

Torver Parish Council

Minutes and Actions of Torver Parish Council

Extraordinary Meeting held at Torver Schoolroom, Torver,

On Thursday 30th January 2025 at 7.30pm

Present:

Chair: Cllr P Worth

Deputy Chair: Cllr C Bradley

Councillors: Cllr M Feather, Cllr V Kay

Clerk: C Sargeant

Guest: D Cook, Head of the Raymond Priestley Centre

Members of the public: 10 (C Barr, K Chadwick, S Childs, A Hadwin, E Hadwin, D Harris, S Harris, L Higgins, A Lancaster, M Mayvers.)

Minute Number		Action By
018/25	Public participation: 1. Westmorland and Furness Cllr S Pender: There was no report from Cllr Pender.	
019/25	Apologies: No apologies - all councillors present.	
020/25	Minutes of the Meeting on 9th January 2025: Resolved: The Minutes of the Meeting held on 9 th January 2025 were approved as a true record and signed by the Chair P Worth and D. Chair C Bradley.	
021/25	Requests for Dispensation: None declared.	
022/25	Declaration of interests in respect of Agenda items: None declared.	
023/25	Planning: 1. Application 7/2024/5732 The Priestley Centre, Hoathwaite, Torver, Cumbria, LA21 8AX - Construction of 6no. self-contained glamping pods and retention of existing yurt adjacent to the Raymond Priestley Centre. D Cook, Head of the Priestley Centre, was present to provide a background to the Priestly Centre's wish to expand its capacity and to respond to questions from members of the public. D. Cook explained that for many years the Centre had been a little-known resource at Birmingham University, but there has been a decision to encourage course managers to make greater use of the facility. This has been very successful and	

	many more students who are undertaking courses which might benefit from facilities and opportunities at the Centre are visiting. In addition, the university is keen to expand its outreach program to schools in the surrounding area and to provide much enhanced access for wheelchair users by having two out of the six proposed pods suitable for disabled visitors. Cash constraints would mean that they would probably start the development by installing the disabled pods as a first step. Opinions expressed by members of the public at the meeting were that: ▪ The increase in accommodation and users will have to rely on a sewage system that may need to be modernised to cope with the increase of human waste to protect the lake and its shore. (LH) ▪ Apparently no approach has been made to the National Trust to improve the accessibility to the Centre: a single-track road, also serving as a footpath, will now have to cope with extra traffic to the Centre as well as that to the campsite and caravan park. (AL, SC) ▪ Highways has not responded to the pressures that are put on the back lane (from Prickett Corner to the Old Vicarage) and no safeguard has been implemented to prevent it being used, inappropriately, as a short cut to the Centre (campsite and caravan park). (AL) ▪ Little effort has been made to benefit Torver by using the facilities in the village, because the Centre imports its food and directs its visitors to the amenities in Coniston. (CBa) ▪ There is no strategy to ease the problems of litter. (SC, VK) ▪ There is no safeguard on the development and the future of the site, which is the Centre, to prevent it being sold to a commercial enterprise that would be anathema to the Local Plan. (CBa) Councillors acknowledged the admirable intention of the Centre to broaden its use for students, staff, alumni, and related families, in a controlled and measured way. (CBr, MF) Councillors noted that Birmingham University had submitted a request for pre-application advice to the Lake District National Park Authority (LDNPA) in May 2024. This consultation confirmed that the principle of a "pod village" located immediately to the rear of the existing centre was acceptable to the LDNPA, subject to the design and scale of the development. Also that the Planning Statement supporting the application confirmed that the application met the criteria set out in the LDNPA's Local Plan. In view of the above, three of the four councillors were persuaded that the benefits of the proposal outweighed the negative aspects of the development, and that the design and siting of the pods behind the existing building assisted in screening the view of the pods from the lake. The outreach programme being developed by the Centre to engage with local schools, providing education, recreational and residential experiences is to be commended. (CBr, MF)	
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	The parish council was very keen to make sure that all members of the public were aware that they have the right to communicate either their concerns or their support for the proposal, directly to the LDNPA and were very actively encouraged to do so. (CBr, MF) After a lengthy debate it was resolved (3 to 1) that the parish council was not minded to object to the application, but it acknowledged that a number of concerns had been expressed by members of the public at the meeting which should be brought to the attention of the LDNPA.	
024/25	2. Application 7/2024/5702 at Wilson Arms, Torver, Coniston, LA21 8BB - 4 no. timber Shepherd's Huts for holiday accommodation - variation of conditions 2, 3, 6 & 8 on planning permission. After a brief debate it was resolved, unanimously, that the Council would support the application. Councillors acknowledged the effort of the applicant to meet the specific safeguards imposed by the Park Authority.	
025/25	Village Green: Mr Lancaster submitted a sheet of information.	
026/25	Councillor Matters: It was resolved to close the meeting because of the low temperature and to defer all other business to the next meeting.	
027/25	Date of Next Meeting: The date of the next meeting will be held on Thursday 6th March 2025 at 7.30pm in the Schoolroom.	
028/25	Closure: The Chair closed the meeting at 9.05pm.	

Signed

Date

Signed

Date