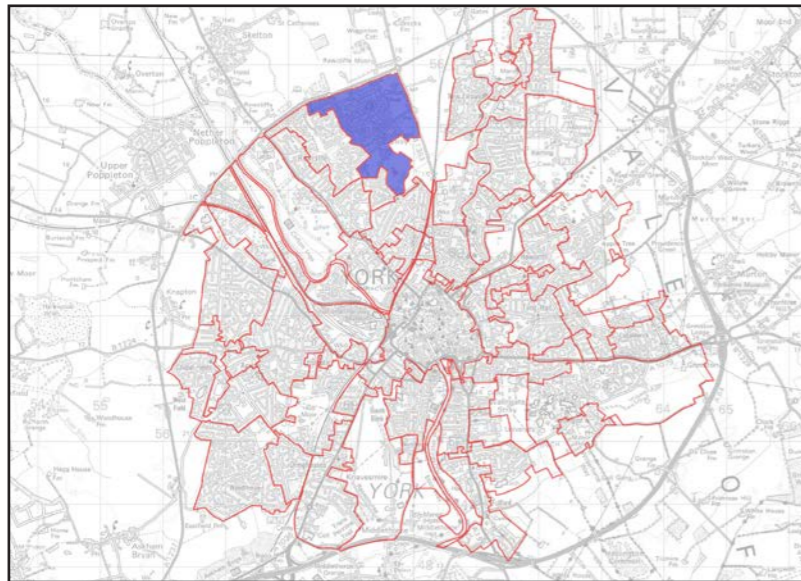
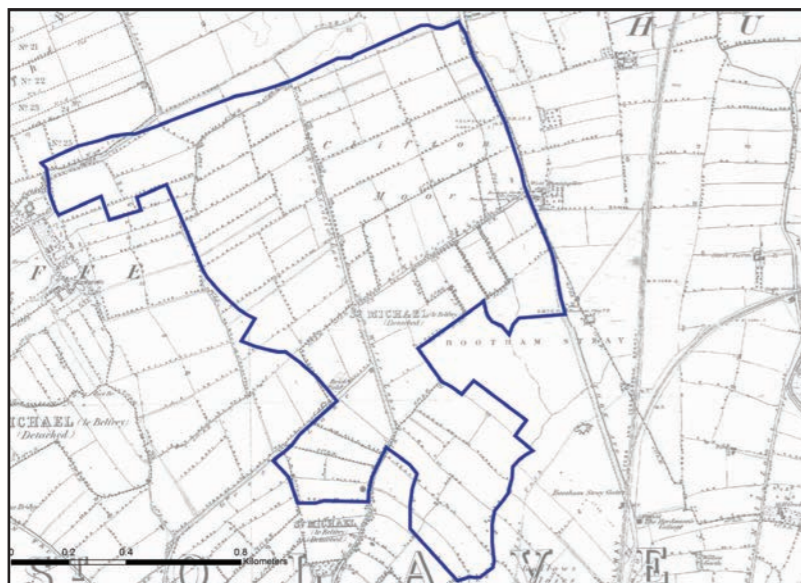


Character area 38: Clifton Moor (Commercial)



Location of character area



Extract from First Edition Ordnance Survey Plan 1852

Key Characteristics

General Character: 20th century commercial buildings one-three storeys high located in industrial estates, modern roads and purpose built retail parks, several late 19th to early 20th century buildings of rural nature.

The topography of the land is generally level and low-lying

Strong links to York's aeronautical and agricultural past

The commercial nature of this area provides a significant economic boost to the city

Borders onto Clifton Backies a Local Nature Reserve and part of Bootham Stray

Approximate walking/cycling distance to the city centre from the centre of Clifton Moorgate 4km via Water Lane and Sutton Way

Dominant Housing Type: Two storey modern detached houses – sinuous street patterns, cul-de-sac's, front and rear gardens, garages and driveways

Other Key Housing Types: Late 19th to early 20th century buildings. Other buildings include commercial buildings within retail parks

Designated Heritage Assets: Two Scheduled Ancient Monuments and Grade II listed milepost Wigginton Road

Non-designated Heritage Assets: Airfield and airmens camp remains and ridge and furrow

Key Views: View of The Minster across Bootham Stray and surrounding fields from Clifton Moor Gate

Surviving historic roads and tracks: Clifton Moorgate, Water Lane and Green Lane

Archaeology and history

The Royal Forest of Galtres, created following the Norman Conquest formalised what must have been a relatively well wooded landscape immediately north of the city walls and Roman legionary fortress.

The sites of two Roman military training camps are known on the south-eastern boundary of this area, south of Clifton Moor Gate. The Minster is visible across the fields from the site of the camps, presumably the Roman fortress (Eboracum) would have also been within sight. The camps, which are Scheduled Ancient Monuments, partially survive as earthworks. 18th century documentary evidence suggests that up to eight camps may have existed in this area. However, the earthworks have been severely reduced by ploughing. The western camp which is included within this character area has been almost entirely levelled, with only very faint traces surviving. The eastern most camp falls just outside the area partly on Bootham Stray, it survives to a height of 0.3m.

Deforestation reduced the size of the forest over the following centuries allowing the development of settlements such as Clifton and Skelton. By the early 17th century the whole area was agricultural land serving scattered farms which populated the vicinity.

Broad Ridge and furrow (an indicator of pre-enclosure open fields) is visible on historic aerial photographs prior to the construction of Clifton Moor Retail Park and some still exists on the site of the camps, Clifton Backies and in some areas off Wigginton Road. Enclosure occurred in this area in the 1760s.

By the mid 19th century West Huntington, Brecks Nook and Rawcliffe Moor farms surrounded this character area. Apart from agriculture, there is map evidence of a small brick works on Green Lane. Nova Scotia Lane ran through the area roughly in a north-south direction, with Kettlestring Lane leading from Wigginton Road turning into Water and Green Lane. Water Lane may date to the medieval period as a back lane leading from Clifton to the outlying fields.

Plantations were created either side of Nova Scotia Lane during the late 19th and early 20th century. The only other development during this time was the construction of White Hall (1907) on Wigginton Road.

In the early 1930s York Municipal Aerodrome opened on Clifton Moor complete with clubhouse and hangar. The creation of the airfield saw the removal of plantations and the severing of the road between Kettlestring Lane and Water Lane.

The airfield was requisitioned by the government in 1939 and expanded to include three runways, including those capable of dealing with heavy bombers. After the war, private use was re-established although the government did not hand back ownership until the mid 1950s. The airfield closed shortly afterwards. Parts of the runway can still be seen to the north of the ring road and in the field adjacent to Whitehall Grange off Wigginton Road. This field also contains the remains of a trench system and the earthworks from a fighter dispersal pen. Several associated buildings were still in use as depots and warehouses into the early 21st century. Clifton Backies, on the east side of Water Lane was also part of the airfield and contains several surviving Second World War blast shelters and remains of the Airmen's Camp (MYO2228).

Rapid growth of the area as a commercial district began in the 1980s. Clifton Moor Retail Park and trading estate was established at this time. Kettlestring Lane was extended north-westwards to join the ring road and was renamed Clifton Moor Gate. The creation of the retail park and nearby housing estates has almost obliterated the airfield south of the ring road.

By the 1990s the retail area was completed with the addition of car retail outlets on the south side of Clifton Moor Gate. A small residential area was also added on Water Lane.



Aerial photograph of camp sites, 2002



Airfield opening ceremony, 1936 City of York Archives

Character

The area is characterised by out of town, large modern commercial premises and industrial estates between one-three storeys in height constructed in a mix of styles. Large scale (typically single span steel framed) retail units, brick (skinned, steel framed) built office blocks, recreational facilities, restaurants and car showrooms are some of the buildings which make up Clifton Moor.

Landscaping is relatively generous but indifferent quality and car parks are common. This busy commercial area is important to York's economy as a source of employment which is easily accessible from the city and surrounding areas due to its location adjacent to the outer ring road and links to public transport.

Clifton Moor is a local and sub-regional centre with limited appeal for tourists and other visitors. The retail area is bounded to the north and east by the ring road, beyond which the landscape retains its open rural character.

Modern (1980s and 1990s) housing estates surround the character area to the south-west. One small estate, Woodland Chase, dating to the 1990s, is situated on the border of Clifton Backies and Bootham Stray. It is a typical late 20th century estate featuring two storey detached houses with garages and driveways designed around a sinuous road layout with small cul-de-sacs. Within the estate, several dwellings have been constructed in a courtyard style in a darker brick than surrounding houses on Hazelnut Court. This was the site of Moor Farm.

The oldest buildings within the character areas are generally agricultural and rural in character and date to the late 19th and early 20th century such as Victoria Farm and White Hall.

Significance

Archaeology: The area contained a number of Roman military training camps, two of which still exist although in a very poor condition. These are of national significance. Broad ridge and furrow survives in a number of places and parts of the airfield, which played an important role during the Second World War, can still be identified in a field in the north-east corner of the area.

Architecture: The commercial part of Clifton Moor contrasts strongly with the suburban residential areas surrounding it to the south-west and the rural nature of the nearby Clifton Backies, Bootham Stray and open fields beyond the ring road. The recreational amenities at Clifton Moor are anonymous in nature with similar developments existing countrywide.

The majority of buildings, commercial and residential are late 20th century in date and are not significant architecturally. They have been constructed in a wide range of styles on purposely constructed estates which do not follow historic boundaries. The few older former farm buildings that survive maintain a link to the historic rural landscape.

Historic: Historic field boundaries do not survive well with an approximate survival rate of 20%. Wigginton Road, Water Lane and Green Lane are historic roadways.

The names given to several roads within the retail area reflect the sites former use as an airfield, for example, Amy Johnson Way, Aviator Court and George Cayley Drive. The historic Kettlestring Lane survives as a modern roadway to the north of its original location.

Social value can be placed on the former airfield as it played an important role in the wartime experiences of many York residents as well as part of the wider defence of Britain.

Streetscape components: All street lighting, bus stops, waste bins are modern in date and the majority of carriageway and pavement surfaces are tarmac.

Aesthetics: The view of the Minster (site of Roman fortress) across Bootham Stray and surrounding fields from Clifton Moor Gate on the fringes of this character area increases in significance when linked to the Roman camps on the land adjacent. The area includes a small amount of farmland and borders open fields and Clifton Backies at the south-east corner, a designated Local Nature Reserve.

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 streetlights, 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).

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.

The small remaining area of the airfield visible in the field adjacent to Whitehall Grange and blast shelters on Clifton Backies should be retained and conserved against further destruction. Further work should be done to connect these remaining features to the local community perhaps through school projects. Websites aiming to collect memories about the airfield already exist with varying degrees of success.

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 heritage assets and local landmarks should be maintained to help orientation and provide local distinctiveness.

Surviving late 19th century buildings should continue to be re-used and maintained as far as possible.

Any further housing development in this area should attempt to match existing modern housing in terms of style, material and proportions.

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 landscape features are particularly important in this area. Appropriate mitigation strategies should be agreed to protect potential archaeological deposits for any future development in area.

Character Area 38: Images



Car show rooms, Clifton Moor Gate



Example of larger retail units



Victoria Farm, Water Lane



Industrial Estate buildings on Clifton Moor Gate



View of the Minster from Clifton Moor Gate



Victoria Farm, Water Lane



Example of office buildings



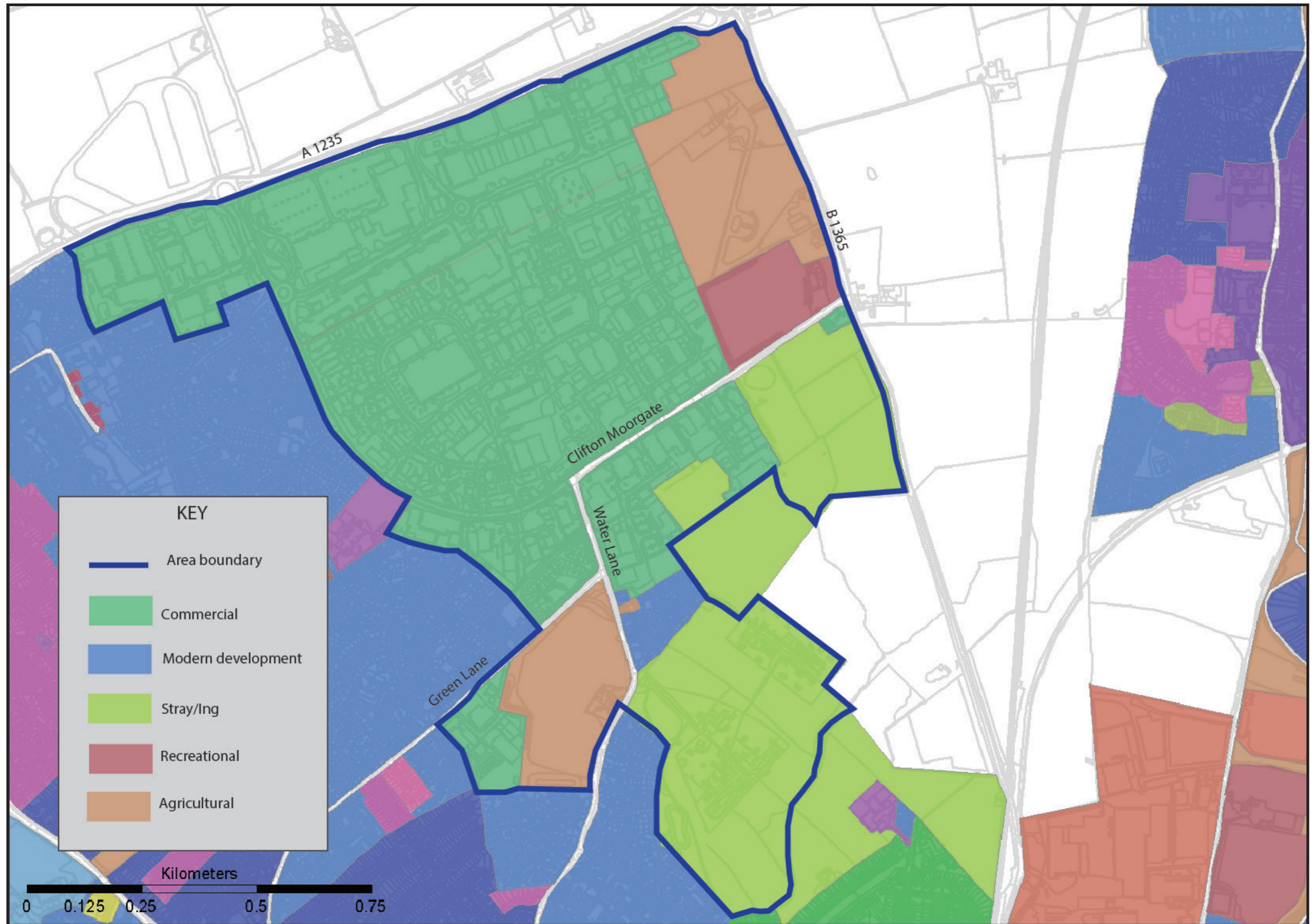
White House Farm



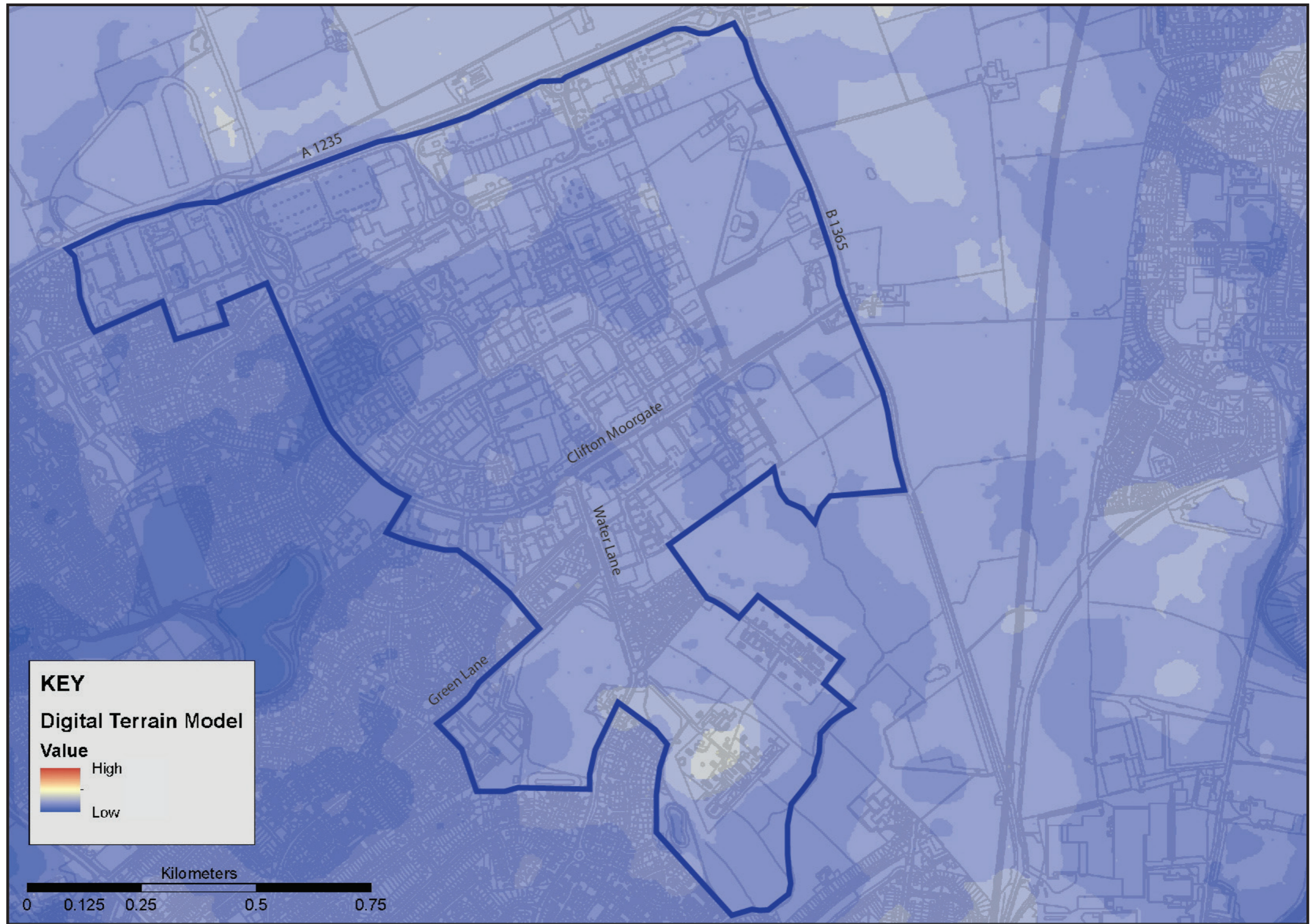
New builds on the site of Moor Farm

Character Area 38: Maps

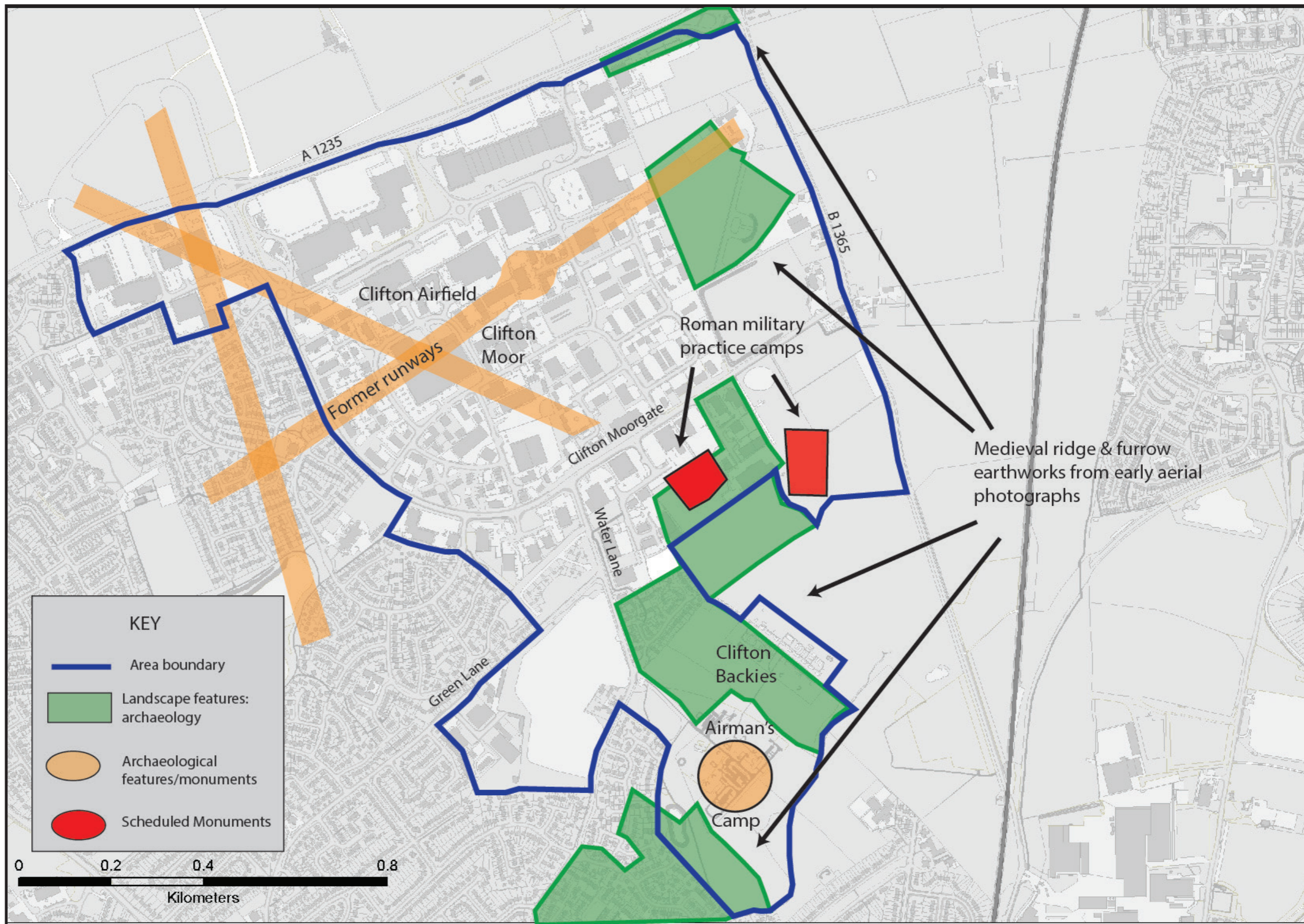
Broad Type characterisation plan. The white roadways indicate roads or lanes visible on the 1852 Ordnance Survey Plan.



Topography



Archaeology and heritage assets



Extant surviving boundaries, roads and tracks as depicted on the 1852 First Edition Ordnance Survey Plan

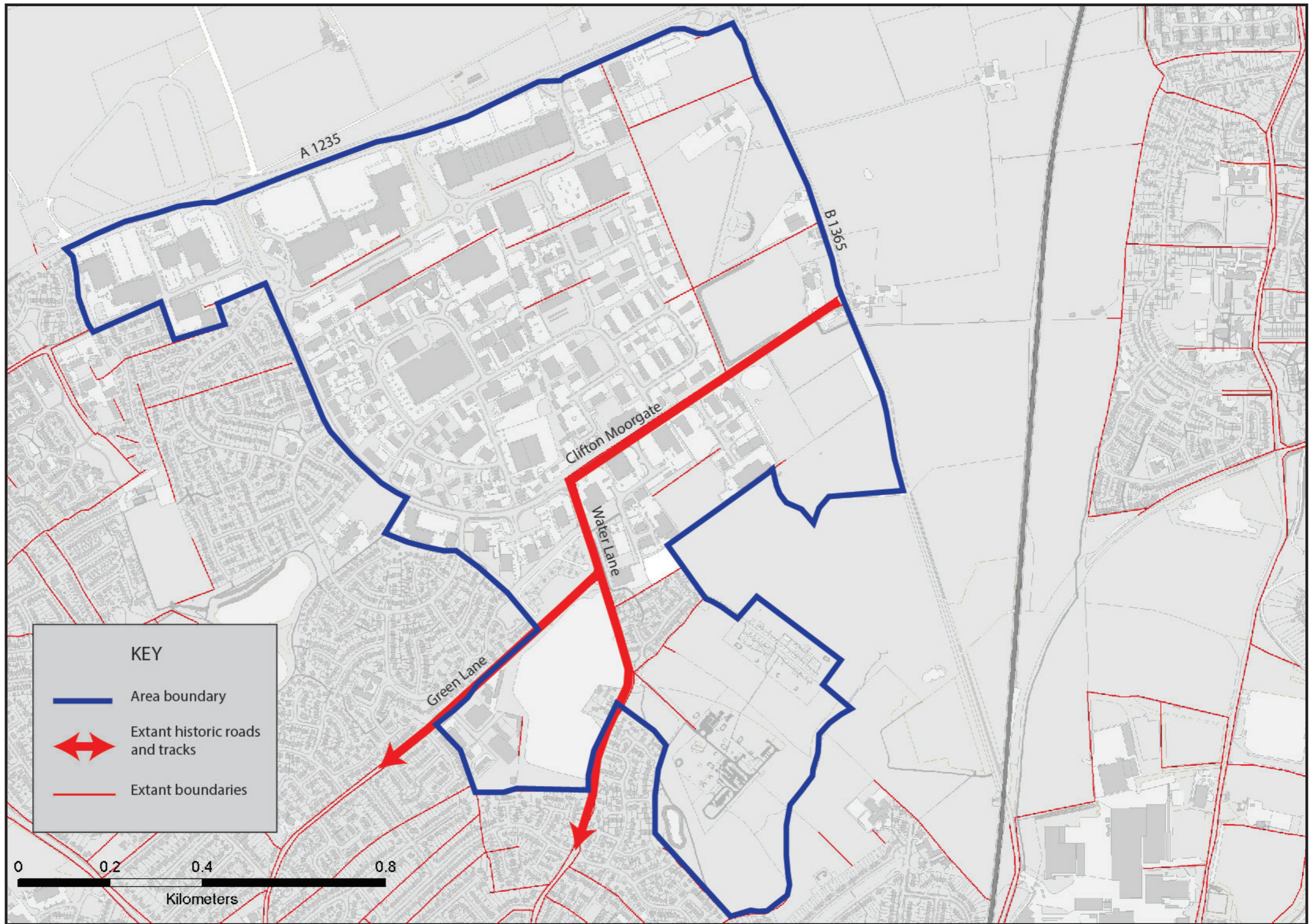


Figure ground map showing the relationship between open space (black) and the built environment



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