

Consultant / Senior Consultant (Job title TBC)

At specialist consultancy Dixon Searle Partnership (DSP), the common thread through all our work is viability in planning.

Our small, diverse team provides expert services specifically to Local Authorities and sometimes other public sector/related organisations.

We provide viability evidence for Local Plans, CIL Charging Schedules and other development plan documents. We advise on the suitability of affordable housing and other policies, financial contributions calculations and levels, s.106/review mechanisms and other matters where development viability plays a role.

DSP is looking for a person or people to join and complement our excellent team; to help DSP's continued growth.

This is with a view to:

1. Helping to develop our work both in scope and technically. We are looking to boost capacity and evolve what we do, including (for example) in respect of key areas such as climate change response, biodiversity net gain and green infrastructure (as key examples).
2. Further enhancing the company's strong reputation and high profile in our specialist areas of consultancy work.
3. Sustaining the business, helping us to plan as well as react and respond; and to thrive into the future alongside DSP's valued clients.

Paying high regard to the DSP ethos, new member(s) will need to have a strong interest in viability in planning, or in developing that.

They may be part qualified/gaining experience or qualified/more experienced. Tailored training and close personal development will be supported accordingly. Professional membership fees and CPD fully funded.

Salary and other terms subject to experience (part time also considered).

DSP supports fully hybrid working, with work patterns discussed between colleagues and flexibility around core hours.

This role also offers the potential to be involved in new business, tendering and other aspects involved in operating a SME.

Person profile / skill set:

1. Adaptable and enthusiastic.
2. Enjoys working in a small dynamic team, contributing to the smooth running of the business whilst multi-tasking across a professional workload.
3. Ideally having a viability and / or a planning policy background, preferably with at least some local authority experience. As a team encompassing property, building, technical, housing, planning, and legal experience, however, DSP is also open to and has consistently good experience of developing the right people from related or different sectors.
4. Ability to review and summarise Local Plan policies and documents, national planning policy and guidance, technical reports and guidance and data from a wide range of sources (for example Land Registry, VOA, RICS, impact statements, studies, property databases/portals and the like).
5. An analytical, querying nature, with an eye for detail.
6. Technically minded, with a capacity for considering and weighing up complex matters, options for actions and potential consequences.
7. An ability to lead on / assist compiling technical information and evidence that DSP prepares (research > assumptions setting > appraisal and review > analysis and presentation of results > judgments and reporting).
8. Ideally experience of running and interpreting development appraisals, or the interest and capacity to pick this up early on.
9. Strong report writing skills.
10. Experience of leading presentations and training sessions or similar, or, again, an ability to develop these sides to your work if this is not within your direct experience initially. Taking this on to represent DSP and its clients at a variety of settings (e.g. client meetings, officer and Member training, acting as expert witness at Appeal / Public Inquiry / Examination in Public).

Primarily, we see the key element of the role being the leading on/supporting our strategic level viability assessments (for Local Plans, CIL, DPDs, SPDs) at what is an ever-evolving time for plan making and associated areas. An interesting and potentially pivotal point for this.

We also expect that new colleagues will need to (and will benefit significantly from) getting involved with our site specific viability review caseload. This, along with the other typically varied duties in a small company set up is likely to enhance both the experience gained and the progression of opportunities for the Company.

For further information or an informal exploratory discussion please contact initially Directors Richard and / or Rob at richard@dixonsearle.co.uk rob@dixonsearle.co.uk).