

Blackrod Neighbourhood Development Plan

Neighbourhood profile

November 2016

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This document sets out a picture or summary of Blackrod and is intended to provide the evidence to inform the preparation of the Blackrod Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP). It is intended that this document will be a 'live document', ie it will be updated as new evidence or relevant information becomes available.
- 1.1 The NDP Steering Group will use the information set out in this document, together with information collected during consultation with our local community and stakeholders, to help identify the key issues which the plan should address.

2.0 Location

- 2.1 The parish of Blackrod is located some 3.9 miles (6.3 km) north-northeast of Wigan and 6.6 miles (10.6 km) west of Bolton (see Fig 1). It lies close to the town of Horwich and its major employment areas to the west of Bolton, separated by the M61 motorway and railway line. The village of Aspull lies approximately 1 km to the south west. Blackrod is a distinct village settlement set in open countryside which is designated 'Green Belt' under policy CG7AP of the adopted Bolton Allocations Local Plan (see Figure 7).

3.0 Transport and access

- 3.1 Blackrod has excellent road and rail access

Roads

- 3.2 The B5408 runs through the centre of the village and links to the A6 Blackrod Bypass to the north and south which provides access to the M61 motorway at Junction 6 to the south. The B5238 provides access to Horwich and Wigan to the south east.

Rail

- 3.3 Blackrod is served by [Blackrod railway station](#) (located on Station Road) which is on the [Manchester to Preston line](#) with frequent services to Manchester and Preston. The station has a park and ride facility.

Footpaths

- 3.4 There is a network of public footpaths and bridleways linking the main settlement with the surrounding open country and to the Leeds-Liverpool Canal.

Leeds – Liverpool Canal

- 3.5 The Leeds-Liverpool Canal runs inside the western boundary of the parish and provides a recreational and commercial water borne form of transport. In addition, it is a key recreational and environmental resource.

Buses

3.6 The parish is currently served by the following bus services:

575 - Bolton - Lostock - Horwich - Aspull - Wigan

517 - Blackrod - Middlebrook - Atherton - Leigh

521 - Blackrod - Royal Bolton Hospital - Little Lever

615 - Rivington & Blackrod High School - Blackrod

617 - Rivington & Blackrod High School - Aspull

8A - Chorley - Adlington - Blackrod

Car Availability

3.7 Table 3.1 below shows car and van availability in the parish in 2011 and shows a relatively high level of household access to cars or vans. It can be seen that the percentage of households with no access to a car or van, at 14.7%, is much lower than for Bolton (28.3%) and England (25.8%). The percentage of households with access to one car or van at 47.4% was significantly higher than for Bolton (43%) and England (42.2%). The percentage of households with access to two or more vehicles was also higher than for Bolton and England.

Table 3.1: Car/Van Availability

	Blackrod	Bolton	North West	England
No Cars or Vans in Household	14.7	28.3	28	25.8
1 Car or Van in Household	47.4	43	42.5	42.2
2 Cars or Vans in Household	29.4	23.3	23.5	24.7
3 Cars or Vans in Household	6.7	4.2	4.6	5.5
4 or More Cars or Vans in Household	1.9	1.1	1.4	1.9

Source: 2011 census (ONS)

4.0 Population

- 4.1 In 2011¹, the parish had a population of 5,001 compared to 5,300 in 2001. Of this number, 8.77% were under nine years of age (lower than the national average of 11.86%), whilst 11.23% were aged 10 to 19 years (slightly lower than the national figure of 12.11%). The percentage of the population 60 years of age and over was 30.49%, significantly higher than the national figure of 22.32%.

Ethnicity

- 4.2 The parish had a relatively low percentage of BME or non-UK residents, with 97 % of the population describing themselves as White English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British compared with 79.8% for England.

5.0 Deprivation

- 5.1 In 2011, deprivation, when measured by the percentage of households which were deprived in one or more dimension (employment, education, health and disability, and household overcrowding), was 55% in the parish compared to figures of 61% in the district and 57.7% in England.

6.0 Health

- 6.1 According to the 2011 census, 4.47% of the population described themselves as having bad health, which was lower than that for the district (5.22%), but slightly higher than for England (4.2%).
- 6.2 The parish has a local health centre, GP service and pharmacy but has no dentist service. (See also community facilities below.)

7.0 Economy

- 7.1 There are a number of employment areas located within the parish boundary (see Figure 2).

1-Blackrod Industrial Estate

2-Rivington View Business Park

3-Moss Lane Employment Park

4-Timber Yard east of railway station.

5-Markland Farm – 4 Barn Units

- 7.2 Only Rivington View Business Park and Moss Lane Employment Park are protected from alternative development by the current Bolton Local Plan. (See Figure 7)

¹ Unless stated, the demographic information in this section is sourced from the 2001 and 2011 Census (ONS).

- 7.3 The excellent transport connection also provides access to employment opportunities for residents.
- 7.4 In 2011, there were 650 retired residents. This represents 16.48% of residents aged 16-74, a higher figure than that for Bolton district (13.34%), and England (13.54%).

Main employment industries of residents

- 7.5 Table 7.1 below sets out the major industries in which people residing in the parish were employed in 2011. It can be seen that the percentage of people employed in the following sectors were all marginally higher than in Bolton and England:

- human health and social work activities,
- human health and social work activities,
- public administration and defence; compulsory social security,
- professional, scientific and technical activities,
- accommodation and food service activities
- construction

There is a lack of new, quality, business starter units in appropriate locations in Blackrod to serve the smaller business start-ups. High tech industries and new employment opportunities are required for the immediate local community. Blackrod Industrial Estate is in need of major regeneration to accommodate the future business and community needs.

Table 7.1: Comparison of main industries of employment - percentage of residents aged 16-74 in employment

	Blackrod	Bolton	North West	England
G Wholesale and Retail Trade; Repair of Motor Vehicles and Motor Cycles	14.98	18.89	16.71	15.93
Q Human Health and Social Work Activities	14.46	13.09	13.85	12.40
C Manufacturing	11.46	10.69	10.28	8.85
P Education	11.06	9.39	9.75	9.90
F Construction	10.58	8.43	7.39	7.68
O Public Administration and Defence; Compulsory Social Security	6.37	5.62	6.00	5.90
M Professional, Scientific and Technical Activities	5.53	5.21	5.60	6.70
I Accommodation and Food Service Activities	4.41	4.83	5.91	5.56

Source: 2011 census (ONS)

Main occupations

- 7.6 Table 7.2 and Figure 7.1 below show that the percentage of residents of the parish in the management, professional occupations, associate professional and technical operations, administrative professions, and skilled trades occupations were higher than for Bolton district, and the North West of England.
- 7.7 This may reflect the attractiveness of the town for professional commuters, set in its attractive countryside location but with excellent accessibility via motorway and railway transport links to major employment areas. This may also explain the relatively high household car and van availability (see para 3.5).

Unemployment

- 7.8 In 2011, the unemployment rate for Blackrod and Horwich was 5.3%, compared to 8.7% and 7.6% for Bolton and England respectively². In October 2016, the percentage of population aged 16 to 64 who were claiming out of work benefits was 1.5% in Blackrod and Horwich compared to 3%, and 1.5% for Bolton and England respectively.³

Table 7.2: Comparison of main occupations -percentage of residents aged 16-74 in employment

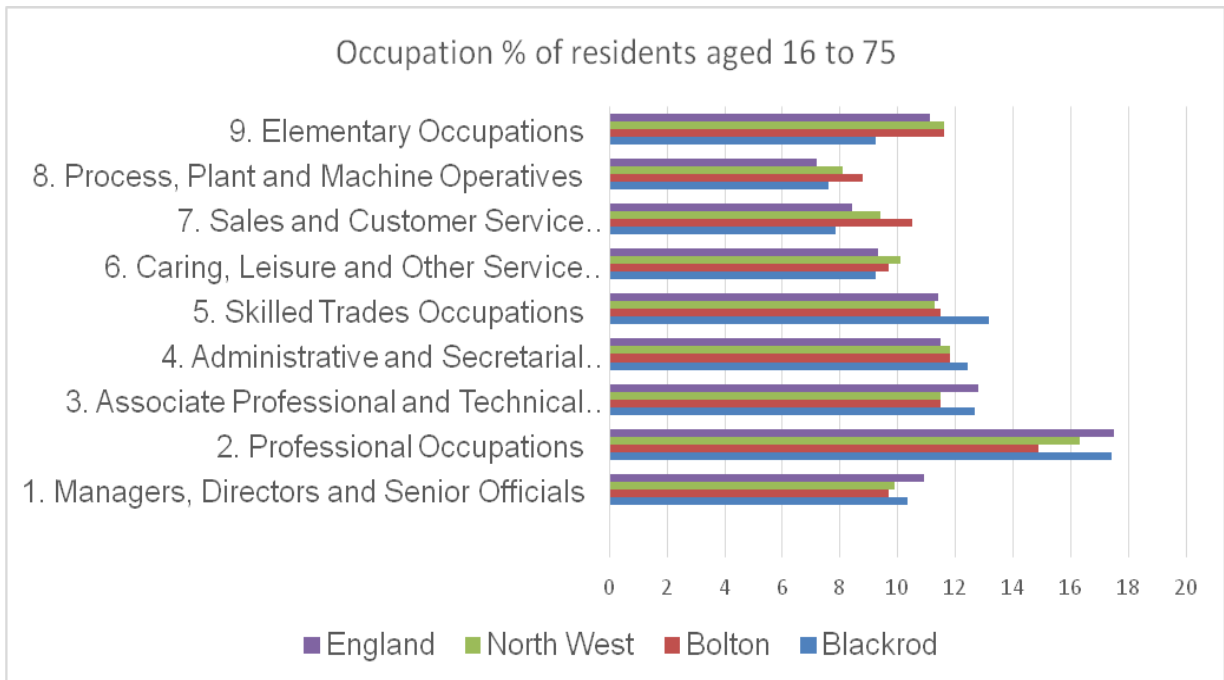
	Blackrod	Bolton	North West	England
1. Managers, Directors and Senior Officials	10.33	9.7	9.9	10.9
2. Professional Occupations	17.42	14.9	16.3	17.5
3. Associate Professional and Technical Occupations	12.66	11.5	11.5	12.8
4. Administrative and Secretarial Occupations	12.41	11.8	11.8	11.5
5. Skilled Trades Occupations	13.18	11.5	11.3	11.4
6. Caring, Leisure and Other Service Occupations	9.25	9.7	10.1	9.3
7. Sales and Customer Service Occupations	7.85	10.5	9.4	8.4
8. Process, Plant and Machine Operatives	7.61	8.8	8.1	7.2
9. Elementary Occupations	9.25	11.6	11.6	11.1

Source: 2011 census (ONS)

² Based on economically active population-2011 Census

³ [NOMIS](#)

Figure 7.1: Comparison of main occupations -percentage of residents aged 16-74 in employment



Source: 2011 census (ONS)

8.0 Housing

- 8.1 The total number of households in the parish in 2011 was 2,298, with an average household size of 2.17 persons. The percentage of households owned outright at 41.6% is significantly higher than the average for Bolton (30.4%) and for England (30.6%). This probably reflects the difference in age structure and higher proportion of retired persons. Some 81.6% of households were owner occupied: significantly higher than the average for Bolton (63.7%) and England (63.3%). The percentage of social rented households is low at 7.8% compared to Bolton (20.4%) and England (17.69%). The percentage of private rented households at 9.2% is also low when compared to Bolton (13.68%) and England (16.84%).
- 8.2 The majority of households in the parish, some 48.5%, were in semi-detached properties, significantly higher than in Bolton (34.5%) and in England (30.7%). The percentage of detached households at 20.8% was also considerably higher than Bolton (16.3%) but lower than the average for England (22.3%). The percentage of terraced households, 23.5%, was significantly lower than for Bolton (34.9%) but similar to the average for England (24.5%). The percentage of households in flats and apartments in the parish, 6.6% was significantly lower than for Bolton (12.2%), and for England (16.7%).

9.0 Land use

- 9.1 The parish largely comprises open countryside, with Blackrod the main linear settlement. Blackrod is a relatively small settlement comprising mainly residential uses.
- 9.2 There is open countryside separating Blackrod and the Manchester to Preston railway line and the employment areas immediately to the east. Running through this gap is the Blackrod Bypass A6. The Blackrod Industrial estate lies in open countryside to the south of Scot Lane.
- 9.3 The Leeds -Liverpool Canal runs close to the north-western boundary of the parish.

10.0 Landscape and topography

- 10.1 The landscape of the great majority of the parish is defined as 'Agricultural Coal Measures' in the *Landscape Character Appraisal of Bolton* (October 2001), reflecting the history of coal mining activity in the area. The key landscape features are listed as:
- Undulating topography with hills and valleys falling to the Mersey basin in the south.
 - Low grade agricultural land with ponds and flash areas. (Agricultural Land Classification later describes this as Good to Moderate Agricultural Land)
 - Structure provided by broadleaved woodland.
 - Fragmented landscape with scattered settlements and dissecting transport links.
 - Lack of historical continuity and variety in landscape quality.
- 10.2 A small part of the parish, north east of the railway line, is defined as 'agricultural floodplain'. The key landscape features of this area are listed as:
- Undulating topography of wetland areas and low-grade farmland.
 - Remnant moss land areas, which are important for their archaeological and nature conservation resource.
 - Small pockets of woodland.
 - Enclosed character of the Douglas Valley contrasts with the more open character of the Middle Brook Valley.
- 10.3 The following issues and opportunities were identified:
- Major redevelopment and ribbon development fragments the landscape character.
 - Noise from and visual dominance of the motorway and railway routes cutting through the area detracts from the landscape character.
 - Recreational provision provides a manicured appearance and an urban fringe element to parts of this landscape area.

- Evidence of past industrial activity, provide a sense of historic identity to the landscape as well as being important wildlife habitats.
- Large number of ponds provides attractive landscape features, however, they suffer from lack of management.

10.4 A Gas Pumping Station, located in the west of the parish, is classified as a hazardous Installation and has a buffer zone of safety which may influence development. Any proposed development would have to have approval of the Health and Safety Executive.

11.0 Environment (Figure 3)

11.1 The parish is set in open countryside which is productive farmland. The countryside is accessible by a network of public footpaths and provides a rich recreational and environmental resource to our residents and neighbours.

Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)

11.2 The Red Moss SSSI is located outside but adjoining the south-east boundary of the NDP area. The SSSI Impact Zone, which is intended to inform planning applications with a potential impact on the SSSI, covers much of the parish.

Sites of Biological Importance

11.3 There are three areas of Biological Interest located in the north-western corner of the parish:

- Arley Woods East
- Red Rock Railway Cutting North
- Leeds-Liverpool Canal -Adlington to Wigan North

11.4 The Leeds-Liverpool Canal also forms an important environmental corridor.

Flood Risk (see Figure 4)

11.5 The River Douglas, which runs along the northern boundary and to the west of Blackrod, is subject to flooding and lies within an area Flood Risk 3 on the Environment Agency web based mapping resource.

11.6 The areas of land at risk of flooding may be subject to change and the latest EA web based mapping should be consulted

12.0 Community Infrastructure (Figure 6)

Education

12.1 There are two primary schools located within the parish:

- Blackrod Church School (Vicarage Road West)
- Blackrod Primary School (Manchester Road)

12.2 These accommodate the educational needs of most local younger children. Secondary pupils have to access facilities further afield, including the Rivington and Blackrod High School in Horwich

12.3 Local residents also have access to some adult education and training facilities in Wigan and Bolton.

Health facilities

12.4 Within the parish, primary health care is provided by the Blackrod Health Centre, Church Street, which includes a local GP practice. A pharmacy service is located at 28 Blackhorse Street.

Care homes

12.5 There are currently two care homes serving Blackrod: Knightswood Care Home, located off Manchester Road and Blackrod House Care Home located on Chorley road.

Community centre

12.6 The parish community centre is located on Greenbarn Way.

Youth centre

12.7 There is a youth centre located off Manchester Road near to the Blackrod Primary School.

Greenspaces

12.8 There are two formal greenspaces within the town which are safeguarded by Policy CG 1 of the adopted Bolton Allocations Local Plan:

- Recreation ground-east of Half Acre Lane. This space is predominantly a playing field associated with the community centre and used for regular football activities by Blackrod Town FC and other teams as well as a number of ladies rounder's teams.
- Greenbarn Way. This space is a play area for children and other users.

12.9 There are two other greenspaces not currently protected by Policy CG1:

- Recreation ground-west of Half Acre Lane. This space is a play area consisting mainly of a large field which is also utilised as a second football pitch.
- Cricket Ground off Vicarage Road West. This is a space that has been home to Blackrod Cricket Club since the early 1900's and provides sport and recreation for junior and senior cricket.

12.10 In addition, there are two areas of protected open land within the parish designated by Policy CG6AP in the adopted Bolton Allocations Local Plan (see Figure 7).

- Land south of Vicarage Road West
- Land South of Moss Lane

12.11 There are no Local Green Spaces identified within the Bolton Local Plan. The Neighbourhood Development Plan may consider the merits of identifying such areas for special protection (see paras 76 and 77 of the 2012 NPPF)

Retailing

12.12 There are three small groups of shops within Blackrod as set out in Table 12.1.

Table 12.1: Local retailing provision

Ref	Location	No of Shops	Type of shop
A	District Centre -Junction of Church Street and Blackhorse Avenue	7	
B	District Centre- Junction Church Street and Whitehall Lane	6	
C	Junction of Church Street and Ridgeway	2	
D	Junction of Station Road and Manchester Road	4	

There is a wide range of shops at the locations indicated although additional choices would be welcomed. None of these locations include the Scot Lane end of the village which currently has no shops.

Shops outlined under Ref A report insufficient parking for their customer's needs with some of them indicating that their businesses are suffering as a result. The dated common frontage of the shops including the parking area needs remodelling to maximise safe parking and the overall customer experience.

Shops outlined under Ref B have a dated common frontage and shared area parking which expands across the pavement area. The parking facility is not clearly marked for vehicles and pedestrians which causes confusion and potential dangers.

13.0 Heritage Assets (Figure 5)

Conservation Areas

13.1 There are no conservation areas within the parish boundary

Listed Buildings

13.2 There are twelve Grade II listed buildings within Blackrod

1. Church of St. Katharine
2. Holmes Farm House
3. Green Barn Farmhouse
4. Folly, west of Arley Hall
5. Arley Hall Wigan Golf Club
6. Coach House, west of Arley Hall
7. Bridge over Leeds-Liverpool Canal
8. Aquaduct over River Douglas
9. Waterhouse Bridge
10. Anderton Bridge
11. Aberdeen Bridge
12. Georgian House Hotel

Scheduled Ancient Monuments

13.3 There is one scheduled ancient monument within the parish: the moated site at Arley Hall

14.0 Planning Policy Context

14.1 The development Plan for the Area currently comprises the following documents:

- Bolton Core Strategy- Adopted March 2011
- Bolton Allocations Local Plan –Adopted December 2014
- Greater Manchester Joint Minerals DPD- Adopted April 2013
- Greater Manchester Waste Plan- Adopted April 2012

14.2 Relevant allocations and policy designations are shown on Figure 7. Other than the housing site off Manchester Road there are no other housing or employment allocations contained in the current development Plan.

14.3 The Greater Manchester Spatial Framework is currently in preparation and will be the overarching development plan within which Greater Manchester's ten local planning authorities will identify more detailed sites for jobs and homes in their own area. The Draft Plan was published in October 2016 and contained no policies which would impact on the Parish.

Figure 1: Location

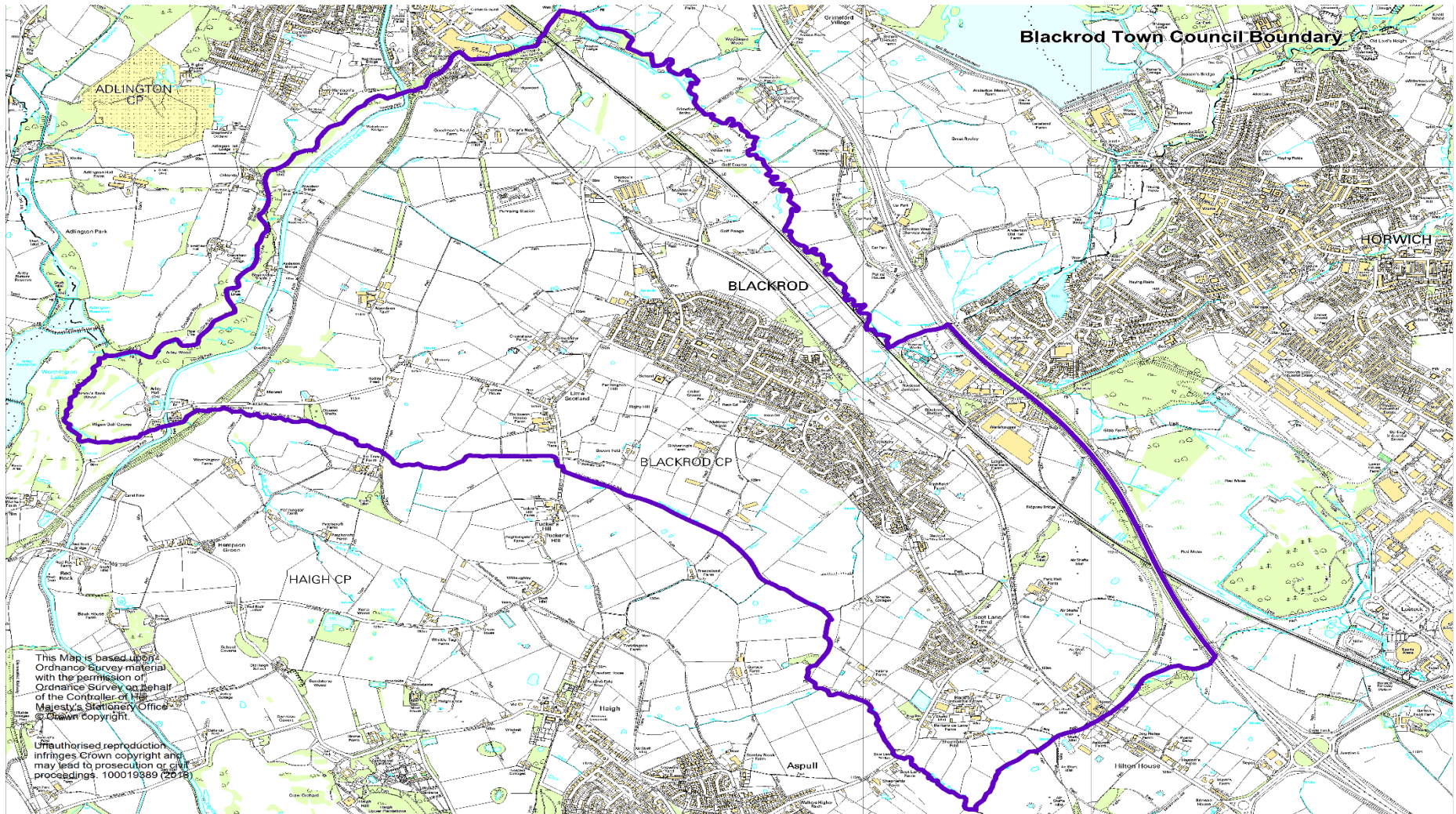


Figure 2: Land Use and Transport Infrastructure

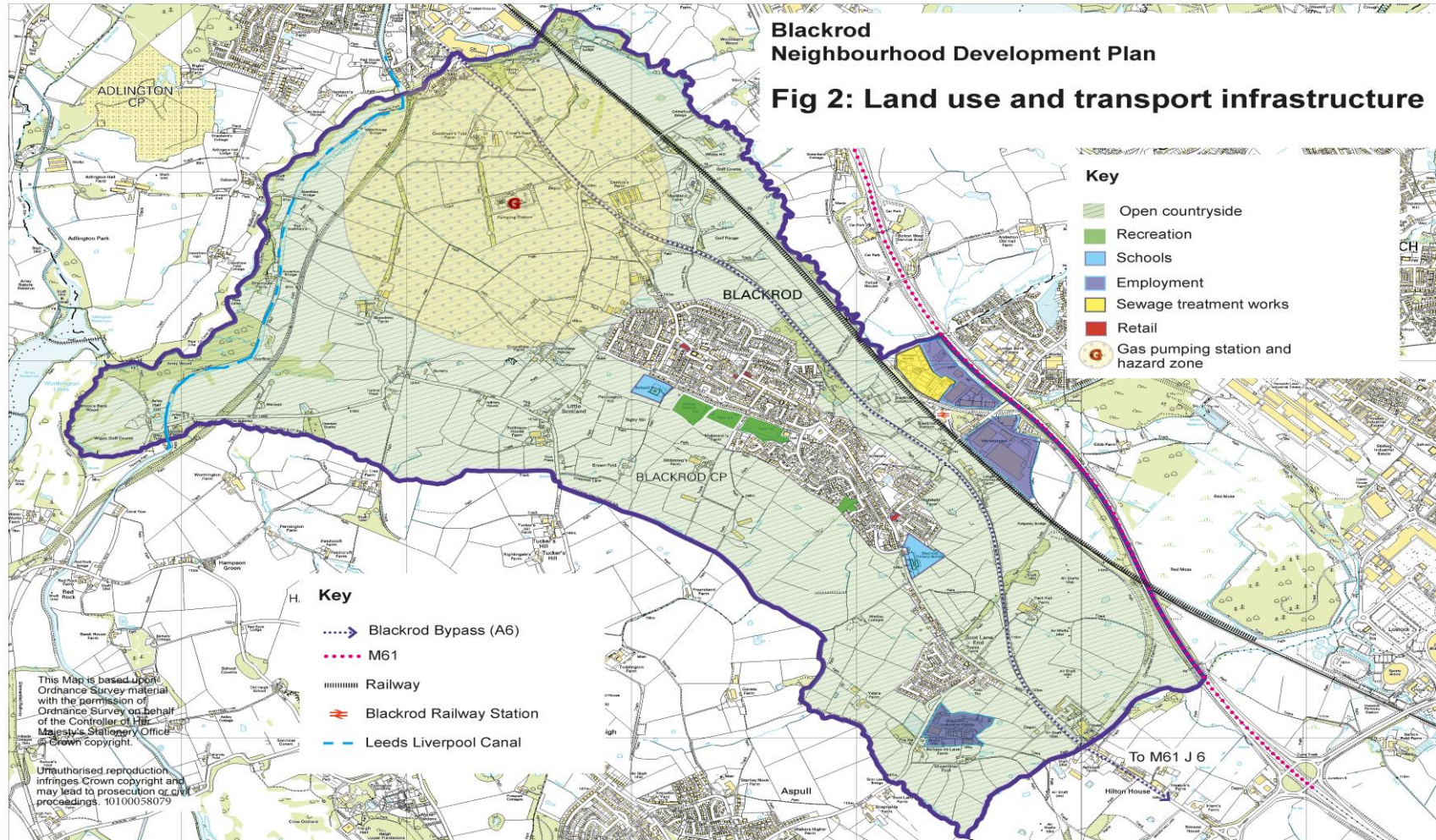


Figure 3: Environmental Assets

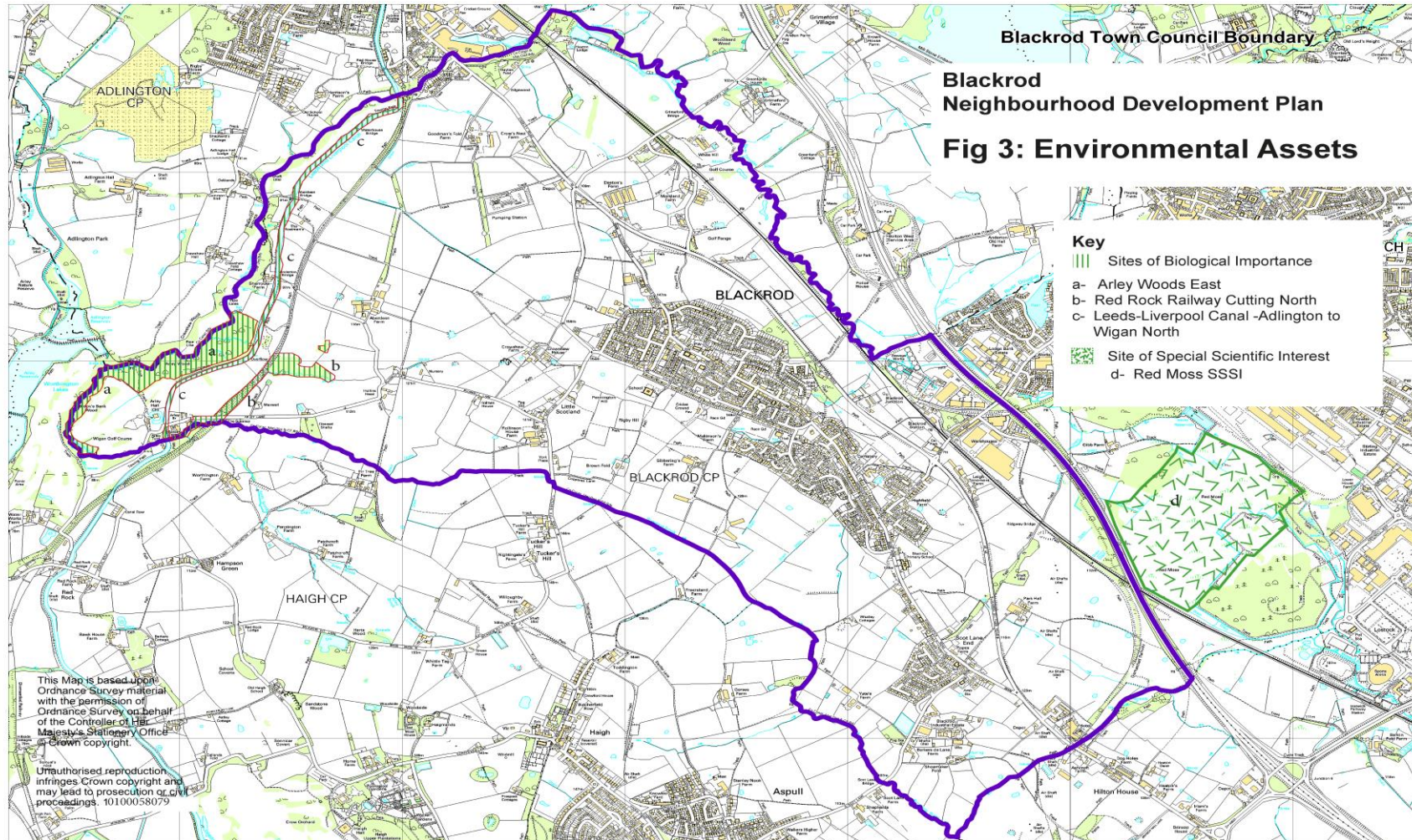
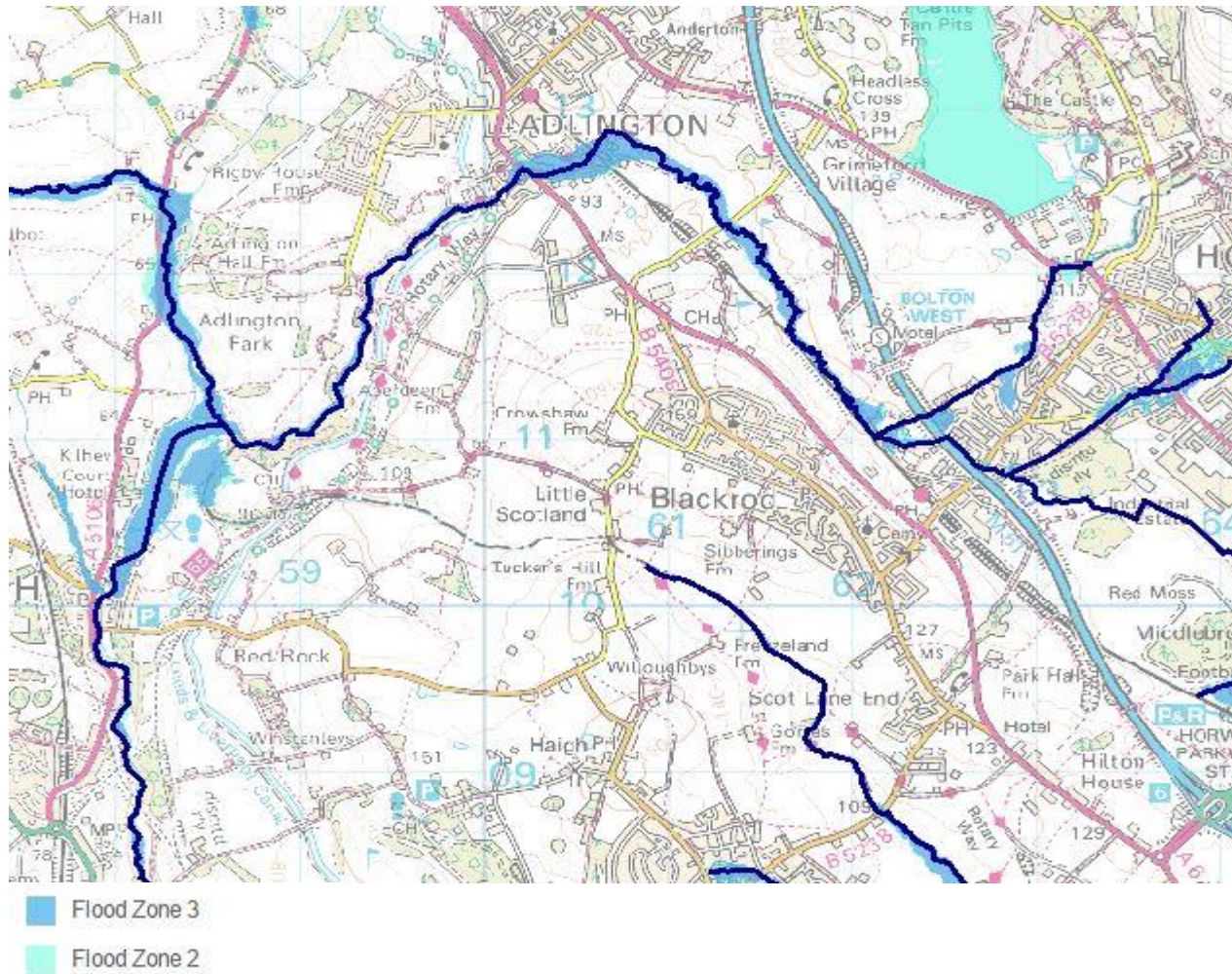


Figure 4: Flood Risk



Source: [Environment Agency](#)

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Figure 5: Heritage Assets

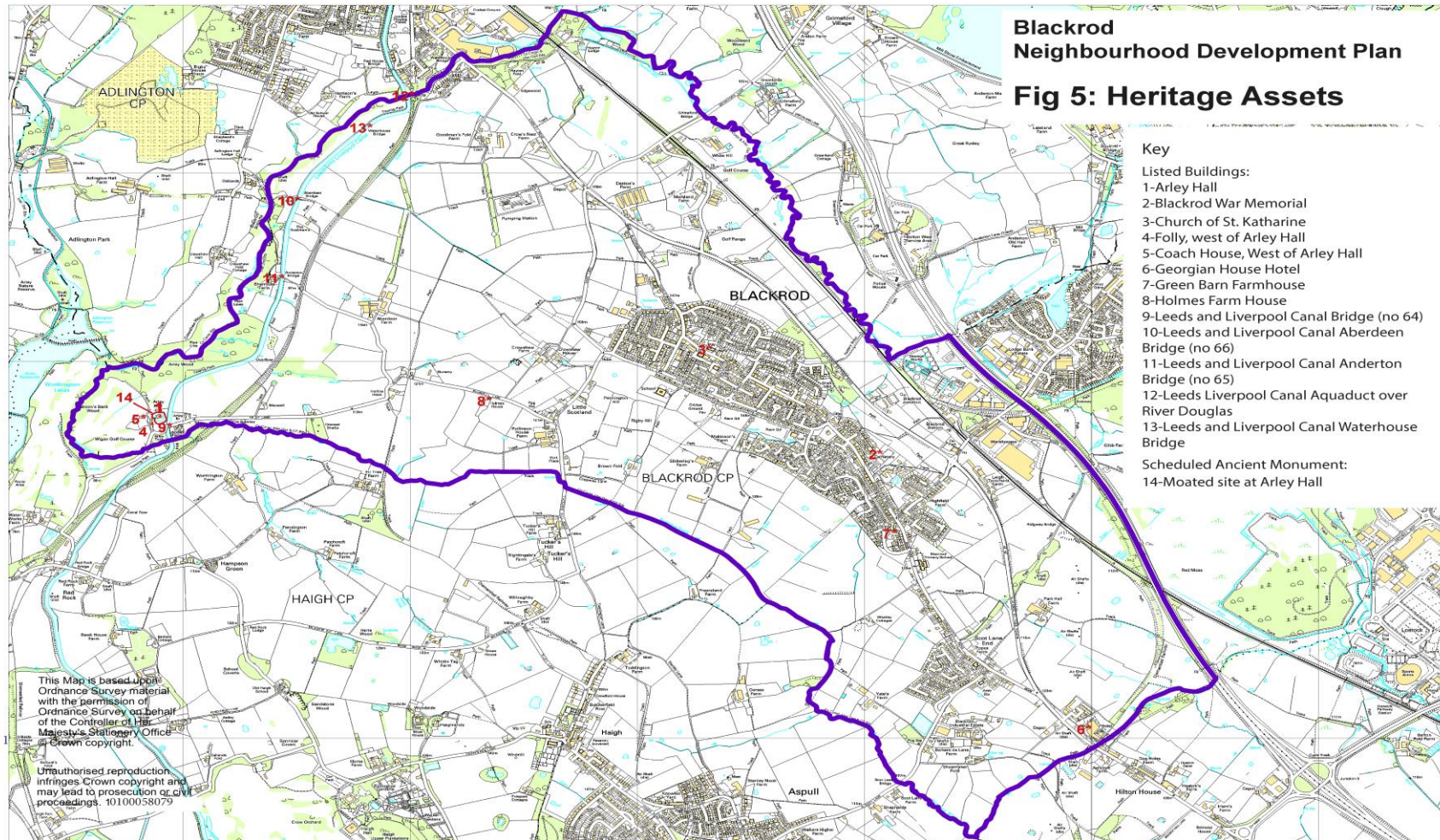


Figure 6: Community Infrastructure

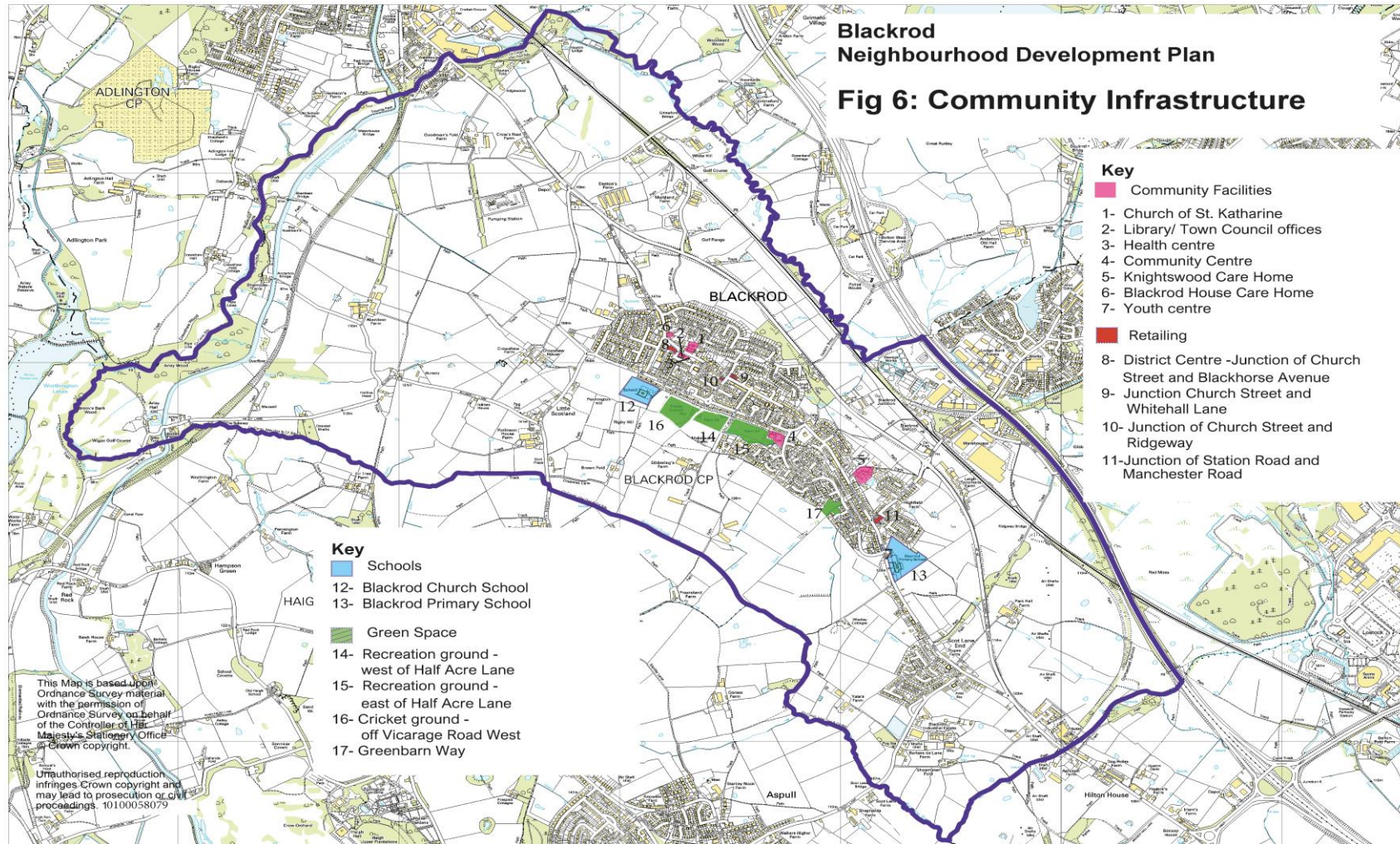
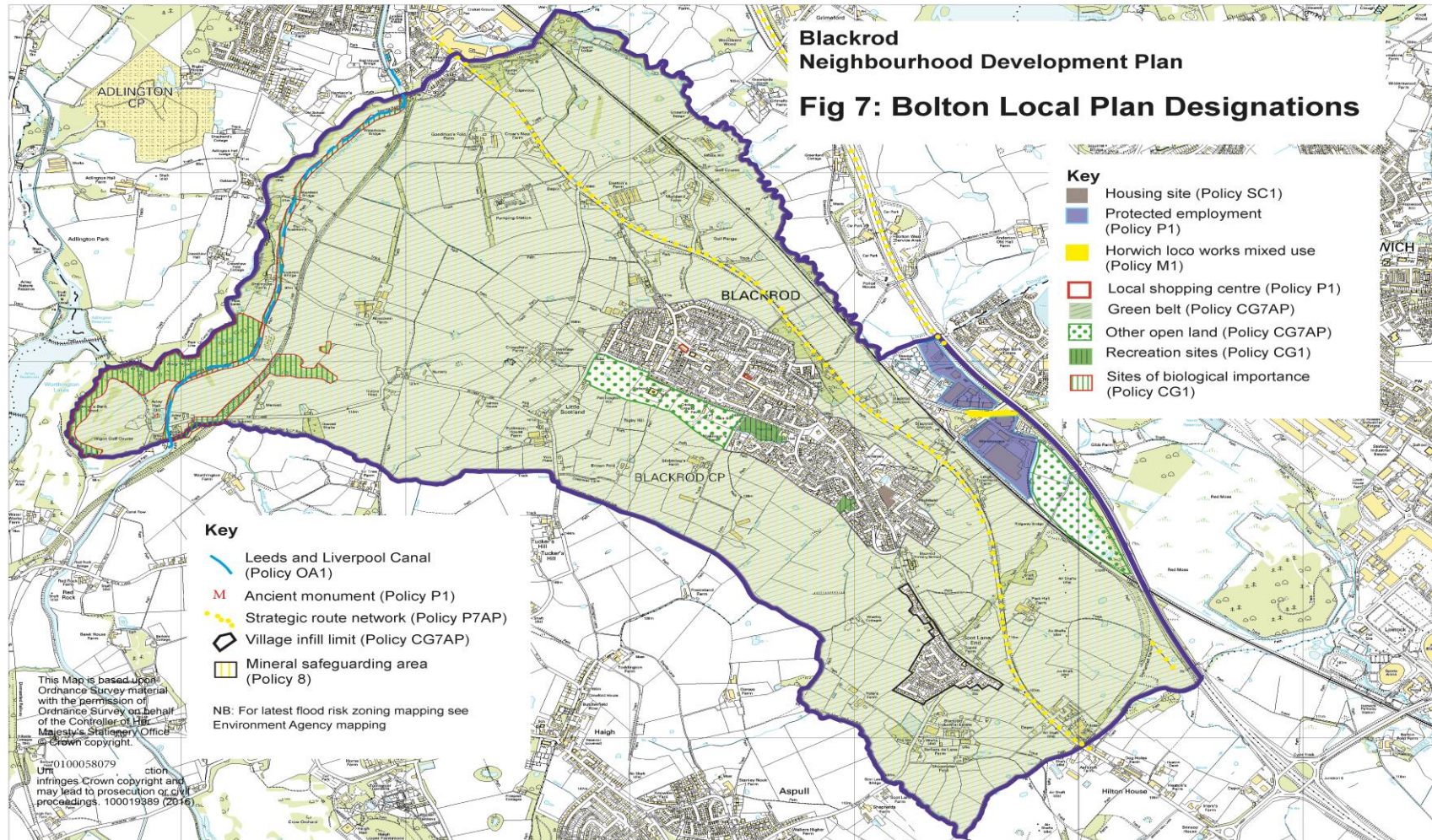


Figure 7: Bolton Local Plan Designations



Blackrod Town Council

Council Office, Public Library, Church Street, Blackrod, Bolton. BL6 5EQ

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