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Sent: 19 October 2014 19:40
To: 'declan.hoare@barnet.gov.uk'
Cc: 'cldr.d.cohen@barnet.gov.uk'; 'paul.millard@barnet.gov.uk.'
Subject: Draft Parking Policy - Response from Mill Hill Neighbourhood Forum

Dear Mr Hoare,

You will be aware that Mill Hill Neighbourhood Forum's application for designation was officially agreed at Barnet Council's Planning meeting held on 17th September 2014. We have reviewed the draft policy, in our committee of 30 Mill Hill residents, both generally and in the specific context of our designated area (Mill Hill ward and the NW7 post codes within Hale ward) and can comment as follows:

In general terms we do not think that the policy acknowledges the real need to provide more car parking spaces across the Borough to meet today's needs and then of course the expected considerable growth in the resident population going forward. We believe that the Council should acknowledge the current deficit in the supply of car parking, along with the very poor East-West access routes, and be encouraging alternative forms of transport, notably E-Bikes and "lite" rail/trams etc, to persuade people that the car is no longer the best form, for most journeys. Further you should revise upwards the recommendations for car park spaces in new developments, as the reality is that residents have more vehicles than said recommendations expect, which results in overspill onto public roads.

You state under the heading of "keeping the traffic moving" that one objective is "to deter long term commuter parking".

We would agree in part with this, if it was stated as "to deter long term commuter parking on public roads". We would actually suggest that the provision of parking for commuters should be significantly enhanced to actively encourage people to park & ride public transport. This will be covered further below, where we have made more detailed comments in line with the numbered paragraphs within your draft policy document:

3.5 Improving Bus Reliability: With the new residential developments in Mill Hill East and the desirability of improving the footfall in Mill Hill Broadway (without increasing the need for extra parking) it would be beneficial to have a shuttle bus running every 10 minutes between the Mill Hill Broadway and Mill Hill East Stations, via Devonshire Road.

3.7 Supporting Business and the High Street: We approve the introduction of free short stay parking bays in Mill Hill Broadway, we also think that there should be a 15-20 minute free parking period to actively encourage visitors. There should also be permits for businesses. Smart meters should record vehicle registration numbers on arrival to facilitate active parking management.

4.1 Allocation of On and Off-Street Parking Spaces: There is a car park at Bunns Lane for Mill Hill Broadway Station and at Finchley Central Station but only a very small one at Mill Hill East Station. This does not make sense especially with the increase in population with the new developments in Millbrook Park. The parking facility at the Mill Hill Broadway station should be increased (a multi-storey facility provided) and made more efficient to encourage the use of public transport and encourage shoppers and workers in Mill Hill Broadway to park there. There should be differential pricing for Commuters, Shoppers and businesses based in the Broadway. The under-croft at Mill Hill Broadway Station should be developed for retail purposes.

The restricted parking times around Mill Hill Broadway should be split 50% 11.00am to Noon and 50% 3.00pm to 4.00pm.

The Car Park in Daws Lane should remain free of any charges. Hopefully with a multi-storey car park at Bunns Lane, Mill Hill Broadway station, those business users who currently park in Daws Lane, will move, freeing up spaces at Daws Lane for users of the Park. If a charge was introduced at Daws Lane car park, it would simply push the cars out onto the surrounding streets, making this area difficult for residents to park near their properties. We can then see that a solution to such a chain of events would cause the Council to suggest a CPZ which would be totally unacceptable in this area.

The car park at Finchley Central tube station could be made multi-storey with relative ease and low cost. Smart technology could tell potential users that a space was available and this could be booked through a smart phone App, using open-data. Registration numbers could be taken on arrival to the car park by camera, matched to the earlier booking and charging perhaps done on a differential basis on exit depending on the car's registered address. Barnet residents could receive a lower fee than those originating outside the Borough.

The Council will shortly vacate their depot at Mill Hill East, and again a large car park should be developed to encourage people to park and ride public transport.

4.2 & 6.9 The Setting of Fees and Charges: We approve of the reduction of parking charges in Mill Hill Broadway but we think that it was a mistake to remove the cash payment meters as for some this is the most convenient method of payment. It is not clear notably to occasional users that a transaction charge is levied on top of the parking fee for payments by phone. If this method costs the Council more, then we would encourage the use of debit cards, notably contactless cards with no additional fee charged. Cash is no longer taken by TFL, so increasingly people will become familiar in using alternative methods. It was unfortunate that the ability to make a cash payment was arbitrarily taken away by the Council, but we do understand that the collection of cash is now a more expensive option.

6.2 Controlled Parking Zones: We do not approve of any further extensions in NW7. We regard to the Saracens CPZ, the Council should issue all residents of Mill Hill parking permits based on DVLA records. Under the current arrangements those Mill Hill residents living outside the CPZ cannot park in Mill Hill on Match days, thus reducing trade. Indeed with modern technology it should be possible to stop issuing permits and rely on the accuracy of the DVLA registration data. People would have the added incentive when changing vehicles to ensure that the DVLA data was updated promptly.

8.9 Car Parks: As stated above we believe that there is potential to open multi-story car parks in locations such as Mill Hill Broadway with the much needed re-design of the station. Any developments on surface car parks (such as in Hartley Avenue) should be refused unless this is replaced by a larger parking facility to service the medical centre and other users.

8.11/8.12 Footway Parking and on Dropped Kerbs ; We believe that this should be extended in areas like Hammers Lane/Daws Lane where the pavement is wide and it is difficult for buses to pass and where a school is nearby. We note that, for example in Brookfield Avenue, residents regularly park on the pavements and this should be regularised with bays clearly marked or if not deemed appropriate, then enforcement action taken to discontinue the practice.

Appendix 3-NO2 Air Quality: We believe that air quality and noise pollution in Mill Hill Broadway, would be reduced if there were high level (2-3 metres) screens installed along the railway and M1 (these could include solar panels thus providing power generation as is now happening alongside the M40 near High Wycombe and is widely adopted in Europe).

Further Comments:

Electric Vehicle Charging Points: A quantity of these should be provided in suitable locations and notably in Mill Hill Broadway.

Car Club/Car Sharing: Parking spaces in the highway should be provided to encourage this use within the borough thereby reducing the necessity for outright car ownership.

Daws Lane: In order to improve the movement of buses we believe it would be beneficial to restrict parking along one side of this road, perhaps proving a 1 hour maximum stay.

The Ridgeway near the Adam & Eve: The current restriction from 8am-midnight should be changed to 8am-6pm Monday to Friday only.

Cycle Lanes: We believe that there is potential to install these in Mill Hill Park as currently exist in Dollis Park. We would welcome a similar E-Bike scheme as in Muswell Hill/Haringey. More orbital routes should be explored and cycle racks installed at key location near shops.

Lay by for Buses: Where at all possible these should be installed to improve traffic flow.

Intelligent Traffic Light Timing: There is potential for this to be carried out at Mill Hill Circus, and elsewhere. Vehicles should also be able to turn left on a red light (as works so effectively in USA) giving way to any pedestrians or vehicles.

Bus Timetable/Train Timetable: There does not appear to be any coordination between the arrival of buses and the departure of trains. Again using open data bus drivers should know when a train is arriving and wait for passengers to transfer to the bus. This should also work in reverse.

Parking Infringements: Enforcement really needs to be improved and notably to stop parking on pavements (outside specifically marked bays) and on verges.

Bittacy Roundabout & Holders Hill Road Shopping Areas: Short term parking should be encouraged to free up the limited spaces for shoppers popping in by car (e.g. free 20 minute parking).

DualTrack Tramway/Light Railway: We believe that the current infrequent shuttle tube service between Finchley Central and Mill Hill East Stations should be replaced by a frequent dual Track Tramway/Light Railway service between Finchley Central-Mill Hill East-Mill Hill Broadway-Edgware. The majority of the route still exists from what was originally the Northern Railway and would provide a huge economic benefit to Mill Hill which will be necessary to compete with the development of Brent Cross and encourage the use of public transport (and interchange between the tube and surface rail networks) It is now possible to travel from Mill Hill Broadway by train to Westfield Shopping centre at White City, via West Hampstead and the Overground in 30-40 minutes. As this is so easy and quick, why would you go by car? Such orbital links are required if people are to find public transport more acceptable than using their car. We have now seen the plans for the new Thameslink station at Brent Cross, but it is on the south side of the North Circular Road rather than on the North Side where it could be viable for shoppers visiting the expanded shopping centre. Nobody will use this station in the proposed position, and people will continue to travel by car. In fact it would probably be as quick for Mill Hill residents to get to Westfield by public transport as it would be to get 1/3rd of the distance to Brent Cross shopping centre via the new station. Shoppers coming from further on towards Bedford will simply not bother with Brent Cross either. By connecting Mill Hill East with Mill Hill Broadway residents will be able to easily travel to Gatwick or Luton airports and to St Pancras for Central London and Eurostar. If the lite rail solution also visited Brent Cross, perhaps it could continue to the new developments at Old Oak, with access to Crossrail (and onwards to Heathrow) and to HS2.

In conclusion, we strongly recommend that your Parking Policy encourages the use of alternative forms of transport and recognises the real need to provide many more parking spaces across the Borough.

We would be pleased to discuss any of the above points with you at any time. We would like to extend an open invitation to you to attend one of our regular committee meetings by arrangement, to engage in further discussions around parking, as we see this topic as a fundamental ingredient of the future economic viability of our neighbourhood.

Yours sincerely

John H Gillett

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