

## Epping Forest District Council Representations to the Draft Local Plan Consultation 2016 (Regulation 18)

Stakeholder ID	4544	Name	Lynne	Aston	United Karate association
Method	Email				
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### Letter or Email Response:

Dear Sir/Madam Proposed Mixed Use Development at North Weald Park The United Karate Association strongly supports a proposed sporting super hub as part of the North Weald Park proposals. Our club has hundreds of members and, following discussion with Quinn Estates, we have signed a heads of terms that would enable us to become part of a trust that would own and operate a new clubhouse in association with other local sports clubs. This is a fantastic opportunity for us to control our own destiny and promote martial arts such as Karate and Tai Chi in a purpose-built venue. We have been running classes in the Epping and North Weald area since 1981 and have over the years become recognised as one of the most successful competition squads in the United Kingdom. UKA have had dozens of members represent England at international level, winning numerous medals and titles. We believe that this huge opportunity at North Weald Park will allow us to grow further and become a regional centre of excellence, especially in view of the fact that Karate has recently become an Olympic sport. We currently offer classes at over a dozen primary schools in the area, including Ivy Chimneys, Moreton and Chipping Ongar, and hold an annual District Karate Tournament for all local school children to take part in which is currently in its third year. We also work with disabled children and give them the opportunity to take part in one of the most popular sports in the country. Indeed only last weekend we had several hearing impaired children pass their first grade at our current North Weald venue. UKA is proud to say that its membership includes adults and children of both gender, from all walks of life and various cultural backgrounds. Our karate classes really do represent society right across the board. With the Sport Hub that the North Weald Park proposal offers, the local community have been given the opportunity to acquire an outstanding facility which we believe would be for the benefit of all. We hope that the Council can think ambitiously and creatively to maximise what we believe is a superb project. We believe that the United Karate Association can use this asset to further our work in the community, providing significant health benefits through the activities on offer, but, just as importantly, providing a socially inclusive environment for young people to gain important life skills through training and competition. We are really pleased to see a development come forward that is not simply a housing estate on farmland: this is a development that has been cleverly devised to employ previously used land that currently is accessible only by a small minority and could now bring many benefits to the local community. The business space will bring jobs, revenue for the Council and opportunities for young people in the area across a variety of sectors and skill levels. The housing includes a full provision of affordable housing, giving local people an opportunity to stay in this popular area, preserve the current sense of community and also welcoming newcomers to the town. The education provision really has potential to enhance local people's schooling alternatives. A grammar school would be a major coup. Adding to this the quality of the rest of the proposals, there really is an opportunity to make this an exceptional

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development with so many wide ranging benefits. We would welcome further discussion with the Council so that the strength of support from both the Karate club and other groups is made abundantly clear so that this opportunity is not lost. Yours faithfully, ....Redacted.... UKA Secretary