

Cotswold District Local Plan 2011-2031

Local Plan Examination 2017

Topic Paper 4: Cotswold Water Park



COTSWOLD
DISTRICT COUNCIL

COTSWOLD WATER PARK POLICY TOPIC PAPER

1. The special character of the Cotswold Water Park (CWP)

- 1.1 The south and south-eastern parts of Cotswold District have been subject to extensive mineral extraction for sand and gravel since the 1920s. Much of the area now comprises a complex of numerous lakes and other wetland habitats; remnant agricultural land; and active mineral working.
- 1.2 There are approximately 150 artificial lakes in the CWP¹ and many of these support important habitats and species², such as aquatic macrophytes and wintering and breeding waterfowl. The remaining areas of farmland have high nature conservation value, notably the Special Areas of Conservation at North Meadow and Clattinger Farm, which are located just outside the District boundary in Wiltshire. There are also currently 9 SSSIs in the CWP; however Natural England is considering undertaking a review of the SSSI boundaries³, to better reflect the importance of the area for birds. A biodiversity action plan for the CWP has been produced and this focuses on 12 habitats and 16 species as well as including some generic actions. It is important that developments within the CWP enhance this valuable biodiversity resource, both at site level and at a landscape scale. Wildlife is one of the main reasons why visitors are drawn to the area.
- 1.3 Besides the farmland and lakes, there are several other key green infrastructure features⁴⁵⁶⁷ within the CWP. These include: the River Thames and the associated Thames Path national trail; a significant length of the Thames and Severn Canal; and Sustrans national cycling route 45. The whole of the CWP forms an important east / west swathe of green infrastructure.
- 1.4 In recognition of the area's distinctive characteristics⁸, the CWP was designated in the 1960s, and includes land in both Gloucestershire and Wiltshire.
- 1.5 The Cotswold Water Park Strategic Review and Implementation Plan (2008)⁹ established that the CWP should:
 - Become a distinctive countryside environment in which to live and work, engendering a sense of community spirit, pride, well-being, vitality and prosperity across the whole of the CWP area.

¹ Open Spaces Strategy (2011)

² Cotswold Water Park Biodiversity Action Plan (2007-2016)

³ Natural England – detailed notification review (CWP)

⁴ Swindon Borough Council Green Infrastructure Strategy

⁵ Infrastructure Delivery Plan draft 2013

⁶ National Character Area profile - 108 Upper Thames Clay Vales (draft 2014)

⁷ Open Spaces Strategy (2011)

⁸ Cotswold Water Park: Integrated Character Assessment (2009)

⁹ <http://www.cotswold.gov.uk/residents/planning-building/landscape/cotswold-water-park/>

- Become a premier site for nature conservation, achieving regionally, nationally and internationally important biodiversity targets through a landscape-scale programme in which stakeholders can create, nurture, and protect rare and endangered indigenous habitats and species.
- Offer a range of sports, leisure and recreation facilities of local, regional and national significance that promote public access to and enjoyment of the countryside for local residents and visitors.
- Present a quality visitor destination that draws on the unique character of the lakes, the settlements, and environment to deliver a wide range of experiences.
- Become a truly sustainable place that is pioneering in its approach to development that incorporates measures to significantly reduce the environmental footprint of all types of activity.

2. Tourism and Holiday Homes

- 2.1 Previous local plan policies have encouraged the development of the CWP as a resource for recreation, leisure and tourism with a variety of water sports venues, a public beach, country parks and a number of holiday home complexes and hotels. There is now evidence, for example from the Strategic Review and Implementation Plan and from community consultation (see Appendix A) that the balance of provision for recreation, leisure and tourism should change, particularly regarding the provision of holiday homes. Approximately 960 holiday homes have been granted planning permission in the Cotswold part of the CWP, of which approximately 390 had been constructed at December 2015¹⁰. These now dominate the landscape of parts of the CWP, notably along the western Spine Road.
- 2.2 In the light of this evidence, it is considered that a more restrictive approach should be taken towards holiday homes or hotels. To achieve this, it is proposed that there should be no specific CWP policies for the provision of this type of development. Therefore, in future, such development would have to meet the normal local plan policy requirements that apply throughout the rest of the District.
- 2.3 The CWP is, however, a particularly important area for outdoor and water-based activities¹¹, employing a substantial number of people¹² as well as encouraging high levels of visitors. The development of the area as a tourist destination has brought issues for local residents, particularly where they have not been able to access the new facilities.

¹⁰ CDC monitoring

¹¹ Wiltshire Council draft Core Strategy

¹² Economy Evidence Paper (2013)

- 2.4 For economic reasons, Local Plan policy should continue to encourage appropriate outdoor and in particular, water-based activities¹³, while ensuring that local issues and concerns, such as access and the protection of tranquillity, are addressed.

3. Settlement Protection Boundaries (SPBs)

- 3.1 SPBs were previously defined around settlements within the CWP in line with the following Local Plan policy:

POLICY UT.2 : SETTLEMENT PROTECTION BOUNDARIES

[Proposals Map Insets 6, 7, 9, 11 and 11A]

Within the Settlement Protection Boundaries indicated on the relevant Proposals Map Insets, amelioration measures, such as tree planting and bunding, which protect residential amenities and enhance the landscape setting of settlements, will normally be permitted. Proposals for sport, recreation and tourism, allowed in principle in parts of the Water Park by Policy 19 and Policy 26, will not be permitted within Settlement Protection Boundaries if they would damage residential amenities and the setting of a settlement.

- 3.2 The Local Plan's explanatory text notes that "*Minerals Local Plans prepared by Gloucestershire and Wiltshire County Councils define similar boundaries to deal with the disturbance and disruption caused by mineral working and restoration.*" Because of this, Policy UT.2 is superfluous and has very rarely been used in planning decisions.
- 3.3 The evidence base for the existing SPBs, moreover, is not robust; therefore, a wholesale re-evaluation would need to be undertaken if SPBs were to be retained. This is unlikely to result in a better outcome than a criteria-based policy, which, in any event, is the approach favoured by the NPPF. For these reasons, it is proposed that SPBs are not included in the emerging Local Plan.

4. CWP Zonings

- 4.1 In the 1990s a Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) document was produced for the CWP, based on a zoning approach. This has had some success in ensuring that development has taken place in the appropriate locations. However, the age of the evidence underpinning the SPG is now out-of-date and cannot be considered robust.
- 4.2 As with the SPBs, the evidence on which the zonings rely could well be questionable when tested against current soundness tests; hence, a wholesale re-evaluation of zonings would need to be undertaken if this approach were to be retained.
- 4.3 The proposed new policy approach is based on criteria, as advocated by the NPPF, rather than relying on zonings.

5. Future Mineral Extraction

¹³ Gloucestershire LEP – EU Structural and Investment Funds Strategy (2014)

- 5.1 Mineral extraction will continue within the CWP for a number of years, with the main emphasis for extraction being in the central part of the CWP around Down Ampney and Latton. Therefore, the landscape will continue to change over time.
- 5.2 Post-extraction restoration is made more complex by the need to ensure that there is no additional bird strike risk for RAF Fairford. Close liaison is required between the local and mineral planning authorities to maximise the environmental, social and economic benefits of restoration and after-use of this dynamic landscape.

6. Problems with defining a consistent CWP boundary

- 6.1 The designated area is quite tightly drawn but there are some historic inconsistencies to the CWP boundary. As a result of this, a number of different informal boundaries have been used, for example the CWP Biodiversity Action Plan¹⁴ uses a wider boundary, based on habitat types; while the CWP Strategic Review and Implementation Plan (masterplan)¹⁵ bases its boundary on wider, relevant, land uses.
- 6.2 Occasionally, requests have been made to amend the boundary for various reasons, including a recent one from Siddington Parish Council to take account of on-going mineral extraction within that area and other matters.
- 6.3 The boundary, if retained, would require regular reviewing and updating. There would always be a risk that the boundary becomes out of date, and this could have adverse consequences for any planning policies that relate specifically to the CWP.

7. New approach: Upper Thames Clay Vales

- 7.1 It is now proposed that all developments (except those covered by the policy) will be determined in line with other policies in the local plan and NPPF, taking account of the fact that the area does have a different character to the rest of the District. For example, a new golf course or mountain bike track might be considered to have less landscape and/or character impacts here than in certain parts of the Cotswolds AONB.
- 7.2 The Upper Thames area is that part of Cotswold District which falls within the Upper Thames Clay Vales national Character area (no. 108) as defined by Natural England. This includes all of the current CWP; and nearly all the area encompassed by the CWP biodiversity action plan and the CWP Strategic Review and Implementation Plan (2008) and subsequent review (2010).
- 7.3 Instead of referring to developments within the CWP, the reviewed policy will apply to post mineral extraction sites within the Upper Thames Clay Vales national Character area.
- 7.4 This would remove the following problems:

¹⁴ Cotswold Water Park Biodiversity Action Plan (2007-2016)

¹⁵ <http://www.cotswold.gov.uk/residents/planning-building/landscape/cotswold-water-park/>

- Applicants seeking leisure developments on the back of the CWP policies in unsuitable places, such as Poulton, simply because they technically lie within the boundary of the CWP;
- deciding whether or not a proposal needs a lake-based location;
- post-mineral sites that do not currently fall within the CWP, e.g. Siddington
- the complexities involved in defining and reviewing the boundary.

7.5 Both Gloucestershire and Wiltshire minerals authorities refer to a 'resource area' or 'Upper Thames'. This is because the CWP boundary is an administrative one that does not reflect minerals resources. GCC used the CWP boundary as a 'Minerals Consultation Area'.

APPENDIX A

Local Plan 2011-2031 Community Engagement: Cotswold Water Park Policy consultation event, 12th December 2013

INTRODUCTION

The aim of this workshop was to seek views from Parish and Town Councils on the most appropriate approach to a range of issues about the future of the Cotswold Water Park and surrounding area. The ideas generated will be used by Cotswold District Council (CDC) primarily to inform what to include in the forthcoming Local Plan about the Water Park.

All Parish and Town Councils that cover the Water Park area and its immediate surroundings were invited to send representatives, including those from the Wiltshire and Swindon side. Those attending, which included some who are also District Councillors, are listed in Appendix 1. All those attending were sent a short briefing note in advance, see Appendix 2.

The workshop format was developed by CDC officers and Jeff Bishop of Place Studio. Jeff facilitated the workshop independently, with support from CDC officers also listed in Appendix 1. The event was almost entirely interactive, working through small groups with some overall summarising. There was also a brief introduction and a short final session outlining the next stages. The main sessions, which also form the sections of this report, were as follows:

- *Key Issues*
- *Separate policies? Appropriate boundaries?*
- *Long-listing possible actions*
- *First stab objectives*
- *Keep zoning or go 'criteria-led'?*

Each stage is explained more fully in the relevant section. All explanatory text, as here, is in italics; everything recorded on the night is included here verbatim and in plain text.

KEY ISSUES

As people arrived they were faced with five sheets on screens, each listing a question such as:

What – for you – are some of the aspects that need to be addressed to achieve a positive future for the Water Park in terms of:

Getting to the Water Park

The other four sheets had the same basic question but different final themes (these themes were used at several stages during the workshop), ie:

- **Getting Around the Water Park**
- **Environment and Landscape of the Water Park**
- **Recreation and Leisure in the Water Park**
- **Employment in/linked to the Water Park**

Participants were invited to write their responses on post-its. The results follow below.

Getting to the Water Park

- More public transport
- Links from Cirencester/Kemble Station
- Creation of Spine Rd - connect Lechlade to A419
- Public transport
- Dial a ride
- Highways- separate route for HGVs
- Cricklade country way and link to Cirencester
- Where is it?
- Do people know when they are in it?

Getting Around the Water Park

- Preservation of bus services
- Circular cycle paths
- Inter-village cycleways
- Cycling to be further encouraged
- Public access to newly created lakes
- More public car parks
- Cycleways/footpaths
- Circular cycle and foot paths
- Improvement of road West and North end
- Access or those less mobile
- PROW cycle paths/buses – public/dial a ride
- Regular traffic hazards (mud on road)
- Disabled access

Environment and Landscape of the Water Park

- Strict enforcement of restoration conditions after gravel extraction
- Returning pits to land not water
- Balance water and land in restoration
- Need a proper landscape plan
- Local plan to create policy for overall future development
- Biodiversity plans and animals
- Resurface A419 concrete section as promised
- Car parking
- Protecting visual amenities
- Maintain village protection zones
- Ensure quiet areas
- Maintain zoning to protect villages
- Secure buffer zone between Lechlade/Cerney

Recreation and Leisure in the Water Park

- No more holiday homes
- Noise from some sports
- High quality water sports facilities
- Low cost leisure
- Promote use of foot paths and cycleways

- Footpaths and cycleways
- Separate cyclists and pedestrians
- Better standard of footpath surfaces
- Improve state of some footpaths
- Protect prows/create more access
- General public facilities
- Clear the agreements with gravel companies before first extraction
- Something more for families
- Snow Dome
- Another beach type location useful
- Balance quiet and louder e.g. water-ski v. sailing

Employment in/linked to the Water Park

- Make it more commercial
- Local employment opportunities
- We do need employment – craft/small workshop, easy in/easy out offices
- Highways/HGV routes/small scale industrial units/employment sites

SEPARATE POLICIES? APPROPRIATE BOUNDARIES?

In this first group session, all groups addressed the same two questions:

1. *Is there a need to have separate plan policies for the Water Park or would it be OK, perhaps better, to simply rely on overall, district-wide policies? Is there a half-and-half answer, ie. some policies (eg. transport) to be generic, others (eg. recreation) to be park-specific?*
2. *There is at present a boundary for what is considered to be a relevant area to think about and plan with for the Water Park and its effects, or what affects it (see map). Is this boundary still OK? Change it – if so, where, how and why?*

Group notes follow below, as well as some summary points from a short final plenary feedback session. Some groups annotated the maps to show suggested boundary changes. A summary map of these suggested changes is included as Appendix 3.

Group 1

1. A formal cross boundary Wiltshire/Gloucestershire CC body to work together on applications of gravel extraction, workings, reinstatement and future use. To liaise with all stakeholders in Parish Councils, Canal Trust, highways, District Councils and County Councils.
2. Boundary changes to include Marston Meysey and proposed extraction at Hannington Wick (See map)
3. Footpaths/Cycle way

Group 2

1. Change around Siddington; incorporate all Dryleaze extractions, R. Churn and canal. (Latter two for financial/grant funds)
2. Incorporate all gravel areas including Marston Meysey
3. Single boundary
4. Incorporate only parishes that are 'really' in CWP
5. Correlate CWP to geological gravel map

6. Q1. What is the CWP?
 - Gravel extraction and after use
 - Hence separate policies for planning
7. No separate policies apart from the one above to govern gravel extraction and associated after-use

Group 3

1. Water Park or district dependent on policy.
2. Cross boundary working; CDC, Wilts, GCC
3. Encourage employment opportunities

Group 4

1. Boundary crazy- based on mineral extraction area
2. Keep as existing
3. Policies to encourage more family orientated activities:
 - Snow dome
 - Ice skating
 - Commercial activity
 - Tree climbing
4. Need for separate policies, may have passed (except mineral extraction)
5. Need to consider what Wilts policies are proposing
6. Concern about infill to backfill quarry
7. Issues: flooding and drainage
8. More scope for commercial activity, cross boundary, (Wiltshire)

Group 5

1. What makes the CWP different?
2. District wide policies should be adequate
3. Specific policy for gravel extraction
4. Will mean further landscape changes: Cerney Wick
5. Wiltshire examples of backfilling and return to agriculture- challenge finding backfill
6. Risk of overfill
7. Clarity for neighbouring authorities- how do we work with them without formal position?
8. Challenge of impact of development over county border- Cotswold Community Boundary
9. Extension to include Siddington
10. An aid
11. Logic- but county boundary illogical "If you've got gravel, you're in"

Summary

Keep Separate?

- Mix of generic/specific
- Must link cross boundary
- Separate on extraction (rest CDC-wide)
- Policies to be consistent
- More scope for community activity outside protected zones
- Impacts cross border
- Policies in Wilts?
- Transport may not be too generic. Therefore extraction traffic

Boundary?

- Extraction/Geology key determinant
- Not by parish
- Other boundaries- wildlife boundary
- In fill of extraction in future
- Prevent negative impact of extraction on residents (removed from employment- not belong!)
- Water Park visitors contribute to local economy

LONG-LISTING POSSIBLE ACTIONS

This second group task was very simple. Each group was asked to consider one of the five main themes and develop a list of possible, actions, projects or initiatives that would make positive progress for that theme, be they small, large, short term or long term. The results follow below:

Group 1: Employment in/linked to the Water Park

1. Campsite/Caravan Sites/ B&B. Cheaper holidays/short stays. Support to local villages/towns
2. Utilisation of farm units to be used as activity/craft/leisure centres (Leisure hire companies)
3. Rural skill centre, countryside and water activities
4. No large industry. Light industrial units, easy in, easy out to promote new businesses
5. Planned canal marina at Latton to bring in more passing visitors
6. Area set aside for noisy recreation. i.e. ice skating
7. Consult school pupils of their wants
8. Non tourism employment to provide opportunities all year round

Group 2: Getting to the Water Park

1. Infrastructure to support access to many diverse areas
2. Remove bottlenecks through towns/villages, i.e. Fairford/spine road east of A419
3. Another bridge over Thames or enforce routes avoiding Fairford/Lechlade/Kempsford etc.
4. Cycle ways linking villages/Kemble Station and Cirencester/Cricklade/Lechlade
5. Where and what is the Water Park? Cotswold Lakes?
6. Remove excess signage (i.e. blue signs/spine road near Cirencester). Relocate these signs to A419 northbound, just before Cricklade
7. Lack of identity/cohesive plan
8. Public footpath access, condition of extraction permission

Group 3: Getting around the Water Park

1. Cycle ways:
 - More cycle hire?
 - Cycle paths - secure
 - Bus and cycle (like park and ride)
 - Circular cycle routes linking villages across the CWP
2. PROW:
 - Public rights of way linking villages and shorter circular parish walks across the CWP
3. Access
 - Community transport and Dial-a-Ride. Local and tourists

- Public access by car and bus
 - Improved routes and frequency
 - More car parks across CWP
 - Disabled access, paths and gateways
4. Highways:
- Improve road network: volume of traffic, safety, type of traffic, i.e. HGVs, tourists, cyclists
 - HGV route to bypass village centres where possible.
 - Upgrade Spine Road C124

Group 4: Environment and Landscape in the Water Park

1. Zoning/ Protecting:
 - Quiet areas
 - Commercial activity
 - Employment/ light industry
 - Villages, protection zones (see SPD) from extraction after use
 - Environment
2. Bonds:
 - Landscape after extraction
 - Make public access condition of planning (gravel extraction)
3. Restoration: Better reinforcement of conditions/approved plans and time scales ... (and stick with zoning, e.g. zone A)
4. Master plan? Not clear on status. Need adoption by all authorities
5. Restrict any more holiday homes
6. Need more public and cycle right of ways
7. Car parking on soft surfaces and lots of hedges around
8. Maintain/endorse village protection zones
9. People driving through ... don't realise in Water Park: need to open up views and access
10. Ensure areas created/managed for wildlife/CWP:
 - Biodiversity action plan (BAP)

Group 5: Recreation and Leisure in the Water Park

1. Map footpaths and land ownership
2. Circular off-road cycle path/footpath linking villages
3. South Cerney to Siddington to Cirencester cycle way, needs a lead party/group
4. Some paths can/should be upgraded- others not
5. Jet Ski Lake near A419?
6. Zoning for noisy sports
7. Build in future, use at first planning permission
8. Offer land based leisure as well

FIRST STAB OBJECTIVES

For this final group work session, the task for each group was to reflect on one of the above lists of action and try to condense these into some broad objectives for the Local Plan that might then cover any such actions in the future. To help people to do this, groups were provided with some objectives as used in planning policy documents. To focus the task, each group took and worked from the list of actions produced by another group. The results follow below:

Group 1: Recreation and Leisure in the Water Park

- Encourage improvements to make cycling and walking safer and more attractive
- To encourage use of Water Park facilities
- To encourage people from further away to come to the Water Park by improving the available facilities
- To promote the Water Park across a wider geographical area
- To promote the Water Park as a holiday destination
- To make current facilities in the Water Park more inclusive
- To encourage development of indoor activities

Group 2: Employment in/linked to the Water Park

- Encourage non-tourism employment anywhere within CWP, i.e. high tech science parks, connections with RAU/Cirencester college, see schools and further afield, Bristol & Oxford
- Improve east-west infrastructure (to support above)
- Encourage conversion of redundant farm units into employment offices
- Develop employment zones with financial incentives

Group 3: Getting to the Water Park

- Developments which improve local and strategic traffic management through routing of HGV/LGV traffic away from the local road network and routes through village centres will be supported
- New development which generate minimal impact on local residents, e.g. noise, emissions, traffic volume
- 3-5 as written on 'prompting examples' (*ie. from actions list above*)
- Development contributions to support the provision and continuation of public transport to the CWP from key transport hubs, e.g. Kemble station and Swindon by bus and train

Group 4: Getting around the Water Park

- Encourage creation of new cycle way links to existing network to maximise off-road routes (or along quiet lanes). (East-west route: Fairford & Lechlade and Kemble)
- Specific about links:
 - Encourage improvements to make cycling and walking safer and more attractive
 - By linking existing routes (Fairford/Lechlade to Kemble, east and west sections)
- Maximise opportunities for public access within and around water park and its lakes in particular
- Sufficient/adequate parking to meet role as 'destination' location

Group 5: Environment and Landscape in the Water Park

- Ensure future proposals fit with zoning policy
- The plan will support and encourage environmentally acceptable restoration and aftercare for former gravel pits
- Restoration and/or development to contribute towards the creation or management of a coherent ecological network

KEEP ZONING OR GO 'CRITERIA-LED'?

This was managed as a short plenary discussion around the question of whether it might be better to retain (improve, sharpen) the existing zoning approach or to shift to an approach which is less place-specific but uses key criteria to shape what happens. It was pointed out that the key challenge is between the possibly greater certainty and control of zoning – though that can also be limiting, and the greater responsiveness and flexibility of a criteria-led approach – though that can lessen detailed control.

The key points raised and noted follow below:

- Without total control (over land especially) difficult to avoid laissez-faire
- There are different pressures on different zones
- But how much land will be left after all abstraction?
- Can do criteria within zones!
- Just criteria and this creates gaps to exploit
- (Wiltshire appear to have opted out!)
- Zoning gives people a clear say
- Developers like zoning
- Circulate zoning information
- Zoning gives more certainty
- Halfway house on infill
- What's the reality of zoning in plan v. use of a SPD?
- Use of criteria (evidence) to set zones

*As people left there was an 'instant evaluation'. This asked people to rate the event along two axes – one about how **valuable** they felt the workshop had been and one about how **enjoyable** it had been. Most responses were very positive, just two people rating it average or just above average.*

APPENDIX 1: WORKSHOP ATTENDEES

	Name		Role
	Nicholas	Parsons	CDC Deputy Leader, Portfolio holder for the Local Plan
	Helen	Richards	Gloucestershire Rural Community Council
	Sue	Coakley	CDC Councillor, Kempsford Lechlade
	Dave	Parsloe	Siddington Parish Council
	Chris	Rumble	Siddington Parish Council
	Mark	Clarke	Cricklade Town Council
	Tony	Williams	Kempsford Parish
	John	Ford	Driffield and Harnhill Parish Council
	Anthony	Norris	Driffield and Harnhill Parish Council
	Ray	Jenkins	Down Ampney Parish Council
	Philip	Nicholas	South Cerney Parish Council
	Sarah	Powell	Somerford Keynes Parish Council
	Graham	Blunden	Latton Parish Council
	Roger	Sleeman	Somerford Keynes Parish Council
	John	Brailey	Somerford Keynes Parish Council
	Matthew	Millett	Cotswold Water Park Trust
	Joanne	Billingham	Principal Planning Policy Officer, CDC
	Philippa	Lowe	Head of Development Services, CDC
	Joseph	Walker	Community Partnerships Officer, CDC
	Sophia	Price	Heritage and Design Manager
	Jeff	Bishop	Place Studio
	Sandra	Carter	CDC Cllr, Kempsford Lechlade
Apologies	Shaun	Parsons	GCC Cllr, Water Park

Apologies	Richard	Broadhead	Wiltshire Council
Apologies	Jenny	Cunningham	Poole Keynes Parish Council
Apologies	Juliet	Layton	CDC Cllr, Water Park
Apologies	Alison	Ward	Kempsford Parish and Upper Thames cross county partnership
Apologies	Clive	Bennett	CDC Councillor, Water Park

APPENDIX 2

Event briefing note

Thank you for booking in for this important workshop. The workshop is a result of Cotswold District Council reconsidering the approach that needs to be taken in the future for the Cotswold Water Park, especially how this should be expressed in the Local Plan. Input and comments from people such as you within the Water Park area have emphasised the need for this.

On the basis of what has been considered to date, one key point to make immediately is that future policy will almost certainly not support further holiday homes but will place the main emphasis on leisure, recreation, promotion and management of visitors (local and from further afield), local employment and environmental conservation and enhancement. The workshop will enable discussion of all of these and any other themes, looking towards the objectives and policies that should be put into the forthcoming Local Plan. The event will not therefore address specific local details and it will be focused very much on the future. (It is also important to note, as will be explained, that there will be other consultation opportunities for you on housing and site selection and on waste and minerals.)

Within and around work on the main themes as above, the aim is to discuss questions such as whether there is in fact any need for specific policies for the Water Park (or do general District policies cover all that is needed), whether the current boundary is the most appropriate, and whether any policies should still be based on different zones. All this will work towards helping to develop objectives and, to that end, we will outline the next stages for you.

The workshop is also exactly what it says; it will be very interactive as the whole point is to hear your issues, views and ideas. So a full report will be produced afterwards. To enable the most open and productive discussion we have engaged an external facilitator – Jeff Bishop – to run the event.

Please be sure to join us ready for a prompt start. This is because (and you may wish to think about this in advance) as soon as you arrive we will be asking you to list out what you believe to be the key issues that must be addressed to ensure what you no doubt all want -a positive future for the Cotswold Water Park.

Please come direct to the Council Chamber entrance to our premises, towards the right as you come into the car park. Our main reception closes at 17:00, so will not be accessible.