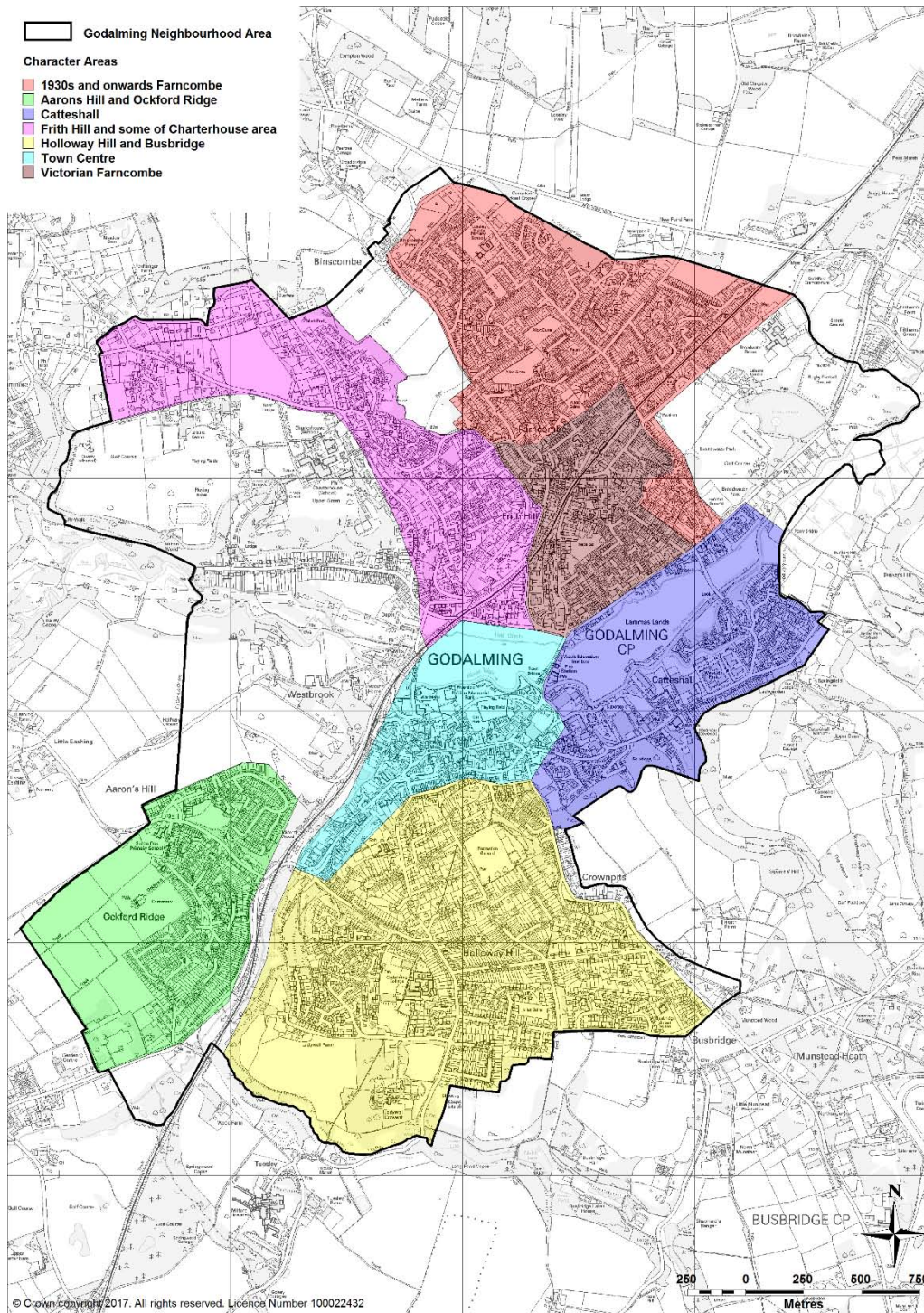


Figure 6.2: Character Areas in Godalming and Farncombe



- 6.10 This approach is not intended to stifle innovation, originality or initiative, but will promote local distinctiveness as required by the NPPF.
- 6.11 It is considered important that development must be designed so that it sits appropriately within its surroundings. It is acknowledged that, if development is of a different mix of housing, e.g. 2 and 3-bed dwellings in a predominantly 4 and 5-bed dwelling area, then densities may differ

slightly. However, it is vital that the design of such developments does not have a negative impact on the amenity of existing residents in the neighbouring properties.

6.12 The objectives of this policy are to ensure that safe and attractive residential layouts are promoted.

6.13 The particular issues that should be considered in demonstrating that a development scheme is acceptable are as follows:

- The style and materials used in the area of Godalming and Farncombe in which they are proposed to be built. Much of the relevant context is provided in the Character Area Assessments. They should be varied in design and avoid uniformity to enhance the appearance and character of the local area. The community looks to applicants to demonstrate a commitment to delivering standards which will improve the Godalming and Farncombe area and not detract from it.
- Established building lines and arrangements of front gardens, walls or hedges, where such features are important to the character and appearance of the area (see photos below).



***Hedgerows, grass and greenery bordering properties***



***Original style Victorian brick and stone walls***

- In a historic town such as Godalming certain features of housing layout have been well established over a long period. These include:
  - Established plot widths within streets where development is proposed, particularly where they establish a rhythm and height to the architecture in a street.
  - The separation (i) between buildings, and (ii) between buildings and their site boundaries, in relation to likely impact on the privacy and amenity of neighbouring properties and existing views.
- Aligning with the prevailing existing roofline of the immediate area and ensuring not to cause harm to views that are important to the character and heritage of the area. Buildings which are significantly higher than the surrounding ones will need to show that they are not harmful to the character and appearance of the Conservation Areas, the wooded hillsides (as reflected in the adopted Waverley Local Plan Policies BE2 and BE5), the river valleys and other visually important sites. Precedent should not be seen to be set by new developments such as Prime Place on Flambard Way, which have been granted planning permission despite being much higher than surrounding buildings and also obscuring views of the hillsides.





***Flambard Way: Victorian terrace just visible (arrowed) to the left of Prime Place, but the hillside behind is no longer visible***

- The provision of sufficient off-street storage for recycling bins associated with each new property. The community of Godalming and Farncombe raised this as an issue, particularly in areas where houses have small front gardens.

6.14 The wooded hillsides are valued by the local people as shown by responses in public consultations.



***View of Town with hillsides from Frith Hill area***



***View of Town from St Edmund's steps***



***Farncombe is also framed by hillsides***

- 6.15 In addition, there will be strong support for development that reflects the following:
- 'Building for Life 12' criteria<sup>15</sup> with designs that will weather and mellow with time and settle into the environment rather than conflict with it. The philosophy should be 'build well - build once'. These are shown in Appendix A.
  - The provision of shared green spaces within smaller developments, recognising both physical and mental health aspects of the environment and the inhabitants right to a life-enhancing environment.
- 6.16 The policy applies to the whole of the Godalming and Farncombe Neighbourhood Plan area rather than just within the settlement boundary.
- 6.17 It is important that the guidance in the Character Area Assessments, or any successor documents, are followed in respect of the seven character areas in Godalming and Farncombe.

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<sup>15</sup> <http://www.designcouncil.org.uk/resources/guide/building-life-12-third-edition>

**POLICY GOD5: CHARACTER AND DESIGN**

- A. All development shall protect the amenity of neighbours, and be sympathetic to the scale, mass, height and form of neighbouring properties. Development proposals must demonstrate how they contribute positively to the features of the respective character areas, as described in the Godalming and Farncombe Character Area Assessments**
- B. In particular, development proposals shall:**
- a. Retain historic buildings that contribute to the distinctive character and historic architectural interest of the Character Area;**
  - b. Ensure they do not cause harm to views that are important to the character and heritage of the area as exemplified by Policy God 8 and God 13.**
  - c. Avoid the appearance of cramming by aligning with the established plots widths within the street;**
  - d. Be in keeping with the form of development of properties in the immediate surrounding area, particularly with respect to the prevailing roofline;**
  - e. Provide sufficient off-street storage for refuse and recycling bins associated with each new property;**
  - f. New developments are to respond to the existing street scene, reflect the prevailing boundary treatments where such features are important to the character and appearance of the area, and in particular whether existing developments are setback from the road.**
- C. In order to ensure that delivery of demonstrably sustainable development, proposals that directly address the following will be strongly encouraged:**
- a. Design that meets the 'Building for Life 12' criteria. Developers are encouraged to demonstrate how their proposals specifically meet these criteria, as shown in Appendix A.**
  - ~~**b. The provision of shared green spaces within smaller developments. The scale of such provision should adequately reflect the number and mix of units in the development.**~~

## Design of Residential Parking

- 6.18 Residential parking was raised as a significant issue by the community throughout the preparation of the Godalming and Farncombe Neighbourhood Plan. With a high proportion of semi-detached and terraced houses as well as flats, Godalming and Farncombe does not **have sufficient safe** off-street parking for its residents. As such, and with growing levels of car ownership, the amount of on-street parking has increased. This impacts upon the safety of pedestrians and cyclists, as well as creating amenity and access problems for refuse and, of greatest concern, emergency service vehicles. The additional new development that is planned means it is even more important to deliver solutions which address this issue.
- 6.19 *It is therefore paramount that new development is designed so as to minimise the opportunity for on-street parking. New streets should be designed so as to discourage residents from parking on the street and instead park in the off-street areas provided for them. Use of car ports – which are open structures making parking easier than in garages, whilst still retaining storage above – and parking courts – provided they are designed to minimise criminal activity – can be effective ways of providing off-street parking. Equally, new streets can be designed so that it is not possible to simply park on them, for example through the provision of permanent planters or other structures where parking spaces would normally be – this also has the added benefit of making the street more visually attractive.*



***A 1980s development where garages are provided in brick surrounded courtyards but are not routinely used for car parking***



***A recent development where there is a mix of parking areas, garages, etc, but this appears to be insufficient for the development***

- 6.20 Waverley Borough Council's 2013 parking guidelines provide guidance on minimum standards of provision for car parking. It is considered necessary to bring this guidance into policy in the Godalming and Farncombe Neighbourhood Plan in order to ensure that it has greater weight in decision-making and that development is designed to fully take these matters into account.

**POLICY GOD6: PROVISION AND DESIGN OF RESIDENTIAL PARKING**

- A. Development proposals that generate an increased need for residential parking should provide adequate and suitable off-street parking in order to minimise obstruction of the local road network in the interests of the safety of all road users, including pedestrians and cyclists.
- B. In the case of residential development, the following minimum off-street parking provision is required:
- a) 1-bed units:
    - i. **Within the Godalming Town Centre Area, 1 space per unit**
    - ii. **Outside the Godalming Town Centre Area, 1 space per unit**
  - b) 2-bed units:
    - i. **Within the Godalming Town Centre Area, 1 space per unit.**
    - ii. **Outside the Godalming Town Centre Area, 2 spaces per unit.**
  - c) 3+ bed units:
    - i. **Within the Godalming Town Centre Area, 1.5 space per unit.**
    - ii. **Outside the Godalming Town Area, 2.5 spaces per unit.**
  - d) **Where space permits additional parking provision is to be encouraged.**

**Note: The Town Centre Area is shown on the Policies Map.**

- C. The parking spaces required by Policy GOD6.B is considered to be the minimum required to support sustainable development within the Neighbourhood Plan area. A lower level of provision will only be permitted if it can be clearly demonstrated that a decreased requirement is justified. Evidence to support justification for a lower parking space provision is to be submitted with the planning application. This requirement applies to all parking provision standards**
- D. Parking spaces that take the form of open spaces or car port facilities, rather than garages, will be encouraged.
- E. Development proposals that would reduce the existing level of off-street parking provision will be resisted unless it can be satisfactorily demonstrated that the amount of overall provision is adequate.
- F. The design of new residential streets must demonstrate how on-street parking in excess of that required for residents and visitors will be minimised. Use of environmental and other visually attractive features including street furniture to manage on-street parking arrangements will be strongly encouraged, particularly in the Godalming Town Centre Area and along the identified Movement Routes (Policy GOD9).



## Shopfront Design and Advertising

- 6.21 Godalming and Farncombe have historic retail centres which are important to local people. Godalming town centre is in a conservation area and has many listed buildings which should offer protection from inappropriate shop frontages. The retail areas in other parts of Godalming and Farncombe are also visually important and provide a community amenity.
- 6.22 The community wishes to protect and enhance these areas and, in particular, shop frontages are one important way that the unique ambience and attractiveness of the shopping experience in the area is enhanced.
- 6.23 There is widespread concern that excessive plastic and low quality shop frontage reduces the overall feel of the shopping areas. This is particularly important in the Town Centre Conservation Area where, due to the absence of any Article 4 Direction (see Glossary), changes can and have been made to unlisted buildings without needing planning permission. Whilst this cannot be addressed directly by the Godalming and Farncombe Neighbourhood Plan, it highlights the importance of ensuring that any proposed alterations to shop frontages follow appropriate design criteria.
- 6.24 Waverley Local Plan Saved Policy S7 (Shopfronts) requires a high standard of design, including the use of appropriate materials that blend in with the street scene. This has been complemented by the Waverley Shopfront Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document<sup>16</sup> (SPD) and it is considered that this guidance should be integrated into policy for Godalming and Farncombe, with specific requirements in respect of materials and design.



<sup>16</sup> Waverley Borough Council (2016) *Shopfront Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document*



***Farncombe's main retail area of the village centre with old and new developments sitting side by side interspersed with residential property and close to the parish church***

- 6.25 Design of shop frontages should be of a high quality and owners of shops and commercial properties should respond sensitively to the local area in the provision of an appropriate frontage. They should avoid plastic, aluminium and mosaic materials and the signage should not be overbearing in terms of size or design.



***National retailer using appropriate materials and design in the Conservation Area***

- 6.26 Generally, muted and traditional colours are preferred as they preserve the character of many of Waverley's shopping streets. The materials should reflect the architectural style of the building. Materials such as granite and marble, or modern highly reflective materials, are not usually characteristic of the area. Materials and colours should be carefully considered. The photograph above shows a national chain store with an appropriate frontage, reflecting the fact that many national retailers have logos and styles for conservation areas.



***An example where the building's original features have not been spoilt by the shop front***

***The left half of this shop's frontage has generic branding which detracts from the adjoining part of the frontage***

6.27 'Restore not replace' is an important principle. Godalming High Street has many traditional shop fronts which make up the character of the Conservation Area. Original features, such as recessed doorways, stall risers, mullions, transoms and pilasters, should, where possible, be restored rather than replaced.



***The shop on the left has divided the frontage with wooden painted windows and risers which fits with the street scene***

***The one above has used glazed ceramic tiles and large plate glass which is a bland expanse out of character with the street***

6.28 Care should be taken to ensure the size, shape and position of awnings and canopies are in keeping with the street scene and building and conform to Surrey County Council's clearance height recommendations. Retractable awnings and canopies are preferred as they allow for greater flexibility of use.





***Examples of rhythm and street scene***

- 6.29 The appearance of individual units should keep the 'rhythm' of the street scene (see the examples above, including the M&Co frontage). This additionally improves actual and perceived structural integrity of the building.
- 6.30 'Rhythm' is taken to mean the repetition or alternation of elements, often with defined intervals between them. It can create a sense of movement and can establish pattern and texture. A regular rhythm occurs when the intervals between the elements, and often the elements themselves, are similar in size or length. Examples are where shop frontages have been framed with smaller elements to fit in with the adjacent buildings.



***Good examples of existing signs in the Town Centre that are of a similar size and do not dominate or obscure architectural features***

- 6.31 Fascias should not hide architectural detailing of the building. They should not obscure the first-floor window sills and should be proportionate to the building.