

Derwent Walk Railway Path

What is special?

The Derwent Walk is an extremely popular linear route between Consett and Swalwell, with fabulous views across the Derwent Valley. Its southern end, at Lydgetts Junction, links to the Lanchester Valley Railway Path, Waskerley Way Railway Path and the Consett-Sunderland cycle route. Durham County Council's ownership is between Blackhill and Rowlands Gill. At its northern end is the Derwenthaugh Country Park. This has two visitor centres: Thornley Woodland Centre and Swalwell, both run by Gateshead Council. There are bird hides, picnic areas, information and toilets. [Contact Gateshead Council for opening hours: 01207 545 212, countryside@gateshead.gov.uk](mailto:countryside@gateshead.gov.uk)

The Derwent Walk follows National Cycle Network route 14 for the most part and is clearly signposted. It leaves the Derwent Walk at the Country Park and continues down the River Tyne to join the Keelman's Way at Blaydon. It forms part of the C2C long distance cycle route.

The Derwent Valley Railway was opened in 1867 and carried passengers and goods between Newcastle and Consett until the line finally closed in 1962. Line passes various structures of historical interest: site of Derwenthaugh cokeworks, Axwell Hall, Hollinside Manor, Gibside Hall, Friarside Chapel and Derwentcote. There is also evidence of old railway platforms, bridges and houses along the route.

There are numerous viaducts, the most impressive of which is Nine Arches Viaduct at Derwenthaugh Country Park. It is 500 foot long and was built because the Earl of Strathmore would not allow the railway to pass through the Gibside Estate. Going over the viaducts you look down on the tree canopy getting a bird's-eye view of the area below.

[more info...](#)

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



Total length: 12 miles (19km)

Grid Reference for main access points:

Lydgetts Junction (southern end): NZ 099 493

Blackhill: NZ 101 522

Shotley Bridge Station: NZ 102 535

Ebchester Station: NZ 107 548

Hamsterley Mill: NZ 143 561

Rowlands Gill: NZ 166 581

Thornley Woodlands Centre: NZ 178 604

Swalwell(northern end): NZ 197 619

Access also from the Highway and various Public Rights of Way

Map: Ordnance Survey Explorer 307 and 316

Directions:

Lydgetts Junction signed on A692, ½ mile west of Templetown, Consett

Blackhill car park is off Queens Road to the north of Benfieldside Cemetery, path accessed by a 50 metre walk to the west

Shotley Bridge Station on B6310 from Shotley Bridge to Medomsley, 1 mile west of Medomsley, signposted

Ebchester Station on the B6209 from Ebchester to Medomsley, entrance is below the Derwent Walk Inn, signposted

Hamsterley Mill from A694, east of Hamsterley take B6310 east towards Burnopfield, car park is signed approx ½ mile down this road

Rowlands Gill from A694 take B6314 towards Gibside, after 300 metres turn right onto Stirling Lane, car park is on left

Thornley Woodlands Centre off A694, west of Winlaton Mill, signposted (belongs to Gateshead Council)

Swalwell Visitor Centre off B6317 beside Blaydon Rugby Club, signposted (belongs to Gateshead Council)

Parking: Car parks at Lydgetts Junction, Blackhill, Shotley Bridge Station, Ebchester Station (2 disabled bays), Hamsterley Mill, Rowlands Gill, Thornley Woodlands Centre (disabled parking) and Swalwell Visitor Centre (disabled parking)

Public transport: Numbers 45 and 46 (Go North East) run parallel

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

Designation: Railway Path, UK Woodland Assurance Scheme certified, part of the C2C long distance cycle route

Suitable for: Walkers, cyclists, wheelchair users, horse-riders (horse-riders are advised to dismount before crossing the viaducts)

Habitats: Woodland, hedgerow, grassland, wetland, riverside

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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This route passes through woodland and meadow and alongside ponds and riverside areas. There are fragments of ancient woodland which are home to many birds including green and great spotted woodpecker, nuthatch and sparrowhawk. The reclaimed steelworks site at Consett is now a vast expanse of grassland which is alive with the sound of skylarks.

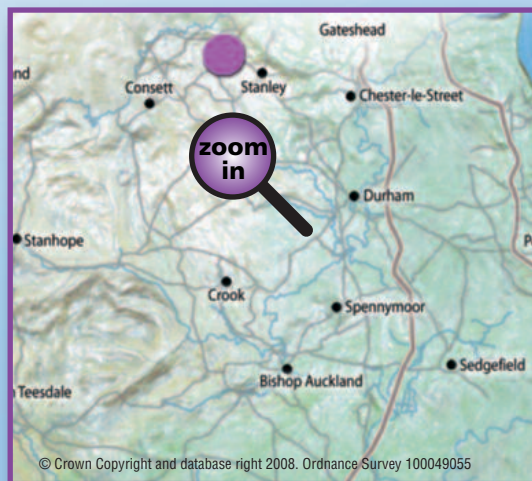
The Northern Kites Project saw the reintroduction of red kites. This beautiful bird of prey, with its distinctive forked tail and russet plumage, is regularly seen soaring along particularly at Rowlands Gill and Winlaton. There is a waymarked red kite walking trail and various viewing platforms in the lower Derwent Valley. [For more information go to www.northernkites.org.uk](http://www.northernkites.org.uk)

You may spot fox, roe deer and badger tracks. Along the riverside kingfisher, heron and dipper can be seen. Plants which grow along this route include wood anemone, knapweed, field scabious, lesser celandine, lords and ladies, ivy and dogs mercury.

Accessibility Statement

The route rises gently from Gateshead to Consett. Slopes vary along the route but only those which are particularly steep have been marked on the map so you are advised to look at the route profile. Path surfaces vary from unsealed surfaces with some large stones to concrete and tarmac. There is loose material on slopes and on the Lydgetts Junction to Blackhill section. The path widths vary but are an average of 2 metres along the route with wider sections over the viaducts.

For specific access information at the Gateshead section contact Gateshead Council: 01207 545 212 or countryside@gateshead.gov.uk.



Lords and ladies



Dogs mercury



Skylark



Sparrowhawk



Red Kite

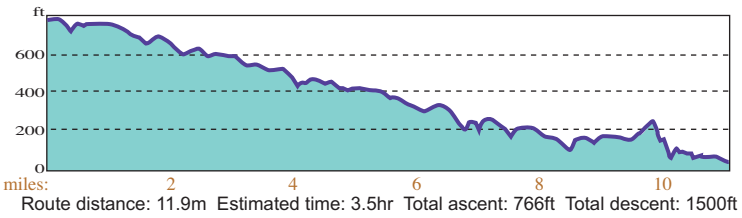


Badger Tracks

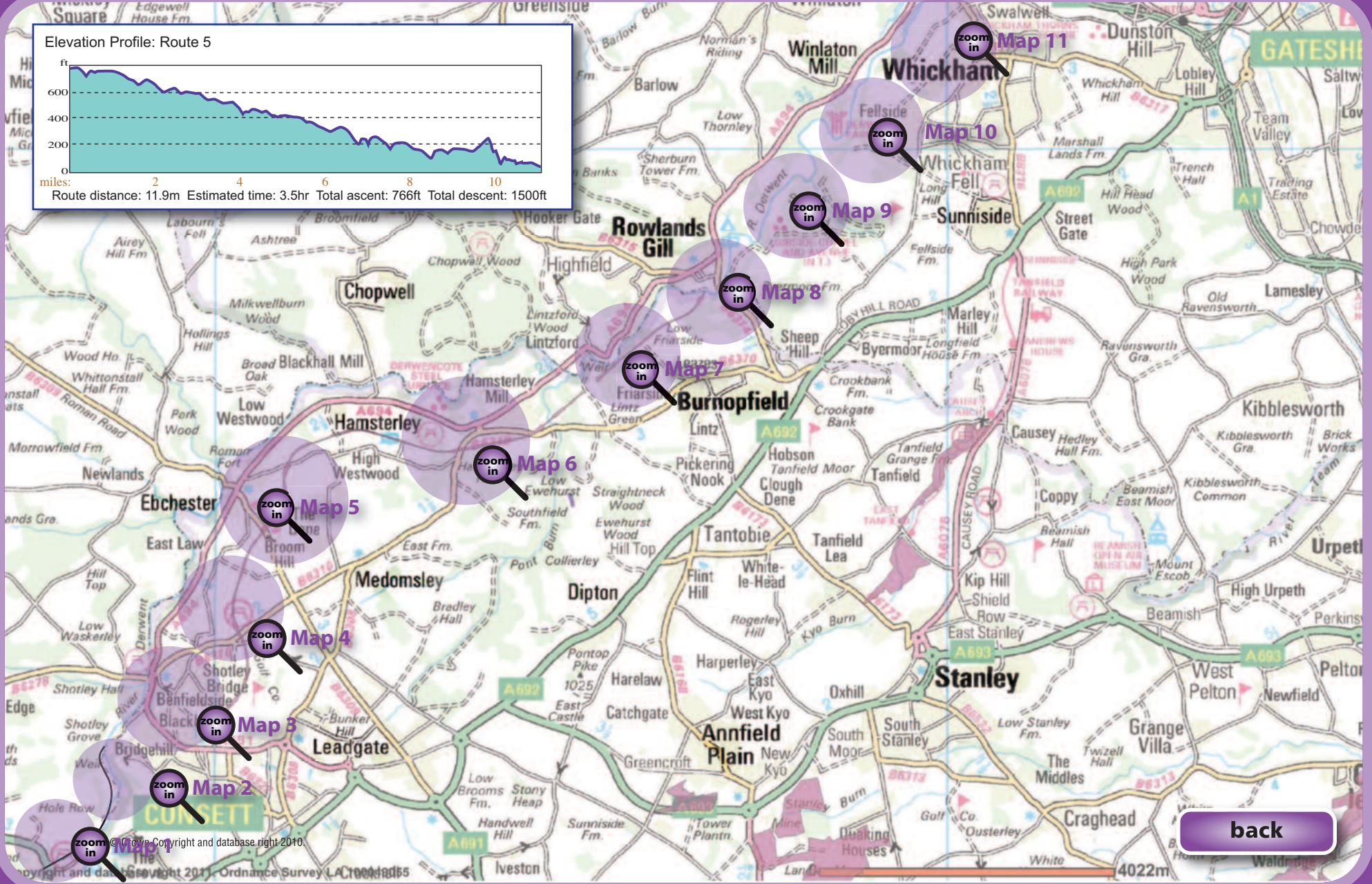
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Elevation Profile: Route 5



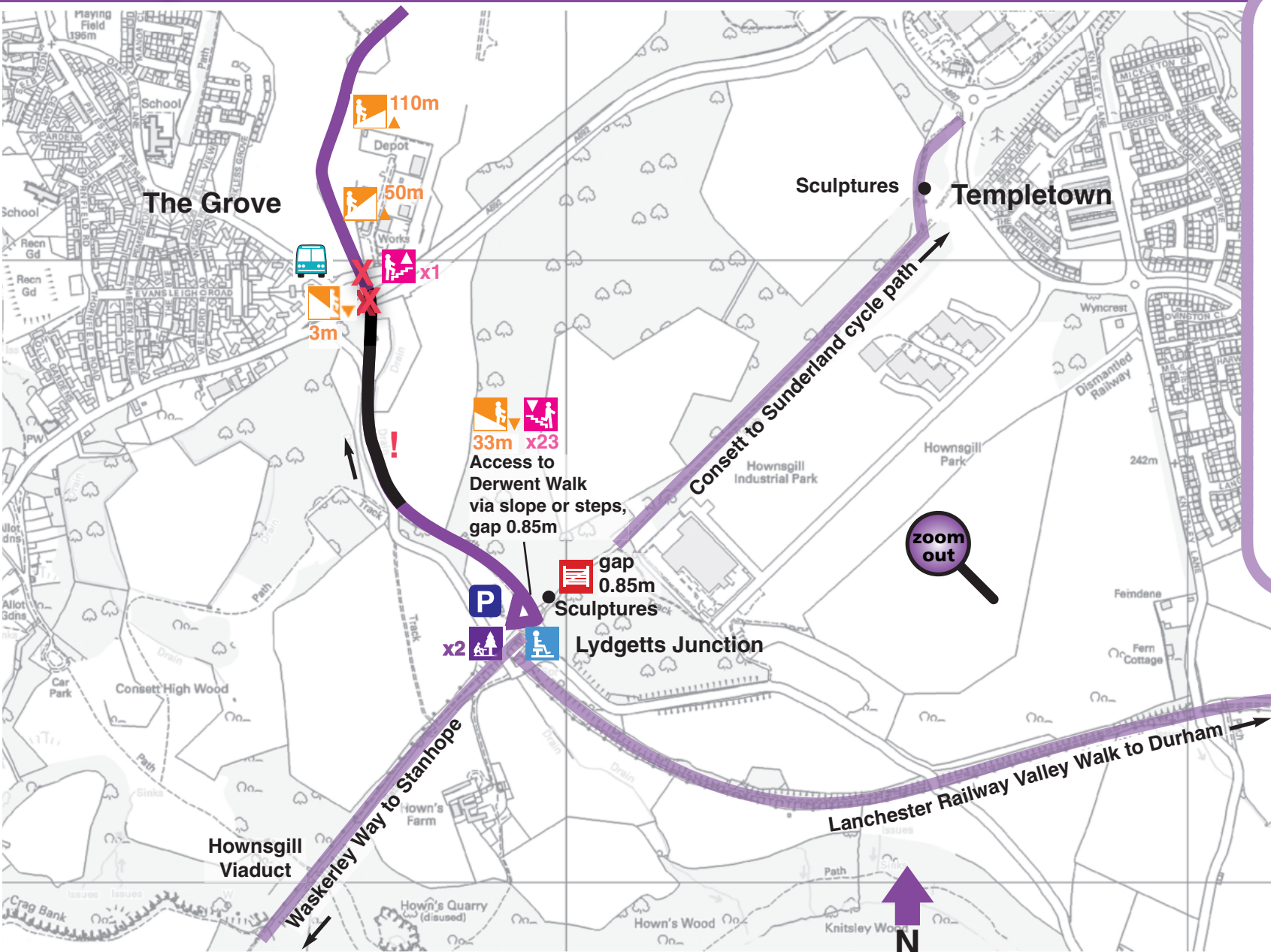
Route distance: 11.9m Estimated time: 3.5hr Total ascent: 766ft Total descent: 1500ft



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Map 1



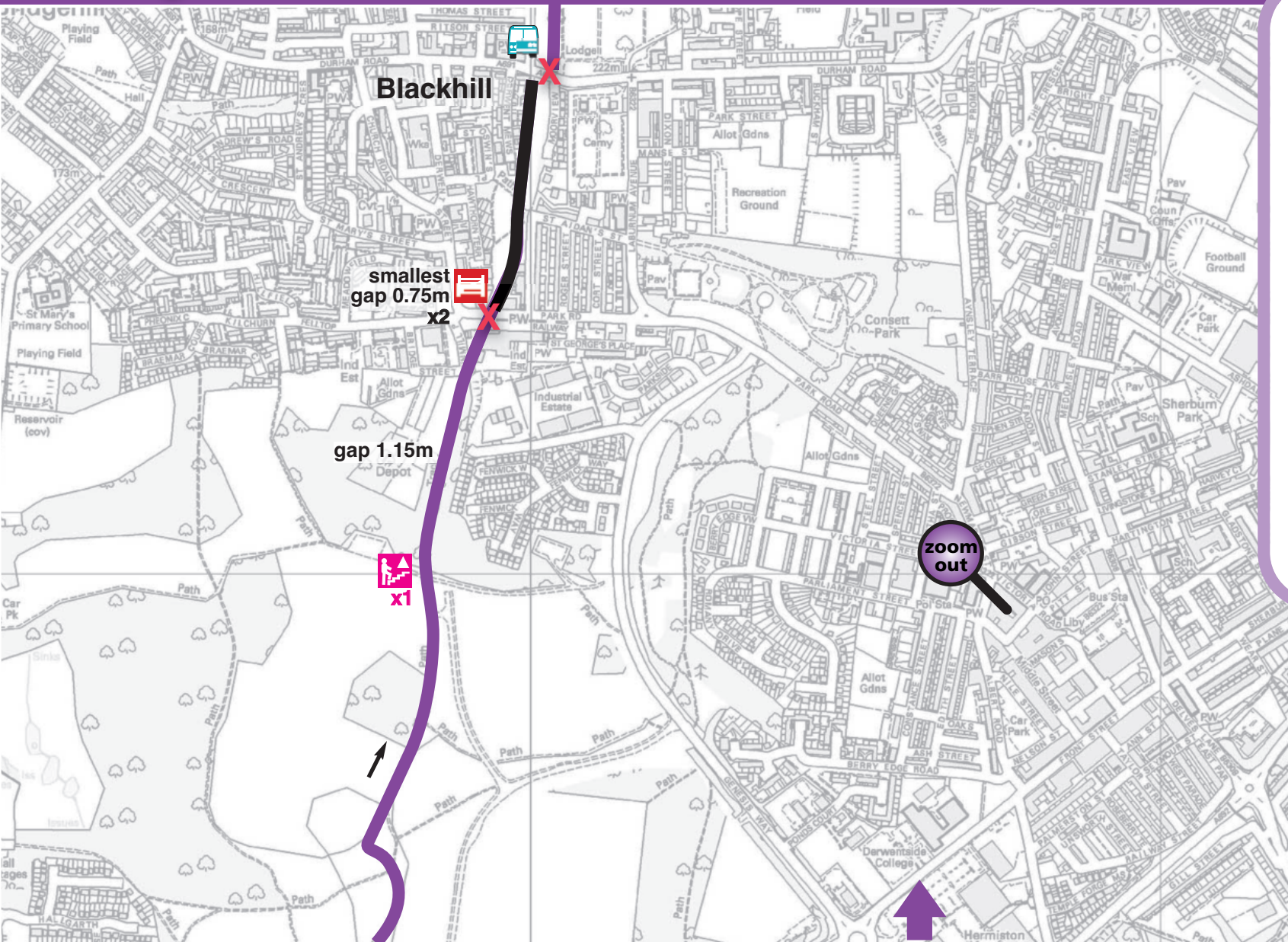
KEY

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








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Derwent Walk Railway Path

Map 2



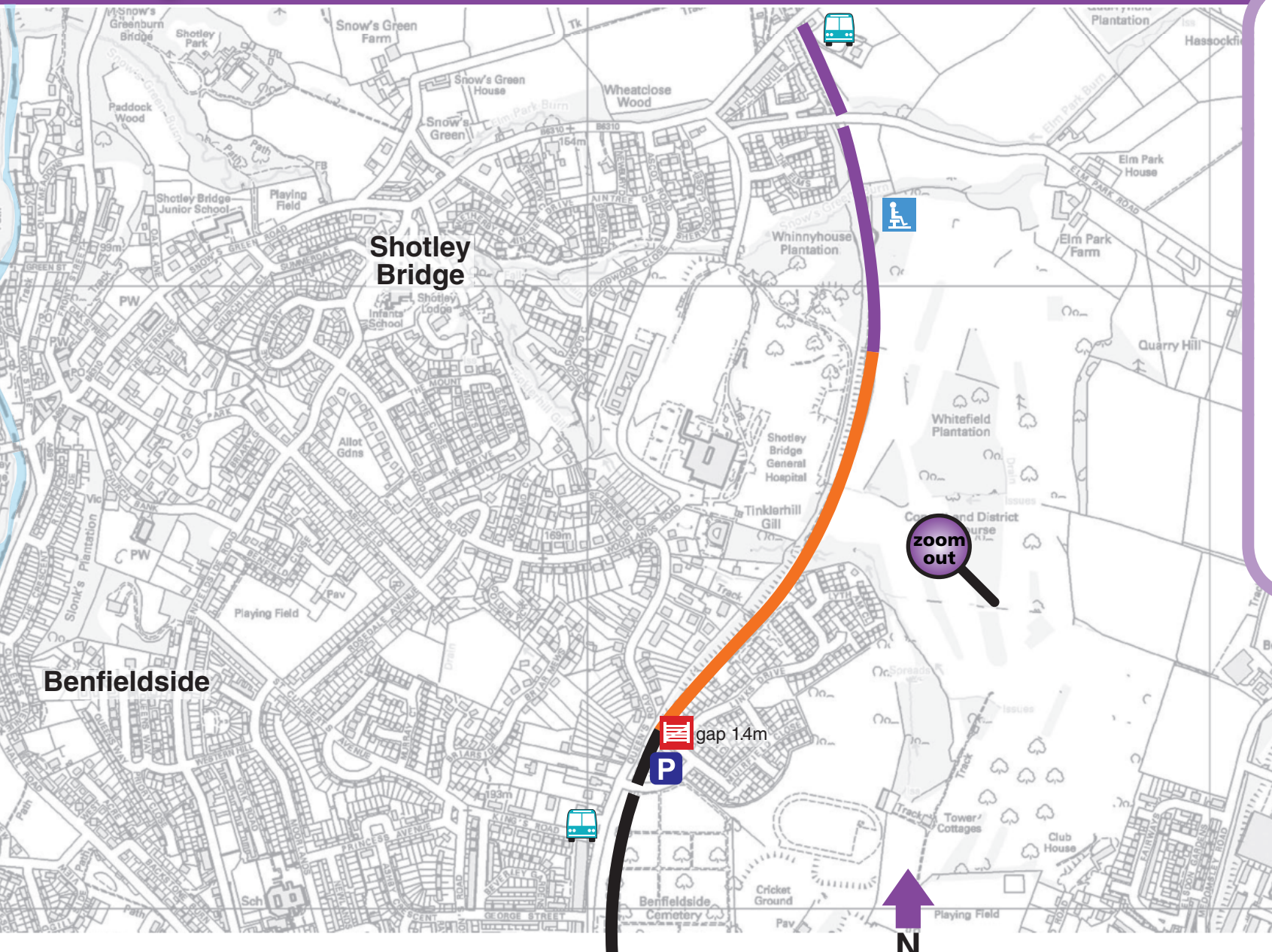
KEY

-  Picnic Area
-  Seat
-  Parking
-  Gate
-  Steps Up
-  Steps Down
-  Medium Slope Up 1:20-1:10
-  Steep Slope Up 1:10-1:1
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-  Road Crossing






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Derwent Walk Railway Path

Map 3



KEY

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

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0 500m

Derwent Walk Railway Path

Map 4



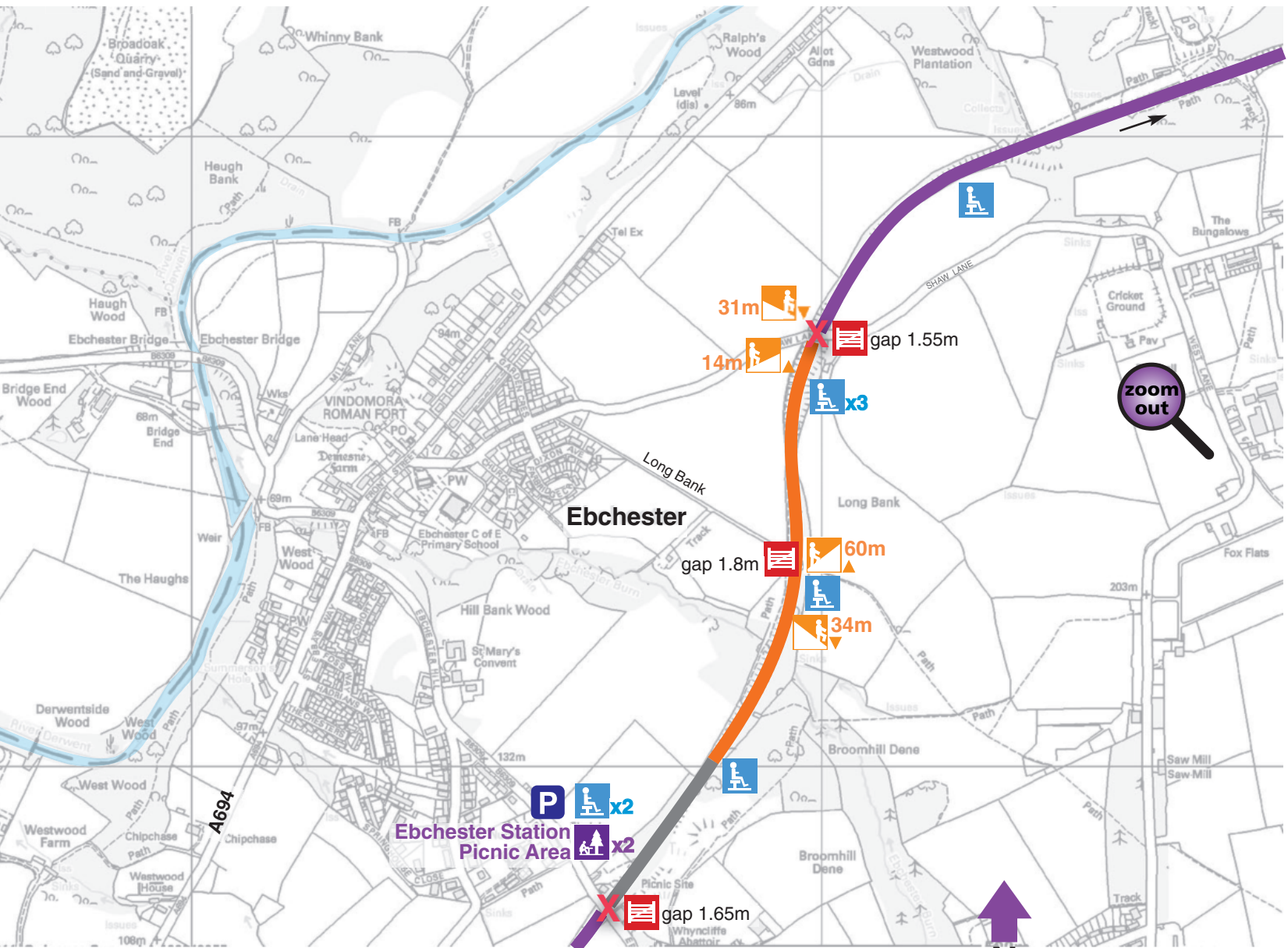
KEY

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

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Derwent Walk Railway Path

Map 5



KEY

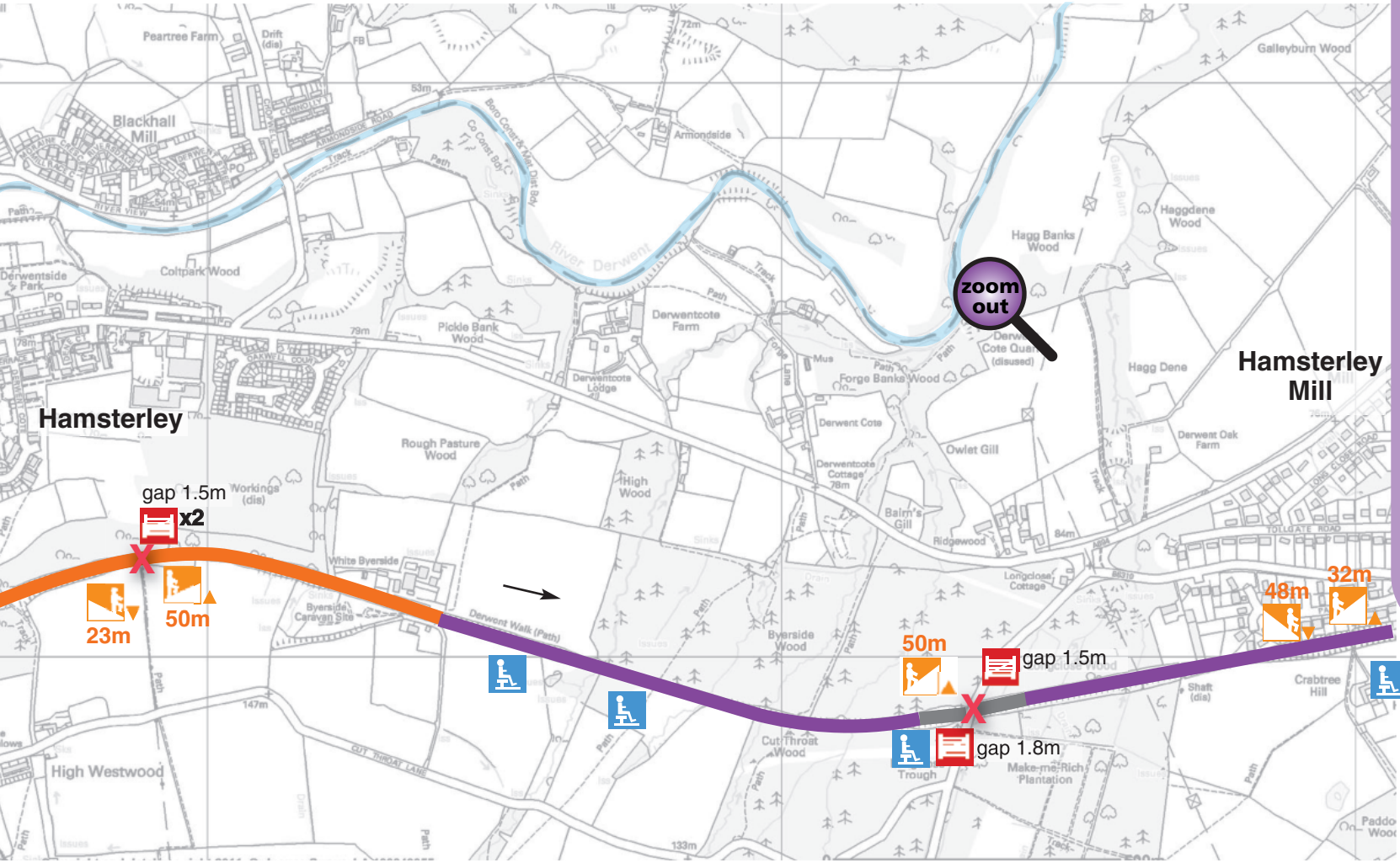
- Picnic Area
- Seat
- Parking
- Steep Slope Up 1:10-1:1
- Steep Slope Down 1:10-1:1
- Medium Slope Up 1:20-1:10
- Medium Slope Down 1:20-1:10
- Gate
- Bus Stop
- Direction of Travel
- Easy Access Route
- Hard Sealed Surface
- Road
- Road Crossing

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Map 6



KEY

- Seat
- Steep Slope Up 1:10-1:1
- Steep Slope Down 1:10-1:1
- Medium Slope Up 1:20-1:10
- Medium Slope Down 1:20-1:10
- Gate
- Direction of Travel
- Easy Access Route
- Hard Sealed Surface
- Road
- Road Crossing

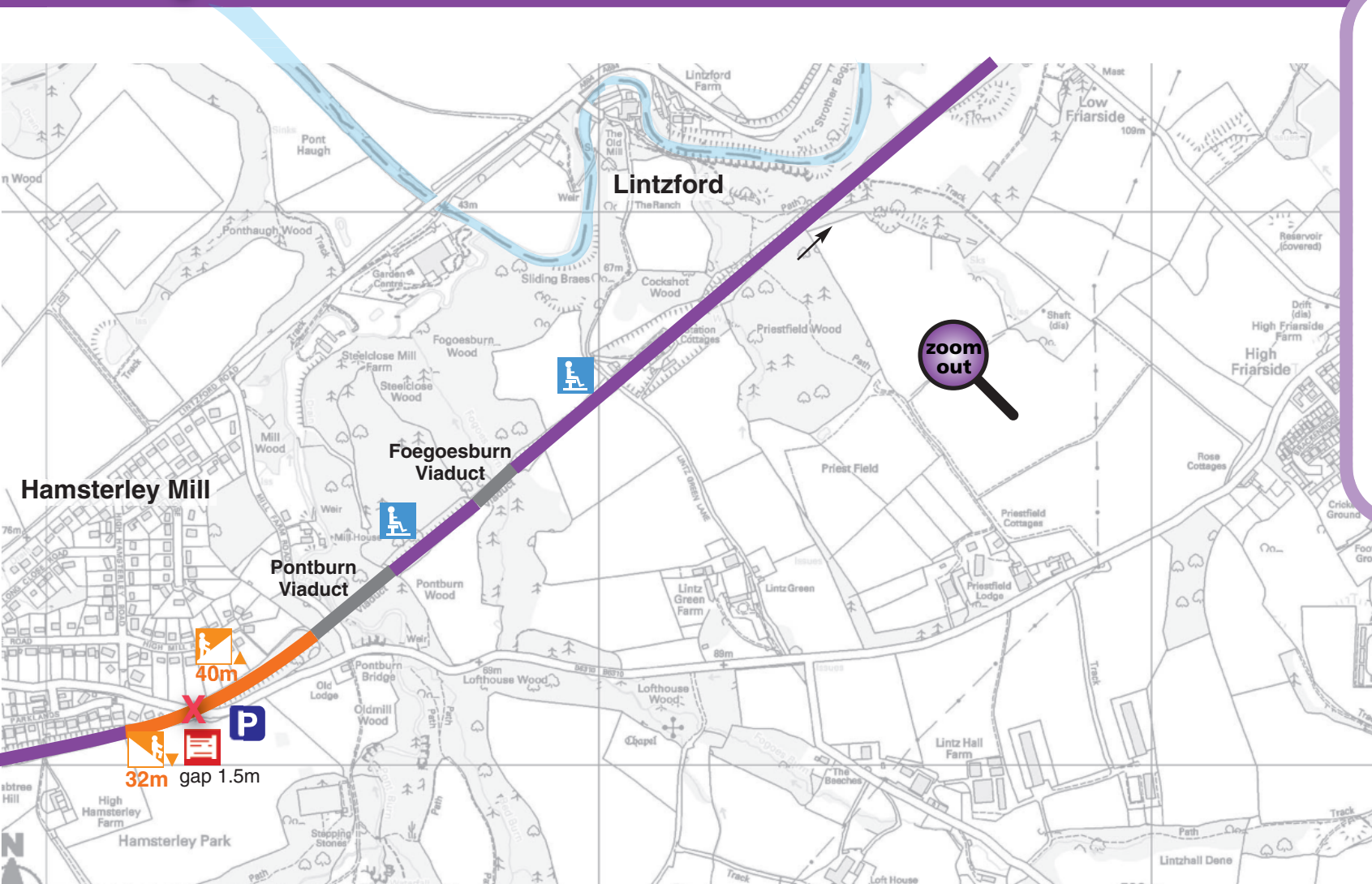
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Derwent Walk Railway Path

Map 7



KEY

-  Seat
-  Parking
-  Steep Slope Up 1:10-1:1
-  Steep Slope Down 1:10-1:1
-  Gate
-  Direction of Travel
-  Easy Access Route
-  Hard Sealed Surface
-  Road/Tarmac
-  Road Crossing

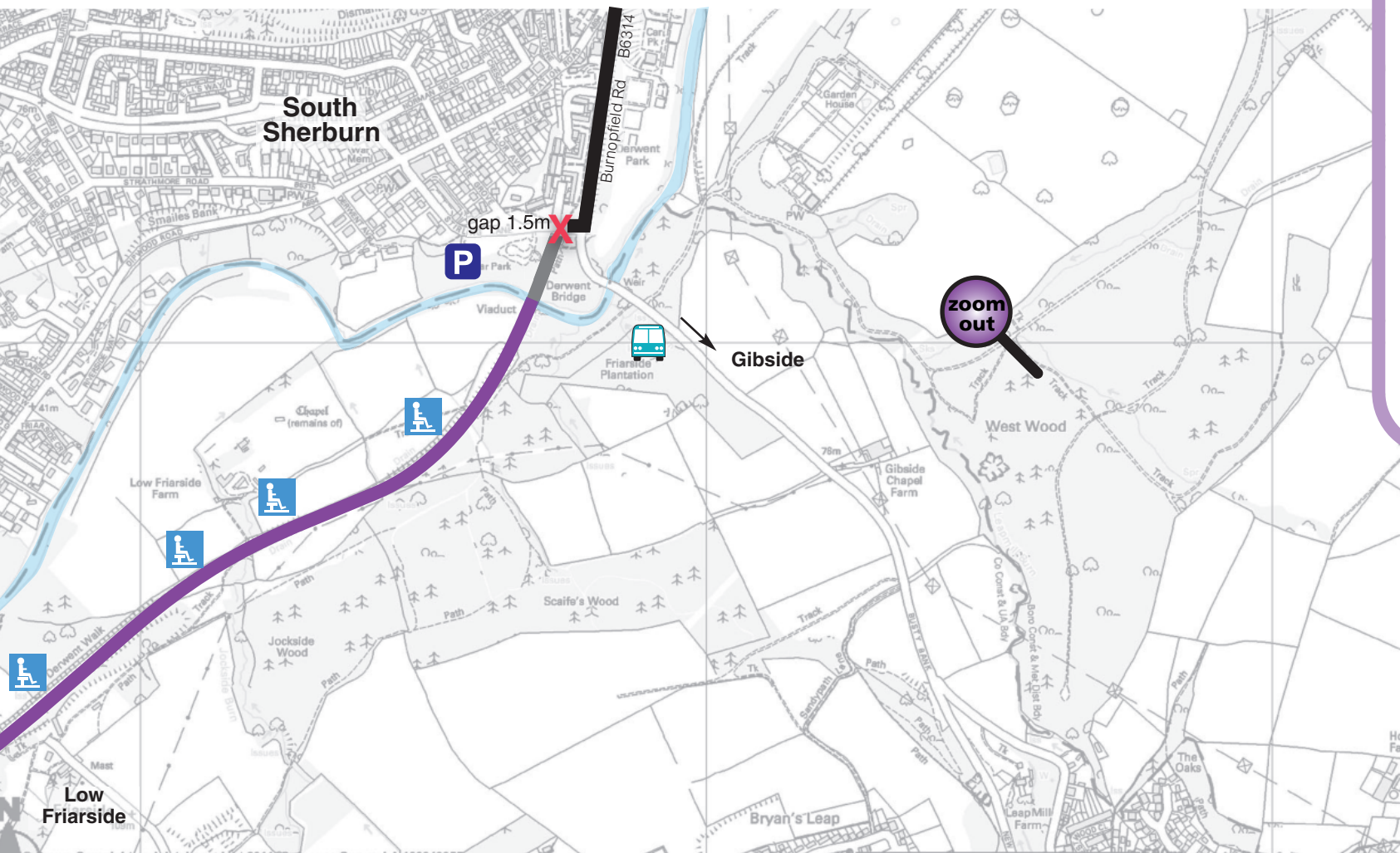
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0  500m

Derwent Walk Railway Path

Map 8



KEY

-  Picnic Area
-  Seat
-  Parking
-  Bus Stop
-  Direction of Travel
-  Hard Unsealed Surface
-  Road
-  Tarmac
-  Road Crossing

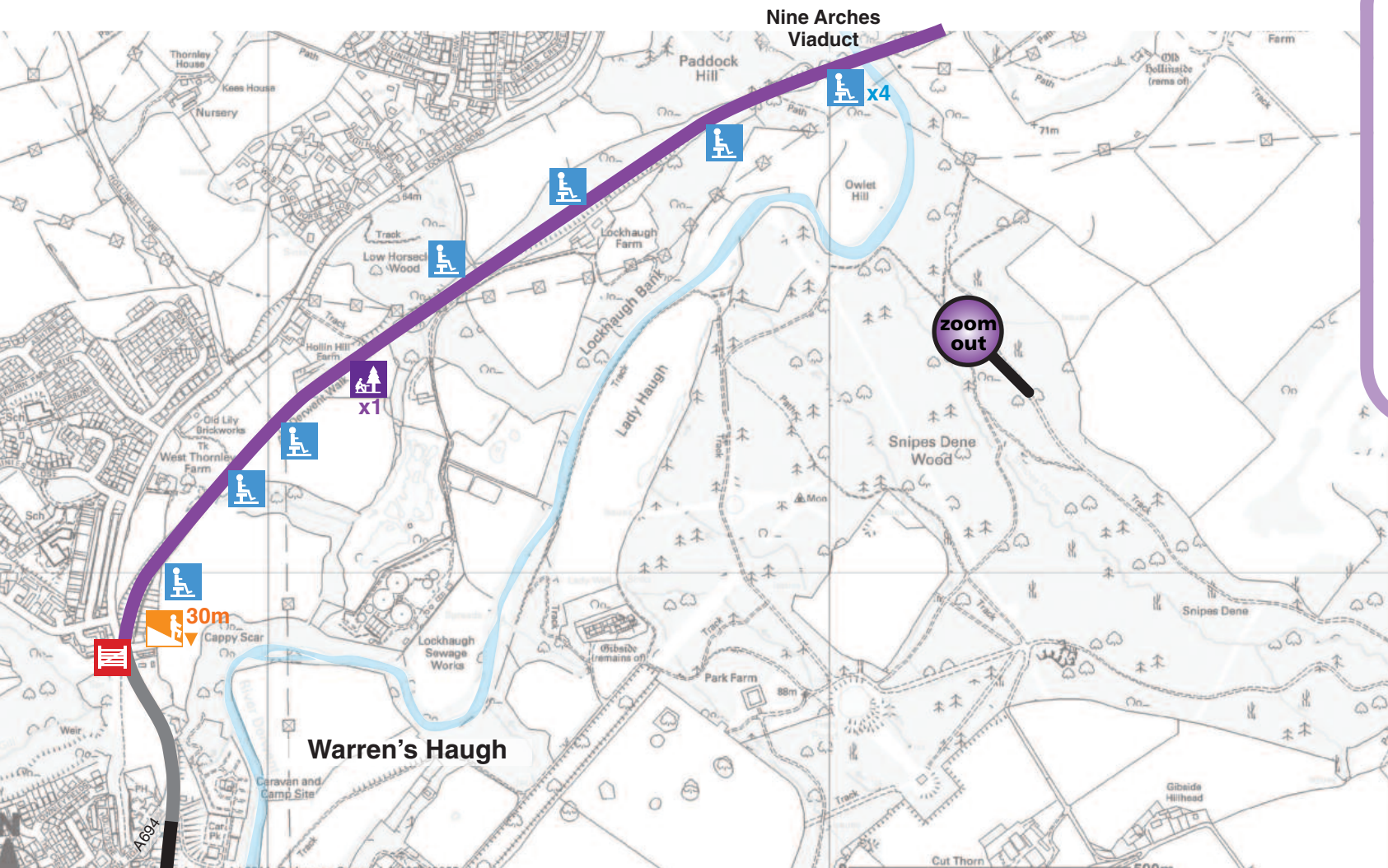
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Derwent Walk Railway Path

Map 9



KEY

- Picnic Area
- Seat
- Parking
- Medium Slope Down 1:20-1:10
- Motorbike Inhibitor Gate
standard wheelchairs can access
- Hard Unsealed Surface
- Road

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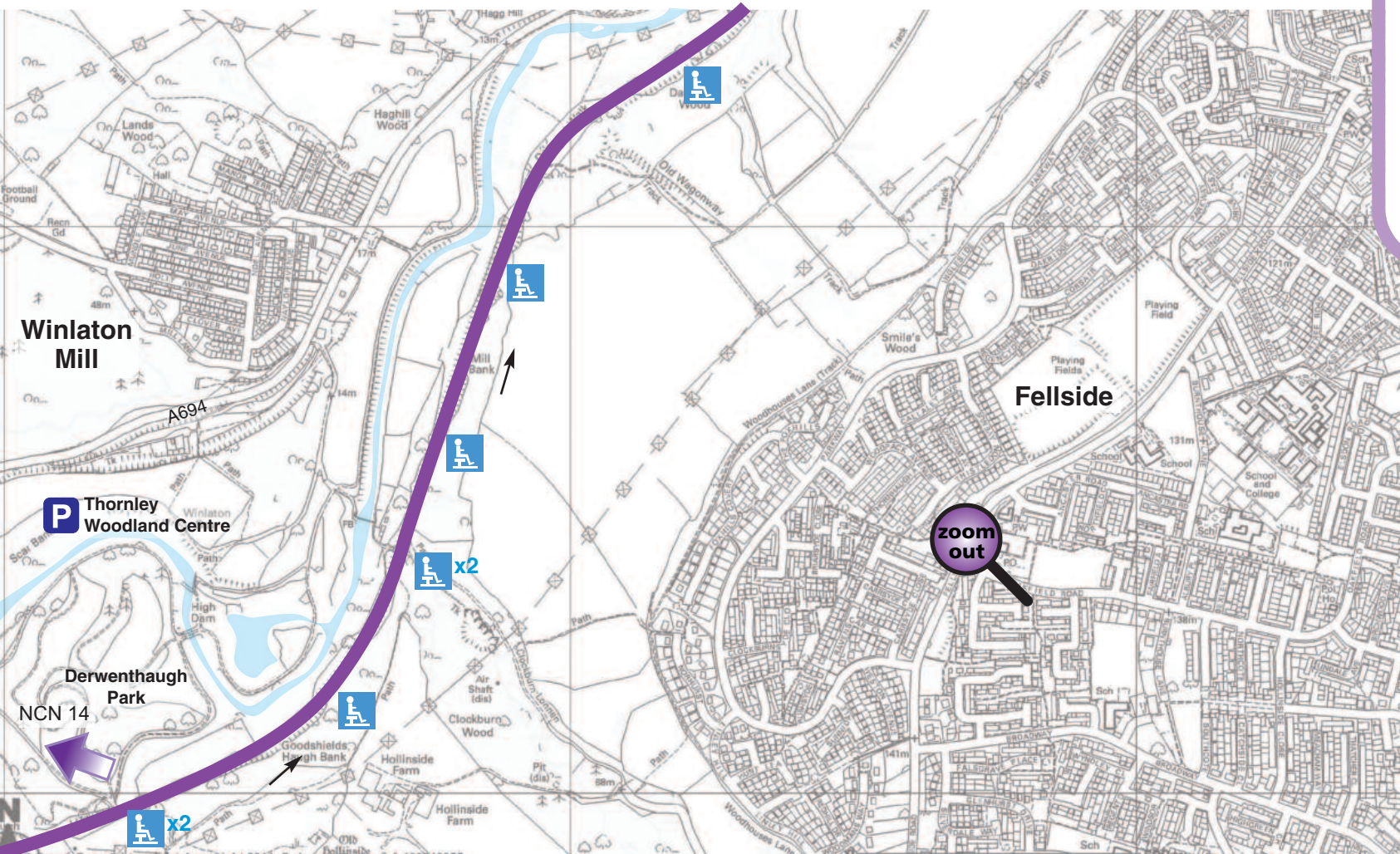
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Derwent Walk Railway Path

Map 10

KEY

-  Parking
-  Seat
-  Direction of Travel
-  Hard Unsealed Surface









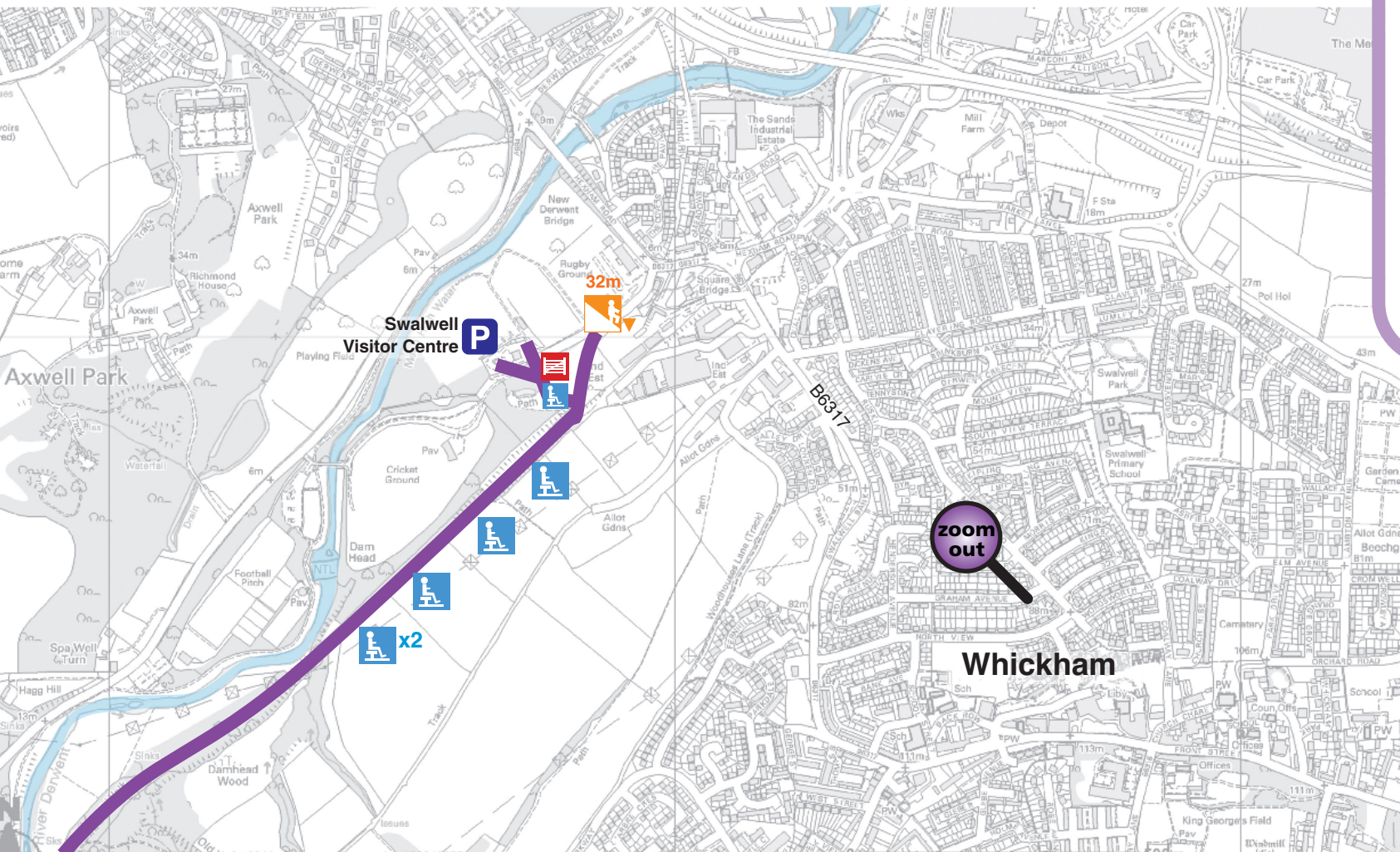
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Map 11

KEY

-  Seat
-  Parking
-  Steep Slope Down 1:10-1:1
-  Motorbike Inhibitor Gate
standard wheelchairs can access
-  Direction of Travel
-  Hard Unsealed Surface



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0  500m