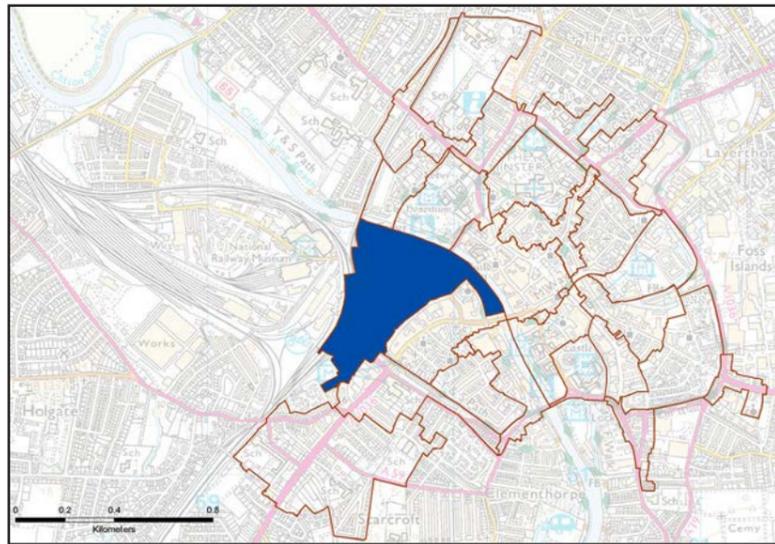


Character area 22: Railway



The location of the character area within the historic core.

Description

The railway has had a major impact on the character of the area and has little historic relationship with the rest of the city. Planning of the railway was defined by engineering needs rather than historic plot boundaries. These needs influenced not just design of the two stations but also the road network around them. Large isolated buildings, initially built by the railway companies in the 19th century, set the template for 1960s development on Toft Green.

Uniquely, a section of city wall runs through the centre of the area rather than defining its edges. The highly permeable nature of this section means character transcends the historic barrier

Historic Core Conservation Area Appraisal

Archaeological background

Roman

The archaeological record is dominated by various examinations of a substantial cemetery (MYO2010) containing both inhumations and cremations, principally during construction of the current railway station, the Royal Station Hotel and Scarborough Bridge in the late 19th century. In addition, burials, structures and occupation evidence were discovered in the area towards the riverside. It is believed that the cemetery may extend to the south bank of the Ouse (EYO114). More recently, a watching brief in 1983 at the Railway Station revealed disarticulated remains at 1.2m below ground level. Contemporary (1876 and quoted in RCHME, Roman York) accounts identified a number of large pits into which had been 'thrown' several bodies in a random manner (EYO418). At the Royal Station Hotel in 1999, thirteen inhumations, wall foundations and ditches were recorded with one structure interpreted as a mausoleum as part of a Time Team live dig (EYO4186). In the same year another excavation at the hotel revealed several Roman inhumation and cremation burials some of which contained jewellery, pottery and evidence of coffins (EYO2797). These burials were located relatively close to the modern ground surface, probably as a result of earth moving and ground reduction during the 19th century.

In 1998 an excavation at the former Foxton's Garage site on Leeman Road (EYO114) exposed disturbed material which included Roman pottery and 20th century deposits to depths of 1.0m below ground level and 3.0m below ground level in one of the four trenches. Roman material was removed from boreholes which ran much deeper than the excavated trenches. However, it was not possible to determine if these deposits were original undisturbed Roman levels. It is possible that all of the material encountered during the evaluation was re-deposited during the construction of York Railway Station in the 1870s. Further evaluation in 2000 (EYO418 and EYO422) did not expose any Roman material.

Within the Colonia, possibly enclosed by earth and masonry defences (although evidence is scant), several substantial buildings have been identified.

Beneath the Cedar Court Hotel architectural fragments including stone capitals and a stone lined well were exposed during building work in 1901 (MYO2166, 2162 and 2165). A conduit and timber lined pit was also located; the pit was recorded as c.2.5m below ground level (MYO2167-8).

The former railway station located within the walled city area, now West Offices, was subject to several archaeological investigations including five evaluation trenches (EYO4271) in 2009. This evaluation revealed a complex sequence of Roman structures c.0.9m+ below ground level, beneath the former station platform some of which are almost certainly associated with the baths complex recorded during the construction of the railway station (EYO2580-81). Potential Roman deposits were identified at 1.30m below ground level during a watching brief at Station Rise (EYO431) while a possible Roman courtyard or minor road was discovered close to Toft Green/Tanner Row c.0.4m below ground level in places.

In the Tanner Row and Toft Green area evidence of another apsidal building with mosaic pavement (MYO3602) was discovered in 1840 during works to the Old Railway Station at an approximate depth of c.1.3m. The foundations of yet another apsidal building and religious dedication stone (MYO3601) were discovered in the late 18th century during the digging of a cellar on Toft Green. Immediately outside the area (character area 21) other 19th century investigations revealed evidence of other large scale buildings including a house, with three mosaics, found in 1853 under Toft Green (EYO2470-71 & MYO3614). Other occupation evidence dating to the Roman period has been encountered at various points on Tanner Row (EYO169, EYO2173-2186 and EYO3298).

An excavation at North Street pumping station (EYO4065) revealed part of a river retaining wall (MYO2035) and stratigraphical sequences revealing changes in river and land management. Evaluations at Wellington Row and the Stakis Hotel site also exposed evidence of a river retaining wall in timber and stone, as well as evidence of substantial stone buildings, possibly warehouses (e.g. EYO2928). On Rougier Street, waterlogged Roman timber lined channels, drains, masonry structures and road surfaces were recorded in 1981 (EYO2320-2325).

The top of the Roman deposits were c.3.8m below ground level.

Anglo-Scandinavian

Understanding the evolution of this area from the Roman period up to the early 19th century has been significantly hampered by the substantial amount of 'cut and fill' that has been undertaken during construction of the original railway station and associated works since 1840. The vertical drop from Toft Green is a direct result of this activity. Contemporary anecdotal evidence suggests that during the early 19th century a variety of Anglian and Anglo-Scandinavian artefacts including metalwork had been found, presumably during earthmoving. Much of this ended up in various private collections including that of Thomas Bateman, a prolific Sheffield and Derbyshire collector. Recent investigations prior to construction of the City council's new West Offices revealed clear evidence to support this.

It is likely that some of the more substantial stone buildings of the Roman period may have been standing during the Anglian period, perhaps even re-used. The 10th century robbing of Roman buildings and subsequent occupation has been identified on Tanner Row. Limited evidence has been recovered on Rougier Street and Wellington Row where a layer was recorded as being cut by pits containing 9th to 11th century worked bone artefacts. Evidence of craft working including amber, antler, glass, non-ferrous metals and textile manufacturing was found on North Street in 1993 (EYO4065) and evidence for wattle river defence has been located at the North Street Pumping Station (EYO4065).

Although there is no direct archaeological evidence, the later medieval earth and masonry defences of the city walls may well have their origins at this time, if not earlier.

Medieval

As with the Anglo-Scandinavian archaeology, medieval archaeological evidence is practically non-existent in the area of the old railway station.

Redevelopment of former goods sheds and warehouses off Toft Green (present George Stephenson House) was investigated in the late 1990s (EYO117) revealing some medieval deposits heavily truncated during the Victorian era. The level of surviving deposits varied between 0.75m and 1.77m below ground level.

Evidence from Rougier Street includes floors, deposits and dumps. On the river front, North Street was lined with staiths which served boats loaded with produce from the nearby mills and warehouses. The 11th century waterfront was discovered 5.5m below ground level during the North Street Pumping Station excavation (EYO4065). Further evaluation, just outside this character area at All Saint's Church, North Street (EYO698) investigations encountered medieval artefacts and borehole survey results suggest several metres of medieval stratigraphy survive across the area. This site also produced evidence of 12th to 15th century pits. Medieval deposits were waterlogged and c.1.6m thick (EYO2179). Late medieval deposits occurred at c.2.5m below ground level, with undisturbed archaeology present below cellars at c.4.0m below ground level. Medieval pits, post holes and clay floors were recorded at the York Railway HQ building, Station Rise (EYO431). Evaluation ahead of the redevelopment of the Old Railway Station (MYO712) buildings as West Offices (EYO4271) included the investigation of an area close to the war memorial. This trench revealed a 0.3m thick layer of medieval deposits, representing small buildings, at c.1.15+m below ground level.

During the medieval period Toft Green was divided into two areas: open ground at the south-west end used for militia meetings and cattle market; and, to the north-east a Dominican Priory was founded in the early 13th century. This later became a nursery garden following the reformation and was one of the few large open green spaces within the city walls. The city walls which run through the centre of this character area run from Baile Hill to Barker Tower (MYO1715) and date to the late 13th century. To the west of the city walls lay an area of presumed water meadow known as Bishop's Fields. Thief Lane is almost certainly a medieval lane affording access to fields and open pastures to the west.

Post-medieval – Early modern

The Friary gardens continued in use as a nursery until the early 19th century and the extreme North-East corner of the former precinct contained a House of Correction built by the Corporation in 1814. By 1839 the York and North Midland Railway had acquired all this land as part of the creation of York's first railway. During the late 1830s and 1840s, the city walls were breached by two great arches created to allow access to the rail networks, goods areas and newly built station (opened 1841) at Station Rise. During the creation of the railway area, significant ground reduction and levelling occurred. A newer, larger station opened at the current site in 1877. The creation of the new station also saw the construction of a new road network including Rougier Street in the 1840s and a new river crossing at Lendal Bridge, opened in 1863. A watching brief in 1991 at Tanners Moat, Lendal Bridge (EYO3245) revealed modern material to a depth of 1.6m below ground level.

The riverside area continued to be used for manufacturing and industry. Factories and warehouses will have had a detrimental effect on any shallow archaeological deposits. During the mid 20th century large scale office blocks and the Park Inn Hotel (formerly Viking Hotel) were constructed which also would have had a negative effect on any potential archaeology on site. At the same time the railway sidings were removed from the Old Station site.

Hudson House, a good example of post-war brutalist architecture was constructed in the early 1960s followed by the ubiquitous George Stephenson House in the late 1990s and the Council's West Offices in 2013, successfully incorporating the original station into a contemporary sustainable building.

Visible character

Railway dominates area in terms of buildings and road layout

Queen Street Bridge dominant feature

Landmark City Walls run through the centre of this character area

Buildings range from 1 to 8 storeys in height

Contains old and current railway station buildings, railway offices, workshops and sheds as well as 20th century office block developments

Hudson House is one of few examples of post-war commercial architecture in York

Green space of cholera burial ground undermined and divided by inner ring road

Landmark City Walls and Micklegate Bar visible with fine views of the Minster and other heritage assets from the city walls

Sub surface character

Ove Arup Development & Archaeology Study Research Zone: 10, 11 and 17

Deposit Depth (where known): Ove Arup Archaeology and Development Study suggests average quality archaeological deposits relating to the Roman to medieval periods across the majority of this area. On the waterfront, high quality deposits relating to all periods may be found at average depths of c.5.0m below ground level. Within the walls, medium quality deposits of all periods may be found at average depths of c.2.0m below ground level.

Natural levels were recorded at c.7.0m below ground level on Rougier Street, however this varies widely across the area due to river deposits and levelling activities which have taken place over the centuries

Undisturbed Roman archaeology relating to structures and deposits vary in depth between c.0.4m below ground level e.g. at Tanner Row to 3.8m+ below ground level on Rougier Street. Disturbed layers were noted at 1.2m at the Station and up to 3.0m on Leeman Road

Medieval deposits appear to survive c.5.5m below ground level on North Street

Deposit thicknesses recorded vary between: Roman c.2.5m and 4.5m, Anglian and Anglo-Scandinavian c.0.2m, medieval 0.3m to 1.6m

Period Survival: Evidence relating to significant Roman cemeteries outside the civilian town and buildings including a bath house inside the city boundaries exist within this area. Limited Anglo-Scandinavian deposits have been recorded relating to craft working on North Street and Wellington Row. Medieval occupation deposits are common in this area where not disturbed by railway infrastructure. Later medieval and post-medieval levels are often disturbed by more modern activity – particularly 19th century levelling which took place during the construction of the railway.

Medieval deposits are also common although later periods and post-medieval levels are often disturbed by more modern activity.

Interventions (recorded on HER April 2013): There are approximately 42 archaeological interventions, including several historic in date, 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 a brief summary.

Significance

Overview: This area falls predominantly within the Extramural (west) zone and partly within the Colonia/West Walled City and Ouse Waterfront (west bank) areas as identified by Ove Arup in the Archaeology and Development Study. The study identified the extramural area as containing Roman to medieval deposits while the Colonia area contains deposits relating to all periods at an average depth c.2.0m below ground level. Both areas are described as containing archaeology of medium quality. On the waterfront, high quality deposits are likely to exist at depths of c.5.0m below ground level.

Despite the obvious impacts of early 19th century development, investigations beneath the old station platforms at West Offices demonstrate that Roman archaeology at least can survive well.

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

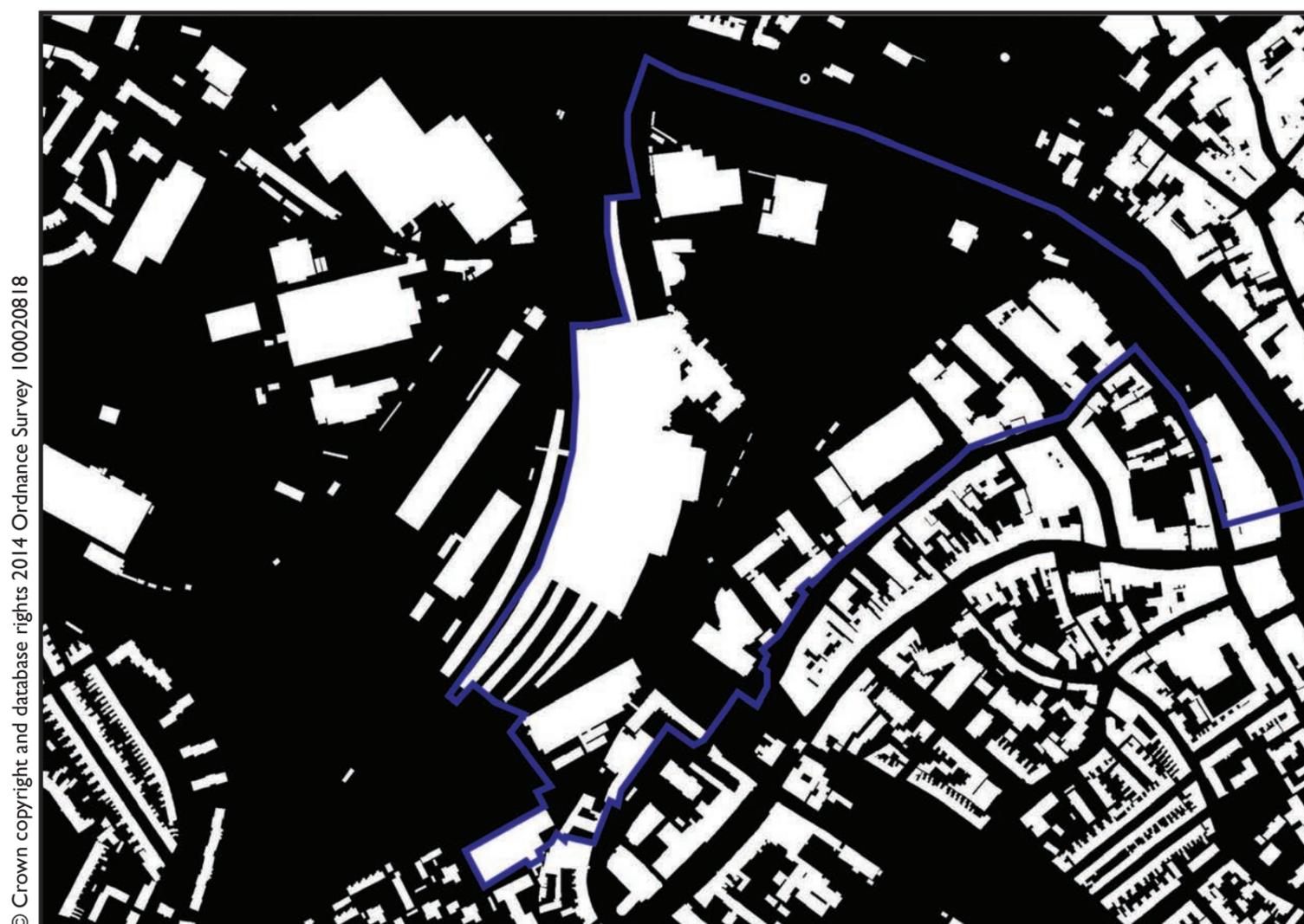
The railway area contains several architecturally or historically significant buildings as well as a handful of Buildings of Merit (parts of locomotive works, Railway Institute and housing on Queen Street - Historic Core Conservation Area Appraisal 2011). There are 4 Grade II* and 16 Grade II listed buildings. The City Walls (Barker Tower to Baile Hill) are also Grade I listed and Scheduled Ancient Monuments (SAM 30).

Streetscape components: The area around West Offices and Cedar Court Hotel including Station Rise has been recently landscaped with sawn natural stone flags (English Pennine Sandstone). Other materials associated with this work include poorly laid bound gravel, natural stone setts and pre-cast concrete setts and flags. Pre-cast concrete flags and asphalt are more common elsewhere on Leeman Road and Station Rise. Station Road is a mixture of pre-cast concrete and natural stone flags while Station Avenue comprises asphalt surfacing. Pre-cast concrete flags (Marshalls Saxon paving) are used on Queen Street and Rougier Street. Riven and sawn natural stone flags are used on Wellington Row at the riverside. Carriageways are all asphalt.

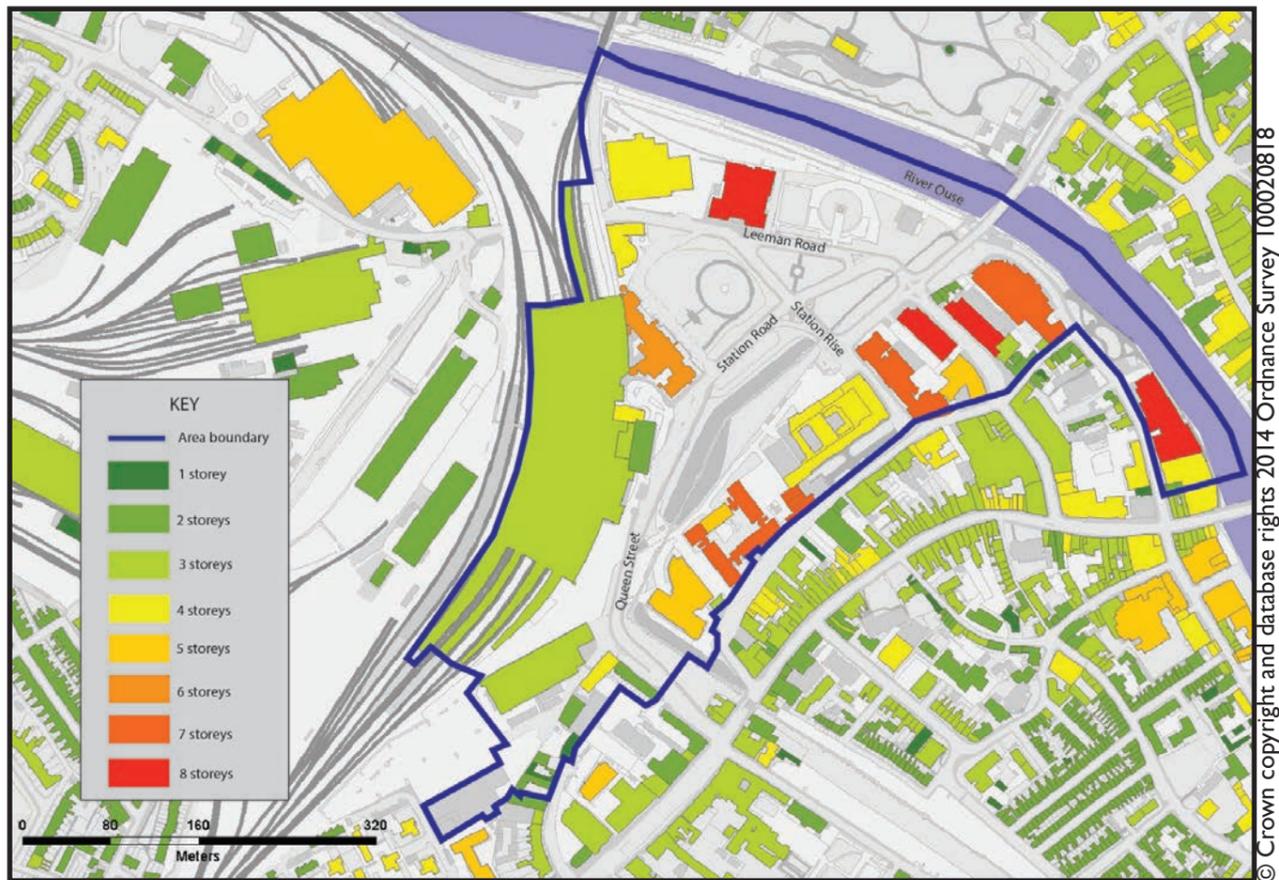
The area contains contemporary street signage, late 20th century phone boxes and traffic signage, cycle racks, seating and Edinburgh style waste bins. Late 20th century-early 21st century street lighting is in use on the main thoroughfares.

Around the West Offices and Cedar Court Hotel, replica period styles of street lights are in use.

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

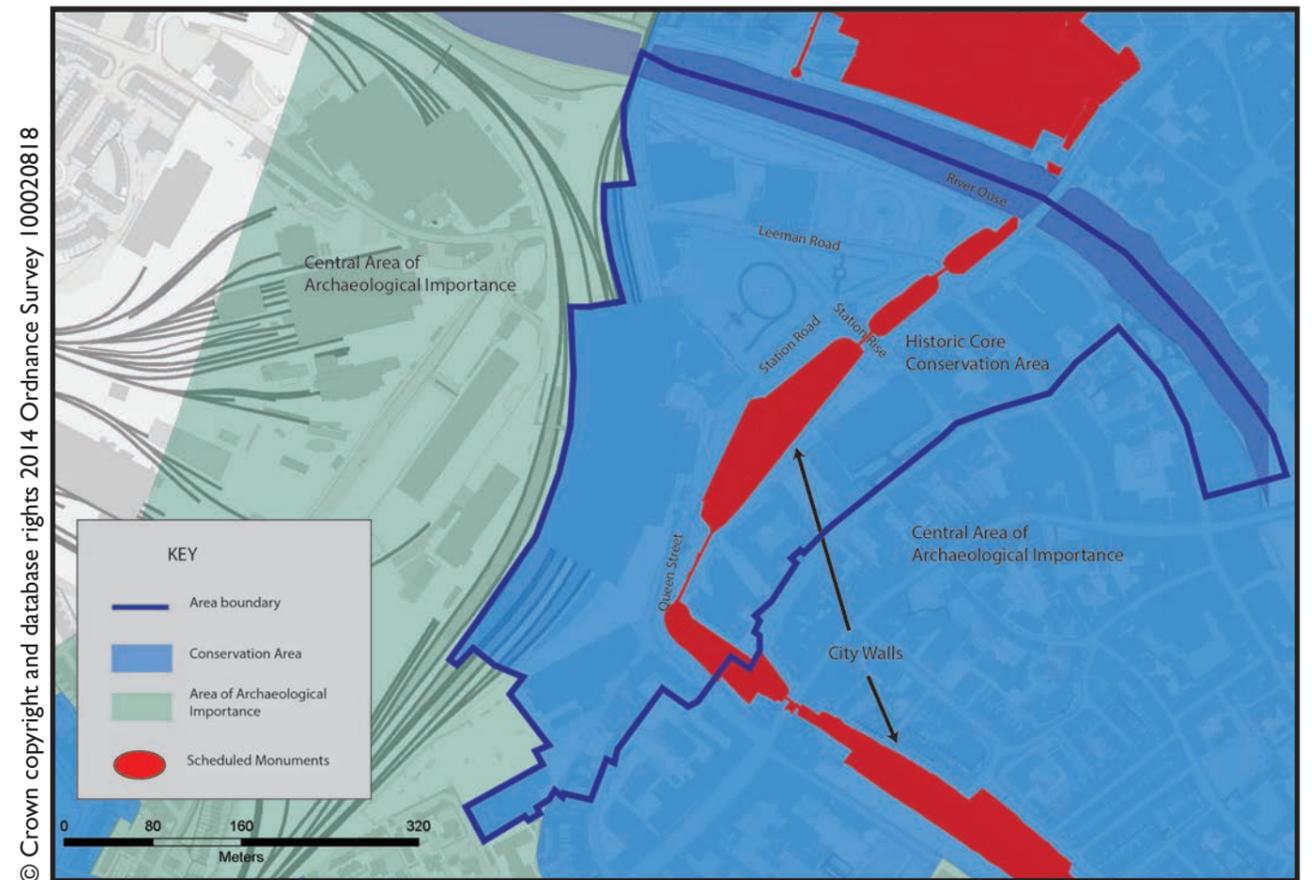
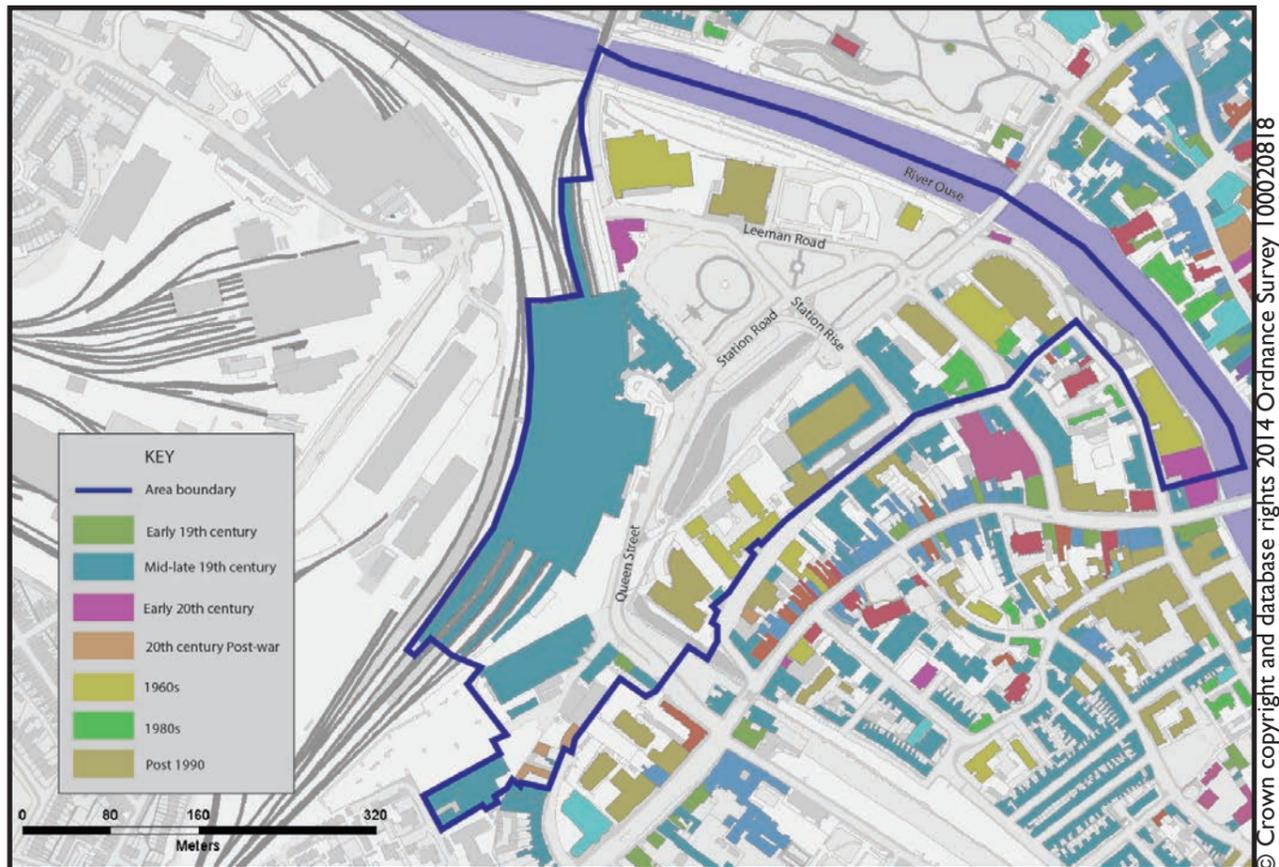


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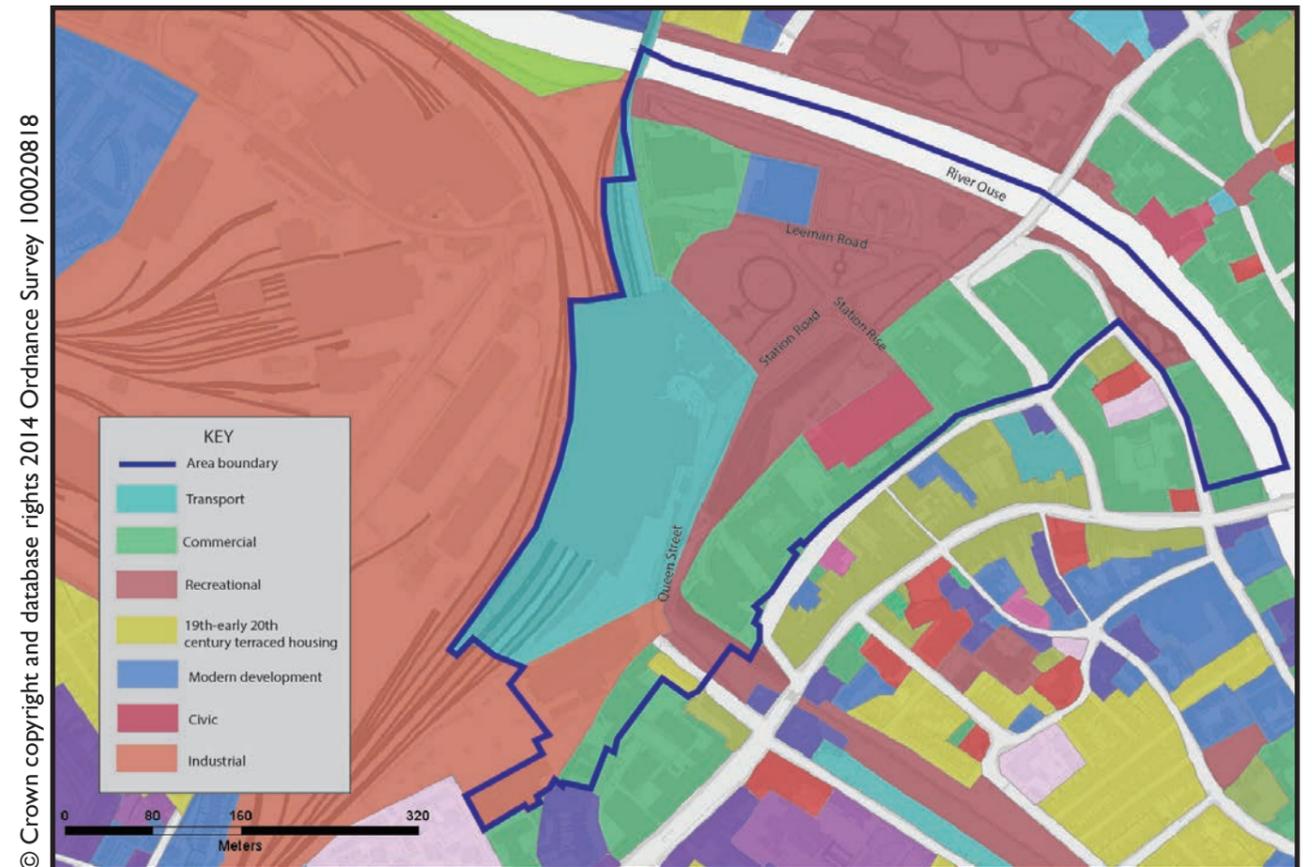
Above: Plan showing the heights of the buildings within this character area.

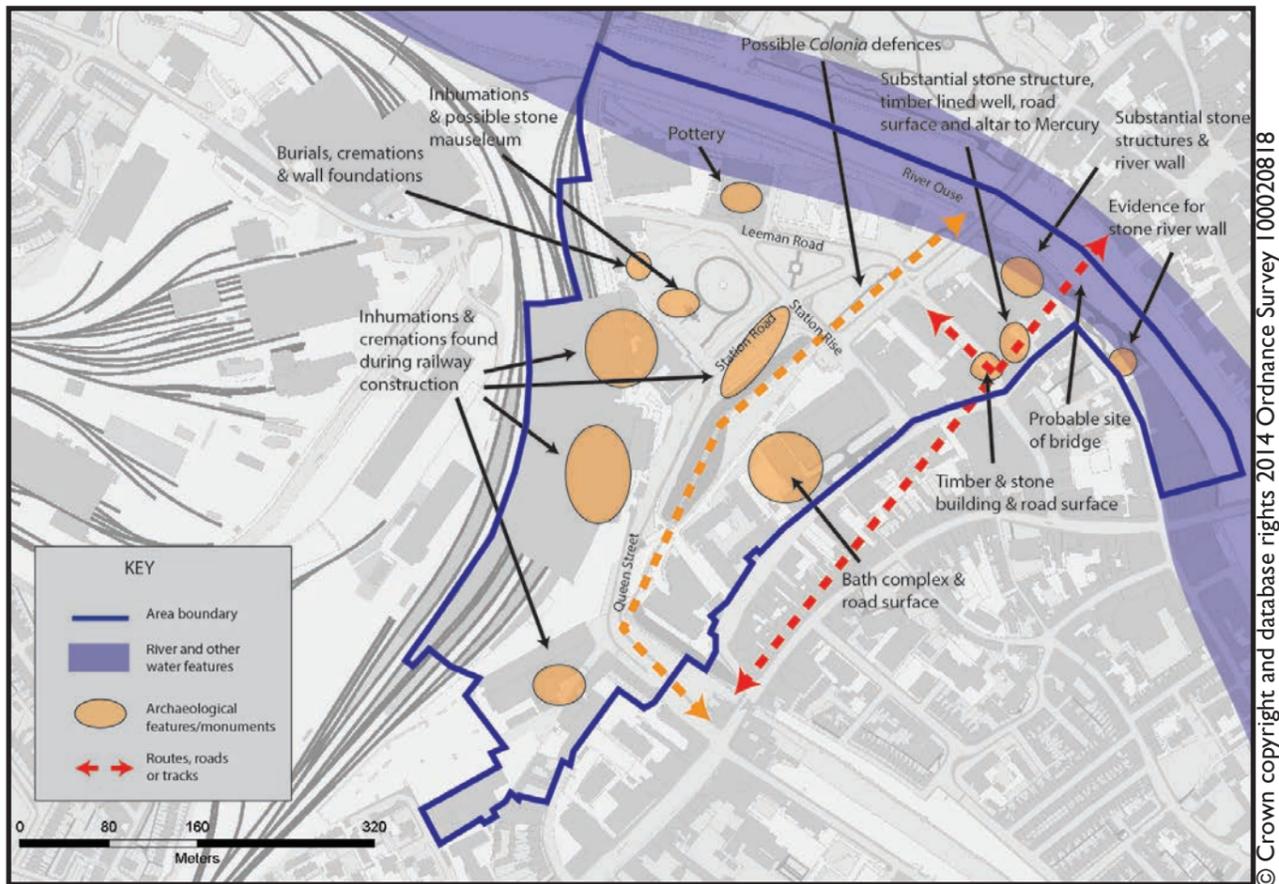
Below: Plan showing the construction dates of the buildings within the area.



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

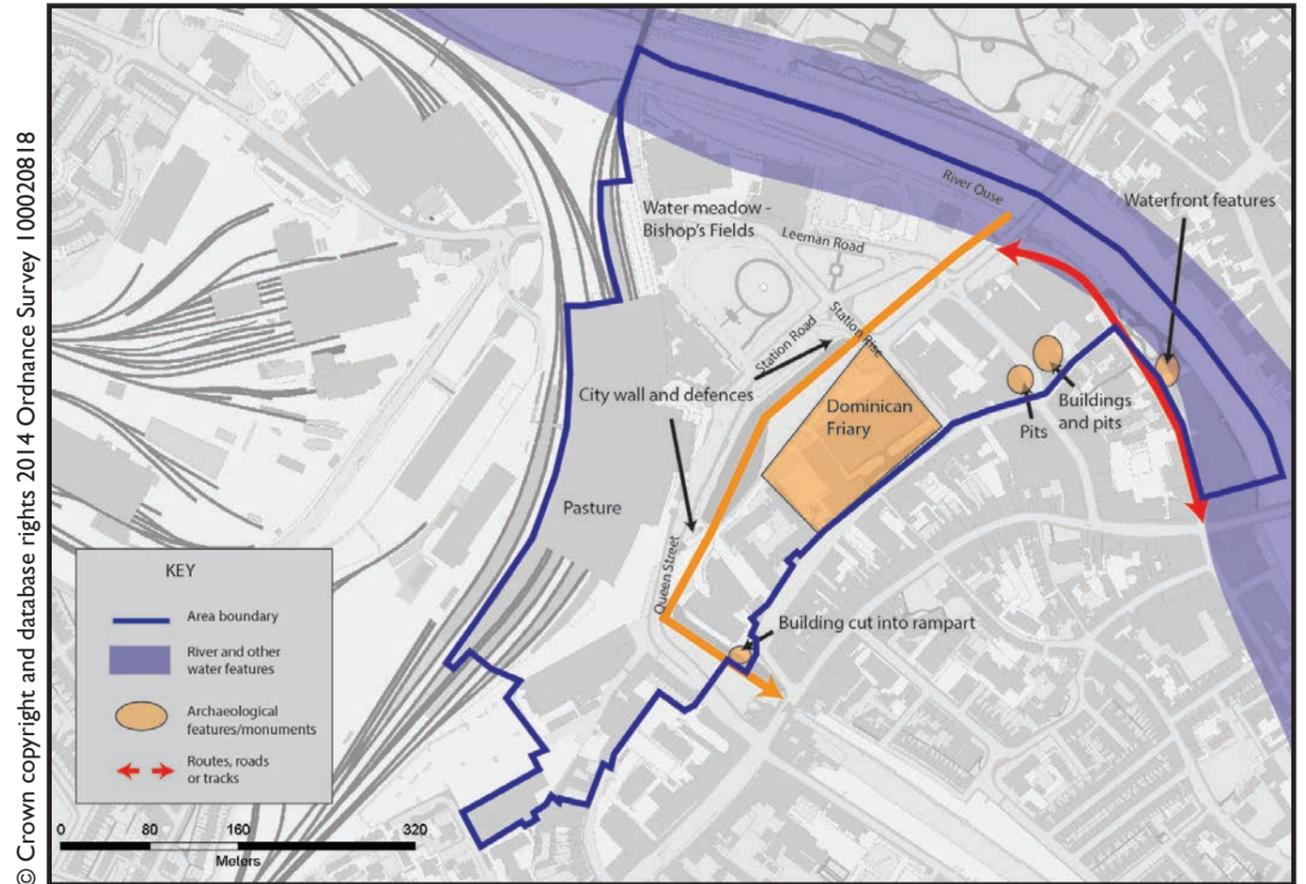
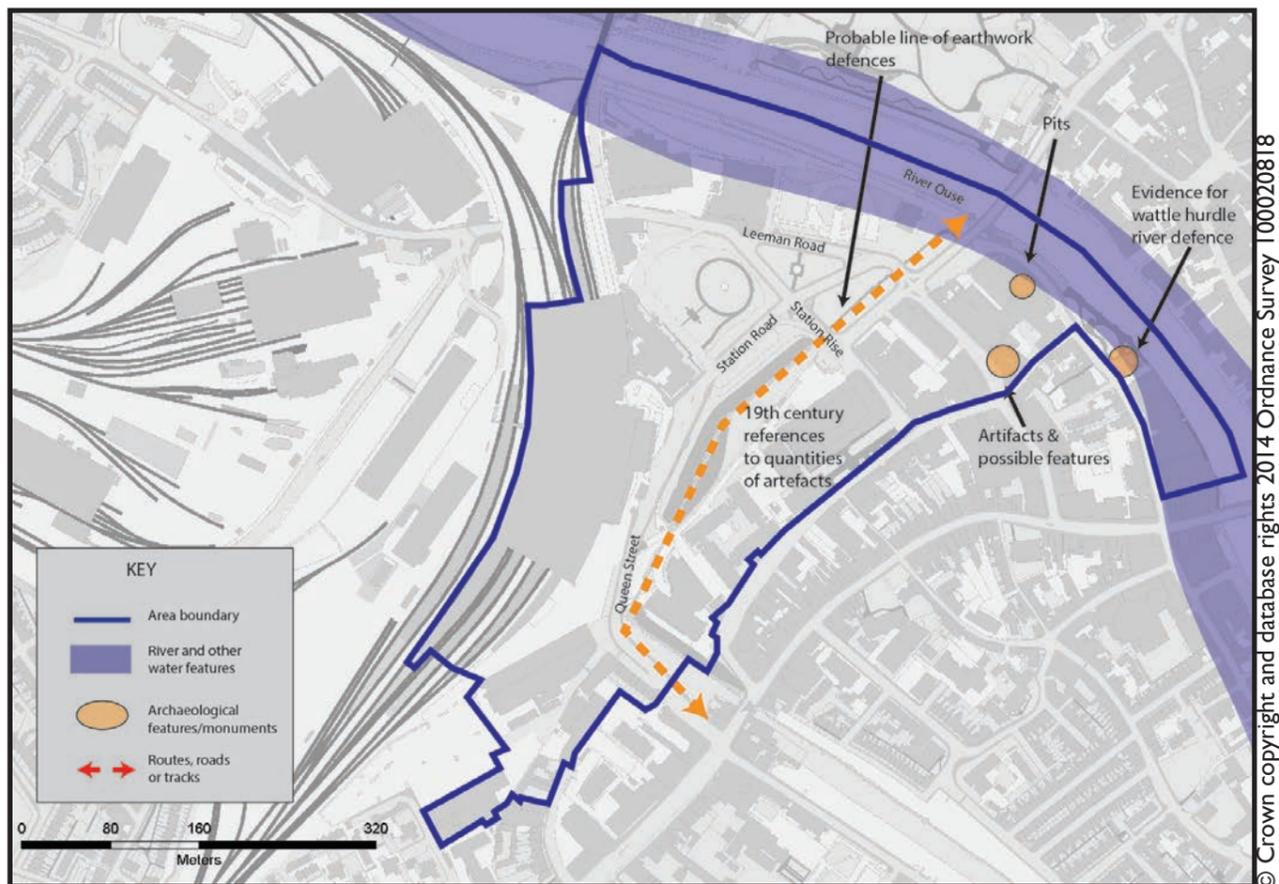
Below: Plan showing the Broad Type characterisation of the area. White roadways indicate roads or lanes visible on the 1852 Ordnance Survey Plan.





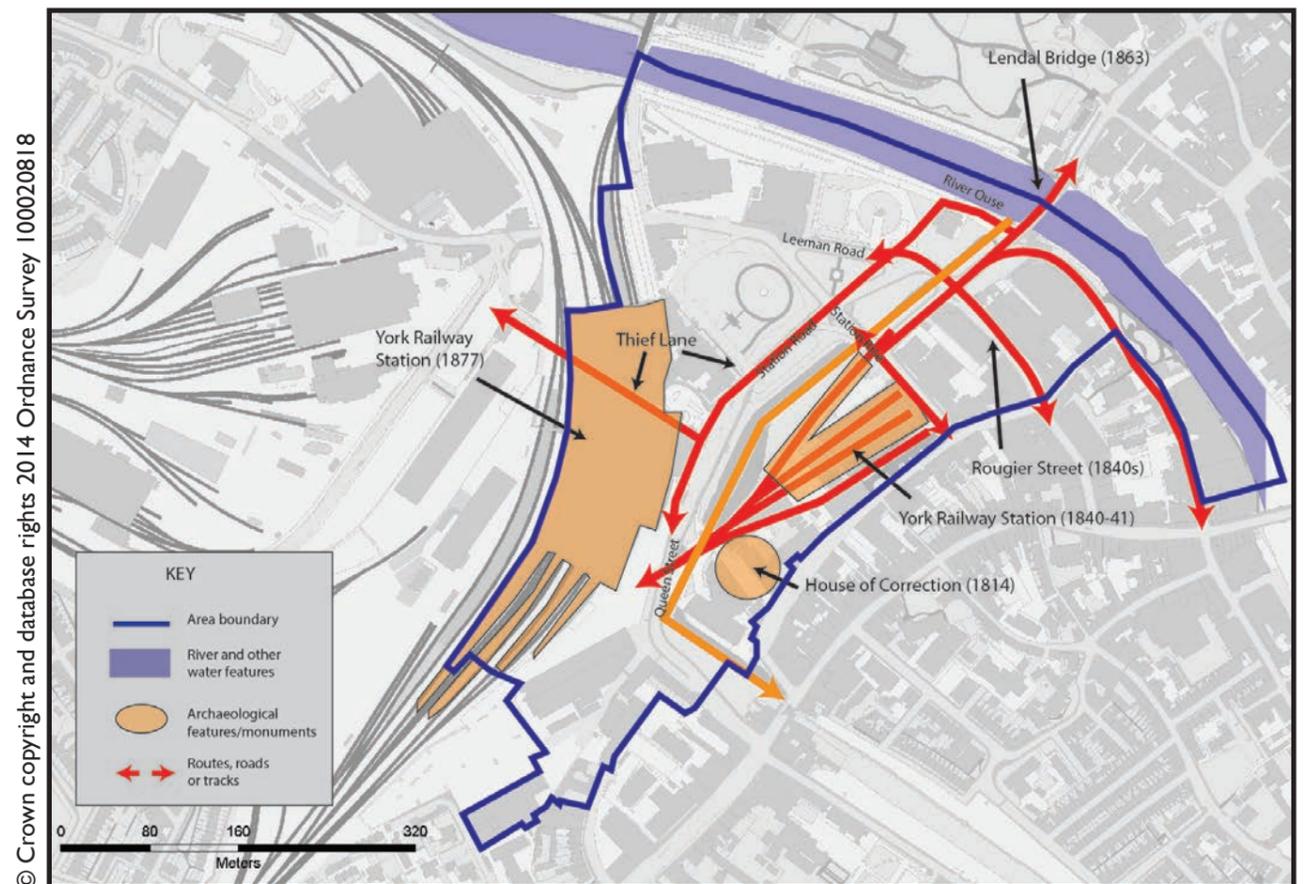
Above: The Roman landscape.

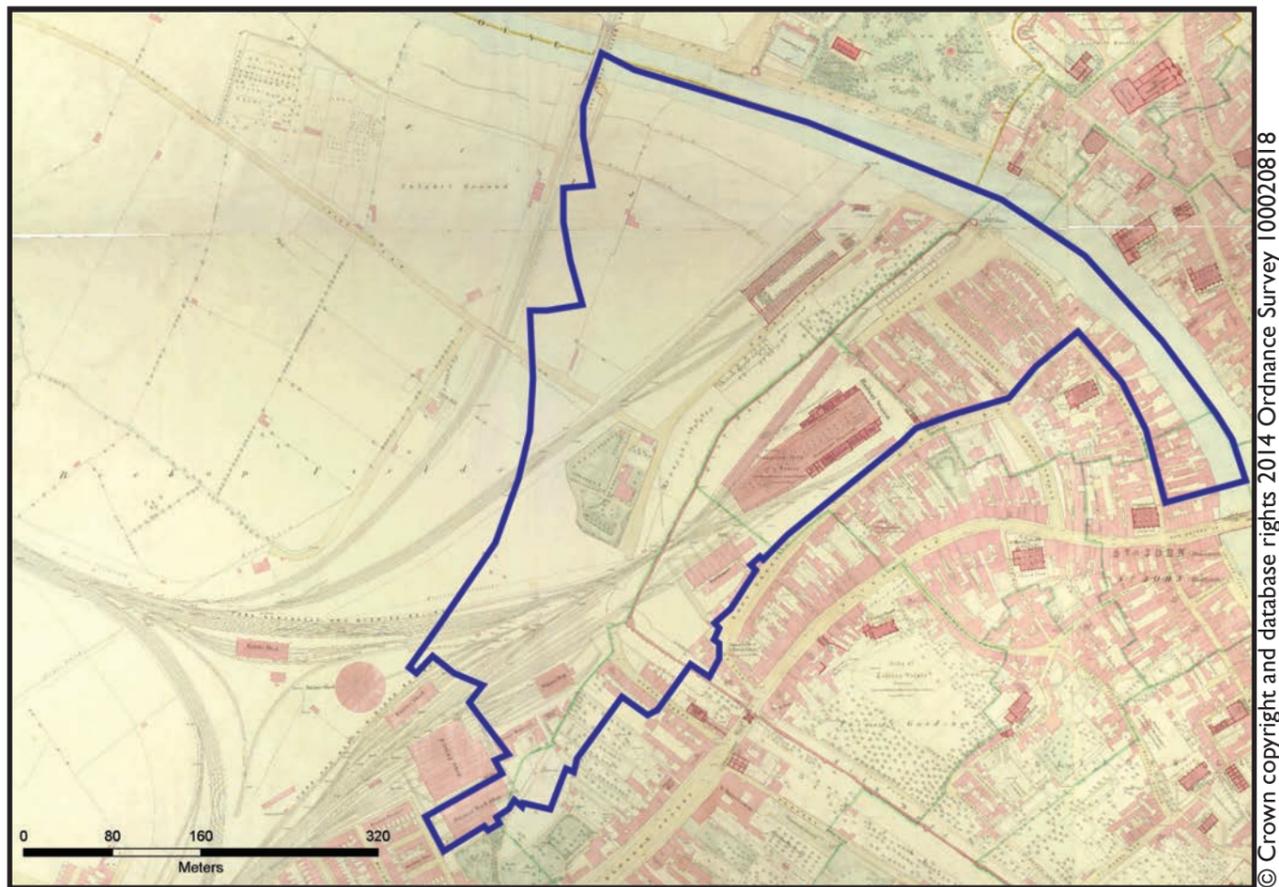
Below: The Anglo-Scandinavian landscape



Above: The medieval landscape.

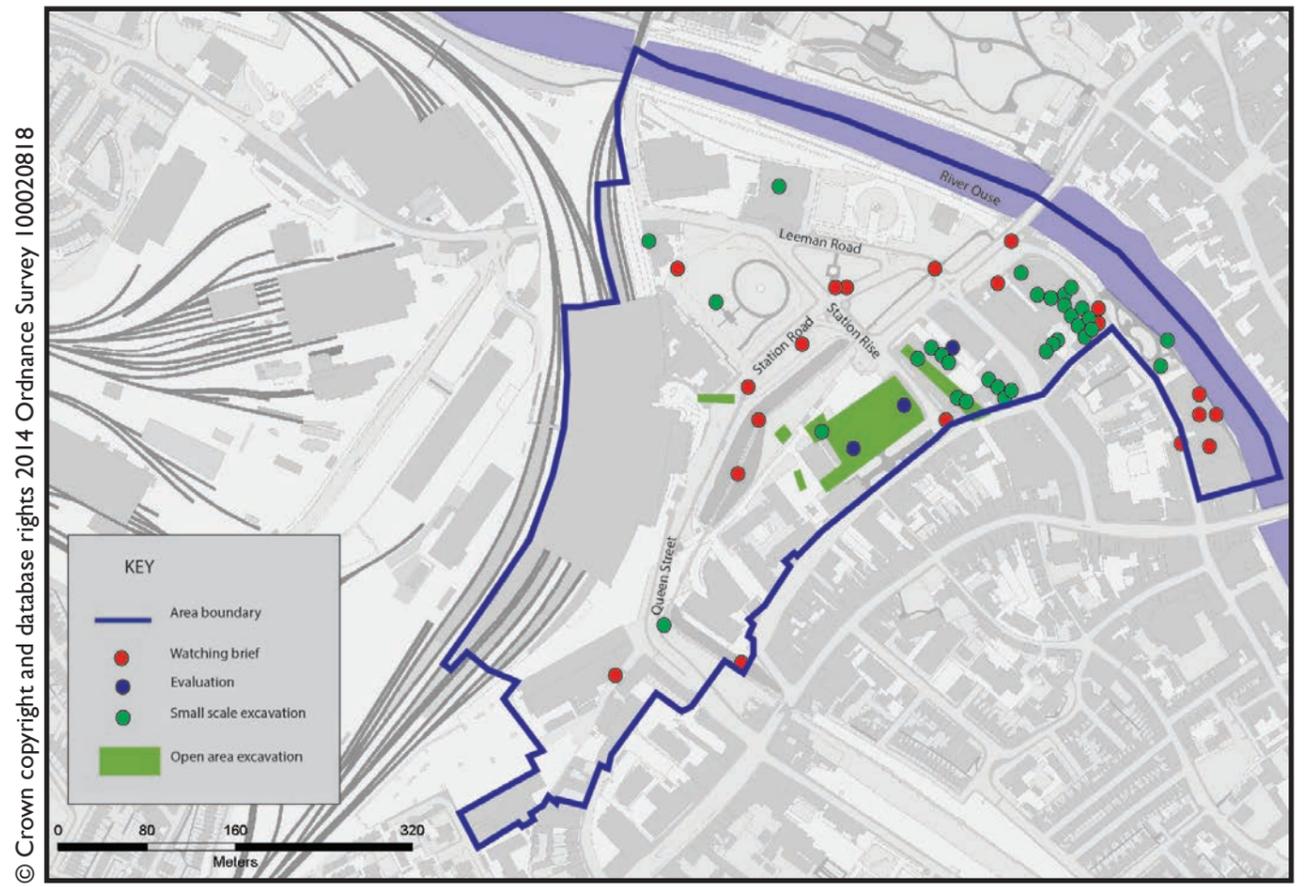
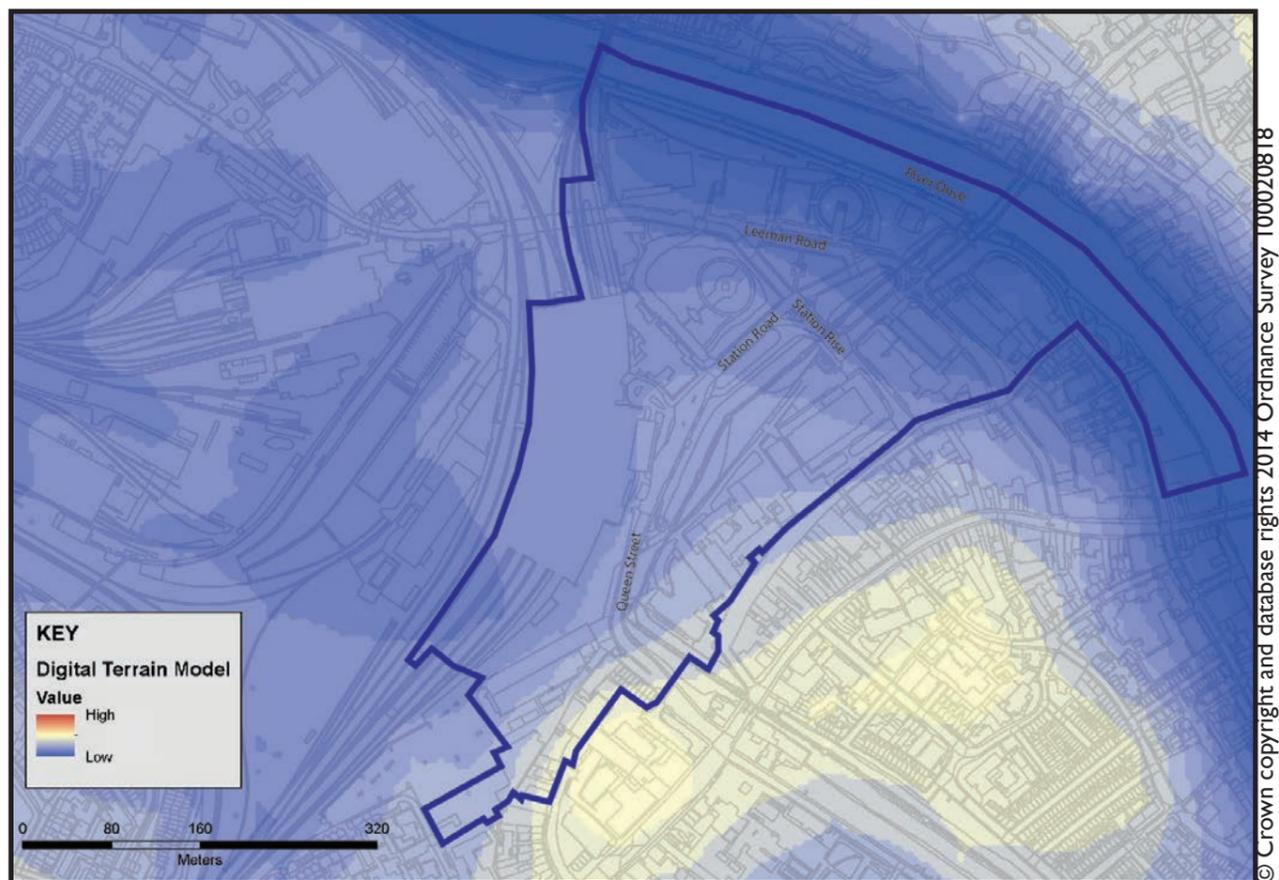
Below: The post-medieval landscape.





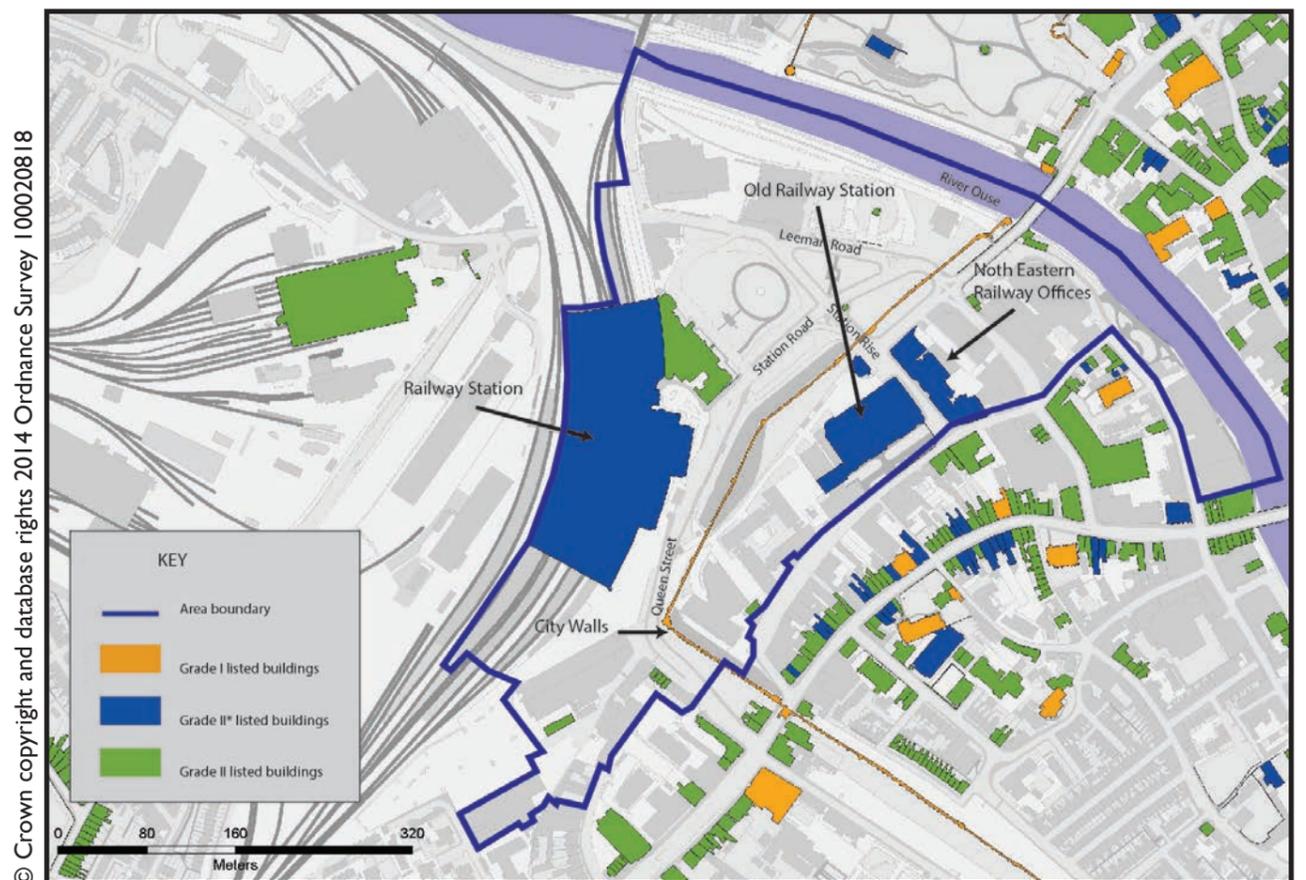
Above: The 1852 landscape.

Below: The general topography showing higher ground to the south of the railway station.



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

Below: Location of listed buildings. Note the Grade I listed City Walls running through this area.



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York City Council Historic Environment Record (and grey literature report EYO114, 418, 801 and 4047)

York City Historic Core Conservation Area Appraisal- 22: Railway Area

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