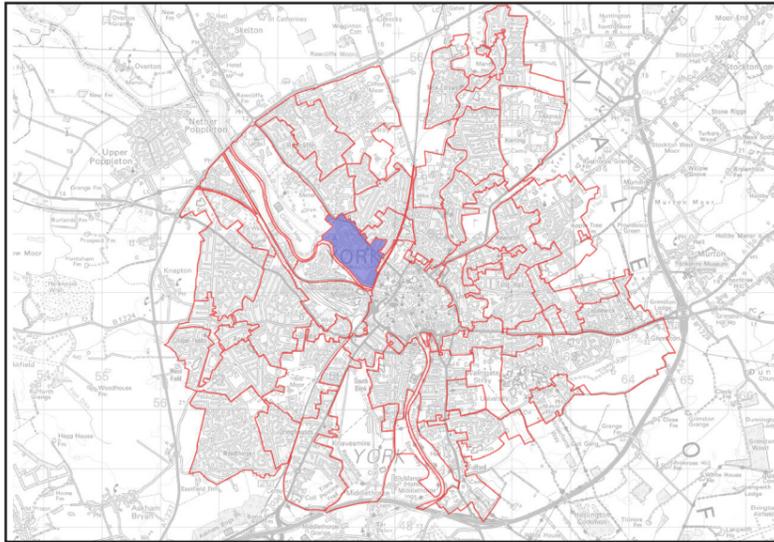
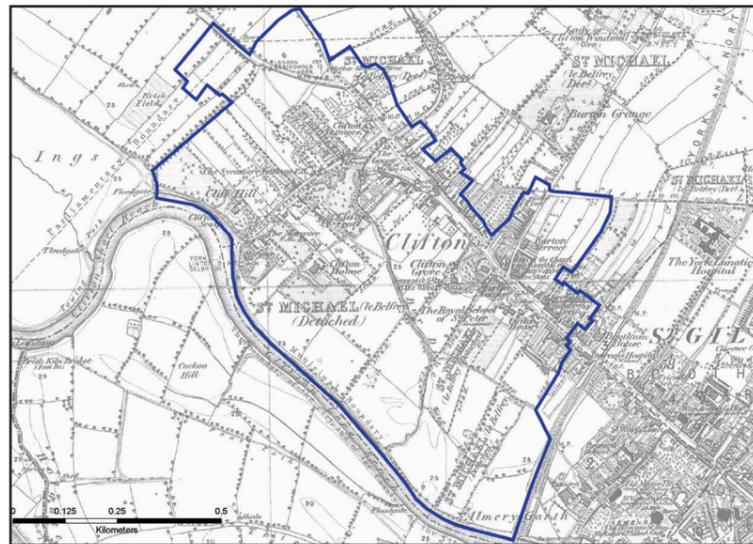


Character area 35: Clifton



Location of character area



Extract from First Edition Ordnance Survey Plan 1852

Key Characteristics

General Character: Clifton contains predominantly 18th to 19th century development, with 20th century areas of expansion. A handful of 17th century buildings also survive.

Bounded by the River Ouse to the south, Bootham to the east, Clifton Ings and 1930s development to the west and 19th century development to the north

The area occupies flat, relatively low lying ground

Former rural medieval village

Contains part of the central Area of Archaeological Importance and the majority of Clifton Conservation Area

Limited open space but Clifton Ings in close proximity

Approximate walking/cycling distance to the city centre from Clifton Green 1.6km via Bootham

Dominant Housing Type: 19th century villas, 17th to 19th century townhouses, and 18th to 19th century cottages

Other Key Housing Types: 19th century terraced houses, inter-war semi-detached and late 20th century housing

Designated Heritage Assets: Cluster of Grade II and II* buildings including St Olave's and St Peter's schools, Clifton village green, Area of Archaeological Importance (part) and Clifton Conservation Area

Non-designated Heritage Assets: Electrobus Station, The Garth, St. Olave's Road, Roman cemeteries, various boundary stones in St Peter's School ground, and MOD stones on Burton Stone Lane, stable pavements and 1930s street lighting

Key Views: Distant views of The Minster on the approach to York.

Surviving historic roads and tracks: Clifton, Burton Stone Lane, Water End, Shipton Lane, lane from Marygate Lane to Clifton Green, Rawcliffe Lane and Water Lane

Archaeology and history

As with most of York, evidence for prehistoric occupation and activity is lacking. Evidence of Roman activity is however, relatively prolific. Clifton Road and Bootham follow the line of the main Roman road north to Catterick. There is also some evidence to suggest two other subsidiary roads running parallel further towards the Ouse. Roadside inhumations and cremations are known from several locations adjacent Bootham and Clifton Road with a large inhumation cemetery known from Bootham Terrace (MYO 3620) found during construction of the York to Scarborough railway and a large inhumation and cremation cemetery known from the Ings to the north west of St Olave's School (MYO 3624). A tessellated pavement and various other evidence of settlement and occupation has been investigated on a number of occasions around St Olave's School itself.

From the Norman Conquest until the 17th century the land immediately to the north of the city walls centred on Sheriff Hutton formed part of the Royal Forest of Galtres. Deforestation reduced the size of the forest over the following centuries allowing the development of settlements such as Clifton. By the early 17th century the whole area was agricultural land serving scattered villages such as Clifton and scattered farms which now populated the vicinity.

The medieval village grew along the line of the Roman road into York with its green at the west end. A settlement has probably existed in Clifton since the Anglo-Scandinavian period, since the name Clifton derives from Anglo-Saxon origins. Medieval toft and croft boundaries of the village were linked to back lanes, many of which are shown on the 1852 OS map. Clifton was a rural community with a windmill situated on Burton Stone Lane. Records show that Clifton or Lady Windmill existed from the late 14th century until the mid 19th century. Large swathes of land were owned by the church. The Cistercians of Byland Abbey had property on the site of, The Homestead on Water End. This was also a shipping point for the Abbey along the Ouse exporting wool.

Burton Lane (now Burton Stone Lane), Water End and Water Lane are likely to be medieval in origin.

Older, timber-framed buildings exist but many have been reincorporated into newer builds. One example is a late 17th century house, (Grade II*) which contains 16th century remains and was rebuilt in 1962.

By the mid 19th century residential areas grew outside of the city walls, in particular along the main roads. Clifton became less of an isolated rural settlement with development now linking the village area to the fringes of the city. Surrounding residential expansion to house the expanding industrial workforce occurred in the fields to the north of the village.

The 1852 Ordnance Survey plan shows a handful of large detached properties in the area of the village green such as Cliff Hill (now Haverford), Clifton Holme and Clifton Croft. Several smaller properties are also shown such as Clifton Cottages. Along the roadside development includes Clifton Grove, St. Peter's School, Clifton House and The Old Grey Mare PH. Housing is shown on either side of Burton Stone Lane leading out to the fields north of the village and the windmill. Two wells are also depicted on the north side of the road to the west of 'Bur Dike'.

The Royal School of St. Peter, shown on the 1852 plan, was founded in the 7th century and is one of the oldest schools in the world. It moved to the Clifton site in the 19th century and comprises of several original buildings.

By the early 1890s further development had occurred on all sides of the village including detached villas and the Church of St. Philip and St. James (1866) on the west side and terraced streets to the north. Dairy Farm now existed in the area to the south of the main roadway. St. Olave's Road on the north side of Shipton Road was developed as a terrace at its northern end. At its southern end, The Garth (1886) was constructed for H.M. Platnauer, keeper of the Yorkshire Museum. The Garth has been nominated for inclusion on York's Local List of heritage assets.

Clifton continued to grow into the 20th century with several streets constructed on the south side of Clifton such as Clifton Dale at the west end of the village and North Parade and Sycamore Terrace at the east end.

Around Water End the development of villas continued with the addition of Ousecliffe and The Homestead. The Homestead (1903) was built for Benjamin Seebohm Rowntree. A short time later land was bought from the nearby Cliff Villa (now Haverford, the Youth Hostel) to create Homestead Park. The park continues to be maintained for the benefit of local people. Clifton Lodge (1852) was later occupied by Joseph Rowntree from 1905 until his death in 1925. Rawcliffe Holt was constructed in 1907 for Joseph's daughter. On the north side of the roadway development continued on a small scale including the construction of St. Peter's Grove. The extant Queen Anne Grammar School for girls was built in 1909. It now forms part of St. Olave's School, the junior school for St. Peter's.

John Burrill Almshouses (Grade II listed) were created on the site of allotment gardens on Water End in the 1920s. By the early 1930s the Dairy Farm was known as St. Peter's Farm, it survived until the 1960s. The Clifton cinema opened in November 1937 and was in use as a cinema until October 1964. It is currently Clifton Bingo and Social Club, but very little change has been made to the building. Development continued off Water End with the creation of several residential streets such as Westminster Road.

Small empty pockets of land continued to be gradually infilled, in particular on the north side of the road away from the dangers of flooding, well into the 20th century, such as Highcliffe Court.

Character

Clifton retains some of its rural character in the area of the village green which includes many small scale buildings such as Ellison Terrace. However, the village is predominately characterised by late Georgian townhouses, Victorian villas and Victorian terraces.

On Shipton Road there are important Victorian and Edwardian villas in substantial grounds. The Rawcliffe Lane area is bounded dwellings on the Rowntree Estate, built to the designs of Parker and Unwin. Along the main roadway (A19) through Clifton, a range of houses are present spanning the last 400 years and possibly more.

West of Clifton Green the character is of large buildings set in generous gardens. East of Clifton Green the density of buildings is higher but spacious; the character is enhanced by the setback of St Peter's School buildings and surrounding grounds. There are many trees in roadside verges in open spaces and in gardens. Clifton Green, the most obvious open green space, is triangular, surrounded for the most part by early 19th century cottages. Homestead Park, part of the Rowntree Estate, provides a highly valued large green space containing a central tree-lined walkway.

The Victorian terraces on the south side of Clifton are a typical mixture of two-three storey buildings in narrow plots, formed in long terraces in a grid like fashion. Some terraces, such as Compton Street contain no front garden and are a standard two-up-two-down design. There is c.30% survival rate of sash windows on this street. On North Parade and Queen Anne Road, wider two-three storey terraces with two upstairs windows and mock Tudor pointed gables exist.

Stable pavements exist in several back lanes and at the front of the school in the area surrounding Queen Anne Road and North Parade. In the same area, a boundary stone, or possibly gate pier was noted at the junction of North Parade back lane and the playing fields of St. Peter's School. It may relate to the 19th century Dairy Farm or to the grounds of Clifton House.

Stable pavements also exist in the terraced areas around Rosslyn Street as well as c.1930s street lighting. In contrast, Clifton Dale, an area of 19th century large semi detached houses has been landscaped with planter boxes and has had modern period street lighting installed.

The 1930s housing forming a small estate on the former site of Clifton Croft and Clifton Holme is typical of contemporary developments elsewhere. For example, wide, well planned, estates containing two-storey housing, with gardens, driveways and garages. Another area of 1930s building exists by the river – these houses have a high retention of arched doorways and also include a circular window on the side of the building. They are in stark contrast to their two-storey cottage or large Victorian surroundings.

Housing developments dating from the late mid-late 20th century are mixed in-between older properties along the street frontage and to the rear. Highcliffe Court (1960s) for example and a late 20th century office buildings have been constructed in the gardens to the rear of the north frontage of the village. They are completely out of touch with their surroundings in terms of style and scale.

Basic typology of 19th to 20th century terraced streets

Brick, two-three storey in height

Vertical emphasis

Pitched roofs with chimney

Long linear rows with through streets

Bay and sash windows common

Decorative brickwork, painted window surrounds and tilework common

Ironwork to houses – shoe scrapers and waterwork information

Rear yards – some front gardens or enclosed space

On-street parking

Significance

Archaeology: There is high potential for the discovery of further evidence of Roman settlement, burial and roads throughout the area. In particular, clarification on the tessellated pavement located on the site of St Olave's School. The archaeology of the medieval village is yet to be clarified but potential may exist despite substantial 19th century development.

Architecture: The predominant housing style is large three-four storey townhouses along the main roadside, in differing aesthetically pleasing styles. Some earlier buildings exist but the majority have been incorporated into re-builds. The large number of listed buildings within Clifton, combined with 19th and early 20th century streetscape features adds value to the area as a whole. Other significant buildings dating to the early 20th century include The Clifton cinema (1937) and John Burrill Almshouses (1920s).

Historic: Clifton retains significant connection to the Rowntree family through The Homestead and its adjacent parkland. The Rowntree Estate owns or owned Beverley House, Clifton Lodge, Rawcliffe Holt, Homestead and Homestead Park, Haverford/Cliff Villa and Ouse Lea (now redeveloped under the guidance of Joseph Rowntree Trust).

Approximately 50% of the historic field boundaries remain readable in the urban landscape. North Parade and Queen Anne's Road provide good examples of how a former field system determined the limits of development. On the north side of Clifton Road several lines of terraced streets follow the pattern of earlier plot boundaries.

Clifton's development along the main route to the city and the retention of the village green show the medieval plan of the settlement, although it is no longer obvious where the croft lines existed.

Streetscape components: The streetscape along the main artery road contains a mixture of early to late 20th century street lighting, mid to late 20th century wooden seating, late 20th century telephone boxes and telecommunications exchange boxes, and waste bins.

Stable pavements exist in the terraced areas around Rosslyn Street as well as c.1930s street lighting. In other areas, such as Clifton Dale, the area has been landscaped with planter boxes and has had modern period street lighting installed.

Paving is provided in a mixture of materials. Concrete flags are the most common featuring across the area (e.g. Sycamore Place, Queen Anne's Road and around Clifton Green). English Pennine sandstone paving can be found on Sycamore Terrace, along parts of Bootham and Clifton Dale. Blacktop (slurry sealing) is also in use on Bootham and several side roads.

Aesthetics: The village green, Homestead Park, and tree lined streets, contribute to the rural village ambience of the settlement, particularly at its western end. Its fine architecture and views of the Minster on the approach to York also contribute to the aesthetic significance of the area.

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. 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, such as Homestead Park and the village green, 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.

The 19th and early 20th century terraces contain a number of original features which should wherever possible be retained and enhanced. This should include maintenance of existing ironwork and conservation of remaining areas of stable paving. The stable pavements in particular 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.

The inter-war housing estates still retain a large number of original architectural features such as arched doorways as well as examples of historic street lighting. It is recommended that further erosion of the original aspects of the estates should be monitored and avoided where possible.

A local survey of architectural and streetscape features (gate piers, sett paving, street signs) of the 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.

Development management policy should take account of the contribution made by locally identified heritage assets to the distinctive character of the area.

The archaeology of the area is clearly significant and there are many research opportunities to clarify the lines of various Roman roads, distribution of burials and the location of substantial settlement. The tessellated pavement found at St Olave's School may be associated with a substantial suburban villa of which there are very few known from York. 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 several listed buildings as well as others 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 Local List of Heritage Assets such as The Garth, and electrobus station add significant value to the area. The Bert Keech Bowling Club has very recently been demolished (see www.yorkstories.co.uk for further information)- this was also a nominee for the Local List. 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.

City of York Council should consider commissioning a Conservation Area Appraisal for Clifton as has been done in other parts of the city. Further study and consultation in partnership with local residents would also be beneficial in this area to inform on character and how it changes over time.

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 35: Images



The Green



Housing and street scene on Shipton Road (A19)



The junction with Burton Stone Lane and Clifton today



Example of houses surrounding the Green on north side (Shipton Road)



Example of housing in Clifton



Example of housing on Burton Stone Lane



Example of houses surrounding the Green on the west side (Ellison Terrace)



The junction with Burton Stone Lane and Clifton showing the old inn in 1896 - City of York Archives



Example of housing on Burton Stone Lane



Late 17th century house, Clifton



Former Dairy Buildings off The Avenue



Late 20th century housing on Queen Anne's Road



Clifton cinema (1937), now bingo hall



Stone gate pier near St. Olave's School



Stable Paviour paving



Art work close to the bingo hall by Keith Hopewell



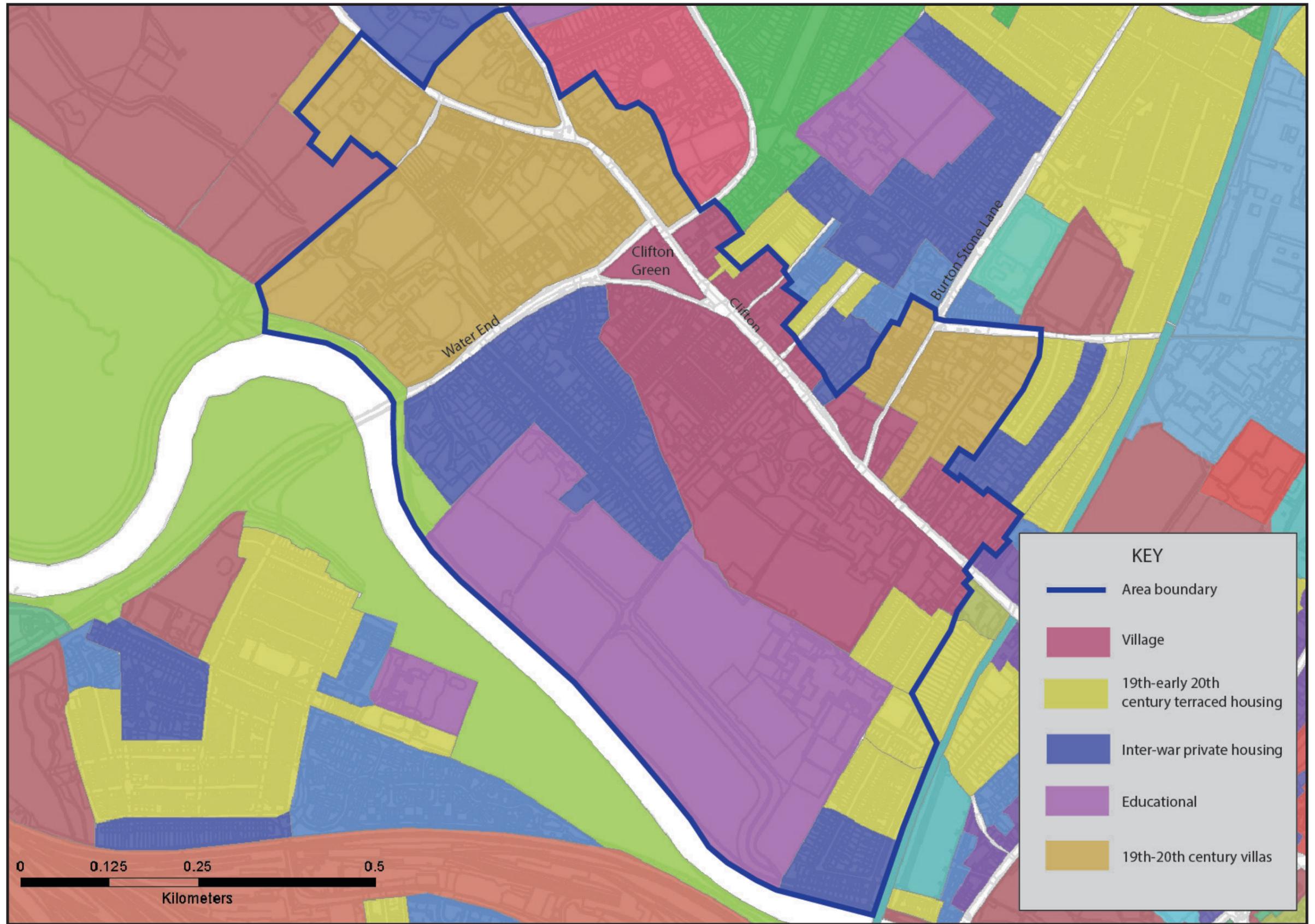
Mid to late 20th century housing at Highcliffe Court



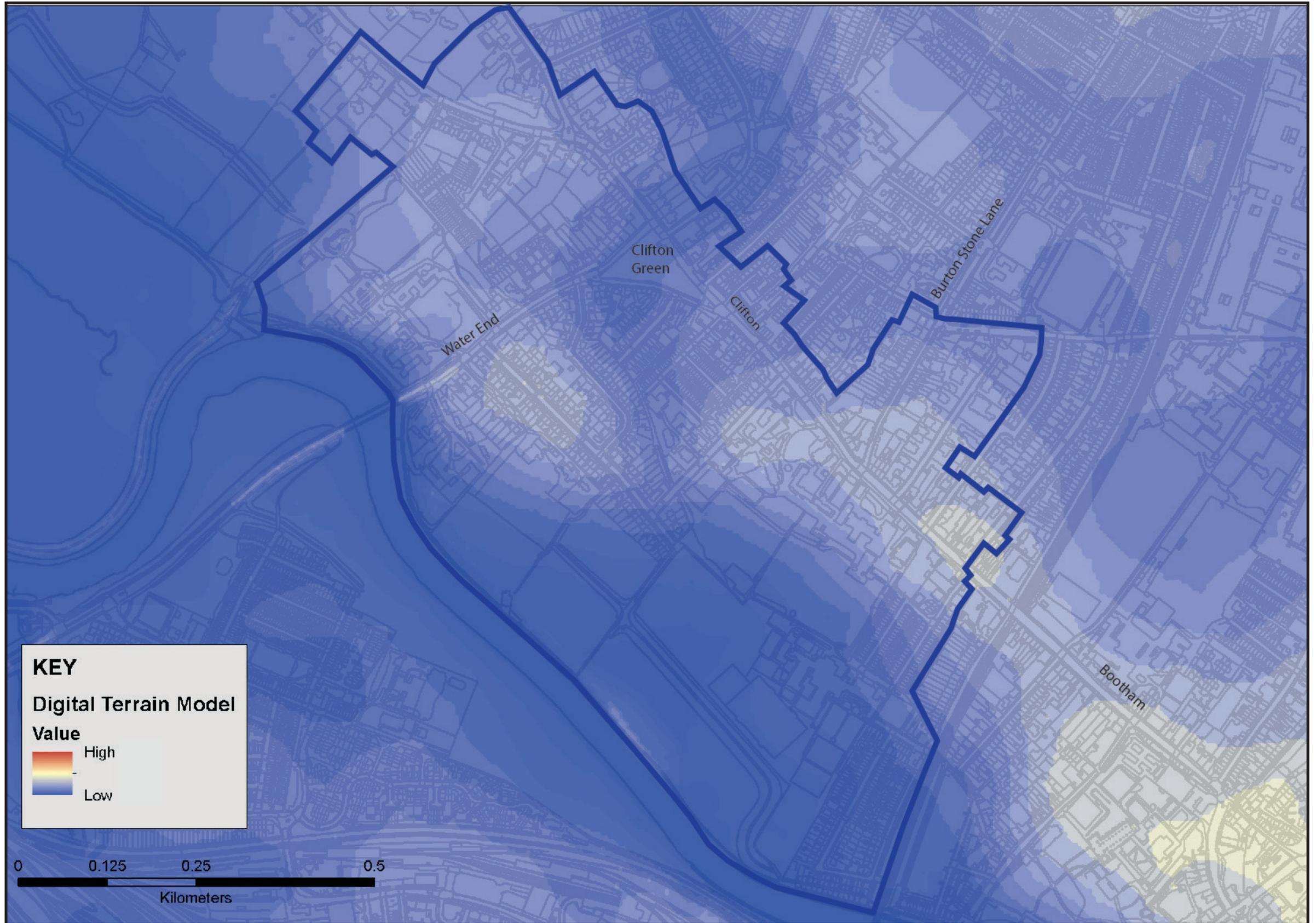
Late 20th century building at Highcliffe Court

Character Area 35: Maps

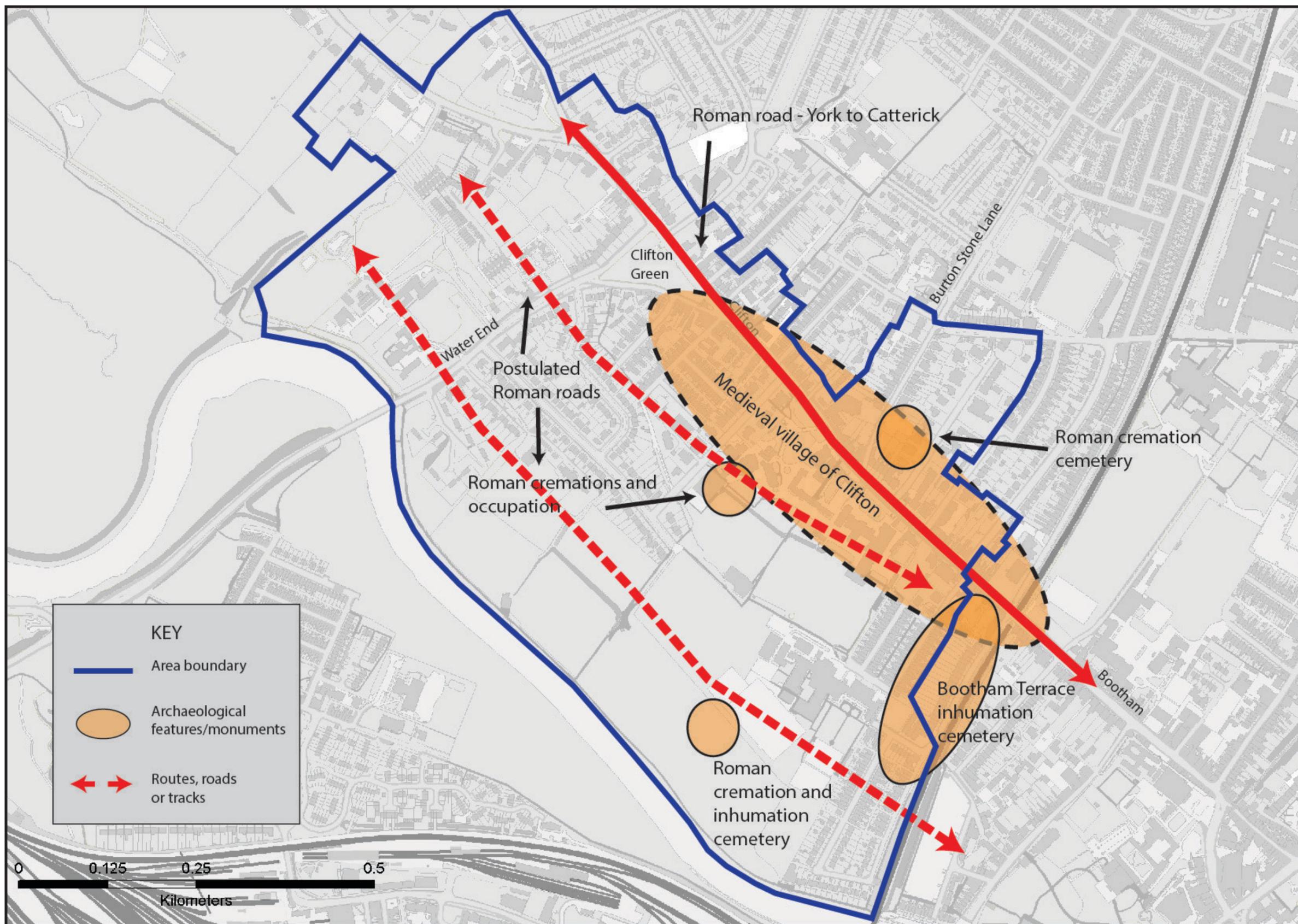
Broad Type characterisation plan. White roadways indicate roads or lanes visible on the 1852 Ordnance Survey Plan



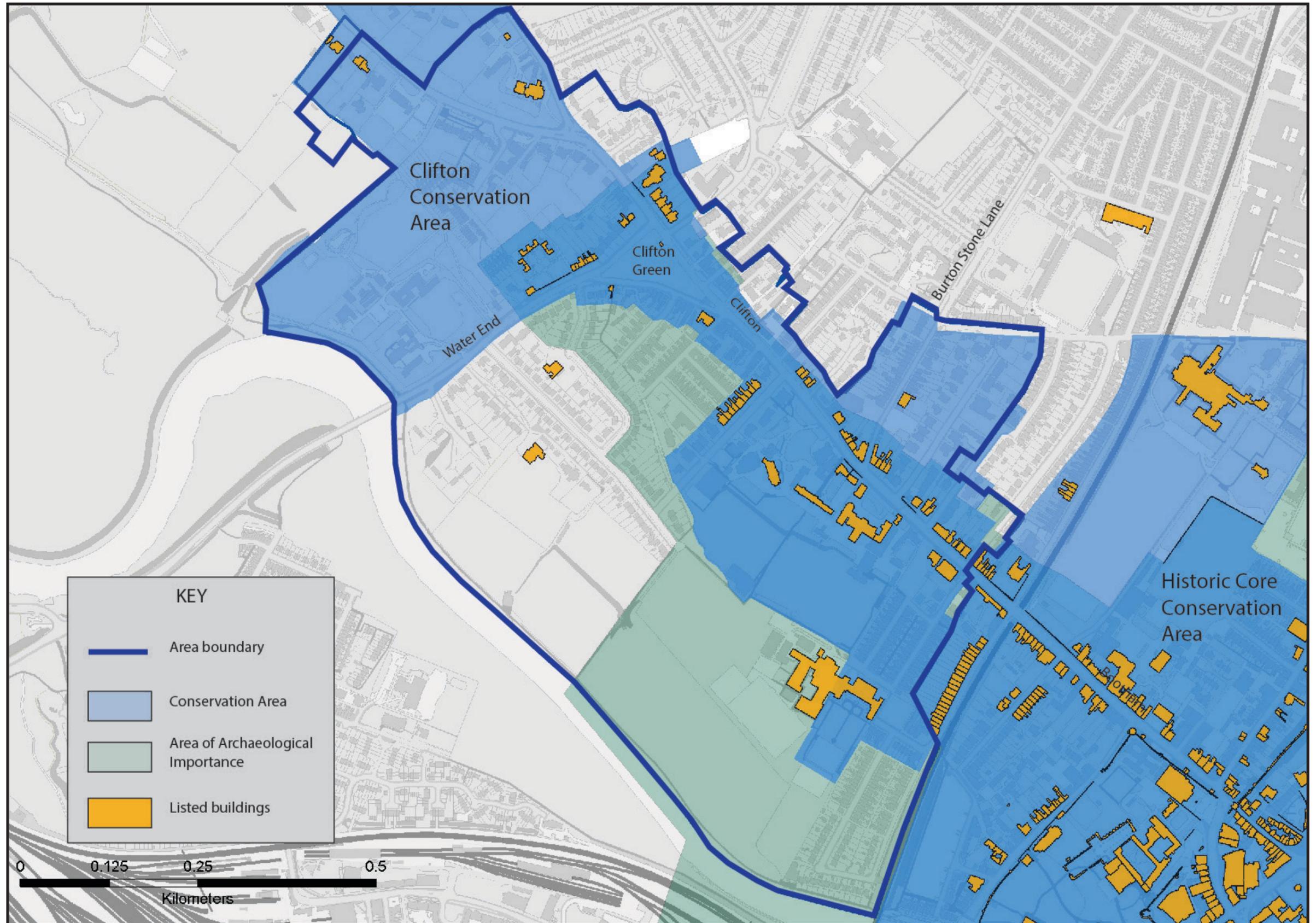
Topography



Archaeology and non-designated heritage assets



Designated heritage assets



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

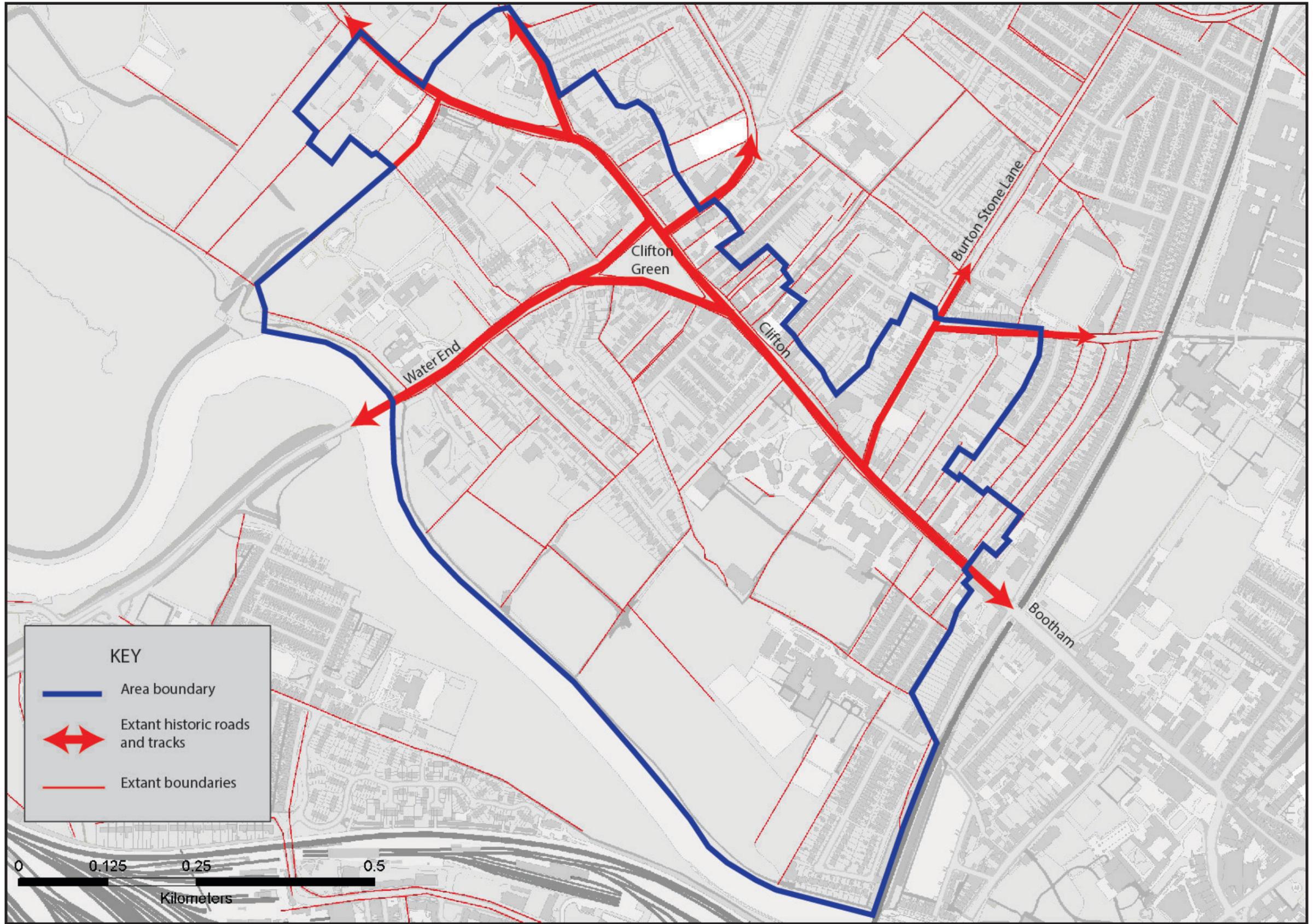


Figure ground map showing the relationship between open space (black) and the built environment



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**

