

# KILBURN HIGH ROAD

Neighbourhood Planning Design Support



## Quality information

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## Revision history

Project role	Name	Position	Action summary	Signature	Date
Qualifying Body	Kilburn Neighbourhood Plan Forum	Neighbourhood Planning Group	Comments on Draft Report		
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# **Background and Introduction**

**01**

# 1. Background and Introduction

## Background

Through the Ministry of Communities and Local Government Neighbourhood Planning Programme, AECOM has been commissioned to provide Design support to the Kilburn Neighbourhood Plan Forum. The support is intended to provide design assistance to the Forum's work in producing a Neighbourhood Plan and is designed to complement the plan-drafting work that is underway.

## Objective

The objective of this report is to advise on how the Neighbourhood Plan can promote the enhancement of Kilburn High Road by providing:

- Public realm improvements;
- Potential areas of intervention, and
- Shop front design guidance .

These areas of focus being where specialist technical support could best progress neighbourhood plan-making.

## Location

Kilburn is the second largest town centre in the borough of Camden, with Kilburn High Road forming the boundary between the boroughs of Brent and Camden. The road has its roots in pre-Roman times and forms a strong focus for the neighbourhood plan area. Kilburn is a busy multicultural London district with vibrant communities and a population of 12,038 (neighbourhood plan area) at the census 2011.

## Process

The following steps were undertaken to produce this report:

- Initial meeting, site visit and walk around;
- Desktop research and policy review;
- Site design analysis;
- Development of public realm strategy and interventions;
- Identification of potential areas of interventions
- Preparation of shop front guidance; and
- Preparation of this draft report, for comment by the Neighbourhood Plan Forum

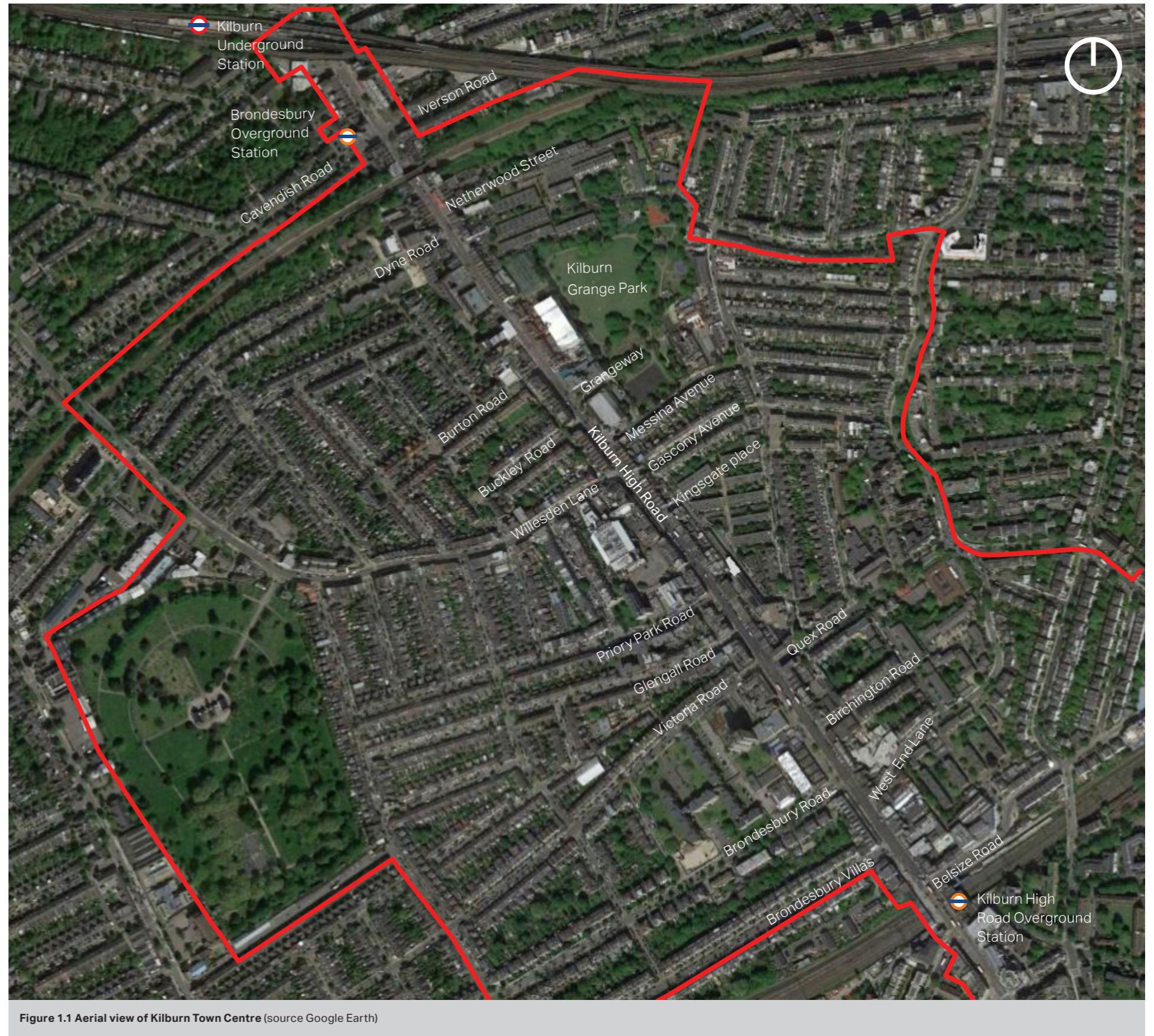


Figure 1.1 Aerial view of Kilburn Town Centre (source Google Earth)

### Legend

— Neighbourhood Plan boundary

## Study Area

The study area focuses on Kilburn High Road, which runs from North-West to South-West between Kilburn Underground Station and Kilburn High Road Overground Station. Kilburn High Road is the heart of Kilburn, its main thoroughfare and historically and its principal cultural destination. Today, it is bordered by retail shops with office buildings above towards its southern part whereas the land-use is more oriented towards restaurants and cafes with residential properties above at its northern part.

Many of its cultural institutions have turned into places of worship or non-cultural uses. The Kilburn High Road is a key distributor to other local residential roads. The study area will extend to include these primary junctions and interfaces.

Kilburn High Road is a two way traffic along its length with intermittent bus and cycle lanes. As the A5, it is part of the strategic road network, as well as being a traditional high street - so it has to perform as important movement function as well as being a 'place' in its own right. The movement function often dominates, and this document is about promoting a strong sense of place to the benefit of local people, visitors and businesses.



Figure 1.2 Typical foot way, materials and street furniture on Kilburn High Road



Figure 1.4 Local shops spilling into pavement area on Kilburn High Road



Figure 1.2 Materials at the entrance of Kilburn Underground Station



Figure 1.5 Some landmarks and grade II listed buildings along Kilburn High Road like Gaumont State Cinema



Figure 1.3 Typical shop fronts and pedestrian crossing on Kilburn High Road



Figure 1.5 Public Realm within Kilburn Square adjacent to Kilburn High Road



**Planning Policy**

**02**



## 2. Planning Policy Review

### Introduction

#### Planning Policy Review

There are different planning policy documents that are relevant for this study, including:

- London Borough of Brent Local Development Framework, Core Strategy (adopted July 2010);
- London Borough of Brent Unitary Development Plan (2004-marked up 2015)
- London Borough of Camden Local Plan (adopted July 2017);
- London Borough of Brent South Kilburn Supplementary Planning Documents (June 2017)

These have been reviewed and the policies relevant to the sites development are summarised below.

#### **London Borough of Brent Local Development Framework, Core Strategy (2010)**

##### **Policy CP9 South Kilburn Growth Area**

States South Kilburn will experience substantial transformation. The area is promoted for regenerative development using the highest standards of urban design to physically improve the area and change the perception to a busy, thriving, safe and secure section of urban London by:

- By regenerating it as a dense urban environment and a neighbourhood with new homes, commercial and community uses set along a traditional street pattern.
- Creating four distinctive quarters: The historic, the Village, the Urban and the Artisan
- Setting out anticipated opportunities including: new schools, improvements to open spaces, new community facilities and greening of the area.

##### **Policy CP16 Town Centres and the sequential approach**

States in identifying potential sites, and in considering proposals for major new retail and other town centre uses in Brent, the following sequential order of centres will be applied: Major Town Centres (Wembley and Kilburn), District Centres, Local Centres, Neighbourhood Centres and Out-of-centre locations. This will be achieved by:

- Maintaining Existing Town Centres.
- Understanding the retail need and capacity to improve the provision of shops and key services in accessible locations for local communities
- Locating new developments

#### **London Borough of Brent Unitary Development Plan (2004-marked up 2015)**

The Brent Unitary Development Plan (UDP) was adopted in 2004 and some of the policies in it still make up part of the development plan for Brent. Some of the policies that are relevant to this study

##### **Policy BE15 Transport Corridors and Gateways**

States that particular regard will be had to the design and attractiveness of all development proposals in the vicinity of, and visible from Transport Corridors. Kilburn High Road is considered as a priority for townscape and Public Realm enhancement

during the Plan Period. An urban design framework will be produced to guide the form of development and ensure a coordinated enhancement strategy.

##### **Policy SH2 Town Centres and Shopping**

States planning proposals should support the maintenance and improvement of shopping and other facilities in Kilburn and Wembley town centres in accordance with their status as major town centres.

- The market in Kilburn Square is the only one with permanent stalls in the east of the Borough. It is an integral part of Kilburn town centre, adding to its character and vitality.
- For Kilburn major regeneration initiatives will be pursued jointly with Camden.

##### **Policy SH26 Existing Retail Markets**

States the retention of existing retail markets will be encouraged and, where affected by development proposals and where feasible, their replacement in town centre locations will be sought.

##### **Open Space, Sport & Recreation**

Kilburn is deficient in open space. Given the lack of open space in the Borough and its poor distribution, it is important to protect local open spaces which help to maintain and improve the environmental quality of the Borough and to provide for recreation.

#### **London Borough of Camden Local Plan (adopted July 2017)**

##### **Location of Growth and Spatial Strategy**

- Kilburn High Road is considered as a highly accessible location which is ideal for a significant amount of growth.
- High quality developments with high densities will be encouraged along Kilburn High Road
- Provision of a mix of uses and development proposals of an appropriate size in growth areas such as Kilburn High Road is encouraged in order to contribute towards meeting Camden's pressing need for self-contained housing

##### **Policy H2 Maximising the supply of self-contained housing from mixed-use schemes**

States that new development on Kilburn High Road should be considered for mixed-used development that includes self contained housing

##### **Policy C1 Health and Well-being**

States to improve and promote strong, vibrant and healthy communities through ensuring a high quality environment with local services to support health, social and cultural well-being and reduce inequalities.

- Kilburn High Road is designated as a place that is able to host a facility that is anticipated to generate a large number of visits.

##### **Policy E1 Economic development**

States to secure a successful and inclusive economy in Camden by creating the conditions for economic growth and harnessing the benefits for local residents and businesses.

- Kilburn is identified as having an important role for businesses that provide local services. This policy seeks to protect existing offices in these locations.

- Conversion of employment space to residential has been particularly high in Kilburn when there are significant concentrations of premises suitable for start-up, small and medium enterprises.

##### **Policy E3 Tourism**

States the importance of the visitor economy in Camden and support tourism development and visitor accommodation.

- Encourages the smaller scale visitor accommodation within Kilburn Town Centre.

##### **Policy CC3 Water and Flooding**

Seeks to ensure that development does not increase flood risk and reduces the risk of flooding where possible.

- A notable risk of ground water flooding has been identified in Kilburn which will need to be considered and mitigated for any development.

##### **Policy TC1 Quantity and Location of Retail Development**

States that the council will focus on new shopping and related uses in Camden's designated growth areas and existing centres, having regard to the level of capacity available in these locations.

- Additional retail provisions in town centres like Kilburn

##### **Policy TC2 Camden's centres and other shopping areas**

Seeks to promote successful and vibrant centres throughout the borough to serve the needs of residents, workers and visitors by:

- Protecting and enhancing the role and unique character of each Camden's Centres
- Providing for and maintaining, a range of shops including independent shops, services, food, drink and entertainment and other suitable uses to provide variety, vibrancy and choice;
- Making sure that food, drink, entertainment and other town centre uses do not have a harmful impact on residents and the local areas
- Pursuing the individual planning objectives for each centre, as set out in supplementary planning document Camden Planning Guidance on town centres and retail, and through the delivery of environmental, design, transport and public safety measures.

#### **London Borough of Brent South Kilburn Supplementary Planning Documents (June 2017)**

This document was prepared to reinforce the Masterplan proposals in planning policy, it provides development principles for South Kilburn to transform it into a sustainable urban area through promoting an integrated neighbourhood, high quality building design, improved public realm, providing high level of education, proposing a new health centre, improving connectivity and accessibility to Parks and open spaces and providing tenure diversification.



# **Site Analysis**

**03**

# 3. Site Analysis

## Site Characteristics

Kilburn High Road constitutes the town centre of Kilburn. It is characterised by its linearity, it is approximately 2Km in length with a series of residential side roads, all providing access to the town centre corridor. Because of the different roads that feed into Kilburn High Road there is a sequence of signalised junctions and pedestrian crossings. There are three stations along the length of the road: Kilburn Underground station and Brondesbury Overground Station in north part and Kilburn High Road Overground Station, towards the south part of the High Road. One prominent Park along the road is Kilburn Grange Park which falls in the Borough of Camden.

Buildings along Kilburn High Road are mainly Victorian, four storey terracing and in a continuous line typically built of red brick creating an overall corridor effect. Paving within the public realm comprises light grey concrete slabs that is not well maintained. Tactile paving is concrete of red colour. Road surfacing on Kilburn High Road is predominantly tarmac. Since Kilburn High Road is between two Boroughs, the street furniture varies along its length. Bollards are black cast iron but they differ in shape and size between the north and the south part of the road. Similarly to the bollards, road lighting is of different styles reflecting the section of the borough they fall into, some are black with one lamp, other are more greyish in colour and have two lamps at different levels. There are also black posts for signage. Bins are black in colour, with some bigger ones designated for recycling newspapers and magazines located close to the stations but are of poor quality and not well maintained. Several CCTV masts are notable along Kilburn High Road. There are cycles racks along the road but again of different materials and styles and sometimes not strategically located so not taken advantage of and properly used. There is a significant use of pedestrian guardrails on crossings which is narrowing the width of the pedestrian public foot-way and acting more as a barrier. The combination of all these elements seem to clutter the public realm. There is a lack of benches and public seating areas along the road.

The north section of the road has more an urban village feel and some attractive shop fronts, this part is more residential with restaurants and cafés at the ground level. Moving more towards the south, the character becomes more commercial like a 'regular' High Street with big supermarkets and shops like Aldi and Primark at the ground floor with offices on the upper floor.

## Issues

Whilst Kilburn High Road holds a lot of history and assets, it is not serving its community to its full potential in functioning as the main town centre and destination. This is partly due to a poor public realm that will require regeneration. Some of the main issues and activities that are contributing to this matter are:

- The quality of the public realm
- Street cluttering with posts, pedestrian guardrails, bollards
- Inconsistent site furniture
- Narrow public pedestrian foot-way
- Loading vehicles taking over potential areas of intervention
- No designated cycle routes
- Areas under the bridges are gloomy and unsafe
- No permeability
- Shop owners extending and spilling out into public realm



Figure 3.1 Kilburn Underground Station at the north part of Kilburn High Road, cluttered street scene with poor quality cycle parking provision



Figure 3.2 Brondesbury Overground Station, no visual presence, hidden and obscure under bridge



Figure 3.3 Kilburn Grange Park, a key open space in close proximity to Kilburn High Road



Figure 3.4 Typical Victorian Buildings along Kilburn High Road



Figure 3.5 Typical concrete slab paving along kilburn High Road in poor condition and with no maintenance

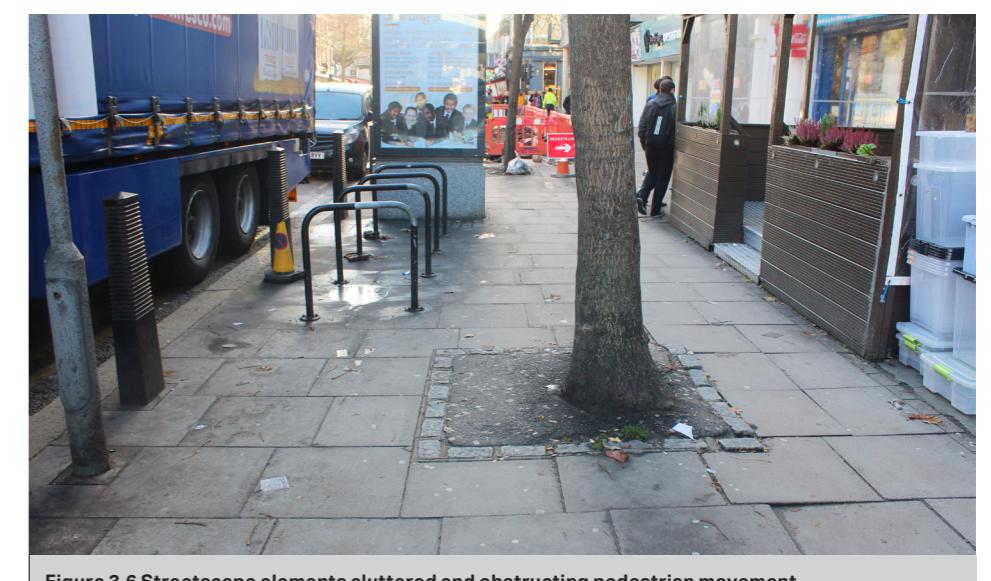
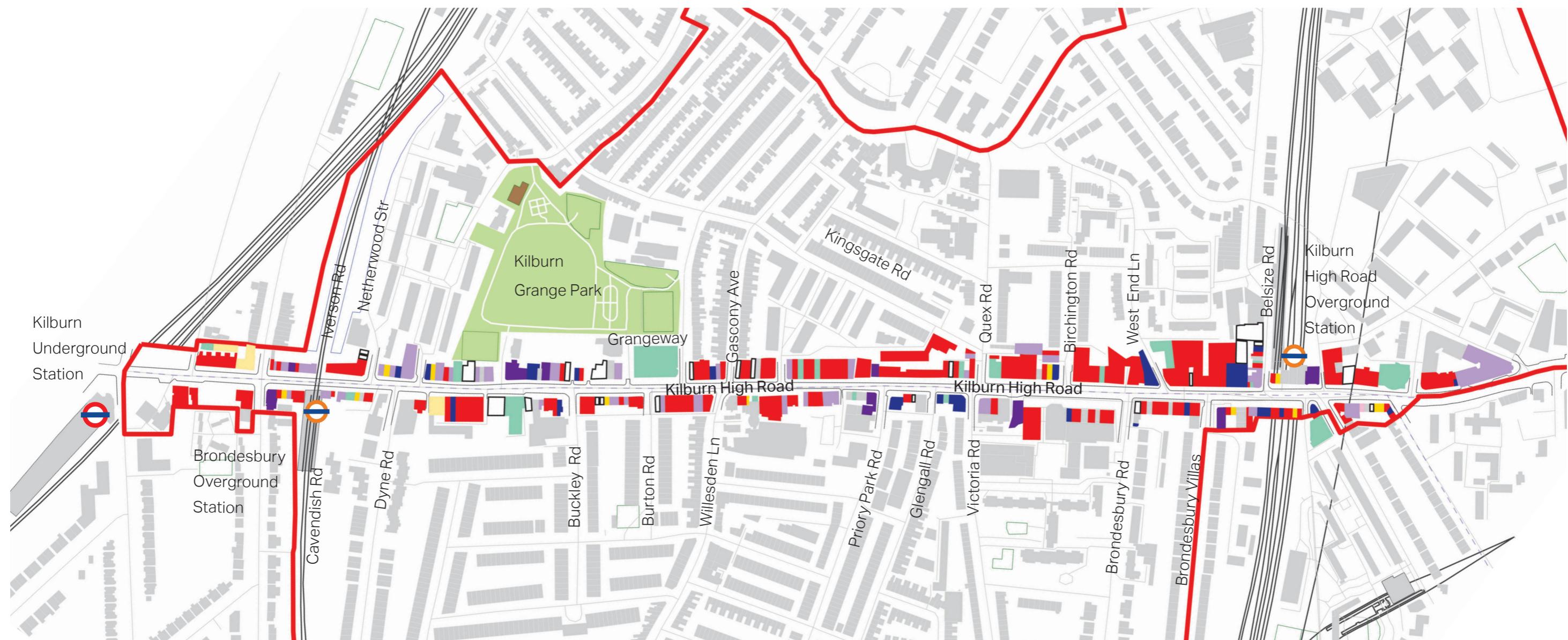


Figure 3.6 Streetscape elements cluttered and obstructing pedestrian movement

**Legend**

Neighbourhood Plan boundary	Hot Food Takeaway	Dwellings/Houses
Park/public green space	Business	Houses of Multiple Occupations
Shops	General Industrial	Non-Residential Institutions
Financial and Professional Services	Storage or Distribution	Assembly and Leisure
Restaurants and Cafés	Hotels	Sui Generis
Drinking Establishments	Residential Institution	Vacant or Similar

**Figure 3.7 Town Centre Land use Plan**

- Key areas should be more open and inviting like Kilburn Market and the three stations along Kilburn High Road
- The quality of shop frontages

The paving material and the street furniture is in poor condition and not well maintained. The streetscape is cluttered which detracts from the historic quality of some buildings along the road. The different type of elements and their inconsistent placement within a narrow sidewalk does not help to develop a unified space.

There is a significant number of bollards and pedestrian guardrails that make the street busy and further complicate the space rather than facilitate the movement around it. Issues with delivery vehicles also contribute to the clutter that detracts from the potential attractiveness of the street. Shop owners are spilling into the public footway without receiving permission and licence to do so which is resulting in narrow footways that discourage pedestrian movement along the street. In some instances, there are cars parks on the sidewalk that also impedes pedestrian movement. Some parking are available along the side streets but there are no proper signage leading to these parking and the pedestrian entrance/exit of one of these parking is through Kilburn Market which is not very appealing.

Kilburn Town Centre has some interesting landmarks that assist in orientation and legibility along the street. However, there is a lack of visual connection which can be achieved through tree planting or compatible street furniture and active frontage. The areas around the stations seem to be obscure and will require to be more open and have adequate visual presence or signage.

Buildings along Kilburn High Road are mainly Victorian. At ground level, historic architectural features have been obscured by modern shop fronts with low quality modern materials in a range of styles and proportions.

## Aims

Overarching aims have been developed in response to the site analysis. These are:

- Improving the public realm, with particular consideration into widening the pavement by reclaiming back the public realm and through introducing possible areas of interventions
- Creating a more pedestrian and cyclist friendly environment
- Regenerate the Road, making it an inviting centre rather than a thoroughfare.
- Making the road more vibrant and sustainable, celebrating Kilburn mixed community
- Promoting new start-ups and independent shops
- Improving shop fronts.

A better quality pedestrian environment would be achieved by de cluttering street furniture and considering reduction of some of it especially when it is obstructing pedestrian movement, increasing pavement widths, developing a palette of materials and colours to unify elements of the space and reflect the different characters of the road, thus focusing on designing high quality space for pedestrians. This potentially also provides more space for community activities, such as seating areas. Identifying possible areas of intervention which can become public squares, or temporary farmers markets with street stalls, which can enhance the mix of uses and provide a more dynamic street environment.

There are areas that require immediate improvement and intervention like kilburn market, the areas in front of the different stations as well as Kilburn square. These will be covered in chapter 5.

Well designed and well maintained shop frontages along the road would promote a healthy local economy by improving the visual appeal of the area.



Figure 3.8 Possible Area of Intervention showing unused cycle rack



Figure 3.11 South Character of Kilburn High Road with major retail shops



Figure 3.9 Pedestrian guardrails not visually attractive and obstructing pedestrian flow



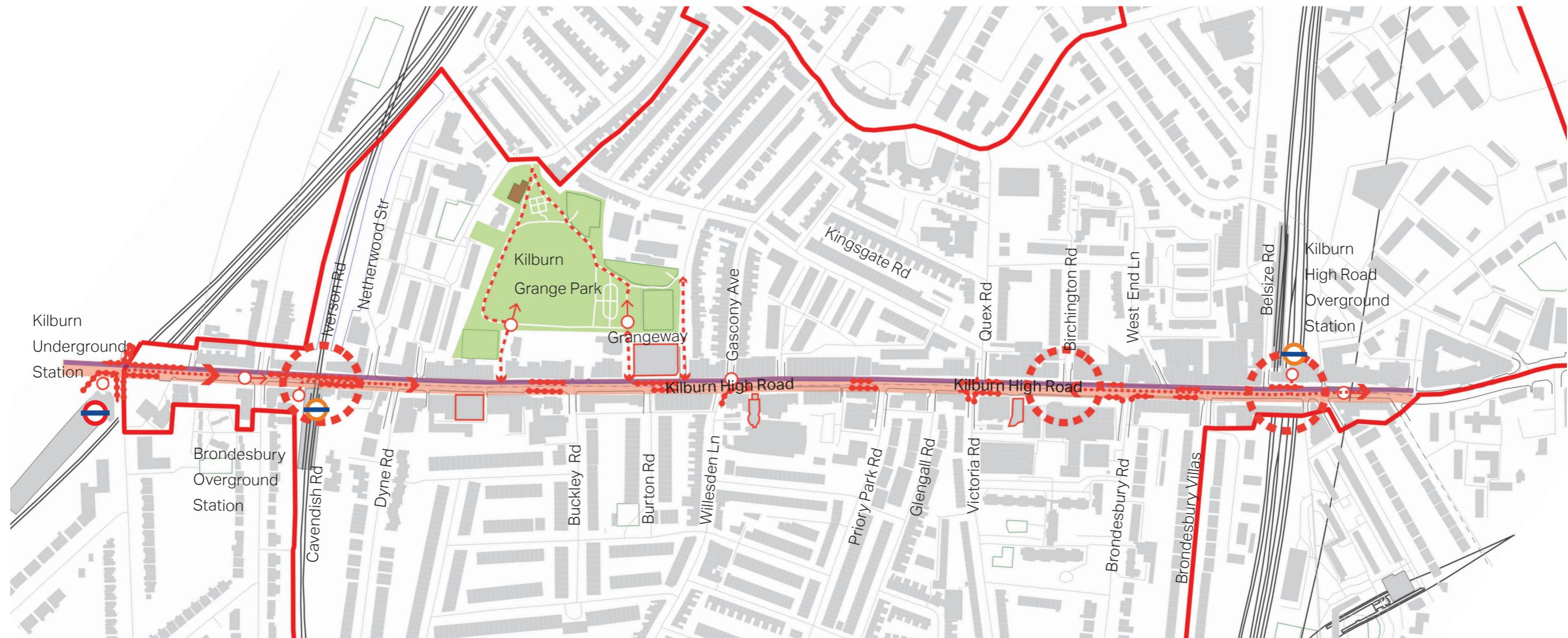
Figure 3.11 Delivery motorbikes taking over a potential public area for intervention which is only used as a loading bay



Figure 3.10 View towards Shoot Up Hill north of kilburn High Road reflecting the town village character



Figure 3.12 Modern shop fronts detract from the character of buildings on Kilburn High Road and some shop owners spilling into pavement

**Legend**

- Neighbourhood Plan boundary
- Node
- Viewpoint
- ↔ Physical barrier/pedestrian guardrail
- ↔ Key pedestrian links

- Landmarks
- Cycle route
- Bus route



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**Figure 3.13 Movement and Circulation Diagram**



# **Public Realm Strategy**

**04**

## 4. Public Realm Strategy

Kilburn High Road has preserved much of its historic and cultural character, but incremental alterations to the buildings and particularly shops at the ground level have changed the character of the road. This section of the report proposes a set of general design principles and strategies that should improve the public realm around Kilburn High Road and re-establish its character.

Future interventions should as much as possible, reinforce the cultural character of the area and enhance its assets and heritage. Contemporary design should be encouraged but must always sit comfortably within this context. The current public realm is vehicle focused, leaving a minimum room for public realm enhancement. A shift towards a more pedestrian and cycle-friendly environment as well as a higher quality public realm is required in order to reinstate Kilburn High Road to its own legacy. This will help in reconnecting local residents to Kilburn Town Centre and its facilities, becoming part of their everyday life and strengthening the sense of community. Based on the analysis above, the width of the pavement along the road; in front of shops; should be reviewed to consider where pavements can be widened in order to facilitate pedestrian movement and accommodate street furniture and planting where possible.

It is proposed that the public realm should be simplified, the quality of its elements improved, street furniture de-cluttered with the aim to create a pedestrian orientated environment while keeping the existing vehicular movement. To establish and maintain a visually appealing, uncluttered public realm the placement of constituent elements such as street furniture should be considered. Way finding can be improved by the reduction of visual clutter and unnecessary signage. Tree planting can also assist in creating a visual continuity along the road.

Similarly, the placement and arrangement of bollards and pedestrian guardrails should be revisited, the ones that do not serve any purpose should be removed or relocated. Cycle racks should be strategically positioned along the road and at entrances to stations.

Where pace allows, seating should be provided along the street and where views of activities are available. In addition, the use of hardscape materials throughout the public foot-way should be more homogeneous and well maintained as this will define the public realm area and make it more appealing.

Public realm elements such as street lighting and bins should be of similar designs and colours as this will create a visual coherence making for a more pleasing street scene. Bins should be located near sources of rubbish such as bus stops, benches, shop entrances and other areas where people are likely to congregate. Ease of servicing with adequate room around the bin for emptying should be considered. Placement near other items of street furniture will reduce the total area taken up by street furniture collectively and reduce the obstruction these elements present to pedestrian.

All of the above will contribute towards a better and more dynamic street life.



Figure 4.1 Example - Sidcup High Street before design principles were applied



Figure 4.4 Example - Public realm and shop fronts in Sidcup after design principle were applied



Figure 4.2 Example - North Street, Brighton before public realm improvements



Figure 4.5 Example - North Street, Brighton with an improved public realm



Figure 4.3 Example - Shop front implementing design principles, Sidcup High Street

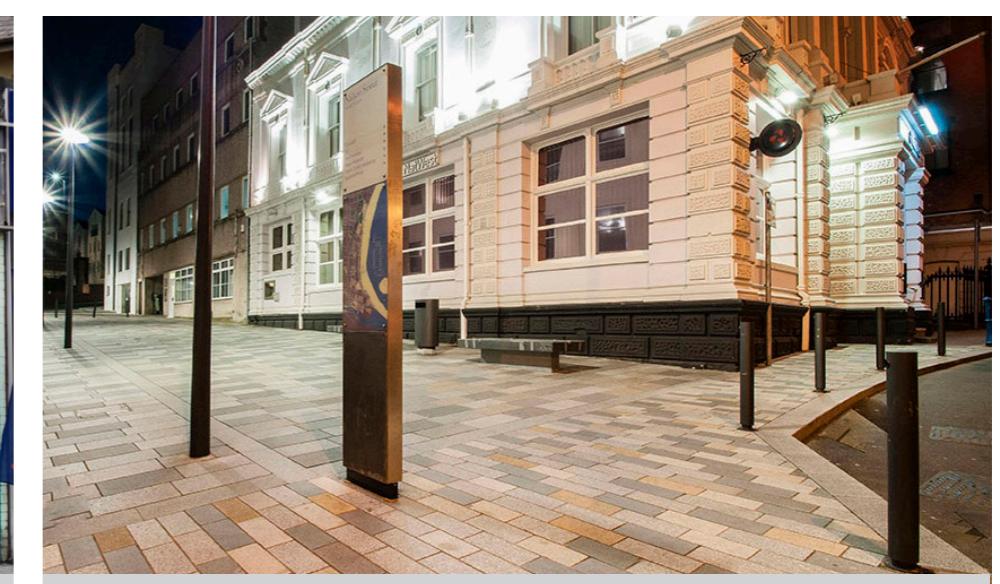
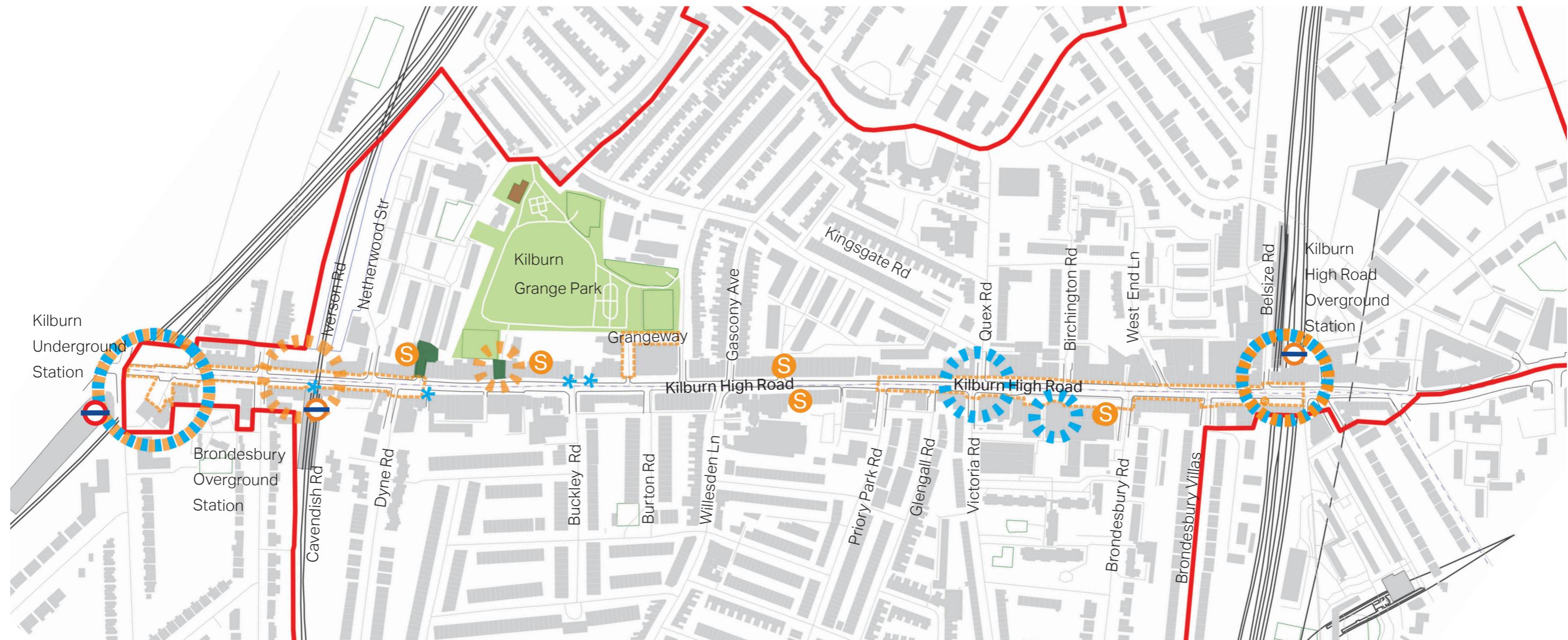


Figure 4.6 Example - Signage and street furniture at Douglas, Isle of Man

**Legend**

- Neighbourhood Plan boundary
- Enhanced gateway node
- Node
- Improved pedestrian space
- Potential green space
- S Potential pocket public space
- \* Potential art intervention
- Existing pavement
- Public realm improvement
- Proposed pavement widening if possible



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**Figure 4.7 Public Realm Strategy and Framework Diagram**

## 4.1 Street Character

As mentioned above, Kilburn High Road does not have one street character throughout its length, partly due to its location between different boroughs and the predominant economic activity within its different stretches.

We were able to identify three distinct but interrelated characters in Kilburn High Road and these were further used to determine the nature of the proposed public realm in each section of the road.

The first street character extends from Kilburn Underground Station in the North to Dyne Road, this section is characterized by interesting independent shops and cafés that celebrate the identity of Kilburn High Road. The width of the public foot way seems average allowing for additional tree planting and some arranged street furniture such as new benches, bins and planters. This part of Kilburn High Road has two important stations, Kilburn Underground Station and Brondesbury Overground Station, both of which would benefit from opening up the area in front of them which tend to be obscure from the rail bridges above and would require some visual reference. This can be achieved by removing unnecessary guardrails and posts that are functioning as visual and physical barriers to pedestrians and users of these stations. Cycle racks should be strategically located around the borders of these areas, turning them into the main gathering and meeting points in this section of the road.

The second street character stretches from Dyne Road in the North to Priory Park Road in the south. This stretch serves as a transition between the residential town-like aspect of the first section and the commercially dominated nature or high street at the southern part of Kilburn High Road. This section of Kilburn High Road encompasses important landmarks like Gaumont State Cinema, Kiln/Tricycle Theatre and Cinema; these underline Kilburn history in leisure. There are also other architectural and cultural heritage buildings that help to define this area. Another significant space that falls within this middle section of Kilburn High Road is Kilburn Grange Park which is the main open space in the area, offering a range of facilities to the community. This segment of the road focuses mostly on restaurants and cafes for economic revenue. The width of the pavement around this part of the road varies from being generous at some instances but narrower at others. This would restrict the incorporation of major street furniture and tree planting at this section. However, there is a series of streets and lanes that branch out from Kilburn High Road in the east leading to Kilburn Grange Park, all of these can function as gateways to the park and pocket public open spaces marking this section of the road. Some artworks or wall motifs can also be integrated to give extra character to this strip of the street. Similarly to the first street character some de-cluttering would be required in order to introduce some new street furniture like benches, bins and planters.

The third and last street character spreads from Priory Park Street all the way to Kilburn High Road Overground Station. This section covers the southern part of Kilburn High Road or as usually referred to Kilburn High Street, most of the retail shops fall into this part of the road. Kilburn Market and Kilburn Square are also in this fragment of the road. The pavement is generally narrow around that stretch and will require widening when possible in order to improve the public realm quality and to have treatments that reflect the high street nature, providing a pedestrian friendly orientated environment. Again, this can be reached by de-cluttering existing street furniture and removing pedestrian guardrails to open up key areas like the junction between Quex Road, Kilburn High Road and Victoria Road as well as Kilburn Market and the area in front of Kilburn High Road Overground Station. Kilburn Square is major potential area for development, it is already functioning as an urban square where the community gathers and interacts but it should be restored and connected to the existing Kilburn Market.

It is important that these characters are kept and enhanced as they portray the vibrancy and mixed culture of Kilburn.



Figure 4.12 Street Section 1 Current status



Figure 4.15 Example-Organised Public Realm, independent shops, Pitshanger Lane, Ealing, London

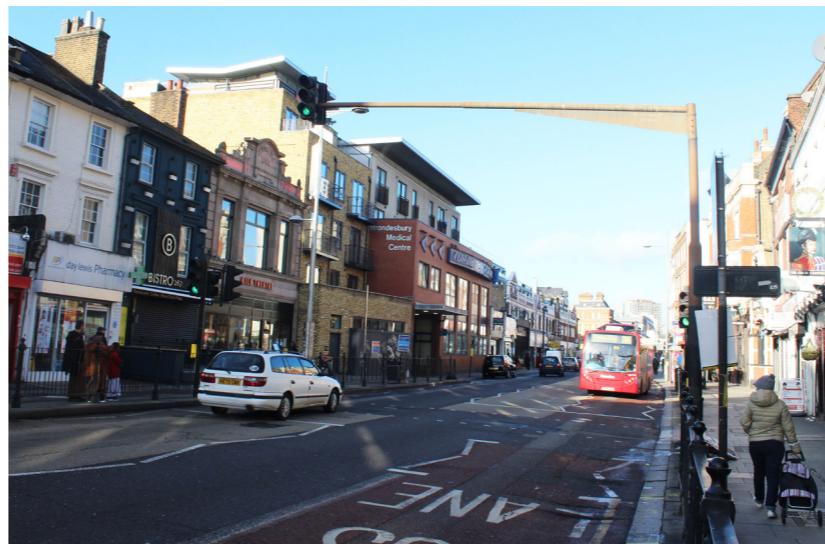


Figure 4.13 Street section 2 Current Status



Figure 4.16 Example- Transitional Street, High Street West & Fawcett Street, Sunderland



Figure 4.14 Street section 3 High Street Current Status



Figure 4.17 Example- Improved Public Realm Croydon High Street

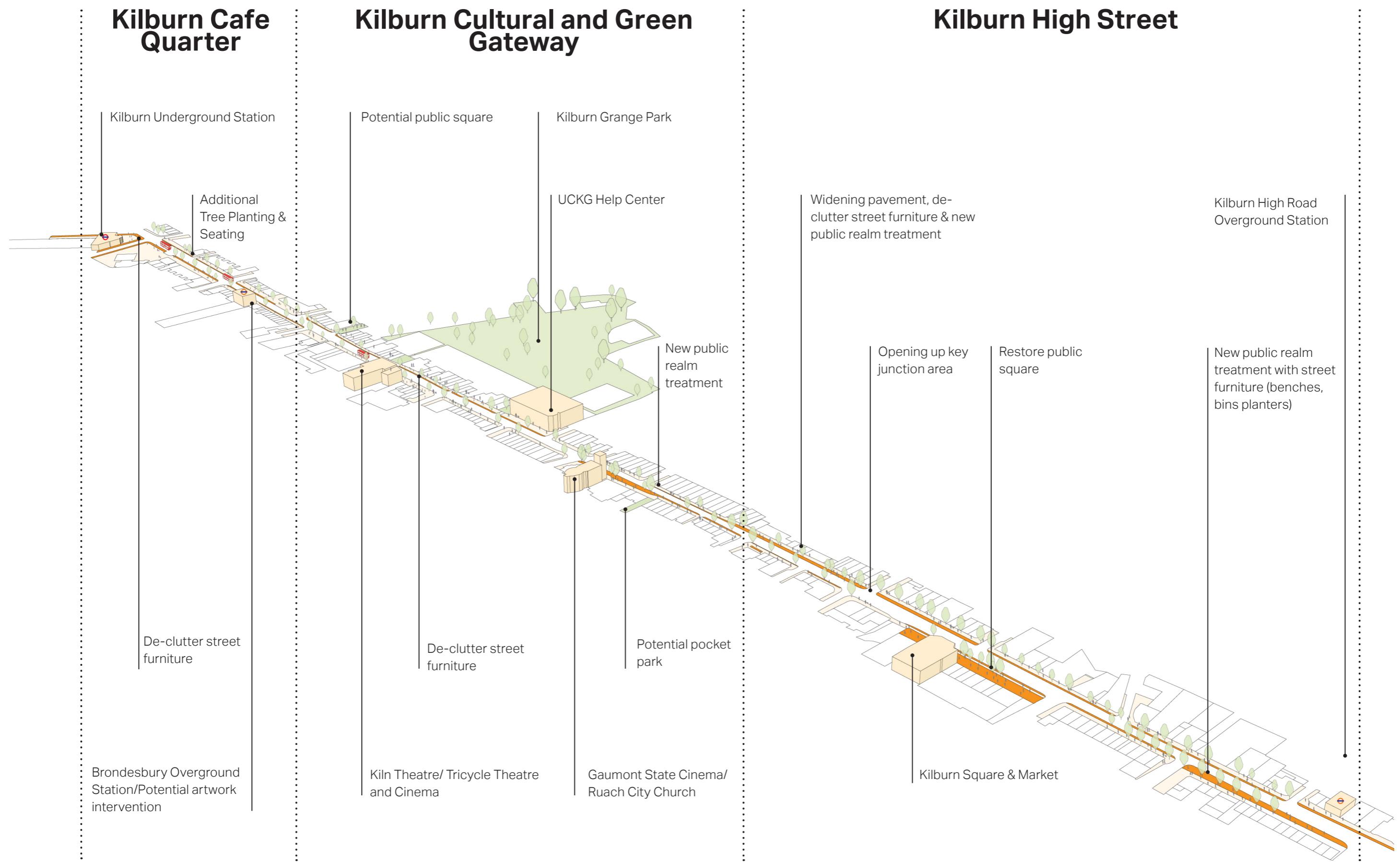
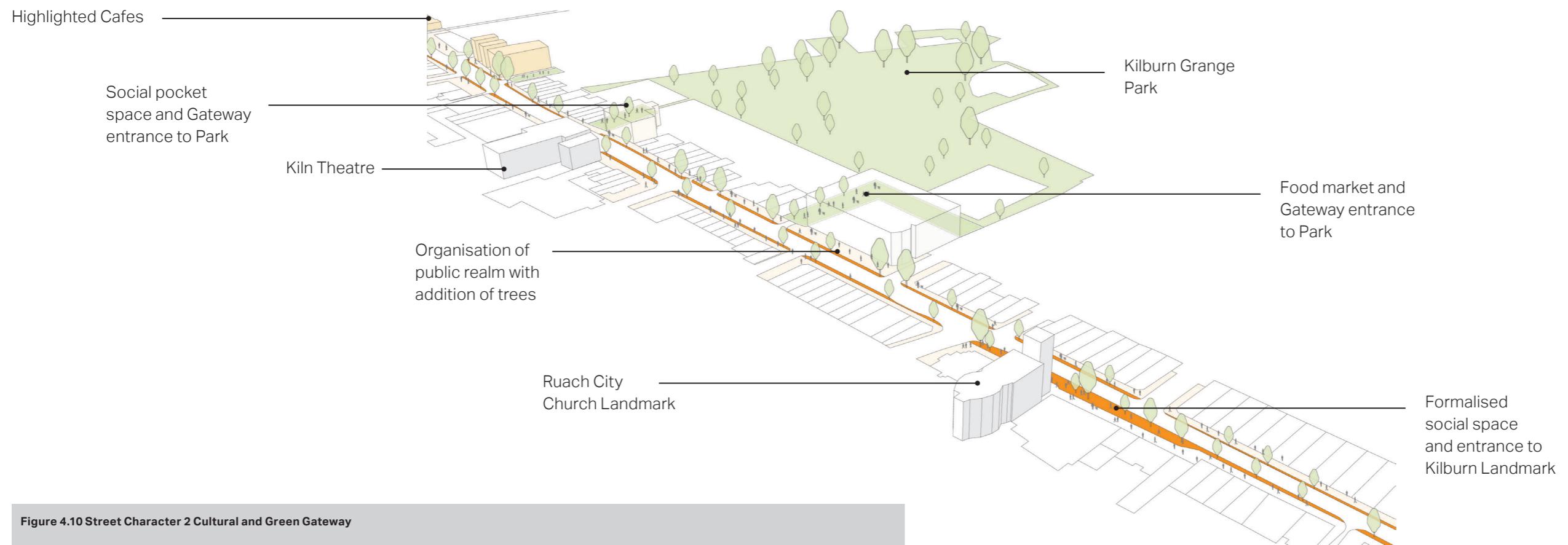
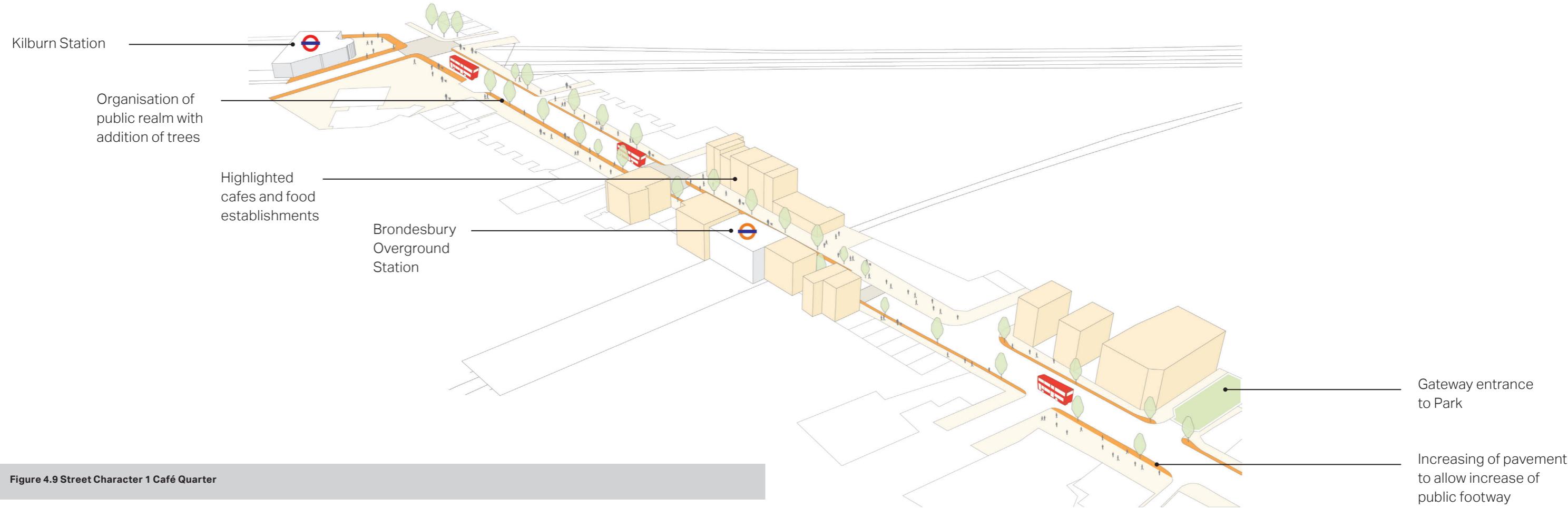


Figure 4.8 Kilburn High Road Overall Street Character







## **Possible Areas of Interventions**

**05**

## 5. Possible Areas of Interventions

Following the site analysis, public realm strategy and the street character study, we were able to establish different possible areas for interventions. We have tried to narrow these down into four main areas, taking into consideration the character they fall into and the opportunities these spaces have and can bring to the community. The ultimate vision continues to be maintaining the High Road's vibrant and mixed identity but by making it attractive and inviting to all members of the community.

By proposing four different areas of interventions, we are also promoting pedestrian movement between these different areas and we are enhancing the gateways within the scheme.

It is important to note that although we have focused on four main areas of intervention, however the strategical and conceptual approach can be applied to other areas of similar characteristics and potential.

The first area of intervention is the one in front of **Kilburn Underground station**, which requires to be opened up and restored as it is a sort of a gateway for Kilburn High Road from the north. It falls in the first stretch of Kilburn High Road which is more residential with independent shops. As referred to before this area is cluttered with signage posts, pedestrian guardrails, bins, bollards and cycle racks, leaving no space for pedestrians movement and interaction. Moreover, the hardscape materials seem to be worn out and not well maintained which can result in unsafe incidents.

The second and third areas of interventions fall into the cultural and green gateway stretch of Kilburn High Road. Both of which are gateways that lead into Kilburn Grange Park. **Palmerston Road** is a dead end alleyway that is bordered by the Webheath Estate. Currently, it is being used mainly as a parking for food delivery motorcycles and as a loading bay. There is a Nando's restaurant at its corner with Kilburn High Road. Due to its strategic location in close proximity to Kilburn Grange Park and to a Camden Housing estate as well as to Kilburn High road, it can serve as an open space refuge from the busy street. That way it will boost the community's well being by providing them with a pocket park, in an urban setting.

**Grangeway** is another street that branches from Kilburn High Road and it connects to Messina Avenue, so it is only used as a short cut and not as a secondary road. The perpendicular street has an opportunity to become a temporary market. Again, since the street is not frequently used by vehicles, the stretch of the street can be closed down at weekends or at specific days of the week to accommodate farmers market, or pop up market, that way it can encourage members of the community to contribute to the daily life at Kilburn and interact together.

The fourth area of intervention is **Kilburn Square**, although this area already functions as an urban square but it will require regeneration. This area is a central open space for Kilburn High Road as it sits within the High Street and just in front of kilburn High Road Overground Station, it is also in close proximity to Kilburn Market so any regeneration in Kilburn Square will also have to include Kilburn Market. At its current status, Killburn Square is not very inviting, the planters with seating are in bad condition, the pavement is not attractive. As for Kilburn Market, it seems as a lost opportunity since the whole area is fenced out so people feel intimidated to enter and explore it. It becomes a destination to the vendors and stall owners rather than something the whole community can benefit from.



Figure 5.1 Kilburn Underground Station- First Possible Area of Intervention



Figure 5.4 Kilburn Square and Kilburn Market- Fourth Possible Area of Intervention



Figure 5.2 Palmerston Road- Second Possible Area of Intervention



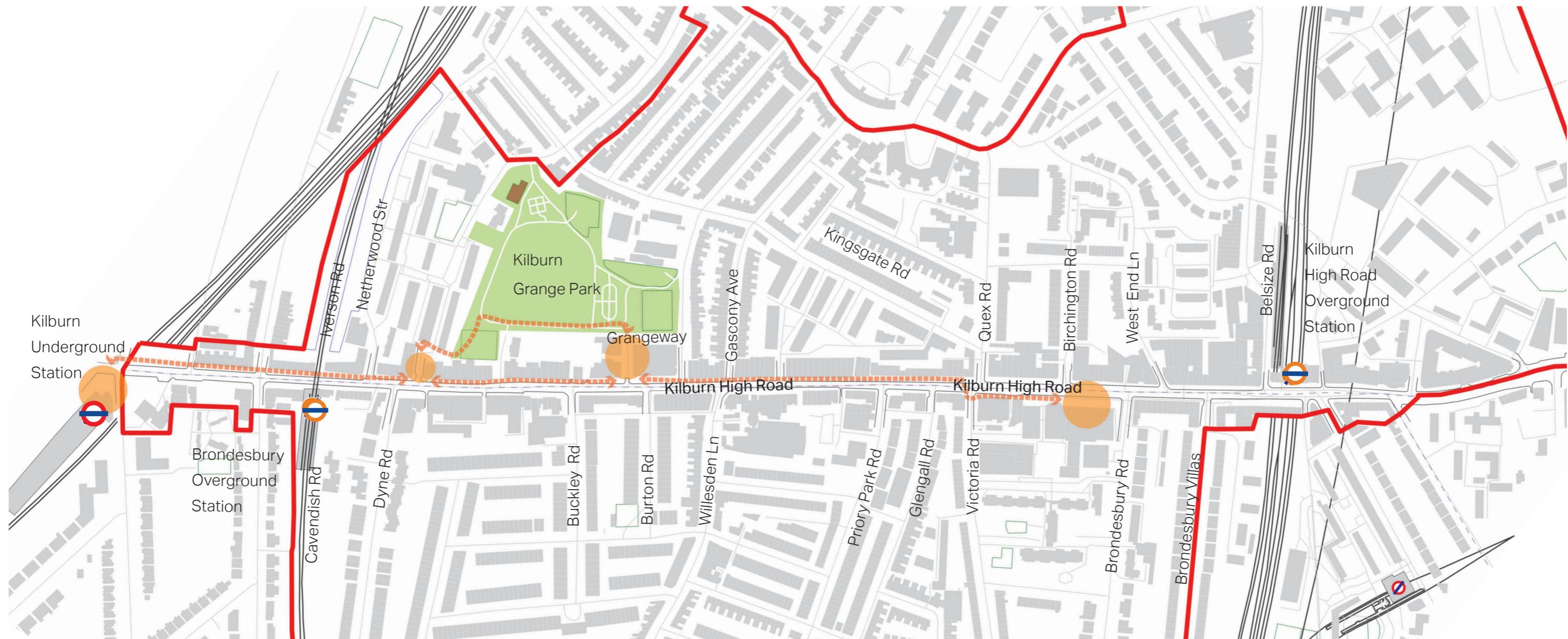
Figure 5.5 Kilburn Market Entrance- Possible Area of Intervention



Figure 5.3 Grangeway, Gateway to Kilburn Grange Park-Third Area of Intervention



Figure 5.6 Kilburn Market- Current Status

**Legend**

- Neighbourhood Plan boundary
- Potential areas of intervention
- Pedestrian network between key areas of intervention



0 100

**Figure 5.7 Possible Areas of Intervention and Connectivity**

## View 1: Kilburn Underground Station

This area is in front Kilburn Underground Station, it is currently enclosed by pedestrian guardrails and cycle racks, and has several items of street furniture that clutter the pavement and obstruct movement. This area falls at the beginning of Kilburn High Road from the north, so it is a gateway to the road. The opportunities below describe how the space could be improved.

1. Pedestrian signalized crossing with higher quality surface materials highlighting the gateway experience;
2. Removal of pedestrian guardrails, opening up the space making the pavement wider in order to improve walking conditions and pedestrian flow;
3. De-cluttering street furniture and reorganizing it, giving importance to the station within Kilburn High Road and improving legibility;
4. Resurfacing with high quality materials to emphasize Kilburn Underground Station as a key space in Kilburn Town Centre;
5. Provision of street furniture and new seating areas with consistent design and colour to develop a unified sense of place; and
6. Arrangement of cycle racks at the borders of the station so that they don't take up from the space.



Figure 5.9 Example - Materials resurfacing promoting local distinctiveness, Stratford Station, London



Figure 5.10 Example - Simple street furniture with consistent design developing a unified sense of place , Shepherds Bush Station, London



Figure 5.11 Example - Open area in front of Tottenham Court Road Station, London

## View 2: Palmerston Road- Urban Square

Palmerston Road is just off Kilburn High Road and it is a dead end vehicular alley. The road provides a visual and physical link to Kilburn Grange Park from Kilburn High Road. The area can become an urban pocket square and a refuge from the busy street. This section of Kilburn High Road has cultural landmarks so a public urban square will be ideal for people to gather outside when moving around the area to attend one of the cultural activities. The opportunities below illustrate how this road can be transformed into a pocket urban square.

1. Permeable paving with high quality material to highlight the space from it is surrounding ;
2. Providing areas open areas for gathering and or children playing;
3. Provision of shaded seating areas and benches with consistent designs giving the place an identity;
4. Introduction of herbaceous planting that can complement a sustainable urban drainage system; and
5. High canopy tree planting providing shade to the area.



Figure 5.12 Kilburn Grange Park Gateways showing possible areas of intervention 2 and 3



Figure 5.13 Palmerston Road- Urban Square



Figure 5.14 Example - Morelondon square a refuge to busy street, London Bridge, London

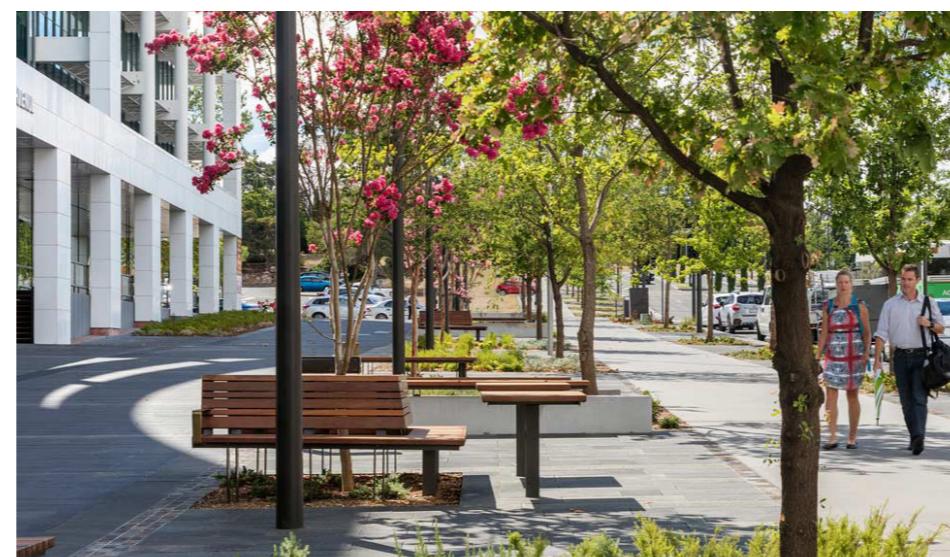


Figure 5.15 Example -Interesting street furniture and planting composition, Constitution Avenue, Canberra. Australia

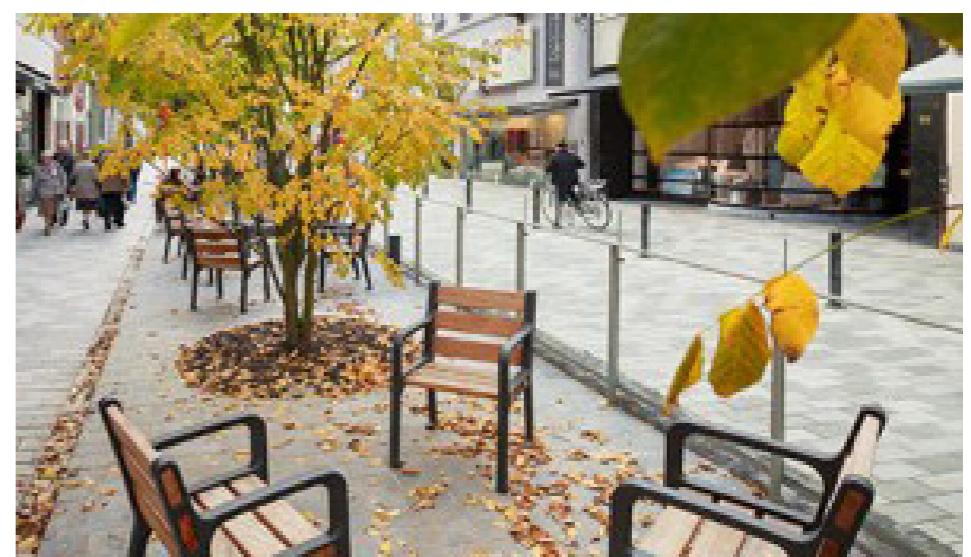


Figure 5.16 Example - Pocket park along shopping street, Stationstraat, Sint-Niklaas, Belgium

## View 3: Potential Farmers Market on Grangeway

This area provides an important pedestrian link between Kilburn High Road and Kilburn Grange Park and functions as gateway to the park. The hardscape materials are already in good condition. There is a potential for this area to accommodate a farmers' market or a seasonal market that Kilburn community can benefit from. There is no farmers' market directly within Kilburn and many vendors that use the edge of pavements along Kilburn High Road to sell fruit and vegetables, so that can be used as an opportunity to consolidate them in one area. This can become a destination market during weekends, bringing up the economy of Kilburn neighbourhood. The opportunities below show how this space could be developed.

1. Provision of tree pit around existing tree;
2. Introduction of movable stalls that farmers can rent out to display their products;
3. Emphasising gateway to the park, the space can act as an active entrance to the park; and
4. Planting new tree at the corner of the street to delimit the area and highlight the gateway.



Figure 5.17 Farmer's Market on Grangeway



Figure 5.18 Example - Flower Market on Columbia road, a tourist attraction and destination



Figure 5.19 Example - Kerb Food Market, Granary Square, Kings Cross, London



Figure 5.20 Example - Alexandra Palace Farmers Market within a landscape park setting, London

## View 4: Kilburn Square and Market

This area consists of Kilburn Square and a section of Kilburn Market. It falls within the busiest area of Kilburn High Road (Kilburn High Street). There is a great opportunity to restore the public square and reactivate it as the pavement is wide enough. This area will act as the main southern commercial and social open space to Kilburn town centre and the rest of the High Road. The opportunities below show how this area could be improved.

1. Arranged street furniture with consistent designs and colors to highlight a unified public realm intervention;
2. Improved surface materials to emphasize Kilburn Square as a main public square and gathering space;
3. Introduction of new tree planting aligned to existing trees to delimit the public resting area from public sidewalk;
4. Clear pavement in front of retail shops to ease pedestrian movement shopping;
5. Proposed tree planting to delimit retail shopping area from public resting area;
6. Introduction of understory planting, mixed of herbaceous and perennial planting that can contribute to the sustainable urban drainage;
7. Provision of street furniture/ benches of high quality and of consistent design and colour to develop a unified identity of the space;
8. Opening up the area in front of Kilburn Market in order that it becomes more inviting, introduction of new stalls and structures and removal of the surrounding fences; and
9. Provision of cycle racks with similar design to benches on the edge of kilburn square and at the boundary of Kilburn Market so that it doesn't obstruct pedestrian movement.



Figure 5.21 Kilburn Square and Kilburn Market



Figure 5.22 Example - Resting area next to busy shopping destination, Pitt Street Mall, Sydney, Australia



Figure 5.23 Example - Clear pavement in front of retail to facilitate pedestrian movement, Stationstraat, Sint-Niklaas, Belgium



Figure 5.24 Example - Croydon High Street Public Realm, Croydon, London



# **Shopfront Guidance**

**06**

# 6. Shopfront Guidance

## Introduction

This storefront design guidance is intended to provide advice on the design of businesses and shopfronts within Kilburn Town. Although the guidance applies throughout the whole Neighbourhood Area, it has a particular focus on Kilburn High Road where most commercial properties are to be found. The variable quality of shop fronts, and the impact this has on the wider 'feel' of the area, has been identified as an area of concern.

The purpose of this section is to encourage high standards of design and the use of appropriate and sympathetic materials in both new shop fronts and renovation of existing ones. Good design can make an important contribution to the character and appearance of the commercial streets, helping to create an attractive shopping and cultural environment.

The key objectives in relation to business and shop front design and signage in Kilburn Town are as follows:

1. To provide guidance on the retention, refurbishment or replacement of existing shop fronts including signs and fascias;
2. To support the transformation of shop fronts in older buildings where the original design has been destroyed or otherwise compromised and the applicant is wishing to reincorporate a traditional retail frontage or a modern interpretation of it;
3. To inform and encourage a diversity of approach to shop fronts, while promoting good design;
4. To ensure appropriate provision is made to meet the access requirements of all shopkeepers;
5. To improve the front shop perceptions within the whole Neighbourhood Area although the guidelines are intended primarily for shops on Kilburn High Road; and
6. To ensure only good quality shuttering and advertisements that reflect the design aspirations of the area are provided in places where they are suitable.

## General principles of shop design

The most welcoming of shop fronts are inviting and attractive in themselves; they add to the shopper's experience. Usually, they have an entrance door set back from the back edge of the pavement; they will have a stall riser, one or two vertical mullions, and a transom rail at head of door level.

However, new construction methods and materials have led to a diffusion of the "standard" modern shop front within shopping streets. This type of shop front is usually characterized by aluminum or plastic framework, with a large area of plate glass, often incorporating a doorway. If this is applied to a historic building, it gives a visually non-cohesive appearance.

In the Neighbourhood Area, the majority of shop fronts are modern. It is important that new shops should incorporate traditional features, where these are present locally, and thus, avoid large areas of plate glass, or using aluminum and plastic as materials.

If the existing shop front is to be replaced, the key principle is that the new shop front should carefully take account of the building context and history as well as commercial concerns, being consistent with the whole architectural composition of the building. The design should take into account the period and style of the building above as well as of buildings in the immediate vicinity.



Figure 6.1 Current status of shopfront on Kilburn High Road



Figure 6.2 Examples of good shop front design



Figure 6.3 Examples of bad shop front design

If the premises are in a modern development, there is potential to explore more innovative approach to a shop front. Even though, this may involve the use of non-traditional materials, high quality design should always be guaranteed: shop front design in this instance should be appropriate to the style of the building, utilizing high quality materials.

The design or redesign of a shop front in the Neighbourhood Area should take into account the age and architectural detail of the building as a whole and special attention should be paid to the elements described below.

## Windows

It is highly recommended that the design of the windows should reflect and enhance the architectural style of the remainder of the building. The use of glazing panels, with mullions and transoms is preferred to the large areas of glass. Shop fronts should ensure that their windows are used to effectively display products or maintain a visual link between the street and interior of the shop. Shop fronts should avoid advertising displays, such as plastic film, that fully obscures the interior of the shop from the eyes of the pedestrian. Ground floor windows should ensure active street frontages. It is also important to consider the first floor which may be used for another use such as residential or offices.

## Materials

Materials should be selected in accordance with the building character and image. As a general guidance, the number and type of materials should be kept to a minimum, and always be based on the local architectural style of the street.

## Signs and Advertising

Though diversity is encouraged between different shop fronts, signage should be consistent across an individual façade. There is some degree of flexibility in signage design, but as a general set of principles, the following branding is appropriate in the Neighbourhood Plan area:

- Encourage font that is the same across all external signage;
- Maintain a consistent foreground and background colour;
- Ensure that the colour palette used is reflective of the colour palette present across the whole façade, including the area above the shop front;
- If there is a hanging sign that extends out in front of the building, this should be in keeping with the rest of shop front, and not have an overbearing impact on the general street scene; and,
- Advertising external to retail premises (e.g. A-frames and blackboards) should be discouraged where they impede walkways or harm local character.

## Security

Addressing security is a key issue for both shopkeepers and community. The use of solid roller shutter blinds, which lead to a very unattractive environment when closed, should be discouraged. The use of open roller grills, removable grills or internal grilles and meshes are preferred since the shop display can still be seen, enhancing the perception of the street outside working hours. It is recommended that roller shutters and grills are integrated into the design of the shop and not additional items, non-contributing to the building appearance.

## Awnings, Canopies and Blinds

If integrated into the shop front design, awnings, canopies and blinds could be a very attractive addition to the street environment. Straight canvas canopies with particular retractable rollers design would be preferred and recommended instead of the use of inappropriate plastic coated blinds.

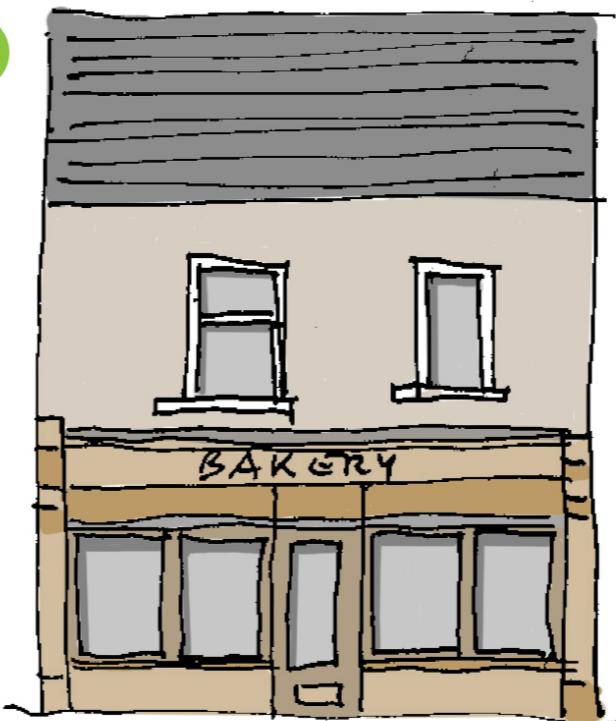


Figure 6.4 Good window design and proportions



Figure 6.7 Bad window design and proportions



Figure 6.5 Grill type shutters create active shop fronts

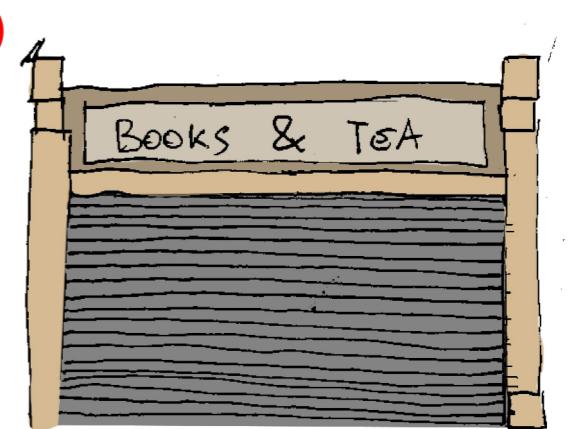


Figure 6.8 Roller shutter detract from the streetscape

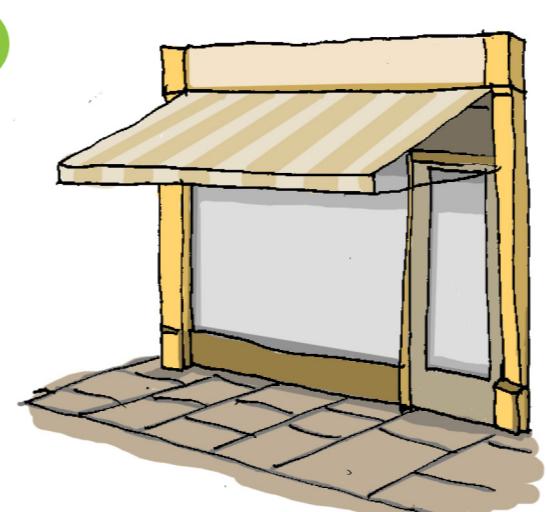


Figure 6.6 Example - Awnings

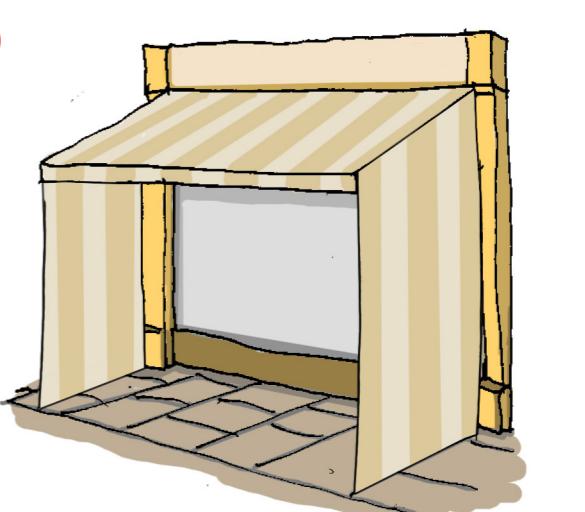


Figure 6.6 Example - Awnings



## **Next Steps**

**07**

## 7. Next Steps

This report builds on the work already done by Kilburn Neighbourhood Plan Forum to offer advice on how the area's built environment can be improved as development takes place. The recommendations are rooted in the engagement work that the Forum has undertaken, combined with the specialist skills of AECOM's planners, landscape architects and urban designers.

### Summary of Key Proposals

- Widen narrow footways when possible by reclaiming the privatised public footpath to improve walking conditions and pedestrian flow;
- Resurface paving with high-quality materials in key areas to emphasise Kilburn High Road's function as the area's central retail and gathering space;
- Provide tree planting to create a continuous identity to the road;
- Provide high quality street furniture (bins, benches, planters) with consistent design to highlight a unified sense of place;
- De-clutter and reorganise street furniture to facilitate pedestrian movement and improve legibility;
- Provide public art or motifs on blank walls close to stations replacing blank walls with something of local cultural relevance;
- Open up and enhance gateways like Kilburn Underground Station, Kilburn High Road Overground station and gateways leading Kilburn Grange Park by improving spatial and visual connections;
- Opportunity to enhance and restore Kilburn Square with high quality materials to emphasise its position as the main commercial and social open space along the High Street;
- Opportunity to develop an urban pocket square on Palmerston Road, which is underutilised and has a potential to become a refuge from the busy street; and
- Opportunity to accommodate a farmers' market or seasonal market on Grangeway to activate the area and involve the community in an activity that they can benefit from, it can also improve the economy of Kilburn.

### Purpose

The recommended next steps for how to use the outcomes of this design options study are to:

- Embed the report's content in the emerging Neighbourhood Plan;
- Engage with the Councils to develop policies supporting the proposals;
- Engage with traders and landlords to begin to implement shop front improvements;
- Identify public realm improvements to kick start the regeneration of Kilburn High Road, using the sketches in Chapter 5 as inspiration; and
- Work with those local organisations that can help to implement the recommendations, for example by reusing some of the landmark vacant buildings on Kilburn High Road.

### Integration in the Neighbourhood Plan

- Neighbourhood Plan policy needs must relate to land use planning: things that must be subject to planning permission. It is not always clear how transport and public realm proposals fit into this category, unless they form part of a site (re)development, which is not the case here.

The steering group should consider how our recommendations can be transposed into policy through discussions with the Council and use the best practice guidance from Locality to prepare draft policies for consultation. Locality's 'Writing Planning Policies' guidance sets out how different planning policies are designed to achieve different things. The guide describes the three most common as:

1. Generic – a simple policy which applies universally to development across the entire neighbourhood plan area;
2. Criteria based – a policy with a series of requirements that should be met by development proposals. These can be set out as separate bullet points; and,
3. Site specific – this is where a policy applies to particular areas of land. One of the most powerful tools for a neighbourhood plan is to allocate land for a particular type of development. As well as allocating land, the Neighbourhood Plan can set out the principles which need to be followed in developing a particular site. This might include specifying what needs to be covered in a design brief to accompany any planning application. If there are site specific policies then a clear map showing the location and boundaries should be included.

The basic sample policy below can be used at the starting point for drafting a Kilburn High Road one regarding shop fronts.

#### Shopfront Quality Design

Proposals will be required to be of a high quality, contributing to an overall improvement in terms of urban design and architecture.

Proposals will:

- Use an appropriate choice of materials and colour;
- Be visually attractive from all angles;
- Enhance streets and spaces through quality design and architecture;
- Promote visual links between the interior of the shop and the street; and
- Be suitable in terms of crime prevention, community safety and security.

#### **About AECOM**

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