in the public notices for this planning application. Ownership of a rectangular area of land to the rear (east) of the building is unregistered and appears to have been within the adjoining property until the extension was built. This boundary change was not mentioned in the public notices.
- The occupied building may not have a valid Statutory Certificate of Compliance on Completion and/or Fire Safety Certificate and/or Disability Access Certificate. The works do not comply with the Building Regulations and the floor plans would need to change. The first floor area with a head height of 2.4 metres is less than 50% of the floor area that is now being called a storage area. With the building constructed in a piecemeal manner, it is now proposed to retain a haphazard and substandard portacabin annexed to the building. By March 2023, the portacabin had been in place for about three years.

- Parking spaces are not shown on the submitted plans and there are no designated spaces for people with disabilities. There is not enough space for parking within the site. Cars park in front of the building in an *ad hoc*, uncontrolled manner. The entrance is about 12 metres wide, which allows cars to enter the property at speed. Cars have to reverse to get out with potential for collision with cars entering. The totem sign exacerbates this situation.
- The applicant has not shown the impact of the totem sign on sightlines by comparing the before and after scenarios. Although it may comply with the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets, it more than likely does not comply with the Development Plan which requires a setback distance of 4.5 metres. The sign was erected beyond the front boundaries of adjacent properties in line with the pedestrian footpath to the south. It restricts forward visibility at the site entrance, is a distraction to drivers and pedestrians and poses a traffic hazard.
- The totem advertisement is illuminated with light spilling on to the roadway and glare emanating from the sign. No information has been submitted on lux levels in the area. A panel at the top of the sign displays different text in red flashing. The sign is not in keeping with the area including the protected structures.

4.0 Planning History

- 4.1. **71/379:** On 16th September 1971, permission was granted for a credit union office at the application site.
- 4.2. **90/336:** On 8th August 1990, permission was granted to extend and re-roof offices.
- 4.3. **14/385:** On 1st December 2014, permission was granted for a 20 square metre extension to rear of the credit union premises and ancillary site works including the relocation of an oil tank.
- 4.4. **21 U273:** Alleged unauthorised works to commercial building, alleged unauthorised portacabin and alleged unauthorised signage. A warning letter was issued on 10th November 2021.

5.0 Policy Context

5.1. Development Plan

- 5.1.1. Map 3.2 of the Louth County Development Plan 2021 – 2027 shows the application site within the settlement boundary of Castlebellingham/Kilsaran. The site, together with buildings to its north and south is zoned for community facilities. The objective of this zoning, set out in Section 13.21.20 of the Plan is *“To provide for and protect civic, religious, community, education, health care and social infrastructure”*.
- 5.1.2. Under the heading Urban Design & Public Realm, Policy Objective CAS 23 is *“To protect and enhance the character of the town by requiring that the height, scale, design and materials of any proposed development has regard to the architectural heritage of the town and does not diminish its distinctive sense of place”*.
- 5.1.3. In Section 13.10 of the Plan, it is stated that temporary residential structures such as mobile homes, portacabins and caravans are considered to represent a substandard and haphazard form of accommodation. Permission will generally not be granted for such structures.
- 5.1.4. In Section 13.12.3, within the Development Management Guidelines for Social and Community, it is stated that temporary classrooms will be assessed on a case-by-case basis and will generally be accepted for a period not exceeding five years.
- 5.1.5. In Section 13.13.10, within the Development Management Guidelines for Employment, it is stated that *“The number and location of signs on an individual building and within a business park or industrial estate shall avoid a situation that would result in clutter or the over-proliferation of signage”*.
- 5.1.6. In Section 13.14.11, within the Development Management Guidelines for Retail, it is stated that *“Free standing advertising displays (including digital) will be considered in certain locations such as pedestrian precincts of shopping centres and other areas of retail/commercial activity such as town centres. The location of these advertising displays shall not interfere or impede pedestrian movement or more vulnerable road users, and shall not be a distraction for motorists. Any proposal for a digital display will have regard to the area in which it is to be located and any possible impacts it may have on visual or residential amenities. The height of the structures shall be*

sympathetic to its surroundings and shall not be unduly prominent in the streetscape. The proliferation of this signage shall be avoided".

5.1.7. Table 13.11 of the Plan indicates that at banks and financial institutions one car parking space should be provided for every 30 square metres of floor space.

5.1.8. Table 13.13 of the Plan sets out the minimum visibility standards for new entrances on to streets and roads where the speed limit is in excess of 60 kilometres per hour and the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets is not applicable.

5.2. National Guidance

5.2.1. Table 4.2 of the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets indicates that the standard for forward visibility on bus routes with a design speed of 50 kilometres per hour is 49 metres. Paragraph 4.4.5 indicates that at priority junctions in urban areas visibility should be measured from 2.4 metres back from the continuation of the line of the nearside edge of the main road.

5.3. Natural Heritage Designations

5.3.1. The site is over 2 kilometres from Dundalk Bay Special Area of Conservation, whose qualifying interests include estuaries, mudflats and sandflats, associated vegetation and salt meadows; and from Dundalk Bay Special Protection Area for birds.

5.4. EIA Screening

5.4.1. The development is not one to which Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended, applies. Having regard to its nature, size and location, it is not considered to be sub-threshold development for the purposes of Schedule 7 of the Regulations. Therefore, the requirement for submission of an environmental impact assessment report and the carrying out of an environmental impact assessment may be set aside at a preliminary stage.

6.0 The Appeal

6.1 Grounds of Appeal

6.1.1. The appeal is against the part of the split decision refusing retention permission. The arguments presented may be summarised as follows:

- Kilsaran Connect Credit Union is a small local branch that serves the village and rural community and provides much needed local employment. It depends on advertising to make people aware of the vital financial services it provides.
- The portacabin is required for office space for additional staff. The first floor accommodation that was once a boardroom is now used for storage. There is a lot of file storage associated with a credit union. The Annagasson branch of the Credit Union was amalgamated into the Kilsaran branch which necessitated additional storage and staff. The portacabin has been in place since 2016 and is required for a maximum period of five to ten years. Connect Credit Union plan to construct a more permanent structure/extension within this period.
- The portacabin was located to connect to the existing offices towards the rear of the building so as not to be visually obtrusive. It is hidden behind the boundary walls to the yard. The flat roof is all that is visible from the road.
- The totem sign has very low luminence similar to that from lights in buildings. Its pastille colours reduce its visual impact. A timer ensures it switches on at 8 am and off at 12 midnight. There is a rotating digital script at high level but it does not flash or change colour. Similar totem signs are present on approach to all small towns and villages in Ireland. There was already a back-lit sign in this general location for a many years prior to the totem sign being erected. The sign does not interfere with sightlines at the entrance and the Council's Roads Engineer has accepted this.
- Similar signs were approved by Louth County Council at Dealga Service Station, Carrickmacross Road, Dundalk; Morgan Fuels, Carrickarnon, Ravensdale; and Dundalk Stadium, Old Dublin Road. These illuminated double-sided totem signs are three to four times the size of the applicant's sign and were granted permission within the last few years.
- The sign within the main window is almost 20 metres from the road edge and is not visible on approach from the north. It is not visible from the south until one is at the front of the building. It is not a traffic hazard and is located on the same plane as the scroll signs which have been granted permission.
- The sign on the opposite side of the R132 has been in position for over 40 years. It used to advertise a local engineering firm Padhraic Moneley Limited.

The sign was in place at the time of the 1971 permission for the credit union building and was therefore accepted in principle. The credit union sign has been stuck on to the existing metal backing. It is not illuminated. It is located almost 10 metres from the road edge and mainly addresses the parking area. Adjacent to it is a sign advertising a recycling facility in the car park. The credit union sign was in existence prior to Louth County Council erecting that sign.

- All the signs are set back from the road edge and do not distract road users or pedestrians.

6.2 Planning Authority Response

- The floor space at first floor level extends to 44 square metres. Specifications indicate that this is accommodate additional storage space for the credit union. This is a generous space and represents a significant increase from what was previously available, even when the amalgamation of the two branches is considered. The requirement for the portacabin containing an additional 25 square metres of floor space has not been justified, especially in an electronic era when hard files and correspondence are being phased out. Although the applicant suggests that the portacabin has been in place for over seven years, Google Earth imagery indicates that it was not in place in April 2019.
- The current totem sign is located closer to the road than the previous sign at this general location. A review of planning history does not confirm that this sign had planning permission. The previous sign was smaller and positioned on two stainless steel legs and the current sign is illuminated. The precedent examples provided by the applicant related to signage structures at petrol stations and a racecourse, whereas the application site is located within a small settlement in close proximity to residential properties and protected structures.
- The boundary of the 1971 planning application did not encompass the advertisement some 50 metres to the south west of the credit union and it cannot be assumed that it was acceptable in principle. It is clear that the advertisement was removed and the advertisement associated with the credit union is a new sign.

6.3. Further Response by Appellant

- The Annagasson credit union branch building is in the process of being sold. Hard files and general storage are required because of the nature of credit union financial services. A condition that the portacabin be removed after a period of time would have been acceptable. There was a portacabin on site for three years prior to the current one being erected in October 2019.
- The original sign on the roadway adjacent to the credit union building was in place for over 30 years and was extended on steel posts more than 4 metres high. It is understood that it had planning permission. The totem sign is at a lower level and therefore arguably has less visual impact. There is a facility for a digital scroll on top of the sign but it has never been used. The planning officer has taken a subjective opinion of the sightline issue despite all technical requirements being met. A large totem digital sign outside and in the curtilage of a protected structure at The Forge Filling Station, Castlebellingham has been granted permission under planning reference 04/477.
- The window sign changes subtly every 20 seconds and is apparent only when people are actually turning into the credit union car parking area.
- The original advertisement on the western side of the R132 has not been removed but was simply overlaid by a new sign on a thin sheet of aluminium. The size remains the same.

7.0 Assessment

7.1. Procedural Issues

- 7.1.1. Article 18 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 requires a notice of a planning application published in a newspaper to give a brief (*my emphasis*) description of the nature and extent of the development and, where the application relates to the retention of a structure, the nature of the proposed use of the structure. To my mind, what must be notified is the primary purpose for which the structure is used, as opposed to the manner in which every area of floor space is laid out.
- 7.1.2. A third party submission to the planning authority expressed concern about the failure of the press notice relating to the significant further information to make specific

mention of the retention of the kitchenette/canteen on the first floor of the credit union. However, the notice referred to the first floor storage accommodation and associated roof lights and advised that the information was available for inspection at the planning authority's offices. I am satisfied that the notice met the statutory requirements.

- 7.1.3. The planner's second report confirms that the applicant paid an additional fee in respect of the first floor. I agree that ownership of the land to the rear of the credit union building is not a significant matter, as no works are proposed in this part of the application site.

7.2. Appropriate Assessment Screening

- 7.2.1. Having regard to the nature and scale of the proposed development, the nature of the foreseeable emissions therefrom and the absence of a pathway between the application site and any Natura 2000 site, it is possible to screen out the requirement for the submission of a Natura impact statement and carrying out of an AA at an initial stage.

7.3. Substantive Issues

- 7.3.1. I have inspected the site and considered in detail the documentation on file for this First Party appeal. The focus of the appeal is on the elements that the Council decided to refuse, namely the portacabin; the sign in the front window; the totem sign at the site entrance; and the advertisement on the western side of the A132. Concerns were also expressed about the alterations to existing credit union building and I shall address them first.

7.4. The Alterations to the Credit Union Building

- 7.4.1. It was suggested that the layout of the upper floor of the credit union building may not comply with the Building Regulations. However the submitted drawings are for planning purposes and not for building control and must be judged in a planning context. I see nothing objectionable in the layout as presented.
- 7.4.2. The credit union building has a floor space of 183.5 square metres and the portacabin has a floor area of 28 square metres. I am satisfied that there is room for at least seven cars to the front and side of the building, in accordance with the relevant parking standard, without having to reverse out.

7.5. The Portacabin

- 7.5.1. It is my understanding that a credit union is a self-help co-operative whose members pool their savings to provide each other with credit at a low interest rate. It is a not-for-profit community facility. The land on which the original building stands and the adjoining area where the portacabin has been placed are zoned for community facilities. The provision of additional accommodation for the credit union is consistent with the objective set out in Section 13.21.20 of the Louth County Development Plan to provide for and protect community and other social infrastructure.
- 7.5.2. It seems to me that the planning authority misdirected itself when it applied a test of demonstrable need in its second reason for refusal. I find no such test in the Development Plan. The zoning provides sufficient justification for the principle of providing additional accommodation for the credit union but the physical form of the development requires careful attention.
- 7.5.3. While the Plan has no specific policy on portacabins used to provide additional accommodation for community facilities, it contains a general presumption against portacabins used for residential purposes. The phrase “substandard and haphazard form of accommodation”, which appears in the second reason for refusal, is drawn from the passage on temporary residential structures. By contrast, the Plan takes a case-by-case approach to temporary classrooms and contemplates five-year permissions. I do not consider that either of these different policies should be read across and applied directly to the current planning application for a different land use.
- 7.5.4. It seems to me that the appropriate test in this instance is that set out in Policy Objective CAS 23, to protect and enhance the character of the town (Castlebellingham/Kilsaran) by requiring that the height, scale, design and materials of the development have regard to its architectural heritage and do not diminish its distinctive sense of place.
- 7.5.5. The external walls of the portacabin consist of coated metal panels. It is 2.846 metres in height and is set well back behind the metal fence that surrounds the yard area. Its flat roof has little presence in the street scene. The impact of the portacabin on the town’s character, architectural heritage and sense of place is negligible. In my opinion, given the inherent impermanence of the structure, a temporary permission for a period of five years would not materially contravene Policy Objective CAS 23.

7.6. The Sign in the Front Window and the Totem Sign at the Site Entrance

- 7.6.1. While the Development Plan has no specific policies on signs and advertising displays associated with community facilities, the avoidance of clutter and over-provision of signage, distraction of motorists and adverse impacts on visual and residential amenity are all relevant matters for consideration in this appeal.
- 7.6.2. I carried out my site inspection at dusk. The digital sign in the front window of the credit union building is unduly bright and changes at brief intervals. It reflects in the front window of the dwelling opposite and is detrimental to the residential amenity not only of that property but also of its neighbours. It has a jarring appearance when seen from the site frontage and the public footpath opposite. The window sign, when added to the signs higher up on the front elevation of the building, creates an unacceptable clutter of signage. For these reasons, the refusal of planning permission is justified.
- 7.6.3. Regardless of the location and nature of previous signage at the site, it is the current signs which are the subject of the application for retention permission that must be assessed. Rotating digital script was not being displayed in the dark area at the top of the totem sign at the time of my site visit, although the Council's planning report contains photographs showing red lettering. The sign is large, bright and unduly dominant in the street scene, which includes protected structures. It is detrimental to the residential amenity of the properties opposite and adds further to the proliferation of signage at the site.
- 7.6.4. The technical requirement for sight splays of 2.4 metres by 49 metres is met but the totem sign is nonetheless a distraction to drivers approaching the site from the north and constitutes a traffic hazard.
- 7.6.5. Totem signs are an expected feature of petrol stations. The racecourse sign, which I passed on the day of my visit to Kilsaran, is in keeping with the local importance of the sporting venue. The approval of these signs does not justify a totem sign in the more intimate context of the application site. A grant of permission for the applicant's sign would create an undesirable precedent for totem signs in other inappropriate locations.

7.7. The Advertisement on the Western Side of the R132

- 7.7.1. The planning authority does not dispute that a sign on the western side of the R132 has been in position for over 40 years. The applicant has overlaid the sign with a non-illuminated advertisement publicising its own services. In my judgement the sign is

visually inoffensive. It is not read in conjunction with the signage on and adjacent to the credit union building and does not create visual clutter. It is difficult to reconcile the refusal of planning permission for the applicant's sign with the existence of the Council's own sign a few metres away.

8.0 Recommendation

- 8.1. I recommend that retention permission be granted for the alterations to the upper floor area of the credit union building including the insertion of roof lights; for the use of the former garden area as an enclosed yard with boundary walls; for the portacabin; for the two scroll signs on the credit union building; and for the advertising sign on the western side of the R132, subject to the conditions set out below.
- 8.2. I recommend that retention permission be refused for the digital advertising sign in the front window; and for the totem sign.

9.0 Reasons and Considerations

- 9.1. Having regard to the fact that the application site is included within the settlement boundary of Castlebellingham/Kilsaran and zoned for community facilities, it is considered that, subject to compliance with the conditions set out below, the retention of the alterations to the upper floor area of the credit union building, the use of the former garden area as an enclosed yard with boundary walls, the retention of the portacabin on a temporary basis, the scroll signs on the credit union building and the advertising sign on the western side of the R132 would not have a materially adverse impact on the town's character, architectural heritage or sense of place. These elements of the development would therefore be in accordance with the provisions of the Louth County Development Plan 2021 – 2027 and with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.
- 9.2. It is considered that the digital advertising sign in the front window of the credit union building and the totem sign at the site entrance by reason of their illumination adversely impact on the visual amenity of the area and the residential amenity of the property opposite. It is also considered that the totem sign by reason of its location constitutes a traffic hazard. These advertisements result in an overall proliferation of signage displays at the application site. A grant of retention permission for either

advertisement would set an undesirable precedent for similar signage and would be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

10.0 Conditions

1.	<p>This retention permission relates only to (i) the alterations to the upper floor area of the credit union building including the insertion of roof lights; (ii) the use of the former garden area to use as an enclosed yard with boundary walls; (iii) the portacabin extension to credit union building; (iv) the two scroll signs on the credit union building; and (v) the advertising sign on the western side of the R132. For the avoidance of doubt, the digital advertising sign in the front window of the credit union building and the totem sign at the entrance to the credit union site are not permitted.</p> <p>Reason: To define the permission.</p>
2.	<p>The development hereby approved shall be retained in accordance with the plans and particulars lodged with the application, as amended by the further plans and particulars submitted to the planning authority on 15th March 2023, and as further amended by the plans and particulars received by An Bord Pleanála on 3rd May 2023.</p> <p>Reason: In the interest of clarity.</p>
3.	<p>The former garden area shall be used as an open yard and not for any other purpose.</p> <p>Reason: To limit the scope of the use to that for which the application was made.</p>
4.	<p>The permission for the portacabin is for a temporary period of five years from the date of this grant of permission, at which time the structure shall be removed from the site, unless a new grant of planning permission has first been made for the retention of the structure.</p> <p>Reason: To permit the planning authority to reassess the situation in light of the circumstances prevailing at that time.</p>

5.	<p>The developer shall pay to the planning authority a financial contribution in respect of public infrastructure and facilities benefiting development in the area of the planning authority that is provided or intended to be provided by or on behalf of the authority in accordance with the terms of the Development Contribution Scheme made under section 48 of the Planning and Development Act 2000. The contribution shall be paid in full within six months from the date of this grant of permission. Details of the application of the terms of the Scheme shall be agreed between the planning authority and the developer or, in default of such agreement, the matter shall be referred to the Board to determine the proper application of the terms of the Scheme.</p> <p>Reason: It is a requirement of the Planning and Development Act 2000 that a condition requiring a contribution in accordance with the Development Contribution Scheme made under section 48 of the Act be applied to the permission.</p>
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I confirm that this report represents my professional planning assessment, judgement and opinion on the matter assigned to me and that no person has influenced or sought to influence, directly or indirectly, the exercise of my professional judgement in an improper or inappropriate way.



TREVOR A RUE

Planning Inspector

14th March 2024