



# Devon Historic Coastal and Market Towns Survey

## Cullompton



## Historic Environment Projects



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The views and recommendations expressed in this report are those of Historic Environment Projects and are presented in good faith on the basis of professional judgement and on information currently available.

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## **Cover illustration**

Cullompton, viewed from the south, from Padbrook Hill

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## **Abbreviations**

EH	English Heritage
EUS	Extensive Urban Survey
DCC	Devon County Council
HE	Historic Environment Projects, Cornwall Council
HER	Historic Environment Record
HLC	Historic Landscape Characterisation
HUCA	Historic Urban Character Area
HUCT	Historic Urban Character Type
MDV	Monument Devon (prefix to Devon HER numbers)
OS	Ordnance Survey

## **1 Summary**

Cullompton was assessed during Spring 2013 under the Devon Historic Coastal and Market Towns Survey (DHCMTS). Part of a national programme of Extensive Urban Surveys initiated and supported by English Heritage, DHCMTS is aimed at increasing understanding of 17 medieval towns within the county, prioritised because of their high historical significance and archaeological potential and the immediacy of development pressure. On the site of a Roman settlement, Cullompton is first mentioned in 872 and had a market by 1278. It is the focus of substantial proposals for in-filling, central and edge expansion and Market Town enhancement.

DHCMTS constitutes a deepening of Devon's Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) project, completed in 2004. Standard, easily available sources are used to identify Historic Urban Character Types (HUCTs), which divide a town up on the basis of land use. Incorporating time-depth allows a town's urban extent and uses to be mapped during the different periods of its history.

The HUCTs are then grouped together to define distinct geographical areas – Historic Urban Character Areas (HUCAs) – distinguishable by their specific origins, historical development, plan-form, buildings and degree of survival. HUCAs are the principle tool for describing the character of the historic towns included in the survey. The project results are held digitally in a GIS database (the main project output) as part of the Devon Historic Environment Record and presented in a report for each town (together with a project synthesis to be published at the end of the project).

Located in Mid-Devon, within the Culm Valley, Cullompton is focused on a spur of level ground, dissected by tributary streams, on the western valley side (Figures 1-2). The town's distinctive character reflects its setting and topography and almost 2000 years of historical development (Figures 3, 5-12). Originating in a prehistoric farming landscape, as a proto-urban settlement serving Roman fortifications on St Andrew's Hill, after a period of probable abandonment it became the centre of an early medieval royal estate and the location of a Saxon minster church.

Evolving into a (part organic, part deliberately-planned) medieval market town, Cullompton continued to flourish during the post-medieval period as an important centre for woollen cloth manufacture and a staging post on the main Bristol to Exeter road. After declining in the early 1800s, its fortunes increased during the 19<sup>th</sup> and early-mid 20<sup>th</sup> century, aided by new industries and improved road and rail links. While its commercial and industrial functions have proportionately decreased, Cullompton's role as a service centre for the wider Culm Valley and commuter town for Exeter has grown, and its geographical extent is now five times greater than at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

The varying natural topography now incorporated within Cullompton, coupled with the imprint on its plan-form and fabric of the different pre-urban and urban land uses / phases of development, lends distinctive character to different areas of the town. Its personality - part village, part market town, part industrial settlement, part service centre/commuter belt – is played out across 14 HUCAs (Figure 4), most of which are considered to have medium-high heritage significance, both above and below ground.

Historic Urban Character Area (HUCA)		Heritage significance	
Number	Name	Above ground	Below ground
1	Church and environs	High	High
2	Fore street	High	High
3	Higher Bull Ring	High	High
4	Western back plots	High	High
5	Eastern back plots	High	Medium
6	Exeter Hill	High	Medium
7	Higher Street & Station Road	Medium	Medium
8	Shortlands Lane	Medium	Medium
9	St Andrew's Hill	Medium	High
10	Waterloo & Meadow Lane	Medium	Medium
11	Valley-bottom recreational	Medium	High
12	Valley-bottom industrial	Medium	Medium
13	St George's Well northern expansion	Low	Medium
14	Western residential expansion	Low	Medium

## 2 Town context

The study area encompasses the present (Spring 2013) extent of Cullompton, with the exception of King's Mill Industrial Estate and Honiton Road, which form an area of development to the east of the M5 detached from the main town and with no historic urban roots (Figure 1).

### 2.1 Location and setting

Cullompton is located in Mid Devon, an area of wide, flat-bottomed valleys, separated by relatively low, gently undulating land. It lies within the Culm Valley, which extends from the Blackdown Hills to join the Exe on the outskirts of Exeter. Twelve miles north of Exeter, 20 miles south-west of Taunton and 4 miles south-east of Tiverton, the town is focused on the western valley side, on a spur of raised ground between tributary streams, with the River Culm meandering through its flood plain to the east (Figure 1).

The valley bottom is also dissected by the mainline railway and M5 motorway, running parallel, along the eastern side of the town. This part of Mid Devon is an important transport corridor between Devon and Somerset, and, although it no longer has a railway station (closed 1960s), Cullompton has its own motorway junction (and services, occupying part of the former station site).

The B3181 (part of a much earlier route from Bristol to Exeter) passes north-south through the town centre, and historic roads from Honiton (A373) and Tiverton run in from the east and west, with several lesser roads and lanes radiating out to surrounding farms, hamlets and villages.

### 2.2 Geology and topography

The underlying geology is red marl, sandstone and conglomerate, which make up the Devon Redlands and give rise to distinctive hummocky hills, examples of which frame Cullompton – Paulsland Hill to the north-west, St Andrew's Hill to the west-north-west, Padbrook Hill to the south – and form an important aspect of its topographical setting. Viewed from these hills the town appears to be nestled down onto the Culm valley bottom (cover photo), yet most parts are elevated above it.

The historic core (and main thoroughfare) of the town lies between St Andrew's Hill and the River Culm, occupying a north-south strip of relatively level ground just above the valley floor. While it is backed against the hill on the west, the historic eastern limit of

Cullompton is a sub-channel of the Culm, which was important as the town's mill leat and survives today as a prominent topographical feature (fixation point). To the north and south, the older town limits are defined by the valleys of tributary streams running west-east to join the River Culm near the bottoms of Station Road and Duke Street.

Since the medieval period, Cullompton has expanded well beyond the spur of level ground bounded by these tributaries – down into the two valleys, which provided water for post-medieval and later industry, and into meadows edging onto the main valley floor. Large-scale civic, retail and recreational activity is now focused here, and (particularly during the late 20<sup>th</sup> and early 21<sup>st</sup> centuries) there has been a large amount of mainly residential development to the north and west of the historic core, which has more than trebled Cullompton's size. St Andrew's Hill, previously an area of enclosed rough ground, is now part of the urban area and an extensive swathe of more gently undulating medieval farmland is covered by housing and a new network of associated roads.

Water continues to be an important element of Cullompton - in addition to the river/valley-side setting, there are streams, leats, culverted water supplies or the river itself, encroaching on or running through most parts of the town.

### **2.3 Previous archaeological work**

Thirty-four archaeological 'events' – assessments, geophysical survey, evaluations, watching briefs/excavations - are recorded in the Devon HER as having taken place within the study area (some for the same site).

Not surprisingly, with the exception of the superstore site on the old gasworks in HUCA 12 and infill housing in remnant fields at Hillcrest/Court Farm (HUCA 13), most (geographically) large-scale investigations have been associated with development around the present town edge - such as the swathe of new housing between Knowle and Tiverton roads (HUCA 14), the new health centre west of Willand Road (HUCA 13) and a proposed cemetery extension below St Andrew's Hill (HUCA 9). Where they were present, archaeological remains related to prehistoric and Romano-British farming settlements and medieval/post-medieval fields.

A number of archaeological interventions have also taken place on smaller restoration and development sites within Cullompton's medieval core (HUCAs 1-4) – such as the new community centre site north of St Andrew's Church, at The Walronds (also the subject of a conservation management plan), in back plots either side of Fore Street and, most notably, adjacent to Shortland's Lane (south of New Cut). The most notable discovery has been at the latter location - the remains of a proto-urban Roman settlement and cemetery. Elsewhere, recorded archaeological remains have generally been discrete features and artefact assemblages dating to the post-medieval period.

## **3 Historical development**

This section summarises the physical development of the town through time (Figures 5-12), highlighting the key components and influencing factors, as part of the process of identifying its historic urban character. (It is not intended as a detailed historical narrative.)

Historic Environment Record numbers (prefix MDV) have been included for cross reference with Devon County Council's database of archaeological sites and historic buildings (where site-specific descriptions and bibliographical references can be accessed).

Cross-reference is also made to the historic urban character areas (HUCAs).

## Prehistoric farming landscape

Prehistoric settlement remains (ditches, gullies and pits) have been recorded at two locations within the study area in both cases on sites subsequently occupied during the Roman period (see section 3.2 and Figure 5) - east of Shortlands Lane (HUCA 4; South West Archaeology newsletter October 2011) and West of Willand Road (HUCA 11; MDV74213; Hood 2007). In addition, a Neolithic perforated quartzite hammer is listed as being found 'at Cullompton' (MDV1405).

Further evidence of prehistoric activity has been recorded in the surrounding vicinity. Ring ditches identified from air photo crop marks probably represent the remains of Bronze Age barrows, north-east of Cullompton, near Paulsland Farm, (MDV42623), and on Padbrook Hill, to the south (MDV62056), while a curvilinear enclosure recorded north-west of the town (MDV57896) is likely to be an Iron Age settlement. Other artefact finds include a Mesolithic chert pick from East Culme Farm (MDV67678) and a scatter of flint indicating Neolithic and Bronze Age activity near Verbeer Manor (MDV58840).

The natural resources of this part of the Culm Valley were clearly exploited by hunter-gatherers and early farming communities. This included settlement of the elevated, valley-side plateau that later became the focus of the medieval town.

### 3.1 Roman proto-urban military settlement

During the Roman period, as a result of its proximity to the legionary fortress and *civitas* capital at Exeter and its position overlooking the River Culm, the location became strategically important and the focus of military and related activity. Roman period sites and components within and in the vicinity of the study area are shown in Figure 5.

Most notable are the earthwork and below-ground remains of two (successive) Roman forts and camps on top of St Andrew's Hill, on the north-western edge of the present town (MDV29189; HUCA 9), and, on the plateau below (HUCA 4), a civilian settlement and cemetery - four phases of Roman occupation, with evidence for a planned system of land division, and cremation burials. Discovered east of Shortlands Lane, beneath the former Drill Yard (historically known as 'The Green', now 'Roman's Way' housing development), the site yielded a large and wide ranging assemblage of Roman ceramics and other artefacts, but only limited structural remains, suggesting that it was the southern edge of a more extensive settlement (South West Archaeology newsletter October 2011). It may have extended as far north as the base of St Andrew's Hill, up to (and perhaps across) the line of Tiverton Road.

Paving, uncovered (during the early 20th century) at the junction of Tiverton Road with Fore Street, running at an angle to the latter, may have formed part of a Roman road (MDV30067; HUCA 3), possibly a route linking the Roman fortifications on St Andrew's Hill to the Roman road running along the valley bottom towards Cullompton from the north-east (MDV81042), and perhaps connecting it to the Fosse Way.

Romano-British farming settlements have been revealed by recent development on the north-western edge of the town (Health Centre site, west of Willand Road, MDV74213; HUCA 13) and just west of the study area (north of Knowle Lane, MDV78245). Stray finds within Cullompton include a Roman Coin found at Playing Field (MDV40080; HUCA 11).

Present evidence suggests that alongside the continuation of pre-Roman farming communities, a proto-urban settlement developed on the western part of the site later occupied by the medieval town. Originating during the Iron Age or earlier prehistoric period, this may have evolved in response to the establishment of the fort on St Andrew's Hill during the mid-1<sup>st</sup> century AD, servicing the garrison with local produce and benefitting from the opportunity for increased foreign trade. The late 4<sup>th</sup> century date of the settlement's final occupation phase ties in with it having gone out of use as a result of the fort being abandoned and Roman occupation of Britain coming to an end.

### 3.2 'Columtune' – Saxon royal estate and minster

There is an hiatus of direct evidence in terms of the historical development of Cullompton during the 500 years from the end of the Roman period to the late 9<sup>th</sup> century AD, by which time a Saxon settlement was in existence (MDV71719).

The earliest documentary record is contained in the will (AD 872) of King Alfred the Great, in which he bequeathed 'Columtune' to his younger son, Ethelward, indicating that it was a royal holding. The place name is derived from the Celtic river name *cwlwn* ('looped' or 'winding' river) and *-ton*, suggesting an important early estate centre (Rippon 2012, 171; Gover et al 1931). In 1020 Cullompton passed to Gytha, the Danish princess who married Earl Godwin and mother of King Harold (Cullompton Town Trail leaflet 1999).

At Domesday (1086), Cullompton was not recorded as a separate manor and was probably included as part of the royal manor of Silverton (Rippon 2012, 171). There is, however, a reference to a church at Cullompton, suggesting a pre-conquest minster (ibid). Emerging during the late 7<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> centuries and often located at royal centres, minsters housed groups of priests serving the pastoral needs of the population in their *parochiae* (large territories subsequently divided up into today's smaller local parishes) (ibid, 199).

The presence of a minster church, combined with the place-name evidence and advantageous location (on the banks of the Culm, within a fertile lowland plain), suggests that Cullompton may have been the centre of an early estate, the administrative centre of which later moved to Silverton (ibid, 172). The Domesday Survey records, at 'Colump' (Gover et al, 1931), a church with five prebends (manors which financially supported it) - Upton, Colebrook, Weaver (partly in Plymtree), Henland (in Kentisbeare) and unidentified 'Esse' (MDV16218). The fact that some of these are in neighbouring parishes may be evidence for Cullompton's previous wider influence.

Figure 6 indicates the components of Cullompton's present plan which reflect its Saxon history. (Note that owing to the fact that the GIS town mapping has been largely generated using present-day urban plots, as shown on the 2007 OS MasterMap, the shape and extent of the early medieval settlement is only approximate.)

Analysis of the present-day plan-form and topography, together with the location of St Andrew's Parish Church, indicates a geographical shift in settlement focus, from the Roman site on the west side of Fore Street (below St Andrew's Hill), south-east to the crest of the spur overlooking the River Culm (Figure 6; HUCA 1). It is possible, however, that earlier (Roman) settlement occurred there as well.

The present church is set well back from (south-east of) Cullompton's main (medieval) street, within a sub-rectangular enclosure, formed by the churchyard and the lanes running around its west, south and part of its east side. This has the appearance of a precinct or close, and may be a survival of the layout of a minster church surrounded by Canon's houses, with wide tenement plots behind (Weddell 1987; MDV54301).

A distinctive, curvilinear block of wide plots to the south of the churchyard/precinct hugs the edge of the level ground, with a sharp drop down to the lane below, suggesting the accumulation of occupation material within its boundary. A potsherd retrieved (during the town visit for this study) from an earth section exposed by modern ground works may provide useful dating evidence.

On the north/north-east of the churchyard, the original precinct plan is indistinct owing to later landscaping and vicarage/house construction, but the 1633 Wyndham Map shows that buildings fronted onto the churchyard on all four sides, and the likely northern extent of the minster is defined by the area not impinged on by burgage plots laid out on the west side of Fore Street during the medieval period (Figure 7).

At the death of William the Conqueror (1087), Cullompton church was given to Battle Abbey, along with its prebends (Weddell 1987; MDV54301). The annexation would have deprived the minster church of its income and although the 'college' of priests may have continued to exist for a while, the structure of the foundation would have been undermined, and with the transfer of the church and its endowments to St Nicholas's Priory in Exeter during the late 11<sup>th</sup>/early 12<sup>th</sup> century it probably ceased to be Collegiate (ibid). By the late 12<sup>th</sup> century there was only a single vicar and the church would have become indistinguishable from an ordinary parish church (ibid).

### 3.3 Medieval market town

During the medieval period (c1066-1540) Cullompton's diminishing religious status was replaced by its increasing role as a trading and manufacturing centre for the surrounding farming area. Benefitting from its location next to the River Culm - with water-powered grist, fulling and tucking mills at nearby Higher and Lower Kingsmill from at least the 13<sup>th</sup> century (MDV1415, MDV61497) - it became a base for flour production and for the woollen cloth manufacture for which Devon was famous from the later medieval period.

Named as 'Columton' in 1230 (Gover et al, 1931), the manor was willed by Amicia, Countess of Devon, to Buckland Abbey in 1278 and remained its property until the dissolution of the monasteries (1539), after which it was purchased from the Crown by Sir John St. Leger (Keystone, 2010).

Despite not being documented as a borough until 1640, when it is recorded as 'Burgus', the evidence indicates that Cullompton was a town long before then - a grant was made in 1278 for a market on Thursday and a 3-day fair at the festival of St John the Baptist; in 1317/18 a Tuesday market and fair at the feast of St George was granted (MDV21786; Beresford & Finberg 1973, 90; Morris 2001, 59; Letters et al 2003). Moreover, the town has a plan-form that confirms it as a part organically evolved and part deliberately laid out medieval urban settlement (Figure 7).

The key phases/components of the medieval town (Figure 7) are as follows.

- **Minster / St Andrew's Parish Church** (MDV1402; HUCA 1) - existing minster church, apparently dedicated to St Mary (Reichel 1898), was replaced by a new parish church during 15th century (re-dedication to St Andrew granted 1436); Lane Chapel erected 1526 by wool capitalist (decorated with symbols of the wool trade, including carved angels holding cloth shears); large tower added 1545-9; church restored and partly rebuilt in 19th century.
- **Initial urban development** - likely to have been focused on the area (adjacent to the church/precinct) already settled during the Saxon period.
- **Initial market place** (west of minster/parish church, HUCA 2) - may have been a sub-triangular area formed by: the splayed area, known as Lower Bull Ring (MDV43036), where Exeter Hill and Cockpit Hill merge at the south end of Fore Street; together with Queen Square (formerly a more open space); and the area now occupied by the buildings fronting the east side of Fore Street, at its south end, and the north side of Queen Square.
- **Initial streets, Church Street and Lower Church Street** (HUCA 1) - connecting the minster church precinct to the initial market place.
- **Fore Street** (HUCA 2) - main axis of the medieval town; appears to be a deliberately laid out street, which runs north-south, along and taking advantage of the long axis of the plateau on which the town developed; together with the burgage plots either side of it, this street appears to be a deliberately laid out rectangular block of urban development.

- **Burgage plots** (MDV73707, HUCA 2-5) – rectangular blocks of long, parallel strips fossilised by property boundaries on both sides of Fore Street; on the west side burgage plots front the whole of Fore Street and the southern end of High Street; on the east side this northern limit is defined by the line of a (still partly surviving) west-east leat, and the block of burgage plots extends as far south as the northern edge of the already established early medieval (minster) settlement (HUCA 1).
- **Tiverton Road** (HUCA 3 & 4) – the straight, eastern end of this lane runs through the burgage plots and is part of the planned layout of the medieval town; it may originally have curved around the base of St Andrew's Hill, before being redirected to provide access into the medieval Fore Street, with which it forms a T-junction. Alternatively, the original route may have followed the approximate line of what (in the post-medieval period) became Shortlands Lane.
- **Town Leat and New Cut** (MDV1407; HUCA 2, 3, 4 & 14) – a watercourse for domestic supply granted to the town by the Abbot of Buckland in 1356; water rising in the hills 2½ miles to the west flowed as a stream into a pond at Shortlands, from where it ran along several open channels into the centre of town (including along what is now New Cut), and then both ways along Fore Street and to other parts of the town; covered over since the 1960s, but line still detectable in places. (Morris 2001,86-7)
- **Later market place, Higher Bull Ring** (MDV43869; HUCA 3) – wide lozenge-shaped area formed by the 'bowing' out of a street (High Street) used as a market area; this market place may date back to the late medieval period or be of early post-medieval origin (Figure 8).
- **Possible late medieval tenement plots** (HUCA 3) – shorter parallel plots fronting both sides of Higher Bull Ring, to the north of the burgage plots; may be late medieval in origin or early post-medieval (Figure 8).

The remaining land within the study area (present town extent) would have been covered in strip fields and other agricultural enclosures, with two farmsteads - Padbrook (MDV15447) and Padbrookhill - located on the south, and water meadows on the valley floor to the west providing rich summer pasture.

### 3.4 Post-medieval processing and trading centre

During the post-medieval period 'Culliton' (1675, Gover et al, 1931) continued to flourish as an important processing and trading centre for surrounding farms and villages. Woollen manufacturing increased, with Cullompton, like other Devon towns, manufacturing kersey for sale in London and abroad (MDDC 2003). Cloth produced was initially sent to Exeter for finishing, but by the early 17<sup>th</sup> century speciality kersey stockings were being produced in the town (Keystone 2010). Other industries were established – leather working, papermaking, bell founding – taking advantage of the ample water supply from the River Culm and numerous side streams.

The town also benefitted from passing trade resulting from its location on the main Bristol to Exeter post road, along which it extended for '4 furlongs' according to Ogilby's 1675 atlas, no doubt being one of the places 'accommodated with fitting entertainment for travellers' (White 2005, 90, 96-7). From 1753 the road, which entered the town on the north via Higher Street and continued on to Exeter up Padbrook Hill, was improved and managed by the Exeter Turnpike Trust, with a tollhouse (MDV63158) opposite the Bell Inn. Other routes also converged on Cullompton, including the road from Tiverton, maintained from 1767 by the Tiverton Turnpike Trust, with a toll chain/gate and house near North House, west of the post-medieval town (MDV63956), and the Honiton Road to the east, on which there was another tollhouse (MDV24515).

Figure 8 shows the Cullompton's form and extent by c1800. Much of the commercial core shown is depicted on the 1633 Wyndham Map, by which time development had expanded beyond the church area and Fore street into High Street, and buildings had started to extend out from the centre along the roads and lanes leading into the town – Higher Street and Lower Street to the north, Tiverton Road to the west, Exeter Hill, Cockpit Hill/Duke Street and Crow Green to the south (with the suggestion from the 1633 map that by that date Shortlands Lane was also in existence, running along the back of the medieval burghage plots, to the west of Fore Street).

At the southern end of the town, the extension of roadside frontage down back lanes (Church Street, Lower Church Street, Cockpit Hill, Way's Lane, Lower Mill Lane) and the widening of several junctions (Lower Bull Ring, Queen Square, Pound Square) created two distinctive, detached blocks of development - to the west of the church and at the triangular junction of Cockpit Hill with Exeter Hill.

Over the next century, as Cullompton's economy grew, the density of development would undoubtedly have increased, but the only significant change to the plan-form between 1633 and Donn's 1765 map was New Street. Laid out in a straight, diagonal line from the top of Exeter Hill to the lower part of Shortlands Lane, this was a planned single-phase development associated with the expanding woollen industry.

By the time of the c1802 OS surveyor's drawings, however, further accretive expansion had taken place around the older centre – to the north as far as Goblin Lane; on the west along Shortlands Lane; and, on the south, down Exeter Hill into the tributary valley, on the other side of which an additional settlement area was forming around the Bell Inn. To the east, the Mill Leat created a linear physical boundary (although the valley-slope between it and the back of Fore Street remained largely undeveloped), with the routes leading down to the higher and middle mills adding two new lanes to the town plan.

The key physical changes/components of the post-medieval period are as follows.

### **Commercial /mixed**

- The eastern side of the initial medieval market place was in-filled with buildings fronting onto the south end of Fore Street and rebuilding and back plot development took place along the rest of the street (HUCA 2).
- The commercial core of the town grew to encompass the whole of the area from the top of Lower Street (now Station Road) in the north to the top of Exeter Hill in the south, with three distinct market areas operating in conjunction with each other:
  1. Higher Bull Ring (MDV43869; HUCA 3) was a wide area for trading sheep and cattle driven in from the surrounding countryside.
  2. Fore Street (HUCA 2) was where produce was made and sold – the street was lined with coaching inns and merchants' houses (with back courts containing stables, woollen workshops and workers housing); most notable is the stretch of largely unaltered c1600s street frontage (of large wool merchants' houses - The Walronds, MDV1410, and Manor House, MDV1408) at the north end of Fore Street, on its western side; a market cross (MDV1411) is shown on the 1633 and 1802 mapping in the centre of the street, half way along its length; and the shambles (meat and corn market) is depicted as a long thin building running down the middle of the street towards its southern end.
  3. Lower Bull Ring (MDV43036; HUCA 2), including Queen Square, appears to have been a secondary livestock market, with Pound Square providing an additional area for holding animals (for market) and the name Cockpit Hill (MDV43037) suggesting a location for cock fights.

## Industrial

### Mills

- Higher, Middle and Lower Mills (with an associated mill pond, MDV69871) – known as Cullompton Mills, along with Higher Kingsmill (2 mills) and Lower Kingsmill to the west of the study area; the six mills are mentioned in a mortgage deed of 1700 (Morton 2007).
- Higher Mill, also called Town Mill (MDV18703; HUCA 5), and Lower Mill (MDV18704; HUCA 1) were used for grinding corn; Middle Mill (MDV18702; HUCA 5) had two wheels, one for corn, one for leather processing.
- Cullompton Leat (MDV65780; HUCA 5, 7, 9, 11 & 12), which takes its water from the Spratford Stream (a tributary of the River Culm), fed the three mills (Higher, Middle & Lower) on the western side of the town from at least the early 17<sup>th</sup> century (Lower Mill and part of leat shown on the 1633 Wyndham Map).
- Higher Kingsmill (MDV1415) had two (woollen) tucking mills in 1608 and was used for making paper from c1729; Lower Kingsmill (MDV61497; MDV72857) in 1674 included 'three water greist mills one fullinge mill one paper mill' (the earliest reference to a paper mill on the Culm), with 'Lower and Higher Rackfield' (indicating areas of racks on which fullled cloth was stretched) recorded in 1792.

### Woollen industry

- Shortlands woollen mill (MDV15449; HUCA 8) - William Upcott's serge manufactory, constructed on the western edge of the town (late 1700s?)
- Possible woollen factory/workshops, north end of Higher Street, opposite Goblin Lane (HUCA 7) – line of small buildings on south side of lane to Court Farm (named as 'The College') also depicted on the 1802 OS drawings & Tithe Map, may represent an earlier part of the woollen factory north of lane on 1904 OS map.

### Bell founding

- Bell foundry (MDV15448; Pugsley 1986a, 20-21) – 1746 Thomas Bilbie established 'The West of England Church Bell-foundry' in Cullompton; over 400 bells hanging in Devonshire church towers were cast and founded there (including 8 of the 10 bells in St Andrew's Parish Church); 1815 business sold to William Pannell and was continued in the town, until moved to Exeter by his son in 1850; over the years various sites used by the foundry, including Almshouses building (HUCA 7), Methodist Court (HUCA 2), Middle Mill (HUCA 5).

## Civic

- Almshouses (MDV11447, HUCA 7) - on east side of Higher Street, north of Lower Street; founded 1522 for six poor men, by wealthy cloth merchant, John Trott.
- Workhouse (HUCA 4) – appears to have stood in a back plot west of Fore Street, on south side of New Cut (on the site now occupied by the Royal British Legion hall); disused by 1839 (Cullompton Town Trail leaflet; Leonard 1994, 6).

## Religious

From the late 17<sup>th</sup> century non-conformism grew in the town.

- Unitarian Chapel, Pound Square (HUCA 6) - 1698, rebuilt 1912 (Cherry and Pevsner 1991, 304).
- Baptist chapel, High Street (MDV15354, HUCA 3) – 1743, rebuilt 1858.
  - John Wesley first preaching in the town in 1748.
- Wesleyan chapel, New Cut (MDV15355, HUCA 2) - 1764, replaced 1806, restored 1872 following a fire.

## Residential / mixed

- By the early 17<sup>th</sup> century (1633 Wyndam Map) individual cottages and short rows lined the roads leading into the town centre (Exeter Hill, Crow Green, Duke Street, Tiverton Road, Higher and Lower Street).
- The area either side of Exeter Hill (HUCA 6) started to develop as a mixed residential and industrial area, with New Street (HUCA 6) being constructed in the early-mid 18<sup>th</sup> century to provide additional housing (with back yard work space) for those employed (by Upcott's) as home workers in the woollen industry.
- A similar area of workers' housing and larger houses with (woollen and other) workshops behind started to develop at the north end of the town (HUCA 7), along Higher Street and down into the top of Station Road (previously known as Lower Street).
- In contrast, the area immediately west and to the south of the parish church (HUCA 1) took on a village-like appearance, as it became transformed into a genteel residential enclave, away from commercial and industrial activity.
- Vicarage (HUCA 1) - built north of church, with grounds occupying area of early medieval tenement plots, transforming it into landscaped garden; building depicted on 1633 Wyndham Map.
- Other (later post-medieval) large detached houses, set in their own grounds – Court House, on the northern edge of the town (HUCA 7); Brooke House on the south (HUCA 6).
- On the southern edge of the town, a linear settlement area along (mainly the west) side of Exeter Road had begun forming by at least the early 17<sup>th</sup> century (Wyndham Map 1633). With the Bell Inn forming its northern end point, it would probably have served as a resting place for travellers into the town, especially at market times and when the road into the town was blocked by floodwater from the adjacent tributary stream or the River Culm itself. During the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the location of a tollhouse here would have made this a natural stopping point.
- Another edge of town settlement area was Waterloo, a farm and collection of cottages at the south-west end of Duke Street.

In 1695 Celia Fiennes described 'Culimton' as 'a good little market Town' (Morris 1947). By the end of the post-medieval period it had evolved into more of an industrial settlement. Yet it still retained its country-town feel, surrounded by farmland and (according to the 1802 mapping) with orchards occupying most back plots and gardens.

### 3.5 19<sup>th</sup> century - decline and revival

Figures 9 and 10 illustrate the extent and form of Cullompton during the early and later 1800s. The limited expansion beyond the post-medieval town limits was mainly the result of industrial development on its northern and southern edges.

By the early 1800s the commercial centre of the town seems to have been in a state of decline, being described in 1809 as 'principally of one old street badly paved and the centre much disfigured and obstructed by some old shambles', with the lack of any sewer system and resulting pollution of water supplies leading to insanitary conditions and frequent outbreaks of typhoid and malaria (MDDC 2003).

Woollen cloth manufacturing continued into the 19<sup>th</sup> century, with 60 weavers and many spinners being employed in 1816 at the Shortlands mill, which by the 1840s was the biggest employer in the town (Morris 2001, 89). In 1838 Cullompton still had 500 looms, now used to produce (poorer quality) serge cloth (MDDC 2003). Both Middle Mill (HUCA 5) and Lower Mill (HUCA 1) were adapted for woollen cloth production in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. However, by the late 1800s one had become an axle works and the other was being used to grind animal feed, and in 1869 Shortlands closed, presumably

as a result of the mechanisation of the weaving industry. Although woollen manufacture became a lesser part of Cullompton's economy, a (mechanised) branch factory was established by Fox Brothers in 1900, on the northern edge of the town, opposite Goblin Lane (HUCA 7) and around the same time there was a small-scale revival of the hand-weaving industry, in the stables of Heyford House (HUCA 3), which evolved into the machine-knitting of garments (Morris 2001, 89).

Leather production gradually became the major industry in the town, helping to revive its fortunes. Large-scale tanneries were built on either side of the road at the bottom of Exeter Hill (Crow Green Tannery, MDV1406, HUCA 6), north of Court House (Court Tannery, HUCA 7), and (later) further to the east (HUCA 12). Papermaking continued (at Kings Mill), changing from hand- to machine-made in the 1890s, and a range of other industries also developed, such as: cabinet making, with Luxton's Furniture Factory occupying two sites in Duke Street (HUCA 6); a twine works in Goblin Lane (MDV69870; HUCA 7); East Culme Brick and Tile Works (off Knowle Lane; MDV78243, MDV67483). There were also two smithies in the town - one on Tiverton Road, the other on Higher Mill Lane, HUCA 3 (MDDC 2003).

The town also benefitted from significant improvements to the transport infrastructure. From 1813, the Cullompton Turnpike Trust established a new route to Exeter, replacing the earlier hilly Exeter Turnpike Trust route (up Padbrook Hill and via Bradninch and Killerton) with a more level one via Broad Clyst (now part of the B3181). In 1843-4 the Bristol and Exeter Railway, the southern extension of Brunel's Great Western Railway line from London to Bristol, was extended into Devon, passing just east of Cullompton, with a station being built north-east of the town (MDV22421). In addition to accommodating passengers, Cullompton Station became an important trading centre, with coal and goods yards, cattle trucks, a milk train and other local produce (such as bales of skins) exported by rail (Morris 2001, 83). As well as the development beginning to creep eastwards out from the town, along what was now Station Road, the Railway Inn was built west of the station.

The wealth, opportunity and status gained from revived industrial activity and improved transport links led to redevelopment of the commercial centre (High Street, Fore Street, top of Exeter Hill), with remodelling of older fronts and insertion of shop windows, and the erection of some new buildings, such as a police station (1898) and several banks in Higher Bull Ring. The latter continued to be the location for sheep and cattle markets and for fairs, while the southern end of Fore Street remained the focus for the sale of meat and other produce, with the Shambles being removed in 1811 and a replacement Market House established in the former Court House (MDDC 2003; Cullompton Town Trail leaflet 1999).

Other civic, religious and residential additions and improvements took place elsewhere in the town. Cullompton School was built c1870 at the top of Exeter Hill (HUCA 6) and in 1865 a town gas works (MDV73788) in Station Road (HUCA 12). A public cemetery, with two (Church of England & Non-conformist) mortuary chapels (MDV76964-6), was laid out on the western town edge, in Tiverton Road, the site also of an Independent chapel, erected in 1830 and later converted to assembly rooms (HUCA 9). St Andrew's Parish Church was restored (1848-50), and the vicarage (1820), together with Church Street and houses to the east of the churchyard were all rebuilt in a grander style (HUCA 1).

Lesser scaled, rows of industrial housing continued to be built adjacent to the edge-of-town factories and in connection with the building of the train station (Railway Terrace), and in 1839 a catastrophic fire led to the rebuilding of most of the worker's cottages in New Street and Crow Green, as well as many houses in Lower Bull Ring (thatched roofs and cob walls being replaced with slate and rendered stone and brick).

At the end of the century, more substantial terraces were constructed for the wealthier inhabitants of Cullompton, including Belle Vue Terrace on Station Road. Located just above the valley floor, at right angles to the road, with front gardens running down to

the Mill Leat, this would have formed an attractive gateway into the town from the railway station. Beyond the town, along the approaching roads and lanes were wayside cottages, in places forming small hamlets, such as at St George's Well, to the north.

The revival of Cullompton by the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century is indicated by a 1910 account, which states that 'the houses for the most part are clean and smart in appearance, and the side streets and recently built terraces add considerably to the beauty of the town' (MDDC 2003).

### **3.6 20<sup>th</sup>/21<sup>st</sup> century service and commuter town**

During the 20<sup>th</sup> century Cullompton expanded dramatically beyond its former limits (Figures 11 and 12).

From the early 1900s commercial and industrial development extended out across the valley bottom to the railway (HUCA 12). This included the cattle market (relocated in 1918 from Higher Bull Ring to a field behind the Railway Inn), Culm Leather Dressing Works (established 1921 beside the station) and a sawmill on the east bank of the Mill Leat. Later in the century trading/industrial estates developed on the valley floor south of Station Road (an area now, in part, occupied by a large supermarket).

Smaller-scale commercial/industrial ventures sprung up elsewhere, including the 1930s Cullompton Hotel, at the southern entrance to the town (HUCA 14). Further towards the town, Selwood's Tannery at Crow Green continued in operation until gutted by a fire in 1958, since when parts of the site have been occupied by a petrol station and supermarket (HUCA 6). Some small-scale light industry (including a printing works) still takes place in the northern part of the town, though the Woollen factory there closed in 1977 and Court Tannery is now a farm (HUCA 7).

Twentieth century alterations to the regional/national rail and road infrastructure have had a great impact. While direct rail links were withdrawn by the closure of Cullompton Station in 1964, a road bypass completed in 1969 was upgraded in 1974 to part of the M5, with the town having its own motorway exit (and services on the former railway station site since 1999). As a result, Cullompton has become an important commuter town for Exeter, significantly increasing its population.

In addition, its role as a service centre for the wider Culm Valley area has grown and diversified over the century. During the 1930s a new primary school was built on the south-east side of St Andrew's Hill (HUCA 9), with the 1960s seeing the opening of Cullompton Secondary School to the east of Exeter Road (HUCA 10) and Willow Bank Primary School on Crow Bridge Road (HUCA 14). In addition to schools, the town's civic, recreational and social facilities now include a police station (HUCA 7); fire station (HUCA 8); large sports centre (HUCA 10); area of extensive playing fields, bordering on the Mill Leat, now a recreational walkway (HUCA 11); modern community centre next to the church (HUCA 1) and a modern library and community learning hub (The Hayridge Centre) on a site formerly occupied by a magistrates court and health centre site (HUCA 6); with the new Culm Valley Integrated Centre For Health (HUCA 13), as well as a GP surgery and vets practice (HUCA 7); and care homes – the old vicarage (HUCA 1), Court House (HUCA 2) and at the southern tip of the town (HUCA 11).

Post-war housing estates were laid out on the slopes of St Andrew's Hill and in former orchards and farmland to the west of Cullompton (HUCA 9 and 14), with linear roadside development and estate housing also occurring along Willand Road and at St George's Well on the northern edge of the town (HUCA 13). Later 20<sup>th</sup> (and early 21<sup>st</sup>) century residential development has further increased the western town extent, created a spear-head of expansion to the north (HUCA 13) and wrapped around the town's southern and south-eastern edge (HUCA 10). Within the historic core of the town, the backs of former burgage plots on both sides of Fore Street and Higher Street have also been progressively infilled with houses during the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Twentieth/Twenty-first century religious additions include: the 1929 St Boniface Roman Catholic Church at the bottom of Shortlands Road (HUCA 8); Hebron Evangelical Church in Queen's Square, originally 1962, rebuilt 1980s (HUCA 6); modern place of worship at the west end of Tiverton Road (HUCA 14). Adjacent to the latter is an electrical sub-station, with other utilities (sewage/water) located east of Millennium Way (HUCA 12) and on the town's southern edge (HUCA 11).

Several new roads – St Andrews Road, Shortlands Road, Swallow Way, Langland's Road, Forcefield Road, Meadow Lane, Millennium Way – have been laid out to provide access to the expanded town, which now covers five times the area that it did at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

## **4 Historic Urban Character**

Cullompton's natural topography, coupled with the imprint on its plan-form and fabric of previous land use and over a 1000 years of continuous development, have resulted in a varied historic urban character - part village, part market town, part industrial settlement, part service centre/commuter belt – played out across 14 distinct areas (Figure 4).

The village-like character of the area around St Andrew's (HUCA 1), overlooking remnant meadow-land on the valley bottom below (HUCA 11), belies the fact that is part of the urban environment.

Fore Street, Higher Bull Ring and their back plots (HUCAs 2-5), however, have the enclosed and tightly-developed appearance and varied architecture of a medieval town core that has undergone successive rebuilding (including in response to at least four disastrous fires that damaged the town during the 17<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> centuries - Pugsley 1986a, 14-15).

In contrast is the more homogenous architecture of the areas of later post-medieval and 19<sup>th</sup> century industrial expansion to the south and north of the centre (HUCA 6 and 7). The slither of Shortlands Lane (HUCA 8) on the west, despite 20<sup>th</sup> century rebuilding, still references Cullompton's earliest factory, while the more open-plan character of HUCA 12 reflects the larger-scale industrial and commercial development encouraged by the routing of the mainline railway, and (over a century later) the M5 along the eastern side of the town.

Twentieth and 21<sup>st</sup> century social and private estate housing, together with associated civic (educational, health, recreational) facilities, defines the character of most of the rest of the town – a large swathe wrapping around its north, west and south sides (HUCAs 9, 10, 13 and 14), although St Andrew's Hill is a prominent and still largely undeveloped element of the urban topography.

Flowing through these disparate parts is the network of water courses (river, tributaries, Mill Leat, other channels and culverts) fundamentally important to Cullompton's historic development, influencing its location, supplying water to its inhabitants and powering its industries. The significance of this integrated water system cannot be overestimated and surviving elements are best understood as part of the overall character of the town, rather than just within the individual character areas.

Another distinctive characteristic of Cullompton is that rather than having a well-defined civic and communal focal point, these functions have shifted through time and are spread throughout the historic core. This shifting pattern, together with the lack of a predominant building material or phase, makes it difficult to give an overall architectural summary for the town; this is best achieved through the individual character area descriptions.

The 14 Historic Urban Character Areas (HUCAs) are described below, together with a statement of their (Low, Medium or High) above- and below-ground heritage significance, and photographs to illustrate general character. Relevant Historic Environment Record numbers (prefix MDV) have been included for cross reference with Devon County Council's Historic Environment Record (database of archaeological sites and historic buildings).

### Church and environs (HUCA 1)



St Andrew's Church, from Church Street



View SE across churchyard to Gravel Walk



Cullompton Community Centre



View towards church from Lower Mill

#### 4.1.1 Historic character

HUCA 1 encompasses the projecting spur overlooking the River Culm that was the focus of Cullompton's early medieval settlement, occupying the level crest and extending down gently sloping land to the Mill Leat (which forms its eastern edge) and Lower Mill Lane (on the south).

The Saxon origins of this area of the town are partly preserved in its plan-form - the sub-rectangular churchyard and surrounding lanes (Lower Church Street, Gravel Walk) probably reflecting the precinct of the minster church (MDV54301), with the wide, parallel garden strips to the south likely to be remnants of the tenement plots (behind Canon's houses) that once surrounded the early medieval church. The spur is now crowned by the dominant presence of the 15<sup>th</sup> century St Andrew's Parish Church (MDV1402).

Set back from the medieval market area (HUCA 2) and away from post-medieval industry, the church environs evolved during the post-medieval period into a quiet residential enclave, including a vicarage standing in extensive landscaped grounds. The area's genteel detachment was re-enforced by late 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century rebuilding in

the relatively polite and classically-influenced style of the vicarage, houses to the east of the churchyard and along the roads leading out to the Lower Bull Ring and Church Street. The latter was formed into an attractive formal approach from Fore Street, framing the view of the church tower.

This character was reinforced by later 19<sup>th</sup> century Queen Anne and Arts and Crafts houses and extensions. The later 20<sup>th</sup> century saw more detached housing colonise the lower slopes, beside the Mill Leat and Lower Mill Lane, with the mill, itself (MDV18704), first recorded in 1633 and used until 1968 for grinding corn and woollen cloth manufacture, now a substantial waterside residence.

In general, HUCA 1 has a small-village church-town feel, with narrow streets feeding into the central, open, churchyard area from the west and south-west, and the green and leafy grounds of the former vicarage (now a nursing home) and spacious gardens of other detached residences creating a rural appearance. Even the building of a large modern community centre along the northern side of the churchyard has not significantly diminished the village-green appearance of the latter. From within HUCA 1, its urban context is hinted at by glimpses of Fore Street, down Church Street.

#### 4.1.2 Heritage significance (above ground)

**High** – HUCA 1 is the location of the Saxon minster from which the market town later developed, preserving evidence of these pre-urban origins in its plan-form and its set-apart, village-like character. This is focused around the medieval parish church, the size of which, together with the quality and richness of its 16th century tower and Lane Aisle makes it significant in its own right and as a reflection of the continuing wealth of the town during the post-medieval period. The surrounding buildings emphasise this high status and attendant good quality of design – confirming the area's intrinsic aesthetic values and its significance as an indicator of Cullompton's past wealth and success and continuing role as a centre for the surrounding countryside.

#### 4.1.3 Heritage significance (below ground)

**High** – A high proportion of HUCA 1 is undeveloped land (including the graveyard, vicarage grounds, back plots behind Gravel Walk and gardens above the mill leat) and buried archaeological remains of the early medieval minster, together with medieval and later urban activity are likely to be uncovered during any (re)development. There is potential also for earlier settlement remains (a potsherd retrieved during the town visit for this study, from an earth section exposed by modern ground works, may be of Roman date).

## 4.2 Fore street (HUCA 2)



View northwards up Fore Street



Alley into back court, west side of Fore Street



Lower Bull Ring, looking north into Fore Street      Queen Square, from its east side

#### 4.2.1 Historic character

HUCA 2 consists of Fore Street, the historic commercial core of the town and its main axis since the medieval period, when it was laid out as a piece of planned urban development. It incorporates remnant burgage plots on either side, and at its southern end an earlier open market associated with the Minster church - a sub-triangular area formed by Lower Bull Ring, Queen's Square, and the area now occupied by buildings fronting the east of Fore Street, either side of the entrance into Church Street (Figure 7).

Developed and rebuilt over time in response to the town's economic fortunes and after fires, Fore Street's plan-form (and to a considerable degree its standing fabric) reflects the typical post-medieval sub-division of wider burgage plots into narrower tenements, with merchants' houses and coaching inns occupying the street front and long, thin back courts (containing workers' housing, workshops, stables and other ancillary buildings), accessed through covered alleyways.

There is an unusually well-surviving stretch of early 17th century streetscape on the western side of the street's northern end - formed by the Manor Hotel (MDV1408), The Walronds (MDV1410) and the Merchant's House (MDV43721) - adjacent to the site of a (no longer existing) market cross (MDV1411). The fact that these buildings weren't significantly rebuilt in later centuries may relate to a shift in commercial focus.

Elsewhere, the street has undergone more successive remodelling and rebuilding, with a preponderance of Victorian (and later) shop fronts, though evidence of earlier phases can be detected in many of the buildings or their back courts. The overriding sense is of a street frontage containing more complexity and time depth than may at first appear.

Running north-south in a straight line along a plateau of level ground, this relatively narrow street has an almost unbroken frontage on both sides, with many three (and some four) storeyed buildings, creating a strong sense of enclosure. Views are largely along the length of the street, although towards its southern end Church Street provides a stunning view of St Andrew's Church and Middle Mill Lane, New Cut and shorter alleyways provide glimpses into back plots. At either end, views open out as Fore Street fans out into Higher Bull Ring (HUCA 3) to the north and splays open into the converging tops of Exeter Hill and Cockpit Hill to the south.

During the post-medieval period, the open market place at the southern end of Fore Street was reduced by encroachment and infill - the (no longer surviving) 'Shambles' market house was built in the centre of the street; Lower Bull Ring (MDV43036), with Queen Square, where there was an animal pound, appears to have functioned as a secondary livestock market; and Cockpit Hill (MDV43037) became a location for cock fights. The pound was built over during the 19<sup>th</sup> century and an Evangelical Church added to the north side of Queen's Square in 1962, and although the still relatively-

open spaces hark back to the area's previous use, they are mainly fringed with houses; bustling market activity having been replaced by a more subdued residential character.

#### 4.2.2 Heritage significance (above ground)

**High** - HUCA 2 encapsulates the planned medieval town, where its original plan-form can still be understood; the standing fabric reflects the function of this particular street as being the original commercial core, with continuity of use to the present day. It is the main axis connecting the dispersed elements of the rest of the historic town, and the range of building dates, and variety and quality of materials and detail reflects the intrinsic value of the standing fabric, as well as it providing evidence of the area's continuing primary function.

#### 4.2.3 Heritage significance (below ground)

**High** - Although densely developed as continuous frontage, there are former market and back plot areas within HUCA 2 which are not built over, and any (re)development is likely to reveal buried archaeological remains of medieval and/or later urban activity, with some potential for earlier (prehistoric to early medieval) settlement remains to be uncovered.

### 4.3 Higher Bull Ring (HUCA 3)



Higher Bull Ring, from the south



West side of High Street



Cottage row, west end Tiverton Road



Higher Bull Ring, from north

#### **4.3.1 Historic character**

HUCA 3 is focused on High Street, 'bowed' out to form the wide, lozenge-shaped area known as Higher Bull Ring – a market place for trading sheep and cattle (MDV43869; Figure 8). High Street continues the line of Fore Street northwards, bending towards the north-east in order to keep taking advantage of the plateau of relatively level ground along the valley side.

The rectangular block of medieval burgage plots laid out along Fore Street (MDV73707) appears to have extended into the southern end of High Street, although subsequent sub-division and infilling has blurred the plan-form here. It is thus difficult to be precise about the exact northern limit of the planned medieval market street (HUCA 2). Tiverton Road runs parallel with the south side of these plots, before making a T-junction with Fore Street/High Street; to the north, the plots stop short of St Andrew's School, where the more steeply sloping land of St Andrew's Hill would have truncated their continuation.

The shorter parallel plots fronting both sides of High Street to the north of the burgage plots, appear to be later in date – representing late medieval or early post-medieval expansion, along with the Higher Bull Ring market place (Figure 8). The line of the (now covered) town water supply can be traced in the pavement on the west side of the street.

As an extension of Cullompton's commercial centre, High Street/Higher Bull Ring has the same long back courts (used for stabling, manufacturing and subsidiary housing during the post-medieval and later periods) as Fore Street. The street frontage, however, has evolved differently, with substantial Georgian buildings (some with later shop fronts inserted), interspersed with earlier inns and houses and a Baptist chapel. While this part of town continued to be the location for sheep and cattle markets and fairs until the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, during the 19<sup>th</sup> century it acquired additional financial and civic functions (including several banks and a police station), with additional notes of refinement and ceremony provided by the planting of ornamental trees along both sides of the street and the erection of the war memorial in 1920 (MDV71247).

The defining character of HUCA 3 is the generous spaciousness of its streetscape and the architectural scale, variety and quality of the buildings that line it. Internal views are much more open than in Fore Street, with external lines of sight provided by Higher Mill Lane and St Andrew's Road (a 20<sup>th</sup> century widening of an earlier alleyway). At its northern end, Higher Bull Ring pinches in again, before meeting the junction with Higher Street and Station Road (HUCA 7). Here, as in Tiverton Road, larger-scale higher-status buildings give way to rows of modest workers cottages.

#### **4.3.2 Heritage significance (above ground)**

**High** – HUCA 3 is a really good place to experience the size and form of a late medieval /early post-medieval bowed market street and to see within the buildings lining the street how this area was the focus of 18<sup>th</sup> century commercial expansion beyond the medieval Fore Street, to the point where it attracted 19<sup>th</sup> century and later financial and civic functions.

#### **4.3.3 Heritage significance (below ground)**

**High** – Although the street frontage is continuously developed, there remain many undeveloped back yards and plots, together with the open space of the wide bow-shaped street itself, Any (re)development within HUCA 3 is likely to reveal buried archaeological remains of medieval and/or later urban activity, with some potential for evidence of earlier (prehistoric to early medieval) settlement.

## 4.4 Western back plots (HUCA 4)



Open garden area behind The Walronds



New Cut, route of medieval water channel



Vickery Close, 20<sup>th</sup> century infill development



Recent housing on the Roman settlement site

### 4.4.1 Historic character

HUCA 4 is defined by the back of the medieval burgage plots (MDV73707) that fronted onto the west side of Fore Street (HUCA 2) and High Street (HUCA 3). It lies on relatively level land below St Andrew's Hill (sloping very gently north-west to south-east towards the south end of Fore Street) although to the north of Tiverton Road the ground rises up more steeply at the base of the hill.

Recent excavations on the south side of New Cut have revealed that part of HUCA 4 is the site of what appears to have been a proto-urban civilian settlement and cemetery associated with Roman fortifications on St Andrew's Hill (Figure 5).

These below-ground Roman remains have not directly influenced the present character of this part of Cullompton. In contrast, the long, parallel strips of the medieval burgage plots can still be detected in the present plan-form, despite 20th century infill development partly obscuring their pattern. Their dominance perhaps reflects the degree of remodelling associated with the deliberate creation of the new medieval town. The 1840 Tithe map shows a clear, north-south boundary line across the plots, which would have divided them into 'tofts' and 'crofts' (the front of the plot on which the house was built and the land behind used for pasture or arable), but this has now been almost completely removed.

The Tithe and early OS mapping shows that HUCA 4 was largely undeveloped until the mid-1900s. Some of the courts behind Fore Street had been extended further back to create space for additional ancillary buildings and yards, and a Wesleyan Chapel had been built at the east end of New Cut (a medieval water channel, which became an

alleyway). Otherwise, most of the area was comprised of undeveloped gardens and orchards, with a scatter of small sheds and greenhouses. The 1880 OS map names the area along the south side of New Cut as 'The Green', perhaps suggesting a communal recreational space; by 1904 it was associated with a drill hall.

From the 1960s the back plots were increasingly built over – mainly with social housing, such as that at Vickery Close, and detached and semi-detached private residences, such as those bordering on the south side of Tiverton Road. Piecemeal infill has continued into recent years (including the housing development which uncovered the Roman settlement remains), and the only back plot still largely undeveloped is that forming the garden of The Walronds. However, many of the long and high rubble stone walls that defined these plots still survive, in some cases with traces of former buildings.

Passage through HUCA 4 is via Tiverton Road, New Cut and a number of other narrow, alleyways running back from Fore Street - all historic routes running east-west, parallel with the burgage plots (eventually leading into Shortlands Lane – see HUCA 8). Otherwise, access and views across this area are restricted, owing to the enclosed nature of the original plots and their subsequent sub-division and infilling with modern development.

#### **4.4.2 Heritage significance (above ground)**

**High** – Formed by the back of the western block of burgage plots and encompassing the site of a previous (proto-urban) Roman settlement (overlying prehistoric features), together with post-medieval and later back plot development, the character of HUCA 4, despite modern infill, is still strongly defined by its medieval layout.

#### **4.4.3 Heritage significance (below ground)**

**High** - Buried archaeological evidence of Roman, medieval and later proto-urban and urban activity, together with prehistoric settlement remains, are likely to be uncovered by (re)development within HUCA 4.

### **4.5 Eastern back plots (HUCA 5)**



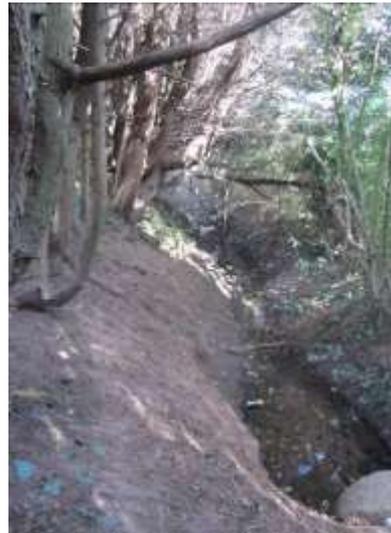
Mill Leat, Higher Mill & modern housing



Forge Way car park, on the former orchard site



Higher Mill lane, looking east



Leat marking north edge of burgage plots

#### 4.5.1 Historic character

HUCA 5 encompasses an area of back plots behind the eastern frontages of Higher Bull Ring and the northern part of Fore Street. It extends from Higher Mill Lane in the north to just south of Middle Mill Lane and occupies land that slopes relatively steeply from west to east, down to the Mill Leat.

Historically, the southern part of HUCA 5 consisted of the backs of the medieval burgage plots which fronted onto Fore Street and the southern part of High Street – a leat running along the south side of Forge Way Car Park marks their likely northern extent (Figure 7). The area to the north would probably have been medieval strip fields.

The Mill Leat, together with Higher and Middle Mills, and their associated lanes, date back to the post-medieval period (Figure 8). The mills were variously used for grinding corn, working leather, making bells, manufacturing wool, as an engineering works and for producing animal feed. Higher Mill (MDV18703) was converted to a house in the 1970s, while Middle Mill (MDV18702) survives only as a ruin.

While the High Street ends of the medieval burgage plots and strip fields were later built over to form the post-medieval road frontage, with long narrow courts behind, the back plots in HUCA 5 were undeveloped until the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century. The 1880 OS map showing an orchard, south of Higher Mill Lane, covering a third of the area, and the remaining enclosures also devoid of buildings.

By the 1960s, detached and semi-detached houses had been built along both mill lanes and on the land between the two, with a car park occupying most of the former orchard site. Subsequent infilling and rebuilding has included the construction of a block of flats (Clark's Court) and other piecemeal development.

Although the parallel-strip pattern of HUCA 5's medieval origins has become blurred by modern subdivision and infill development, it is still detectable in the present plan-form. There are a considerable number of trees, good-sized gardens and a generally open feel to this area (increased by the watery presence of the Mill Leat and the views over the valley floor afforded by the sloping ground above), which provides a reminder of its earlier, semi-rural character.

#### 4.5.2 Heritage significance (above ground)

**High** – Incorporating the backs of the eastern block of burgage plots and later medieval/early post-medieval tenements, HUCA 5 is part of the historic town core, with original plan-form and back-plot character still apparent, despite modern infill

development, and it also incorporates part of the historic leat system connected to industry within the town (with wider significance for understanding Devon's medieval and post-medieval industrial development).

#### 4.5.3 Heritage significance (below ground)

**Medium** – The potential for buried remains within HUCA 5 is less clear (than in the western back plots of HUCA 4), and while lack of pre-20<sup>th</sup> century development and the amount of undeveloped land suggests good survival of earlier (prehistoric to post-medieval) occupation evidence, the sloping topography may reduce the likelihood.

### 4.6 Exeter Hill (HUCA 6)



The Hayridge, library & learning hub



Looking south down Exeter Hill, to Bell Inn



New Street, from west



Crow Green Tannery site, from south-west

#### 4.6.1 Historic character

HUCA 6 extends south-west down Exeter Hill, into the north end of Exeter Road, and to the east of that line (into the lower part of Cockpit Hill, Pound Square, Way's Lane and Brook Road) and westwards (into New Street and Crow Green). It occupies land which slopes relatively steeply down into and across the mouth of a tributary valley, just before it joins the flood plain of the River Culm.

Previously medieval strip fields and water meadows, HUCA 6 started to develop (south of Fore Street) as a mixed residential/industrial/commercial area from the early post-medieval period, with New Street (additional accommodation for woollen industry home workers) added in the early-mid 18th century. Rebuilt in stone after a disastrous fire in 1839 badly damaged this part of town, some earlier structures survive and the earlier cob walling is still detectable.

Further south, by at least the early 17th century, an edge of town, initially separate, linear settlement (including the Bell Inn) had begun forming along Exeter Road on the far side of the tributary valley flood plain (probably as a resting place for travellers entering/leaving the town, and, later, halting at the turnpike tollhouse sited here).

In the late 18<sup>th</sup>/early19<sup>th</sup> century the construction of a large tannery (MDV1406) on either side of the road at the bottom of Exeter Hill plugged the gap between the northern and southern parts of HUCA 6. Despite a disastrous fire in 1958, which ended the tannery's life, both sites retain substantial original historic fabric. This, together with the large outdoor spaces typical of such industrial sites, still gives the area an industrial feel, which is reinforced by the type, scale and spatial characteristics of the modern re-use and development (including a petrol station and supermarket).

Apart from the large industrial sites, HUCA 6, is characterised by smaller-scaled rows and terraces – of houses and (now largely disused) Victorian shop fronts, with back yards containing mews accommodation and workshops - interspersed with larger-scale buildings, including the new library and learning hub (the Hayridge Centre) at the top of Exeter Hill, on the site previously occupied by the town's health centre and law courts, and, before that, the original Cullompton School (built c1870).

Similarly contrasting are the key views within/through this area, which are a combination of sweeping ones (such as down Exeter Hill and across the western tannery site) and more constricted lines of sight along the narrow side roads and lanes.

#### **4.6.2 Heritage significance (above ground)**

**High** - HUCA 6 is an area of post-medieval (and later) industrial expansion with its original character largely reflected in the surviving historic fabric (which exhibits a degree of time depth) and the design and scale of modern development. Despite being of less obvious aesthetic value, the industrial buildings and their special relationships are significant survivors of small-town Devon industry and there is high group value in terms of the presence of associated workers' housing, as part of an integrated industrial quarter. An area which made Cullompton what it was during its later history.

#### **4.6.3 Heritage significance (below ground)**

**Medium** – There is a large open area within HUCA 6 (the western tannery site, some of which appears not to have been built on during the last few hundred years), together with other undeveloped yards and garden plots, and (re)development may reveal buried evidence of the urban, farming and other activity that has taken place here since prehistory (including earlier industrial activity taking advantage of the tributary valley location, plus evidence of causeway/crossing points across the tributary).

### **4.7 Higher Street & Station Road (HUCA 7)**



Trott's Almshouses



Higher Street, looking north



Former woollen cloth factory



Court Farm, site of leather tannery

#### 4.7.1 Historic character

HUCA 7 is comprised of Higher Street and the western part of Station Road (formerly known as Lower Street). Higher Street is a northern extension of High Street, along the level shelf of ground below St Andrew's Hill, while Station Road slopes relatively steeply, from its T-junction with the two roads down the main valley side to the Mill Leat, which forms the Eastern boundary of HUCA 7.

Previously an area of medieval strip fields and open ground, in 1522 John Trott's Almshouses (refurbished and still standing; MDV11447) were built on what would then have been the northern edge of the town (Figure 9). During the post-medieval period HUCA 7 developed as an area of rows and terraces of workers' housing and larger houses with woollen and other workshops behind. Its industrial focus increased during the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century with the establishment of a leather tannery north of Court House and a woollen factory (with adjacent line of small buildings, for unknown reasons named as 'The College' on the 1880 OS map) at the north end of Higher Street, opposite Goblin Lane, where there was also a twine works (MDV69870) on the site of a former ropewalk. In addition, there was a blacksmiths south of Station Road, adjacent to what is now Forge Way.

Nevertheless, at the time of the 1904 OS map, much of the south side of Station Road and most of the area behind the street frontages and around the factory sites was still undeveloped, with a predominance of large orchards. A flavour of this former openness is still provided by the drive and remaining grounds of Court House (MDV88811), a large 18<sup>th</sup> century residence associated with the tannery, and the lane leading to the latter from Higher Street.

The re-use of the woollen factory as a printing works, and other current small-scale industrial activity, perpetuates to some extent this element of HUCA 7's history. However, the twine works is now covered by detached houses. Along with other pockets of modern infill/backfill, this development adds to the non-industrial residential aspect already created by the early 20<sup>th</sup> century terraces (Belle Vue and Garden) either side of Station Road - picturesquely-sited, with gardens sloping down to the Mill Leat, with its iron-railed walkway. Forming the eastern extent of HUCA 7, this marks the crossing point (over Palmer's Bridge) into the large-scale industrial/commercial valley-bottom development of HUCA 12.

In addition to the mix of light industrial and residential, there is also a strong later 20th century civic element to HUCA 7 - it contains the present police station (on the south side of Station Road) and ambulance station and GP/veterinary surgeries on the opposite side (within former orchards, which is reflected in their generous scale and spacing).

The views within HUCA 7 are narrow and linear along Higher Street and wider and more open down the less tightly lined streetscape of Station Road.

#### 4.7.2 Heritage significance (above ground)

**Medium** – HUCA 7 reflects post-medieval (and later) industrial expansion to the north of the medieval town, with relatively good survival of historic buildings, which, despite being of less obvious aesthetic value, have significance as evidence of small-town Devon industry. Also incorporating part of the historic leat system, this is an integrated industrial quarter similar to HUCA 6 to the south, although the character of HUCA 7 has become more diluted by subsequent (re)development.

#### 4.7.3 Heritage significance (below ground)

**Medium** – Although HUCA 7 is considerably built over, there is potential within undeveloped yards, gardens and the few remaining small fields for the survival of buried evidence of its industrial and earlier use, including prehistoric to medieval farming, with the chance of Roman remains greatest in the enclosures adjacent to the Roman fort on St Andrew's Hill (HUCA 9).

### 4.8 Shortlands Lane (HUCA 8)



Looking north up Shortlands Lane



Social housing on Shortlands wool factory site

#### 4.8.1 Historic character

HUCA 8 consists of a narrow strip of land along Shortlands Lane, at the back of the medieval burgage plots on the west side of Fore Street. It occupies a relatively level plateau which rises up slightly to Tiverton Road to the north and slopes down towards its southern end into the tributary valley occupied by Crow Green.

There is a suggestion from the 1633 Wyndham map that Shortlands Lane existed by that date and, as Cullompton's (now culverted) 14<sup>th</sup> century domestic water supply crosses HUCA 8 before entering the town via New Cut, it is possible that the lane originated in the medieval period as a back access to the burgage plots. Its route deviates from their back line, however, and the lane may instead have been laid out to provide access to Shortlands woollen factory, established here during the 17<sup>th</sup> century (Figure 8).

Until the 20th century, development was limited to the factory (which closed in 1869) and some still surviving roadside cottages towards the southern end of the lane, opposite the entrance to New Street, with most of HUCA 8 remaining garden plots. The majority of this still-edge-of-town area was comprised of garden plots and orchards. From the early-mid 1900s this began to change, with St Boniface Roman Catholic Church built (1929) at the south end of Shortlands Lane, the town's fire station on the corner with Tiverton Road, social housing along the west side of the lane and, more recently, detached properties infilling the plots on the east.

Overall, HUCA 7 has an enclosed feel, emphasised by the three-storeyed Hammett Road housing mimicking the scale of the woollen factory it replaced, with generally

restricted lines of sight up and down Shortlands Lane (and the adjacent more modern streets), apart from at the southern end, where the downward sloping ground opens up a longer view over the valley below. Although now largely having the appearance of an edge-of-centre urban residential area, the greenness of the garden hedges along the Tiverton end of Shortlands Lane, together with the remnant cottages towards Crow Green, hark back to the area's previously more rural character.

#### 4.8.2 Heritage significance (above ground)

**Medium** – A post-medieval focal point for Cullompton's woollen manufactory, HUCA 8 to some extent still reflects this important aspect of the town's history, though 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century housing development has diminished its previous edge-of-countryside, industrial character.

#### 4.8.3 Heritage significance (below ground)

**Medium** – Although there is now very little undeveloped land within HUCA 8, there remains potential for settlement remains of all periods to survive in garden plots, particularly on the east side of Shortlands Lane, along the backs of the medieval burgage plots, adjacent to the site of the prehistoric and Roman settlement and cemetery remains uncovered by recent housing development in HUCA 2. This area may also contain evidence for the medieval back lane and burgage plot extents.

### 4.9 St Andrew's Hill (HUCA 9)



Cullompton Cemetery, from Tiverton Road



Allotments below Roman fort



St Andrew's Estate, from playing field to south



St Andrew's School and Children's Centre

#### **4.9.1 Historic character**

HUCA 9 encompasses St Andrew's Hill - from its summit, down to Goblin Lane (to the north), Tiverton Road (to the south), east to the backs of the plots on High and Higher Streets, and west almost to the town limit. With the exception of the relatively flat hill top and a level saddle at its western base, all the land within HUCA 9 is moderate to steeply sloping, and its elevated position affords sweeping views over the town and surrounding countryside.

In the Roman period St Andrew's Hill was crowned by fortifications (surviving as scheduled archaeological remains, MDV29189, Figure 5), with the slopes below probably covered in rough pasture, perhaps largely unenclosed until a medieval or later date. The 1840 Tithe map shows most of the area sub-divided into square and rectangular enclosures, contrasting with what appear to be remnant strip fields on the lower eastern slopes (which are depicted as orchards on the 1880 OS map).

HUCA 9 was totally undeveloped until the 19<sup>th</sup> century, when an Independent Chapel (later assembly rooms, now pre-school nursery) was built in 1830 on the north side of Tiverton Road (opposite the entrance to Shortlands Lane) and the town cemetery was laid out further to the west in 1856 (MDV76964-6). Even then, for almost another hundred years it remained mainly fields.

During the 1950s and 60s, however, St Andrew's School and Estate, with associated recreation ground and allotments, were constructed on the southern and south-western slopes of the hill, extending the town limit up to its crest. Smaller-scale development (including a chapel and electricity sub-station) also took place on the western edge of HUCA 9.

Owing to its elevated (above the rest of the town) position, together with the nature and layout (with generous gardens and communal spaces) of its mid-20<sup>th</sup> century development and the fact that there has been little subsequent building (with 50% of the St Andrew's Hill still green fields), HUCA 9 has a separate, self-contained, village-like feel and appearance.

#### **4.9.2 Heritage significance (above ground)**

**Medium** - HUCA 9 encompasses the town's most prominent natural landmark, on which Cullompton's post-war expansion, with all its associated historic and communal value related to the social housing movement, is most clearly expressed, with its character and edge-of-town rural backdrop essentially intact. The chapel and cemetery, as well as being interesting in themselves, have commemorative and social history value, marking a time when these marginal facilities defined the edge of the town.

#### **4.9.3 Heritage significance (below ground)**

**High** - In addition to the Roman fort on the summit of St Andrew's Hill (MDV29189), there is potential for other below ground remains to survive on its, still largely undeveloped, slopes (with undated gullies, ditches and other anomalies revealed by geophysical survey towards the west end of Tiverton Road, MDV78286).

## 4.10 Waterloo and Meadow Lane (HUCA 10)



Looking down Duke Street towards Waterloo



Housing south of Lower Mill Lane

### 4.10.1 Historic character

HUCA 10 extends south-west from Lower Mill Lane across the Culm valley bottom to the base of Padbrook Hill, including Duke Street, Waterloo and Meadow Lane. This is flat, low-lying land – former river flood plain – which rises up slightly where it meets the base of the western valley side.

Originally medieval water meadows, HUCA 10 remained largely undeveloped until the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century. During the post-medieval period piecemeal development started to take place along the lower part of Duke Street, with, by the 19<sup>th</sup> century, a farm and wayside cottages forming a hamlet beyond the town edge at Waterloo. At the same time, linear development was beginning to occur along the east side of Exeter Road.

However, there was then no significant change until the 1960s, when Cullompton Secondary School and Sports Centre were built, north of a new road (Meadow Lane) connecting Duke Street and Exeter Road, and estate housing was constructed to the south and to the north-east of Duke Street (engulfing Waterloo within the town). Apart from a small amount of subsequent housing development, the area has changed little since this burst of mid-late 20<sup>th</sup> century expansion.

While its valley-bottom location and flat topography hints at HUCA 10's historic use as an area of rich summer grazing, the enclosure pattern of those previous water meadows can only faintly be detected (in some places) in the modern plan-form (eg where fossilised in the boundaries of the school and adjacent playing fields).

### 4.10.2 Heritage significance (above ground)

**Medium** - HUCA 10 has a character, which, though unspectacular, reflects the mix of its past and present use, with some surviving early plan elements and post-medieval / 19<sup>th</sup> century fabric, and 1960s housing and school architecture reflecting post-war social and educational ambitions.

### 4.10.3 Heritage significance (below ground)

**Medium** – Despite being mainly built over, HUCA 10 has significant expanses of undeveloped ground (particularly the school and sports centre playing field), where below-ground remains of post-medieval and earlier farming and other rural settlement activity may survive.

## 4.11 Valley-bottom recreational area (HUCA 11)



Footpath along Mill Leat, looking north



Recreational fields

### 4.11.1 Historic character

HUCA 11 occupies the valley bottom from Middle Mill in the north to the B3181 (Exeter) road in the south, with the mainline railway (MDV22421) and M5 forming its eastern boundary and the Mill Leat (incorporating a mill pond, MDV69871) running along its western edge as far as Lower Mill, from where it meanders south-eastwards to join the main channel of the River Culm. The minor road continuing eastwards from Duke Street crosses HUCA 11, passing over the leat via First Bridge, just after it is joined by another sub-channel of the Culm, and area is also dissected by numerous land drains.

Previously medieval water meadows, the map evidence suggests that HUCA 11 continued to be used primarily as summer pasture until the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, when football and cricket grounds (and associated club house) were laid out in the northern part of the area, and a further sports field, sewage works and a residential rehabilitation centre established to the south.

Today, a public walkway runs along the side of the leat, other footpaths provide additional access and the whole area experiences a high degree of recreational use. Owing to the predominance of grassy open spaces and survival of most of the (tree-fringed) meadow field boundaries, the historically rural character of HUCA 11 remains essentially intact.

### 4.11.2 Heritage significance (above ground)

**Medium** – HUCA 11 was until relatively recently part of the countryside rather than the town and has limited significance in terms of Cullompton's urban history, but the area retains much of its historic rural, water-meadow character, the southern part of the Mill Leat runs through it. The latter is part of the historic leat system connected to industry within the town (with wider significance for understanding Devon's medieval and post-medieval industrial development).

### 4.11.3 Heritage significance (below ground)

**High** - HUCA 11 is comprised of still largely undeveloped land (including part of the corridor preserved for a new distributor road), which may contain buried remains of its post-medieval and earlier farming use and other activity (a Roman coin was found on one of the playing fields, MDV40080), with its valley-bottom location increasing the possibility of water-logged occupation deposits and palaeoenvironmental evidence.

## 4.12 Valley-bottom industrial area (HUCA 12)



West down Station Road from railway bridge



Looking NW over railway to industrial estate

### 4.12.1 Historic character

HUCA 12 consists of the area of developed valley bottom to the north and south of Station Road, bounded on the west by the Mill Leat and on the east by the M5, with the parallel mainline railway (MDV22421) clipping the eastern part of this area. A sub-channel of the Culm loops down from the north, before passing under Station Road at Long Bridge and then beneath the railway and M5, and land drains also dissect the area.

While this part of the valley bottom is slightly more elevated than HUCA 11 to the south, it is essentially low lying and flat, with the exception of the eastern end of Station Road where it rises up onto the railway bridge and offers views back over the rest of HUCA 12.

This was an area of medieval water meadows (with some later orchards) until the Bristol and Exeter railway was routed through here in 1844 and Cullompton Station constructed outside the town, on the north-eastern edge of HUCA 12. During the later 19<sup>th</sup> century the Railway Inn (now The Weary Traveller) was built halfway along Station Road to service those involved in rail-based trade and urban expansion eastwards from Palmer's Bridge included a town gas works, saw mill and workers' housing (Station Terrace).

At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century much open land still remained, but by the 1960s large-scale development covered most of the area - a leather dressing factory (now an industrial estate) and sewage works west of the station and a trading estate and depot (now a superstore) on the south side of Station Road.

The impact of the closure of Cullompton Station (1964) was mitigated by the construction of the M5, with an exit feeding into Station Road, in 1974 and motorway services being sited on the former railway station site since 1999.

Apart from a slither of residential development between the railway line and M5, and new housing at the entrance to Millennium Way, the present character of HUCA 12 is firmly industrial - in terms of the types, design and scale of its buildings and the expanses of tarmac and concrete in between - with only a few smaller-scale 19<sup>th</sup> century remnants and the tree-fringed railway line to break up the homogenous mass.

### 4.12.2 Heritage significance (above ground)

**Medium** - Although now largely covered by modern development, the character of HUCA 12 reflects the later industrial history of Cullompton, with some survival of 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century fabric, not least the railway, and a hint of the previous water meadow layout in its plan-form. It incorporates part of the historic leat system

connected to industry within the town (with wider significance for understanding Devon's medieval and post-medieval industrial development) and represents Cullompton's expansion off dry land on to the valley bottom.

#### 4.12.3 Heritage significance (below ground)

**Medium** - HUCA 12 is largely built over, but there are still some undeveloped plots, particularly to the south of Station Road (where the corridor for a new distributor road has been preserved), which may contain evidence of the area's post-medieval and earlier farming use and other pre-industrial activity (with its valley-bottom location increasing the possibility of water-logged occupation deposits and palaeoenvironmental evidence).

### 4.13 St George's Well northern expansion (HUCA 13)



19<sup>th</sup> & 20<sup>th</sup> century houses at St George's Well



Mid-20<sup>th</sup> century houses on Willand Road



Willand Road 21<sup>st</sup> century Health Centre



21<sup>st</sup> century housing in Millennium Way

#### 4.13.1 Historic character

HUCA 13 is a spear-shaped area of residential expansion on the northern side of Cullompton, on the top and slopes of a plateau above the Culm valley dissected by shallow tributaries.

HUCA 13 previously consisted of medieval fields and meadows, incorporating the site of a prehistoric and Romano-British farming settlement (on the west side of Willand Road, MDV74213, Figure 5). A linear roadside hamlet had developed at St George's Well by the time of Donn's 1765 map - the water from the well, a natural spring, apparently being good for the eyes (MDV1412). Otherwise, HUCA 13 remained undeveloped countryside until the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century when a mixture of large detached houses, individual bungalows and social housing estates began to be constructed out along the

south end of Willand Road, north of Goblin Lane and around the earlier road frontage at St George's Well, engulfing the earlier road frontage.

During the later 20<sup>th</sup> to early 21<sup>st</sup> century housing has spread further north, in-filling most of the elongated triangle formed by the converging routes of Willand Road and Millennium Way - a new road laid out from Station Road, north along the edge of the valley bottom. Recently, the Culm Valley Integrated Centre for Health has created a new civic focal point on the western edge of this mass of residential development.

The plan-form of HUCA 13 is decidedly modern, with little trace of the preceding medieval field pattern, and, although there are a few surviving 19<sup>th</sup> century buildings, its character is dominated by the combined uniformity of 1950s/60s social housing design and the 'anywhere' architecture of more recent houses and blocks of flats.

#### 4.13.2 Heritage significance (above ground)

**Low** - HUCA 13 is an area of primarily modern development of limited local distinction, with little cohesion in terms of layout, architectural style and materials, although a few earlier structures survive and the 1950s/60s estates are of some interest for their post-war social-housing function and character.

#### 4.13.3 Heritage significance (below ground)

**Medium** - Most of HUCA 13 is built over, but there are a few undeveloped plots where rural settlement and field system remains of post-medieval and earlier date may survive, and any further extension of this area to the west of Willand Road has strong potential to reveal buried evidence similar to the prehistoric and Romano-British farming settlement uncovered by the health centre development (MDV74213).

### 4.14 Western residential expansion (HUCA 14)



Western expansion, viewed from the cemetery



1960s housing estate



Late 20<sup>th</sup> century housing, Tiverton Road



21st century housing

#### **4.14.1 Historic character**

HUCA 14 a large area of residential development on the western side of Cullompton, which makes up almost a third of the town's current geographical extent. Occupying the sides and bottom of the tributary valley above Crow Green and that below Padbrook Hill, together with the spur of high ground in between the two, HUCA 14 as a whole has a rolling and undulating topography.

The area extends along the south side of Tiverton Road and curves southwards around the town as far as the B3181 (Exeter) road, incorporating other historic approaches (Crow Bridge, Colebrook Lane, Padbrook Hill) and routes newly laid out during the mid-late 20<sup>th</sup> century (Langsland Road, Shortlands Road, Forcefield Road, Swallow Drive and numerous Ways, Avenues and Closes).

This was previously a large swathe of medieval strip fields (partly associated with Padbrook and Padbrook Hill farmsteads), through which the streams bearing the town's water supply flowed west-east to a pond at Shortlands (now built over) and down to Crow Green. Up until the early 20<sup>th</sup> century it was only otherwise populated by a scatter of wayside cottages and the odd orchard. However, after World War Two, social housing estates were laid out from the western town edge, serviced by a new (Willow Bank) primary school built near Crow Green in the 1960s, and allotments in strip fields on the new western town limit.

The southern extent of HUCA 14 developed into recreational use, initially with the construction of the Cullompton Hotel (originally a gentleman's club, now rebuilt as flats), a bowling green (still in existence) and the conversion of Padbrook Farm to a golf course/club.

Private houses and blocks of flats constructed during the late 20<sup>th</sup> and early 21<sup>st</sup> century now form a semi-circular of further expansion in HUCA 14, which is continuing apace. Similar to HUCA 13, the character of this area is dominated by the combined uniformity of 1950s/60s social housing design and the incoherent 'anywhere' architecture of more recent houses and blocks of flats, although the plan-form retains slightly more of a trace of the formerly predominant pattern of medieval strip fields.

#### **4.14.2 Heritage significance (above ground)**

**Low** - HUCA 14 is an area of primarily modern development of limited local distinction, with little cohesion in terms of layout, architectural style and materials, although some of the roads and boundaries fossilise the medieval pattern, a few post-medieval structures survive and the 1950s/60s estates are of some interest for their post-war social-housing function and character.

#### **4.14.3 Heritage significance (below ground)**

**Medium** – Most of HUCA 14 is built over, but there are a few undeveloped plots where there may be surviving rural settlement and field system remains of post-medieval and earlier date (like the Romano-British farmstead uncovered just west of the study area, north of Knowle Lane, MDV78245), together with the culverted streams that historically supplied water to the town.

## **5 Suggestions for future research**

- Investigate the likely full extent of the proto-urban Roman settlement in HUCA 4 (through more detailed map and plan-form analysis, field work, sample trenching and archaeological monitoring and recording projects during infill development in the area)
- Refine understanding of the extent of the early medieval (Saxon minster) settlement in HUCA 1 (and whether this was preceded by Roman settlement in this part of town), for example, through: more detailed map and plan-form analysis; geophysical survey and sample trenching in garden plots; dating the potsherd found

during the 2013 town visit and examining the exposure that it came from; and archaeological monitoring and recording projects during any infill development in the area

- Identifying the extents and dates of different historic land ownership within the town
- More detailed research of the historic use of individual plots and buildings – using Tithe map and Apportionment, and the 19<sup>th</sup> century OS and other town maps
- Detailed historic buildings study within the historic core of the town – using large scale historic maps, documentary sources and field work
- Inventory and photographic record of architectural styles, details and materials (adding to the Conservation Area Appraisal information)
- Detailed recording of other elements of the historic fabric – e.g. boundary walls, pavements, lamp posts, wells, leats, drains, railings
- A study of the style and socio-economic context of the different 20<sup>th</sup> century housing estates within the town

## 6 Bibliography

Primary sources, publications and websites directly consulted during the study are listed below. In addition, there are numerous bibliographical references contained within the site entries relating to Cullompton in the Devon HER.

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*Note: the existence of the following map was identified during the study, but time was not available to consult it - Bradninch and Cullompton Map, 1633 (Devon Record Office 2650Z/Z1A).*

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## **6.2 Information leaflets**

Cullompton Town Trail leaflet, 1999 (prepared by Cullompton Women's Institute with help from Cullompton Town Council)

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## **6.3 Websites (accessed February - July 2012)**

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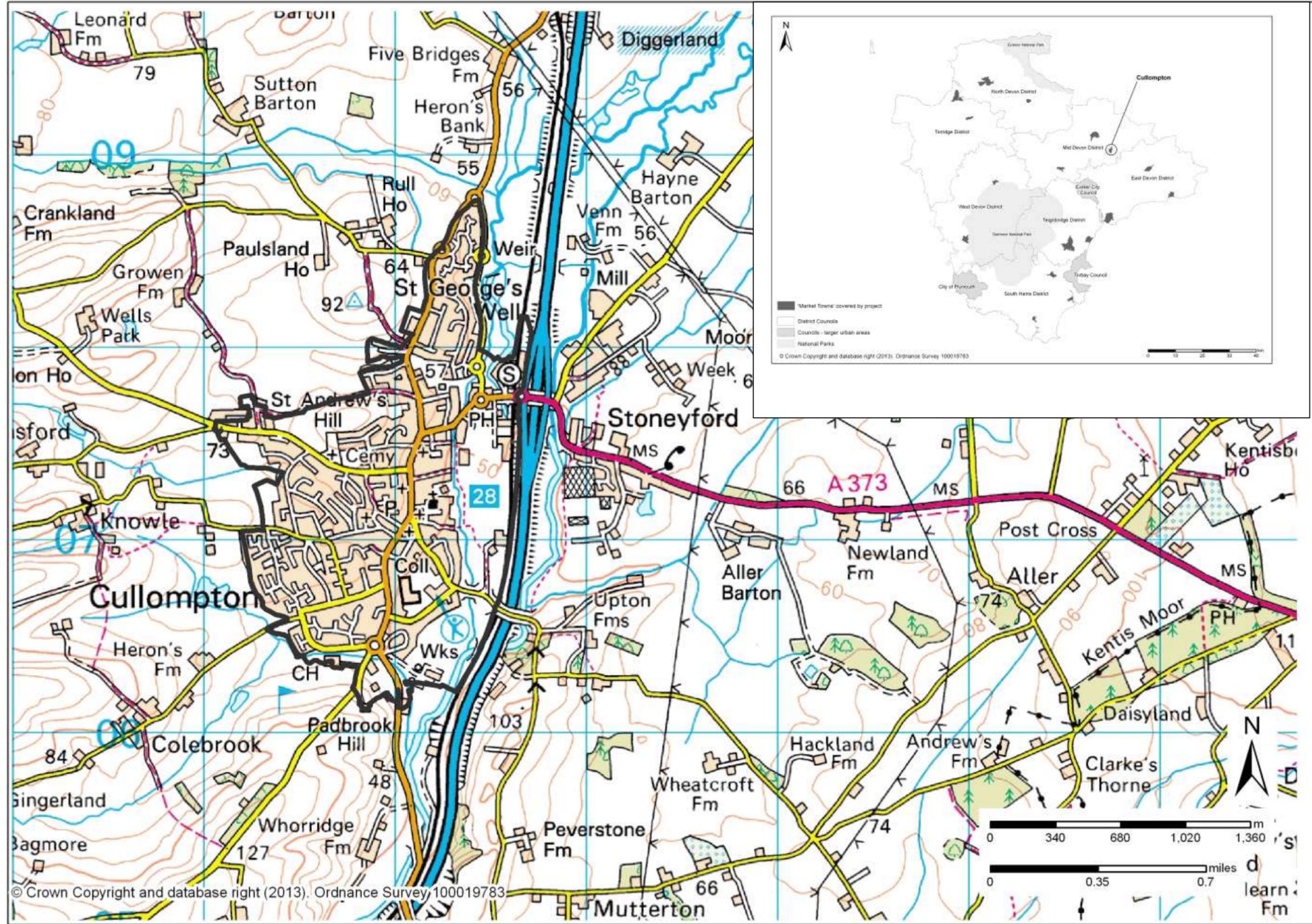


Fig 1 Location and setting

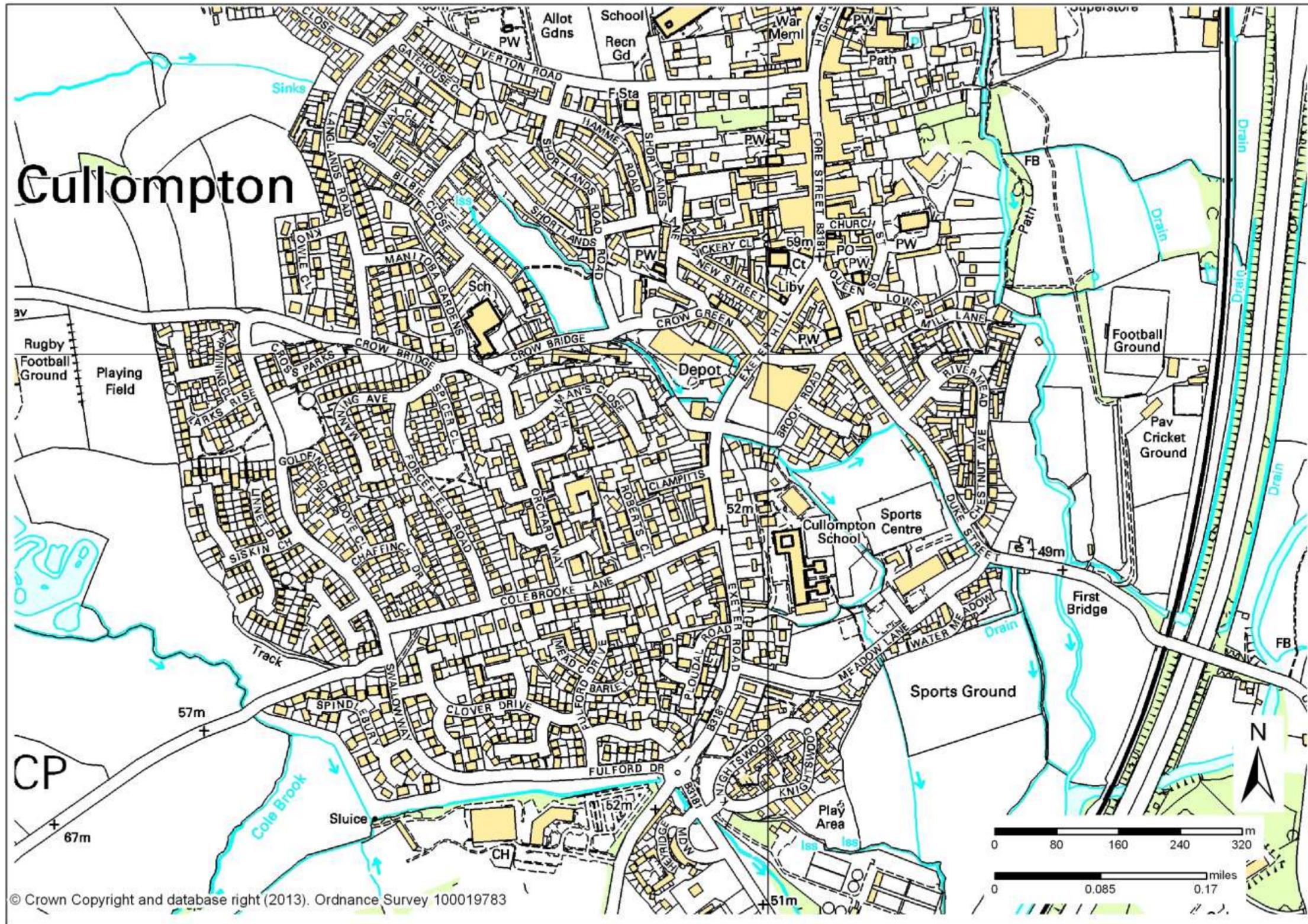


Fig 2a Roads and streets (Cullompton south)

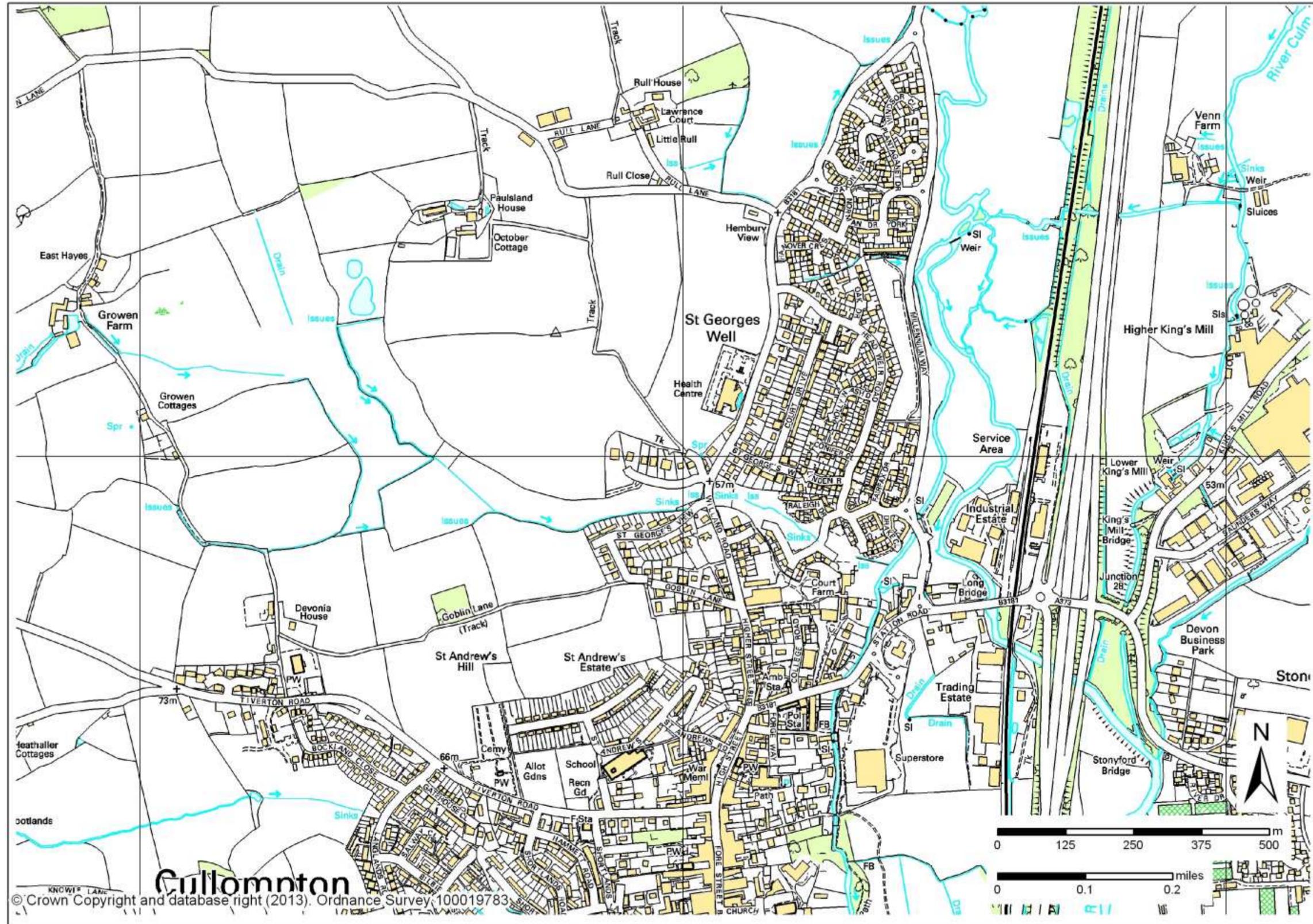


Fig 2b Roads and streets (Cullompton north)

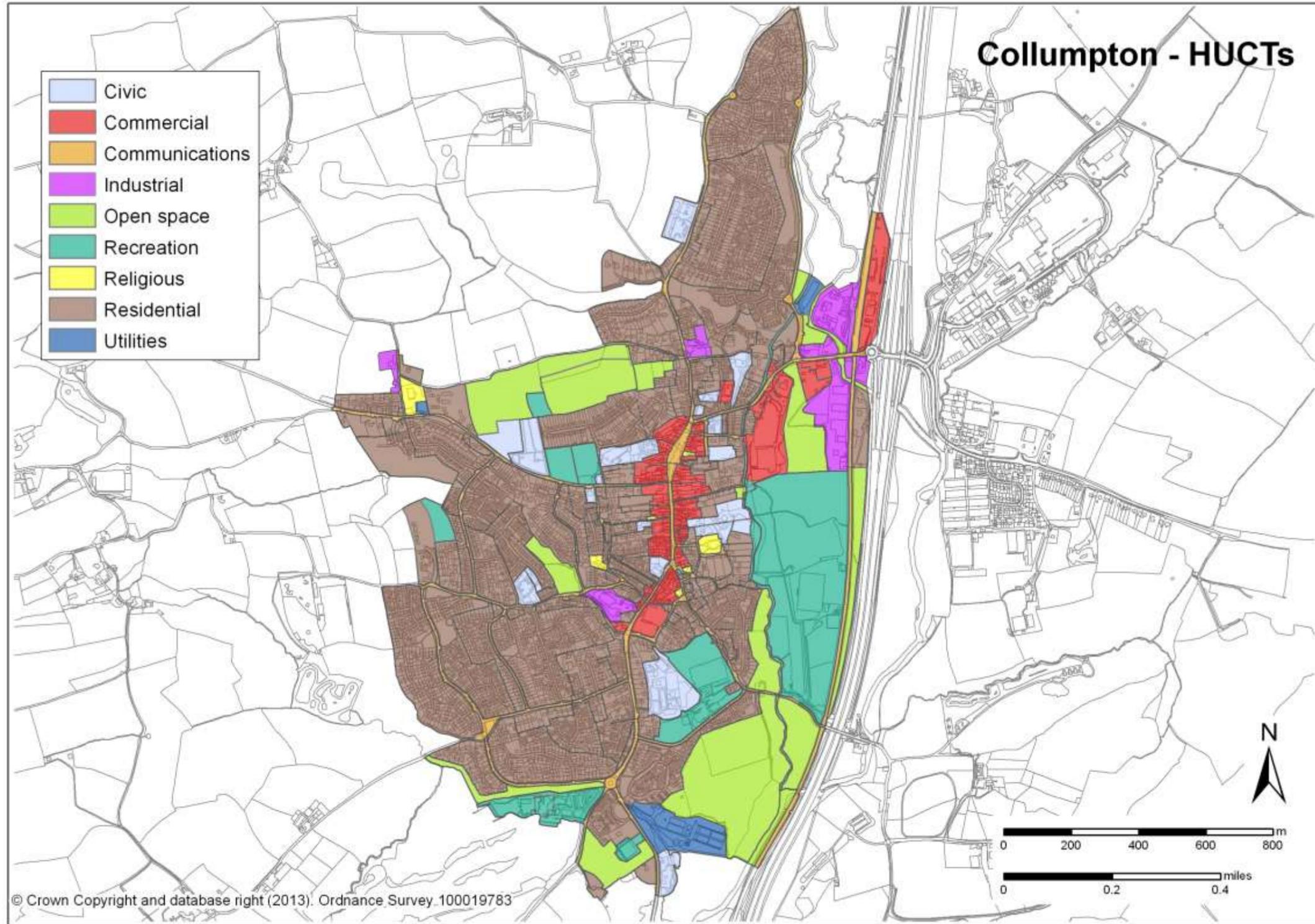


Fig 3 Historic Urban Character Types (HUCTs) 2013

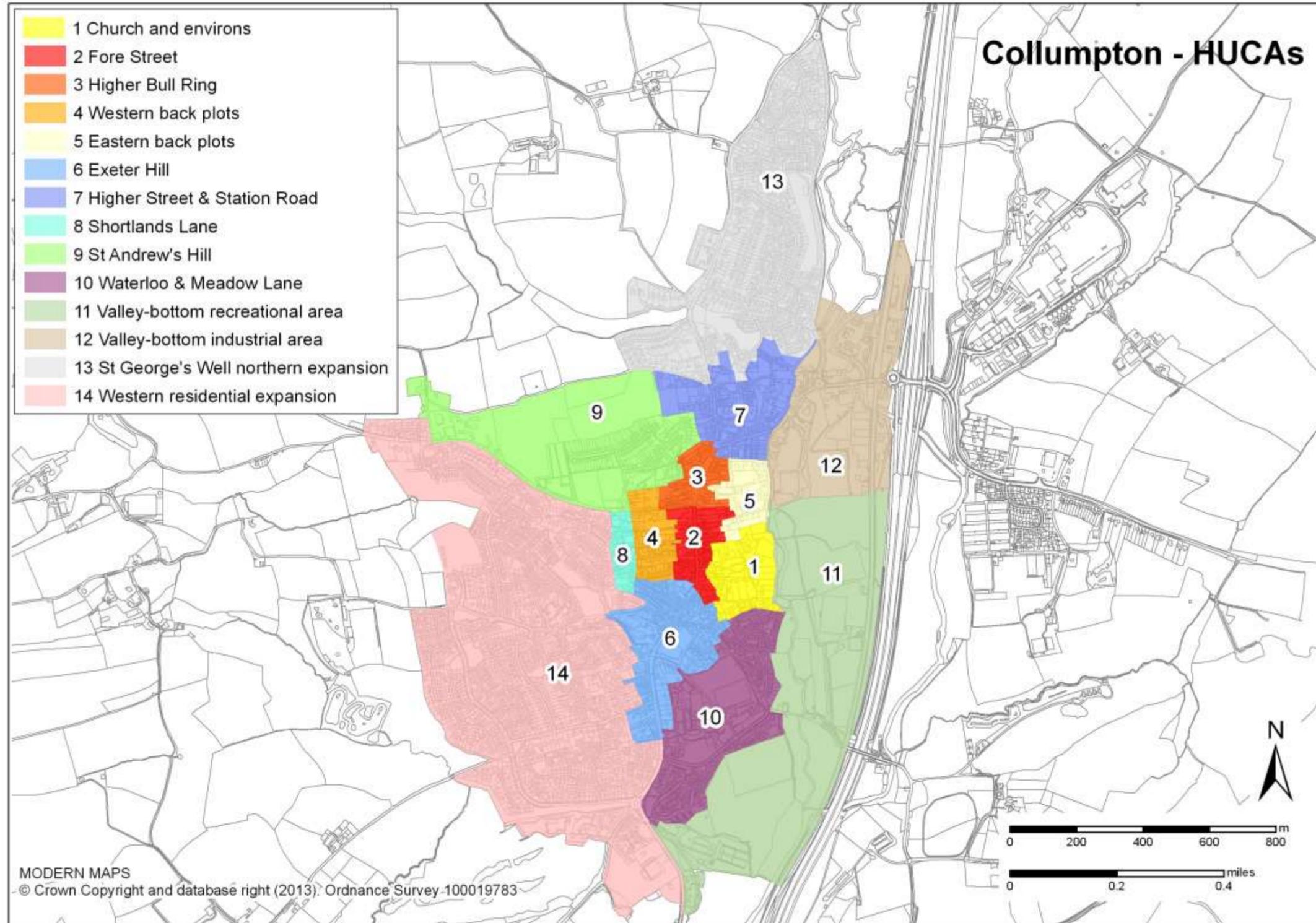


Fig 4 Historic Urban Character Areas (HUCAs) 2013

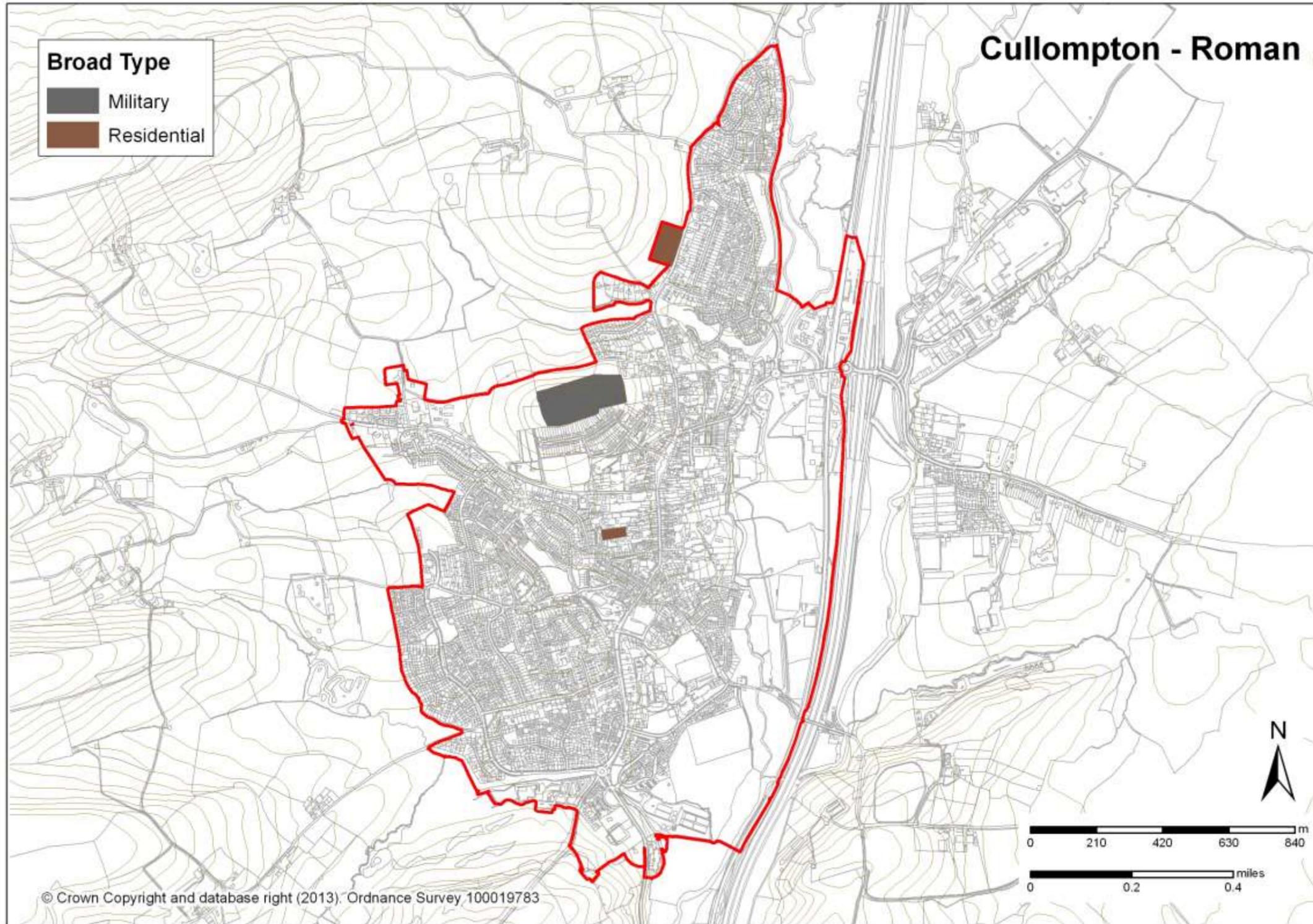


Fig 5 Historical development (Roman)

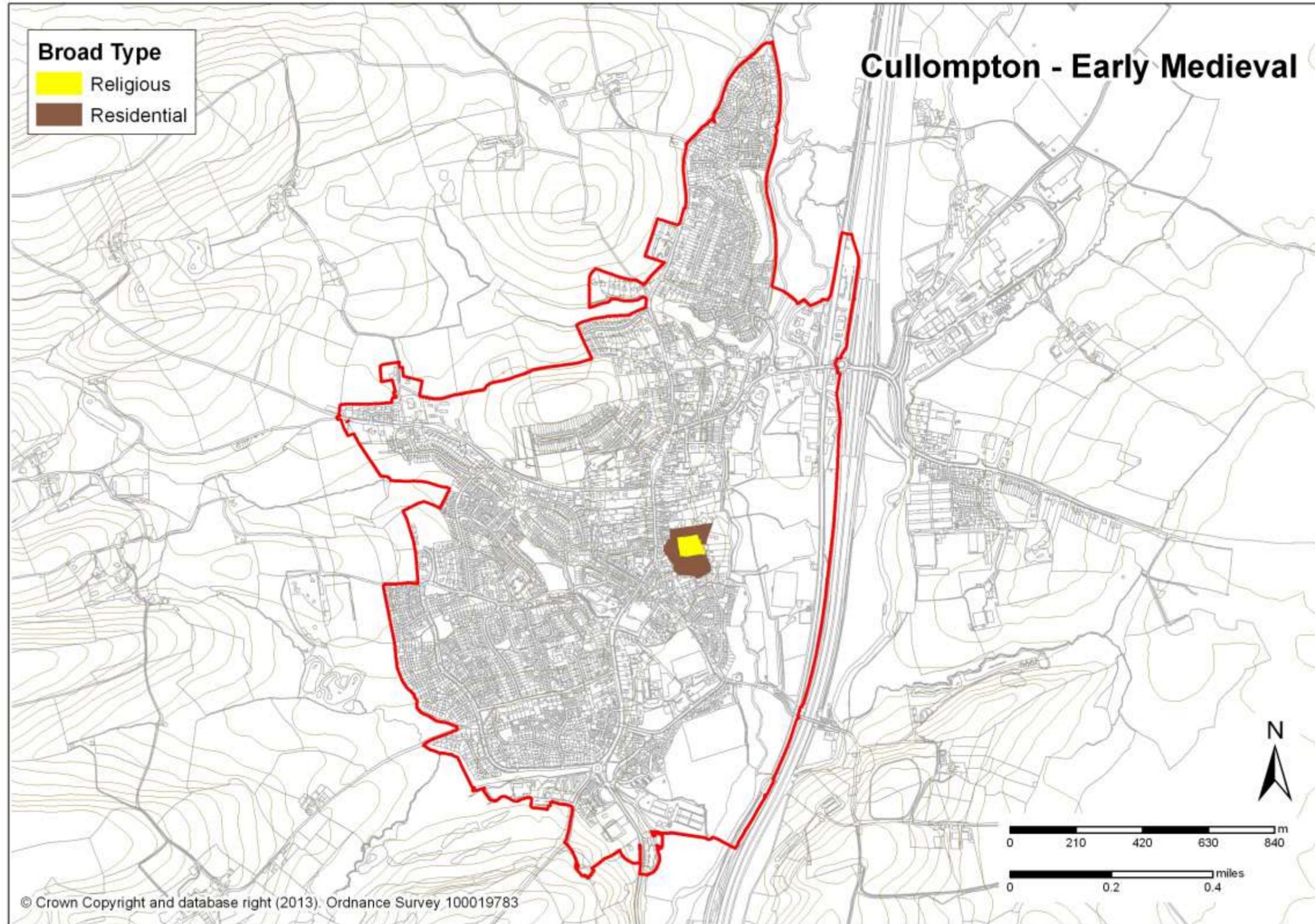


Fig 6 Historical development (Early Medieval)

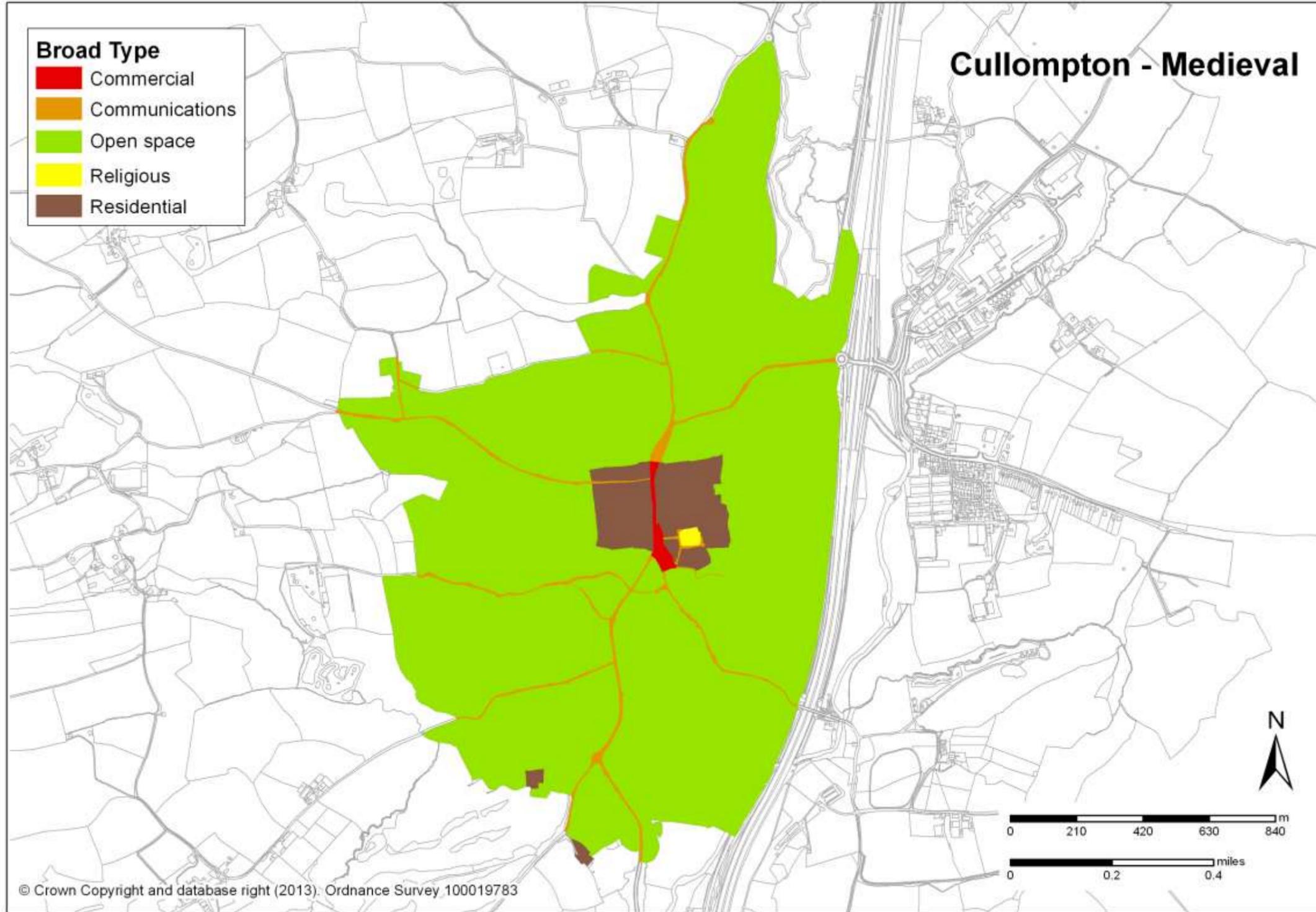


Fig 7 Historical development (Medieval)

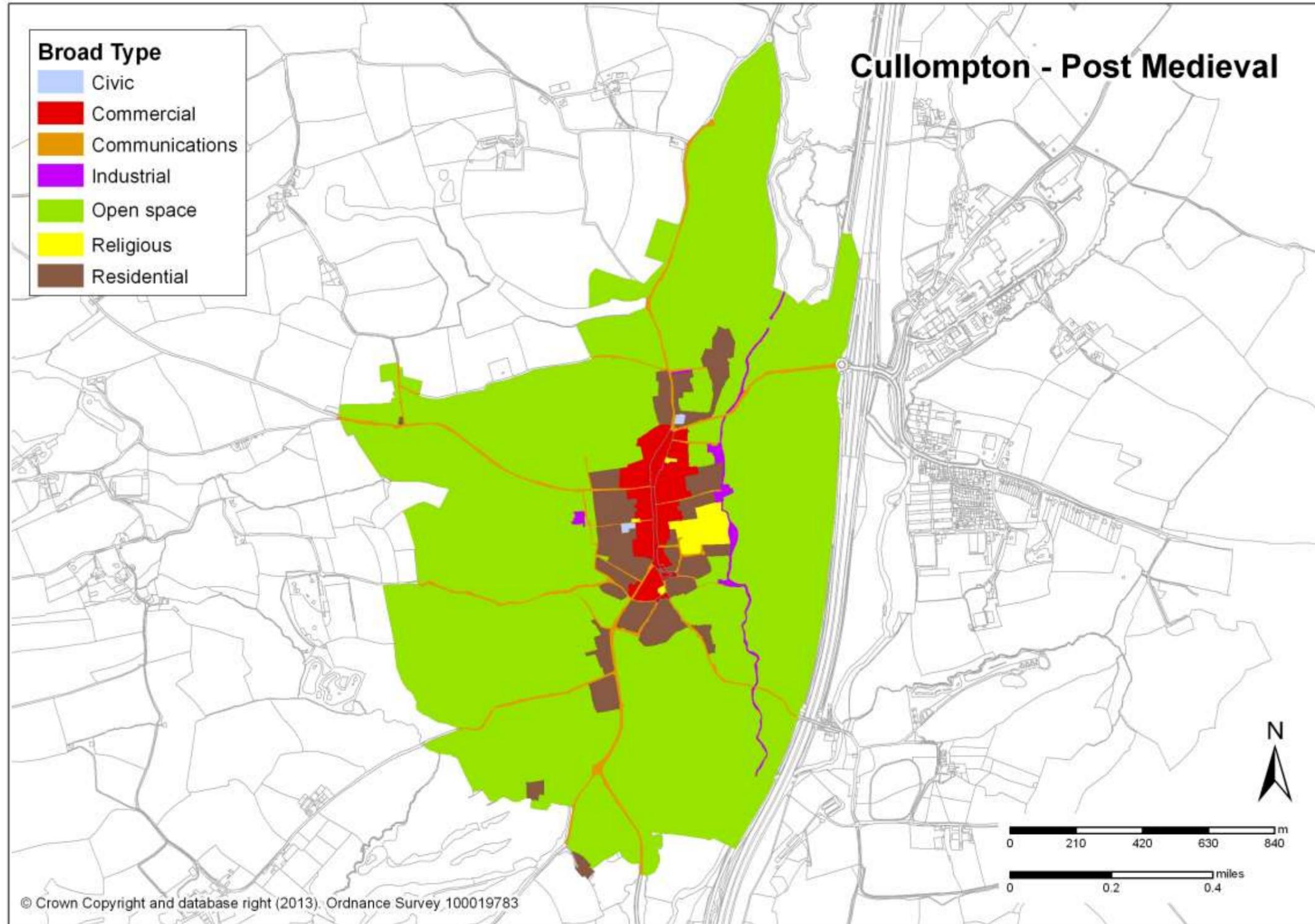


Fig 8 Historical development (Post-medieval)

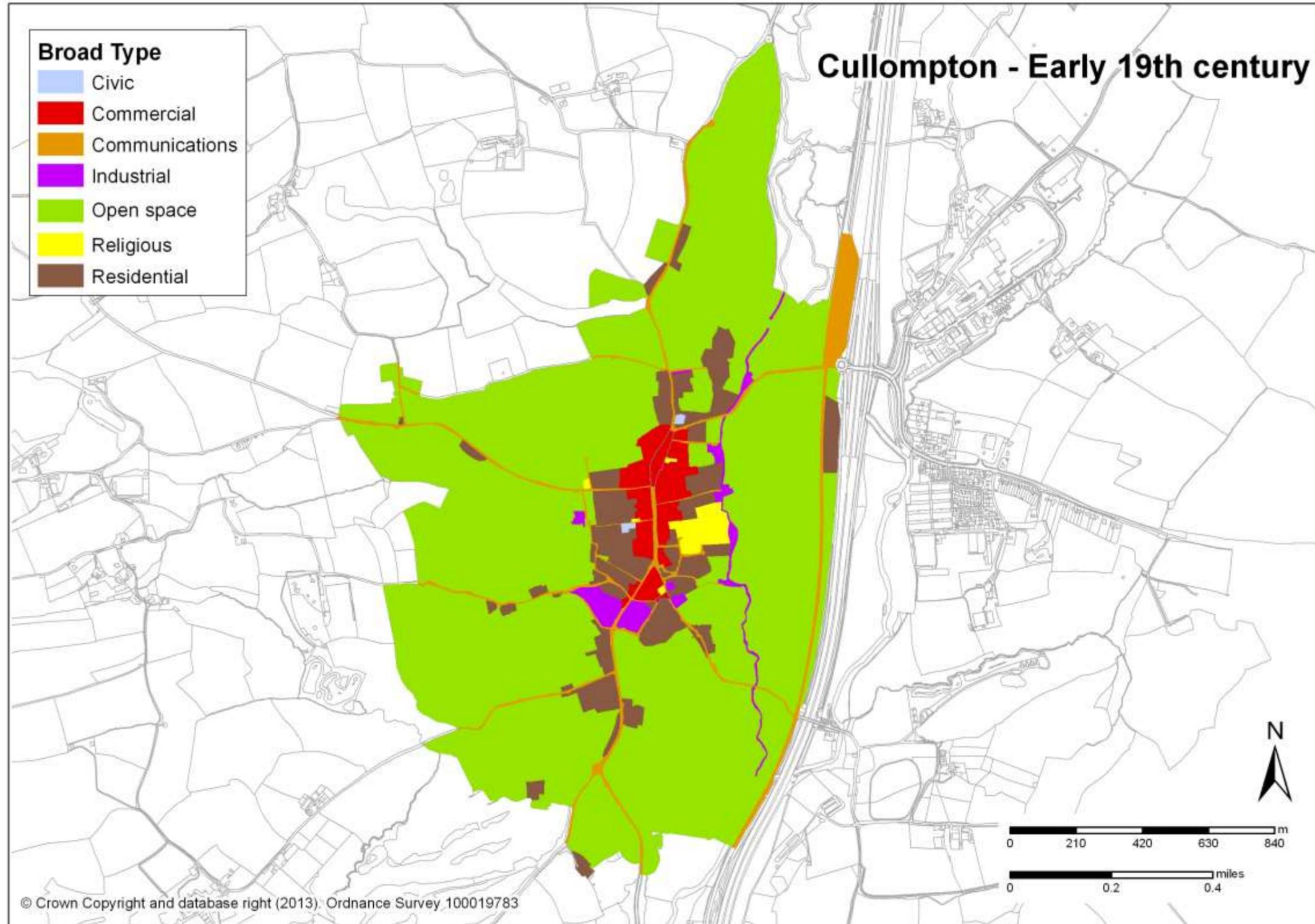


Fig 9 Historical development (Early 19<sup>th</sup> century)

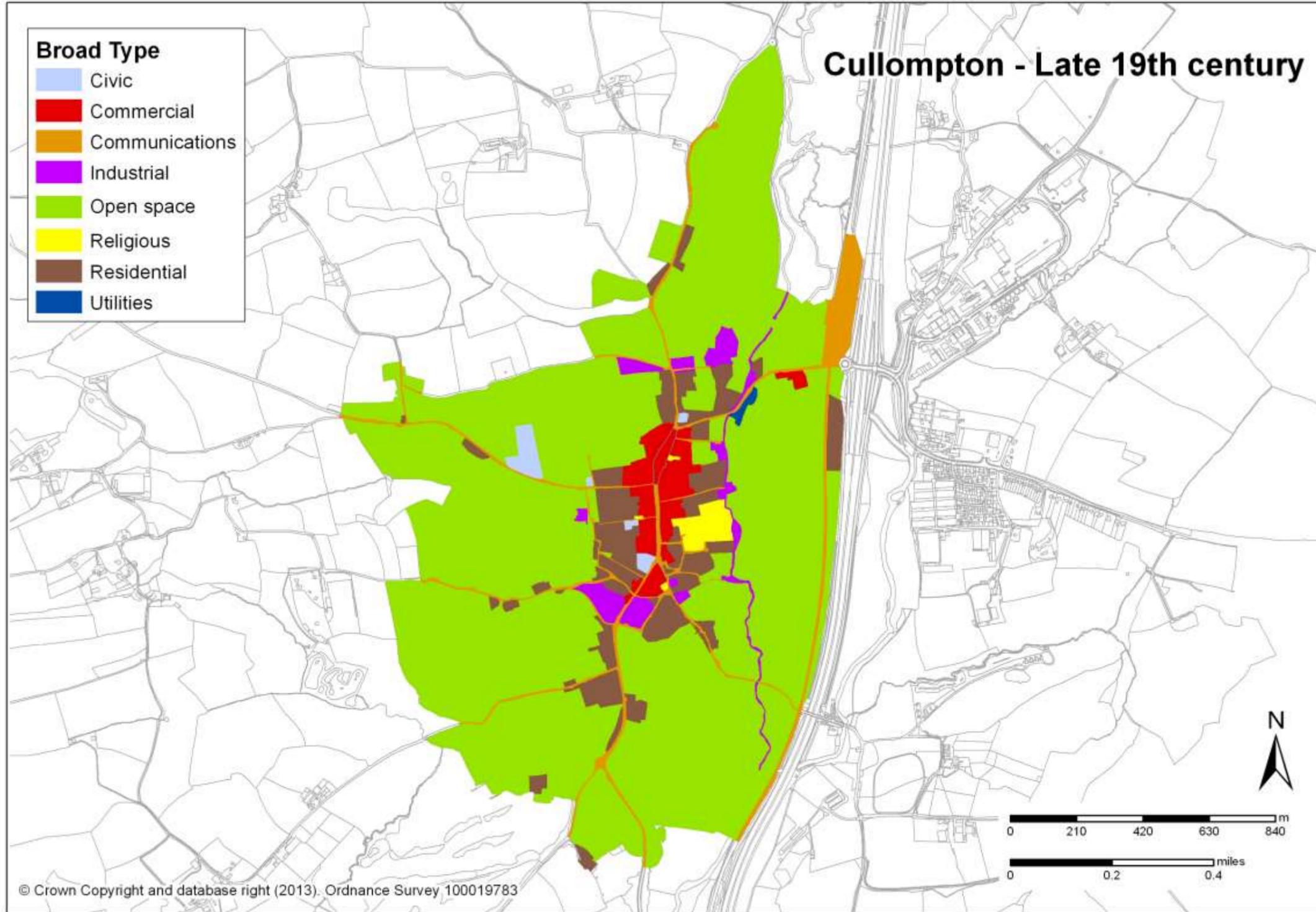


Fig 10 Historical development (Late 19<sup>th</sup> century)

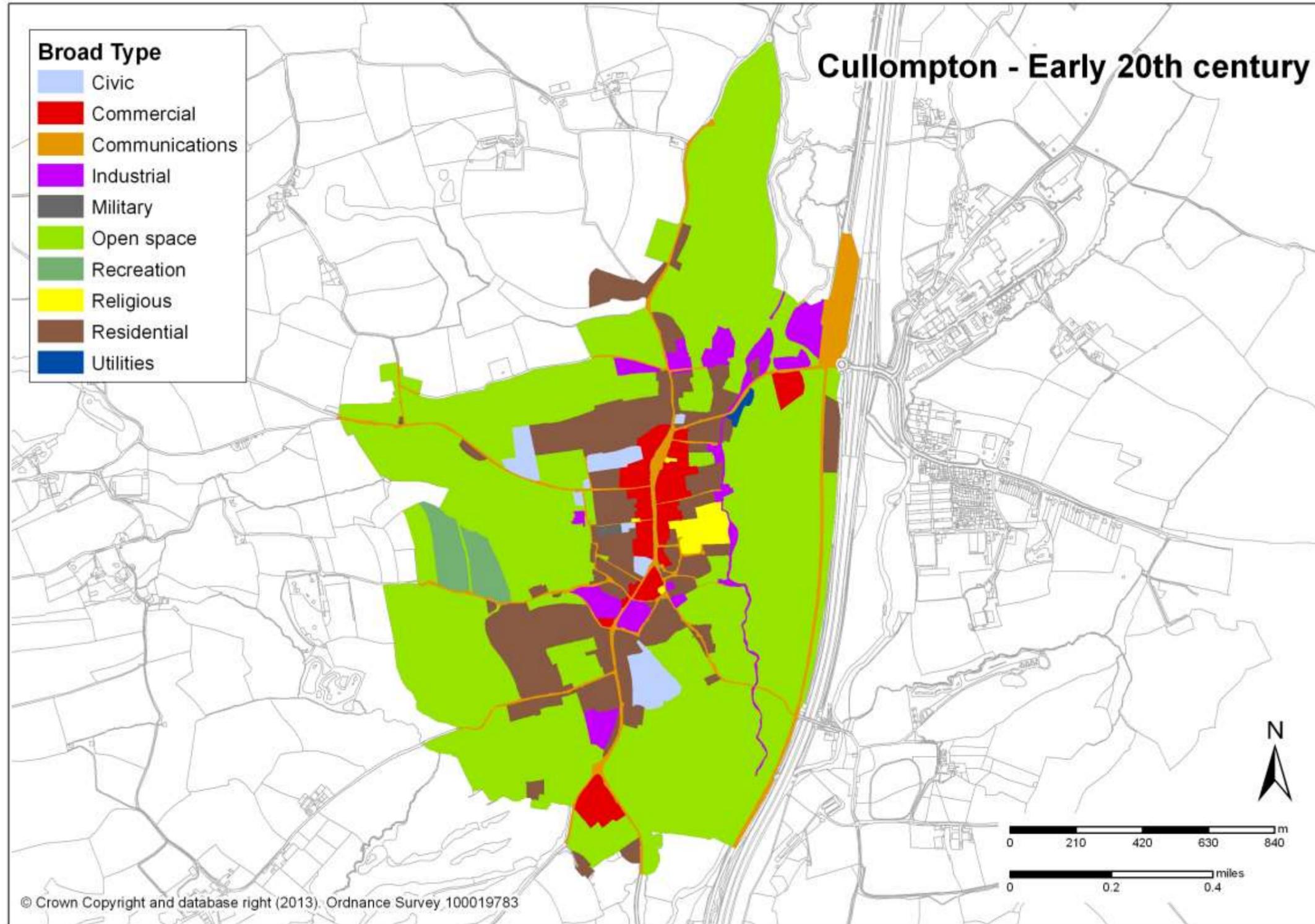


Fig 11 Historical development (Early 20<sup>th</sup> century)

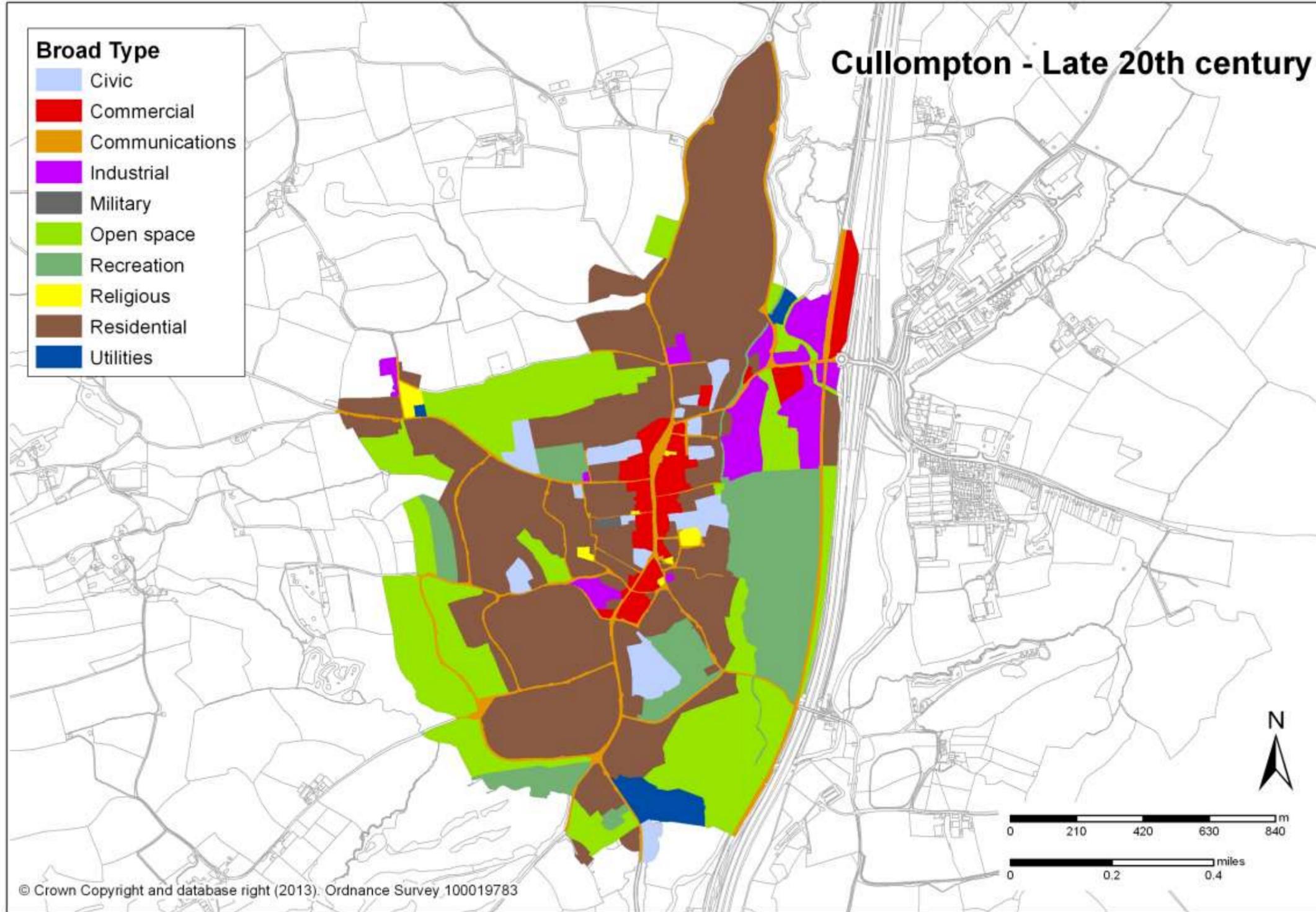


Fig 12 Historical development (Late 20<sup>th</sup> century)