

Interim Lancaster District Local Plan Timetable

6 March 2025

This Interim Lancaster District Local Plan Timetable has been prepared in response to the direction of Matthew Pennycook, Minister of State for Housing and Planning, within his Written Ministerial Statement (WMS) “*Building the homes we need*” published on 12 December 2024. The Minister stated that he would write to all local planning authorities asking them to provide an updated plan-making timetable within 12 weeks. On 13 December 2024, Joanna Averley, the Chief Planner at the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government stated that this meant by no later than 6 March 2025.

Lancaster City is preparing a new local plan and has been preparing that plan in accordance with a Local Development Scheme (plan timetable) that provides dates for the preparation “milestones” (such as the anticipated publication date of the draft Local Plan), however the government wishes local planning authorities to prepare plans in accordance with a proposed new system, although the details of this new system have not yet been announced. The new system will require local planning authorities to set out the dates for the preparation of their local plan within a fixed 30-month long time-period following a formal commencement date. The new timetable must provide the “milestone” dates and dates for “Gateway Assessments”. These new assessments involve a government appointed external assessor conducting a three-stage review of the emerging local plan prior to it being submitted to government.

This document is an **Interim Lancaster District Local Plan Timetable**; it has been submitted to government and published on the City Council’s website to satisfy the Government’s direction that a new timetable must be made available by 6th March 2025. The City Council’s Cabinet will formally consider the proposed timetable soon. It is hoped that Cabinet will have the benefit of the awaited details of the new system from Government to support that formal consideration. The Council’s Cabinet will confirm, or potentially amend the interim timetable below, prospectively on 15 April 2025. A formally approved version of the timetable will then appear on the City Council’s website.

The Lancaster District Local Plan for 2028/29-2042/43 will:

- (o) Be a single Local Plan, prepared by the City of Lancaster District Council for the whole of the local planning authority area except for the part of the district within the Yorkshire Dales National Park where planning responsibilities are discharged by the Yorkshire Dales National Park Planning Authority.
- (o) Establish the amount of development required in the district in the period from its anticipated adoption in June 2028 for the 15 financial years following adoption (including the financial year in which it was adopted); that is: 2028-2029 to and including financial year 2042-2043.
- (o) Provide the appropriately considered and robust spatial framework needed to respond to the significant and unfolding challenges raised by Climate Change, including meeting obligations and objectives on climate change in UK Legislation and national planning guidance, through planning policies that deliver on objectives to address climate mitigation, climate adaptation, and community, economy and environmental climate resilience.
- (o) Take account of the Lancashire County Local Nature Recovery Strategy, including the areas identified in the strategy as areas which are, or could become, of particular importance for biodiversity, or, areas where the recovery or enhancement of biodiversity could make a particular contribution to other environmental benefits, and the priorities set out in the strategy for recovering or enhancing biodiversity.
- (o) Establish the broad principles for the spatial distribution of the development required within the district over the Local Plan period.
- (o) Allocate sites for specific development purposes and set policy requirements for social, environmental and economic benefits to be enabled through the delivery of development proposals.
- (o) Identify specific areas to be protected from development for the purposes of; achieving objectives on environmental management; maintaining and enhancing biodiversity; retaining or securing land for formal and informal recreation and protecting valued landscapes.
- (o) Provide a definition of “infrastructure” for the purposes of the new Local Plan.
- (o) Provide details of any infrastructure requirements understood to be needed to enable the achievement of the development needs identified in the Local Plan.

- (o) Establish the Local Planning Authority's approach to seeking contributions to enable the delivery of infrastructure to achieve the development requirements of the Local Plan.
- (o) Establish specific requirements for affordable housing in the Local Plan area.
- (o) Contain policies to shape the delivery of housing such that it best addresses the housing needs of the community in terms of type, tenure and access to affordable housing.
- (o) No site-based supplementary plans are specifically proposed at the commencement of preparation of the new Local Plan; however, site-based supplementary plans are firmly and positively anticipated in due course to provide further detail and support the delivery of key regeneration development sites and objectives that will be established by the new Local Plan.
- (o) The authority will prepare a series of area-specific Design Codes to accompany the new Local Plan. The preparation of these Design Codes will be prioritised in accordance with an assessment of which areas will be subject to development proposals likely to be of significance to the local environment.
- (o) The Local Plan will describe objectives on how the Council will explore initiatives for joint working with neighbouring local planning authorities and National Landscape Management Bodies on approaches to achieving greater consistency in the objectives of planning policies for the conservation and enhancement of the Arnside and Silverdale National Landscape and Forest of Bowland National Landscape.

Lancaster District Local Plan

Plan Preparation Key Stages

Stage 1: September 2025 to December 2025 (four months)

- o Notification of commencement and early participation process

- Stage 2: January 2026 to November 2027 (twenty-three months)
 - o January 2026: Gateway Assessment 1
 - o February-March 2027: Mandatory Consultation on Visioning and Options
 - o October 2026: Gateway Assessment 2
 - o March 2027: Mandatory Public Consultation on the Draft Local Plan (Reg. 18)
 - o August 2027: Gateway Assessment 3
 - o October 2027: Publication of formal Draft Local Plan (Reg.19)
 - o November 2027: Submission (Reg. 22)

- Stage 3: December 2027 to May 2028 (six months)
 - o Examination Process

- Adoption: June 2028 (one month)
 - o Adoption of Local Plan