



Planning and Parish Councils

The Role of a Parish Council in Planning Matters

The role of Beetham Parish Council (“the Council”) in planning procedures is to represent local views and should: -

- Provide local knowledge.
- Raise areas of concern.
- Inform, debate, and add value to the process.
- If required, contact and involve District Councillors.

The Council is a statutory consultee in the planning process and must be informed of all planning applications, and any amendments to those applications, within the parish by Westmorland and Furness Council.

The Council can only comment on these planning applications in the same way as any other member of the public, however, any comments by the Council must be agreed at a public council meeting. Members of the public attending the meeting can comment, speak in support of or object to any application during the “Public Participation” segment of the Council meeting. Any interventions from the public are subject to the discretion of the Chair. However, members of the public may be asked to provide clarity on details of the application during the Council’s deliberations.

Comments (Support, Object or Neutral) agreed in the council meeting are submitted online by the Parish Clerk to Westmorland and Furness Council.

Prior to the Council meeting, Councillors will have carefully studied the plans, forms and details submitted with the application. Councillors will know and bear in mind, that the local planning authority will almost certainly be bound by the advice of the statutory bodies.

The Council is only a consultee and only counts as one opinion. Without advice from residents of the Parish, the members of the Council may have and give their own opinions. The Council can and will seek the views of residents of the Parish, particularly in controversial cases, and will reflect such local feeling during the deliberation process.

Should there be widespread objection, or support for a proposal, the Council, who as a consultee only counts as one opinion, will urge members of the public to send their own individual responses direct to the planning authority.

The Parish Council comments in response to a planning application can only be based on planning matters.

Whilst the local planning authority must consider the representations of the Council, that does not mean that any application will be decided in accordance with the views of the Council. In reaching a decision, the local planning authority is required to weigh up all the issues associated with an application. Comments made by the Council may be deemed not to have sufficient weight to enable the application to be determined in line with the wishes of the Parish. It is important to recognise that representations from Parish Councils are not binding on the Local Planning Authority – far from it!



Objections should be clear, concise, relevant, and accurate to stand a chance of being read and accepted by the Planning Officer.

Any comments or objections made should be supported by a genuine material planning consideration or considerations. They must be relevant to the proposed development/application.

Material Planning Considerations include: -

Layout, density, risk of flooding or pollution, overlooking and loss of privacy, overshadowing and loss light (daylight/sunlight), access and traffic generation (highway safety), local economy, design, appearance and materials, effects on street, specially designated area or building (e.g. conservation areas, listed buildings, ancient monuments, etc.), adequacy of parking, noise and smell, landscape, contamination, loss of trees, etc. , cumulative impact, past planning history or appeal decisions of the site.

The following are **NOT** considered to be material considerations: -

History of applicant, loss of view, commercial competition, change from previous scheme, impact on property value, restrictive covenants, right of access, noise and disturbance from construction work, land and boundary disputes, land ownership, damage to property, private rights of way, deeds and covenants, private issues between neighbours and finally and quite important, lots of objectors.

If the Council response is ‘No Objection’, it follows that the Council is satisfied that everything above has been carefully considered and applied to the application and that the Council has found no reason to object. However, if needed, the Council may make recommendations for locally beneficial planning conditions to be added to the application.

Beetham Parish Council Processes

The Councillors representing each ward receive weekly reports from Westmorland and Furness Council showing applications and decisions made. These reports are also included on meeting agendas. The Council will decide what response to make – except in the rare circumstances set out below – at the formal Council meeting.

NO MEETING BEFORE THE STATUTORY DATE In this case, power is delegated to the clerk to respond to WFC on behalf of the Council. Prior to making the response, the Clerk must make reasonable efforts to seek the views of all Councillors, and he/she must devise a response that is acceptable to all of them

AGENDA ALREADY PUBLISHED In this case; the Council’s response will be decided by Councillors at the meeting. The agenda for every meeting will list all applications about which we have been notified prior to its publication but will also clearly state that any urgent applications that are received after its publication, but prior to the meeting, will also be considered at the meeting. The Council will make all reasonable efforts to notify the public of any applications that will be considered at the meeting but that are not listed on the agenda.

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