



Ribble Valley Local Plan Timetable

1. Background

- 1.1 In March 2026 a new local plan making system was brought into force by regulations to implement the relevant sections of the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act (LURA) 2023 which paved the way for major planning reform. These procedural regulations, [Town and Country Planning \(Local Planning\) \(England\) Regulations 2026](#) superseded the [2012 plan making regulations](#), amending the [Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004](#).
- 1.2 Most notably the [new local plan making system](#) introduces a structured 30 month process for creating and adopting local plans to be undertaken in a prescribed sequence, in part overseen by the Planning Inspectorate, with three clear Gateway (checkpoint) assessments. This means we have had to review and replace our original plan-making timetable, known as the Local Development Scheme) to ensure compliance with the new regulations.
- 1.3 Although the regulations introduces some new steps to plan making, commencing on the new system does not mean that we are starting afresh. Work is well underway and significant progress has been made particularly on scoping and the production of evidence to underpin the new plan and early engagement including the Call for Sites exercises. Some of our work, however, must be reviewed to ensure compliance with the new regulations and the new statutory requirements for consultation will require further early engagement exercises.
- 1.4 Below is the current timetable for preparing the Ribble Valley Local Plan, which will cover the current administrative area of Ribble Valley. The Local Plan Timetable takes effect from 14 May 2026 and formally replaces the [Ribble Valley Local Development Scheme](#) (published 27 November 2025).

2. Introduction

- 2.1 The government has brought into force new legislation and regulations that changes how local plans must be prepared. This includes the requirement to create and maintain an up to date Local Plan Timetable which must be published no later than on the same day as the notice of intention to commence plan preparation.
- 2.2 Ribble Valley Borough Council (“the Council”) has given [notice of its intention to commence preparation of a new Local Plan](#) which is to be referred to as the Ribble Valley Local Plan.
- 2.3 The Local Plan Timetable sets out the key milestones and target dates for the preparation and adoption of the Ribble Valley Local Plan in accordance with the new plan making system. The key stages include consultation periods when the community, stakeholders and other interested parties can engage with the plan-making process. The Timetable also sets out dates for ‘Gateways’ which are a new requirement of the plan-making process, as well as when the Council expects to be able to submit the Local Plan and all associated supporting documents for Examination followed by Adoption.
- 2.4 The Local Plan timetable, prepared by Ribble Valley Borough Council as Local Planning Authority, takes effect from 14 May 2026. It is published in accordance with the [Town and Country Planning \(Local Planning\) \(England\) Regulations 2026, Part 2, Regulations 4, 6 and 8](#).

3. The geographical area to which Ribble Valley's Local Plan will relate

- 3.1 The Ribble Valley Local Plan will cover the entirety of the current administrative boundary of Ribble Valley Borough Council (ONS E07000124).

4. Matters which Ribble Valley's Local Plan is likely to deal with

- 4.1 The Ribble Valley Local Plan will be a single document setting out a borough-wide vision and strategy for development alongside locally specific development management policies. It will need to respond to planning reforms aimed at increasing housing delivery and boosting economic growth whilst providing the basis for the timely delivery of supporting transport, social and environmental infrastructure.

- 4.2 The matters which the Ribble Valley Local Plan will deal with are:

- The distribution of development including site allocation
- Housing need for different groups in the community including (but not limited to) affordable housing, care homes, pitches and plots for gypsies and travellers, and self and custom-build housing
- Economy and employment need including the rural economy
- Retail, town centres, leisure and tourism
- Infrastructure and connectivity including transport, health, education, community facilities, playing pitch provision, open spaces and parks; and infrastructure delivery including planning contributions
- Protecting, enhancing and managing the historic and natural environment including heritage, landscape, ecology and environmental protection
- Climate change including adaptation and mitigation, renewable energy, flooding and sustainable drainage
- Design quality

- 4.3 The scope and content of the Ribble Valley Local Plan will be reviewed following the scoping consultation and the subsequent consultation on proposed Local Plan content and evidence, with the Local Plan Timetable updated where necessary.

- 4.4 The Ribble Valley Local Plan will not address matters in relation to waste and minerals, which remain the joint responsibility of Lancashire County Council, Blackpool Council and Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council.

- 4.5 The Ribble Valley Local Plan will, upon adoption, fully replace the adopted the adopted Core Strategy: A Local Plan for Ribble Valley (2008-2028); Housing and Economic Development DPD (2008-2028); and Proposals Map which are collectively referred to as the [Local Development Framework](#)

5. Design Codes

- 5.1 The Ribble Valley Local Plan will include policies relating to the design of development within the plan area, as required by Section 15F(1) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended).

- 5.2 The Council is monitoring emerging [Government policy and guidance in relation to design and placemaking](#) and will confirm how the obligation will be met in future iterations of the timetable. Should the Council decide Design Codes are most appropriate tools to deliver development that is of high design quality, these will be provided through supplementary plans and the timetable will be updated accordingly.

6. Supplementary Plans

- 6.1 Supplementary plans are intended to be produced at pace to enable local planning authorities to react and respond positively to unanticipated changes in their area outside of the Local Plan preparation process, for example introducing new site-specific policies in relation to design, infrastructure or affordable housing. They are not for routine use and planning authorities should therefore prioritise including all policies in their Local Plans and reserve Supplementary Plans only for exceptional or unforeseen circumstances arising between plan updates.
- 6.2 No supplementary plans are proposed at the commencement of the preparation of the Ribble Valley Local Plan. The Council will consider whether supplementary plans are required as the preparation of the Local Plan progresses.

7. Joint Plans

- 7.1 The Ribble Valley Local Plan is not intended to be a Joint Local Plan. No joint supplementary plans are proposed at the commencement of the preparation of the Ribble Valley Local Plan.

8. Local Plan Timetable

Key Milestone	Brief Description	Target Date	Month(s) in Formal Process
Notice given of Intention to Commence Local Plan Preparation	Publication of the notice brings the local plan timetable into effect. It commences the minimum 4-month notice period so that stakeholders are aware plan-making is beginning.	14 May 2026	-
Scoping consultation starts	6 week public consultation inviting feedback on what the plan should contain and how we should engage when further consultations take place. We will also publish the emerging evidence base that is to be used to support plan making.	03 July 2026	-
Scoping consultation ends	All comments (representations) on the scoping consultation must be received on or before this date.	14 Aug 2026	-
Gateway 1 self-assessment of readiness	Publication of a document confirming the plan-making preparation to date, marking formal commencement of the 30-month timeframe to prepare and adopt the local plan.	14 Sept 2026	1
Consultation: Proposed Local Plan Content and Evidence starts	This second formal consultation sets out the proposed vision, aims and objectives, spatial strategy, evidence we have already gathered and evidence we intend to gather and the scope and details of the Strategic Environment Assessment. This consultation will also include information about proposed policies topics, potential allocations and constraints.	11 Jan 2027	5

Consultation: Proposed Local Plan Content and Evidence ends	All comments (representations) to the second formal consultation must be received on or before this date.	22 Feb 2027	6
Gateway 2	Seeking observations and advice, from an external assessor, to support the early resolution of potential soundness issues with the emerging plan and evidence base including progress towards the requirements required to pass Gateway 3 (the 'prescribed requirements').	12 April 2027	8
Gateway 2 advice published		24 May 2027	9
Consultation: Proposed Local Plan starts	8 week consultation on the final version of the local plan and its supporting documents	04 Oct 2027	14
Consultation: Proposed Local Plan ends	All comments (representations) on the Proposed Local Plan consultation must be received on or before this date.	29 Nov 2027	15
Gateway 3	Final check, by an external assessor, that the proposed local plan has met the 'prescribed requirements' and can proceed to examination	01 Feb 2028	18
Gateway 3 advice published		28 Feb 2028	18
Local Plan submission	The proposed Local Plan is submitted for an independent Examination carried out by a Planning Inspector	27 March 2028	19
Local Plan Examination	The purpose of the examination is to determine whether it is reasonable to conclude that the local plan is sound, in line with the tests of soundness set out in National Policy. The Examination should last no longer than 6 months.	27 March 2028 to 28 Sept 2028	20 to 25
Exam recommendations published		29 Sept 2028	25
Local Plan adoption	Publication of Local Plan and adoption statement	30 Nov 2028	27

8.1 This is Version 1 of the Local Plan Timetable, published 14 May 2026.

8.2 To ensure our communities and other stakeholders remain informed on our intended timescales for preparing the Local Plan, the timetable will be subject to monthly reviews and updated where appropriate. Any future versions will be included in the [schedule of amendments](#) published alongside the updated timetable.

9. Approved Data Standard

9.1 The Council must follow the approved data standard to publish our local plan timetable so that we meet the requirements of the Planning Data (England) Regulations 2026. This data is provided under the [Open Government Licence](#) and can be downloaded [here](#) in CSV File format

10. Monitoring and Updating the Local Plan Timetable

10.1 The Council will review the Local Plan Timetable monthly from the date of publication and update it when any changes are required. The Council will also update the Local Plan Timetable on the same day that the following stages are reached:

- Publication of Gateway 1 self-assessment
- Publication of Gateway 2 advice
- Publication of Gateway 3 advice
- Publication of the recommendations and reasons of the examiner following the examination of the plan

10.2 The Local Plan Timetable will also be updated if any additional consultation to the stages set out in the table above is to be undertaken; or if any changes are required to be made due to the need to repeat the Gateway 3 assessment of the Plan; or if the Council takes a decision to either withdraw or revoke the Plan.

10.3 A record of all updates to the Local Plan Timetable will be recorded in a [separate schedule](#).

11. Local Government Re-organisation

11.1 It should be noted that the timetable extends beyond 01 April 2028 which is the proposed date for the new unitary authorities covering Lancashire to formally come into effect. This means that Ribble Valley Borough Council will prepare and submit the Local Plan for examination but final adoption will need to be undertaken by the new unitary council that covers the Ribble Valley area.

12. Availability of Local Plan Timetable

12.1 The [Timetable](#) and [Notice of Intention to Commence Plan Preparation](#) are available to view on Ribble Valley Borough Council's webpage. Copies are also made available for inspection at:

- Ribble Valley Borough Council Offices, Church Walk, Clitheroe, Lancashire, BB7 2RA during office hours (Monday to Friday 08:45hrs to 17:00hrs)
- All libraries within the Ribble Valley during normal working hours. Please view our library locations and opening times [here](#)

12.2 The documents will remain available to view until the expiry of a minimum period of three months beginning with the day after the date on which the Local Plan is adopted.

12.3 To request paper copies of the timetable or to seek further information please contact Ribble Valley's Planning Policy Team through the following ways.

E-mail: localplanconsultation@ribblevalley.gov.uk

Telephone: 01200 425111

Post: Ribble Valley Borough Council Offices, Church Walk, Clitheroe, BB7 2RA

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