



SUMMARY

SUMMARY OF BENEFITS

The proposed development at Rochford Park provides the opportunity to create a ground-breaking new carbon negative neighbourhood. It would not only provide c.2,000 new homes, but be driven by an innovative new factory which would have numerous economic benefits including new jobs. The key features are summarised below.

HOMES

- Making a significant contribution to meeting local housing needs, in a manner that would engender significant additional social, environmental and economic benefits.
- A mix of 2, 3 and 4 bed houses, bungalows and apartments with affordable provision

SUSTAINABILITY

- Delivery of c.2,000 carbon negative homes, ensuring a significant proportion of the new homes needed in the District would have a neutral or even positive impact on climate change.
- Homes built using carbon negative technology – ensuring that not only the homes themselves, but the construction process, does not contribute to climate change.
- Provision of new technology into the District that would enable construction of carbon negative homes for not just this site, but for other developments in and beyond the District.
- Planting of 100,000 trees, helping to combat climate change.

TOWN CENTRE VITALITY

- New homes, recreational and leisure activities, and tourism within close proximity of, and with excellent accessibility to, Rochford Town Centre.
- New green links from the Site to the Town Centre to encourage greater footfall and revitalise the centre

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

- New SEND School, addressing current lack of provision.
- Forest School, utilising new and existing green infrastructure for educational benefits.
- Pre-school/Nursery.
- Neighbourhood centre – providing for day-to-day needs of future residents, but without providing services or facilities that would compete with Rochford Town Centre.
- Doctors, dentist, and physio and holistic health centre for future and existing residents.
- Community pub.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- Provision of new innovative MMC technology into the District, creating a significant number of new, high-skilled jobs both directly and indirectly. Rochford District to be at the forefront of the green revolution, and to benefit from the economic benefits of this.
- New homes factory to provide c.350 new jobs; plus help support an estimated additional 175 jobs indirectly.
- New start-up business space to help harness local entrepreneurial culture and enable benefits to be felt locally.
- School leaver jobs and apprenticeships. Integrated support potentially with accommodation
- Provision of c.2,000 new homes is projected to generate c.£52m in additional expenditure in local shops.
- New development to be constructed of locally grown hemp, with significant benefits to the local agricultural industry – estimated to be worth £7m per year to the local farming sector.
- Future residents to benefit from significantly reduced energy costs – estimated c.75% reduction in running costs.
- New jobs through creation of additional employment space, tourist facilities, and other community facilities.

TRANSPORT & ACCESSIBILITY

- Provision of employment, community facilities, services, recreation and leisure within walking distance of new and existing homes, helping reduce reliance on the private car.
- New north-south link road to be incorporated into the development, with the potential to alleviate congestion on Ashingdon Road.
- Multiple connection points between the new development and the existing community, helping to integrate the new development with the existing community and Rochford Town Centre.

RECREATION & LEISURE

- New playing pitches, with details to reflect local need / demand, with club house.
- Significant area of green, public open space to be created on land over which there is not currently public access.
- New blue infrastructure to be provided, with potential for this to provide a range of recreational uses also.
- New playspaces, with a focus on utilising and integrating with new and existing infrastructure (e.g. woodland playground).
- New allotment space
- Informal fitness, including trim trails.
- Lake for cold water swimming or fishing

TOURISM

- Provision of new tourist accommodation to address current shortage...
- ...plus within a location which would represent a transitional area between residential development and the open countryside, with opportunity to facility access into the countryside through new and existing walking and cycling links...
- ...and in a location well-related to the RSPB's Wild Coast Project at Wallasea Island.
- Provision of new areas for camping.
- Community pub
- Huge contribution to green tourism, realising the Council's aspirations in this regard.
- Museum, arts centre, and events venue within existing historic buildings, addressing a lack of such provision within the area.

HERITAGE

- Utilising currently underused / vacant heritage assets for a new, long-term use – helping to ensure they remain viable and can be sustained.

ECOLOGY & LANDSCAPE

- Extensive areas of natural habitat would contribute to Biodiversity Net Gain and wildlife conservation.
- New woodland areas to provide not only an environmental benefits, but also ecological enhancement.

THE VISION OF MATTHEW BELCHER, FOUNDER & CEO OF HEMSPAN®

In the heart of the Rochford area, lies an unprecedented opportunity — not only to create 2,000 net regulated CLimate Positive houses, ensuring homes which are economical to run and environmentally beneficial, but the chance to reimagine both the literal and figurative landscape of this historic corner of Essex.

I'm Matt Belcher, founder and CEO of HEMSPAN®, where we go beyond the role of designers and builders, to work as visionaries, weaving aesthetic design with cutting-edge sustainable technology. Our proposed Rochford Park venture is not confined to the construction of buildings; it's about sculpting a future for Rochford that resonates with its present inhabitants and beckons to those of the future. The excitement lies not only in shaping structures but in cultivating vibrant communities where individuals and families establish homes, forge lives, and sow the seeds for generations to come.

This isn't just a development; ***it's a commitment — to elevate Rochford into a thriving heart of innovation, sustainability, and enduring prosperity.***

A VIBRANT FUTURE FOR ROCHFORD

With its rich trading and agricultural history and diverse community, Rochford merits a development that not only caters to present needs but charts a course towards an exciting future. One that thrives on sustainable, affordable living, responsible development, and the invigoration of a modern, ethical, and dynamic community spirit. Rochford Park is the blueprint for this future – with all the essential facilities a modern, thriving and connected community would expect, from doctors to dentists, schools to intergenerational skills spaces, even green energy to green tourism opportunities. It will bring much needed infrastructure and attract new businesses and employment to Rochford Town Centre and the surrounding area. It is an embodiment of our pledge to breathe vitality back into the region and rekindle its spirit and pride.

COLLABORATION WITH LOCAL COMMUNITY GROUPS AND BUSINESSES

Our journey isn't solitary, it's a collaborative, community-driven approach involving close cooperation with local businesses, farmers and groups including families who have called the Rochford area home for generations. Their profound understanding of the region's history and their commitment to sustainable practices, including the historical farming and processing of industrial hemp, align seamlessly with our vision. We collaborate not just on the development but also on initiatives benefiting the local community, enhancing the social fabric that makes Rochford unique.

INNOVATING WITH PURPOSE

Rochford Park is as much about building homes as it is building purpose. About weaving a tapestry of sustainable living, economic prosperity, and community well-being. At HEMSPAN®, our proprietary BIOHAUS® building systems and products are rooted in purpose — not least to address the environmental crisis our planet faces. The construction industry significantly contributes to carbon emissions, and we are here to change that narrative. With our modular design for offsite manufacturing and bio-based construction solutions, we set the benchmark for carbon performance

in house building. And with the inclusion of cutting-edge features, such as smart energy systems and innovative waste management, and our sensitivity towards the updating of historic buildings that celebrate the region's past, our design ensures that this development provides something for everyone and is at the forefront of modern living.

LOCAL IMPACT: SOCIAL, ECONOMIC, AND ENVIRONMENTAL

With Rochford Park we go beyond the design of a cluster of residences to the shaping of a connected community, meticulously designed with residents' well-being at its heart. Our designers have worked hard to integrate countryside and green spaces with homes, businesses, and community facilities. And we have partnered with local famers and business people to design a circular economy, rejuvenating the local hemp growing industry and its jobs that the area has been so famous for.

Hemp was once a core part of the UK's economy, used in the manufacturing of rope, sails and linen. Only 20 years ago, 4,000 acres of carbon-capturing hemp was grown across Essex, predominantly to reduce plastic use in the German auto industry. The new local hemp crop will provide the integral ingredient and building material that will go into the homes we build. With Rochford Park, hemp brings authenticity to our circular economy initiative and will provide a sense of pride and identity to the residents of our homes.

COMMUNITY-BUILDING APPROACH

Fostering a sense of belonging, pride, and shared responsibility is key to our designs at HEMSPAN®. It's why we work so hard with local community groups to go beyond the purely physical aspects of building homes, to create a society that embraces inclusivity, education, entrepreneurship and environmental responsibility.

It's why Rochford Park will provide a new village centre, featuring a focal point for communal activities; a new Special Educational Needs & Disability (SEND) school, providing accessible educational opportunities; and a Forest School and Nursery, fostering a holistic approach to education. It will boast an extensive pedestrian and cycle network, connecting the development to Rochford town centre, and a north-south link road, an alternative to Ashingdon Road, prioritising eco-friendly infrastructure and community connectivity.

A COMMITMENT TO SOCIAL HOUSING

We have also given considerable thought to the approach towards the provision for social housing. The normal paradigms for social housing tend to view it as an after-thought and a burden, and as a result sub-standard, poorly considered accommodation is then delivered, inflicting negative outcomes on the residents.

For Rochford Park we will work with specialists in this sector such as Cornerstone Place, a social enterprise development consultancy which works with Local Authorities, charities, Registered Providers and developers to create housing which focuses on delivering a positive impact for residents in a financially and environmentally sustainable way.

ECONOMIC PROSPERITY WITH ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY

Rochford deserves economic prosperity. This is why, as well a space for homes and families, Rochford Park will also be a future-facing, environmentally conscious, economic engine designed to propel sustainable growth.

The proposed state-of-the-art HEMSPAN® factory, strategically located near Rochford Park, illustrates this commitment to delivering a carbon-negative footprint. Hemp, a core HEMSPAN® building material, is one of nature's most efficient and effective storers of atmospheric carbon. On an annual basis, hemp sequesters between 8 and 15 tonnes of CO₂ per hectare . By comparison, a hectare of 20-year-old woodland captures 2 to 6 tonnes per annum. Our hemp-based building system, developed through rigorous research and development, goes 'beyond zero carbon', not only creating energy-efficient homes, but also negative carbon emissions, aligning with the global push towards a sustainable future.

This use of hemp by the factory will create a demand for approximately 5,000 hectares worth of hemp per annum which local farmers can support. It will also generate approximately 350 new local high-value jobs, plus a further 175 jobs in associated support industries. Together it will generate £750 million GDP per year, while the development as a whole will provide space for education, hospitality and workspaces for innovation and skills transition.

As you can see, this is about living and working in harmony with the environment and natural landscape around us. It's about building homes and a bustling community surrounded by extensive areas of natural habitat and wildlife conservation areas. And with c.100,000 trees to be planted, it's about contributing to a biodiversity net gain and the mitigation of climate change.

A PROMISE TO THE GENERATIONS AHEAD

In conclusion, Rochford Park is not just a development, it's a promise – to revive, rejuvenate, and reshape Rochford for the better. To breathe new life into the area, make it a home for technology and for new ways of thinking. It's a place where people will look forward to raising their children.

This isn't about constructing houses; it's about building a future we can all be proud of. As HEMSPAN® CEO, I extend an invitation for you to join us on this exciting journey, ***where innovation meets purpose, and where the legacy we build isn't just for us but for the many generations that will call our flag ship Rochford Park development home.***

Thank you,

Matt Belcher



OUR VISIONARY PARTNERS & CLIENTS

APPLY



MARGENT FARM



PIXEL



*Centre for Natural Material Innovation, Darshil Shah