



# **Godalming & Farncombe Neighbourhood Plan 2017-2032**

April 2019

## **PART 1**



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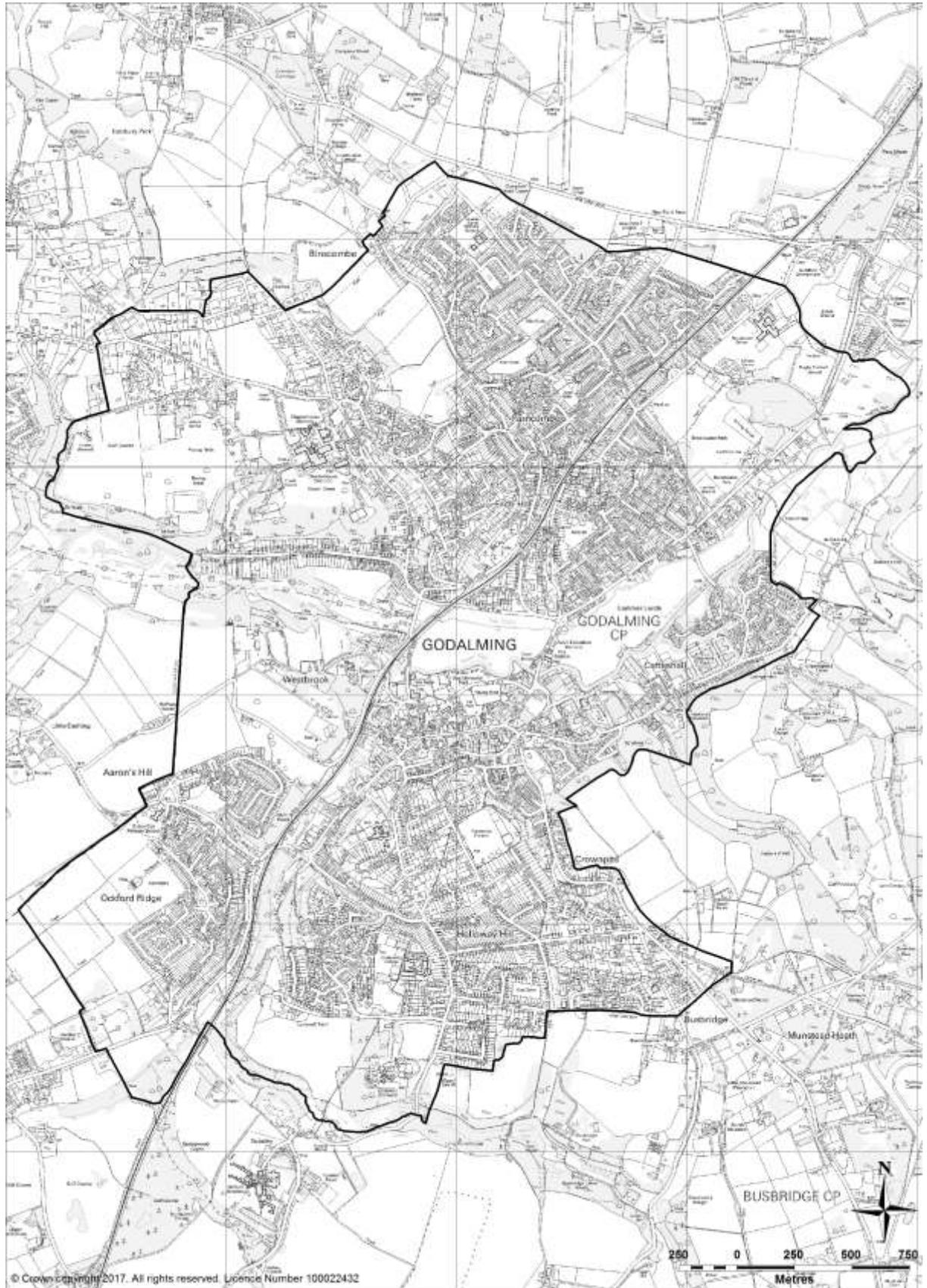
### PART 1

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# 1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This document represents the Godalming & Farncombe Neighbourhood Plan for Godalming parish. It represents one part of the development plan for the parish over the period 2017 to 2032, the other part being the Waverley Local Plan Part 1 (2018). It is important that the Neighbourhood Plan has due regard for the strategic policies in the Local Plan Part 1. In addition, Waverley Borough Council is preparing a Local Plan Part 2: Site Allocations and Development Management Policies. This will complement the Local Plan Part 1 and the Neighbourhood Plan policies and is due for adoption in 2019.
- 1.2 Waverley Borough Council, as the local planning authority, designated a Neighbourhood Area for the whole of Godalming parish in July 2013 to enable Godalming Town Council to prepare the Godalming and Farncombe Neighbourhood Plan. The Godalming and Farncombe Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared by the community through the Godalming and Farncombe Neighbourhood Plan Group.
- 1.3 The Godalming and Farncombe Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared in accordance with the Town & Country Planning Act 1990, the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the Localism Act 2011 and the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012. The Godalming and Farncombe Neighbourhood Plan Group has prepared the plan to establish a vision for the future of the parish and to set out how that vision will be realised through planning and controlling land use and development change over the plan period 2017 to 2032.
- 1.4 The map in Figure 1.1 shows the boundary of the Godalming and Farncombe Neighbourhood Plan area, which is contiguous with the boundary of Godalming parish.
- 1.5 The purpose of the Godalming and Farncombe Neighbourhood Plan is to guide development within the parish and provide guidance to any interested parties wishing to submit planning applications for development within the parish. The process of producing a plan has sought to involve the community as widely as possible and the different topic areas are reflective of matters that are of considerable importance to Godalming and Farncombe, its residents, businesses and community groups.
- 1.6 Each section of the plan covers a different topic. Under each heading there is the justification for the policies presented which provides the necessary understanding of the policy and what it is seeking to achieve. The policies themselves are presented in the blue boxes. It is these policies against which planning applications will be assessed. It is advisable that, in order to understand the full context for any individual policy, it is read in conjunction with the supporting text.

**Figure 1.1: Godalming and Farncombe Neighbourhood Plan Area**



## National Policy

1.7 The Godalming and Farncombe Neighbourhood Plan has been written to ensure consistency with the 2012 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and all NPPF references and paragraph numbers relate to that version, however consideration has been given to the new 2018 NPPF.

1.8 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states:

*"Neighbourhood planning gives communities direct power to develop a shared vision for their neighbourhood and deliver the sustainable development they need. Parishes ... can use neighbourhood planning to set planning policies through neighbourhood plans to determine decisions on planning applications (para.183).*

*Neighbourhood planning provides a powerful set of tools for local people to ensure that they get the right types of development for their community. The ambition of the neighbourhood should be aligned with the strategic needs and priorities of the wider local area.*

*Neighbourhood plans must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Plan. To facilitate this, local planning authorities should set out clearly their strategic policies for the area and ensure that an up-to-date Local Plan is in place as quickly as possible. Neighbourhood plans should reflect these policies and neighbourhoods should plan positively to support them. Neighbourhood plans and orders should not promote less development than set out in the Local Plan or undermine its strategic policies (para.184).*

*Outside these strategic elements, neighbourhood plans will be able to shape and direct sustainable development in their area. Once a neighbourhood plan has demonstrated its general conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Plan and is brought into force, the policies it contains take precedence over existing non-strategic policies in the Local Plan for that neighbourhood, where they are in conflict. Local planning authorities should avoid duplicating planning processes for non-strategic policies where a neighbourhood plan is in preparation (para.185)".*

1.9 The Local Plan for Waverley Borough consists of the Local Plan Part 1 (2018) and retained policies from the 2002 Local Plan. This is an up-to-date plan and therefore provides the strategic framework for growth in Godalming and Farncombe.

1.10 The Waverley Local Plan Part 1 covers the period to 2032. It identifies Godalming as one of the main settlements for accommodating the residential and commercial growth required across the borough. It is the role of the Godalming and Farncombe Neighbourhood Plan to provide a spatial framework for the delivery of this growth.

## Consultation

1.11 The Godalming and Farncombe Neighbourhood Plan Group developed the Godalming and Farncombe Neighbourhood Plan through extensive engagement with the community.

1.12 In October 2013, Godalming Town Council agreed to promote and resource the Godalming and Farncombe Neighbourhood Plan process for Godalming and Farncombe and engaged professional planning consultants to advise on the process. A public meeting was held in January 2014 at the

Borough Hall, with nearly 300 people attending; the event had to be streamed live into the adjoining Council Chamber as well as being streamed on a webcast.

- 1.13 From this meeting residents were asked to complete feedback forms from which over 70 volunteers came forward to form six working groups - Transport, Community & Infrastructure, Natural Environment & Water Management, Housing, Economy and Heritage and Design. These groups started their investigations and evidence gathering phase in March 2014, with an oversight steering group being set up in September 2014.
- 1.14 The working groups gathered information and evidence through a number of processes including online surveys and public consultations at the main town events; Godalming Town Show, Farncombe Fete, Spring Show, Farmers Markets, Spring and Summer Festival Markets.
- 1.15 From the feedback received via these events, the Steering Group collated information from the individual working groups to create the Godalming and Farncombe Neighbourhood Plan Survey, which over the period September 2015, was distributed via the Royal Mail to all postal addresses within the GU7 area, approximately 9,500 addresses. In conjunction with the postal survey an online version was made available via the Godalming Town Council website. In total, 2,084 responses were received.
- 1.16 The survey information was collated during November 2015, with the results being used to inform debate within twelve Focus Group sessions held at various times and locations throughout March 2016. During the same period, themes identified from the survey were explored with the Godalming & District Chamber of Commerce.
- 1.17 Having identified the main issues of concern within the community, a public exhibition of the work of the volunteer groups was held at Godalming Museum during April 2016, with representatives of the Godalming and Farncombe Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group being in attendance to assist and inform the visitors to the exhibition.
- 1.18 During July 2016 and October 2017, a further online survey was conducted with local businesses, followed by a call for sites to establish any potential sites that might be allocated for development in the Godalming and Farncombe Neighbourhood Plan.
- 1.19 Throughout the process, updates were published within the Town Council's newsletters which were distributed to all GU7 households.
- 1.20 The beginning of 2017 saw an end of the evidence gathering phase and the submission of Working Group Reports to the Steering Group in order to produce the first draft Godalming and Farncombe Neighbourhood Plan Report. Throughout a series of meetings the Steering Group reviewed the draft report, with the final version forwarded for scrutiny by Godalming Town Council prior to the Pre-Submission Consultation.

## 2 LOCAL CONTEXT

### History of Godalming and Farncombe

- 2.1 Godalming, located within the Borough of Waverley, was first mentioned in the Domesday Book. It is an historic market town with some 22,000 inhabitants. Located in south-west Surrey the town is four miles from Guildford and 30 miles from London. Being on the route from London to Portsmouth the town is close to the A3 and served by two railway stations with regular services to and from London Waterloo.
- 2.2 Godalming has a strong sense of identity and community. Widely considered to be a very desirable place to live, the town straddles the River Wey and its most important distinguishing landscape feature is the large water meadow area, central to the town, known as the Lammas Lands. Its hillsides that rise from either side of the meadow very much assist in defining its character. These features, along with the presence of the Green Belt around much of the town and the recognition of the quality of the landscape through the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty to the west and north and the Area of Great Landscape Value in the west and north-west of the parish, represent significant environmental assets that need to be protected as Godalming and Farncombe grow.
- 2.3 The town has a long history and a built environment that reflects that heritage. There are five conservation areas in and around Godalming and 227 listed buildings. The town is still growing with twenty-first century development sitting beside older buildings.
- 2.4 The administrative area that is Godalming encompasses a number of different communities including Farncombe, Binscombe, Frith Hill, Aarons Hill, Ockford Ridge, Catteshall, Crownpits, Charterhouse and (almost all of) Busbridge. Of these, the Farncombe community has a distinctive 'village' identity of its own and is served by one of the train stations.
- 2.5 Farncombe was initially established around the Manor which was located where Manor Gardens is now. The second phase of its development came with the railway in 1849.
- 2.6 Godalming is regarded as an expensive residential town, partly due to its visual appeal, favourable transport links and high proportion of private housing<sup>1</sup>. Between 1950 and 1980, Godalming experienced a large expansion in housing with new estates being built on previous greenfield sites in Binscombe, South Hill, Farncombe Hill/Twycross, Bargate Wood and Aarons Hill areas of the town. In addition, there have been a growing number of developments in the once industrial area of Catteshall Road, resulting in the loss of industrial buildings and land.
- 2.7 The Borough of Waverley, which includes Godalming, was judged in 2013 to have the highest quality of life in Great Britain<sup>2</sup> and in 2016 to be the most prosperous place in the UK<sup>3</sup>. Although predominantly a prosperous area Godalming is not without areas of difficulty. The 2015 Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) showed that Aarons Hill in Godalming and the Northbourne/Long Gore/Furze Lane area of Farncombe remain two of the three most disadvantaged Super Output Areas (SOAs) in Waverley borough (although Aarons Hill has improved from sixth to 26th in Surrey).<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Dyckhoff, Tom (19 September 2009). "Let's move to Godalming, Surrey". The Guardian. London. Retrieved 19 September 2009.

<sup>2</sup> Bingham, John (29 March 2013). "Waverley tops list of best places to live". Daily Telegraph. London. Retrieved 29 March 2013.

<sup>3</sup> "The 22 happiest, richest, healthiest, and most crime-free areas in Britain". The Independent. London. 13 October 2016

<sup>4</sup> <https://mycouncil.surreycc.gov.uk/documents/s26451/PRIORITY%20NEIGHBOURHOODS%20AND%20DATA.pdf>

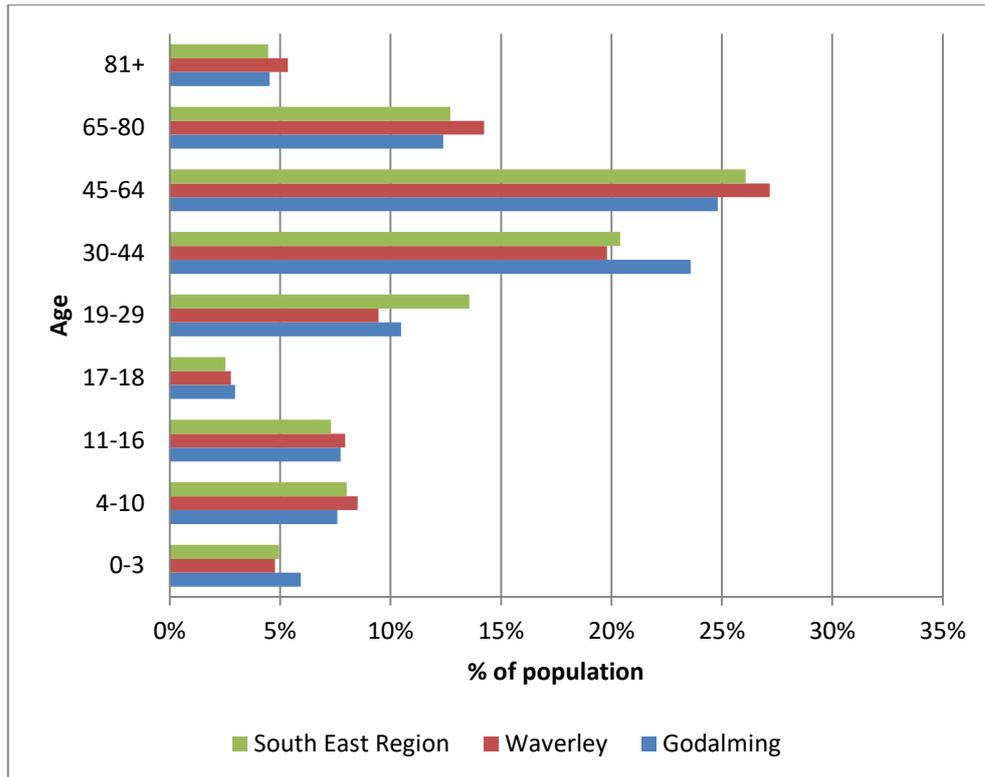
## Profile of the Community Today

2.8 Unless stated otherwise, the profile of the community has come from the 2011 Census.

### Population

2.9 In 2011, the population of the parish was 21,804. Godalming has a significantly higher proportion of people aged 30-44 than Waverley or the South East region (see Figure 2.1).

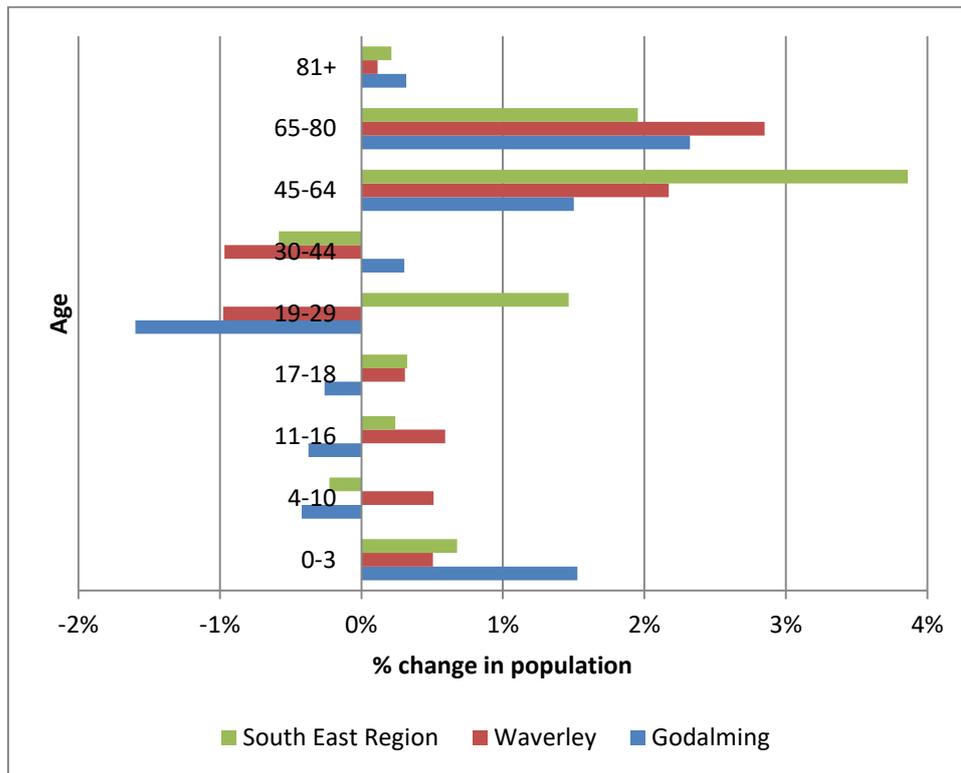
**Figure 2.1: Population Profile, 2011**



Source: 2011 Census

2.10 Between 2001 and 2011 the population of the parish grew by 700 persons, or 3%. This is below the growth in Waverley (5%) and the South East region (8%).

**Figure 2.2: Change in Population, 2001-2011**



Source: 2011 Census

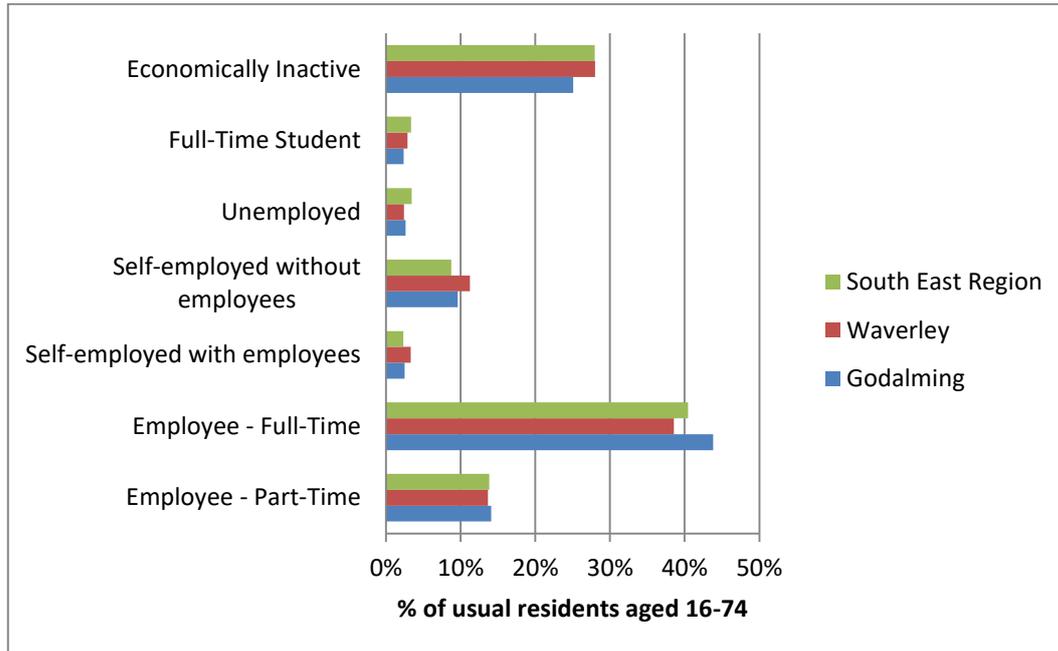
- 2.11 Godalming has seen a significantly higher percentage of its growth in very young children aged 0-3 years. By contrast, it has seen a decline in the population of all other young people (aged 4-18) when the borough and region have all seen growth over the same period. This is shown in Figure 2.2.

**Godalming is a place where young families live but is seeing growth increasingly of the retirement age population.**

**Work**

- 2.12 The proportion of Godalming’s population of working age (16 to 74) is high, with 44% in full-time employment compared to 39% in Waverley borough and 40% across the South East region.
- 2.13 The economically inactive population is low due to the comparatively low proportion of retirees in Godalming.
- 2.14 There is a good proportion of people in self-employment, at 12%. This is shown in Figure 2.3.

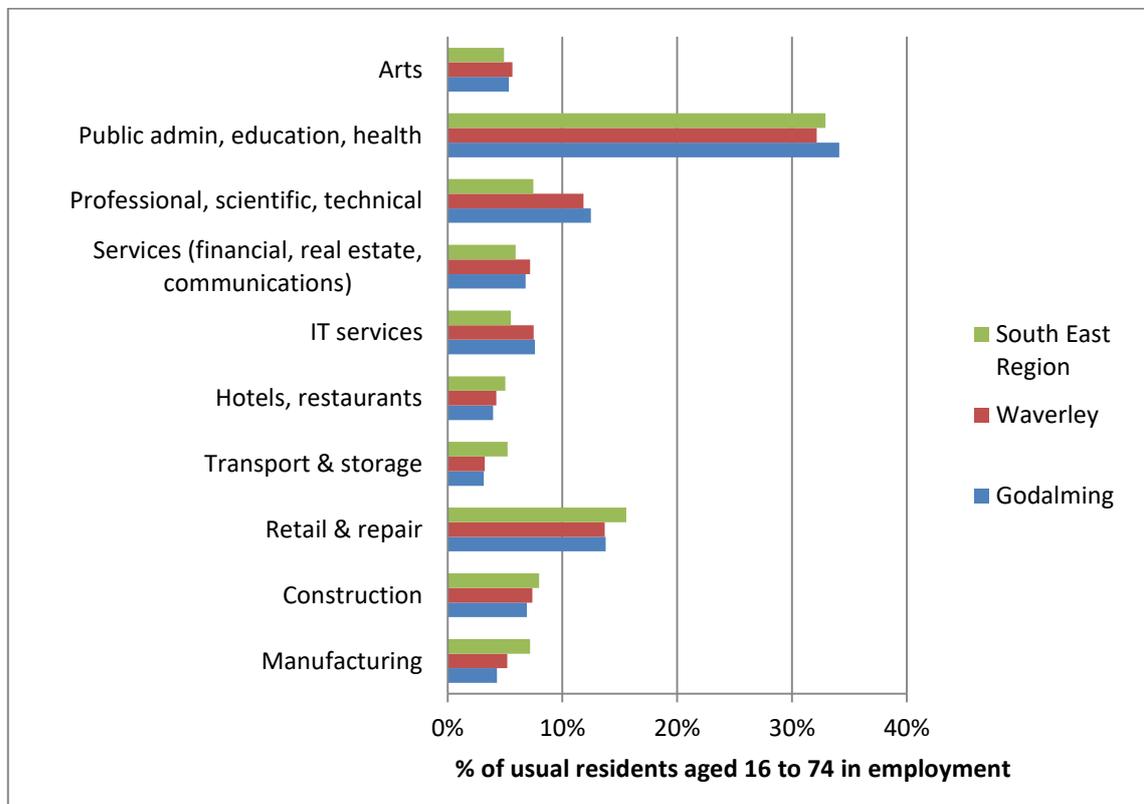
**Figure 2.3: Economic Activity, 2011**



Source: 2011 Census

2.15 Godalming is strongly represented by workers in the public administration, education and health sectors. It also has above-average numbers of people working in the professional, scientific, technical industries. This is shown in Figure 2.4.

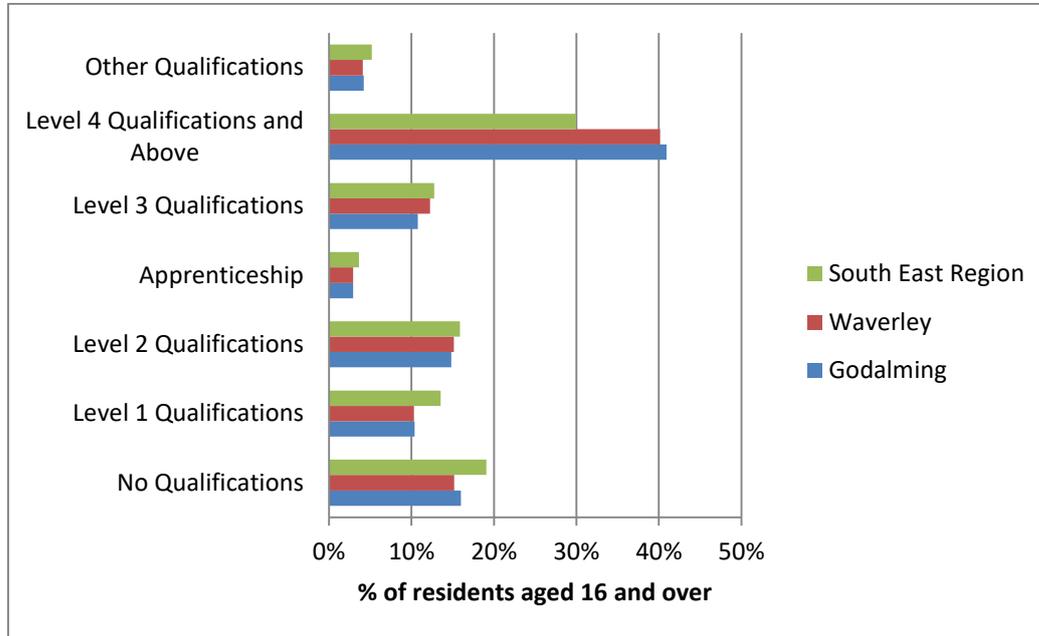
**Figure 2.4: Type of Industry, 2011**



Source: 2011 Census

2.16 Figure 2.5 shows that nearly 41% of the population is educated to Level 4 or above (degree level), which is above the borough average and well above the South East region. Those only qualified to Level 1 or unqualified is below that of Waverley or the South East region.

**Figure 2.5: Qualifications of Residents Aged 16 and Over**



Source: 2011 Census

**Godalming has a high proportion of well-educated people working in professional occupations.**

- 2.17 The large majority of those who travel to work do so by car, with most driving themselves. This is supported by the figures on households with access to a car. On an average, each Godalming household has access to 1.38 cars. This compares to 1.58 cars per household in Waverley borough and 1.36 cars per household across the South East region. When compared with the average across England of 1.16 cars per household, this represents reasonably high levels of car ownership.
- 2.18 Whilst average car ownership in Godalming is below the borough average, the high proportion of non-detached houses (semi-detached, terraced and flats), as shown in Figure 2.6, means that the town has a higher density of built development than average. It also has limited off-street parking as a result of this mix of housing stock, which creates significant problems with on-street parking despite the below-average levels of car ownership.

### Typical Levels of On-street Parking in Godalming



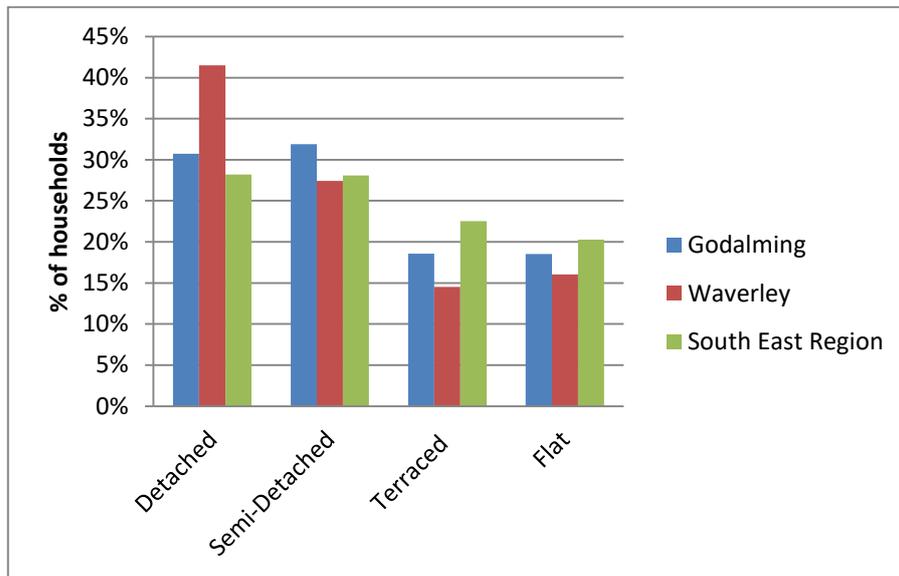
- 2.19 With the area being well served by rail links to several major employment centres, 17% of Godalming's working residents commute by train
- 2.20 With the 2011 census showing that 14% of work related journeys were either on foot or by bike, this is significantly greater than the 2% who travel by bus, but is very much lower than the 60% who travel by car either as a driver or passenger.

**Godalming has relatively high car ownership and its built structure means that the impact of on-street parking is significant. Commuting by train is a well-used alternative to the private car.**

### Housing

- 2.21 Godalming nearly has an equal proportion of its housing stock accounted for by detached and semi-detached housing. In total, these account for 31% and 32% respectively. The proportion of detached properties in Godalming is well below that of Waverley and the South East region.
- 2.22 There is also an equal proportion of terraced housing and flatted development of 19%. These are higher proportions than across Waverley borough, reflecting Godalming's function as one of the larger settlements in the borough. This is shown in Figure 2.7.

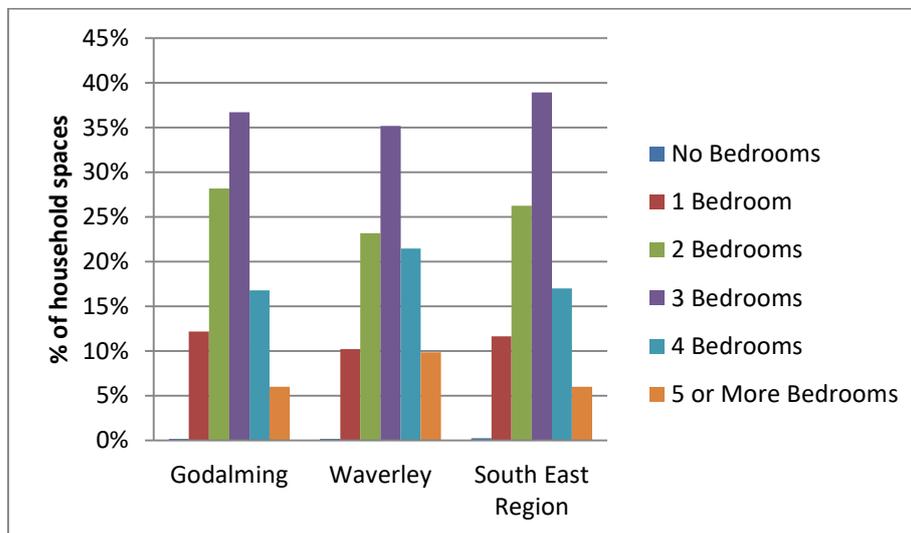
**Figure 2.6: Type of Dwelling**



Source: 2011 Census

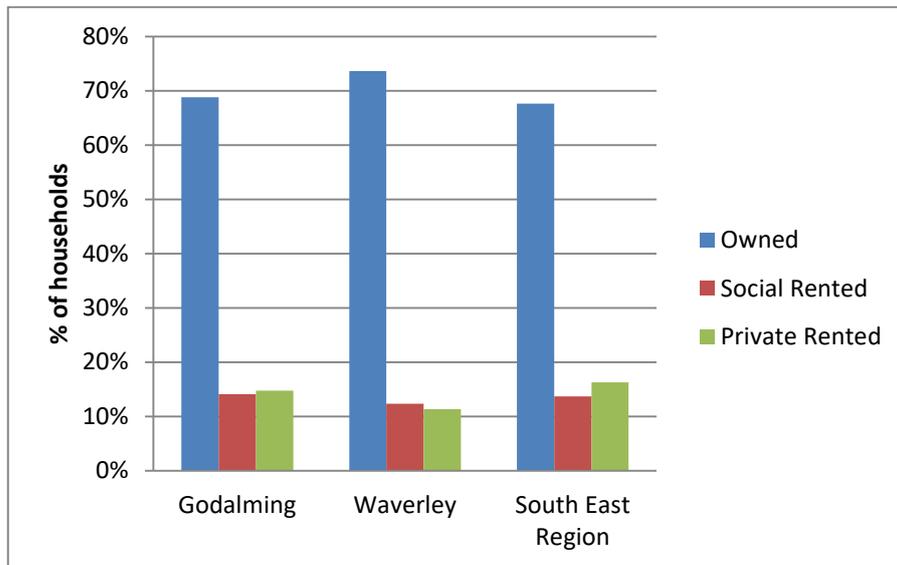
2.23 This is reinforced when looking at the number of bedrooms that properties in Godalming have. Figure 2.7 shows that it has a higher proportion of 2-bed properties. By contrast, the proportion of 5-bed properties is very low. Its predominant stock is of 3-bed properties which is a typical size for semi-detached houses.

**Figure 2.7: Number of Bedrooms**



Source: 2011 Census

2.24 The ownership profile of these dwellings reinforces the profile of Godalming as an affluent area. Figure 2.8 shows that a high proportion of people own their property – in excess of 60%. In fact, 33% of the properties in Godalming are owned outright with no mortgage on them.

**Figure 2.8: Ownership Profile**

Source: 2011 Census

- 2.25 By contrast, Godalming has a slightly above-average proportion of social rented housing stock, at 14%, but this is not significantly higher than the borough level and is actually below the regional average.

**Godalming has a significant stock of owner-occupied 2 and 3-bed properties which likely reflects a combination of the demand in the area and the relatively high density that has shaped development of the town.**

## Local Infrastructure

- 2.26 One of the distinctive characteristics, as well as a defining geographical restriction of Godalming is its location set in the Wey Valley with large water meadows and surrounding hillsides. Whilst the valley floor sets the North/South direction of the main arterial transport routes, rail (London to Portsmouth main line) and road (A3100), the ability to expand the capacity of either is limited. The easterly road links towards the A281 is severely restricted in its ability for increased capacity by the built environment, particularly within the Brighton Road area. Similarly, the western road links towards the A3 are limited by height restricted bridges. Expansion within the town boundaries will inevitably result in increased traffic movements both within the town itself and along the arterial routes. Increased housing within the hinterland surrounding Godalming, particularly to the east at Dunsfold Park and South at Milford, has the potential to place significant strain on the road infrastructure, with the likelihood of increased private transport journeys being exacerbated by the paucity of public transport operating in the east/west direction. Associated with any increase in vehicle movements into Godalming is the shortage of parking at journey's end, both public and private car parking, including on-road parking spaces.
- 2.27 Hand in hand with any further expansion of population within Godalming and, to a large extent, within the immediate hinterland is the provision of medical facilities. Whilst the majority of residents surveyed as part of the Godalming and Farncombe Neighbourhood Plan process felt that there is easy access to primary health provision (doctors 77%, dentist 68% and Pharmacy 95%), a number of concerns emerged surrounding timely appointments, insufficient parking and availability of public transport to and from both Medical Centres. Although an additional bus service

was introduced to the Mill Medical Practice post survey date, its frequency of 1 per hour remains a limiting factor in people's choice of transportation methods to this medical facility.

- 2.28 Of the two medical practices, The Mill does have capacity for further expansion of medical provision. However, its parking provision will not be able to increase in line with any expansion. Of the other medical practice, Binscombe Surgery is considered by the senior partners to have reached capacity and they believe that within the next 5-10 years it will need to relocate to a larger purpose built facility as, "there is no doubt our current practice would be insufficient in size and GP numbers to cope with additional large numbers of new patients [new] housing developments would bring to the area". No suitable location has been identified for any potential relocation.
- 2.29 As with other areas of local infrastructure current school provision would be placed under additional strain if large scale housing development took place within the town or surrounding areas. Whilst primary schooling provision should be adequate to meet demand, both within the town and surrounding areas, population expansion could see a shortage of Secondary School provision, especially if large scale developments take place outside the town's boundaries but within the Godalming School Planning Area. Expansion of either of the secondary schools within the Godalming School Planning Area due to increased population within the surrounding villages, especially Dunsfold Park, could also see significant travel journeys on the already vulnerable eastern transport routes.
- 2.30 Although, as housing need numbers are met and the population increases, transport (including parking provision), health care provision and schooling remain the areas of greatest concern relating to local infrastructure, challenges also exist around the softer edges of local infrastructure, such as affordable child care provision, play areas for younger children and safe spaces for older children, especially youth provision within the 12–18 year age groups and the provision of such facilities to meet the demands/requirements of an increased population.

## **Local Plan Policy**

- 2.31 The Local Plan Part 1 (covering strategic policies and sites) was adopted in February 2018.
- 2.32 The Godalming and Farncombe Neighbourhood Plan must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the adopted Local Plan Part 1.
- 2.33 The Local Plan Part 1 seeks to deliver at least 11,210 dwellings over the period to 2032. The main location where approximately one-quarter of this growth is to be delivered is at Dunsfold Park. The remaining focus for development is in the main towns, one of which is Godalming. In total, Godalming is expected to deliver 1,520 dwellings between 2013 and 2032 although a significant proportion of that figure has already either been built, is under construction, has planning permission or is allowed for as windfall (1,168 dwellings in total as at 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017).
- 2.34 The Local Plan identifies that a further 352 dwellings are to be allocated in the Local Plan Part 2, which is being prepared and is planned to be adopted in 2019
- 2.35 The Local Plan Part 1 has made amendments to the Green Belt, including the removal of land south-east of Binscombe and land between Aaron's Hill and Halfway Lane.
- 2.36 Sustainable transport is a key theme of the Local Plan Part 1, with Policy ST1 seeking to ensure that development is located where it is accessible by means other than the private car and placing a focus on the improvement of networks for cycling and walking. Equally, infrastructure is a vital part of the strategy, with Policy ICS1 seeking to protect existing infrastructure and secure new infrastructure for wider community benefit.

- 2.37 The Local Plan Part 1 stresses the importance of the borough's town centres and the need to protect and promote a range of uses there so that they retain and enhance their vitality and viability (Policy TCS1). It also recognises the importance of Farncombe as a Local Centre (Policy TCS2).

### **3 VISION AND OBJECTIVES**

#### **Challenges for Godalming and Farncombe**

- 3.1 The Godalming and Farncombe Neighbourhood Plan seeks to address, as far as is possible, the challenges and opportunities that face the community of Godalming and Farncombe. In summary the identified challenges are:
- The ageing population and the need for residential and social care provision to address people's needs as they age.
  - The importance of protecting the considerable heritage of Godalming and Farncombe and ensuring development enhances the character of the town.
  - Retaining and enhancing the vitality and retail offer of the High Street and Farncombe village centre so that local residents choose to shop in Godalming and Farncombe.
  - Significant road congestion on an historic network, which was not designed for the levels of traffic that use it.
  - Making use of sustainable modes of transport more attractive by improving the provision for walking and cycling.
  - Retaining and enhancing the community infrastructure which serves a growing town.
  - Recognising the impact that strategic scale development at Dunsfold Park will have on Godalming and Farncombe and, in particular, through use of the railway stations as well as on the road infrastructure.
  - Parking issues for all types of development, with the particular need to improve accessibility for alternative modes of travel at the railway stations.
  - Protecting the sensitive natural environment in which Godalming and Farncombe sits, which is defined by the River Wey and the Lammas Lands, along with the hillsides that rise up and provide a very visible setting for the town.
  - The loss of employment in the town through the loss of employment sites and premises to housing, as well as the lack of provision for the needs of modern businesses.

## Vision for Godalming and Farncombe

- 3.2 In consultation with the community, the established vision for Godalming and Farncombe is as follows:

***'In 2032, Godalming and Farncombe has successfully retained its distinctive historic feel whilst sustainable growth has enabled it to address the challenges that its people have faced.***

***The historic core of the town has been protected and the increased footfall in the town has helped to retain the vitality of its shops and services. High quality external finishes to new shopfronts and signage have helped to give the community back its High Street that is distinctly 'Godalming'.***

***The increased footfall has been helped by a recognition that the car has been choking a town unable to resolve its congestion by providing new roads. Instead, pavements, footways and cycle paths have been created and improved along key routes so now more people leave the car at home and instead come to shop, take their children to school or go to work on foot, by bicycle or by bus (including school buses).***

***Whilst traditional employment has fallen in Godalming and Farncombe, the highly skilled population has taken the opportunity created by the development of more modern workspaces. Small-scale, flexible workspaces and co-working hubs have been developed across the area which have encouraged a growing entrepreneurial spirit and the development of new companies which can share space and network. This has been complemented by the roll-out of faster broadband. Godalming and Farncombe have adapted in order to remain competitive.***

***This has all helped to encourage more young people with families to live in Godalming. This has been assisted by family housing being freed up by older people who have been able to move into newly built housing and facilities that are specifically designed to address their needs. Whilst this development has been modern in its thinking, it has been designed to be in keeping with the character of the area in which it sits; innovation in design is encouraged but in a way that still means new buildings sit comfortably within their surroundings.***

***The growing population has not been to the detriment of Godalming and Farncombe's environment or infrastructure. Existing community facilities have been protected and new facilities delivered alongside growth. Equally, new development has protected and enhanced the high quality natural environment which defines the setting of the town and has been designed to maximise sustainability. Godalming and Farncombe has grown, but not at the expense of the environment or the health and wellbeing of its people.'***

## **Godalming and Farncombe Neighbourhood Plan Objectives**

3.3 The objectives of the Godalming and Farncombe Neighbourhood Plan as identified through engagement with the community are as follows:

### **Housing**

- To address the housing and social care needs of the population of Godalming and Farncombe.

### **Transport**

- To increase walking and cycling as alternatives to the private car.
- To improve public transport networks and availability.
- To address parking problems, particularly at Godalming and Farncombe stations.

### **Economy**

- To provide modern, flexible employment space for start-ups and growing micro-businesses.
- To ensure a flexible approach to Godalming town centre and Farncombe village centre which helps to preserve and enhance their vitality.

### **Community and Infrastructure**

- To safeguard existing community infrastructure and to ensure new development provides the community facilities that are lacking in the town.

### **Heritage and Design**

- To ensure that development respects the character of the area.
- To ensure that shopfronts in the town centre protect and enhance the heritage of the Town Centre Conservation Area.

### **Environment**

- To protect and enhance the sensitive natural environment in which Godalming and Farncombe sits.
- To ensure development enhances the potential for local flora and fauna to thrive.
- To ensure that development is sustainable, particularly in its use of water and energy.
- To ensure development minimises air pollution and removes the need for Air Quality Management Areas.

## 4 HOUSING

- 4.1 The work undertaken with the community to inform the Godalming and Farncombe Neighbourhood Plan identified four sectors in which the housing market is failing to meet local needs:
- Lack of suitable accommodation for the over 55s, who represent the town's fastest growing resident group; and who will increasingly be needing to cope with mobility disabilities and illness, especially dementia.
  - Lack of reasonably priced accommodation for young and growing families.
  - Difficulties experienced by many young persons in securing their first independent accommodation.
  - General lack of social housing.
- 4.2 Approximately 60% of house re-sales in Waverley are to people from outside the borough, particularly London commuters. Accordingly, new house building, renovations and extensions have focused on creating large houses, particularly those with four bedrooms or more. As a result, gaps in housing provision have arisen.
- 4.3 The 2015 West Surrey Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA)<sup>5</sup> estimated that the net annual housing need in Godalming and Farncombe was 62 dwellings. Over the 15-year plan period this equates to 930 dwellings but a large proportion of this requirement has already been granted planning permission. Whilst many of these sites in the planning pipeline will be addressing the particular needs in respect of dwelling mix, it is likely that the need for specific types of housing to address the needs of younger people and older downsizers will continue
- 4.4 The need identified in the SHMA was as follows for Godalming and Farncombe:

**Table 4.1: Estimated Need by Number of Bedrooms, Godalming and Farncombe, 2013-2033**

Size of property	Affordable housing <sup>6</sup>	Market housing <sup>7</sup>
1-bed	41%	12%
2-bed	35%	36%
3-bed	22%	37%
4-bed or more	2%	14%

Source: 2015 SHMA

- 4.5 This suggests that the predominant need for smaller houses has been recognised and, as reflected in Waverley Local Plan policy<sup>8</sup>, is being addressed. Strong support is given for this policy approach

<sup>5</sup> GL Hearn (2015) *West Surrey Strategic Housing Market Assessment*, for Guildford, Waverley and Woking Borough Councils

<sup>6</sup> GL Hearn (2015) *West Surrey Strategic Housing Market Assessment – Waverley Sub Area Addendum*, for Waverley Borough Council, table 15

<sup>7</sup> GL Hearn (2015) *West Surrey Strategic Housing Market Assessment – Waverley Sub Area Addendum*, for Waverley Borough Council, table 18

<sup>8</sup> Policy AHN1 (Affordable Housing on Development Sites) and Policy AHN3 (Housing Types and Size) both require new development to provide a mix of housing in line with the requirements of the 2015 SHMA.

which should go some way to addressing the needs of young families and first-time buyers. For this reason, the Godalming and Farncombe Neighbourhood Plan does not seek to duplicate this by trying to address issues relating to the needs of younger people or older people who do not have particular needs in terms of supported housing and care.

- 4.6 However, what this does not address are other types of accommodation that are needed to support the ageing population. Over the period to 2032, Waverley borough's population of people aged over 65 is forecast to grow by approximately 50%. In addition to considering how the number and proportion of older people is expected to change, one needs also to take into account specific illnesses (especially dementia-related) and disabilities (particularly mobility problems). The proportion of the population with a long term health problem or disability increases dramatically with age, with the vast majority of any increase concentrated among the over-65s.
- 4.7 The rising cost of social care, coupled with a falling demand for residential care, has meant that new models of extra-care housing have emerged. These aim to meet the needs of those who require high levels of care and support, alongside those who are still generally able to care for themselves. These models often allow for changing circumstances in situ rather than requiring a move.
- 4.8 Across Waverley the requirement for places will increase from the current 686 units to 2,926 by 2032. The need for extra-care and extended care housing developments that can cope with such specialist demands is clear if large numbers are going to avoid being isolated in specialist units, possibly separated from their partners.
- 4.9 Evidence from a major provider of extra care facilities which has delivered them in a range of locations nationally is that such development can be secured and delivered viably with the right policy framework. Whilst the Godalming and Farncombe Neighbourhood Plan has not identified any sites that are suitable for such provision, it seeks to encourage provision if sites become available.
- 4.10 Extra care is not the only requirement for the ageing population. Increasingly, older people are retaining their independence for longer and wish to remain in their own homes rather than move into an institutional setting. The provision of the right type of housing to address this need is paramount. Smaller dwellings are in strong demand from older people but what they are seeking is often different to the first-time buyer, with many requiring homes that are on one level. Typically, older buyers are looking to downsize from large, family homes and therefore have significant amounts of equity. So a smaller home may well be a spacious two or three-bedroom property with a small garden. It is important that new development provides for these needs. This will also have the benefit of freeing up family homes as currently, many of these older people prefer to stay in their family homes rather than move out of their local community. Other factors such as the cost of stamp duty on a house sale deters some from moving, the lack of supply of smaller properties is also a significant factor.
- 4.11 This is supported by the West Surrey Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2015 which identified a need for nearly three-quarters of market dwellings and well over 50% of affordable dwellings in Godalming to be two or three-bed properties<sup>9</sup>. It is important that all new development properly reflects this need which will go a long way to addressing the needs of older people.
- 4.12 Under certain circumstances, delivery of a high proportion of two and three-bed properties may not be possible, e.g. in a high density flatted scheme close to the town centre. Under such

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<sup>9</sup> GL Hearn (2015) *West Surrey SHMA – Waverley Sub Area Addendum*, for Waverley Borough Council, Table 17

circumstances, provided it can be demonstrated that such a mix is not viable or deliverable, then an alternative mix can be provided.

- 4.13 Policies that support Self or Custom building dwellings can help to provide delivery of affordable housing. Waverley LPP2 proposed policy (DM15) is strongly supported.

**POLICY GOD1: ADDRESSING THE RESIDENTIAL NEEDS OF GODALMING**

**A. All new residential developments (Use Class 3) of at least 10 dwellings should provide at least the required percentage of one, two and three-bedroom properties as indicated for the Godalming area in the most up to date area Strategic Housing Market Assessment**

**B. Proposals to deliver extra care facilities (Use Class C2) in Godalming and Farncombe will be strongly encouraged.**

## 5 ECONOMY

- 5.1 Waverley Borough Council's 2015-2020 Economic Strategy<sup>10</sup> has six key objectives:
- Safeguard the borough's attractive character and quality of life
  - Maintain/enhance attractiveness and vitality of main settlements
  - Provide high quality infrastructure
  - Manage employment growth and encourage skilled well paid jobs
  - Support businesses
  - Provide affordable housing for key workers
- 5.2 Work to inform the Godalming and Farncombe Neighbourhood Plan identified that the management of the future economy of Godalming and Farncombe and the need to support businesses was key to its success. Godalming has seen a significant reduction in its business base in recent years. Whilst it is well located, with access to the major A3 and A31 roads, proximity to Guildford and rail links via two stations to London, this has served to have the opposite effect, with increased numbers of residents leaving in the morning to access jobs elsewhere. Whilst there are a significant number of in-commuters to Godalming and Farncombe each day, many of the jobs they are accessing are low paid, service jobs in sectors such as retail. This also highlights the problems that such people have with accessing affordable residential property locally.
- 5.3 One of the casualties of the national economic downturn, exacerbated by national changes to permitted development rights allowing conversion of employment space to residential, has been the loss of employment land and premises. This has been particularly significant in the main commercial employment area of Catteshall Lane, with the loss to residential use of Thornbrook House and Panda House at Weyside Park, Dolphin Works/Drumbeat House (as part of the Flambard Way Key Site development), the English Chain Company and Southern House.
- 5.4 It is not within the power of the Godalming and Farncombe Neighbourhood Plan to reverse this trend of loss of employment (this being national policy) and Local Plan Part 1 Policy EE2 (Protecting Existing Employment Sites) seeks to protect employment sites as best it can. The focus therefore is on developing the employment space required by the commercial sectors and activities which Godalming and Farncombe are well placed to thrive in over the plan period.

### Key Sectors and Activities

- 5.5 Waverley lies within the Enterprise M3 Local Economic Partnership (EM3 LEP), a partnership between local authorities and businesses to help determine local economic priorities and undertake activities to lead economic growth and create jobs.
- 5.6 EM3 LEP's vision<sup>11</sup> is to be 'the premier location in the country for enterprise and economic growth, balanced with an excellent environment and a high quality of life'. The EM3 LEP's objective is to achieve this vision through a number of interventions that support interlinked elements of the local economy. These comprise:
- enterprise development and competitiveness
  - the generation and commercialisation of innovation

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<sup>10</sup> Waverley Economic Strategy 2015 -2020, February 2015

<sup>11</sup> Working for a Smarter Future, EM3 Strategic Economic Plan 2014 – 2020

- the growth of high value industries
- the development of skills needed by employers.

5.7 This focus is very much on quality of commercial activity rather than quantity. In the context of high value sectors, this means that the activity of small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) is key and the Waverley Economic Strategy focuses on providing flexible, high quality space for these businesses.

### **Small Scale Start-up Space**

5.8 As stated above, the focus is on the high value SME sector. Policy EE1 in the Waverley Local Plan seeks to deliver at least 16,000m<sup>2</sup> of office and research and development space to facilitate this.

5.9 However, it is also considered that, in order to develop SME businesses, and ultimately grow larger businesses off the back of that, then it is necessary first to nurture even smaller businesses – micro-businesses. Nationally there has been strong growth in self-employment and this has been mirrored in Godalming and Farncombe – in 2011, 12% of residents aged 16 to 74 in the parish were self-employed, compared with a figure of 10% nationally and 11% in the South East region. Not all of these businesses will require employment space, as many people will work from home. However, for some micro-businesses, the ability to access workspace on flexible, 'easy-in, easy-out' terms helps to provide the foundation to grow a business. Godalming and Farncombe has a well-qualified workforce and this foundation creates the potential for new businesses to be started up by local residents who are keen to also work locally. There is also the potential to link in with some of the best economic drivers in the UK, particularly the Blackwater Valley high-tech corridor and the Surrey Research Park in Guildford. With the provision of business incubator space, this could help to turn a small, home-based business into a major high-tech business.

5.10 However, as was noted in the 2016 Waverley Employment Land Review<sup>12</sup>, Godalming has a very limited supply of employment premises for business start-ups. Despite this, the study considered that Godalming provided opportunities to create employment provision which was sufficiently flexible to respond to future business requirements.

5.11 In February 2017, permission was granted for a mixed use development of the Local Plan Part 1 allocation at Woodside Park in Catteshall Lane which included over 500m<sup>2</sup> of B1 office floorspace. This will help to make a contribution to addressing these small scale needs. However, over the lifetime of the Plan, further provision of flexible B1 floorspace is needed.

5.12 Strong support will therefore be given to the provision of small-scale businesses premises, ideally on flexible rental terms.

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<sup>12</sup> Atkins (2016) *Waverley Employment Land Review Update*, paras. 4.17-4.18.

**POLICY GOD2: SMALL-SCALE EMPLOYMENT DEVELOPMENT**

Development proposals to provide small-scale accommodation, falling within Use Class B1 of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 as amended, including as part of residential led, mixed use site allocations in the Waverley Local Plan Part Two, will be encouraged. This could either be through:

- Provision of replacement building(s) of an appropriate design or the provision of new buildings or conversion of existing non-residential buildings within the settlement boundary of Godalming and Farncombe; or
- conversion of existing buildings outside the settlement boundary, subject to:
  - i. the cumulative impact of the development on the highway network is not severe.
  - ii. it being an appropriate use within the Green Belt (where applicable) which preserves its openness and does not conflict with the purposes of including land in the Green Belt.

## Town and Local Centres

- 5.13 Godalming and Farncombe has two important shopping centres which serve many of the needs of the town's residents. Godalming is a large town centre with a range of convenience and comparison shopping. It is anchored at one end by the Waitrose supermarket which is close to a Sainsbury's supermarket on the edge of the town centre. The High Street has a range of shops, with many housed in older, listed buildings – much of the area is within the Conservation Area, so there are limitations on changes that can be made to those buildings. Generally there is very limited capacity for the town centre to expand. At the western end of the High Street and in Church Street, the town centre is faring less well, with lower footfall and fewer attractions which will draw people to it.
- 5.14 Farncombe has a smaller local centre on Farncombe Street and St John's Street. This has a more limited range of shops but they serve an important local function. For example, the Co-op store is seen as vital for 'top-up' food shopping and there are a number of other retailers that provide key local services, e.g. newsagents, pharmacy, hairdressers, etc,
- 5.15 It is important that both these centres are supported to ensure that they retain their vitality and viability.

### Pop Up Uses in Godalming Town Centre

- 5.16 In Godalming Town Centre Area, the Primary Shopping Area, as defined on the Policies Map provides the main retail service to the community of Godalming and Farncombe. Much of the community engagement informing the Godalming and Farncombe Neighbourhood Plan revolved around the Town Centre Area, with varying views about the retail offer, parking and access, the role of the supermarkets which anchor its offer and possible ways of improving its vibrancy and vitality.
- 5.17 The Waverley Retail Study<sup>13</sup> identifies that the convenience shopping offer – anchored by Sainsbury's and Waitrose at the eastern end of the town – is very successful. However, comparison

<sup>13</sup> Chase & Partners (2013) *Town Centres Retail Study Update*, for Waverley Borough Council

retail is less so, with shopping for these types of goods happening elsewhere, in Guildford and increasingly online (which is a national trend).

- 5.18 Whilst vacancies in late 2012, when the Retail Study survey was undertaken, were lower than the national average at 7%, this still equated to 13 units. With the growing threat to the comparison retailers in the Primary Shopping Area from Guildford and online retailing, it is likely to become increasingly difficult to fill vacant units and keep others from becoming vacant.
- 5.19 It is important that Godalming town centre Area continues to attract people to it to spend money and contribute towards its long term commercial health. But it is important that a balance is achieved between retail, residential and other commercial uses. The change to residential use is national policy so cannot be prevented. However, there are other actions that can help to maintain vitality.
- 5.20 Certainly in recent years given the economic slowdown, the risk of starting new commercial ventures has increased, as has the difficulty given the need for finance. One of the highest costs is premises and often there is a desire to take space on a flexible short-term lease in order to see if there is potential in the business. This in itself provides more opportunity to focus investment in the actual business.
- 5.21 The Primary Shopping Area has vacant units that could be taken by commercial ventures on short term, flexible leases to see if the business has potential. Often these businesses are not those that are permitted on the High Street without the need for planning permission – a further and potentially quite significant cost for a new business. Yet it is not to say that these non-retail businesses would not thrive and fit in well on the High Street. There are examples elsewhere of businesses as diverse as ceramics manufacturers, artists and web designers not only taking space and thriving in a High Street location, but providing life and diversity to the offer and bringing new people in that wouldn't have otherwise visited.
- 5.22 To encourage footfall across the Primary Shopping Area, 'pop up' cultural and entertainment events will generally be supported. This should help to ensure shops on the High Street and close by are kept viable through mechanisms that do not lead to higher rentals and business rents. Other incentives to attract the 'higher-spend, longer-stay' tourist by working together to create a 'cultural and leisure offer' that makes it worthwhile to stay longer in the Town Centre will generally be supported.
- 5.23 Therefore, the use of 'pop up' shops and cultural, creative, and leisure-orientated activities to help Godalming Town Centre become a niche leisure and cultural destination, building on the existing heritage offer and festivals programme, is supported.
- 5.24 Most Use Class A1 units (i.e. shops) now have extensive Permitted Development (PD) rights under the General Permitted Development Order, with a change of use allowed for up to two years. However these PD rights do not apply to listed properties so, therefore, the provision of 'pop-up' shops in such properties will require the necessary permissions. In addition, these PD rights do not extend to changes from retail to Use Class D which includes art galleries, exhibition halls, cinemas and concert halls.

**POLICY GOD3: NON-RETAIL USES IN THE PRIMARY SHOPPING AREA**

- A. In the Primary Shopping Area of Godalming shown on the Policies Map, the use of Class A retail and service premises for temporary uses will be encouraged. Such uses include cultural, creative and leisure uses introduced on a temporary basis or for specific events.**
- B. Such non-retail uses must demonstrate that they will not have a detrimental impact on the amenity of neighbouring uses, particularly residential through excessive noise and pollution.**

- 5.25 With the limited ability of the Godalming Primary Shopping Area to physically expand, the growing retail needs of the expanding population would be best served through small scale expansion of Farncombe Local Centre. Some existing sites in the area are under-used and there is less restriction on re-development than in Godalming Primary Shopping Area because it is not in a Conservation Area and has few listed buildings. Policy TCS2 of the LPP1 provides safeguards to local centres and supports provision of new small scale facilities. Opportunities to expand retail provision in or adjacent to the existing Local Centre in Farncombe will, therefore, be supported. The potential to develop adjacent to the existing centre boundary reflects a necessarily flexible approach.

**POLICY GOD4: RETAILING IN FARNCOMBE LOCAL CENTRE**

**Proposals to provide new retail premises (Use Classes A1 to A5) or to redevelop existing buildings for retail uses in or adjacent to the Farncombe Local Centre, as shown on the Policies Map, will be strongly encouraged.**

## 6 HERITAGE AND DESIGN

- 6.1 One of the defining features of Godalming and Farncombe is its built heritage. This is demonstrated by the fact that it has five conservation areas and 227 listed buildings, of which two, St Peter and St Paul's Church and Wyatt's Almshouses are Grade I listed. These buildings and areas are well protected by planning policy, both at national and borough level.
- 6.2 Whilst it has grown over time, the town has not seen any significant dilution of this heritage. There was a considerable expansion to the area in the late 1800s to early 1900s and during this time the population trebled. It is important that the future growth of the town continues to recognise and pay due regard to this heritage whilst recognising that innovation in design should not be restricted. Innovative design does not have to mean a building clearly out of keeping with those around it.
- 6.3 Up to the late 1800s-early 1900s, buildings were made from local wood, brick and stone.



***Church Street shows a range of the architectural styles from 16-20C***



***The Georgians added brick frontages to traditional timber framed buildings***



***From the mid-1850s onwards the railway extended the materials used in building***



***There were further increases in the town between the wars and from 1970s onwards***

6.4 The photographs below show a development close to Church Street completed in 2016 that has used elements of the style and finishes without being a pastiche. This won a civic design award from the Godalming Trust in 2016.



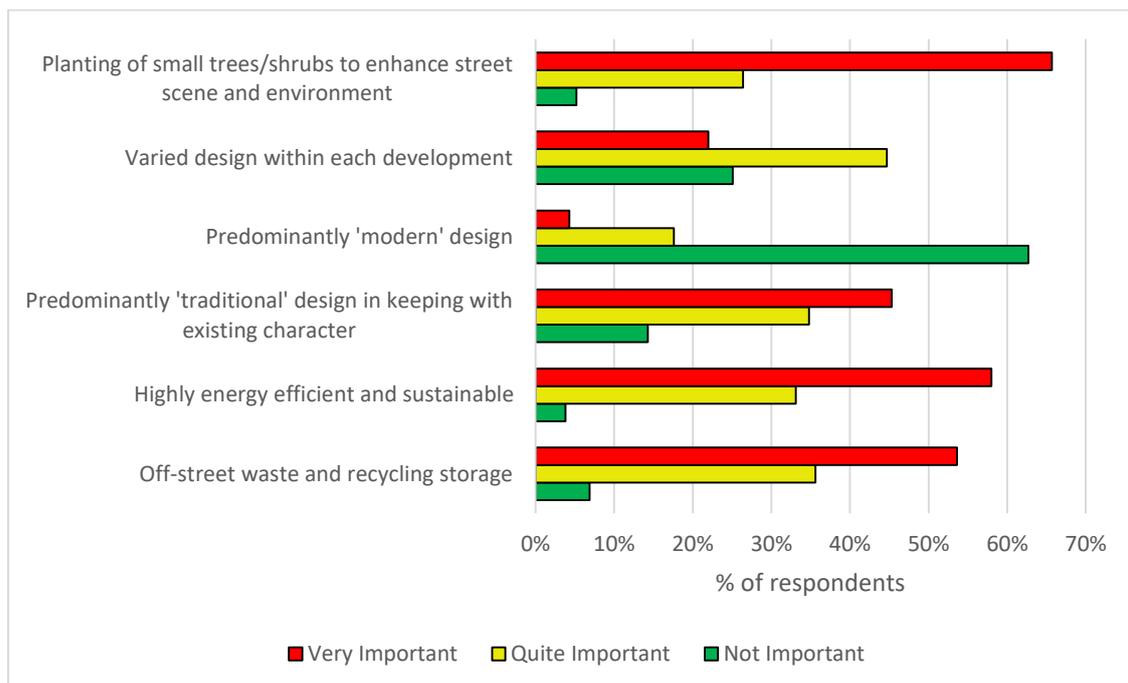
## Character Areas

6.5 Adverse impacts of inappropriate developments can include the following:

- Loss of significance to heritage assets, including impacts on setting
- Changes to the grain<sup>14</sup> and overall density which defines local character
- Loss of amenity, overshadowing, overlooking
- Noise
- Loss of green links/trees /hedgerows/vegetation
- Visual intrusion
- Visual separation
- Loss of parking
- Difficulties with recycling and waste collections/bin storage

6.6 The public questionnaire identified a number of issues relating to the character and design of development, as shown in Figure 6.1.

**Figure 6.1: Issues relating to character and design from public questionnaire**

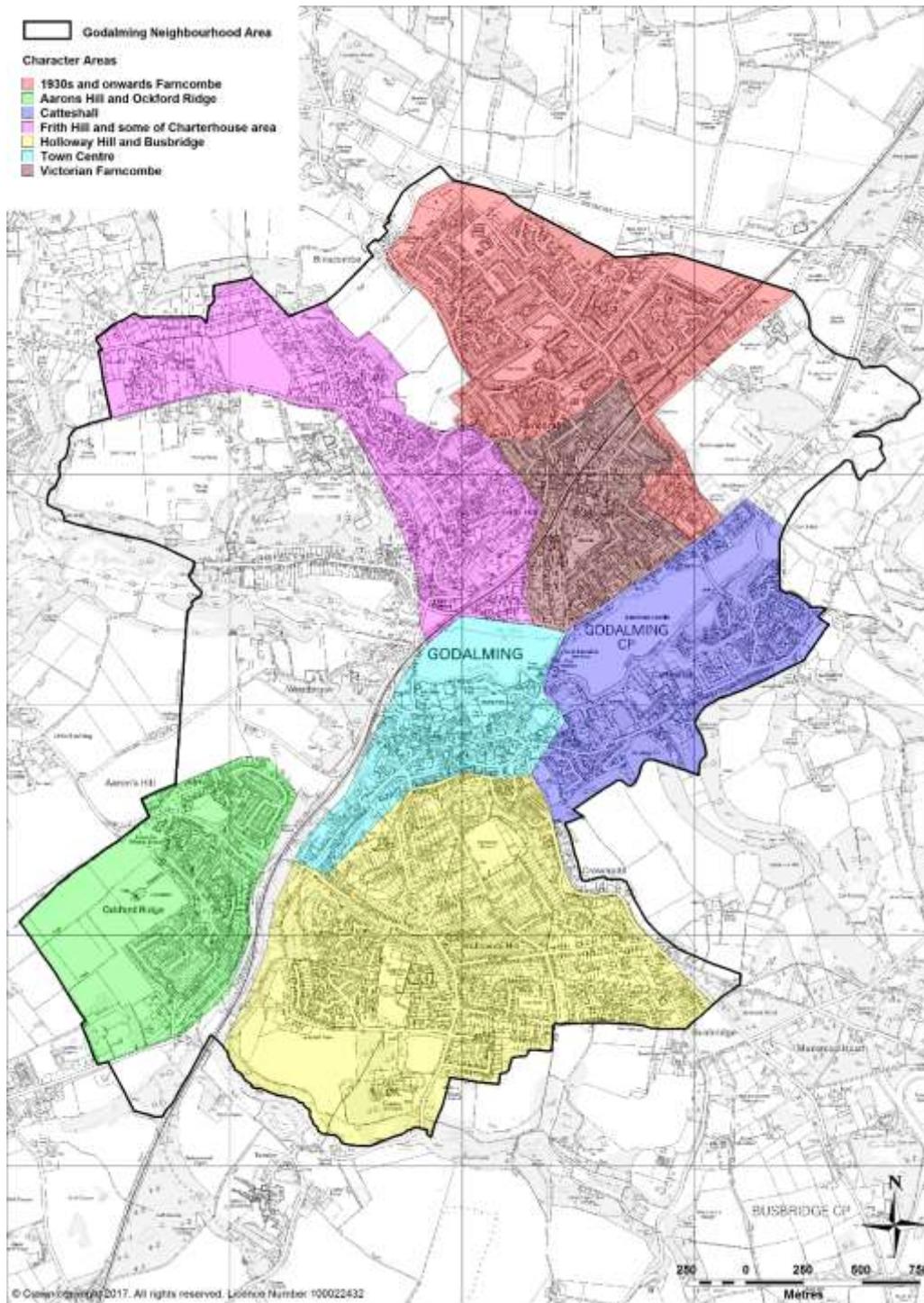


6.7 Matters such as boundary planting, traditional design and providing appropriate storage for waste and recycling are all issues that can be addressed by well-designed development.

<sup>14</sup> 'Grain' is defined as the combined pattern of blocks and streets, taking into account the character of street blocks and building height and size, and how they all work together to create and enable movement and access.

- 6.8 Waverley Local Plan Policy D4 (Design and Layout) addresses a lot of these issues, but it is important to reinforce the particular issues of importance within the local Godalming and Farncombe context.
- 6.9 The Godalming and Farncombe Neighbourhood Plan has not prescribed a fixed palette of materials for new development. However, the evidence gathered along with the strong support identified through responses to the public questionnaire mean that development is required to be sympathetic to, and enhance, its immediate surrounding area, whatever the predominant style. This is guided by the Character Assessments for the specific identified character areas shown in Figure 6.2.

**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 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 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.

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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 not significantly adversely impact on 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. Avoid the appearance of cramming by reflecting with the established plots widths within the street;**
  - c. Be in keeping with the form of development of properties in the immediate surrounding area, particularly with respect to the prevailing roofline;**
  - d. Provide sufficient off-street storage for refuse and recycling bins associated with each new property;**
  - e. 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***

- 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 will be sought:**
- 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 for the areas outside the Town Centre Area are considered to be the minimum required to support sustainable development within these parts of the Neighbourhood Plan area.**
- 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.

- 6.32 As a traditional element of street scene, projecting and hanging signs should be simple, proportionate and hung either at fascia level or between the first-floor window sill and fascia.
- 6.33 Illumination of shopfronts and signs can make a positive contribution to the street scene if it is in keeping with the character of the area. Small spot lights, halo lighting or a compact strip light is considered most appropriate for external illumination but must be subtle.
- 6.34 Advertisement Boards (A-Boards) should not clutter up the street scene, and should be sympathetic in terms of colour and materials to the character of the area. All A-Boards should follow Surrey County Council guidance which specifies conditions on when A-Boards will be permitted on a highway. Projecting and hanging signs, subject to advertisement consent, are preferred to A-Boards.

#### **POLICY GOD7: SHOPFRONTS, SIGNAGE AND ADVERTISING BOARDS**

- A. Development proposals for shopfronts and/or signage are expected to demonstrate a high quality of design that is in keeping with the character of the area and keep the 'rhythm' of the street scene. This particularly applies to Godalming High Street and other frontages that are within a conservation area.**
- B. In particular, a high quality of design will be expected to address the following:**
- a. Use of high quality materials in muted and traditional colours. Materials such as plastic, aluminium, marble and granite as well as reflective materials are generally not considered to be appropriate.**
  - b. Signage should not be overbearing in terms of size.**
  - c. Original features, such as recessed doorways, stall risers, mullions, transoms and pilasters, should, where possible, be restored rather than replaced.**
  - d. 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 are of an appropriate height. Retractable awnings and canopies are preferred.**
  - e. Fascias should:**
    - i. be proportionate to the building;**
    - ii. not hide architectural detailing of the building; and**
    - iii. not obscure first-floor window sills.**
  - f. Projecting and hanging signs should be simple, proportionate and hung either at fascia level or between the first-floor window sill and fascia.**
  - g. Illumination of shopfronts and signs should be in keeping with the character of the area, using small spot lights, halo lighting or a compact strip light.**

### **Protected Views**

- 6.35 One aspect raised by the community through the Godalming and Farncombe Neighbourhood Plan engagement process was the importance of protecting valued landmark views from any negative impact that could be caused, directly or indirectly, by proposed development, whether residential or commercial.
- 6.36 Public consultation showed particular support for the view from Chalk Road/Bridge Road across the Lammas Lands towards the Parish Church, framed by the wooded hillsides. Whilst the Lammas

Lands themselves are protected from development by Waverley Local Plan Saved Policy C5, this does not protect against inappropriate development on the other side of this iconic vista.



***View of the Parish Church of St Peter and St Paul from Chalk Road/Bridge Road***

**POLICY GOD8: VIEW FROM CHALK ROAD/BRIDGE ROAD TO PARISH CHURCH**

Development should preserve the historic setting of the panoramic view from Chalk Road/Bridge Road towards the Parish Church of St Peter and St Paul, across the Lammas Lands as indicated on the policy map for Policy GOD8. Any development which has a detrimental impact on the setting of this panoramic view will be refused.

