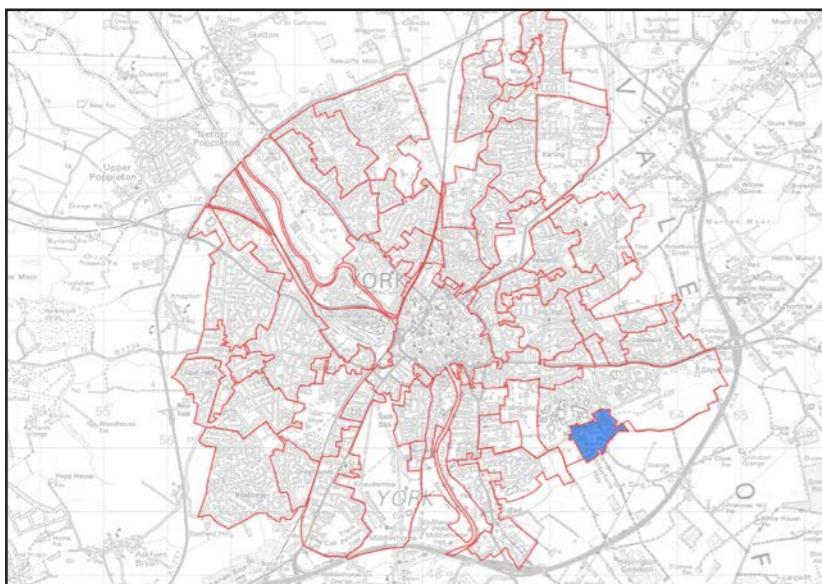
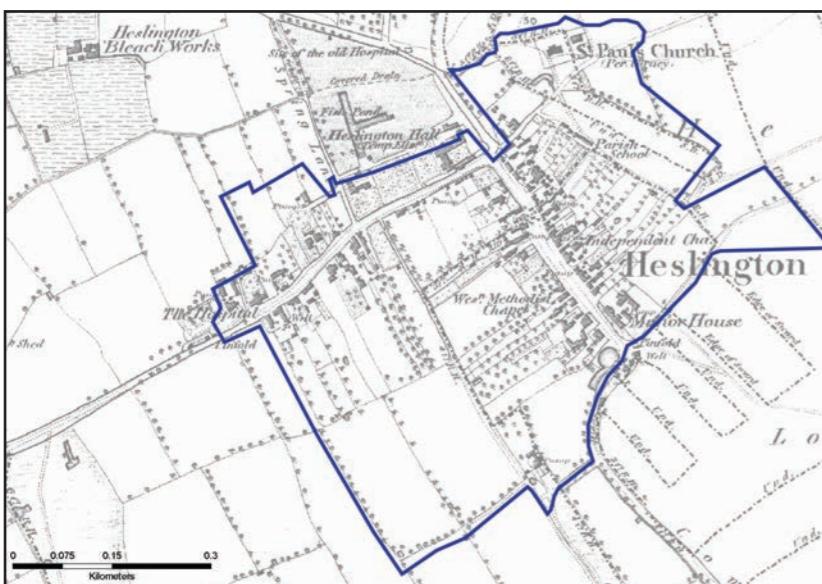


## Character area 62: Heslington



Location of character area



Extract from First Edition Ordnance Survey Plan 1852

### Key Characteristics

**General Character:** Historic rural village containing 18th to 20th century private and social housing. Green spaces and mature trees found throughout the core of the village.

Rural medieval village

Retention of back lanes and toft boundaries

Quiet area bounded to the south by open countryside and to the north by the university campus

Many buildings commandeered by university including Heslington Hall and its stable block

University development to the east and west is generally sympathetic to the village and features playing fields and green space to respect the individual identity of the settlement

Generally low lying land with the highest point in the area of the Hall and Church

Conservation Area

Approximate walking/cycling distance to the city centre from the centre of Heslington village 3.5km via University Road and Lawrence Street

**Dominant Housing Type:** One to two storey 18th to 19th century brick buildings including dwellings, public houses and former farm buildings

**Other Key Building Types:** Heslington Church, Hall and school. 20th century residential developments in variety of styles, including two storey flats, detached housing and semi-detached social housing

**Designated Heritage Assets:** Over twenty listed buildings Grade II and II\* and Heslington Conservation Area

**Non-designated Heritage Assets:** Important historic buildings which contribute to village character, 1953 Coronation commemorative seat, toft and croft boundaries and medieval village plan form

**Key Views:** Local views of the Hall and church, views of surrounding rural landscape and distant views of Heslington East Campus

**Surviving historic roads and tracks:** Main Street, Field Lane, Boss Lane, School Lane and Low Lane

## Archaeology and history

Nothing is recorded on the York Historic Environment Record (HER) dating to the prehistoric or Roman period. This area occupies lower ground to the south of the main ancient settlement site now covered by the university campus. The recent excavations ahead of the construction of the Heslington East Campus provided evidence of possible Mesolithic and Neolithic occupation along with later prehistoric and Romano-British occupation.

Heslington village may have Anglo-Scandinavian origins. During the medieval period the current layout of Heslington was established featuring long, narrow plots of land extending to back lanes such as Boss Lane and School Lane. Boss Lane was also the line of the road used to reach the common land. A church was established on higher ground to the north-east of the main village.

Ridge and furrow earthworks survived in the Holmefield Lane area prior to development in the late 20th century. It survives in patches of farmland outside of the character area. Medieval fields surrounding the village include Gravel Field, Heslington Field and Low Field. Gravel Field was also used as an area of gravel extraction. The fields to the east of the village were not enclosed until the mid 19th century.

By the late 18th century 25 farms were extant across the parish, eleven of which remain today although Lime Tree Farm is the only operational farm within the village core.

During the 18th and 19th century the village underwent substantial changes. The majority of the historic buildings within the village date to this period.



Main Street 1900s - City of York Archives

A Wesleyan chapel and school were constructed in the mid 19th century along with reconstruction work to Heslington Hall including the creation of the fishpond. The medieval church was replaced by the present building in the late 1850s.

The estate of Lord Deramore, centred upon Heslington Hall (1568), was sold in the 1960s allowing the development of York University campus immediately to the north of the village. The hall became an administrative centre for the university.

Other buildings, such as Home Farm, within the village were also converted for use by the university. Infill development has occurred in some places within the village such as Hall Park housing development, Eden Court Halls of Residence and The Crescent a post-war social housing development.

Late 20th century development exists throughout the village.

## Character

Heslington has retained its rural, independent village character despite the close proximity of the university campus due to its historic architecture, green space, layout and association with farming. The green, open spaces in and around Heslington enhance its rural nature. The village has been described in further detail in the Heslington Village Design Statement (VDS) developed by the local community. The VDS has been adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance.

Heslington Hall (Grade II\*) at the north of the village sits opposite Heslington Church (Grade II). The church is generally surrounded by open land and green space. Field Lane running to alongside the church and hall is tree lined adding to the parkland character of this area. The hall provides the link between the university and the village. The hall is very much a village building but its use by the university has led to the encroachment of the university into Heslington. Many buildings are now in use by the university, including the stables to the hall.

Main Street (running north-south) retains an historic atmosphere; almost all of its buildings are 18th to 19th century in date, many of which are listed. Several other buildings within the village have been nominated for inclusion on the Local List of heritage assets. Many buildings front directly onto the street and are two-storey, usually detached or in short terraces. The majority of the core village buildings feature traditional multi-paned or four-paned sash windows. Medieval tofts leading off either side of Main Street survive in places as do many tracks and roadways. This helps to reinforce Heslington's sense of place and identity. The outgang to the south of the village is preserved in its original rural state.

Throughout the core, well maintained wide grass verges, mature trees, and flowers enhance the rural and picturesque nature of the village. Many cottages with doorways leading straight onto the street have small flower beds beneath the windows to the front of the house. Some of these have now been replaced by cobbled areas.

Outside of the core area, several buildings have been inappropriately constructed without consideration given to material and design, such as university buildings to the north end of Main Street.

Main Street also runs roughly east-west across the top of the core village area. This street contains a mixture of historic and modern architecture, wide grass verges and period style lighting. Buildings here are one-three storey including former farm buildings and large listed houses such as More House. Features of note in this part of the village include boot scrapers and a coal delivery hatch on a boundary wall.

The village contains two public houses as well as several other commercial amenities. These services have been retained and strengthened to serve the nearby campus. Sporting facilities surround the village including university sports fields, fishing lake and Fulford golf course. Heslington also has its own sports field, donated by Lord Deramore.

Social housing on The Crescent, constructed in 1948 and during the 1970s on Holmefield to the southwest of the village, are both successful 20th century developments, sympathetic to their surroundings. Most of this social housing is now privately owned. The Crescent buildings have hedged front boundaries supported by concrete posts as found in contemporary developments.

More recent development can be found to the south west and east of the Main Street. These are generally detached and semi-detached two storey houses. Note that some modern developments still feature chimney stacks e.g. Lloyd's Close.

The village is home to a variety of people due to the close proximity of the university. There is a thriving community scene including an annual church fete, brownies, scouts and a football and cricket club. Heslington also has its own sports field, donated by Lord Deramore.

Several historic almshouses have been restored by the Joseph Rowntree Housing Trust for use by the elderly.

Street lighting was installed in the village with the development of the university campus in the early 1960s. The Village Trust ensured that mercury lighting was used rather than sodium lighting, giving out a white light rather than orange.

## Significance

**Archaeology:** Excavations in advance of the new Heslington East Campus to the north of the village has provided evidence of prehistoric to Anglo-Scandinavian occupation. The village may date to the Anglo-Scandinavian period period. Significant potential deposits may exist within the village in particular dating to the medieval period in undisturbed pockets of land.

**Architecture:** The village contains a mixture of predominantly 18th to 19th century residential architecture as well as Heslington Hall and former stables, schoolhouse, church and commercial amenities. The majority of key buildings within Heslington are listed although many more contribute to the character of the village. The buildings within the conservation area are almost entirely constructed of red clamp bricks with clay pantil roofs. The consistency in materials used within the village help to maintain a strong sense of place.

20th century architecture varies in style and quality within the village. Many of these developments include grass verges and planting to retain the rural character of the area.

**Historic:** The layout of the village follows the traditional medieval form with buildings either side of Main Street (N-S) and the church near the top end of the settlement. The back lanes and croft lines from the original housing plots can be seen as Boss Lane and School Lane (formerly Back Lane). Many of the toft lines shown on the 1852 ordnance survey plan still exist. The outgang at the southern end of the village is also retained.

Several other lanes leading between the back lanes and Main Street also exist now asphalt generally footpaths.

The school dating to the 1860s is named Lord Deramore's School after the former owner of the estate. The creation of the present school also led to the renaming of Back Lane to School Lane. The Old Schoolhouse (1795) is still extant across the lane.

**Streetscape components:** All main roads contain asphalt carriageways and footpaths. Modern bus stops on Field Lane and Main Street (running east-west), square waste and dog waste bins, telephone boxes and telecoms boxes can be found throughout the village.

At the northern entrance to the village a blue plastic bin, similar to some in use on the nearby campus exists next to Home Farm, now a university building.

The Village also contains a 1953 Queen Elizabeth II Coronation commemorative park bench. Street lighting is a mixture of period design lighting on Main Street and mid-late 20th century units in the cul-de-sac areas including the use of concrete posts. Street signage is generally modern and situated on lamp posts, low finger posts or on sides of buildings. Solar panelling is in use on a handful of buildings.

**Aesthetics:** The village is distinct from the university campus, which now surrounds it on three sides. It clearly has a link to the university but still retains its independent rural village feel.

The Village Trust was set up in 1963 by local residents to maintain the character of Heslington during the construction of the new university campus. The Trust has recently been successful in persuading the university to leave a wide buffer zone between the east side of the village and the new Heslington East campus to help maintain its separateness.

Aesthetically the village scores highly with a good number of historic buildings, green spaces and tree planting. Small lanes and paddocks enhance the village ambience.

## 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).

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. In Heslington, it is recommended that street lighting be replaced with white fluorescent lighting to retain the white street lighting that has illuminated the village since the early 1960s.

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 medieval, 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 the public houses, retail areas and school, with appropriate weight given to local opinions.

Green spaces, open spaces and historic lanes such as Boss Lane and the Outgang should be retained.

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 and enhanced to help orientation and enhance local distinctiveness.

A local survey of architectural and streetscape features of the whole 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.

Despite their age and text book appearance the styles and features of the modern housing estates 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.

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.

Research projects that examine the relationship between medieval villages on the fringes of the urban area and the city centre will make a significant contribution to our understanding of post-Roman and early medieval land-use and the relationship between city and countryside.

The area contains many listed buildings and several that should be considered for listing or at least inclusion on the Local List of Heritage Assets. Those buildings that have been recommended for inclusion on the forthcoming Local List of Heritage Assets add significant value to the character of Heslington. 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.

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.

Following on from the Village Design Statement additional consultation with residents could further inform on Heslington's character and how that has changed over time, particularly with the growth of the nearby University Campus.

## Character Area 62: Images



Heslington Hall (now university buildings)



Charles XII Public House on Main Street



Main Street running E-W



Former stable block to Heslington Hall (now university buildings)



Main Street commercial buildings



Coal hatch on Main Street (E-W)



Main Street running N-S



Coronation commemorative seat and contemporary waste and dog waste bins, Main Street



Boot scraper and cobbles replacing flower beds on Main Street (E-W).



Late 18th century original school house on School Lane



Peel Close (1970s)



Asphalt public footpath running between School Lane and Main Street.



1860s school also on School Lane



Late 20th century Lloyd's Close (note the use of chimneys)



The Crescent (1940s)



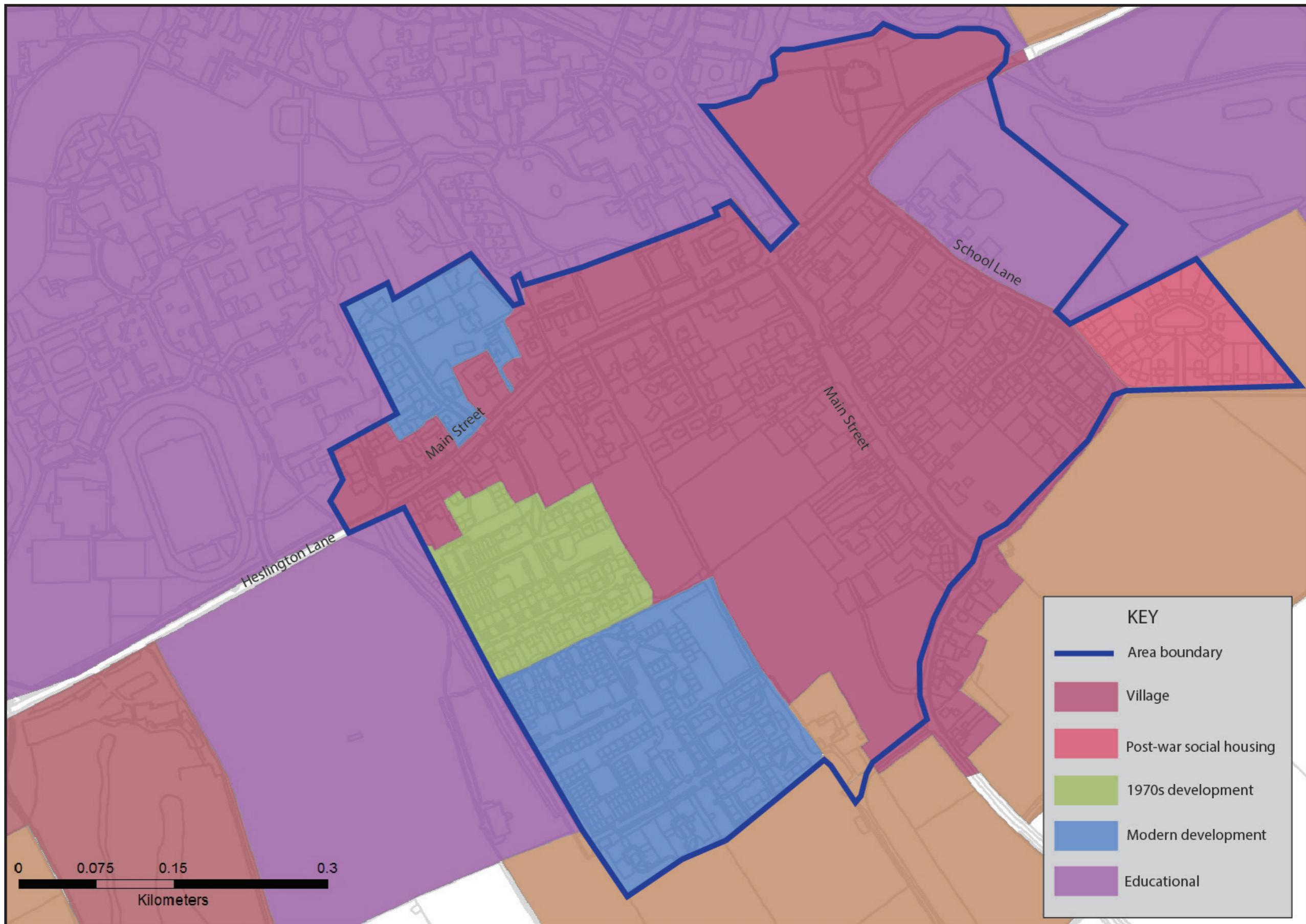
Late 20th century The Orchard (note the use of chimneys)

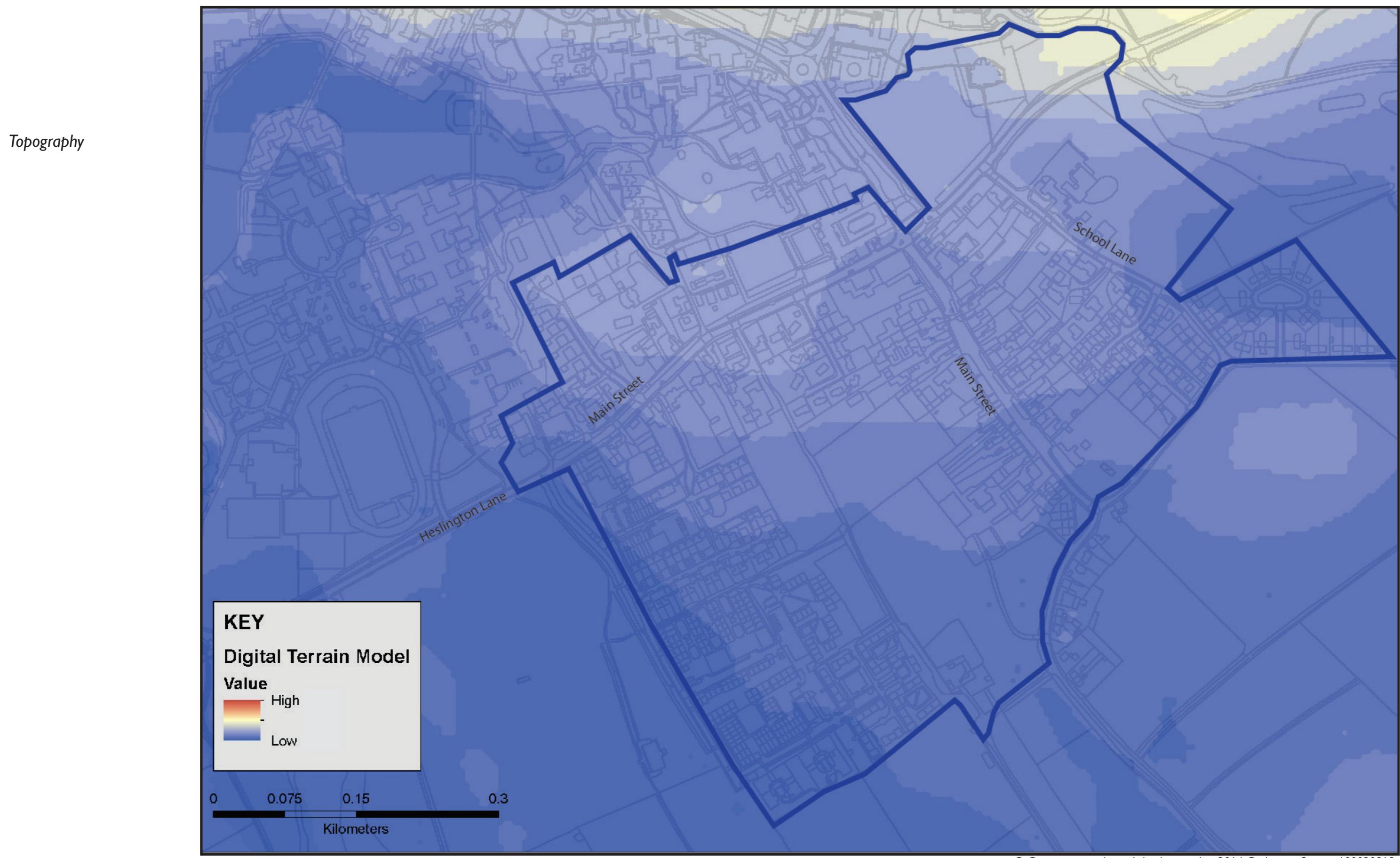


Paddock running between School Lane and Main Street, parallel to the lane above.

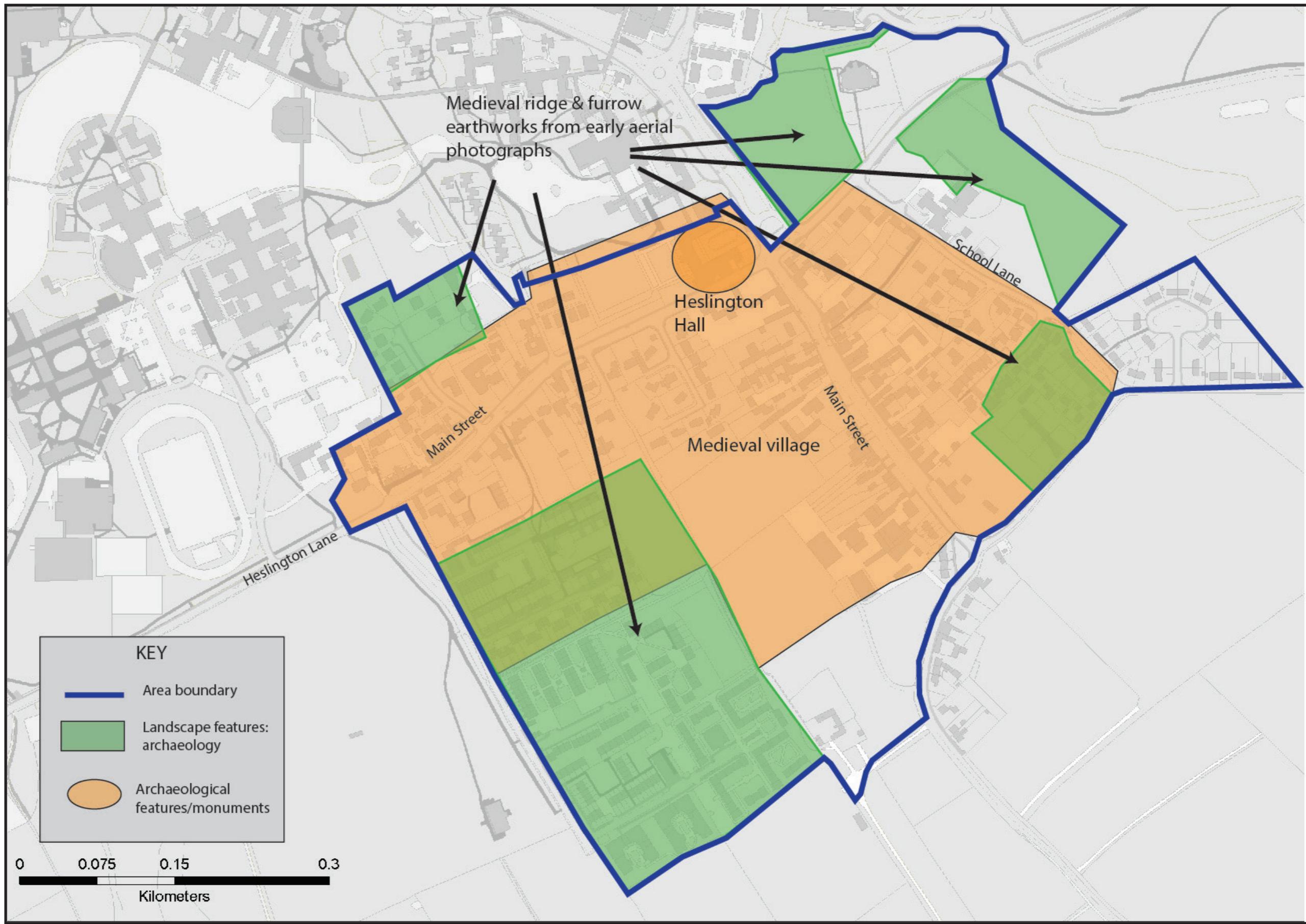
## Character Area 62: Maps

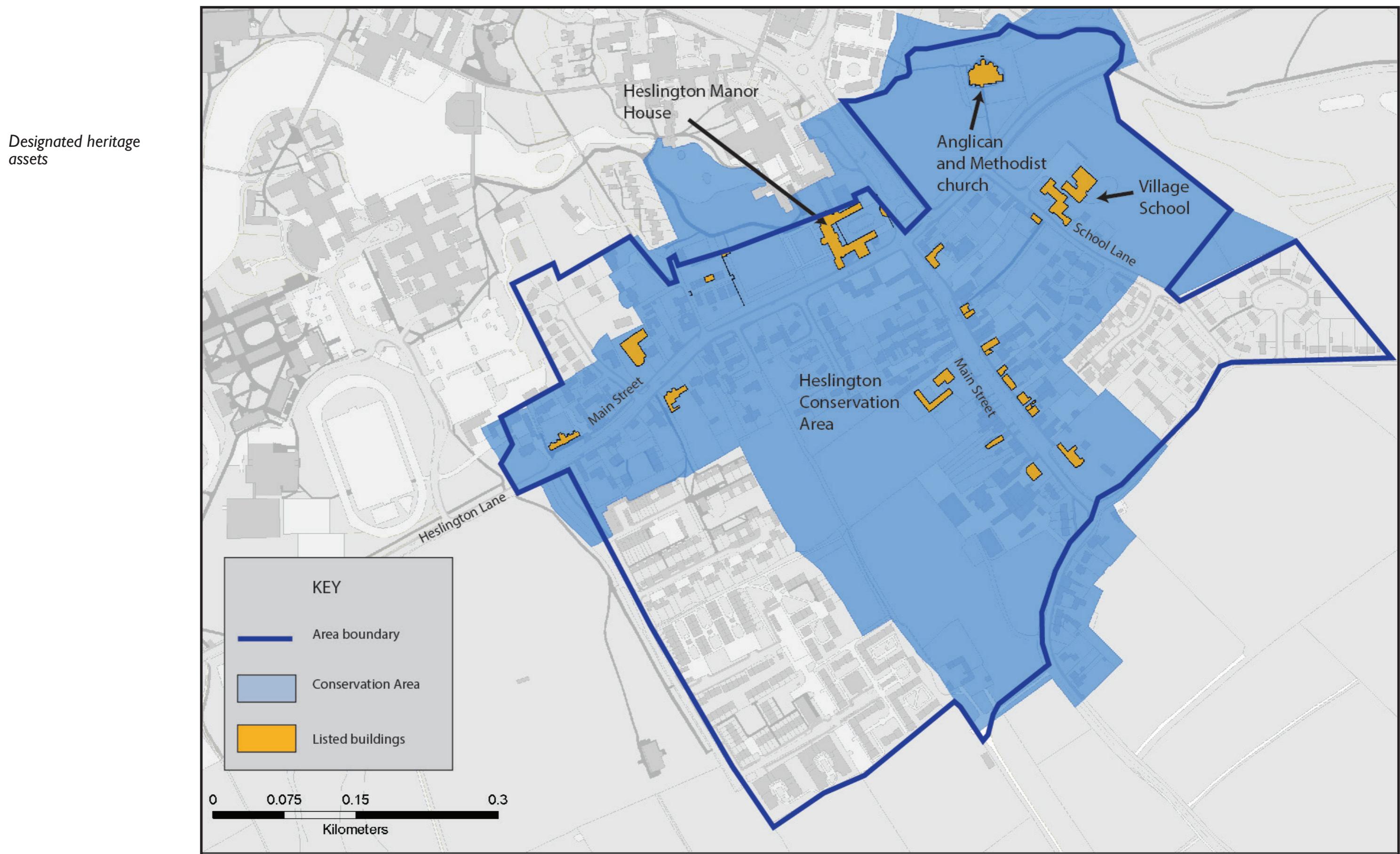
*Broad Type*  
characterisation plan.  
White roadways indicate  
roads or lanes visible  
on the 1852 Ordnance  
Survey Plan





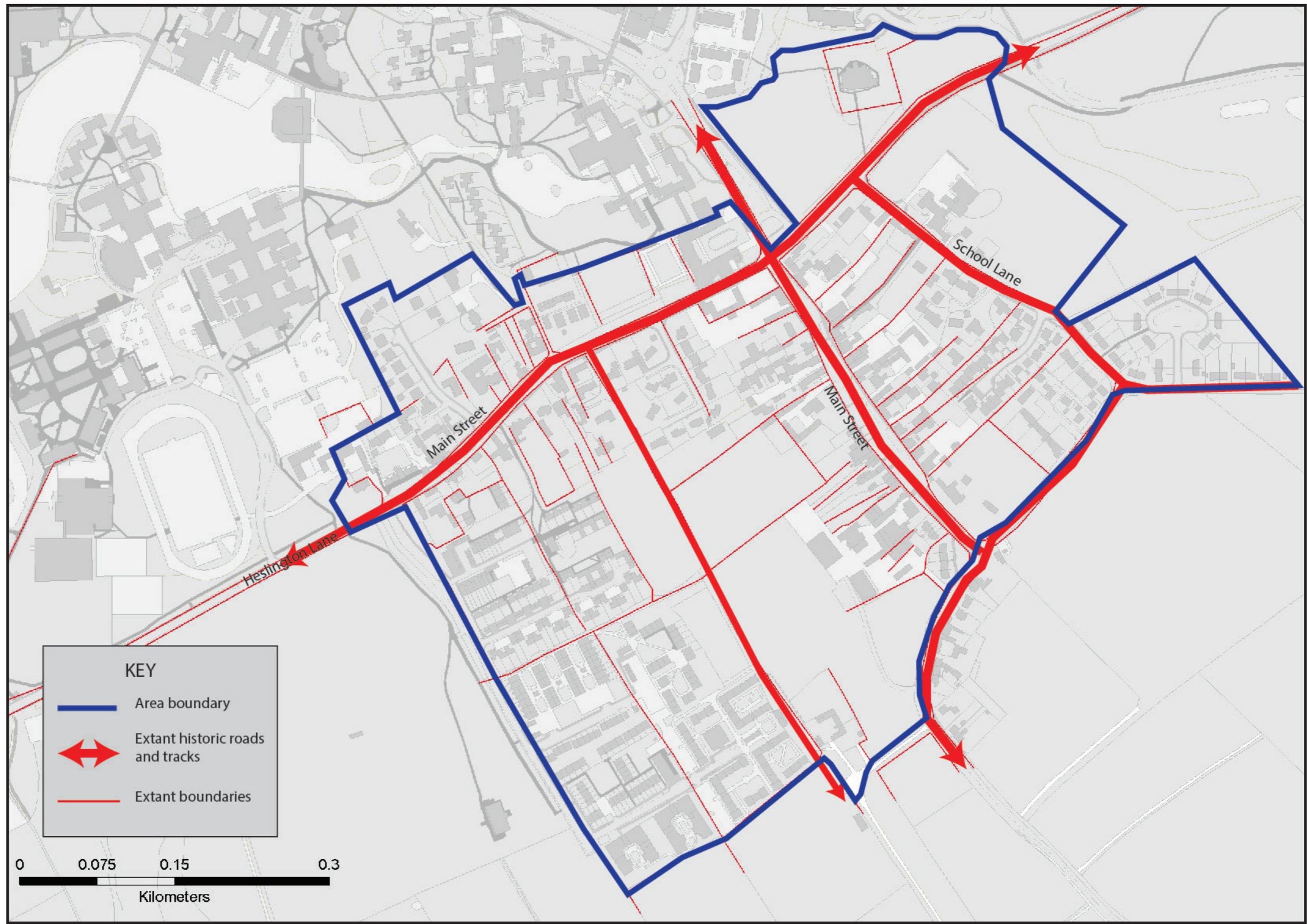
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*Archaeology and heritage assets*



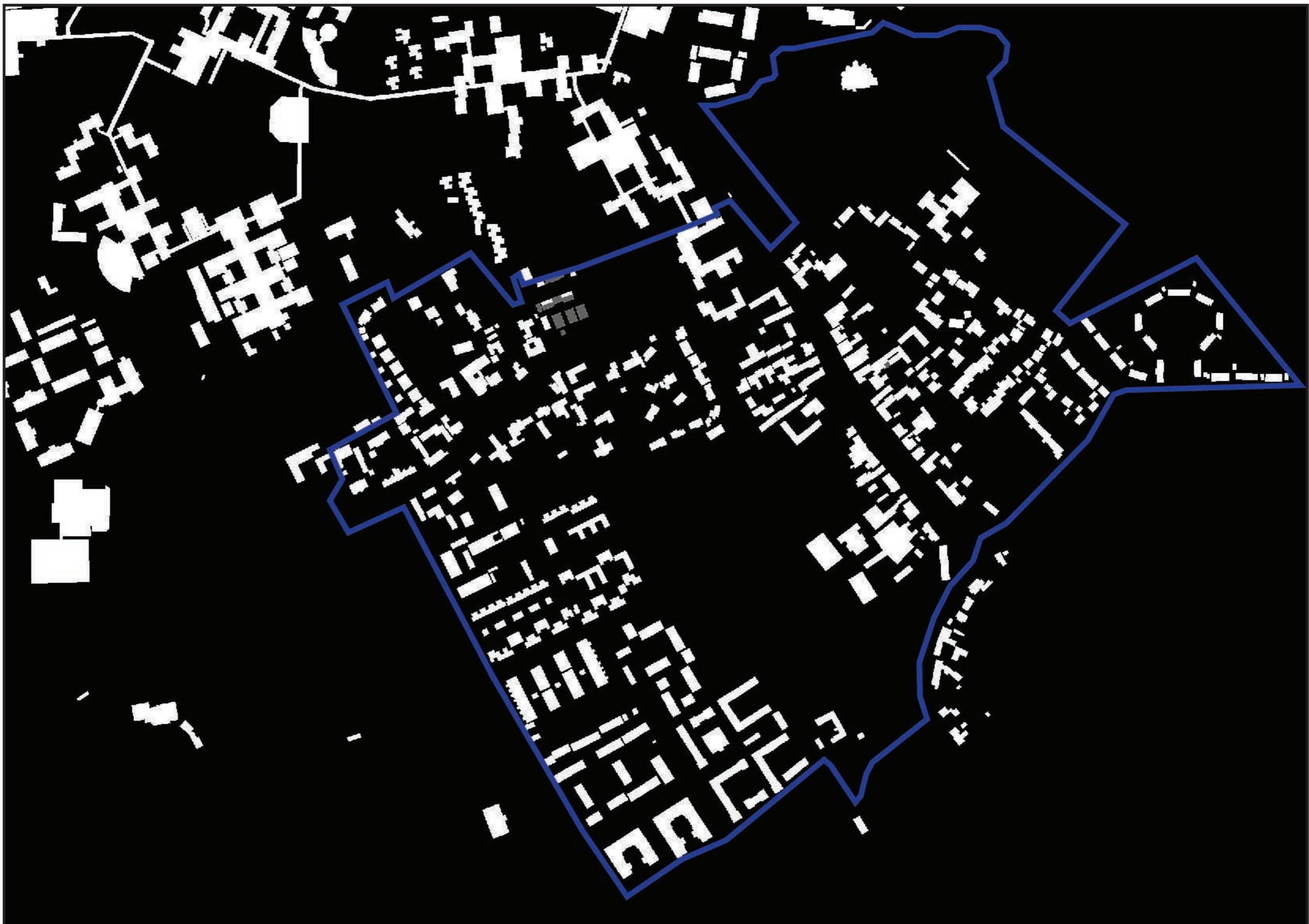
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Extant surviving  
boundaries, roads and  
tracks as depicted on  
the 1852 First Edition  
Ordnance Survey Plan



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



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