



**Assistant Director –  
Place & Environment**  
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**SENT BY EMAIL**

My Ref: RNLP/MDC/090821

Date: 9 August 2021

Dear Matthew

**Capacity for Accommodating Development Needs – Rochford new Local Plan**

As you will be aware, Rochford District Council (the Council) has recently published the latest stage in our new Local Plan, the Spatial Options document, for consultation. As part of the preparation of its new Local Plan, the Council is considering options for how its identified development needs could be accommodated over the next 20 years.

At this stage, the Council has identified four broad strategy options for accommodating these needs.

- Option 1: Urban Intensification
- Option 2: Urban Extensions
- Option 3: Concentrating Growth
- Option 4: Balanced Combination

The Local Housing Need methodology calculates a need of 360 homes per annum for Rochford District. Over the period of the new Local Plan, it is therefore likely that in the region of 7,200 homes will need to be planned for to accommodate Rochford's needs.

As identified in our current and emerging evidence base, we estimate that at least 4,000 homes can be accommodated on existing sites, including current allocations, planning permissions and other opportunity sites, and expected windfall. Through our Urban Capacity Study and wider work, we have identified that it may be possible to accommodate around 1,500 more homes through increasing density and repurposing allocations, however we have less certainty over the sustainability or deliverability of these options.

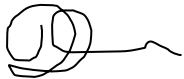
At this time, our evidence suggests employment land needs may be met by existing allocations, however this will be kept under review.

At this stage of plan-making, the Council has not concluded whether exceptional circumstances exist to justify Green Belt release. Nevertheless, of the four strategy options identified, only those which would involve Green Belt release (Options 2 – 4) would be able to accommodate all of Rochford's identified needs within its own area.

As set out in national policy, once established, Green Belt boundaries should only be altered where exceptional circumstances are fully evidenced and justified. Before concluding that exceptional circumstances exist to justify changes to Green Belt boundaries, local planning authorities must, inter alia, explore whether neighbouring authorities could accommodate some of the identified need for development.

As an authority sharing a marine boundary with Rochford, and to inform an assessment of whether such exceptional circumstances do exist, I would be grateful if you could advise me of whether any of Rochford's identified development needs could be accommodated in your authority area, either now or in future.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized 'D' followed by a horizontal line and a small flourish.

Daniel Goodman  
Team Leader – Strategic Planning  
Rochford District Council