

# Mill Hill Neighbourhood Forum

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Document 1

## Application for Neighbourhood Area designation

### Introduction

This new 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 submits for consideration a new application for the 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 seek a new designation of this area as a Neighbourhood Area.

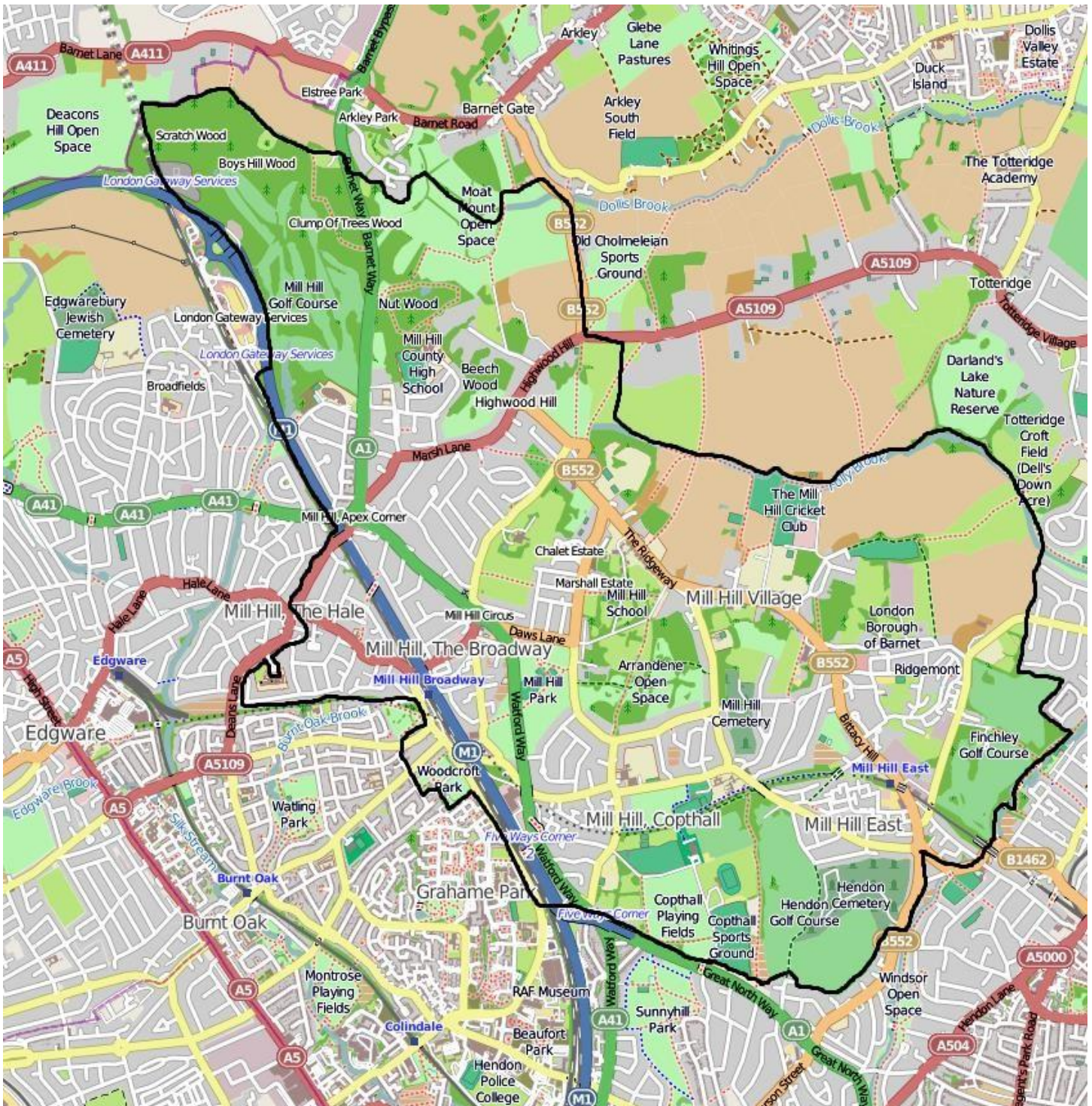
It is worth noting that we considered a smaller area based simply around Mill Hill Broadway, but this was rejected as it became obvious that the principal users of Mill Hill Broadway live throughout Mill Hill, and there needs to be an integrated plan for the whole of NW7 to take the area forward. Many residents want such a plan (NDP) to be holistic. The committee (see Neighbourhood Forum application -Document 2) has been selected from people living across NW7. In our deliberations we found that NW7 actually is present in eight different wards and for this reason, the very fringes of NW7, where it extends 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. The previous Neighbourhood Forum has worked over the previous five years in order to deliver the Neighbourhood Development plan within this designated area, and we see no reason to amend the area, in this new application. There will be further work to incorporate the new London Plan (when published) and the emerging Barnet Local Plan, in order to finalise the draft plan and then to deliver the NDP through examination and referendum until it is 'made'. We expect then to follow-through to deliver critical elements of the plan, such as the redevelopment of Mill Hill Broadway Station.

Hence, this new Neighbourhood Area application covers the wards of Mill Hill and the NW7 post codes within Hale ward, as previously. It is understood, through consultation, that the residents and businesses within the HA post codes in Hale Ward, consider themselves part of Edgware, rather than Mill Hill.



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## Map of proposed Mill Hill Neighbourhood Forum Area



Many residents actually see Mill Hill as being divided currently into four areas; namely, Mill Hill Broadway, Mill Hill East, Mill Hill Village and the NW7 post codes within Hale Ward. Through this initiative we hope to bring these four parts together wherever possible, in order to encourage 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



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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 routes dissect the area. The proposed Neighbourhood Area enjoys the benefit 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 ('District') with numerous shops and cafes and transport links. Central London can be reached within 20 minutes.

## Changing Landscape

The majority of Barnet's growth is focused to the west of the borough and includes 2100 new dwellings in the Mill Hill East Area Action Plan (MHEAAP). We do not wish 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 that they need in order to help them to enjoy their lives within the wider community across Mill Hill and Hale (NW7).

We will see huge developments in Colindale and Cricklewood and a major expansion of the Brent Cross area. Additionally, Edgware, Wembley (LB Brent, but close-by), North Finchley 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 now seen as a positive asset in Mill Hill ward, and their contribution to the wider community is being seen across Barnet. This is an example of how the right investment can benefit all. It is also fully understood now that with incessant pressure to reduce car journeys and ownership, more amenities must be provided locally for local residents.

The National Institute for Medical Research (a 40-acre site), now 'Ridgeway Views' and Watchtower House have previously been seen as major development sites in the Green Belt where exceptional, limited infilling or redevelopment will take place. The previous Mill Hill Neighbourhood Forum worked to ensure that any such developments were sympathetic to the special character of Mill Hill, and reflected the interests of the local community. We will continue to do so.

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 writing the Mill Hill Neighbourhood Plan (NDP). We will work with developers to help them to build new facilities which will improve the character of this leafy North London suburb, and which will provide the appropriate infrastructure to support their full integration into the area.

It is clear that Mill Hill's Town Centre, classified as a 'District' centre, is not a specific priority for attention within the London Borough of Barnet's emerging Draft Local Plan (Reg18) or the Mayor's London Plan. While this may be understandable in some aspects, it is the objective of this Forum to supplement these plans with the specific requirements of the residents of Mill Hill and Hale (NW7), and to ensure that the area has the ability to compete commercially and to flourish as an attractive destination in future years.

We recognise the need to harmonise with the NPPF, The Mayor's London Plan and Barnet's emerging draft Local and the requirement to clarify the needs of local people in an integrated Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP).

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## Summary

These existing characteristics and the pressures for change need to be considered across Mill Hill ward and the NW7 postcodes 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 continuing to bring benefits for local residents and businesses, into the future. Mill Hill is a relatively affluent area and our Neighbourhood Development Plan, needs to 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. We also wish to encourage 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) and Barnet Council, we will together build a better and sustainable place for all to enjoy.

## Relevant Body

Addressing point 3 in the introduction 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. Six meetings of the new committee have been held since September 2019 and copies of minutes are available on request. A public meeting will be scheduled following 'designation'. 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.

The Neighbourhood Forum, while being independent will work closely with other local organisations and 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 many organisations in public meetings and our brochure (see Appendix A) 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).

The Forum Committee currently includes representatives of local businesses, residents across the two 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.

## Forum Membership

Further we currently have more than 3000 "followers" on Social Media (see [www.facebook.com/millhillforum](http://www.facebook.com/millhillforum)) and a database of 680 people who have requested regular updates on our progress. Membership of the Neighbourhood Forum is open to all residents and to businesses operating in Mill Hill and Hale (NW7) together with other interested bodies to be determined.

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## Recent activities

We are able to incorporate all of the efforts of the previously designated Neighbourhood Forum which held an initial round of meetings and leaflet distribution (see Brochure at Appendix A below) around the designated area, to explain the purpose of the Neighbourhood Forum. They held regular Committee meetings and bi-annual public meetings. In addition, they established markets in our Town Centre in order to engage with local people. A report was commissioned from Masters Students in Urban Planning at the London School of Economics, and their excellent 78-page report (dated July 2015) has informed the draft NDP that we inherit from the former Forum, as has the report that was commissioned from AECOM on Master-planning for our Town Centre and its surrounds (dated January 2016).

A major strength of this new Forum is that it is not starting from scratch; it is fortunate to be able to build on the good work of the previous Forum which reviewed most planning applications in the area since its original designation to inform the (NDP) plan, and commented on many where they were seen not to conform with our emerging thinking. The major developments, such as the NIMR site, Pentavia, IBSA, Saracens-West-Stand and some smaller ones such as St. Vincent's School landfill project have taken huge amounts of volunteer time to review, assess and comment upon, thus diverting energy from creating the NDP.

The previous Forum undertook a number of intervention projects which were deemed important and time critical in the short term, to enable delivery of the plan. Notable examples are as follows:

- It gained funding from the Mayor of London, local residents, businesses and Barnet Council to regenerate the shopping precinct at Salcombe Gardens
- It gained funding from Tesco & Barnet Council to create a Town Square at the end of Brockenhurst Gardens as it meets the Broadway in our Town Centre to provide a central meeting place for all.
- It recognised that the Town Centre was dirty and therefore unattractive to potential investors, and accordingly worked with Council officers to get rid of the bins and use timed bag collections as an alternative waste management solution. This is recognized as being highly successful and is being rolled-out across other shopping areas.
- It recognised that the Broadway Station was not fit for purpose and brought together, with help from Cllr Val Duschinsky, the various Public Sector bodies involved (Network Rail, Barnet Council, Govia-Thameslink, TfL & Highways England) together for project meetings, chaired by Dr Matthew Offord MP. A budget of £65,000 was agreed for a feasibility study into how best to achieve "Step Free-Access" (SFA) at the station and subsequently an application for SFA funding under the "Access for All" scheme was submitted to the Department for Transport. Funding (£8.5m) was secured from the Department for Transport in April 2019 for the 2020-2023 funding period.
- It engaged with local developers who have prepared a feasibility study for establishing, a 150-bed Hotel, Conference Centre and Multi-Storey Car Park on the current Council owned car Park at Mill Hill Broadway Station. This would form a key part with SFA of the regeneration of the station and would result in a huge economic boost for our Town Centre.
- It campaigned with others including Andrew Dismore (GLA Member) to get Step-Free-access at Mill Hill East station, and this is now being installed.
- It responded to numerous Barnet Council & GLA consultations, including Barnet Leisure, Parks & Open Spaces, Housing, Parking, Transport Policy, the London Plan and the NPPF.

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- It obtained funding from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) to pay for 2/3rds of the Architects' fees in respect of the proposed Community Centre in Daws Lane on the basis of the 'Community Right to Build' programme,

In financial terms the Forum has brought, to date, £274,000 of additional investment, into the Area, through the extensive efforts of the previous Committee,

While the new Forum will concentrate on delivering the Neighbourhood Development Plan, it is worth noting the above achievements which demonstrate strong engagement with local people.

Recent correspondence exists regarding the new Forum with Dr Matthew Offord MP for Hendon Constituency (which includes NW7) and with Andrew Dismore GLA Member for Camden and Barnet.

Our Facebook Page [www.facebook.com/millhillforum](http://www.facebook.com/millhillforum) provides regular updates on our activities and information for the Community at large. We have a website at [www.millhillforum.org.uk](http://www.millhillforum.org.uk) which will set out our progress as we create the Neighbourhood Development Plan. This includes minutes (where not sensitive) of Forum meetings, while "designated", scheme appraisals, consultation efforts, presentations etc.

## Benefit to London Borough of Barnet

Finally, we believe the previous MHNF Committee and members served as a very useful independent "Focus Group" available to Council Officers and Developers for consultation on their thinking and the new Forum will continue to do so.

This Neighbourhood Area application is accompanied by an application for Neighbourhood Forum status at Document 2 and our Constitution is provided as Document 3 in this application.

Signed on behalf of Mill Hill Neighbourhood Forum:

Name & Position

Stuart Kershaw, Chairman

3 March 2020

## APPENDIX A

Brochure, that was circulated to explain the concept and purpose of the Mill Hill Neighbourhood Forum.



# Mill Hill Neighbourhood Forum

## 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.

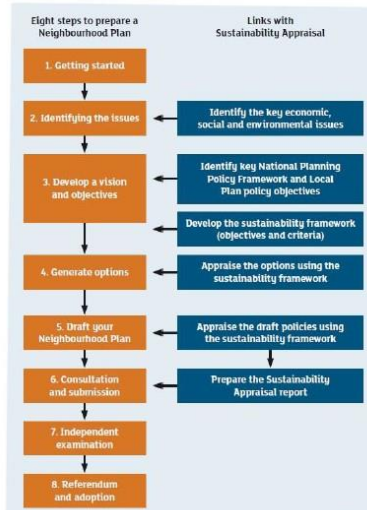


Your input is really important and we encourage you to please, send us your thoughts, and support us in this important initiative.

Contact us at:

[Chairman@MILLHILLFORUM.org.uk](mailto:Chairman@MILLHILLFORUM.org.uk)

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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.

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## 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](mailto:Chairman@MILLHILLFORUM.org.uk)

