



## Rayleigh Town Council

The Pavilion, King George V Playing Field, Rayleigh, SS6 8JD  
[www.rayleightowncouncil.gov.uk](http://www.rayleightowncouncil.gov.uk)

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Monday 23 March 2026

Rochford District Council (c/o Planning Team)  
Sent by email

Dear Sir/Madam,

### **Response to Local Plan Consultation**

Rayleigh Town Council wishes to provide the following response to the draft Local Plan consultation issued by Rochford District Council, which we have broken down to align with the specific policy questions –

#### ***Strategic Policy MG1***

The Town Council supports maximising brownfield opportunities where it is appropriate to do so and where suitable infrastructure can be sustainably delivered.

The Council does wish to highlight that the Plan's own transport evidence highlights the existing pressures on the A127 and A13, in particular the Fairglens Interchange and Rayleigh Weir roundabout. It is therefore imperative that mitigation measures are incorporated to ensure cumulative growth in housing numbers does not result in severe and disruptive congestion.

We also wish to highlight that there is currently a 'loophole' which enables the sites to be proposed individually by separate developers, ignoring the cumulative impact of development and reducing contributions to the community to mitigate against such development. An example of this is CFS053, CFS098 and CFS029. Sites that are all next to each other on Green Belt land at the edge of Rayleigh, however as they are deemed individual sites, the S106 contributions are lower. If they were deemed as one site, greater levels of community contribution would be required.

#### ***Strategic Policy MG2***

The Town Council supports the protection of the Green Belt, particularly where it plays a vital role in

- Preventing coalescence with neighbouring settlements
- Maintaining the character of the town

- Providing important open space and environmental value

There is concern locally about the potential release of Green Belt land without clear criteria or justification. Any release of Green Belt land must be strictly limited, clearly justified and only considered once all brownfield and urban capacity has been fully explored.

### ***Strategic Policy MG3***

Rayleigh Town Council supports the use of Health Impact Assessments, but the proposed policy needs to be enhanced. There should be clearer standards so that HIA's are evidence-based.

We highlight that local GP surgeries, hospitals and dentists already face long waits. The Local Plan must show clear, funded provision for new primary care and health services before large scale development is progressed.

### ***Strategic Policy MG4***

The Town Council encourages firmer wording should be applied to this policy in terms of phasing and clearer links to named infrastructure requirements. There should also be tighter safeguards against viability arguments.

The Town Council highlights that the policy's core obligation that contributions shall accord with Rochford's Infrastructure Delivery Plan. As the IDP is still in draft form, until it is finalised, developers can challenge any obligation as inconsistent with an incomplete evidence base.

### ***Policy EC2: Protecting Employment Land***

The Town Council supports the protection of employment land in principle, especially when the employment sites serve Rayleigh and the wider areas. We do hold concerns that employment land can be steadily weakened by pressure from residential development unless the policy is strong enough to resist these pressures.

In terms of site specific, we request that any residential site allocation on land surrounding Lubards Farm to include explicit protections for the employment site, including physical separation, access improvements and a buffer zone from which development is prohibited.

### ***Policy TC3: Development in Town Centres and Neighbourhood Parades***

The Town Council believes the draft policy is not strong enough to protect the variety or ensure support for the independent businesses that give Rayleigh its distinct identity. A stronger Town Centre policy is relevant to the infrastructure-led approach because the town centres are themselves part of the social infrastructure of the district.

The requirement for Class E uses to make up at least 65% of primary frontage units appears at first glance to be a robust policy, but Class E is a broad category. The policy itself says nothing about the mix within Class E. We highlight that residents in Rayleigh raise concerns about the proliferation of personal service uses at the expense of the independent retail and

food businesses that give town centres their character. The policy as written does nothing to address this.

The Town Council also suggests that a policy expectation be applied that redevelopment of town centre opportunity sites includes a proportion of small-unit, affordable commercial floorspace targeted at independent businesses.

***Policy NE12: Providing New Open Space***

RTC supports the principle that development must provide new open space, but the policy needs to be stronger on quality, accessibility, connectivity and long-term maintenance. Open space should not be treated as a token addition at the end of the process. It is essential infrastructure and the policy should be strengthened so that provision is meaningful, connected to existing spaces and properly maintained over time.

The Town Council also highlights that there should be an explicit Council adoption commitment for open spaces backed by a commuted maintenance sum secured via S106 prior to occupation, covering a minimum of twenty years. Open Spaces should also be connected to the existing open space network and Local Green Space designations.

In conclusion, Rayleigh Town Council is not against the principles of development but wishes to see a infrastructure-led approach, and one which preserves and protect the distinct qualities that makes Rayleigh a good town to live and work in.

Kind Regards,

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Shaun Fishenden PSLCC  
Town Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer