

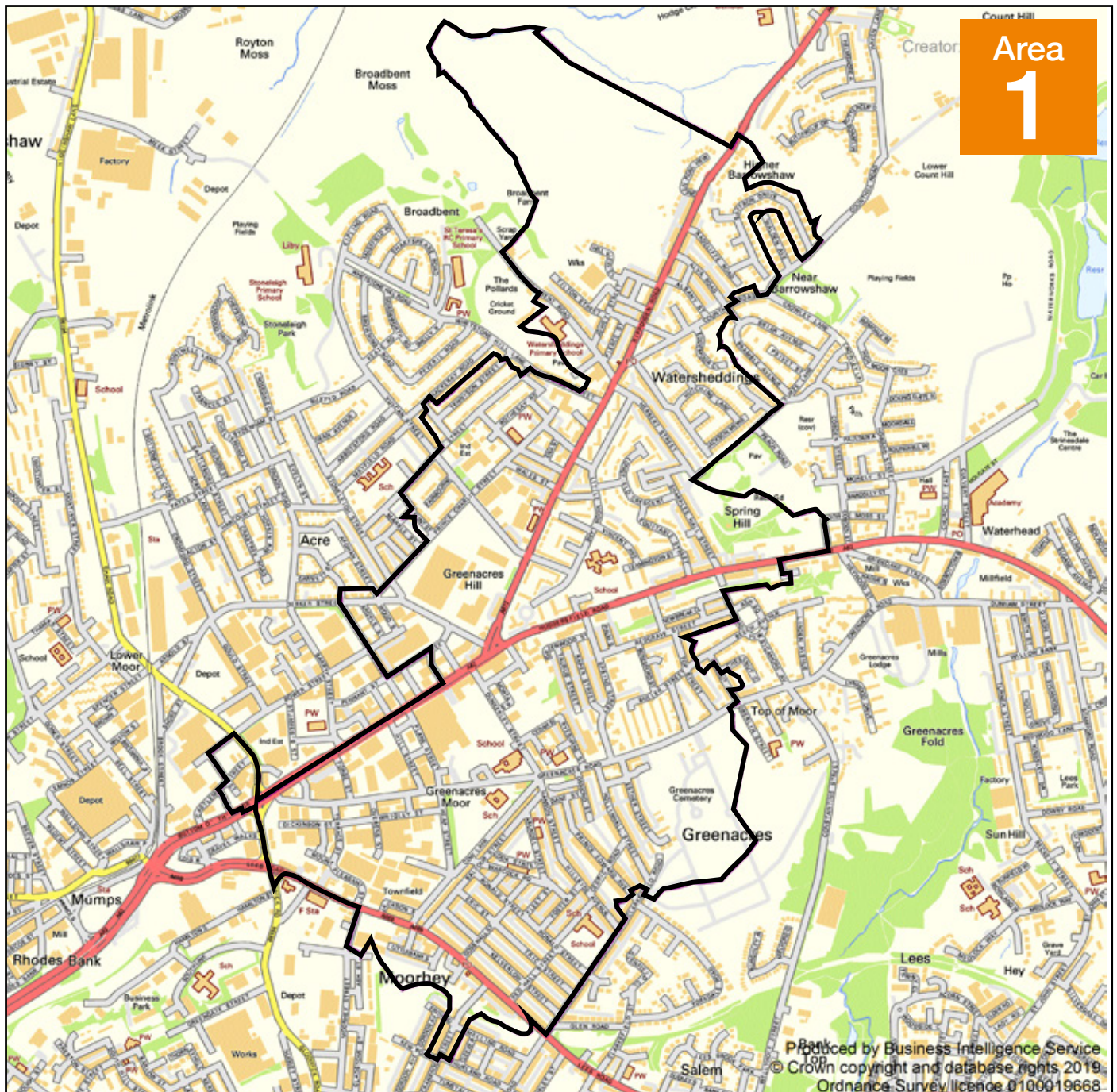
Licensing of private landlords

Your Opinion Counts



Oldham
Council

Over the last five years, private rented properties in the area have required to have a licence with the council.



Landlords have to meet certain criteria and comply with conditions to ensure that their properties are in good repair and managed properly.

The scheme was introduced due to low housing demand. This means rents/house prices are low compared to the rest of Oldham and there is a higher rate of tenant changes. This has a negative impact on all and can be due to poor management and property standards of some private rented properties.

A review carried out shows there has been improvement, however, more needs to be done.

The scheme is not a quick fix and it takes time to change behaviours.

How does licensing affect me?

This scheme is due to end soon. A new scheme can be introduced; however we need to make sure this is the right thing to do and build on our learning from the previous scheme. Please see the map for proposed area near you.

Your views are very important in making this decision and shaping the future of the area you live in.

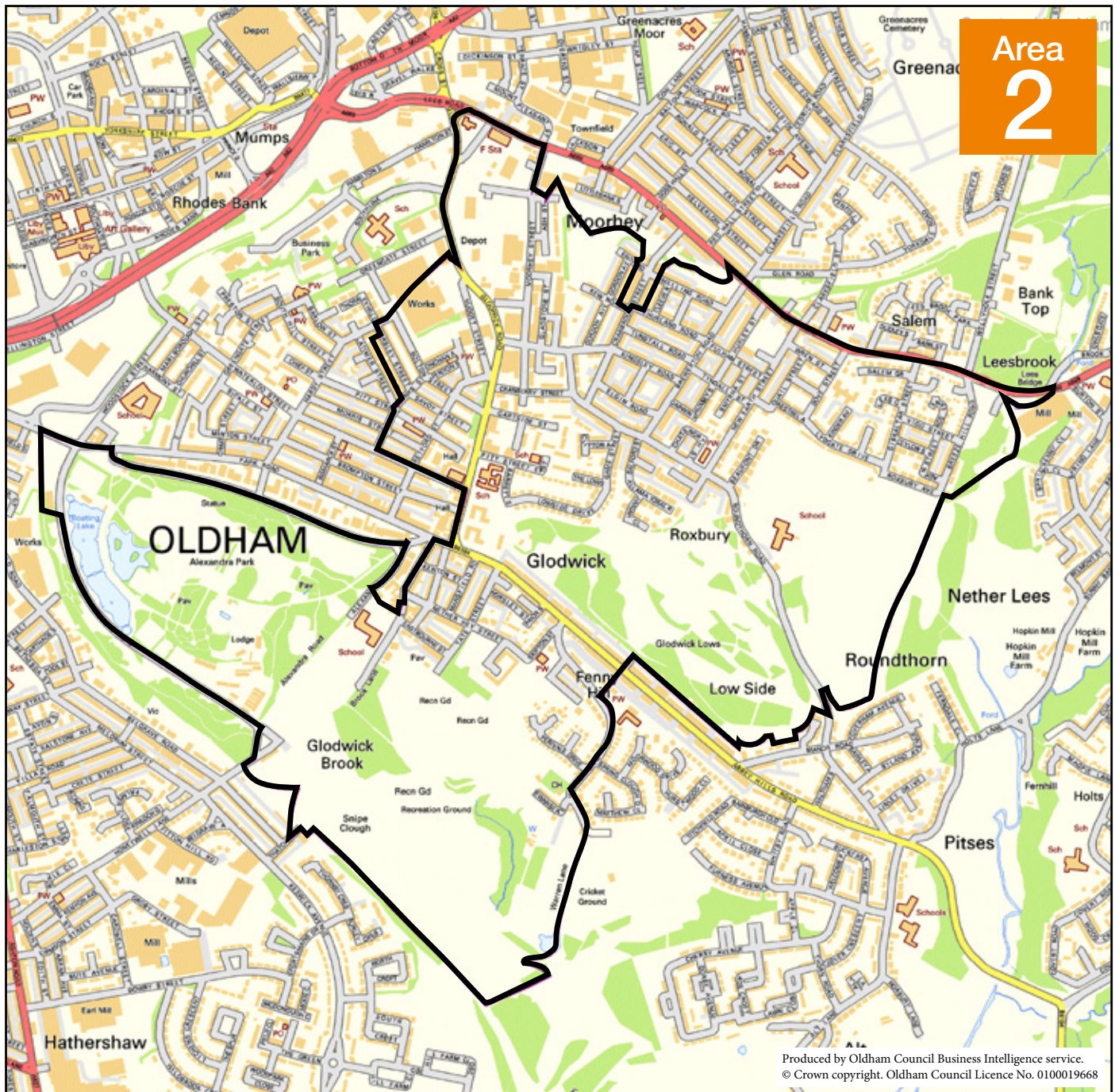
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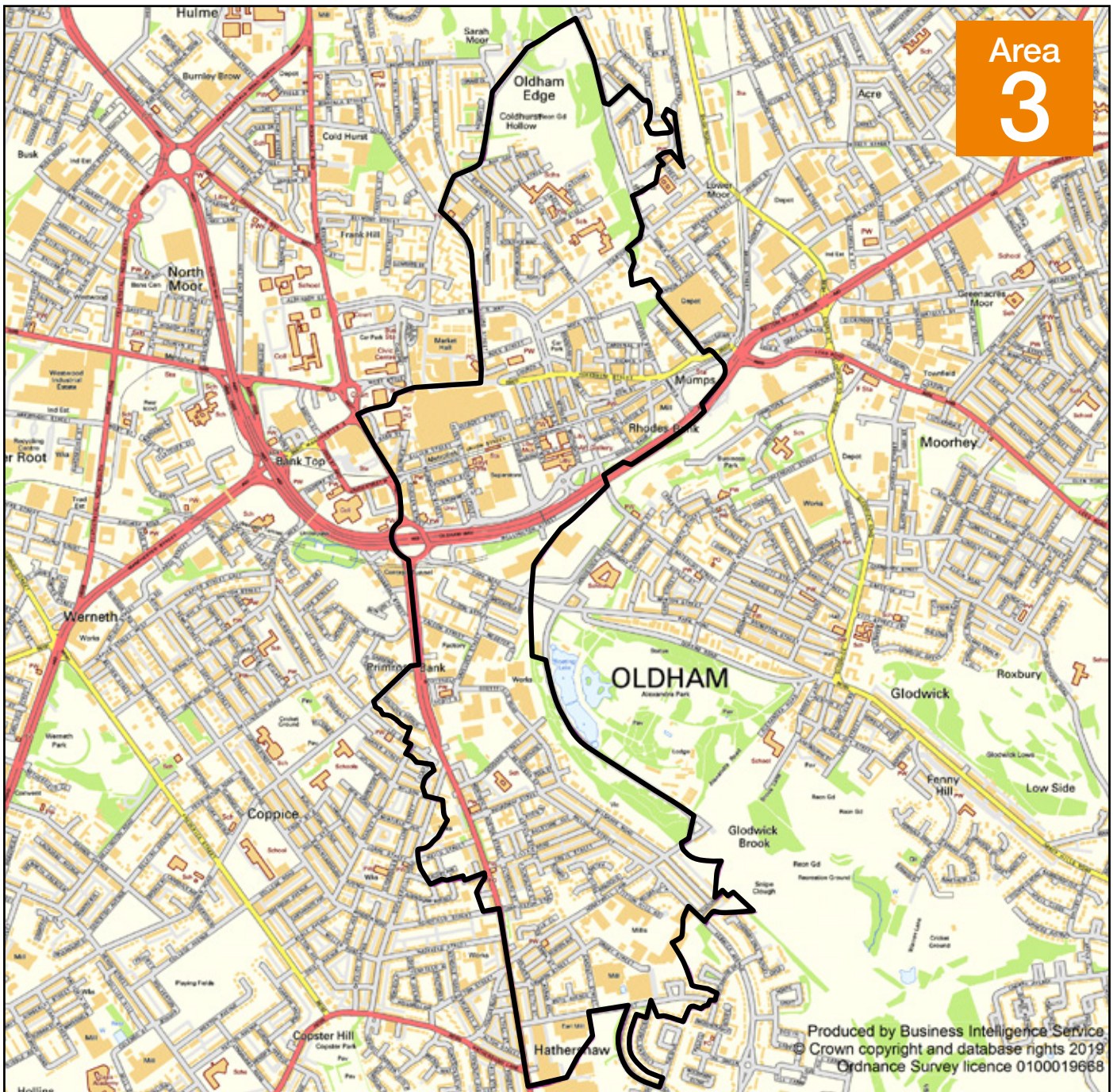
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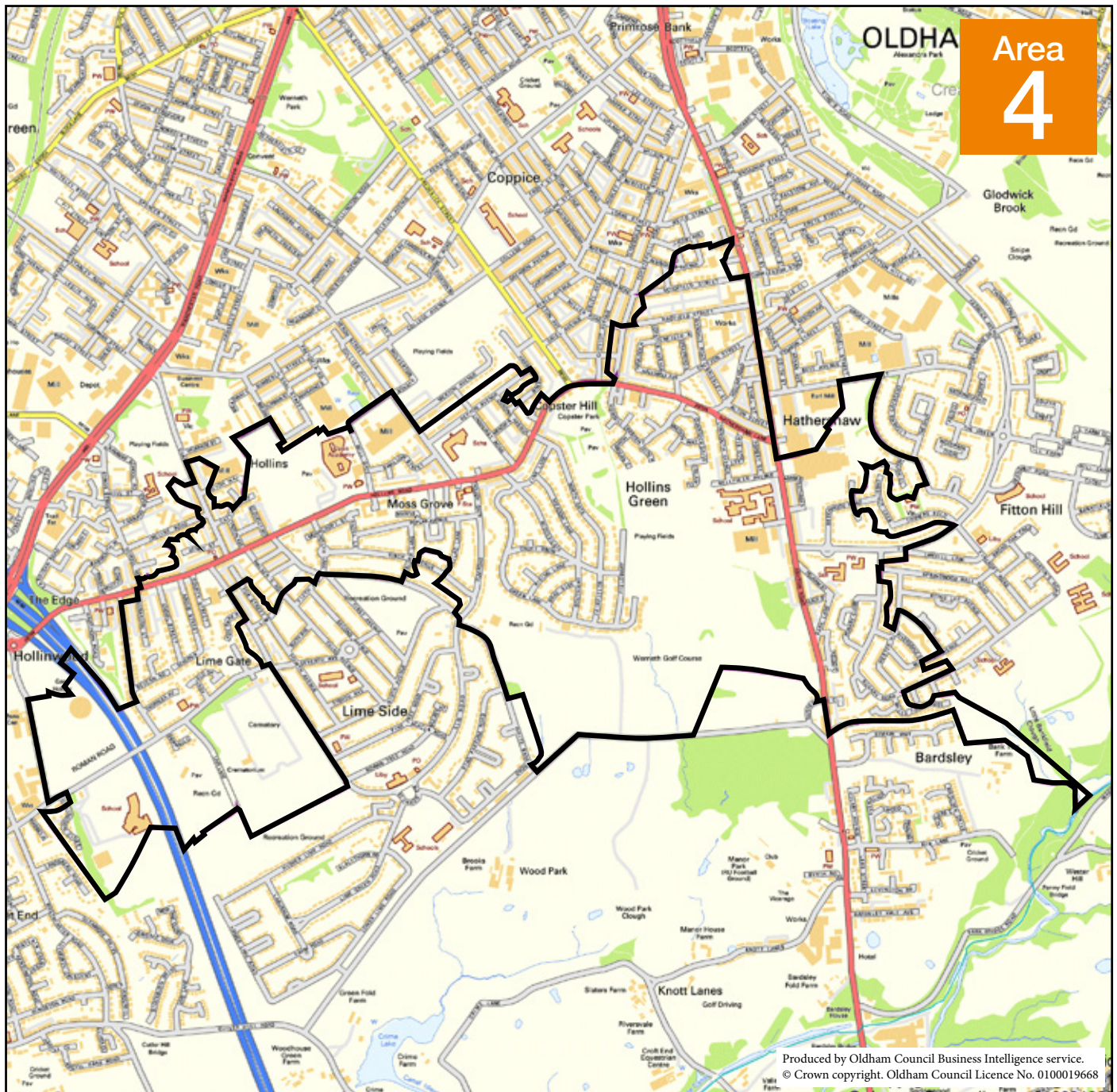
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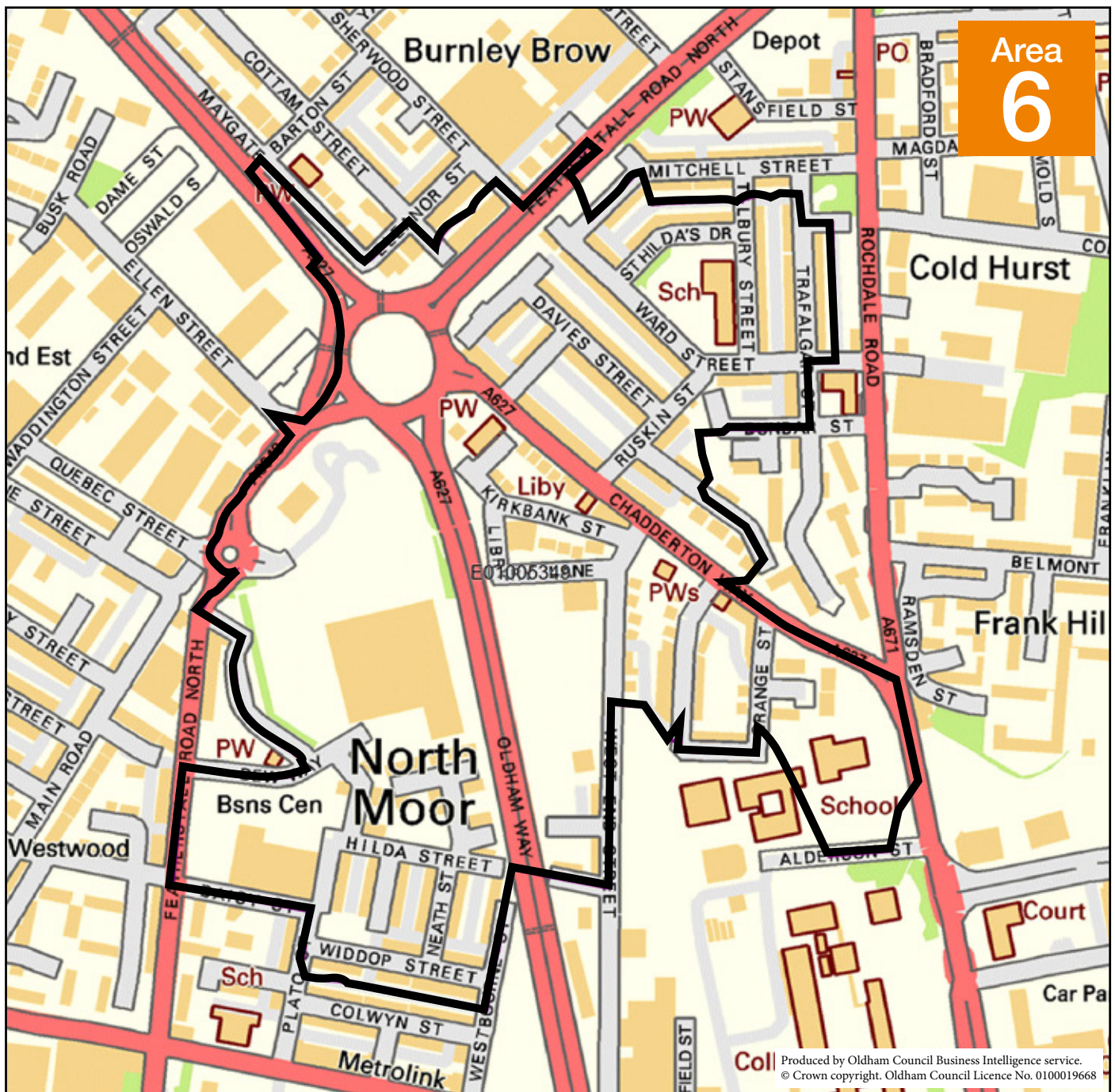
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What has licensing of private landlords achieved and why consider this again?

For tenants:

- Improved property and management standards, education, mediation and assistance to create longer tenancies

For residents:

- Improved private rented sector and increased house prices
- People staying in the area for longer helping to build sustainable communities
- Single point of contact and having their voice heard and matters dealt with

For landlords:

- Education, advice, legislation updates, landlord forums and training
- Single point of contact, mediation and support with complex situations
- Development of a community to share best practise
- A level playing field, sustainable longer tenancies and increased rents

The Council has been able to work closely and build relationships with residents, tenant, landlords and other agencies. In addition licensing can help to:

- improve the reputation of the private rented sector
- ensure private rented property owners are taking responsibility
- improve the image and perception of the area
- build a positive economic future
- possibly reduce anti-social behaviour and reduce low demand housing

Without a scheme the Council has very limited powers concerning the management of private rented properties.

Proposed Licence Conditions:

There are a number of licence conditions which are stated in legislation regarding gas safety certificates, smoke alarms and tenancy documents.

Additional licence conditions proposed by the Council relate to:

Property standards include the provision of wheeled bins, pest proofing, repairs and preventing overcrowding.

Management conditions include relating to the licence holder residing in the UK, providing receipts, references, reviewing their agents' practices and reporting a change of circumstances.

Security conditions relating to provision of keys for window locks and ensuring property secure from unauthorised entry.

Anti-social behaviour and environment conditions making sure the property is free from waste, in a tidy condition and action is taken regarding anti-social or criminal behaviour.

It is also proposed that the Council will add additional management conditions on a case by case basis.

For further information regarding the proposed detailed licence conditions please visit www.oldham.gov.uk/selectivelicensing. The proposed licence conditions are subject to amendment following consultation.

How would this work?

Private landlords in the proposed area would need to apply for a licence for each property they let. The landlord has to meet a certain standard before they can be given a licence. Once licensed they will need to comply with conditions.

Enforcement action will be taken for those who fail to apply for a licence or comply with licence conditions.

What will it cost the landlord?

The Council cannot make a profit from the scheme. The length of the licensing scheme is for five years.

The proposed fee for a new scheme would be up to £650 per property (about £2.50 a week) but could reduce following consultation.

The fee will be split into two parts the first part is for the processing of the licence. Should the licence be granted the second part of the fee is for monitoring and enforcement.

Further proposals include potential discounts for current licensed landlords and portfolio licensed landlords.

What do we need from you?

We need your views, comments and feedback:

- What are the problems in your area?
- Is this the best approach to tackle the problems?
- What do you think the Council should be doing?
- What benefits do you want from the scheme?
- Do the proposed licence conditions help tackle the problems?
- What is your experience of the current scheme, what could we improve?

Provide your comments by completing the questionnaire that will be arriving soon and is available online at www.oldham.gov.uk/selectivelicensing

For further information please visit:

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