

Derby Tories want to expand city boundaries to take in new housing

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Derby's Conservatives say the city's boundaries should be extended

DERBY'S Conservative group is calling for the city's boundaries to be extended to deal with housing developments on neighbouring council's land.

Thousands of homes are planned on land that falls under the planning authority of Amber Valley Borough Council and South Derbyshire District Council.

Sites such as Boulton Moor, Wragley Way and the development off Kedleston Road would all have serious implications for Derby City Council's infrastructure, according to Councillor Matthew Holmes.

To cope with these "bolt-on" applications, Mr Holmes will put forward a motion to the full council meeting of Derby City Council to expand the area over which Derby would have control.

He said: "Housing developments being proposed and imposed on the city outskirts continue to be a huge issue. It also has a huge impact on many other wards due to the knock-on impact of available school places and pressures on infrastructure.

"This is not an acceptance that the Conservative group now accepts 'bolt-on' developments. We continue to lead the fight against them to support our local communities but it's clear we must also accept the reality of the situation."

The boundary change would also have a serious knock-on effect of increasing the council tax yield for the city by possibly "millions of pounds" according to Mr Holmes

He said: "It would allow more money to be spent on frontline services and facilities for residents."

But he is prepared for neighbouring authorities not supporting the plan. He said: "As Derby councillors, our priority is to both support our local constituents and do what is best for the city. In our view, the supporting arguments for boundary change are valid based on the latest guidance and are confident a submission could be made for a review in a modest time frame."

Councillor Martin Rawson, cabinet member for planning, environment and regeneration, said: "Boundary extension is a potentially long protracted process."

"At the request of the Department for Communities and Local Government or of a local authority, or at the Local Government Boundary Commission for England's instigation, the Local Government Boundary Commission for England can undertake administrative boundary reviews, which review the external boundaries of a local authority."

Councillor Lucy Care, speaking on behalf of the Liberal Democrat group, said: "The idea is something that we looked at when we were in power and other councils were not in favour. With the various other conversations that are still ongoing at this moment in time, such as the countywide partnership, I think more thought needs to be put into this plan."

The leader of Amber Valley Borough Council, Councillor Paul Jones, said: "We have no intention of requesting, or being involved in, a boundary review at this time."

South Derbyshire District Council was unable to comment.