

Central Lancashire Local Plan Local Development Scheme



Jan 2024 – Dec 2026



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1. Introduction

- 1.1 Local Plans, prepared by a Local Planning authority in consultation with its community, set out a vision and a framework for the future development of an area. Once in place, Local Plans become part of the statutory development plan. The statutory development plan for the area is the starting point for determining Local Planning applications. Every Local Planning authority in England must prepare a Local Plan.
- 1.2 The three Central Lancashire authorities of Preston City Council, South Ribble Borough Council and Chorley Council are working together to produce a single Central Lancashire Local Plan. This will form part of the statutory Development Plan for each district alongside other documents such as Neighbourhood Plans. It will replace the Central Lancashire Core Strategy 2012 and the three district Local Plans adopted in 2015. There will be written planning policies and proposals maps prepared as part of this work.
- 1.3 The purpose of the Local Development Scheme (LDS) is to provide information and clarity, as it sets out the anticipated timeline to produce the Central Lancashire Local Plan. Under planning regulations, the Councils are required to regularly update this document and post it on their respective websites.
- 1.4 This document describes the updated programme for the review of the Local Plan which includes a comprehensive review of the existing development plan policies, refreshing the required evidence base, inviting a call for sites and producing a draft pre-submission Local Plan for consultation ahead of an examination in public for adoption.
- 1.5 Work on delivering the Local Plan has progressed well. Several consultations have been conducted, including Integrated Assessment Scoping from August to September 2019, Issues and Options from 18th November 2019 until 14th February 2020 and Preferred Options from 19th December 2022 until 26th February 2023.

2. Purpose of the Document

- 2.1 This document covers the period between January 2024 and December 2026. It supersedes the previous LDS that covers the period between September 2022 and March 2025.
- 2.2 Since the previous LDS was adopted, there have been significant changes to national planning legislation. The three Central Lancashire Authorities remain absolutely committed to the delivery of the new Local Plan under the existing statutory planning regime. This updated LDS outlines how the Local Plan will meet the deadline of submission by 30th June 2025 and adoption by 31st December 2026.
- 2.3 The previous LDS outlined that Regulation 18 Consultation would take place in two parts; this is no longer the case. To meet strict submission deadlines there will not be a Preferred Options Part Two consultation. There will however be further consultation with the opportunity for the submission of representations at the Regulation 19 Publication Stage.
- 2.4 This LDS provides a project plan for preparing a new Local Plan for Central Lancashire. Minerals and Waste matters are the responsibility of Lancashire County Council, and so the preparation of the relevant Development Plan Documents related to those matters do not form part of this LDS.
- 2.5 The Local Development Scheme includes the following information:
 - Details of the high-level programme for the undertaking of a review of the existing statutory development plan including the Central Lancashire Core Strategy, Chorley Local Plan, South Ribble Local Plan and Preston Local Plan.
 - Details of the evidence currently under commission and to be commissioned in order to inform the preparation of the new Local Plan.
 - Information about the resources available, within Central Lancashire, for preparing the Local Plan.
 - The risks associated with situations that might arise that could adversely impact on the achievement of the work programme set out in the LDS and how these risks are to be managed.

3. Background

- 3.1 This section presents information on the documents which make up the current Development Plan for the Central Lancashire Authorities.

Central Lancashire Core Strategy

- 3.2 The Central Lancashire Core Strategy adopted in July 2012, is the strategic document of the plan and covers all three Central Lancashire authority areas – Preston City, South Ribble and Chorley. It sets the overall strategic vision for the area, including issues such as setting housing requirements, identifying strategic locations for development and principles for infrastructure.

District Local Plans

- 3.3 Each Central Lancashire authority produced a separate Local Plan, all adopted in July 2015. The Local Plans set out development management policies, and allocate or protect land for specific uses, such as housing, employment or greenspace. Preston also has a City Centre Plan which was adopted in 2016.

Neighbourhood Plans

- 3.4 The Penwortham Town Neighbourhood Plan, Inner East Preston Neighbourhood Plan, the Broughton in Amounderness Neighbourhood Plan and Barton Neighbourhood Plan prepared by the local neighbourhood forums with the support of the local councils, form part of the development plan. The Penwortham Town Neighbourhood Plan was made in March 2017, Inner East Neighbourhood plan was made in April 2015, the Broughton in Amounderness Neighbourhood Plan was made in October 2018 and Barton Neighbourhood Plan was made in December 2023.

Supplementary Planning Documents

- 3.5 Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) offer Local Planning authorities the opportunity to add guidance on specific policy areas. They are not part of the Development Plan. The purpose of SPDs is to provide guidance on the interpretation and implementation of relevant planning policies, particularly those in the Central Lancashire Core Strategy. They are a material consideration in making planning decisions. The following Central Lancashire SPDs have been adopted:

Affordable Housing – Oct 2012

Controlling Re-Use of Employment Premises – Oct 2012

Rural Development – Oct 2012

Design Guide – Oct 2012

Access to Healthy Food¹ – Oct 2012
Open Space, Sport and Recreation – Sept 2013
Biodiversity and Nature Conservation SPD – July 2015
Employment Skills SPD – Sept 2017

Statement of Community Involvement

3.6 Each Central Lancashire Council has an adopted Statement of Community Involvement (SCI). The SCI sets out who the Council will consult on various aspects of planning, and what methods the Council will use. The current version for each Council is listed below.

- Chorley Council's Statement of Community Involvement, adopted in April 2019, which is currently being updated.
- South Ribble Borough Council's Statement of Community Involvement, adopted in December 2013, an updated version is currently under consultation.
- Preston City Councils' Statement of Community Involvement, adopted in December 2018.

¹ The Access to Healthy Food SPD was adopted in October 2012, however, after consideration at the Chorley and South Ribble Local Plan Examinations, the SPD and proposed Local Plan policy with their references to a 400m exclusion zones was not considered robust and the SPD has been suspended (in Chorley and South Ribble) pending a review which will inform whether it is revised or withdrawn and reviewed alongside the requirements of the new Local Plan

4. Resources

- 4.1 The three Central Lancashire Councils are working as a partnership to undertake a review of the Local Plan and are jointly resourcing dedicated officers to contribute to the work. The following in-house resources have been established which are hosted by Chorley Council on behalf of the three Councils:
- 1 x Planning Policy Officer
 - 1 x Local Plan Project Manager (to be appointed)
- 4.2 This dedicated plan making capacity is complemented by the substantive Planning Policy Officer and Manager posts at each respective council as required and also by external consultancy support as and when necessary.
- 4.3 In addition, joint working between the Central Lancashire teams is coordinated through a Central Lancashire officer working group. There is also a Joint Advisory Committee made up of Members from the three Central Lancashire Councils and Lancashire County Council.
- 4.4 The Planning Policy teams can draw on additional resources from other teams within each council for expertise on areas such as:
- Housing
 - Neighbourhood Management
 - Environmental Health
 - Climate Change
 - Economic Development
 - Property Services
 - Open Space Strategy
 - Corporate Policy
- 4.5 Lancashire County Council is supporting Local Plan preparation largely through their following roles:
- Transport and highways
 - Strategic Flood Risk
 - Minerals and waste
 - Cross-boundary issues
 - Health
 - Education

4.6 Consultants are engaged on specific projects where there is a lack of expertise or capacity in-house, for example the production of evidence base studies such as the Housing Needs Study, Employment Land Study and Integrated Assessment.

5. Programme for review of the Central Lancashire Local Plan

- 5.1 A timetable for the Preparation of the remaining stages of the Local Plan is shown below in Figure 1. This shows the key dates for preparation of the Local Plan and consultation with stakeholders, with Table 1 providing more detail in support of this.

FIGURE 1: KEY STAGES OF THE CENTRAL LANCASHIRE LOCAL PLAN

| Central Lancashire Local Development Scheme Timetable (2024 - 2026) | | | 2024 | | | | | | 2025 | | | | | | 2026 | | | | | | |
|--|--------------|------------|------|-----|-----|-----|------|-----|------|-----|-----|-----|------|-----|------|-----|-----|-----|------|-----|--|
| Year | | | Jan | Mar | May | Jul | Sept | Nov | Jan | Mar | May | Jul | Sept | Nov | Jan | Mar | May | Jul | Sept | Nov | |
| Month | Start | End | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Preparation of Pre-Submission Version of Local Plan | Mar-23 | Jan-25 | █ | █ | █ | █ | █ | █ | █ | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Regulation 19 Consultation | Feb-25 | Mar-25 | | | | | | | █ | █ | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Submission Stage (Regulation 22) | | Jun-25 | | | | | | | | | █ | | | | | | | | | | |
| Examination in Public | Dec-25 | Jun-26 | | | | | | | | | | | | █ | █ | █ | █ | | | | |
| Adoption | Jul-26 | Dec-26 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | █ | █ | █ | |

TABLE 1: DETAIL OF KEY STAGES OF THE LOCAL PLAN

| Key Stage | Description | Timescale |
|--|---|---|
| <p>Issues and Options (Regulation 18- statutory Consultation)</p> | <p>Consultation process involving engagement of all stakeholders, statutory (UU, EA, HE etc.) and non-statutory including public bodies, members of the public, developers etc.</p> <p>This included publication of the initial tranche of sites suggested for development.</p> | <p><u>Consultation Period</u> November 2019 to February 2020</p> <p>Completed</p> |
| <p>Preferred Options Part One Consultation (Regulation 18)</p> | <p>Following Issues and Options Consultation, further detailed consideration of the sites was undertaken with potential site allocations for housing and employment identified, along with a number of policy directions, taking into account Issues and Options consultation responses and a review of the existing policies. Updates to the evidence base were also prepared as necessary.</p> <p>This included a 'Preferred Options Part One' draft Local Plan being published for consultation.</p> | <p><u>Preparation Period</u> March 2020 to December 2022</p> <p><u>Consultation Period</u> December 2022 to February 2023</p> <p>Completed</p> |
| <p>Publication of Pre-Submission Version of Local Plan and Consultation (Regulation 19)</p> | <p>Following the Preferred Options Consultation, further detailed strategic and development management policies will be formulated based on the responses from the Preferred Options Part One Consultation. Updates to the evidence base will also be prepared as necessary.</p> <p>This will include a 'Pre-Submission' Version draft Local Plan being published for consultation.</p> | <p><u>Preparation Period</u> March 2023 to January 2025</p> <p><u>Consultation Period</u> February 2025 until March 2025</p> <p>Under Progress</p> |
| <p>Submission Stage (Regulation 22)</p> | <p>Collation of Representations to the Publication Draft Local Plan and submission to the Planning Inspectorate ahead of the examination in public.</p> | <p>By 30th June 2025</p> |

| Key Stage | Description | Timescale |
|-----------------------|---|---|
| Examination in Public | The Examination stage will last between 6-12 months from submission of the plan. The exact time will depend on the Matters in Questions (MIQ's) raised by the appointed Inspector and the timing of the hearing sessions themselves. In addition, further consultation may be required for any major modifications deemed necessary following the hearing sessions. | Expected in late 2025 until Summer/early Autumn 2026 |
| Adoption | This will follow the examination in public. The length of time depends on the process for agreeing the findings of the Inspectors Report and arranging for the plan to go through three Full Council processes for adoption, with the final Full Council sessions forming the adoption date for all three councils. | Expected no later than 31 st December 2026 |

6. Evidence base

6.1 The preparation of a new Local Plan requires an extensive evidence base covering a wide range of topics. This section provides details of the evidence work we have undertaken to date, as well as information of work we are currently/planning to undertake to inform the development of the Plan. Table 2 lists all the relevant Local Plan evidence documents that reflects the needs of the Local Plan and work also being undertaken at the County level which is relevant to this Plan.

TABLE 2 LIST OF CENTRAL LANCASHIRE LOCAL PLAN EVIDENCE DOCUMENTS (AS AT JANUARY 2024)

| Evidence Documents | Date of Publication |
|---|----------------------------|
| (A) Housing | |
| Central Lancashire Strategic Housing Market Assessment | September 2017 |
| Preston Student Accommodation Demand and Supply Study | August 2019 |
| South Ribble Local Housing Needs and Demand Study | January 2020 |
| Chorley Housing Need and Demand Assessment 2022 | August 2022 |
| Central Lancashire Housing Study | September 2022 |
| Central Lancashire Housing Density Study | October 2022 |
| Preston Housing Need and Demand Assessment 2022 | December 2022 |
| (B) Economy | |
| South Ribble Retail and Leisure Study | September 2017 |
| Chorley Retail and Leisure Study | February 2019 |
| Preston Retail and Leisure Study | April 2019 |
| Employment Land Study Update | July 2022 |
| (C) Infrastructure and Transport | |
| Preston City Transport Plan | June 2019 |
| Central and West Lancashire Rail Options | August 2020 |
| Strategic Transport Assessment (Stage 1) | In Progress |
| Infrastructure Delivery Plan | In Progress |
| (D) Open Space and Green Belt | |
| Central Lancashire Playing Pitch Strategy Assessment Report | September 2018 |
| Central Lancashire Strategy & Action Plan | December 2018 |
| Chorley Council Open Space Study Standards Paper | February 2019 |
| Central Lancashire Open Space Assessment Report | February 2019 |
| Central Lancashire Playing Pitch Strategy and Action Plan | January 2022 |
| Open Land Designations Study Landscape Assessment | October 2022 |
| Green Belt Designations Study | October 2022 |

| (E) Flood Risk | |
|--|----------------|
| Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Level 1 | February 2021 |
| Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Level 1 Update | In Progress |
| Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Level 2 | In Progress |
| (F) Consultation | |
| Central Lancashire Local Plan Consultations Issue and Options Outcome Report | September 2020 |
| Central Lancashire Local Plan Preferred Options Consultation Statement Main Report | August 2023 |
| (G) Others | |
| Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment | July 2019 |
| Integrated Assessment Scoping Report and Iteration 2 | October 2019 |
| Central Lancashire Local Plan: Integrated Assessment Development Site Options | November 2022 |
| Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment Update | November 2022 |
| Central Lancashire Whole Plan Viability and CIL Study | In Progress |

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

6.2 Alongside the Local Plan, work will also be progressed on a CIL review for Central Lancashire. Although CIL is not itself part of the Local Plan, the Central Lancashire Authorities recognise there is a need to undertake a review of the existing CIL Charging Schedule to ensure that any future CIL is in accordance with the findings of the viability work which is being undertaken as part of the evidence-based underpinning the development of the new Local Plan. This work identifies any future infrastructure needs the Local Plan will be required to deliver.

Integrated Assessment & Habitats Regulation Assessment

6.3 In addition to the above an integrated Assessment and Habitats Regulation Assessment is also being undertaken of the Local Plan. It is proposed to incorporate the statutory requirements of Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessments.

7. Risk Assessment – Local Plan delivery

- 7.1 There are always risks associated with production of such a large project which may incur slippage to the published programme. The key issues for the Local Plan are discussed below.

Staff capacity/turnover/absence

- 7.2 Should there be a loss of staff due to sickness or turnover, home team staff can be utilised to keep the project on track along with support from consultants as necessary until staff return or are replaced.

Political Delay

- 7.3 The potential for delays due to the political decision-making process is increased by the requirement for joint/aligned documents to be approved by the relevant decision-making structure of each Central Lancashire authority. This has been mitigated by involving Elected Members from all three authorities in a Joint Advisory Committee informed by sovereign Elected Member Working Group/equivalent briefings in each district authority enabling Members to be fully involved in plan making.

Joint Working

- 7.4 Although there are considerable benefits in joint working, there are risks in terms of programming work and political decision making. The three authorities are minimising this risk through a memorandum of understanding. There is also a Steering Group where the planning leads from each of the three councils, and LCC meet regularly to discuss the development of the plan and any ongoing issues.

Soundness of the Local Plan

- 7.5 There is a risk that the Local Plan will be found unsound, this risk will be minimised by liaising closely with relevant partners and agencies, neighbouring authorities, and having regard to the PAS soundness toolkit and Local Plan Route Mapper and procedural implications this may have.

Changing Legislation

- 7.6 The risk of changing legislation during the preparation of the Local Plan is very real. Since commencing the review, we have to date had three Government Consultations in 2020 and 2023 respectively on Changes to the Planning System. The further changes proposed in the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill (LURB) and introduction of the Environment Act have raised further issues which need to be addressed through the Local Plan. The legislation following

the introduction of the Environment Act are starting to come forward, with key details on the introduction of Biodiversity Net Gain in January 2024.

- 7.7 This impact will be minimised by attending events, liaising with the relevant Government department, keeping up to date with new policy and legislation and assessing how this may impact on the Local Plan. This is largely out of the authority's control, and we are following Government advice of continuing with the plan through the current adopted system.

Finance/Resource Availability

- 7.8 The costs of preparing a Local Plan on this spatial scale are significant and there are financial challenges facing all Local Authorities currently, which will impact on the available resources for plan making in the forthcoming years. This will need to be considered by the authorities and assessed on an annual basis. The risk of lack of finance has been mitigated by advance budgeting and joint working savings and the successful Government award of Planning Delivery Funding for two years earlier in the programme. The Steering Group receive regular finance updates which will alert them in advance of any major budgetary or resource issues.

8. Monitoring & Review

- 8.1 Each authority monitors the delivery of the Local Plan including policy achievement, targets and milestones such as housing land availability and housing delivery. The annual monitoring reports review document preparation progress over the preceding year compared to the targets and milestones set out by the authorities.
- 8.2 The latest monitoring reports for each of the councils can be viewed on the Planning Policy pages on each of the authorities' websites:

TABLE 3 LATEST MONITORING REPORT FROM EACH COUNCIL

| | |
|------------------------------|--|
| Chorley Council | Planning policy evidence and monitoring - Chorley Council |
| South Ribble Borough Council | Planning, monitoring and evidence - South Ribble Borough Council |
| Preston City Council | Monitoring - Preston City Council |