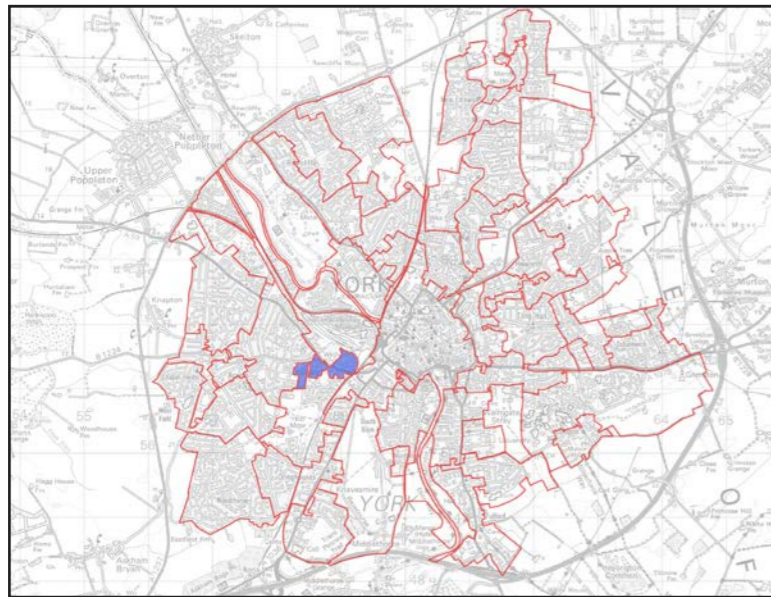
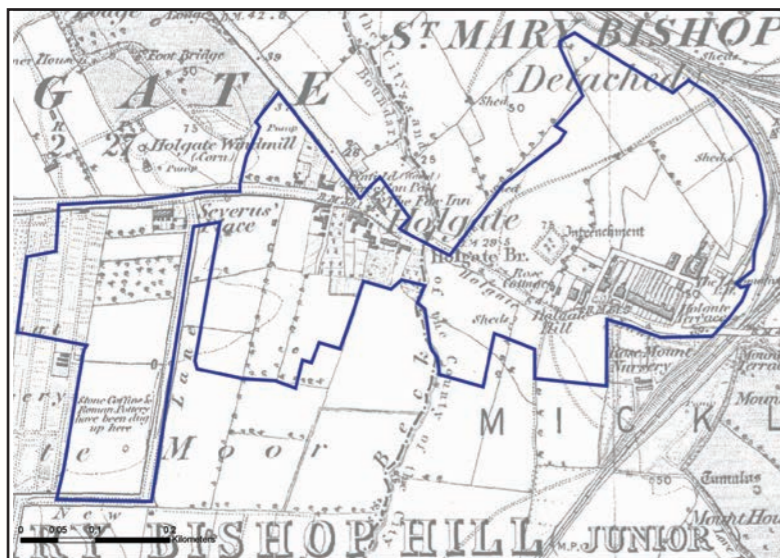


Character area 30: Holgate



Location of character area



Extract from First Edition Ordnance Survey Plan 1852

Key Characteristics

General Character: Predominantly 18th to 19th century buildings, ranging from grand town houses of St Paul's Square to working class terraced houses. 1930s to late 20th century development also present.

Area includes the north and south side of Acomb Road, extending north-eastwards to the boundary of the railway to include St. Paul's Church, Primary School and West Bank Park.

The topography of the area is undulating, with the highest ground in the north-east corner. The land rises from Holgate Junction to the west in the direction of the Holgate Windmill.

Holgate Beck flows south to north from The Fox Inn PH into the Ouse at Acomb Landing.

West Bank Park, a former plant nursery and now a public park

Strong links to York's railway heritage

Not as detached as surrounding suburbs – connection to city through railway

Approximate walking/cycling distance to the city centre from the centre of Holgate Road 1.6km via The Mount

Dominant Housing Type: Three storey Victorian townhouses/terraced houses – formal urban properties, strong vertical form, linear street patterns (mainly on arterial roads), long front gardens

Other Key Housing Types: Victorian working class terraces – narrow plots, ornate and varied brickwork, stable paviour in places, >5% retain boot cleaners and on-street parking

Modern housing developments forming cul-de-sac estates and small pockets of development in odd shaped spaces

Designated Heritage Assets: Over 30 Grade II listed buildings, 1 Grade II* (163 Holgate Road), partly within core Area of Archaeological Importance and St Paul's/ Holgate Road Conservation Area

Non-designated Heritage Assets: Stable paviments & Victorian streetscape features

Key Views: York landmarks, including the Minster, city walls, and railway station can be seen from the crest of the high ground at the top of Wilton Rise and along Railway Terrace. Glimpsed views of the Minster towers from West Bank Park.

Surviving historic roads and tracks: Poppleton Road, Holgate Road and New Lane

Archaeology and history

Roman material has been identified from several locations along Holgate Road. Roman pottery and a stone coffin were discovered in the vicinity at what is now West Bank Park (MYO3627) during the late 19th century and dispersed burials are known from the Holgate Road area (MYO2245). More recently, a Neolithic stone axe and Bronze Age pottery was discovered during preliminary stages of the construction of new housing on St. Paul's Mews in the late 1990s (EYO78). This evaluation also revealed traces of a Roman road which may form part of the postulated York to Boroughbridge route which may have passed through the village of Acomb.

Holgate probably developed as a small medieval settlement around the Poppleton Road/Acomb Road Junction. Holgate Windmill, situated to the west of this character area, dates to the 18th century and presumably replaced an earlier, possibly medieval, mill although no evidence of this exists. An earthwork, of unknown date and function, existed until the construction of Enfield Crescent (MYO2207). This was excavated in 1936 and was noted to overlie earlier ridge and furrow. This earthwork may have enclosed a windmill or may be associated with the 17th century siege of York. The large open grazing areas surrounding Holgate were enclosed in 1774 and then further subdivided in the 19th and 20th centuries.



Holgate Road c.1910 - City of York Archives

During the first half of the 19th century, settlement for the prosperous middle classes had spread outside of the city walls and along Holgate Road, a main road connecting York to Acomb and Poppleton. The larger, finer residences in this area exist along the roadside and the speculative St Paul's Square constructed in the mid 19th century. Expansion of railway infrastructure from the mid 19th century, led to an explosion of development, clustered around the industrial areas, to house a rapidly growing workforce. By 1890, the railway system and its associated industries were well established. Several rows of terraced houses were built on the south side of Holgate Road/Acomb Road and close to the railway on the hill to the north of Holgate Road. This particular residential area also contains St. Paul's Church (1851, Grade II listed) and St. Paul's school (1872). Two public houses, still in use today, were open by the 1850s, The Fox Inn and The Locomotive.

During the 1930s further residential streets were added on the north side of Holgate Road and West Bank Park was created from the grounds of West Bank House, a former plant nursery nationally famous for its ferns. It covers 20 acres and includes bowling greens, play areas and a basketball court. Further development did not occur until the mid to late 20th and early 21st century, when several small developments were constructed on newly vacated patches of ground, predominantly former railway land.

Modernisation of the carriageway and streetscape is evident, particularly at Holgate junction.

Character

The area is characterised by large terraced houses that line the north side of Holgate Road. These are mostly three storeys in height, with tall bay windows on the ground floor. They contain two rooms in width, long front gardens with low boundary walls now containing a mix of railings and hedges. This row has been fitted with period style street lighting. Many of these houses are now hotels.

Behind Holgate Road, lies St. Paul's Square (1851 to 1860) the only formally laid out square in York. The 'square' forms a horseshoe shape, with houses between two and three storeys of cream and reddish brown brick, with wooden sash windows and slate roofs. The buildings surround an open grassed area, surrounded by mature trees and railings. The low boundary walls in the square predominantly retain their original cast iron railings. Period street lighting has also been used in this area. The square and terraces on Holgate Road are the main elements within the St Paul's/ Holgate Road Conservation Area.

The large Victorian terraced houses along Acomb Road are slightly different in style and are mainly two storey with attic rooms creating a third floor. They have higher boundary walls with grand brick gate piers, some featuring the house name. Further Victorian middle-upper class housing can also be found on the south side of Acomb Road with larger detached dwellings on the south side of Holgate Road.

All the terraces towards the railway open directly onto the street. St. Paul's Primary School was constructed as part of St. Paul's Terrace and is still in use.

90% of the terraces to the south of Acomb Road do include a front enclosed area. Existing iron railings on the streets that enclose a front garden are not original but enhance the character of the area as they would have once been a more common feature of the street.

All the terraces contain a rear yard, most including remnants of former outside toilets and coal houses.

Perhaps less than 5% of the houses in these terraces retain their original ornate iron boot scrapers, and most of these are in poor condition. Patches of stable pavioir paving exist in some of the back lanes and small snickets. In other areas stone setts have been laid such as Park Lane.

Approximately 15% of the iron drain covers which run across the footpath survive. These are important as an historic feature and as a symbol of York's iron industry in the late 19th- early 20th century. They contain a mix of identifying labels while some are just patterned replacements. The remains of the drains that have been paved over can be seen in the profile of the kerb. These levels of preservation are similar to those found nearby on Poppleton Road and in Acomb.

The Holgate community have two public houses, two churches and a school at their disposal, as well as local amenities and recreation areas to use as social spaces. Shops are generally located along the main road; corner shops within the terraced streets have been converted to residential use.

The railway line curves around the north-eastern edge of this character area with a footbridge leading from the Wilton Rise area and a road bridge (known locally as the The Iron Bridge) by St. Paul's Church. Originally the railway would have run closer to Watson Street but modern development now stands on former railway land. Historically, the presence of the railway would have dominated the area, snaking around the houses of its workforce and the location of the carriage works on the land immediately to the south-west. It would have symbolised the relationship between this community of railway employees and York itself.

The 1930s housing in this area is at a minimum and contains two storey semi-detached houses in the usual planned estates. Some poorly designed 1960s development has taken place in small patches behind Holgate Road, for example, to the rear of St. Paul's Square

Modern development is a mixture of 1980s-2000s development, containing a range of properties. The post 1960s development in this area does not respect the character provided by the earlier buildings.

The clusters of new-builds on the former railway land is in stark contrast to the surrounding terraces but is at least generally confined to discreet areas. However, several individual new-builds exist, for example on Cecilia Place next to the 1960s block.

Significance

Archaeology: Archaeological significance is demonstrated by the inclusion of part of Holgate Road and the St Paul's terracing in the central Area of Archaeological Significance. The possibility that Holgate Road itself along with Acomb Road may respect the line of a main Roman road to Boroughbridge and the presence of burials and settlement evidence in the area clearly enhances this significance.

Architecture: This distinct architectural area immediately to the west of the city centre contains predominantly early - late Victorian development, with 1930s and modern areas of expansion. The predominant housing style is grand three storey townhouse terraces along the main road through the historic settlement. Architecturally the houses are significant and nearly all listed in the area between Holgate Bridge and junction at The Fox Inn. The strong vertical form of these buildings imposes itself on the passer-by leaving no doubt as to the status of the people who once lived there. The clustered nature of these listed buildings adds to their aesthetic and historical value, especially when combined with St. Paul's Square to the rear.

The later Victorian terraces remain in their original clusters, particularly those closest to the railway. They also still retain their church and school as well as ornate brickwork and original paving and ironwork features. Sash windows are in use in all of the terraced streets to some degree.

Historic: A strong link with York's railway heritage is still evident, due to the close proximity of the railway and former carriage works and through the limited use of associated names, such as Railway Terrace and The Locomotive pub.

Pre-development boundaries do not survive well in general in this area, apart from the arterial roads, which run through the settlement. The most interesting area is around St. Paul's Square.

Several boundaries survive here which may have been connected with the medieval earthwork located in this area. These boundaries are preserved in the form of the west side of St. Paul's Square open area and the rear boundary between Watson Terrace and Enfield Terrace.

Other boundaries shown on the First Edition Ordnance Survey plan that survive on Holgate Road are associated with the extant buildings although earlier buildings may have occupied the site previously.

This area is distinct from adjacent 20th century developments to the south of Holgate Road. Its geography, neat clustered terraces, strong architectural features and community buildings all add to its significance. It provides an excellent example of how a small settlement developed along linear roadways and then expanded due to the demand for accommodation close to industrial areas during the Victorian period and into the 20th century.

Streetscape components: Street lighting is predominantly provided by a mixture of modern free standing lamp posts and modern street signage on the main roads. Modern bus stops and waste bins are also in use. Within the terraced streets iron drain covers, stable pavements and stone setts are present along with mixture of 20th century street lighting. Period street lighting survives within the conservation area.

Aesthetics: York landmarks such as The Minster, Holgate windmill and the railway station can be seen from the crest of the high ground at the top of Wilton Rise and along Railway Terrace.

Opportunities and recommendations

It is recommended that any extensions, new development or re-development in the area should be sympathetic in terms of style, material, proportions and density and should complement and enhance existing character. Street furniture, including street signage and street lights, should integrate with the character of the area.

Opportunities for improving the quality and consistency of contemporary street furniture and the public realm should be identified, in particular the enhancement of existing pedestrian surfaces, cycling facilities and upgrades of existing street furniture. This should be undertaken following guidance contained in the City of York Streets and Spaces Strategy and Guidance (City of York Council, 2013).

Removal of original streetscape features over time has had a negative impact on the character of the area – further loss of these features should be avoided where possible. Original street lighting columns should be retained wherever possible and where this is not possible, they should be carefully retrofitted with new lanterns where appropriate and column replacements should reflect the style of originals. The scale (height in particular) of lighting column should always respect the character of the street. Lighting columns on residential streets with low traffic volumes should reflect traditional heights. Further guidance is contained in the City of York Streets and Spaces Strategy and Guidance.

The most significant opportunity is to consider enlarging the existing conservation area to include the excellently preserved terraced streets to the north and east of St Paul's Square. Cleveland Street and Upper St Paul's Terrace contain well preserved paving for example and original features including timber sashes survive well. There is however, a real danger of losing many of these features.

Wherever possible and practical, it is strongly recommended that inherited historic landscape grain evidenced through post-medieval and 19th century former field boundaries should be enhanced and conserved.

These play a key role in explaining the historic development of the area.

Where historic boundaries have been identified, either as surviving hedgerows or where retained as part of historic development, efforts should be made to ensure their continuing survival as part of any future development opportunities.

Great care should be paid to the retention of socially valued buildings and spaces, such as West Bank Park, schools and churches with appropriate weight given to local opinions.

Hedgerows and trees should be carefully managed and opportunities for planting new trees along grass verges and in existing hedgerows should be identified in partnership with local residents. A programme of regular monitoring of original hedgerow boundaries and grass verges should be secured.

Key views of the Minster, other major heritage assets and local landmarks should be maintained and enhanced to help orientation and enhance local distinctiveness. The views from Railway Terrace and Wilton Rise are particularly good and there is an opportunity for making these views more widely known, perhaps as part of a series of walking tours from the station round through St Paul's Square and back along Holgate Road.

The area contains a high number of listed buildings. All of these buildings add significant value to the character of Holgate. Every effort should be made to ensure that these buildings are retained and kept in productive use. Their loss or inappropriate alteration would have significant impacts on the character of this area.

The 19th and early 20th century terraces contain a number of original features which should wherever possible be retained and enhanced. This should include maintenance of existing ironwork and conservation of remaining areas of stable paving.

The stable pavements in particular are a unique feature of York's streetscape and any street works affecting them should carefully store and reinstate them following guidance contained in the City of York Streets and Spaces Strategy and Guidance.

A local survey of the architectural and streetscape features (gate piers, sett paving, street signs) throughout the area could usefully be carried out in the near future, in conjunction with the local community, to further assist with the monitoring of existing features and to identify those at risk.

Development management policy should take account of the contribution made by locally identified heritage assets to the distinctive character of the area. Sub-surface archaeological sites and landscapes are particularly important. Appropriate mitigation strategies should be agreed to protect potential archaeological deposits for any future development in area.

A Conservation Area Appraisal for Holgate Road/St. Paul's Square should be considered for commissioning as has been done in other parts of the city. Further study and consultation with residents would also be beneficial in this area to inform on character and its change over time.

There is an opportunity for this study to be used as baseline data for the local community to develop local priorities, encourage community cohesion, recognise and improve the quality of their environment and strengthen a sense of place. This area in particular would benefit from further study and consultation with residents to inform on its character and how that has changed over time.

Character Area 30: Images



Holgate Road



Large Victorian property, south side Holgate Road



St. Paul's School



St. Paul's Square



18th century property on Holgate Road



St. Paul's Terrace leading from the school



Mid 20th century Cecilia Place behind St. Paul's Square



Belgrave House gate piers, Acomb Road



Stable Pavours, Murray Street



Falconer Street



Two storey terraces on the south side Holgate Road



Sluice valve marker on Murray Street



1930s West Bank Park entrance Acomb Road



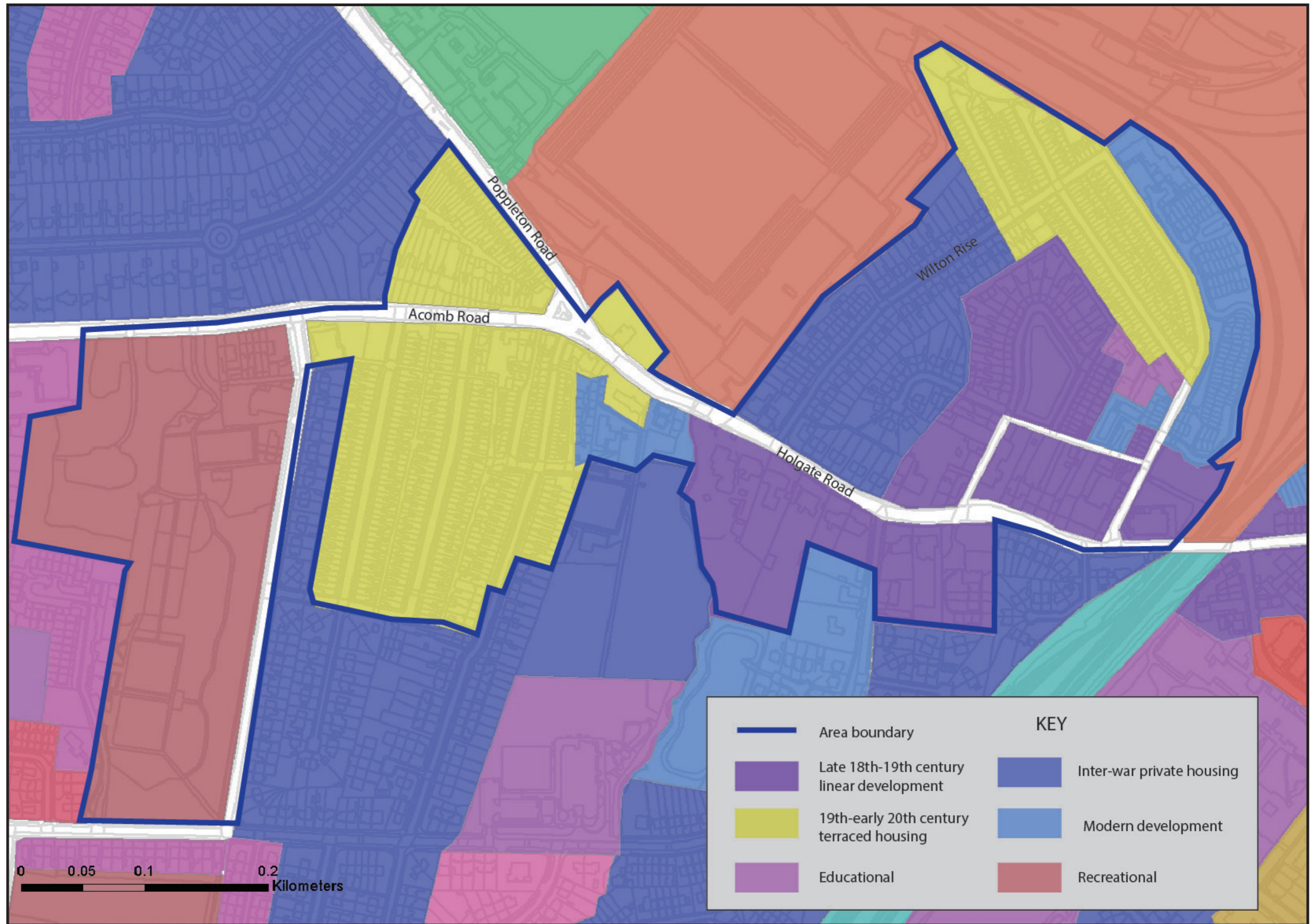
Drain cover, Murray Street



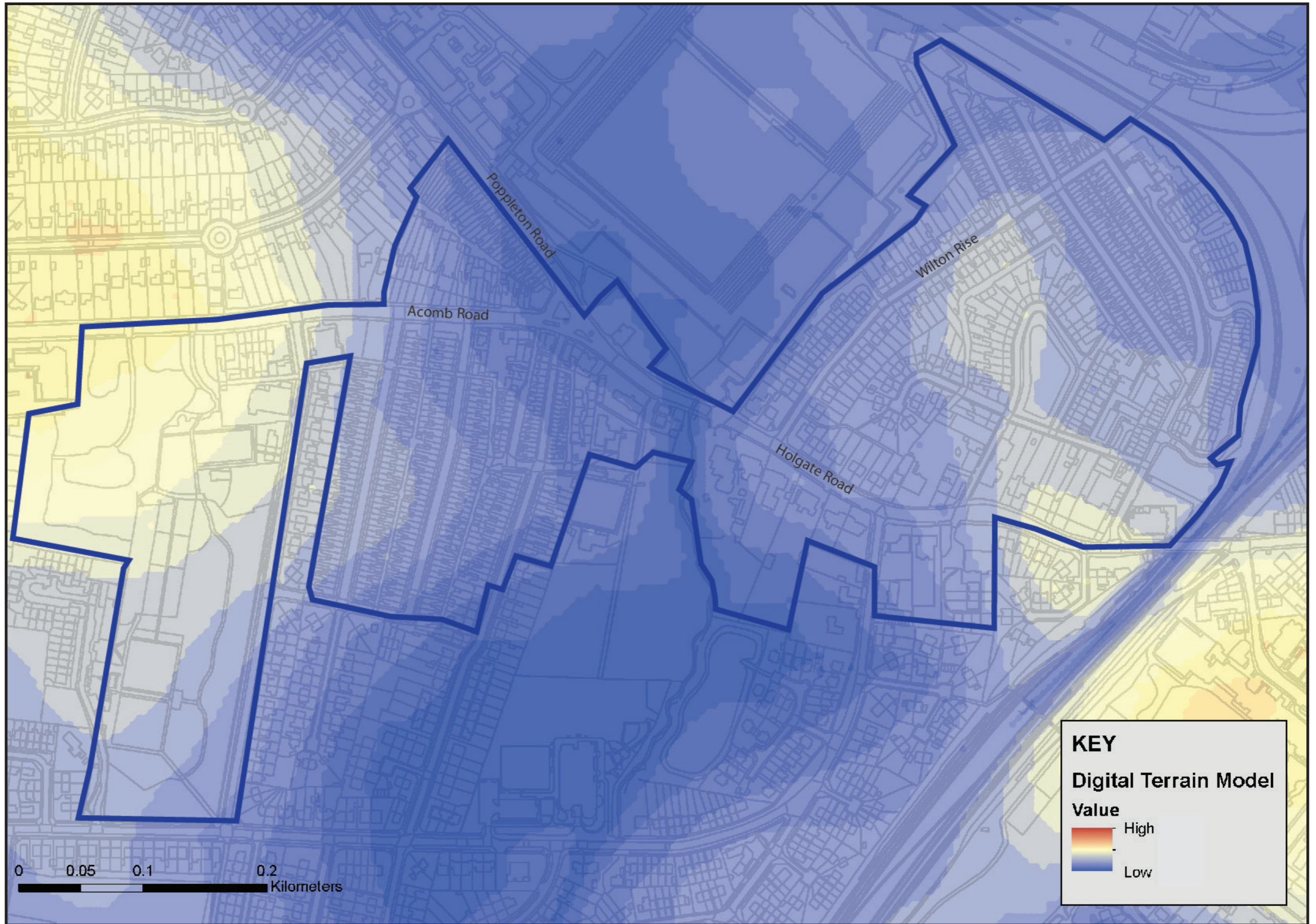
1930s housing facing Holgate Road

Character Area 30: Maps

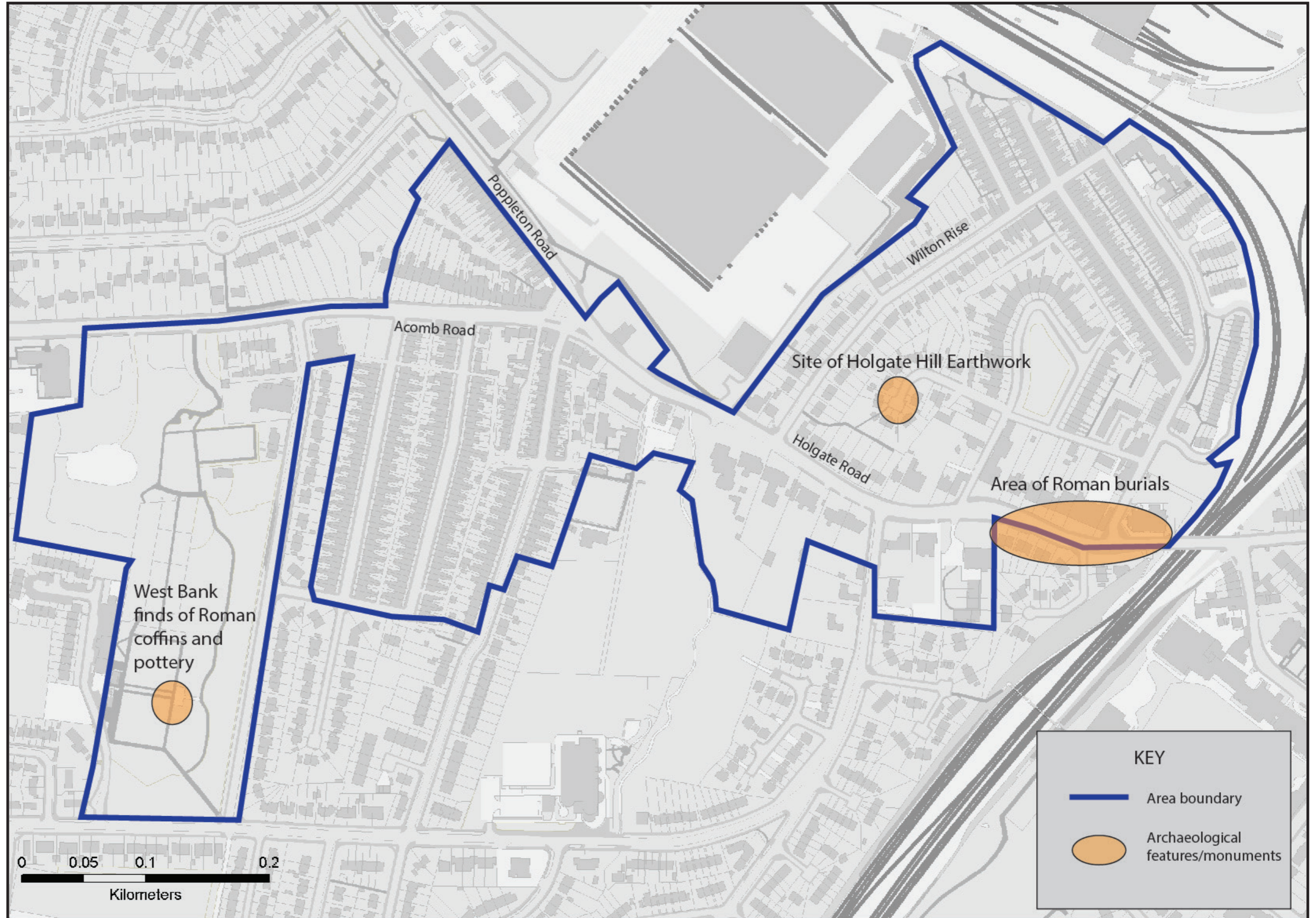
Broad Type characterisation plan. White roadways indicate roads or lanes visible on the 1852 Ordnance Survey Plan



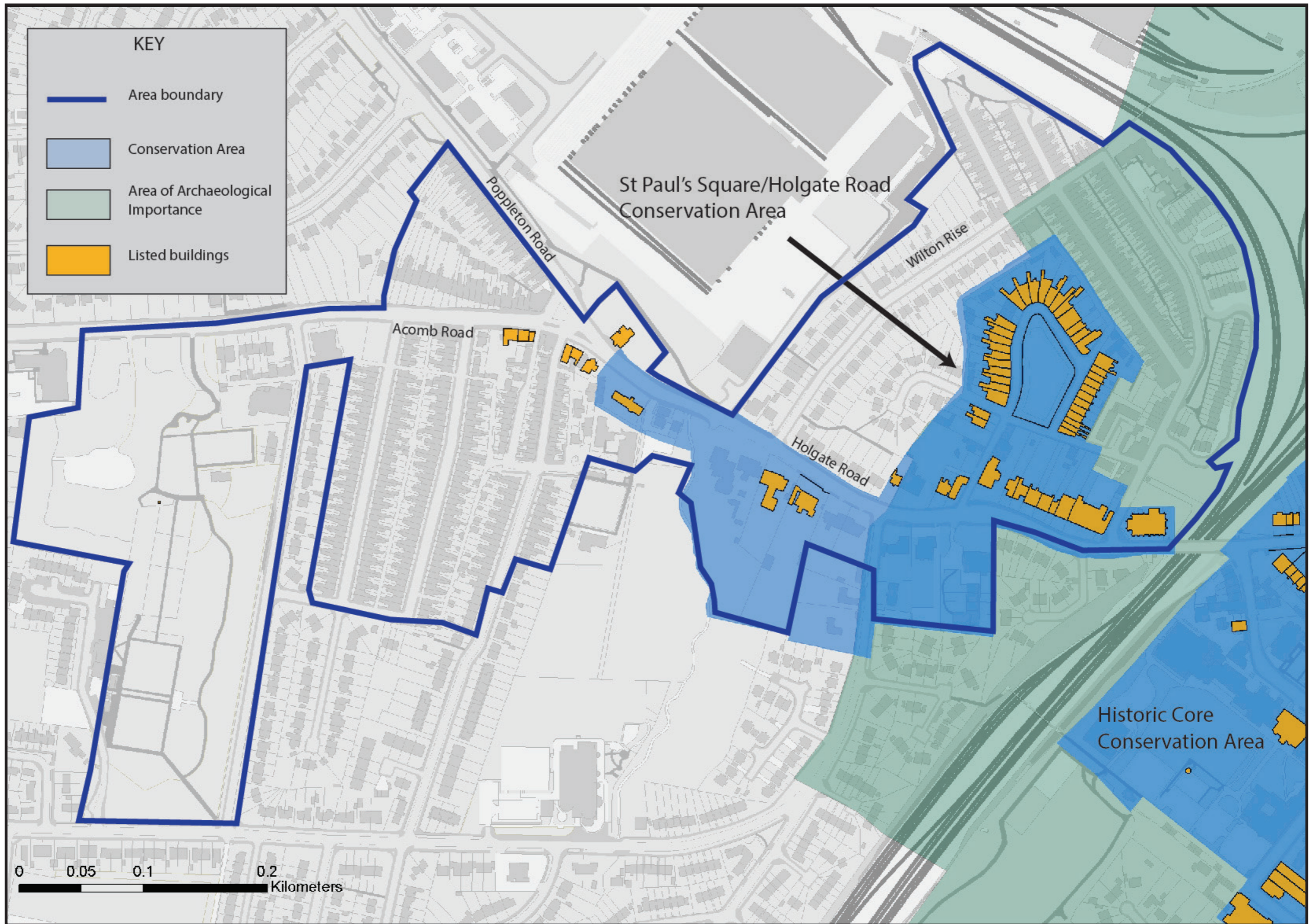
Topography



Archaeology and non-designated heritage assets



Designated heritage assets



Extant surviving boundaries, roads and tracks as depicted on the 1851 First Edition Ordnance Survey plan

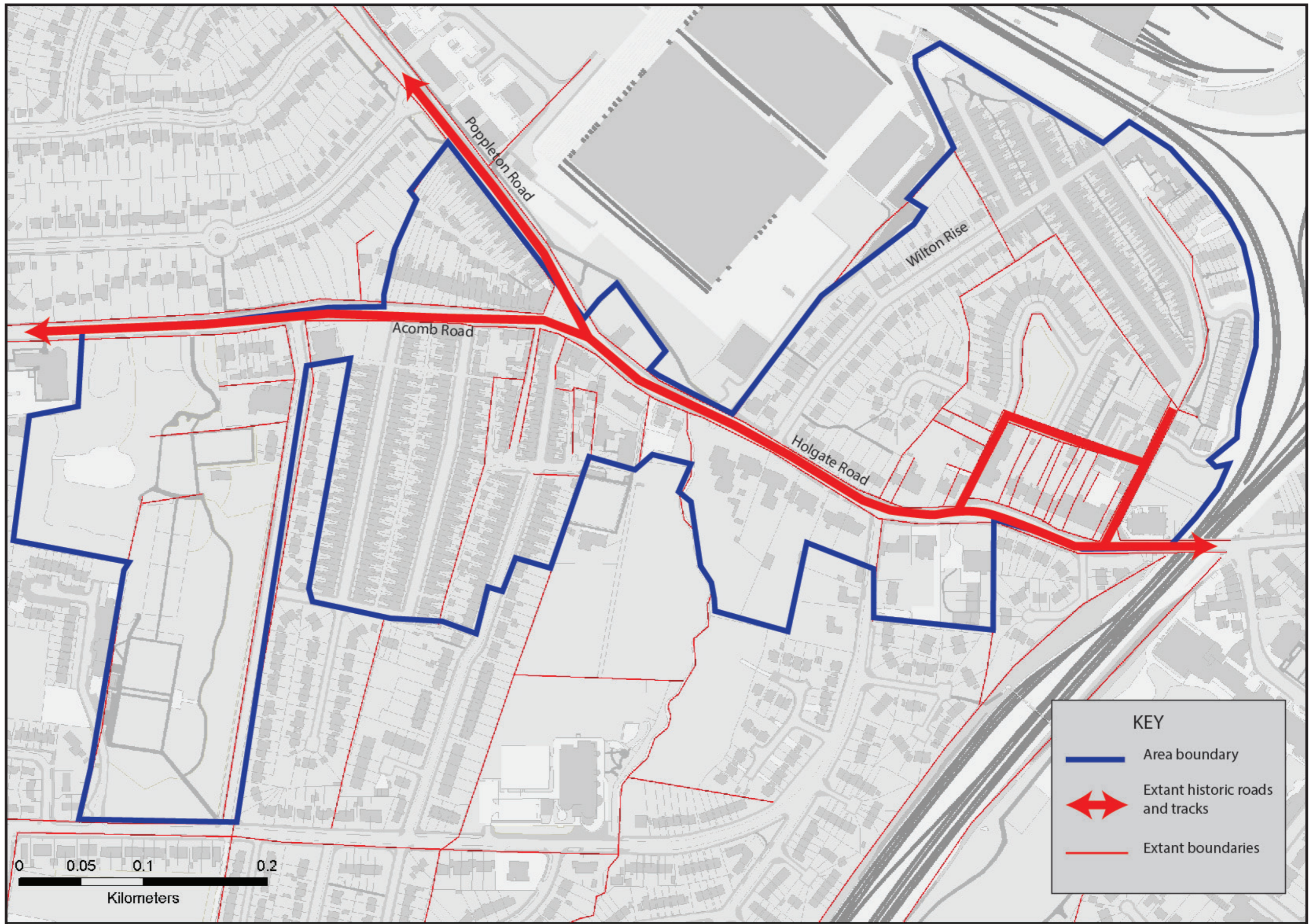


Figure ground map showing the relationship between open space (black) and the built environment



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