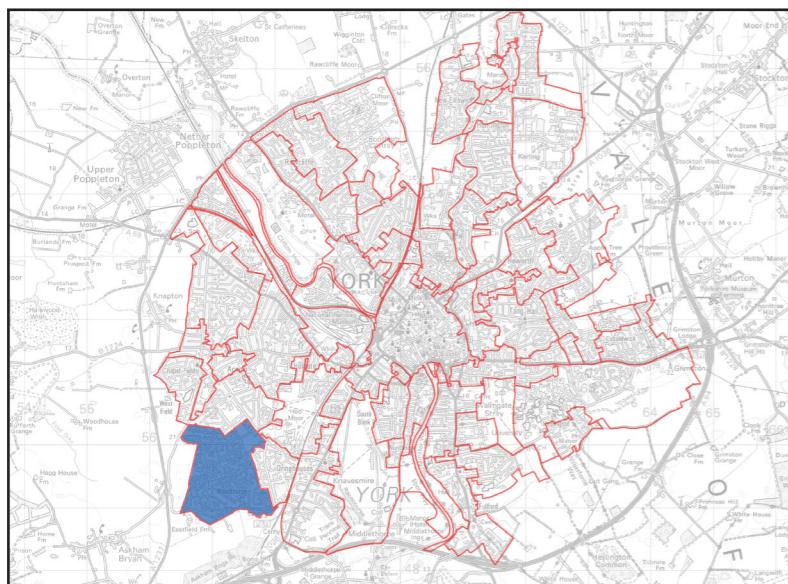
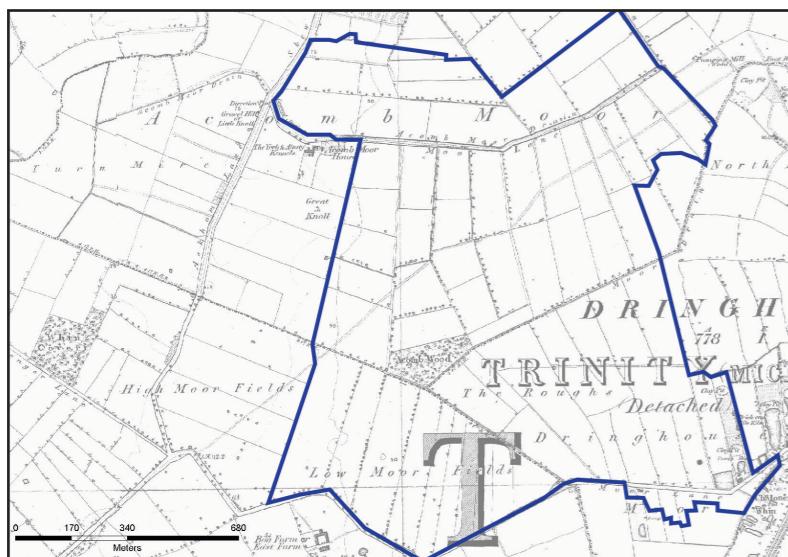


## Character area 76: Woodthorpe



Location of character area



Extract from First Edition Ordnance Survey Plan 1852

### Key Characteristics

**General character:** Semi-rural to the west and south with pockets of individuality as in Acomb Wood but essentially a ubiquitous mid to late 20th century mixture of pattern book architectural styles in large estates and small scale, high density new-builds that have no distinctive York features

This part of Woodthorpe is bounded by Tedder Road north of Foxwood Lane to the north, Moor Lane to the south and Acomb Moor to the east

Acomb Moor and Moor Lane is an area of farmland providing a green buffer between housing and the outer ring road and A64. The topography is generally flat but with a slight incline towards Askham Bog to the south of Moor Lane. Includes Acomb Wood, a council owned piece of woodland protected by an area TPO (Tree Preservation Order) and a locally valued amenity for dog walking

York Acorn ARLFC (Amateur Rugby League Football Club) manage a significant open space in the north east corner of the area against Thanet Road

Anonymous suburban feel with tenuous link to the city centre

Private housing is 'manicured' in places

Approximate walking/cycling distance to the city centre from the centre of Bellhouse Way 4.8km via Hob Moor and The Mount

**Dominant Housing Type:** Two storey, detached and semi-detached late 20th century housing with front and rear gardens in planned estates. The majority of the private housing contain garages and driveways.

**Other Key Housing Types:** Early 21st century low rise flats, townhouse and short terraces, 1960s bungalows (many containing driveways and garages) and retail blocks

**Designated Heritage Assets:** 18th century or earlier boundaries retained as modern fence lines

**Non-designated Heritage Assets:** Acomb Wood, Moor Farm house, Gale Lane historic buildings

**Key Views:** There are good views to Askham Bog and surrounding countryside from Moor Lane

**Surviving historic roads and tracks:** Gale Lane, Moor Lane and Foxwood Lane

## Archaeology and history

This area was farmland until it was utilised after World War II to provide new homes for low-middle income families. Acomb Moor had until then provided agricultural and grazing land for the adjacent villages of Acomb, Askham Bryan and Dringhouses since at least the medieval period. Medieval broad ridge and furrow earthworks have been identified from historic aerial photographs of the area taken prior to development in the 1950s (English Heritage Vale of York National Mapping Project – City of York HER). A ditched enclosure has also been identified off Moor Lane at the extreme southwest corner of the area although no archaeological recording was undertaken during development.

The enclosure of the medieval open fields occurred in this area in the 1770s. Fields were subdivided into smaller areas and distributed between scattered farms such as Eastfield Farm (formerly Bog Farm). Small scale semi-rural industry is represented by mid 19th century brick and tile works in the north-east corner of this character area (Acomb Brick Works – now Acorn ARLC site) and in the south east corner off Moor Lane. These became slightly more widespread in the late 19th to early 20th century and provided much of the brick used as building material at this time. A small group of short terraces on Gale Lane known as Brickyard Cottages survived into the 1960s.

The main development of the area began as part of 1950s housing running from Gale Lane into the Tedder Road area – these houses have since been demolished and replaced with new builds in the late 20th century. However the area remained principally farmland until the mid-1960s.

## Character

There are predominately two distinctive types of housing estate in the area dating from the 1960s – 1970s and 1980s to the present day. This mid to late 20th century development contains small areas of early 1980s council housing on the south side of Foxwood Lane. A mixture of housing types, including late 19th and early 20th century buildings exist along Moor Lane, including Moor Farm House. These buildings are the oldest surviving structures.

Agricultural land to the west and the south results in a semi-rural character at the fringes, enhanced by the presence of Acomb Wood and views through to Hob Moor. However, the majority of this character area has an anonymous suburban feel. Private housing appears very ‘manicured’ in places. The relationship of the housing estates to the city seems tenuous. Apart from the bus routes which serve the area, there is little to suggest a clear relationship to the City of York.

The 1960s housing comprises a mix of bungalows, detached, short terraces and predominantly semi-detached housing, with driveways and garages. The estates contain buildings of one-two storeys, many featuring weatherboards, and all with gardens to the front (generally unenclosed) and rear. There are very few significant extensions visible from the street. Solar panelling is in use on a small proportion of houses.

The estate to the south of Foxwood Lane contains a public house, school (Woodthorpe Primary School), shopping area including a butcher and small supermarket, The Church of St. James the Deacon and medical centre which provide amenities for a wide area. The 1960s estate to the north of Foxwood Lane also contains a small shopping area- serving all neighbouring areas.

The modern housing estates date between 1980-mid 2000s, they contain a mixture of bungalows, detached, short terraces, low rise flats and semi detached housing, with the majority containing driveways and garages.

The predominant housing type depends on the specific area. For example, the early 1980s council housing immediately south of Foxwood Lane, consists of short terraced housing with detached garage blocks. Some of these also feature weatherboards although many are white and plastic rather than coloured and wooden.

To the south, closer to Moor Lane, the predominant housing type is detached, dating from the late 1980s to early 1990s.

All of the late 20th century estates contain buildings of one-four storeys, with gardens to the front and rear. There are very few extensions visible from the street, however rear conservatories are common. Solar panels are visible on a small number of houses.

21st century development in the Tedder Road area consists of two-three storey semi-detached, linked and townhouse dwellings. This estate features a mixture of driveway and communal parking areas.

The bus routes do not carve through the modern housing areas as much as the neighbouring council estates, planned cycle routes provide an alternative link to the city.

## Significance

**Archaeology:** An undated ditched enclosure is known off Moor Lane at the extreme southwest corner of the area although no archaeological recording was undertaken during development.

This area was open fields and grazing land in the Medieval period. Ridge and furrow earthworks and Medieval broad ridge and furrow earthworks attest to this.

Small scale semi-rural industry in the form of brick and tile works in the north-east corner of this character area (Acomb Brick Works – now Acorn ARLC site) and in the south east corner off Moor Lane occurred throughout the 19th century. The extraction of clay for this process combined with mid to late 20th century development will have had a negative effect on any surviving archaeological deposits within the area.

**Architecture:** Although the housing in this area is not significant architecturally, nor different from other contemporary residential estates in the city, it is distinct from the inter-war and post-war council housing nearby, and provides a good example of how the suburbs of York have grown and morphed together over the past 50 years.

The older, more established estates are valued socially and provide a sense of identity for the local community. The 1960s estates in particular are smaller and in places, self sufficient, containing commercial and educational buildings. Amenities such as these add to the sense of place and identity of the estates.

The older buildings situated on Moor Lane are a reminder of the rural character of the area which existed until the mid 20th century.

**Historic:** Significant historic roads and tracks survive and form the backbone of the present suburban grain. These include, Gale Lane, Moor Lane and Foxwood Lane (formerly also called Moor Lane). Approximately 40% of historic field boundaries, shown on the 1852 ordnance survey plan survive.

For example, on the north side of Foxwood Lane, the rear boundary of Otterwood Lane (1960s) and modern re-development of Minter Close and Waterman Court follow an historic field boundary. The majority of these boundaries are 19th century in date although several have been identified as dating to at least the 1774 enclosure period such as the rear division between Lowick and Ryecroft Avenue with Acomb Wood.

Unlike adjacent post-war development street names do not reflect the historic rural character of the area. However, a modern development on the former site of the brickworks off Gale Lane bears the name Clay Place.

**Streetscape components:** Carriageways are generally tarmac flanked by tarmac footpaths. Grass verges exist on some of the main roads. The street furniture in the estates includes Edinburgh style waste bins situated by bus stops and shops and dog waste bins near recreational spaces.

A mixture of street lighting ranging from original 1960s concrete columns to taller and slender cast iron columns as recent replacements. Unusually some late 20th century concrete street lights are in use in the more modern residential areas. Contemporary lighting is installed on bus routes.

The majority of street signs are affixed to lighting columns or on low finger posts in the more contemporary estates.

**Aesthetics:** The dense housing estates here are surrounded by open space. There are several play areas/recreational fields as well as Acomb Wood which help to break up the suburban nature of the area.

## Opportunities and recommendations

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. 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).

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.

Historic buildings on Moor Lane should continue to be conserved and any future extensions or alterations should respect existing character and distinctiveness.

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.

## Character Area 76: Images



Moor Farm farmhouse and modern bungalow adjacent,  
Moor Lane.



Residence and retail block on Acorn Way.



Acorn Way



19th century building on the south side of Moor Lane.



Concrete street lighting  
and modern street  
signage.



The Church of St. James the Deacon.



Short row of historic buildings on Moor Lane.



Carrfield



Retail units on Foxwood Lane.



1980s social housing and streetscape components on Foxwood Lane.



Examples of traditional 1980s brown frame windows and modern white replacements on Girvan Close.



21st century development on Tedder Road.



Martin Cheeseman flats.



1980s Ashmeade Close



21st century development on Tedder Road.



Bellhouse Way, early 1980s social housing.



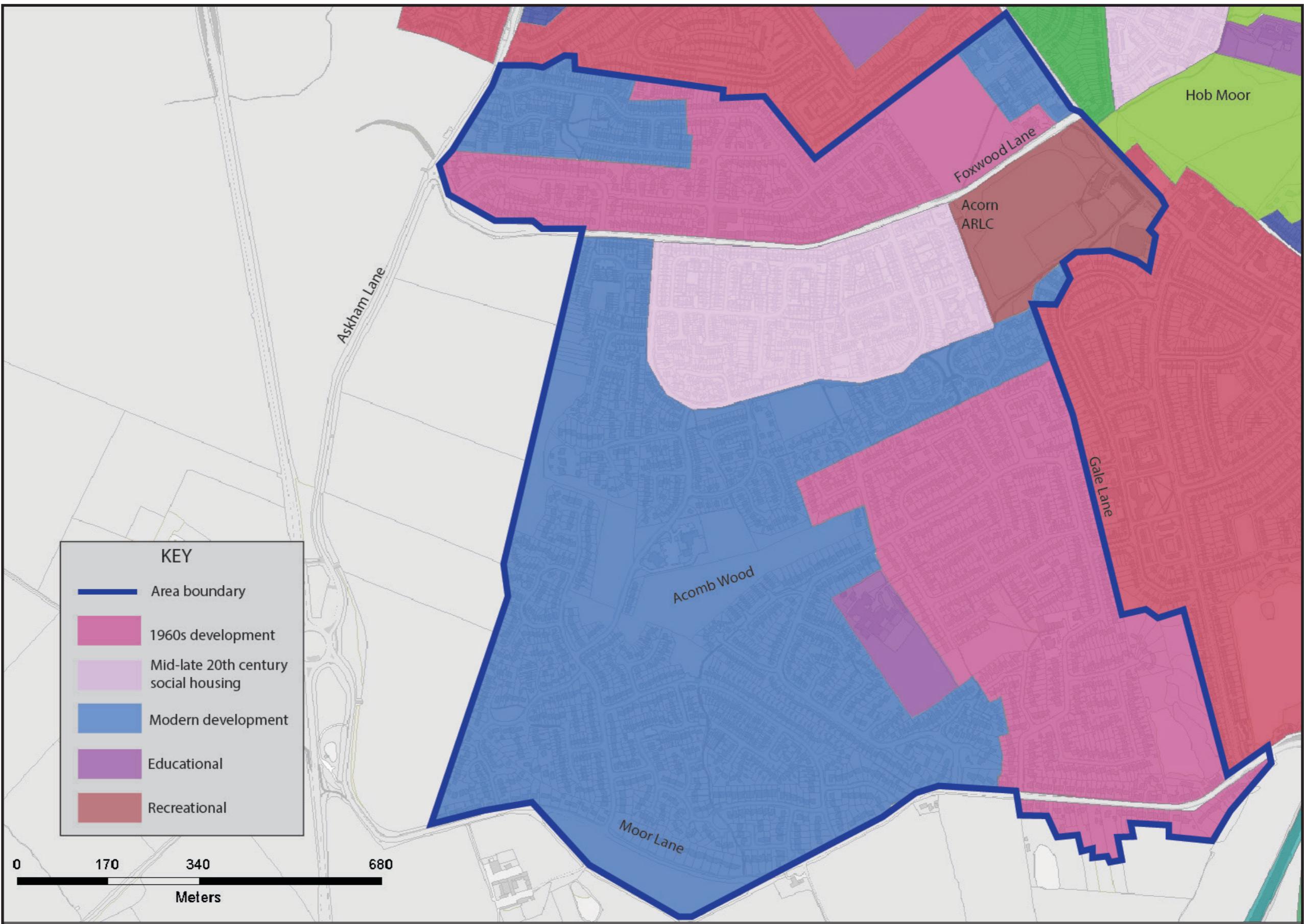
Examples of solar panels in a late 20th century estate.



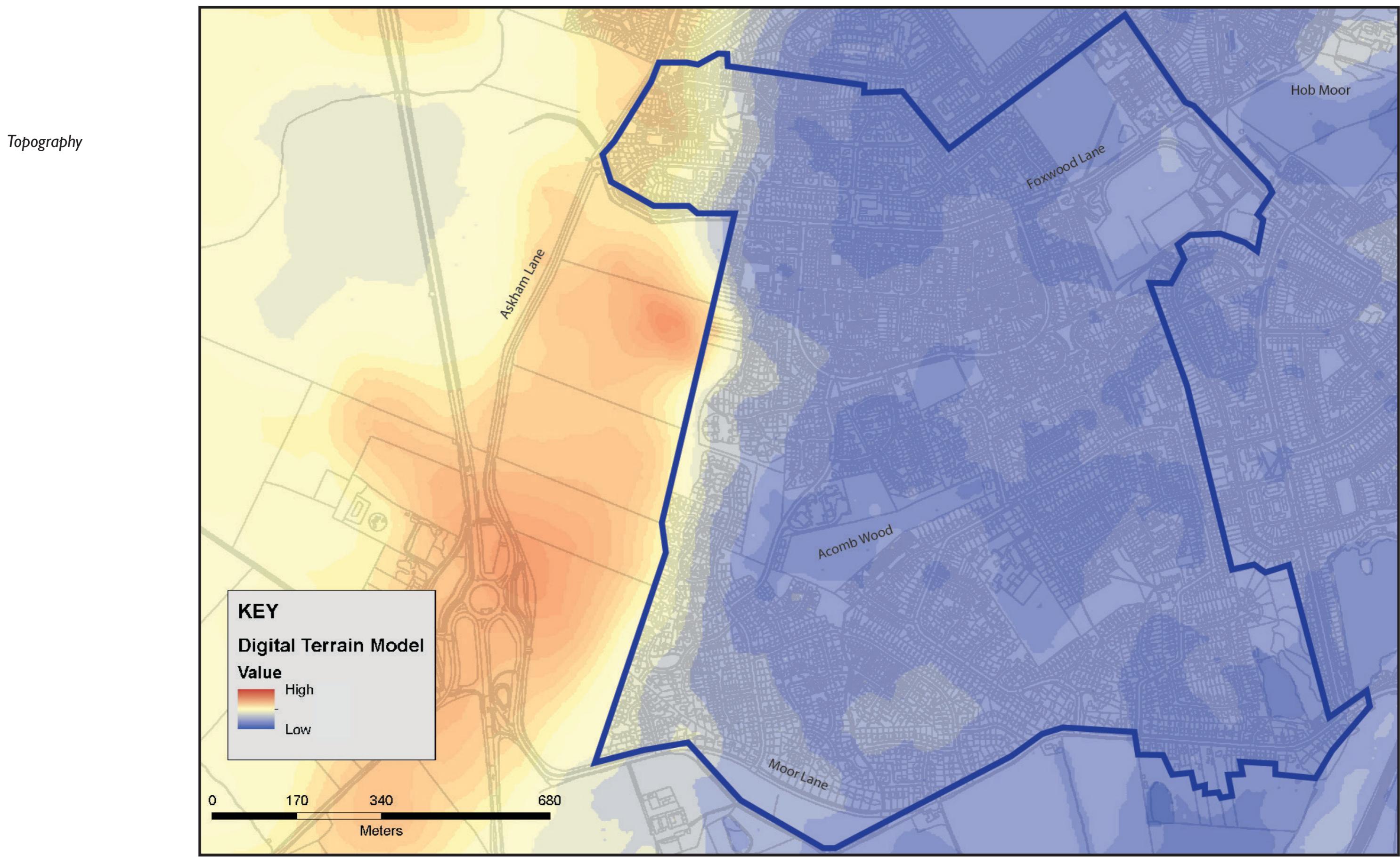
View across open space/play area to early 21st century development which replaced earlier buildings.

## Character Area 76: Maps

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



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Archaeology



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

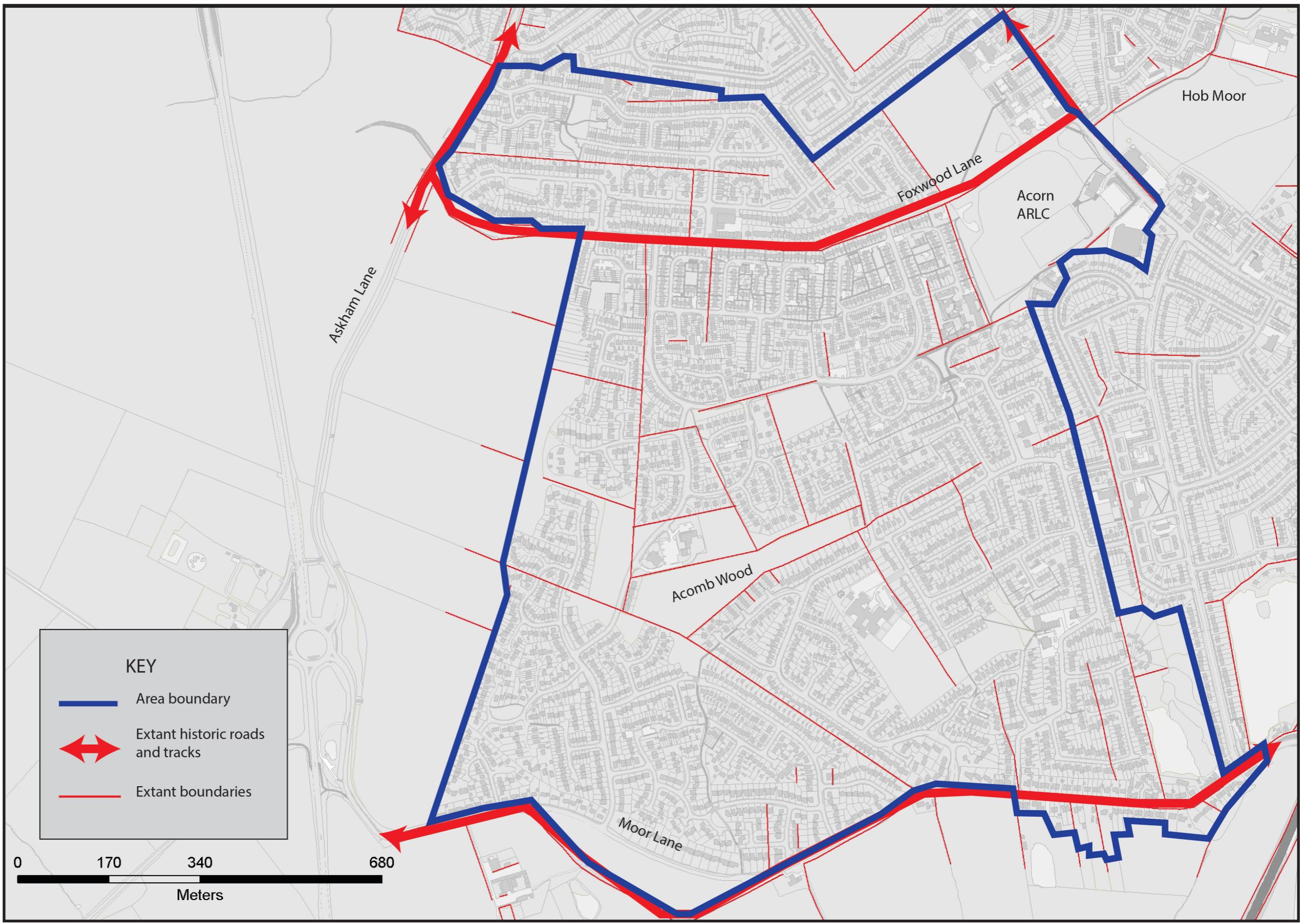


Figure ground map showing the relationship between open space (black) and the built environment



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