# Rochford faces backlash over plans for 17,000 new homes amid infrastructure fears



The Rochford district in Essex is poised to undergo a significant transformation, with plans for 17,000 new homes, as outlined in a recent local development strategy. Local MP Mark Francois has expressed his vehement opposition to what he describes as an "insane" and "unacceptable" plan, highlighting the potential strain it could place on the area’s infrastructure and resources.

The proposed development, led by the Liberal Democrat administration at Rochford Council, includes the construction of a new town on the border of Rochford and Southend, along with additional housing proposals that encompass 5,000 homes in this area, 2,000 at Dollymans Farm in Rawreth, 1,000 at Poynters Lane in Great Wakering, and 900 in Rayleigh. Francois has raised concerns about the practicality of accommodating such an influx of residents, particularly in light of current infrastructure challenges, stating, "With our local roads already maxed out and hospitals full to bursting, there is absolutely no way on earth our semi-rural district could possibly accommodate 17,000 new houses."

Danielle Belton, leader of the Rochford Conservatives, echoed similar sentiments regarding the challenges posed by housing targets set by the government. Having seen a confidential list of proposed development sites, she expressed her apprehension about their implications, emphasising the need for responsible planning and community engagement. According to Belton, many of the proposed sites stir "great concern," indicating that not all stakeholders may have been adequately consulted during the planning process.

Adding to the complexity of the situation, Rochford Council has stated that new housing targets have been imposed by the Labour Government, which requires the district to produce at least 689 new homes annually. This has led to a sense of urgency among local authorities as they develop strategies to enhance housing availability while considering sustainability. A council spokesperson noted that the recent reclassification of certain greenbelt areas could facilitate additional development, further complicating the community's response.

The council's draft local plan aims to balance the need for new homes—with a focus on affordable housing, job creation, and the development of community facilities—against the necessity of protecting the region's natural environment and heritage. This plan, however, is still in its formative stages, requiring thorough evaluation of its environmental and infrastructural impact.

As the discourse continues, Rochford Council is committed to testing various options and gathering evidence on how these housing developments might affect the existing transport network and public services. Following this assessment, the draft plan will be made available for public consultation, allowing residents a platform to voice their opinions and concerns before final submissions to the government.

The prospect of rapid urban development in semi-rural areas like Rochford highlights the tension between national housing policies and local community needs. As debates continue, the balance between growth and sustainability remains a critical concern for residents and officials alike.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.yellowad.co.uk/mp-claims-17000-new-homes-are-planned-for-rochford-district/?utm_source=rss&utm_medium=rss&utm_campaign=mp-claims-17000-new-homes-are-planned-for-rochford-district> - Please view link - unable to able to access data