

Report of	Meeting	Date
Director (Planning and Property) Introduced by (Executive Member (Economic Development and Public Service Reform))	Council	28 <sup>th</sup> January 2025

## Central Lancashire Local Plan 2023-2041 Publication Version (Regulation 19) Consultation

Is this report confidential?	No
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Is this decision key?	No
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### Purpose of the Report

1. To provide an update on the preparation of the Central Lancashire Local Plan 2023-2041 Publication Version including the two Regulation 18 consultations undertaken to date and the comprehensive evidence base underpinning the plan.
2. To seek approval of the Central Lancashire Local Plan 2023-2041 Publication Version for consultation and subsequent submission to the Secretary of State for independent Examination, in accordance with Regulation 19 (The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 and the transitional arrangements as set out in National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (December 2024, paragraph 234).
3. The Central Lancashire Local Plan is a joint plan covering the three Local Planning Authorities of Chorley, Preston, and South Ribble. Each Council will take a sovereign Council decision to approve the Central Lancashire Local Plan 2023-2041 Publication Version for the next stage of plan making.

### Recommendations

It is recommended that:

4. Approval for the Central Lancashire Local Plan 2023-2041 Publication Version (Regulation 19), as set out at Appendix One to the report, be published for a minimum of six-week period of public consultation, along with the Publication Policies Map Publication Version (appendices ten to thirty-three), the Integrated Assessment (Appendix two, which includes the required Sustainability Appraisal) and the supporting documents as listed in Appendix nine.
5. Delegated approval is given to the Director of Planning and Property in consultation with the Executive Member (Economic Development and Public Service Reform), to approve the final Regulation 19 Version of the Local Plan

including the accompanying Policies Map for public consultation ( minor changes needed for clarification and for consultation purposes), and other supporting material to be produced for consultation purposes, recognising as a joint local plan, collaboration is necessary with the other two Councils.

6. Delegated approval is given to the Director of Planning and Property in consultation with the Executive Member (Economic Development and Public Service Reform) following the completion of the consultation period, to submit the Central Lancashire Local Plan 2023-2041 Publication Version to the Secretary of State (together with any necessary minor modifications or that are required to ensure legal compliance 'soundness') in accordance with Regulation 22 (The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012), for independent Examination. This submission to include the required accompanying supporting documents.
7. Agree that Delegated approval is given to the Director of Planning and Property in consultation with the Executive Member (Economic Development and Public Service Reform), to request that the Local Plan Inspector recommends any main modifications to what the submission version of the plan (if necessary) in order for the plan will be to be legally compliant and found sound in accordance with Section 20(7c) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
8. Agree the adoption and use of the Central Lancashire Local Plan 2023-2041 Publication Version for development management purposes and determining planning applications, with appropriate weight given in accordance with paragraph 49 of the NPPF.
9. Note the accompanying background evidence and supporting documents to the Plan listed in Appendix Nine (to be published upon commencement of the Regulation 19 Consultation).
10. Agree that the Central Lancashire Local Plan Local Development Scheme (LDS) as published, has been reviewed and remains valid and therefore does not require updating.

### **Reasons for recommendations**

11. The recommendations should ensure that the new Local Plan for Central Lancashire can be progressed to ensure decisions can be made in accordance with a plan-led system. The plan is sound by being positively prepared, justified, and effective, as well as being consistent with national policy and being legally compliant.
12. These recommendations are intended to ensure that the Central Lancashire Local Plan 2023-2041 can continue to be prepared in accordance with the December 2023 version of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) in line with the transitional arrangements set out in the revised NPPF and other changes to the planning system.

### **Other Options considered and rejected.**

13. To not propose the Central Lancashire Local Plan 2023-2041 Publication Version should proceed to Regulation 19 Consultation ahead of submission to the Secretary of State for Independent Examination. This would leave the three

Councils without an up-to-date Local Plan contrary to the government’s ambition for complete coverage of Local Plans. This in turn would mean that the three Councils are vulnerable to speculative, unplanned-for development proposals and would require the preparation of a new plan to meet the new requirements set out in the December 2024 NPPF: including planning for higher housing need requirements under the revised standard method for housing.

14. The recommendations above ensure timely progress can be made with the Local Plan by moving forward with the next key statutory stage in the process. Once at Regulation 19 Publication stage, the Central Lancashire Local Plan 2023-2041 starts to carry a level of material weight in the determination of planning applications.

### **Corporate priorities**

15. The report relates to the following corporate priorities:

<b>Housing where residents can live well</b>	<b>A green and sustainable borough</b>
<b>An enterprising economy with vibrant local centres in urban and rural areas</b>	<b>Healthy, safe, and engaged communities</b>

### **Background to the report**

16. The three Councils of Chorley, Preston and South Ribble have a long-established proven track record of working together in plan making, which is permitted under Section 28 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. The extant Central Lancashire Core Strategy adopted in 2012 contains the strategic planning policies and the Central Lancashire Local Plan 2023-2041 Publication Version follows a comprehensive review of the policies alongside the three respective Local Plans and a decision made by the three Councils to update those policies.
17. Evidence strongly supports the premise that Central Lancashire is a single, self-contained housing market area and a functional economic market area and this new Local Plan includes all strategic and local development management policies to cover the period 2023-2041.
18. National policy allows for the preparation and adoption of joint local plans to be overseen either by the individual authorities involved or by a voluntary joint committee structure and both apply in this case. The established Central Lancashire Joint Advisory Committee has overseen the preparation of the plan for a number of years and on 16th December 2024 endorsed the Central Lancashire Local Plan 2023-2041 Publication Version for formal approval at the three sovereign Councils.

### **What is the Central Lancashire Local Plan 2023-2041 Publication Version?**

19. Planning Legislation alongside National Planning Policy and Planning Practice Guidance set out the process and tests by which, a plan is prepared and examined in order to achieve approval for adoption.
20. Plans should be prepared with the objective of contributing to the achievement of sustainable development (which is a legal requirement) and, be prepared positively, in a way that is aspirational but deliverable.

21. Plans are to be shaped by early, proportionate, and effective engagement, contain policies that are clearly written and unambiguous and are to be accessible through the use of digital tools to assist public involvement and policy presentation. Finally, plans should serve a clear purpose, avoiding unnecessary duplication of policies that apply to a particular area.
22. The Central Lancashire Local Plan 2023-2041 Publication Version (hereafter referred to as the 'CLLP Publication Version') covers the three geographic boroughs of Chorley, Preston and South Ribble and includes strategic and development management policies.
23. The CLLP Publication Version sets out the three Councils' approach to managing and delivering development for the three Boroughs between 2023 and 2041. Once adopted it will replace the Central Lancashire Core Strategy (2012), the Chorley Local Plan (2015), the Preston Local Plan (2015) and the South Ribble Local Plan (2015).
24. The CLLP Publication Version identifies sites for housing and employment and includes policies for future determination of planning applications in topics such as housing, retail, green infrastructure, community facilities, and the protection of natural and historic environments in the Boroughs.
25. The plan will shape the future growth of Central Lancashire and will be applied in planning decision making. Once approved for Regulation 19 Consultation stage, the plan begins to carry some weight in planning decision making, which each Council will address locally.
26. Once adopted, the policies contained within the CLLP Publication Version will form part of Chorley's (and South Ribble's and Preston's) statutory development plan and will be used to determine planning applications.
27. There are site allocations proposed for a variety of uses and a policies map for each Borough which illustrates the policies geospatially. These policies maps will be available to view on PDF only for this Regulation 19 stage with an online interactive mapping tool to be developed and made available in the near future.

### **Key Issues Addressed in the Publication Plan**

28. The CLLP Publication Version covers a broad range of topics each linked to the eleven strategic objectives of the plan whilst also meeting the fundamental overarching objectives of economy, social and environmental as set out in National Planning Policy Framework.
29. Key matters a local plan must address include identified need for housing and employment, in addition to setting out the contributions expected from development, including levels of affordable housing and other infrastructure such as that needed for education, transport and so forth.
30. The CLLP Publication Version also includes policies on a broad range of topics which will deliver direct benefits to our local communities, both in terms of new or improved infrastructure including play, open space and sports facilities, active and

sustainable travel, and also environmental measures including biodiversity gain and protection of our green belt and areas of open countryside.

31. A local plan is an important strategy which supports delivery of corporate ambitions and objectives, such as provision of affordable housing, tackling health and social inequalities and tackling the climate emergency. It sets out a mandate for the three Councils in shaping future growth in the three boroughs and ensuring this is determined locally.

### **Housing need and unmet need**

32. The CLLP Publication Version has a key role to play in providing the housing that the Central Lancashire area and its communities need, providing the scale and mix of house types and sizes, with a variety of tenures in a range of different places is important to meet local housing needs and support economic growth.
33. As part of the plan making process, it is required to identify the housing needs for the area for the period the plan covers and propose policies which demonstrate how those needs can be met.
34. As this local plan is being prepared under what is now the previous version of NPPF, the starting point for calculating the housing needs for this local plan is the standard method for housing (the Governments' prescribed formula) and then other factors are also considered including previous delivery, availability of jobs and economic growth.
35. The housing evidence produced a single recommended housing need figure for the Central Lancashire area as a whole which has then been broken down into three individual housing need figures for each Borough.
36. South Ribble and Preston Councils each have sufficient supply of housing sites to meet their identified housing need under the December 2023 NPPF figures. However, Chorley does not have sufficient supply of housing sites to meet their identified need. This is referred to as 'unmet need.' The provisions within NPPF set out the steps to be taken to address any unmet housing need, and these must be followed prior to any decision to review greenbelt boundaries, in order to meet that unmet need.
37. South Ribble and Preston Councils have identified an available supply of housing land which can accommodate Chorley's unmet housing need, and therefore through the mechanism of this CLLP Publication Version, have agreed to a redistribution of the total housing requirement to ensure housing need can be met in full across the Central Lancs area, for the full plan period.
38. This is of significant benefit to all three Councils not least as the progress of this new local plan would otherwise have to be postponed pending the commissioning of further evidence, at an additional significant cost to the public purse. Furthermore, as this would most likely require the release of greenbelt land in Chorley and South Ribble, due to the need to plan for the new housing figures introduced through the December 2024 version of the NPPF, further consultation would be required prior to the Regulation 19 stage.

39. The most significant benefit to all three Councils is the ability to continue with this local plan as intended. As a new NPPF has been published in December 2024, along with a change to the formula for the standard method, the annual housing need prescribed by Government for the three boroughs has increased.
40. By progressing with this local plan, this new NPPF requires that we must meet 80% of those new figures. However, if we must start a new plan (for example, if there are any unmet housing needs), the new figures apply in full which means that all three Councils would need to identify more sites for housing.
41. This would mean further delay to adopting a new local plan, additional costs in plan making and crucially, some or all three Councils potentially failing to demonstrate a five-year housing land supply and therefore being at risk of speculative development.
42. The table below illustrates the differences between the numbers with column one 'New Proposed Policy' showing what the new proposed annual requirements are.

#### **TABLE OF ANNUAL HOUSING REQUIREMENT PER COUNCIL**

	<b>New Proposed Policy</b>	<b>New Standard Method</b>	<b>Current (Out of date) Local Plan Figure</b>
South Ribble	460	489	417
Preston	520	590	507
Chorley	334	564	417

#### **The Regulation 19 Stage of Plan-making**

43. Regulation 19 is the final opportunity for stakeholders, consultation bodies and any others to provide feedback on the new local plan, before it's submitted to the Secretary of State, which thereafter leads to an Examination in Public providing further the opportunity for representations to be made. This is the version of the local plan that the three Council intend to submit and therefore is no longer 'draft.'
44. The Regulation requires that the Councils do two main things before submitting the local plan to the Secretary of State for independent examination, which are as follows.
- i. The Councils must make a copy of the plan and any other documents (such as evidence and background papers) and a statement of how they will undertake the consultation, and
  - ii. The Councils must ensure these documents are made available for inspection, with a statement setting out the places and times they are available to be seen, and send this to our consultation bodies, with an invitation to make representations. This consultation must be undertaken in accordance with the three Councils' Statements of Community Involvement (see Appendix Nine List of Supporting Documents).

45. It is important to note the distinction between the previous two consultations, “Issues and Options” and “Preferred Options” which are Regulation 18 Stage consultations, and this, the Publication Stage consultation (Regulation 19). Previously consultations were on options and emerging themes and policies for the new local plan and as such invited new ideas. Site suggestions and general non-specific feedback were allowed.
46. It was originally planned to undertake a further discretionary Regulation 18 consultation, a part two to the first Preferred Options undertaken in 2022/23, had time allowed. The two Regulation 18 Consultations were comprehensive and met the requirements and therefore in order to ensure a plan led approach is embedded efficiently, the plan is progressing as per the regulations, to Regulation 19 Publication Stage.
47. As this is now the Publication version local plan, representations made on this plan must refer to the tests of soundness and legal compliance of the plan and set how where and how the local plan does not meet the tests. Representors are asked if they wish to suggest a change to part of the local plan, they clearly set out why and how the plan should be changed.
48. The Publication Version of the Local Plan along with supporting documents and all representations are submitted to the Secretary of State, who appoints a Planning Inspector to test the plan. Therefore, respondents are required to provide their personal details and if they do not wish for these to be made available or published, their representation cannot be considered.
49. A simple Consultation Guidance note will be produced along with an ‘FAQ’ summary to explain in simple terms what the consultation is about and how to respond, which will be available both online and at the drop in events.

### **How Will Consultation Be Undertaken**

50. The Statement of Representation Procedure and Statement of Fact (Appendix Four) is a legal requirement of the regulations (Town and Country Planning (Local Planning (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended): Regulation 19: Publication of Local Plan. This document confirms The Central Lancashire Local Plan 2023-2041 Publication Version as the local plan for consultation and includes full details of how representations can be made, the period of consultation and the locations where the documents are available for view along with opening times.
51. The Statement also includes details of the local drop in events where the documents are also available to view and officers available to answer any questions.

### **The Duty to Cooperate**

52. The Councils are required by legislation and NPPF to engage constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis with prescribed bodies to make development plan documents, in respect of cross boundary strategic matters. The Councils must submit a statement alongside the Local Plan which confirms and demonstrates how the Duty to Cooperate has been achieved.

53. Throughout the preparation of the CLLP Publication Version, the Councils have engaged actively and constructively with prescribed bodies and key partners. The Interim Duty to Cooperate Statement (Appendix Six) documents the engagement and highlights the outcomes of it, demonstrating how the duty has been met.
54. Statements of Common Ground (SOCG) are being prepared in collaboration with key partners. These include a SOCG between the three Councils and Lancashire County Council, as a key partner and stakeholder to the local plan. This SOCG will cover strategic matters which include flood risk, transport, local nature recovery and longer-term strategic growth beyond 2041.

### **What Are the Next Steps to Progress the Central Lancashire Local Plan 2023-2041?**

55. The stages and timeframes for plan-making are set out in the Local Development Scheme (See under background documents). Following the conclusion of the Regulation 19 Publication stage, the three Councils will prepare for submission of the CLLP Publication Version to the Secretary of State in Summer 2025.
56. Regulation 22 sets out the requirements of this stage, prescribing the materials to be submitted which include a statement setting out the details of representations received including main issues and copies of those representations.
57. Subject to no significant or material changes being required, the Local Plan will be submitted as presented ahead of a Planning Inspector being appointed to independently examine the plan.
58. It is estimated that examination will commence late 2025 although this is subject to the Planning Inspectorate confirmation.

### **Reforms to the NPPF And Other Changes to The Planning System**

59. A new NPPF was published on 12th December 2024 which sets out the transitional arrangements for plan making which apply to this local plan and mean that we are able to progress under the provisions of the December 2023 version. For decision making purposes, the new NPPF applies. There are other measures proposed yet are not yet in force which includes changes to planning committees.
60. As part of the announcements to changes to the NPPF, the Deputy Prime Minister has asked that all local planning authorities produce an updated Local Development Scheme (LDS) by no later than 6<sup>th</sup> March 2025. The request sets out that the LDS must be clear, realistic and include specific dates for consultation and submission.
61. The LDS sets out the programme for plan making (see background documents for link to current LDS) and was last reviewed in 2024. As the three Councils are on track to meet the timeframes set out in the current LDS, it is proposed that we confirm to MHCLG as requested, that we have reviewed the LDS and consider it to remain valid.



## **Climate change and air quality**

62. The implications of the proposals within the CLLP Publication Version have been assessed as part of the Integrated Assessment provided as the supporting evidence.

## **Equality and Diversity**

63. The implications of the proposals within the CLLP Publication Version have been assessed as part of the Integrated Assessment provided as the supporting evidence.

## **Risk**

64. This CLLP Publication Version has been carefully prepared in conformity with the NPPF, Planning Practice Guidance and associated planning legislation.
65. Appropriate legal advice has been sought throughout plan making as required and the supporting evidence base produced by what are considered to be experts in the field, following robust procurement exercises.
66. The three Councils elected to participate in an optional Planning Inspectorate Advisory meeting recently for a 'light touch' review of the plan so far which was positive with no areas of concern raised.
67. It is therefore considered this plan meets the requirements as set out in NPPF and is therefore sound and ready for the next stage.
68. The main risk at this stage is that material objections to the plan are raised in the consultation however it is not envisaged this will be the case. In the event this happens, modifications can be proposed which would enable the plan to progress to submission.

## **Comments of the Statutory Finance Officer**

69. There are no direct financial implications arising from the report, however there could be significant financial implications if there were further delays in the publication of the Central Lancashire Local Plan.
70. Clearly the plan has wide ranging financial implications from its various outcomes. These are captured across the relevant reporting and reflected in financial receipts and costs through budget reporting.

## **Comments of the Monitoring Officer**

71. The procedure and legal framework for the progression of the development of the Local Plan are set out in the body of the report. The recommendations will ensure compliance both with the legislation.

## **Background Documents**

NPPF December 2023 [\[ARCHIVED CONTENT\] National Planning Policy Framework - GOV.UK](#)

## **Appendices**

Appendix One	Central Lancashire Local Plan 2023-2041 (Publication Version)
Appendix Two	Integrated Assessment of the Central Lancashire Local Plan: Pre - Submission Local Plan
Appendix Three	Pre-Submission Local Plan Integrated Assessment: Non-Technical Summary
Appendix Four	Statement of Representation Procedure and Statement of Fact
Appendix Five	Habitats Regulations Assessment of the Central Lancashire Local Plan: Pre-Submission Local Plan
Appendix Six	Central Lancashire Local Plan 2023-2041 (Publication version) Interim Duty to Cooperate Statement (Regulation 19)
Appendix Seven	Central Lancashire Local Plan 2023-2041 Statement of Common Ground with Lancashire County Council
Appendix Eight	Central Lancashire Local Plan Preferred Options Consultation (Reg 18) Consultation Statement
Appendix Nine	List of Supporting Documents
Appendix Ten	Central Lancashire Local Plan Policies Map (Publication Version) Map 1 - Overall
Appendix Eleven	Central Lancashire Local Plan Policies Map (Publication Version) Map 2 - Chorley Council
Appendix Twelve	Central Lancashire Local Plan Policies Map (Publication Version) Map 2.1 – Adlington Inset
Appendix Thirteen	Central Lancashire Local Plan Policies Map (Publication Version) Map 2.2 – Bretherton Inset
Appendix Fourteen	Central Lancashire Local Plan Policies Map (Publication Version) Map 2.3 - Brinscall and Withnell Inset
Appendix Fifteen	Central Lancashire Local Plan Policies Map (Publication Version) Map 2.4 - Buckshaw Village Inset
Appendix Sixteen	Central Lancashire Local Plan Policies Map (Publication Version) Map 2.5 - Charnock Richard Inset
Appendix Seventeen	Central Lancashire Local Plan Policies Map (Publication Version) Map 2.6 - Chorley Town Inset

Appendix Eighteen Central Lancashire Local Plan Policies Map (Publication Version)  
Map 2.7 - Clayton Brook/Clayton Green Inset

Appendix Nineteen Central Lancashire Local Plan Policies Map (Publication Version)  
Map 2.8 – Clayton-le-Woods Inset

Appendix Twenty Central Lancashire Local Plan Policies Map (Publication Version)  
Map 2.9 – Coppull Inset

Appendix Twenty-One Central Lancashire Local Plan Policies Map (Publication Version)  
Map 2.10 – Croston Inset

Appendix Twenty-Two Central Lancashire Local Plan Policies Map (Publication Version)  
Map 2.11 – Eccleston Inset

Appendix Twenty-three Central Lancashire Local Plan Policies Map (Publication Version)  
Map 2.12 – Euxton Inset

Appendix Twenty-Four Central Lancashire Local Plan Policies Map (Publication Version)  
Map 2.13 – Mawdesley Inset

Appendix Twenty-Five Central Lancashire Local Plan Policies Map (Publication Version)  
Map 2.14 – Wheelton Inset

Appendix Twenty-Six Central Lancashire Local Plan Policies Map (Publication Version)  
Map 2.15 – Whittle-le-Woods Inset

Appendix Twenty-Seven Central Lancashire Local Plan Policies Map (Publication Version)  
Map 3 – Preston City Council

Appendix Twenty-Eight Central Lancashire Local Plan Policies Map (Publication Version)  
Map 3.1 – Preston Urban Area

Appendix Twenty-Nine Central Lancashire Local Plan Policies Map (Publication Version)  
Map 3.2 – Preston City Centre

Appendix Thirty Central Lancashire Local Plan Policies Map (Publication Version)  
Map 4 – South Ribble Borough Council

Appendix Thirty-One Central Lancashire Local Plan Policies Map (Publication Version)  
Map 4.1 – Leyland Urban Area

Appendix Thirty-two Central Lancashire Local Plan Policies Map (Publication Version)  
Map 4.2 –Bamber Bridge Urban Area

Appendix Thirty-Three Central Lancashire Local Plan Policies Map (Publication Version)  
Map 4.3 – Longton and Hutton Area

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