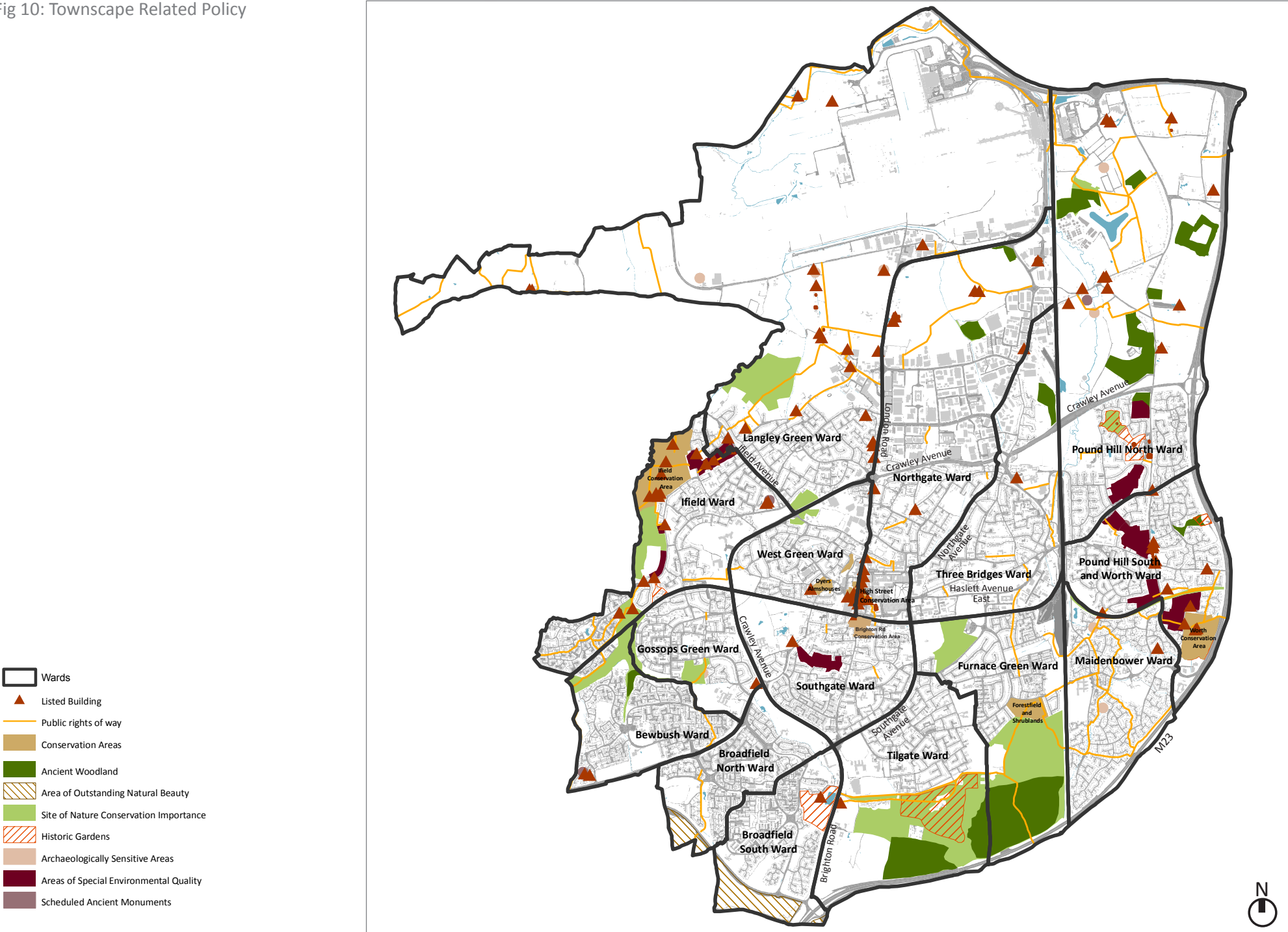


Fig 10: Townscape Related Policy



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2.7 Employment areas

Employment is focused around Manor Royal and to the west of Three Bridges train station around Stephenson Way, although smaller areas of employment uses are often located to the rear of the neighbourhood centres.

Manor Royal is located to the north of the town, with land to the east and west of London Road and towards the airport on Gatwick Road. The main roads (Fleming Way and Manor Royal) through the area are wide with large grassed verges and street trees and serve large development plots which have been developed on a plot-by-plot basis. Building typologies are either single or double height, brick, steel or glass with large floor plates, shallow pitched or flat roofs and a variety of sizes and styles. There are a number of office blocks / reception areas of three –six storey constructed of red or buff brick or clad.

On-plot car parking and servicing is dominant when it is located to the front, although often it is placed to the side or rear of the main building. Enclosure and continuity is weak. Stephenson Way has a similar character although the overall quality not as good, with no trees, dominant car parking and a more ad-hoc arrangement of buildings within the plot. The boundary walls and car parking of light industrial units form a particularly poor frontage to Haslett Avenue East.

2.8 Town Centre

The town centre is located at the geographic centre of the town and includes the medieval High Street to the west and the New Town centre to the east including The Boulevard with Civic functions and Queen's Square around which the retail core is arranged.

The High Street has an attractive historic townscape which is recognised through its designation as a Conservation Area and the twelve listed buildings which front onto its wide, paved market square. The St John the

Baptist Church and the mature Jubilee Oak tree at the northern end of the High Street are notable landmarks. Retail and commercial activity has shifted away from the High Street to the New Town areas of Queen's Square and The Boulevard in the last fifty years and the High Street today is rather disconnected from general visitor circulation patterns and focuses mainly on evening (restaurants / bars) and secondary retail uses.

To the east of the High Street, linked by the rather tired 'Broadway', Queen's Square is the focus of the New Town retail centre developed in the early 1950s. The square has strong retail frontage on all sides and is an attractive shopping area which has retained the strong geometric arrangement set up by the original masterplan. Later development at County Mall introduced indoor shopping areas which unfortunately present blank brick facades to the bus and rail stations and the Memorial Gardens.

To the north of the retail core, The Boulevard is a straight, tree-lined route fronted by civic buildings constructed during the 1960s, including the Town Hall. The street is subject to major redevelopment plans under the Town Centre North SPD.

The Memorial Gardens are an important green space within the heart of the town centre, however the space is poorly addressed by built development on all but the northern side.

The town centre is ringed by the heavily trafficked routes of Haslett Avenue West, Peglar Way, Station Way and College Road which limit pedestrian connectivity to the centre. Land alongside this inner ring road includes important community buildings, for example the town library, plus major supermarkets. There is a coarse urban grain with large blocks and considerable land given over to surface car parking creating a harsh environment that is car dominated and lacking the 'green' feel that is a positive characteristic of Crawley in general.

2.9 Strategic landscape character

The borough of Crawley is situated on the edge of two National Landscape Character Areas: The Low Weald (121) and the High Weald (122, (as defined by Natural England and illustrated in Figure 11).

The urban landscape of Crawley and its surrounding rural setting are influenced by characteristics of both of these landscape types. The town is located in the northernmost tip of the Low Weald character area, with its southern parkland fringes skirting the edge of the High Weald character area and as a consequence the sense of place changes dramatically depending upon the location within the study area.

Key characteristic of the Low Weald (Extracted from Natural England):

- Broad, low lying and gently undulating clay vales that underlie a small-scale intimate landscape enclosed by an intricate mix of small woodlands, a patchwork of fields and hedgerows.
- Topography and soils vary locally in relation to higher, drier outcrops of limestone or sandstone, which are commonly sites of settlements or historic manor houses.
- An abundance of ponds and small stream valleys often with wet woodlands of alder and willow.
- Tall hedgerows with numerous mature trees that link copses, shaws and remnant woodlands which combine to give the Low Weald a well-wooded character.
- Grasslands predominate on the heavy clay soils, while lighter soils on higher ground support arable cropping in a more open landscape.
- A rural landscape with dispersed farmsteads, small settlements and often many timber and brick built traditional buildings, where recent urban

development has not taken dominance.

- The positioning of historic settlements. This was dictated by a preference for higher, drier outcrops of limestone or sandstone with moated manor houses being a characteristic feature.

Key characteristic of the High Weald (Extracted from Natural England):

- A well-wooded landscape rising above the Low Weald and deeply incised in many places to give complex pattern of ridges and steep stream valleys.
- Distinctive and scattered sandstone outcrops or 'bluffs' rise above the farmland and woodland.
- Main roads and settlements are sited along the prominent ridge-lines with a dense network of small, narrow, and winding lanes linking scattered villages, hamlets and farms.
- The legacy of the early iron industry, based on sandstone, ore, water and timber, has left extensive marks upon the rural landscape.
- Areas of coppice woodland and the characteristic 'hammer ponds' which originally provided power to the industry.
- High forest, small woods and copses, and a network of hedges and shaws link small, irregular fields created from cleared woodland. Heavy clay soils have reduced the impact of agricultural change in the area and it is still, in the main, a quiet pastoral landscape with mixed farming predominating.
- Distinctive red tile, brick, local stone and timber building materials, often including hung tiles and white weatherboarding, are characteristic of the historic settlements, farms and cottages. Local building materials characterise the area but recent 'suburbanisation' of farmstead buildings is eroding the distinctive local style in many places.

The Low and High Weald at Crawley

The Low Weald covers all of the urbanized area of Crawley including the surrounding rural landscape to the north, east and west of the town.

Gatwick Airport, located 2 miles north of the town centre also falls within the Low Weald area, and is separated from the edge of the northern urban fringe by a low pastoral plain containing a mixture of small scale grazing enclosures and larger arable fields.

The developed areas of Crawley and Gatwick Airport are uncharacteristic elements within the predominately rural, undulating landscape of the Low Weald. They occupy an area of landscape that is relatively flat in topography, contains typically a lower percentage of woodland and tree cover than the rest of the Low Weald, and has a predominantly 'urban' character due to the built form and road and rail infrastructure.

In the southern parts of the study area and further south into the High Weald, the character changes dramatically as the topography is considerably higher than in the north. The landscape is dominated by the tree cover of the High Forest. Buchan Country Park and Tilgate Country Park form immediate edges to the southern neighbourhoods of Bewbush and Broadfield, and Tilgate, Furnace Green and Maidenbower respectively. Both of these Country Parks offer a range of valuable recreational resources while supporting a network of bridleways and footpaths that connect the urban area with the rural landscape of the High Weald.

To the east and west of the town (Brewhouse Wood and Hyde Hill respectively) the flanking landscape illustrates the transition between the Low & High Weald as the topography gradually rises from the low plain in the north, to the steeper vales and ridges and the high woodland and forest areas occupying the south.

In the southern neighbourhoods (Bewbush, Broadfield, Tilgate) localised ridgelines and valleys influence the landscape character and often remain

heavily forested forming ecological and visual links to the surrounding rural landscape. A number of vantage points provide rare opportunities for extensive views across the urban area.

The network of green corridors provides accessible links from the urban area to the surrounding rural landscape supporting the existing green infrastructure of the town. These corridors consist of various types of amenity and recreational open space, linked by footpaths and bridleways and provide connections to the Crawley Greenway and Worth Way (National Trail).

The Low Weald landscape surrounding Crawley, has changed significantly throughout time due to the influences and impacts of farming, industry, deforestation and the growth of the town from a village to regional centre of almost 100,000 people.

Historical deforestation for shipbuilding, farming and charcoal smelting has changed the landscape from predominantly tree cover to a varied landscape of fields, settlements and tall hedgerows and mature trees. Wooded shaw's remain where forest once stood (mature tree belts forming field boundaries).

The evolution of the new town has pushed the forests southward to where they stand on the high ground today - indicating the edge of the High Weald.

Changes in land use, lack of management and/or farm diversification and intensification has resulted in fragmentation of the landscape structure. Hedgerows have been removed and groups of smaller pastoral fields have been combined into large arable fields.

Historic waterways now weave through the Crawley neighbourhoods as brooks, streams and drainage ditches. There are ponds (often formed as a result of past quarrying for brick-making, marl pits or early iron industry),

Fig 11: Landscape context

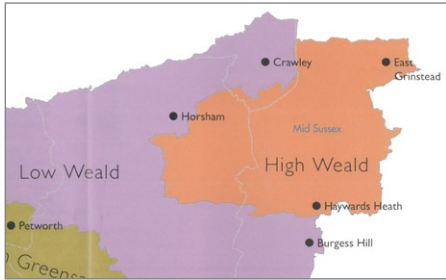









Fig 11a:
Map extracted from WSCC's
'Strategy for the West Sussex
Landscape' October 2005

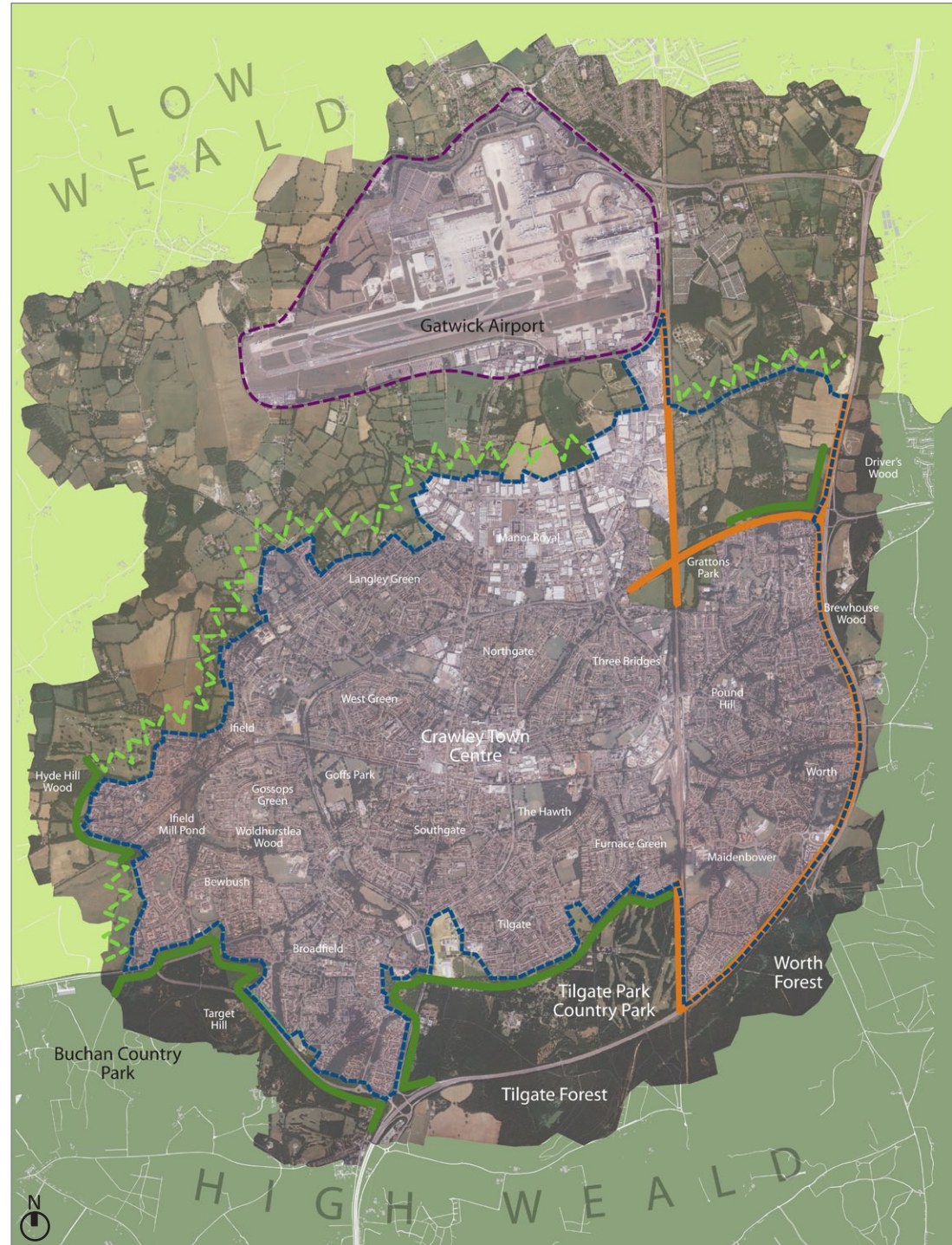


Fig 11b:
Map extracted from Natural England
Low Weald [Character Area 121]



Fig 11c:
Map extracted from Natural England
High Weald [Character Area 122]

-  Built up area Boundary (Study area)
-  Low Weald [Character Area 121]
-  High Weald [Character Area 122]
-  Gatwick airport area
-  Filtered rural edge to study area
-  Enclosed forest edge to study area
-  Edge defined by road & rail infrastructure



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mill pools and moats that provide valuable habitats and key features within the wider recreational and green infrastructure of Crawley. Unfortunately these are often under pressure due to limited management and a decline in quality, and many have become over grown with vegetation, littered with rubbish or silted up. They would benefit from an improved management regime and ecological enhancements.

Views / visual amenity

Within the northern urban area views are generally restricted to local and short distance, due to the contained nature of the built form, screening provided by belts of trees, hedgerow vegetation and the generally low lying flat topography.

Along the urban fringes to the north and northwest (Ifield, Langley Green and Lowland Heath) views are limited to short distances over the rural fringe landscape. The contained nature of the urban area breaks up, allowing views over the intimate rural landscape with fields of pasture delineated by mature hedgerows and trees. In some places these views are filtered due to the break up in density of the hedgerows and tree cover; in others slightly more extensive views are possible due to larger field layouts, created by the intensification of modern farming.

The presence of Gatwick Airport is also clearly evident in these fringe areas. Although the airport is not directly visible from the edge of the built up area, aircraft continually puncture the skyline as they take-off. This land use also impacts on the rural character of the northern pastoral plain as the large units and warehouses (many associated with airport services) in Manor Royal and Lowfield Heath provide an industrial character to the landscape.

Amenity green spaces such as school playing fields, cemeteries, allotments and the urban parks provide breathing spaces within the town while also allowing longer distance and wider views across the built up area.

To the south, southeast and southwest, where the topography rises and falls more often, views out of the urban area to the surrounding High Forest areas are more frequent. Glimpses of mixed tree species within the forests are visible in the distance from various viewpoints or breaks in the built form.

Within the surrounding Country Parks, extensive long distance views to the wider area are possible due to the higher elevation and exposure, allowing views northward over the southern neighbourhoods of the town and beyond to neighbouring ridgelines such as Rusper to the northwest.

Major landscape features

Crawley offers a variety of landscape features and facilities within its urban landscape including school playing fields, cemeteries, communal gardens, allotments, environmentally sensitive areas, urban forests and urban parks. These are generally well distributed and maintained and form valuable resources for residents. Most notable of these are Goffs Park, Hawth Wood and Tilgate Park.

Goffs Park offers traditional leisure facilities such as a model railway, flower gardens, a lake, children's play area, pitch & putt, within a Victorian Parkland setting. Hawth Wood is a 10-hectare area of mixed deciduous woodland situated just outside of the town centre. A number of pathways lead throughout the woodland linking a circular trail from the Hawth Theatre car park to the surrounding residential neighbourhoods. Its history can be dated back as far as the 16th Century when it was used as a source of charcoal and iron ore for the local iron industry. This area of woodland along with others at Furnace Green, Tilgate and Gossops Green were retained as remnant woodlands as the Crawley New Town developed.

The Country Parks to the south (Buchan Country Park and Tilgate Country Park) which are heavily influenced by the ancient forests, also support a range of recreation and leisure pursuits (golf courses, lakes, outward