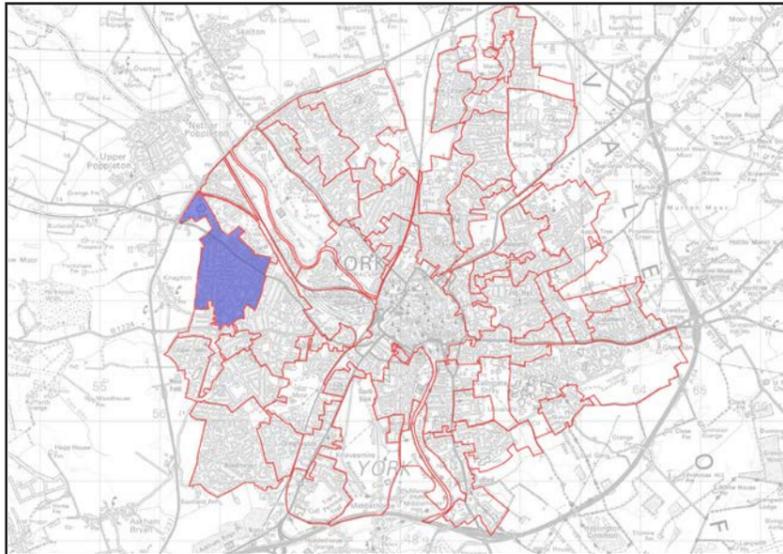
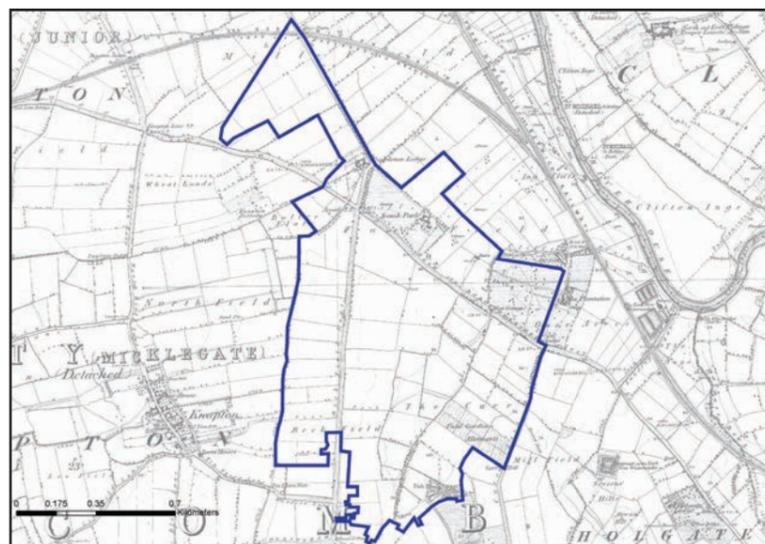


## Character area 28: Acomb north



Location of character area



Extract from First Edition Ordnance Survey Plan 1852

### Key Characteristics

**General Character:** A mixture of private and social housing spanning the 1930s-2000s, covering several housing estates of varying size on the north side of Boroughbridge Road, the west side of Beckfield Lane and the east side as far as Carr Lane. This character area extends southward towards the north of Acomb village.

The land rises from Acomb in the south towards Boroughbridge Road

Commercial activity is generally limited to Beckfield Lane and Boroughbridge Road

Clear suburban feel with a more obvious connection to York than suburbs to the south-west of the city

Approximate walking/cycling distance to the city centre from the junction of Beckfield Lane and Boroughbridge Road 4.5km via Water End and the south bank of the River Ouse

**Dominant Housing Type:** Post-war council housing – two storey, semi detached, front gardens (often now providing parking area), rear gardens and coal houses

**Other Housing Types:** One-two storey inter-war housing, mid 20th century private housing and late 20th century development in private estates.

**Designated Heritage Assets:** Church of the Holy Redeemer (Grade II)

**Non-designated Heritage Assets:** 18th and 19th century field boundaries existing as fence lines in an urban setting

**Key Views:** Key strategic view of the Minster from the crest of the hill on the east side of Beckfield Lane

**Surviving historic roads and tracks:** Boroughbridge Road, Carr Lane and Beckfield Lane

## Archaeology and history

Principally this part of Acomb comprises the former medieval fields of The Carr (low lying and marshy as its name implies) and Back Field (on higher ground). Broad ridge and furrow is noted on the Historic Environment Record either side of Boroughbridge Road (MY03498) in the vicinity of Cranbrook Avenue.

Enclosure occurred in this area in 1774, however by the mid 19th century further subdivisions created smaller fields distributed between scattered farms such as Acomb Park.

By the end of the 19th century the area also contained Plantation Farm, Plantation Cottage, Carr Grange and a Fever Hospital, situated in isolation on the west side of Beckfield Lane. Residential expansion began during the 1930s along Beckfield Lane and Boroughbridge Road and halted during the 1939-45 war.

Following the Second World War a combination of housing shortage and austerity led to a boom in the construction of social housing. The estates started in the 1930s were expanded from the late 1940s through the 1950s.

By 1962 the area between Beckfield Lane, Boroughbridge Road and Carr Lane was fully developed. Two schools were constructed around the same time on either side of Beckfield Lane – only the primary school survives.

The latest phase of development, in the late 20th and early 21st century has seen the construction of a new secondary school and business premises on Boroughbridge Road, and pockets of residential developments on the old school site west of Beckfield Lane, and former farms north of Boroughbridge Road.



*Rosedale Avenue 1957 - City of York Archives*

## Character

This residential area contains four distinctive types of housing: inter-war private housing, post-war council housing, mid 20th century and late 20th century housing forming a large mixed suburban area spanning the 1930s-2000s.

Inter-war construction started around the junction between Beckfield Lane and Boroughbridge Road and close to the former British Sugar Factory on Boroughbridge Road. Around 95% of dwellings have UPVC windows with a minority using solar panels. Development pattern follows a generally linear street pattern when compared to later development in the area. The typical 1930s arched porch is evident in over 60% of houses. The houses all contain two storey convex bay windows.

Post-war social housing is predominant in this character area. The housing contains a mixture of styles although nearly all are semi-detached properties with front and rear gardens. Some buildings are similar to those found in other estates of the same period such as housing on Jute Road. Most of the social housing has been sold to tenants which has meant, over the past 30 years, modifications have significantly eroded original character of the estates. Well over 90% of houses have modern UPVC windows.

There is only one small recreation area on Viking Road and a small part of a 19th century allotment which has survived the encroaching development near Danebury Drive.

Commercial development is generally restricted to Beckfield Lane and Boroughbridge Road.

In the north-west corner, and along the north of Boroughbridge Road, pockets of post-war private development occurs – often replacing earlier buildings or farm land. For example, The Paddock, a 1950s estate, was constructed on a paddock area between Acomb Park and Plantation Farm.

The majority of this housing dates to the late 1940s and 1950s and consists of semi-detached housing, including bungalows.

A 1960s school, Manor Secondary Modern (now church) and Church of the Holy Redeemer (Grade II listed) were constructed along Boroughbridge Road.

Small bungalow estates dating to the 1950s and 1960s are found to the south built in the back gardens of inter-war houses.

Late 20th century housing is concentrated on the west side of Beckfield Lane replacing a mid 20th century school, with small patches of development further north. This housing is a mix of detached, link terraces, low rise flats (up to three-four storey) and semi-detached.

There are very few extensions visible from the street. Few solar panels are evident.

These houses retain original features (with the exception of single glazed windows from the older properties). However, they are generally bland and identical to housing estates found across the country.

The late 20th century developments follow many different styles of construction, reflecting the various pattern books of individual house builders and are designed to utilise space to maximum effect. Street layouts are typically sinuous with many cul-de-sacs and few through roads. By contrast, the inter-war and immediate post-war developments follow a similar pattern of street layout incorporating wide streets and grass verges. Typically there are few cul-de-sacs.

The post-war social housing has lost much of its original character due to the changes made to the area since their construction.

This is partly due to home improvements since the 1980s. The inter-war houses are perhaps best preserved in terms of features and character.

The newer estates retain most of their original features and character but are devoid of anything unique or locally distinctive.

The area has a suburban feel with a more obvious connection to York than in the suburbs to the south-west of the city. Bus routes and signposted cycle routes run through the area, particularly along the main routes of Beckfield Lane and Boroughbridge Road.

Boroughbridge Road is the main route into the city from Harrogate and relatively busy at peak times.

The older, more established estates hold more communal value and provide a sense of identity for the local community. The provision of a school within the area of social housing adds to the sense of place, allowing children to be educated in the place in the area in which they live.

This mixed area is distinct from the areas of Victorian terracing and historic Acomb village nearby. The post-war housing (including modern developments) are similar to other estates across the city and nationwide. When combined they provide a good example of how the suburbs of York have grown over the past 70 years.

## Significance

**Archaeology:** The area may once have had the potential to reveal evidence of prehistoric occupation and activity, especially along the higher ground overlooking the carr land to the east but development has probably obscured or destroyed this. The former carr lands may conceal deep wet deposits in some locations.

**Architecture:** The inter and post-war suburbs to the west of the city centre contain many architectural styles from the early 1930s to the early 21st century. The housing styles range from large planned estates to small scale 21st century dwellings constructed in between older developments. Although perhaps not much aesthetic or architectural value may be placed upon the buildings in this area, they nevertheless play an important role in the story of the growth of York's suburbs.

**Historic:** This area contains one Grade II listed building, the mid 20th century Church of the Holy Redeemer on Boroughbridge Road.

Significant historic roads survive including Boroughbridge Road, Carr Lane and Beckfield Lane. Across the southern half of the character area, 19th century field boundaries do not survive well in the urban landscape, they are perhaps best preserved as fence lines on the west side of Beckfield Lane. Some, such as the rear garden boundaries of Melwood Grove, represent former field boundaries dating to at least the period of enclosure in the 1770s. On the west side of Carr Lane several other examples of earlier boundaries exist including a large boundary running to the west of Cranbrook Avenue, along the west side of the allotments and continuing eastwards forming part of Tostig Avenue and Woodlea Bank.

In some cases, street names reflect historic names or historic use, especially on the north side of Boroughbridge Road, such as the modern development of Villa Court on the site of Poppleton Villa and the inter-war development of Plantation Grove on the site of Plantation Farm.

**Streetscape components:** The streetscape within this area varies depending on development type and age. A mixture of tarmac, paved and concrete carriageways and footpaths exist throughout. Where street furniture is evident it consists of Edinburgh style waste bins situated near bus stops on main roads, and a mixture of street lighting dating from c. 1980s to present day. Modern street signs are generally attached to streetlights or situated on low fingerpost style signs throughout the more recent developments.

**Aesthetics:** The view from Beckfield Lane of the Minster is significant as one of the best views of the west end of the Minster. The topography of the area appears to make the Minster perch above the suburban rooftops. Hedgerows and grass verges add to the areas green space as well as small scale recreational areas and allotments.

## 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.

The concrete road surfaces of the immediate post-war streets have generally survived well and are a key element of the distinctive character of mid 20th century suburban development in York and should wherever possible be retained. The relationship between these carriageways and street properties is a key part of the design of these streets.

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.

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 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.

The key strategic view of the Minster from Beckfield Lane should be conserved and any development proposals along this view should carefully consider and mitigate any adverse impacts. Views of local landmarks and other heritage assets should be maintained and enhanced to help orientation and enhance local distinctiveness.

The inter and post-war housing estates still retain a large number of original architectural and streetscape features. It is recommended that further erosion of the original aspects of the estates, as well as changes such as garden to driveway conversions and inappropriate extensions should be monitored and avoided where possible.

Despite their age and text book appearance the styles and features of the modern housing estate should be noted to inform future proposals and monitor change. Any further housing development in this area should attempt to match existing modern housing in terms of style, material and proportions.

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 28: Images



*Post-war social housing on Jute Road*



*Post-war private housing on Almsford Road*



*Late 20th century housing on Boroughbridge Road*



*Post-war social housing on Ostman Road*



*Post-war private housing on Boroughbridge Road*



*Late 20th century housing on Melander Close*



*Mixture of post-war private housing and commercial properties on Boroughbridge Road*



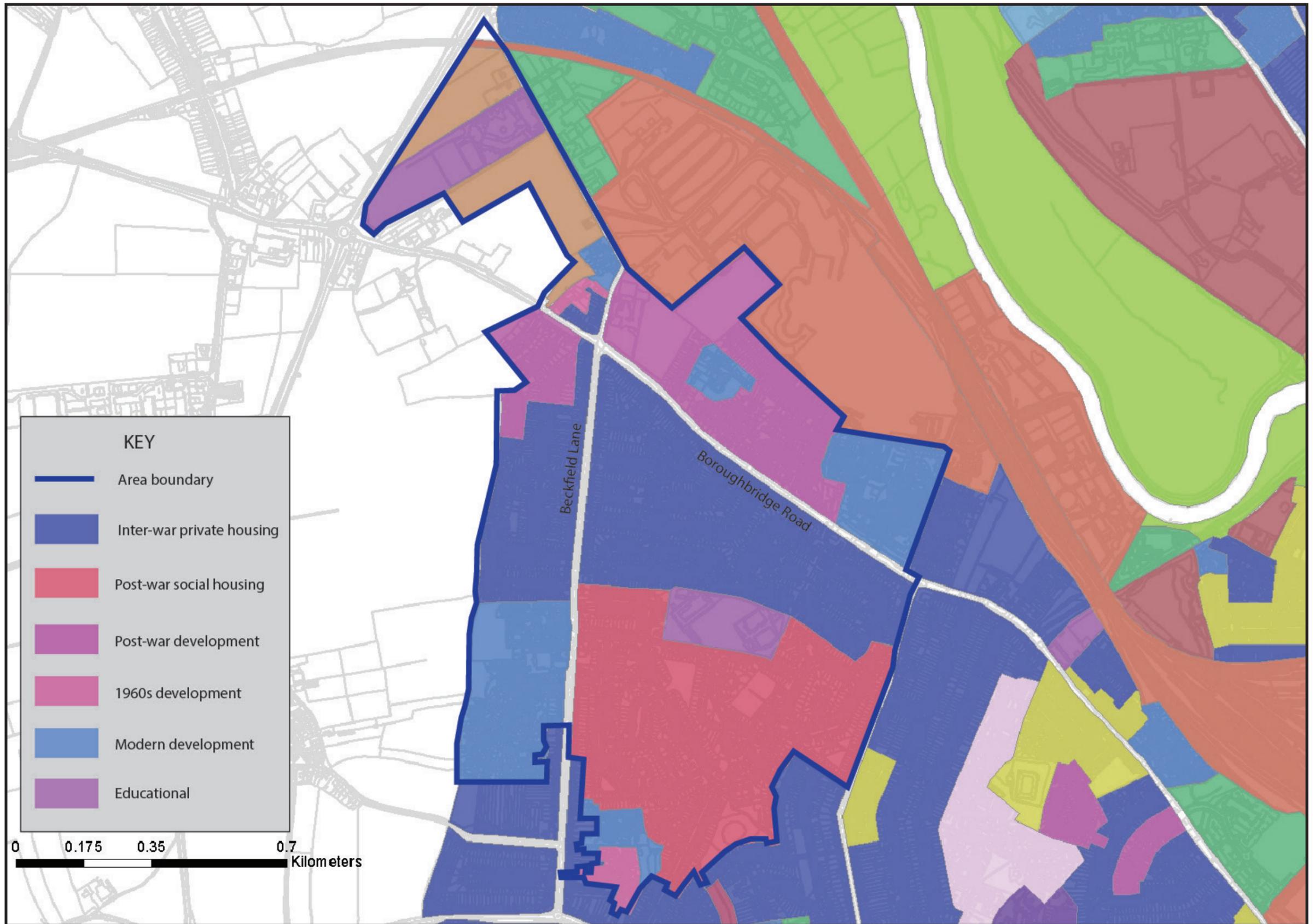
*Church of the Holy Redeemer, Boroughbridge Road*



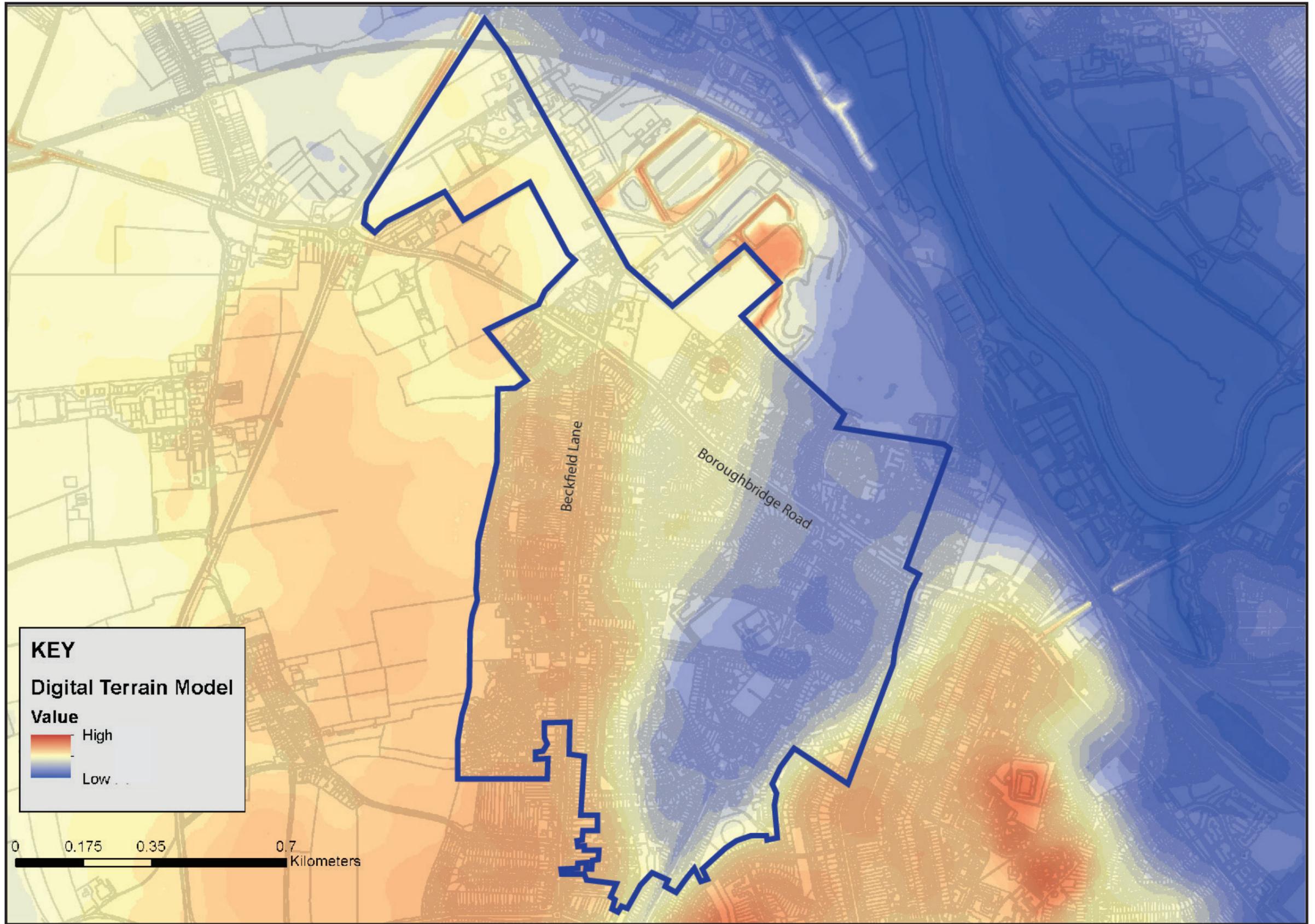
*Late 20th century housing on Turnberry Drive*

## Character Area 28: Maps

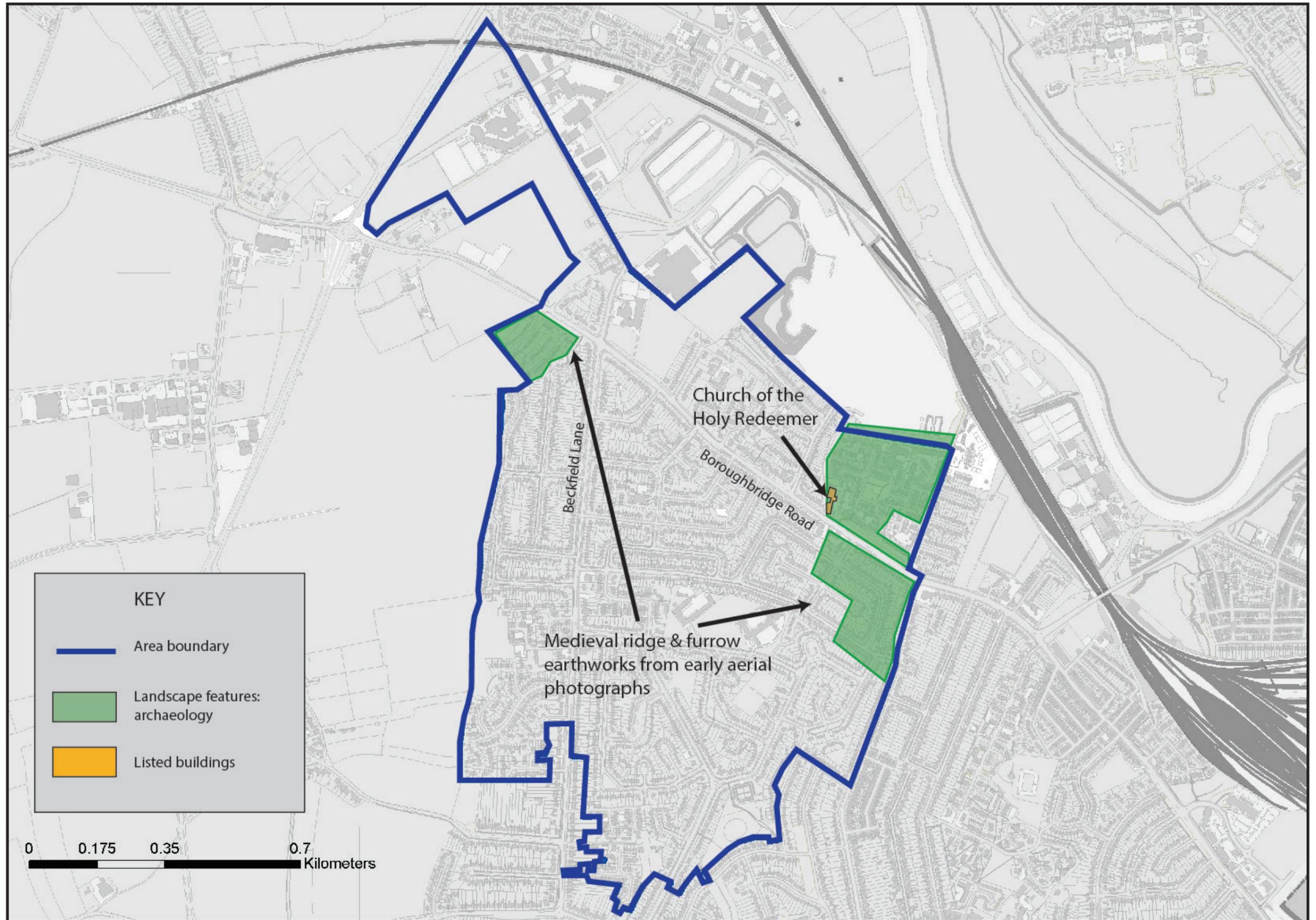
Broad Type characterisation plan.  
White roadways indicate roads or lanes visible on the 1852 Ordnance Survey Plan



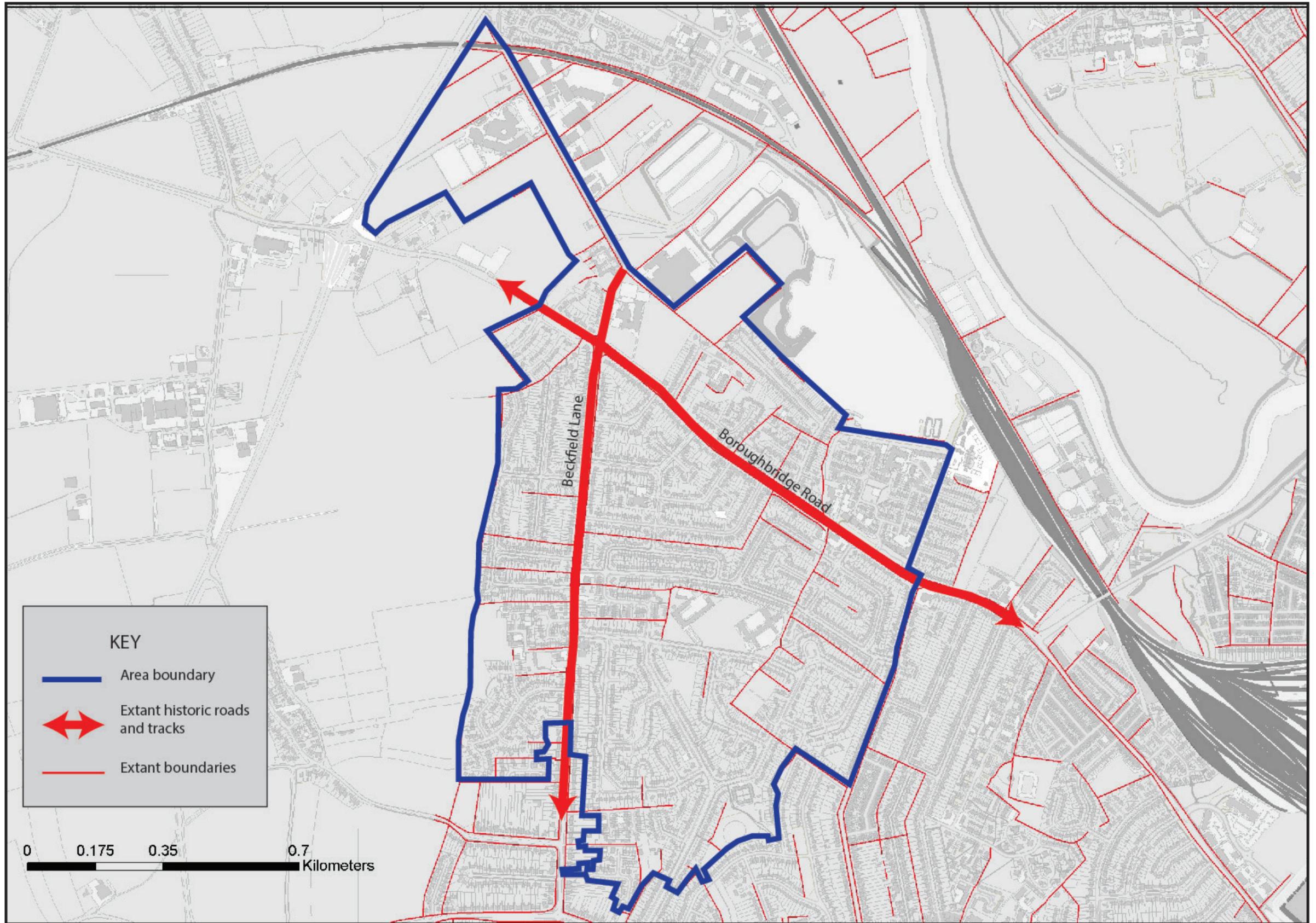
Topography



Archaeology and designated 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*



**Researched and written by:** Claire MacRae

**Photographs:** Claire MacRae except where indicated

**Graphics:** Bob Sydes and Claire MacRae

**Edited by:** Bob Sydes

**Funded by:** English Heritage

**Issued:** November 2013

© **City of York Council 2013**

