

# Auckland Way Railway Path

## What is special?

The line was built in two stages. In 1841 the section between Byers Green and Spennymoor was opened as part of the Clarence Railway Company's 'Byers Green Railway' which served Port Clarence on Teesside. This was used to carry coal around Byers Green and Willington.

In 1885, NER opened the route between Byers Green and Bishop Auckland and the whole line was then used by passengers. When in operation, it formed a link between Bishop Auckland and Cornforth, connecting the Darlington-Bishop Auckland line with what is now the main East Coast route. It was closed in 1939.

The Railway Path passes through countryside which was once part of the Bishop's Park. Remnants of its railway history can be seen along the route. Look for the very wide railway bridge with mature trees on it. Bishop Lightfoot hated the railway and would only give his consent for the use of his land if a special 'double' bridge was built over the railway for his personal use. The bridge is twice the normal width and had trees planted along each side to screen the Bishop from the detested railway. It is now known as the Bishops Bridge and is unique in County Durham and possibly the country.

At Byers Green you can see the remains of the old station platform. 'Byers' means 'ancient woods'. They grew around the village, giving it its name.



[more info...](#)

## Contact the Countryside Service

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email: [countryside@durham.gov.uk](mailto:countryside@durham.gov.uk)

[www.durham.gov.uk/countryside](http://www.durham.gov.uk/countryside)



**Total length:** 4.3 miles (7km)

### Grid Reference for main access points:

**Brack's Farm** Bishop

Auckland (western end):

NZ 222 329

**Coundon Station** NZ 227 301

**Whitworth Road**

Spennymoor: NZ 245 337

**Rosa Street** Spennymoor

(eastern end): NZ 253 337

**Map:** OS Explorer 305

### Directions:

**Brack's Farm** A688 south of Coundongate roundabout, between Bishop Auckland and Spennymoor. Signposted

**Coundon Station** located on

A688 at New Coundon,

between Bishop Auckland and Spennymoor. Entrance is next to petrol

station, opposite the Top House pub. Signposted from road

**Whitworth Road** from A688 roundabout take the turning for Middlestone Moor, continue along the road for 1 mile. Turn left at

crossroads onto Whitworth Road. Car park is 600 metres on left **Rosa Street** from A688, take turning towards Spennymoor town centre, straight over mini-roundabout, left at next roundabout. Take second right onto Princess Road and follow road around. Access to Path is next to Rosa St Primary School

Railway Path can also be accessed at Byers Green (NZ 227 329), Binchester (NZ 226 324) and various Public Rights of Way

**Parking:** Brack's Farm, Coundon Station (closed on evening) and Whitworth Road (one disabled parking bay at each car park)

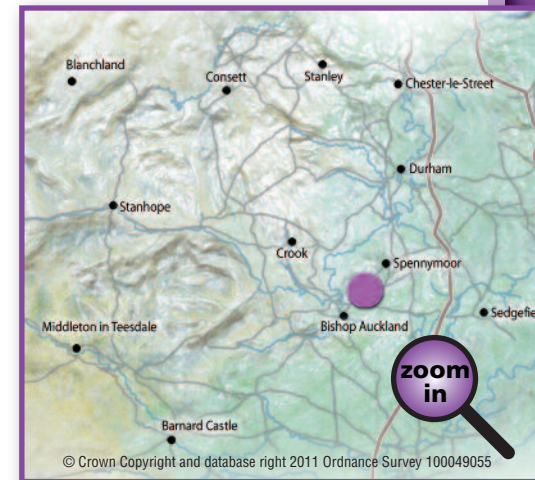
**Public transport:** Numbers 2c, 56 (Arriva) and 21 (Go North East) run between Spennymoor and Bishop Auckland.

**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:** Scrub, hedgerow, grassland, woodland, 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.*



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At New Coundon notice the Old Station House which, as its name suggests, was once Coundon Station. Today the roar of engines has been replaced by birdsong. The route here passes by a golf course and pasture fields grazed with sheep, horses and cows.

The scrub and hedgerow which line the route are ideal feeding and nesting places for birds. There are a large variety of birds along the Auckland Walk including tree sparrow, bullfinch and song thrush. We have even had a sighting of a redstart, with its distinctive orange tail feathers. During the winter, look out for the redwing, a migrant from Scandinavia. They can often be seen feasting on the berries. Another notable species to look out for is the speckled wood butterfly which flies between April and October.

There are a variety of flowering plants along the route including herb robert, ox-eye daisy and the delicate field scabious. The wetland area near Bishops Close reflects the vibrant yellow blooms of marsh marigold each spring and yellow flag between May and July.

To the west there are extensive views across the Wear Valley towards the North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The route passes near Binchester Roman Fort and Auckland Park.

## Accessibility Statement

This linear walk is gently undulating with several steep gradients where bridges once stood (please refer to the route profile).

Path surfaces vary from tarmac, to unsealed hard surfaces with some large stones. Small sections of the path suffer from erosion and may have ruts and large stones in them.

The path width is generally two metres, however the sections near Binchester and between Bishops Close and Whitworth Lane narrows to one metre in places.

There are a number of seats along the route.



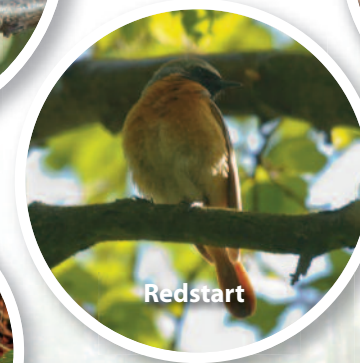
Bullfinch



Speckled wood



Deer



Redstart



Fly agaric



Gorse



Broom

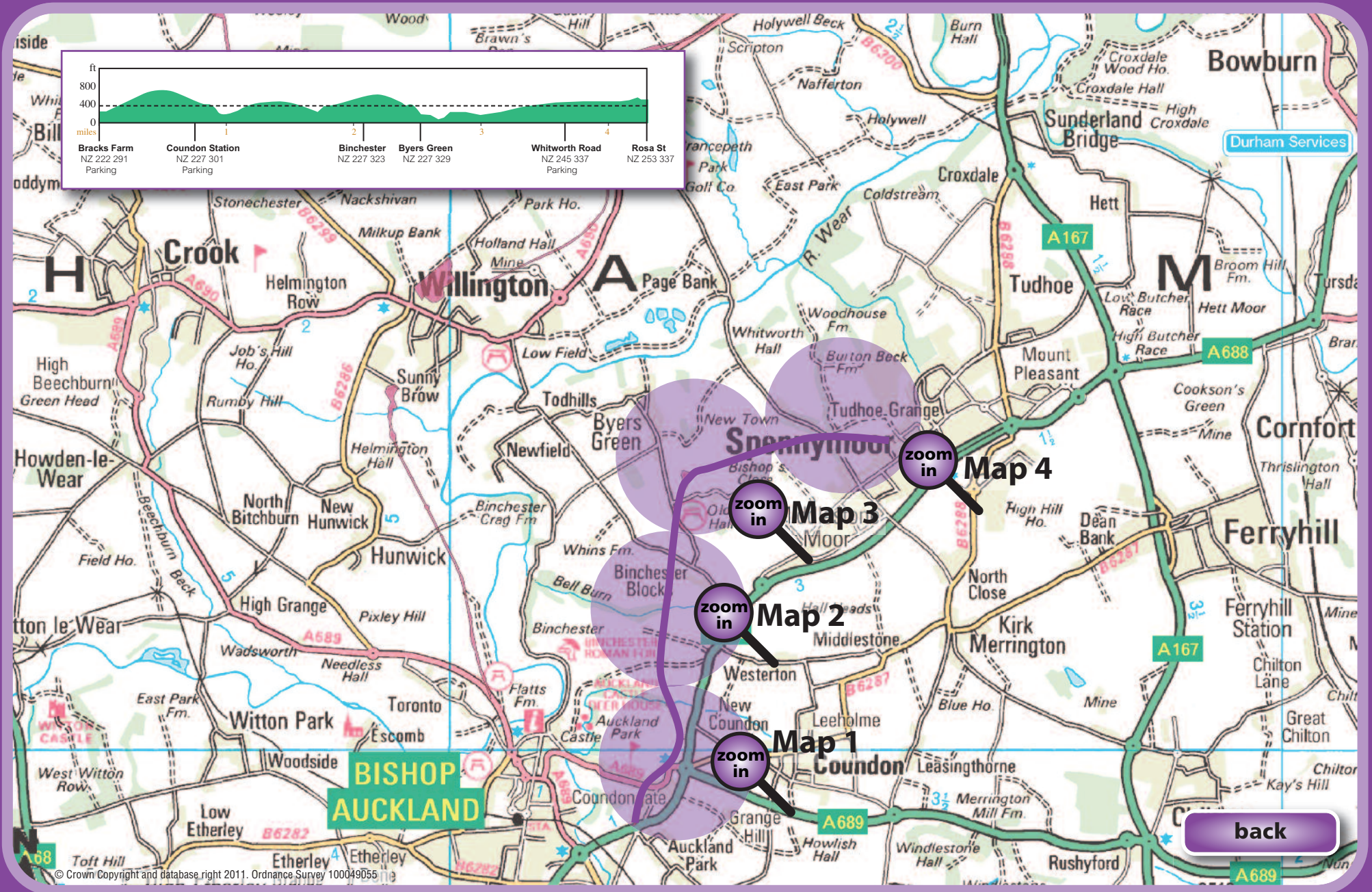


Barn Owl

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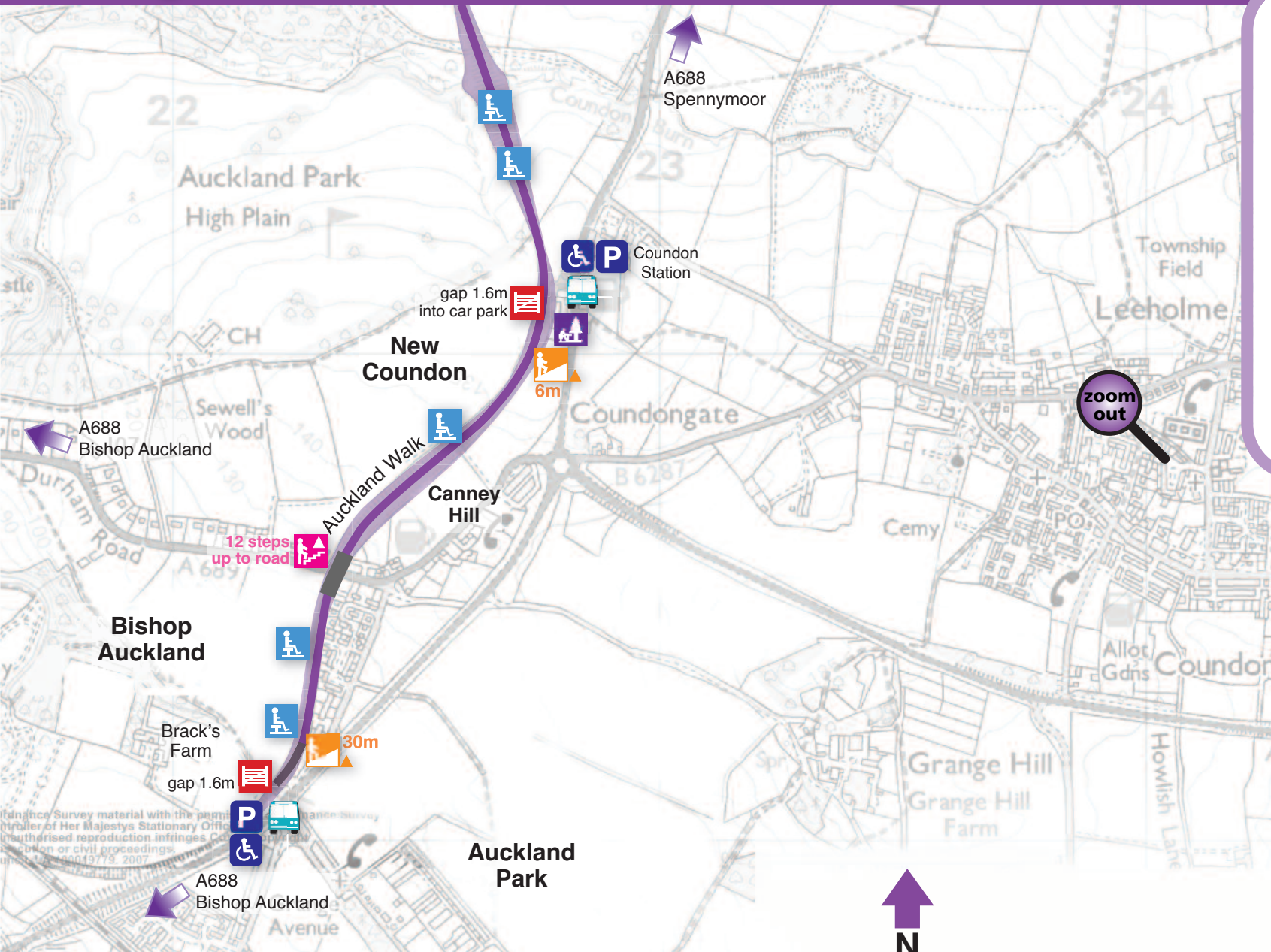
# Auckland Way Railway Path















# Auckland Way Railway Path

## Map 1



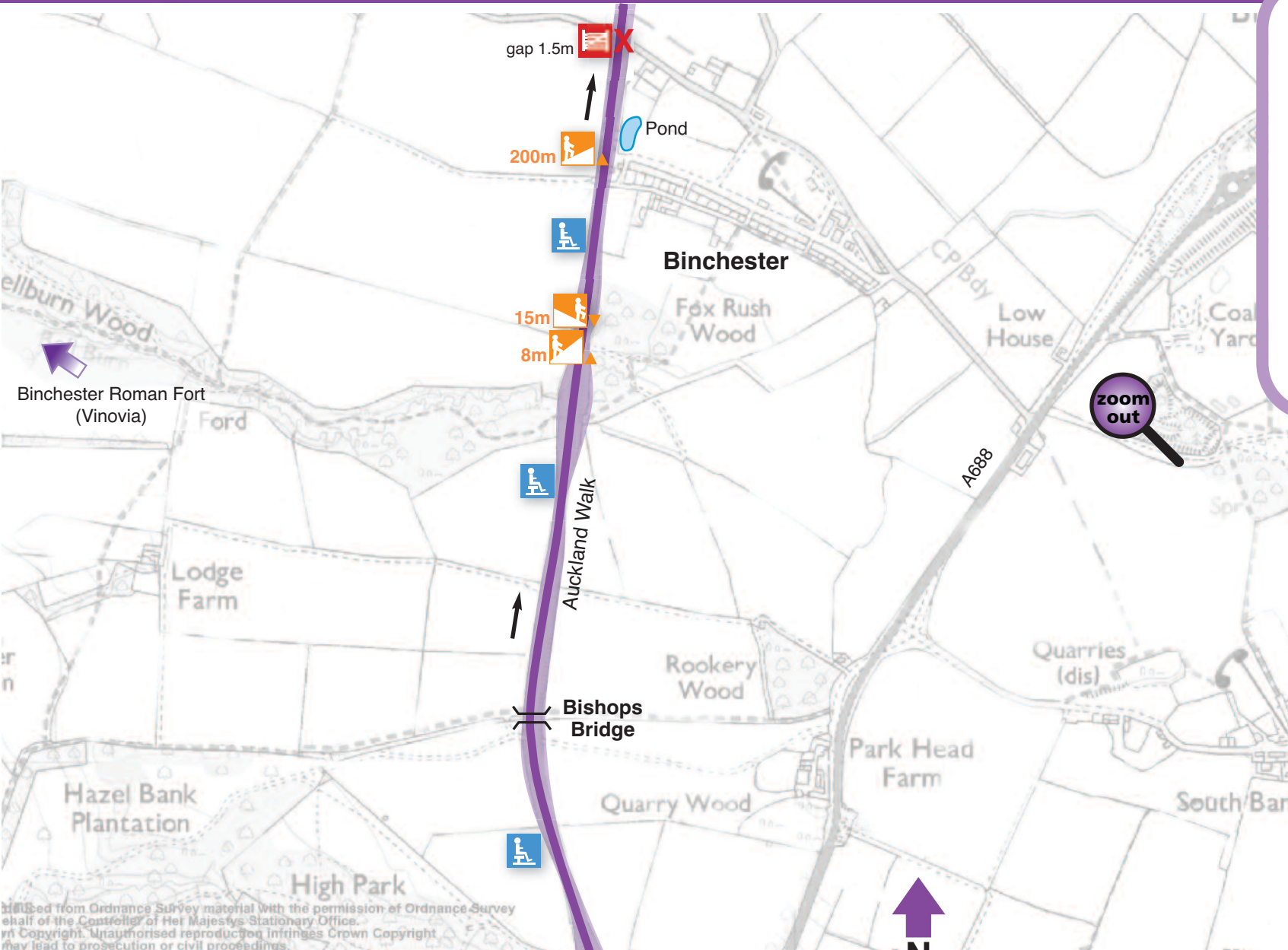
### KEY

-  Picnic Area
-  Seat
-  Parking
-  Disabled Parking
-  Gate
-  Steps Up
-  Medium Slope Up 1:20-1:10
-  Bus Stop
-  Hard Unsealed Surface
-  Road/Tarmac





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# Auckland Way Railway Path

## Map 2



### KEY

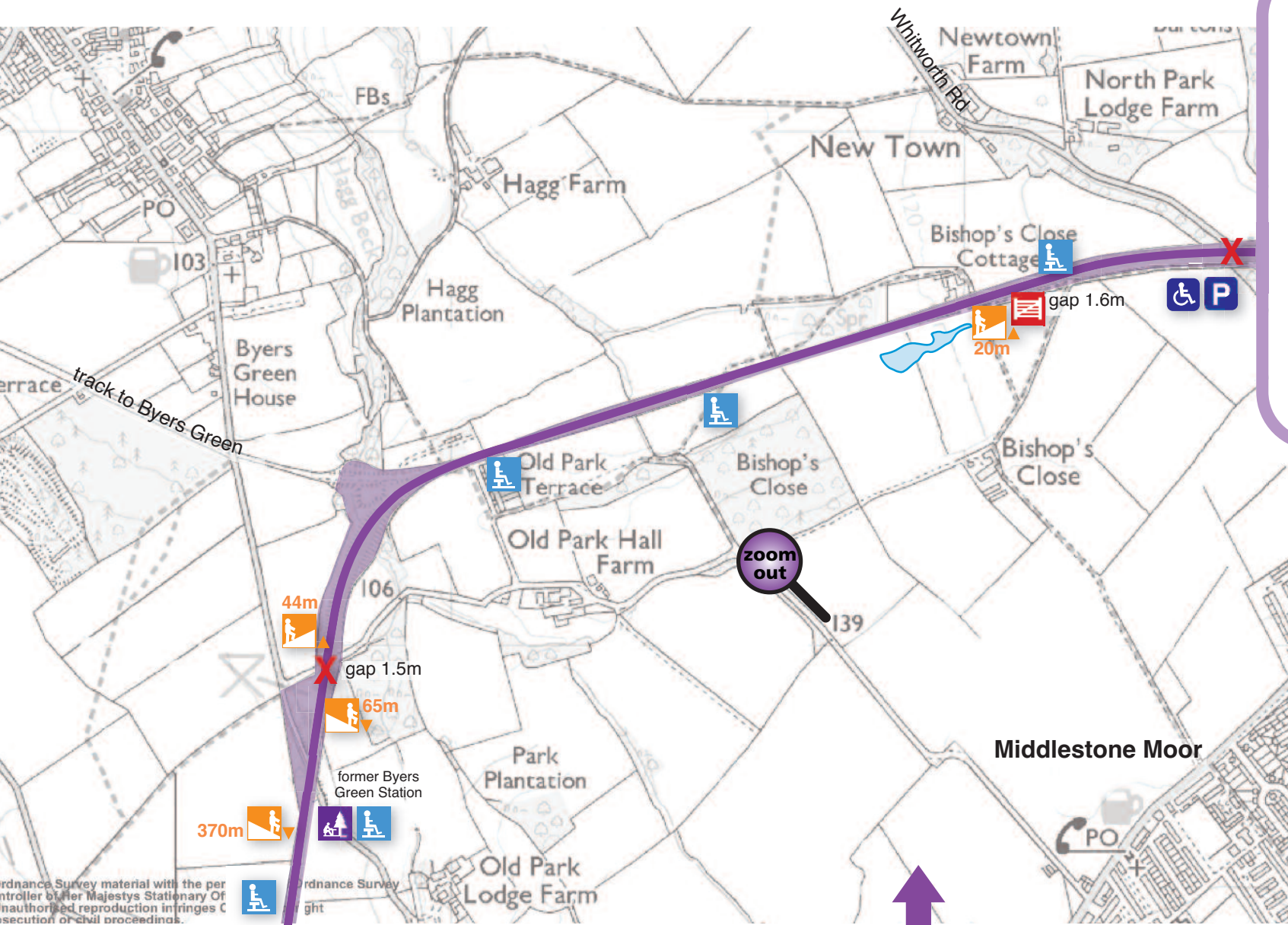
-  Picnic Area
-  Gate
-  Medium Slope Up 1:20-1:10
-  Medium Slope Down 1:20-1:10
-  Steep Slope Up 1:10-1:1
-  Direction of Travel
-  Hard Unsealed Surface
-  Road Crossing

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# Auckland Way Railway Path

## Map 3



### KEY

-  Picnic Area
-  Seat
-  Parking
-  Disabled Parking
-  Gate
-  Medium Slope Up 1:20-1:10
-  Medium Slope Down 1:20-1:10
-  Hard Unsealed Surface
-  Road Crossing

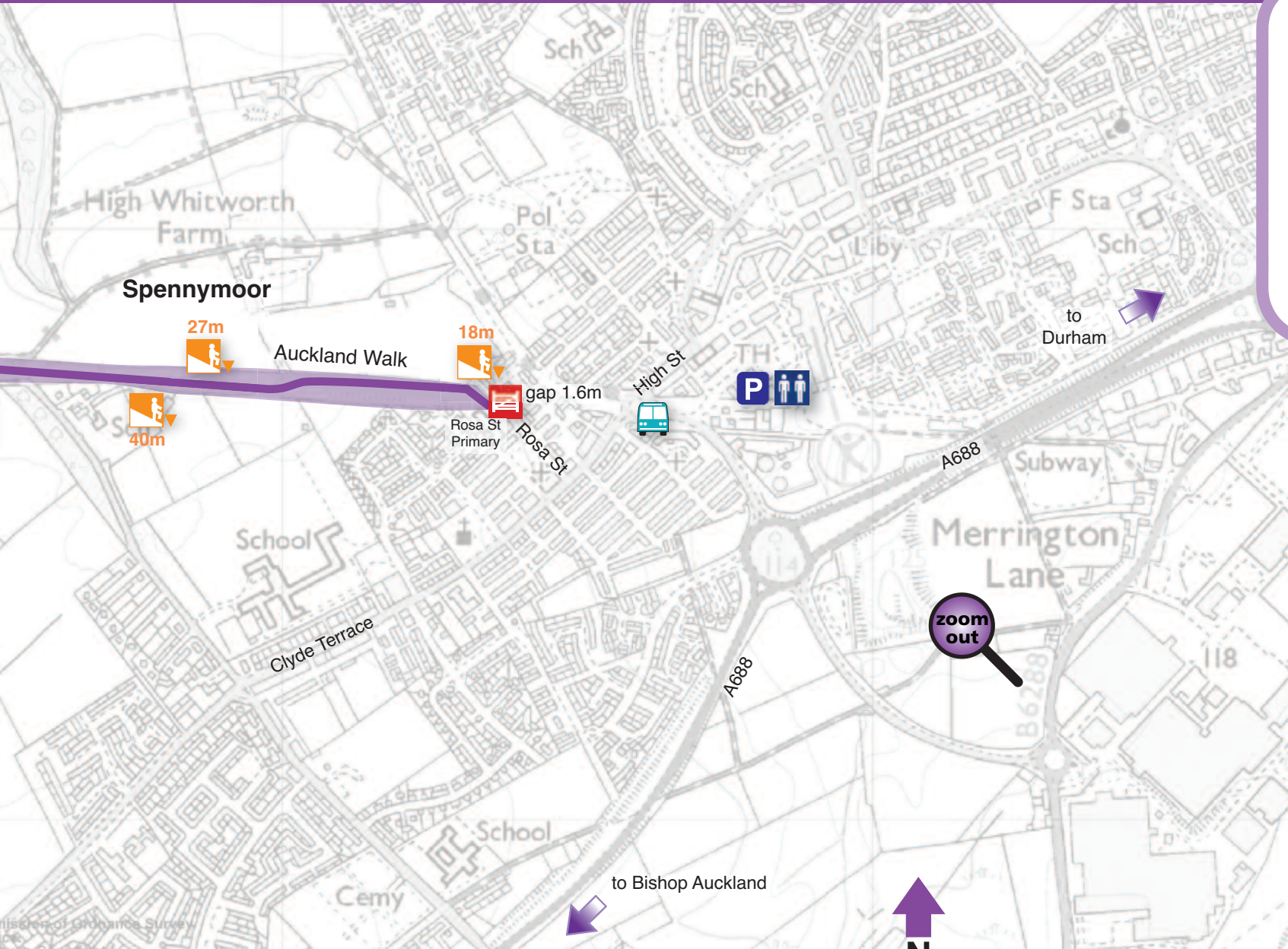
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# Auckland Way Railway Path

## Map 4



### KEY

- Parking
- Gate
- Medium Slope Down 1:20-1:10
- Hard Unsealed Surface
- Toilets
- Bus Stop

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