

Central Lancashire Local Plan: Pre-Submission Version Regulation 19 Consultation

Slide 1: Introduction

Thank you for joining this recorded webinar. My name is Joel and I'm a volunteer at Planning Aid England, which is part of the Royal Town Planning Institute. We provide free, independent, professional planning advice to help people get involved in planning for their local area.

Today's webinar aims to provide you with information about the Local Plan process and about the final consultation stage for the Central Lancashire Local Plan. We'll discuss what this consultation is about, where to find more information, and how to comment.

But first, what is a Local Plan?

Slide 2: Local Plans: why are they needed and what do they include and aim to do?

Local Plans are at the heart of the planning system in England and play a key part in decision-taking for a local area.

Section 3 of the National Planning Policy Framework ("NPPF") requires every local planning authority to prepare a Local Plan for its area. This may involve a single local authority preparing a Plan for its area alone, or a group of local authorities working together to prepare a Local Plan for their combined areas – as with Central Lancashire. The Central Lancashire Local Plan will be one single local plan for all 3 Councils – Preston, South Ribble and Chorley, replacing a variety of current plan documents.

Local Plans guide decisions on future development proposals and address the needs and opportunities of an area. Local Plans set out where different forms of development – such as housing, offices, factories and recreational facilities – can go, and also contain policies that planning applications for new buildings and changes of use have to satisfy in order to get planning permission.

The Local Plan must contribute to the achievement of sustainable development and be consistent with the principles and policies in the government's National Planning Policy Framework. In essence, the Local Plan should set out what the opportunities are for development in the area and say what types of development will and will not be permitted and where.

It is therefore very important that you get involved in the preparation of planning policies and proposals within the Local Plan if you want to influence how your area will be developed in future. The sooner you get involved the greater the influence you can have on planning in your area.

The Central Lancashire Local Plan sets out how the three Councils want to see the area developing and improving over the next 15 + years and how they will achieve this. It includes policies to guide development and site allocations to indicate where they expect new development to take place. It identifies where they need new community facilities such as schools, parks, sports facilities. And it aims to help to protect and enhance the environment.

Now, what's involved in preparing a local plan?

Slide 3: Local Plan preparation - the stages involved

To draw up a local plan involves it going through various stages, specified by Government planning regulations.

Work on the **Central Lancashire Local Plan** has followed these stages so far:

1. **Initial evidence gathering** – this included consultation on an “Issues and Options” document between November 2019 and February 2020
2. **Initial consultation and continued work on evidence gathering** - this stage involved consultation on a “Preferred Options” document between December 2022 and February 2023.
3. **Publication and submission** – this is the current stage in the Plan’s preparation and involves a consultation running between February and April 2025 on a full draft.

Any final alterations made in response to this consultation stage will be incorporated into a “Submission Version” of the draft Plan. This will then be approved by the three Councils before its expected submission by the end of June 2025 for a formal Examination in Public by the Planning Inspectorate.

Slide 4: So, what’s happening now?

The Central Lancashire Local Plan has reached the pre-submission publication stage and there is now a further consultation period.

This “Regulation 19” consultation is the last stage of public engagement before the draft plan is finalised and goes to the Planning Inspectorate for Examination.

The consultation started at 2pm on Monday 24th February and runs for 7 weeks until midnight on Monday 14th April 2025. You can only make a representation (in other words make comments supporting or objecting to the Plan) during the consultation period. Any comments submitted during that time will be provided to the Inspector. Any late representation received after the period ends will not be provided to the Inspector.

Slide 5 Central Lancashire Local Plan: where to see the Plan and how to comment

The draft Plan and a full range of supporting evidence base documents can be viewed online by visiting centrallocalplan.lancashire.gov.uk (the link is shown on this slide).

During the consultation period, the draft Local Plan will be available to view at the three Councils’ offices, public libraries, in post offices in the Chorley area and at any of the 18 consultation events being held across the plan area.

The evidence that supports the Local Plan includes the Integrated Appraisal (consisting of a Sustainability Appraisal and Equalities Impact Assessment) and a Habitats Regulation Assessment. Copies of these will also be available to view at the three Councils’ offices, local libraries and post offices.

In terms of commenting on the draft plan at this Regulation 19 stage, there is a formal method of responding that is required by the Planning Inspectorate. **Only comments on the soundness and legal compliance of the plan can be made and must be targeted to a specific policy or paragraph in the draft Plan.**

An online platform for submitting comments, the link for which is on the slide, allows you to refer to a policy, policies map reference, diagram, or paragraph in the draft plan or in a supporting document (such as the Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment), and then to explain why you think it is or is not sound and / or legally compliant.

It includes a question asking you to set out the modification that you consider necessary to make the pre-submission Local Plan legally compliant and/or sound, including any revised wording.

You can also attach supporting documents for justification relevant to your comments.

You'll be asked whether you wish to participate in person at the Examination if you are seeking a modification and to explain why. It is the Inspector who will determine the most appropriate way to hear those who have indicated that they wish to participate at the Examination.

The response form also asks whether you wish to be kept informed about the later submission, publication and adoption stages.

Respondents are encouraged to use electronic documents and asked to submit their representations electronically using the Citizenspace platform as linked on the slide. However, a representation form can be downloaded and sent to centrallancashireplan@chorley.gov.uk or by post to Preston Town Hall.

Those who don't have access to a computer can visit a council office and ask for help from a member of the Planning Policy team or phone 01772 625388 or 01772 625589 and request to be sent a paper copy of a representation form.

It should be noted that anonymous representations will not be accepted. You must provide your name and contact details. Your personal data will be processed in line with the requirements of the [UK General Data Protection Regulation \(UK GDPR\)](#) and the [Data Protection Act 2018](#). You should assume your representation will be published, including your name. No other personal details will be published.

The representation form also includes questions where you can tick to say that you believe the Local Plan is sound and legally compliant. It is important that people can support the Local Plan if they feel it is sound and legally compliant.

Lastly, what will happen with your comments? All representations received during the consultation period will be sent to the Planning Inspectorate together with the draft Local Plan and supporting documentation. The Planning Inspectorate will conduct an independent review of the plan and the representations made, to determine whether the plan is sound. This is called an Examination in Public.

Slide 6: Central Lancashire Local Plan: Some key tips for commenting on the plan

In this section I'm going to run through some tips for commenting on the plan to help you take part effectively.

Paragraph 36 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) identifies four tests against which Local Plans are assessed. Plans should be:

- **Positively prepared** – providing a strategy that seeks to meet an area's assessed needs; and is consistent with achieving sustainable development;

- **Justified** – a plan should be an appropriate strategy for its area, when considered against reasonable alternatives, and based on proportionate evidence;
- **Effective** – the plan should be deliverable over its period; Consistent with national policy – the plan should enable the delivery of sustainable development in accordance with the policies in the NPPF.

In order to make your comments effective you need to relate them to these tests. Here are some key tips from Planning Aid England’s website on making comments:

- Clearly identify the policy or site proposal you are objecting to or supporting, using the reference number given in the plan;
- Say why you are objecting or supporting and, if you want to see a policy or site proposal changed, say how and put forward your own alternative wording and the reasons for it;
- Keep your comments as simple as possible and organise them in a logical order;
- Concentrate on the planning issues involved. These are known as material considerations – one guide on these is on the PAE website (link shown on the slide).
- Referring to reliable published evidence to support your arguments can help to ensure that they are given more weight. Identify statements or analysis from the Sustainability Appraisal or other documents such as national policy, guidance or local technical studies in the Plan’s Evidence Base documents which support your view;
- If objecting to certain aspects of a site proposal, it is important to stress where you agree with the local authority so attention can be focussed on issues of conflict. Try to show that you have understood, yet still disagree with the local authority’s position;
- Refer to local issues and concerns, but try to relate them to the main planning issues. Your local knowledge is invaluable, but try not to get side-tracked onto non-material, temporary or non-planning issues. These include noise and disturbance during construction, or comments relating to property values or loss of a view and should be avoided.
- Local Plans seek to achieve a balance of different factors, e.g. enabling growth on the one hand, protecting valued landscapes on the other. It is particularly valuable to comment on whether you agree with the balance that has been struck and if there are any different approaches (for example different sites or strategies to locating development) that you feel would be more beneficial in planning terms.

Remember all planning documents are public documents and any comments you make will be public information and will be able to be viewed by others.

Slide 7: Next Steps

After the Regulation 19 consultation has closed, any final alterations made in response to this consultation stage will be incorporated into a “Submission Version” of the draft Plan. This will then be approved by the three Councils before its expected submission by the end of June 2025 for a formal Examination in Public by the Planning Inspectorate.

The Examination in Public of the submitted plan is expected to take place between late 2025 and summer / early autumn 2026.

Finally, adoption of the final Plan by the three Councils, incorporating any modifications agreed during the Examination stage is anticipated by the end of 2026.

Slide 8: thank you for watching & listening

Thanks for joining this webinar; we hope you've found it useful and encourage you to take part in the consultation. Please contact the three local planning services direct for further details of the Plan and how it affects your area.

The first link on this slide takes you to the Central Lancashire Local Plan website, where you will find the previous "Issues & Options" and "Preferred Options" documents published earlier during the Plan's preparation, together with the full set of Evidence Base documents supporting the Plan at this latest stage, and the Plan itself.

The second link is to the online platform for submitting a representation.

Finally, details of how to contact PAE for further help on planning are here on the screen – our website gives you a full background to the range of services we offer including a free online Advice Service where fully qualified planning volunteers can offer brief advice by email on day-to-day planning questions from groups and individuals.

Thanks again for watching.