

Auchterarder Infrastructure Report

Working Document

November 2017

Introduction & Context

Auchterarder is a small town located north of the Ochil Hills. It has a 1.5 mile- long High Street which is the longest main street in Scotland. This high street used to be a main road however now the A9 acts as a bypass. There is community governance evident in the town and it also has a proactive business community. The Auchterarder Community Facilities Fund continues to provide the town with grants to improve services and contribute to projects such as the upgrade of core paths running through Auchterarder.

The settlement has a range of community facilities including The Community School of Auchterarder. The town centre provides a selection of independent shops and services for the local population as well as visitors. The town plays an important role in the provision of employment and housing land in the Strathearn area.

Auchterarder is closely linked with the village of Gleneagles where Gleneagles Hotel provides employment for many living in the area. At the same time, the population of Gleneagles relies on services and community facilities in Auchterarder.

There are approximately 2400 residential properties within Auchterarder (PKC Corporate Address Gazetteer, 2017). With an average household size of 2.2 (based on Census trends) it is estimated that the settlement's current population is 5280.

The adopted Local Development Plan sets out The Auchterarder Development Framework, which comprises of 3 sites and allocates land for 800 houses. For parts of these allocations, planning permission has been secured and 192 houses have already been completed to this date. In addition, there is a site with capacity for approximately 105 houses in the Proposed Plan, providing an alternative to the employment use originally included in the Auchterarder Development Framework.

Therefore in total, 713 houses within Auchterarder could potentially be built by 2028. Based Census trend the average household size for the settlement will fall to 2.18 by 2028. It is estimated that as a result of new development, the population could increase to 6786 by 2028, assuming that all properties are occupied. *

Area	Current population estimate	Population estimate by 2028	Current residential properties estimate	Residential properties estimate by 2028
Auchterarder	5280	6786	2400	3113

**It should be noted that land for a total of 713 houses is allocated market evidence suggest a slower build rate which is likely to result in the housing land supply lasting well beyond 2028. This will be regularly monitored however for the purposes of this report it is assumed that 713 houses could be occupied by 2028.*

This infrastructure study has been undertaken to ensure that the infrastructure capacity within the area is adequate to support the level of growth envisaged within the LDP. This infrastructure capacity assessment will describe the current infrastructure provisions within Auchterarder and highlight any shortfalls which could be addressed through the LDP or supplementary guidance.

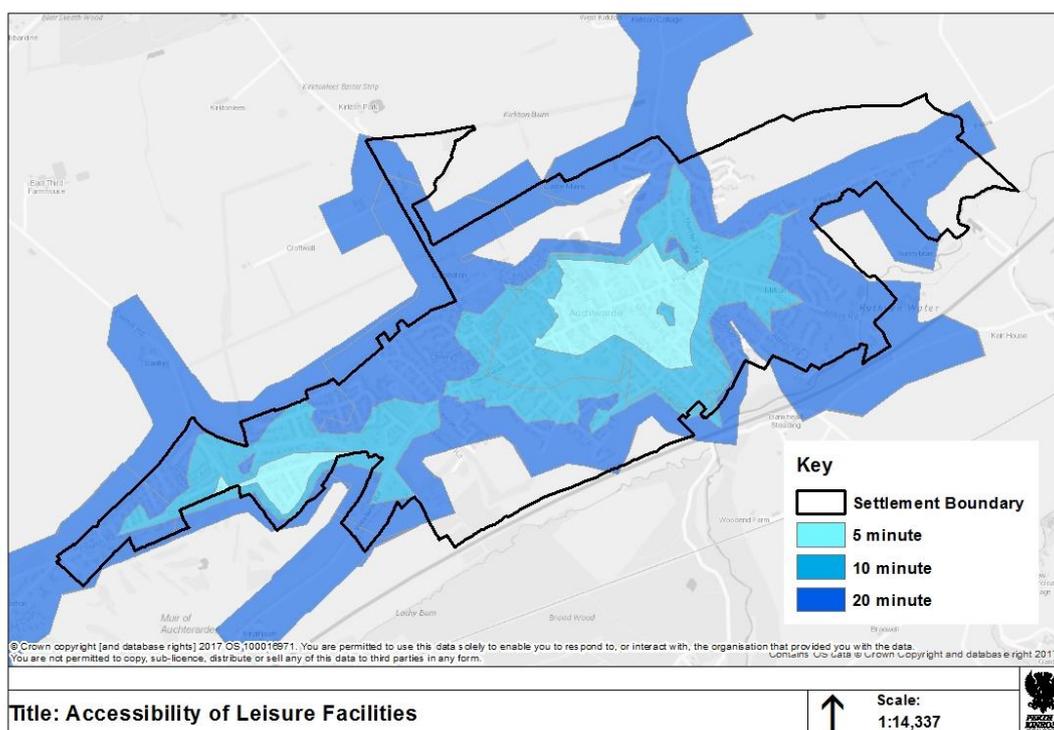
1. Community Facilities and Recreation

As populations are growing, community facilities are being used more frequently and so capacity may need to be increased to satisfy the needs of all the residents living in these areas. The cultural identity of a town is improved by community facilities being present as it offers opportunities for social interaction and is important for local identity. This report will show the key local amenities there are in each town and how accessible they are from different

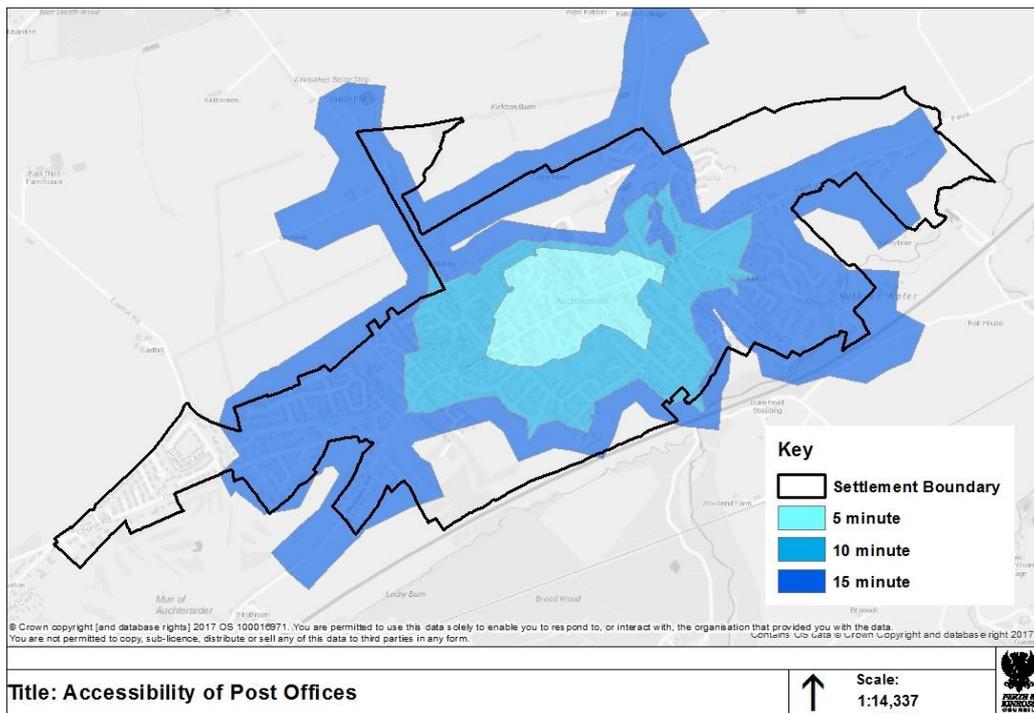
residential areas within the settlement.

Community sports facility and leisure activities	There are 3 community sport and Leisure facilities in Auchterarder.
ATMs	There are 3 ATMs in Auchterarder
Petrol stations	There are two petrol stations in Auchterarder
Libraries/mobile libraries	There is one library in Auchterarder
Community/town hall	There are 4 community halls in Auchterarder (including church halls and community buildings).
Post Offices	There is one post office in Auchterarder.
Public Houses & Hotels	There are 7 public houses & hotels in Auchterarder.
Recycling Points	There are 2 recycling points in Auchterarder.
Recycling Centres	There is one recycling centre in Auchterarder.
Council Offices	There is one council office in Auchterarder.

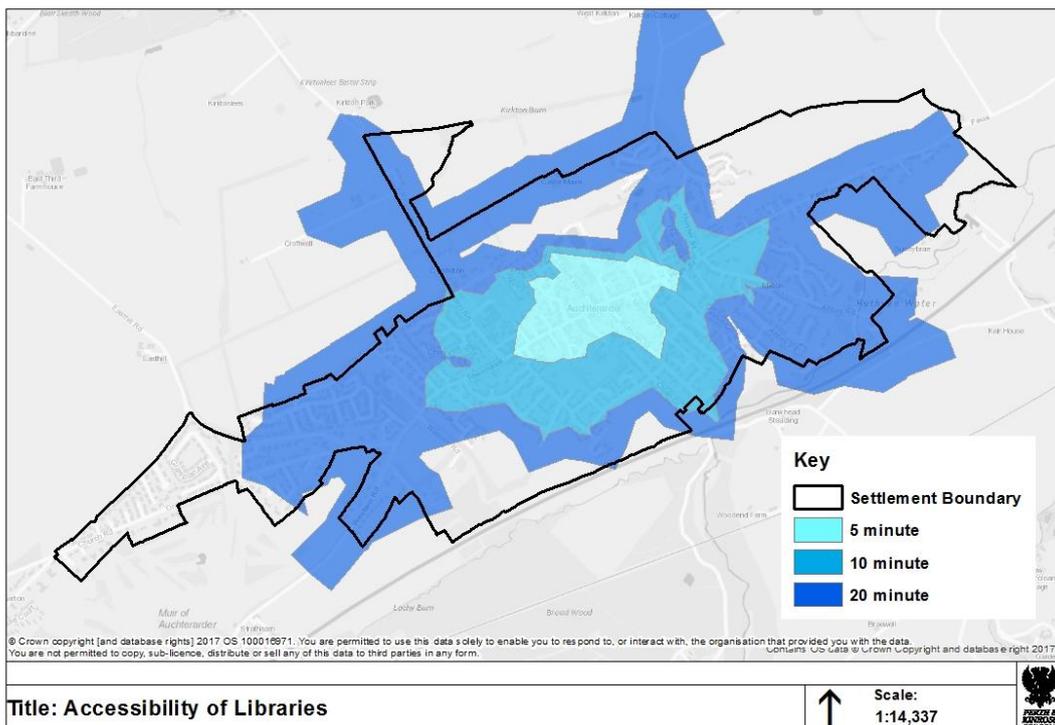
The table above highlights the provision of community facilities within Auchterarder at the time of the survey in 2015. The maps below show the accessibility of some these services. The analysis highlights the number of properties that are within 5, 10 and 20 minutes walking distance to services.



2321 households are less than 20 minute walk from the nearest leisure facility in Auchterarder. This is **96%** of all households included in the survey.



2193 households are less than 20 minute walk from a Post Office in Auchterarder. This is **91%** of all households included in the survey.



2179 households are less than 20 minute walk from a library in Auchterarder. This is **90%** of all households included in the survey.

1.1 Implications for the Proposed Plan

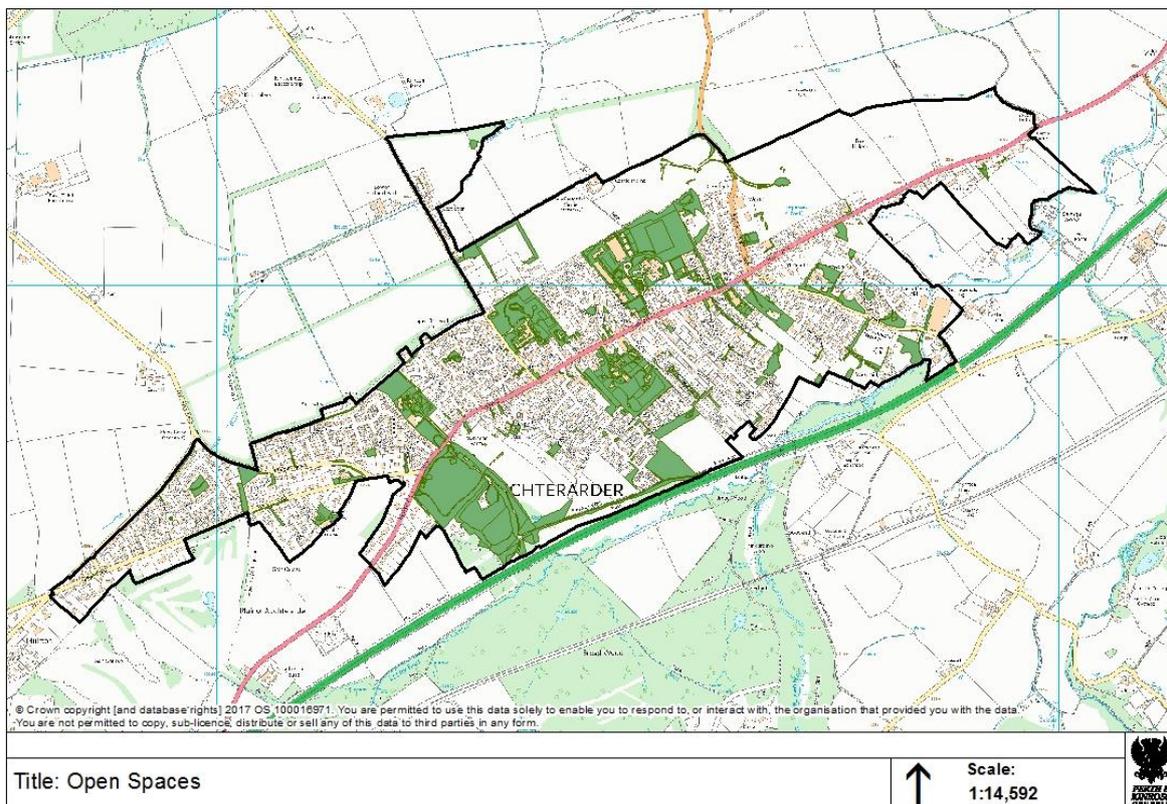
Auchterarder has a number of community facilities including a post office, a library, Live Active Auchterarder and the Community Campus. Due to its size, these are all easily accessible at central locations.

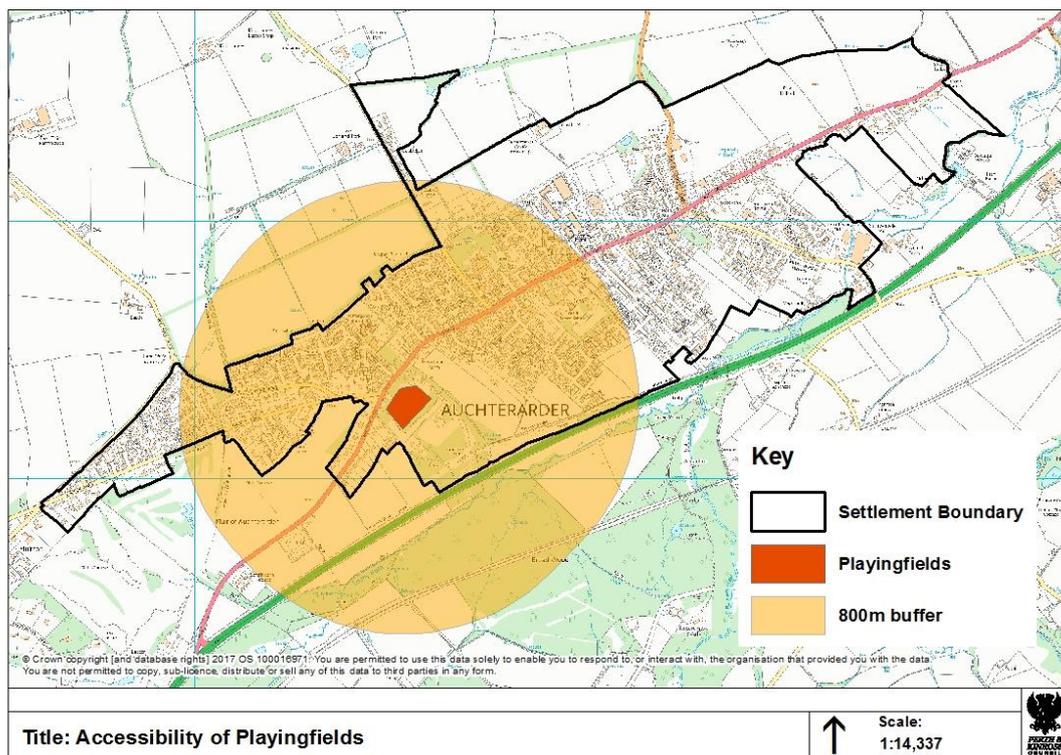
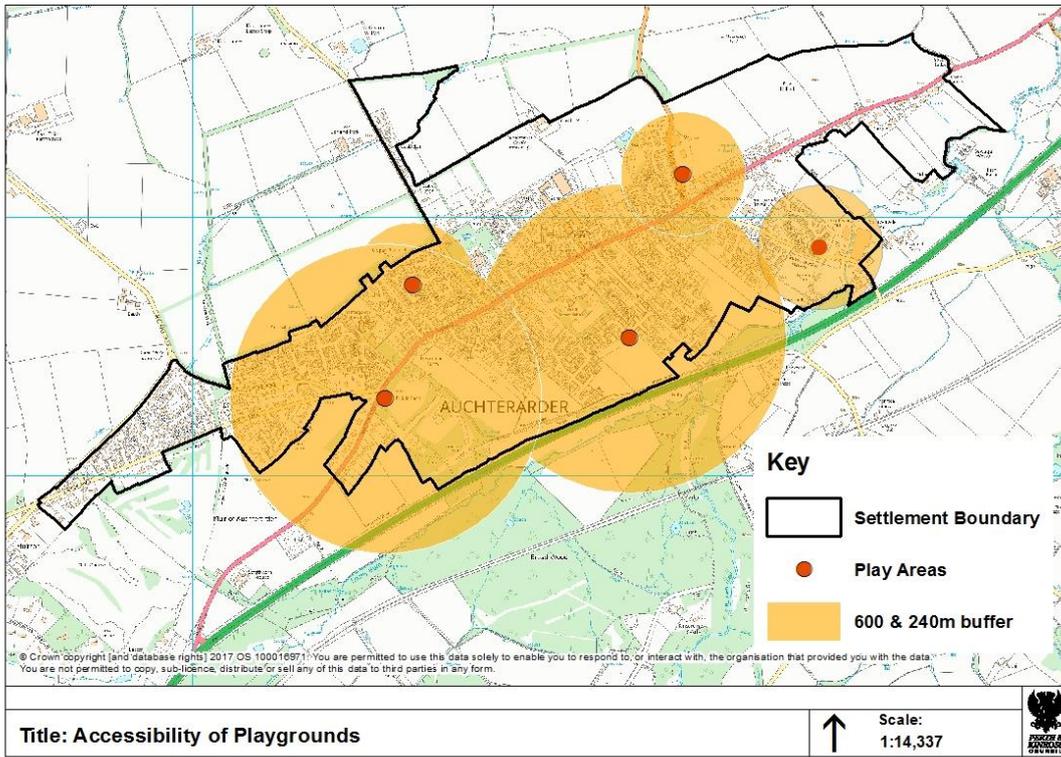
2. Open Space

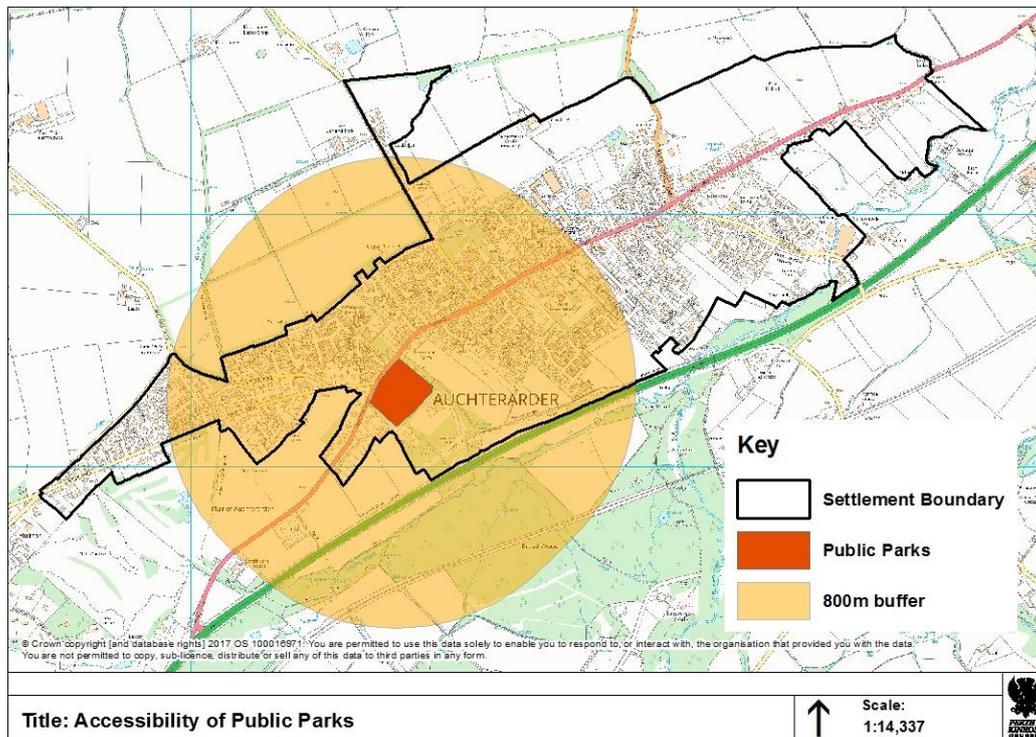
Open space is crucial within a settlement and adds value to the community for both recreational and amenity purposes. The natural environment is a valued national asset offering a wide range of opportunities for enjoyment. Open Space makes a positive contribution to quality of life by breaking up the built up urban areas and creates wildlife habits which increases biodiversity. Open space should be present in every settlement and should be accessible by all residents of these settlements. This study will show how accessible the various areas of open space are from different locations in the tiered settlements and whether with the growing population of the settlements, these green spaces need to expand or new sites need to be developed.

The map below highlights all the open space within Auchterarder which provide space for outdoor activities and provide visual amenity for residents. The open space provision of the settlement is approximately 39 ha which is 8.44 ha/ 1000 people.

2.1 Accessibility of Open Spaces







52% of households are within 10-15 minute walk of a playing field in Auchterarder. Besides the highlighted pitches, the Auchterarder Community Campus playing field also provides access to this function both indoors and outdoors. Furthermore, small kickabout areas provide opportunity for informal play.

54% of households are within 10-15 minute walk from a public park or garden.

82% of households are within a distance from playgrounds which is considered to be appropriate for children at target ages.

2.2 Cemetery Provision

There is sufficient cemetery provision within Auchterarder for the upcoming years and there is potential adjacent land for expansion when it becomes necessary.

2.3 Implications for the Proposed Plan

The Proposed Plan safeguards existing open spaces such as playgrounds, playing fields, parks and cemeteries. The study also highlighted where there is a need for improvement in order to meet existing as well as future demand:

Playgrounds	The audit suggests that there is a small deficit in all three open space types. Taken that the settlement is expected to go through significant growth, the shortfall should be addressed through a holistic approach. This Auchterarder Development Framework sets out an indicative masterplan for the allocated sites, including new open spaces and areas for sports and play. It is anticipated that these will make up for the shortfalls identified by the audit and ensure that functional open spaces are easily accessible across the settlement.
Playing Fields	
Public Parks	
Cemeteries	The study did not identify any issues with the provision.

Table 1. The table summarises the conclusion of the quantity and accessibility audit and the Future Cemetery Strategy.

The Auchterarder Charrette highlighted the need to regenerate and make better use of Dunlop Park which is the only larger green amenity space in the town centre. Participants suggested upgrading the accesses to the park and introducing new furniture, public art and landscaping elements.

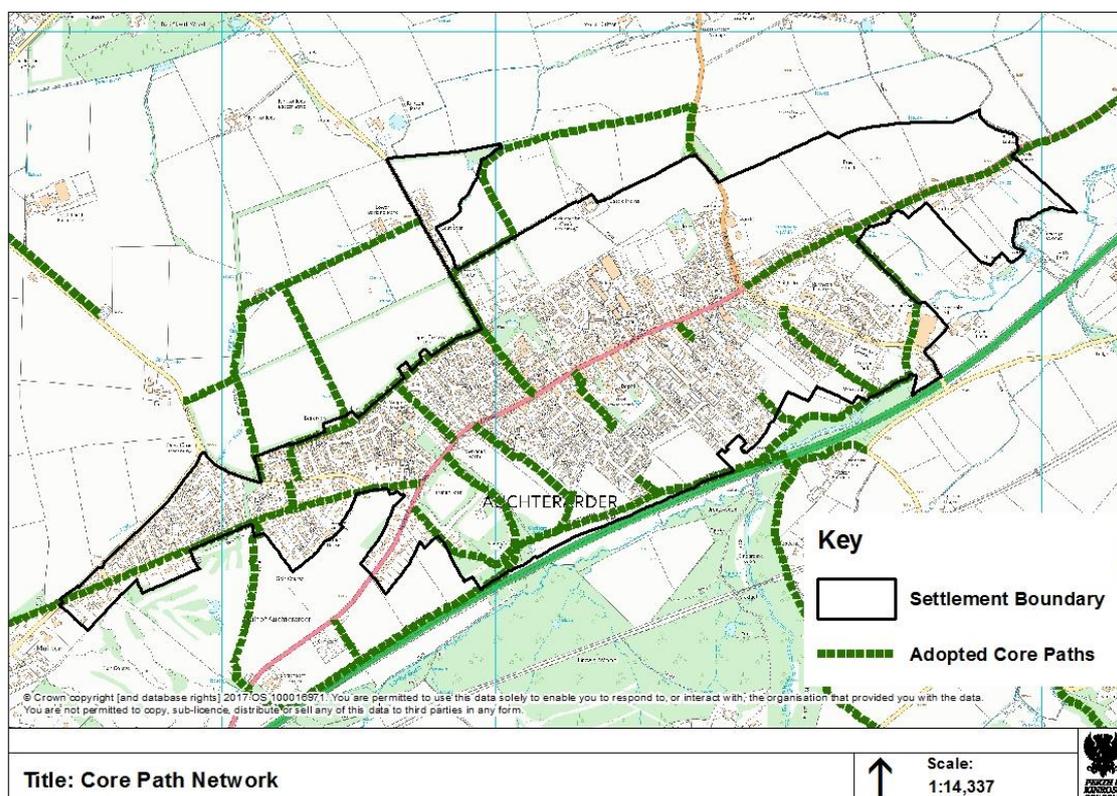
3. Transport

This section aims to comment on the active and public transport networks in settlements. Furthermore, it will examine the capacity of the road network as well as the parking provision of towns.

3.1 Walking

The map below suggests that Auchterarder and the surrounding area, is well served by existing core paths. The Auchterarder Masterplan includes the extension of the current network and creating new links towards the town centre.

In term of walkability within the Town Centre, the local community expressed the need to give greater priority to pedestrians and cyclist. It is appreciated that the A824 road that runs through Auchterarder is an important vehicular route, however through small interventions it is possible to reduce its impact on the town centre environment. Suggestions included widening paved surfaces, using coloured tarmac to emphasise pedestrian activity and decluttering signage and lightning to ease movement.



3.2 Cycling

Auchterarder is not directly connected to the national cycle route however the street network within the town provides good cycling connectivity. In addition, new developments will be required to provide suitable cycling provision within the development (including parking).

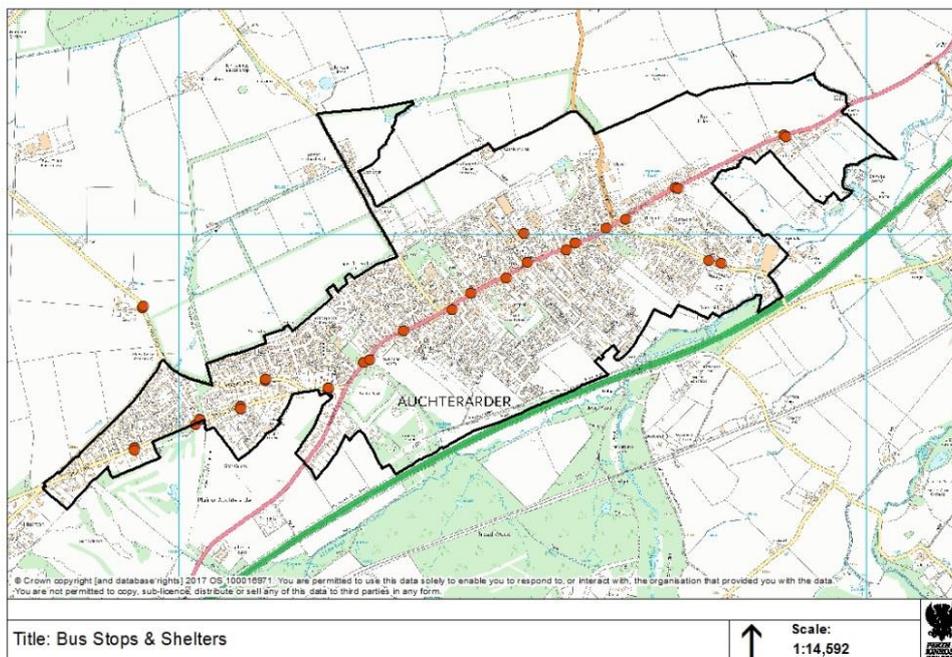
3.3 Public Transport

Auchterarder has a direct hourly bus service to Perth (19/A) and a direct service to Stirling (20) however this is not as

frequent. Onward travel from Perth to Dundee and other major cities is possible by coach or rail. On weekdays the latest bus from Perth to Auchterarder runs at 23:30. On Sunday, services are limited, running every 2-3 hours.

During a Charrette in 2016, the local community highlighted the issue of having poor connections to Gleneagles train station which provides connections to Glasgow and Perth. Suggestions included the development of a footbridge and new cycle routes connecting the station to the settlement.

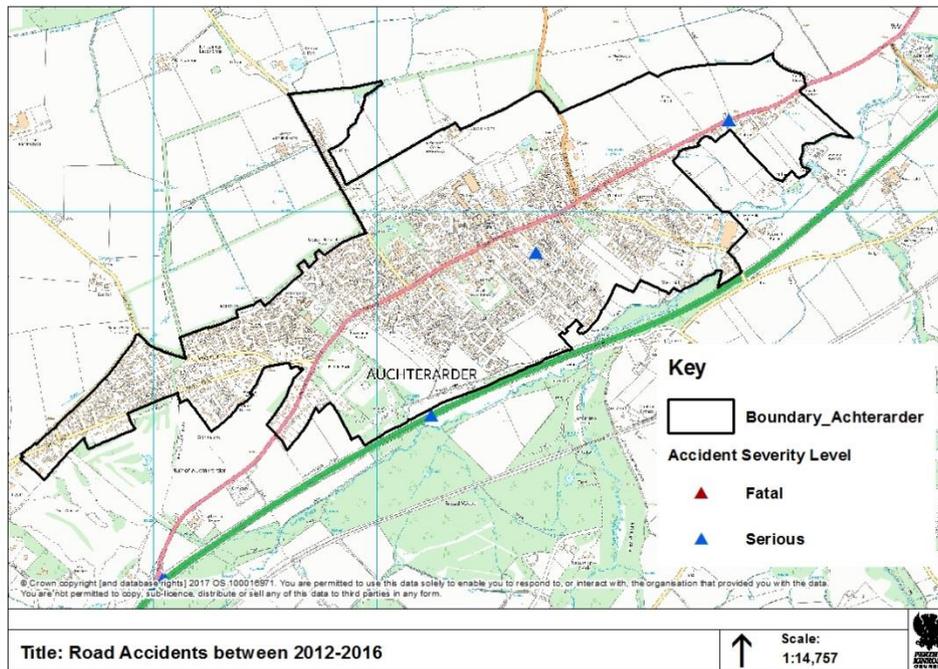
Auchterarder has a town centre bus route which runs approximately hourly. This service is very popular for the employees of Gleneagles Hotel which is just on the outskirts of the town.



3.4 Road capacity

The current transport network has sufficient capacity to sustain the current flow of traffic. There is a need for improved access to the A9 trunk road, and work to create the grade separated junction at Loaninghead south of the town has been completed. The creation of a new junction north of the town is planned and developments in the area will require making a proportionate contribution towards A9 junction improvements, in line with the policy.

3.5 Accident records



The map above shows accidents in Auchterarder over a four year period. There have been 2 accidents between 2012 and 2016 none of which were fatal. Trends within the council area show a decrease in the number of traffic accidents.

3.6 Parking

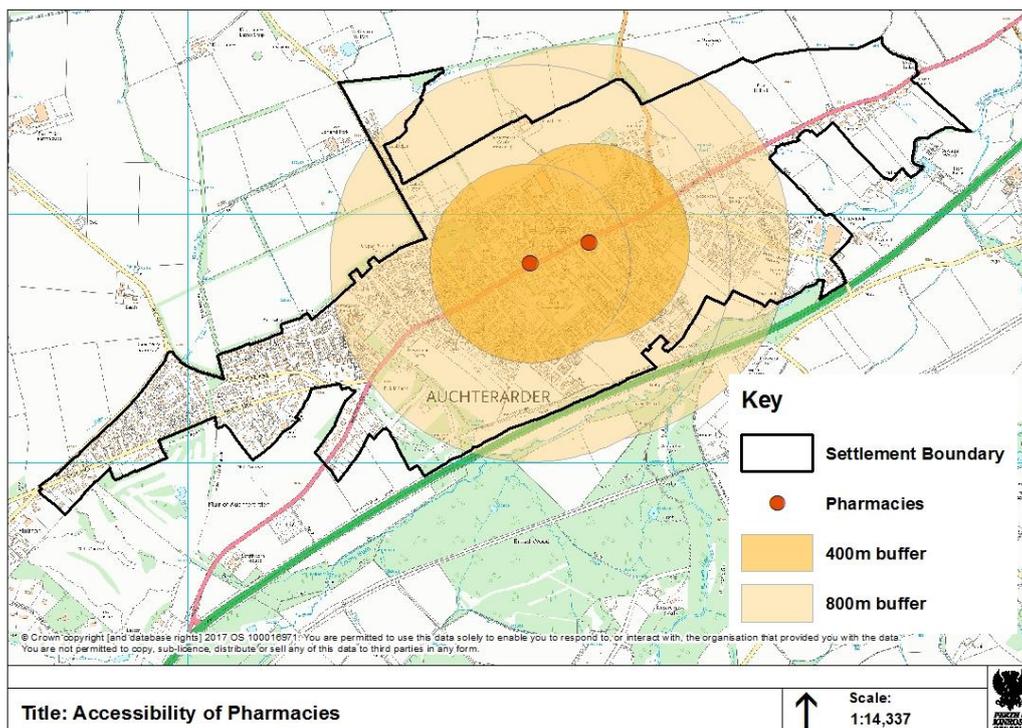
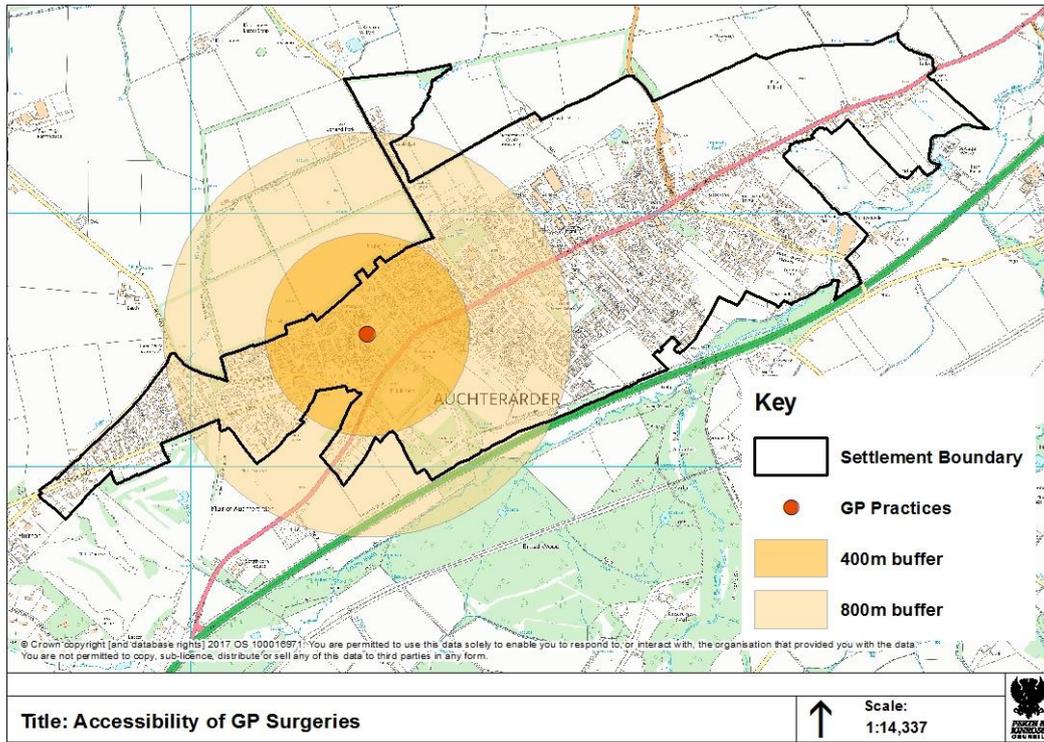
There is one main council car park in the centre of Auchterarder along with on street parking; all parking is free of charge. In addition, the car park at the Community School of Auchterarder is available at evenings and weekends. A parking survey has been undertaken in 2017 to assess the occupancy and duration of stay of all parking areas within Auchterarder. This will be used to determine if measures to manage demand are necessary or if additional parking is required.

The Auchterarder Charrette highlighted the need to rationalise the current parking provision and develop a Parking Strategy to take a holistic approach. Participants suggested that the council should experiment with reducing the number of parking spaces along the High Street to allow for widening pavements and creating a more vibrant and pedestrian friendly public realm. At the same time, opportunities should be sought to provide off-street parking in the vicinity of the town centre.

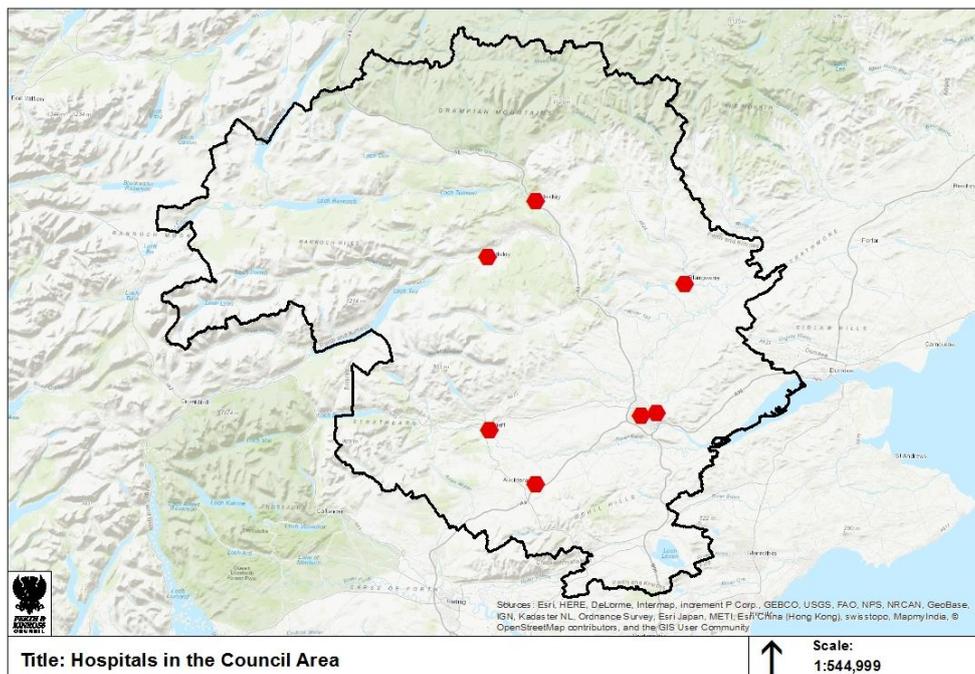
4. Health

For a community to thrive is it essential that they have access to healthcare. The Council work closely with partners in the NHS to ensure that this can delivered and that consideration is given to the impact of future development on existing services.

Within Auchterarder there are **two pharmacies and one GP surgery**. This GP surgery has capacity at the moment however this might change if the future depending on development coming forward. The map below highlights access to the local GP for residents in Auchterarder.



The maps show the walking distance to pharmacies & GP surgeries. The survey shows that **81%** of households are less than 10-15 minute walk away from a pharmacy. In case of GP surgeries, **44%** of households are less than 10-15 minute walk away. While the majority of allocated sites are within 800m distance from pharmacies, new houses on the north east of the settlement will be more than 15 minute walk away from the GP surgery. There is a bus stop in front of the surgery that serves local buses.



St Margaret’s Health Centre provides general medical services as well as medical reports and medicals. With more serious issues patients can access hospitals in Perth which is approximately 25 minute drive away and can also be accessed by public transport.

There is currently one dental surgery in Auchterarder however it should be noted that this does not include private practices which do not operate under the NHS.

5. Education

In order to support future growth in a settlement it is essential to have sufficient education provision. Through the School Estates Plan the Council seeks to accommodate this future growth taking account of population projections and future housing levels through the Local Development Plan. The Council has adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance on Developer Contributions which secures contributions from new residential development within the catchments of primary schools with a projected capacity constraint. The guidance provides an annual update relating to the likely impact of future identified housing on the school estate.

The Community School of Auchterarder comprises of a secondary and primary school. It also provides a nursery with council run classes. The projected level of development within Auchterarder has the potential to impact on the available capacity within the Primary School.

The Council will continue to review the build rate of development within the catchment and where possible through the use of phasing of development will seek to limit the impact. If required there is potential for a future school extension and the Council will seek to secure financial contributions towards the delivery of additional capacity if required.

6. Retail and Employment

Both retail and employment are significant aspects of the development of any town or village. Perth and Kinross Council complete an annual Employment Land Audit which provides information on how much land there is available, where it is and whether it is available for development which allows us to assess the employment land uptake in the areas and establish whether or not there is a need to provide more employment land to facilitate economic growth in the area.

This report shows that there is a total of 8 hectares of land allocated in Auchterarder for employment which is marketable with minor constraints. This site has been allocated in the adopted LDP and will be carried forward by the Proposed Plan. The take up of employment land will be closely monitored to establish whether or not there is a need for further employment land within the area.

To measure retail capacity within Perth and Kinross a Town Centre and Retail Study was undertaken in 2016. This investigated whether or not there was a need for more land to be allocated for retail uses and contained the town centre health checks.

According to the study, Auchterarder has a balance of services and retail units and low vacancy rates at 4.7%. Most people shop in Auchterarder as it is close to their home and mainly spend on food items and general goods. The range and quality of shops as well as the town centre environment were rated high. As for its weaknesses the study pointed out parking as an issue and the lack of multiple retailers and a mainstream supermarket operator. This study concludes that Auchterarder requires no specific actions at present, beyond maintaining the existing retail offer.

In the longer term however, as the populations grows, there might be potential for a larger supermarket. This will be monitored on a regular basis as development comes forward in the area.

Currently, there is ongoing discussion about establishing a Business Improvement District (BID) in Auchterarder. The main objectives of the BID are advocating for and marketing the area as well as highlight opportunities and environmental improvement which will benefit their location. The voting period for establishing the BID will be in early 2018. More information can be found on: www.auchterarderbid.co.uk

6.1 Implications for the Proposed Plan

The Proposed Plan highlights one employment opportunity and protects the town centre for retail uses and services. The study suggests that this satisfies the space required for growth however, as pointed out in previous sections, improvement to the public realm in the town centre would be desired and the parking strategy need to be rationalised. Auchterarder also has an active business community who have the potential to facilitate projects in partnership with the council in order to make the town centre more attractive to retailers and other businesses.

7. Energy and Water

It is important that all new and existing development can be served by key infrastructure including electricity, gas and water treatment works. The analysis below suggests that the exiting community is well served but that there may be a need for improvements to facilitate future growth.

7.1 Water Network capacity

There is sufficient capacity at the water works in Auchterarder and there are significant network upgrades which are being funded.

7.2 Waste Water Network capacity

There is capacity at the waste water work within Auchterarder as of September 2015. There has been technical approval on most sites.

7.3 Is the opportunity to connect to the national grid?

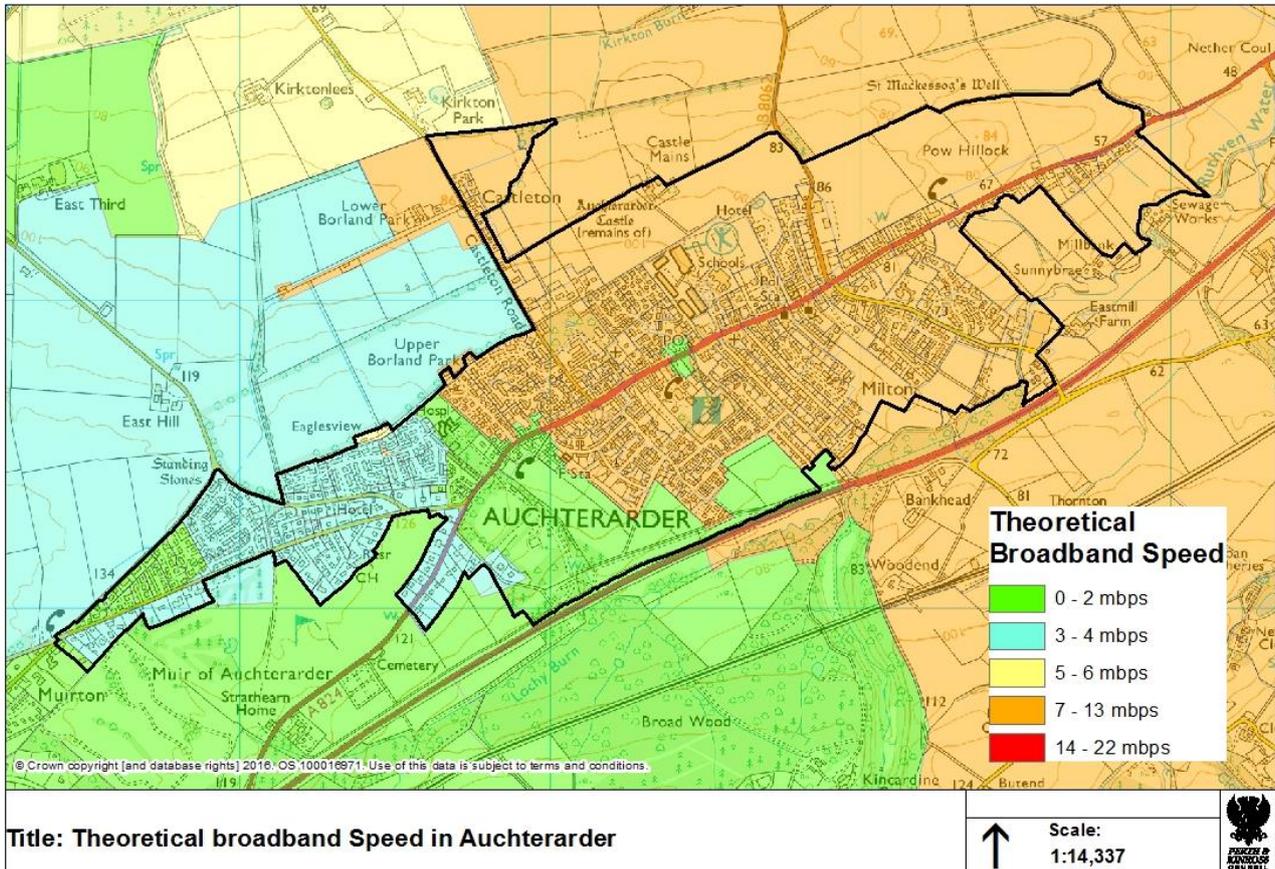
Properties within Auchterarder are connected to the national grid.

7.4 Is the opportunity to connect to gas supply?

Most properties within Auchterarder are served by gas mains.

7.5 Access to High Speed Broadband

Fibre broadband has recently been deployed within Auchterarder. The vast majority of premises will be covered, although not necessarily all (Digital Scotland, Scottish Government). The map shows that Auchterarder has 7-13mbps speed on most locations with some areas having 3-4 and 0-2 mbps broadband speed.



Conclusion

The study concentrated on the current infrastructure provision in Auchterarder and the impact of future growth planned for the settlement. The results show that Auchterarder has a number of community facilities and services as well as a proactive community who are eager to maintain and enhance this offer. The planned and phased approach to the expansion of the settlement has the potential to bring further benefits to the town. These include an improved open space and green infrastructure provision, attractive neighbourhoods and increased footfall for local businesses.

The main points for improvement related to connectivity. While Auchterarder has relatively good connections to Perth during the week, travelling at the weekend and getting to other settlements such as Stirling or Dundee is difficult. There are also issues around parking and internet speed.

The increased pressure on the use of community facilities such as schools and GP surgeries also presents a challenge. By phasing new development the influx of new residents can be controlled however solutions should be sought in the meantime for increasing capacity if it becomes necessary.

SWOT Analysis	
<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good range of community facilities • There is road capacity locally to cater for future development • Frequent public transport connections to Perth • Town centre with low vacancy rates and good quality shops, cafes and restaurants serving the local population • Active local and business community 	<p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public transport connections to larger settlements / weekend service • Limited school capacity • Concern over the capacity of the GP surgeries • Car dominated town centre lacking focal points • Parking issues • Slow internet speed at certain locations • Need for improved access to the A9 trunk road
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant expansion based on a masterplan • Opportunity to provide new open spaces at the right locations • Available employment land providing opportunity for economic growth • Potential to revitalise the town centre through public realm improvements and make it more walkable • Potential of establishing a BID 	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased reliance on cars • Compromised community facilities due to significant population growth

Appendix 1: Bus Routes serving Auchterarder

