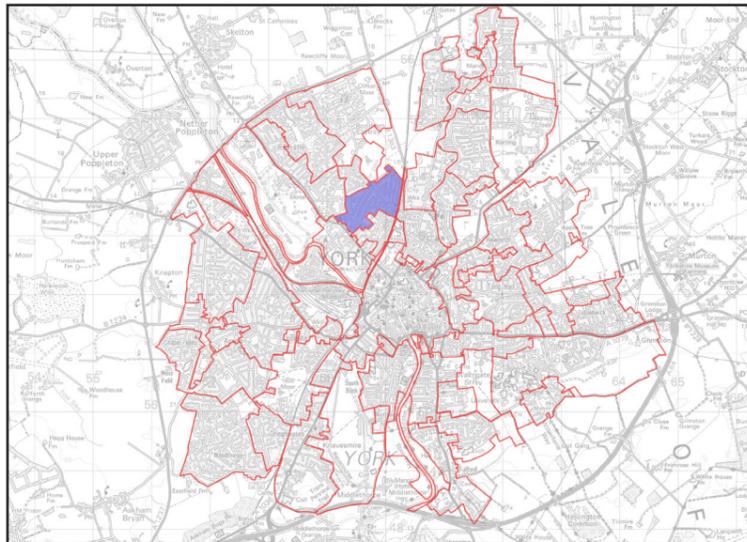
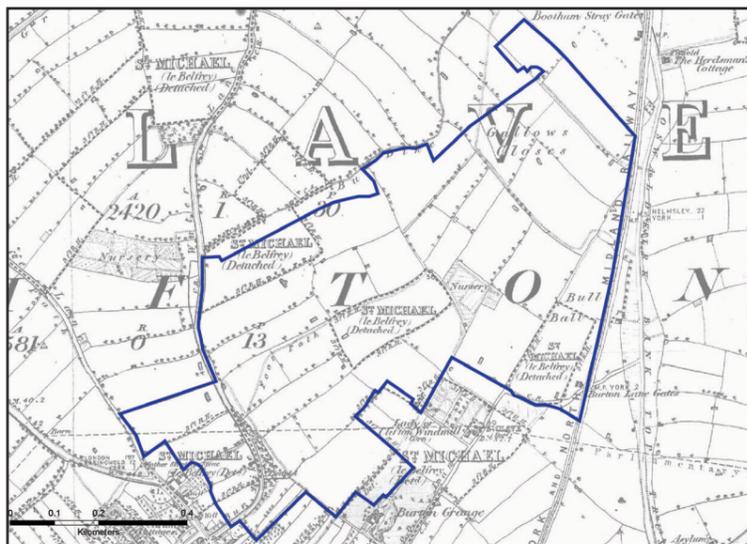


Character area 39: Clifton north



Location of character area



Extract from First Edition Ordnance Survey Plan 1852

Key Characteristics

General Character: Large residential 1930s social housing estate with strong horizontal and vertical rhythm

Area has low lying flat topography and is bounded by Clifton Backies (Bootham Stray) to the north, 19th and 20th century housing to the south, railway to the east and Water Lane and Clifton Village to the west.

Community amenities include Burton Green and Clifton Green primary schools and St. Joseph's Church

Anonymous suburban area with planned green spaces

Tenuous link to city

Approximate walking/cycling distance to the city centre from Kingsway roundabout 2.7km via Burton Stone Lane and Bootham

Dominant Housing Type: Two storey, short linked terraces in linear street pattern, front and rear gardens, arched front doorway and flat porch roofs

Other Key Housing Types: Two storey 1930s and 1940s dwellings and early to mid 20th century church and mid 20th century schools

Designated Heritage Assets: None

Non-designated Heritage Assets: Ridge and furrow and post-war concrete street signage

Key views: None

Surviving historic roads and tracks: Water Lane

Archaeology and history

There is no evidence of Prehistoric or Roman activity in this area.

The area lay within the medieval village of Clifton's fields, the majority in the ownership of St Michael le Belfrey church. Broad ridge and furrow (an indicator of pre-enclosure open fields) is known from aerial photographs at the southern end of this area, in particular on the west side of Water Lane and to the north on the site of Burton Green Primary School.

Many field boundaries shown on the 1852 ordnance survey map, reference early medieval strip fields. Water Lane may date to the medieval period as an access track leading from Clifton to surrounding fields.

The York and North Midland Railway, which runs north-south along the eastern boundary of this character area was constructed by the mid 19th century. A small nursery is the only other feature in the agricultural landscape at this time.

During the early 20th century large areas of the landscape were in use as allotment gardens (presumably for the residents of recently created terracing to the north east of Clifton).

Development of the site for housing dates to the 1930s and was completed immediately after the Second World War.

Small pockets of 1960s development exist on the northern fringe of the character area on the border of Clifton Backies and to the south on Water Lane. Several small modern developments also exist on the northern fringe as well as small infill in the centre of the area.

Character

This area is characterised by a large social housing estate dating to the late 1930s to late 1940s. It predominantly contains short linked terraces each of four dwellings constructed in a generally plain, uniform style. These buildings are two-storeys in height, contain front and rear gardens, and hipped roofs with chimneys. As in other similar estates the number of front gardens which have been converted into use as a driveway is high.

Commercial amenities exist in nearby Clifton Village and at Clifton Moor. Within the estate two primary schools and a church are in use.

The first houses to be built were Spalding Ave, Water Lane and St. Philip's Grove as well as north and south of Crichton Avenue, which were constructed by 1936.

Garages and car ports are a common addition to the end of each building. Originally all the houses had a flat porch roof above the front door. Around 90% of these still exist, although may be replacements of the original.

Concrete gate piers and wire fencing were originally used, along with concrete posts for street signage although none of these survive. Generally throughout the character area approximately 40-50% of the original gate piers survive, usually supporting more recently acquired gates, fencing or hedgerows. Survival varies, for example, St. Phillips Grove contains approximately 65% of its concrete gate piers/fencing, whereas in the nearby street of Peter Hill Court the construction of new builds on the street has led to the replacement of all boundaries with uniform black iron railings.

Modifications to houses are more apparent on streets such as Crichton and Wilberforce Avenue which contain lower storey bay windows to approximately 70% of properties.

Generally the houses all contain UPVC windows and plastic guttering. Fenestration would have originally been uniformly replaced across the estates until privatisation occurred.

Pebble dash cladding is more common on these houses as well as hipped porch roofs and extensions to the end terraced properties.

The estate contains several wide, grass verged, main roads. Burton Stone Lane, an extension of the medieval road out of Clifton, is a wide tree lined avenue which also contains a slight variation of the four house linked terrace featuring lower bay windows on the central houses and larger frontages on the end houses.

Kingsway North is another wide 1930s boulevard street containing a central grassed, tree lined, area. This design provides a large green space breaking the monotony of the surrounding streets as well as an attractive footpath and cycleway. These houses are the same as the other linked properties but contain small rounded double bay windows. Evidence of concrete gate piers and fencing is as low as 20% here.

The estate follows a generally linear pattern with the majority of streets linking to one another in some way. Cul-de-sacs are rare.

On the west side of Water Lane, a small area of post-war council housing exists. These houses are semi-detached and predominantly contain double squared bay windows and flat porch roofs. Some variations in style are evident such as those on Brompton Road. The houses generally have detached garages. Original concrete road surfaces survive in the cul-de-sacs here. Green space has been included in the centre of Hudson Crescent. Two rare survivals of concrete street signs can be found on Brompton Road and Lister Way.

Despite modifications, the houses within this character area are distinct from those surrounding it, including the modern council housing to the north-west. The social housing design is evident throughout but the presence of wide boulevards and tree lined avenues removes the sense of austerity many post war council estates contain.

This area is very much a residential suburb, with generations of the same family living on the same estate.

Significance

Archaeology: There were no reported discoveries during construction which suggests that the area does not have the potential for revealing substantial archaeological evidence of Roman or later date. The area formed part of the open fields of Clifton Village.

Architecture: The housing boom of the 1930s is evident across York, as other cities, in the form of private housing. Pre-war social housing is less evident but is significant in its role to provide a modern sanitary home for the working classes, previously housed within the city centre in Walmgate, Hungate and other locations.

Over the past 30 years many existing housing has been sold to tenants leading to modifications significantly eroding the original character of the estate.

The housing developments in this character area are distinct from the 19th century terrace housing and historic village of Clifton to the south and modern developments to the north. Housing here is similar to other contemporary developments across the city, such as in Heworth, and nationwide.

Historic: The streets do not follow historic boundaries. Unsurprisingly historic field boundaries do not survive well in this area with an approximate survival rate of 5%. Examples include Wilberforce Avenue which follows an historic field boundary and the fence line to the rear of Morrell House to the north.

Streetscape components: Smaller side street pavements are a mixture of concrete flags and asphalt (slurry sealing).

Carriageways are generally asphalt but some original concrete survives. Waste bins and public seating do not seem to be provided in this area. Black bollards are in use outlining traffic calming measures in some side streets.

Contemporary street signs are affixed to modern style street lights. Some original, concrete street signs survive.

Solar panels are evident on a very small number of houses, probably less than 3%.

Aesthetics: Use of trees, hedgerows, grass verges, green spaces such as Kingsway North and wide streets adds to the aesthetics of the estate despite the dense suburban nature of the area.

Opportunities and recommendations

Over the past 30 years a large proportion of social housing has been sold to tenants and others, often resulting in modifications that have significantly and adversely impacted on the original character of the estate. This has been exacerbated over time through the removal of original streetscape features and the use of poor quality replacements. Further erosion of these features should be avoided where possible and extensions and alterations should be carefully considered.

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 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 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, such as garden to driveway conversions and inappropriate extensions should be monitored and avoided where possible.

A local survey of architectural and streetscape features (gate piers, 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.

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 would benefit from further study and consultation with residents to inform on its character and how that has changed over time.

Character Area 39: Images



Burdyke Avenue



Kingsway North



Brompton Road



Peter Hill Drive



Kingsway North



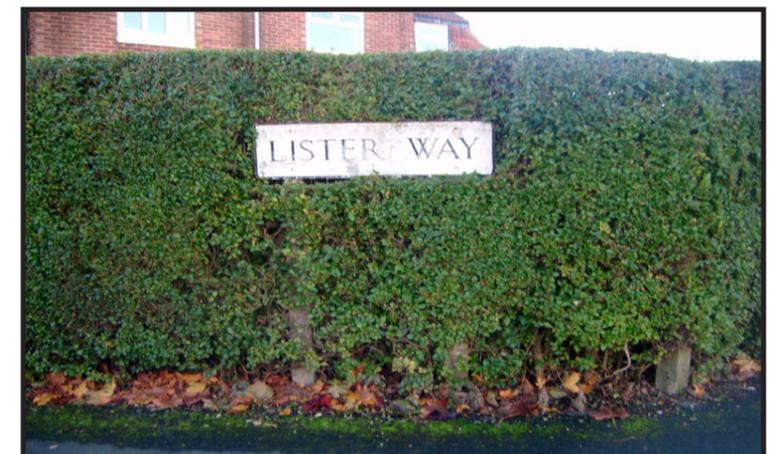
Rare concrete signage on Brompton Road



Peter Hill Drive



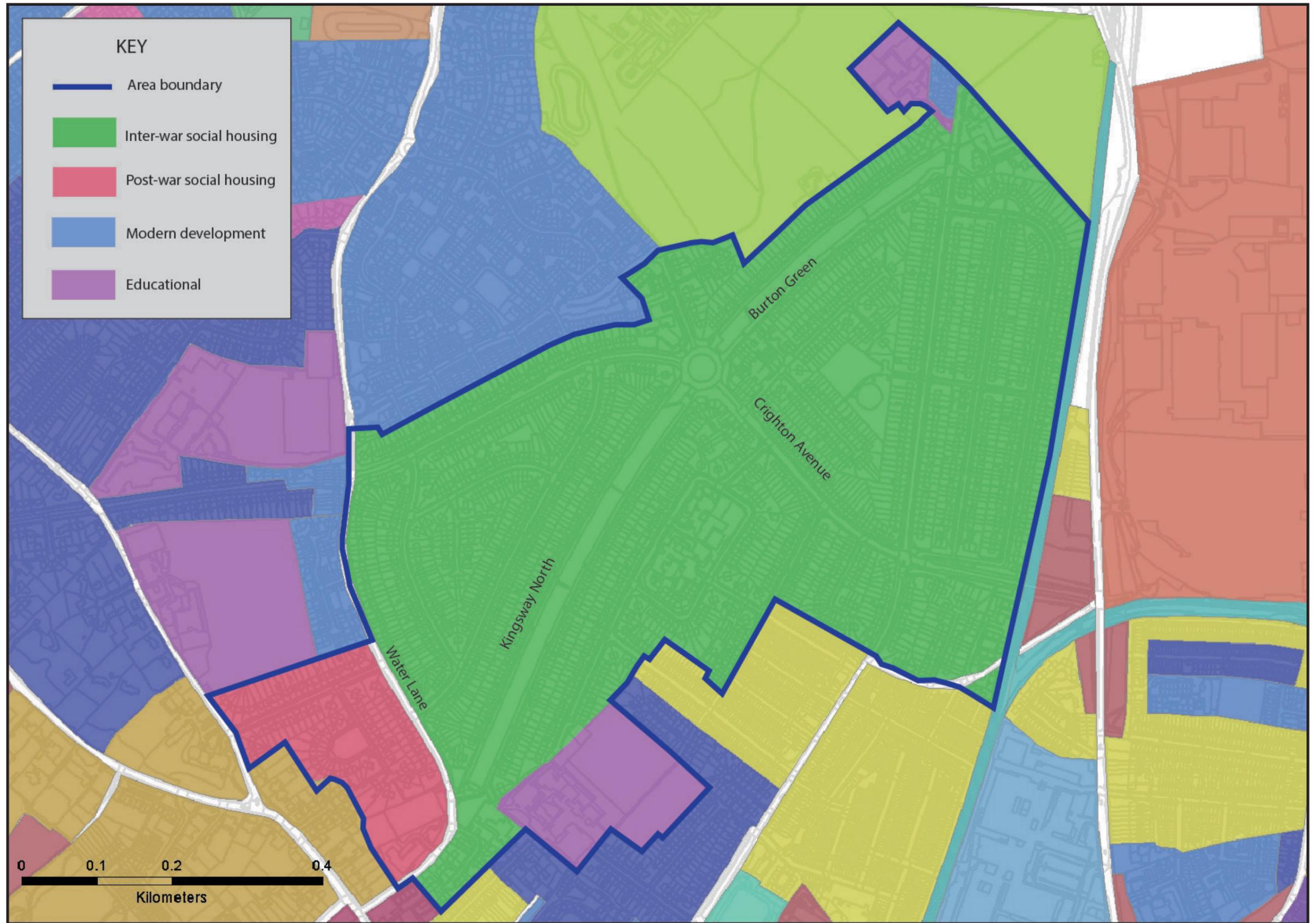
Kingsway North



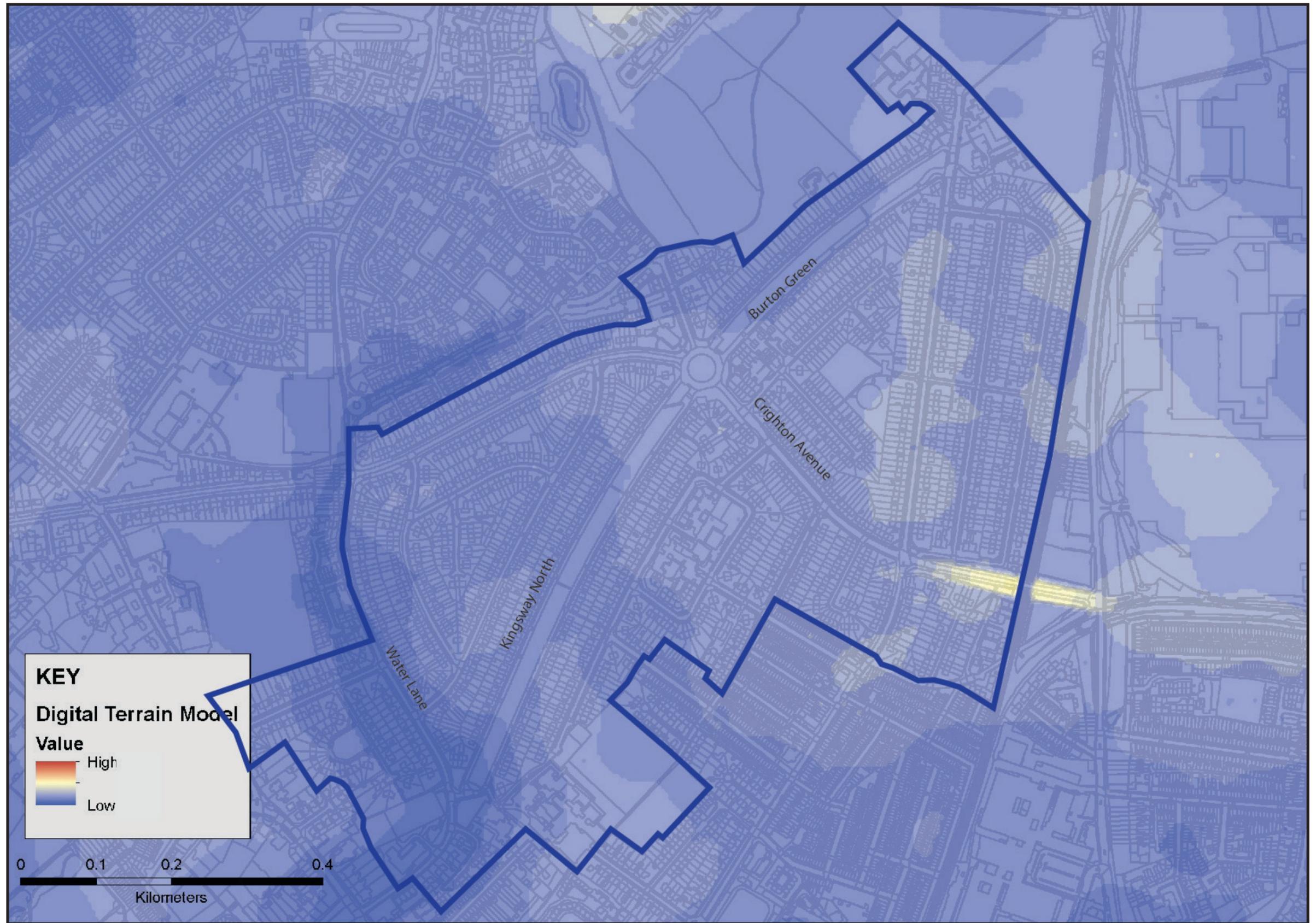
Concrete signage hidden in hedgerow on Lister Way

Character Area 39: Maps

Broad Type characterisation plan. The 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

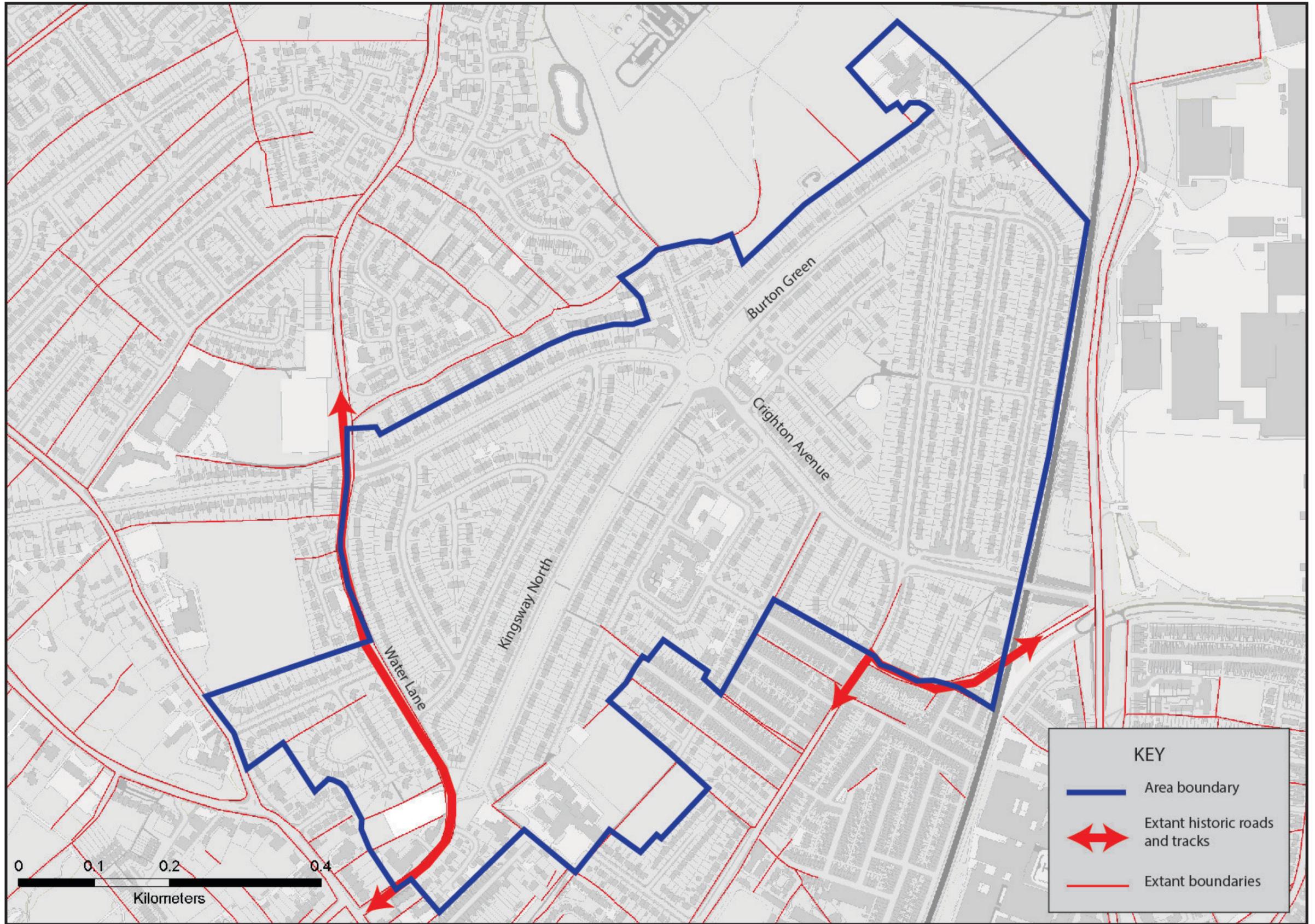


Figure ground map showing the relationship between open space (black) and the built environment



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