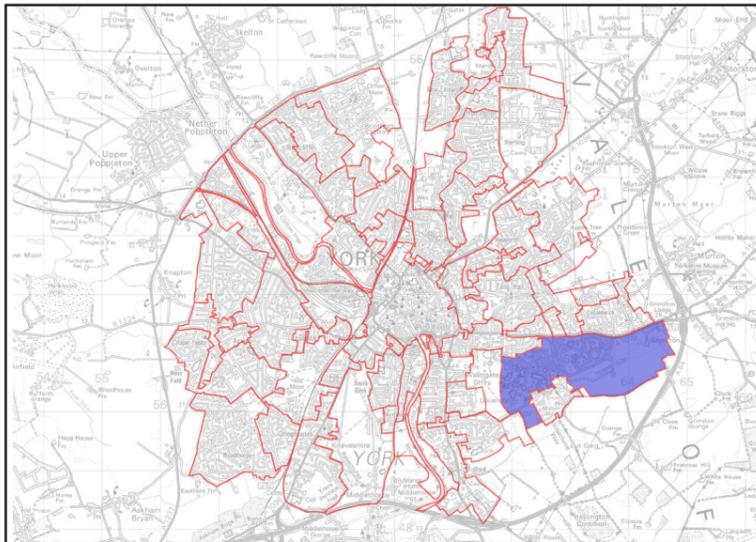
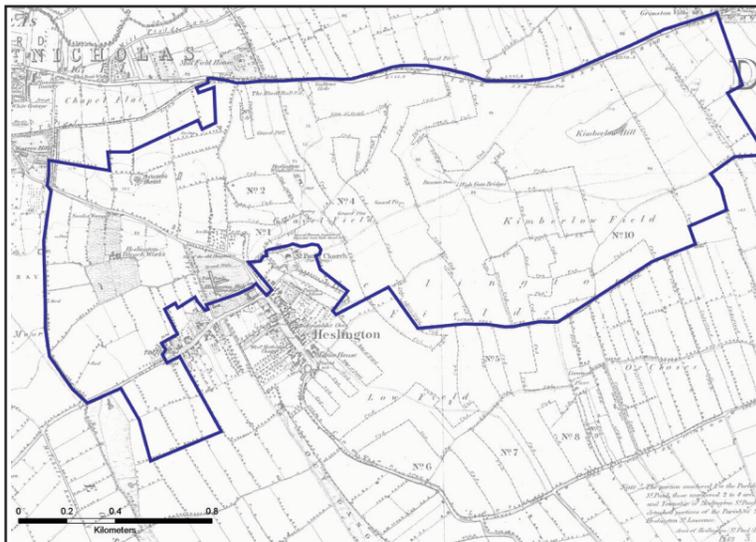


Character area 61: University of York campus



Location of character area



Extract from First Edition Ordnance Survey Plan 1852

Key Characteristics

General Character: University campus containing residential, recreational, commercial and educational buildings of a variety of styles and size predominantly dating between the 1960s to 2000s

1960s residential estate included on the fringes of the campus which includes a primary and secondary school
Approximate walking/cycling distance to the city centre from the centre of University Road 2.7km via Heslington Road

Dominant Housing Type: 1960s housing estate, one to two storey detached and semi-detached dwellings within planned estate featuring front and rear gardens, driveways and garages. Also a small amount of 21st century housing off Windmill Lane.

Other Key Building Types: Mid 20th to early 21st century educational, recreational and residential campus buildings
Designated Heritage Assets: Siwards Howe (SAM 26623)

Non-designated Heritage Assets: Significant archaeological deposits relating to the prehistoric, Roman and medieval period, sculptures and university buildings used by generations of students since 1963.

Key Views: Near and distant views of Heslington Church Spire and University boiler mast from Heslington East

Surviving historic roads and tracks: Hull Road and Field Lane

Archaeology and history

The earliest evidence of human activity in this area dates to the prehistoric period. Stray finds are well known throughout this area of high ground. Recent excavations in advance of the new Heslington East Campus provided possible evidence for Mesolithic and Neolithic occupation (MYO 3644-45). Later prehistoric activity at the same site included a Bronze Age settlement, burials, water management systems, metal-working as well as an Iron Age roundhouse. This prehistoric settlement continued to be occupied throughout the Romano-British period with remains of a field system, burials, and structures also revealed during the investigations. Hull Road itself is a former Roman route leading from Eboracum fortress to the east.

Another Roman road ran from the south across Low Moor and nearby Walmgate Stray. The original university campus site was also presumably occupied during this period due to its favourable topography. A Roman coin hoard is known from this area (MYO 253). Siwards Howe (MYO 104) has not been assigned a definite date although it may be prehistoric (the name Siward relates to an 11th century Danish King of Northumbria).

After the Roman period, little is known about the area. However, burial grounds are known at Lamel Hill to the west and possibly in the area of Siwards Howe. An Anglo-Saxon settlement was excavated in 2002 at Heslington Hill, close to Siwards Howe (MYO 2022).

The campus area was agricultural land featuring scattered windmills during the Medieval period serving the nearby villages of Osbaldwick and Heslington, both of which may have Anglo-Scandinavian origins. Ridge and furrow was recorded across the area on historic aerial photographs prior to the development of the campus. Medieval fields include Gravel Field, Heslington Field and Low Field. Gravel Field was also used as an area of gravel extraction.

This land use and strip field system continued into the Post-Medieval period. A hospital may have existed to the north of Heslington village now part of the campus (MYO 100).

During the 18th and 19th century the larger fields and strip fields were further subdivided into smaller areas. The 1850s Ordnance Survey plan shows a short residential area, Swales Terrace on the road between Heslington Road and Heslington. This presumably was for employees of the Bleach Works constructed immediately to the south. The Black Bull Public House existed on the side of Hull Road by this time although the present building dates to the 20th century.

Windmill Lane formerly known as Mill Lane, ran alongside Mill Plantation during the late 19th to early 20th century. Several houses built between 1936 and 1950 exist along this lane.

By the early 1960s construction of the Badger Hill housing estate on land bounded by Hull Road, Windmill Lane and Field Lane was underway. The construction of the University of York began in 1963, on land to the south-west of the housing, between Walmgate Stray, Heslington Lane and Thief Lane. It has been expanded several times since, most recently with the construction of the new Heslington East campus to the fields east of Heslington and south of the 1960s housing.

Character

Residential areas to south of Hull Road

A small amount of inter-war development on Windmill Lane sits opposite Mill Plantation. The plantation is still evident and acts as screening between this housing and university sports fields. The houses are two-storey, semi-detached in similar style to contemporary buildings noted elsewhere. The lane itself has a rural feel at its southern end where it is bounded by an open field close to the site of the former windmill.

Leading off this lane is a late 20th to early 21st century estate consisting of predominantly two-storey detached dwellings. The estate contains small soft landscaped areas and is again similar to contemporary estates.

To the east of these developments is Badger Hill Estate, a large 1960s development containing Bishop Holgate's Secondary School and Badger Hill Primary School. Housing here is typical of its time and contains a range of one to two storey properties both detached and semi-detached. Weatherboards feature on many houses such as on Deramore Drive and Yarburgh Way.

Within the estate grass verges, wide corners, hedges and play area break up the urban streetscape. This estate is a continuation of the growth of the suburban areas to the east of the city along the artery roads. It is separate in character to the university but is contemporary in date.

University

The 1960s and 1970s buildings include lecture and residential halls, library, recreational space and the Central Hall (1972) set on the fringes of the lake. The majority of the residential buildings consist of pre-fabricated concrete panels standing two to four storeys in height and have flat roofs. The original campus buildings have a consistent form and scale and are set around the landscaped area of the lake. The setting provides a sympathetic boundary to the adjacent village of Heslington.

More recent additions to the campus are generally constructed in red and beige brick and feature pitched and hipped roofs. The generous landscaped areas include footpaths between colleges featuring sculptures from a variety of decades. Flat roofed walkways are common linking the original colleges. The Berrick Saul Building is more contemporary in design and is similar to buildings at Heslington East in its use of timber and curved lines. Old and new buildings sit side by side within this area; nothing seems out of place though, more like a natural progression of campus architecture.

The Science Park area to the east of University Road constructed in 1998 is reminiscent of other contemporary office parks and is much more commercial in nature. It contains three to four storey brick and steel framed buildings. The area contains small grass verges alongside the cycle paths as well as hedgerows.

The most recent addition to the campus is the development at Heslington East and adjacent sports village. The development contains a mixture of residential, commercial and educational buildings as in other areas. Buildings here include the use of timber cladding and other natural materials and range from two to nine storeys in height (three to four being the most common). Natural colouring has also been used. Each cluster of buildings has been designed to have its own identity.

This campus is set in a green landscaped area, bordering a lake, featuring cycle paths and footpaths to the main campus and nearby communities.

The layout of the site has been designed to maximise areas of sunlight (e.g. lake side social areas are south facing) and reduce the effect of the wind.

The University is well known for its abundance of wildlife and even boasts a bird sanctuary at the southern end of the lake. Signage giving information on the wildlife in the area can be found throughout the campus. The geese, which occupy the shores of the lake, are a particularly memorable characteristic of the campus for most students and visitors. The birds also contribute to the soundscape of the campus.

Significance

Archaeology: The favourable topography of the area made it an attractive place for prehistoric settlement and activity. Excavations in advance of the new Heslington East Campus provided possible evidence for Mesolithic and Neolithic occupation with an abundance of later prehistoric activity and settlement. The area was still in use as a settlement during the Romano-British and potentially into the Anglo-Scandinavian period. Although subsequent agricultural practices and the creation of the university campus and nearby housing during the 1960s will have had a negative impact on archaeology within the area, it should still be considered to contain significant potential deposits.

Architecture: The predominant university campus features a variety of buildings from several different periods. The newly built, architecturally award-winning campus at Heslington East features more natural materials, colouring and curvilinear building lines than its 1960s grey, concrete, box-like counterparts. The area also contains a range of non-descript 20th century residential architecture. Several university buildings lie within the adjacent village of Heslington including Heslington Hall (Grade II*).

Historic: The University celebrates its 50th anniversary in 2013. Fifty years of social and academic activities in this area have contributed to the city as a whole attracting new tenants and raising the profile of York nationwide. The campus has played host to a number of memorable and notable events such as concerts by Jimmy Hendrix and Paul McCartney, Royal visits and record attempts. More unusual campus events, such as the planting of part of Issac Newton's apple tree by the Physics Department in 1977, is commemorated every year by the creation of Issac Newton apple pies.

Unsurprisingly very few historic boundaries shown on the 1852 ordnance survey plan remain readable on the ground or in plan form.

The main roads are ancient in origin with Hull Road presumably dating to the Roman period and Field Lane/Heslington Lane at least Medieval in date.

A hedgerow on the Science Park alongside a cyclepath leading to Windmill Lane contains large mature tree stumps. This division follows a boundary shown on late 19th century ordnance survey plans. It is probably the remains of a field boundary created through enclosure of medieval strip fields. Interestingly this boundary almost follows an earlier parcel of land marked on an 1850s plan as a dashed line. A large mature tree along the line of the Field Lane was also noted.

Within the residential areas, the names Windmill Lane and Sails Drive clearly relate to the former windmill situated nearby. In Badger Hill Estate the names Deramore Drive and Kimberlows Wood Hill relate to the former estate holder Lord Deramore and the name of a nearby hill respectively.

Streetscape components: The majority of the housing estates contain asphalt carriageways and footpaths along with mid to late 20th century street lighting, including the use of concrete units. Modern street signage on lamp posts and finger posts and modern bus stops are common. Concrete roads surfaces can be found within Badger Hill Estate such as Eastfield Crescent, Fernway and Sussex Close.

The main campus includes a mixture of asphalt, concrete flags and decorative stone setts. Footpaths across the campus are dotted with sculptures and seating areas. Seating is mixed and includes a mixture of mid to late 20th century examples. Within the Science Park, all footpaths and carriageways are asphalt with modern street lighting units. Green wayfinding signs as found on other areas of the campus are in use as well as white Science Park signage. Cyclepaths run throughout the area and are well signposted.

The Heslington East campus contains contemporary lighting, asphalt carriageways and cyclepaths as well as decorative pink herringbone paving.

Aesthetics: Despite the concrete architecture in the centre of the campus the generous landscaping and large lake contribute to a pleasant ambiance.

Areas surrounding commercial areas may be less attractive but there are plenty places to sit by the lake or in green surroundings and admire the many sculptures or wildlife. The landscaping and green vibe has been continued at the Heslington East campus, which also features a lake.

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).

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.

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.

Great care should be paid to the retention of socially valued buildings and spaces in particular those associated with the university, schools and play areas associated with the housing estate with appropriate weight given to local opinions.

There is an opportunity for this study to be used as baseline data for the local community (including non-student) 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, particularly with the recent growth of the University Campus.

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.

Character Area 6 I: Images



Crossways



Alcuin College buildings (1968)



Vanburgh College (1967) landscaped area



Deramore Drive play area, with broken fencing in the foreground



Late 20th century Alcuin buildings



Donald Baron Court



Quant Mews off Windmill Lane



Wentworth Graduate College



View showing contemporary Berrick Saul Building and new paving to left and original campus covered walkways right



The central lake area



Examples of mid 20th century and later seating around campus



Heslington East



Vanbrugh's Paradise from the Central Hall



Science Park (1990s)



Streetscape components of Heslington East



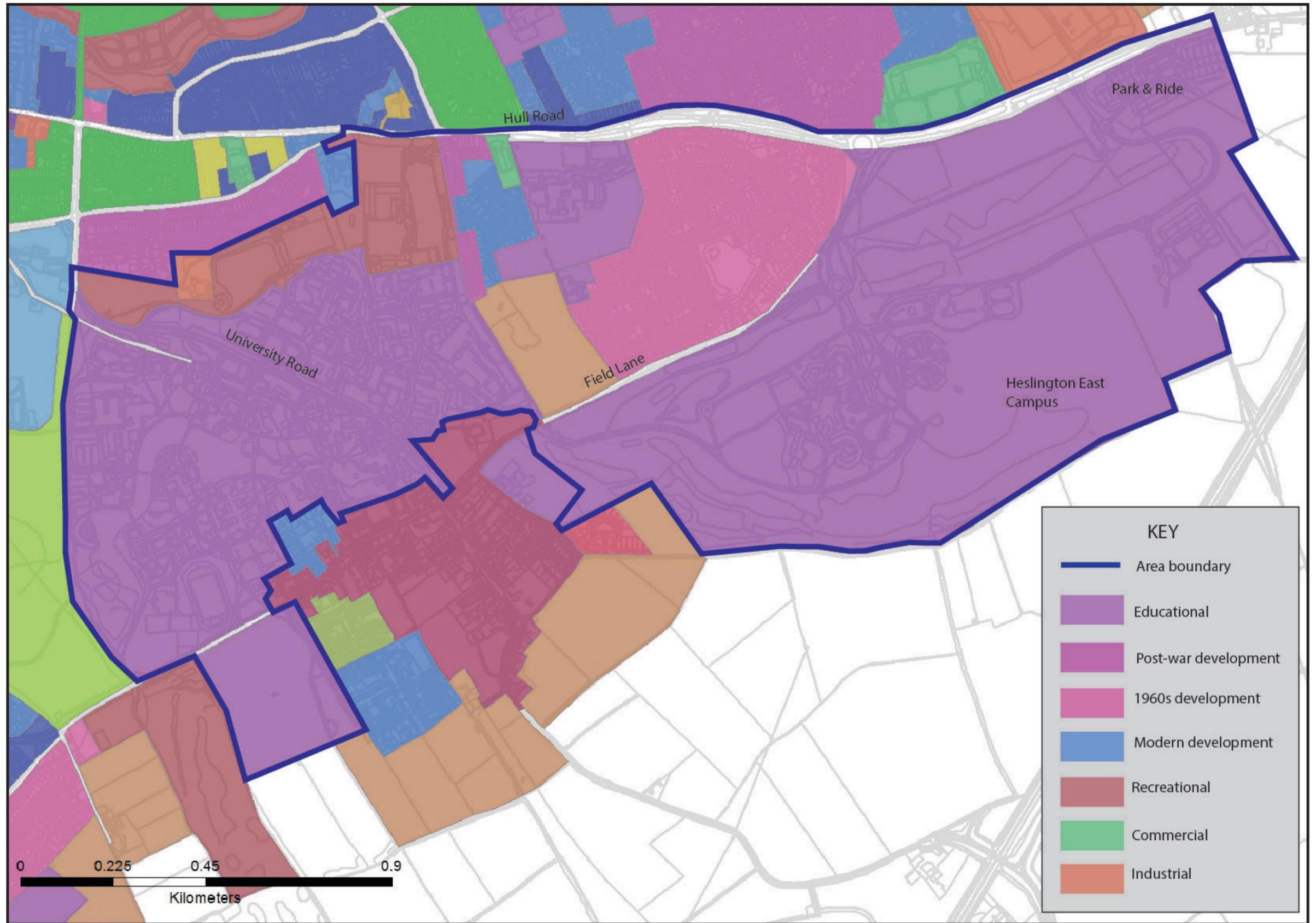
The iconic Central Hall building (1972)



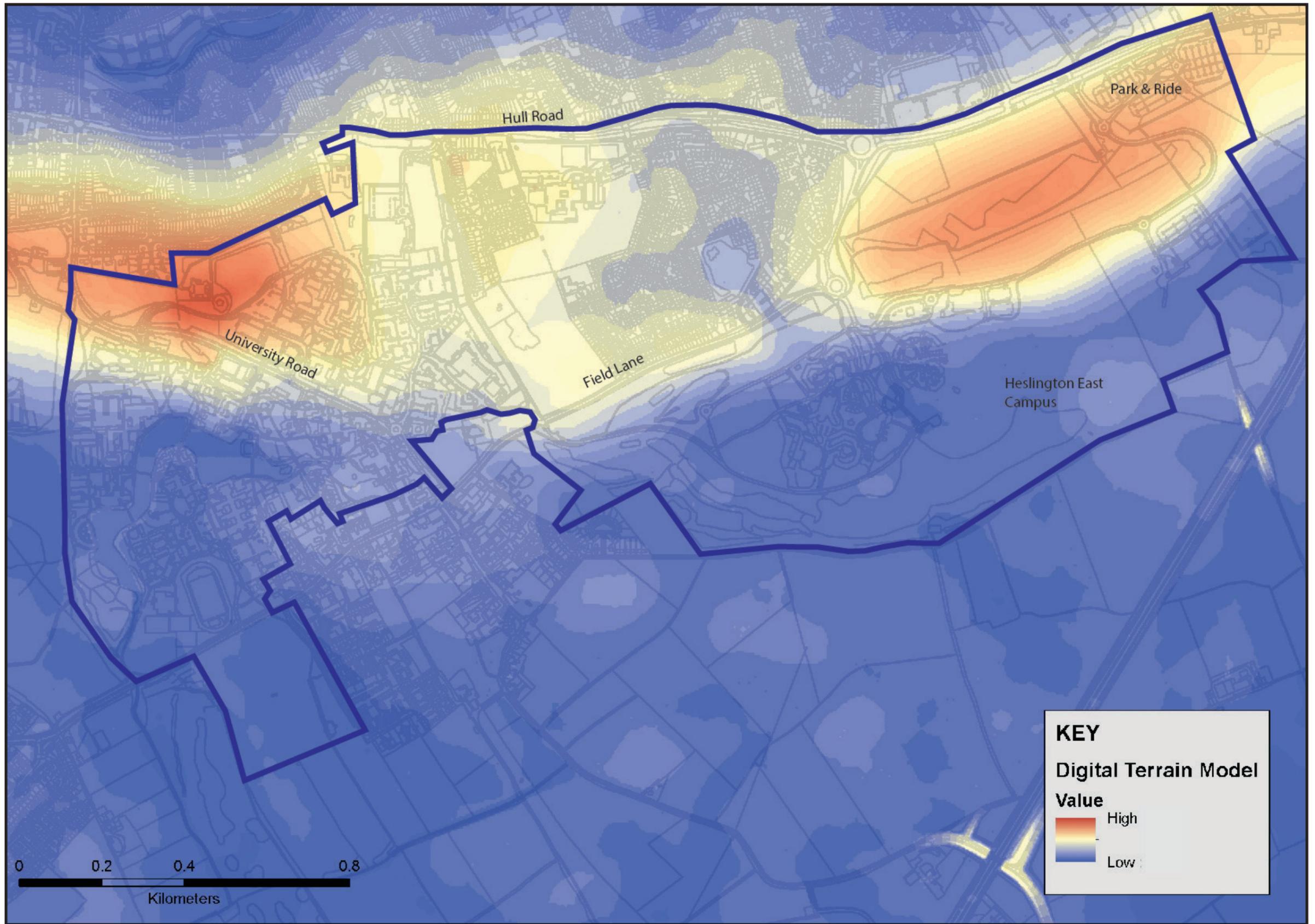
Heslington East

Character Area 61: Maps

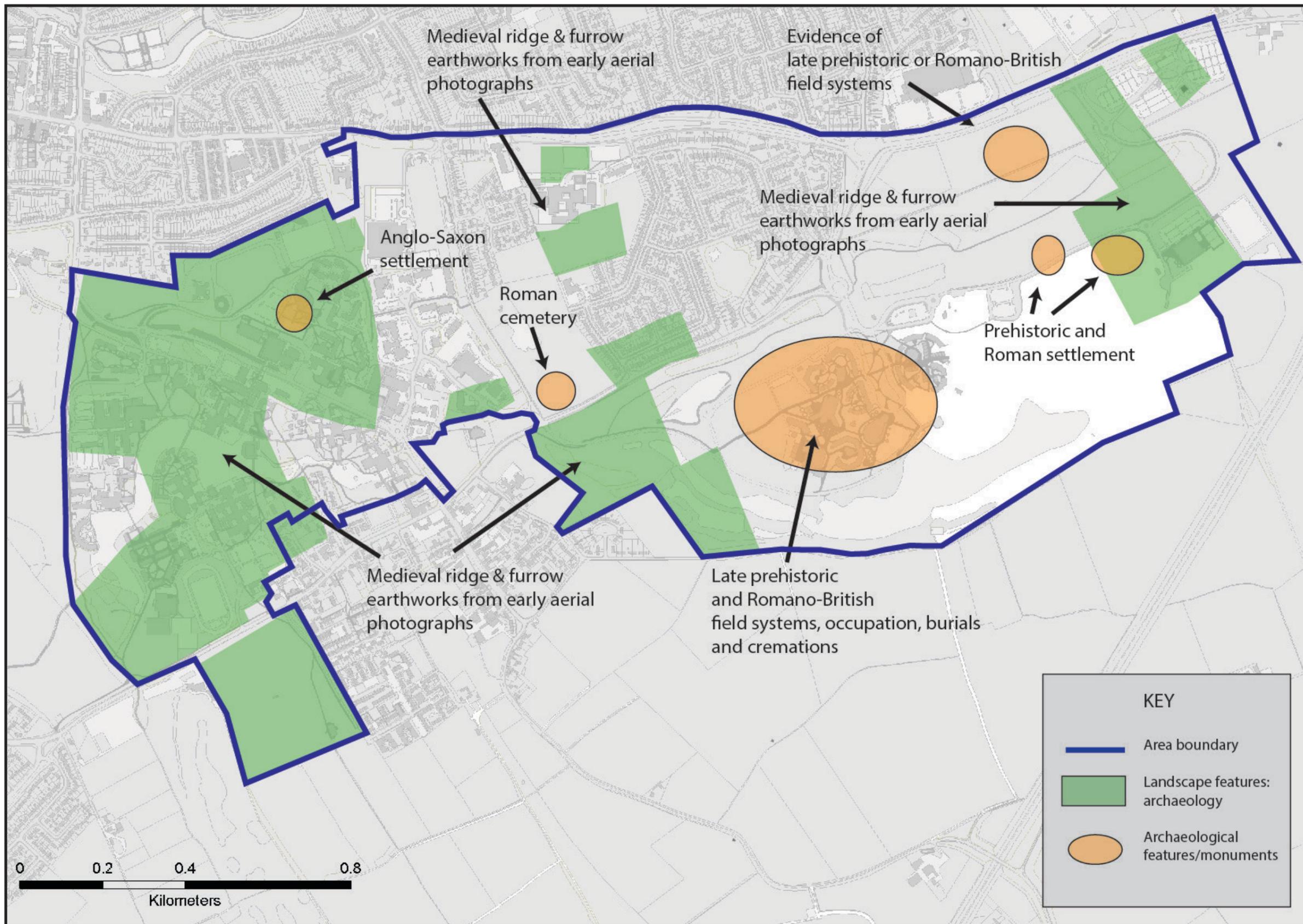
Broad Type characterisation plan. The white roadways indicate roads or lanes visible on the 1852 Ordnance Survey Plan.



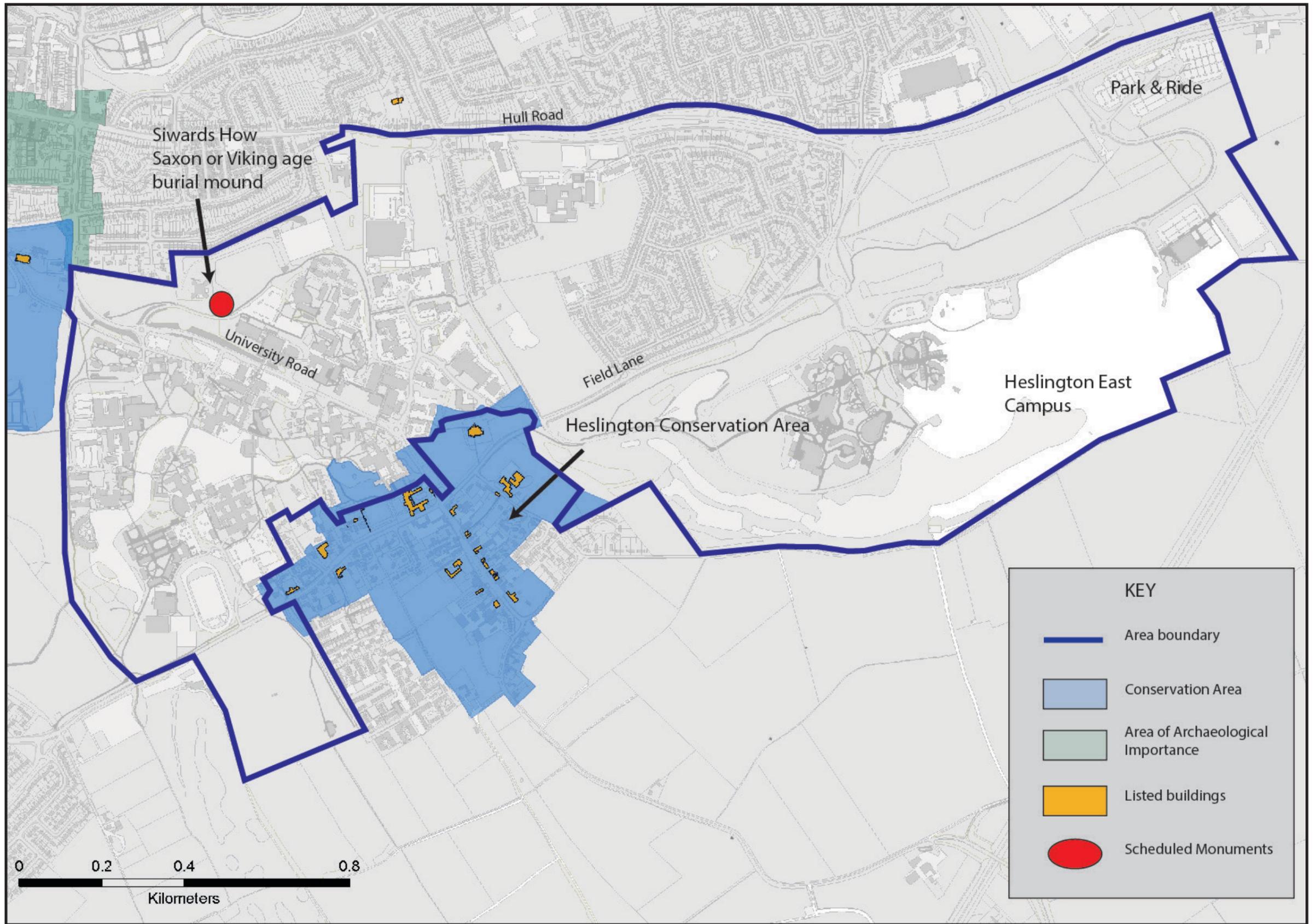
Topography



Archaeology



Designated heritage assets



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

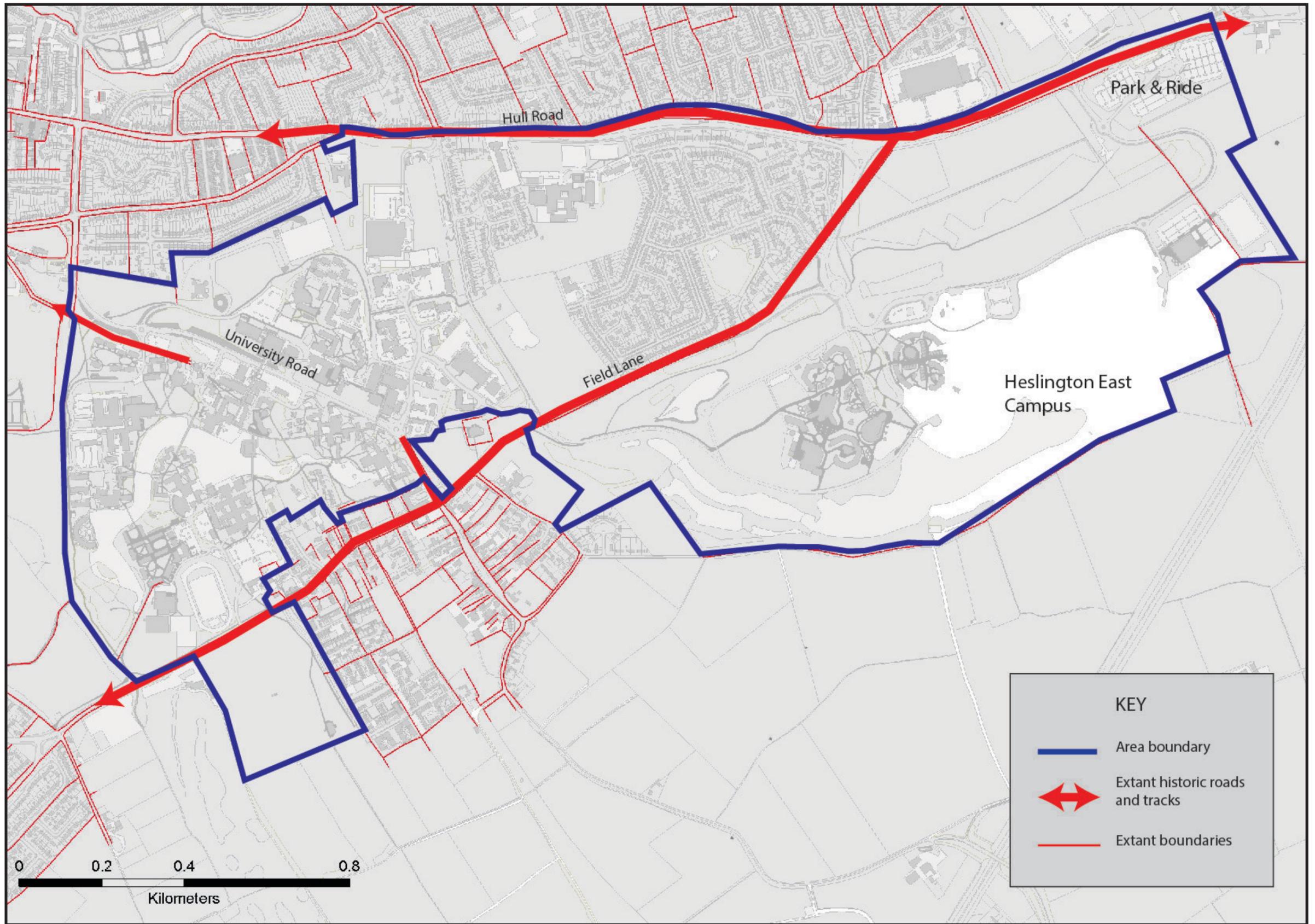


Figure ground map showing the relationship between open space (black) and the built environment



Researched and written by: Claire MacRae

Photographs: Claire MacRae except where indicated

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