



Report of	Meeting	Date
Interim Deputy Chief Executive (Chorley)	Central Lancashire Strategic Planning Joint Advisory Committee	4 <sup>th</sup> December 2023

## Local Plan Update

Is this report confidential?	<b>No</b>
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Is this decision key?	<b>No</b>
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### Purpose of the Report

1. To provide an update on progress made to prepare a new Central Lancashire Local Plan.

### Recommendations

2. To note the contents of the report

### Reasons for recommendations

4. Not applicable

### Other options considered and rejected.

5. Not applicable

### Local Plan Programme

6. Officers are currently engaging with all key consultants, stakeholders and partners who are involved in the Central Lancashire Local Plan (CLLP) preparation, to develop a robust programme for the remainder of the process. Several pieces of evidence and policy preparation are intrinsically linked and therefore its essential that the project plan reflects these and that there is a transparency and accountability with critical deadlines.
7. The three Councils are intending to submit the Local Plan to the Secretary of State by the deadline 30th June 2025 and therefore officers are building a programme around that timeframe, taking account of the required resources and plan making capacity.

## **Evidence Base: Employment Land**

8. BE Group have been commissioned to prepare an update to the Central Lancashire Employment Land Study with this latest work looking specifically at land supply in 2023.
9. The study looked at specific markets including industry, warehousing and offices and estimates the employment land requirement resulting specifically from projected population growth in Central Lancashire (Resident Workforce Forecast). A further model, Resident Workforce has been produced which indicates the additional employment land need from the population growth. This represents the employment land requirement specifically from these extra jobs and is not a forecast of OAN for the whole Central Lancashire economy.
10. A draft report has been provided to officers for review, which includes the main report, an executive summary, list of consultees and site scoring results from the sites reviewed as assessed as part of this work. Several research methods were used, including site visits and telephone/e-meeting interviews with property market stakeholders such as developers, investors, and their agents.
11. The status and likely deliverability of potential future employment sites, put forward for inclusion in the CLLP, were reviewed in detail, compared to forecast objectively assessed need (OAN) and changes in local and national property markets since 2021. The OAN has been compared to the latest population projections for Central Lancashire, to understand how economic growth links to population change in the sub-region and to recorded employment land losses since 2010 and conclusions proposed.
12. The study reviewed over fifty sites which have been identified for employment and mixed uses in Call for Sites/SHELAA and, as of summer 2023, have been put forward as site suggestions in the CLLP as options which could meet the identified OAN of each Local Authority. All of the sites were reviewed in terms of both their qualitative attractiveness to the market and their deliverability, including consideration of some of the practical barriers they may face to development. Additionally, each site was graded using a standard scoring system that consisted of ten objective measures, which further illustrate the site's market desirability and deliverability. The maximum score possible was one hundred, with the ten individual measures each scored out of ten.
13. The full findings of the study will be reviewed by the three home teams and a paper presented to the next JAC with the details and implications for land supply and site proposals.

## **Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Level 1 Update and Level 2**

14. The SFRA Level 1 was produced by JBA in February 2021. This work assessed all the sites received up to that date in relation to flood risk requirements at that time. Following completion of that work, additional guidance was released by government which required further assessment of those sites already reviewed. In addition, further sites were received following call for sites four, and these require review under this process.
15. The update to this work has now been commissioned to JBA. Preston City Council are leading on this on behalf of the partnership. A project inception meeting has taken place and work has commenced in collating data from the councils, the Environment Agency, United Utilities and LCC as the Lead Local Flood Authority.
16. The key milestones for the Level 1 SFRA work are listed below. These timeframes are based on receipt of information by the councils and key partners. Work on the Level 2

would commence following completion of this work and a detailed programme for this work will be provided once we agree on any sites this will apply too.

17. The Level 1 findings will identify the potential flood risk implications for each site suggestion and the need for more detailed flood risk work via a Level 2 assessment, as necessary.

- Draft Level 1 SFRA site assessment and recommendations Feb 2024
- Draft Level 1 SFRA Report March 2024
- Final Report May 2024

### **Policy Preparation**

18. A structure document of the new Central Lancashire Local Plan is now under preparation. There are key policy areas under development which are explored in more detail below:

### **Design**

19. NPPF requires that the Local Plan sets out a clear design vision and expectations to provide certainty about acceptable design principles. Further, policies should be prepared which reflect local aspirations and characteristics and design guides or codes should be prepared which are consistent with the National Design Guide and National Model Design Code. Therefore, to address this in the new CLLP, a piece of work is being undertaken led by Preston Officers, to identify key priorities and principles of a local plan design framework/ including a design vision.

20. This would provide the foundation of the Central Lancashire Design Code policy and would be consulted on at the next stage of consultation. The long-term plan would be to progress the Local Plan based on this work and with a view that a Supplementary Plan of more detailed design codes would follow post adoption.

### **Open Land Policies**

21. A comprehensive piece of evidence called the Open Land Study was undertaken by Land Use Consultants (LUC) and this looked at existing policies (over and above national policy constraining development in the Green Belt) for open land including areas of other open countryside (Chorley Local Plan), protected open land (Preston Local Plan) development in the open countryside (South Ribble Local Plan) and Area of Separation policies.

22. LUC made a series of policy recommendations for future policy in the new CLLP, including a more robust Spatial Strategy policy and consolidation and refinement of the Council's area of separation policies. LUC are commissioned to support the preparation of these policies, taking account of input from the three Councils. As these policies will restrict development in certain locations and inform the Spatial Hierarchy (and therefore the land supply for housing and employment), this is a critical piece of work to be completed in the short term. Given it is envisaged to impact most significantly on Preston land supply, Preston colleagues will be leading on this work.

### **Spatial Strategy and Hierarchy for Growth**

23. A key piece of work will be the finalisation of the Spatial Strategy for the new Local Plan. The three councils will need to agree the strategic locations for growth for housing and employment, taking account of the emerging land supply for housing and employment. This is intrinsically linked to the open land policies referred to above.

## **Supplementary Development Plans (SPDs)**

24. The three Councils will need to decide which, if any, of the many existing SPDs which cover topics including affordable housing, playing pitch and open space assessment, householder design guide, hot food takeaways, rural areas, employment and so forth, will be retained. Workshops with Development Management officers from each Authority have been undertaken to review the value and efficacy of these. The recommendations from these workshops will be used to inform policy writing for the new Local Plan.
25. Proposed changes from the National Government state that SPDs will no longer exist under the new plan-making regime as they do today. The intention of these workshops was to absorb as many elements of the SPDs into the new Local Plan as possible, ensuring the new policies are sufficient to support decision making. Feedback from the workshops have been made into a list of recommendations for policy writers. Given the nature of the feedback, many of the existing SPDs can be set aside upon adoption of the new Local Plan.

## **Site Selection**

26. A verbal update will be provided at the meeting.

## **Infrastructure**

27. We have commenced the work on the Infrastructure Development Plan (IDP). This work has been commissioned to Fore consulting and they are compiling a baseline of infrastructure that is already identified across the three boroughs. Each council will have an Infrastructure Funding Statement (IFS) which was previously the CIL Regulation 123 list.

## **Strategic Transport Assessment**

28. A series of productive discussions have taken place with LCC and Jacobs colleagues with regards the proposed methodology and programme for the Strategic Transport Assessment which is scheduled to commence before the end of November and will be interlinked with key site selection milestones not least SFRA Level 1 and Level 2.

## **Climate change and air quality**

29. The work noted in this report has an overall neutral impact on the Councils Carbon emissions and the wider Climate Emergency and sustainability targets of the Council.

## **Equality and diversity**

30. There are no impacts at this stage and the Local Plan itself is subject to a comprehensive impact assessment and EIA which must be published alongside the draft plan when submitted to the Planning Inspectorate

## **Risk**

31. There is a risk register in place for the preparation of the Local Plan, the main risks are associated with the programme and the absolute deadlines imposed by the Government of submission by 30th June 2025 and adoption by 31st December 2026.

### **Background documents**

32. There are no background papers to this report.

### **Appendices**

33. There are no appendices.

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