

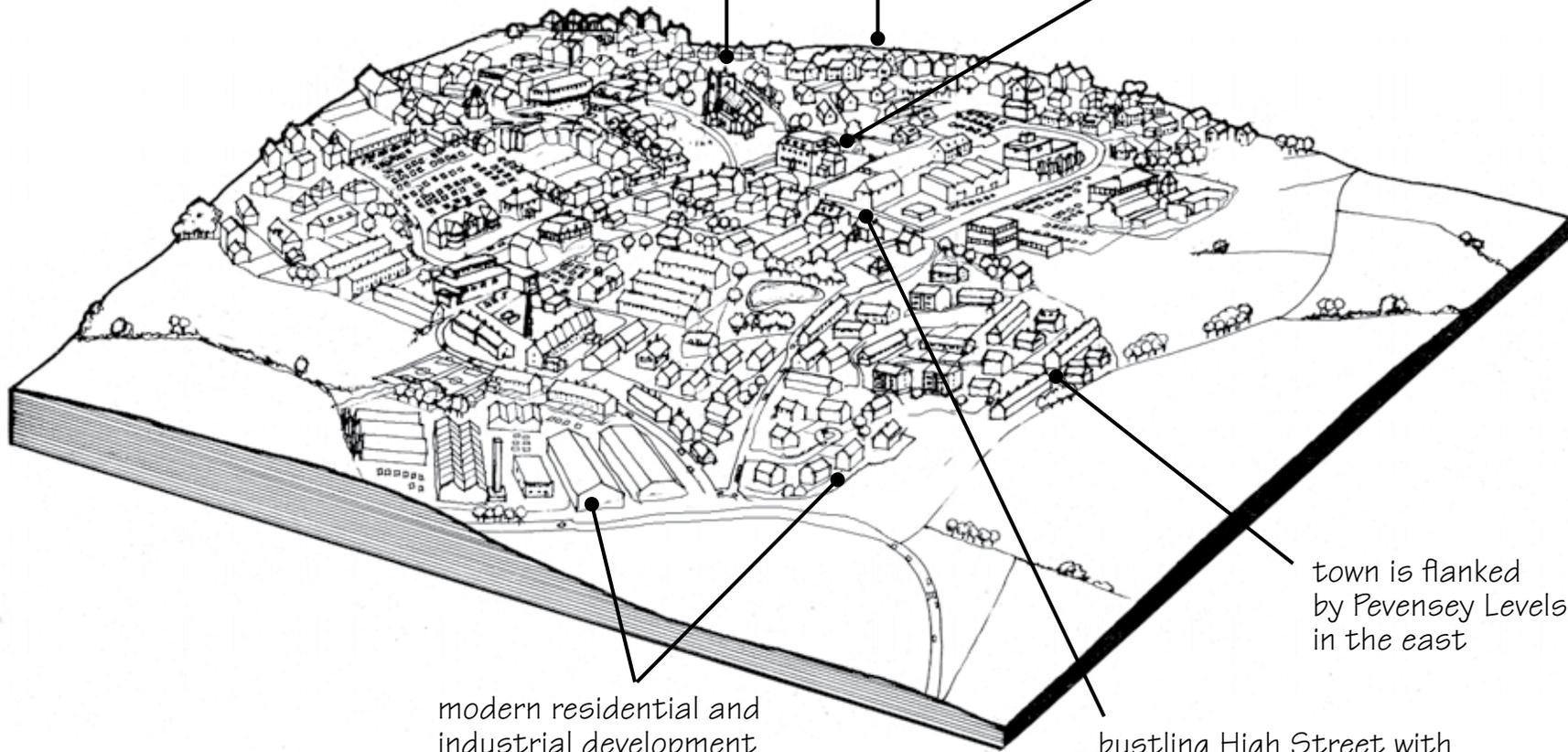
Hailsham

pleasant, human scale and small market town character

Church with landmark tower and fine trees give High Street a focus

town situated in very flat countryside

The Grange is a notable historic building



modern residential and industrial development around edges

town is flanked by Pevensey Levels in the east

bustling High Street with eighteenth century core and Victorian shops

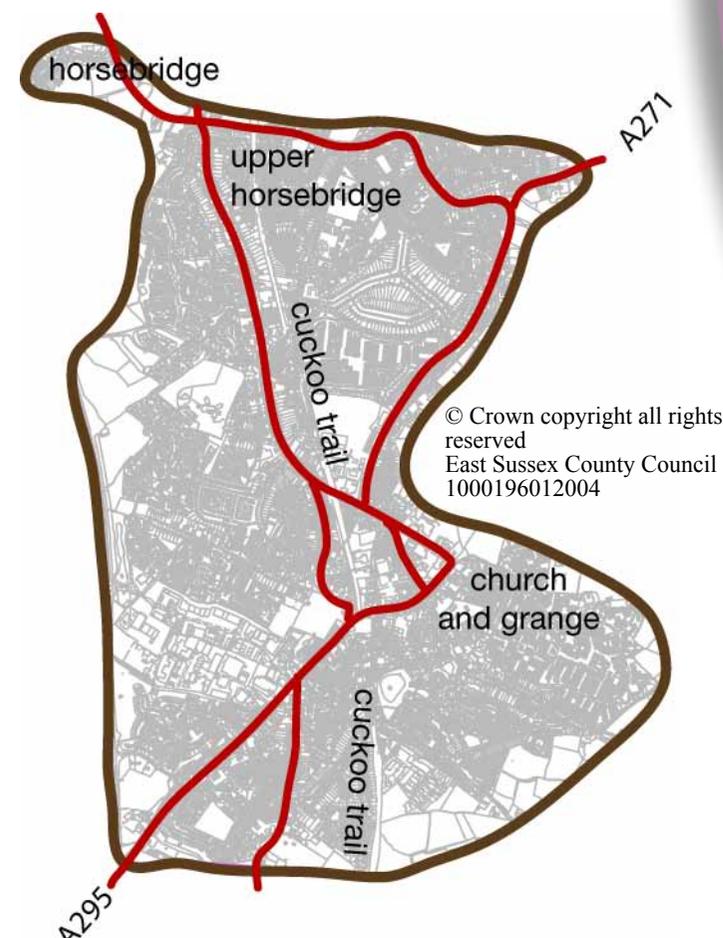
Hailsham

Situated on the east end of the Low Weald, the market town of Hailsham dates back to medieval times. It sits on a slight rise in low flat landscape with extensive views to the High Weald and Downs. The town has expanded considerably in recent decades, and some of its edges are rather open and untidy. The town centre abuts onto attractive, undeveloped and hedge-patterned slopes descending east towards the Pevensy Levels. The town sits in an almost flat landscape with light tree cover. The eastern edge, descending to the open levels, is particularly sensitive to change.

Trees help to 'soften' the suburbs, but offer sparse cover to the modern housing estates.

Characteristics

- There is a pleasant human scale and small market town character, and an abundance of small and traditional shops.
- A bustling high street, with an eighteenth century core and Victorian shops.
- The buildings are of very varied age and character, with the new precinct relating well in scale to the church and High Street. The twentieth century additions are sometimes in scale, like St Mary's Walk, but not all are so successful.
- There is a fine juxtaposition between the High Street and the church, which encloses the area. The quiet green church yard lies close by, with many fine trees.
- The dominant building material is brick, often whitewashed.



Hailsham

Special features

- The Grange is a notable large historic building.
- The Cuckoo Trail, the old dismantled railway, runs north-south through the town.
- extensive woodland of Abbots Wood/ Wilmington Wood lies just to the south-west.
- The rope industry that has thrived for centuries.

Problems, pressures, detracting features

- Extensive, characterless housing and industrial estates impact on the countryside
- Loss of physical and visual contact between town centre & countryside with the exception of the views from the car parks at the east of the town.
- Large, featureless car parks around the town centre.
- Uninspiring modern infill development in & around the town centre, notably the drab 1960's shopping mall.
- Traffic and car parking.

- The threat to the town's small market town character and relationship to its surroundings posed by the likelihood of further substantial expansion.

Vision

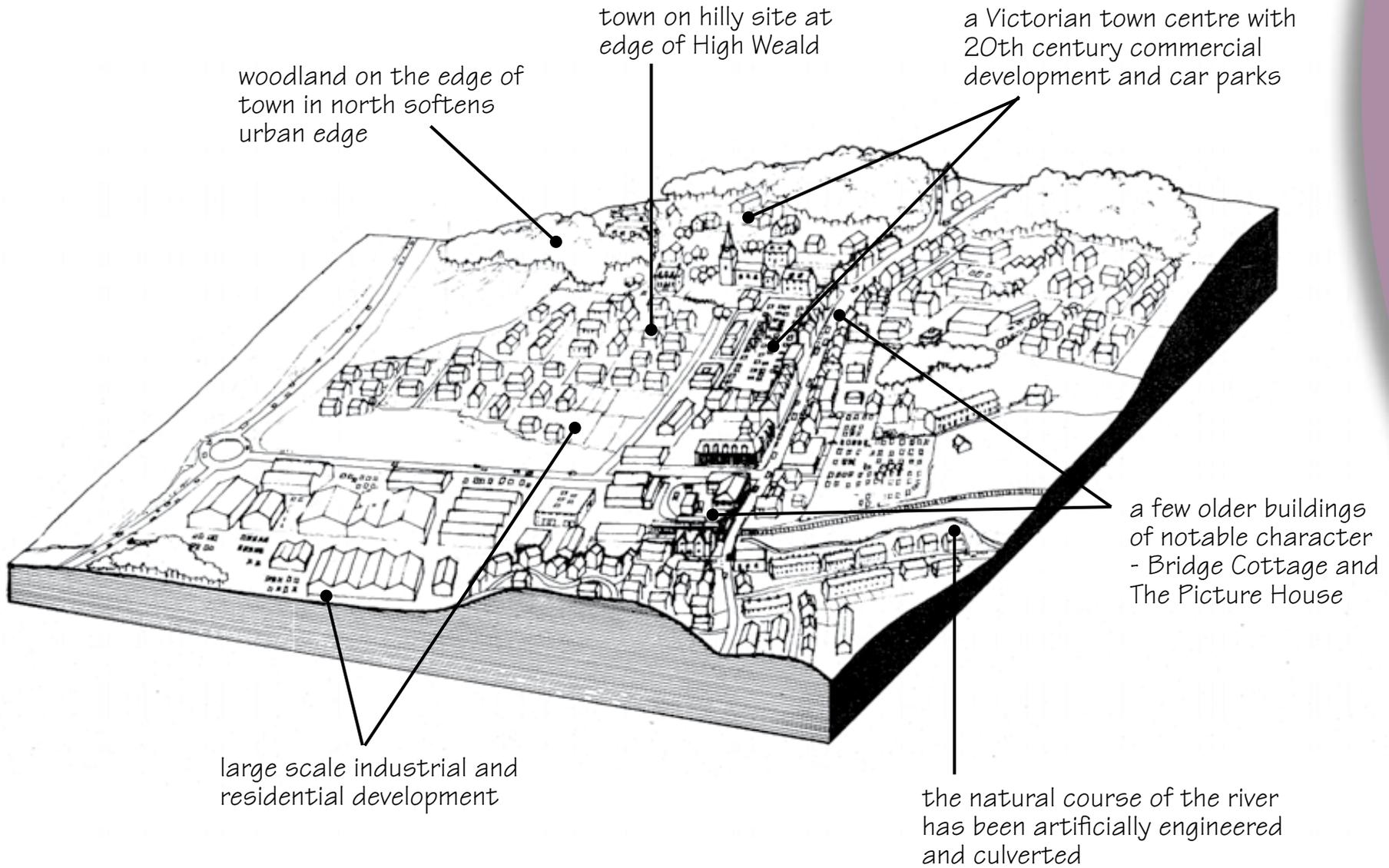
A Low Weald town which retains a small market town character. A strong tree structure, this should define distinctive neighbourhoods and grade out into the pattern of the surrounding countryside. The character and intensity of the centre protected and enhanced to ensure its future as a vibrant successful market town.

Landscape action priorities

- Produce an environmental design strategy for the town centre.
- Protect, and build upon, the local character, especially the churchyard and its trees.
- Conserve the older shops, buildings and character details in and around the town centre.

- Special character features elsewhere, should be reflected in new developments.
- Establish and strengthen a strong, final urban edge, protecting and enhancing the contact between the town centre and countryside in the east.
- Manage traffic and parking and undertake environmental improvements.
- A tree strategy for the town, to include:
 - ◆ Identification, conservation and replacement of important trees
 - ◆ A tree structure for the whole town, reflecting the Low Weald field-and-hedge pattern and scale and defining small 'neighbourhoods'.
 - ◆ Plant trees in and around town centre car parks.
- Design and locate new development to prevent urban creep and create new satellite communities with green corridor links to the town.

Uckfield



Uckfield

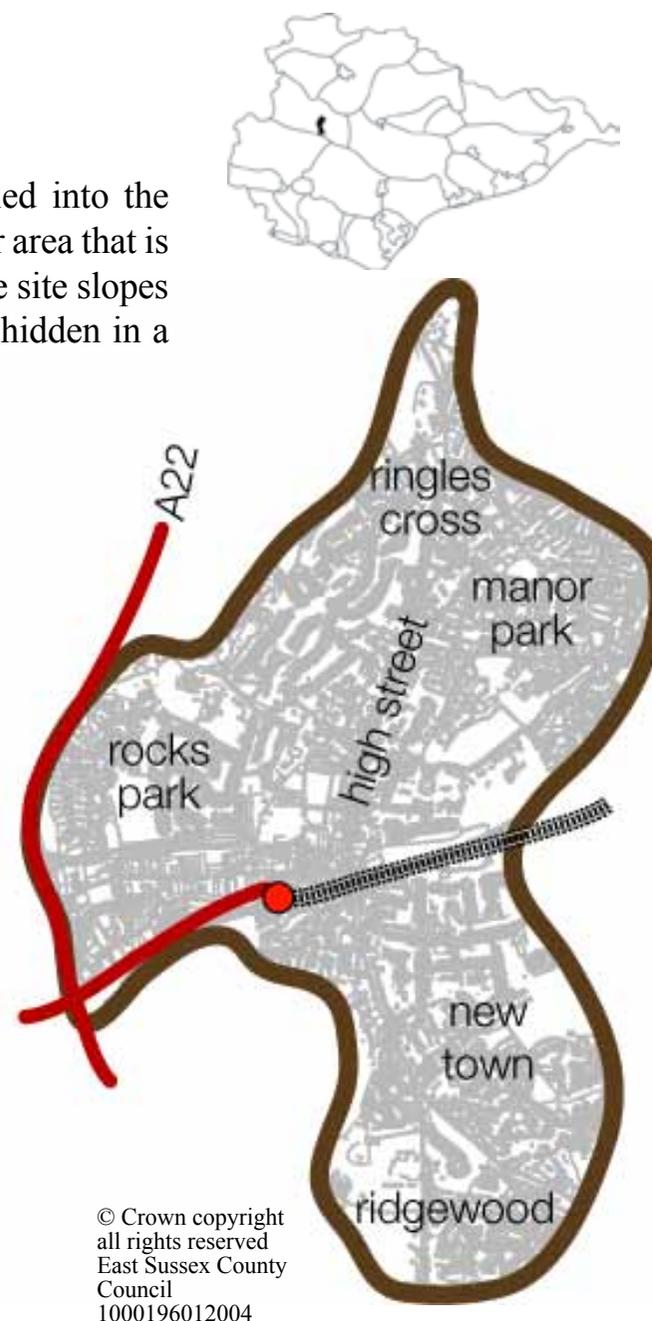
Uckfield has retained the character of a small market town, nestled into the gently rolling countryside of the Upper Ouse, a landscape character area that is a rich mosaic of woods, shaws, gills, small fields and hedges. Its hillside site slopes steeply south to the river Uck and the railway. The river is somewhat hidden in a narrow valley, now full of industrial buildings.

Characteristics

- A mainly Victorian and twentieth century town, with wide variety of styles, that are broadly harmonious due to the repeated use of red brick, the intricately divided facades and white sash windows
- There is a steep, busy high street on a main through-route, the old A22.
- The sandstone church and huge yew tree provide a focal point.
- At the top of the High Street, where the road is narrow, there is a compact, human scale to the buildings.
- Going south down the hill, the size increases to a variety of three and four storey Victorian facades, tightly abutting the road.
- At the foot of the hill, 1960s buildings detract from the historic character.
- There is large scale industrial and residential development that lacks local character
- The wooded character softens the impact of the expanding town on the surrounding countryside, but the relatively open, gently-sloping areas and larger fields reveal some exposed development edges.

Special features

- The pretty Picture House dates from 1916 and is a focal point.
- The Holy Cross is a sandstone church dating from the sixteenth century.
- Bridge Cottage is a wonderful example of a 16th century Wealden House.



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Uckfield

Problems, pressures, detracting features

- Lack of character and identity in modern residential and commercial development.
- The failure to utilise the river as an amenity.
- Pressure for continued expansion.
- High traffic levels and pressure of parking, dominance of cars in the High Street and surrounds.

Vision

A medium-sized Wealden town with a colourful, interesting and pedestrian-friendly High Street, focusing on a pleasant tree-lined river with a backdrop of wooded, easily-accessible Wealden countryside.

Landscape action priorities

- Enhance High Street to strengthen it as a character focus for the town.
- Produce an environmental design strategy for the town centre.
- Consider creation of a pedestrian square or precinct, removal of clutter, and traffic calming measures.
- Break up town centre car parks with tree planting.
- Consider a river restoration project for the Uck for recreation and wildlife, with a view to providing flood relief.
- Establish strong, final development limits to the town.
- Manage urban edge woodlands and parklands.

Crowborough

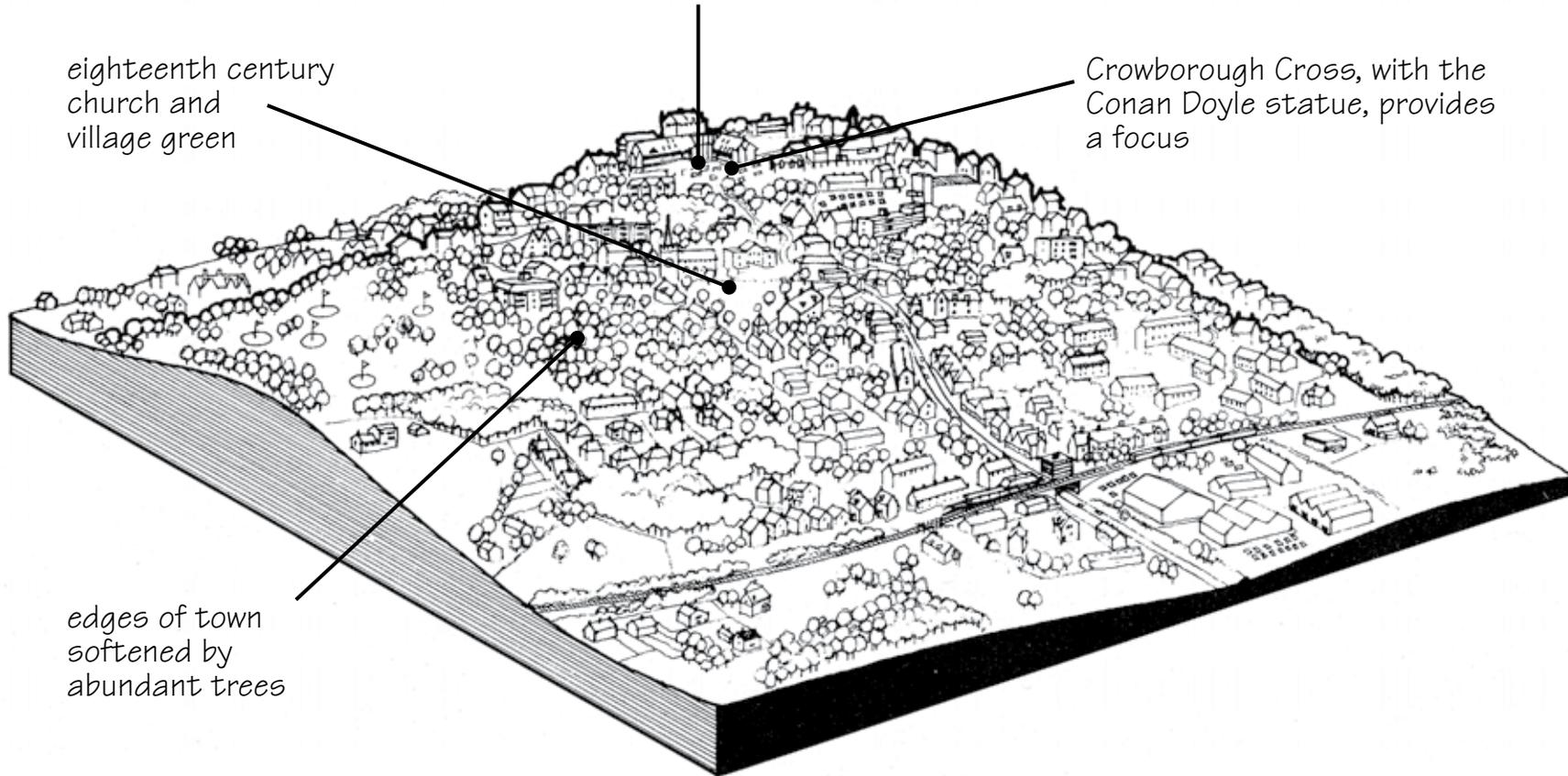
cohesive red brick Victorian and Edwardian centre, with continuous frontage to the road

Crowborough is the highest town in the county, blanketing the main Wealden Ridge east of Ashdown Forest - fine Wealden views

eighteenth century church and village green

Crowborough Cross, with the Conan Doyle statue, provides a focus

edges of town softened by abundant trees



Crowborough

Crowborough blankets the crest of the main Wealden ridge east of Ashdown Forest. The town evolved at a cross-roads, where a coaching inn called The Cross was built. The railway came in 1868, which resulted in the growth of the village into a town. The core of Crowborough was built of red brick, at the turn of the twentieth century. In common with other towns close to the railway, the buildings have slate roofs. Crowborough has seen considerable expansion but has preserved its pleasant loose-knit, green, suburban character.



Characteristics

- Crowborough is a large ridgetop town – the highest in the county.
- There are satellite centres of focus away from the town centre.
- The town centre is largely inward-looking, with few views out to exploit the setting.
- In the centre there are good quality Victorian and Edwardian buildings with interesting detailing. There is some red clay tile hanging, and much evidence of sandstone
- The outskirts are of a less attractive late 20th century estate housing.
- The edges of the town are softened by abundant trees, but the suburban development on the eastern slopes is clearly visible from the Rotherfield area.

Special features

- Chapel Green beside the eighteenth century church.
- The Cross, with the Conan Doyle statue, provides a focus.



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Crowborough

Problems and pressures

- Lack of character and structure away from The Cross and Chapel Green.
- Disappointing lack of evidence that this is the highest point in the East Sussex weald.
- Heavy through traffic on the A26 undermines the character of the town.
- Lack of distinctive building and streetscape design in town centre weakens local identity.

Vision

Attractive town on the crest of the High Weald, noted for its fine trees and views, Strong tourist and heritage links to Chapel Green and The Cross.

Landscape action priorities

- Produce an environmental design strategy for the town centre.
- A Tree Conservation Plan for the whole town, aimed at maintaining the present tree cover, protecting and strengthening tree cover on the town edges.
- A traffic management/environmental improvement scheme for the town centre, creating 'pedestrian friendly' spaces and new character features.
- Strengthen visual and pedestrian links between Chapel Green and The Cross/ town centre, with wider footways, distinctive signs, street furniture, and tree planting.
- Ensure that development pressure does not lead to higher density at the expense of tree cover, increasing the town's impact on the AONB landscape.