



Central Lancashire Local Plan 2023-2041

Statement of Common Ground Between the Central Lancashire Authorities (Chorley Council, Preston City Council and South Ribble Borough Council) and Wyre Borough Council

Version 2

December 2025

CONTENTS

1. Introduction	1
2. Background of Central Lancashire	2
3. Strategic Geography	3
4. Joint Working: Central Lancashire Authorities and Wyre Borough Council	4
5. Strategic Matters	5
Strategic Matter 1: Housing Development (Need and Distribution)	5
Strategic Matter 2: Economic Development (Need and Distribution)	6
Strategic Matter 3: Transport.....	7
Strategic Matter 4: Natural Environment	10
Strategic Matter 5: Community Facilities	10
Strategic Matter 6: Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Needs	11
6. Signatories	13

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) has been developed in order to address strategic planning matters between the parties consisting of the Central Lancashire Authorities (CLAs) of Chorley, Preston and South Ribble, and Wyre Borough Council (WBC).
- 1.2 The SoCG has been prepared to comply with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requirements. Paragraph 24 to 27 of the NPPF¹ state that “Local Planning Authorities are under a duty to cooperate with each other, and with other prescribed bodies, on strategic matters that cross administrative boundaries”. Moreover, the “strategic policy-making authorities should prepare and maintain one or more statement of common ground, documenting the cross-boundary matters being addressed and progress in cooperating to address these”. Paragraphs 20 to 23 set out how the duty to cooperate works and how strategic matters that cross administrative boundaries require effective and on-going cooperation. These matters include:
- Housing (including affordable housing), employment, retail, leisure and other commercial development;
 - Infrastructure for transport, telecommunications, security, waste management, water supply, wastewater, flood risk and coastal change management, and the provision of minerals and energy (including heat);
 - Community facilities (such as health, education and cultural infrastructure); and
 - Conservation and enhancement of the natural, built and historic environment, including landscapes and green infrastructure, and planning measures to address climate change mitigation and adaptation.
- 1.3 According to the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)², a SoCG is a written record of the progress made by strategic policy-making authorities during the process of planning for strategic cross-boundary matters. It documents where effective co-operation is and is not happening throughout the plan-making process and is a way of demonstrating at examination that plans are deliverable over the plan period and based on effective joint working across local authority boundaries. It forms part of the evidence required to demonstrate compliance with the duty to cooperate.
- 1.4 Both NPPF and PPG make it clear that a SoCG should primarily be produced to document the strategic cross-boundary matters. Therefore, this SoCG is the written record account of the progress achieved in the planning process for

¹ NPPF Version December 2023

² Under the Section of Plan-Making

strategic matters in Central Lancashire and how the CLAs have worked effectively to fulfil their duty to cooperate. The approach taken in writing this statement is in accordance with the requirements of the PPG.

2. Background of Central Lancashire

- 2.1 Central Lancashire covers the geographical areas of Preston City Council, Chorley Borough Council and South Ribble Borough Council, which functions as one integrated local economy and commuting area. It is a single housing market area with high levels of self-containment, or families moving within the area. It is therefore appropriate to work strategically in collaboration to ensure our policy is joined up and complementary.
- 2.2 The joint working on planning-related matters began in 2008, when the three councils came together and produced a Central Lancashire Core Strategy, which was adopted in July 2012. It sets out the strategic planning policies for Central Lancashire. In 2018, a review of the Core Strategy and individual local plans began with a view to deliver a single Central Lancashire Local Plan (CLLP), reflecting both the shared strategic policy objectives and more detailed non-strategic policies.
- 2.3 A Central Lancashire Strategic Planning Joint Advisory Committee (JAC) has been established, made-up of elected members from each authority. This Committee has the responsibility to consider proposals, open them up to debate and move to endorse or challenge them at their discretion. Members from LCC also attend the JAC.
- 2.4 A Central Lancashire Local Plan Team has been created and jointly funded by the three local authorities specifically to undertake the work required to deliver the review of the local plan. The team is accountable to all three local authorities, reporting back to each home team and guiding the process forward.

3. Strategic Geography

- 3.1 Central Lancashire is in the heart of Lancashire within the North West Region and covers the three local authority districts of Chorley, Preston and South Ribble. It comprises an urban core surrounded by attractive scenery ranging from the Pennine foothills/West Pennine Moors in the East, to the Lancashire Plain and the Ribble and Alt Estuary in the West. The area is bounded by Fylde and West Lancashire to the West, Ribble Valley and Blackburn with Darwen to the East, Wyre to the North and Greater Manchester to the South.
- 3.2 The Central Lancashire area is a diverse mix of urban and rural including towns, villages, and sparsely populated countryside. Some of the main landscape attractions and protected wildlife habitats in the area include the Forest of Bowland National Landscape, the West Pennine Moors SSSI, and the Ribble and Alt Estuaries. There are also significant areas of open space and attractive public parks for sport, leisure, and recreation. Grid-iron pattern streets typify the urban areas of Preston, Chorley, and Leyland, as workers housing was built tightly around the mills and industrial complexes.
- 3.3 The area covered by the Central Lancashire Local Plan is shown in the map below.



4. Joint Working: Central Lancashire Authorities and Wyre Borough Council

- 4.1 The purpose of the SoCG is to inform the Inspector appointed for the Central Lancashire Local Plan Examination and other parties about the areas of agreement between the CLAs and WBC in relation to key strategic matters contained in the Central Lancashire Local Plan (2023-2041). Duty to cooperate engagement has been a consideration in the development of the policies, supporting explanatory text and the Infrastructure Delivery Plan for the draft Local Plan.
- 4.2 Meetings have been held between the Councils throughout the plan making process, to discuss and resolve issues arising through the production of the draft Plan. This SoCG reflects the agreed position between the CLAs and WBC for submission to the Inspector of the Central Lancashire Local Plan Examination.
- 4.3 This Statement sets out the confirmed points of agreement between the parties with regard to the strategic matters.

5. Strategic Matters

Strategic Matter 1: Housing Development (Need and Distribution)

- 5.1 The CLAs jointly commissioned a Local Housing Needs and Demand Assessment along with a Central Lancashire Housing Study. The Housing Study has had a number of iterations with the most recent update published in December 2024.
- 5.2 The table below outlines the proposed housing split between the CLAs from the Housing Study compared to the current Central Lancashire Core Strategy requirement, the housing requirement proposed at Preferred Options and the standard method:

Authority	Current Core Strategy	Proposed at Preferred Options	Standard Method*	Recommended 1:1 Commuting Ratio
Chorley	417	384	506	410
Preston	507	500	269	441
South Ribble	417	450	169	386
Total	1,341	1,334	994	1,237

*Standard method as outlined in the NPPF published December 2023

- 5.3 The Housing Study identifies that a range of indicators continue to comprehensively support the conclusion that housing need within Central Lancashire exceeds the result of the Government's Standard Method (2023 formula). The recommended scenario from the original Housing Study was the employment-led (Commuting Ratio ((CR) -1-to-1) scenario which produced a dwelling growth outcome of 1,334 per year. The equivalent figure for the updated employment-led (CR-1-to-1) scenario is either 1,137 per year (applying 2011 Census economic activity rates) or 1,237 per year (applying 2021 Census economic activity rates). The latter of these is the newly recommended housing need figure.
- 5.4 A redistribution of the three identified housing requirements has been applied to reflect the spatial strategy drivers to promote housing and related growth in the most sustainable locations and to enable existing commitments to come forward.
- 5.5 Following publication of the revised NPPF in December 2024, the annual housing requirement has been increased slightly to 1,314 dwellings per annum in order to achieve 80% of the LHN using the new standard method formula, in accordance with the transitional arrangements. The additional 77 dwellings per annum has been distributed between the CLAs.
- 5.6 The annual housing requirements are as follows:

Chorley = 334
 Preston = 520
 South Ribble = 460

- 5.7 The CLAs are proposing that the housing need identified in the Local Plan will be met within the Plan area. As such, the parties have agreed that no housing need will be taken on by WBC. The parties have also agreed that the CLAs will not take on any unmet need from WBC.

Strategic Matter 1: Housing Development	<p>The signatories agree that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposed level of housing growth in Central Lancashire is appropriate in the context of the evidence base that supports the Local Plan; • There is no unmet housing need that is required to be met by WBC; • There is no unmet housing need in WBC that is required to be met by the CLAs.
--	--

Strategic Matter 2: Economic Development (Need and Distribution)

- 5.8 The CLAs commissioned an Employment Land Study to review the future employment land requirement for the three local authorities, in the light of changing market conditions. The study also provides an Objectively Assessed Need (OAN) for the CLLP. The study separates need by industry, providing requirements for office land and industrial and warehouse uses. The combined OAN for the CLAs as per the most recent Employment Land Study is outlined in the table below:

Authority	Combined Employment Use OAN
Chorley	41.45 ha
Preston	74.43 ha
South Ribble	56.99 ha
Total	172.87 ha

- 5.8 The CLAs are proposing that the Plan’s employment need will be met within the borders of Central Lancashire, with more land than required to meet the OAN being available through allocations and extant planning permissions.
- 5.9 As the CLAs will be meeting their employment needs within the Plan area, the parties have agreed that there will be no employment land needs met by WBC. The parties also agree that the CLAs will not be taking on any unmet need from WBC.

- 5.10 The parties also agree that the CLAs will continue to engage with WBC on all strategic sites.

<p>Strategic Matter 2: Economic Development</p>	<p>The signatories agree that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposed level of economic growth in Central Lancashire is appropriate in the context of the evidence base that supports the Local Plan; • There is no unmet economic need that is required to be met by WBC; • There is no unmet economic need in WBC required to be met by the CLAs.
--	---

Strategic Matter 3: Transport

Purpose of the Statement of Common Ground

- 5.11 In June 2025 Central Lancashire Authorities (CLA) and Wyre Brough Council (WBC) agreed a Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) (DC08) dated June 2025.
- 5.12 The purpose of this SoCG is to provide an update on further discussions and the agreed position in relation Transport evidence which was raised as a matter of concern by WBC both prior and after the submission of the CLA Local Plan for examination.

Background

- 5.13 Lancashire County Council is the Local Highway Authority for the CLAs.
- 5.14 Lancashire County Council on behalf of CLA commissioned Jacobs to prepare transport assessment as evidence to support the CLA Local Plan.
- 5.15 In June 2025, a SoCG between CLA and WBC was agreed in advance of the publication of the Stage 2 transport assessment evidence. The SoCG made clear that WBC had areas of concern regarding cross boundary transport, in particular the highway interaction between Wyre and Preston in relation to the A6 corridor feeding into junction 1 of the M55/M6 and potentially interactions at junction 2 of the M55. WBC concerns raised were solely in relation to the transport assessment and not under Duty to Cooperate.
- 5.16 Since June 2025 and the publication of Stage 2 transport assessment, CLA has engaged with WBC and has responded to questions raised on the transport assessment undertaken.

- 5.17 Through that engagement, WBC raised concerns over the transport assessment using growth projections from National Trip End Model (NTEM) to forecast Wyre's growth and whether this was representative of actual current and forecasted growth. This was a concern for WBC due to the government's revised Standard Method (introduced December 2024) that had significantly increased the housing need in Wyre, which at March 2025, was calculated at 599 dwellings per annum (dpa) for WBC compared to 296dpa in the adopted Wyre Local Plan^[1].
- 5.18 In responding, CLA provided a Wyre growth comparison between NTEM and Wyre Local Plan housing requirement for the period 2024-2041. The comparison highlighted a difference in trip of 813 between the adopted Local Plan (5032) and NTEM (4219). This comparison was based on the minimum housing requirement of 296dpa,, which reflects the housing requirement in the adopted Local Plan for the period 2019-2031^[2].
- 5.19 On 16 September, Wyre specifically raised the need with CLA for further sensitivity testing to be undertaken as part of the transport assessment, to fully consider the cross-boundary implications of development in Wyre. The sensitivity testing should factor in growth based upon the new Standard Method and this should consider an appropriate distribution of growth to align with the emerging Wyre Local Plan. Wyre offered to provide an assessment of transport flows resulting from the emerging Wyre Local Plan along the A6 to assist in the sensitivity testing.
- 5.20 On 17 November, Wyre submitted a letter addressed to the Planning Inspectors ([OD01](#)) to provide further clarity on matters raised in the June 2025 SoCG and to provide a summary of WBC ongoing concerns, which at that time, had not been addressed by CLA. A response from CLA (prepared by Jacobs) was received by Wyre later on 17 November, after WBC has submitted the letter to the Planning Inspectors.
- 5.21 In relation to NTEM, Jacobs responded
- 5.22 "It is acknowledged that the Local Housing Need figures currently embedded in the Central Lancashire Transport Model do not reflect the more recent updates, which would likely result in increased traffic volumes, particularly along the A6 corridor. As previously noted, the model was developed using the most current and reliable data available at the time, sourced from NTEM.
- 5.23 The impact of Wyre's updated Local Housing Need could be explored through a sensitivity test, particularly to assess implications for key strategic junctions and corridors shared with Preston. The scope and approach of such testing is a

decision for Lancashire County Council and the relevant district authorities, specifically, whether it should be undertaken as part of the Central Lancashire Local Plan or incorporated into the transport evidence base for Wyre's Local Plan update. Wyre Council has concluded its call for sites stage, however no sites have yet been assessed or selected for inclusion in the Local Plan, there remains uncertainty around which locations may come forward. Consequently, any sensitivity testing at this stage would be very high-level".

- 5.24 On 1 December, a Duty to Cooperate meeting was held between CLA and WBC. The meeting was focused on WBC outstanding concerns regarding CLA transport assessment.
- 5.25 At the meeting, CLA explained that the transport assessment was prepared prior to the NPPF 2024 being published. Therefore, the SM figures were used from the NPPF 2023 and the Local Plan was submitted under the transitional arrangements. To meet the transitional arrangements, the CLA annual housing need has been increased to 1,643 dwellings per annum, or 1,314 in order to achieve 80% of the annual housing need using the new standard method formula, in accordance with the transitional arrangements. The additional 77 dwellings per annum has been distributed between the CLAs, in order to meet the minimum 80% requirement of annual need.
- 5.26 The meeting minutes were agreed and published as part of the examination evidence ([DC12](#)).

Highway matters which the parties agree

- 5.27 It is agreed that:
WBC concerns are regarding the adequacy of the transport assessment prepared to support the CLA Local Plan. This is a matter which would be addressed as part of Matter 14 of the CLA Local Plan examination.
- 5.28 WBC have not raised concerns under the Duty to Cooperate.
- 5.29 CLA transport evidence was prepared under the NPPF 2023.
It is confirmed that WBC standard method calculated under the NPPF 2023 was 280dpa.
- 5.30 The use of NTEM as part of a high-level assessment of Wyre's growth is not too dissimilar to the housing requirement (296dpa) in the adopted Local Plan for period 2019-2031; or dissimilar to the standard method calculated under the NPPF 2023 (280dpa).

- 5.31 On the basis that the CLA local plan is examined under the transitional arrangements, the use of NTEM to assess Wyre’s development is therefore appropriate.
- 5.32 The parties agree to engage proactively and positively on ongoing strategic cross boundary transport matters.
- 5.33 The parties agree to continue to work together, such as where adequate funding is necessary to deliver mitigation and interventions that have cross boundary transport implications.

^[1] Wyre Local Plan (2011-2031) (incorporating partial update of 2022)

^[2] There was a minimum housing requirement of 479 net additional dpa between 2011 and 2019 and 296 net additional dpa between 2019 and 2031.

Strategic Matter 4: Natural Environment

- 5.34 It is not anticipated that there will be any strategic cross-boundary issues related to the Natural Environment.

Strategic Matter 4: Environment	<p>The signatories agree that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are no outstanding unresolved strategic issues relating to the Natural Environment.
--	--

Strategic Matter 5: Community Facilities

- 5.35 DtC discussions took place around community facilities related to schools, health, and community facilities. The CLAs assured WBC that the relevant organisations that manage community facilities have been engaged in the plan-making process.
- 5.36 The CLAs are aware of cross-border movement of pupils between the CLAs and some neighbouring authorities. Lancashire County Council is the education authority for the CLAs and as such are responsible for determining school places, extending, and establishing new schools. The CLAs have discussed with WBC their understanding of the County Council’s methodology and requested that specific education related issues be discussed directly with the County.

Strategic Matter 5: Community Facilities	The signatories agree that:
---	-----------------------------

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are no outstanding unresolved strategic issues relating to community facilities.
--	--

Strategic Matter 6: Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Needs

5.37 In 2024, the Council published a Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment (GTAA). This analysed the latest available evidence to identify the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople across the study area which included all three CLAs.

5.38 The GTAA identifies the following additional need for permanent gypsy and traveller pitches across Central Lancashire over the plan period:

	Chorley	Preston	South Ribble	Central Lancashire Total
5yr Authorised Pitch Shortfall (2024/25 to 2028/29)	10	17	0	27
Longer-term need				
<i>Over period 2029/30 to 2033/34</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>Over period 2034/35 to 2038/39</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>9</i>
<i>Over period 2039/40 to 2040/41</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>6</i>
Longer-term need TOTAL	3	19	0	22
TOTAL NET SHORTFALL 2024/25 to 2040/41	13	36	0	49

5.39 In Chorley, the pitch shortfall relates to future family needs on an authorised site, and current and future family needs arising from an unauthorised site.

5.40 The authorised site at Hut Lane has been allocated and it is envisaged that future family needs arising from that site over the plan period can be met within the site. The GTAA recommends regularisation of the unauthorised site to meet the current and future needs arising from that site over the plan period. Chorley Council is in receipt of an application to regularise the site, and if not considered suitable, will undertake further work to identify an alternative site to meet the identified need.

5.41 In Preston, the pitch shortfall relates to future family needs on an authorised site, and current and future family needs arising from an unauthorised site.

5.42 The authorised site at Leighton Street has been allocated, however it is envisaged that not all of the future family needs arising from that site over the plan period can be met on the site. The GTAA recommends regularisation of the unauthorised site to meet the current need arising from that site over the plan

period, however it is envisaged that not all of the future family needs arising from that site over the plan period can be met on the site. Preston Council is committed to considering regularisation of the site, and if not considered suitable, will undertake further work to identify an alternative site to meet the identified need. The Council is also in active negotiations with community groups who have land holdings to find sites to meet the remaining current and future needs.

5.43 The CLAs are proposing the introduction of negotiated stopping to address transit needs, as recommended in the GTAA.

5.44 The GTAA does not identify any need for travelling showpeople.

5.45 The CLAs are preparing a Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Topic Paper which will set out how the need identified in the GTAA will be met in more detail.

5.46 Through DtC meetings, it was determined that WBC do not have the capacity to meet unmet need in Central Lancashire.

<p>Strategic Matter 6: Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Needs</p>	<p>The signatories agree that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposed level of gypsy and traveller pitches, and proposals to meet unmet need in Central Lancashire, is appropriate in the context of the evidence base that supports the Local Plan; • The unmet gypsy and traveller need in Chorley and Preston will not be met by WBC; • There is no unmet gypsy and traveller need in WBC required to be met in Central Lancashire.
--	--

6. Signatories

Wyre Borough Council

On behalf of Wyre Borough Council, I can confirm that: There is common ground on the draft planning policies set out in the emerging Central Lancashire Local Plan (2023-2041); and except for Strategic Matter 3: Transport, that there are no unresolved strategic issues in relation to matters set out in Section 5 of this statement.	
Signed:	
Date:	18/12/25
Name:	Steve Smith
Position:	Assistant Director Planning and Building Control

Central Lancashire Authorities

Chorley Council



Zoe Whiteside, Head of Spatial Planning

-

Preston City Council



Carolyn Williams, Planning Policy Manager

-

South Ribble Borough Council



Elizabeth Thornber, Head of Planning and Enforcement