



RIBBLE VALLEY LOCAL PLAN LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME

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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND
PLANNING



Ribble Valley
Borough Council

www.ribblevalley.gov.uk

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1 Introduction

1.1 This document is Ribble Valley's Local Development Scheme (LDS). It sets out the proposed programme and timescales for the production of Ribble Valley's New Local Plan and other associated documents.

Ribble Valley's Development Plan

1.2 The Local Development Framework (LDF) is a non-statutory term used to describe a set of planning documents (referred to as Local Development Documents and Development Plan Documents) prepared by a local planning authority, in consultation with its community, that set out a vision and a framework to guide future development of an area as part of the Statutory Development Plan. Ribble Valley Borough Council's LDF currently comprises the following Development Plan Documents:

- Core Strategy: A Local Plan for Ribble Valley (2008-2028) – Adopted December 2014
- Ribble Valley Proposals Map – Adopted November 2019
- Housing and Economic Development DPD (2008-2028) – Adopted Nov 2019

1.3 The LDF also comprises documents that relate to the process of preparing and monitoring the Statutory Development Plan. These are referred to as Local Development Documents and include

- Statement of Community Involvement
- Authority Monitoring Reports
- Local Development Scheme (this document)

1.4 The Longridge Neighbourhood (Development) Plan and the Joint Lancashire Minerals and Waste Local Plan sit alongside the LDF. Together they form Ribble Valley's Statutory Development Plan.

Fig 1: Ribble Valley LDF

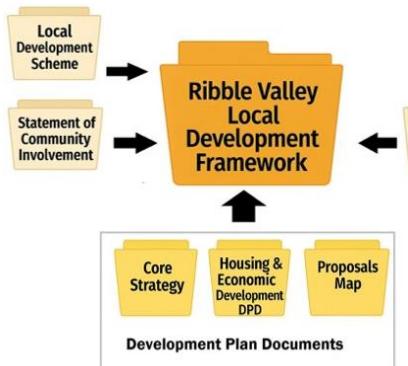


Fig 2: Ribble Valley's Development Plan



Local Development Scheme

1.5 This document is the Local Development Scheme (LDS). It is intended to set out the approach and timetable of policy preparation. It is required under Section 15 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011). This relates not just to the Plan documents, but also factors in the evidence base documents. The LDS is reviewed on an annual basis and is used to monitor the Council's progress in terms of meeting key milestones and highlighting where document production might be slipping (if applicable).

1.6 This Local Development Scheme is key to the production of the new Local Plan and is intended to guide the production of the development plan within the Ribble Valley.

- 1.7 It is a very important document because our Local Plan will help to guide and shape the pattern of development within the borough. It will form a spatial strategy for the area and will help to deliver community objectives and establish sustainable communities.
- 1.8 This Local Development Scheme is intended to cover a 3 year period up to the end of November 2028. The schedule explains how, and when, the Council intends to complete its new Local Plan.
- 1.9 In preparing this document the Council has considered:
 - What the likely content and structure of the proposed document is likely to be;
 - The evidence base needed to ensure that the policies are sound; and
 - Whether the Local Plan or any evidence base documents are likely to be prepared jointly with one or more authorities
- 1.10 The Council's Authority Monitoring Report provides a formal mechanism to monitor progress and the need to update either the timetable or policy coverage.

2 Plan-making process

2.1 The process for preparing and adopting development plan documents is set out in the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.

Public participation

2.2 The scale and nature of public participation will vary according to the stage of document production and will be guided by the Council's Statement of Community Involvement (SCI).

2.3 Ribble Valley Council's first SCI was adopted in April 2007. The current SCI is the fifth revision, replacing the fourth version which was adopted in October 2021.

2.4 The SCI sets out how the Council proposes to engage and involve the local community and other stakeholders in the preparation of the Local Plan and other planning documents including Neighbourhood Plans; and in decision making on planning applications and related consents. The document sets out the statutory processes and the points at which people can be involved, together with the Council's approach to ensuring engagement is as comprehensive as possible.

Plan preparation

2.5 Regulation 18 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 covers all stages of plan preparation, such as the identification of key issues and the preparation of early drafts of the plan.

Publication and Submission

2.6 On completion of the public participation stages the Council will prepare the document for Publication, also known as the proposed submission stage under Regulation 19 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. This will be published by the Council to allow people to view the document. Once published there is a statutory six-week period for representations to be made on issues of soundness and legal compliance.

2.7 Following consultation on the Publication plan, the Council can, if necessary, propose minor amendments to the published document before submitting the plan and relevant supporting documentation to the Secretary of State under Regulation 22 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.

Integrated Appraisal

2.8 To assess the potential effects of the plan it will be subject to an Integrated Appraisal. This includes a Sustainability Appraisal which considers the social, economic and environmental effects and incorporates the requirements of the European Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive and the UK SEA Regulations. As part of the plan preparation process reasonable alternatives are appraised to ensure that the plan is the most appropriate option. The Integrated Appraisal also incorporates an Equalities Impact Assessment and a Health Impact Assessment.

2.9 Appraisals are carried out at each stage of the plan preparation process, and the outcomes influence the content of the plan. Where appropriate, the sustainability appraisal may suggest measures to mitigate any potential adverse effects that are identified through the appraisal.

Habitats Regulations Assessment

- 2.10 The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (as amended) requires Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) to be undertaken to assess the impacts of a land-use plan against the conservation objectives of European Sites and to ascertain whether it would adversely affect the integrity of those sites.
- 2.11 The process of HRA involves an initial screening stage, followed by an Appropriate Assessment (AA) if proposals are likely to have a significant adverse impact on a European site. Where significant negative effects are identified, alternative options should be examined to avoid any potential damaging effects.
- 2.12 Habitats Regulations Assessments, including Appropriate Assessment as necessary, will be undertaken prior to submission of the plan, to consider emerging policies against the Habitats Directive. Although there are no European sites within the Borough, Appropriate Assessment may still be required to assess whether policies will affect sites outside the Borough.

Examination

- 2.13 Once a plan has been submitted to the Secretary of State, it must be examined by an independent Inspector before the Council can adopt it.
- 2.14 The role of the Inspector is to consider whether the plan has been prepared in accordance with the Duty to Cooperate, legal and procedural requirements, and whether it is sound.
- 2.15 To examine whether the submitted document is legally compliant the Inspector will check that it:
 - has been prepared in accordance with the LDS, the SCI and the Regulations;
 - has been subject to sustainability appraisal and strategic environmental assessment;
 - has regard to national policy; and
 - has regard to any sustainable community strategy for the area.
- 2.16 The Inspector will also assess whether the plan has been prepared in accordance with the duty to co-operate and whether it is sound. A local planning authority should only submit a plan for examination which it considers to be 'sound' – namely that it is:
 - **Positively prepared:** Providing a strategy which, as a minimum, seeks to meet the area's objectively assessed needs; and is informed by agreements with other authorities, so that unmet need from neighbouring areas is accommodated where it is practical to do so and is consistent with achieving sustainable development;
 - **Justified:** An appropriate strategy, taking into account the reasonable alternatives, and based on proportionate evidence;
 - **Effective:** Deliverable over the plan period, and based on effective joint working on cross-boundary strategic matters that have been dealt with rather than deferred, as evidenced by the statement of common ground; and
 - **Consistent with national policy:** Enabling the delivery of sustainable development in accordance with the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework and other statements of national planning policy, where relevant

3 Summary and profile of proposed Development Plan Documents

- 3.1 It is the Council's intention to replace the existing Ribble Valley LDF with one comprehensive Development Plan Document, the Ribble Valley Local Plan, that will replace the current suite of documents that make up the LDF.
- 3.2 The Local Plan will be produced in the context of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and associated Planning Practice Guidance (PPG). It will set out the planning strategy, policies, proposals and key principles that will guide future development needs of the Ribble Valley up to 2042. It will form part of the Statutory Development Plan for the borough and will cover a period of 15 years from adoption. The new Local Plan will include:
 - A development strategy
 - Development management policies
 - Site allocations
 - A Policies Map to illustrate how policies and plans will apply in different locations
- 3.3 The following will form Ribble Valley's Statutory Development Plan:
 - Ribble Valley Local Plan
 - Policies Map
 - Longridge Neighbourhood Plan (2028)
 - Joint Lancashire Minerals and Waste Local Plan
- 3.4 This chapter sets out the subject matter and geographical area to which each document is to relate and the timetables for their preparation.
- 3.5 The programme is intentionally ambitious as the Council is keen to produce a new the Local Plan to ensure up to date policy coverage for the borough continues. Government has also set a deadline of the end of December 2026 for Local Planning Authorities to submit their local plans for examination under the existing statutory planning regime.
- 3.6 The Council will keep the timetable and need for resources under review to enable it to meet its ambition.

Ribble Valley Local Plan

Document Profile: Ribble Valley Local Plan	
Document details	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Title: Ribble Valley Local Plan • Role and Purpose: This will provide the strategic overview for the borough and set out the key policy designations, statements and development management policies. • Geographic Coverage: The whole borough • Status: Local Development Document. • Chain of Conformity: The Local Plan is the overarching strategic policy document for the Ribble Valley.
Timetable	<p>Call for Sites- September 2021 Strategic Matters (Reg 18) Consultation - May 2022 Draft (Preferred Options) Local Plan Reg 18 Consultation – Spring 2026 Pre-Submission Plan (Regulation 19) Consultation – Autumn 2026 Submission for Independent Examination – December 2026 Examination Hearings and Adoption* - 2027</p> <p><i>*subject to Planning Inspectorate availability</i></p>
Arrangements for production	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead Department: Economic Development & Planning Department. • Management arrangements: The project will be led by the Borough Council's Planning and Development Committee, supported by the Local Plan Working Group. • Resources required to complete the document: The main resource will be the Council's Strategic Planning and Housing Section. • Approach to involving stakeholders and the community: We will work with the community as much as possible consulting in accordance with the regulations and the adopted SCI. Linkages with the Parish and Town Councils will be enhanced. Close liaison will be maintained with Strategic Partners and various Town/Village action groups that have been established, as well as neighbouring authorities and relevant consultation bodies and agencies.

Ribble Valley Local Plan Policies Map

Document Profile: Local Plan Policies Map	
Document details	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Title: Policies Map Role and Purpose: An Ordnance Survey based plan mapping development plan policy designations and site- specific policies arising from other Development Plan Documents Geographic Coverage: Whole borough. Status: The Policies Map will be a Local Development Document.
Timetable	In alignment with that of the preparation of the Ribble Valley Local Plan.
Arrangements for production	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lead Department: Economic Development & Planning Department. Management arrangements: The project will be led by the Borough Council's Planning and Development Committee, supported by the Local Plan Working Group. Resources required to complete the document: The main resource will be the Council's Strategic Planning and Housing Section Approach to involving stakeholders and the community: We will work with the community as much as possible consulting in accordance with the regulations and the adopted SCI. Linkages with the Parish and Town Councils will be enhanced. Close liaison will be maintained with Strategic Partners and various Town/Village action groups that have been established, as well as neighbouring authorities and relevant consultation bodies and agencies.

Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)

Document Profile: Ribble Valley SCI	
Document details	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Title: Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) • Role and Purpose: To set out how all section of the community have had the opportunity to participate in the planning of the borough. This ranges from private individuals, through to interest groups and specific consultees as well as hard to reach groups. • Geographic Coverage: Borough-Wide. • Status: This will be a Statutory Supporting Document. • Chain of Conformity: It will conform to the Local Plan and existing partnerships.
Timetable	Revised SCI to be published Autumn 2025
Arrangements for production	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead Department: Economic Development & Planning Department. • Management arrangements: The project will be led by the Borough Council's Planning and Development Committee, supported by the Local Plan Working Group • Resources required to complete the document: The main resource will be the Council's Strategic Planning and Housing Section. • Approach to involving stakeholders and the community: We will work with the community as much as possible consulting in accord with the regulations and the adopted SCI. Linkages with the Parish and Town Councils will be enhanced.

Authority Monitoring Report (AMR)

Document Profile: AMR	
Document details	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Title: Authority Monitoring Report • Role and Purpose: This will provide the monitoring overview for the borough, ensuring the Development Strategy, key policy designations and Development Management policies are operating adequately. • Geographic Coverage: The AMR considers aspects concerning the whole borough. • Status: This will be a supporting document. • Chain of Conformity: The AMR is the overarching strategic policy planning monitoring document for the Ribble Valley and feeds into the evidence base.
Timetable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The AMR is produced annually. The most recent AMR was published in July 2021. • An updated AMR will be published in January 2026.
Arrangements for production	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead Department: Economic Development & Planning Department. • Management arrangements: The project will be led by the Borough Council's Planning and Development Committee, supported by the Local Plan Working Group. The AMR has proved in recent years to require increasing levels of resource input. • Resources required to complete the document: The main resource will be the Council's Strategic Planning and Housing Policy section. • Approach to involving stakeholders and the community: The AMR collates data into one document. It covers a range of topic areas proving useful information for a range of stakeholders and community members.

Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP)

Document Profile: IDS	
Document details	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Title: Infrastructure Delivery Plan • Role and Purpose: This will provide the detail of the infrastructure requirements needed to deliver the aspirations of the Local Plan. It sets out how key stakeholders and partners will be involved in this delivery and the role that they will play as well as the Council. • Geographic Coverage: The IDS will apply to the whole borough. • Status: The IDS is a key requirement of the Local Plan delivery • Chain of Conformity: The IDS is integral to the production of the Local Plan and illustrating its implementation.
Timetable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The IDS will be published in draft by Spring 2026, alongside the Draft (Preferred Option) Local Plan.
Arrangements for production	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead Department: Economic Development & Planning Department. • Management arrangements: The project will be led by the Borough Council's Planning and Development Committee, supported by the Local Plan Working Group • Resources required to complete the document: The main resource will be the Council's Strategic Planning and Housing section. • Approach to involving stakeholders and the community: We will work with the community as much as possible consulting in accordance with the regulations and the adopted SCI. Close liaison will be maintained with Strategic Partners, statutory consultees and relevant consultation bodies and agencies.

Neighbourhood Plans

Neighbourhood Plan area	Date Area Designated	Status
Bolton-by-Bowland and Gisburn Forest NP	May 2014	Submitted. Report from the Examiner received but NP subsequently withdrawn.
Longridge NP (2028)	September 2013	Supported at Referendum in Feb 2019. Plan 'made' 30 th April 2019.
Whalley NP	June 2015	No further progress since designation

4 Supporting Statement: Structure of the Local Plan.

- 4.1 The Council's Local Plan provides strategic policies aimed at guiding the spatial pattern and broad scale of development within the borough. It also provides, as part of its implementation mechanism key Development Management policies. More detailed Development Management policies to help guide and inform decisions on planning applications will be provided through a suite of Supplementary Planning Documents.
- 4.2 As part of the delivery of the new Local Plan it will be necessary to revisit and reassess the settlement strategy that was determined as part of the Core Strategy. In addition, the overall housing requirement (as well as affordable housing) for the borough over the new plan period will be reassessed in addition to the level of employment land required. This will need to consider the new method for calculating housing need contained within the National Planning Policy Framework. Greenfield land release will also be a consideration in view of the very limited supply of previously developed land, however there will be a strong emphasis on environment protection and enhancement.

Evidence Base

- 4.3 Critical to the production of the Local Plan is the preparation of a clear and robust evidence base. Whilst Ribble Valley already holds an extensive evidence base, which was used in the production of the LDF, many of these documents need to be reassessed to ensure that the information contained within is up to date and remains relevant. The Council also wants to ensure that the process of evidence gathering is proportionate. Whilst most of the evidence base was produced in 2013, there are some documents which date back to 2008 and are therefore in need of a refresh where relevant, to ensure that they are fit for purpose and reflect the most up to date position.
- 4.4 It is therefore proposed at this stage that the following evidence base documents will be reviewed to determine which are relevant to the new local plan and require updating:
 - Borough wide housing requirement
 - Borough wide employment land requirement
 - Housing Land Availability (monitoring)
 - Strategic Housing & Economic Needs Assessment
 - Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment
 - Renewable energy
 - Public Open Space
 - Retail Base Data
 - Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment
 - Environmental baselines – e.g. SSSI's, Biological Heritage Sites, RIGS, Biodiversity, and quality of life indicators
 - Heritage Assets
 - Flood Risk Assessment(s)
 - Infrastructure Delivery Plan
 - Landscape Visual Impact Assessment (A59 Corridor)
 - Leisure study and Service Centre Health Checks
 - Topic Paper on Greenbelt
 - Topic Paper on Transport
 - Whole Plan viability study
- 4.5 The evidence base will be kept up to date as required and is likely to evolve as production of the Local Plan progresses and additional issues emerge. The evidence base will also form an important element of the Sustainability Appraisal process.

Resources

- 4.6 The Council's Strategic Planning and Housing section deliver the core functions in relation to planning policy. It also includes economic development, tourism and partnership working. The principal staff resource comprises a Planning Assistant, Assistant Planning Officer, Planning Officer and a Principal Planning Officer together with the Head of Service as lead officer.
- 4.7 Consultants will be engaged on specific projects where there is a lack of in- house capacity. The section has a small operating budget provision to carry out its functions, however the Local Development Scheme will inform the Council's annual budget rounds and financial planning process.

Local Plan Monitoring and Review

- 4.8 The Local Plan will be subject to an annual monitoring and review process. In addition to this we will also use the Council's Risk Management systems to ensure that this issue is fully taken into account and that our systems are capable of being altered to take account of changing contingencies.

Risk Assessment

- 4.9 There are a number of key risks which could impact on delivery of the proposed planning policy documents by the targets that have been identified as follows:
 - **Staff Turnover:** Staff resources are very limited, consequently any turnover of staff, given recruitment times, will have an impact on the programme. There are currently vacancies within the Planning Policy team which makes delivering the Local Plan challenging. The national shortage of experienced Planning Officers exacerbates this issue.
 - **Competing Corporate Priorities:** This will remain an issue, but Senior Officers and Members are aware of the need to ensure sound planning policies are put in place and are seeking to maintain progress on the development plan in the face of significant development pressures. Commitment to the process is explicit within the Council's expressed priorities.
 - **Legal Challenge:** We will minimise this by aiming to ensure that the plan is "sound" and founded on a robust evidence base and well-audited stakeholder and community engagement systems.
 - **Programme Slippage:** We will continue to monitor our programme. It is recognised that the programme is ambitious and that there are many factors which may impact on delivery including government aspirations to amend the planning system for local plans. This may lead to changes to the process at later stages in the council's programme, however stages will be addressed to reflect the governments proposed approach wherever possible whilst remaining regulation compliant.
 - **Changing National Policy:** The Council will need to take account of any changes in policy or legislation. Significant changes were recently introduced through the publication of the new national planning policy Framework which will be factored into the new Local Plan. The recent changes increase the pressure to deliver a new Local Plan with limited resources. Further changes at a national level would introduce the risk of existing work no longer being compliant and the need to amend the content of work progressed.

Monitoring and Review of this Document

4.10 The Council will aim to keep this schedule up to date. Changing circumstances may lead to a position where priorities are altered. It is essential that we monitor progress so that any problems in delivering on the timescale set out in the document are identified and addressed at an early stage. An annual monitoring process will be undertaken, and the Council will publish a formal report, however regular progress will be monitored through the Local Plan Working Group.

APPENDIX 1**Schedule 1 Summary Information and Timetable**

Document Title	Brief Description	Chain of Conformity	Start	Adoption
Local Plan	Provides the overall strategic framework for the borough, covering all policy areas. The Local Plan also includes a set of Development Management policies that will be used in determining planning applications across the borough.	The Local Plan is the overall strategic planning policy document that all other planning documents and policies need to conform to.	September 2020	Winter 2027/28

Schedule 2 Supporting Management Tools

Document Title	Brief Description	Chain of Conformity	Start	Adoption
Statement of Community Involvement	Document setting out standards and approach to involving stakeholders and the community in the production of the LDF.	The statement builds upon existing partnerships.	Ongoing	Autumn 2025
Authority Monitoring Report	The Authority Monitoring Report (AMR) measures the effectiveness and progress made in delivering the policies in the adopted Core Strategy and the emerging Local Plan	The AMR links to all Local Development Documents.	Annually	Annually
Infrastructure Delivery Plan	Provides the detail of the infrastructure requirements needed to deliver the aspirations of the Local Plan.	It will conform to the Local Plan and existing partnerships.	June 2022	Winter 2027/28
Local Development Scheme	This document sets out the council's programme and timetable for preparing planning policy documents.	The LDS is key in providing information and a timetable in relation to LDDs.	October 2019	November 2025 (Annually reviewed)

APPENDIX 2**Local Plan Preparation Timetable**

Local Plan Preparation Stage	Target Deadline
Preferred Options Draft (Preferred Option) Local Plan consultation (Regulation 18)	Spring 2026
Pre-Submission (Proposed Publication) Document consultation (Regulation 19)	Autumn 2026
Submission for Independent Examination (Regulation 22)	Winter 2026/27*
Examination Hearings	Spring 2027**
Main Modifications Consultation (if necessary)	Summer 2027**
Inspectors Report	Autumn 2027**
Adoption (Regulation 26)	Winter 2027/28**

* No later than the Government's deadline of 31 December 2026

** Indicative as dates will be dependent on the availability of the Planning Inspectorate