

Brandon to Bishop Auckland Railway Path

What is special?

The line was built mainly to carry coal and coke and closed to passenger traffic in 1964. It is now a route enjoyed by both people and wildlife. All along the line you will see a host of birds including chaffinch, blue tit, blackbird, kingfisher and kestrel. On an evening listen for the hooting of owls. In sunny glades butterflies such as peacock and comma feed on flowering plants and nettles. You may also spot the red bushy tail of a fox or, more likely, smell it's strong musty odour.

Broompark is an ideal starting point with its woodland walks, large picnic area and plentiful parking. A new route has been created which minimises the steep drop down to the river. New ponds and wildflower meadows have also been created. As you cross the footbridge keep an eye out for movement in the River Deerness, it may well be an otter.

Waxwings, with their distinctive reddish-brown crest, have been seen at Brancepeth. They are winter visitors and feed on the berries, which are in abundance on the hawthorn trees lining the Railway Path. Brancepeth Station was part of a 19th century estate village which was created to improve the approach to Brancepeth Castle.

The section between Willington and Sunnybrow is urban and the route is less obvious. Follow the blue signs through the streets until you reach countryside once more. At Sunnybrow there are deep wooded ravines with rushing streams. Look out for jay and kestrels. At Rough Lea a missing bridge causes the Railway Path to dive and twist to get back on course. Shales and clay were dug here for brick making. There were six brickworks in a four mile stretch of the valley downstream from Hunwick.



Contact the Countryside Service
telephone: 0191 372 9100
email: countryside@durham.gov.uk
www.durham.gov.uk/countryside



Total length: 9 miles (14.5km)

Grid Reference for main access points:

Broompark (north end):

NZ 250 415

Brancepeth (Wolsingham Rd):

NZ 219 382

Hunwick (Station Road):

NZ 198 326

Bishop Auckland Newton

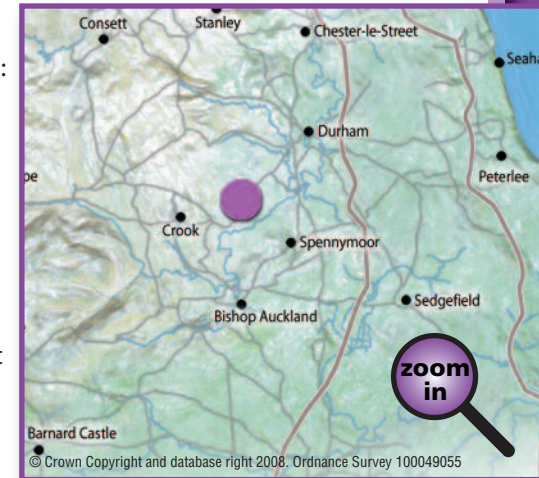
Cap Viaduct (south end):

NZ 205 306

Access also at Langley Moor, Brandon, Willington, Sunnybrow and various Public Rights of Way

Map: Ordnance Survey

Explorer 305 and 308



Directions:

Broompark Follow A690 Durham to Crook road. Turn at Stonebridge roundabout onto B6302 to Ushaw Moor. Entrance is signed ½ mile on left

Brancepeth Follow A690 Durham to Crook road to Brancepeth village. Turn onto Wolsingham Road (opposite Brancepeth Castle). Entrance is 350m on left and signed from the road

Hunwick Located between A690 at Willington and A689 near Toronto. Take B6286 to Hunwick village. At the junction turn onto Station Road and entrance is approximately ½ mile on the right

Newton Cap Viaduct From Bishop Auckland follow the A689 towards Crook. Entrance is on the right and is signposted 200m from the end of Newton Cap Viaduct

Parking: Car parks at Broompark (two disabled bays), Brancepeth, Hunwick and Newton Cap Viaduct

Public transport: Broompark, Relly Farm (Arriva 43), Brancepeth (Scarlet Band 47, 47a), Willington (Arriva 46, SB Travel 109), Hunwick (SB Travel 109), Bishop Auckland (numerous services to bus and train stations)

Dogs: Allowed under control. Please clean up after your dog

Designation: Railway Path, UK Woodland Assurance Scheme certified

Suitable for: Walkers, cyclists, horse-riders, wheelchair users

Habitats: Grassland, scrubland, woodland and wetland

Whilst every effort has been made by Durham County Council to ensure accuracy of information, the Council cannot accept any liability resulting from omissions or inaccuracies.

Brandon to Bishop Auckland Railway Path

As you approach Bishop Auckland, there are superb views of Auckland Castle, the residence of the Bishop of Durham since the 12th century. The route ends at Newton Cap Viaduct. In 1995 the viaduct became a road carrying traffic across the River Wear and it is thought to be the first example of such a conversion. If you wish to keep away from the traffic, continue from the car park along a bridleway under the viaduct until you reach the 14th century Skirlaw Bridge then turn left over the bridge to reach Bishop Auckland town centre.

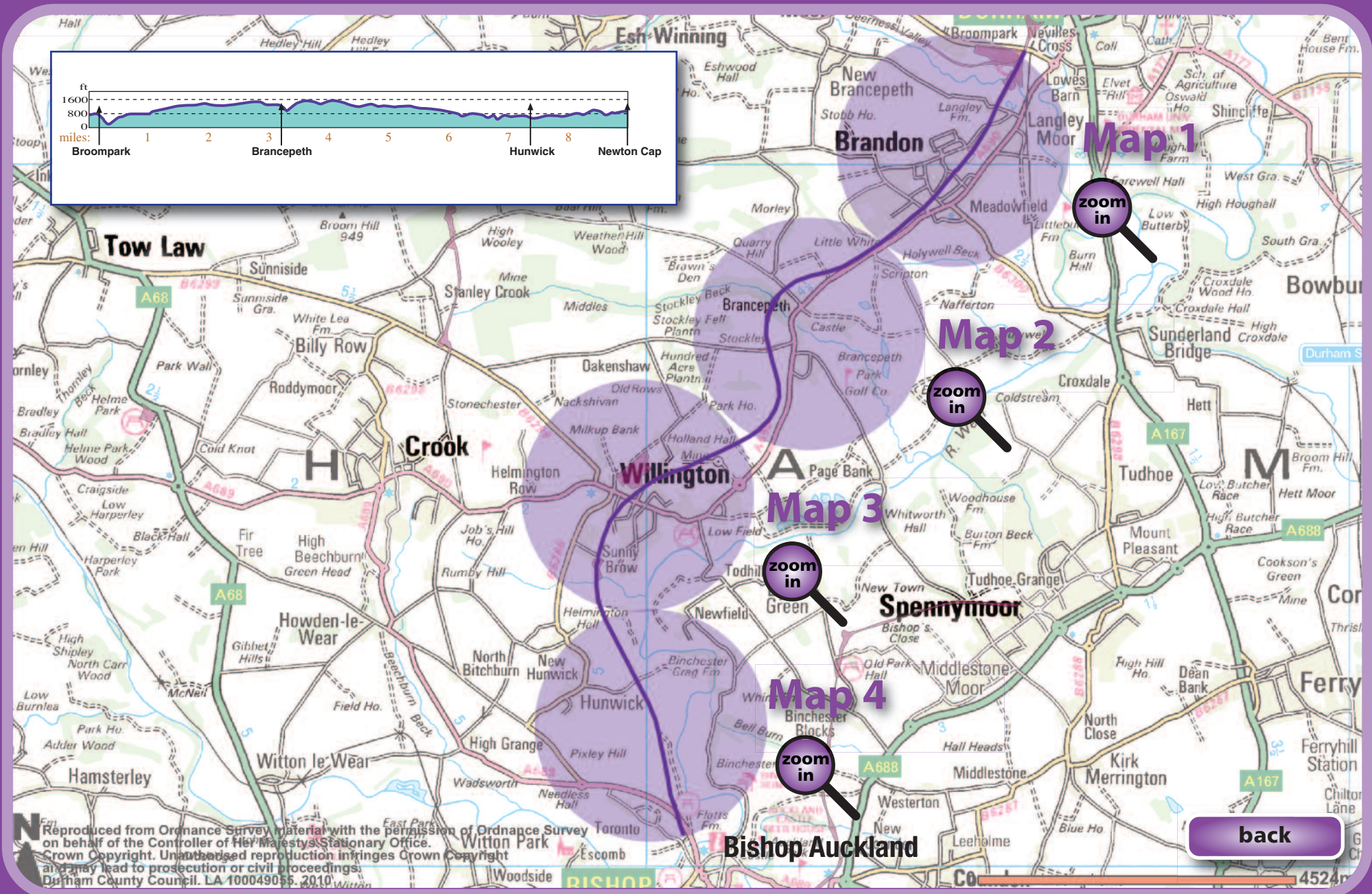
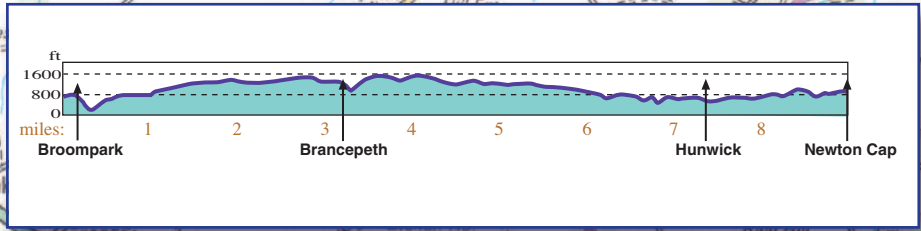
Accessibility Statement

This 9 mile linear walk gently rises from Broompark to Bishop Auckland and is relatively flat along its entire length. There are several steep gradients where bridges once stood but only those which are particularly steep have been noted on the map so you are advised to also look at the route profile. The path is mainly a hard, unsealed surface with some large stones and loose material on some of the slopes. There are short sections of tarmac. The path width is between 1.8 and 3 metres. There are a number of seats along the route and picnic tables at Broompark and Newton Cap.



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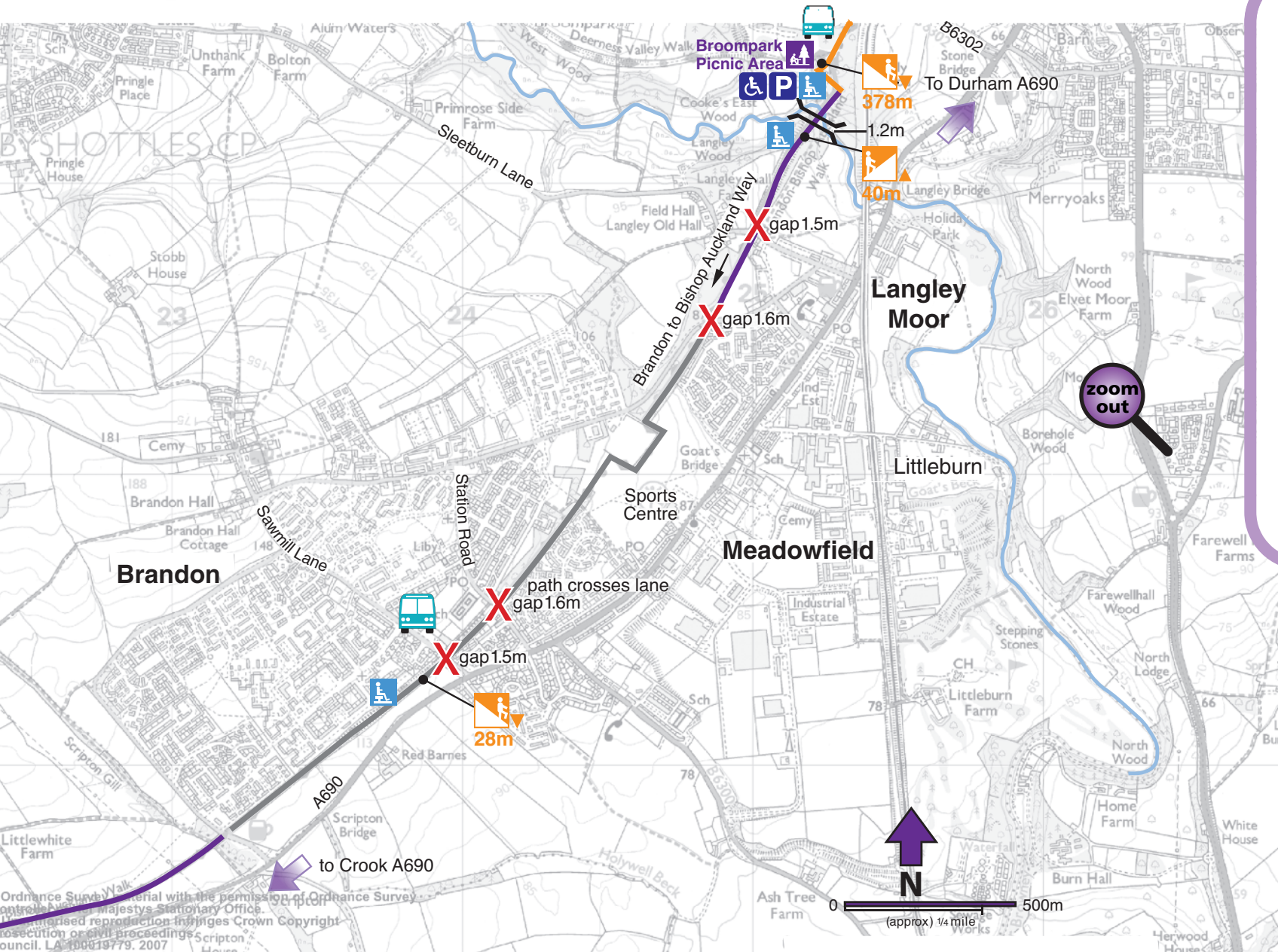


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Brandon to Bishop Auckland Railway Path

Map 1



KEY

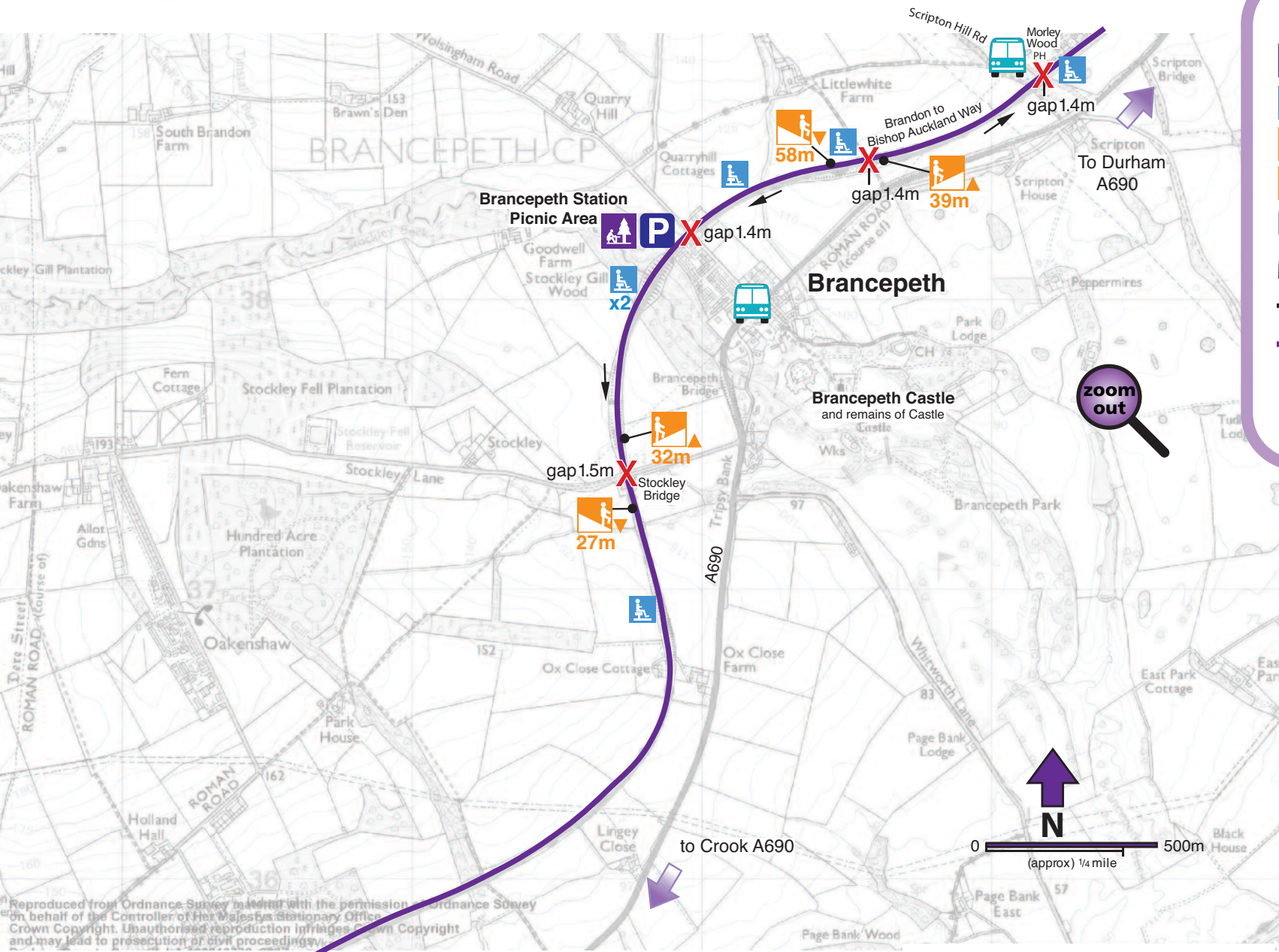
-  Picnic Area
-  Seat
-  Steep Slope Up 1:10-1:1
-  Steep Slope Down 1:10-1:1
-  Parking
-  Disabled Parking
-  Bus Stop
-  Direction of Travel
-  Hard Unsealed Surface
-  Road/Tarmac
-  Road Crossing
-  Concrete Footbridge

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Brandon to Bishop Auckland Railway Path

Map 2



KEY

-  Picnic Area
-  Seat
-  Medium Slope Up 1:20-1:10
-  Medium Slope Down 1:20-1:10
-  Parking
-  Bus Stop
-  Direction of Travel
-  Hard Unsealed Surface
-  Road Crossing

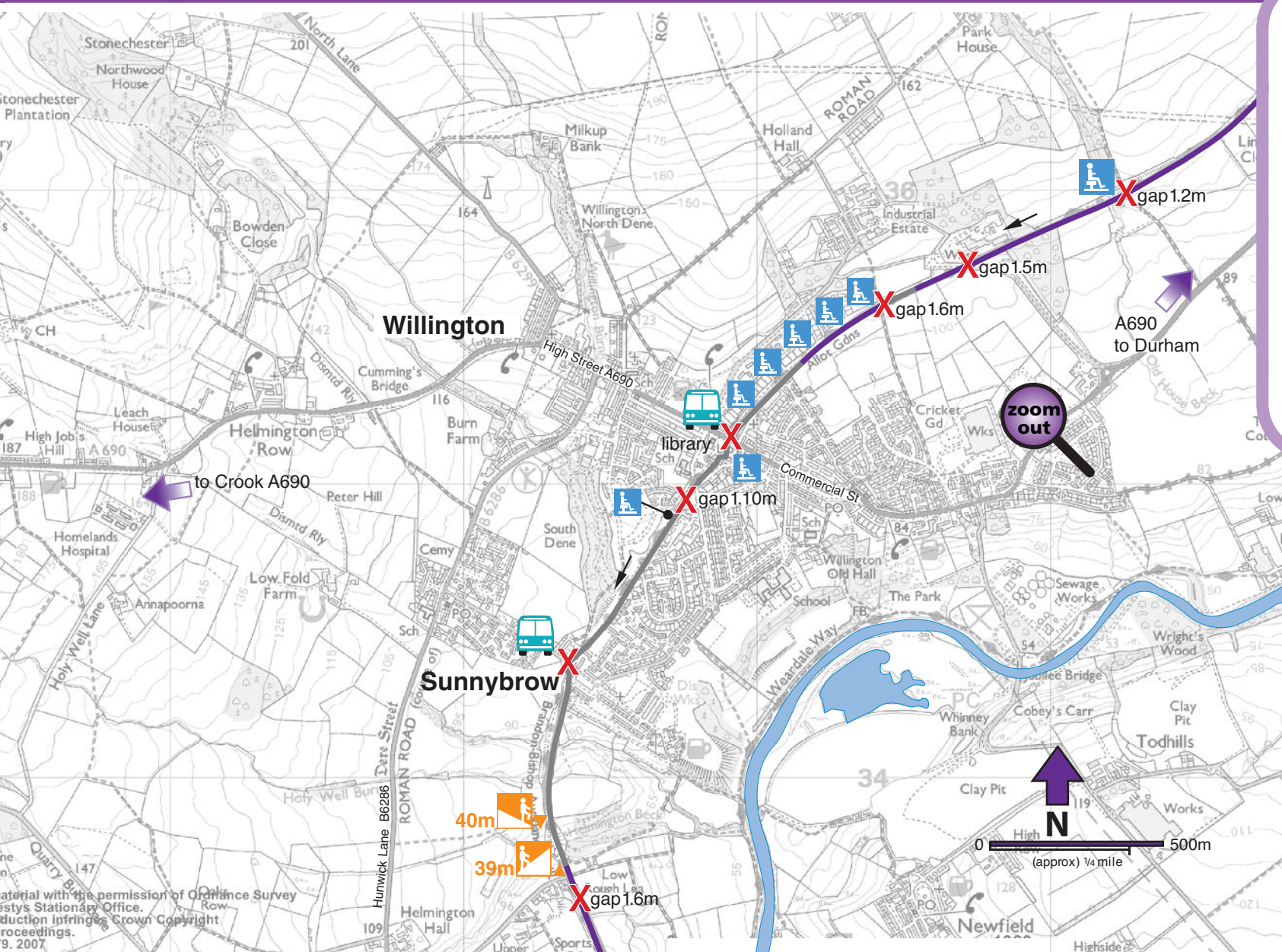
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Map 3



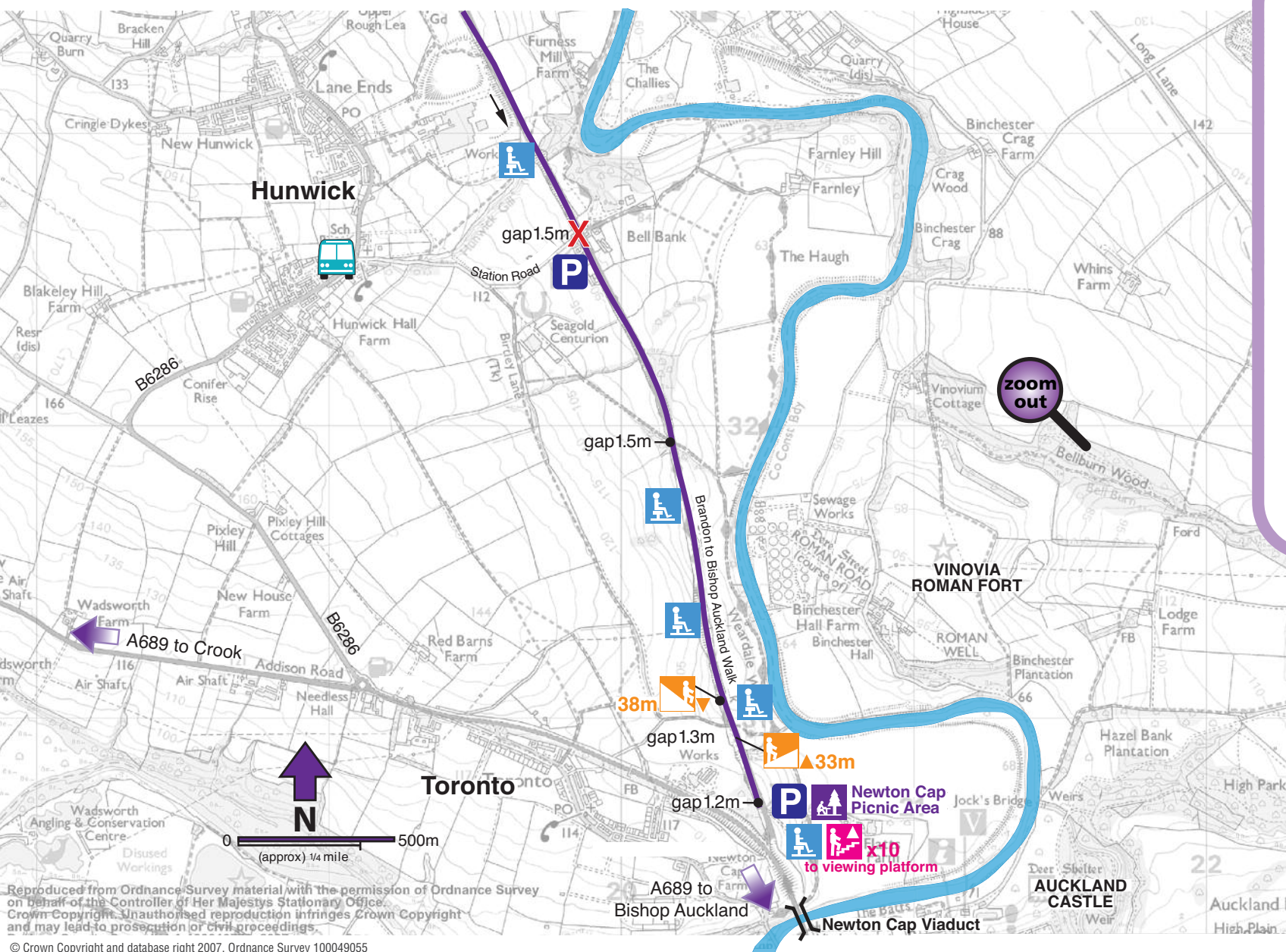
KEY

-  Seat
-  Steep Slope Up 1:10-1:1
-  Medium Slope Up 1:20-1:10
-  Bus Stop
-  Direction of Travel
-  Hard Unsealed Surface
-  Hard Sealed Surface
-  Road/Tarmac
-  Road Crossing

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Brandon to Bishop Auckland Railway Path

Map 4



KEY

- Picnic Area
- Seat
- Parking
- Steep Slope Down 1:10-1:1
- Medium Slope Up 1:20-1:10
- Steps Up
- Bus Stop
- Direction of Travel
- Hard Unsealed Surface
- Hard Sealed Surface
- Road/Tarmac
- Road Crossing

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