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TAG/FER0WHH

18<sup>th</sup> Dec. 2014

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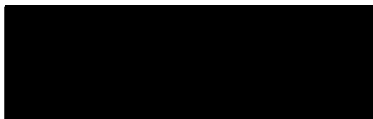
Dear Sir/Madam ,

**Re: Vale of White Horse Local Plan Part 1 , Consultation Dec. 2014**

I have attached representations on behalf of White Horse Harriers Athletic Club.  
My client has not made representations at earlier stages of the Local Plan but will seek to participate in this process as fully as possible

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you wish to discuss these representations ,  
or if anything is unclear.

Yours faithfully,



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## **Vale of White Horse Local plan part 1. - representations on behalf of White Horse Harriers Athletics Club.**

The following representations are being made on behalf of the White Horse Harriers Athletics Club. They seek to make a number of general points about certain of the Core Policies in the Local Plan, but also seek specific amendments to take account of the needs of the White Horse Harriers Athletic Club (WHH)

WHH formed in 1981 and has been part of the Wantage and Grove community for 32 years. The club caters for all ages of participants from 8 years old to veterans and is involved in entering and encouraging participation in competition in track & field athletics, road –running, cross-country, team events and junior competitions like SportsHall.

The club draws over 160 members from Wantage, Grove and many surrounding villages and towns including Lambourn and Didcot.

Members of WHH have achieved considerable success over the years in competitions, perhaps most notably former member Jessica Harrison who achieved 12<sup>th</sup> in the Triathlon in the 2008 Olympic Games, and 9<sup>th</sup> in the 2012 London Olympics.

The WHH two regular coaches train 8-16 year old children twice a week and encourage them to be active , healthy and involved in competitions.

WHH is an inclusive club and encourages non-athletes into jogging for health reasons by organising courses like JogWantage, and by volunteering at ParkRun Abingdon.

WHH contributes to local charities through organising events and recent donations have been made to Helen & Douglas Trust and the Thames Valley Air Ambulance.

The club organises the over-subscribed White Horse Half Marathon annually, attracting over 650 participants and raising awareness of the area and funds for local charities.

The club does not have dedicated training facilities and is forced to use the Manor Road recreation ground, school playing fields and other open land whose owners are prepared to allow access. During the summer members of the club have to travel to Tillesley Park, Abingdon, in order to use proper athletic facilities. The club has no premises or even the ability to share premises for meetings, training sessions or social events.

WHH is already an important part of the local community, but with proper facilities it could take on an even stronger role. The significant increase in population which is planned for the area will present both an opportunity and a challenge as far as recreation is concerned. This can only be delivered if the proper facilities are available locally.

The Local Plan fails to identify the need for the following facilities:

- A full size permanent running track (preferably all weather)
- A club house /pavilion which can be used for changing, meetings, training sessions and social events

The club recognises the difficulty in identifying sites for such facilities and more importantly in funding them, and does not require exclusive use. It would be very content to share with other appropriate organisations. It is noted , however that funding from some sport specific national bodies does sometimes require a minimum level of exclusive usage.

The club considers that the Local Plan should identify an appropriate and suitable location for the facilities described, and should state clearly in the appropriate policy, that funding ( in the form of contributions) will be required from new development, both residential and commercial.

Once a site has been identified, the Club will be in a position to begin its own fund-raising, and if it is to be a shared facility, work can begin with appropriate partners.

The Local Plan appears to contain a number of statements, and indeed policies, which purport to support or encourage “the provision of new community facilities”, (Chapter 2) . moreover Strategic Objective 4 (SO.4) states such and objective. However, there is no clear statement of what these facilities might be or how the “healthy communities” referred to in Core Policy 15 are to be achieved other than by building houses of different types, densities and designs.

Core Policy 7 is concerned with the provision of supporting infrastructure and services. However the policy is mainly concerned with the mechanisms for funding infrastructure. The reference to Leisure in the chapter on District Wide policies refers back to CP 7 and simply states that “development will be expected to make appropriate provision for open space and recreational facilities as outlined in the SPD. Unfortunately reference to the SPD again appears mainly concerned with the provision of open space and facilities associated directly with new development.

It is a serious omission that nowhere in this plan is reference made to the requirements of the existing communities and how and where these might be secured. It is recognised that this is a strategic level Plan , but the provision of the kind of facilities described above for the WHH are strategic in nature and must be addressed in this kind of document. If nothing is done until the Local Plan part 2 dealing with specific non-strategic sites is prepared then it will be too late to secure the necessary site or funding.