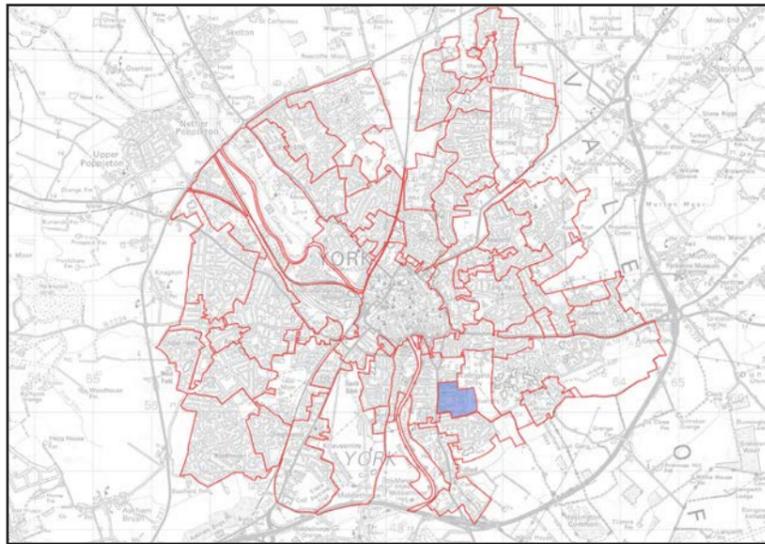
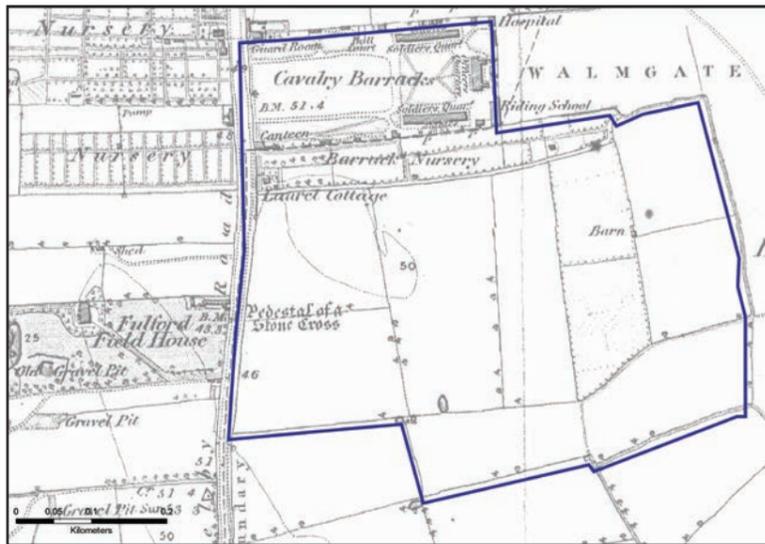


## Character area 64: Imphal Barracks



Location of character area



Extract from First Edition Ordnance Survey Plan 1852

### Key Characteristics

**General Character:** 19th to 20th century historic and contemporary military barracks. Also includes sports facilities and a late 20th century police station on former cavalry barrack site.

Situated on busy thoroughfare of Fulford Road

Bounded by 19th to late 20th century residential areas to the north and south, Fulford Road to the west, and Walmgate Stray to east

Relatively low-lying topography

Partly within Fulford Road Conservation Area

Approximate walking/cycling distance to the city centre from the Barracks entrance 1.7km via Fulford Road and Fishergate

**Dominant Building Type:** 19th to 20th century military barrack buildings

**Other Key Building Types:** Late 20th century police headquarter buildings

**Designated Heritage Assets:** One Grade II listed building 'The Keep', Fulford Cross (SAM) located on the border of area, Conservation Area (part)

**Non-designated Heritage Assets:** 18th century boundary wall and late 19th century former Cavalry Barracks buildings and Cavalry Barracks Coat of Arms, stable paviour paving, post-medieval boundaries

**Key Views:** Views of Walmgate Stray from the east

**Surviving historic roads and tracks:** Fulford Road

## Archaeology and history

Prehistoric activity is known in the Fishergate area to the north of this character area in the form of scattered lithic material (EYO 610). A flint scraper is noted on the HER found within Fulford (MYO213) while Lamel Hill to the east may also have prehistoric origins.

Fulford Road itself is probably a Roman road by the late 1st century. Roman inhumation and cremation cemeteries are known at the Fishergate end and along Lawrence Street, another Roman route to the north-east of Fulford Road. Further evidence for Roman settlement and agricultural activity was uncovered during the Fishergate investigations and in Fulford village to the south. No archaeological evidence dating to Roman or earlier periods is known between Fulford and Fishergate.

Throughout the mediaeval period the area remained undeveloped and provided common grazing land shared between the City and St Mary's Abbey, the major landowner in Fulford. The re-positioned Fulford Cross (MYO 1535, SAM 26618) survives opposite the barracks; this probably defined the boundary of the grazing rights and acted as a meeting place.

Following enclosure of the common land in the late 1750s the land to either side of Fulford Road was split into smaller fields. The Cavalry Barracks (1795) were constructed on the east side of Fulford Road to house troops who had previously been billeted throughout the surrounding area. This was one of 101 barracks built in England between 1793-1804 (Fulford Road CAA).

The site was developed further during the mid-late 19th century to include married quarters, a church and prison. Outside of the barracks, Fulford Road saw the construction of several buildings associated with the barracks such as The Barrack Tavern (now Fulford Arms), Military Hospital and residential accommodation.

A tram depot was located opposite the barracks, which linked them to the Command HQ and the city to the north, now replaced by retail units.

The Infantry Barracks were constructed to the south of the Cavalry Barracks in 1877, these were renamed Imphal Barracks in 1951 in commemoration of campaigns in Burma. Further expansion continued in the early 20th century, however by the end of the century the Cavalry Barracks had closed and the military presence declined. The Cavalry Barracks site is now occupied by a late 20th century police station.

The adjacent Stray and Low Moor, like many other public open spaces, was utilised by the army as a training area during the First and Second World Wars. However, the military connection to this large patch of land probably dates back to the construction of the cavalry barracks in the late 18th century.

## Character

The area of the former Calvary Barracks and the extant Imphal Barracks create its own small character area. However, their presence did have a significant impact on the surrounding area, in particular Fulford Road, which contained many buildings linked to the military such as The Fulford Arms, and First and Second World War Soldiers Homes on Wenlock Terrace.

The Cavalry Barracks has been replaced by a late 1970s police station made up of several buildings. One of the buildings visible from the road is a three storey brick and concrete office block. The original main entrance has been bricked up, although several late 19th century brick, guardhouses exist on Fulford Road as well as the high original boundary walls. The bricked up entrance has been clad and now suffers from graffiti. Two seats have been placed outside the former entrance facing onto the main road. The northern most guard house has a lead clad turret. Within the walls nothing of the original barracks survives.

The Infantry Barracks (Imphal Barracks) were constructed in the late 19th century around a central parade ground and catered for both regular and reserve battalions. Extensions to the east included a riding school and rifle range now occupied by a sports centre. The barrack buildings vary in scale and are surrounded by a high red brick wall. To the south of the barrack entrances the brick wall is replaced with black iron railings providing the public with a glimpse into the base. The majority of visible military buildings from Fulford Road date to the Victorian period and are constructed in red brick. They are generally two storey buildings although they are substantial in height, built in a traditional Victorian style. Smaller brick buildings make up the frontage with larger blocks bordering the parade ground within the site.



*Original cavalry barrack entrance n.d. - City of York Archives.*



*The same, now blocked entrance today*

The Keep (Grade II listed) is the most prominent and distinctive building in the area. It is constructed of similar brick to other contemporary buildings although medieval in appearance. It is three storeys in height with four storey turrets.

The 'Coade stone' coat of arms which was originally located in the 1796 Officers Mess was relocated to the Infantry Barracks in 1970 and re-displayed east of the parade ground.

The late 18th century cavalry barracks were part of a national building programme initiated following the French Revolution and a government fear of the rise of popular radicalism. The military base in York continued to be significant during the later decades of the 19th century. Its importance led to the Royal Army Ordnance Corps establishing its base close to the Military Hospital in 1890 and the relocation of Northern Command HQ from Manchester to Fishergate.

## Significance

**Archaeology:** There is no recorded archaeological evidence for this area. However, the Barracks lie along the line of an important prehistoric and Roman route. Known lithic scatters and Roman and Anglian cemeteries are known in the vicinity.

Evidence of medieval ploughing or other activities has been destroyed by the creation of the barracks and surrounding residential areas. 20th century archaeological remains relating to military practices are known on the adjacent Walmgate Stray.

The site of the 18th century cavalry barracks although unfortunately devoid of any surviving structures apart from the entrance represents a key social and political episode in the life of York and the rise of Yorkshire radicalism.

**Architecture:** The majority of visible military buildings date to the late Victorian period and are constructed in red brick. They are generally two storey buildings although they are substantial in height, built in a traditional Victorian style. The Keep building gets its name from its design, modelled on a medieval castle keep. This is an imposing building, visible from the road containing small barred windows.

20th century buildings within this site vary. Many are invisible from Fulford Road. The police station contains a three storey late 20th century office block as well as storage sheds/garages.

**Historic:** Many of the boundaries within and forming the outlines of this area date to at least the 1750s such as the border with Walmgate Stray and residential areas to the north and south. Cycle Route 66 runs from Walmgate Stray through to Fulford Road via a lane (visible on the 1852 Ordnance Survey Plan) now flanked by the TA centre and 19th to early 20th century Infantry Barrack buildings.

The barrack buildings dominate surrounding residential areas. However, the local community and the military did interact with barracks open days and military parades which became important social events.

Many street names still reflect their former military use despite redevelopment for example, Hospital Fields Road.

On the east side of the barracks, Walmgate Stray was used as a by the military as a training area presumably since the opening of the barracks in the late 18th century. During the First and Second World War the Stray was used as a place to practice the excavation of trenches, used for rifle training and contained an assault course area.

**Streetscape components:** Asphalt footpath and carriageways on Fulford Road with Edinburgh style waste bins and modern bus stops, George VI post box, phone box and street lighting in differing styles near the barracks. A patch of stable paviour paving was noted outside the barrack wall at a gated opening.

**Aesthetics:** Fulford Road at the front of Imphal Barracks contains wide grass verges and mature trees. It has a less urban feel due to the absence of buildings on the immediate roadside (Fulford Road CAA). The buildings themselves are not particularly aesthetically pleasing.

## Opportunities and recommendations

Much more could be achieved in recognising the significance and importance of these barracks and the link between their presence in York and the social and political pressures of the day. In particular, the role of the Cavalry barracks and oppression of the working classes of Yorkshire could be linked into better revealing the history and significance of the 'Eye of York', and the trials and retribution meted out to Luddites and Chartists.

Information boards explaining the connection between the later barracks and world events could also be developed.

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.

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, 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.

Key views of heritage assets and local landmarks, such as The Keep, should be maintained and enhanced to help orientation and enhance local distinctiveness.

The stable pavements visible on Fulford Road are a unique feature of York's streetscape and any street works affecting them should carefully store and reinstate following guidance contained in the City of York Streets and Spaces Strategy and Guidance (City of York Council, 2013).

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.

Further work could be carried out in conjunction with the local community and former soldiers to increase knowledge of the historic and current residential/military relationship as well as the character/community spirit of barrack life.

## Character Area 64: Images



*Cavalry barracks buildings on Fulford Road*



*The current entrance to the Imphal Barracks*



*General streetscape on Fulford Road and the high boundary wall with barrack buildings behind.*



*Fulford Arms (left) and cavalry barracks buildings on Fulford Road*



*The Keep viewed from Fulford Road.*



*View from National Cycle Route 66 running between Fulford Road and Walmgate Stray. The lane dates to at least the mid 19th century.*



*The Keep*



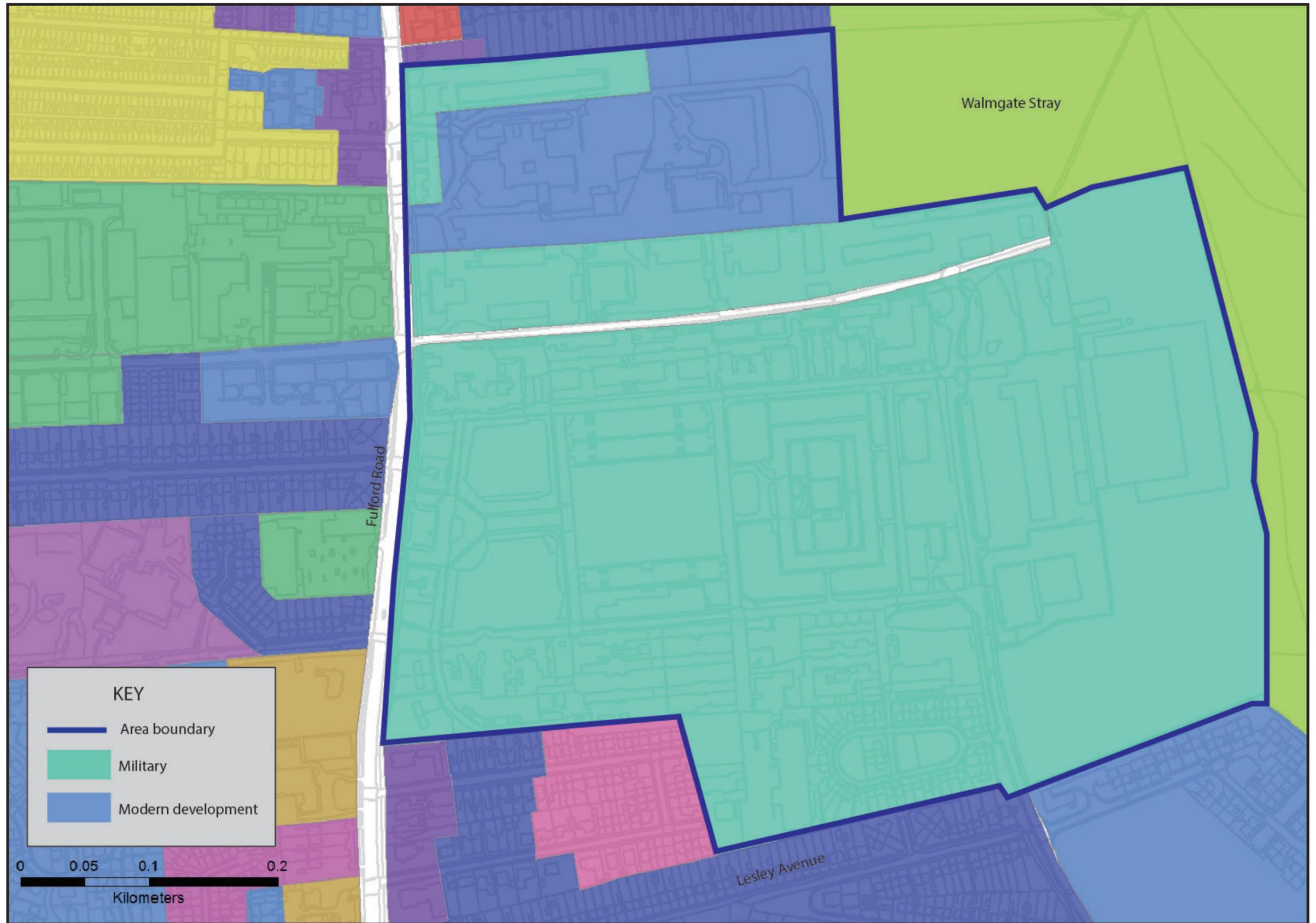
*Stable paviour from the gateway shown on the right hand side of the above image.*



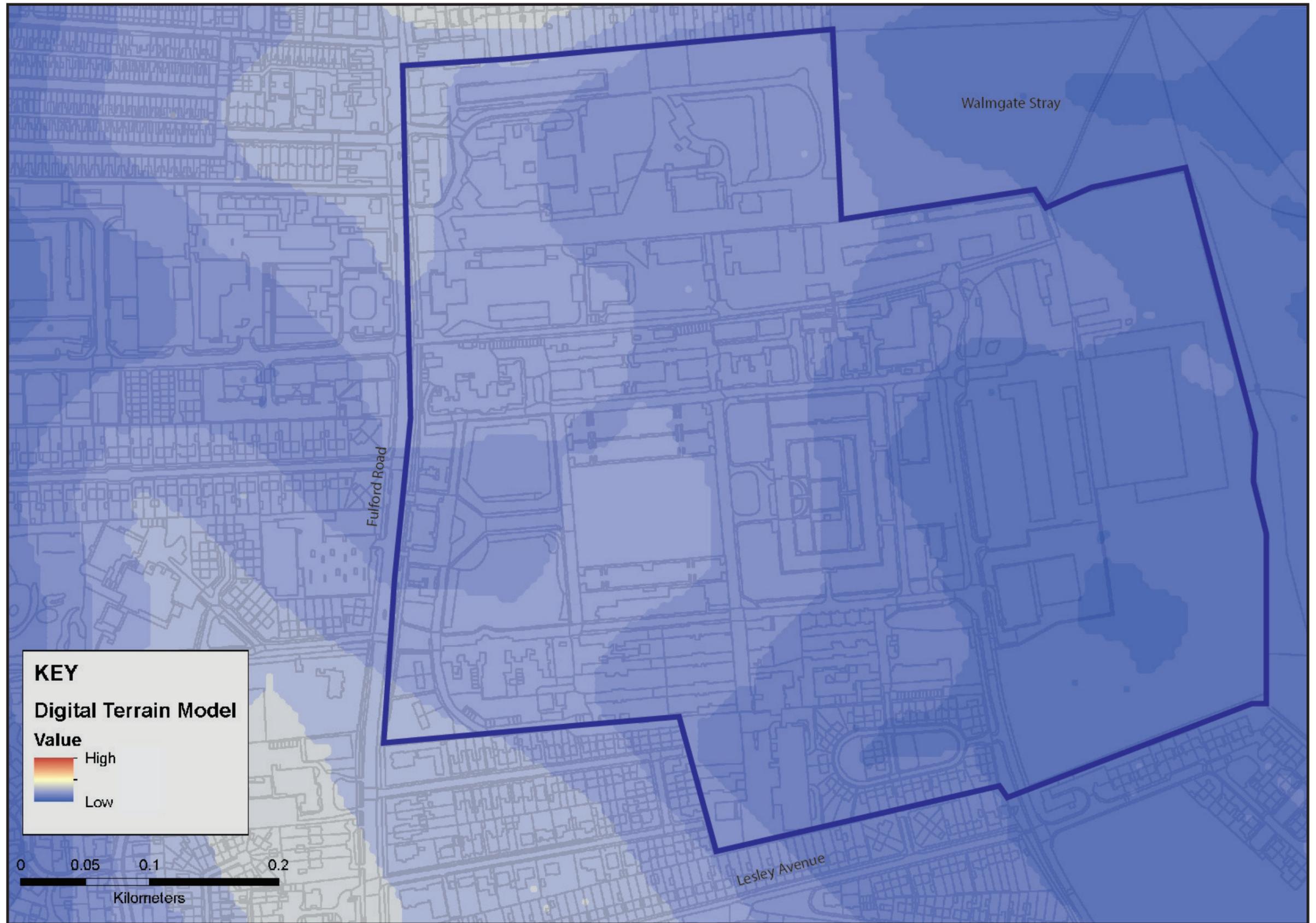
*Cycle Route 66. Note the high Victorian wall forming the northern boundary of the Infantry Barracks (left) and the mesh fencing bounding the TA centre (right).*

## Character Area 64: Maps

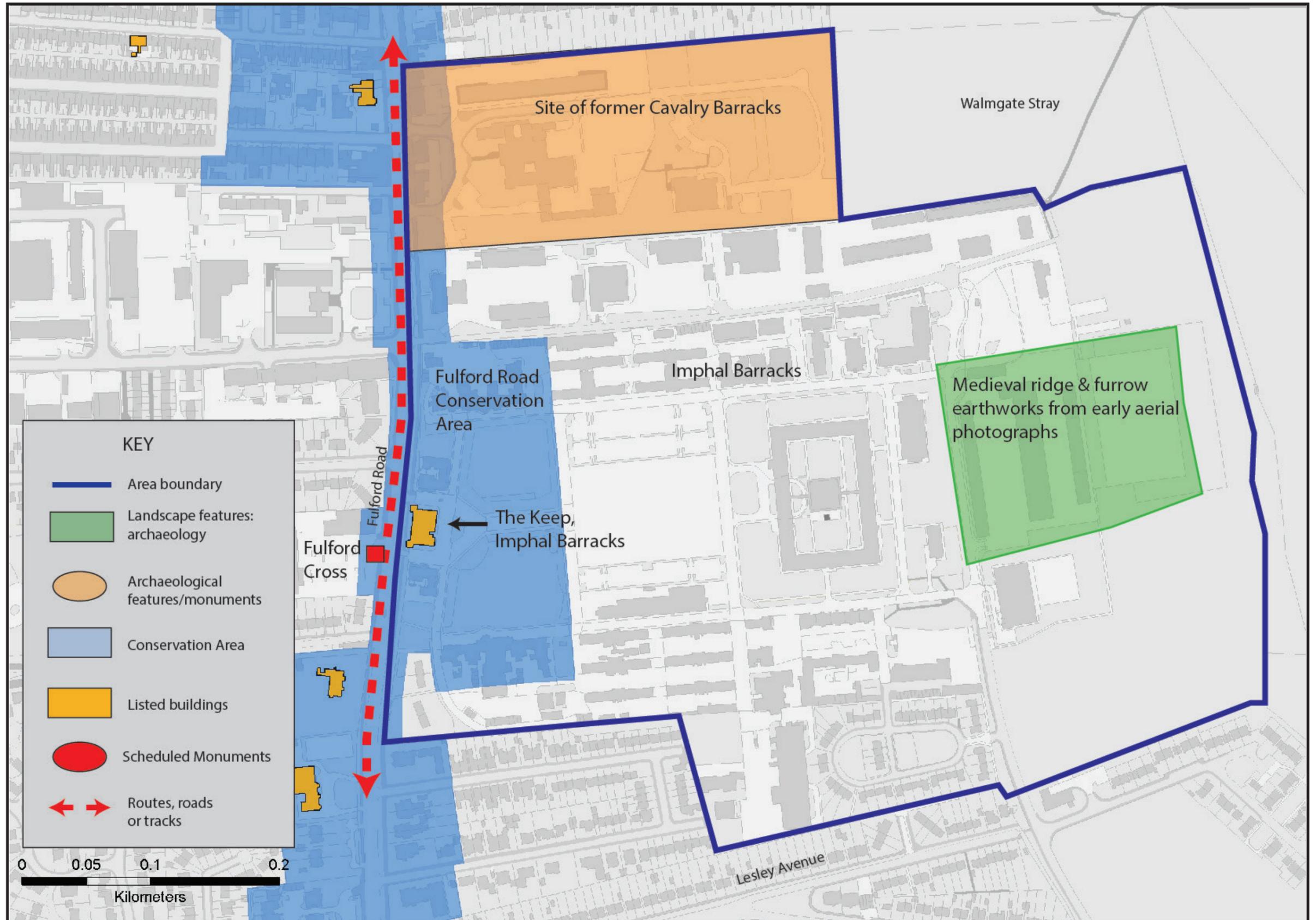
Broad Type characterisation plan.  
White roadways indicate roads or lanes visible on the 1852 Ordnance Survey Plan



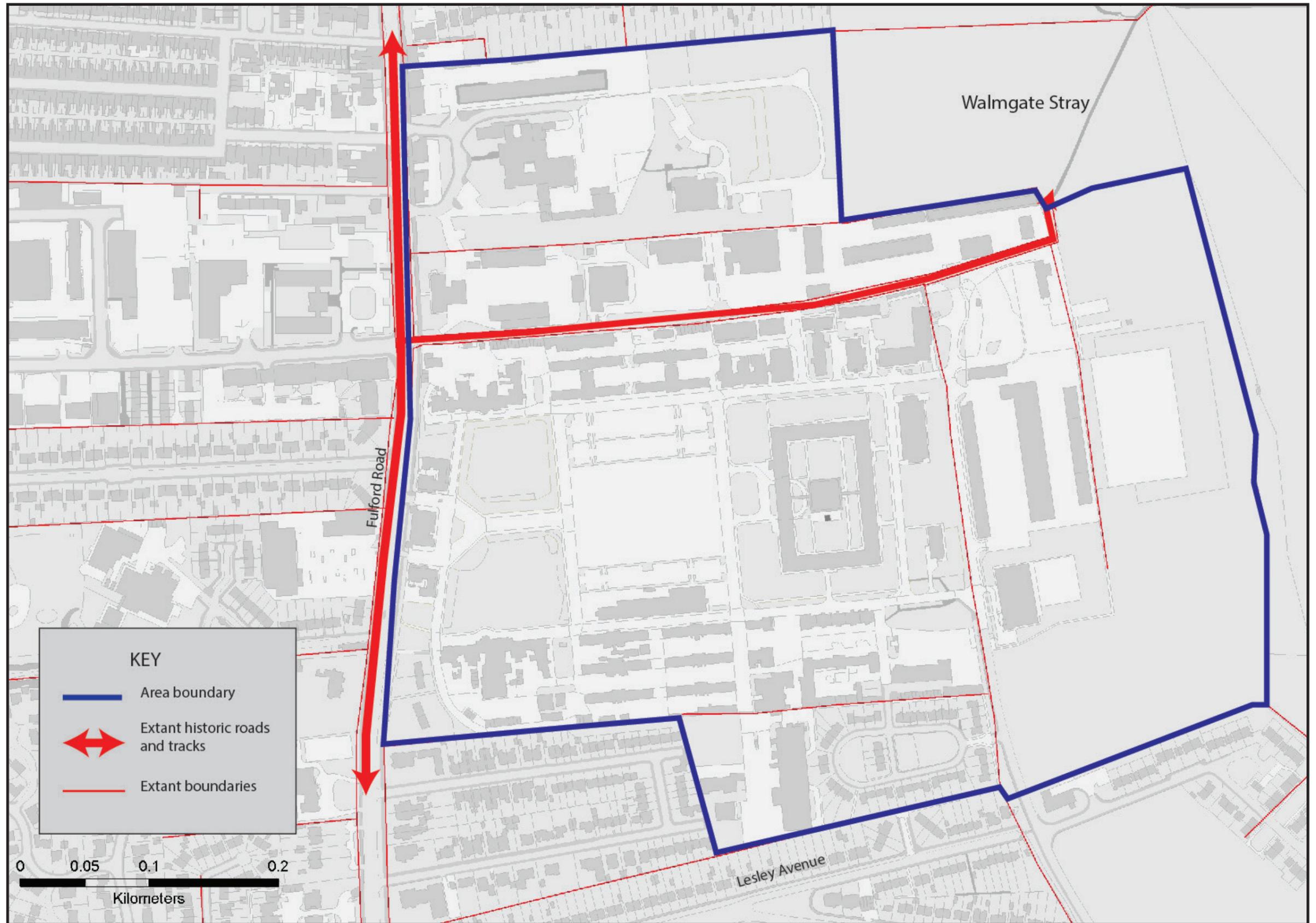
Topography



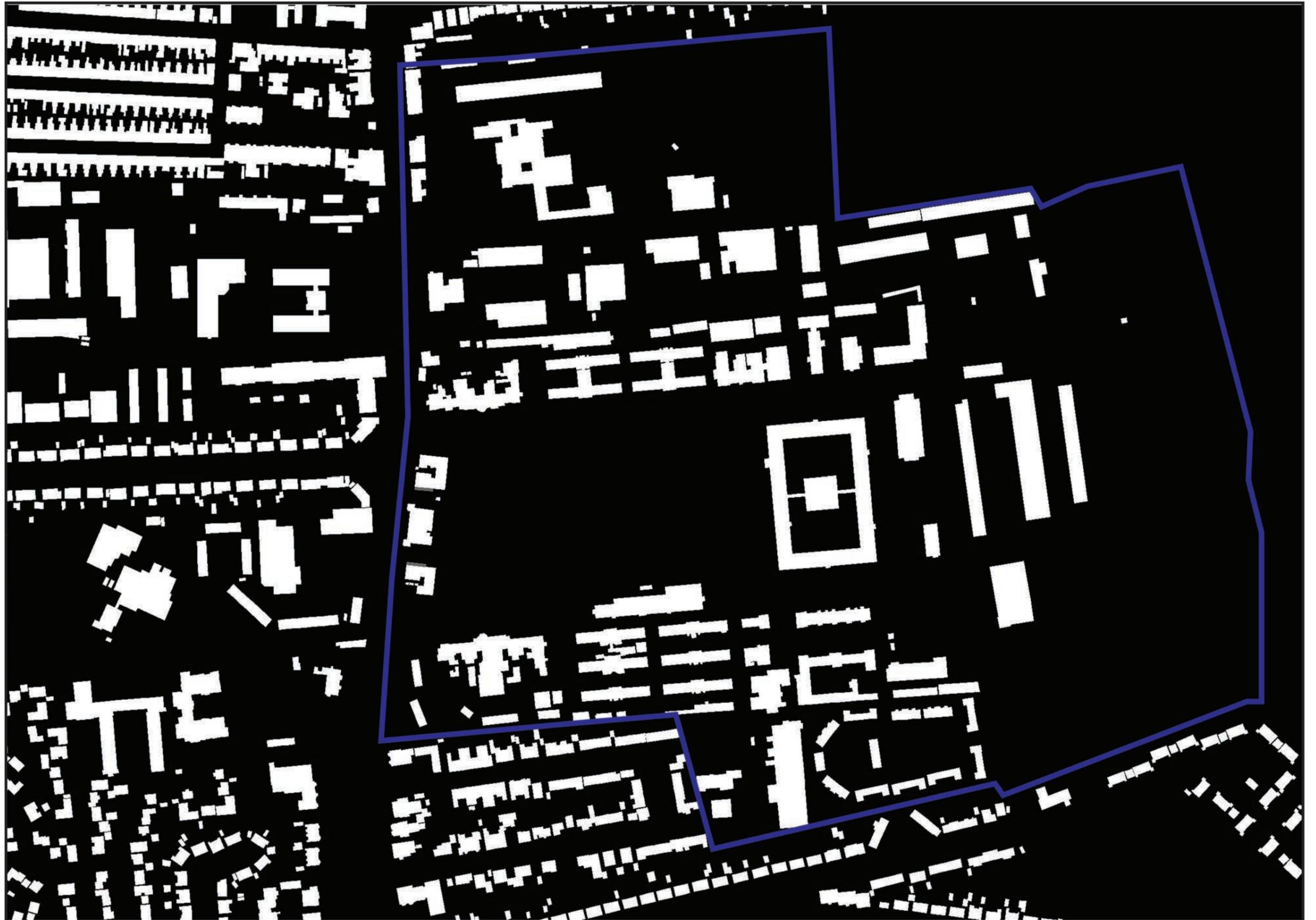
Archaeology and heritage assets



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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