

Urban Analysis  
**FOLKESTONE**  
*A Narrative for Place & Change*



## **Folkestone - Urban Analysis: A Narrative for Place and Change**

The purpose of this Urban Analysis is to provide people who live in, or visit, Folkestone with some information and some ways of thinking. The Analysis should enable you (since you've started reading it!) to appreciate why the town looks the way it does, and provide you with tools for thinking about how the town could be changed.

The Urban Analysis has been prepared by Folkestone Fringe and paid for by a grant from Folkestone Triennial. It has been written by John Letherland and Diane Dever.

The Folkestone Triennial exhibitions in 2014 and 2017 have addressed how it feels to live in the town – the ways in which history and geography, as well as the built environment, create a context for looking at art placed out of doors. And how the art provides a way to think about the way daily life is experienced in the town. The Analysis is intended to contribute to this context.

It initiates a series of workshops, organised by Folkestone Fringe and to be held early in 2017, about some strategic sites in the town and how to approach Folkestone's urbanism through those sites. It should then provide, with the outcome of the workshops, a foundational document for the Folkestone Urban Room, which will develop through 2017 and over the following years alongside the changes in the town, under the impact of new urban developments and new thinking.

Thank you, Folkestone Fringe and the authors.

Lewis Biggs  
Curator, Folkestone Triennial 2017

Contents

	page
<b>Introduction</b>	
Geology, Geography & Time	1 - 4
<b>The Evolution of Folkestone</b>	
Landscape Impact on Urban Development	
River & Harbour	7- 8
Roads	9 - 10
Railways	11 - 16
Tunnel	17 - 18
<b>The Principles Eras of Change</b>	
Urban Growth Impact on Landscape	
Natural Landscape (Pre-History)	20 - 22
Access, Settlement & Christianity	23 - 24
Defence	25 - 26
Trade & Growth	27 - 30
Taming Nature	31 - 32
Health & Bathing Resort	33 - 34
World Wars	35 - 36
Decline of the Rail & Ferry	37 - 38
Renewal	39 - 40
<b>Folkestone Today</b>	
Figure Ground Maps	
Contours	46
Underpasses, Bridges & Level Crossings	47
Cycle Routes	48
Car Parks & Gap Sites	49
Blockages	50
Gyratories	51
Deprivation	52
Creative Quarter	53
Future Developments	54
Summary	55
<b>Appendix</b>	56 - 60



White Cliffs of Dover

While it doesn’t feature in many conversations on the street, geology is fundamental to the attractiveness and ‘liveability’ of every town or village. The dramatic landscape of East Kent has produced one of the most famous geological formations in the world.

The White Cliffs of Dover express both the separation of the British Isles from the rest of our continent, and the threshold that joins these islands with Europe. To some they symbolise the UK’s defiant island spirit and a sense of independence from the rest of Europe. But no geologist would agree with this point of view, and even in historical terms this is a recent idea - Calais was still the “brightest jewel in the English crown” until 1558.

The North Downs are around 70 million years old, and the White Cliffs of Dover were formed when the Dover Strait was carved through the Downs. This happened only 10,000 years ago, at the end of the last major ice age, when rising sea levels in the North Sea cut a path through the Downs and disconnected this western peninsula from the rest of Europe.

The result of this geological episode, is that the coastline between Folkestone and Dover is the closest part of the British Isles to France. To geologists and geographers, both sides of the Dover Straits form a single region with common physical attributes, and the Channel is not seen as a divide.



How Britain became an island CIRCA 10 000 years ago



Map to illustrate Landbridge



When sea-level were much lower the rivers flowed across grassy plains where the sea used to be

The chalk beds of southern England were formed when a shallow tropical sea submerged the southern portion of England. They are estimated to be about 400 metres thick and are said to span the complete duration of the so-called Late Cretaceous geological period.

Geologists estimate that the chalk beds were built up over 30 or 35 million years of evolutionary time. A simple calculation reveals that the average rate of chalk accumulation therefore over this time period was around one millimetre every 100 years.

This large chalk ‘dome’ connects the UK to mainland Europe, and the chalk cliffs of the Alabaster Coast of Normandy are part of the same geological system.

“Britain - an island built of coal, surrounded by fish - can never get really cold or starve.”

*[How England made the English’ by Harry Mount, 2012]*

There are simple geological reasons why England has been so successful as a place of human settlement.

The geography of Kent is a direct expression of the geological structure from which it is formed. The great chalk uplands of the North and South Downs define and protect the fertile plains of the Weald, in West Kent, that is synonymous with the 'Garden of England'.

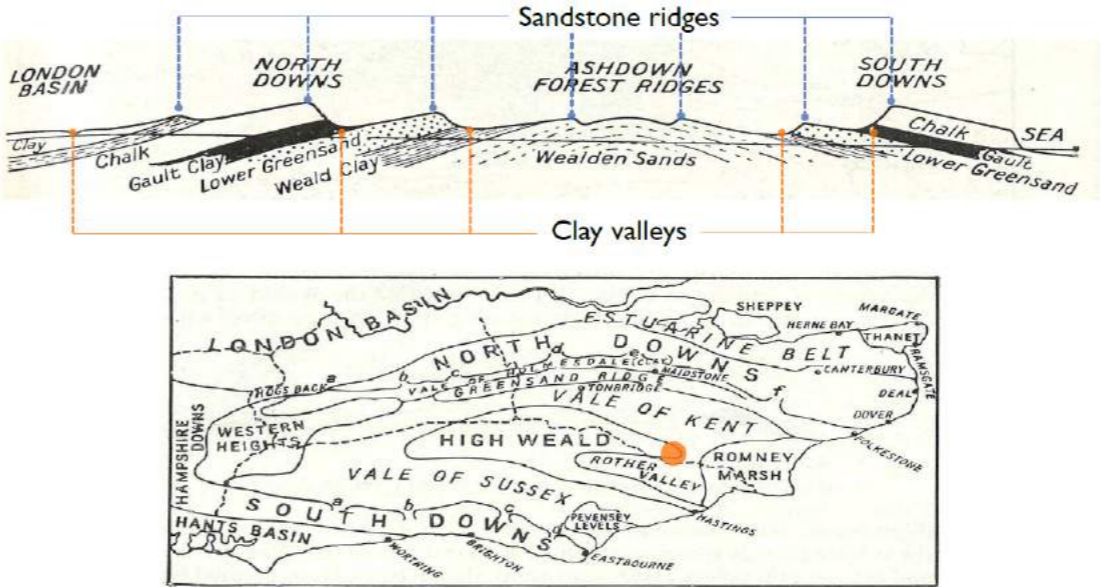
In East Kent, the Devonian beds and Cretaceous Era rock formations, have played a major part in shaping the physical and human geography of the region, how it was settled and how it has flourished over time - the buried seams of coal, and the later chalk escarpment where the valleys and the hills created between them (these are difficult to build on) have been created by the action of the streams and rivers cutting into the rock.

So it's not surprising that geology has also played a major part in Folkestone's origins and in particular its location. The North Downs cliffs create an impressive and impenetrable barrier to invasion; they also made it difficult for Kent's early settlers to reach the seashore to catch and land fish.

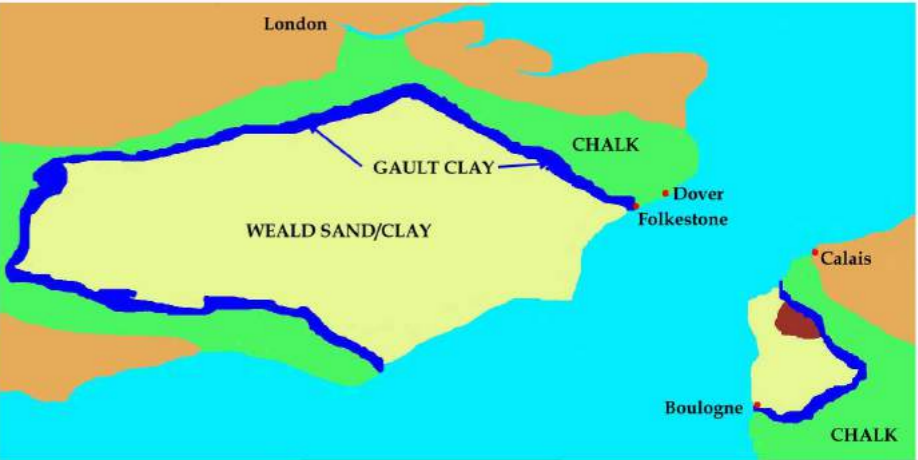
That difficulty was resolved by the Pent watercourse, which can be said to be the prime initiator of Folkestone's development as a place. The Pent runs down from the higher ground of the North Downs to the sea at the junction between the chalk and the less stable Lower Greensand levels to the west. It was the watercourse that enabled Folkestone's early settlers to reach the seashore from the cliff and to establish a fishing settlement on the beach.

The two main sources of the Pent are a large spring situated in what was Biggins Wood, now under the Channel Tunnel service terminal; and a second spring located between Cherry Garden Hill and Castle Hill (sometimes called Caesar's Camp). There is some evidence to suggest that this site was occupied in Neolithic times (about 6000 to 4000 years ago). The source streams can still be found but their flows have been diverted under the M20.

The combined Pent streams originally met the sea in a tidal pool, reaching as far inland as the present north end of Tontine Street.



The Weald, a result of erosion - forming sandstone ridges and clay valleys



## Evolution of Folkestone

Landscape impact on urban development

Castle Hill (sometimes called Caesar’s Camp). There is some evidence to suggest that this site was occupied in Neolithic times (about 6000 to 4000 years ago). The source streams can still be found but their flows have been diverted under the M20.

The combined Pent streams originally met the sea in a tidal pool, reaching as far inland as the present north end of Tontine Street.



The pattern of human colonisation (settlements linked by paths) of the place that became Folkestone was directly influenced by the topography: the settlers sought out easy crossing points along the rivers, which provided fresh water and a means of waste disposal, while avoiding the valley bottoms that were prone to flooding and the steep hillsides between the valleys.

This map clearly shows the basic 'skeleton' of the town - a strong pattern of radiating streets that all emerge from the narrow gap between the two headlands astride the Pent estuary, and which fan out like the spokes of a wheel, travelling inland from the tidal pool and toward the neighbouring settlements of Hythe, Newington, Uphill and Capelle-Ferne.

Invariably, in an era mostly reliant upon horse-drawn transport, the roads follow the lines of least resistance along the valley floors wherever possible and cross the contours where they are most widely spaced. Consequently there are far fewer streets that connect between these radials in a concentric pattern, as to do so they would have had to cross the steep-sided valleys. Most of the concentric streets that were created tended to be in the core of the fishing village where the early settlers clustered, or along the ridgelines of the surrounding hills.

It is this configuration, developed as a consequence of the geography and the landscape, that forms the characteristic underlying shapes and patterns of the town we see today.

This geographic context goes to explain how constrained Folkestone was as a settlement, and why its success as a commercial centre (awkwardly dependent on waggon transport and boats drawn up on the shingle beach) was so limited. In Tudor times Folkestone's population was around 500; by the early 1800's, despite the nationwide shift of population from rural to urban in this period, the population of the town remained small at around 3,500 people.



1819 Historical Map

When the London - Dover railway reached Folkestone in 1843, it was presented with the considerable obstacle of the deep and steep-sided Pent valley. The viaduct was engineered by Sir William Cubitt and built with bricks manufactured in Folkestone from clay excavated nearby (the resultant pit was later opened as Kingsnorth Gardens). Measuring precisely 252 yards and 6 inches in length, the viaduct comprises nineteen arches, with equal spans of 30 feet. The highest point is above Bradstone Ave, at approximately 88 feet to rail level, and the structure is believed to be the world’s highest arched brick viaduct.

A temporary station was opened whilst the Foord Viaduct was constructed. The first permanent station to serve the town was located to the east of the Pent valley and called Folkestone Junction, later renamed as Folkestone East station. A spur line was extended from this station down to the Harbour, where a Station was opened in 1849 so allowing the transformation of the Harbour into a successful cross-channel ferry port. In 1864, Folkestone West station

was opened to serve the barracks at Shorncliffe and, in 1884, another was opened between the two called Cheriton Arch station. This latter station was renamed Radnor Park in 1886, in recognition of the development of the estate of the Earl of Radnor, itself stimulated by the arrival of the railway. It was only in 1895 that this station was renamed Folkestone Central. A branch line from Sandling station to the west of Folkestone also brought trains down to the coast as far as Sandgate in 1874, however the topography was too difficult to negotiate to extend this line further east as far as Folkestone, and the station closed in 1931.

The arrival of the railway had a significant impact upon the population of Folkestone. By 1851, the population had nearly doubled, to 7000, and by the end of the 19th century the population had soared to almost 19,000 people - a staggering increase of over 500% in as little as 50 years.

The Railway and the development of the Harbour instantly expanded the possibilities that Folkestone

had to offer. In particular, the scheduled rail/ ferry link between London-Folkestone-Boulogne-Paris was the fastest route between Europe's two major capitals in an age when frequent travel for the wealthy and middle classes was becoming fashionable.

The alternative route, via Dover and Calais, was favoured for goods or when speed was less important. Dover and Calais were seen as 'working' ports, while the Folkestone and Boulogne route was preferred by fashionable passengers and high value luxury goods. The easy access to France was crucial in Folkestone's development as a 'court' town, to which the king and his companions (along with all their retainers) frequently resorted in the early years of the 20th Century. (See below The Principle Eras of Change: Health & Bathing Resort (1850 – 1914) pp 34).



1899 Historical Map

Through the second half of the 19th Century, the growth of the town's economy remained strong, and large and luxurious hotels were built to cater for Folkestone's growing reputation as a high end resort, along with many other amenities that were needed to cater for the holiday making public.

The First World War caused significant further growth in Folkestone; with large numbers of refugees arriving (37,000 Belgian refugees were billeted in the town's deserted boarding houses and hotels) and the use of the Harbour as a prime military embarkation point, the town rapidly adjusted. Following World War I, Folkestone rejuvenated itself and became a resort that appealed to middle-class families and not just the affluent.

Expansion was needed, but to the south this was blocked by the sea. To the north, the railway embankment running along the edge of the town had been constructed with few physical penetrations; the lack of crossing points presented considerable

difficulties to expanding in that direction. Nevertheless, the town did begin to expand. As the Pent Valley viaduct was the largest access point through the rail line, so Folkestone's expansion north was concentrated in that area, absorbing the outlying villages of Broadmead and Foord in the process. Because of the same physical constraint of the rail embankment, Folkestone's expansion was guided more effortlessly to the west, where development of Lord Radnor's farmland into a network of new urban blocks followed the palimpsest of the old field pattern. To the east of the Harbour branch line there was also development land available. The 'folly' once located on Copt Point and referred to on the earlier maps seems to have been a casualty of this eastward expansion, and is now only a distant memory recorded in the naming of Folly Road.

By the middle of the 20th century, following World War II, Folkestone rebuilt itself as a resort for holidaymakers and day-trippers. As the main

target of the bombing, the Harbour area suffered particularly badly; one of the consequences of bomb damage was to destroy the buildings connecting Tontine Street and the Old High Street to the seafront, leaving a hole in the urban fabric that remains to this day.

Damage caused by numerous air raids and V1 attacks left many gaps in the urban fabric. The shadow of Sir Leslie Patrick Abercrombie, the government's advisor on post-war urban redevelopment, still hangs heavy over parts of the town. In that era, our towns and cities were considered to be 'broken' and many gap sites were filled in with insensitive and anti-urban developments. Dual carriageways and gyratories were created, along with zonal planning of social housing, retail and light industrial 'parks'. Some gap sites still scar the urban landscape today as open car parks or vacant undeveloped sites.



1921 Historical Map

The ‘taming’ of the coastline from the mid-nineteenth century onwards (groins, barriers, seawalls, promenades, jetties, piers) altered the dynamics of coastal deposition; the construction of the Harbour pushed the longshore drift out from the coastline and a shingle bank began to develop to the west of the Harbour, creating a large 'plain' of reclaimed land below the cliffs, without geographic or historical function and variously used for warehousing, railways sidings, and the entertainment industry but never well integrated to the rest of the town.

These disconnections between town and Harbour / foreshore were exacerbated when a (now redundant) one-way system was introduced throughout the town for the benefit of traffic to the ferry port. This creates a traffic flow that is faster, noisier, more polluting and travelling larger distances than is needed. As well as being without rationale since the closure of the ferry port, this has a severely damaging effect on the routes for pedestrians between the town and Harbour.

Nowadays, the tight urban grain of the historic fishing village remains in the centre of the town but, with the advent of motorised transport, expansion around the edges of Folkestone has reached as far as the chalk escarpment to the north. Urban sprawl has also absorbed the village of Sandgate along the coast, and has reached as far as the deep valleys south of Cheriton. Much has happened since 1945; extensive rebuilding programmes, the expansion of residential and light-industrial areas, the building of the M20 and the Channel Tunnel, have all meant major changes.

Since 2009 Folkestone has been connected to London by a High Speed Rail link, with travel times of less than an hour, and is undergoing a renaissance as a centre of art and culture through the work of the Creative Foundation (founded 2002) and the investment of the Roger De Haan Charitable Trust.



1949 Historical Map

While the railway had provided the greatest stimulus to the expansion of Folkestone, 150 years later it was responsible for creating a significant crisis: the building of the Channel Tunnel (opened 1994) had a profound negative effect on the local economy.

The Dover Straits were created in an episode of climate change, and humans seem always to have wanted to revert to the ease of travel that preceded this event. The oldest sea-going boat in the world, discovered in Dover and now on display in Dover Museum, is evidence that trade between these islands and mainland Europe was active in the Bronze Age. The Channel Tunnel is only the latest manifestation of this desire, and relies entirely on the character of the geological substrata for its form, route and success.

There were numerous proposals for a tunnel under the channel during the 19th Century, including one by Napoleon, but the first serious attempt to build a tunnel came with an Act of Parliament in 1875 authorising the Channel Tunnel Company Ltd to start preliminary trials. This was an Anglo-French

project with a simultaneous Act of Parliament in France. Work continued until the early 1880s, when the UK Government became concerned about possible military implications. The project was subsequently abandoned by the French.

Humans have continued to innovate ways to cross the channel for economic or territorial advantage, be it by invasion armadas, trading vessels, paddle steamers, boat trains, aircraft, hovercraft, tunnels, channel swimmers, power and telephone lines or listening ears. Even the pleasure piers, such as the one that existed in Folkestone, or Harbour Arms along the coastline whilst taking people out to sea, might be seen as attempts to bridge the gap between the landmass above the water line.

Like the changing of the tides, there are periods in history when we have considered connecting to the mainland to be against our interests. These have tended to be at times of heightened tensions politically, and so our efforts have focused on defence instead.



2016 Combined Topographical & Urban Map

## Principle Eras of Change

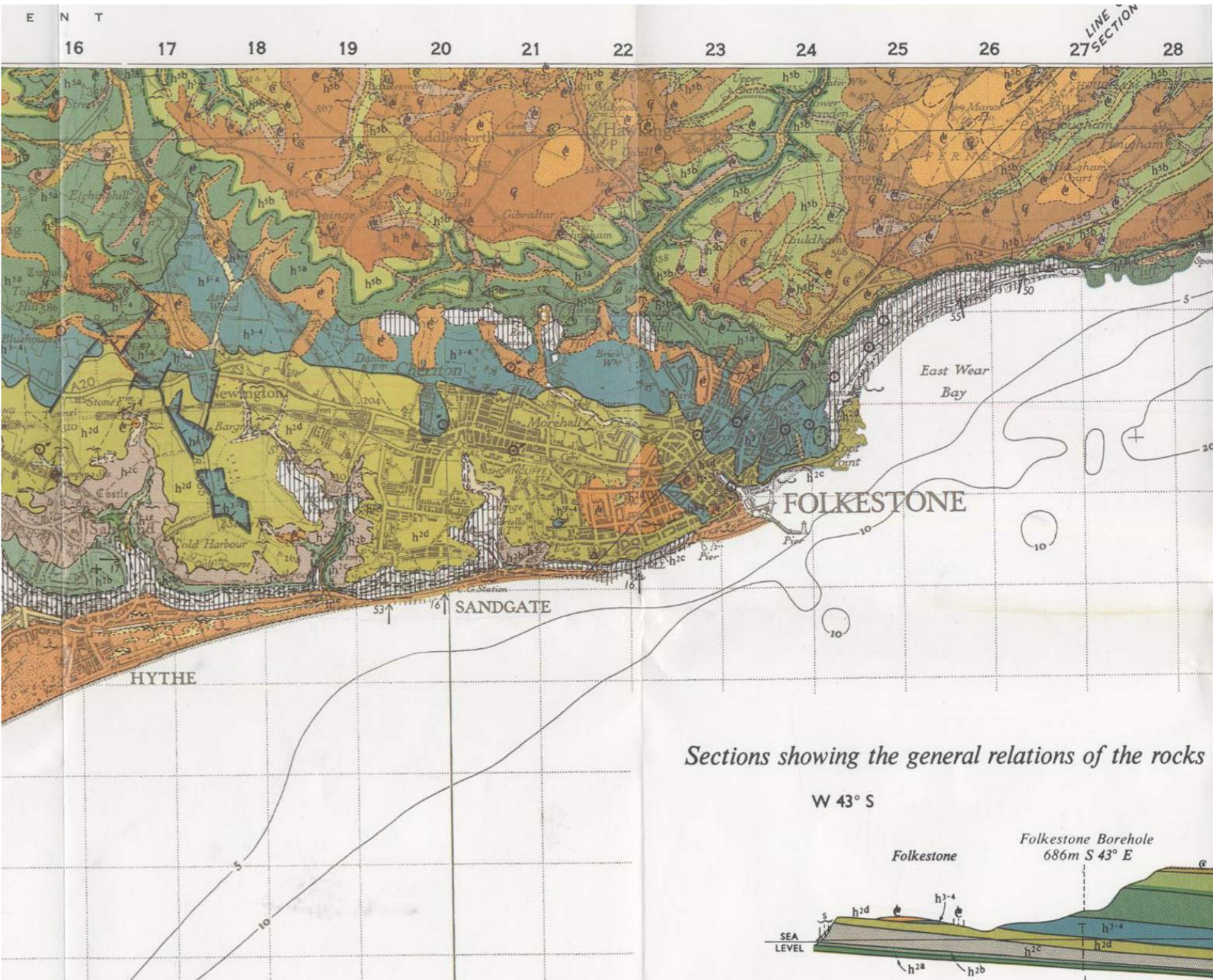
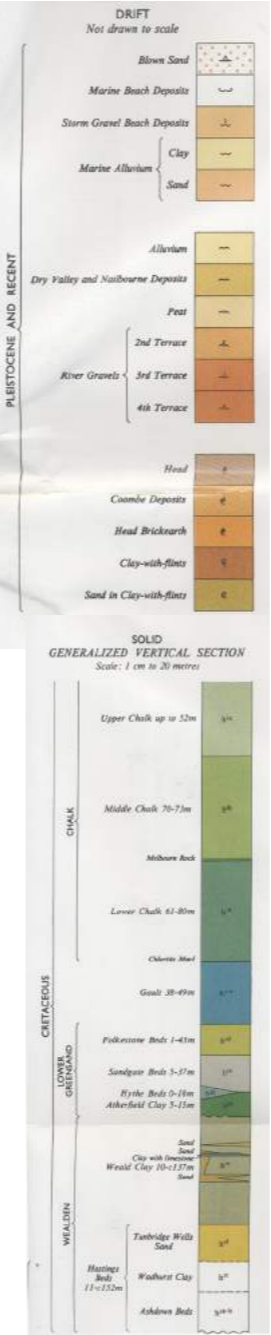
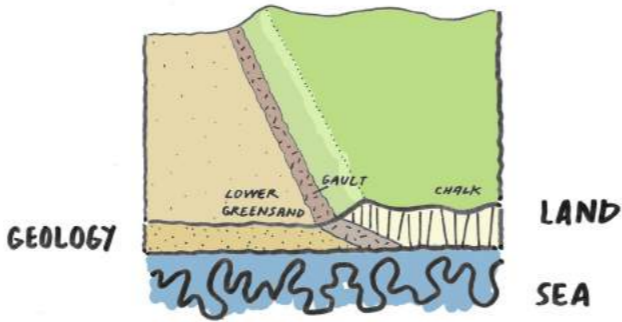
Urban growth creating landscape

The following illustrations have been created to map the evolution of the town centre and the main eras of change that it has undergone.

The sequence begins with the geological context in which Folkestone is located, from which the contours and river valley that meet the sea derived - a clear drawing showing the rivers and streams cutting through the porous chalk.

Folkestone sits at the point where the band of Gault Clay separates the chalklands of Dover from the Weald geology of sand and clay. It is geology that dictated the place, in time, where the Pent Stream found its way to the Channel.

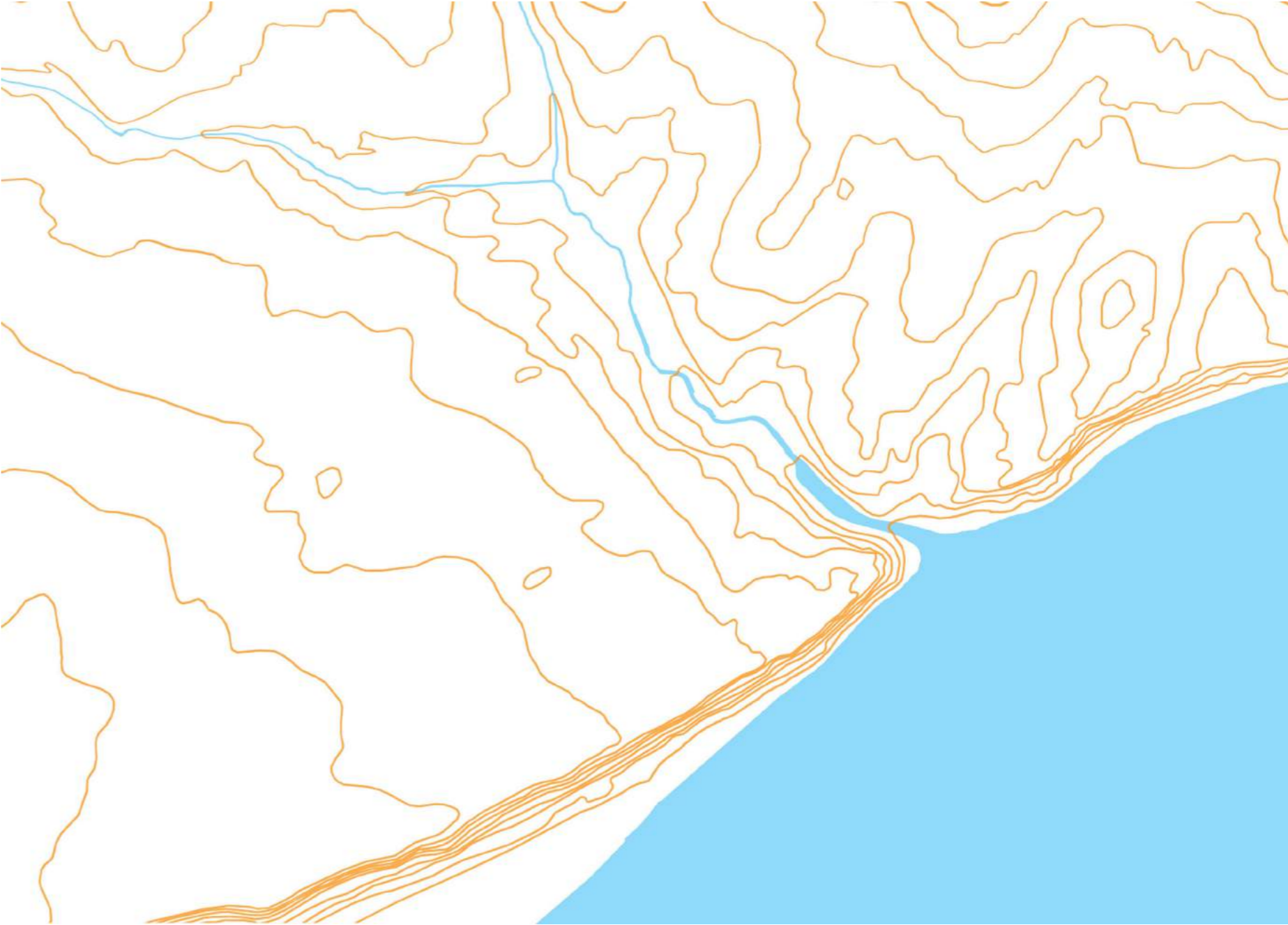
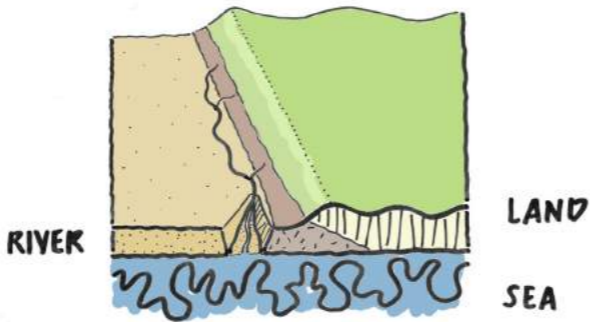
This impervious layer of Gault Clay forces the rainwater to emerge as a spring-line at the foot of the chalk escarpment. Thus the watercourse now known as the Pent cuts its way through the cliff line of the softer Lower Greensand rock and down to the sea.



Map illustrating the Geology of Folkestone

The Pent provided the key to Folkestone’s location in finding its way from the higher ground of the North Downs to the sea at the junction between the Chalk and the less stable Lower Greensand levels to the west.

The watercourse cut a path through the cliffs and we assume thereby enabled Folkestone’s early settlers to reach the seashore and for a fishing settlement to be established on the beach. It would have also made it possible for settlers arriving by sea to penetrate inland at this point.



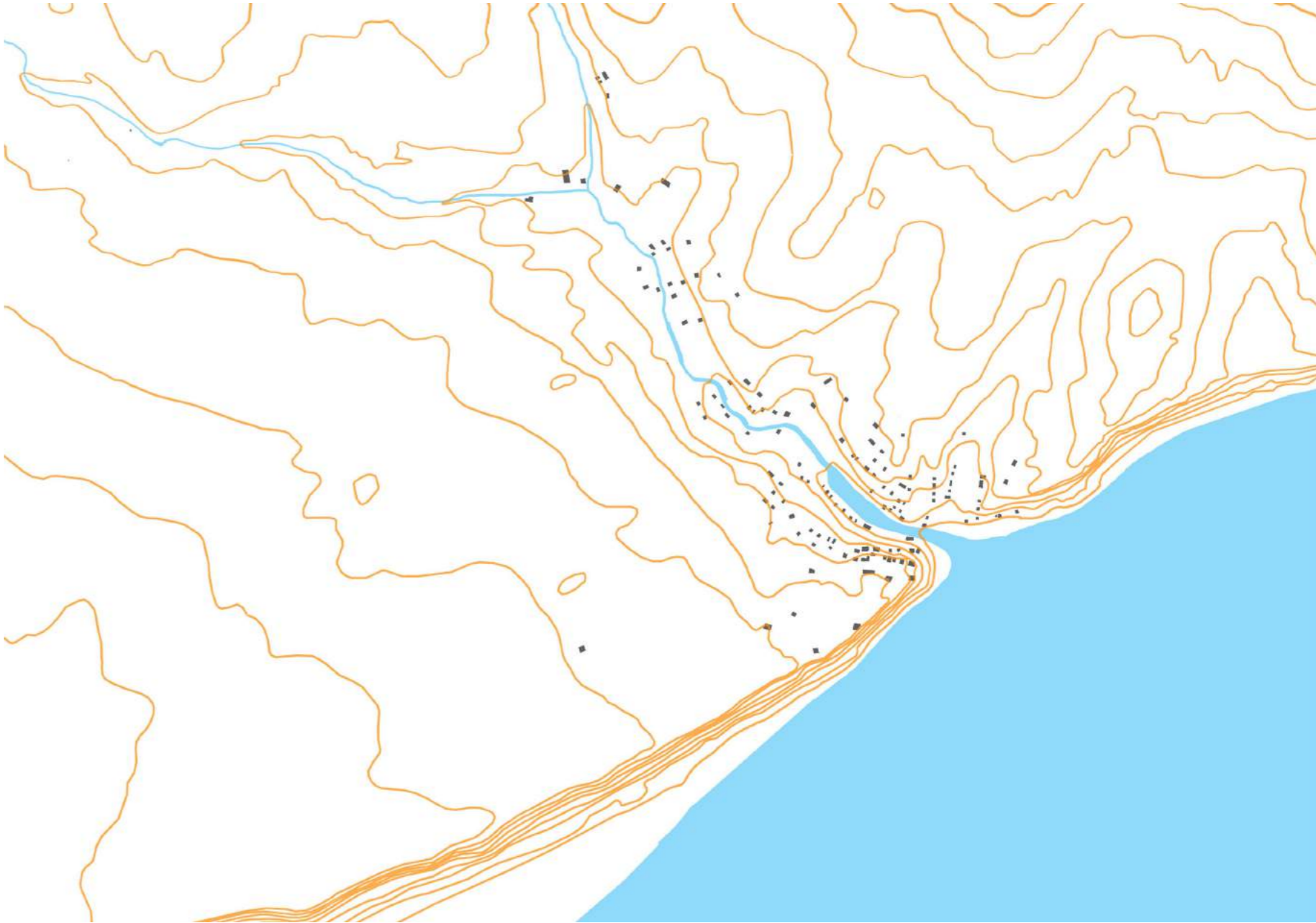
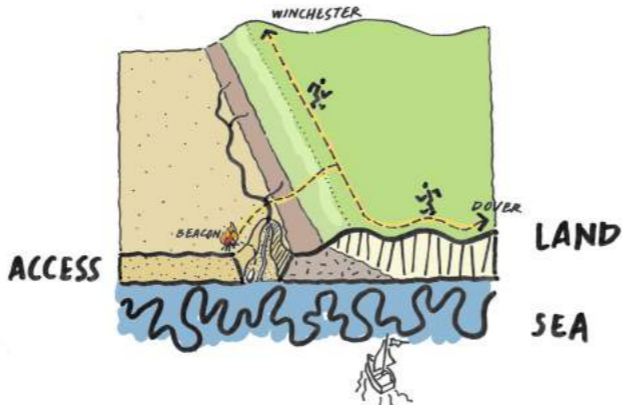
Contour map illustrating how the tidal inlet met the Pent watercourse

The cliff line was once continuous between The Warren and The Leas, before the Pent found a weakness in the rock formation and cut a channel to separate them. In doing so it created an extraordinarily deep valley between the areas known as West and East Folkestone.

As the early fishing settlement gradually established around the inlet and to the east of the valley, it became successful as a place of commerce and trade. The settlement inevitably grew up and into the more sheltered location in the river valley, and a high street was established to the west of the inlet leading from the seafront to the defensible Bayle above.

The village itself was not a Roman settlement, but a Roman watchtower with an entrenchment was built on a hill about 1.5 miles to the north. A Saxon castle, church, and nunnery were built in the reign of Eadbald, King of Kent (616-647); these were ruined by Danes in the 10th century and again by Earl Godwin in 1052, but the town was of some note by the time of the Norman Conquest.

The castle was rebuilt after the Conquest, and a Benedictine priory founded on the site of the Saxon nunnery in 1095; the priory moved shortly afterwards to a site south of the current parish church due to cliff erosion, and was rebuilt in 1138.



The priory was possibly already moribund by the dissolution of the monasteries in 1535, but thereafter the buildings were broken up and the stone was used for Sandgate Castle to the west as part of Henry VIII’s defence against attack from Catholic France.

The French sacked Folkestone in 1552, and Calais ceased to be English in 1558. By the 1560s Folkestone had fallen into severe decline, but its defensive role was revived against Spanish attacks in the 1580s.

During the 17th century Non-Conformist churches were constructed, along with a grammar school, and the first attempts were made to protect the beach against storm erosion, by building jetties.

The 18th-century economy expanded with boat-building and fishing; the defensive jetties were repaired and augmented after 1766, providing the beginnings of “a kind of Harbour” (1790s’ description).

This map shows development restricted to the area east of St Eanswythe’s church, and focused around the (still open) Pent watercourse.

Until the end of the 18th century, fishing boats were drawn up onto the beach to be unloaded along the seafront. Folkestone at this time was not a prosperous place, and consequently had low civic status – it was designated as a ‘limb’ of Dover within the Cinque Ports Confederation. Apart from fishing, the second major plank in Folkestone’s economy was smuggling, an activity centred on the Warren.



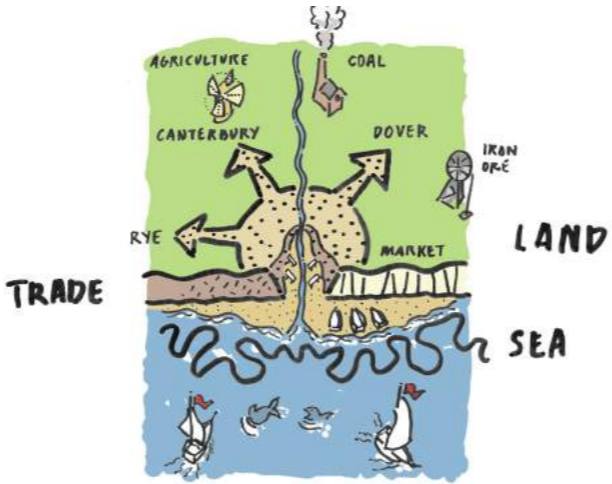
The two headlands that were created by the action of the Pent on either side of its valley - West Cliff and East Cliff - provided convenient markers framing the tidal pool of the river, and, after the silting up of the pool, the poorly developed beginnings of the Harbour (18th Century). They also provided convenient look-outs from which to get early warning of invaders. The story of Folkestone's development from these early geologically determined beginnings is clearly visible, still recorded in its physical make up even today.

It was these headlands that provided the locations for two of Folkestone's most famous historic buildings: the ancient St Eanstwythe's Church has provided a welcome beacon of safety for Folkestone's fishermen since first being established in the 11th century, and Martello Tower #3 was constructed on Copt Point as the front line in a complex 19th century defensive system guarding against invasion by Napoleon.

When the Old High Street and Dover Road were created to provide access between the headlands, the basic structure of the town was established.

The meandering Tontine Street follows the course of the Pent River, culverted in 1849 in order to build the street above. The river is visible today as it emerges at low tide through an iron grill into the Inner Harbour and cuts a channel through the sand and out through the Harbour mouth.

However, the key geographic factor from which Folkestone benefitted is its close proximity to London and to Paris. And it was the sale of the Harbour in 1842 to the South Eastern Railroad that really stimulated Folkestone's growth and subsequent prosperity.



Folkestone’s development and success have always been determined by geology – and expressed through the evolving relationship between the land and the sea; not only fishing and the trade in seafood but the commercial port and ferry services to and from Boulogne. Human interventions to ‘tame’ the shoreline stimulated the construction of the Harbour in a series of incremental stages. The war effort against Napoleon led to improvements to the Harbour, gradually increasing the Harbour’s capacity and providing a safe haven for the fishermen.

The first pier and Harbour was built by Thomas Telford in 1809, and the beautiful East Quay (now listed Grade 2) was constructed to provide protection from the easterly winds. This created a small increase in trade and the population started to grow. Unfortunately, the Harbour entrance was easily choked by the longshore drift of shingle, and by silt carried down by the Pent Stream. When the entrance to Harbour became impossible to negotiate by boat, it had to be cleared by hand and horse-drawn carts.

Following the sale of the Harbour, the rail line between London and Dover was extended through a branch line down to Folkestone Harbour, via East Folkestone Station, in 1843.

A new viaduct was constructed across the Harbour and the West and South Quays were built to provide safe berthing for cross-channel paddle steamers to and from Boulogne, along with space for the Customs House and a growing number of warehouse buildings to support the commercial trade.

Subsequent commercial ventures led to the construction of The Stade along the old shoreline to provide a fish market and a more practical landing stage from which boats could be loaded and unloaded.

Later, in 1844, George Turnbull was responsible for the construction of the ‘Horn Pier’; the construction of this ‘Harbour Arm’ out into deeper water overcame the limitations caused by the tidal range and allowed large ships to dock at any stage of the tide. It also enabled the rail line to be extended to reach the ferries; this investment in transport infrastructure had the advantage of enabling the Orient Express direct access between London’s Victoria Station and Folkestone Harbour, and passengers were able to embark and disembark in close proximity to the cross-channel ferries moored alongside Harbour arm. Thus the world’s first ocean-going ‘boat train’ was established, strengthening Folkestone’s reputation as the primary connection with Continental Europe.



Following the development of the train link to the Harbour, the success of the cross-channel trade stimulated yet more business and even larger ferry vessels and Folkestone prospered in response to the growing demand for access to the Continent. This innovation heralded a new and more prosperous commercial direction for Folkestone, as the fashion for therapeutic sea-bathing changed gradually into a new era of holiday-taking in the second half of the 1800s, with the town transforming by 1900 into a fashionable sea-side resort.

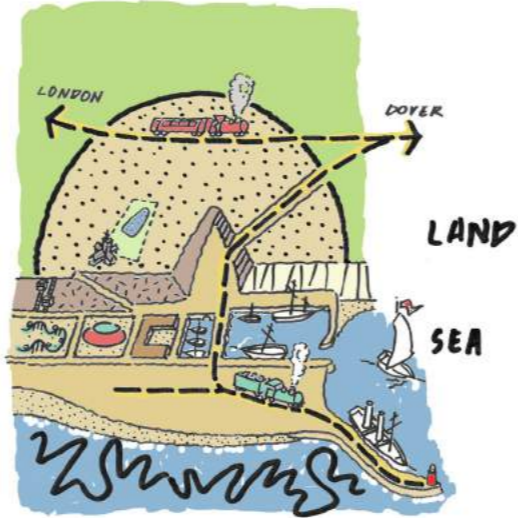
Back in 1815, Napoleon’s defeat at Waterloo had restored peace to England’s coastal communities and many serving naval officers returned to England and set up home in Folkestone’s then impoverished but beautiful surroundings. The town’s character as a working village for fishing and smuggling gradually began to be overlaid with a more genteel character. The healthy surroundings made it popular with people seeking convalescence or avoiding the disease of the cities (eg Mary Shelley came in 1832 to avoid the cholera epidemic in London).

The first signs that Folkestone’s could be reborn as a fashionable resort were already present at the end of the 18th Century. The Earls of Radnor, Lords of the Manor of Folkestone, began to develop their landholdings around the town from 1784, when a fall of the Leas cliff created the opportunity to build a new road between Folkestone and Sandgate. Lower Sandgate Road was opened in 1828 and provided a more direct and less arduous route west

avoiding the steep gradients of the Upper Sandgate Road. Lord Radnor turned to the architects Decimus Burton to plan this route and Sydney Smirke (architect of the British Museum) to design the charming and diminutive toll house still standing today. This road became known as Marine Parade as it crossed the shingle bank. Grand, elegant town houses were constructed north of Marine Parade, including Marine Crescent.

Burton and Smirke also contributed to the transformation the cliff-top farm fields of the Radnor estate into a development of large and generously proportioned houses, hotels and guest houses and the grand promenade known today as The Leas. Like many of the great estates of that era, the layout of tree-lined avenues and squares of that part of town bears the imprint of the field pattern that preceded it.

The Leas became a favourite haunt of King Edward VII, not only with the Queen and their entourage, but also with his mistress Alice Keppel. In his wake came fashionable society. Many famous writers and artists of the day lived in the area to take advantage of the healthier coastal climate, including HG Wells, Joseph Conrad, Henry James and Edith Nesbitt. Frequent visitors were George Bernard Shaw, Arnold Bennett, Ford Madox Ford and Sir James Barrie, as well as political figures such as the local MP, Sir Edward Sassoon, and his friend the young Winston Churchill.



Compared with nearby Dover or Ramsgate, Folkestone’s success as a port has always been impaired by the huge tidal range it experiences and the fact that it suffers from being a drying Harbour at low tide.

While the other East Kent ports grew in importance through trade (of seafood and coal from the East Kent coalfields), Folkestone’s advantage was its proximity to France and a short channel crossing: its commercial future as a port was for passengers.

This meant that during the First World War, Folkestone became the prime military point of embarkation and disembarkation, with large numbers of refugees also arriving from Belgium and France. The town rapidly adjusted.

In between the Wars Folkestone once again rejuvenated itself and became a resort that would appeal to middle-class families and not just the affluent. The family holiday trade boomed in the 1920s and 1930s, and many large homes were converted to flats or private hotels. Amusement centres were developed along the seafront to the south of Marine Gardens, including the Rotunda, a boating lake and a bathing pool.

World War II inevitably brought about the closure of resort and Channel services. Although re-opened in the late 1940s, improvements to the ferry ports at Dover, Calais, and Boulogne were not matched at Folkestone, which struggled to compete.



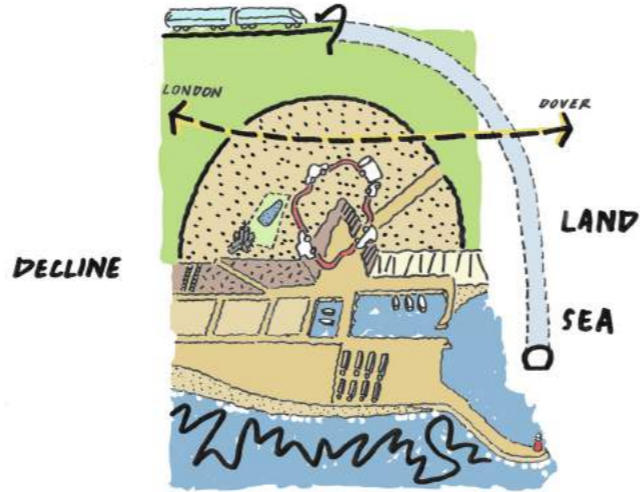
From 1945, there was a gradual decline of Folkestone as a resort, paralleled with changes to the Harbour and the transport services.

The main pier, the Marina, and the Pleasure Gardens Theatre were all demolished in the 1950s to create car parks, and an office building. The seafront rail yard was cleared and the Cliff Lifts were taken over by the local council.

A £9 million Harbour and Channel services scheme was opened in 1972, but in the mid-1980s Sealink was privatised and there were disruptive multiple changes to ferry services.

The channel services changed ownership again in 1990: this was followed by major investment and expansion at Dover and, with no concomitant investment in Folkestone, the Folkestone ferry and transport services declined rapidly.

The Channel Tunnel opened 1994 and duty free tax was abolished in 1999; both events hit Folkestone hard. All cross-Channel passenger services from Folkestone finally closed in September 2000 and the Harbour was sold in 2004.



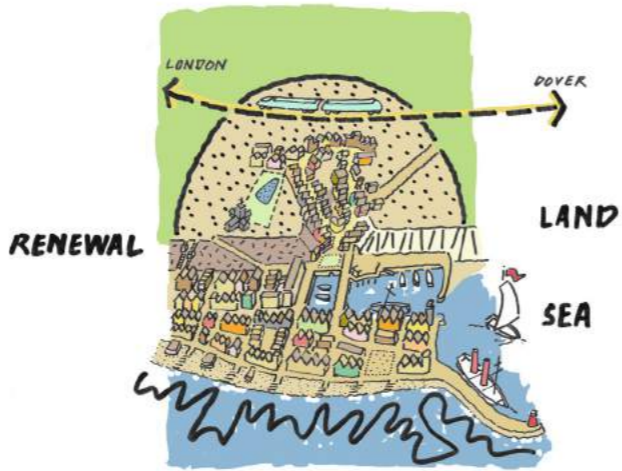
From the mid-1800s onwards, the extension of the marine structures out from the original coastline into deeper water significantly altered the dynamics of the ocean currents, causing unexpected changes to Folkestone’s seafront.

As the extended Harbour Arm pushed the predominantly eastward longshore drift further away from the coastline, the pattern of coastal geomorphology was altered, resulting in the gradual growth of a shingle bank at the base of the cliffs to the west of the Harbour. In contrast, a further consequence of the same effect was the build up of a sand beach to the east of the Harbour.

Today, hydrologists have established that this drift has now balanced and the shingle bank has stabilised as a land form. The impact on Folkestone’s seafront has been quite dramatic as the cliff line between the Leas lift and the Harbour has been left stranded inland. The growth of this new part of seafront, coming as late as it did in Folkestone’s urban development, has meant that this landform has never been fully integrated into the rest of the town.

Today, Folkestone has the benefit of a High Speed Rail link to London with travel times of less than an hour, and with the philanthropic investment of Sir Roger De Haan, the town is undergoing a renaissance as a centre for the arts and culture. The Old Town has been regenerated by repairing and upgrading the urban environment to provide a home for a new community of artists and creatives, whilst preserving the charm and character of this part of Folkestone.

As part of this renewal, a masterplan created by Sir Terry Farrell for the strip of accreted land has been approved by Shepway District Council for Folkestone Seafront. Outline planning permission is in place for the development of new homes, apartments and retail space. The recent restoration of the Folkestone Ferry Port and Harbour Train Station has begun to reconnect Folkestone with its seafront - its Genius Loci. The opening of this place as a new public space has built upon the success of the revitalisation of the Old Town, creating a destination and focal point for the regeneration of Folkestone.



## Folkestone Today

Figure Ground Maps

Folkestone today is a complex urban composition with recognisable shapes and patterns arising from a diagnosis of its historical evolution.

The following sequence of images is intended to illustrate the various fractures and blockages from which the town suffers as a consequence of this build up of layers of change imposed upon the town throughout its history.



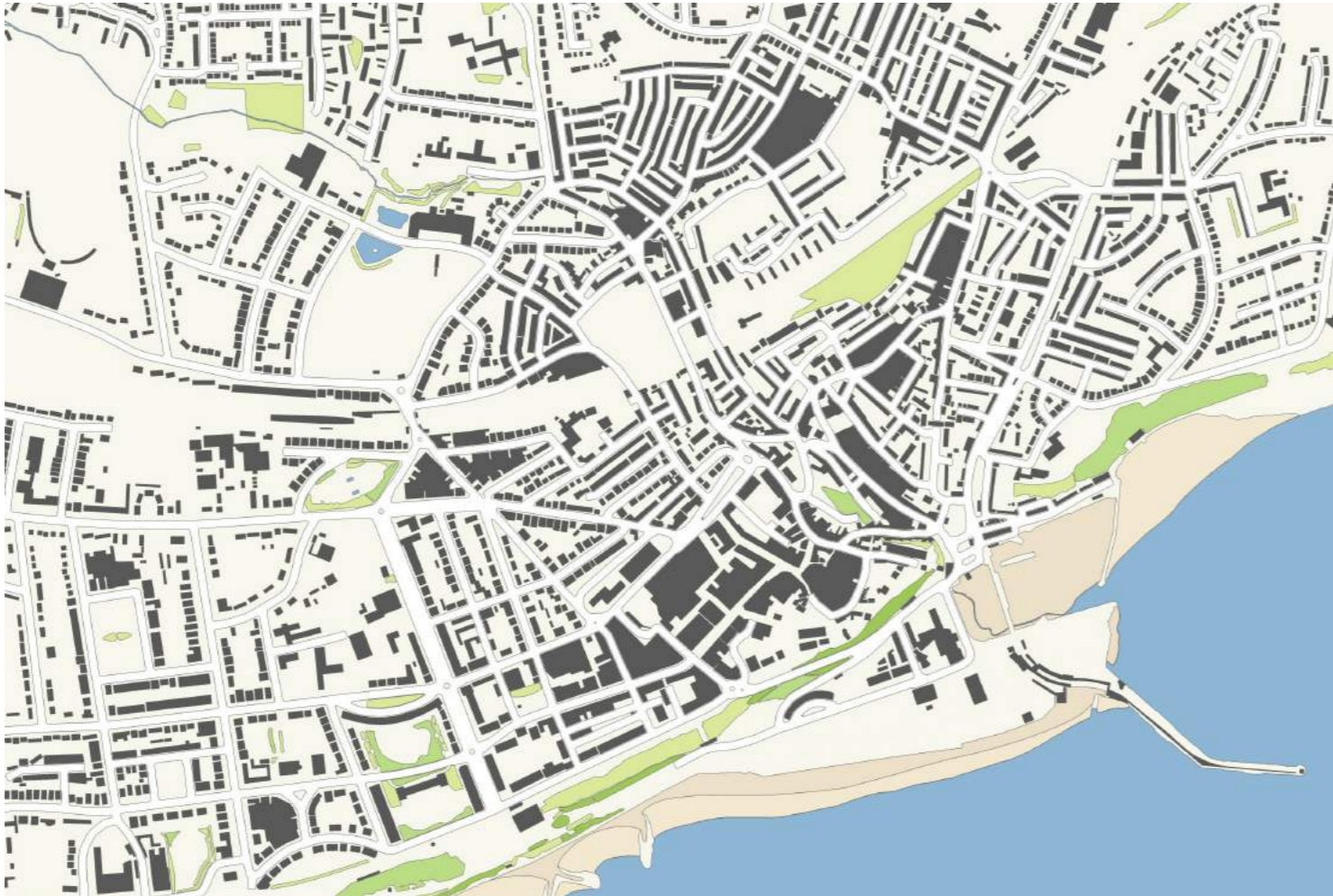
A Figure Ground drawing of the town today - the buildings are blocked out in black to show the shapes and patterns of the spaces between them.



The drawing is layered with the streets, the urban realm, the green spaces and the shoreline.

KEY

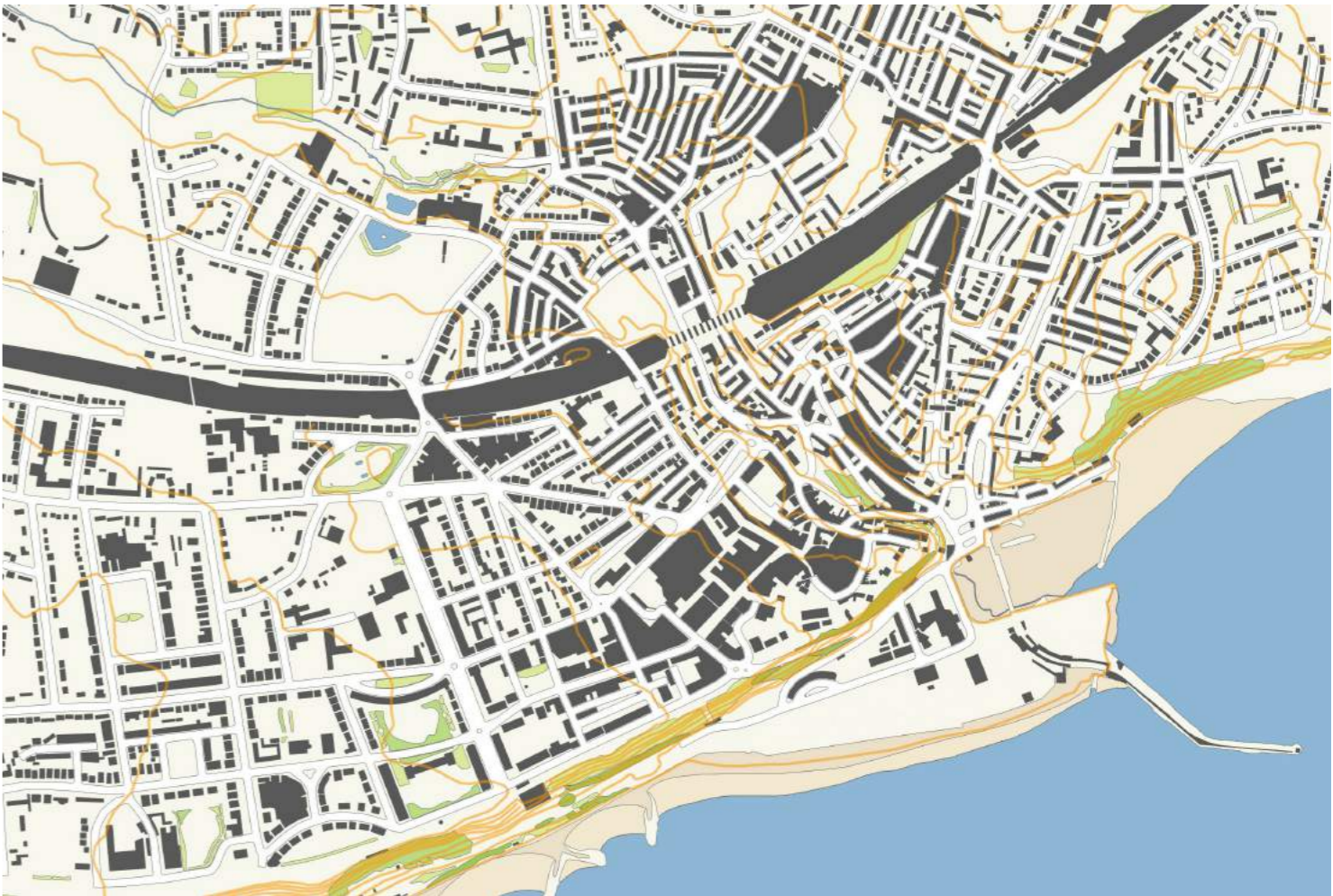
- FIGURE GROUND
- LANDSCAPE



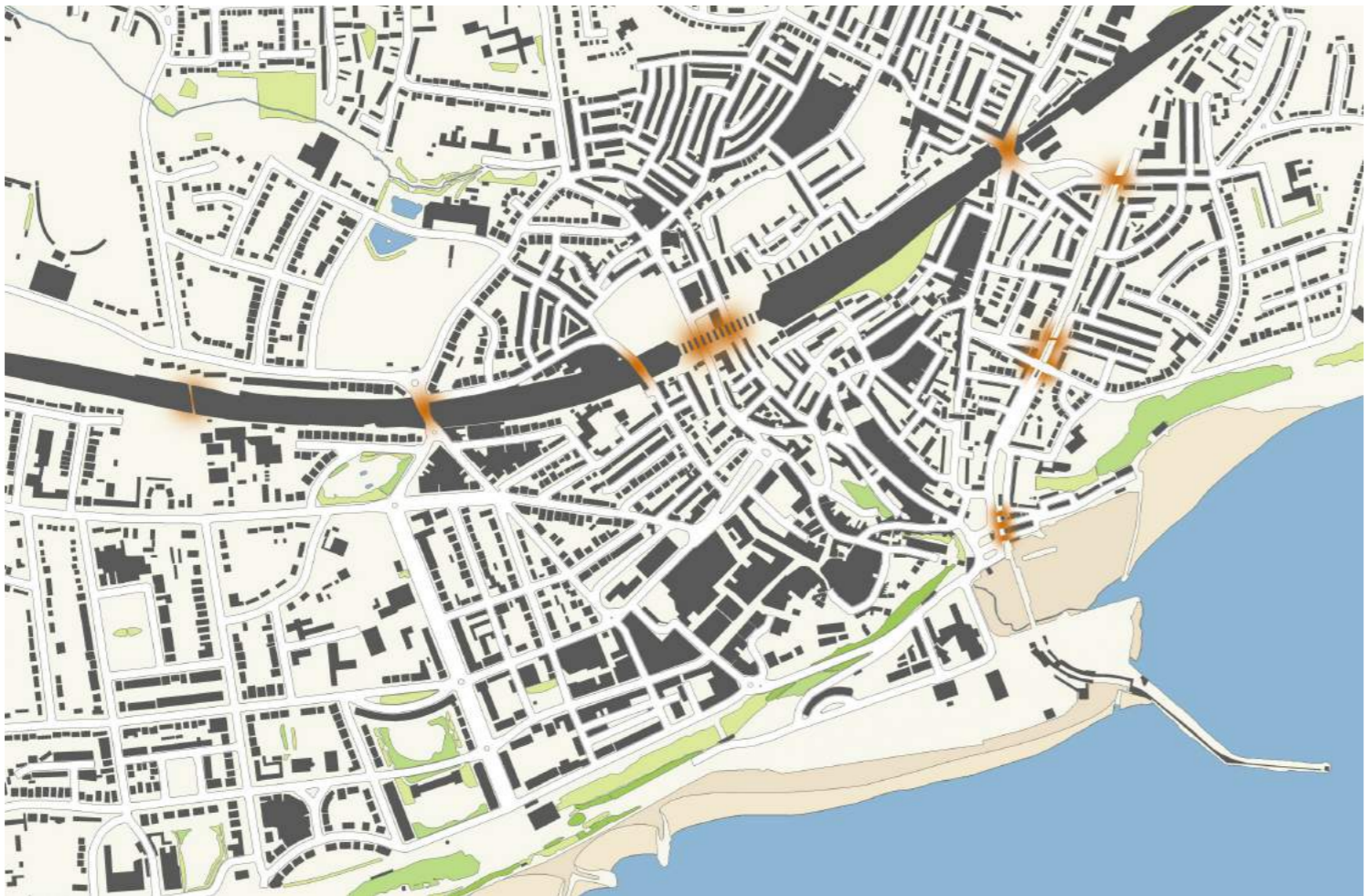
Show the complex topography of the town. The closer together the contour lines the steeper the slope.

KEY

- FIGURE GROUND
- LANDSCAPE
- CONTOURS



There are only a small number of penetrations and crossing points along the rail lines that thread through the town.



KEY

- FIGURE GROUND
- LANDSCAPE
- UNDERPASSES, LEVEL-CROSSINGS & BRIDGES

Sustrans National Route 2 between Dover and St Austell runs through Folkestone, mostly along the seafront. As a large portion of this route is on level ground between Hythe and Folkestone and mostly off-road, it is very popular recreational route for family walking and cycling trips.

Other local routes penetrate from the town centre into inland Kent. As these routes climb the hills and valleys surrounding Folkestone, they tend to be used by more hardened walkers and cyclists.



KEY

- FIGURE GROUND
- LANDSCAPE
- LOCAL ON-ROAD CYCLE ROUTES

Due to its close proximity to France, this part of Kent was very vulnerable to bomb damage caused by bombing raids and shelling in both world wars - as a result it was knick-named ‘Hell-fire Corner’. This created many gaps in the urban grain, many of which remain today.

As part of the rebuilding of Folkestone in the second half of the 20th century it was anticipated that there would be a growing dependency on the motor car, so many of these gap sites were used to create both surface and multi-storey car parks.

Nevertheless some gaps in the urban grain still scar the urban landscape today as vacant undeveloped sites.

KEY

- MULTI STOREY CAR PARK
- SURFACE CAR PARKS
- GAP SITES (DEVELOPMENT)



Numerous dead-end streets exist throughout the town, often a result of severage of historic streets by new interventions or created as part of 20th century suburban developments.

KEY

- FIGURE GROUND
- LANDSCAPE
- BLOCKED STREETS



A huge network of one-way streets, mostly resulting from the introduction of a (now redundant) one-way traffic system to enable the free-flow of traffic to the ferry port.

KEY

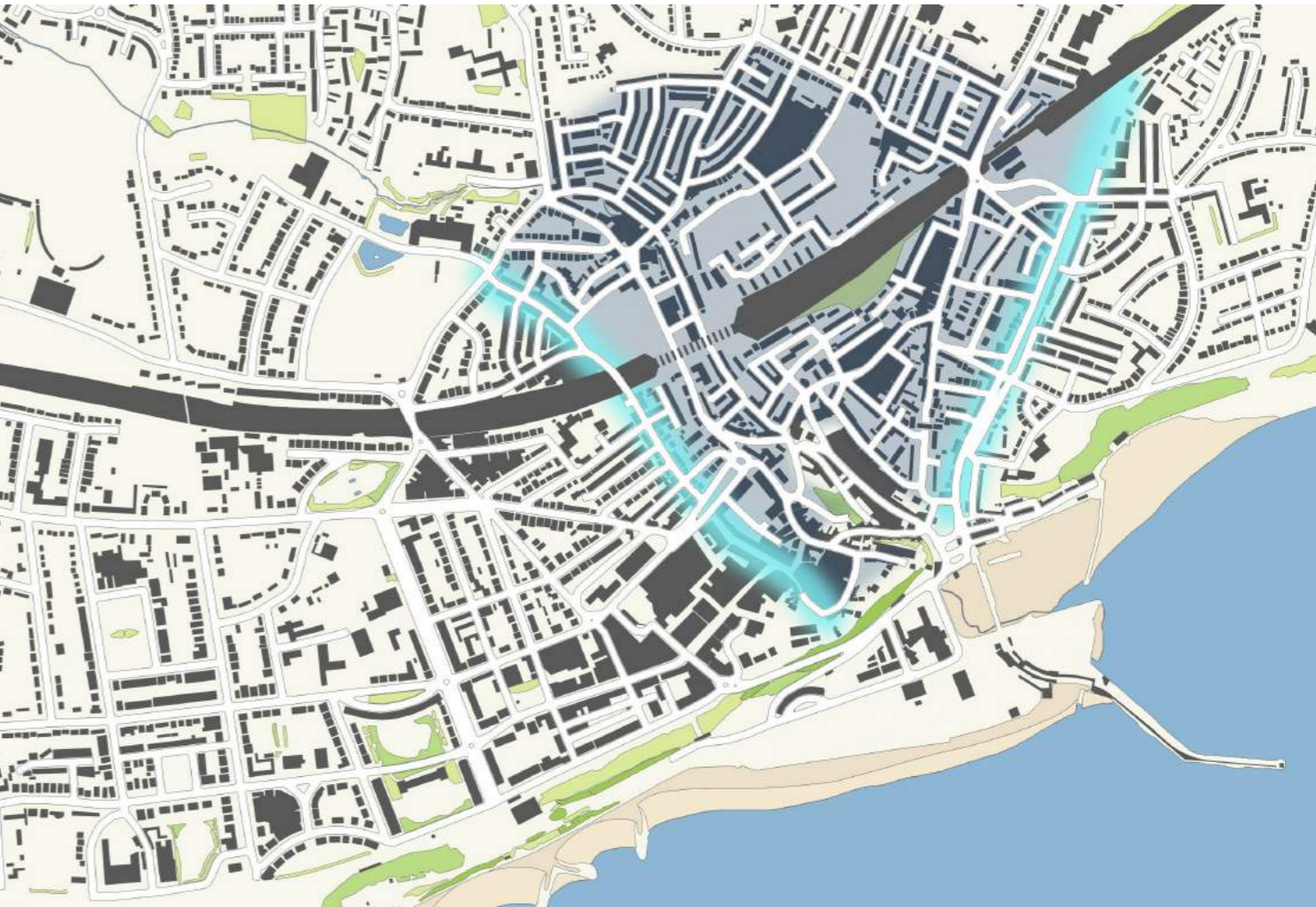
- FIGURE GROUND
- LANDSCAPE
- GYRATORIES



The isolated enclave of social and economic deprivation in the heart of the town.

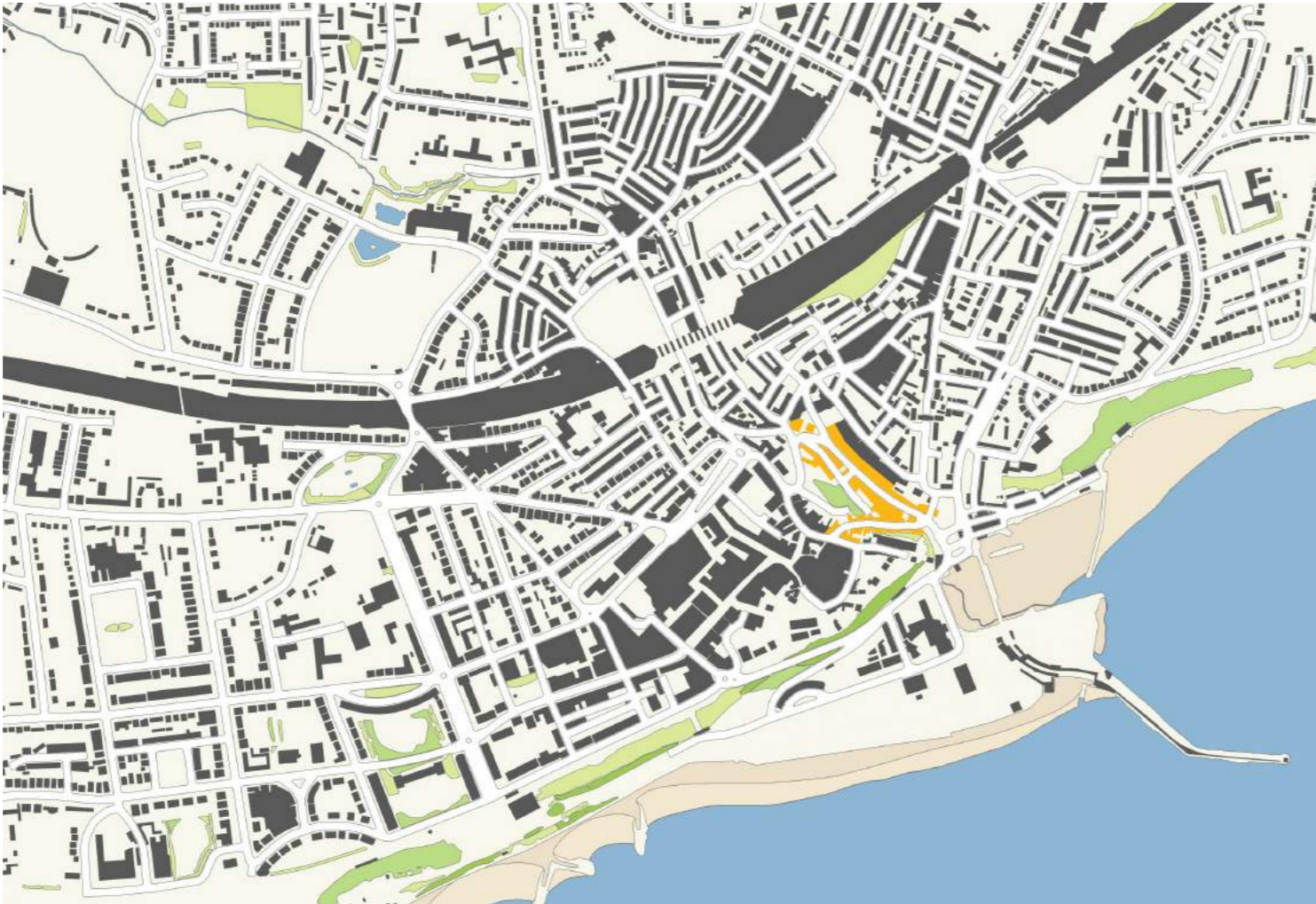
KEY

- FIGURE GROUND
- LANDSCAPE
- DEPRIVATION



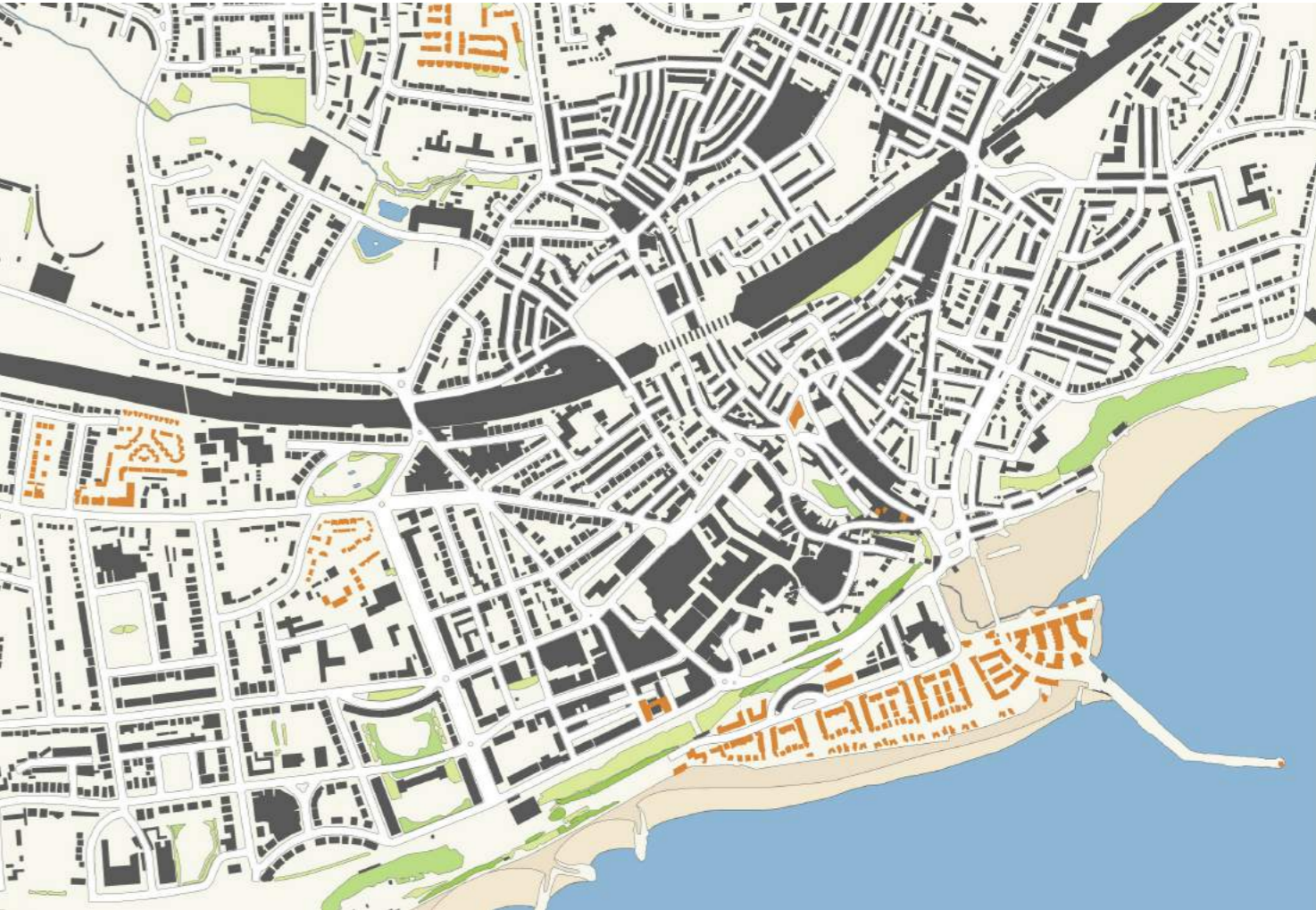
An area of the Old Town currently being regenerated by the Folkestone Creative Foundation to provide space for the growing community of creative industries.

- KEY
- FIGURE GROUND
  - LANDSCAPE
  - THE CREATIVE QUARTER



Developments that are currently proposed as a consequence of, or in order to stimulate, Folkestone's growth and regeneration.

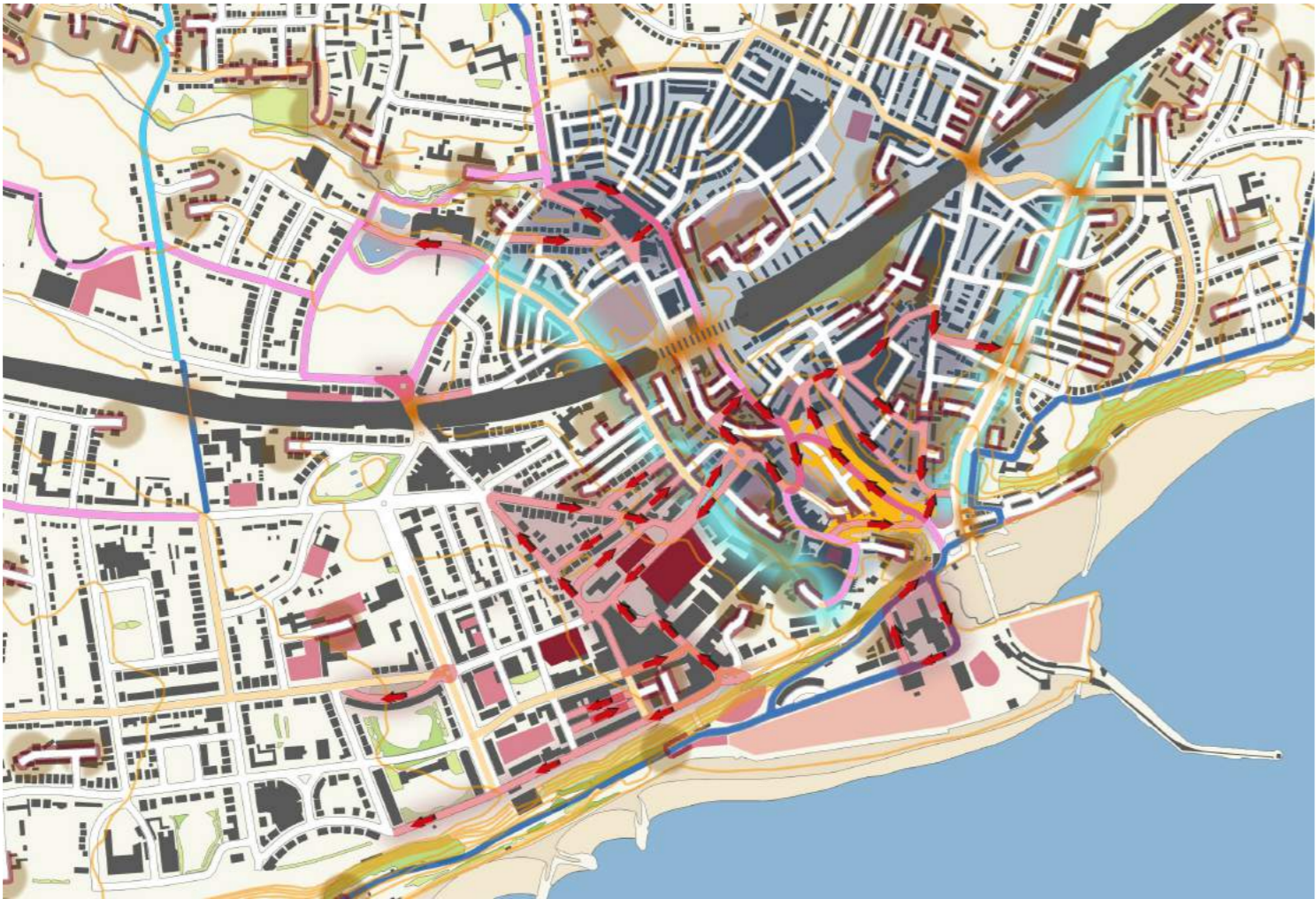
- KEY
- FIGURE GROUND
  - LANDSCAPE
  - DEVELOPMENT SITES



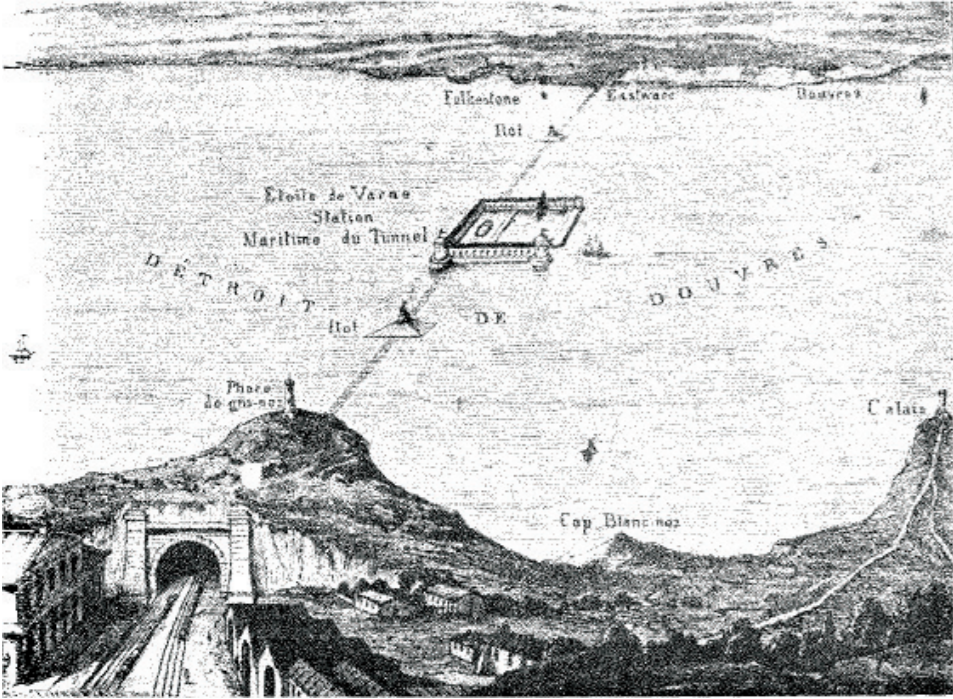
This image combines the sequence of drawings to show how these various fractures and blockages accumulate that continue to inhibit Folkestone’s success as a place.

KEY

- FIGURE GROUND
- LANDSCAPE
- CONTOURS
- UNDERPASSES, LEVEL-CROSSINGS & BRIDGES
- LOCAL ON-ROAD CYCLE ROUTES
- NATIONAL Sustrans Cycle Route
- MULTI STOREY CAR PARK
- SURFACE CAR PARKS
- GAP SITES (DEVELOPMENT)
- BLOCKED STREETS
- GYRATORIES
- DEPRIVATION
- THE CREATIVE QUARTER



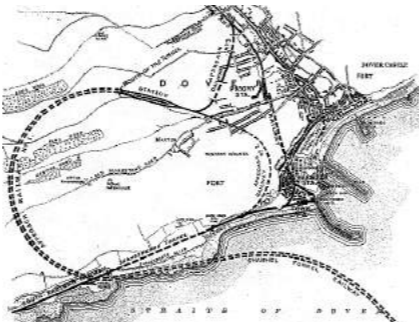
# Appendix



Concept sketch for Channel Tunnel with mid point exchange station



Tunnel shafts



Proposed railway line for 1880 tunnel



Listening ears at Dungeness



An early attempt at early cross-channel mobile phone