

Savills on behalf of the Defence Infrastructure Organisation

Examination into the Central Lancashire Local Plan 2023-2041

Hearing Statement

Matter 1b – Overarching Matters

Issue 1 – Has the Council complied with the duty to co-operate and other relevant procedural and legal requirements in the preparation of the Local Plan?

1.11 Is the Plan Period (2023-2041) justified, effective and consistent with national policy which requires strategic policies to look at least 15 years ahead from adoption? Should the requirements/timescales for review of the Plan be set out in policy?

1. The NPPF outlines that *'strategic policies should look ahead over a minimum of 15 year period from adoption to anticipate and respond to long-term requirements and opportunities, such as those arising from major improvements infrastructure'* (paragraph 22).
2. The proposed Plan period is set to 2041 which would require adoption in 2026 in order to meet the above requirement. The latest Local Development Scheme (CD12) envisages adoption of the Local Plan by the end of 2026 therefore on this basis the Plan would meet this requirement.

1.12 What are the implications of the transitional arrangements set out in paras 234 and 235 of the NPPF (Dec 2024) for the examination of the Plan?

3. The NPPF outlines *'for the purpose of preparing local plans, the policies in this version of the Framework will apply from 12th March 2025 other than where one or more of the following apply:*
 - a). *the plan has reached Regulation 19 (pre submission stage) on or before 12th March 2025, and its draft housing requirement meets at least 80% of local housing need;* (paragraph 234a of the December 2024 NPPF).

'Where paragraph 234a, b, c, d, or e apply, the plan will be examined under the relevant previous version of the Framework' (paragraph 235 of the December 2024 NPPF).
4. The Central Lancashire Local Plan undertook its Regulation 19 consultation between 24th February and 14th April 2025 therefore the Local Plan can proceed under the transitional arrangements as outlined above, subject to meeting at least 80% of the local housing need.
5. The applicable local housing need calculation is 1,643 dwellings per annum as at December 2024. Policy HS1 outlines *the housing requirement for Central Lancashire is for 23, 652 homes to be delivered in the Local Plan period between 2023 and 2041, an annual average of 1,314 homes which equates to 80% of the local housing need (when rounded to the nearest whole number).*
6. The housing need figure of 1,643 refers to standard method at the time the draft Local Plan was produced and is therefore the December 2024 figure. It is noted that following the release of 2024 affordability ratios in March 2025, Central Lancashire's figure has slightly increased to 1,662 (reducing the Plan figure % of standard method from 80% to 79.1%) and it is expected to increase later this year following the release of new dwelling stock estimates. Notwithstanding this, a figure must be agreed

for the Councils to work with which cannot, for the purposes of ensuring an efficient plan making process, be a continuously moving target.

7. It is also relevant to note that some strategic site policy requirements, such as that for Policy SS4: Strategic Allocation – Fulwood Barracks, are worded in a way that does not prevent additional dwellings coming forward on these sites therefore, in reality, dwelling provision may exceed the planned figure in any event which is noted as a minimum in this instance.