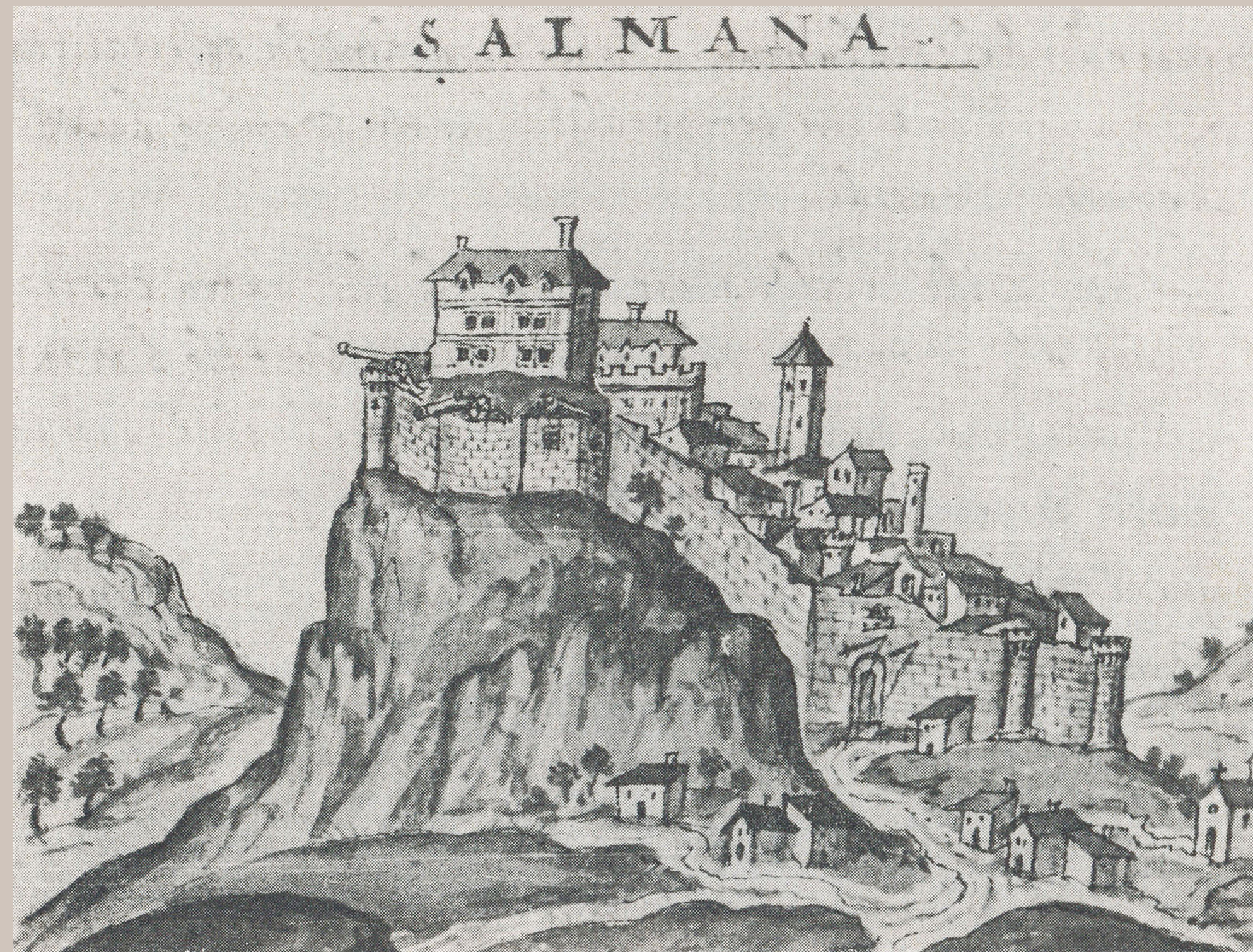


The village of Saumane



View of Saumane in the late 16th century ©ms. Addit 17402, British Library, London

The first evidence of human occupation in the Saumane area during the Old Stone Age is the shelters in the Vallon de Chinchon. The rocky spur, also inhabited very early on, provided a strategic position as the ideal watch post for the surrounding region.

In the 13th century, the village was protected by a defensive wall. At that time, it was under the authority of the Count of Toulouse and the feudal lords of the village were, in 1220, the Pierre family, followed by Pons II Astouaud in 1253. The castrum placed under papal authority in the 14th century was later enfeoffed to Baudet de Sade, in 1451.



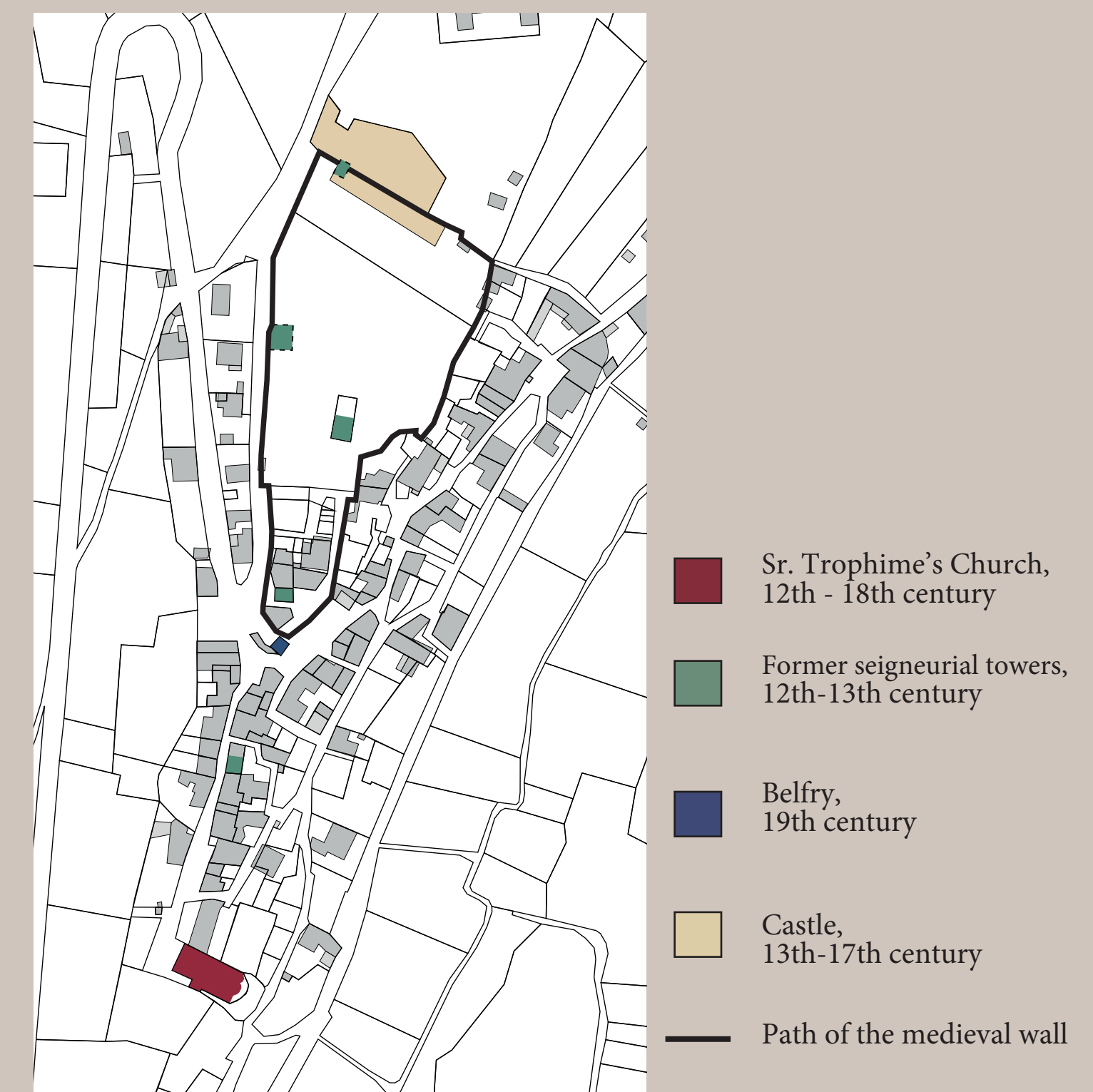
Seigneurial tower built in the late 12th - early 13th c. © DPI



Nave of St. Trophime's Church © DPI

In the early 13th century, the current château had not even been built although several seigneurial towers were scattered around the village. There are five of them, the most iconic of which is close to the belfry built in the 19th century, close to the former entrance through the rampart. This tower erected between the late 12th and the early 13th century has retained a section of the elevations and a corps de logis built against the rear in the 13th century. In the early modern period, these buildings housed a communal oil mill.

St. Trophime's Church was built outside the village wall. Its Romanesque architecture shows evidence of staggered construction between the late 12th century and the first half of the 13th century. Its original plan was divided into three bays including a choir bay bordered by a semi-circular apse surmounted by a quarter-sphere vault. Its nave was enlarged in the modern age with the addition of a small northern aisle.



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