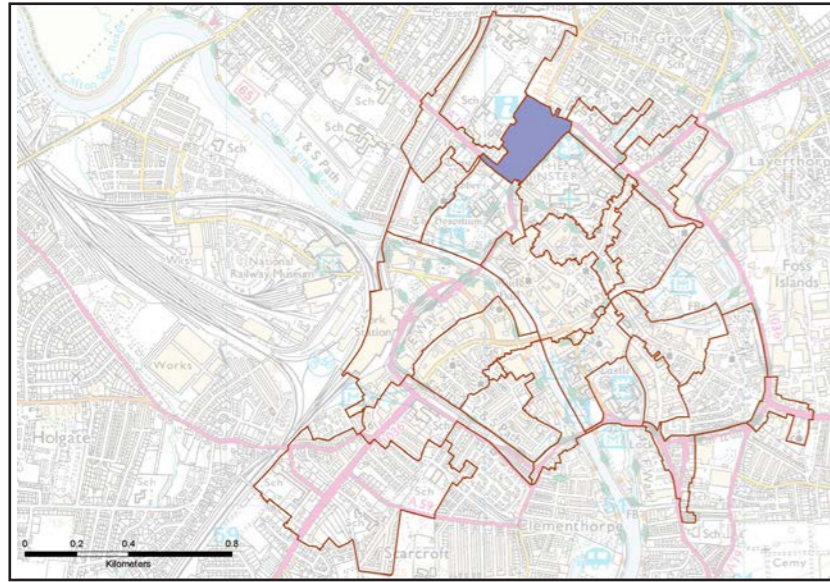


Character area 5: Gillygate



Description

Gillygate and the southern part of Bootham are of medieval origin but now local shopping and residential streets are of mixed 18th and 19th century character. Unlike elsewhere in the city, houses built directly on the former city wall ditch and alongside St Mary's Abbey wall have escaped the extensive clearance that took place in the early 20th century.

Over the last 30 years the quality of shops and businesses here has risen generally. There are still exceptions, especially at the southern end of Bootham and Clarence Street, where shops are vacant, poorly maintained or garishly painted. The area remains an important gateway to the city centre but is blighted by heavy traffic. Until this is resolved, this issue will suppress further improvement

Historic Core Conservation Area Appraisal

Archaeological background

Roman

Evidence for Roman activity is relatively common in this extramural area particularly in the form of occupation related material and remains of timber buildings on, and to the rear of, Gillygate. Modern Bootham follows the line of the principle Roman road leading north-west from the legionary fortress of Eboracum to Catterick. The fortress lay immediately to the east of Gillygate with a possible annex to the south of Bootham in Museum Gardens which would preclude an extra-mural circuit road. That said, a cobbled surface was noted at the corner of Gillygate and Bootham at depths of c.2m (EYO3705). Possible occupation material is known from the vicinity of St. Peter's School, Grosvernor and Union Terraces. Roman material from Gillygate includes pottery, possible timber buildings and ditches (EYO4867, EYO3666-71 and EYO30). The Roman levels were generally located 0.6 to 0.7m below ground level with further deposits recorded on nearby Clarence Street in 1999 at 1.5m below ground level.

Anglian-Anglo-Scandinavian

There is very limited evidence recorded on the HER of Anglian or Anglo-Scandinavian activity within this area. An Anglian coin, found during excavation in the 1970s (EYO4867) represents the only material culture form this period.

Medieval

Large medieval areas of activity surround Gillygate recorded as Sayngiligat in 1330. Medieval pits and drains were uncovered during several Gillygate excavations which took place during the 1970s and early 1990s. A 1m thick medieval cobbled surface was recorded on top of a Roman surface at 21-23 Bootham (EYO3721). At Union Terrace, immediately to the north of this area excavations in the early 1970s revealed evidence for continuous occupation from the 12th-17th century beginning with the church of the Carmelite Friary. This building was later adapted for use as a chapel, St. Mary's Hospital, and in the 16th century as St. Peter's School.

The Minster was built on the site of the former fortress while St. Mary's Abbey occupied the annexe site. Part of the former Precinct Walls stand on the southern border of this area (MYO1080).

The Minster Precinct is surrounded on its western side by town wall stretching from Bootham Bar to Robin Hood's Tower. The wall (MYO1733), including Robin Hood's Tower, runs along the eastern boundary of this character area. In the mid-12th century Gillygate was developed on the south east side with burgage plots running up to the city wall ditch (later extended as the ditch was infilled). Beyond Gillygate was an open space called the Horse fair extending up to the junction of Wigginton and Haxby Roads (Historic Core Conservation Area Appraisal 2011).

The church of St Giles, from which the street takes its name, was situated roughly on the site of the present Salvation Army Citadel, this was out of use by 1586.

Post-medieval

By the 17th century, development was still limited to the wall side of the road and the church had been demolished. Post-medieval pottery within a wet soil deposit was recorded on Gillygate (EYO3669). On the other side of the road were open fields. Small scale industry included several stone yards (possibly for The Minster), coal yards, a smithy and a clay pipe manufactory.

Visible character

The majority of buildings date to the late 18th and 19th century and are between two and four storeys in height

Gillygate is medieval in origin

Medieval city wall glimpsed from a number of locations and is a particular feature of the back yards and gardens of Gillygate properties on the south-east side. Bootham Bar viewed from the junction with Bootham and the Abbey precinct wall viewed from Gillygate.

Contains a high number of independent retailers and several older shopfronts survive.

Many boundaries, shown on the 1852 ordnance survey plan, remain readable as plot divisions. On the east side of Gillygate these are likely to reflect medieval burgage plot boundaries. A late 18th to early 19th century field boundary on the west side of the road is preserved as the rear lane between Portland Street and Claremont Terrace. Bootham Row represents a field boundary dating to at least 1736 as shown on Drake's plan of York.

Sub surface character

Ove Arup Development & Archaeology Study Research Zone: 19

Deposit Depth (where known): Roman occupation layers are likely to exist between 0.6 and 2m below ground level on Gillygate. Cobbled road surface noted at c.2m below ground level at 21 to 23 Gillygate and c.2m below ground level at the junction with Bootham.

Period Survival: Large amounts of Roman occupation deposits survive on Gillygate. Evidence for early medieval activity is sparse while later medieval deposits are common. Medieval cobbled surface and dumps recorded as c.1m thick on Bootham and 0.6m thick on Gillygate. Post-medieval and early modern evidence of occupation is abundant, possibly truncating earlier deposits.

Interventions (recorded on HER April 2013): There are approximately 24 interventions recorded on the City of York Historic Environment Record (HER). Few of the interventions are recorded in any detail and a brief examination of some grey literature suggests several interventions are yet to be recorded in the HER. See Appendix I for brief summary.

Significance

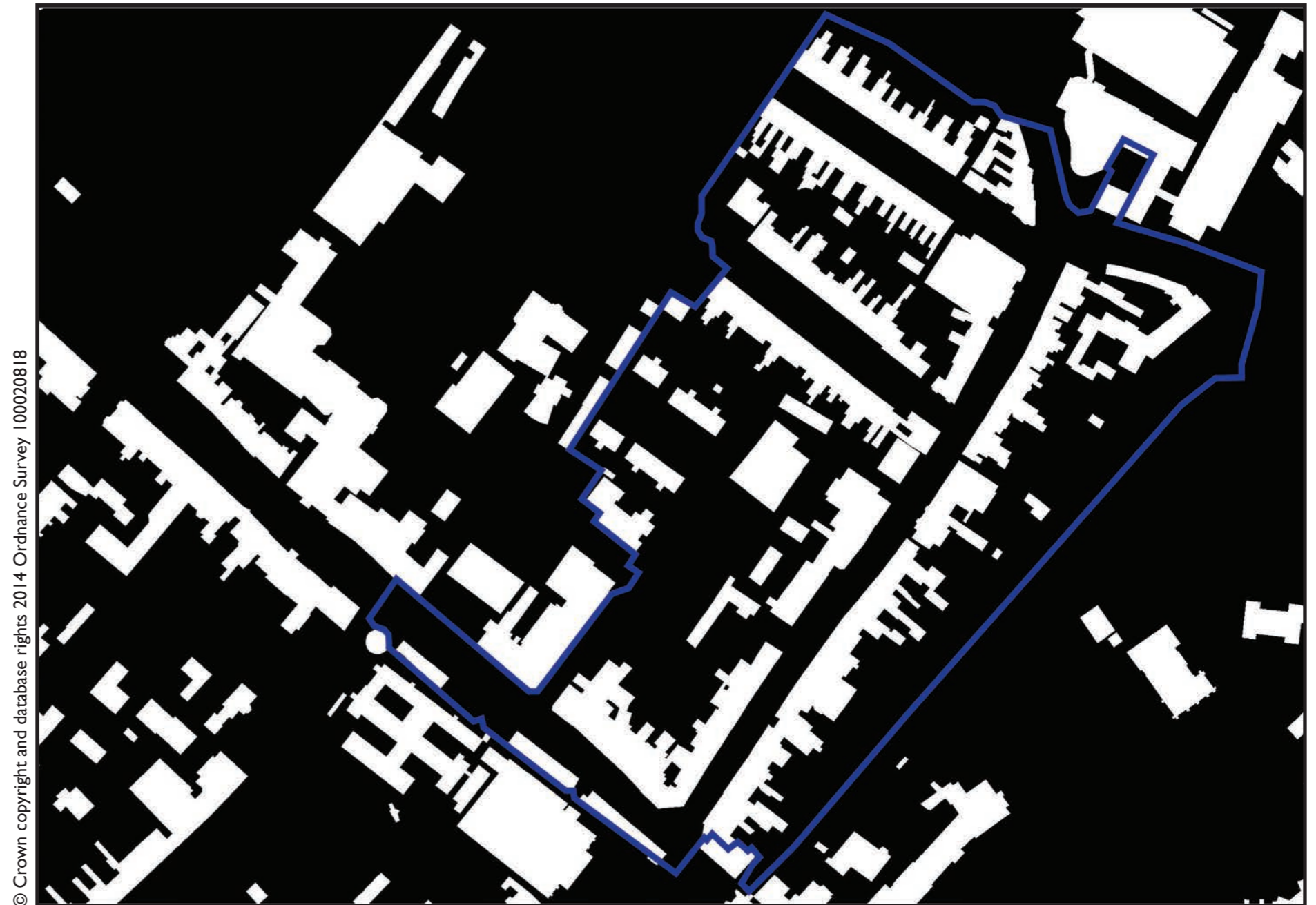
Overview: Gillygate lies immediately north-east of the Roman legionary fortress and medieval city, specifically the Minster precinct. Small scale investigations have revealed that some extra-mural Roman settlement had occurred in the area and evidence of a cobbled road surface suggests that there may be an early precursor to medieval Gillygate. The limited information available indicates that substantial stratified deposits can survive within this area despite later development taking place. Abundant archaeological evidence suggests Roman layers may be encountered between 0.6 and 2m below ground level. Medieval development was concentrated on the east side of Gillygate and archaeological deposits relating to this period are common. Post-medieval and later occupation may have truncated earlier deposits in some places. Some of this later activity is industrial by nature.

Designations: The site falls within the Central Area of Archaeological Importance and the Historic Core Conservation Area.

Gillygate contains a relatively high number of architecturally or historically significant buildings, including one Grade I listed building (the city walls are listed as well as scheduled), 2 Grade II* and 26 Grade II buildings. Several Buildings of Merit have been identified in the Historic Core Conservation Area Appraisal which may be recommended for inclusion in the Local List of Heritage Assets. The remains of St. Mary's Abbey precinct walls and York Minster Precinct Walls are Grade I listed and Scheduled Ancient Monuments. These walls make a substantial contribution to York's collection of significant landmark monuments, one of the city's key significances.

Streetscape components: Gillygate is a busy area containing a mixture of independent retail outlets and accommodation. Many of the buildings contain decorative tiling, individual decoration and iron work such as sign hangings. Claremont Terrace and Portland Street also feature iron railings, portico designs, stained glass and decorative floor tiles within porches. There are several important shopfronts on the street.

Paving includes riven English Pennine Sandstone on Bootham, but is predominantly a mixture of pre-cast (Marshalls Saxon paving mainly) flagstones (e.g. Gillygate & Moatside Court) and asphalt surfaces (slurry sealing) on Portland Street, Bootham Row and Claremont Terrace. Stable pavioir paving can be seen in the gutters on Claremont Terrace and to the rear of Gillygate on Percy Street car park.



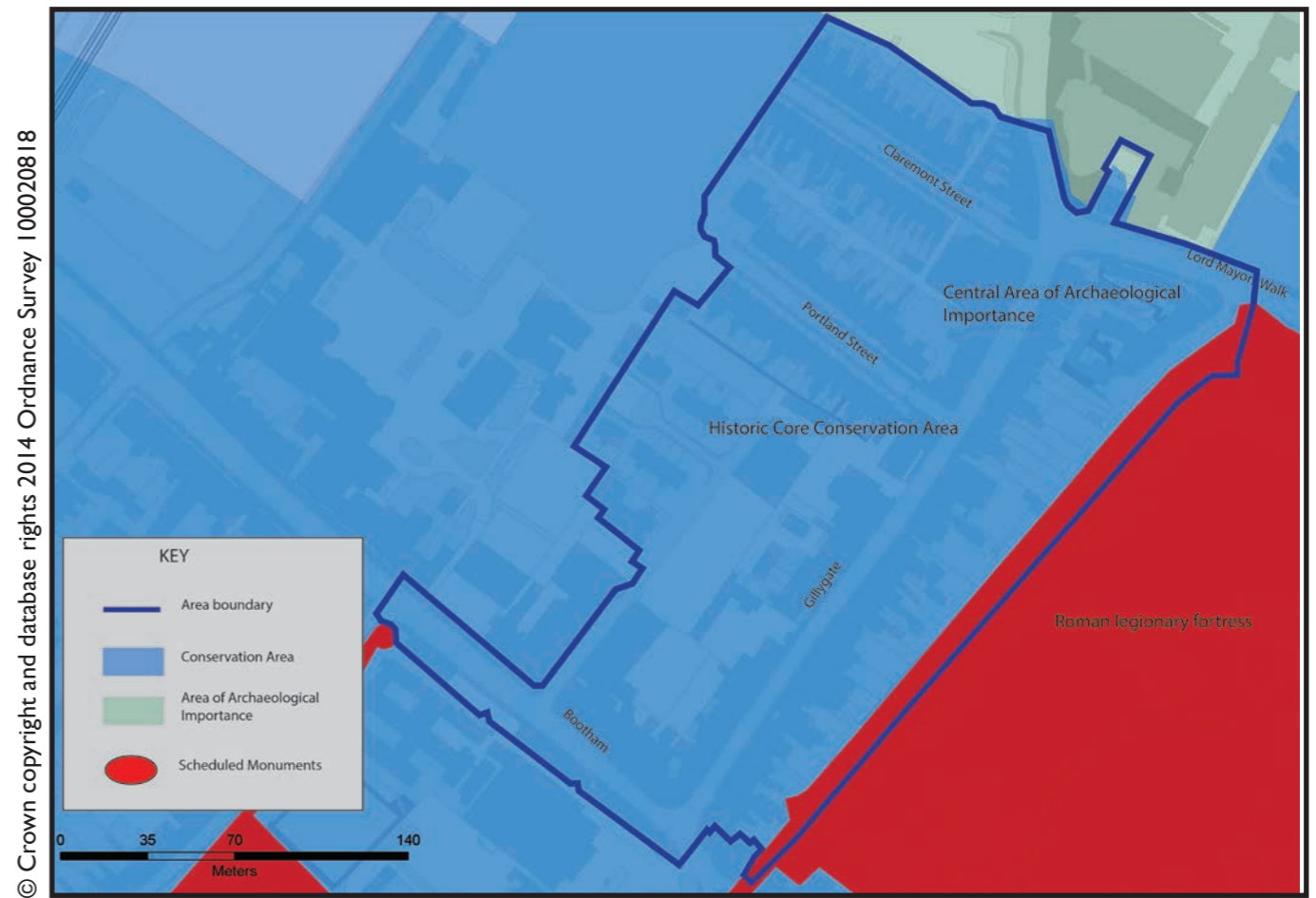
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Figure ground map with built environment shown as white on black.



Above: Plan showing the heights of the buildings within this character area.

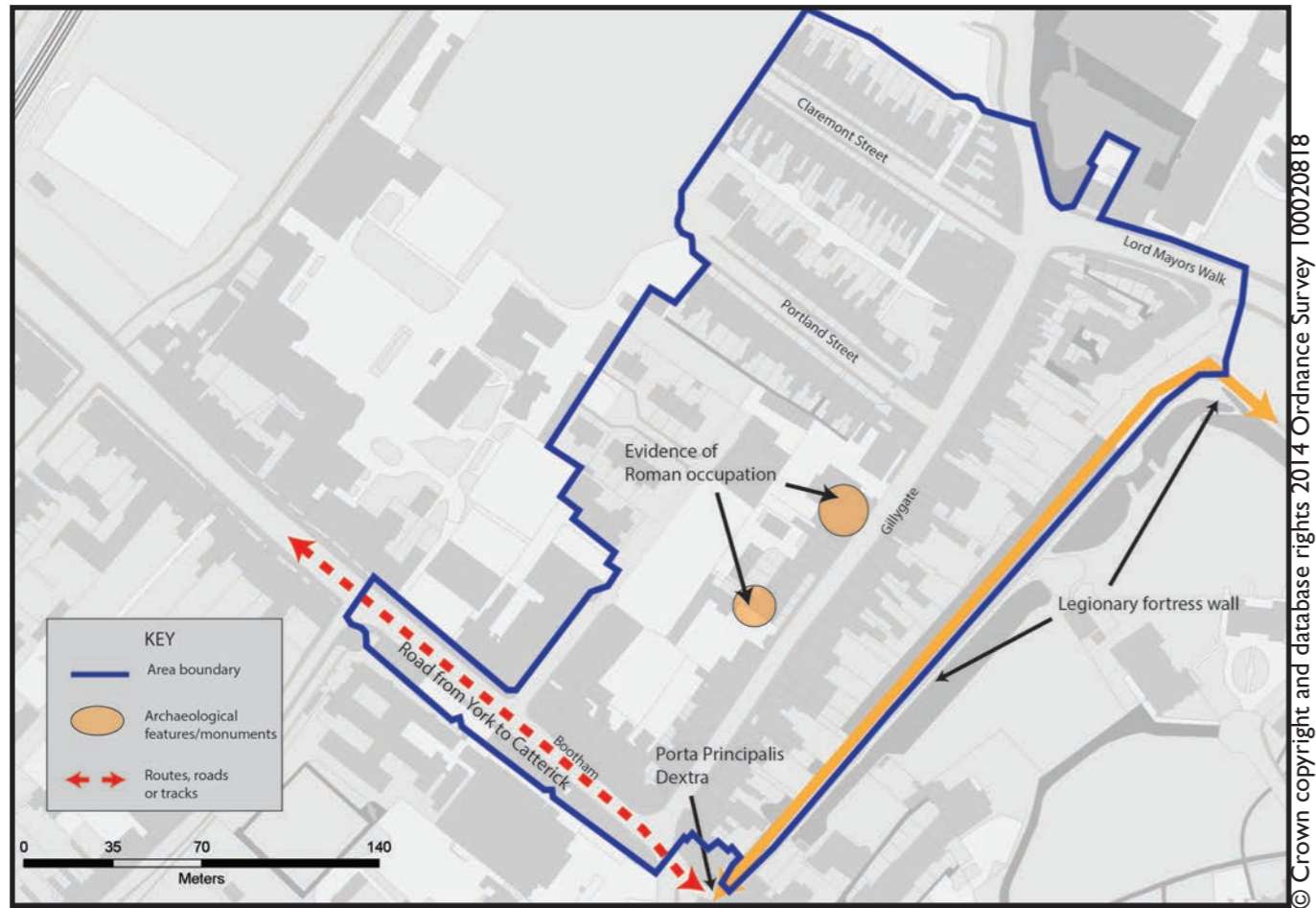
Below: Plan showing the construction dates of the buildings within the area.



Above: Plan showing designated heritage assets within this character area.

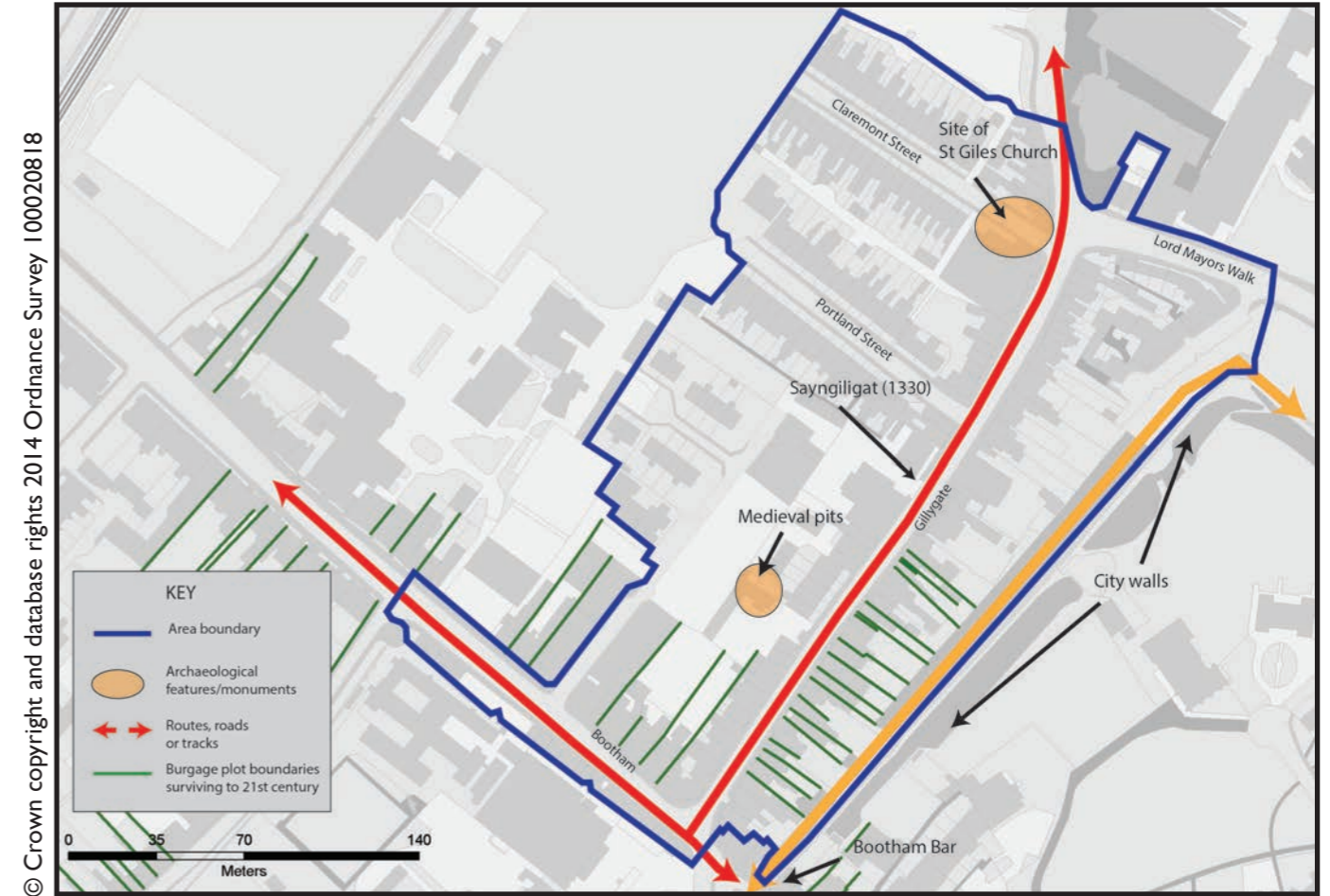
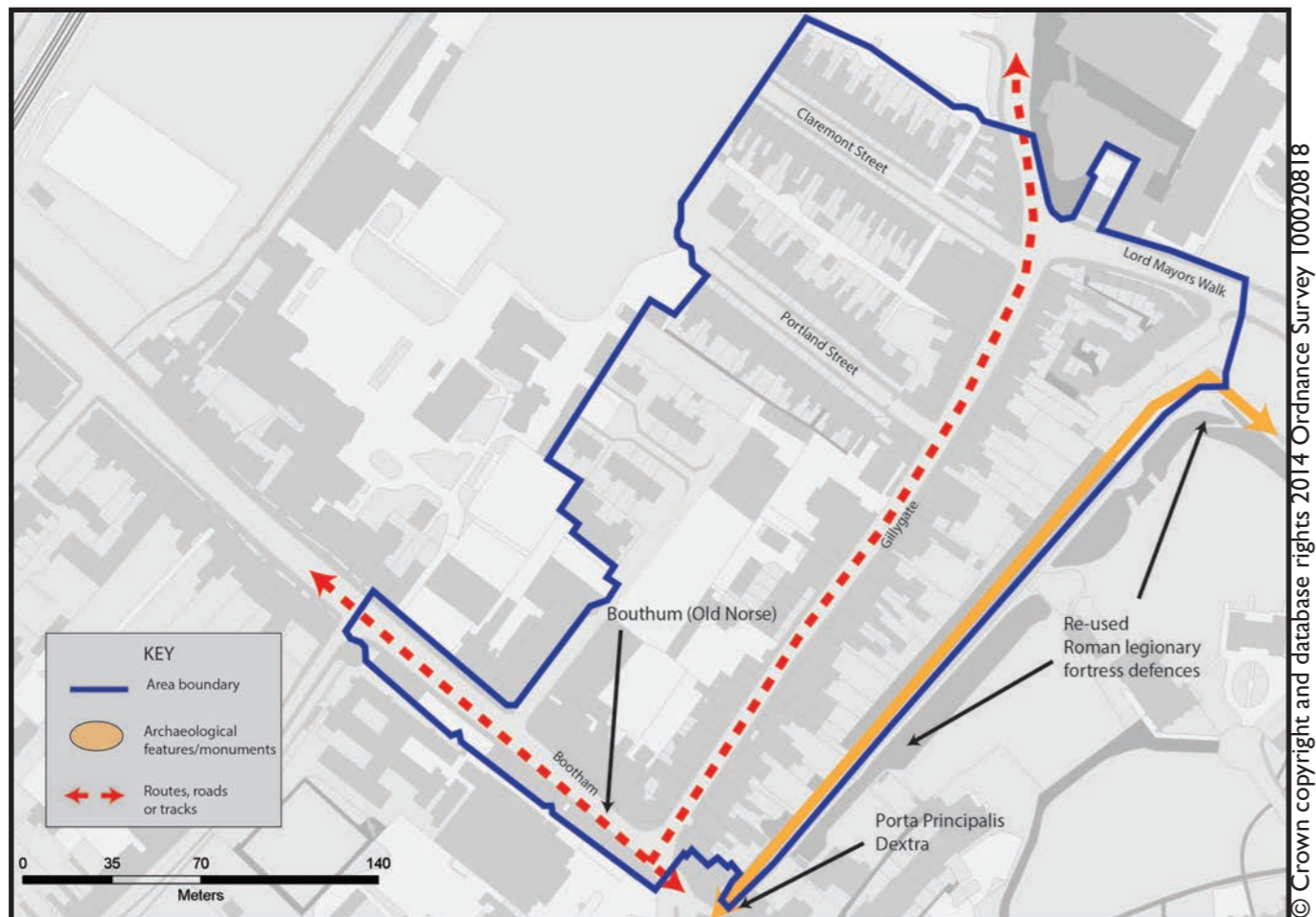
Below: Plan showing the Broad Type characterisation of the area.





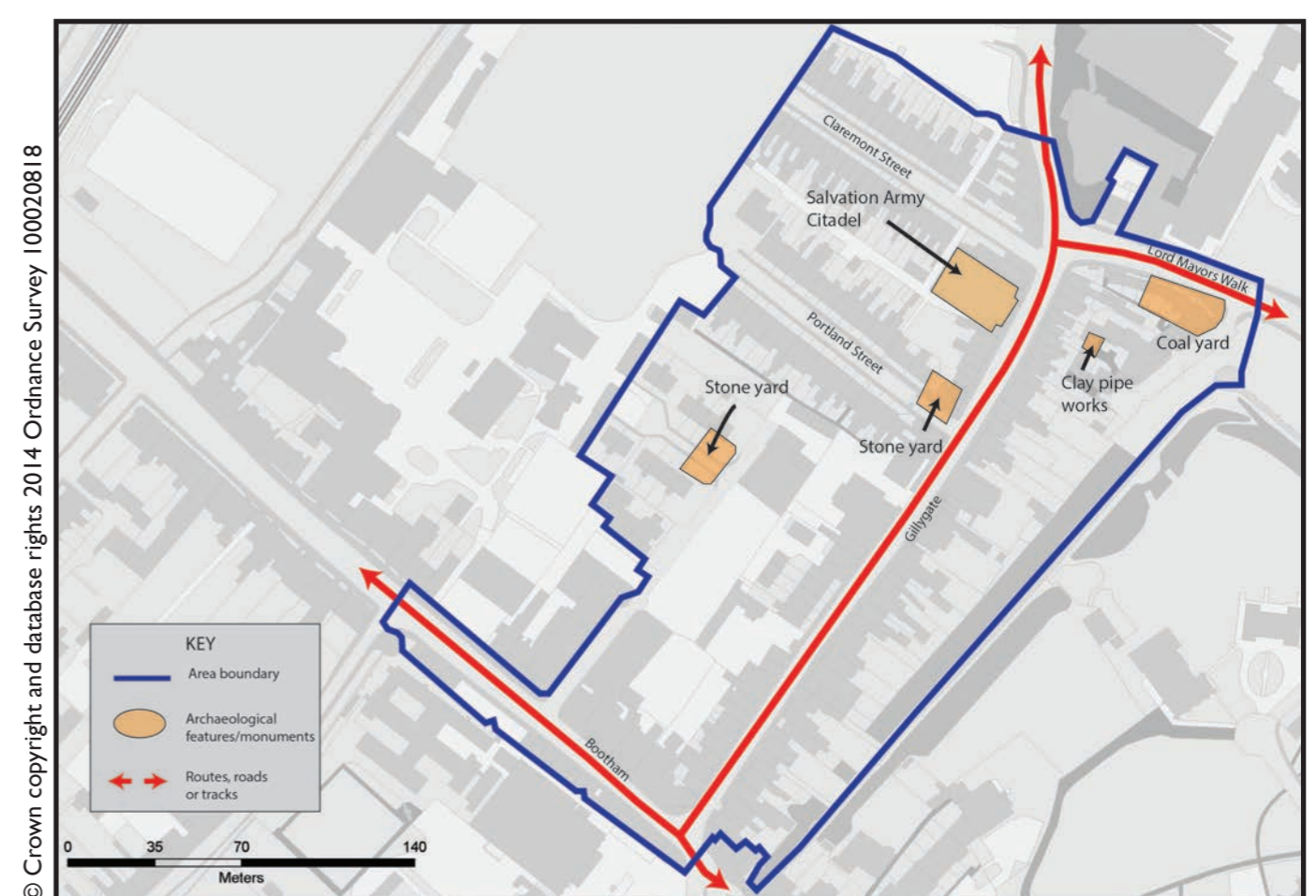
Above: The Roman landscape.

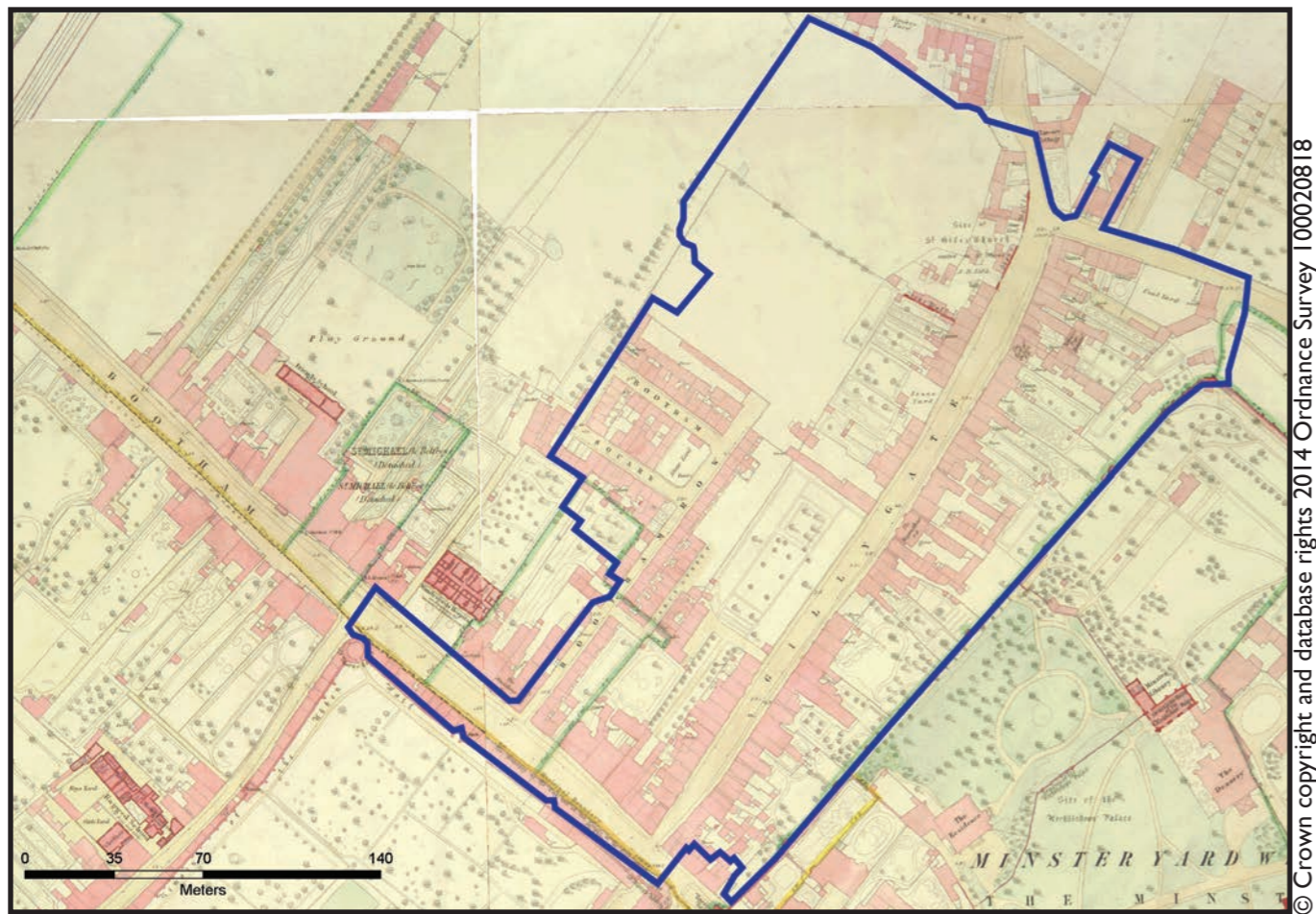
Below: The Anglo-Scandinavian landscape.



Above: The medieval landscape.

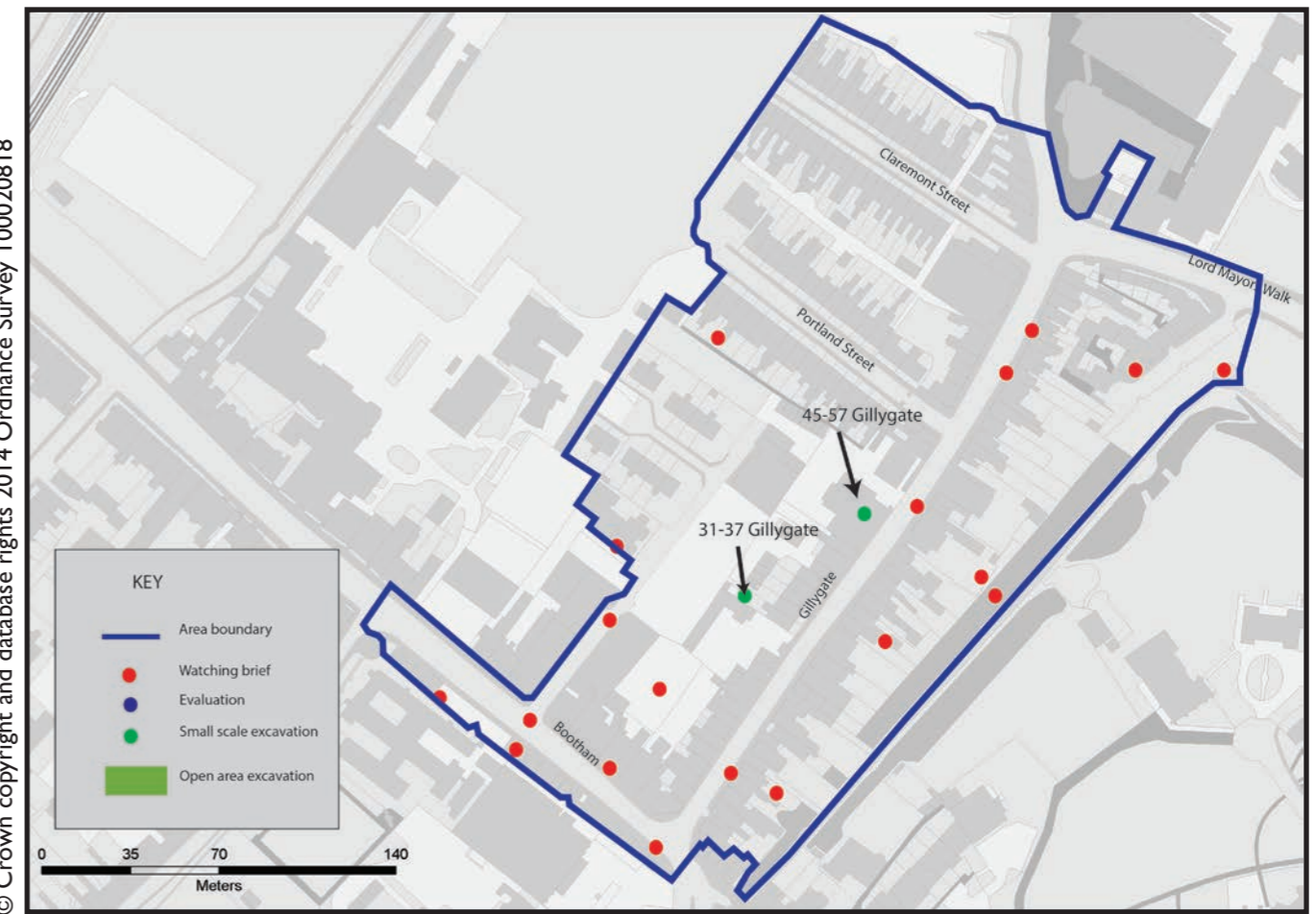
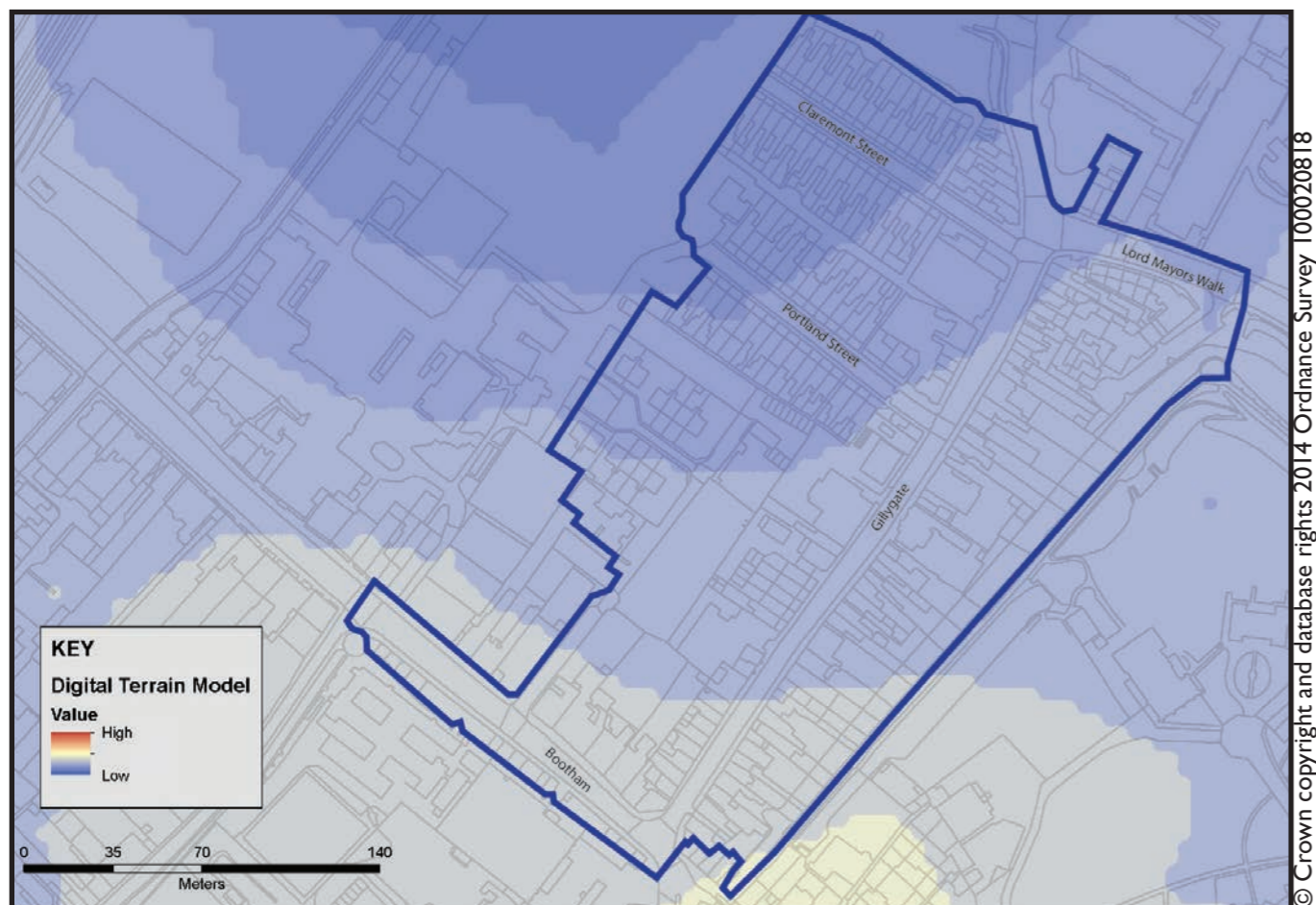
Below: The post-medieval monuments of the area.





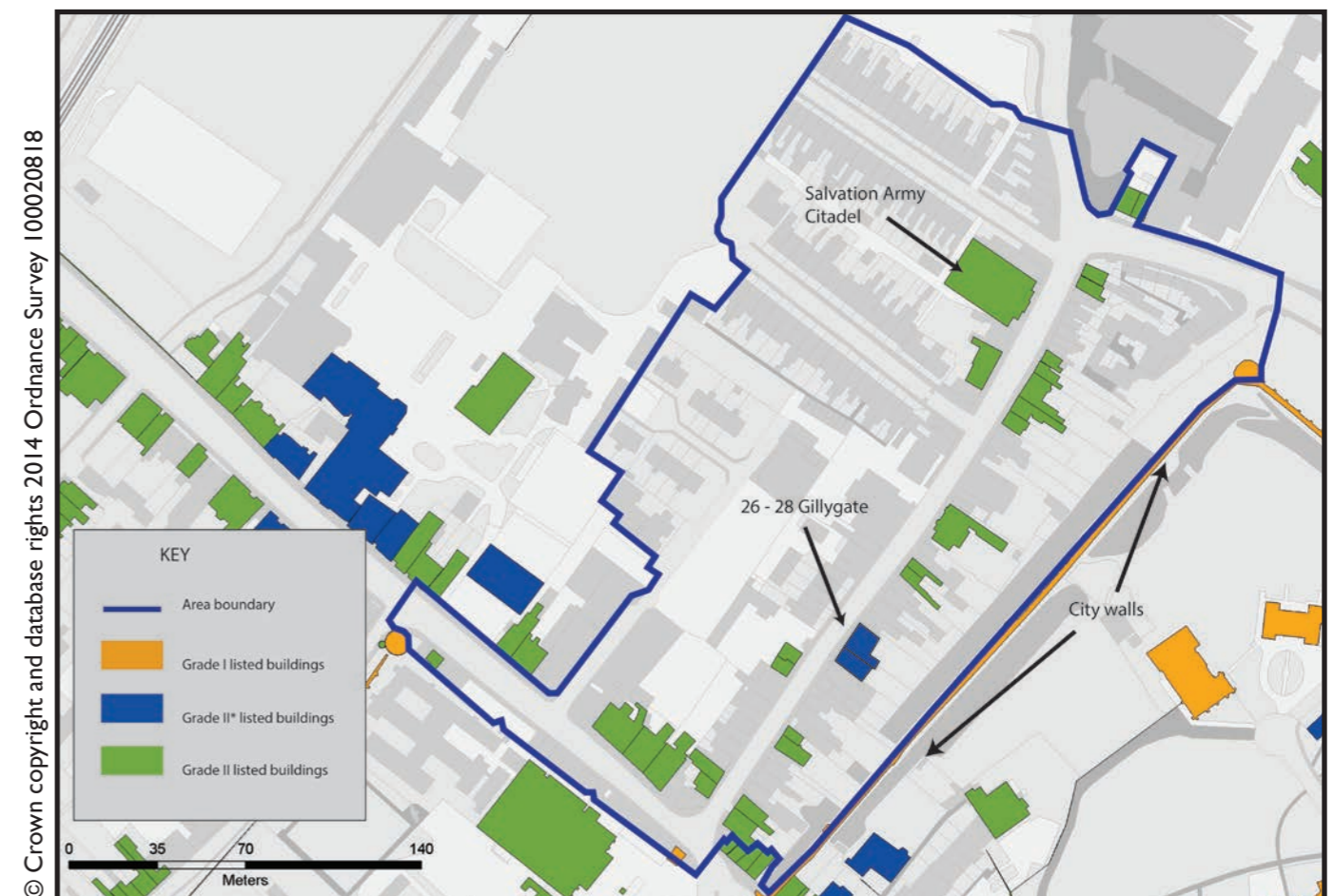
Above: The 1852 landscape.

Below: The general topography showing the higher ground towards Bootham.



Above: The location of archaeological interventions recorded on the City of York Historic Environment Record.

Below: Location of listed buildings.



Main Sources

Ottaway, P. 2011, Archaeology in the Environs of Roman York, CBA, York

Ove Arup, 1991, Archaeology and Development Study, York

York City Council Historic Environment Record

York City Historic Core Conservation Area Appraisal- 5: Gillygate

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