

Examination of the Central Lancashire Local Plan

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Sent by email via the Programme Officer

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Dear Central Lancashire Authorities,

Thank you for providing the updated docs CD10 and CD11. We are currently putting together our Matters Issues and Questions (MIQs) with a view to opening the Examination Hearing on the 1st of December. In the meantime we have set out below a few factual queries and initial questions to the Council to assist us in refining the MIQs. If this information is already available within the evidence base then please direct us to it.

Habitats Regulations

The Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) concludes that site allocations in the Plan may, in combination, lead to the loss of functional habitat for over-wintering birds which are a qualifying species for Coastal SPA and Ramsar Sites. In order to mitigate these impacts the HRA sets out a requirement for overwintering bird surveys on sites identified with moderate potential to support qualifying species, along with a requirement, where necessary, to provide appropriate mitigation. This is addressed in Policy EN7 alongside a requirement for an over-wintering bird survey on affected sites.

The HRA identifies that the effects are likely only in combination, having regard to the extent of development proposed in the Plan. Can the Council therefore advise what an overwintering bird survey for an individual site would involve? Assuming that the assessment of the potential of each site in the HRA is accurate, how far would an individual survey need to take account of the likely impacts arising from other proposed sites in order to assess cumulative impact? How does the Council anticipate this will matter will be addressed?

The HRA also refers to the potential impacts of recreational disturbance on designated sites and ongoing work to identify a Zone of Influence (ZOI) for each of these, which a view to developing a joint programme of mitigation to which developers would be required to contribute. Can the Council advise on whether there has been any progress on these since the HRA was prepared?

The Spatial Strategy and Settlement Hierarchy

Policy SS2 sets out the settlement hierarchy for development within the Plan. Table 1 identifies settlements in the Plan area and attributes them a position within the hierarchy.

Can the Council please provide details of the evidence that was used to assess the position of each settlement within the hierarchy?

Furthermore, can the Council please provide a breakdown of how much development is proposed within each settlement tier?

Please also advise of when the boundary for each settlement was last reviewed?

Neighbourhood Plans

The Local Development Scheme provides details of the made Neighbourhood Plans in the Plan area. Please provide details of any allocations within these Plans which contribute to the Plan's housing supply. Please also provide details of where the housing requirement for each neighbourhood area as set out in paragraph 69 of the NPPF 2024 is provided in the evidence base.

Housing Land Supply

The Housing Land Supply Position Statement from South Ribble contains information on the lead in times between the receipt of outline, reserved matters, and full applications and the completion of the first units and also on average build out rates. Is similar information for Chorley and Preston in the evidence base, and if not please can this be provided? This should be based on major applications (i.e. 10 or more dwellings). It would be helpful if this could be broken down by size of site i.e. 10-49, 50-99, and 100+ dwellings, particularly for the build out rates.

A response to the above should be provided by Friday 3rd of October 2025.

Alison Partington and Anne Jordan
INSPECTORS

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