

To receive a report on Neighbourhood Priority Statements and consider any actions or associated expenditure

Report to:

Planning and Licensing Committee

Date of Report:

06.05.2026

Officer Writing the Report:

Planning and General Administrator

Purpose of the report:

To receive a report on the revised National Planning Policy Framework and the emerging Cornwall Local Plan, and to consider supporting the preparation of a Neighbourhood Priority Statement and the commissioning of a bespoke Settlement Spatial Plan, to ensure Saltash Town Council can proactively manage development pressures and clearly set out local priorities.

Officer's Recommendations

Members are asked to consider whether they wish to proceed with the recommendations outlined in this report and resolve to:

1. Approve the submission of a Neighbourhood Priority Statement (NPS) to Cornwall Council and confirm by issuing a formal letter of designation;
2. Delegate authority to the Town Clerk to sign and submit the letter of designation on behalf of Saltash Town Council;
3. Approve the appointment of a company to deliver a Settlement Spatial Plan (SSP), noting that this will also enable a full and evidence-based review of the Saltash Neighbourhood Development Plan;

4. Delegate authority to the Office Manager, in consultation with a Neighbourhood Plan Working Group comprising of Cllrs B Samuels, P Samuels and Brady and consider appointing one other member, to oversee delivery of the NPS and SSP process;
5. Delegate authority to the Office Manager to manage any additional public engagement costs working within budget code 6275 PR EMF Neighbourhood Plan, with progress and expenditure reported back to future committee meetings.

Report Summary

The Government's revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), effective from 12 December 2024, introduced significant changes to national planning policy, including an increase in Cornwall's annual housing requirement from 2,707 to 4,421 homes. In response, Cornwall Council has begun preparing a new Cornwall Local Plan (CLP), with adoption anticipated in June 2029. Further information, including the timetable, is available on Cornwall Council's website:

<https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/cornwall-local-plan-2050/local-plan-timetable/>

As part of this process, Cornwall Council has requested that all town and parish councils prepare a Neighbourhood Priority Statement (NPS) to provide up-to-date local insight on community needs, priorities, and aspirations. Town and parish councils have been requested to submit a letter of designation by Tuesday 26 May 2026, confirming their commitment to preparing a Neighbourhood Priority Statement.

Although the NPS is not a statutory document and carries no formal planning weight, it will form an important part of the evidence base informing the emerging Local Plan.

See **Appendix A** for helpful information on the NPS process, including questions and answers arising from recent presentations to town and parish councils.

Engagement in this process is therefore essential to ensure Saltash's priorities are reflected and to reduce the risk of speculative or unplanned development, particularly given the town's proximity to Plymouth and increasing development pressures.

Saltash's current Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP), adopted in 2022 and valid until 2030, remains in force. However, changes to national policy and emerging development pressures mean some policies may carry reduced weight, and the plan does not reflect more recent potential development areas identified through the Call for Sites. Best practice supports periodic review to ensure continued relevance.

To support both the preparation of the NPS and a wider review of the NDP, a Settlement Spatial Plan (SSP) has been identified as an appropriate and proactive approach. An SSP would provide an evidence-based spatial framework for managing future growth, identifying infrastructure needs, and strengthening the Town Council's position in responding to planning applications and engaging with Cornwall Council and developers. Importantly, the SSP process includes structured community engagement, which can directly inform the NPS while also supporting a comprehensive review of the NDP.

Cornwall Council has not provided dedicated funding for the preparation of NPS documents. Both the NPS and SSP will require officer input and some level of community engagement expenditure; however, this work is considered essential to ensure that future development is appropriately planned and aligned with local priorities. Failure to progress this work may reduce the Town Council's ability to influence strategic planning decisions and respond effectively to development pressures.

Two quotes have been received for the SSP. Both provide a comprehensive outline of the work involved and the activities to be undertaken over a period of 4–5 months. For the purposes of this report, they are referred to as **Company A and Company C**.

Appendix B is examples of effective community engagement undertaken as part of a successful SSP delivered by another council.

How Does This Meet the Business Plan?

A Settlement Spatial Plan would support several of Saltash Town Council's strategic priorities by providing a clear direction and framework for shaping Saltash future growth. It would also guide where high quality, affordable homes should be located in response to the increased housing numbers required. By considering different growth scenarios and associated infrastructure needs, the SSP can help the Council influence how future growth aligns with Saltash community priorities.

Quotes Provided

- Company A:

£14,950 + VAT Settlement Spatial Plan

In person meeting expense of £100 for the two visits.

- Company B: Declined to provide a quote due to existing workload and lack of capacity.

- Company C:

£14,850 +VAT Settlement Spatial Plan

+ expenses dependant on Town Council instructions.

Both submissions are of a comparable headline cost and programme and would be capable of delivering a Settlement Spatial Plan for Saltash. However, they differ in emphasis, scope and cost certainty.

Company A proposal provides a strategic, scenario-led framework with a relatively fixed scope and cost.

This company is sector-focused, with former Town Clerks and experienced local government officers within its team, providing valuable insight based on practical council experience.

Company C proposal provides a detailed spatial and technical analysis, but with a more flexible scope and potential for additional costs depending on requirements.

However, there is an optional additional cost to appoint a consultant who was involved in the original preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan, which could provide continuity and added context to the project.

Procurement Threshold

Does this project meet the procurement threshold?

No

If no, provide further information on how the project will meet the financial regulation requirements for contracts under the threshold. For example:

- For contracts greater than £3,000 excluding VAT the RFO shall seek at least 3 fixed price quotes

Budgets

Budget Codes: 6275 PR EMF Neighbourhood Plan

Budget Availability: £23,053

Signature of Officer:

Planning and General Administrator