

Document 1

Application for Neighbourhood Area designation

Introduction

This application for Neighbourhood Area designation is submitted to the London Borough of Barnet under the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012. In the accompanying **Document 2** there is an application for Neighbourhood Forum designation for the Mill Hill Neighbourhood Forum

Mill Hill Neighbourhood Forum wants to submit for consideration an application for designation of a Neighbourhood Area. The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 state that where a relevant body submits an application for designation of a Neighbourhood Area to the local planning authority it must include:

- 1) a map which identifies the area to which the area application relates;*
- 2) a statement explaining why this area is considered appropriate to be designated as a Neighbourhood Area; and*
- 3) a statement that the organisation or body making the area application is a relevant body for the purposes of section 61G of the 1990 Act.*

This application addresses these requirements as follows:

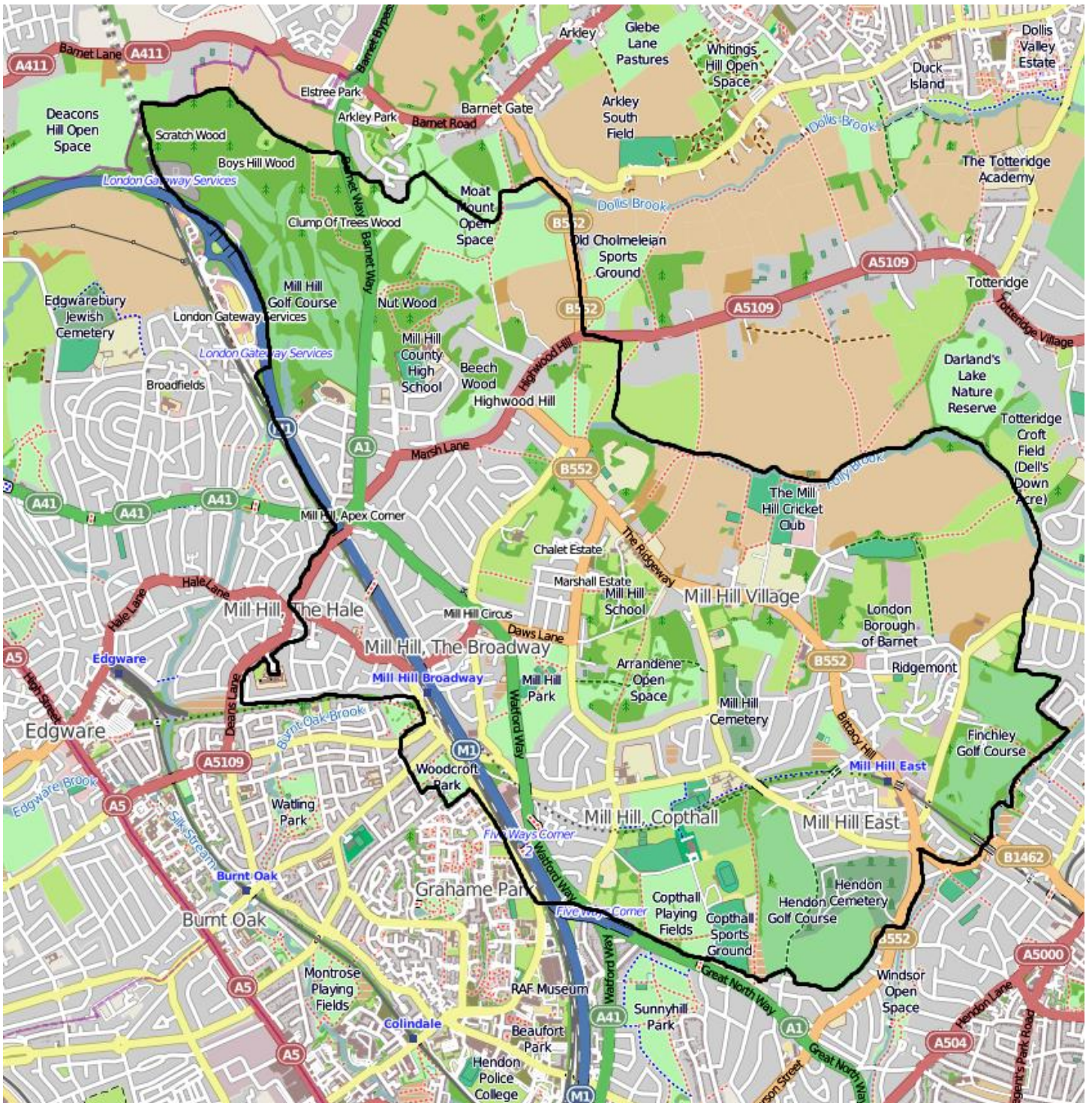
Application

Addressing points 1) and 2) above, The map below shows the proposed Mill Hill Neighbourhood Area as covering the whole of Mill Hill Ward and the NW7 Postal codes within Hale Ward. A statement is included that explains why it is important to designate this area as a Neighbourhood Area.

It is worth noting that we considered a smaller area based simply around Mill Hill Broadway, but this was rejected as it became obvious that the principal users of Mill Hill Broadway, live throughout NW7 and there needs to be an integrated plan for the whole of NW7 to effectively take the area forward. Our initial committee meetings determined that a piecemeal plan for a part thereof, would not be appropriate, and would not be supported by residents who wanted any plan (NDP) to be holistic. The committee (see Neighbourhood Forum application) has therefore been selected from people living across NW7. In our deliberations we found that NW7 actually is present in 8 different wards and for this reason the very fringes of NW7, where it roams into Underhill, Colindale, Burnt Oak, West Finchley, Totteridge and Finchley Church End, have not been included in our Area for Designation. Further the proposed area is able to be described with ease and provides local recognition/understanding.

Hence, the Neighbourhood Area application covers the wards of Mill Hill and the NW7 post codes within Hale ward. It is understood, through consultation, that the residents/businesses within HA post codes in Hale Ward, associate themselves with Edgware rather than Mill Hill. Notably the Hale Association and one of the Hale Councillors confirmed our findings in this regard. A subsequent conversation with another Hale Councillor further agreed this area view. We have distributed 1500 paper copies and many additional electronic copies of the publication attached as Appendix A, and discussed the proposed area designation with many local residents and business owners. We have not received a single negative comment during these discussions regarding our proposition! People have been really supportive, and agree that this activity really needs to take place for the future benefit of Mill Hill overall.

Map of proposed Mill Hill Neighbourhood Forum Area



Many actually see Mill Hill as being divided currently into three areas; namely Mill Hill Broadway, Mill Hill East and Mill Hill Village. Through this initiative we hope to bring these three parts back together where ever possible for community cohesion, and economic development. The development of an integrated plan is critical if we are to achieve this.

The proposed area for the Neighbourhood Area includes Mill Hill Broadway (“the Town Centre”), Hale Lane, Flower Lane, Daws Lane, and Pentavia Retail Park off the Watford Way. The area is characterised by a mix of residential, commercial and retail, and includes the Granard Business Centre and the Mill Hill Industrial Estate / Bunns Lane Works in Bunns Lane. The Midland Main Line railway, the M1 motorway and the A1/A41 trunk route run through the area. The proposed Neighbourhood Area benefits from many open spaces, Green Belt land, and a Conservation Area

Mill Hill Broadway is the main hub of the proposed Neighbourhood Area, with a wide shopping offer and a strong historic identity. This is a suburban district, which developed from the 1890s onwards, and especially in the early part of the 20th century, after the arrival of the Midland Railway station in 1868. The Broadway itself is now an important local retail area with numerous shops and cafes and transport links. Central London can be reached in 20 minutes.

Changing Landscape

The majority of Barnet’s growth is focused to the West of the Borough and includes 2500 new dwellings in the Mill Hill East Area Action Plan. It is not our desire to change or amend the MHEAAP. We do however intend to include the new residents as they occupy the Millbrook Park site, in our consultation exercises, in an attempt to provide where possible access to the amenities they need to help them enjoy their lives within the wider community across Mill Hill and Hale (NW7).

We will see huge developments in Colindale & Cricklewood and a major expansion of Brent Cross shopping centre. Additionally Edgware, Wembley (LB Brent, but close-by) and Chipping Barnet shopping centres are being upgraded extensively. With much happening in neighbouring areas all around Mill Hill, we need through the Neighbourhood Plan to attract investment into our area, without relying on others to do it for us! The arrival of Saracens RFC was considered a mixed blessing initially but they are largely seen as a good new asset in Mill Hill ward and their contribution to the wider community is being realised across NW7. This is an example of how the right investment can benefit all.

The National Institute for Medical Research (a 40 acre site to be vacant in its current purpose by 2016) and Watchtower House are identified in Barnet’s 2006 UDP as Major Developed sites in the Green Belt where exceptional, limited infilling or redevelopment may take place. Through our Neighbourhood Plan we will work to ensure that any such developments are sympathetic to the special character of Mill Hill, and reflect the interests of the local community.

There will be many other development proposals to consider and the Neighbourhood Plan will provide a local planning framework which will guide local development. In developing the Mill Hill Neighbourhood Plan we will work with developers to help them to build new facilities that are distinctive, which will improve and not detract from the character of this leafy North London suburb, and provide appropriate infrastructure to support their developments successful integration into the area.

It is clear that Mill Hill Town Centre is not a specific priority for attention within the London Borough of Barnet’s Local Plan-Core Strategy or the Mayor’s’ London Plan. While this may be understandable in some aspects, it is the objective of this Forum is to supplement these plans with the specific requirements of the residents of Mill Hill and Hale (NW7), and to ensure the area has the ability to compete commercially and flourish as an attractive neighbourhood into the future. We recognise, the need to harmonise with the NPPF, The Mayor’s’ London Plan and Barnet’s Local Plan-Core Strategy and the requirement to clarify the needs of local people in an integrated Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP).

Summary

These existing characteristics and the pressures for change need to be considered across Mill Hill ward and the NW7 parts of Hale ward, in order to create a strategy to manage future growth in a way which enhances the role of the town centre, while maintaining the special character of the area and benefitting local residents and businesses, into the future. Mill Hill is a relatively affluent area and the proposed Neighbourhood Area and Forum, needs to better serve the requirements of the residents

across Mill Hill and Hale (NW7) for retail, leisure, employment, housing, transportation (including parking) health, education, recreation, visual amenity and other elements of community infrastructure and including events for all to enjoy. The Neighbourhood Area needs to attract investment to deliver the necessary developments to meet these objectives. We want this future growth to be supported by appropriate infrastructure which will, in the future, be attractive to all residents, right across the designated area and we hope to make it easy for all to enjoy their multi-cultural community to the full.

Our Neighbourhood Forum will strive to address the issues highlighted above (and in other reports/opinions published recently regarding the future of Suburban Town Centres,) such that in consultation with the residents and businesses of Mill Hill and Hale (NW7) we can together build a better and sustainable place for all to enjoy.

Relevant Body

Addressing point 3 above, this application is submitted on behalf of the proposed Mill Hill Neighbourhood Forum, a relevant body for the purposes of section 61G of the 1990 Town and Country Planning Act. The proposed Mill Hill Neighbourhood Forum is a body established for the express purpose of promoting and improving the social, economic and environmental well-being of the proposed Neighbourhood Area.

Mill Hill Neighbourhood Forum has been formed through discussions with the Mill Hill Preservation Society (MHPS) and from such concepts; interest was raised through other organisations, including the Mill Hill Residents Association (MHRA), and the Hale Association. The Neighbourhood Forum, while being “independent” will work closely with these organisations and other local bodies on matters covering the interests of residents and businesses across Mill Hill and Hale (NW7). The idea of the Mill Hill Neighbourhood Forum has been discussed with members of these organisations in their public meetings and our brochure has been distributed to their members. Consistently the feedback received, has been very positive and all have agreed in the need to produce an integrated and holistic plan for NW7.

The Forum Committee

As a consequence, individuals, who have a passion for developing Mill Hill for the benefit of the community, have come together to form the Forum Committee. Additionally we have the support of Saracens RFC (based in Mill Hill ward) and their Stadium Director is one of the Forum’s committee members.

The Forum Committee currently comprises 26 representatives of local businesses, residents and councillors across the 2 wards in the proposed neighbourhood area. This committee is representative of the Community at large since it includes, young, middle and older age groups, of both genders, from different ethnic backgrounds and faiths, all with differing economic means. A map showing where the Committee Members live is provided in our Forum application (Document 2).

Forum Membership

Further through the membership of the MHPS (900 approximately) and the MHRA (300 members), after eliminating duplication, we already have an additional 1000 members of the proposed Neighbourhood Forum. Membership of the Neighbourhood Forum will be open to all residents and to businesses operating in Mill Hill and Hale (NW7) together with other interested bodies to be determined.

Recent activities

We have produced a “brochure” (as Appendix A attached) in which we explain the concept of a Neighbourhood Forum including the processes we will perform. The brochure outlines the direction of the Neighbourhood Forum and shows the boundaries of the proposed Neighbourhood Area, This is available as a .pdf file for electronic communications. Additionally we have printed 1500 copies of a folding A5 size document (with the same text) that can be handed to Residents, Business Owners and other interested parties within our proposed Neighbourhood Area. There has been a marked reluctance amongst

business owners and public bodies alike to engage with us, to tell us their future plans, while we do not have a legal standing. We have not detected that this reaction is in anyway negative; more that it is a demonstration of healthy scepticism as several alternative approaches to consultation have been tried in the past and the concept of Neighbourhood Planning is unfamiliar/unproven yet. Most have however indicated their willingness to engage, when we are formally designated as a Neighbourhood Forum by the Local Council. Meetings to discuss this activity have also been held with Matthew Offord MP for Hendon Constituency (which includes NW7) and with Andrew Dismore GLA Member for Barnet.

We have built a website at www.millhillforum.org.uk which will set out our progress as we create the Neighbourhood Development Plan. This will include minutes of Forum meetings, scheme appraisals, consultation efforts etc.

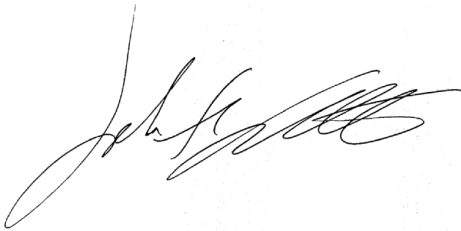
We are also active in a consultation process with major influencers in the area and this will carry on throughout the summer. All have been extremely supportive to date!

Benefit to London Borough of Barnet

Finally we believe the MHNF Committee and members will serve as a very useful independent "Focus Group" available to Council Officers and Developers for consultation on their thinking!

This Neighbourhood Area application is accompanied by an application for Neighbourhood Forum status.

Signed on behalf of **Mill Hill Neighbourhood Forum:**



Name & Position

John H Gillett

Chairman-Designate

Date: **9th June 2014**

APPENDIX A

Brochure

Mill Hill - Welcome to our Neighbourhood



Mill Hill, NW7 in the London Borough of Barnet, is nine miles (14.3 km) north-west of Charing Cross, and is a most desirable place to live and work. Residents benefit from the many green spaces including parks, playing fields, and woods and many examples of architectural splendour; **all of which we cherish!** We have direct access from Mill Hill Broadway mainline station to London, St. Pancras in 15 minutes or from Mill Hill East Northern Line station to Euston in 23 minutes. We have good links to airports at Luton, Stansted, Gatwick, London City and Heathrow and to the road networks through the A1/A41, M1 & M25.

In addition to the numerous green spaces, a wealth of local shops, delis, cafés and restaurants are within easy reach at Mill Hill Broadway. Nearby leisure facilities include three Golf clubs, several Gyms and Sports grounds, including Saracens Rugby Football Club. Mill Hill's schools are renowned for academic excellence.

However, changes are happening all around us and Mill Hill needs to evolve to address the changing needs of our residents and our businesses, going forward. Unless we take action now, **decline is likely** and we need to take charge ourselves, because otherwise we cannot expect the right outcomes to just happen!

The Mill Hill Neighbourhood Forum, has been formed to address these issues.

We will consult with residents and business owners, to address their needs relating to the built and open environment. While principally addressing planning matters, we will consider these within the context of demands for, retail, leisure, employment, housing, transportation (including parking), health care, education, recreation, visual amenity, and community infrastructure, paying attention to reducing our carbon footprint, notably around Mill Hill Broadway Town Centre.

Let us introduce ourselves!

The Forum Committee currently comprises 21 representatives of local businesses, and residents. It is actively supported by one Local Councillor from each of the two wards: Mill Hill & Hale.

We all have a passion for Mill Hill!

The committee is independent and representative of the Community at large, since it includes, young, middle & older age groups, of both genders, from different ethnic backgrounds and faiths.

Membership of the Forum is open to all residents who live, and all businesses that are based, within the designated area.

(Please see Map alongside)

We want to know your issues about planning and what you see as missing in Mill Hill. We will then try to draw consensus from your inputs, in order to build the Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP).



The proposed area for our Neighbourhood Development Plan is shown above within the black line. It includes Mill Hill Ward and the NW7 addresses within Hale Ward. There are currently more than 13,000 dwellings within this area, with an additional 2000 new homes being built at Millbrook Park, Mill Hill East over the next 10 years.

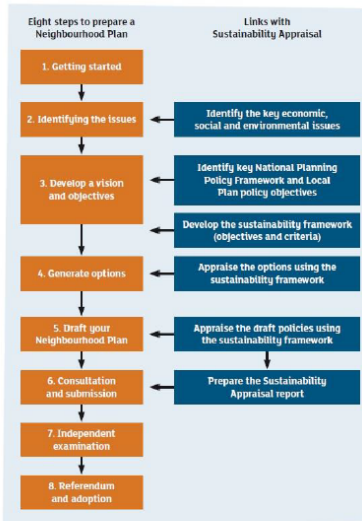
We aim to ensure that new development reflects the distinctive suburban qualities of Mill Hill. We will encourage investment to bring the right developments from which the community will benefit.



Your input is really important and we encourage you to please, send us your thoughts, and support us in this important initiative.

Contact us at:

Chairman@MILLHILLFORUM.org.uk



Of course a lot is happening in Mill Hill, but not apparently when you search on Google. We will look at developing a "portal" to accurately report all Community activities so that you know what you can enjoy and where you can go for goods and services.

We need to embrace emerging technologies, to, for example make it really easy for people to communicate with each other and with all information sources.

We need to take advantage of developments to reduce our carbon footprint, and to minimise noise and air pollution.

So what is a Neighbourhood Forum?

The idea of giving local people more influence over their local environment was established under the Localism Act 2011. Local communities are now able to produce Neighbourhood Plans for their neighbourhood, putting in place a vision and policies for the future development of the area.

A Neighbourhood Plan

is a community-led framework for guiding the future development, regeneration and conservation of an area. A neighbourhood plan is about the use and development of land and may contain a vision, aims, planning policies, proposals for improving the area or providing new facilities, or allocation of key sites for specific kinds of development. It may also deal with a wide range of social, economic and environmental issues (such as housing, employment, heritage and transport).

A Neighbourhood Plan will be part of the statutory development plan for the area, if successful at referendum. This statutory status gives Neighbourhood Plans far more weight than some other local documents, such as parish plans, community plans and village design statements.

A Neighbourhood Plan must comply with European and national legislation and must have appropriate regard to national policy and be in general conformity with Barnet's Local Plan and the London Plan.

Neighbourhood Plans do have real legal force!

Your Neighbourhood Forum: "Not just another talking shop!"

Your Neighbourhood Plan, like hundreds of others across England, will be led by an authorised, independent and open, local community organisation, which is formally constituted as a Neighbourhood Forum. This means your community representatives will write the plan themselves in close co-operation with the Council's planning team. The Neighbourhood Plan will carry more weight as a consideration in future planning decisions, effectively giving the local community more influence and control, over the development of their area.



We want your input please, every step of the way!

- We will be building a Community based, Neighbourhood Plan over the next 18-24 months, for the future development of Mill Hill. The NDP will seek to ensure that local residents and businesses benefit from future development. We know it will be hard work and there will need to be compromises in order to satisfy the majority. Please join in and participate to help shape the future of Mill Hill
- Send us an e-mail if you would like to be updated regularly with our progress and hopefully you will attend our events.
- If you have experience in Urban planning and time to help our Committee volunteers, do please get in touch.

Contact us at: Chairman@MILLHILLFORUM.org.uk

