

**CENTRAL LANCASHIRE LOCAL PLAN EXAMINATION MATTERS,  
ISSUES AND QUESTIONS**



**Written representation by the Peak & Northern Footpaths Society**

Contact: Ms. Linda Smith  
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The Peak & Northern Footpaths Society (PNFS) is a community of individuals and organisations committed to protecting rights to access the outdoors. We do this by monitoring, protecting and improving public rights of way such as footpaths and bridleways. Since 1894, PNFS has defended the rights of everyone to use these routes and held landowners and councils to account in their duty to maintain them.

Comments being made in relation to:

**Matter 2, question 2.4**

**Have the sites allocated for development in the Plan been appraised and selected in comparison with possible alternatives using a robust and objective process?**

**a) Is the site selection process transparent? How were different development constraints taken into account? Were they identified using up to date and appropriate evidence and guidance?**

Public rights of way (PROW) are existing physical and environmental constraints for any new development. The Peak & Northern Footpaths Society (PNFS) observes that development for 'Delivering Homes' is likely to affect PROW, in some of the Chorley, Preston and South Ribble 'Site Allocations' areas. Were public rights of way considered as constraints in the site selection process? If so, there has been no mention of them in the plan, and therefore the site selection process is not transparent in relation to them.

PNFS emphasizes that PROW locations should be evaluated for all potential development sites in order to avoid or minimise any adverse impacts.

Where any site development will impact on PROW, PNFS expects that the following legal and 'best practice' requirements will be undertaken:

- The effect of a proposed development on a public right of way (PROW) is a material consideration when deciding whether or not to grant planning permission.
- In addition, no part of the legal width of a PROW must be obstructed by development unless the path is legally diverted.
- Diversions should not be onto estate road footways, but on to green corridors through or near the development.
- The granting of planning permission does not mean that a diversion would automatically take place - the interests of users must be considered.
- The surfaces of PROWs must not be altered without the authorisation of the highway authority. Any new barriers across paths must be gates, not stiles
- If there are any proposed sites where it is obvious that the public's enjoyment of the use of PROWs would be greatly reduced, these should not be proposed as development sites

As a statutory consultee, PNFS expects to be informed of any future specific development proposals that affect PROW on the Site Allocation Areas so that we can assess the impacts and make recommendations.