



Dawn Joyce
Assistant to the Town Clerk
Saltash Town Council

BY EMAIL

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Our Ref 5026_027

Dear Dawn,

Saltash Settlement Spatial Plan Proposal

Further to our recent Zoom meeting I set out below a proposal to produce a Settlement Spatial Plan (SSP) with Saltash Town Council.

As we explained, we have designed this new product for town and parish councils to be proactive where they are facing likely large scale development proposals.

This is particularly useful where there is likely to be a period of several years without an up to date Local Plan. Although Cornwall Council (CC) has begun working on its new Local Plan it won't be in place for perhaps four years. This exposes Saltash to the risks of speculative planning applications, which you are now beginning to see, with potentially serious consequences for the town's infrastructure and character.

Our SSP product can serve a number of purposes:

- to shape emerging Local Plan proposals
- to inform representations made on major planning applications and appeals
- to scope out the site allocation and other policy options in a new neighbourhood plan

CC has not yet published the templates for its new Neighbourhood Priority Statement (NPS) approach but based on our review of its completed pilot work, we believe an SSP will have an excellent fit. Only some minor adaptations may be needed to deliver a timely and credible output that will meet CC's needs and establish a clear position for the Town Council. Should CC not fully embrace the outcome of the SSP in its Local Plan, then the Town Council will have an important evidence base to challenge the Local Plan at its examination in due course.



SSP Key Features

The SSP is based on an exploratory scenario planning (XSP) method through which a small number of technically plausible future scenarios for the town are built and tested with stakeholders – the local communities, infrastructure operators (e.g. schools, surgeries, utilities etc), the LPA(s) and land interests.

The scenarios expose the crucial inter-relationships between population growth and distribution on the one hand, with the supporting infrastructure – social, commercial, transport, green and utilities – on the other. They do not therefore leave such matters as ‘somebody else’s problem’ to resolve at a later, most often too late, stage.

The method is highly creative and enables the Town Council to use its deep understanding of how the town functions in reality to inform the scenarios. It also avoids trying to predict the future and leaving a future plan a hostage to fortune. Instead, it will enable the Town Council, and we would hope CC via the NPS output, to adopt a flexible strategy that can anticipate and react to events into the medium term.

For clients wanting to go beyond the technical exercise and to engage their local communities in debating the scenarios, which we encourage, we help them develop stimulating online and offline content. Here, CC will expect such an engagement stage as part of its NPS templated process in any event. But we also encourage and support clients to engage with the most relevant infrastructure providers and even land interests to understand their positions.

Our core role is to manage the project, build the scenarios for your team to validate, guide the stakeholder engagement activities and facilitate the two workshops. We produce the workshop slide packs and output notes for the Steering Group, and then the final SSP report.

We are pleased that SSPs have proven very popular with town and parish council clients across the country over the last year. We have delivered more than a dozen in a wide variety to settlements, including those larger (St. Neots) and smaller than Saltash, and some a similar size (Buckingham). In one very recent case in Essex, we have now been appointed by the local planning authority itself to take an SSP output for a 2,500 home strategic growth area (we produced for a parish council) and help it convert the main features into a new Local Plan policy.

Scope of Work

Our SSP scope comprises:

- Data mapping and evidence gathering
- Stakeholder mapping and analysis with the Steering Group
- Scenario building
- Scenario testing through stakeholder (including community) engagement
- Preferred strategy and action plan recommendations

We would then frame the SSP output to reflect CC’s NPS preferences, on the assumption that should be a straightforward task.

It includes an online inception call, two online steering group meetings and two in-person workshops of the steering group and invited stakeholders. We also make time for occasional communications via email and phone call and for helping you liaise with CC as necessary.

The output is an illustrated report that summaries the process followed, the evidence analysed, the nature of the engagement activities and the preferred strategy and actions arising from that work. This is presented to the steering group to take forward once approved.

Project Team

I will lead the ONH project team with support from other team members that are expert in data mapping, community engagement and document production. I am one of the very few UK-based members of the international Consortium for Scenario Planning and have led on most of our SSP projects in major towns so far. I have over 30 years' of professional planning experience and ten years in the corporate sector.

Timetable

We would be able to commence the project within four weeks of appointment, with the final report expected four to five months after project commencement, depending on the summer holiday period.

Fee

The fee product is priced at **£14,950 + VAT**. We will also charge an in-person meeting expense of £100 for the two visits (there is no fee for online meetings). There are no other expenses. We would invoice in three equal sums on appointment, at the mid-point and on completion.

In making its decision I respect that the Town Council may wish to test the market. However, we know that at present the SSP product is unique with no effective substitutes yet available. I am therefore mindful that our other SSP clients have appointed us using the NALC Model Financial Regulations that allow for competitive quote exemptions in this type of circumstance.

If you have any queries, please come back to me.

Best regards,

