



**CABINET**

**19<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2018**

**AGENDA ITEM (13)**

**GLOUCESTERHIRE 2050 VISION - CONSULTATION**

<b>Accountable Member</b>	Councillor NJW Parsons Cabinet Member for Forward Planning
<b>Accountable Officer</b>	James Brain Forward Planning Manager 01285 623000 james.brain@cotswold.gov.uk
<b>Purpose of Report</b>	To consider a response to the Gloucestershire 2050 Vision consultation.
<b>Recommendations</b>	<p>(a) That Cabinet notes the Gloucestershire 2050 Vision and 'Big Conversation';</p> <p>(b) that the Head of Paid Service, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Forward Planning, be authorised to agree and forward on the final version submission, based on (i) the comments contained in Section 5 of this report; (ii) any feedback at the Cabinet Meeting; and (iii) any further feedback from Members in advance of the consultation response submission.</p>
<b>Reason(s) for Recommendation(s)</b>	To ensure that the Council engages with partners on wider strategic conversations as to how to meet the needs of the future.
<b>Ward(s) Affected</b>	All
<b>Key Decision</b>	No
<b>Recommendation to Council</b>	No
<b>Financial Implications</b>	None directly arising from this report.
<b>Legal and Human Rights Implications</b>	None directly arising from this report.
<b>Environmental and Sustainability Implications</b>	This is not a statutory/formal local plan consultation and the consultation is not supported by a Sustainability Appraisal. It is likely that several proposals would have significant environmental and sustainability implications. Should these be supported, further assessments would be required to establish their extent and severity and also whether proposals can be adequately mitigated.

<b>Human Resource Implications</b>	None directly arising from this report.
<b>Key Risks</b>	<p>Meeting the needs of future generations is a key priority for all Councils across Gloucestershire. The Council, through its Local Plan (2011- 2031), provides the key mechanism to achieve this, and is a demonstration of its commitment to meet its needs.</p> <p>The Council has a duty to co-operate with neighbouring authorities, and this consultation is one of many ways the Council can engage with strategic issues and ideas affecting Gloucestershire.</p> <p>Pro-active plan-making helps to reduce the risk of piece-meal and speculative development.</p>
<b>Equalities Impact Assessment</b>	Not specifically required

<b>Related Decisions</b>	None
<b>Background Documents</b>	<p>(i) Glos 2050 website: <a href="https://glos2050.com/">https://glos2050.com/</a></p> <p>(ii) Powerpoint Presentations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overview <a href="https://glos2050.com/EngagementToolkit/Presentation/Toolkit%20presentation%20-%20Overview.pptx">https://glos2050.com/EngagementToolkit/Presentation/Toolkit%20presentation%20-%20Overview.pptx</a></li> <li>• Case for Change <a href="https://glos2050.com/EngagementToolkit/Presentation/Toolkit%20Presentation%201%20-%20Case%20for%20Change.pptx">https://glos2050.com/EngagementToolkit/Presentation/Toolkit%20Presentation%201%20-%20Case%20for%20Change.pptx</a></li> <li>• Ambitions <a href="https://glos2050.com/EngagementToolkit/Presentation/Toolkit%20Presentation%203%20-%20Ambitions.pptx">https://glos2050.com/EngagementToolkit/Presentation/Toolkit%20Presentation%203%20-%20Ambitions.pptx</a></li> <li>• Ideas <a href="https://glos2050.com/EngagementToolkit/Presentation/Toolkit%20Presentation%202%20-%20Six%20Ideas.pptx">https://glos2050.com/EngagementToolkit/Presentation/Toolkit%20Presentation%202%20-%20Six%20Ideas.pptx</a></li> </ul>
<b>Appendices</b>	<b>Appendix 'A'</b> - Map showing airports within Cotswold District and those within close proximity to the district.

<b>Performance Management Follow Up</b>	Implement Cabinet decision(s)
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<b>Background Information</b>	
1. <u>General</u>	
1.1 Gloucestershire 2050 is a county-wide conversation to explore ideas and shape the long-term future of the county together. The Big Conversation will continue until 31 <sup>st</sup> July 2018.	
1.2 Members may recall two briefings provided on this subject in November 2017 and January this year, ahead of the Big Conversation launch at Cheltenham Racecourse on 1 <sup>st</sup> February this year.	

## 2. Main Points

2.1 The information supporting the Big Conversation sets out a Case for Change. It recognises that Gloucestershire is a fantastic place to live with bustling towns, a historic city, innovative businesses and beautiful countryside. So why is there a need to change?

2.2 The Case for Change identifies that Gloucestershire will face some major challenges over the next 30 years that will impact on all our lives if we don't take action. We need to develop a long-term vision for our county now, so we are fully prepared to overcome the obstacles that threaten our future and our children's future.

2.3 Evidence shows that there are currently 9,000 births and 5,000 deaths annually in Gloucestershire; also, that 20,000 people move into the county, but 18,000 leave. Underlying these figures is that fact that, annually, we lose 400 more young people than we attract.

2.4 It is estimated that, by 2039, our population will grow, with 79,000 more people in Gloucestershire over the age of 65 years. 0-18 years would account for 4,000 more of the population and the 18-64 years age group would account for 7,000 more of the population. These figures present a major challenge in finding the health and social care workforce to support these older residents.

2.5 Gloucestershire has a great strategic location and a strong, competitive economy, although some sectors are declining in terms of job numbers and we need to raise our productivity and innovation. There is growth in the science, technical, wholesale and retail, health and social care and construction sectors. Against this, there are fewer jobs in manufacturing and public administration. However, the county offers great potential in the cyber, agri-tech and advanced manufacturing and engineering sectors.

2.6 It is estimated that economic growth will generate over 100,000 new jobs over the next 20 years. As set out above, the working age population is set to grow by just 7,000 in the same period. We can also assume that some of the county's current 12,500 EU workers between the ages of 18 and 34 will be lost as Britain withdraws from the EU. This presents the question - can the Gloucestershire economy grow without the working age population to fill the jobs? Currently 77% of employers in the county have 'hard to fill vacancies'.

2.7 Against the background above, it is asserted that the Case for Change demonstrates clearly that action needs to be taken now to plan for the future, but what sort of future should that be?

## 3. Ambitions

3.1 It is clear that Gloucestershire is facing big challenges over the next 30 years; but the county's resources are limited, so there needs to be a fair and transparent process for choosing the ideas that have the best chance of improving the lives of everyone in Gloucestershire.

3.2 Eight ambitions for the county in 2050 have been set out. These ambitions could be used to assess the best ideas that come out of the Big Conversation over the next few months. The ambitions are:

- A magnet county - Where Gloucestershire has a growing working age population, by keeping and attracting more 18-40 year olds with high level qualifications, who want to live and work in the county.
- An innovative county - Where more businesses in Gloucestershire are starting up, growing, and investing in research and innovation.
- A skilled county - Where there are more people in Gloucestershire with high-level skills and jobs in skilled occupations.

- A prosperous county - Where Gloucestershire has rising productivity and household income, offering higher living standards.
- An inclusive county - Where the economic and social benefits of growth are felt by all.
- A healthy, happy county - Where people have a good work/life balance and see improved health and wellbeing.
- A connected county - Where there are improved transport and internet connections so that people and businesses can connect with each other more easily.
- A sustainable county - Where there is more efficient use of resources and more use of sustainable energy.

3.3 These ambitions cover a broad range of matters. They provide a broad basis for the assessment ideas or projects that develop. Are there any that are most important and are there any other ambitions that you think are missing? One possible area might be stating its ambitions about agriculture and the rural economy - ensuring thriving rural communities and businesses, while protecting and enhancing the environment, in the light of challenges from climate change and globalisation.

#### 4. Big Ideas

4.1 To kick start the conversation six big ideas have been identified that could transform the county's national and international reputation by 2050. These are not fixed, and the Big Conversation intends these are a starting point for discussion and to stimulate new ideas. The suggested Big Ideas are as follows.

##### **Super City**

4.2 Gloucestershire's two main urban centres - Gloucester with its cathedral city status and heritage, and Cheltenham with its spa town elegance - could grow and regenerate by developing a third centre connecting the two to create a 'super city'. This would create a vibrant heart in the centre of the county, offering integrated, creative communities to live and work. The benefits of the 'super city' would ripple out to the rest of the county through varied transport links, and changing perceptions of Gloucestershire as a group of separate districts. The combined populations of the three centres would put the new city within the top 10 in the UK, creating the necessary critical mass to support major developments and creating a vibrant and exciting urban environment set within Gloucestershire's glorious countryside. The new centre would also support the second idea, the Cyber Park, to build on Gloucestershire's international reputation in this field.

4.3 One possible location for the third centre could be the land alongside the existing A40 road link, closing the eight-mile gap between city and borough boundaries. Much of this land is currently designated as green belt although has no specific landscape 'value' in terms of particular habitats, special features or protected flora/fauna. It is also suited to building development because it is relatively flat, has good access and a low risk of flooding. The loss of the green belt could be compensated by the development of green corridors through the city into the surrounding countryside to ensure easy access to high quality natural environments.

4.4 The new urban centre would be designed to keep and enhance the unique strengths of Gloucester and Cheltenham, so that the overall city has zones with individual character and identity, as in larger cities such as London. Alongside re-development in Gloucester and Cheltenham, this would provide space to develop a significant new centre with a variety of features to support living, working, and playing across the three city zones.

4.5 The re-developments and the new centre would be planned to address current and future key issues of the county, including the retention of young people, health, education, skills, employment, social cohesion, and sustainability. These issues would be addressed through various projects within the overall development, such as a new, research-led hospital site; a sports stadium/entertainment

venue; new housing; world-class higher education provision; connectivity between existing centres and green corridors; and new cultural offers.

4.6 Gloucester has a population of 130,000; and Cheltenham has a population of 120,000. Nearby parts of Tewkesbury Borough have a population of about 30,000. There are plans to build about 2,500 homes per year in the Cheltenham, Gloucester, and Tewkesbury areas. Assuming that three people live in each of the 2,500 homes built each year, over the next 32 years, there would be 240,000 new residents; and add all the above and we get about 520,000 - this would currently be just about that of a top 10 UK City.

### **Cyber Park**

4.7 Given the increasing threat to national and international security from cyber crime, we need to accelerate and expand our expertise and capability to address these issues. Cyber is an increasingly important economic sector, with big potential for innovative, high-skill businesses and jobs. Having Government Communications Headquarters (GCHQ) on the outskirts of Cheltenham makes the area an obvious choice for the development of a Cyber Park, and a business park is already being developed.

4.8 Expanding the new cyber development alongside GCHQ would create a centre of excellence of national and international significance that capitalises on Gloucestershire's unique selling point in cyber security. The focus on this high-tech, fast-moving industry would attract young professionals and support the retention of young people in the county; provide new training, upskilling, and business development opportunities; and create research partnerships and business links with centres elsewhere in the UK and internationally. There is an existing proposal for a Cyber Park - the challenge is how bold and ambitious this could be.

4.9 The Cyber Park would include a higher education research and innovation facility, working with businesses on the Park and elsewhere to support the development of new products and services. There would be on-site specialist skills training and education, at various levels. The Park would include an enterprise and innovation incubation space and support for cyber-specific start-ups, and business park space for existing businesses to re-locate or expand. There would be meeting and conference space to encourage groups to share expertise locally and beyond the Park.

4.10 The Cyber Park would be an area dedicated to cyber-related business and education development that is supported by surrounding health, housing, and leisure facilities. Economic and social benefits would be maximised, and environmental impacts minimised. Multi-modal transport planning would enable people to walk, cycle, and use public transport.

### **Regional Parks**

4.11 Gloucestershire is blessed to have a varied topography with landscapes that are of high value environmentally and aesthetically. The Forest of Dean and Severn Vale between them offer diverse landscape features, flora, and fauna that can support a range of activities and attract visitors. With Regional Park designation, the existing protective classifications both enjoy would be enhanced and their status as significant leisure and tourism destinations elevated. The designation of the Severn Vale and Forest of Dean as Regional Parks would form part of an overarching tourism plan for Gloucestershire that maximises the value of the diversity of its landscape and heritage assets. Both parks would be accessible from the Super City, putting them back to centre stage as important environmental, economic, and social assets for the county. The new multi-purpose crossing between Lydney and Sharpness would greatly improve access to each area.

4.12 The Severn Vale could be a major attraction in the county, with a range of leisure opportunities and as an important wetland area supporting diverse wildlife. The River Severn has supported the economy of the county for centuries, but has also created problems through flooding. The challenges of flood management and prevention are likely to be exacerbated by climate change; but there is an opportunity to create a managed wetlands area for flood management and to provide habitat for wildlife. With walking and cycling trails accessible from both sides of the river, visitors and local people could access the Vale at strategic points. Enhancing the landscape value with guides

related to the natural and built heritage of the Vale would ensure that visitors and local people gain maximum value from their use of the area.

4.13 The Forest of Dean already has a reputation as a tourism destination; there are, however, issues that prevent the area from maximising its potential. These include the economic decline of its major towns and related decline of valuable tourism resources, limited access from major transport networks, poor broadband and mobile infrastructure, and lack of awareness of the range of leisure activities. The development of the Lydney-Sharpness crossing would improve access and there would be investment in infrastructure and technology, and physical improvement of towns and tourism facilities. This would provide better facilities for local people and employment opportunities, which would be supported by training and education provision.

### **Lydney/Sharpness**

4.14 Sharpness and Lydney were once connected by a rail bridge that was lost through a series of barge accidents during the early 1960s. It was deemed not economic to repair by British Rail. Plans to re-establish a crossing between Lydney and Sharpness have become relevant with the economic decline of the Forest of Dean and large-scale regeneration projects at Berkeley. A new crossing would provide a vital connection between districts, and access to the Forest; thereby addressing employment and economic regeneration, education and skills development, housing need, and retention of young people.

4.15 The new crossing would provide a catalyst to grow the town of Lydney and to develop Sharpness from a small village to a town. It would improve their links to existing transport routes through the county, and create a re-energised economic centre. Investment in Lydney and Sharpness would seek to create a single 'destination' spanning the river with distinctive areas both sides, reflecting their individual cultures, landscapes, and heritage; and inject new life through economic opportunities.

4.16 As well as maximising the tourism potential of the area as an access point to the Forest of Dean and Severn Vale, it would also focus on enhancing employment opportunities and facilities for local people to both retain and attract young professional families. This would include housing, education, leisure, and health infrastructure, which would support those moving into the area to work at the new sites locally, as well as those commuting to the Super City, Cyber Park, and further afield.

4.17 There would be a focus on business development on both sides of the estuary, with facilities for industrial units and incubation spaces to enable and encourage business start-up and expansion. This may be linked to the further development of the Berkeley site and its focus on renewable energy sources.

4.18 The new crossing would be designed to be multi-purpose, to provide for multiple transport methods, and potentially provide a leisure facility with walking and cycling trails into the Severn Vale and Forest of Dean Regional Parks. Connection to the M5 would also be logical, transforming the quality of road access to the Forest of Dean.

### **Cotswold Airport**

4.19 Although it is difficult to predict the exact nature of air transport by 2050, it is widely acknowledged that aircraft will have evolved considerably, perhaps enabling trans-Atlantic travel in as little as 2 hours. Airborne drones will almost certainly be used for a range of services from delivery to observation to transport. Having an airport that is enabled to accommodate, and service, increased aviation activity and its various modes could be central to the county's economic success.

4.20 An expanded and enhanced airport would have a direct economic impact by creating employment on site. An airport able to accommodate long range aircraft would give Gloucestershire direct international connectivity, supporting increased tourism, globalisation of trade, and export of Gloucestershire's growing range of products, from artisan foods to high-tech engineering and professional services. It would provide an important mechanism for the county's businesses and expertise to foster international links in key areas such as cyber-security and advanced

manufacturing.

4.21 As the Cotswolds is already an internationally-recognised tourism brand, direct air access could result in an increase in international tourists. This would provide a direct injection into the local economy of 'cash' that has been earned elsewhere, and support services that benefit the local population, such as pubs, restaurants, and leisure activities. Supported by a strategic marketing campaign, this could impact all the county's tourism assets including the Forest of Dean and Severn Vale.

### **Cotswold Water Park**

4.22 The existing Cotswold Water Park is somewhat fragmented, and there is no significant body of water amongst the many small lakes. Getting a sense of the overall offer and access to different areas is difficult. Alongside the development of a Cotswold Airport, there is an opportunity to turn the Cotswold Water Park into an internationally-recognised tourism destination. Development of water-side housing has provided permanent and tourist accommodation and several leisure activities are available. The lakes have created habitats for wildfowl and some areas have been set aside as nature reserves. The Thames/Severn and Stroudwater Canal passes through the Park, and could provide waterway connectivity to a national network.

4.23 Plans for the Cotswold Water Park in 2050 would include a re-design of the existing lakes to create a larger single body of water surrounded by smaller lakes that could be explored and used as a coherent whole, whilst maintaining and expanding the existing range of leisure uses. The development would include a 1,000-bed hotel of 5-star quality, with conferencing and meeting facilities. Gloucestershire lacks large hotels suitable for major international conferences. The hotel facility, together with the Cotswold Airport, would provide a resource that would boost the international reputation of the county's leading business sectors and bring the market to Gloucestershire. It would enhance the capacity of local higher education providers to host large academic research conferences in emerging fields related to health and cyber-security arising from the Super City developments.

4.24 Access to the wider county and beyond would be maximised by related development of the nearby Thames/Severn and Stroudwater canal networks. The canal network already provides interconnecting footpaths stretching from the Thames at Lechlade through Stroud to the River Severn, in turn linking with the Gloucester/Sharpness Canal to the city. This network would be further developed for walkers and cyclists, including potentially opening navigable stretches of the canals for barge travel, and exploration by canoe and kayak. This would form part of a strategic tourism development, marketing, and management plan for the whole county, encompassing the wider Cotswolds, market towns, Forest of Dean and Severn Vale, and the Super City, providing a range of tourism and leisure opportunities.

## **5. Implications for Cotswold District**

5.1 It is important for the District Council to take an active part in any future proposals for the development of Gloucestershire. We need to have a voice and input into the conversations that shape the area in which we operate, and make sure that the implications of proposals are fully understood and that benefits are maximised for our environment, economy and residents.

5.2 The Big Conversation is asking people to look 30+ years into the future. This is beyond the timescale of our normal forward planning activity. If you consider the amount of change in the last 30 years, how many would have predicted the technological advances that have taken place and the impacts these have had on the way we live? The pace of change is increasing, meaning that an accurate prediction of what the future may hold in 30 years' time is very difficult. There are no detailed business cases behind any of the Big Ideas (with, perhaps, the exception of the Cyber Park, where there is a live planning application). The others will require considerable research and assessments to better understand their benefits and impacts. At this stage we need to decide whether these merit further investigation and whether there are any other ideas that ought to be considered.

## Super City

5.3 The Super City and Cyber Park would provide enhanced facilities and employment opportunities within the county. They would, however, remain some distance from the majority of Cotswold residents with significant travel times. Alongside such proposals enhanced public and other transport improvements would be necessary for the benefits to filter fully to the Cotswold area. Furthermore connectivity improvements, such as the A417 missing link, would be required to enable the knock on business benefits of the Cyber industry. However improvements to the A417 may impact existing commuting patterns. Locating a super city in the Severn Vale area is likely to have a significant impact on the local and national transport network and it will require the full support of several governmental and non-governmental agencies.

## Cotswold Airport

5.4 Creating a new airport in Cotswold District with the aim of attracting international tourist is ambitious. At this stage it is no more than an idea to elicit a response. Clearly, more work is required to understand the feasibility, benefits and impacts. The consultation does not establish where the airport would be located, although GCC have confirmed that Cotswold Airport near Kemble is a possible location. A brief SWOT analysis is provided below, which looks at both internal and external factors associated with locating an airport in Cotswold District. Internal factors are Strengths and Weaknesses, whereas Opportunities and Threats are external factors.

- **Strengths.** Cotswold Airport has a sufficiently long run way to accommodate large aircraft. An expanded and enhanced airport would have a direct economic impact by creating employment on site. An airport able to accommodate long range aircraft would give Gloucestershire direct international connectivity, supporting increased tourism, globalisation of trade, and export of Gloucestershire's growing range of products, from artisan foods to high-tech engineering and professional services. It would provide an important mechanism for the county's businesses and expertise to foster international links in key areas such as cyber-security and advanced manufacturing. As the Cotswolds is already an internationally-recognised tourism brand, direct air access could result in an increase in international tourists. This would provide a direct injection into the local economy of 'cash' that has been earned elsewhere, and support services that benefit the local population, such as pubs, restaurants, and leisure activities. Supported by a strategic marketing campaign, this could impact all the county's tourism assets.
- **Weaknesses.** Part of the Cotswold Airport lies within Wiltshire and it is also within several miles of Swindon. It is not clear if Wiltshire Council and/or Swindon Borough Council are supportive of such an idea. Officers worked closely with Wiltshire Council during the preparation of the local plan and both Councils declared their support for the continued use of the former RAF Kemble runway, buildings and associated infrastructure for aviation-related economic and leisure purposes, along with the associated employment uses already based there.

Airports work best when they are placed at the confluence of other transport networks (rail and road); they work best when acting as a transport hub. Placing an airport away from strategic infrastructure and links such as motorways and inter-city railway is likely to undermine its effectiveness. Furthermore, placing airports in a rural area is likely to increase traffic and place pressures on rural infrastructure in the immediate area - Bristol Airport provides a good case study. The airport admits that, despite being well placed to serve most of the South West of England and South Wales, poor transport links from some parts of the region can make Bristol Airport difficult to get to. It is one of the largest airports in the country without a direct rail link, motorway or dual carriageway access. Its own evidence suggests that it is one reason why, every year, millions of journeys are still made by passengers from the South West of England and South Wales using London airports, despite costing on average £67 extra in time and travel.



This proposal would be contrary to the Cotswold District Local Plan (2011 - 2031), which recognises the need to safeguard the amenities in the area and the visual impact that development could have on the countryside. Scaling up the airport to accommodate international air travel is likely to increase the impact on the local environment.

- **Opportunities.** Although it is difficult to predict the exact nature of air transport by 2050, it is widely acknowledged that aircraft will have evolved considerably, perhaps enabling trans-Atlantic travel in as little as 2 hours. Airborne drones will likely be used for a range of services from delivery to observation to transport. Having an airport that is enabled to accommodate, and service, increased aviation activity and its various modes could be central to the county's economic success. Furthermore, the government is currently preparing an aviation strategy for the UK. The most recent publication (April 2018) looks at the next steps towards a strategy and it found that several regions raised concerns that they do not have the connectivity, in particular to Heathrow Airport, they require to support economic growth. If the government find that suitable connectivity does not exist to meet demand it will look to develop a methodology for assessing the economic benefits that air connectivity provides a region, and consider what role the government should play.

With Brexit fast approaching, the government and the Gloucestershire Local Economic Partnership are drafting their respective Industrial Strategies<sup>1</sup> for a post-Brexit economy. It is likely both strategies will focus on a "Global Britain<sup>2</sup>" approach that looks to improve access to international markets. So on the face of it there is certain logic to building a new international airport. However, this proposal raises an interesting and possibly a more fundamental question: Is Gloucestershire sufficiently connected to international markets and should it seek to become better connected in the future? If so how?

Whilst a new international airport is likely to increase access to international markets, it's worth considering alternative strategies and solutions. For example, it might be more cost effective to consider how Gloucestershire can become better connected with London, which is a leading global city and cultural capital. Better access to London would mean better access to the world's largest city airport system (measured by passenger traffic). Rather than creating a rival international airport there is equal logic to advance improved connections with London in the first instance.

- **Threats.** There are several airports in close proximity to Gloucestershire and Cotswold District (see **Appendix A**). These airports have plans for the future with a focus of capturing regional leakages to international airports and in some cases investigating opportunities to expand. A new Cotswold Airport would need to consider a wide range of environmental issues and it would need to ensure that it is financially viable and is meeting a market need. The close proximity of other regional airports is likely to be a significant threat to this idea. Consideration would need to be given to the operational needs of RAF Fairford. There are however opportunities to learn from London Oxford Airport and its close proximity to RAF Brize Norton.

## Regional Park

5.5 Regional Park status is unclear at this stage. If such a designation could enhance the Cotswold area and support tourism and other employment opportunities, that would be welcome. The compatibility with other formal designations is also unclear. In January 2018, the government published a 25-Year Plan for the Environment. It set out an approach to protect landscapes and habitats in England and committed to undertaking a review National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs). One of the objectives is to consider the case for extension or creation of new designated areas. Further work would be necessary to clarify the intentions and inter-

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[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/664563/industrial-strategy-white-paper-web-ready-version.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/664563/industrial-strategy-white-paper-web-ready-version.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201719/cmselect/cmfaff/780/780.pdf>

relationships of creating a new regional park.

5.6 The lack of accessible countryside is a real issue in the Severn Vale, as the land is mostly in private ownership and therefore not accessible in general other than Public Rights Of Way (PROWs). A better aspiration might be to create a series of country parks (in public or voluntary and community sector ownership) across the county, particularly near centres of population to give good and easy public access to the countryside.

### **Cotswold Water Park**

5.7 Cotswold Water Park (CWP) development is likely to have direct benefits to Cotswold District. As a major tourist destination, it may bring wider benefits through joint marketing and related leisure opportunities. Broadly speaking, a prime location for a new hotel within the CWP would be close to the A417 and therefore probably in Wiltshire and not in Gloucestershire. Be that as it may, the Council's emerging Local Plan recognises that a substantial amount of holiday accommodation, particularly holiday homes, have been constructed and/or granted planning permission over the past few years and, therefore, it is no longer considered necessary to promote this type of development. A significant increase in the offer of holiday accommodation may have a detrimental impact on the local environment - further work would be required to understand the possible impacts. There are, however, opportunities to support sports and/or leisure and/or recreational development, whether outdoor or water-based, as prescribed by emerging Cotswold District Local Plan Policy SP5.

5.8 It is proposed that a number of the lakes be combined into one larger lake; however, this could have significant detrimental impacts on ecology (Natural England are currently considering the SSSI designations in the area); hydrology (this is a flood-prone part of the District); and on potential bird strike issues (with raised threat to aircraft using RAF Fairford and Kemble Airport).

(END)