



A Draft Local Plan for Lancaster District 2011 - 2026

Local Development Scheme July 2013



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Local Development Scheme for Lancaster District

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 The Local Plan for Lancaster District (referred to as the Local Plan from here on) aims to ensure that sufficient opportunities are available to meet the district's needs for housing, economic growth, education, shopping, recreation and transport priorities whilst ensuring that the community can flourish and the environment is protected and enhanced.
- 1.2 This Local Development Scheme (LDS) replaces all previous editions and describes how the Local Plan will be prepared, and additionally, intentions for preparing detailed advice on some planning issues.
- 1.3 This LDS is much simpler than any previous version. It gives direction at this point in time for Local Plan documents that will provide for the community's needs from the period 2011 – 2026; it will be refreshed as needed as Local Plan documents progress and circumstances change.
- 1.4 This LDS provides:
 - An introduction describing the context for the Local Plan;
 - A description of which documents Lancaster City Council will be preparing; and
 - A timetable for preparing each Development Plan Document (DPD) and Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).
- 1.5 The council is responsible for preparing all Local Plan documents with the exception of the Minerals and Waste Local Plan, which is prepared by Lancashire County Council.
- 1.6 This LDS will be published on the council's website at www.lancaster.gov.uk.
- 1.7 Any questions about the LDS of the Local Plan should be sent to planningpolicy@lancaster.gov.uk.



Figure 1: Plan of Lancaster district

South Lakeland district, in Cumbria, is to the north of Lancaster; Craven district in North Yorkshire is to the east, Ribble Valley and Wyre, both in Lancashire, to the south.

Lancaster district contains significant parts of two Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty; Arnside and Silverdale on the north west shores of the district, and the Forest of Bowland in the upland areas to the south east of the district.

2 A changing planning system

- 2.1 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) introduced a system for planning authorities to prepare Local Development Frameworks (LDF). The LDF was to be made up of a number of separate documents; starting with a Core Strategy, which would establish the principles for directing the broad location for development. The documents prepared as part of an LDF are known as Development Plan Documents (DPDs).
- 2.2 In recent years the system has been revised, by:
- The Localism Act (2011) which introduced neighbourhood planning powers; revoked Regional Strategies and introduced a duty to co-operate for local authorities, their neighbours and key stakeholders;
 - The publication of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) in 2012, which replaced previous Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) and Planning Policy Statements (PPS) and established a guiding principle of a presumption in favour of sustainable development and
 - The introduction of new development plan regulations and new terminology.
- 2.3 The NPPF now refers to the collection of documents that make up the statutory plan for a Local Planning Authority (LPA) as a Local Plan. Accordingly, the council is preparing a new Local Plan. The NPPF must be taken into account in the preparation of local and neighbourhood plans, and it is a material consideration in planning decisions.
- 2.4 The Localism Act introduced a duty to co-operate which requires planning authorities and other public bodies to actively engage and work jointly on strategic matters. The council is therefore co-operating actively and on an ongoing basis with the neighbouring districts of South Lakeland, Wyre, Ribble Valley and Craven. The council also works with Lancashire County Council and other councils where there may be a shared interest, for example in planning to meet the needs of Gypsies and Travellers; and with government agencies and infrastructure providers.
- 2.5 The Localism Act also introduced powers for local communities to prepare their own Neighbourhood Plans. They must conform to the Local Plan, go through an independent examination and be supported by a referendum. If these conditions are met then neighbourhood plans can also become a component of the Local Plan. Currently there are no Neighbourhood Plans under preparation in the district.
- 2.6 The procedure for the preparation and review of Local Plans has been revised and is contained in The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) 2012 Regulations.

3 The current local development plan

- 3.1 A Local Plan is made up of a set of Development Plan Documents (DPDs). When prepared these Development Plan Documents are subject to Sustainability Appraisal (SA). The SA process provides the opportunity to consider their economic, social and environment effects. The DPDs are subject to public consultation and independent examination before they can be formally adopted.
- 3.2 The current Development Plan in Lancaster District, excluding the Minerals and Waste Local Plan, comprises the saved policies of the Lancaster District Local Plan (2004) and the Lancaster District Core Strategy (2008).
- 3.3 The council has also adopted a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) on Meeting Housing Needs which supports the implementation of Core Strategy Policy SC4, particularly with regard to securing affordable housing.
- 3.4 However, circumstances have changed significantly since the previous Local Plan and the Core Strategy were prepared. Since 2008 the council has:
- Commissioned an Affordable Housing Viability Assessment (2010);
 - Undertaken a Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (2009);
 - Completed a new Housing Needs Study (2011); and
 - Examined the potential for introducing a Community Infrastructure Levy (2012).
- 3.5 More significantly the adoption of the Core Strategy coincided with the onset of the national economic recession which has lead to greatly reduced levels of development with very little prospect that development rates can quickly return to the expected levels.
- 3.6 With similar issues being experienced across the country the Government published new national guidance, with the intention of helping to encourage greater development activity. The NPPF advised that each local planning authority should produce a local plan for its area that can be reviewed in whole or in part to respond flexibly to changing circumstances. The Regional Strategy, the document which established housing requirements for each local planning authority, was revoked in May 2013.
- 3.7 Whilst both the previous Local Plan and Core Strategy were prepared prior to the publication of the NPPF, the policies should not be considered out of date simply because they were adopted prior to this. Due weight should be given to relevant policies in existing plans according to their degree of consistency with the framework, that is: the closer the policies in the plan are to the policies in the NPPF, the greater the weight that may be given.
- 3.8 The impact of changing circumstances and lower levels of development delivery has impacted in particular on the extent to which Core Strategy Policy SC2 on urban concentration can be achieved. Paragraph 4.45 of the Core Strategy states that “in the context of achieving a five-year housing requirement, a variance of more than 10% will trigger a consideration of the need to review the planning housing delivery programme.” The current state of the economy has triggered this variance and therefore the council is obliged to review its approach to this issue.

- 3.9 Similarly Core Strategy Policy SC3 on rural communities identified eight key villages, on the basis that they had five basic services, as being the most suitable location for development, including housing and employment. The Core Strategy directs rural development towards these settlements whilst outside of these settlements development requires exceptional justification. However, in the time since the policy's adoption the amount of development in rural areas has been very limited and very few development proposals have come forward. The Local plan intends to allow for a new approach that encourages developers to make a case for proposals in a greater number of settlements than just the eight key settlements listed in the Core Strategy.
- 3.10 Given that circumstances have changed so significantly since 2008 the council has taken the view that the policies of the Core Strategy should be replaced once the new Local Plan documents are adopted.
- 3.11 Once adopted the new suite of Local Plan documents will address all planning policy matters. Relevant policies of the Core Strategy will be retained until all the Local Plan documents (described in greater detail in the next section below), have been adopted. The current suite of documents is: the Development Management Document DPD, Land Allocations DPD, Morecambe Area Action Plan, Arnside and Silverdale DPD and Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation DPD.
- 3.12 DPDs are often accompanied by SPDs. These describe a local planning authority's expectations in more detail, for example on meeting housing needs. SPDs must be prepared with consultation but can be adopted without the need for an independent examination.
- 3.13 Upon adoption of all of these documents, described in Table 1, the council will have a new Local Plan for Lancaster District 2011 - 2026.

Table 1: Current Development Plan Documents

Document	Purpose	Stages
Joint Lancashire Minerals and Waste Local Plan	Prepared by Lancashire County Council The Joint Lancashire Minerals and Waste Development Framework Core Strategy DPD were adopted by the three joint authorities of Blackpool, Blackburn and Lancashire County Council in early 2009. The joint authorities have since been working on a Site Allocation and Development Management Policies Local Plan. This has been through the examination process, has been found Sound and will be adopted in the near future, potentially in October 2013. Following adoption the joint authorities intend to review and roll forward minerals apportionments, and then merge the adopted Core Strategy and Site Allocations documents into one Local Plan document. Consideration must now be given as to how the allocations are shown on the council's Policies Map.	Current Stage
		Inspector's report received, document found sound and adoption processes being prepared
		Next Stage Adoption the process of merging Site Allocations documents and Core Strategy into one Local Plan document
Saved Polices of the Lancaster District Local Plan 2004	Saved policies from the Lancaster District Local Plan, adopted 2004, retain local development plan status. These will remain part of the council's planning policies until replaced by a relevant policy in the new Local Plan. Some of the old Local Plan policies have been superseded by Core Strategy policies. In the event of a conflict between an existing saved policy and the NPPF the latter will of course take precedence. All remaining saved Local Plan polices will be superseded by policies in the new Local Plan.	Current Stage
		A number of polices are saved and remain pertinent, though only when the do not conflict with the intentions of the NPPF
		Next Stage Replacement by adoption of emerging Local Plan for Lancaster District
Lancaster District Core Strategy 2008	Provides the strategic planning framework for the district; setting out the long term spatial vision and strategic objectives, and the quantity and spatial distribution of development. It was adopted in 2008. Its implementation has been challenged by rapidly changing economic circumstances, a refreshed evidence base, the revocation of the Regional Strategy, and greatly revised national planning guidance. It will be wholly replaced by the eventual adoption of the Development Management DPD, Land Allocations DPD, Morecambe Area Action Plan DPD, AONB DPD, and Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation DPD.	Current Stage
		Adopted and continues to set strategic development plan consideration until replaced
		Next Stage Replacement by adoption of emerging Local Plan for Lancaster District

4 A Local Plan for Lancaster District

- 4.1 The council has previously intended to prepare a Development Management DPD, Land Allocations DPD and Morecambe Area Action Plan, all at the same time and under a hierarchy that retained the Core Strategy as the strategic level document. However, there is little logic in maintaining the Core Strategy as the upper level document when it predates the significant changes in context and guidance described in the previous section. The council now intends to produce a set of documents that will make up the Local Plan for Lancaster District and will fully supersede the Core Strategy.
- 4.2 It is proposed that the Development Management DPD and Morecambe Area Action Plan are published soon. However, following the formal revocation of the Regional Strategy and having developed and appreciation of how the NPPF's guidance that local authorities must plan for their objectively assessed housing need, the council has commissioned a new Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA). This SHMA, which is due to be completed in August 2013, will help to establish the housing requirement for the next fifteen years.
- 4.3 The housing requirement that emerges from the SHMA process will need to be addressed through the Land Allocations DPD. Land in addition to the housings sites that were identified in the Draft Preferred Options Local Allocations DPD in October 2012 may need to be indentified. The council will need time to consider the options from the SHMA; the opportunities available for deliverable housing sites from the findings of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (2013) (SHLAA); and then determine if additional housing land is needed. It is likely that an additional period of consultation, potentially in late 2013, will be required to provide the community and stakeholders with an opportunity to consider additional sites for housing.
- 4.4 The Local Plan consists of five development plan documents, described in Table 2. It is possible that further development plan documents may be necessary and these would be added to successive Local Development Schemes. The following table provides the name of each document, its purpose, the current stage of preparation and the next stage of preparation. The timetable is subject to frequent updating as circumstances change and progress is made, for the most up to date position please do refer to the council's website at www.lancaster.gov.uk/planningpolicy.

Table 2: Emerging and proposed Development Plan Documents

Document	Purpose	Stage
Development Management	Provides the policies that are used in the assessment of planning applications to guide, control and encourage sustainable forms of development.	Current Stage
		Draft Preferred Option published October 2012
		Next Stage
		Formal Publication expected October 2013
Land Allocations	Identifies or allocates land for development, for example for housing and employment, and for protection from development, for example, areas protected due to providing habitats for nature conservation purposes.	Current Stage
		Draft Preferred Option published October 2012
		Next Stage
		Potential addendum consultation expected Winter 2013
Morecambe Area Action Plan (MAAP)	The central Morecambe area is a regeneration priority. The MAAP is being prepared to change perceptions; increase developer and consumer interest and so improve conditions for business and trading to help grow the local economy. The MAAP allocates land for development, provides development management policies to supplement those in the Development Management document and describes specific actions to improve the local environment.	Current Stage
		Preferred Option published October 2012
		Next Stage
		Formal Publication expected October 2013
Arnside and Silverdale AONB	The Arnside and Silverdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) is an area of national landscape importance. Part of the AONB is in Lancaster district and part is in South Lakeland district. The national importance and environmental sensitivity of this area means that development needs have to be met in a way which reflects its special character. As there are advantages to planning in a consistent way across the AONB, council and South Lakeland District Council are working on a joint development plan document that will both identify sites and provide development management policies. This will be prepared in close consultation with local communities.	Current Stage
		Both councils and the relevant parishes have signed an agreement on the principle of preparing this document, initial scoping meetings have taken place
		Next Stage
		Ongoing work to prepare the document
Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation	Subject to the consideration of the findings of the Gypsy, Traveller and Show people Accommodation Needs Assessment, it is expected that a separate DPD will be needed. It would identify approaches and potentially allocate sites	Current Stage
		Consideration of findings of assessment is underway

	to meet the needs of these community groups. It is felt that the attention and detail that is needed to advance these matters is best dealt with through a commitment to prepare a separate document. This will be prepared in close consultation with community groups.	
		Next Stage
		Formal scoping

- 4.5 In addition to the five proposed DPDs, described in Table 2, the council will prepare a range of SPDs intended to add more detail to the policies in the Local Plan. They will provide guidance for development on specific sites, or on particular issues, such as design. SPDs are a material consideration in planning decisions but do not have the statutory weight of Local Plan policies.
- 4.6 A list of intended SPDs is described in Table 3; these are subject to review if circumstances change.

Table 3: Supplementary Planning Document to accompany the Local Plan

Document	Purpose	Stage
Meeting Housing Needs	Topic based document applicable to all residential development across the district. Will provide greater detail to support the implementation of Core Strategy Policy SC4 and Development Management policies; CSC1 New Residential Development; CSC2 Sustainable Rural Housing Growth; CSC3 Residential Conversions; CSC4 Accommodation for Vulnerable Communities; CSC5 Accommodation for Students; and CSC6 Accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers, and Travelling Show people. Policy SC4 sets out the council's intentions to maximise the opportunities offered by new development to redress imbalances in the local housing market; achieve housing that genuinely addresses local housing need; and secure affordable housing in perpetuity.	Current Stage
		Adopted in 2012
		Next Stage
		Will be reviewed following the adoption of Development Management DPD and regularly as housing market conditions could change.
Open Space Standards	To provide a methodology for calculating contributions from development proposals, and set out arrangements for the future management of amenity open space and play provision.	To be prepared
Sustainable Construction and Design	To provide guidance on design to encourage more energy efficient forms of development. These measures include for example, advice on building orientation and layout, improving energy efficiency through the use of design and the choice of materials, promoting rainwater recycling, on-site energy generation and incorporating recycling facilities.	To be prepared
Shop fronts and Advertisement	To provide guidance on design, this will be a refresh of the current Supplementary Planning Guidance.	To be prepared
Accommodating the local implications of Heysham 3 Nuclear Power Station	Potentially required if a decision is made at national level to develop a third nuclear power station at Heysham. It would describe the how community benefits might be deployed to support local regeneration or other activity. Scope and purposes to be decided.	To be prepared, if required
Student Housing and Young Worker Accommodation	To provide further detail on the implementation of policies in the Development Management DPD that relate to proposals for student housing and young worker accommodation.	To be prepared
Residential Design and Layout	To illustrate how Local Plan policies that encourages good neighbourly design of residential development, including extensions, can be achieved	To be prepared

<p>Development Briefs</p>	<p>To give guidance on development of specific sites. They will show how the policies of the Local Plan apply to individual sites as well as describing requirements on development siting, vehicular, cycle and pedestrian access, design and landscaping. Development Briefs are subject to public consultation. Once adopted, they are used to assist the master planning of development and in the consideration of planning applications The Development Briefs will describe in greater detail how sites identified as strategic land allocations in the Local Plan, in south and east Lancaster, and potentially elsewhere, will deliver the council's expectations on sustainable forms of development</p>	<p>To be prepared</p>
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4.7 Other SPDs may address the following matters such as:

- Protecting community assets, general approaches to planning obligations, particularly in the context of regulations on Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL);
- mitigating the direct impacts of development;
- trees and woodlands,
- the management of caravan sites, chalets and leisure facilities with visitor accommodation; and
- skills and training - to provide further detail on local employment and apprentice schemes to be brought forward by developers when implementing major development proposals.

4.8 A number of complimentary processes and documents are required to produce the Local Plan; these are described in Table 4.

Table 4: Setting a timetable for the Local Plan and other processes

Document/ process	Purpose	Stage
Local Development Scheme (LDS)	This document sets the Local Plan documents which the council is going to prepare and the timetable for preparing these documents.	Current Stage
		This document is being refreshed, July 2013
		Next Stage
		The LDS will be refreshed and maintained regularly. Progress updates will be shown on the council's Website.
Policies Map	It comprises all of the site allocations and designations set out in adopted development plan documents. As new Local Plan documents are adopted their policies will be added to the Policies Map, whilst policies that are superseded or have been implemented will be deleted. The Policies Map will be a live and updatable document on its website. A limited number of printed copies will be created only for the purpose of consultation during preparation of the Local Plan.	Current Stage
		The Lancaster District Local Plan Proposals Map remains relevant, where it relates to saved policies
		Next Stage
		Ongoing; maintaining a Policies Map that illustrates the Local Plan position; including Land Allocations and Minerals and Local Waste Plan Site Allocations.
Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)	This document sets out the council's approach to engaging the community in preparing the Local Plan and in considering planning applications. Adopted in 2006, a revised edition has recently been prepared and will be adopted soon.	Current Stage
		Adopted version currently being revised
		Next Stage
		Adoption expected August 2013
Sustainability Appraisal (SA)	Undertaken for all DPDs, and if required for, SPDs. This will ensure that the social, economic and environmental effects of policies are understood and fully taken into consideration. A SA report will accompany each published stage of a DPD, including the Submission version.	Current Stage
		SA is undertaken for all Local Plan Documents
Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) and Appropriate Assessment (AA)	Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) of all DPDs must be undertaken to establish whether or not the proposals are likely to have significant effects on any areas of international biodiversity importance. Where an HRA cannot state with certainty that there will be no significant effects then an Appropriate Assessment (AA) is also required. It determines the likelihood of	Current Stage
		HRA, and only if required, AA, are undertaken all Local Plan Documents

	such effects, what these effects will be and whether and how these might be mitigated. The HRA, and, if required, the AA reports will accompany each DPD at consultation and publication stages.	
Annual Monitoring Report (AMR)	The AMR reviews progress made on preparing Local Plan documents and assesses the effectiveness of policies. This no longer needs to be submitted to the Secretary of State but continues to be published on the council's website.	Current Stage
		The AMR for financial year 2012 – 13 is on the council's website
		Next Stage
		AMR for year 2013 – 14
Evidence Base	This is comprises data collected and analysed by the council and also studies carried out by consultants on behalf of the council, or other relevant evidence prepared by other parties. Key Evidence includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Flood Risk Assessments • Housing Needs Studies • Strategic Housing Market Assessments • Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment • Employment Land Studies and Retail Studies • Employment Land studies • Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessments 	Current Stage
		On-going updates

5 Scope and timetable for Development Plan Documents

Table 5: Details of scope and timetables for proposed Development Plan Documents

Development Plan Document	Current status	Summary of role and content	Geographical extent	Activity to date	Expected date of formal Publication	Expected date of submission to the Secretary of State	Expected date of adoption	Future status
Development Management (Policies)	Preferred Option Document Published October 2012	Provides polices for determining development proposals	All of the district with the exception that complementary policies appear in the MAAP and AONB DPDs	Following consideration of responses to on Preferred Options consultation a revised version for publication will be presented to council in September 2013	October 2013	December 2013	July 2014	Refreshed as required and maintained as key component of the Local Plan
Land Allocations	Preferred Option Document Published October 2012	Establishes development requirements and allocates land for development or for protection from development	All of the district with the exception that complementary policies appear in the MAAP and AONB DPDs	Following consideration of responses to the consultation on Preferred Options Document and consideration of imminent refresh of SHMA and SHLAA a revised version will be subject of consultation in late 2013/early 2014	July 2014	September 2014	April 2015	Refreshed as required and maintained as key component of the Local Plan
Morecambe Area Action Plan	Preferred Option	To support regeneration	Central commercial	Following consideration of	October 2013	December 2013	July 2014	Refreshed as required as a

Development Plan Document	Current status	Summary of role and content	Geographical extent	Activity to date	Expected date of formal Publication	Expected date of submission to the Secretary of State	Expected date of adoption	Future status
	Document Published October 2012	activity and actions to enhance urban realm	core of Morecambe and central promenade	responses to on Preferred Options consultation a revised version for publication will be presented to full Council in September 2013				separate DPD and maintained as key component of the Local Plan
Arnside and Silverdale AONB	Memorandum of Agreement signed by all relevant parties	To identify sites which will deliver new housing and employment development and set out policies to guide the approach to design and development in the AONB	The whole AONB including that part which is in South Lakeland District	Matter discussed at frequent Duty to Cooperate Meetings 2011-2013. Memorandum of understanding signed June 2013, scoping meeting held July 2013	June 2015	September 2015	January 2016	Refreshed as required as a separate DPD and maintained as key component of the Local Plan
Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation	Consideration of emerging outputs of assessment study underway	To identify sites which will deliver the required accommodation for Gypsy, Traveller and Show people	All of the district	Following accommodation assessment study engagement with the Gypsy and Traveller Community has been organised for summer 2013	December 2014	April 2015	November 2015	Refreshed as required as a separate DPD and maintained as key component of the Local Plan

An account of the development plan status of existing and emerging local plan policies is maintained on the council's website. For further information please contact the Planning and Housing Policy Team using the contact details below:

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