

Central Lancashire Local Plan Local Development Scheme



Jan 2024 – Dec 2026



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1. Introduction

- 1.1 Local Plans, prepared by a local planning authority in consultation with its community, set out a vision and a framework for the future development of an area. Once in place, Local Plans become part of the statutory development plan. The statutory development plan for the area is the starting point for determining local planning applications. Every Local Planning authority in England must prepare a Local Plan.
- 1.2 The three Central Lancashire authorities of Preston City Council, South Ribble Borough Council and Chorley Council are working together to produce a single Central Lancashire Local Plan. This will form part of the statutory development plan for each district alongside other documents such as Neighbourhood Plans. It will replace the Central Lancashire Core Strategy 2012 and the three district Local Plans adopted in 2015. There will be written planning policies and proposals maps prepared as part of this work.
- 1.3 The purpose of the Local Development Scheme (LDS) is to provide the timetable for the production of the Central Lancashire Local Plan. Under planning regulations, the Councils are required to regularly update this document and keep it publicly accessible.
- 1.4 This document describes the updated programme for the review of the Local Plan which includes a comprehensive review of the existing development plan policies, refreshing the required evidence base, inviting a call for sites, and producing a draft pre-submission Local Plan for consultation ahead of formal submission and subsequent examination in public. If found sound following examination, the final stage will be adoption.
- 1.5 Work on delivering the Local Plan has progressed well. Several consultations have been conducted, including Integrated Assessment Scoping from August to September 2019, Issues and Options from 18th November 2019 until 14th February 2020 and Preferred Options from 19th December 2022 until 26th February 2023.

2. Purpose of the Document

- 2.1 This document covers the period between January 2024 and December 2026. It supersedes the previous LDS that covers the period between September 2022 and March 2025.
- 2.2 Since the previous LDS was adopted, there have been significant changes to national planning legislation. The three Central Lancashire Authorities remain absolutely committed to the delivery of the new Local Plan for Central Lancashire under the existing statutory planning regime. This updated LDS outlines how the Local Plan will meet the deadline of submission by 30th June 2025 and adoption by 31st December 2026.
- 2.3 The previous LDS outlined that Regulation 18 Consultation would take place in two parts; this is no longer the case. To meet strict submission deadlines there will not be a Preferred Options Part Two consultation. There will, however, be further consultation with the opportunity for the submission of representations at the Regulation 19 Publication Stage.
- 2.4 This LDS provides a project plan for preparing a new Local Plan for Central Lancashire. Minerals and Waste matters are the responsibility of Lancashire County Council, and so the preparation of the relevant development plan Documents related to those matters does not form part of this LDS.
- 2.5 The Local Development Scheme includes the following information:
 - Details of the high-level programme for the undertaking of a review of the existing statutory development plan including the Central Lancashire Core Strategy, Chorley Local Plan, South Ribble Local Plan and Preston Local Plan.
 - Details of the evidence currently under commission and to be commissioned to inform the preparation of the new Local Plan.
 - Information about the resources available, within Central Lancashire, for preparing the Local Plan.
 - The risks that might adversely impact on the achievement of the work programme set out in the LDS and how these risks are to be managed.

3. Background

3.1 This section presents information on the documents which make up the current development plan for the Central Lancashire Authorities.

Central Lancashire Core Strategy

3.2 The Central Lancashire Core Strategy adopted in July 2012, is the strategic document of the plan and covers all three Central Lancashire authority areas – Preston City, South Ribble, and Chorley. It sets the overall strategic vision for the area, including issues such as setting housing requirements, identifying strategic locations for development and principles for infrastructure.

District Local Plans

3.3 Each Central Lancashire authority produced a separate district Local Plan, all adopted in July 2015. The Local Plans set out development management policies and allocate or protect land for specific uses, such as for housing, employment or greenspace. Preston also has a City Centre Plan which was adopted in 2016.

Neighbourhood Plans

3.4 The Penwortham Town Neighbourhood Plan, Inner East Preston Neighbourhood Plan, Broughton in Amounderness Neighbourhood Plan, Barton Neighbourhood Plan and Woodplumpton Neighbourhood Plan prepared by the local neighbourhood forums with the support of the local councils, form part of the development plan. The Penwortham Town Neighbourhood Plan was made in March 2017, Inner East Neighbourhood Plan was made in April 2015, the Broughton in Amounderness Neighbourhood Plan was made in October 2018, Barton Neighbourhood Plan was made in December 2023 and Woodplumpton Neighbourhood Plan was made in February 2024.

Supplementary Planning Documents

3.5 Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) offer Local Planning authorities the opportunity to add guidance on specific policy areas. They are not part of the development plan. The purpose of SPDs is to provide guidance on the interpretation and implementation of relevant planning policies, such as those in the Central Lancashire Core Strategy. They are a material consideration in making planning decisions. The following Central Lancashire SPDs have been adopted:

Affordable Housing – Oct 2012

Controlling Re-Use of Employment Premises – Oct 2012

Rural Development – Oct 2012

Design Guide – Oct 2012

Access to Healthy Food¹ – Oct 2012
Open Space, Sport, and Recreation – Sept 2013
Biodiversity and Nature Conservation SPD – July 2015
Employment Skills SPD – Sept 2017

Statement of Community Involvement

3.6 Each Central Lancashire Council has an adopted Statement of Community Involvement (SCI). The SCI sets out who the Council will consult on various aspects of planning, and what methods the Council will use. The current version for each Council is listed below.

- Chorley Council's Statement of Community Involvement, adopted in April 2019, which is currently being updated.
- South Ribble Borough Council's Statement of Community Involvement, adopted in December 2013, an updated version is currently under consultation.
- Preston City Council's Statement of Community Involvement, adopted in December 2018.

¹ The Access to Healthy Food SPD was adopted in October 2012, however, after consideration at the Chorley and South Ribble Local Plan Examinations, the SPD and proposed Local Plan policy with their references to a 400m exclusion zones was not considered robust and the SPD has been suspended (in Chorley and South Ribble) pending a review which will inform whether it is revised or withdrawn and reviewed alongside the requirements of the new Local Plan

4. Resources

- 4.1 The three Central Lancashire Councils are working in partnership to undertake a review of the Central Lancashire Core Strategy and three individual Local Plans, and are jointly resourcing dedicated officers to contribute to the work. The following in-house resources have been established which are hosted by Chorley Council on behalf of the three Councils:
- 1 x Planning Policy Officer
 - 1 x Local Plan Project Manager
- 4.2 This dedicated plan making capacity is complemented by the substantive Planning Policy Officer and Manager posts at each respective council as required and also by external consultancy support as and when necessary.
- 4.3 In addition, joint working between the Central Lancashire teams is coordinated through a Central Lancashire officer working group. There is also a Joint Advisory Committee made up of Members from the three Central Lancashire Councils and Lancashire County Council.
- 4.4 The Planning Policy teams can draw on additional resources from other teams within each council for expertise on areas such as:
- Housing
 - Neighbourhood Management
 - Environmental Health
 - Climate Change
 - Economic Development
 - Property Services
 - Open Space Strategy
 - Corporate Policy
- 4.5 Lancashire County Council is supporting Local Plan preparation largely in the following areas:
- Transport and highways
 - Strategic Flood Risk
 - Minerals and waste
 - Cross-boundary issues
 - Health
 - Education

- 4.6 Consultants are engaged on specific projects where there is a lack of expertise or capacity in-house, for example the production of evidence base studies such as the Housing Needs Study, Employment Land Study, and Integrated Assessment.

5. Programme for review of the Central Lancashire Local Plan

- 5.1 A timetable for the Preparation of the remaining stages of the Local Plan is shown below in Figure 1. This shows the key dates for preparation of the Local Plan and consultation with stakeholders, with Table 1 providing more detail in support of this.

FIGURE 1: KEY STAGES OF THE CENTRAL LANCASHIRE LOCAL PLAN

Central Lancashire Local Development Scheme Timetable (2024 - 2026)			2024						2025						2026					
Year			Jan	Mar	May	Jul	Sept	Nov	Jan	Mar	May	Jul	Sept	Nov	Jan	Mar	May	Jul	Sept	Nov
Month	Start	End																		
Key Stage	Start	End																		
Preparation of Pre-Submission Version of Local Plan	Mar-23	Jan-25	█	█	█	█	█	█	█											
Regulation 19 Consultation	Feb-25	Mar-25							█	█										
Submission Stage (Regulation 22)		Jun-25									█									
Examination in Public	Dec-25	Jun-26												█	█	█	█			
Adoption	Jul-26	Dec-26																█	█	█

TABLE 1: DETAIL OF KEY STAGES OF THE LOCAL PLAN

Key Stage	Description	Timescale
<p>Issues and Options (Regulation 18- statutory Consultation)</p>	<p>Consultation process involving engagement of all stakeholders, statutory (UU, EA, HE etc.) and non-statutory including public bodies, members of the public, developers etc.</p> <p>This included publication of the initial tranche of sites suggested for development.</p>	<p><u>Consultation Period</u> November 2019 to February 2020</p> <p>Completed</p>
<p>Preferred Options Part One Consultation (Regulation 18)</p>	<p>Following Issues and Options Consultation, further detailed consideration of the sites was undertaken with potential site allocations for housing and employment identified, along with a number of policy directions, taking into account Issues and Options consultation responses and a review of the existing policies. Updates to the evidence base were also prepared as necessary.</p> <p>This included a 'Preferred Options Part One' draft Local Plan being published for consultation.</p>	<p><u>Preparation Period</u> March 2020 to December 2022</p> <p><u>Consultation Period</u> December 2022 to February 2023</p> <p>Completed</p>
<p>Publication of Pre-Submission Version of Local Plan and Consultation (Regulation 19)</p>	<p>Following the Preferred Options Consultation, further detailed strategic and development management policies will be formulated based on the responses from the Preferred Options Part One Consultation. Updates to the evidence base will also be prepared as necessary.</p> <p>This will include a 'Pre-Submission' Version draft Local Plan being published for consultation.</p>	<p><u>Preparation Period</u> March 2023 to January 2025</p> <p><u>Consultation Period</u> February 2025 until March 2025</p> <p>In Progress</p>
<p>Submission Stage (Regulation 22)</p>	<p>Collation of Representations to the Publication Draft Local Plan and submission to the Planning Inspectorate ahead of the examination in public.</p>	<p>By 30th June 2025</p>

Key Stage	Description	Timescale
Examination in Public	The Examination stage will last between 6-12 months from submission of the plan. The exact time will depend on the Matters in Questions (MIQ's) raised by the appointed Inspector and the timing of the hearing sessions themselves. In addition, further consultation may be required for any major modifications deemed necessary following the hearing sessions.	Expected in late 2025 until Summer/early Autumn 2026
Adoption	This will follow the examination in public. The length of time depends on the process for agreeing the findings of the Inspectors Report and arranging for the plan to go through three Full Council processes for adoption, with the final Full Council sessions forming the adoption date for all three councils.	Expected no later than 31 st December 2026

6. Evidence base

6.1 The preparation of the new Local Plan requires an extensive evidence base covering a wide range of topics. This section provides details of the evidence work undertaken to date and details of the work we are currently/planning to undertake to inform the Local Plan. Table 2 lists the relevant evidence documents that reflect the needs of the Local Plan and the work being undertaken at the County level which is relevant to the Local Plan.

TABLE 2 LIST OF CENTRAL LANCASHIRE LOCAL PLAN EVIDENCE DOCUMENTS (AS AT JANUARY 2024)

Evidence Documents	Date of Publication
(A) Housing	
Central Lancashire Strategic Housing Market Assessment	September 2017
Preston Student Accommodation Demand and Supply Study	August 2019
South Ribble Local Housing Needs and Demand Study	January 2020
Chorley Housing Need and Demand Assessment 2022	August 2022
Central Lancashire Housing Study	September 2022
Central Lancashire Housing Density Study	October 2022
Preston Housing Need and Demand Assessment 2022	December 2022
(B) Economy	
South Ribble Retail and Leisure Study	September 2017
Chorley Retail and Leisure Study	February 2019
Preston Retail and Leisure Study	April 2019
Employment Land Study Update	July 2022
Central Lancashire Retail and Leisure Study	In Progress
(C) Infrastructure and Transport	
Preston City Transport Plan	June 2019
Central and West Lancashire Rail Options	August 2020
Strategic Transport Assessment (Stage 1)	In Progress
Infrastructure Delivery Plan	In Progress
(D) Open Space and Green Belt	
Central Lancashire Playing Pitch Strategy Assessment Report	September 2018
Central Lancashire Strategy & Action Plan	December 2018
Chorley Council Open Space Study Standards Paper	February 2019
Central Lancashire Open Space Assessment Report	February 2019
Central Lancashire Playing Pitch Strategy and Action Plan	January 2022
Open Land Designations Study Landscape Assessment	October 2022
Green Belt Designations Study	October 2022

(E) Flood Risk	
Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Level 1	February 2021
Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Level 1 Update	In Progress
Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Level 2	In Progress
(F) Consultation	
Central Lancashire Local Plan Consultations Issue and Options Outcome Report	September 2020
Central Lancashire Local Plan Preferred Options Consultation Statement Main Report	August 2023
(G) Others	
Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment	July 2019
Integrated Assessment Scoping Report and Iteration 2	October 2019
Central Lancashire Local Plan: Integrated Assessment Development Site Options	November 2022
Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment Update	November 2022
Central Lancashire Whole Plan Viability and CIL Study	In Progress

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

6.2 Alongside the Local Plan, work will also be progressed on a CIL review for Central Lancashire. Although CIL is not itself part of the Local Plan, the Central Lancashire Authorities recognise there is a need to undertake a review of the existing CIL Charging Schedule to ensure that any future changes to this are in accordance with the findings of the viability work which is being undertaken as part of the evidence-based underpinning the development of the new Local Plan. This work identifies any future infrastructure needs the Local Plan will be required to deliver.

Integrated Assessment & Habitats Regulation Assessment

6.3 In addition to the above an integrated Assessment and Habitats Regulation Assessment is being undertaken of the Local Plan. It will incorporate the statutory requirements of Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessments.

7. Risk Assessment – Local Plan delivery

7.1 There are always risks associated with production of such a large project which may cause slippage to the published programme. The key issues for the Local Plan are discussed below.

Staff capacity/turnover/absence

Should there be a loss of staff due to sickness or turnover, staff from each of the Central Lancashire authorities' teams can be utilised to keep the project on track along with support from consultants as necessary until staff return or are replaced.

Political Delay

The potential for delays due to the political decision-making process is increased by the requirement for joint/aligned documents to be approved by the relevant decision-making structure of each Central Lancashire authority. This has been mitigated by involving Elected Members from all three authorities in a Joint Advisory Committee informed by each councils Elected Member Working Group/equivalent briefings in each district authority enabling Members to be fully involved in plan making.

Joint Working

Although there are considerable benefits in joint working, there are risks in terms of programming work and decision making. The three authorities are minimising this risk through a memorandum of understanding. There is also a Steering Group where the planning leads from each of the three councils, and LCC meet regularly to discuss the development of the plan and any ongoing issues.

Soundness of the Local Plan

There is a risk that a Local Plan may be found unsound. This risk will be minimised by liaising closely with relevant partners and agencies, neighbouring authorities, and having regard to the PAS soundness toolkit and Local Plan Route Mapper and procedural implications this may have.

Changing Legislation

The risk of changing legislation during the preparation of the Local Plan is very real. Since commencing the review, Government have undertaken three Consultations looking at reforms to the planning system between 2020 and m. The changes proposed in the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act (LURA) and introduction of the Environment Act have raised further issues which need to be addressed through the Local Plan. The legislative requirements following the introduction of the Environment Act are starting to come forward, with key details on the introduction of Biodiversity Net Gain in February 2024.

This impact will be addressed by officers attending events, liaising with relevant Government departments, keeping up to date with new policy and legislation and assessing how these impact on the Local Plan. Changing legislation is out of the authority's control, but the Councils are following Government advice of continuing with the plan through the current system.

Finance/Resource Availability

The costs of preparing a Local Plan are significant and there are financial challenges facing all Local Authorities, which will impact on the available resources for plan making in the forthcoming years. This will be considered by the authorities and assessed on an annual basis. The risk has been mitigated by advance budgeting, savings through joint working and the Government award of Planning Delivery Funding for two years earlier in the programme. The Steering Group receive regular finance updates which will alert them in advance of any major budgetary or resource issues.

8. Monitoring & Review

- 8.1 Each authority monitors the delivery of the Local Plan including policy achievement, targets, and milestones such as housing land availability and housing delivery. The annual monitoring reports review document preparation progress over the preceding year compared to the targets and milestones set by the authorities.
- 8.2 The latest monitoring reports for each of the councils can be viewed on the Planning Policy pages on each of the authorities' websites:

TABLE 3 LATEST MONITORING REPORT FROM EACH COUNCIL

Chorley Council	Planning policy evidence and monitoring - Chorley Council
South Ribble Borough Council	Planning, monitoring, and evidence - South Ribble Borough Council
Preston City Council	Monitoring - Preston City Council