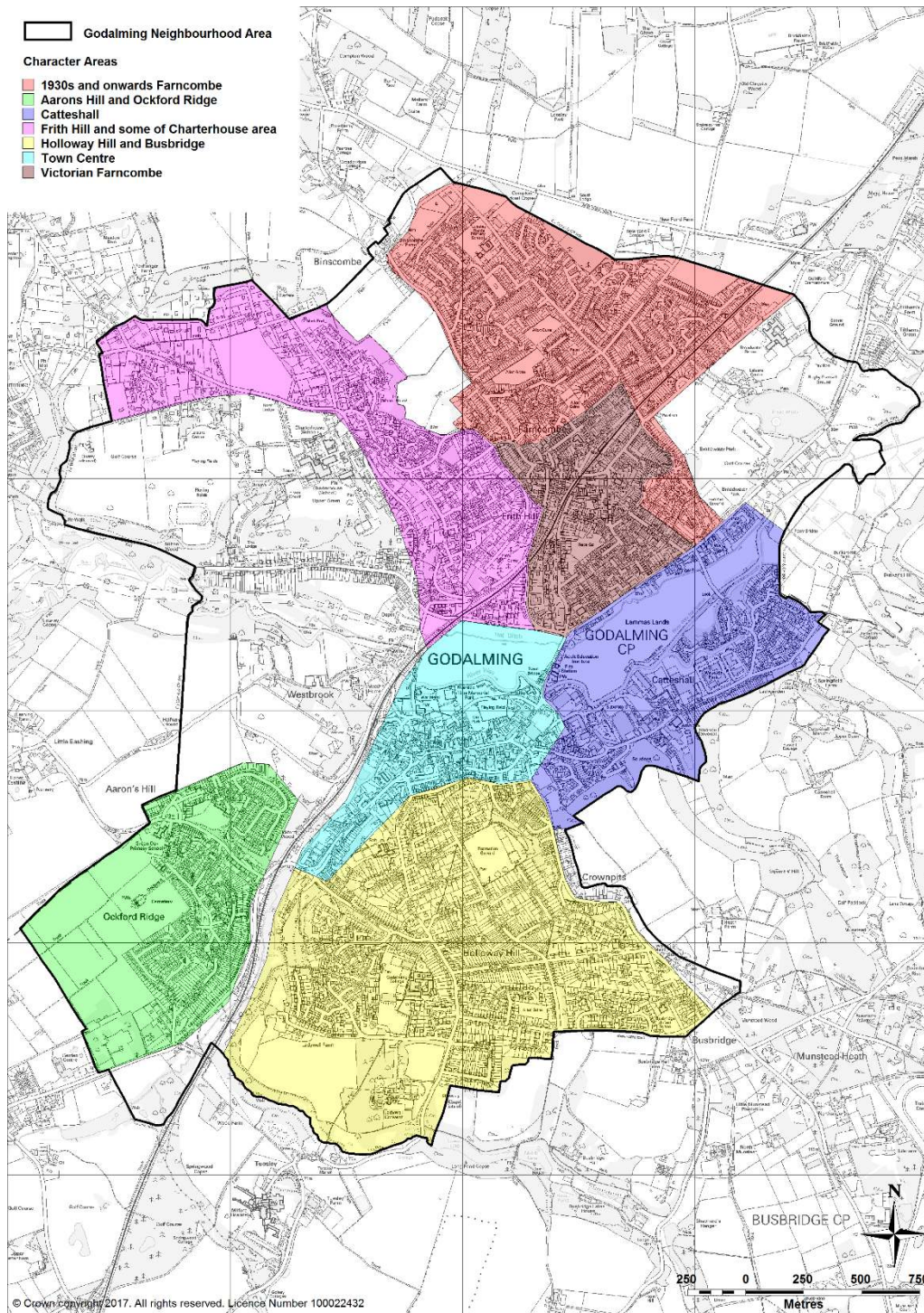


Figure 6.2: Character Areas in Godalming and Farncombe



- 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' criteria¹⁵ 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 inhabitant's 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.

¹⁵ <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.

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