

PERTH & KINROSS COUNCIL

Crieff Infrastructure Report

Working Document

November 2017

Introduction & Context

Crieff is the main town of Strathearn lying on the southern edge of the Scottish Highlands, and is the second largest town in Perthshire. It has a range of community facilities including the Community Campus which includes a library and sports facilities. The town centre offers a selection of independent shops and services for the local population as well as visitors. Crieff has an important role in the provision of employment and housing land in the Strathearn area.

Tourism provides employment and brings visitors to the town. It improves the vitality and viability of Crieff and ensures that services and facilities can continue to be provided in the area. The Crieff Hydro Hotel, and the caravan site to the west of the town, are identified for their contribution to the provision of visitor accommodation and should therefore be retained for their current uses.

There are approximately 3670 residential properties within Crieff (PKC Corporate Address Gazetteer, 2017). With an average household size of 2.14 (based on Census trends) it is estimated that the settlement's current population is 7853.

The Proposed Plan provides land for approximately 674 new houses to be built within the settlements and there is another 21 houses under construction at the moment. Therefore in total, 695 houses within Crieff could potentially be built by 2028. Based Census trend the average household size for Crieff will fall to 2.11 by 2028. It is estimated that as a result of new development, the population could increase to 9210 by 2028, assuming that all properties are occupied. *

Area	Current population estimate	Population projection by 2028	Current residential properties estimate	Residential properties projection by 2028
Crieff	7853	9210	3670	4365

**It should be noted that land for a total of 695 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 695 houses could be occupied by 2028.*

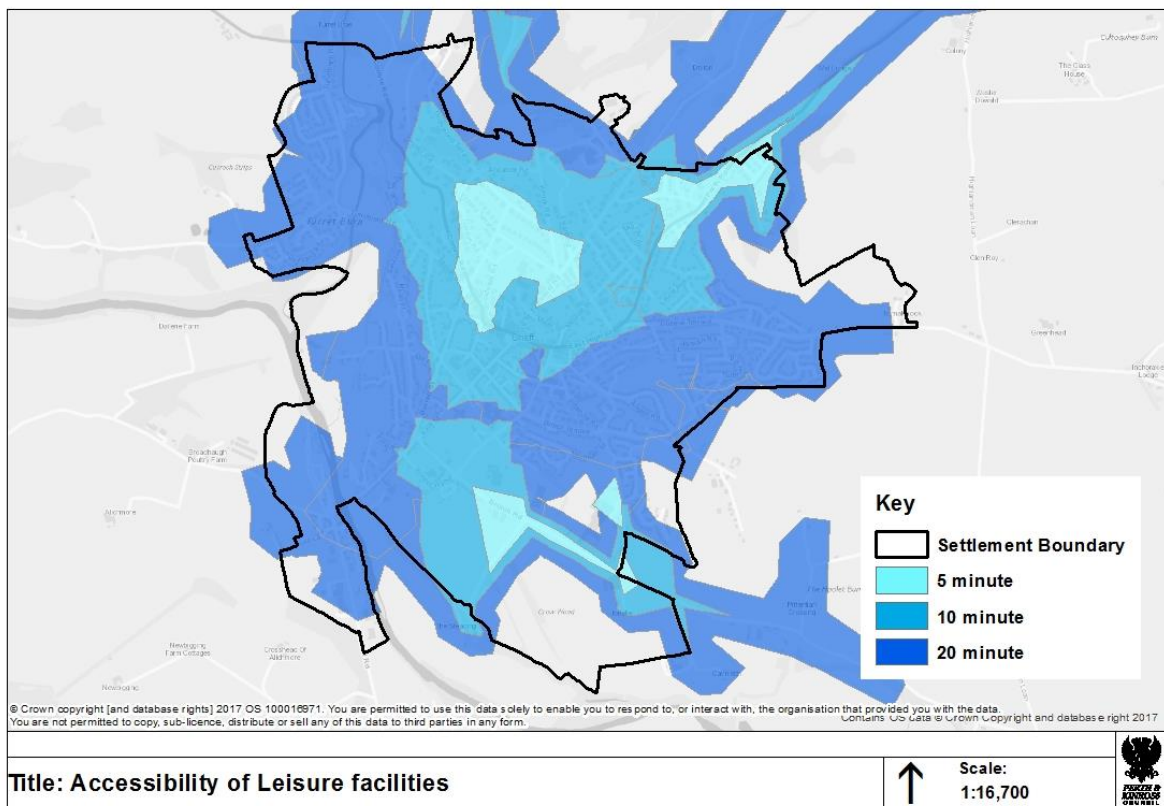
This infrastructure study has been undertaken to ensure that the infrastructure capacity within the area is adequate to support the level of growth envisaged within the LDP. This infrastructure capacity assessment will highlight the current infrastructure provisions within Crieff and highlight any shortfalls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

1. Community Facilities and Recreation

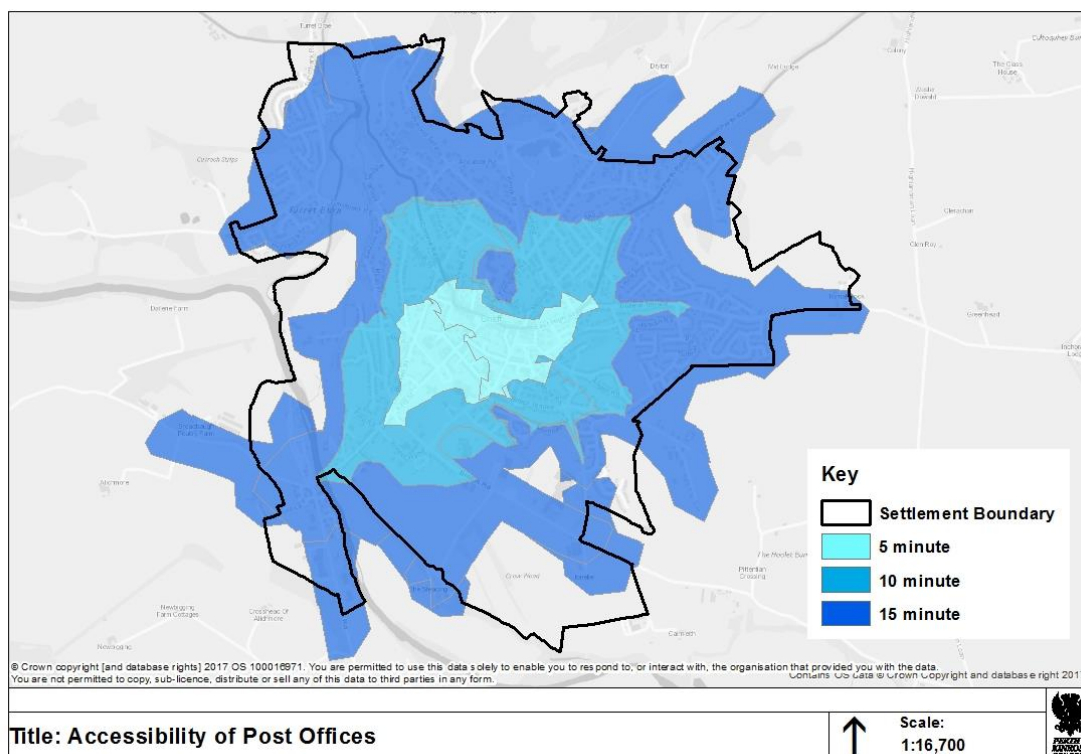
As populations are growing in the tiered settlements, community facilities are being used more frequently and so capacity may need to be increased to satisfy the needs of all the residents living in these areas. The cultural identity of a town is improved by community facilities being present as it offers 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.

The table above highlights the provision of community facilities within Crieff 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 15 minutes walking distance to some of the key services.

Community sports facility and leisure activities	There are 5 community sport and Leisure facilities in Crieff.
ATMs	There are 6 ATMs in Crieff.
Petrol stations	There is 1 petrol station in Crieff.
Libraries/mobile libraries	There is 1 library in Crieff.
Community/town hall	There are 6 community halls in Crieff (including church halls and community buildings).
Post Offices	There are 2 post offices in Crieff.
Public Houses & Hotels	There are 10 public houses & hotels in Crieff.
Recycling Points	There are 3 recycling points in Crieff.
Recycling Centres	There is one recycling centre in Crieff.
Council Offices	There is 1 council office in Crieff.



3632 households are less than 20 minute walk from the nearest leisure facility in Crieff. This is **99%** of all households included in the survey.



3591 households are less than 20 minute walk from a Post Office in Crieff. This is **97%** of all households included in the survey.

The library is located at Crieff Community Campus which is approximately 15 minute walk away from the High Street and more than 20 minutes away for households around the edge of the settlement.

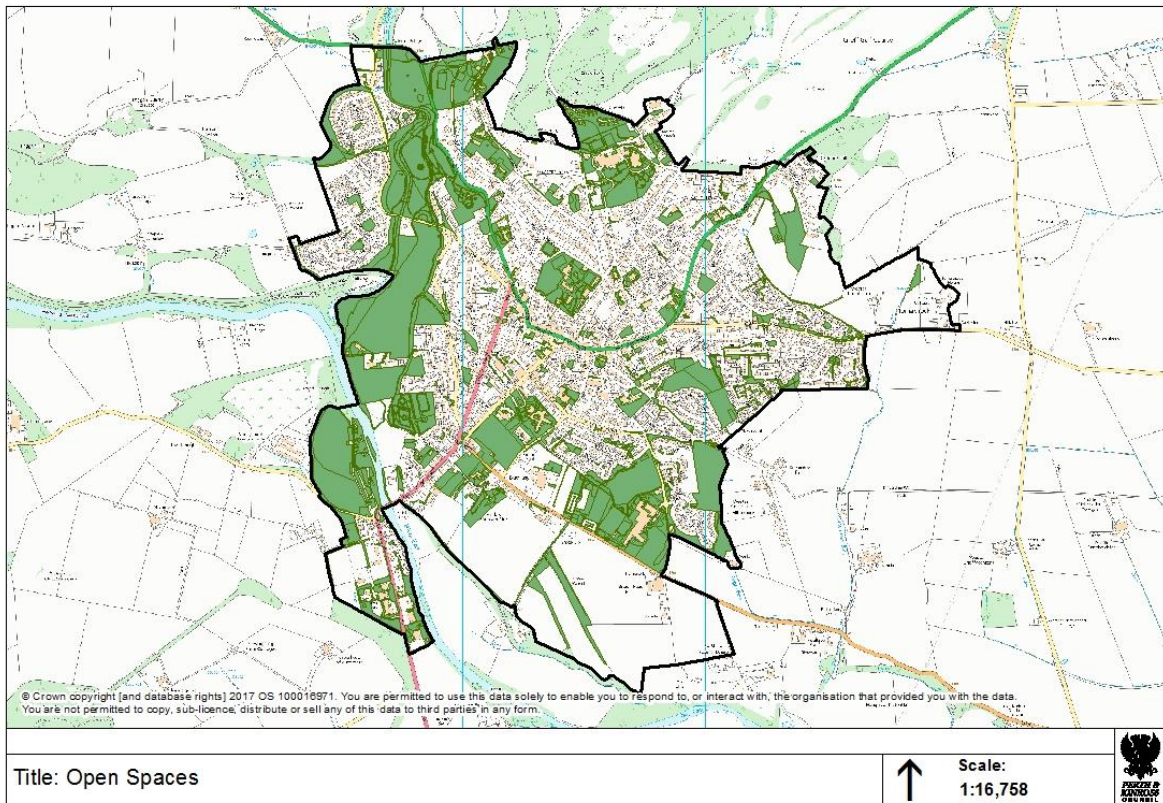
1.1 Implications for the Proposed Plan

Most leisure and recreational facilities in Crieff are provided by Strathearn Community Campus which is centrally located and has good accessibility. The Town Centre itself has limited recreational facilities however cafes and restaurants provide opportunity for socialising. Residents have good access to post offices however many are outwith the 20 minute walking distance to the library because of its peripheral location at the Community Campus south of the town centre. The Crieff Charrette in 2015 also highlighted the need for a community hub located in the town centre.

2. Open Space

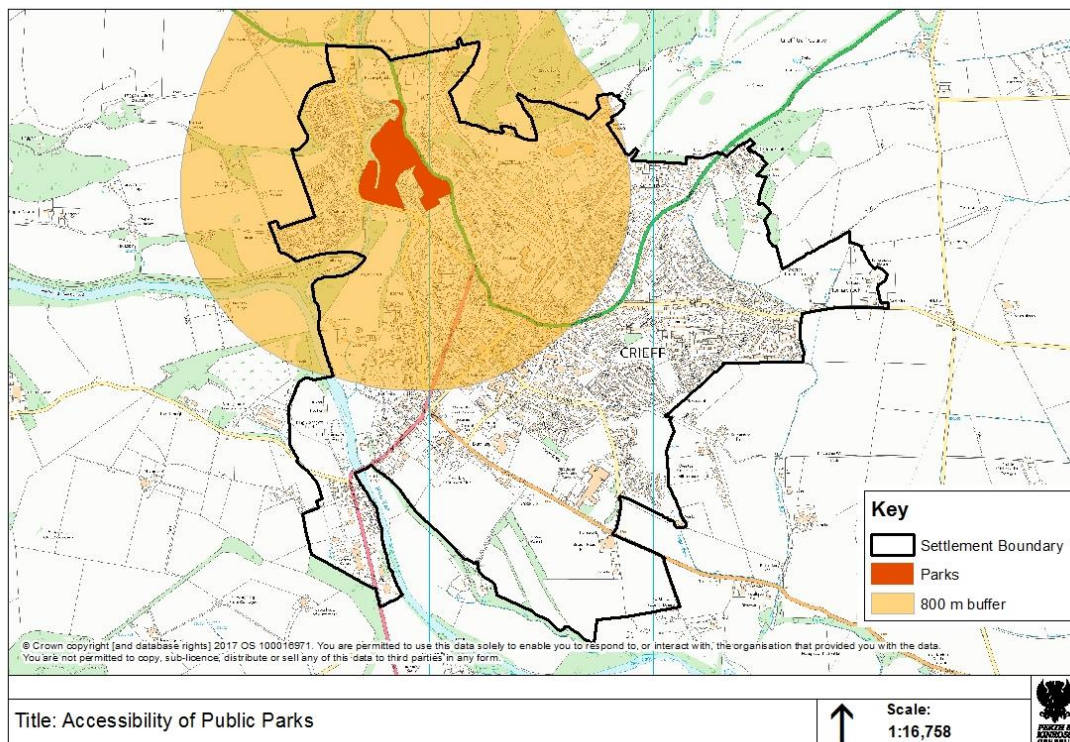
Open space is crucial within a settlement and adds value to the community for both recreational and amenity purposes. The natural environment is a valued national asset offering a wide range of opportunities for enjoyment. Open Space makes a positive contribution to quality of life by breaking up the heavily built up urban areas and creates wildlife habitats 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.

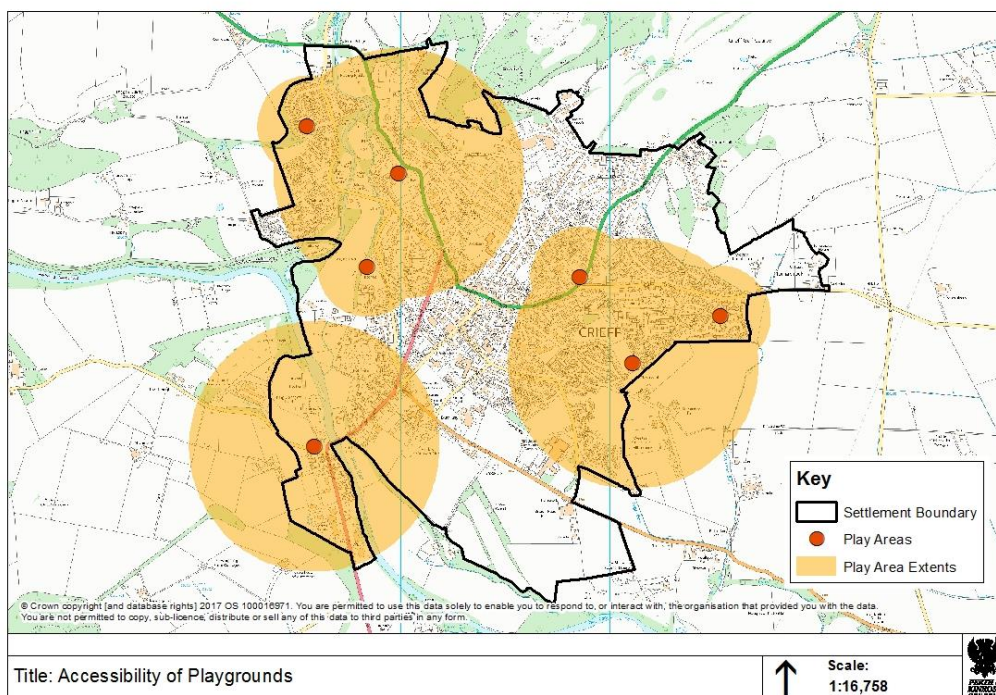
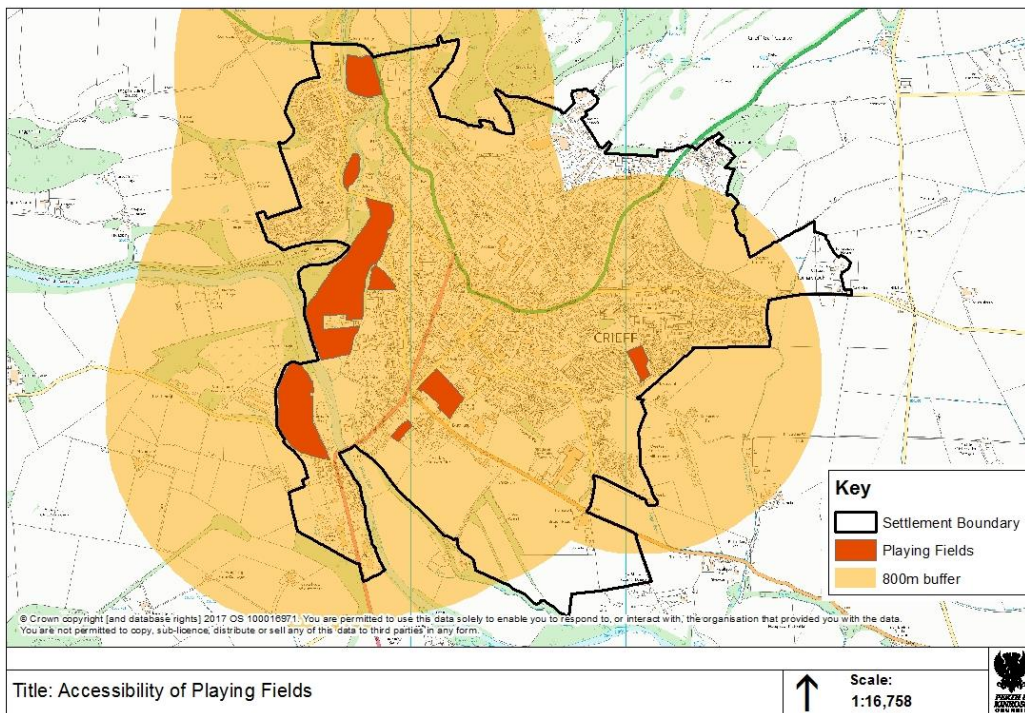
The map below highlights all the open space within Crieff which provide space for outdoor activities and provide visual amenity for residents. The open space provision of the settlement is approximately 115 ha which is 15.4 ha/ 1000 people.



In order to further develop our understanding of the provision of functional open spaces within the council area, an Open Space Audit has been developed examining the supply of playgrounds, playing fields and public parks.

2.1 Access to Open Spaces





98% of households are within 10-15 minute walk of a playing field in Crieff. It should be noted that the highlighted pitches include some private playing fields for which the public need permission to use. Besides the surveyed open spaces the Strathearn Community Campus playing field also provides access to this function and small kickabouts provide space for informal play.

50% of households are within 10-15 minute walk from a public park or garden in Crieff.

70% of households are within a distance from playgrounds which is considered to be appropriate for children at target ages.

2.2 Cemetery Provision

Crieff cemetery is nearing capacity with just over 400 lairs remaining and it is identified within the Future Cemetery Provision Strategy where there is a supply of 10 years or less new lair space.

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	Currently the provision of playgrounds is slightly below the standard and an additional 0.2 ha would be required to offset the impact of growth. The mixed use development in the south Crieff site will provide opportunity for the formation of a larger playground that will partly satisfy this requirement.
Playing Fields	The audit concluded that the amount and accessibility of playing fields is exceptionally high in Crieff. It is suggested that new developments contribute towards the upkeep of existing facilities and improve links to them.
Public Parks	Crieff's parks are all located to the western edge of the settlement. The south expansion site will provide amenity space for new residents on the south of the settlement. Houses on the NE have access to a larger amenity space at Maxton Road which includes a playground and playing field.
Cemeteries	The study identified need for more cemetery space. Investigations will be conducted to identify a suitable site during the life of the plan.

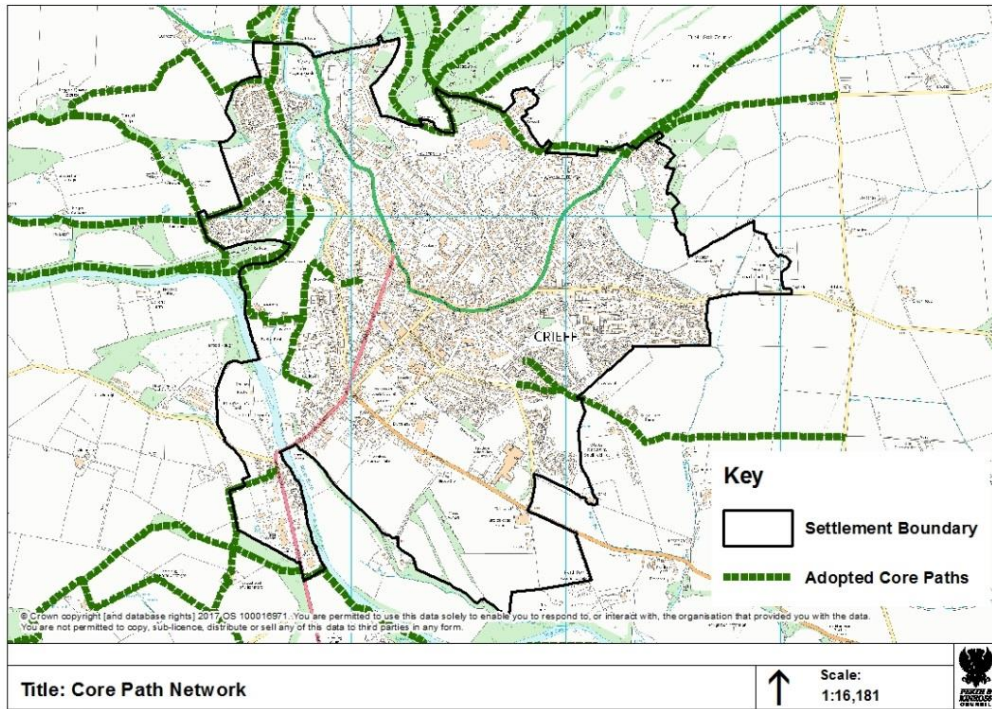
Table 1. The table summarises the conclusion of the quantity and accessibility audit and the Future Cemetery Strategy.

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 Crieff, and the surrounding area, is well served by existing core paths. New development in the area is required to create links with the existing network and ensure walkability within new neighbourhoods.



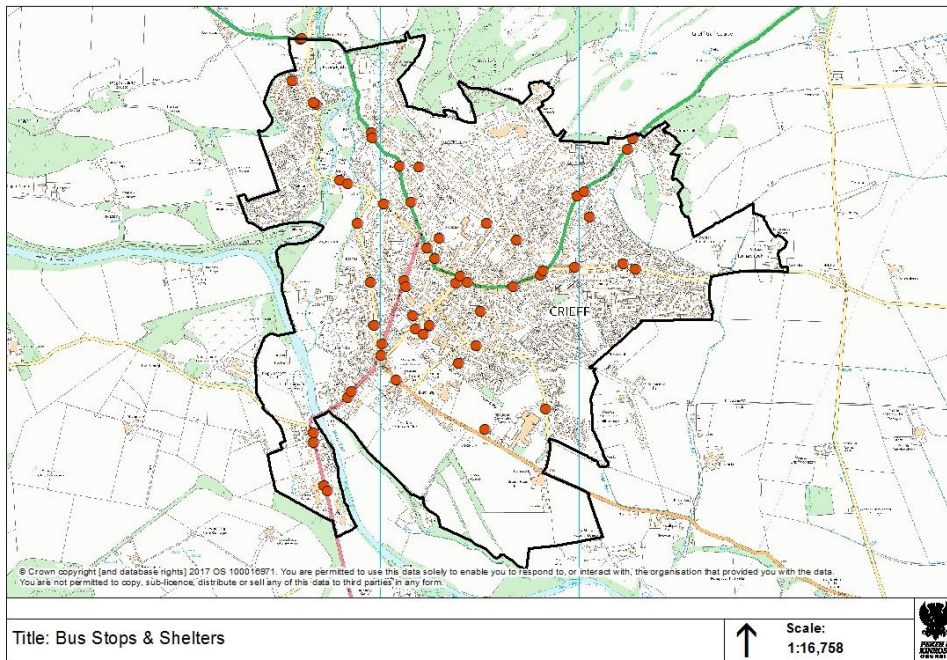
3.2. Cycling

Crieff is not connected to the national cycle route however some Core Path provides opportunity for cycling in the countryside. New development that provides cycling provision (access routes, parking) will be supported.

3.3 Public Transport

There is a frequent bus service to Perth from Crieff, which operates hourly (services 15/15A, 155 and 647) and takes approximately 55 minutes. The Sunday service runs every two hours, and the late night service runs until 00:23. Service 15A provides an hourly service to Stirling with a journey time of approximately 1 hour. There are no direct services to Dundee but there are frequent buses going to these locations from Perth Bus Station. Buses also run to smaller settlements within the area including Amondbank, Methven and Auchterarder. The map below marks bus stops and shelters within Crieff. For a visual representation of bus routes, see Appendix A.

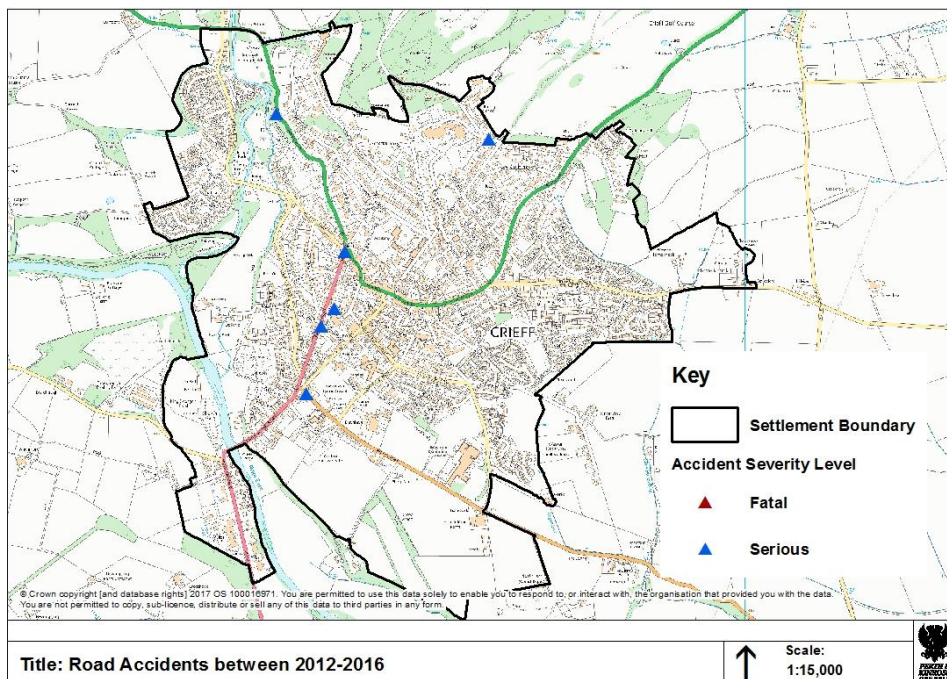
There is a local bus service which runs throughout Crieff which provides various routes. These are all frequent services however there is no Sunday service.



3.4 Road Capacity

There is a traffic model for Crieff (S-Paramics micro-simulation model) and this has shown that there is sufficient capacity to accommodate all LDP aspirations. There is an issue with the major expansion area around Broich Road, but this will be addressed via developer contributions to upgrade the existing junction and to provide other transport improvements. The High Street is also designated as an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) and an Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) is currently being prepared for it. Although traffic from the trunk road is cited as the major cause of the poor air quality, this is more due to the parking issues on the High Street that cause bottlenecks rather than the flow of traffic.

3.5 Accident Records



The map above shows accidents in Crieff over a four year period. There have been 6 accidents between 2012 and 2016 none of which were fatal. Trend within the council area show a decreasing in the number of traffic accidents.

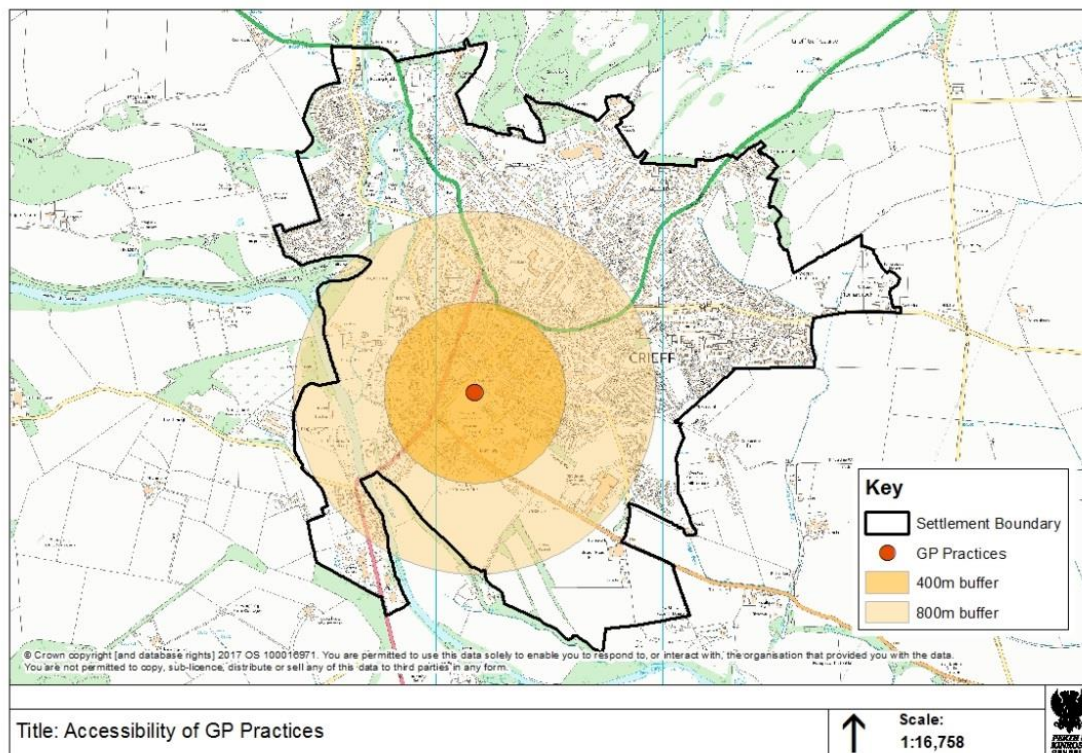
3.6 Car Parking

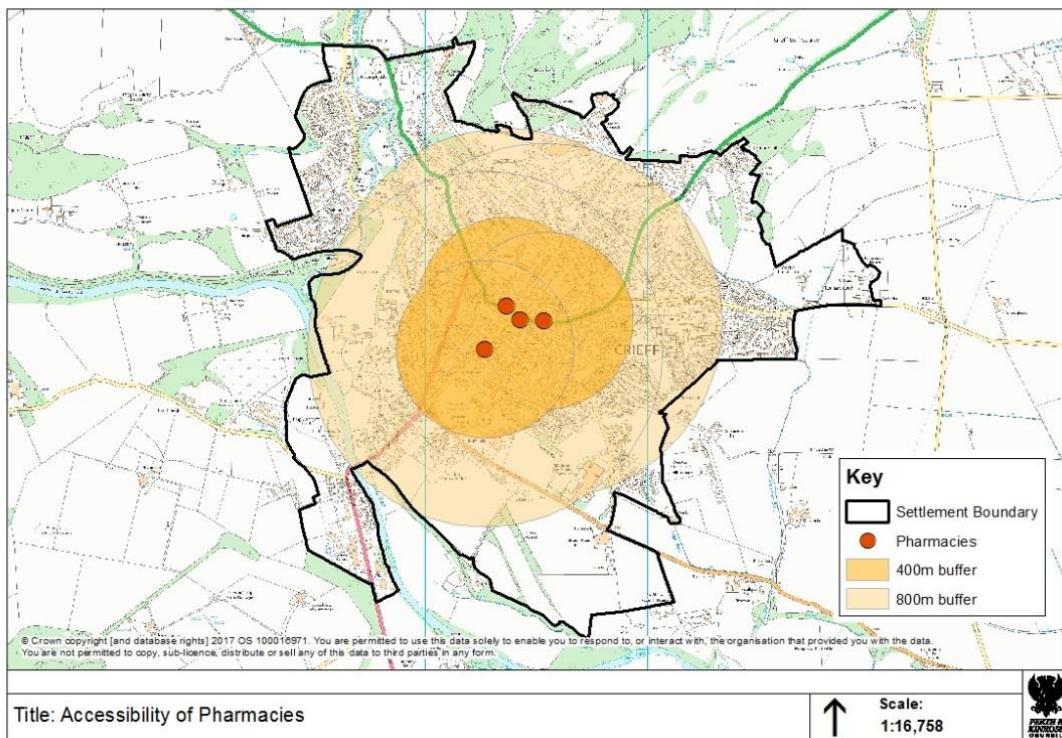
There are six council run car parks in Crieff as well as on street parking. Off street parking is currently free with on street parking provided on a Pay and Display basis. The King Street Car Park provides electric vehicle charging facilities.

4. Health

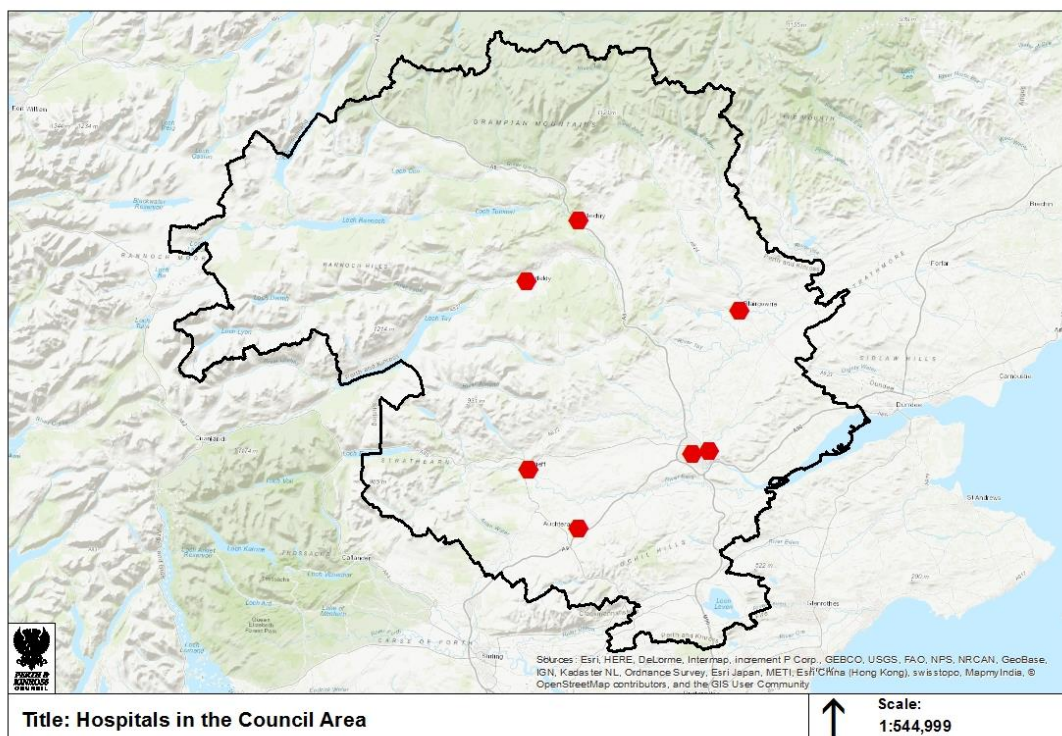
For a community to thrive is it essential that they had access to healthcare. The Council work closely with partners in the NHS to ensure that this can delivered and that consideration is given to the impact of future development on exiting services.

Within Crieff there are **four pharmacies as well as a GP surgery** located in the Community Hospital. This GP surgery has capacity and there are no plans for development, re-location or closure on this facility. The map below highlights access to this surgery.





The maps show the walking distance to pharmacies & GP surgeries. The survey shows that **81%** of households are less than 10 minute walk away from a pharmacy. In case of GP surgeries, **61%** of households are less than 10 minute walk away. As the transport section highlighted there is a frequent bus service running through Crieff which may be used to access the GP surgery.



The Community Hospital includes a 24-bed ward accessed by local GP's for the acute care, palliative care and rehabilitation of their patients. The hospital also has physiotherapy, x-ray and occupational therapy departments and a day care area.

There is currently one dentist within Crieff providing NHS services. However it is important to note that dentists operate a private business and are out with the control of 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.

A new primary school has been completed in Crieff which includes capacity for expansion to accommodate future development needs. Based on current projections Crieff High School has sufficient capacity to support future growth and the Council will continue to monitor the school roll to ensure any changes can be accommodated.

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 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.

The Proposed Plan allocated 8 hectares of employment land within Crieff; one immediately available and one marketable site with minor constraints. In the Proposed Plan one employment site has been reclassified as part of a mixed use site. The take up of employment land will be closely monitored to establish whether or not there is a need for further sites 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. This study concluded that Crieff is an important service centre for the local population as well as visitors in the wider area. The vacancy rate at 15.3% is relatively high and 50% of retailers believed that unaffordable rents were the main reason for this. Vacancy rates were pointed out by residents as a negative quality and they rated the range of shops as poor or average. The Retail Health Checks also suggested that improvements to building frontages and the street environment were also needed. The Charrette exercise confirmed that residents feel that preserving and regeneration vacant buildings in the town centre (e.g. St. Michael's Hall) should be priority.

In terms of the retail offer, the main requirement for Crieff was for an additional supermarket to increase multiple retail representation. Two sites have planning consent on Broich Road which could accommodate for this demand. Apart from this, there are no other obvious requirements for significantly more retail floorspace.

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 existing 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 Crieff.

7.2 Waste Water Network Capacity

There is capacity at the waste water work within Crieff as of September 2015. Most sites have technical approval on drainage layout.

7.3 Is the opportunity to connect to the national grid?

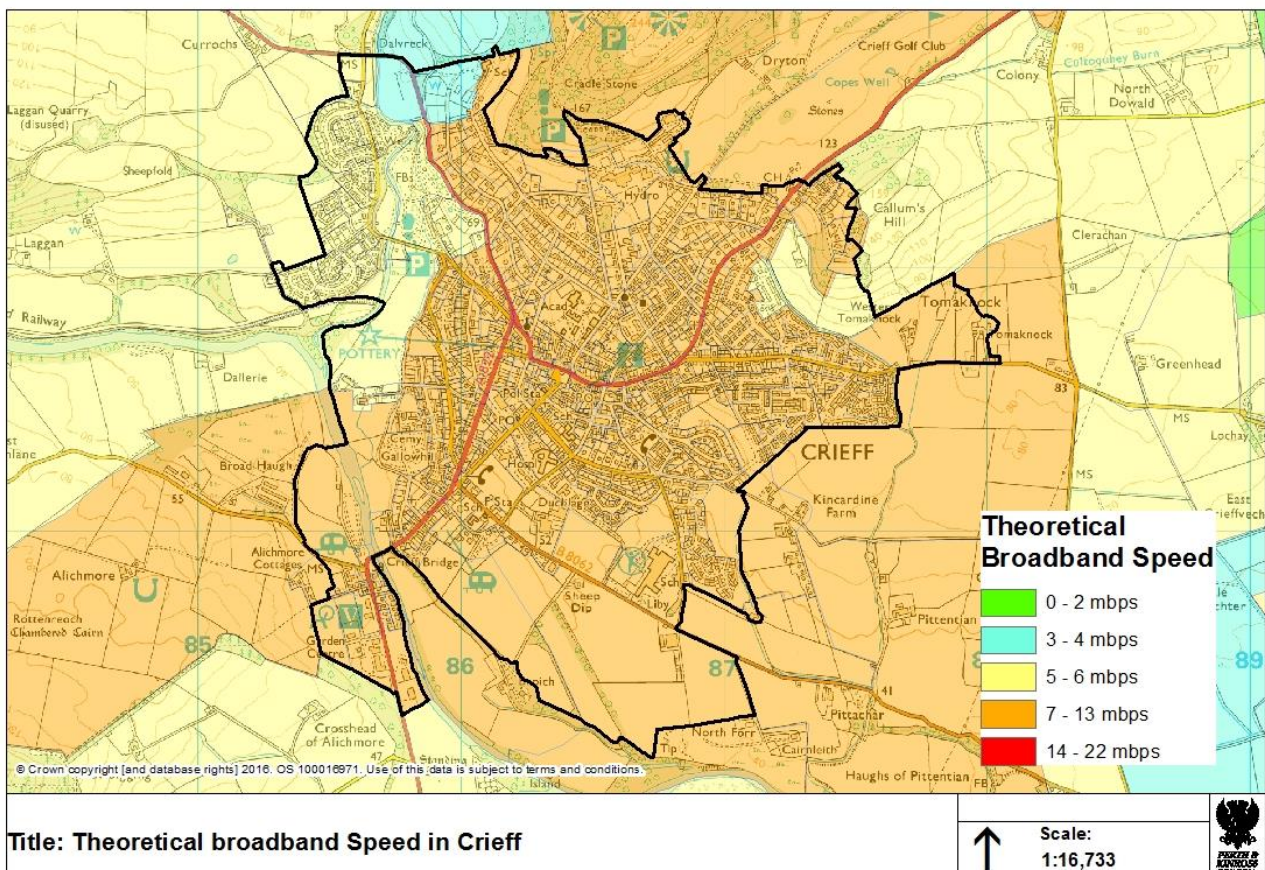
Properties within Crieff are connected to the national grid.

7.4 Is the opportunity to connect to gas supply?

Most properties within Crieff are served by gas mains.

7.5 Access to High Speed Broadband

Fibre broadband has been deployed within Crieff. The vast majority of premises will be covered, although not necessarily all (Digital Scotland, Scottish Government). The map shows that Crieff has 7-13mbps speed on most locations with some areas having slightly lower capacity.



Conclusion

Crieff is an important settlement in Strathearn both for locals and visitors. The town has a range of community facilities, most of which are easily accessible from the High Street. It was however noted that residents could benefit from a community hub which is located directly in the town centre. Crieff also has an adequate amount of open space provision which is protected by the Proposed Plan in order to maintain the character and amenity of the settlement as well as to protect and enhance its biodiversity.

In terms of retail and employment opportunities, the main requirement for Crieff is to increase multiple retail representation. In order to increase the vibrancy and character of the High Street vacant buildings and neglected building frontages should be improved and regenerated.

There is regular public transport service between Crieff and Perth as well as Stirling although the journey takes significantly longer by bus than by car. There is a risk that increased reliance on cars worsens traffic issues within the settlement. On the other hand it is suggested that road capacity is sufficient to support expansion and it is parking on the High Street which should be rationalised in order to ease off congestion.

SWOT Analysis	
<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crieff is a the centre of the area and a popular visitor destination • Accessibility to community facilities is good • Significant open space assets and good links to the countryside • Employment land and mixed use allocations provide opportunities for economic growth 	<p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issues with Crieff High Street (vacancy rates, appearance, range of shops) • Public transport connections to cities do not provide a good alternative for cars • High Street is congested, has parking issues and poor air quality.
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the profile of Crieff as a visitor destination • Strengthen town centre by public realm improvements and a community hub • Maintain good access to open spaces which contribute to the well-being of residents • Road & junction improvements funded through developer contributions • Opportunity to provide a new supermarket 	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Town Centre further loses from its appeal • Increased reliance on cars and worsened traffic issues

