

# **Mill Hill seen by LSE Students**

A report commissioned by  
Mill Hill Neighbourhood Forum

July 2015



## Introductory Remarks

### John H Gillett - Chairman of Mill Hill Neighbourhood Forum

“Mill Hill Neighbourhood Forum was designated by the London Borough of Barnet in September 2014, to build a Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) for the area shown in the map attached as Figure 1. As such we cover the Mill Hill ward and the NW7 post codes in Hale Ward. The area has almost 10,000 residential properties and an additional 2,500 new properties in the process of being constructed. Mill Hill is a thriving suburb, with nearly 50% of our area covered by Green Spaces, mostly in Green Belt. It is 20 minutes away by rail from St. Pancras, and close to the M1, A1 & M25, to the North West of London, 10 miles from Charing Cross. We have excellent schools and great sporting venues, including 3 Golf Courses and Saracens Rugby Football Club.

We accept that change is inevitable and we want to encourage the right changes with distinctive, high quality properties, that sit well in their surroundings, and bring the local

amenities that improve the way we all live, work and play. We believe that new technologies can enable change and we are alive to the possible solutions such advances can bring.

We asked the Master's Students from the LSE to visit Mill Hill to give us their independent views of our suburb and we are very grateful for the energy they have expended in detailing their thoughts, about how we should develop in the future, through this report.”



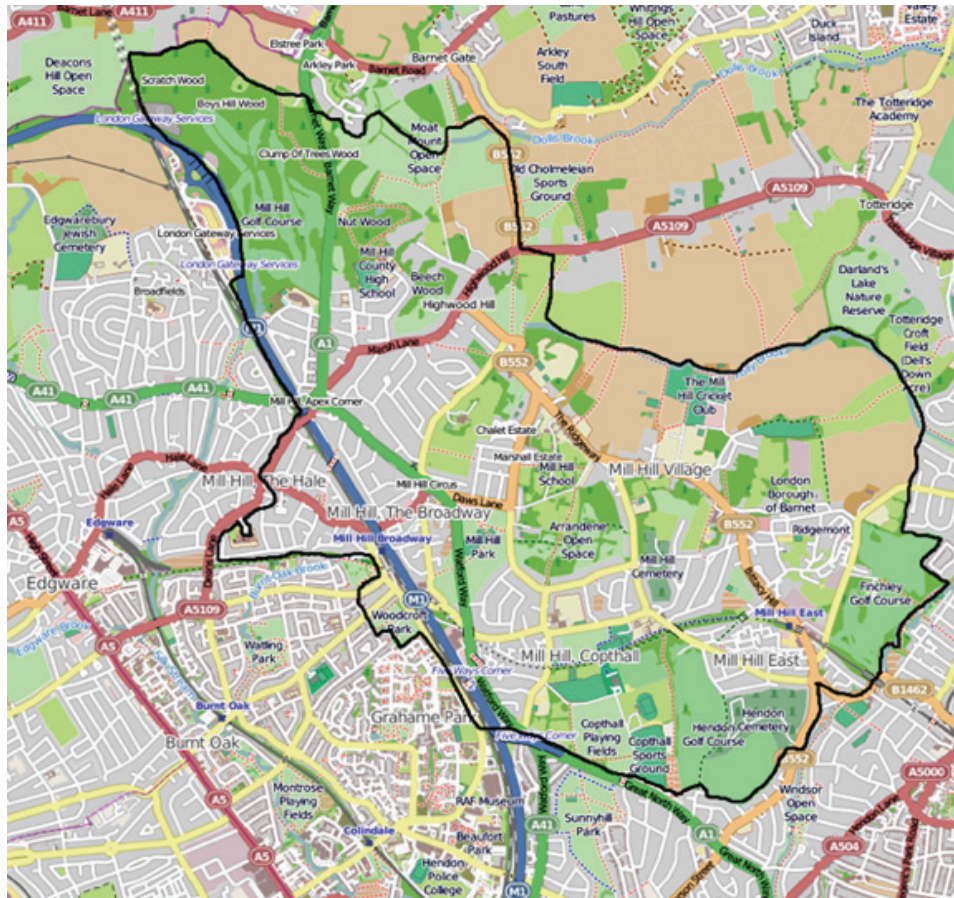


Figure 1: Map of the Mill Hill Neighbourhood Forum's designated area as shown within the black lines.

## Dr Alan Mace – The London School of Economics & Political Science

“Our students come to LSE from all over the world, attracted by the School’s reputation but also by the opportunity to live in and to study London. The invitation from the Mill Hill Forum to produce this report was a valuable opportunity to be involved in a community and in the planning process in the UK. In particular, it has provided a valuable insight into one of London’s suburbs. I take this opportunity to thank all those who have so generously given of their time to support the LSE group.

The Mill Hill Forum faces challenges found in many parts of outer London. These include

poorly performing high streets, loss of places of employment, the need for more housing and the role of the car. The LSE group was asked to provide a fresh view of Mill Hill, which is set out in this report. The wider area has been considered but the high street has received particular attention. Proposals range from better bin management and a ‘public square’ through to green walls and new approaches to transport. The report’s value will be in provoking further discussion as the Forum continues its task of developing the Mill Hill Neighbourhood Plan.”



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## Introduction

This report was commissioned by Mill Hill Neighbourhood Forum and carried out by an independent student team between November 2014 and July 2015. Mill Hill is a suburb located in the borough of Barnet, in the north of Outer London. Surrounded by Green Belt land and well connected to Central London, over the last century Mill Hill has developed as a desirable place to live and work. The evolution of Mill Hill is intertwined with that of the broader London region and as such, global economic and social forces impact its development in terms of population, housing and employment. The last few years have seen a continuous growth in population and a decline in local employment in Mill Hill. This suggests a shift in the relationship between the city centre and one of its peripheries, a shift seen as part of a “post-suburban state” by some scholars.

The agenda of urban renaissance, developed in the early 2000s, brought new challenges for suburbs in terms of delivering higher-density settlements and increasing their overall environmental sustainability. New flatted developments, decline of the local High Streets, and the departure of large institutions such as the National Institute for Medical Research illustrate the changes that impact the identity and function of Mill Hill within the regional economy.

Nevertheless, suburbs are also places that

are actively shaped by their residents. The Localism Act (2011), acting on the embedded assets of local communities, gives the latter the opportunity to produce Neighbourhood Plans, putting in place a vision and policies for the future development of the area. Mill Hill residents have seized this occasion and formed a Neighbourhood Forum to tackle the issues related to the evolution of the built and open environment of the locality to ensure that new developments meet the community’s needs and reflect its identity.

If successful at referendum, the Neighbourhood Plan will be part of the statutory development plan of the area and constitute a binding community-led framework for new developments.

### Who we are

We are a group of 12 postgraduate students from the MSc Regional and Urban Planning Studies (RUPS) programme at the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE). Our team consists of students from France, Japan, China, Colombia, Russia, Brazil, Germany, and the United States. Our diverse professional backgrounds comprise of political and administrative sciences, law, economics, and planning. Commissioned by the Mill Hill Neighbourhood Forum in late 2014, we have

discovered the neighbourhood through various visits, meetings, and desk-based investigations over the past six months.

### **Our approach**

It appeared to us that the Neighbourhood Forum Committee members are very knowledgeable about their area, have diverse skills and a real ambition for Mill Hill. Similarly, the residents and business owners we spoke to seemed well aware of Mill Hill's strengths and constraints. Thus, our group has sought to identify how we can add the most to the Neighbourhood Forum's vision without duplicating work conducted on topics where its members are already actively involved. Therefore, we did not aim to cover all issues that affect the designated area, but rather to focus on those for which we felt most able to come up with potential solutions.

We decided to draw on our diverse backgrounds and experiences to provide an 'outsider's' view. We have referenced best practices and critical thinking and have sought to propose innovative ideas. The purpose of this report is to support the community in forming its vision of the future of the area by enriching the debate on Mill Hill's key challenges. This solution-oriented report should inform the population, residents

and local businesses, of the numerous opportunities for strengthening the local community and delivering the changes it seeks to make.

In this report, we make various recommendations taking relevant constraints into account:

- The room for manoeuvre given by planning documents at Borough, London, and national level;
- The limited funding available to the Neighbourhood Forum and other local actors;
- The need to find local policy champions who are willing and able to drive change.



# Part 1: The High Street

## Measure 1: A Town Square for Mill Hill

### 1.1. Problem

At present, Mill Hill lacks a discernible town centre or core that reinforces a sense of the area's identity and provides space for public events. According to shopkeepers interviewed, the state of the high street does not present a particular aesthetic or functional burden on their businesses. Therefore, we propose to focus on the introduction of an identifiable and central public open space for the high street that would provide Mill Hill with a key asset. Access to a central town square would allow residents a vehicle by which they can better creatively interact with Mill Hill's physical landscape and fellow residents. Moreover, the town square would provide a space for key programmatic measures such as concerts, markets, and other outdoor events such as film screenings. The London Plan specifies its respect for and encouragement of the benefits directly derived from the construction and maintaining of central town squares<sup>1</sup>. With this in mind, the implementation of planning measures focused on the design and programming of Mill Hill's town square would satisfy London's local policy recommendations of aligning planning efforts in order to "sustain and enhance the vitality and viability" (GLA, 2008, 63) of town square infra-

structure. Simultaneously, the implementation of this measure will provide Mill Hill with a legible convocation point that will catalyse benefits including heightened social recreation, evening economic activity, and positive identification of a place for residents and visitors.

### 1.2. Recommendations

In order to mitigate this issue, we propose for residents and business owners of Mill Hill to imagine the significant potential of a town square in the space located on The Broadway and Brockenhurst Gardens. As this particular space is already located perpendicular to the high street and would not require a reorientation or re-routing of auto-traffic, the placement of an outdoor plaza or town square here would pose little challenges to infrastructural development. The aerial map shows the proposed site for implementation of the town square. From this image, one can see that the removal of up to ten parking spaces would be required for the ideal implementation. A more ambitious project, maybe in the longer term, would be to consider the demolition of adjacent buildings to free up more space for the town square.

Within the space itself, this report proposes to engage landscaping and placement of moveable outdoor furniture and a small scale

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<sup>1</sup> Greater London Authority (2011): London plan.



Figure 2: Image depicts aerial map of proposed town square site on Brockenhurst Gardens, perpendicular to The Broadway.

Source: Google maps

outdoor amphitheatre that could be utilised for outdoor concerts, lectures, and film screenings. We envision for the design of the space to be rooted in principles of flexibility and accessibility in order for residents and visitors to utilise the space in their own way. From the aerial shot, one can see this town square would be highly visible among residents and visitors to the high street, therefore creating an accessible space for Mill Hill residents and visitors that would consequently establish a sense of central place for the whole of Mill Hill. The landscaping coupled with moveable outdoor furniture would reinforce this idea of flexible usage and encourage passive recreation such as reading

and social interaction. In doing this, the town square would allow the Broadway High Street to function as more than a commercial hub for Mill Hill residents and visitors, but also as a recreational hub specifically for public enjoyment and social interaction. Generally, the space would serve a centralizing purpose in Mill Hill, allowing the area to host a discernible town centre that reinforces Mill Hill's sense of place and identity.

Additionally, having a town square that is easily programmed for evening events such as film screenings, lectures, concerts, etc. would stimulate the night time economic activity of Mill Hill's Broadway High Street. Individuals and families attending events at the town square

may be inclined to take advantage of the numerous eateries that the high street provides. Furthermore, if the night economy continues to build momentum, new businesses such as pubs, which are highly desired by town residents, may establish themselves within close proximity of the new town square. Pubs in direct proximity to the town square could open up on the public space with terraces and thus contribute to the emergence of a vibrant core in the High Street. This approach relies on reinforcing demand for night time economy so that some businesses adapt their opening hours and some others settle on the High Street in a positive dynamic.

Other more top-down approaches might be considered such as working with freeholders in the High Street to convince them to privilege pubs or night time economy businesses as renters. Finally, the Neighbourhood Plan can be formulated so as to favour the change of land use class from A1 (shops), A2 (professional and financial services), and A5 (hot food takeaways) to A3 (restaurants and cafes) or A4 (drinking establishments including pubs). Once established, pubs could be defined as “community asset” by Barnet Council with the effect of making any change of use subject to planning permission.

### 1.3. Good Practice

This measure proposes to design an intimate outdoor amphitheatre (methods of various contemporary open spaces) that could serve public events such as concerts, film screenings, stage productions, educational lectures, etc. The image to the left depicts an outdoor amphitheatre in San Francisco’s Crissy Field. While this scale is larger than what may be ideal for Mill Hill’s intimate suburban aesthetic, we have pulled this image to show how the layout and design of an outdoor amphitheatre can facilitate particular programmatic measures such as concerts, film screenings, and lectures while simultaneously being conducive to flexible, passive recreational usage.

Secondly, this measure proposes to provide moveable outdoor furniture allows residents and visitors to creatively engage the space for personal enjoyment. Figures 4 and 5 show moveable outdoor furniture recently added to the new Kings Cross development’s Granary Square and Grand Park in Downtown Los Angeles. This lightweight furniture can be easily reconfigured to suit numerous events and uses. Furthermore, the brightly coloured aesthetic of the structures energises outdoor spaces, creating a playful atmosphere for users.

The following picture depicts Patricia’s Green in the Hayes Valley area of San Francisco. While this public town square is larger than the space proposed for Mill Hill’s town square it presents similar physical properties to the town square recommendation. Specifically, like Mill Hill’s site, it is linear and adjacent to both commercial and residential land uses. The park hosts a variety of outdoor furniture and a





Figure 3: Outdoor amphitheatre space within San Francisco's Crissy Field.  
Source: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/42763001@N05/9470707456>

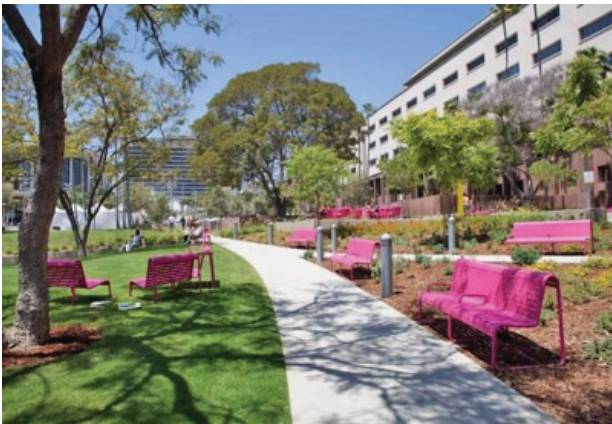


Figure 4: Grand Park in Downtown Los Angeles, USA.  
Source: [http://la.curbed.com/archives/2012/07/take\\_a\\_tour\\_around\\_the\\_civic\\_centers\\_huge\\_new\\_grand\\_park.php](http://la.curbed.com/archives/2012/07/take_a_tour_around_the_civic_centers_huge_new_grand_park.php)



Figure 5: Granary Square at Kings Cross

mosaic of micro-spaces that allow for residents to make use of the landscape in their own way. We propose that Mill Hill's town square can similarly host a diverse range of uses through creating a design rooted in principles of flexibility and accessibility.

In terms of flexibility, the provision of moveable outdoor furniture and the creation of spaces that allow for public events and individualised passive recreation will make Mill Hill's town square unique. With regard to accessibility, the situation of the proposed site between both residential and commercial land uses will encourage the space to be used by local residents as well as visitors. In sum, the creation of the town square, via principles of flexibility and accessibility, will catalyse the cementation of a central sense of spatial identity for Mill Hill residents that will consequently empower residents to creatively activate their own neighbourhood space.





Figure 6: Patricia's Green in Hayes Valley, San Francisco, USA.  
Source: <https://reportingsfspring2014.wordpress.com>

#### 1.4. Feasibility

As the current state of proposed space itself does not pose any significant challenges to infrastructural development, this report foresees the design and implementation of a town square to be highly feasible. With regards to infrastructure, a landscape design that would enhance the space as an accessible public plaza would not negatively impact the surrounding area, but rather enhance the aesthetic and usability of the Broadway High Street. The town square project may pose certain challenges, however, to parking and to noise regulation. Transitioning this space from existing as a dead end of a residential street to a public square would require

the removal of parking spaces. Furthermore, as the space is intended to exist as a hub for public events, certain regulations may be required to ensure quality of life for residents on Brockenhurst Gardens.

## Measure 2: Visual Improvements of Mill Hill Broadway Station

Mill Hill Broadway Station is characterized by its very dominant concrete design, resulting in a dark and uninviting atmosphere for passengers when entering and exiting the station. Upon arrival by train, passengers exit the station via a ground level parking lot with 42 spaces and a bus loop covered by a heavy concrete structure and the M1 motorway crossing on top. There are no cash machines, no waiting rooms and no public toilets available at the station. Step free access is not provided. Insufficient lighting exacerbates the oppressive effect of the station's built aesthetic.

Currently, train services are operated by Thameslink. Between 2013 and 2014, 2.482 million entries and exits were registered at the station<sup>1</sup>. There are four trains per hour to central London, Wimbledon and Sutton; two trains per hour to St. Albans and two trains per hour to Luton. Additionally, there is a night train service between Bedford-Brighton, with a stop at Gatwick Airport and Three Bridges.

When arriving from Mill Hill Broadway by car or by foot, the visual appeal is equally unsatisfying. The north eastern front of the bridge facing The Broadway (A5100) and Station Rd. has a large concrete façade. The ground level parking lot and bus stops are covered by a

<sup>1</sup> Office of Rail Regulation 2015. Station usage estimates. Rail statistics. Available at: <http://orr.gov.uk/statistics/published-stats/station-usage-estimates>



Figure 7: The perspective of train passengers exiting the station via the ground level parking lot towards the Broadway High Street.

Source: own photo



Figure 8: The perspective of train passengers entering the station from Broadway High Street.

Source: own photo

vast concrete ceiling seen in Figure 7. In sum, heavy structures of the M1 motorway create a dominant built environment. Paired with insufficient lighting (“yellow light”) the overall atmosphere is strikingly uninviting to both visitors and residents.

The following section of this report elaborates on several measures to improve the visual appeal of Mill Hill Broadway Station:

- A Green Wall
- Hanging plants
- Painting walls / public exhibitions
- Improved lighting
- Increased commerce along the parking lot

Some of these measures can be taken in a short period of time while others might involve larger financial investments as well as negotiations with key stakeholders. Important stakeholders for the improvement of Mill Hill Broadway station are:

- Transport for London (TfL) who operate the buses on the station’s ground floor
- Network Rail who owns the train station
- The Highway Agency who manages the M1
- Govia who manages the undercroft parking spaces
- Potentially Marks & Spencer’s (M&S) and other businesses in the Broadway High Street for consultation and/or fundraising
- Local citizens for consultation and/or fundraising
- Schoolchildren and Mill Hill’s youth for participation
- Architecture students for a potential contest on improvement measures

## 2.1. Improvements of the station exterior: A Green Wall

The most ambitious and visually most influential measure of improvement would be the installation of so called vertical gardens, also known as green walls or living walls. These refer to the wall being covered by some form of vegetation. These three terms will be used interchangeable in this report. Most frequently, green walls are used to provide aesthetics to airport buildings, bridges, hotels or private apartment complexes. Combining visual attractiveness with urban sustainability, green walls have potential to attract attentiveness of local politicians, local businesses, residents, and visitors alike. The scale of these projects can vary from iconic large-scale walls to more moderate visual improvements.

There are a number of environmental, human and building benefits commonly associated with green walls. However, high investments and potentially high maintenance costs frequently spark criticism. When constructed on building façades, green walls are often used to reduce the energy consumption of the building through improved insulation and to limit noise pollution from the outside. The construction of a green wall on other urban structures such as train stations or bridges mainly aims at improving the aesthetic appearance, bringing about environmental benefits (reduced pollution and traffic noise) and creating an emotional connection between people with the structure and its environment. The following two illustrations demonstrate the visual change that a green wall holds for Mill Hill Broadway Station.

In recent years, green walls have seen a great





Figure 9: A green wall underneath the M1 motorway and next to the Mill Hill Broadway Station. Source: own photo and illustration



Figure 10: A green wall on the bridge facing the Broadway High Street. Source: own photo and illustration

increase in popularity throughout the world. Many world cities have adopted green walls as part of flagship architecture projects. Three illustrative examples of internationally renowned green walls from Singapore, Spain and France are presented below.

With 2.289m<sup>2</sup> of green space, the façade of the 24-storey residential housing block is considered to be currently the largest vertical garden in the world. It is built to increase the visual appeal of the building, to enhance the liveability of residents and to foster biodiversity in the urban environment.

The CaixaForum in Madrid is a museum and cultural centre. The green wall next to the museum was installed in 2007. Today, it is one of the most visited museums in Madrid and its iconic architecture is known throughout the world.

Designed in 2008, this overpass (figure 14) provides an impression of the visual changes that vertical gardens can bring about when designed to improve the aesthetics of concrete bridges. This example may be most comparable to the intended visual improvements that a green wall could bring to Mill Hill Broadway Station.

But green walls can also be implemented on a more moderate scale, involving fewer costs and fewer maintenance requirements. In 2008, the Greater London Authority (GLA), under previous Mayor Ken Livingstone, published its report “Living Roofs” that encourages the implementation of a variety of green roofs and living walls<sup>1</sup>. Across London, various projects have been successfully implemented. Out of the following three examples, two have been

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/living-roofs.pdf>



Figure 11: Tree House in Singapore  
Source: Inhabitat (2014): <http://inhabitat.com/worlds-largest-vertical-garden-at-the-singapore-tree-house-condominium-sets-new-guinness-record/>



Figure 12: CaixaForum in Madrid, Spain.  
Source: <http://concreteplayground.com/brisbane/news/?p=78253>





Figure 13: Pont Max Juvenal, Aix-en-Provence, France.  
Source : <http://www.murvegetalpatrickblanc.com/realisations/provence-cote-d-azur/pont-max-juvenal-aix-en-provence>



Figure 14: Pont Max Juvenal featuring a green wall, Aix-en-Provence, France.  
Source : *ibid.*

implemented by Transport for London (TfL) and one has been implemented by Sutton Council.

TfL's first green wall was installed in 2011 on Marylebone Road at Edgware Road Tube Station to reduce locally generated air pollution. It features approximately 200m<sup>2</sup> of vegetation. A study conducted by Imperial College London on the environmental impacts of the Edgware Road green wall found that the project was overall successful in capturing some airborne pollution.<sup>1</sup>

In 2012, TfL installed a 120m<sup>2</sup> green wall at the Mermaid Theatre in Blackfriars. The green wall's primary objective is reduce local pollution generated by nearby roads. However, the project faced some criticism and was accused of an attempt to "greenwash" the area. The wall is constructed on Puddle Dock, parallel to Upper Thames Street. The lessons TfL learned from these two projects can be found in the report "Delivering Vertical Greening".<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.tfl.gov.uk/cdn/static/cms/documents/role-gi-pmpollution.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/>



Figure 15: Edgware Road Tube Station  
Source: <http://www.scotscapelivingwalls.net/project-gallery/edgware-road.html>



Figure 16: Bridge near The Mermaid Theatre on Puddle Dock  
Source: <http://www.airqualitynews.com/2012/07/09/second-green-wall-installed-in-london-by-tfl>



Figure 17: Sutton High Street  
Source: <http://www.scotscapelivingwalls.net/project-gallery/sutton-high-street.html>

The green wall in Sutton city centre was designed for aesthetics and aimed at bringing greenery to a multi-storey car park that blooms year round. The wall also features six bird boxes that support the biodiversity of the city. However, the project was expensive and cost £130,000, sparking criticism and accusations that the council misallocated public funds.

## Benefits

- Improved aesthetics

Green walls are unique works that soften the hard built environment. Depending on the type of wall and the anticipated investment, the applied textures, shapes and colours of green walls have great potential to appeal to residents, local businessmen and visitors. Because of the distinctive aesthetics of green walls it could serve as an eye-catcher and draw more attention to Mill Hill. However, it's important to note that the proposed Mill Hill green wall would not have

[files/2012-10-15%20Delivering%20Vertical%20Greening.pdf](#)

insulation benefits. Some of the commonly associated benefits such as reduced energy consumption of the building and increased noise insulation for the interior workspaces would not apply in this case. Instead, the primary focus of the green wall installation would be improving the area's aesthetics.

- Creating a 'sense of place' and becoming an amenity

Mill Hill is located in the green belt of Greater London. Most residents value the natural environment and enjoy the variety of parks, woodlands and general biodiversity of the area. In this neighbourhood where nature is an important asset, the current rough concrete station and the M1 motorway create an undesirable and unrepresentative entry and exit to the neighbourhood. By smoothing the concrete structures through a green wall, residents and visitors alike can develop a sense of connection between the neighbourhood and its green environment. Thus, a green wall would greatly improve the visual and environmental quality (also known as adding amenity value) of Mill Hill.

- Potential for pollution reduction

There are different types of green walls involving different installation methods, fixed costs and maintenance requirements. While the linkages between green walls and improved air quality have not been extensively explored, proponents of green walls suggest that they contribute to the reduction of noise pollution and CO2 emissions. A green wall in Mill Hill

could reduce noise pollution by absorbing traffic noise from the Broadway High Street, the M1 motorway and trains.

- Place-marketing: Mill Hill, the Green Belt, and the Green Wall

Because of its highly visible location, a green wall at Broadway station could benefit the place marketing of the Mill Hill neighbourhood. Links to its location in the Green Belt, its proximity to nature, the family-friendliness of the area, and its progressive sustainable development could serve marketing purposes benefiting local businesses by increasing the centre's attractiveness and local tourism by bringing Mill Hill "on the map" for recreational day trips from London. These potential benefits could help generate additional funding for the construction of a green wall through fundraising from local businesses.

## Challenges

- Initial Investment

Green wall construction is often deemed expensive. It is difficult, however, to generalize the costs of a green wall due to variations in types of walls and undisclosed construction costs. Costs range from low-budget, self-made green walls commonly installed in private gardens whereas larger green walls can be very expensive. For example, the construction of Sutton High Street green wall cost the Council £130,000. Factors that influence investment costs include the quality of the building, the type of green wall, the chosen plants and the corresponding irrigation systems. It should be noted that the use of public funds to install

green walls tends to generate criticism from local residents and the media.

- Maintenance Costs

The maintenance costs of green walls also vary significantly. For example, a London-based consultant group estimates that the Edgware Road green wall (200 m<sup>2</sup>) has an annual water bill of about £110.00.<sup>1</sup> Considering additional costs such as drainage and power, the guideline running costs for a living wall (excluding irrigation and horticultural maintenance) can be as low as £1 per m<sup>2</sup> per year according to some calculations. Nevertheless, many projects have been criticised for poor quality and expensive maintenance.

- Greenwash

While green walls can contribute to the reduction of noise and air pollution, they are often accused of greenwashing (i.e. green walls claim to be environmentally sustainable while in practice they only have a small impact on preserving the environment). A common criticism is that the installation of green walls only tackles the symptoms of pollution (at potentially high costs) instead of the causes (e.g. congestion).

## Alternative Measure: Hanging plants

A less cost-intensive solution is the planting of hanging plants on top of the station on the level of the M1 motorway. Ivy is the most common plant used in these projects. TfL notes, "ivy is

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.marklaurence.com/wp/what-does-it-cost-to-run-a-green-wall/>



a fast growing, resilient, evergreen plant, able to grow in harsh environments therefore ideal for vertical planting in urban areas – with which it already has a long association, albeit mainly for aesthetic purposes. The current prevalence of ivy has made it the subject of numerous studies which demonstrate its potential as an effective particulate trap. However, research which compares the particulate capture ability of different shrub species, suggests that other plants may be more effective than ivy.”<sup>1</sup> The suitability of the bridge for hanging vegetation would first have to be tested for this measure to be considered.

### **Alternative Measure: Painting the walls / prints of paintings**

A further small-scale visual improvement could be the community painting of various walls in and around the station. Instead or in addition to a green wall, the wall underneath the M1 motorway bridge could be painted. Such paintings could be carried out either by professional artists or local residents and/or school children (see Measure 13). Allowing painting or legal street art around the station would not only enhance the visual appeal of the station surroundings, but would also appeal to the younger residents of Mill Hill, providing a space for artistic expression within their neighbourhood while simultaneously improving it. Contributing to the beautification of the station environment would be likely to increase the identification of the youth with Mill Hill and potentially integrate them in further community action. Another

possibility is to create large-scale printings of schoolchildren’s works and arrange them underneath the bridge and/or along the parking lot as a (temporary) public exhibition.

## **2.2. Improving station lighting**

Due to the dominating built environment combined with insufficient lighting, the current interior atmosphere of the station is suboptimal. Lighting improvements could provide short-term benefits and create a more inviting environment. Currently, old-fashioned “yellow light” is used to illuminate parts of the station and the adjacent ground level parking lot. A simple change to LED lights would have a noticeable positive impact on the station environment. Improvements in station lighting could be connected to the planned installation of noise proof solar panels along the M1 motorway. However, it should be tested whether or not the generated energy could be used for newly installed LED lights.

Depending on financial and human resources, more ambitious lighting solutions could be developed to improve the interior of the station. Figure 18 shows the innovative, criss-cross light beams installed at a tube station in Budapest, Hungary<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.sporaarchitects.hu/index.php?page=t/03\\_](http://www.sporaarchitects.hu/index.php?page=t/03_)

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2012-10-15%20Delivering%20Vertical%20Greening.pdf>

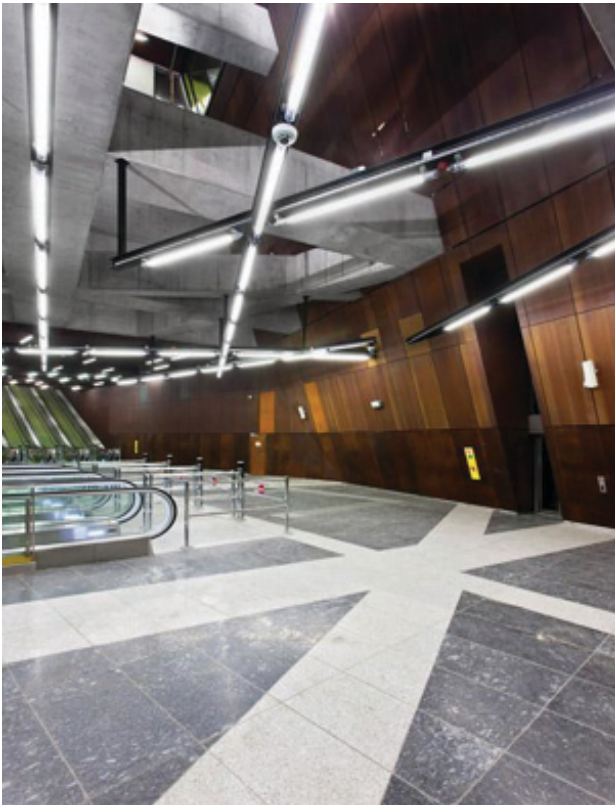


Figure 18: Criss-cross lighting beams in Budapest  
Source: <http://www.dezeen.com/2014/12/04/spora-architects-metro-stations-budapest-concrete-lattice-beams/>

### 2.3. Encouraging commerce in the station and parking lot

The attractiveness and liveliness of the parking lot at the ground level of the station could be improved by introducing small-scale commercial activity such as a vegetable stalls in addition to the existing flower shop. This suggestion could be easily implemented by de-cluttering the space around the station entrance stairs.

More ambitious plans would require a comprehensive reorganization of space and the removal or relocation of some infrastructures

[projects-menu/05\\_infrastructure-menu/096\\_M4F&lang=en](#)

and services. This could be part of a long-term vision to regenerate the station's undercroft.

In the meantime, small-scale improvements could easily make the station's undercroft more welcoming as shown through a basic visualisation in Figure 19.

### 2.4. Feasibility

The suggested measures are ambitious and require coordination with several key stakeholders. Moreover, they potentially require cost-splitting and fundraising from various sources. The main investments would presumably be channelled through the public sector. One possible source of funding is the Air Quality Fund of the Mayor of London. The fund currently provides £6 million of funding until 2016 and is expected to expand to £20 million over the next decade. Moreover, financial contributions to station improvements could be sought by the Council through section 106 planning requirements for new developments in the neighbourhood. In the following section we suggest several additional approaches to raise funds for intended improvements of the station:

#### Fundraising through local businesses

Mill Hill Broadway Station is one of the main gateways to the neighbourhood. Thousands of residents from Mill Hill and surrounding areas enter and exit the station on their daily commute. Additionally, the Saracens Rugby team home games draw on average 7,500 visitors per game to Mill Hill. This constant flow of people represents a potentially high business



Figure 19: Visualising a fruit and vegetable stall next to the station entrance. Source: own photo and illustration

opportunity for local shops, especially for those located in proximity to the station. An improved environment and enhanced visual attractiveness combined with further measures taken on the Broadway High Street carry the potential to draw and retain additional customers to the High Street and surrounding businesses. Given this potential, local businesses might be willing to contribute financially to station improvements. A formal local business association could serve as a catalyst to channel the support towards station improvements (see Measure 5).

### **Engagement of and fundraising through local citizens**

As outlined above, Mill Hill Broadway Station is used by many residents on their daily commute to and from inner London and represents a crossing point for residents bringing their children to school or shopping on the local high street. Visual improvements might find the support of many residents who would potentially be willing to contribute financially. For example, local civil society organizations and neighbourhood groups could engage in fundraising activities for the proposed improvements. These activities would not only provide an opportunity for fundraising, but also engage local citizens to get involved in neighbourhood beautification

measures, thus sensitizing the community for urban sustainable development (see Measure 13 on the role of the community in neighbourhood beautification).

### **Competition among architecture students for targeted improvements of the station**

The scope of this report provides some illustrative examples for improvements. Depending on the selected measures, a more in-depth

consultancy could be provided and additional ideas could be generated. One cost-effective way of generating improvement proposals is hosting a design competition among London's architecture students. With regards to lighting improvements, a competition could provide additional innovative and targeted as well as cost-efficient approaches. Furthermore, these competitions could also be held for generating innovative ideas to improve the step-free access to the station or other functional improvements.

## **Measure 3: Pedestrian Crossings on The Broadway**

Mill Hill is currently dominated by automobile traffic. Infrastructural improvements to current pedestrian pathways have the potential to encourage and facilitate better mobility within the High Street and surrounding areas, reinforcing the high street as a discernible core of the suburb.

We identified two locations on The Broadway where pedestrian crossing opportunities are insufficient. This has a substantial impact on pedestrian safety. In both cases, it is important to consider that pedestrians cross at these two locations even though no protected crossing is provided. By doing so, pedestrians express so-called "desire lines," meaning that there is a disconnect between understanding the risks of crossing from non-protected crossing areas and pedestrian behaviour. In this case, pedestrians are more likely to cross at the riskier but more convenient part of the road rather than walking further to cross at the cross walk. The

ideal response to desire lines is to formalise them into infrastructure by establishing a proper cross walk at the junctions where people are crossing anyways. However, other constraints such as traffic flow have to be taken into account. Therefore, the second best solution is achievable by making alternatives to risk-taking more attractive. Materialized crossings, either zebra crossings or new traffic lights should be added to facilitate pedestrian mobility between both sides of the High Street at or close to these two locations.

### **Between the train station parking lot and Marks & Spencer's parking lot, under the M1 bridge:**

Currently, many pedestrians risk their safety by crossing this busy road at this unsafe location in order to avoid a significant detour to the closest pedestrian crossing.





Figure 20: Own photo of the location where a crossing is missing.

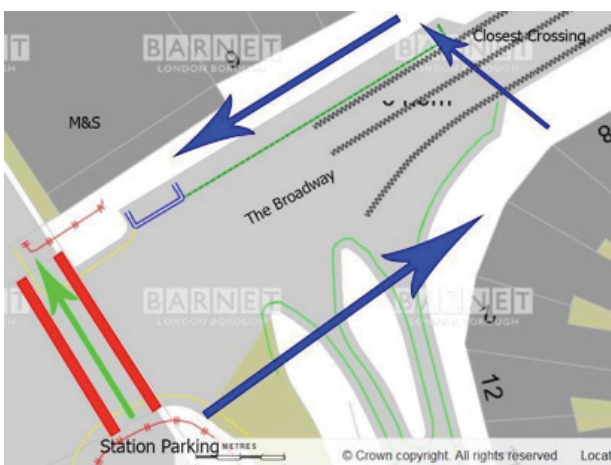


Figure 21: from <http://www.barnettraffweb.co.uk>

Rather than trying to force pedestrians to use remote crossings, it is sensible to provide protected crossings where behaviours show it is needed.

The map shows the detour pedestrians would have to make if they wanted to reach Marks & Spencer from the station parking lot by only crossing on designated pedestrian crossings (blue arrows). The green arrows show the places where pedestrians directly cross and where the materialized crossings should be placed.

### At the end of The Broadway (Mill Hill Circus)

Currently, this location hosts a pedestrian refuge island and the kerb offers a lower section for buggies or cyclists to use it. Previously there was a materialized crossing but it was removed by TfL as part of recent works to reduce congestion and improve journey time reliability in the area. Given the high volume of traffic and the high speed of vehicles coming from Mill Hill Circus the lack of materialized crossing is dangerous for pedestrians.

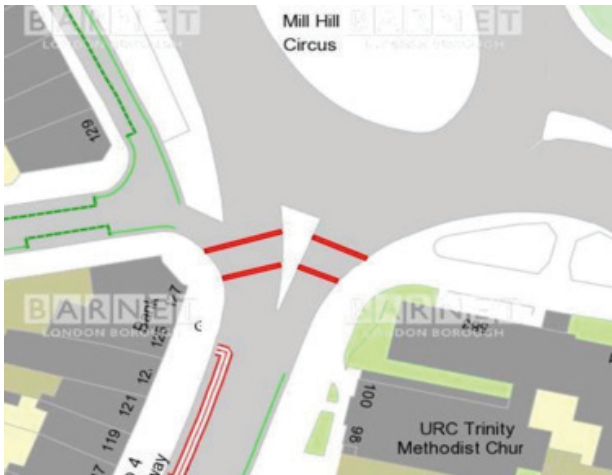
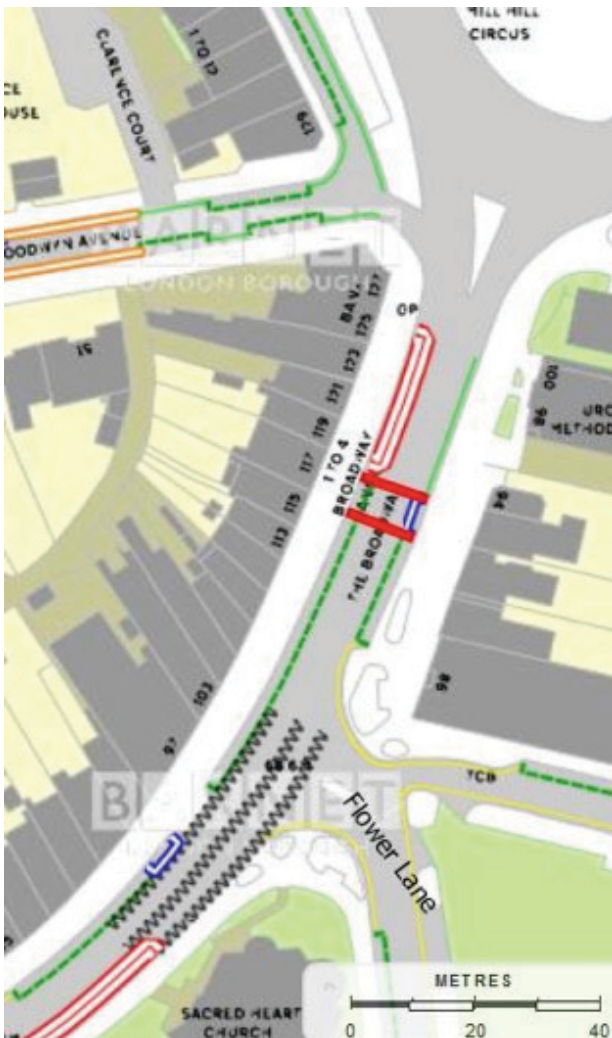


Figure 22: Option 1: The central island should be connected to both sidewalks with materialized pedestrian crossings (red lines).  
Source: ibid.



Some residents have expressed their concerns as pedestrians now cross at the same point as before (because the central island is attractive) at high risk<sup>1</sup>.

A pedestrian crossing at this location would be ideal. However, if this is not feasible, a reasonable alternative would be to place a crossing further down The Broadway. Currently, the next pedestrian crossing on The Broadway is at Flower Lane, which is 110m away from the proposed crossing location. As fluidity of traffic is important at Mill Hill Circus, a zebra crossing should be preferred over traffic controls in order to allow for shorter stopping times. The Residents Association could put pressure on TfL to take pedestrian safety better into account when redesigning traffic in this area.

<sup>1</sup> This is Local London: 'Accident is going to happen' after pedestrian crossing removed at Mill Hill Circus, January 2013.

[http://www.thisislocallondon.co.uk/news/10160274.\\_Accident\\_is\\_going\\_to\\_happen\\_\\_after\\_pedestrian\\_crossing\\_removed/](http://www.thisislocallondon.co.uk/news/10160274._Accident_is_going_to_happen__after_pedestrian_crossing_removed/)

Figure 23: Option 2: On the right, the second-best location for a pedestrian crossing (red lines) would improve pedestrian safety while being less detrimental to traffic fluidity than Option 1.  
Source: ibid.

## Measure 4: Bins and Containers

### 4.1. The problem

Bins and containers tend to be stored on the sidewalk of The Broadway in a disorganized manner, regardless if it is a collection day.

This has several negative consequences on the area:

Pedestrian mobility is affected as this reduces space for movement. The problem is more acute on the southern side of The Broadway, where the sidewalk is narrower. Pedestrians with buggies and seniors are potentially the most impacted by the situation. Furthermore, pedestrians have to zigzag between bins because they are not grouped properly and some are left in the middle of the sidewalk.

The quality of the public realm is reduced, as bins make a dirty and messy impression. This may have a negative impact on the High Street's commercial footfall. Many studies draw a link between quality of the environment and a town centre's economic vitality<sup>1</sup>.

### 4.2. Recommendations

The bin collection frequency has been reduced by Barnet Council from twice a week

<sup>1</sup> Living Streets: "The Pedestrian Pound. The business case for better streets and places"



Figure 24: Sidewalk on The Broadway. Own photo

to a weekly service. Businesses and residents of The Broadway may want to look for other bin services providers. If this is a coordinated approach, a private provider might be able to offer better service at lower or similar cost under the condition that they operate on the whole High Street. Some businesses already hire private service providers but generalizing this practice to the High Street would allow cost sharing, e.g. the cost of making a collection truck carry the waste from The Broadway to the waste destination would be shared between more customers. A business partnership involving High Street businesses can be the starting point for such coordinated approach (see Measure 5 on partnerships).

Better enforcement of bins regulations is also

part of the solution. Mill Hill Neighbourhood Forum has already asked the Council to take action. The Council should make sure that enforcement is sustainably carried out and not only a temporary action.

Raising awareness regarding bin organisation and collection needs to be combined with enforcement measures. The Neighbourhood Forum or the Residents Association could explain the consequences of poor bin storage on pedestrian mobility, High Street image, and commercial footfall and ask for more care in taking the bins out.

But residents and businesses should also be helped in finding alternatives such as reducing the amount of waste produced. Many habits can be changed to achieve lower waste but have to be targeted to each specific situation. For example, restaurants can make 'doggie bags' available to reduce food waste and use washable fabric table cloths rather than paper. Tools like the "Wise Up on Waste" app for professional kitchens can help review internal waste practices. The North London Waste Authority publishes a significant amount of information on their website to help the population and businesses reduce their waste<sup>1</sup>. Their Waste Prevention Team could also be invited to come and give talks and advice to Mill Hill community.

Finally, residents and businesses have to be provided with better physical storage solutions on The Broadway. First, bins should be grouped

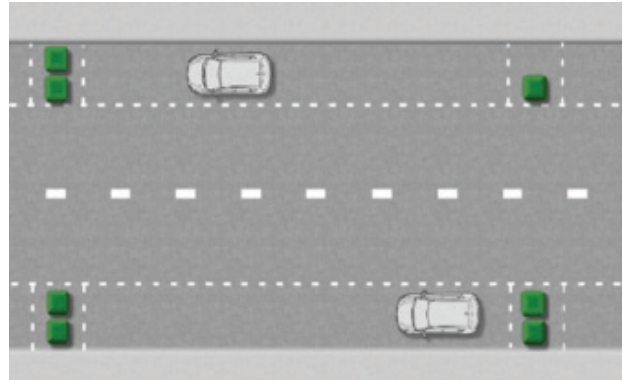


Figure 25: Source : CERTU Fiche n°3.2: Encombrement des trottoirs. [http://www.developpement-durable.gouv.fr/IMG/CERTU%20Fiche%203\\_2%20Encombrement%20des%20trottoirs%20LES%20POUBELLES.pdf](http://www.developpement-durable.gouv.fr/IMG/CERTU%20Fiche%203_2%20Encombrement%20des%20trottoirs%20LES%20POUBELLES.pdf)

instead of dispersed to allow for a more efficient use of space. Secondly, groups of bins should be placed where they cause the least interference with mobility and public realm quality. Here various technical solutions are available at different prices.

#### 4.3. Good Practice

- **Designate bin zones by painting the sidewalk** (these should be located where the negative impact of bins is minimized, i.e. where the sidewalk is wider, where no terrace expands on the sidewalk, away from public benches, etc.).
- **Designate bin zones along the carriage-way on parking spaces:**

<sup>1</sup> <http://nlwa.gov.uk>





Figure 26: Source: Ibid.



Figure 27: Source: Ibid

This would result in losing a few parking spaces on the High Street but would be a net gain for pedestrian mobility as bins are the main obstacle on The Broadway's sidewalks. This solution would necessitate installing an on-street structure to prevent bins from falling on the carriageway (see Figure 25) and it would also ensure that the space remains free from parked cars.

This type of installation prevents bins from falling on the carriageway (e.g. in case of strong winds) and clearly materializes a bin storage spot.

- **Replace individual bins with pooled containers** (such as the wheeled ones that are already used by businesses). This would

automatically limit bin dispersion and these containers could remain chained to an ad hoc structure so that they remain where their impact is minimized.

Such a storage spot can be installed either on-street or off-street. The container is attached to the railings.

- **Solar waste compactors**

These innovative bins entail a solar-powered compaction system and therefore need to be emptied less often than normal bins. Some local authorities have found that these bins would allow them to save on bin collections. The market leading products are branded Big Belly ©<sup>1</sup> and some units can be found in London

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.bigbellysolar.co.uk>



Figure 28: Source: <http://www.bigbellysolar.co.uk>

already. But the concept can be adapted to many situations and other brands may offer interesting solutions as well.

These solar waste compactors can also be used as information display points, which are currently rare and poorly visible in the Broadway. Even if the typical Big Belly © units are public bins, larger waste compactors could suit resident or businesses needs too.

#### 4.4. Feasibility

Part of the bin problem is linked with behaviour – residents and businesses can improve the situation by producing less waste and by being more careful as to where and when they leave bins out for collection. This requires providing them with information and tools on why and how to do it. The Council, supported by the Neighbourhood Forum and The Resident's Association, together with a revitalised Trader's Association, seems best suited to convey this information. For example, the Council can share existing Internet resources on waste reduction strategies with residents and can raise awareness through events where the waste issue would be discussed with the North London Waste Authority.

The second part of the problem can be solved through Barnet Council. The Barnet Council plays an essential role in finding a solution to this problem as they manage waste collection and car parking as well as regulating the use of public sidewalks. Still, the low cost of our proposed solutions suggests that the bin issue, even if it currently has substantial negative impacts on the High Street, can in large parts be tackled through simple actions and a few regulatory changes (e.g. the designation of the bin zones).

The GLA's supplementary planning guidance on Town Centres states that "Providing pedestrians with pleasant, safe and legible urban realm



in town centres is a key factor in the success of a centre,” (July 2014, p.59). After expressing his commitment to better streets in his Manifesto for Public Spaces<sup>1</sup>, the Mayor defined five stages

<sup>1</sup> Mayor of London: “London’s Great Outdoors” (2009)

of implementation for better streets.

Solving issues with bins on Mill Hill’s High Street is the first step to a more attractive public realm and could bring considerable benefits to the area.

## Measure 5: Business Partnerships

We have identified a lack of comprehensive, complementary and effective business partnerships on the High Street and more generally within the designated area. Business owners seem to lack unity although we have determined that they would have strong interest in working together on different issues.

Previously, there was a Shopkeepers Association between businesses on The Broadway. One of their projects was to collectively buy flowers to embellish the High Street. But over time, involvement declined and the association disappeared. In our view, a renewed partnership could help businesses in many ways:

- promote measures that attract a higher footfall to the High Street;
- give businesses a voice in the decisions

taken for Mill Hill;

- enhance the vitality of The Broadway as a Town Centre;
- better adapt to external influences that affect all businesses (e.g. online shopping).

### 5.1. What kind of partnership?

Different levels of ambition can be set, from a loose and informal collaboration to an institutionalised partnership funded by members’ contributions. These are some criteria that would determine what a partnership would look like:

- The partnership can be cross-sector but also be composed of sector-specific subgroups (i.e. restaurants, groceries, etc.).
- ‘Growth Hubs’ (business forums) can be set up to ensure businesses productively discuss

problems and share good practices and information.

- Meetings between business owners can be arranged regularly and ad hoc meetings can be done in smaller groups to tackle more specific issues.
- If the partnership is ambitious, training for business representatives who are involved in partnerships may be useful for them to have a better understanding of the business support resources available both inside and outside Mill Hill (e.g. subsidies, infrastructures, etc.).
- Funding of the partnership could be generated, for example, through a multi-year, compulsory business taxation mechanism.
- The partnership would have to keep close contact with community groups like the Residents Association in order to exploit synergies on common aims.

### **What could a partnership in Mill Hill be useful for?**

- Coordination on the bin issue (see measure 4 on bins) and other visual improvement on the High Street: bin collection could be made more efficient and less costly by pooling rubbish or private contractors could be hired through the partnership rather than by each individual business owner.
- Organize public events that would attract

customers to the High Street, e.g. local market, open-air concert (see measure 1 on Town Square), etc.

- Pool information on consumer behaviours, organize a common survey to ask customers about their experiences on the High Street and collectively commission independent market studies.
- Create and manage a High Street website to centralize all the information on the different businesses and events happening in the area. This website could also be a common platform for a local click & collect system.

## **5.2. Good Practice**

### **• Business partnerships in Outer London**

To promote the business growth in the Outer London area, business partnerships have been proposed by the Outer London Commission to tackle problems such as the challenges and opportunities town centres face resulting from changing consumer expenditure (multi-channel shopping in particular, i.e. in-store shopping has been supplemented by online shopping, pay-by-phone, etc.), as well as the management of the night time economy in town centres.

- 1) Because there is a current trend towards multi-channel retailing, shopkeepers could jointly host websites as promotional

and information platforms. The provision of mentoring and advice on marketing, as well as the guidance of optimal use of social media and websites for retailers and small businesses, could also be integrated into the websites. Some companies provide an online learning platform and support for independent retailers wishing to improve their online presence and digital skills, such as HighStreet13.com and SocialRetail.co.uk. In addition, innovative e-commerce networks, such as Target 200, provide independent shopkeepers with the chance to jointly sell their products online. Consumers would know what is happening on their high street through these platforms. Social media platforms such as Twitter can play an important role in promoting independent shops, advertising events, creating new footfall and assisting new independent start-ups which might not have the resources or skills required to make use of advanced technological tools.

2) Town centres are important locations for small and medium enterprises and start-up businesses, therefore a business partnership could help to provide workspace and support for these enterprises by offering incubators, accelerators and co-working spaces. An incubator helps the new start-up or a business at the early development stages, accelerators provide support for

businesses with significant potential for growth, and co-working spaces offer both workspace and supporting facilities at affordable rates. The Outer London Commission stressed the importance of developing this type of space in outer London due to the town centre renewal and the diverse ways this space can be used.

#### • **Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) in the United States**

Although BIDs can be found in the UK too, the United States features many interesting examples. BIDs in the United States can be seen as a private-sector-led solution to improve the administration of business districts over the situation where they are managed by public authorities. It plays an important role in improving geographically specific outdoor public spaces and business services, which are publicly recognised yet privately directed organisations (Hoyt, 2004). Property owners within the BIDs are charged a small annual fee in order to fund all districts through a multi-year, compulsory business taxation mechanism. Usual services provided by BIDs include public space cleaning and maintenance, safety of public spaces and businesses, and marketing of the BID area.

There are hundreds of BIDs in North America of varying sizes and budgets that have had significant positive benefits for local areas:

1. Cleaner environment: with a 50 person crew, the rating of sidewalk cleanliness in Times Square has exceeded 90%, nearly double before the BID was established;

2. More customers: an additional 500,000 people have been attracted to cultural and entertainment activities in the downtown Washington, D.C. BID since 2002, including an annual concert for 10,000 people (Cook, 2007).

to finance the BID. Contributions should be indexed on turnover or profits. At the same time, potential members must see the partnership's activities as yielding tangible benefits for their business in order for cooperation to be sustainable.

### 5.3. Challenges

It might be difficult to encourage various types of business to form the partnership, since 1.) they have different sizes and cost-structures, and the benefit enjoyed by better-developed business might outweigh the resource-poorer and newer ones; 2.) some shopkeepers may not be able or willing to fund the partnership as they already feel business rates are too high; and 3.) certain types of businesses may be isolated from the partnership if they do not have any common interests with other businesses.

It is crucial that a funding model perceived as fair by members is found so they accept



## Part 2: Transport

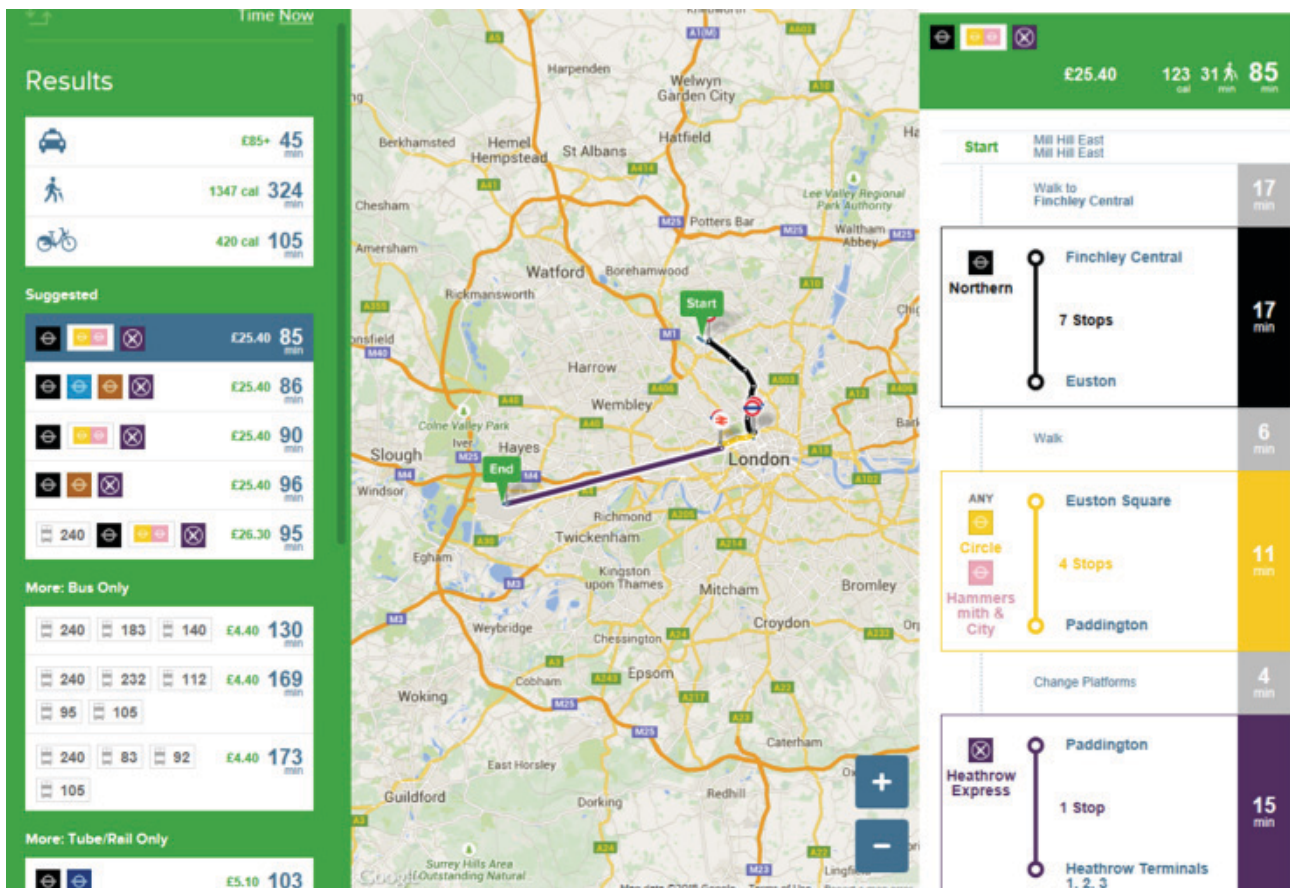


Figure 29: The comparison of time needed to go from Mill Hill to Heathrow Airport by various modes of transport.  
Source: <https://citymapper.com/london>

Mill Hill's historic suburban character is one of detached and semi-detached single family housing. This relatively low-density form tends to generate very car-orientated neighbourhoods. Although Mill Hill is well-connected to central London, inconvenient orbital public transport routes add to the excessive car-use

problem and encourages people to drive to neighbouring boroughs or to the airport. For instance, in order to get to Heathrow airport by public transport a Mill Hill resident first has to come to the centre of London and make a large number of interchanges. In the end, the trip will take almost twice as long as getting there by car

(see Figure 29).

Mill Hill's car ownership rate is significantly higher than those of London, Barnet and neighbouring boroughs. According to Neighbourhood Statistics, about 80% of Mill Hill residents own a car compared to 58.4% in London and 71.3% in Barnet. Meanwhile, while 41% of the residents commute to work (mainly to central London) by public transport, over half (about 52%) of the motor vehicle journeys in Barnet are made wholly within the borough. This implies that people choose to use their car for smaller trips such as going to a supermarket or shopping centre or to bringing children to school rather than commuting to work.

Mill Hill is crossed by major transport links such as the M25, M1 and A1/A41 which are advantageous in terms of the connectivity of the area but also bring a number of problems commonly associated with excessive car use such as air pollution and high noise levels, low road safety, congestion and lack of parking spaces.

Traffic congestion is highest during school arrival and departure times and lack of parking spaces is particularly acute near Mill Hill Broadway Station. The new higher-density developments in the neighbourhood (e.g. Millbrook Park) will only further aggravate the situation.

Cars particularly predominate on The Ridgeway, Marsh Lane, Mill Hill Apex Corner,

Watford Way, Mill Hill Circus, and Barnet Way and are associated with high traffic volume and high speeds. Not only has Barnet a poor record for road safety<sup>1</sup>, but this situation also makes many residents perceive the neighbourhood as unsafe for pedestrians and cyclists. According to Barnet Council, this safety problem is considered by Barnet's inhabitants as one of the most important issues concerning transport<sup>2</sup>.

Finally, dominant car use involves missed opportunities of social interactions as cars are closed spaces that isolate people from each other and prevent people from enjoying Mill Hill's exceptional open green spaces. For these reasons, we believe that reducing car use in Mill Hill is a priority and should yield many health, environmental, economic, and social benefits. This is a long-term process that starts with providing reasonable transport alternatives and creating awareness in support of this modal shift.

<sup>1</sup> Barnet has a poor record on road safety compared with the outer London average. In 2013, Barnet had the highest number of road casualties in outer London. While this marks a 3% decrease since 2012, it included a 19% increase in pedestrian casualties and a 17% decrease in driver casualties. <https://tfl.gov.uk/cdn/static/cms/documents/casualties-in-greater-london-2013.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> London Borough of London, 2010, Local Implementation Plan, p.17



## Measure 6: Parking

The Neighbourhood Forum's SWOT analysis highlights that one of the main preoccupations of the local population in Mill Hill is the scarcity of parking spaces. This issue is particularly acute on the High Street and around Mill Hill Broadway station. The lack of parking facilities has been identified as a strong limitation for the economic vitality of the town centre.

In this section, we will elaborate on the multi-storey car park project brought up by the community and make complementary recommendations to deal with the parking issue in Mill Hill.

### 6.1. Building a multi-storey car park on Bunns Lane

To remedy the lack of parking on the High Street and around Mill Hill Broadway station the Neighbourhood Forum has proposed to build a multi-storey car park at the same location as the Bunns Lane car park. We note the multiple advantages of this project highlighted by the Neighbourhood Forum that considers this car park as a crucial point for the revitalisation of the High Street area.

- First, the new car park would provide more parking facilities for potential customers who currently prefer visiting other retail areas (e.g.

Borehamwood) over The Broadway in Mill Hill due to the lack of parking spaces. Additional parking would therefore attract more customers into the town centre, who would in turn attract better independent retailers and restaurateurs.

- Moreover, in line with the Mayor's Transport Strategy which supports park & ride schemes, this multi-storey car park is an infrastructure enhancement that would support intermodality by making it easier for commuters to park at the station and take a train to central London. The additional parking spaces that would be provided within the multi-storey car park are justified by the expected increase in commuters from the new developments in Mill Hill East and Colindale. The station also offers a bus interchange to assist passengers in orbital journeys.

- The project also allows the development of a step-free access to the station which would otherwise be complicated and costly to provide on its own. This improvement would be highly beneficial for the community, especially for the disabled and the elderly, as well as passengers with luggage traveling to/from Luton and Gatwick airports. This issue has been the object of campaigning in Mill Hill for years. In terms of the wider community, the multi-storey car park provides an opportunity to improve pedestrian

connectivity by providing the most direct routes over and under the railway tracks and the M1 as well as across The Broadway. Creating functional and visually attractive footways will be vital in reducing the severance from those large infrastructures.

- Finally, the provision of additional parking spaces would free up parking spaces on the High Street and neighbouring streets, thus facilitating improvements of the public realm proposed in Part 1 that require the removal of some parking spaces.

In addition to outlining the benefits of the Neighbourhood Forum's multi-storey car park project, we would like to elaborate on several points that should be taken into account and mitigated in order to further improve this proposal. **These views do not represent criticism of the Neighbourhood Forum's project, which we clearly support, but are merely observations aimed at further informing the community's thinking process.**

- First, the multi-storey car park would be expensive and thus requires in-depth reflection on how to maximize the benefits for the community. The Neighbourhood Forum proposes to mitigate this high cost by the

construction of an additional two floor of offices or housing to the four floors of car park (600 parking spaces). The car park would then be a high building on a large surface, with a substantial visual impact on the surrounding area that could be detrimental for the image of the neighbourhood. The current contours of the site suggest that the lower two floors of the car park would be above ground level with a pedestrian entrance in The Broadway, but "underground" at the vehicle entrance which would effectively be on floor 3. This is a substantial first step in limiting the height of the construction but the surface of construction may still lead to an imposing building. We suggest basic visualizations of the project should be produced to better assess the visual impact on the construction and inform efforts to mitigate this impact through architectural improvements and beautification projects such as green walls.

- The project proposed by the Neighbourhood Forum also includes the removal of the undercroft parking lot (42 spaces) at Mill Hill Broadway station. We consider that these parking spaces have the advantage of being very close to the high street whereas potential customers parking their car in Bunns Lane car park would have to walk a slightly greater distance that could negatively impact their desire to shop in

this area. As the Neighbourhood Forum is keen to enhance footfall in the High Street through better parking offers, this differential in walking distance to High Street shops should be taken into account. In our opinion, keeping the undercroft parking lot and limiting parking to 3 hours to reserve it for High Street customers makes sense even once a multi-storey car park is built on Bunns Lane. This report suggests significant visual improvements to the undercroft area that can be carried out without removing the parking lot (see Measure 2). It is therefore possible to change the station entrance to a more welcoming area while maintaining its parking function. In our views, removing and re-developing the undercroft parking into different uses such as retail could only be justified if an assessment suggests that locating retail at the present location rather than on the High Street represents an added value.

- We note that the new multi-storey car park might also increase rush-hour traffic around the train station by attracting commuters to one single location, rather than incentivizing modal shift among them and diluting the role of commuters in rush-hour congestion. Congestion will also increase during the period of construction as the 185 spaces on the current Bunns Lane car park will be inaccessible during this time. Concrete transition measures will be

necessary to alleviate pressure on surrounding parking bays by providing commuters with alternatives. We see the construction period as an opportunity to seize commuters' readiness to experiment alternative, non-car ways of traveling to and from the train station. TfL should consider increasing bus frequency at rush hours and also intensive communication should be put in place by the Neighbourhood Forum to invite commuters to use this momentum to encourage a modal shift.

- Finally, the multi-storey car park is an opportunity to internally provide facilities for alternative modes of transport such as electric cars and bikes. Consequently, a significant amount of parking bays and charging points for these types of vehicles should be provided. Moreover, as part of a mix of alternatives, Measure 7 in this report recommends supporting car clubs. Even if car clubs were used by only 5 to 10% of commuters, it could set a precedent for greater acceptance of other smart mobility solutions. Some parking spaces should consequently be reserved for car club use within the car park. In the long term, the reserved parking bays could be shared with driverless cars given that this innovative type of vehicle is likely to become a reality within the next 15 years. Further the building should be designed with flexibility built-in, such that for example the 4th floor could

be converted into further office or residential space should the requirement for car parking decrease.

In conclusion, a multi-storey car park is a useful solution to the problem of parking in Mill Hill for the next decade and would support the economic vitality of the town centre. In the long term we would encourage the Neighbourhood Forum to adopt an even more ambitious plan in line with the principles set by the Mayor's transport strategy to encourage shifts to other non-car transportation modes, as neither electric cars nor driverless cars solve congestion problems.

## 6.2. Broader considerations on parking provision

Current planning documents tend to support a strategy that limits the provision of parking spaces. Indeed, the section on transport of the London Plan states that 'transport assessments and travel plans for major developments should give details of proposed measures to improve non-car based access, reduce parking and mitigate adverse transport impacts,' (London Plan, chapter 6, pg. 201). The reduction of car use is one of the plan's priorities and reducing parking space is one of the measures to achieve

this goal.

At the same time, it is acknowledged that one-size-fits-all solutions can be counter-productive and that specific standards must be considered for each specific location. Boroughs with low Public Transport Accessibility Levels (PTALs) are to be treated differently and Mill Hill has been singled out as an area with car dependency due to poor transport connectivity.

There appears to be a difference in emphasis between TfL and the Outer London Commission who is more sympathetic to the need of car use and parking in outer London. In its second report in 2011 the Commission indicated that changes to the London Plan should refer back to national policy, "to provide parking policy which is flexible and responsive to local circumstances" and "that the London Plan provide broad strategic support for sensitively designed town centre parking management strategies which contribute to the Mayor's broader objectives for town centres and outer London."<sup>1</sup> The Commission returned to this theme in its third report where it made direct links between parking and the health of local high streets.

The provision of accessible low cost parking can also play an important role in helping town centres draw in people. This applies primarily to outer London where there is more reliance on

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<sup>1</sup> Outer London Commission (2012): 2nd Report.

cars. The Federation of Small Business Parking Manifesto (2008) argues “too many town centres across the country bear the scars of poorly thought out parking policy.” In particular, it noted a study that showed that “quality of and access to parking provision within a five minute walk of main shopping streets has a significant impact on store performance.”<sup>1</sup> Low priced short-term parking can also help to integrate town centres into the online shopping process by providing convenient access to click and collect points. Similarly, accessible parking is a key requirement identified by retailers located in local parades, particularly the availability of close by short-term spaces<sup>2</sup>.

The Outer London Commission is reconvening later this year and the Forum may wish to work with it as it further reviews planning for outer London.

### 6.3. Recommendations

In our opinion, it is important to consider that any improvement in terms of parking provision will attract drivers who currently do not take certain routes or shop in certain areas to benefit from these improvements. In this context, the gains from having more customers able to come

into a high street and park can be compensated by other negative impacts such as road congestion, so there is no overall improvement. Thus, even if various studies show either positive or negative impact of increased parking provision on commercial turnover, the long-term vitality of the high street should not depend on parking but on concrete and permanent improvement in the Public Transport Accessibility Levels (PTALs). Congestion has an economic and social cost, on which investment in public transport policies allow to save. Therefore, we believe that Mill Hill’s future resides in better public transport provision and other non-motorised solutions, such as cycling and walking.

However, we acknowledge that such a shift cannot be prompted immediately so some palliative measures can be thought to improve the provision of parking spaces in the present:

#### Better management

It is important to first gather all relevant information (e.g. location-specific parking bays and occupancy rates) in order to better manage the current parking space offer and to relocate idle spaces to where it is needed. Barnet Council is keen to assess the transfer of idle parking spaces to where they are most needed,

<sup>1</sup> Policy Exchange, 21st Century Retail, 2013.

<sup>2</sup> Outer London Commission (2014): 3rd Report: Section 2.1.38, P.17.

but this is not always possible. Residents want more parking spaces around the High Street where congestion and a poor pedestrian environment are current problems.

### Off-peak parking tariffs around The Broadway

Currently, the High Street is congested during both work and school rush hours but parking spaces are available outside these times. We suggest introducing free parking periods at off-peak times to incentivize those who are the most flexible to come and use the High Street outside rush hours. This could be from 2pm to 4pm. Such a measure could attract customers to shops at a time when they usually get few customers and potentially redirect residents who normally shop on other high streets such as Borehamwood where affordable parking spaces are more abundant. The loss of revenue induced by these free-parking periods could be compensated by increasing the daily price of parking in Bunns Lane car park. The following table shows that the daily tariff in Bunns Lane car park is currently cheaper than in nearby Station car parks along the Thameslink line.

### Know where to park

Technology can be an ally in the management of parking spaces in cities' congested areas. Congestion and pollution are exacerbated when car users need to drive around to find available parking bays. The concept of 'smart parking' consists of bringing together smartphones

Station car parks	Price per day (weekdays; without membership)
<u>Elstree &amp; Borehamwood</u> multi-storey car park	£6,80
Mill Hill <u>Bunns Lane</u> car park (Mill Hill <u>undercroft</u> parking)	£5 (£7,40)
Hendon car park	£6,80
<u>Cricklewood</u> Travelodge	£7,50

Source: <http://www.apcoa.co.uk> and Barnet Parking Directory

and radio frequency solutions to inform drivers about the nearest available parking spot. Some smartphone apps are already available and with the help of IT expertise, the community can create a tailored solution for Mill Hill.

Smart parking has been implemented in the US in cities such as Los Angeles, New York and Washington, D.C. Low-power sensors measuring no more than the lid of a coffee cup are embedded in the asphalt and provide information to authorities on the usage of parking bays. They can also be connected to parking meters, allowing mobile payment and prices adjusted to the high or low demand in busy hours and events. With the use of smartphone apps, users can find empty parking bays easily



in a given area. Each sensor in Los Angeles costs around USD \$20-30 per month<sup>1</sup>. Although the price may seem high, authorities can split the costs with users if the technology reduces parking violations and increases the council's turnover, which would eventually add just a few cents to each individual user. This would provide more than enough compensation for wasted fuel and time while also providing a better city

<sup>1</sup> <http://mashable.com/2011/04/13/smart-parking-tech>

environment. Other cheaper and more collaborative solutions can also be used, such as smart phone apps that allow users to notify others when they leave a parking bay (ibid.).

## Measure 7: Encouraging Bus Trips and Alternative Car Uses

### 7.1. Efficient bus routes

Efficient bus routes connecting Mill Hill with neighbouring areas would be a crucial step in promoting public transport use within the borough. The problem with orbital links is acknowledged in Barnet's Local Plan (p. 97):

"There are significant issues with many radial and other links across Barnet and we are exploring opportunities for improving these as part of our regeneration schemes and through long term approaches to improving strategic transport infrastructure."

'Quick win' solutions that are not currently widely used in Mill Hill but can be implemented relatively easily and can bring noticeable results in short-run include promoting car sharing schemes and car/e-car clubs.

### 7.2. Car sharing, car clubs and driverless cars

Car clubs and car sharing are becoming increasingly popular. They are easy to implement and can achieve substantial reduction in car use rates – with some estimates suggesting a 27-56%<sup>1</sup> reduction within a short period. The advantage of Mill Hill is that there are several common starting and destination points that can ease coordination between car sharing participants, such as schools or railway stations. Moreover, according to the Mill Hill residents' survey, 9% of respondents expressed that they would use car-sharing services. This percentage

<sup>1</sup> Urban Mobility In The Smart City Age. Report by Arup, Schneider Electric, The Climate Group. [http://publications.arup.com/Publications/U/Urban\\_mobility\\_in\\_the\\_smart\\_city\\_age.aspx](http://publications.arup.com/Publications/U/Urban_mobility_in_the_smart_city_age.aspx)

is likely to increase further when the infrastructure is in place and the service is functioning as people learn about it and share the experiences with each other.

While car sharing at schools should be initiated by the school itself, all other shared trips can be done via mobile applications. This can be supported by a partnership between local authorities and the app developer/car club or a start-up as seen in one of our best practices examples below.

The organisation of the car sharing practice at schools is relatively straightforward. A mapping exercise or a GIS map will illustrate the current travel situation and who could realistically be involved with car sharing. Another way is to simply create a display board where parents can post their details (like location, number of children, number of seats in a car) and find a match.

Potential benefits of car sharing schemes include reduced congestion, reduced air pollution and better social interaction between participants.

Car clubs work as follows: a registered user books a car online via telephone or the Internet for as little as half an hour and accesses the car at designated parking bays using the member's smart card. A pay-as-you-go system gives the user full flexibility and the car can be hired with

only a few minutes notice. The user doesn't pay any fuel or maintenance costs as they are included in rent price and annual or monthly subscription.

Supporting electric car clubs can create additional opportunities such as attracting governmental financial support and other funding opportunities.

The challenges of such schemes include provision of free parking spaces for car clubs and free or discounted parking spaces for car sharing users that should be regulated and coordinated with Barnet Council and private parking operators.

It is important to raise residents' awareness about the car sharing schemes and their benefits, e.g. by distributing brochures at railway and underground stations. A pilot project can be held to assess the demand for such services and ensure their efficiency.

As technology develops and driverless vehicle technology steps in, Mill Hill can be a pioneering neighbourhood in London to introduce car sharing schemes with driverless cars. The prototype driverless cars are already being tested in several British cities and the UK government aims at reviewing and amending current regulations to accommodate the new technology by 2017<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.theguardian.com/technology/2015/feb/11/driverless-cars-roll-out-trials-uk-roads>



Figure 30: A prototype of the driverless vehicles to be tested in Milton Keynes in 2015.  
Source: The Pathway to Driverless Cars. Summary report and action plan. Department for Transport, February 2015. [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/401562/pathway-driverless-cars-summary.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/401562/pathway-driverless-cars-summary.pdf)

Benefits of driverless cars include increasing people's free time, positively contributing to road safety and to decreasing emissions and easing congestion. Driverless cars can also provide vehicle access to almost everyone as no driving skill would be required and people would be able to manage a car via smartphone technology. The fully driverless cars are not expected to be widely used before 2020<sup>1</sup> as there are still technological obstacles such as poor performance of the prototypes in snowy and foggy environments<sup>2</sup> as well as physiological issues. For

1 The Pathway to Driverless Cars. Summary report and action plan. Department for Transport, February 2015. [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/401562/pathway-driverless-cars-summary.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/401562/pathway-driverless-cars-summary.pdf)

2 <http://www.theguardian.com/technology/2015/feb/11/>

example, recent research by Virgin has shown that 43% of British respondents "wouldn't feel comfortable with the presence of driverless cars on the roads."<sup>3</sup> However, these challenges are likely to be resolved in the future. Meanwhile, the anticipation new technologies can be made today through the creation of free or discounted car parking spaces reserved for car sharing services that can eventually be used by driverless cars.

### 7.3. Good Practice

The effectiveness of car sharing initiatives is demonstrated by the success of similar schemes internationally. The popularity of peer-to-peer lift sharing schemes based on social media platforms, e.g. Zimride in the USA or BlaBlaCar in Europe shows the confidence that people have in them. Studies show that in the United States each car-sharing vehicle replaces 9-13 privately-owned vehicles.<sup>4</sup>

In 2012 Croydon Borough Council partnered with car sharing service provider Zipcar to provide car club services to council employees. The partnership was formed after the successful

[driverless-cars-roll-out-trials-uk-roads](http://www.bbc.com/news/technology-31364441)

3 <http://www.bbc.com/news/technology-31364441>

4 Urban Mobility In The Smart City Age. Report by Arup, Schneider Electric, The Climate Group. [http://publications.arup.com/Publications/U/Urban\\_mobility\\_in\\_the\\_smart\\_city\\_age.aspx](http://publications.arup.com/Publications/U/Urban_mobility_in_the_smart_city_age.aspx)



Figure 31: Zipcar vehicle in London  
Source: <http://www.nextgreencar.com/news/6285/Zipcar-helps-Croydon-Council-cut-car-use>

implementation of a pilot scheme that is claimed to save over £500,000 annually and cut car use by half<sup>1</sup>. Zipcar is also partnering with Kent County Council, Surrey County Council, London Borough (LB) Islington, LB Sutton, Royal Borough Kingston, LB Richmond, City of Westminster, Maidstone Borough Council, LB Redbridge, Royal Borough Kensington and Chelsea.

Zimride, another ride sharing service network operator, partners with over 100 universities in the United States and has helped its users save over £50 million in vehicle operating costs such as fossil energy, insurance and maintenance. Similarly, Aventones, a successful Mexican start-up that was recently acquired by BlaBlaCar, partners with more than 70 organisations and universities in Mexico and Latin America.

## 7.4. Feasibility

Car sharing initiatives are in line with the Mayor's Transport Strategy that aims at improving air quality (promoting and

<sup>1</sup> [http://www.yourlocalguardian.co.uk/news/10573698.Croydon\\_Council\\_launch\\_employee\\_car\\_club\\_in\\_partnership\\_with\\_Zipcar](http://www.yourlocalguardian.co.uk/news/10573698.Croydon_Council_launch_employee_car_club_in_partnership_with_Zipcar)

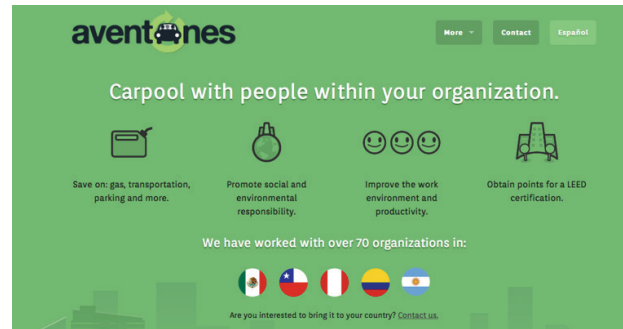


Figure 32: The interface of Aventones carpool service  
Source: <http://www.aventones.com/en>

encouraging new, cleaner technologies such as electric vehicles), improving noise impacts (providing speed control alternatives to road humps, promoting smoother driving and the use of quieter vehicles) and improving road safety.

According to the National Planning Policy Framework, “encouragement should be given to solutions which support reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and reduce congestion. In preparing Local Plans, local planning authorities should therefore support a pattern of development which, where reasonable to do so, facilitates the use of sustainable modes of transport,” (p. 9).

Barnet's Local Plan (Development Management Policies) highlights the importance of the travel plans created by businesses and educational institutions in encouraging more effective use of the transport system. It also states, “in appropriate circumstances consideration should be given to providing funds for subsidising oyster cards or cycle purchase or membership of a car club,” (p. 66).

The SWOT analysis sees promoting car clubs as an opportunity for the Mill Hill area. It would be beneficial to collaborate with Barnet Council or neighbouring boroughs in order to provide a

wider and more efficient car sharing scheme. If an electric car club develops, additional opportunities to attract funding from TfL or London city authorities may arise. Meanwhile, it is important to raise people's awareness about these initiatives by providing sufficient and comprehensive information via websites, brochures and maps with parking spaces for car clubs and events. For instance, there is already a Barnet and Harrow Cleaner Air initiative that has two E-Car Club Renault Zoe electric cars at Barnet House but there is not enough information about their

usage. Moreover, infrastructure for electric cars that only include two electric vehicle charging bays in one location would not encourage intensive use of this technology. It is crucial to ensure that sufficient infrastructure is in place. A pilot project can be a good way to evaluate the opportunity, assess the demand and analyse major challenges and problems that can be avoided in future.

## Measure 8: Encouraging Walking

Walking should be promoted not only for its environmental benefits but also for the extended social benefits such as community-building, knowledge-acquisition, identity-making and creating a sense of belonging. Ultimately, people physically and psychologically aware of their local natural and built environment will have more informed judgments towards the future development of the area. We believe it is therefore essential to empower the community prior to the drafting of the Neighbourhood Plan and wish to promote walking as the preferred transport mode. Mill Hill has incredibly beautiful open spaces and viewpoints, in addition to rich and diverse architectural styles. Therefore, walking is the best way to appreciate Mill Hill intrinsic qualities and to make it a lively rather than dormitory town.

*"As we walk, we are in the world, finding ourselves in a particular space and turning that space by walking within it into a place, a dwelling or territory, a local habitation with a name."* (James Hillman) <sup>1</sup>

Ordinary walking has almost become obsolete in the contemporary world despite being the primary way to connect with our built environment. Walking can be practiced every day to go to school, work, shopping, local clubs, etc.

Walking can also be practiced "for itself," that is the purpose of the civic walks whereby through collectively walking through the local area, people interact with each other and the landscape, build knowledge and gain a certain awareness of the surrounding world.

<sup>1</sup> Irving, TX (1980). *The City as Dwelling: Walking, Sitting, Shaping*: The Center for Civic Leadership, University of Dallas.



## 8.1. Recommendation

### Walking programmes:

Initiative	Actions
<b>Generalize and enhance existing Walk to School programmes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>liaise with local school teachers</li> <li>establish a map of children's homes around the area, design the walking routes together with parents and establish a rotating leadership for each child group</li> <li>for kids who live further away, encourage car-pooling or busing</li> <li>encourage local schools to prioritise walking in their Travel Plans in order to make Walk to School programmes translate into long-term practices</li> </ul>
<b>Walk to Work and Walk for Fun</b>  <i>(e.g. Walk to local sports clubs and other facilities on weekends)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>distribute easy-reading maps of walking routes with indications of approximate travel time/put more signage in the streets</li> <li>provide incentives through reduced commuting fares and local tax</li> <li>install lockers at rail stations</li> <li>encourage the Council to create protected footpaths going from Mill Hill Broadway (30 min) and from Mill Hill East to the Saracens Stadium on the eastern side of Hendon Golf Club (less than 30 min)</li> </ul>
<b>Civic Walks</b>  <i>bi-monthly walks through the local area urban fabric as well as green spaces, open to everyone, free of charge and no booking required</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>make use of existing walking groups such as Barnet Walks to set up a group of locals willing to take turns in leading bi-monthly walks</li> <li>advertise the walks through local shops, at the railway stations, through local schools, parents associations and all other existing associations of Mill Hill</li> <li>walk's planning : walks are not guided but planned tours, there are trips engaging walkers to be critical and reflective with the surrounding landscape</li> </ul>

We believe that the implementation of the following programmes and measures can bring many benefits to Mill Hill, including reducing school run congestion and parking issues, improving health (including obesity and diabetes), making a contribution to reducing CO2 emissions, increasing social interactions, raising child awareness of road safety, and increasing spending on the High Street.

Beyond walking programmes, we suggest the following orientations for community involvement and for the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan:

- have a community website where walks and other community events can be publicized;
- reassert the need for the provision of open spaces in future developments;
- enhance the legibility and attractiveness of footpaths through signage, indications of travel times, maintenance, lighting, etc.;
- support the creation of a regional park in North-West London that would offer recreational, ecological, landscape, cultural and green infrastructure;
- support the construction of new dedicated foot and cycle paths.

## 8.2. Good Practice

### St Godric's RC Primary School in Durham

St. Godric's school has engaged in Living Streets' Walk once a Week scheme (WoW) since November 2012. The school has been working with pupils, parents and the local community to reduce congestion around the school gates and promote a healthier lifestyle for students.

Student walks are logged on the Travel Tracker, an interactive whiteboard tool supporting the WoW scheme. In an eight-week period between 'hands-up surveys', the whole school saw a massive increase in its walk to school rate from 34% to 62%. One year later, the walk to school rate increased further to 70% and enthusiasm amongst pupils and parents for the WoW scheme is high. The majority of parents and grandparents at the school said they would consider using alternatives to driving to school such as Park & Stride facilities from a nearby location in an attempt to incorporate walking as part of the school journey.

St. Godric's head teacher Catherine Craig says:

*"The WoW scheme is easy-to-run and manageable. It only asks families to walk once a week, every week in a month. The Travel Tracker is fun and interactive, and the children*



Figure 33: Source: <http://www.livingstreets.org.uk/walk-with-us/success-stories/walking-comes-on-in-leaps-and-bounds-at-durham-primary-school#sthash.Vdo23mK6.dpuf>

*like using it to record their daily journeys.*

*The badges are an effective mechanism to drip feed the messages around walking to school all through the school year. There is huge excitement when the badges are handed out at the end of each month, together with class of the month trophy.”*

*A parent said, “Walking to school is a good start to the day. It’s sociable and you get to cement relationships. Parents and grandparents can be busy so the walk to school allows us to do this and spend more time with each*

*other.”*

See more at: <http://www.livingstreets.org.uk/walk-with-us/success-stories/walking-comes-on-in-leaps-and-bounds-at-durham-primary-school#sthash.Vdo23mK6.dpuf>

### **An inspiration for Civic Walks, Jane Jacobs Walks**

The Center for the Living City, an American association, promotes the practice of walking through series of free neighbourhood walking, biking tours that help put people in touch with

their environment and with the people who live in their community.

Their website features a wide array of tips, tools, and resources on how to host a walk and engage your community.

In May 2014, Fred Sanders of YourpaceBV hosted his second Jane Jacobs Walk in Amstelveen, discussing community meeting places.

*“In the past the municipality arranged community places like the centre we started at for this Jane Jacobs Walk. Now, because of lack of money, new opportunities are looked for. It’s surprising how many places there are and how many meetings there are organized, just by the organization of civilians active in this neighbourhood. [...] All these places could be better organized meeting places, cheaper than physical community centres paid by government, more in between and from people. **This Jane Jacobs Walk delivered the people and professionals a bouquet of ideas to work with in the coming months.**”*

See more at: <http://www.janejacobswalk.org>

### 8.3. Feasibility

The 2011 London Plan puts a new focus on quality of life and is aimed at:

*“ensuring Londoners in all parts of the city have adequate efficient transport networks and services, and the support for cycling and walking, to enable them to access job, social and other life opportunities, while minimising*

*any adverse impacts recognising, and actively realising, the whole range of benefits which networks of green and open spaces and waterways bring.”* (p.28)

Moreover, there is a specific emphasis on outer London: *“The Mayor will, and boroughs and other stakeholders should, enhance the quality of life in outer London for present and future residents as one of its key contributions to London as a whole.”* (p.48)

In practical terms, these objectives imply that:

- People should be able to live and work in a **safe, healthy, supportive and inclusive neighbourhood** with which they are proud to identify (London Plan p.211)
- The **“loss of local protected open spaces must be resisted** unless equivalent or better quality provision is made within the local catchment area. Replacement of one type of open space with another is unacceptable unless an up to date needs assessment shows that this would be appropriate.” (London Plan p.233)
- *“The network of parks, open space, wildlife sites and the Green Belt is one of North London’s strengths, making an important contribution to quality of life. **These spaces are to be protected and the quality and range of facilities are to be enhanced.**”* (London Strategic Parks Project p. 164)

## Measure 9: Encouraging Cycling in Mill Hill

The perception of low road safety and a lack of designated cycle lanes discourage potential cyclists in Mill Hill. Additionally, some parts of Mill Hill are particularly hilly which contributes to the idea that the whole area is not favourable for cycling and would require a demanding physical effort. As a result, cycling is not considered by residents as an attractive method of transport in the neighbourhood.

### 9.1. Potential benefits

However, some measures supporting the development of cycling would benefit the local community. First, for each individual shifting from the use of their car to cycling to their destination, it is less congestion on the main roads and a less noisy and polluted environment. Additionally, cycling is a healthier mode of transport and is quicker than the bus or driving for many short trips.

Moreover, promoting cycling as well as walking means promoting a more equally shared urban space that benefits cyclists as well as pedestrians and supports a renewed appropriation of public spaces. It also makes many short trips faster than they would be travelling by bus or car as a bus is constrained by its itinerary and a car by parking facilities. The National Cycling Charity notes that cycling and walking encourages people to shop locally rather than

in shopping areas out of the town<sup>1</sup>. Finally, alternative transport methods can revitalise the city centre as people taking their car on a high street are more focused on their travel than cyclists and pedestrians who are more likely to spontaneously stop for shopping.

The potential community-wide benefits of cycle-friendly improvements were cited as reasons why Mayor Boris Johnson prioritised cycling during his term<sup>2</sup>. Since his election in 2008, Johnson has made it his objective to make London the European capital of cycling. We believe that the Mill Hill community should encourage cycling in order to enjoy the community's public spaces, improve residents' overall quality of life and increase attractiveness of the neighbourhood. Furthermore, the forecasted population growth of Mill Hill makes any improvements towards a more cycle-friendly environment crucial in order to ensure sustainable mobility patterns for the future as well as the preservation of its identity. Currently, Mill Hill is partly involved in this dynamic within Mill Hill East. In order to reach the goal of improving transport connectivity, the Mill Hill East Area Action Plan includes the delivery of new

<sup>1</sup> The National Cycling Campaign, *Space for Cycling: A guide for local decision makers*, 8p.

<sup>2</sup> GLA (2013) *Mayor's Vision for Cycling in London: An Olympic Legacy for all Londoners*, 33p.



pedestrian and cycle routes through the entire renewed area<sup>1</sup>. The elaboration of a neighbourhood plan should be an opportunity for Mill Hill to involve the whole area in this dynamic.

## 9.2. Recommendations

Given the current low use of bicycles in Mill Hill, it doesn't seem reasonable to propose a five year strategy that aims at radical changes of mobility patterns in Mill Hill as this type of shift is only reachable after several decades of a coherent transport policy and would involve high costs that are currently not available. However, the benefits of cycling should not be ignored and we advise the promotion of cycling for the future of Mill Hill by incentivising individual shifts to cycling for short trips currently made by car. This plan is in line with the objectives outlined in the transport strategy of the Barnet Council.<sup>2</sup>

- The first recommendation is to act in order to raise awareness among the population on the potential gains of cycling. First, we propose the elaboration of an “active mobility” map of neighbourhoods compiling all the cycle-friendly

<sup>1</sup> London Borough of Barnet (2010) Local Implementation Plan, 75p.

<sup>2</sup> Objective 4.c. in London Borough of Barnet (2010) Local Implementation Plan, 75p.



Figure 34: Cycle park at Mill Hill Broadway station. Own photo.

itineraries in Mill Hill as well as showing several specific examples of trips where the time-gain of using a bicycle is substantial. As an example, travel from Mill Hill Broadway station to the Copthall Sports Centre takes 18 minutes by bus and 12 minutes by bike avoiding the busiest roads<sup>3</sup>. This map should be widely distributed among local residents.

- Additionally, we propose the installation of specific signals at the two stations of the neighbourhood similar to the “Legible London” maps widely installed in central London that have been developed by TfL. These maps outline areas pedestrians can reach within a 5 to 15 minutes walk. These maps should also include information for cyclists and would show that

<sup>3</sup> Estimation via TfL website [tfl.gov.uk](http://tfl.gov.uk)

many residential areas are accessible within 15 minutes by bike.

- Electric bikes are a potential solution for people who are discouraged from cycling due to Mill Hill's challenging landscape or physical effort required to cycle. This type of bike should be promoted on the same document than the “active mobility” map of the neighbourhood and possibly at the occasion of a community event (see measure 14).
- Finally, we also propose the expansion of pre-existing cycle parking areas at Mill Hill Broadway and Mill Hill East stations as these spaces are already widely used and well received by cyclists.

The cycle park at Mill Hill Broadway station is well-located, monitored by CCTV and protects cycles from the outdoors. Moreover, there is enough space for an increase of its capacity. Additionally, the visibility of this cycle park from outside the station could be improved and we advise to better advertise that the space is secure and CCTV monitored. At Mill Hill East Station the cycle park has a smaller capacity and is not very accessible because of some bins located in front of it. These two points should be improved. We also propose a cycle park in Bunns Lane car park or at the ground floor of the potential future multi-storey car



Figure 35: cycle parking at Mill Hill East station. Own photo.

park at the same location. Finally, we propose the provision of two or three small cycle park spaces on the High Street – each equivalent to the space occupied by one car – in order to facilitate cyclists to stop and shop on the street.

We would like to highlight that cycling makes an efficient use of space as it doesn't require expensive and large parking facilities (as shown by a public campaign in Lambeth, the space occupied by one car corresponds to 10 bikes). Moreover, we think that these improvements shouldn't be considered for Mill Hill in isolation from the rest of the borough. Mill Hill doesn't benefit from the most cycle-friendly geographic environment, contrary to Edgware where the

potential for cycling is higher<sup>1</sup>. Then, trips from The Hale to Mill Hill High Street can be made easier by bike if facilities for cycles are present on the High Street and at the station. New cycle parking facilities could improve the attractiveness of the High Street.

We insist on the need to make cycle parks more visible in order to increase awareness regarding the cycle-friendly measures introduced and to encourage the idea that cycling is a realistic transport option for residents.

### 9.3. Feasibility

The high use of cycling by suburban residents in Denmark, Sweden and the Netherlands demonstrates that cycling can be easily adopted outside of large cities and towns. Therefore it is realistic to think that appropriate measures for the population can have some positive effects, especially because Mill Hill is in the end a neighbourhood with numerous residential areas with quiet roads that are suitable for cycling safely on short trips.

Our recommendations do not require huge investments and they promote short-term improvements that allow for low-risk and cost efficient future adjustments. It corresponds to

a first step towards the emergence of public support for cycling. Moreover, these actions would be supported by TfL.

Public support for road improvements is likely to be increased if the community is conscious of the benefits of more cycle and pedestrian friendly roads.

For the long term, we advise that the Mill Hill community promotes cycling to the Barnet Council especially in order to obtain financing for town centre improvements. It could also be beneficial for Mill Hill to promote cycling for orbital links for which buses are the only option for trips between outer London boroughs. Any improvements to these orbital links would then require important financial efforts for building an appropriate infrastructure.

In conclusion, we recommend that the Mill Hill community makes a conscious choice to promote cycling with reasonable concrete measures to enter the dynamic and create support for future infrastructure improvements.

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<sup>1</sup> As calculated in Transport for London (2010) Cycling Revolution London, pp. 86.

## Measure 10: Mill Hill East Station



Figure 36: Mill Hill East Station.

Source: <http://www.saracens.com/coming-to-allianz-park-use-mill-hill-east>

Mill Hill East Station is the only underground station in Mill Hill. It is the terminus and also the only station in the single-track High Barnet branch of the Northern Line from Finchley Central Station. According to ONS (2011) 1,602 people travel to work by underground, metro,

light rail or tram in Mill Hill ward (roughly 12.26% of the total population), which is lower than London Average at 14.75%, and this difference is even larger if just about using underground.

One of the objectives of the Mill Hill East Area Action Plan (AAP) is to improve the underground

station and to maximise its capacity. The area around the station is currently characterized by very large developments (i.e. Millbrook Park) that are likely to increase demand at the station.

### 10.1. Issues that need to be tackled

- There is no “step-free” access at Mill Hill East station, which is vital for disabled and older users, as well as passengers with luggage and families with children and buggies.
- The need to change at Finchley central makes any trip to central London longer. Furthermore the frequency on the MH East – Finchley Central is low during the day. All in all, the interchange can increase the overall journey by around 20 minutes.

### 10.2. Recommendations

- Lobby TfL to build step-free access to the platform;
- Push for higher frequency between Mill Hill East and Finchley Central and more direct trains to and from Central London outside of peak hours as previously operated;
- Increase the amount of secured cycle parking at the station;
- Encourage the provision of small scale and

quick commercial offers in front of the station or on the platform. This could include small boutiques or coffee shops.

### 10.3. Feasibility

The main source of funding to improve the station is TfL. The Neighbourhood Forum or the Residents Association should thus seek to convince TfL that the station improvements mentioned above are necessary. The higher passenger numbers expected from new residential developments will help legitimate claims for better infrastructure in the coming years.



## Part 3: Realizing Mill Hill's Assets

### Measure 11: Stimulate Community Participation

#### 11.1. Participation should be widened

Presently in Mill Hill, a very active part of the community is interested in participating in the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan in order to give the local population more influence in the future development of the area based on the UK Localism Act of 2011. They are represented in the Forum Committee and are part of the local businesses and residents. The area is changing, new residential developments such as Millbrook Park are attracting more people to the area and the community will diversify in the future, bringing new consumption demands and interests but also asking for new spaces of participation in order to be part of Mill Hill's future. If these new spaces - venues and opportunities - of participation are to be created, it is essential to involve all parts of the community including previously established residents and also newer residents like young nuclear families and professionals who enjoy life in the suburbs and rent or buy new smaller flats and residential units that have been built throughout the Mill Hill area.

A second issue related to community participation that needs to be addressed is the existing division between the identifiable three Mill Hill sectors or zones: Mill Hill East, Mill Hill

Broadway and Mill Hill Village. There are some physical connectivity problems related to public transport that should be tackled in addition to the need for a more comprehensive approach to integrate the three Mill Hills from a community participation perspective.

#### 11.2. Recommendations

There are several policies and initiatives in the UK that Mill Hill can implement in order to improve and broaden community participation. Some examples that should be taken into account by Mill Hill community are those ideas and initiatives published by the Department of Communities and Local Government (CDLG) on their website, <http://mycommunity.org.uk/>.

This website provides several resources that Mill Hill stakeholders can implement in order to create new participation opportunities and spaces or to improve the existing participation with the objective of "building community" step by step. The following recommendations are based mainly on the most successful examples highlighted by the DCLG and are feasible for implementation in Mill Hill.

The following recommendations that are based in the current policy (2010 – 2015) of localism, particularly the government's guiding document named "You've got the Power." The

suggestions outlined in this document are easy to use in order to improve the active exercise of their main four rights: right to build, right to bid, right to challenge and right to reclaim land. In order to tackle the existing issues in Mill Hill with regards to community participation, these recommendations will be focussed in the exercise of Mill Hill's community "Right to Challenge" where Neighbourhood Planning processes belong.

For example, events to stimulate community participation around a specific topic include training and employment events for the young population.

Actors such as the existing North London Chamber of Commerce or a potential local business association can create an event bringing together the local businesses, colleges and schools in order to ensure that future students can know and improve the skills that they will need when in their professional careers. This idea focuses on the idea that people's own neighbourhood is the ideal first place to start professional life. Networking opportunities and career advice can be established through these events. This approach can be instrumental in revitalising employment in Mill Hill.

- **Justification:** This initiative creates a space that can be interesting for the un-targeted young population of Mill Hill. Recent Many of them

have concerns regarding their future career path or are interested in finding a summer or part time work. The participation of local youth in local business can have a positive impact on the local economic growth and can increase the sense of belonging to the wider community.

### 11.3. Good Practice

- **The community of Haverhill, Suffolk, Apprenticeships Programme.**

In order to reduce unemployment rates in Haverhill, the community set a target of creating 10 new apprenticeship places in town in a short six month time period. The results of this project were very positive and the community identified local economic growth due to the creation of apprenticeships in local businesses. The project also decreased unemployment of local youth and allowed businesses to source local talent. In the long run this scheme also had a positive impact for planning decision making processes because the young population had a more active role in the Neighbourhood Plan formulation that is currently taking place.

**96% of employers that take on an apprentice report benefits to their business.**

**ONE HAVERHILL**

**Are you missing out on £1,500 to take on an apprentice for your business?**

Is your company looking to give back to the local community by helping us keep our young local talent in Haverhill?

We are looking for companies willing to take advantage of the Government's grant of **£1,500** to assist employers\* who commit to offering 16-24 year olds employment through an Apprenticeships programme. Typical Apprenticeship salaries start at **£90** per week depending on age and experience.

Grants are available until the end of 2014 and you can take on up to ten apprentices and receive **£1,500** per apprentice. The grant is in addition to the training costs of the Apprenticeship which are met in full for young people aged 16 to 18 and 50% for those aged 19 to 24.

\*To be eligible for the grant employer must not have had someone on an Apprenticeship in the last 12 months and employ less than 1,000 employees.

Supported by:  
Suffolk County Council  
National Apprenticeship Service  
Haverhill Job Centre

**Suffolk County Council**

**Apprenticeships**

**jobcentreplus**

**Keep Young Talent in Haverhill Campaign**

As part of ONE Haverhill's work on the Haverhill Community Budget a new Youth Skills Manager was appointed in 2012 to work with colleges and businesses in the town to set up more Apprenticeships and work experience places for our young people. The goal is to encourage local businesses to take on local home-grown talent and enable more young people to stay in the town by offering Apprenticeships. Apprenticeships help young people learn a trade on the job while being paid.

Find out more about ONE Haverhill's Keep Young Talent in Haverhill Campaign at [www.onehaverhill.co.uk/apprenticeships](http://www.onehaverhill.co.uk/apprenticeships)

**When Danielle Eady from Hunden left college 18 months ago she had no idea what she wanted to do for a living but an Apprenticeship at an independent estate agent in Haverhill has not only given her a career and training but she has just been promoted.**

Danielle, 19, left Samuel Ward Academy and went to Wrexham College for two years to do Sport. After leaving college she registered with the Job Centre but did not know which path she wanted to pursue. The Job Centre told her about an apprenticeship at Morris Amstage estate agent in Haverhill, run by husband and wife team Chris and Nickie Jarrahedur. Morris Amstage run an Apprenticeship scheme across their branches in Suffolk, Norfolk and Cambridgeshire at offices in Newmarket, Bury St Edmunds, Ipswich, Cambridge, King's Lynn and very soon Bury St Edmunds.

New recruits are taken on based on Trainee Agents and are taught all aspects of the business including lettings, sales, valuation, and negotiations. The apprentices work towards NVQs while they are learning the ropes on the job. Danielle is one of these apprentices at Morris Amstage's Haverhill office with former Castle Manor students Kathryn Suffolk, 19, and Luke Jenkins, 18.

Chris said, "Unlike other agents, we took the approach that we wanted our apprentices to learn the who a business not just one aspect. Very often you see companies recruiting for trainee negotiators or trainee sales agents. We think it is valuable to young people to see for our business for them to be taught and all aspects of the business."

The scheme has been so successful at Morris Amstage that three former trainees who started at the Newmarket branch were offered the opportunity to become Directors and Partners and went on to set up the now successful Cambridge office.

For Danielle, the Apprenticeship has meant that she has learnt the property business from the bottom up and learned a valuable profession while being paid and remaining in her hometown. She has gained her NVQ 3 and NVQ 2 and just been promoted to Assistant Lettings Manager.

She said "I didn't have a clue where to start when I left college and joining Morris Amstage has given me a career and I haven't had to leave home. I think there are lots of benefits to businesses too as we can bring enthusiasm and fun to the company. There's an eagerness to learn especially when you are starting from the beginning as I was."

For Morris Amstage, they reap the benefits of new young blood in the town, teaching them how they like to work as agents has enabled them to grow their business with knowledgeable and experienced employees.

Chris added, "Having young people here reinvigorates the business and we learn as much from them as they do from us. For example, we have learned a lot about it from Luke from what he was taught at Castle Manor. He has changed the way we work with spreadsheets and as a business benefit from what they know and have learnt at school or college, we can then incorporate these new initiatives in the day to day running of our business."

There's also an incentive for young people to stay and progress within the company. They know our business inside out and one of the reports we give ourselves on is that our staff are knowledgeable and professional. We know they are because of the comments we receive from our clients which shows that as a team we have worked well together from the beginning."

**ONE HAVERHILL**

Supported by:  
Suffolk County Council  
National Apprenticeship Service  
Haverhill Job Centre

**Suffolk County Council**

**Apprenticeships**

**jobcentreplus**

Figure 37: One Haverhill promotional flyers.  
Source: <http://www.onehaverhill.co.uk>

For more information on the program: <http://www.onehaverhill.co.uk/apprenticeships/awards.php>.

## 11.4. Feasibility

The existence of a local economy in Mill Hill, mainly located on the High Street is a first resource that can be part of this program. Ideally the creation of a Local Business Association (see Measure 5) would make this initiative more feasible because it can create a unique voice between shopkeepers and business owners in order to take part in the program.

Even if unemployment is not an issue in Mill Hill a positive impact of creating places for local young population to gain work experience and at the same time improve the local economy can be expected, especially for High Street businesses. Other potential actors are the local chamber of commerce or other members of the community that own their own business or companies that are interested in open places for apprentices.

## Measure 12: Create a Community Arts Centre

The projected Community Hub at 80 Daws Lane, if realised, could host a community arts centre.

### 12.1. Justification

80 Daws lane, location of the projected New Community Hub, has the potential of becoming the venue for integrating communities from the three Mill Hills (Broadway, Village and East) and also the parts of the community that are not currently active in the neighbourhood development and planning decisions. The different activities that are going to be offered in the New Community Hub must be compatible with the interests of different demographic groups. One initiative that might engage different age groups and that can easily coexist with other initiatives within the Community Hub is the creation of a community arts centre with painting, drawing, street art, dance, theatre, music. The possibilities of events and initiatives that could take place in the Community Arts Centre are numerous and may include music festivals, art contests, and dancing and theatre festivals.

### 12.2. Good Practice

- **Stag Community Art Centre**

The case of the Stag Community Art Centre owned by the Sevenoaks Town Council is an interesting example of a successful arts centre. It includes different facilities, some directly related to art, some not, but all attractive for young members of the community. For example the centre includes a gym, a youth café, the Youth Council, a two-screen cinema (including one 4D screen), a wedding venue, and space for youth theatre groups and different volunteer groups. The centre has also hosted business shows and other career advice events for students and young professionals. The success of this centre has grown to the point that it is now a touristic destination for Sevenoaks visitors. The location of this centre is different than the Mill Hill case because it is located on the Sevenoaks High Street but this difference in location doesn't affect the positive impact of the arts centre on the nearby businesses. As 80 Daws Lane is also close to Mill Hill's High Street, the "NW7 Hub" might produce similar benefits, especially if an arts centre attracts a higher number of users to the area.





Figure 38: Stag Community Centre.  
Source: Tripadvisor

### 12.3. Feasibility

The feasibility of creating a community arts centre is supported by both local actors with experience on artistic activities (particularly entrepreneurs and professional artists and musicians) and the ideal venue located at 80 Daws Lane. The actors we have identified as potential partners in this initiative are Mill Hill Music Complex, the Committee of Mill Hill Music Festival, and the Council. Local businesses might also be interested in sponsoring the initiative as some restaurants have already hosted events during Mill Hill Music Festival.

As previously mentioned the venue for these activities can be the new Community Centre but

they could also be extended to the very competitive Mill Hill Music Complex facilities at times when their occupancy rates are lower. Currently, their facilities are occupied around 75% of the available time. This complex has been located in Mill Hill since 1979 and has 17 recording and rehearsal studios in addition to photography, video and dance facilities. These venues could potentially be used for further artistic activities in partnership between the Neighbourhood Forum or Residents Association, the Music Complex, and young residents.

The Music Complex has received many well known UK artists and musicians and its facilities and services can also be enjoyed by community groups at discounted rates.



Figure 39: Source: [www.millhillmusiccomplex.co.uk](http://www.millhillmusiccomplex.co.uk)



## Measure 13: Involve the Community in the Beautification of Mill Hill

Public space is a common good and a right that all members of Mill Hill community can enjoy. Additionally, it is also an opportunity for unifying and integrating the diverse Mill Hill community the beautification and improvement of the public spaces in and around Mill Hill Broadway Station. These visual improvements could be as simple as inviting local schools or residents to paint the exterior walls (see Measure 2).

### 13.1. Potential for improvement

There are some public spaces in Mill Hill that have potential for improvement and depending on the involvement of key actors could feasibly provide an opportunity for community involvement in the process. Some of these spaces are:

- **Mill Hill Broadway Station Train Bridge**

The walls and the area underneath the M1 and the train bridge at Mill Hill Broadway Station are not pleasant areas for pedestrians and are also very unattractive due to the the black walls and the brick surface that combine to create an atmosphere of insecurity and lack of maintenance. The improvement of this area would first require permission from the Network Rail to alter this space and also the participation of the wider community. Similar initiatives have successfully taken place throughout London.



Figure 40: wall under the train bridge next to Broadway Station. Own photo.



Figure 41: Train bridge next to Mill Hill Broadway Station. Own photo.

- **Mill Hill Broadway Station Undercroft**

Figure 42: own photo

### 13.2. Good Practice

- **Eastern Curve Garden, Dalston, Hackney, London**

There are numerous examples of murals made or designed by the community to improve public spaces in different areas of London. These improvements can become pieces of art



Figure 43: Mural in Leeds

Source: <http://www.theguardian.com/cities/2014/dec/17/the-best-neighbourhood-murals-around-the-world-readers-pictures>

that not just improve the area but also become sources of character and modernization. The Dalston mural is representative of the area's ethnic background. While Dalston's character differs from that of Mill Hill, it is a good example of the improvement of public space through murals that include the local community. The following photos of murals in Leeds beautifully express the history of the city.



Figure 44: Mural in Dalston. Own photo.

### 13.3. Feasibility

The renovation or improvement of public spaces might include several actors because structures might have several different owners as in the case of the Broadway Station bridge. Additionally, the visual impact on the local area may require the involvement of numerous authorities (such as permissions to modify façade, impossibility to modify conservation buildings).

After consulting with the appropriate authorities, the funds needed for the initiative are fairly small for murals and there are several expert organisations who assist authorities with the beautification of public spaces through community participation. One such organisation is Groundwork London (<http://www.groundwork.org.uk/>). Similar experts could assist Mill Hill with this project.

## Measure 14: Branding Mill Hill as an Outdoor Sports and Leisure Centre

### 14.1. An underestimated potential

As we got to know Mill Hill better, we felt that Mill Hill has an unknown and underexploited potential in terms of sports and outdoor spaces. It seems that sports are practiced casually and at high-level in many places in and around Mill Hill but often within closed circles. This prevents the social dimension of sports to reach the broader community and enhance social link throughout the area. Residents do not always know about breadth and quality of sports in Mill Hill and in the surrounding neighbourhoods (e.g. Colindale). Also, Green Belt land is an

asset that could be used more to brand Mill Hill as a sports and outdoor leisure hub.

Building such an image could yield several benefits for Mill Hill:

- help define a distinctive identity with which the three geographically separated areas Mill Hill Broadway, Mill Hill Village, and Mill Hill East could identify;
- promote the practice of sports for young and older residents;
- positive economic output from large scale sports or outdoor leisure events.

Focus events such as the last instance of the North London Half Marathon, which started and ended at Allianz Park, have a great potential



to contribute to building such an image. They can make residents identify more with their area, which is also correlated with an interest in community engagement. More specifically, involving residents in sports events may make them feel more affected by the Neighbourhood Plan and want to contribute in it.

## 14.2. Recommendations

- **Jogging or cycling races through Mill Hill**

These can be organised by local sports associations or in collaboration with local cycling groups. There is also a high potential for corporate sponsorship. For example, in June 2015 Nike organised a Women's Race in Victoria Park that attracted thousands of participants. Similarly, cycle brands could host stalls at events to showcase their sports products and promote cycling (including electric bikes) as a transport mode.

- **Sports day on Green Belt land**

All local sports associations could be invited to provide information, sell memberships and showcase their sport in a chosen green space. It would be an occasion for new and existing residents to discover the Mill Hill sports offers and would create social link between residents. Free group yoga or fitness classes could be held to increase interest for some lesser-known

activities and associations.

- **School sports practice on green spaces**

Schools can play a role in encouraging children to value green spaces by organising sports classes outside as often as the weather allows.

- **Outdoor music performances or film screenings**

Cultural events also have their place outdoors, either as one-off events or as part of festivals like Mill Hill Music Festival. A community group called "Free Films Festivals" has already set up seven film festivals in areas such as London Fields and is looking for interested neighbourhoods to organize additional events<sup>1</sup>. The Neighbourhood Forum or the Residents Association may want to contact organisers.

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<sup>1</sup> [www.freefilmfestivals.org](http://www.freefilmfestivals.org)







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