



Local Plan Review

Review and Update of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan

For Central Lancashire Local Plan Team

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Hydrock Fore has been commissioned by the Central Lancashire Local Plan Team, as part of a team led by Aspinall Verdi, to assist in developing the evidence base to support the preparation of the new Central Lancashire Local Plan (CLLP). As a key piece of the evidence base, an updated Infrastructure Development Plan (IDP) is required to identify the infrastructure needs across the Central Lancashire area over the Local Plan period, up to 2041.

Central Lancashire covers the geographical areas of Preston, Chorley and South Ribble, 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. The three local authorities involved are Chorley Council, Preston City Council and South Ribble Borough Council.

In July 2012, the three councils adopted the [Core Strategy](#), the key document in the statutory development plans for the area, which sets out the strategic planning policies for Central Lancashire and which is supported by the individual [local plans](#), which were produced by each respective council in 2015.

In 2018, a review of the Core Strategy and individual local plans was begun with a view to delivering a single Local Plan for Central Lancashire, reflecting both the shared strategic policy objectives, more detailed non-strategic policies and site allocations.

Advice set out in the [National Planning Policy Framework](#) (NPPF) requires that Local Plans are deliverable and that identified infrastructure needs can be met. Local Plans should plan positively for the development and infrastructure required in the area to meet the objectives, principles and policies of the document. The NPPF also makes it clear that the provision of infrastructure through the planning system is one of the key economic drivers required for delivering sustainable development and that growth should be aligned with infrastructure. Plan policies should be consistent with the relevant investment plans of infrastructure providers and for the delivery of major infrastructure.

The national [Planning Practice Guidance](#) sets out that at an early stage in the plan-making process strategic policy-making authorities will need to work alongside infrastructure providers, service delivery organisations, and other strategic bodies. Infrastructure deficits and requirements, and opportunities for addressing them should be identified through a collaborative approach which assesses the quality and capacity of infrastructure, and its ability to meet forecast demands. This need for strategic infrastructure, including nationally significant infrastructure, should be considered.

An IDP was prepared in 2012 alongside a series of [Infrastructure Delivery Schedules](#). To meet the requirements of the NPPF, these documents identified the infrastructure that was needed by new housing and employment development planned in the Core Strategy at that time. A key purpose of the IDP was to prioritise infrastructure projects in order to focus resources on achieving objectives that would not come forward without assistance.

Infrastructure planning is an iterative process, and the schedules have been reviewed and updated periodically to reflect changing infrastructure requirements and priorities since 2012. However, in line with the NPPF, a formal update of the IDP is required as part of the new CLLP that specifies how the infrastructure needed to support the CLLP will be provided.

Specifically, the update of the IDP will outline what infrastructure is needed, when it is needed, who is responsible for providing it, how much it will cost (where this information is available) and how it will be funded.

1.2 Format of the Report

For this Updated IDP, the approach taken has been to be relatively streamlined and focused on the infrastructure requirements - this is considered to be essential to the acceptable delivery of sustainable development.

On this basis, this report sets out the findings of the work undertaken to update the 2012 IDP and the accompanying schedules and covers the following elements in turn:

- » Brief consideration of the evidence base for the updated IDP and how stakeholders helped review and build the revised evidence base
- » Identification of the appropriate critical infrastructure within the Updated IDP to deliver the growth envisaged by the new CLLP
- » An estimate of the likely costs and an overview of potential funding sources for the required infrastructure.

Finally, the report includes suggestions as to how the Updated IDP itself could be used as a better and more flexible/responsive tool to track the delivery of the required infrastructure in Central Lancashire over the period of the new CLLP whilst meeting the requirements of national planning guidance.

2. Evidence Base for the Updated IDP

2.1 Infrastructure Delivery Plan and Infrastructure Delivery Schedules

The 2012 IDP sets out the infrastructure requirements to support planned new development in Central Lancashire. The type, scale and distribution of infrastructure in the IDP was informed by the level, location and phasing of development identified in the Core Strategy at the time.

The IDP brought together a range of data to inform investment decisions by the councils and their delivery partners, and:

- » Broadly describes the main types of infrastructure along with current levels of provision and recent changes therein
- » Sets out the roles of the agencies in providing the facilities and services
- » Identifies delivery mechanisms
- » Points to the likely overall impact on each type of infrastructure of increased demand arising from development.

The main part of the IDP reviews infrastructure needs by type and includes information on responsibilities and delivery partners and, where available, some more detailed project information. The final section of the IDP looks at governance arrangements, how the separate councils as separate Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) charging authorities would facilitate infrastructure planning and delivery into the future. It was intended that funds raised from CIL would contribute towards the funding of the identified infrastructure requirements.

The IDP was supported by a series of Infrastructure Delivery Schedules, published to support the preliminary draft consultation stage of the charging schedules in 2012. To reflect this purpose, the information in the IDP was re-cast as a series of schedules – one for each District, identifying projects specific to each Council and one remaining pan-Central Lancashire schedule listing cross-boundary projects. This was done to align the approach with that needed to inform the local introduction of CIL where there is a requirement to demonstrate an infrastructure funding gap exists for each council area.

The IDP was intended to be a 'living' document that was to be used as a tool for helping to deliver infrastructure and will be updated and monitored regularly. The schedules have been reviewed and updated periodically to reflect changing infrastructure requirements and priorities since 2012. The supporting schedules were also updated on a regular basis as part of the requirement to produce an annual Infrastructure Funding Statement through the CIL regime.

However, as noted previously, in line with the new CLLP, this document represents a more holistic review and update of the IDP.

2.2 Local Plan Review

2.2.1 Plan Period

The 2012 Core Strategy set the overall strategic direction for planning in the Central Lancashire area over the period from 2010 to 2026. The [Draft CLLP](#) (Regulation 19 Publication version) sets out how development will be planned and delivered across the combined area for the period from 2023 to 2041.

2.2.2 Spatial Vision and Strategic Objectives

The Draft CLLP includes a spatial vision which sets out what Central Lancashire will look like as a result of implementing the CLLP, providing a clear direction for the Local Plan's spatial strategy, site allocations and policies.

The spatial vision is as follows:

Central Lancashire will be a place where people want to live, visit, work and invest. New development will be sustainable, supporting our ambitions of carbon neutrality and addressing climate change.

Growth and regeneration of our city and town centres and delivery of new employment opportunities will continue to strengthen economic prosperity, making Central Lancashire a key economic centre for the North West.

A wide range of high-quality sustainable new housing and supporting infrastructure will meet the needs of our diverse communities, delivering vibrant and distinct places. Community wealth building and inclusivity will be at the heart of Central Lancashire's growth.

Our heritage assets will be conserved, and our natural environment will be protected and enhanced for its intrinsic value whilst providing opportunities for recreation and leisure. Throughout Central Lancashire, people's health and well-being will be enhanced through the creation of well-designed developments, delivering homes, jobs and prosperity.

Strategic objectives expand on this vision by setting out more specific goals for the Draft CLLP. There are 11 strategic objectives, as set out in Table 1.

Table 1: Central Lancashire Local Plan Strategic Objectives

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

Strategic Objective 1 - Climate Change

To ensure new development is resilient to and mitigates against the effects of climate change by achieving our goal to be at least carbon neutral. Reducing vulnerability to flooding, promoting sustainable forms of surface water drainage, minimising natural resource and energy use, and incorporating sustainable construction and water efficiency practices.

Strategic Objective 2 - Sustainable Patterns of Development

To focus development at accessible and sustainable locations. Making the best use of existing land, infrastructure, facilities, and services wherever possible, and ensuring that any necessary mitigation or improvements to meet future needs are identified, appropriately funded, and brought forward in a coordinated and timely manner.

Strategic Objective 3 – Sustainable Communities

To create healthy, vibrant, safe, and sustainable communities with a diverse range of housing to meet future needs. Providing a scale and mix of housing types and sizes and a variety of tenures in a range of locations to meet economic aspirations and local housing needs.

Strategic Objective 4 - Economic Prosperity

To provide a range of employment and economic growth opportunities in sustainable locations. Promoting Central Lancashire as the economic centre for Lancashire, protecting and enhancing Preston City Centre's role as Lancashire's key shopping, leisure, tourism, and cultural destination and recognising its strategic importance within the wider Lancashire region and beyond. Prioritising building on the infrastructure improvements within City Deal, supporting the growing population, attracting inward investment, and delivering community wealth building.

Strategic Objective 5 - Sustainable Transport

To encourage development in sustainable locations where the layout, and design of new development reduces the need to use a car and enables more walking, cycling, and public transport use. Prioritising active travel and public transport promotes the use of sustainable modes of transport (walking, cycling and public transport) ahead of the private car, especially for shorter journeys, and supports improved accessibility and connectivity.

Strategic Objective 6 - Place Making

To protect and enhance the rich diversity of the character and appearance of Central Lancashire's landscape and townscape. Maintaining and strengthening local distinctiveness and sense of place for the many different types of settlements across the area and for new development.

Strategic Objective 7 - High Quality Development

To create the highest quality design, which is sustainable, accessible, and safe, and supports active, healthy lifestyles. Promoting built design form that supports inclusive and active communities (objective 11) and a strong sense of place (objective 6) through the relationship of buildings with each other and the spaces around them, and in response to the prevailing character of the area, including scale and density.

Strategic Objective 8 - Historic Environment

To conserve, and enhance the historic environment, heritage assets (including those of local significance) and their settings. Conserving and creating enjoyment of the historic environment which will ensure our historic assets are sustained and enhanced, so the valuable contribution they make to the character and special interest of the area and their cultural, artistic, economic, and environmental benefits can be realised.

Strategic Objective 9 - Natural Environment

To conserve and enhance the natural environment including designated and un-designated landscapes and biodiversity. Promoting a connected green and blue infrastructure network that plays a role in managing flood risk, delivers measurable net biodiversity gains and improves access to nature, parks, and open spaces for all.

Strategic Objective 10 - Education & Skills

To build on the existing education, training, and skills attainment at all levels. Supporting the provision of high-quality education facilities and training opportunities offered across the area and vocational and apprenticeship opportunities.

Strategic Objective 11 - Healthy Lifestyles

To help ensure that development contributes to the reduction of health inequalities, whilst improving social inclusion and equal opportunities for all. Promoting healthy lifestyles to maximise health and well-being to meet the needs of existing and future communities, including inclusive, active design and access to sport, leisure, recreation, and community facilities.

Taken together, the vision and strategic objectives provide an overall sense of purpose as part of the spatial strategy for the Draft CLLP and guide the development and delivery of the Plan's policies and proposals over the plan period, and beyond.

2.2.3 Spatial Strategy and Infrastructure Policies

The Draft CLLP's spatial strategy includes six strategic policies. The first two policies cover development patterns and the settlement hierarchy, and the remaining four policies identify strategic sites which are central to the delivery of the spatial strategy. Key development considerations are set out for each strategic site.

The policy approach on development patterns serves to shape and support the achievement of a sustainable pattern of development in Central Lancashire over and beyond the plan period. The NPPF requires that a sustainable pattern of development should align growth with infrastructure. Key locational requirements are identified so that new housing, employment and commercial growth and associated infrastructure will be focused on the most sustainable locations in Central Lancashire.

As set out in the Draft CLLP, development should:

- » Benefit from, and/or provide, a range of facilities, services, open spaces, and jobs
- » Help regenerate city and town centres
- » Support and reinvigorate the role of centres as focal points for services, facilities, employment, and sustainable transport
- » Make the best use of well-located previously developed land and buildings
- » Provide the greatest opportunities to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and create climate resilient places
- » Facilitate active travel and the use of public transport
- » Harness and enhance local culture and heritage
- » Support and enhance a network of accessible green and blue infrastructure and nature recovery.

The application of a five-tier settlement hierarchy in the spatial strategy aims to match the scale and location of development growth and supporting investment to the role and function of different settlements across Central Lancashire.

The primary focus is the Preston Urban area, and the largest amount of new development will be directed here. The towns of Leyland and Chorley (key service centres) and the South Ribble Urban Area will be the secondary focus for development, complementing the role of the Preston 1 Urban Area. Urban Local Service Centres will be a tertiary focus for development and accommodate new development and investment within settlement boundaries, reflecting the size and characteristics of the different settlements. Rural Local Service Centres will accommodate limited new development whilst more limited new development and investment will be directed to smaller rural villages and hamlets.

Four strategic site allocations are included in the spatial strategy. These larger planned sites look to deliver a range of benefits, such as securing infrastructure alongside growth, and provide an important source of development delivery over time.

The 2012 Core Strategy identified strategic locations and strategic sites as part of the overall approach to locating growth. Buckshaw Village, Chorley and Cottam were identified but are now nearing completion and are expected to be completed by the time of the adoption of the CLLP.

Two locations will continue play a significant role in meeting Central Lancashire's development needs for the initial years of this plan, following delivery of key infrastructure improvements in Preston and South Ribble as part of the City Deal. These strategic site allocations are Preston West, as a residential-led mixed-use development, and two adjacent sites at Pickering's Farm, Penwortham.

In addition, land is also identified in the Draft CLLP for strategic site allocations at North West Preston and Bartle Strategic Site as a residential-led mixed-use development and associated local centres and linear park, and at Fulwood Barracks, a Ministry of Defence site due for disposal in Preston.

The emerging distribution of growth arising from the Draft CLLP shown on the plan included at Appendix A provided the basis for the stakeholder engagement that has informed the Updated IDP. In terms of housing, the distribution across the three council areas, up to 2041, included in the Draft CLLP is:

- » Chorley - 6,012 dwellings
- » Preston - 9,360 dwellings
- » South Ribble - 8,280 dwellings.

Policy IN1 in the Draft CLLP requires the provision of the infrastructure needed to support new development so that it is delivered as an integral part of the development at the appropriate stage and, where necessary improves any deficiencies in existing provision. New development will need to provide sufficient community facilities, services and infrastructure to meet the needs of new development, to support local communities, the environment and the economy. New development will also need to be mindful of existing deficits and consider whether there are opportunities for existing communities to benefit from any new provision.

Policy IN2 addresses how new development will be expected to contribute to mitigating its impact on infrastructure, services and the environment and to contribute to the requirements of the community through

different types of developer contributions. Policy IN3 focuses specifically on digital and communications infrastructure.

2.3 Links to Other Plans and Strategies

There are a number of corporate plans and strategies influencing the CLLP and IDP, which together facilitate the delivery of infrastructure across Central Lancashire. Those that supported the production of the 2012 IDP and subsequent updates include:

- » Lancashire Local Transport Plan 2011 – 2021 (published in May 2011)
- » Central Lancashire Highways and Transport Masterplan
- » Lancashire Green Infrastructure Strategy (published in May 2009)
- » Central Lancashire Open Space and Playing Pitch Supplementary Planning Document (adopted in May 2014)
- » School Place Provision Strategy
- » Preston City Transport Plan.

The first of these has been superseded by a new [Highways and Transport Strategy](#). This has a focus on developing better links, and improving journey times and reliability, between areas of economic opportunity and their workforce, with the provision of sustainable forms of travel a priority. Four core priorities are identified:

- » Highways asset management
- » Network management and safety
- » Public transport and active travel
- » Strategic partnerships.

Together with 12 supporting objectives, these set the framework for future transport activities across Lancashire.

The third and fourth are under review as part of the evidence base supporting the CLLP review and the latest version of the fourth has been used to help prepare the Updated IDP, as described in the following section.

A number of pieces of evidence have also been prepared at the Lancashire level on behalf of all Lancashire councils as part of the CLLP review.

In particular, the [Environment and Climate Change Strategy](#) provides a single point of reference on the councils' environment and climate priorities. It gathers the action that is underway or proposed, and organises it under three principal areas of activity:

- » Reducing waste and pollution
- » Climate change
- » Natural and historic environment,

[Neighbourhood Development Plans](#) (NDPs) enable communities to take the lead in producing part of the statutory development plan for the area and can be used to determine planning applications in a neighbourhood area. NDPs can be prepared by a town or parish council, or, when neither of these is present, a Neighbourhood Forum can be set up.

Many NDPs in the Central Lancashire area are under various levels of proposal and consultation or exist as forums, a small number have been adopted or 'made'. Those that have, such as the one for Penwortham, contain little detail on the supporting infrastructure required, however.

Lancashire County Council (LCC) has a [Corporate Strategy](#) in which the vision for the county is set out. Objectives include Lancashire becoming:

- » The place to live
- » The place to work
- » The place to prosper
- » The place to visit
- » The place where everyone acts responsibly.

The variety of reports offer insight into how the region has constructed a framework that takes multiple lenses to future growth which both aligns with national policy and to suit the county's specific needs.

2.4 Stakeholder Engagement

Contacts established with a wide range of infrastructure and service providers through development of the 2012 IDP and supporting schedules have been maintained to allow the IDP to be updated at frequent intervals.

These contacts include organisations with responsibility for the following infrastructure and services:

- » Strategic highways
- » Local highways
- » Public transport (rail and bus facilities and services)
- » Active travel (cycling and walking)
- » Electricity transmission and distribution
- » Gas transmission and distribution
- » Water supply, sewerage and wastewater treatment
- » Telecommunications
- » Education (nursery, primary and secondary schools and SEND)
- » Health and social care services and facilities (primary, secondary, tertiary and community care)
- » Flood protection
- » Green infrastructure
- » Waste and recycling facilities
- » Indoor and outdoor sport and leisure facilities
- » Community facilities (libraries, museums, cemeteries and public conveniences)
- » Emergency services.

Each of the providers has been contacted to establish the infrastructure availability and capacity issues that the providers felt would be key considerations for the Draft CLLP, and to highlight key planned investments and improvements.

As such, this Updated IDP and supporting infrastructure schedule represent the infrastructure capacity and needs in Central Lancashire as of January 2025 (reflecting the plan at Appendix A) and will be reviewed and updated as necessary through the process of adopting the CLLP and as the IDP itself is delivered.

The Draft CLLP includes site allocations for housing, employment and other land uses. Representations made by stakeholders and infrastructure providers to the Draft CLLP's policies and site allocations, and the subsequent Examination in Public process, may also generate further information and input that can inform a future update of the IDP.

3. Content of the Updated IDP

The previous infrastructure schedule, the analysis of other plans and strategies, and the information gained from the stakeholder engagement, have been used to prepare the remainder of this Updated IDP.

The following paragraphs provide more details on the policy and business considerations as well as the content of the Updated IDP, grouped under the following headings:

- » Transport
- » Utilities
- » Education
- » Health and Social Care
- » Green and Blue Infrastructure
- » Waste and Recycling
- » Social and Community Facilities
- » Emergency Services.

3.1 Transport

3.1.1 Highways

Key motorways that make up the Strategic Road Network (SRN) are generally managed and maintained by National Highways, which is a government-owned company. In Central Lancashire, the sections of the M6, M55, M61 and M65 motorways that pass through the area are part of the SRN.

National Highways published a series of Route Strategy Initial Overview Reports in May 2023 that describe the current performance, constraints and anticipated performance of routes and sets out mid to long term strategies and needs for the network. The route that affects Central Lancashire is the [London to Scotland West \(North\)](#).

Junction 29 of the M6 (for Preston) is designated as a strategic growth site, provides direct access to the SRN, is recognised as a priority area for economic growth, while also being identified as a receptor of adverse noise and air quality.

The report acknowledges higher than usual collision rates on the mainline of the M6 around Preston and around the intersection with the M61. Furthermore, traffic diversion away from the M6 towards Preston presents significant challenges, especially as Junctions 29 to 32 experience frequent congestion.

To address congestion in the area, a significant scheme is planned near the Cuerden site, located east of M6 Junction 29 and to the south of the South Ribble district - this aims to alleviate congestion and improve traffic flow in the region.

As the Local Highway Authority (LHA), LCC has responsibility for the management, maintenance and improvement of the rest of the highway network across Central Lancashire. As noted previously, the Highways and Transport Strategy includes the framework for future transport activities across the County, presenting a high-level view of how transport is delivered between 2023- 2025.

The core priorities of this initiative are aimed at optimising the management of highways assets, enhancing network management and safety, fostering strategic partnerships as well as promoting sustainable public transport and active travel options. Through these focused efforts, the strategy aims to improve overall connectivity, safety, and sustainability of transportation networks while stimulating economic development and collaboration among stakeholders.

To achieve the 2025 vision, several steps have been taken: fixing residential roads with significant deterioration, continuing investment in the Localised Deterioration Fund to reduce frequent pothole repairs, maintaining rural roads with preventative treatments, improving footways and cycle paths in high-traffic areas, enhancing bridge maintenance and street lighting, exploring technology for smoother traffic flow, starting with Preston city centre, and enforcing traffic rules more effectively to reduce congestion and enhance safety.

The Preston Western Distributor (Edith Rigby Way) scheme opened in 2023 and, along with the William Young Way, is intended to help relieve congestion on the local road network, especially access to the SRN at Junctions 1 and 3 of the M55, and on routes through Preston. This £207 million City Deal road scheme is the single largest investment in Lancashire’s infrastructure in more than 20 years.

However, further investment in highways infrastructure is needed to address existing issues and support planned growth.

To support specifically the CLLP review, a study was commissioned to provide transport evidence for Local Plan testing. This is a three-stage commission aimed at providing a robust evidence base, with the three stages confirming a baseline, identifying where issues may arise on the network as a result of the planned growth and setting out some suggested mitigation measures.

The work done shows that private car remains the predominant mode of transport with private car use in each area closely aligning with the regional average of 63% of trips. In all three council areas, traffic generally increases from the base year due to increased land use, population, and employment. Network-wide traffic flow increases are observed, attributed to new developments and broader population and employment growth. Any decreases were often attributed to infrastructure upgrades which involved rerouting traffic or provision of bus lanes.

Table 2 includes a summary of the projected traffic growth arising from the CLLP.

Table 2: 2041 Projection of Traffic Growth within Central Lancashire

District	New Daily Trips (Total)	New Daily Trips (Car)	New Car Trip share (%)	Trip increase from 2024 (%)
Chorley	13,500	12,100	90%	13%
Preston	24,200	20,000	83%	15
South Ribble	14,800	13,300	90%	21%

Outputs from the traffic models indicates sections of the existing network and junctions that are likely to exceed capacity before delays and excessive congestions are modelled and will be created as a direct result of the CLLP review.

The third stage of the work has sought to identify what improvements can be made at these locations, to accommodate additional demand or what sustainable transport measures could be provided to minimise additional trips, as well as mitigation strategies to influence travel choices and reduce single-occupancy vehicle journeys. Priority was given to identifying sustainable mitigation measures first, with any highway mitigation measures identified based on the residual impacts once sustainable transport mitigations had been included.

To determine the mitigation measures, an initial review was conducted of previous local transport plans and strategies and feasibility and optioneering studies. Following this, workshops were undertaken with key stakeholders to identify additional mitigation measures to support the Draft CLLP. These utilised a phased approach, reflecting the hierarchy of mitigation. Between the phases, sifting and shortlisting of the options was undertaken, followed by further assessments to identify the residual highway impacts once the shortlisted mitigations from the previous step were accounted for.

To identify a shortlist representing a potential package of measures to mitigate the impacts of the Draft CLLP, the long list of mitigation options from both phases were sifted considering the following factors:

- » Likely high-level cost
- » Feasibility / deliverability
- » Public / political acceptability

- » Affordability and funding.

This process provided the list of transport measures proposed to support the Draft CLLP included within the Updated IDP.

The transport modelling and assessment process is iterative, with further refinements to be made as the CLLP review progresses, ensuring the preferred development scenario addresses key concerns. This will involve a collaborative approach with stakeholders to identify a balanced mitigation package that integrates highway improvements with sustainable transport solutions. Transport mitigation measures will be guided by the transport modelling and assessment to ensure flexibility in developer contributions.

3.1.2 Public Transport

Network Rail owns the railway infrastructure (e.g. tracks, bridges and station buildings) within Central Lancashire and various train operating companies run passenger services, notably Avanti West Coast and Transpennine Trains on national and regional routes along the West Coast Main Line (WCML) and Northern Trains on more local routes.

Central Lancashire sits within the North West and Central (NW&C) Route of Network Rail and the [Network Specification 2024](#) remains the most recent planning document produced by Network Rail affecting the area. It outlines the train service provision to meet current and future passenger markets and traffic flows for the freight business and identifies infrastructure choices for funders to meet future growth for the medium to long term over the next 30 years.

Of specific relevance to Central Lancashire:

- » Trilink is a programme aimed at modernising the WCML North infrastructure in areas such as Preston by intelligently renewing it to align with current and future train services, optimising layouts and speeds within a renewals budget.
- » The cancellation of HS2 Phase 2 in October 2023 affects Preston's connectivity, but ongoing rail development projects offer alternative opportunities, while aligning renewals with existing HS2 interventions could optimise infrastructure for future enhancements.
- » A study is evaluating traction power supplies on the WCML for potential improvements including infrastructure enhancements, to accommodate increased freight and passenger traffic between Preston and Mossend from 2024 to 2035.
- » Money has been allocated in the current funding period (2024-2029) to renew life-expired signalling on the West Coast North, including the power signal boxes at Warrington, Preston, and Carlisle, with a focus on developing future-fit layouts in collaboration with sponsors, stakeholders, and train and freight operators.
- » There has been recent electrification of the line from Manchester Victoria to Preston via Bolton.
- » Additionally, a new £78 million electrification initiative has been announced for the 13-mile stretch between Lostock Junction and Wigan North Western. This will serve as a critical connection between already electrified routes, further improving Preston's integration into the electrified rail network.

Work on the Preston City Transport Plan and Central and West Lancashire Rail Study Options identified a number of rail priorities for Central Lancashire, including:

- » Preston Station transformation
- » New Cottam Parkway rail station
- » New Midge Hall rail station (re-opening).

Of these, Cottam Parkway, a proposed new railway station on the north-west side of Preston, on the Blackpool to Preston railway line, is the most advanced, with planning permission have been granted for the new station in 2023. Funding for the station has been agreed by LCC with the government. This includes a £28 million funding allocation, subject to the approval of a business case that is currently being developed and requires approval from the Department for Transport (DfT). The delivery of the station is not reliant on funding through contributions from potential planning applications within the Preston West site allocation.

Predominantly Stagecoach and Preston Bus companies run the majority of daytime bus services in Central Lancashire, supported by subsidised bus services (by LCC) to some of the surrounding settlements as well as evening and weekend services.

Since 2011, local authority funding for financially supported bus journeys, particularly those operating in the evenings and on weekends, has been significantly reduced. This has contributed to a decline in passenger numbers. The COVID-19 pandemic further exacerbated this issue, causing a sharp drop in bus usage, and passenger numbers have yet to return to pre-March 2020 levels.

There is ongoing uncertainty regarding future funding for bus services, raising concerns about the viability of the network. Both commercial and subsidised services are at risk, potentially leading to service cuts or reductions in areas with lower passenger demand or higher operational costs.

While significant funding has been dedicated to avoiding reductions without additional funding or interventions, there is a reasonable risk that certain routes, especially in rural or less populated areas, could face reductions or elimination. Urban services during off-peak times, such as evenings and weekends, may also be affected. Changes to services, especially enhancements under the BSIP, are being implemented through to March 2025. Immediate adjustments or cuts will depend on specific route reviews and ridership data.

The [Lancashire Bus Service Improvement Plan](#) (BSIP) aims to enhance bus services by improving frequency, reliability, and affordability while also simplifying fares and providing better information for passengers. With funding of £34.1 million allocated from the DfT, the plan includes measures such as introducing multi-modal, multi-operator tickets, implementing bus priority measures like dedicated lanes, and enhancing existing bus services through public consultation and collaboration with local authorities and bus operators.

There are a number of bus improvement schemes within the Central Lancashire area that are being developed through the BSIP and further bus-based interventions have been identified through the transport evidence work.

Ultimately, the goal of the BSIP and the identified interventions is to create a more efficient and accessible bus network, encouraging more people to choose buses for their regular journeys and reducing reliance on cars.

3.1.3 *Active Travel*

The [Lancashire Local Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Plan](#) (LCWIP) identifies and prioritises cycling and walking improvements across the County. Delivery of the plan is currently underway with the engagement stage now complete, which aimed to better understand public perception of Lancashire's existing facilities and identify people's concerns and areas for improvement support with an open-source map where respondents could identify key areas of concern based on their location.

The data collected demonstrates that driving remains the dominant mode of travel. Barriers such as busy roads for cycling and time constraints for walking were identified. Separated cycle routes and improved footways are seen as critical for encouraging more cycling and walking respectively. The interactive map received over 4,000 pins, primarily focused on cycling infrastructure issues, with a high demand for new or improved cycle routes.

Further engagement has supported the development of seven separate Lancashire LCWIPs and a 10-year investment plan for active travel improvements. A number of the proposed improvements focus around the significant areas of growth, with the idea that internal site layouts respond to the needs and promotion of, active modes, with connections enhanced to existing and proposed facilities in the vicinity.

Again, the improvements set out in the LCWIP have been supplemented with additional active travel investment opportunities arising from the transport evidence work.

More generally the [Actively Moving Forward](#) report presents a decade-long strategy to promote walking and cycling as primary modes of transport in Central Lancashire. It emphasises the benefits of active travel in improving public health, reducing congestion, and mitigating environmental impact, while addressing barriers such as safety concerns and inadequate infrastructure.

Key features include significant investments in infrastructure enhancement, comprehensive promotional initiatives targeting residents and visitors, and measures to improve road safety for pedestrians and cyclists. The strategy also includes provisions for ongoing monitoring and evaluation to assess progress and ensure accountability. Through collaborative efforts and sustained commitment, the report aims to create a more sustainable, healthy, and vibrant community with increased rates of walking and cycling over the next ten years.

3.2 Utilities

Electricity, gas and water supply are regulated industries, and each provider has a duty to connect future developments to their network as they are built, subject to cost and timing within the scope of its asset management plan, where applicable, and regulations laid down by Ofgem.

Each provider also has a five-year investment programme of maintenance and expansion, and so it is often difficult to engage with utility providers, given the much longer timescale and the uncertainty over individual sites coming forward.

3.2.1 Electricity

The electricity supplies for new developments are the responsibility of the development and will be paid for by the developer. If reinforcement is required, the costs are apportioned between the developer and the Distribution Network Operator (DNO). Speculative developments will be funded fully by the developer, including reinforcement.

Works to the electricity network in Central Lancashire will usually fall to Electricity North West (ENW), the local DNO, which has the principal responsibility for the network of engineering assets that allows the distribution of electricity between the National Grid and customer's premises from the 11kV to 132kV volt network.

ENW's latest [Business Plan \(2023-2028\)](#) includes proposals for utilising energy efficiency measures to reduce demands on highly loaded areas of the network, as well as promoting general energy efficiency across the network.

There are 16 significant projects listed across the five-year period, all of which are likely to cost at least £2 million. In Central Lancashire the regional commitment is to reach net zero by 2030. The Lower Darwen voltage arrangement to improve energy resilience and reliability in the area has an estimated cost of £3.6 million.

In response to information provided to them about the planned areas of growth, ENW is unable to identify specific requirements for individual sites that may come forward because network capacity and existence can change over the delivery of the Draft CLLP and the capacity of the network to absorb a potential development site is only really accurate nearer the actual time of required connection.

3.2.2 Gas

National Grid owns, manages, and operates the national gas transmission network in Great Britain, making gas available when and where it is needed.

The annually updated [Gas Ten Year Statement \(GTYS\)](#) provides an update on current and future changes that impact the gas national transmission system, whilst their latest [Business Plan](#) covers the five-year period up to 2026.

Whilst there are no specific identified schemes affecting Central Lancashire in the Business Plan, there is a commitment to improve the service to customers wishing to connect into the transmission system, noting that over the timeframe of the delivery of the CLLP, the reliance on gas should diminish over time.

Northern Gas Networks (NGN) is the local gas distribution company and NGN's [Business Plan \(2021-2026\)](#) is set against a background of a changing energy landscape and the challenges presented by the target of net-zero by 2050.

In the five-year period, NGN is planning to increase investment in pressure management, converting a further ten networks to operate on remote pressure management equipment, and in reinforcement, addressing

existing areas of overcapacity to meet 1:20 supply obligations. However, NGN is also forecasting a 16% overall reduction in connections, expecting new domestic and non-domestic connection workloads to increase and existing domestic connection workloads to decrease.

NGN stated that they require a higher degree of certainty over when individual sites are likely to be delivered before identifying specific infrastructure requirements. Only then will they be able to accurately forecast capacity required, any engineering issues and any possible investment required in the early phases.

Cadent Gas' [Strategic Plan](#) for the period 2021-2026 outlines key initiatives across four focal areas. The plan includes an annual investment of £175 million to maintain network reliability, alongside commitments to allocate over 1% of post-tax profits to the Cadent Foundation for community welfare. Efforts to address climate change involve reducing gas leakage and achieving carbon neutrality in operations by 2026. Additionally, Cadent aims to enhance customer experiences through tailored services and inclusivity. Stakeholder engagement has informed these commitments, which are intended as performance benchmarks.

3.2.3 *Water*

The Central Lancashire area is served by United Utilities (UU) for water and sewerage facilities. UU plans in five-year cycles and take into account projected population growth and proposed new development. Its asset management plan (AMP) sets out the services and improvements UU intends to provide and how much they will cost – the latest is the [Strategic Asset Management Plan](#), published in 2023. AMPs are submitted to Ofwat, the industry regulator.

Water companies are also required to publish water resources management plans (WRMP) every five years and review annually. These plans inform the AMPs by identifying any supply deficits and suggesting how they may be overcome.

Through their latest [Water Resources Management Plan 2024](#), UU is planning for an adequate supply to meet demand from 2025 to 2085, and a supply system that is resilient to drought. United Utilities submission to Ofwat proposed £13.7 billion of planned investment between 2024-30.

United Utilities are seeking support of the councils with proposed investment infrastructure particularly in green belt and in green space areas. This is driven by the Environment Act 2021 with an obligation to progressively reduce storm spills into the environment. UU requests that policies within the CLLP are worded to recognise that infrastructure improvements, located within protected land, are appropriate forms of development which is reflected in policy and through designation of existing utility sites on the Proposals Map.

The Water Resources Management Plan outlines ambitious goals to address water usage and leakage while aligning with government targets and environmental objectives. By aiming to halve leaks and reduce water consumption to 110 litres per person per day by 2050, the plan contributes to broader carbon emission reduction efforts. United Utilities has requested a policy that implements the optional standard for water efficiency in the construction of new dwellings in the CLLP.

Additionally, it sets interim targets for reducing overall water demand by specified percentages in the coming years, with a focus on non-household consumption as well. The plan also emphasises improving service levels during water scarcity events, intending to benefit both customers and the environment. It proposes exploring options for water transfers, positioning the region as a net exporter during national shortages.

Environmental protection remains a key consideration, with measures in place to ensure sustainable water abstraction practices and ongoing efforts to enhance environmental conditions through Catchment Systems Thinking. Lastly, the plan prioritises flexibility and adaptability, acknowledging the need to address future uncertainties such as climate change and population growth effectively.

3.2.4 *Telecommunications*

The [Lancashire Broadband Improvement Scheme](#), primarily driven by the GigaFast project, aims to bolster broadband services across schools in the region as part of the broader Broadband and Online Services Bundle. This initiative encompasses upgraded connectivity, with Primary, Nursery, Special, and Short-Stay Schools benefiting from GigaFast Fibre Broadband, while Secondary Schools receive GigaFibre One, ensuring high-speed internet access tailored to their specific needs.

The rollout plan, extending from 2023 to 2025, is contingent upon the availability of national fibre infrastructure by Openreach. Pricing details are provided through service level agreement pricing letters, with Business Relationship Managers available for inquiries from new customers. Ultimately, this strategic initiative underscores LCC's commitment to enhancing educational resources and digital learning environments by providing reliable, high-speed broadband services integrated with essential support features.

The councils will ensure that new developments are built with the right infrastructure installed to allow premises to access superfast broadband.

3.3 Education

In January 2025, the school census showed that there are 627 schools in Lancashire which provide mainstream school places across the County of which 481 are primaries and 82 are secondaries. Lancashire has a 'mixed economy' of schools (academy, voluntary aided, voluntary controlled, foundation, grammar etc.) where many determine their own admission arrangements.

LCC has the statutory responsibility for ensuring sufficiency of places at any of these schools and this relies on effective collaboration with and between maintained schools and academies in the county to ensure sufficiency of places.

There is a single national measure to assess the net capacity of schools specified by the Department for Education, which should ensure a robust and consistent method of assessing the capacity of schools. The measure is used to identify a surplus or shortage of school places within schools and assess the need for new school place arising from development.

LCC takes an evidence-based approach to forecasting the need for school places to produce 5-year pupil projections. Forecasts are updated twice a year, in December and April, using data which includes:

- » Current and previous years' school census numbers
- » Inward and outward migration (or movement) of pupils between areas and schools
- » School net capacity assessment of buildings
- » Schools' published admission numbers (PAN)
- » Birth data
- » Local authority supplied planned housing data for the next five years.

On this basis, the latest assessment of school place requirements related to the Draft CLLP undertaken by the LCC School Planning Team has identified a need for the future school capacity as follows:

- » Primary: 2 form entry (FE) in Preston West and 1 FE in Leyland
- » Secondary: 6 FE in Chorley and 5.5 FE in Preston West.

The areas referred to above relate to LCC School Planning Areas. It should be noted that the School Planning Area for Preston West includes a large portion of North and North West Preston significantly beyond the proposed Preston West strategic site (SS5).

Within larger sites, land has been secured for the provision of new schools or extensions to schools. Sites where expansion or provision of new education facilities are anticipated include:

- » Land to the East of Wigan Road, Clayton-le-Woods (HC3.1)
- » Cottam Hall (Merry Trees Lane/Tom Benson Way) (HC3.2)
- » Higher Bartle (Maxy Lane/Sandy Lane/Tabley Lane) (HC3.3)
- » Tabley Lane (Northwest Preston Masterplan) (HC3.4)
- » Former Whittingham Hospital (HC3.5)
- » Land to the South of William Young Way (HC3.6)
- » Land at Bartle (HC3.7)
- » Pickerings Farm, Flag Lane (HC3.8)

- » Aston Way, Leyland (HC3.9)
- » Preston West (SS5).

The process of adopting the CLLP will allow the LCC School Planning Team to monitor the above assumptions and provide further detailed what schools are required and where, to be included in future updates of the IDP.

3.4 Health and Social Care

Health and social care in England are provided by a range of organisations under the umbrella of the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) which has the responsibility for strategic leadership of both the health and social care system. NHS England commissions specialised services (for example, cancer, renal and forensic mental health services) and some primary care such as dentistry, ophthalmology, offender healthcare and some services for the armed forces.

NHS England also has a number of roles including funding Integrated Care Boards (ICBs) to commission services for their communities and ensures that they do this effectively. The Lancashire and South Cumbria ICB covers the Central Lancashire area and is part of the leads the Lancashire and South Cumbria Integrated Care Partnership (ICP), which is a group of partners in a geographical area working together to address the health, social care and public health needs of their communities.

The ICP's Infrastructure Strategy sets out the current and developing service strategies and plans of the ICB, partner Trusts and associated Primary Care Networks. It maps the service aspirations and transformational plans and sets these in the context of the existing infrastructure to identify actions to meet these service plans and aspirations.

The report sets out the road map for achieving a successful healthcare system in Lancashire and South Cumbria. Collaborative planning and integration are vital for infrastructure development. Key interventions target efficiency through optimising capacity, leveraging digital transformation, and streamlining operational efficiency. Aligning with workforce needs and integrating decarbonisation efforts are crucial steps. Furthermore, maximising financial opportunities, fostering partnerships, and embracing creativity are emphasised. These strategies aim to create sustainable, efficient, and innovative infrastructure to support the evolving healthcare system in the region.

The ICP's latest [Integrated Care Strategy](#) identifies five key priorities with supporting themes and actions. It does not specifically reference any future proposals to support planned population growth but does confirm a need to put communities at the heart of decision-making, with meaningful community involvement that leads to real change.

- » Starting well: Focuses on improving care in the sector, aiming to clarify terms like "targeted health" and streamline information. Feedback suggests the need for clearer communication, inclusion of local statistics, and easier access to services like CAMHS and breastfeeding support.
- » Living well: Emphasises mental health support and overall well-being. Feedback suggests a need for clearer messaging, including a dedicated category for mental health, and addressing issues such as in-work poverty and support for vulnerable individuals with long-term conditions.
- » Working well: Aims to improve employment opportunities and well-being, though feedback suggests the need for clearer, more accessible information, punctuation for readability, and better support for children with learning difficulties transitioning into employment.
- » Ageing well: Seeks to enhance support for older adults, though feedback highlights the need for less wordy communication, clarification on what constitutes "ageing," and addressing issues such as transportation and enabling elderly individuals to remain in their own homes.
- » Dying well: Addresses end-of-life care sensitively, though feedback suggests reconsidering the wording for better sensitivity and personalisation. There's also a need for clearer guidance and more person-centered approaches to end-of-life care planning.

The need for additional health and social care facilities across Central Lancashire will depend on the amount and type of housing being provided, and whether there will be significant elderly or young populations. This will determine the required make-up of the clinical workforce and may, for example, highlight the need for practice nurse, dental, ophthalmic and pharmacy support.

It is clear, however, that the planned scale of development will have an impact on future health provision requirements and put additional pressure on existing resources. Large residential developments or a cluster of neighbouring developments will create a need for specific local health facilities if there is no existing local capacity or not likely to be in the near future.

In addition to the recently completed Ingol Health Centre, other key health infrastructure requirements have been identified across Central Lancashire, including the Chorley Health Hub and the Preston Health Hub at the St John's Centre, for which a planning application is expected in Autumn/Winter 2025.

3.5 Green and Blue Infrastructure

There is a network of green and blue infrastructure across and beyond Central Lancashire, which includes river valleys and canal networks. This infrastructure provides and brings many economic, social, and environmental benefits and fulfils many different functions for people and wildlife. Canals and towpaths offer active, low-carbon and sustainable ways to travel; health and wellbeing benefits and places where wildlife can thrive. Blue and Green Infrastructure also plays a key role in delivering Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS).

Works to improve the Lancaster Canal Towpath from Bridges 16 to 19 have been completed and there are plans to improve a smaller section of towpath from the canal terminus in Preston and Bridge 12 (subject to funding). The Canal & River Trust have identified the potential for further improvements along other sections of the canal towpath in Preston and Chorley, particularly near Botany Bay, however this will be subject to securing S106 funding. No specific further improvement projects have been worked up at this stage.

The towpath from Bridges 16 to 19 on the Lancaster Canal in Preston is included as an infrastructure project in the current Infrastructure Delivery Schedule along with two projects in South Ribble - the upgrading of Hough Lane and Central Park (Lostock Hall) and the Towngate Leyland Junction and Museum public realm enhancements.

A key component of the North West Preston strategic allocation (providing 5,300 homes in total) is a linear park connecting all the development parcels. Included in this proposal is the delivery of green infrastructure, neighbourhood play areas and on-site open space. Further green infrastructure is proposed with improvements to Moor Park, Waverley Park and Grange Park recreational spaces.

3.6 Waste and Recycling

Chorley, Preston, and South Ribble are waste collection authorities whose responsibilities include household and commercial/industrial (on request) collection services. LCC is the waste disposal authority, responsible for arranging for the disposal of waste collected by the waste collection authorities. All the authorities are part of the Lancashire Waste Partnership which aims to find better ways of handling and disposing of waste by working together.

A [Waste Management Strategy](#) was produced by the Partnership in 2009 which sets out how three larger central treatment facilities "Waste Technology Parks" were to be located at Leyland, Thornton and Huncoat, with supporting waste transfer station sites at Preston, West Lancashire, Pendle, Clitheroe, and Lancaster. There are recycling centres located at Chorley, Farrington and Preston.

A [Joint Minerals and Waste Local Plan Strategy](#) was also adopted in 2009 followed by site specific policies and allocations, and detailed development management policies for minerals and waste planning in 2013.

No specific waste infrastructure projects have been identified for inclusion through this update to the IDP.

3.7 Social and Community Facilities

Community facilities are an integral aspect of sustainable communities. These facilities are wide ranging and can include community centres, libraries, cultural venues, places of worship, burial and crematoria facilities, sports pitches, and play facilities.

The [Central Lancashire Playing Pitch Strategy & Action Plan Stage E Report](#) (January 2022), supplemented by the more recent Winter Sport Summary (May 2025), serves to identify key changes that have occurred, and

actions undertaken, including any consequent change in strategic position, since the adoption of the current Playing Pitch Strategy & Action Plan in 2018, in line with the CLLP review.

Across the Central Lancashire area, there is an overall shortfall in playing pitch provision for most sports forecast by 2036, but this is not uniform, and the recommended approach is to look to utilise actual spare capacity expressed on sites in order to cater for current and future demand in the first instance.

There is an identified shortfall in football pitches (particularly grass pitches) in Preston due to the loss of access to provision at UCLAN and Ashton Park. For future 3G pitches, the report recommends developing full sized 3G pitch equivalents with floodlighting to reduce evidenced shortfalls in Chorley with a focus on education/club sites and ensuring pitches at Bamber Bridge Leisure Centre are built in order to fully alleviate 3G shortfalls in South Ribble and opportunities should be explored for multi-pitch football hubs as a community offer in Preston.

In Preston, major improvements are planned and taking place to various parks across the city. The approach to the Draft CLLP will be to seek additional enhancement to parks and amenity spaces in general across the city, although specific details are not available at this time.

Playing pitch, parks and amenity space provision will be guided by the Playing Pitch Strategy and its identified needs, the Open Space and Recreation Assessments and other relevant information that the councils hold (Draft Policy HS5) to ensure flexibility in developer contributions.

3.8 Emergency Services

The three main emergency services, Police, Fire and Rescue and Ambulance, are responsive organisations with a duty to serve the population within their area, and so the deployment of resources is based on response times to serve this population. These services are not a significant driver or barrier to growth and will ordinarily deploy their resources to serve the scale and location of new development.

Ambulance services are provided by the North West Ambulance Service (NWAS) NHS Trust from locations across the North West including stations in Chorley, Leyland and Preston. In May 2023, the Trust board approved the refresh of the [2022-2025 Strategy](#) which sets out a strong and ongoing emphasis on closer working between NHS 111, 999 and patient transport services to ensure that patients receive high-quality care in line with their needs, regardless of how or where they contact NWAS. Investment in greener buildings, vehicles and energy supplies will improve environmental sustainability and help NWAS to become net zero by 2040.

The Lancashire Constabulary provides policing services across Lancashire. Chorley, Preston, and South Ribble fall within a 'southern division' - one of three divisions that consist of Neighbourhood Policing Officers, Task Force Officers, including Rural Task Force Officers, and Police Community Support Officers. There are police stations in Chorley and Preston.

The Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) for Lancashire launched the [Police and Crime Plan 2021-2025](#) in December 2021 which sets out the PCC's four-year plan for addressing crime in Lancashire. This includes commitments for the environment and sustainability with a strategic approach for reducing the demand for energy, reducing consumption, and using renewable energy sources. The [Police Annual Report 2022-2023](#) updates that as announced in December 2022 a new policing base for Chorley was to be built on Runshaw College's former Chorley campus to serve communities across Chorley and to replace the existing dated and not fit for purpose station in the town centre.

Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service focuses on helping to keep people safe and responding to emergencies. Medium term priorities are set out in the [Community Risk Management Plan 2022-2027](#). There are two 'wholetime' fire stations in Preston and at Penwortham and Leyland and 'wholetime/on call' fire stations at Bamber Bridge and Chorley. The [Annual Service Plan for 2024-2025](#) sets out that following a review of options for Service headquarters in Fulwood (built in 1891) a preferred option has been identified to relocate the service's training centre in Chorley and redevelop the Chorley site including training facilities. This would create a central headquarters hub in one location bringing operational and support staff together from across the county, with training and learning facilities and office space.

No specific infrastructure projects have been proposed for inclusion in the Updated IDP. However, each service needs to provide adequate coverage of new housing and employment developments and cope with a higher number of incidents resulting from a growing population.

4. Costs and Funding

4.1 Cost Estimates

The Updated IDP includes a varied level of information about the anticipated costs of the infrastructure required to support the growth envisaged in Central Lancashire.

However, as of September 2025, the current total estimate for the infrastructure required to support the anticipated growth in the Draft CLLP is just under £172 million, the majority of which is related to transport and education infrastructure. The transport evidence study provided a range of cost estimates for the identified measures - the Updated IDP has assumed the mid-point (P50 value) of these ranges in excess of £1 million (in line with government guidance) and a P85 value below this figure (where there is likely to be greater variability). Projected costs for education infrastructure use the Department for Education (DfE) scorecard costs per place as individual project costs are not known at this time. These estimates also exclude indexation.

4.2 Funding Sources

Any review of the likely funding sources for the infrastructure required in Central Lancashire will only be as accurate as the current circumstances, which themselves are in a state of flux given the ongoing changes within Lancashire arising from devolution.

A proposal for a Lancashire Combined County Authority (LCCA) model of local government has been prepared by the three upper tier councils of LCC, Blackburn with Darwen Council and Blackpool Council, which have negotiated a proposed Devolution Deal with government. If the proposals are accepted, government would give additional powers and funding to the LCCA and more control over the decision-making that affects Lancashire's residents and businesses.

The Devolution Deal would give Lancashire powers in relation to:

- » Economic development and regeneration functions
- » Adult education and skills functions
- » Transport functions
- » Compulsory purchase powers (subject to the consent of the local planning authority affected by the exercise of the function).

The publication of the Devolution White Paper in December 2024 outlined how greater powers, including those relating to strategic planning, could be offered to combined authorities in the future.

Despite this uncertainty over future funding and powers, there are a number of broad funding sources that will remain relevant in some form for the Updated IDP and the Draft CLLP, and these are described in the following paragraphs.

4.2.1 Capital Programme

Each of the councils' capital programmes are funded by the following sources:

- » Central government grants
- » Local taxation, for example, Council tax and charging for services such as housing rents, car parking etc.
- » Capital receipts
- » Borrowing.

Emerging Government policy on devolution means that there may be some changes, and opportunities, for new sources of devolved funding, particularly in the areas already set out in the Devolution Deal agreed with Lancashire.

The councils should continue to monitor these funding sources and take every opportunity to align the identified infrastructure needs of the area to future changes in devolution and governance through the ongoing use of the Updated IDP.

4.2.2 Government Departments

At any particular time, there are numerous Government funding allocations managed by different Departments – some of these are competitive, but some are allocated on a formula basis.

The most recent examples of competitive funding rounds were the Levelling Up Fund (LUF) and the Towns Fund, administered by the then Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, now the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG). There have been three rounds of LUF, and some of the infrastructure projects already under construction in Central Lancashire have been funded through this source as well as Towns Fund.

Following the findings of Preston City Council's Annual Infrastructure Funding Statement (2022/2023), a total of £434 million in new investment was agreed with government through the City Deal, which led to the expansion and improvement of the transport infrastructure in Preston and South Ribble enabling a forecast of 20,000 new jobs and 17,420 new homes to be created alongside contributions towards major infrastructure projects such as Broughton Bypass, Preston Western Distributor, the new Cottam Parkway rail station and various enhancements in public realm and city centre regeneration.

There is unlikely to be further rounds of LUF or the Towns Fund in the future, but no details have been provided by the new government as to what may replace it, although as noted above, the plans for devolution across Lancashire may influence the future arrangements.

MHCLG also administers the New Homes Bonus, a grant paid by government to local authorities to reflect and incentivise housing growth in their areas. It is based on the amount of extra Council Tax revenue raised for new-build homes, conversions and long-term empty homes brought back into use; there is also an extra payment for providing affordable homes. This is likely to continue to be available in the short term but may be reviewed as part of the government's Spending Review in Spring 2025.

The DfT has one of the largest ranges of different funds for improving infrastructure, which are a mix of competitive and formula-based allocations. The most appropriate ones for Central Lancashire currently include:

- » Integrated Transport Block
- » Highways Maintenance Block
- » Major Roads Network
- » Safer Roads Fund
- » Bus Service Improvement Plan
- » Active Travel Fund
- » Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure.

The previous government announced that the Local Transport Fund would replace the first two of these from April 2025 onwards, but the exact allocations and how some of the other funding, notably for public transport and active travel, will be included in any future devolved arrangements, has yet to be confirmed by DfT.

The DfE provides Basic Need Funding to local authorities each year to help them fulfil their duty to make sure there are enough school places for children in their local area. Allocations for 2026-2027 financial year, announced in late 2024, will support local authorities to create the new school places needed by September 2027. The rolling programme is expected to continue beyond this date, subject to a further announcement from the DfE.

In addition, local councils also receive high needs provision capital allocations to support the provision of new places for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities or requiring alternative provision.

4.2.3 Partner Funding

Throughout the Updated IDP, there are opportunities for the councils to work with delivery partners to help fund the identified infrastructure.

In transport, this will primarily be through National Highways and Network Rail, either through their five-year funding settlements with Government, or through dedicated funds devolved to these organisations, such as those to alleviate pinch points on the SRN or to deliver new rail stations where growth and demand is anticipated.

As noted, each of the utility companies is required to develop five-year business and investment plans and so providing each with a forward look of likely demand across Central Lancashire should help identify where interventions are needed before they become a constraint on future growth.

Delivery of the identified health and emergency services facilities will be led by the appropriate partner organisation, many of whom receive an annual grant from Government to commission and/or deliver the required services.

Taking forward plans for green and blue infrastructure will involve working with a range of partners at a national, regional and local level, including the Environment Agency and Natural England, all of whom have funding allocations that can be used, as well as seeking contributions from some of the current or future MHCLG funding sources, as well as the AONB Sustainable Development Fund and the Big Lottery Fund.

Government funding for flood defences is provided through the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) and is administered and managed by the Environment Agency.

4.2.4 Private Sector Contributions

Planning obligations are legal obligations entered into to mitigate the impacts of a development proposal, these are commonly referred to as 'Section 106' or 'developer contributions'.

These agreements are legal agreements which can be attached to a planning permission to mitigate the impact of development and can only be sought where they are directly related to the development and necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms. Contributions can either be provided on-site, for example by the provision of affordable housing, or off-site in the form of financial payments.

Infrastructure provision and financial contributions will be guided by evidence, much of which has informed this Updated IDP (for example, the Playing Pitch Strategy, Open Space and Recreation Assessment, the Transport Assessment and other information that the councils hold), as well as the type, scale, the impact of the development and viability, to ensure flexibility in developer contributions.

Developers may also contribute towards infrastructure by way of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) which is a fixed charge levied on new development to fund infrastructure. CIL is intended to fund more generalised, strategic infrastructure requirements across an area in order to support new development. It is a mechanism to secure financial contributions from developers on certain viable developments and CIL monies can be used to fund the provision, improvement, replacement operation and maintenance of infrastructure to support the development of the area.

Central Lancashire has a CIL charging schedule which is administered by each of the councils, and each publishes an infrastructure funding statement on an annual basis. These statements are a summary of developer contribution receipts, allocations, expenditure and any unspent or unallocated receipts collected from Section 106 agreements and CIL within the financial year. The CIL charging schedule is being reviewed as part of the Draft CLLP.

Private sector service providers, such as train operating companies and bus operators, as well as third party service providers, may also be potential sources of funding for the required infrastructure, either outright or, most likely, as a source of match funding for future funding bids.

5. Taking Forward the Updated IDP

This commission has critically reviewed the previous infrastructure plans prepared for Central Lancashire and developed an Updated IDP that identifies the critical infrastructure to support the planned growth in the Draft CLLP.

Regular engagement with infrastructure service providers has informed the development of the Draft CLLP and specific engagement has informed this Updated IDP.

To build on the work done in updating the IDP, and to ensure that the councils are in the best possible position to take an early view as to which infrastructure interventions it may seek to put forward for potential future competitive funding rounds, or to allow the work in progress to be used to respond to any planning applications, it is recommended that the Updated IDP be taken forward as a working document.

Using a spreadsheet approach initially, it has been possible to identify the key infrastructure schemes against timeframe, cost, lead agency, funding sources and gaps, risk and priority, to provide a 'live' copy of an IDP schedule that the councils could use to monitor progress across all infrastructure areas.

The current version of such a spreadsheet-based schedule has been prepared and is included at Appendix B.

The schedule should be reviewed regularly to ensure that it remains up-to-date and useful tools for co-ordinating investment in infrastructure and to capture the impact of any changes on the infrastructure required for growth in the future. Updates will be informed by:

- » Continuing input from stakeholders and infrastructure providers through the CLLP preparation process prior to adoption
- » Consultation with infrastructure providers and partners regarding capital programmes and infrastructure needs (within the councils and external)
- » Review of any updates to the CLLP
- » Monitoring indicators of relevant policies
- » Additional studies and desk-top research.

To allow continued updating and to provide clear visibility of the future infrastructure requirements to all partners, stakeholders and future investors in the Central Lancashire area, it is suggested that the schedule and the plan be developed in future as an open-source document.

This would initially use a GIS-based record of key infrastructure needs, which can then be a more useful tool with Members and partner organisations and allow developers an upfront view of the likely infrastructure requirements of bringing forward various sites, as well as being a powerful collaborative tool with other partner agencies who the work done to date has found can be sometimes difficult to engage with.

