



# Queen Camel Parish Council

## Response to South Somerset District Council's Local Plan Review *Issues and Options* consultation

Submitted on January 10<sup>th</sup>, 2018

1. Queen Camel Parish Council (QCPC) has long recognised the importance of maintaining the social and economic viability of the Parish through sustainable development in line with the views and interests of Parishioners. This is reflected in:
  - i. The Queen Camel *Community Plan* (2005)
  - ii. The establishment of a QCPC Planning and Development Group in 2006
  - iii. The Queen Camel *Development Plan* (2009)
  - iv. QCPC's selection as a *Frontrunner* parish under the 2011 Localism Act
  - v. The Queen Camel *Parish Survey* (2016)
  - vi. The Housing Needs Assessment and Survey undertaken in conjunction with South Somerset District Council (SSDC), 2017-18.
  - vii. The drafting of the Queen Camel *Neighbourhood Plan*, 2012 - present
2. QCPC's support for sustainable development is further illustrated by its promotion of two recent substantial developments in the Parish, namely 20 new Affordable Homes and a new Primary School.
3. Councillors attending the SSDC pre-consultation workshops on October 5<sup>th</sup> and October 12<sup>th</sup>, 2017 and studying SSDC's *Local Plan Review Issues and Options Consultation* document welcome SSDC's acknowledgement that rural settlements (like Queen Camel) have 'over-provided' housing and employment development (5.23, 5.36) and that consequently development up to 2034 should be focussed on existing major settlements.
4. The Queen Camel Draft Neighbourhood Plan (which will be presented to QCPC within the next two months before going out for statutory public consultation) emphasises QCPC's continuing commitment to sustainable development which respects the character and satisfies the needs of the Parish.

5. The idea of a 'Garden Village' located near the A303 may be in line with national or regional development policies (*Issues and Options*, 5.31) but QCPC will vigorously oppose any proposed developments which would affect the Parish without respecting its character or satisfying its needs.
6. *The A303 Garden Settlement Proposals* Prospectus issued by South West Strategic Developments during the Christmas holiday period was not sent to QCPC but news of the proposals has leaked out and caused considerable alarm among some residents.
7. The information so far provided about the Garden Settlement proposals is not sufficient for an informed judgement to be made about its likely impact on the Parish but QCPC has considerable reservations about what it has heard so far.
8. QCPC is currently taking stock of proposals for two major schemes which would both have a major impact on the Parish, namely the A303 Road Improvement Scheme and the SWSD Garden Settlement Scheme. QCPC is surprised that so little detail has been provided about the possible or likely effect of the two schemes on each other and about the overall effect on the Parish of the two schemes combined. Without such detail it is difficult to make an informed judgement about the merits of either scheme.
9. Parishioners hearing about the proposed Garden Settlement are particularly concerned about the impact of thousands of extra cars on local roads and about the effect the Settlement would have on local services and facilities like the School, the Medical Centre, the village shop, leisure facilities etc. Depending on the structure of the proposed Settlement there is a danger that Queen Camel's existing services could be either 'swamped' or 'starved', and either outcome would undermine the sustainable development which is at the heart of our Parish planning.
10. QCPC would be grateful if SSDC could take account of all these considerations and concerns when evolving its preferred policy options.