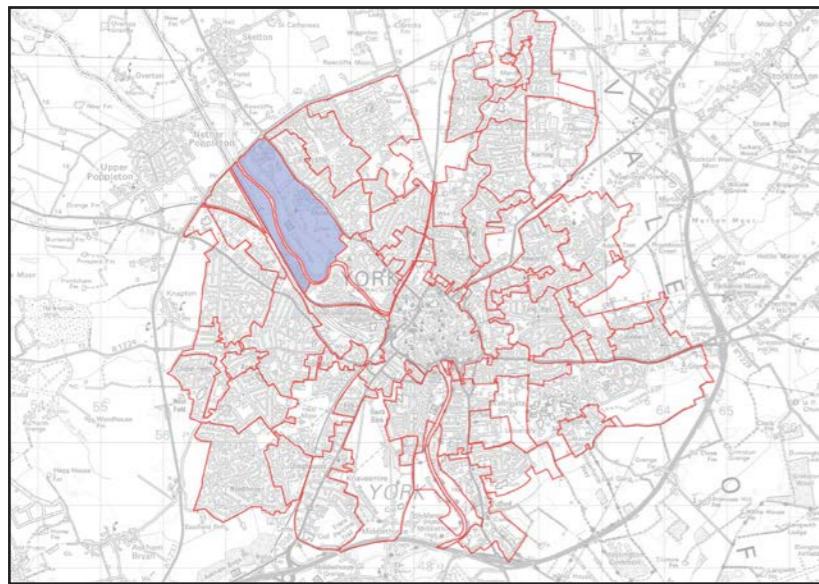
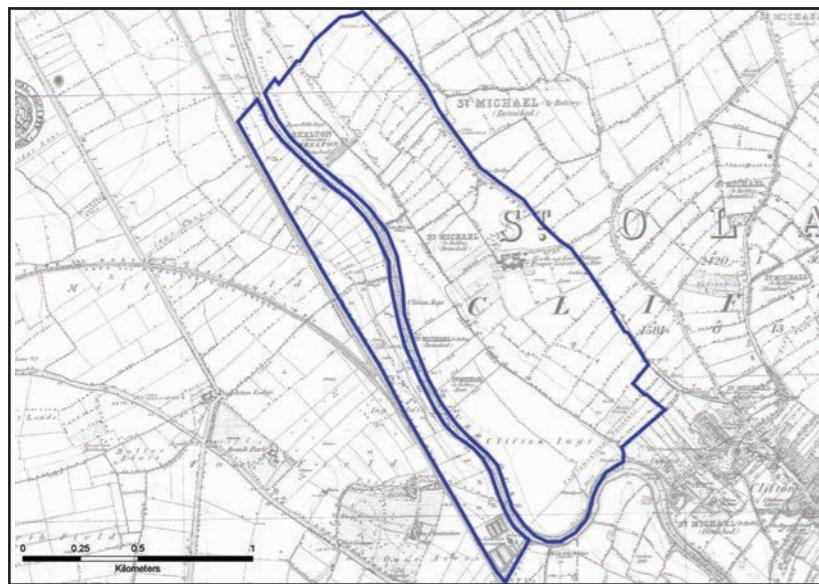


Character area 34: Poppleton, Rawcliffe and Clifton Ings



Location of character area



Extract from First Edition Ordnance Survey Plan 1852

Key Characteristics

General Character: River Ouse floodplain of the Ings on the banks of the River Ouse surrounded by 19th to 20th century commercial, industrial and residential properties

Area extends northwards to the outer ring road and southwards to the edge of Clifton and the bend in the river. The site is bounded to the west by the railway and to the east by Shipton Road.

The topology of the area is low lying in the vicinity of the river, with a raised mound flood defence running along the eastern edge of the riverside. The railway embankment and higher ground border the west side of the area.

Site of Importance for Nature Conservation containing semi-natural grasslands uniquely altered by centuries of farming.

The meadow fauna of the Ings around the River Ouse is virtually confined to lowland England. It is estimated that the Ings between Clifton and Acaster Malbis represent around 6% of this habitat in the UK.

Includes allotment site

Integral part of York's flood defence with a capacity to hold 3.3 million cubic metres of water

Distinctive landscape feature

Continuous history over 2000 years

Mid-long distance cycle and footpaths through open countryside – a key component of one of York's principal characteristics (Landscape & Setting)

Approximate walking/cycling distance to the city centre from Clifton Ings 2.4km via Route 65 on the north bank of River Ouse

Dominant Housing Type: Linked and detached, two storey houses in modern estate

Other Key Buildings: Extant 19th century asylum buildings, waterworks and 19th century housing

Designated Heritage Assets: None

Non-designated Heritage Assets: Buildings and landscape features from the former asylum (Clifton Hospital) including the chapel and Pcaillion Cottages, late 18th century hedgerows marking strip fields and ridge and furrow

Key Views: Good views of the river, the Ings, and a key view of the Minster situated on slightly higher ground

Surviving historic roads and tracks: Shipton Road

Archaeology and history

There is no evidence of prehistoric or Roman activity in the area although the water meadows would clearly have been as important a resource for grazing, hunting and fishing throughout these periods. The modern Shipton Road follows the line of an earlier Roman road known from archaeological evidence at various locations closer to the city walls.

By the 11th century 50 acres of meadow are referenced in the Domesday Book. The majority of the Ings in this area were later bestowed upon St Mary's Abbey. After the dissolution in 1539, most ecclesiastical lands were re-distributed by the Crown, however, the Church managed to retain some land on Clifton Ings which it still holds today. During the medieval period, this rich agricultural land was divided into strips to be farmed by individuals. Several patches of ridge and furrow are known from aerial photographic evidence, particularly on the south side of Shipton Road. Several features and fragments of pottery were found dating to this period at the Rawcliffe Park and Ride site during investigations.

During enclosure acts in the mid 18th century several of the Ings fields were portioned into smaller fields. An example of late 18th century boundaries can still be seen on Poppleton Ings, running in a NE-SW direction. Stone boundary markers to the south of Poppleton Ings are shown on the mid 19th century ordnance survey plan. These did not correlate with any boundaries which exist today and may have indicated pre-enclosure field boundaries. The strips were arranged in such a way that each included a mixture of flat low lying and sloping land. Clifton Ings remained largely unenclosed. The surrounding farmland between the Ings and Shipton Road was also divided into strips. In the mid 17th Century, substantial areas of old plough land in Clifton were set down to grass, including these fields.

Ridge and furrow exists in the fields immediately south of Clifton Park Avenue. Arable farming appears to have continued into the early 19th century as flooding was not as severe as it can be today. The Ings land itself was almost certainly never ploughed.

During the early 18th century the Ings were the site of York's first official race meetings and were held here until 1730 when the meetings were moved to the current Knavesmire site due to persistent flooding.

During the 1840s, York, like other areas in the country, was experiencing a period of large scale industrial growth. The railway line was created on an embankment which ran through Poppleton Ings, cutting off the remaining land between the tracks and the river. The steam engine was beginning to replace the horse in terms of transport and the need for hay began to decline. No further development has taken place on Poppleton Ings due to its isolation by the railway.

The York New Waterworks Company was founded in 1846 in the south-west corner of this area. It expanded throughout the 19th and into the 20th century and is still in use today.

The North and East Ridings Pauper Lunatic Asylum opened in 1847 in the centre of the character area near to Shipton Road. It was enlarged during the late 19th and early 20th century and remained open as a psychiatric hospital until the mid 1990s. Several mature trees and buildings were retained for use by the health authority, such as the chapel (now offices) and lodge, when the site was redeveloped.

During the mid to late 20th century a sewerage works opened in the north-east corner of the area. Several sewerage filter beds had previously existed on the fields to the south of the asylum buildings.

Further commercial and residential development continued throughout the late 20th and early 21st century.

Character

This area is characterised by large open green areas, predominantly the Ings land but also adjacent fields now used recreationally as allotments, playing fields and parkland. Industrial buildings are situated on the northern and southern extremities of the character area.

The modern housing estate contains a 50-50 split of linked terraces and detached properties. It is a typical modern estate with a sinuous road layout leading to small cul-de-sacs. Nearly all properties contain a garage which is detached from the house in most cases. The buildings are constructed in a range of pattern book styles.

Ashtree House, a late 19th century, three storey former asylum building has been retained within the new estate and converted into apartments. Its stark contrast to the surrounding red brick two storey housing is immediately apparent. It is not obvious what its former use was but it is clear that it is an historic building brought back to life through a new use. Some other extant older buildings are hidden away in the commercial area adjacent to the housing estate and are in use as offices.

The ambience of the area is generally peaceful. The commercial and industrial areas are distinct from the green spaces but are well screened by woodland and do not detract too much from the open riverside setting.

Significance

Archaeology: Important in the prehistoric and Roman periods for grazing, hunting and fishing but unlikely to reveal any significant evidence. The higher ground adjacent to Shipton Road has the potential to reveal evidence of Roman roadside settlement but apart from a few stray sherds of Roman pottery found at the Rawcliffe Park & Rides site there has been limited evidence.

During the medieval period, this rich agricultural land was divided into strips to be farmed by individuals. Several patches of ridge and furrow as well as fragments of medieval pottery were also found at the Park and Ride site. Further areas of ridge and furrow are also recorded in Clifton. Some of this ridge & furrow survives (MYO 2172)

Examples of late 18th century boundaries can still be seen on Poppleton Ings, running in a NE-SW direction.

Architecture: Mixture of several large late 19th to early 20th century residential and former institutional buildings alongside modern housing estates, commercial and industrial structures.

The chapel and Pavillion Cottages formerly linked to the asylum, have been nominated for inclusion on York's Local List of Heritage Assets. The cottages are connected to the cricket pavilion which was for the use of hospital staff and patients. This accommodation has been nominated for inclusion on the Local List of heritage assets as it is a rare example of a hybrid residential/sports facility.

Two short terraced rows of late 19th century, two storey dwellings exist in this area as North and South Cottages. East Cottages were constructed on the east side of Shipton Road in 1925.

Late 20th and early 21st century saw the redevelopment of the asylum site including the construction of a housing estate, hotel, mental health centre, office blocks and public house. Elsewhere the creation of the sports centre has further added to the redevelopment of the area.

Historic: On the south side of the railway line over 70% of the field boundaries shown on the 1850s ordnance survey plan are extant. However, on the north side it is perhaps only a 20% survival rate.

To the south of the river the link with York's railway and industrial heritage is more apparent, due to the dominance of the rail line forming the western boundary of the character area and the existence of the waterworks at the southern tip. The significance of the Ings grassland cannot be over emphasised. This site provides a significant flood defence for the city and provides a visible link to how the area appeared and was managed over centuries as it is still hay cropped and grazed. It is a valued resource to many interest groups as well as being an aesthetically pleasing open area. It is one of a number of Ings meadows within York which form one of the city's distinct landscape features.

The 18th century hedgerows forming strip field boundaries on Poppleton Ings have survived mainly because of their isolation, and therefore protection, from development on the south side of the railway. Despite being cut in half by the railway, they provide an excellent example of how the historic field systems appeared.

Streetscape components: Contemporary street lighting and signage with asphalt footpaths and carriageways within the new build estates. Mixture of 20th century street lighting, waste bins and bus stops on Shipton Road.

Aesthetics: Large open green areas including allotments, playing fields and parkland.

The meadows contain an internationally rare type of grassland and are a national stronghold for the Tansy Beetle (data list 2 species). The meadows are managed by a local interest group (Friends of Rawcliffe Meadows) and professional bodies. However, they are still under threat from pollution and neglect.

The riverside contains a well used cycle track (part of National Cycle Route 65) and footpath linking the city centre to open countryside and Rawcliffe Country Park. These mid-long distance cycle and footpaths through open countryside contribute to York's principal characteristic, Landscape & Setting.

The view of the Minster from Clifton Ings illustrates the relationship between the historic core and the wider landscape. The church owned most of the land on Clifton Ings making the dominance of the Minster more significant. The view from the Ings has been identified as one of York's Key Viewpoints.

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.

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.

Presently the national cycle route is a shared route with pedestrians and there are tensions between these two uses, especially on the Ings. Pedestrian movement is significant and includes many families, older people and disabled access is generally good. Opportunities for creating separate cycle paths should be considered. Also, in some places the existing path is too narrow for the volume of use.

The site of the former North & East Riding Lunatic Asylum offers opportunities for research and presentation on the history and use of the site – an oral history study could usefully be promoted.

The Ings are part managed through time limited stewardship agreements and plans for more long term management could usefully be worked up.

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.

Key views of the Minster, other major heritage assets and local landmarks should be maintained and enhanced to help orientation and enhance local distinctiveness.

Character Area 34: Images



Fylingdale Avenue



Ashtree House, former asylum building now residential



Allotment site



Late 20th century Clifton Park NHS treatment centre



Former asylum building now used as offices



View towards Minster across Clifton Ings.



Premier Inn, Shipton Road



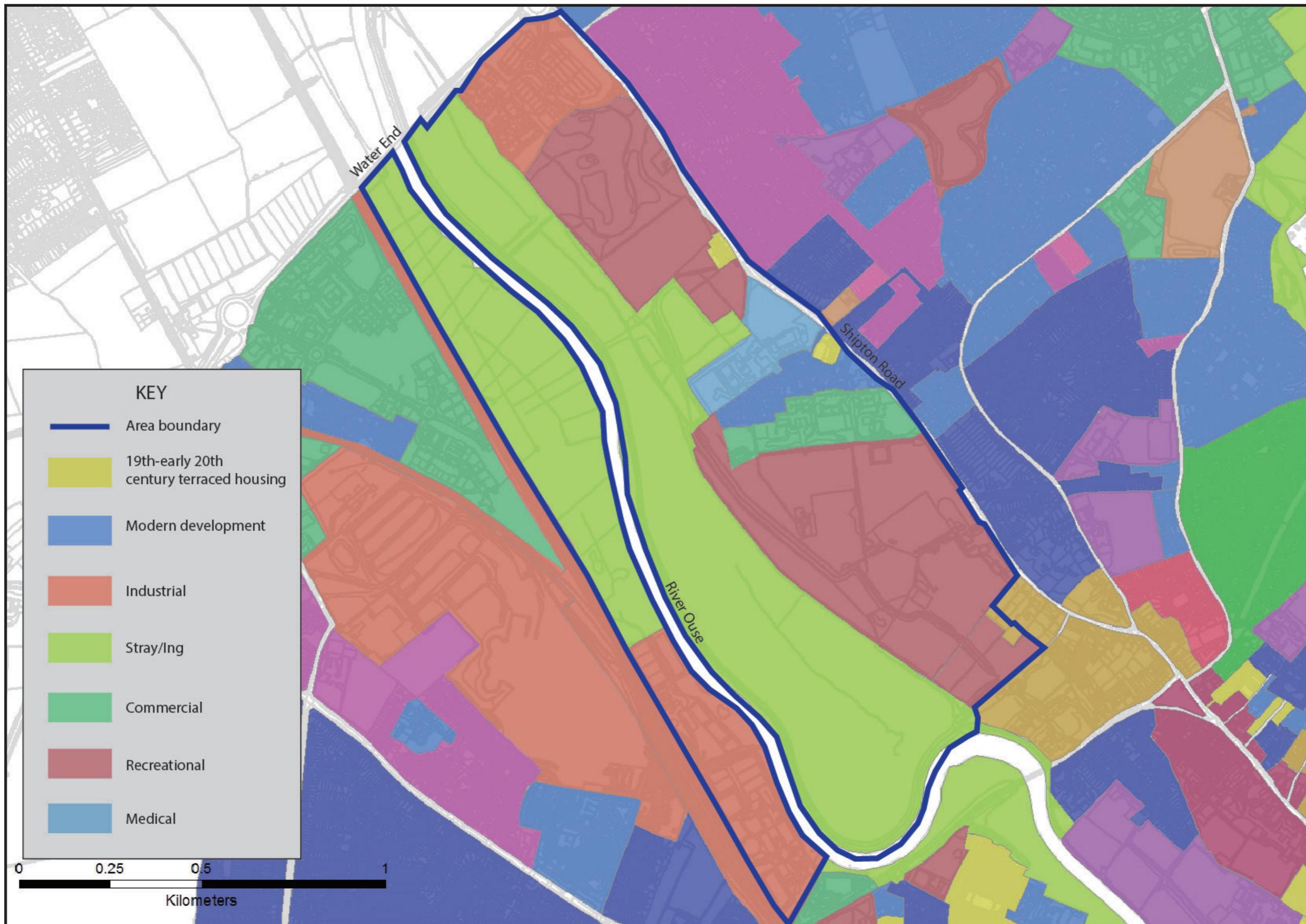
North Cottages on Shipton Road



View towards Minster from higher ground of ring road

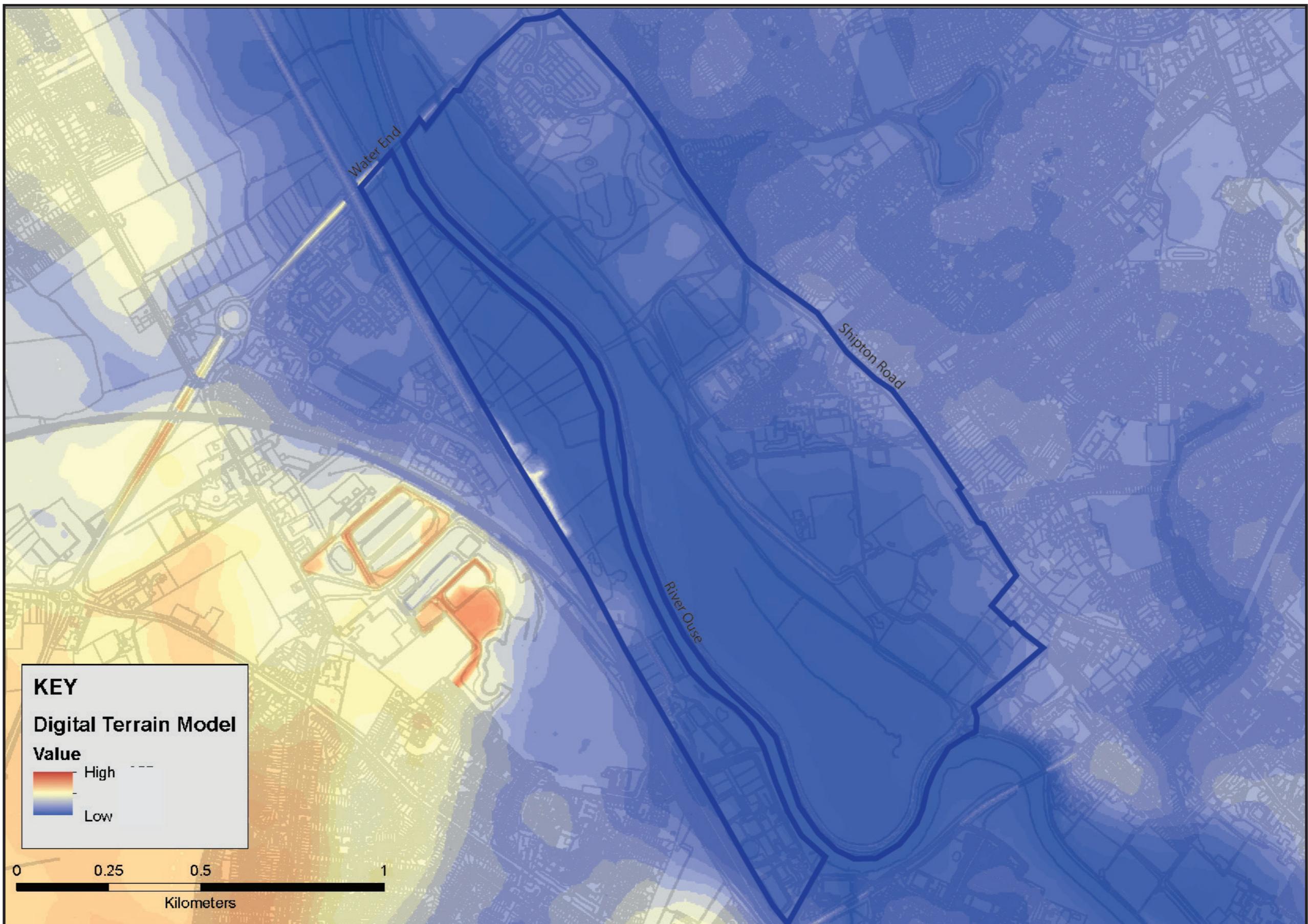
Character Area 34: Maps

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



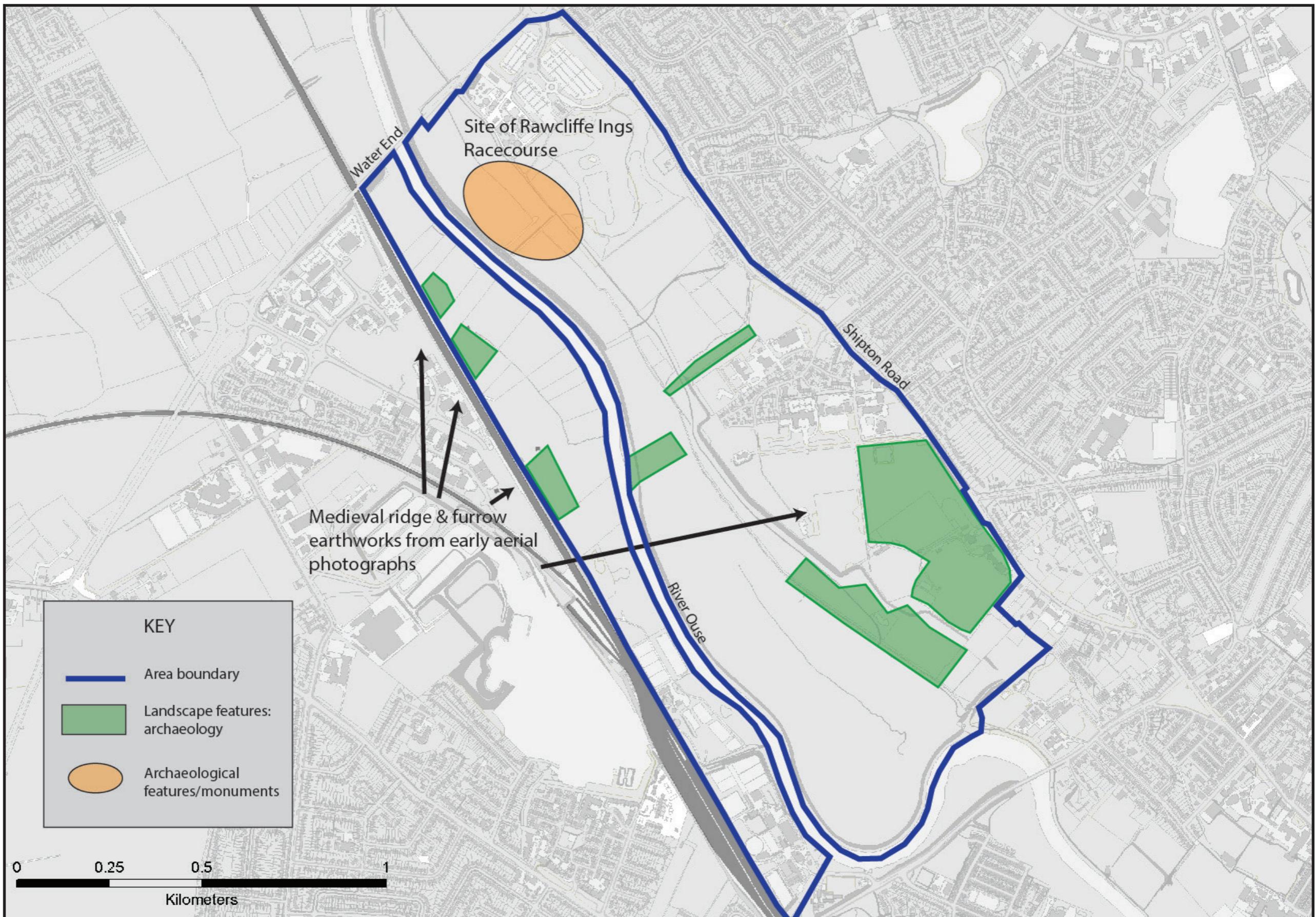
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Topography



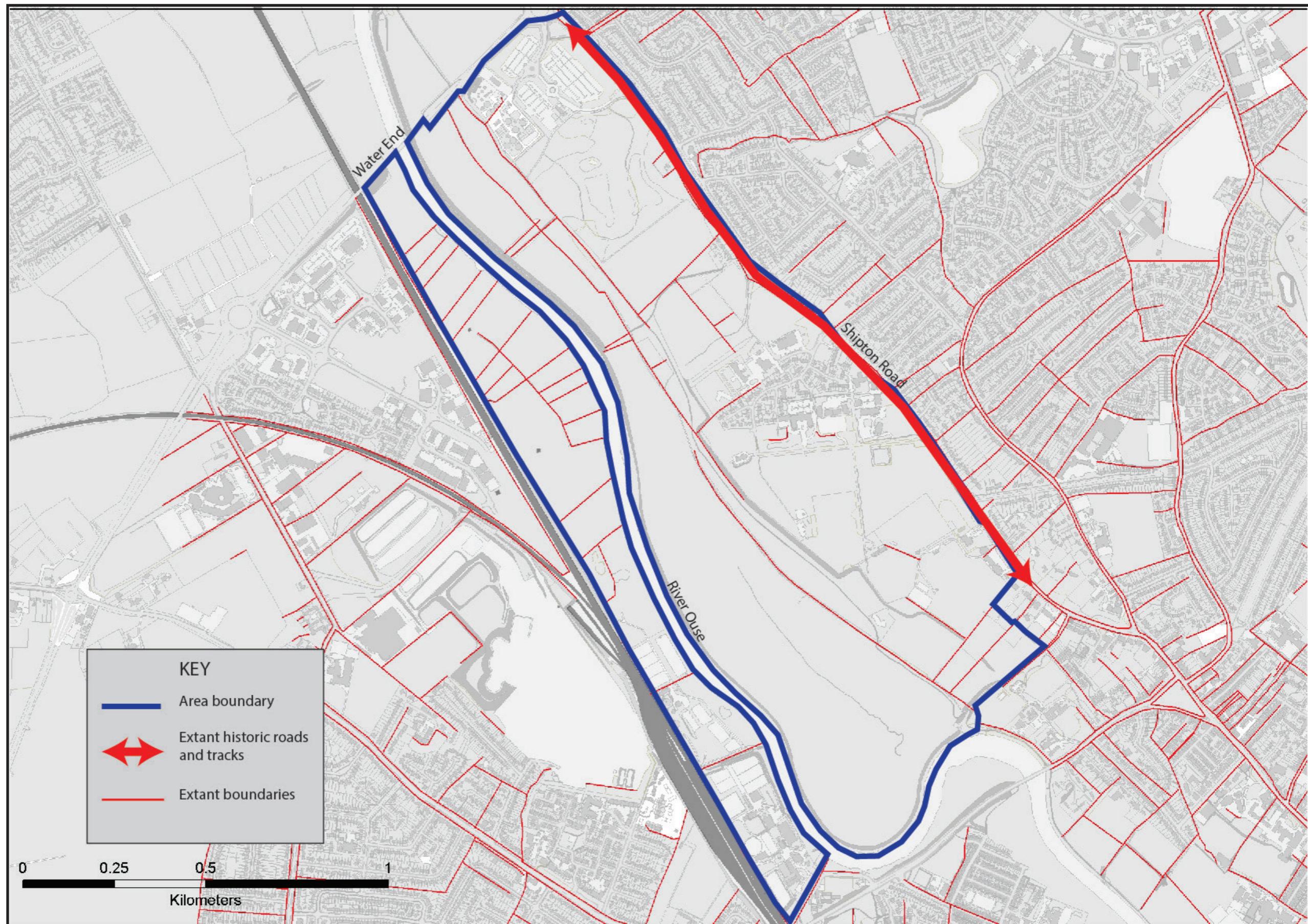
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Archaeology and heritage assets



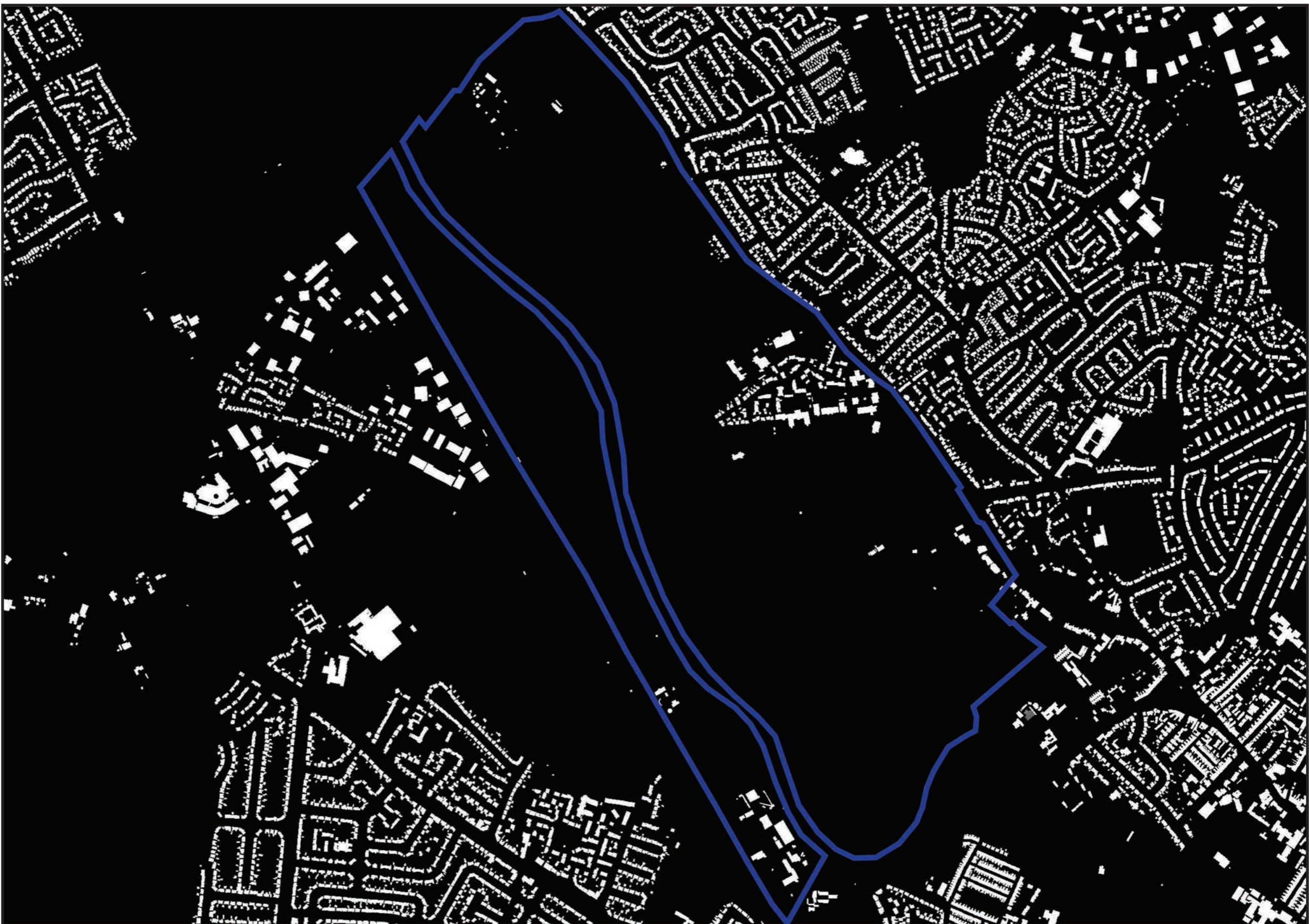
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Extant surviving
boundaries, roads and
tracks as depicted on
the 1852 First Edition
Ordnance Survey Plan



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



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