

APPENDIX B

13.07.26

Saltash SSP Session 1 Notes

ONH introduced the presentation and provided an overview of the SSP and principles of Scenario Planning, including the concepts of predictability and uncertainty in relation to Saltash.

The SSP will deliver a strategy to inform the NPS or NDP but also to make comments on major planning applications, and Cornwall Council's local plan.

The approach will use scenario planning to explore different futures for Saltash, focusing on understanding opportunities, constraints and relationships between different issues rather than attempting to predict specific outcomes. Scenario planning is not used by planning authorities, and it differs from the traditional approach of predict and provide. The SSP is intended to encourage thinking about the future without trying to predict it.

A second session is proposed for late September, for Members and key stakeholders to test three or four scenarios developed from the discussions and evidence gathered so far. Scenario information will be circulated in advance with the exercise designed to explore potential trade offs and improve an understanding of how different choices and factors may influence the future of the town.

Stakeholder mapping will form part of the next stage, and a matrix will be sent to identify stakeholders and their level of interest and influence. Community engagement is planned for October to ensure local views help shape the final strategy.

ONH explained that housing delivery is influenced by the wider market and structural factors, with allocated sites building out slowly. It was noted that Plymouth's economic growth particularly the increase in defence expenditure and employment is likely to drive housing demand in Saltash, alongside the town's countryside and estuary setting.

Discussions covered Cornwall's housing targets, with Saltash viewed as a sustainable and well connected location due to its rail station and proximity to Plymouth, which aligns with national planning policies and supporting development in sustainable locations.

While planning authorities are required to identify sufficient land for housing, key infrastructure is not always delivered alongside development. Scenario planning can help explore infrastructure capacity, key thresholds and how existing services can accommodate future growth.

Discussion on Key insights

Healthcare and Access to Services

- Saltash has limited healthcare provision despite population growth.
- Existing GP surgeries are already at capacity:
 - Port View – approximately 7500 patients
 - Saltash Health Centre – approximately 13500 patients
- Significant challenges accessing healthcare, dentistry and hospital services, with residents travelling to Derriford in Plymouth, Truro/Treliske or Torpoint for referrals.
- Public Transport to health services is limited, particularly in rural areas. Trematon has one bus a week which is not a service.
- Access to healthcare and other services is difficult for households without a car
- There are ongoing discussions around improving healthcare provision, but there have been delays and is not within STC remit. Doctors currently at the GP practices share consultant rooms and are part time.
- Integrated Care Board engagement is ongoing but operational challenges and staffing shortages continue to delay improvements.
- Land is allocated at Treledan for healthcare provision but there is no certainty over what type of facility will be delivered. Funding for this will not be released until a percentage of properties are occupied.
- Existing facilities especially Port View are unsuitable due to lack of parking and no lift access.
- The current hospital in Saltash is an admin base with a small number of clinical staff.
- There have been discussions for around two years about opening a local phlebotomy facility, but progress has been slow. Residents currently travel to facilities such as Windsor House by Derriford Hospital in Plymouth for routine blood tests which can involve considerable travel time and impact traffic. St Barnabas has a room set up for phlebotomy appointment with suitable equipment but currently no staff.
- Proposals to improve health services should include:
 - Expanded preventative care services
 - Family hub facilities/ Midwifery and health visitor facilities
 - Additional GP and community health care services

Education

- Saltash has four primary schools, a secondary school and a SEND school.
- Saltash secondary school has pupils attending from Plymouth.
- Children and young people regularly travel outside Saltash for education, including Plymouth Grammar Schools, typically by bus or train. Further education colleges in Callington, Bodmin, Truro and Falmouth.
- The Secondary School has reduced intake but capacity is constrained and the due to the buildings age and layout, it has narrow corridors and limited space. To manage capacity pressure, the school has introduced staggered classroom changeovers and lunch breaks.
- Primary Schools are under subscribed due to falling birth rates and lower nursery enrolments. Many parents working in Plymouth choose Plymouth nurseries for convenience as it fits better with commuting patterns, and some companies offer incentives with nurseries. A reduction in numbers has resulted in a reduction in funding.
- Land and funding have been allocated for future education provision at Treledan. Treledan is contributing funding now to the existing secondary school rather than delivering a new school.
- Demographic changes are affecting demand with some areas having older populations and fewer school aged children.
- There is not an issue with lack of primary schools/spaces, but they are located relatively close together and not as accessible for families living on the outskirts of Saltash. Their locations are not in the most suitable areas to service current and future populations.

Housing and demographics

- Saltash has an aging population, but second homes are not considered an issue locally.
- Housing affordability is a challenge, and Plymouth is often seen as a cheaper alternative.
- There are limited affordable housing, no lettings available and housing market movement is relatively stagnant.
- Areas such as Pilmere have matured demographically with family households now having adult children.
- Population growth has not been matched by infrastructure and services.

Economy and Employment

- Deprivation is not a significant issue in Saltash.
- Saltash has been described as one of the safest towns in Cornwall.
- The town benefits from its proximity to Plymouth, which provides high quality, well paid jobs. A large employer includes defence and engineering such as Babcock.
- Employment opportunities further west in Cornwall are often reliant on hospitality, tourist and seasonal work.
- Employment links with Plymouth is likely to encourage housing demand and population growth. Although economically connected to Plymouth, Saltash has a distinct Cornish identity.

Town Centre and Retail

- Saltash town centre is performing relatively well compared with other towns, with few vacant units.
- Success of the Town Centre could be measured in business longevity and occupied units, however, turn over has been relatively high which could suggest it is not as successful as it appears.
- Fore Street has mostly independent businesses, except for Boots and Superdrug.
- The town has lost everyday retailers such as butchers, bakers, fruit and veg shop and the factory shop that assisted in driving footfall.
- Parking charges are a barrier to town centre visits, particularly since free Sunday parking was removed. There is 30 minutes free, but that is not long enough. It was noted that in Plymouth areas such as Plympton and Plymstock both offer free parking for three hours.
- Improvements have been made, led by Town Team and the Town Council, including planting, additional seating, and lights.
- Regular events are well attended and support footfall to the town.
- Free parking after 4pm helps encourage visits.
- The location of Fore Street is right next to key access routes going east and for people commuting to and from Plymouth. It is close to the A38 and the station.
- There are upper floor flats in Fore Street and houses in close proximity to town.
- Geography of the town is pulling west with all developments.
- There are other areas with accessible retail such as Treledan and the Industrial estate.

Infrastructure, Transport and Future Growth

- The A38 and rail station provide important regional connectivity. The edges of Saltash are distant from the Town Centre and Rail station. Better connections are needed.
- Saltash's topography creates challenges for movement around the town.
- New development areas need to be supported by infrastructure, services and community facilities.
- There are concerns about developments such as Pilmere, which has limited infrastructure and only one main access route. The intention for space has changed.
- Treledan has been planned with a more integrated approach with community hub, sports facility and services.
- Future growth needs to focus on improving existing infrastructure as well as delivering new facilities. Current facilities are all condensed in one area.

Councillors discussed the idea of mini satellite districts that compliment town rather than compete with it. Similar to Plymouth's Plympton and Plymstock areas.

Fears for the future of Saltash

Members discussed the following as fears for the future of Saltash:

- Traffic congestion at carkeel
- Additional housing growth would lead to increased traffic pressures.
- Poor public transport links, especially for residents in rural areas.
- Limited bus services will not be sufficient for residents to access town or healthcare.
- Healthcare provision not keeping pace with growth. An aging population will increase demand for services.
- Lack of nursing and residential care provision. There is one purpose build nursing home. There have been no proposals for a retirement village, but this may be a welcomed proposal.
- Saltash not being a tourist destination. Lack of hotels and previous hotel proposals never materialised.
- Waterside location under promoted and underused.
- Not being able to retain Saltash's character and heritage. Buildings were removed and the road widened for the Bridge.

Great decisions for Saltash

Members discussed what great decisions for Saltash could be:

- Investment in the waterside area, public spaces and access to water transport.
- Improvement in connections between buses, the railway station and Plymouth. Extending the railway platform and improving rail infrastructure, to support the railways route alongside the Dockyard to support employment and economic opportunities in that area.
- Developing a more modern, responsive and reliable public transport network, with links between communities. Improvement in walking and cycle links across the town, making it easier and more convenient, without relying on a car.
- Ensuring new development contributes to transport and infrastructure improvements.

Members discussed that bus services available within the town. Commuter services are important as Plymouth plays a significant economic role in Saltash, which provides major employment opportunities, and influences housing growth.

Members highlighted successful examples such as Falmouth's regular hopper-style bus network, which run every 20 minutes, 7 days a week connecting key destinations around the town. It was suggested that Saltash may now have the population to support a similar hopper style service.

Members discussed Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and section 106 contributions, including the potential to request an increase in CIL banding to secure greater infrastructure funding from development. It was noted CIL rates and payment structures are set by Cornwall Council.

Next Steps

A second session is planned in September, with members to consider inviting key stakeholders. Alternatively, it can be a session for Town Council members first and then a stakeholder engagement exercise afterwards. STC to decide.

Scenario based discussion material will be circulated in advance to support a workshop session of a few hours. The session will explore the cause and effect relationship and trade offs associated with different future growth scenarios, rather than focusing on quantifying outcomes. A report will be sent on how to do stakeholder engagement.

DJ to send ONH details of the Waterside project.

ONH to send DJ the stakeholder matrix.