

Pitlochry Infrastructure Report

Working Document

November 2017

Introduction & Context

Pitlochry is a burgh, lying on the river Tummel. It is the largest town in Highland Perthshire and the tourist hub for this area of Scotland. The settlement has a range of community facilities and services serving both the local population and visitors. The settlement plays an important role in the economic growth and housing provision within the Highland area.

Tourism plays a key role in employment provision and economic viability of services and facilities with the area. The adopted Local Development Plan seeks to promote and enhance existing and future tourism developments. The Atholl Palace Hotel and Milton of Fonab Caravan Park are identified for their significant contribution to the provision of visitor accommodation and will therefore be retained.

There are approximately 1657 residential properties within Pitlochry (PKC Corporate Address Gazetteer, 2017). With an average household size of 1.98 (based on Census trends) it is estimated that the settlement's current population is 3280.

The Proposed Plan provides land for approximately 155 new houses to be built within the settlements and there are currently 20 properties under construction in the settlement.

Therefore in total, 175 houses within Pitlochry could potentially be built by 2028. Based on Census trends the average household will remain at 1.98 in the period until 2028. It is estimated that as a result of new development, the population could increase to 3627 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 |
|-----------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|---|---|
| Pitlochry | 3280 | 3627 | 1657 | 1832 |

**It should be noted that although land for a total of 175 houses is allocated market evidence suggest a slower build rate which is likely to result in the housing land supply lasting beyond 2028. This will be regularly monitored however for the purposes of this report it is assumed that 175 houses could be occupied by 2028.*

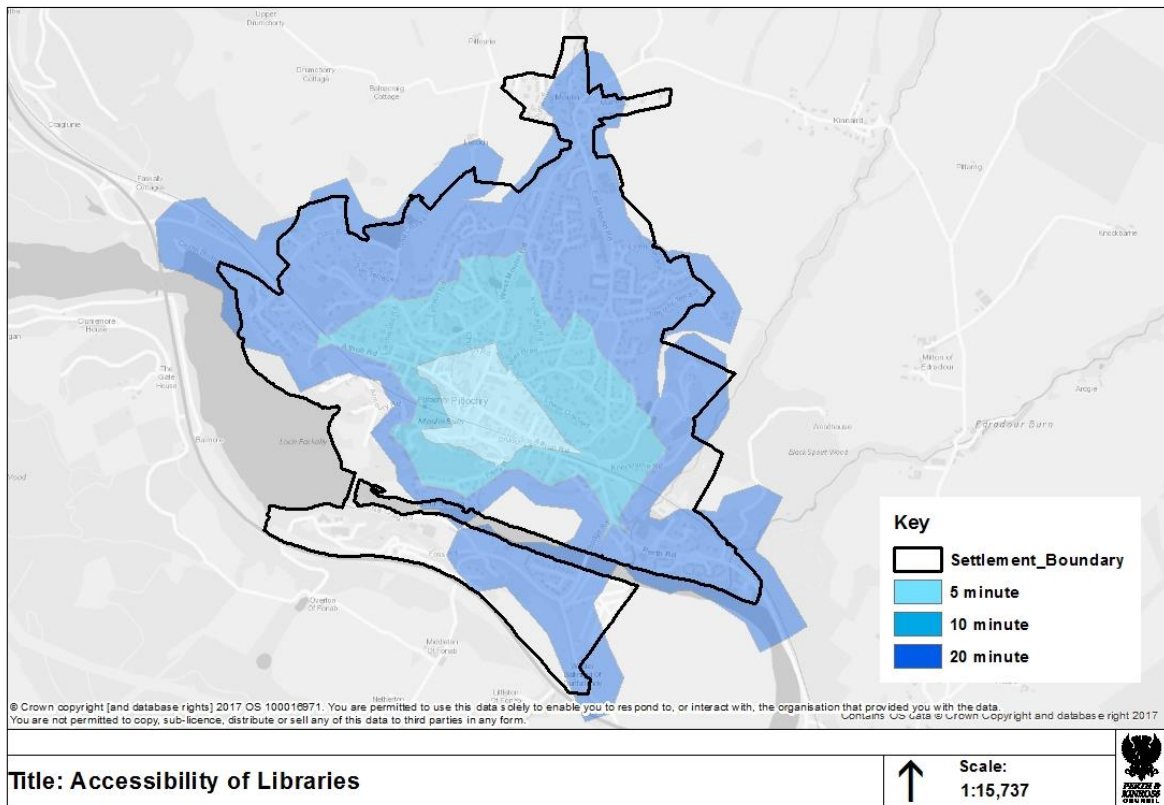
This infrastructure study has been undertaken to ensure that the infrastructure capacity within the area is adequate to support the level of growth envisaged within the LDP. This infrastructure capacity assessment will highlight the current infrastructure provisions within Pitlochry and any shortfall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

1. Community Facilities and Recreation

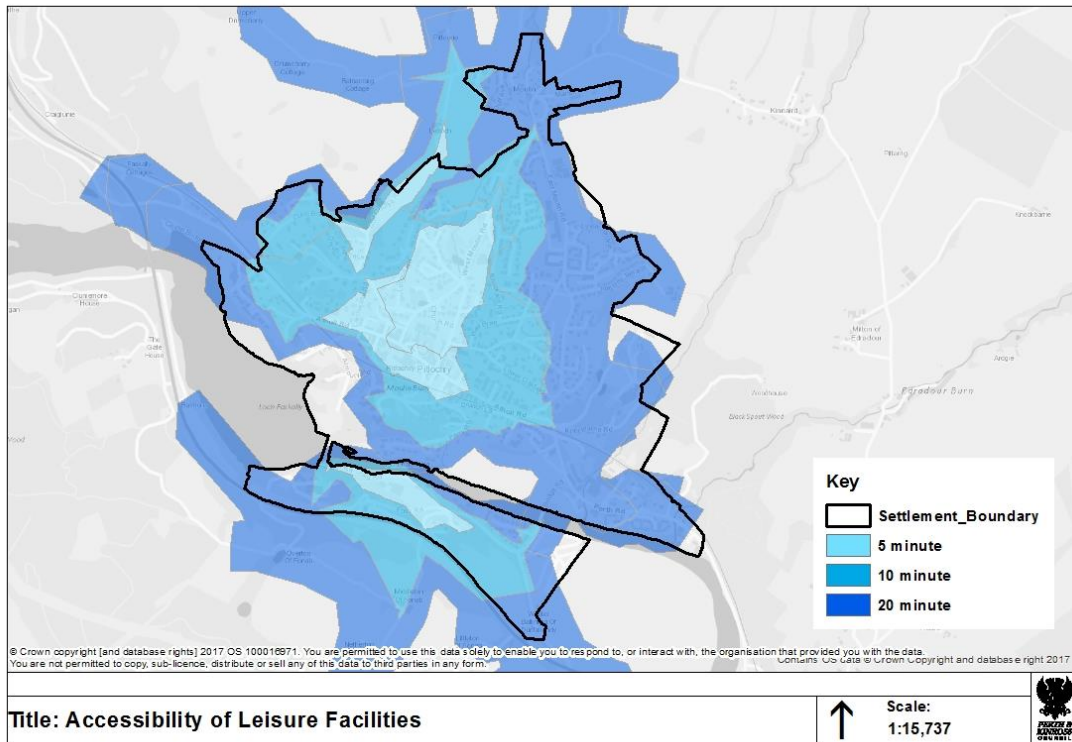
As populations are growing, there is an increased pressure on community facilities and capacity may need to be increased to satisfy the needs of residents. The cultural identity of a town is improved by community facilities being present as they offer opportunities for social interaction and they are important for local identity. This report will show the key local amenities in each town as well as their accessibility from different residential areas within the settlement.

| | |
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| Community sports facility and leisure activities | There are 3 community sport and Leisure facilities in Pitlochry. |
| ATMs | There are 3 ATMs in Pitlochry |
| Petrol stations | There is 1 petrol station in Pitlochry. |
| Libraries/mobile libraries | There is one library in Pitlochry. |
| Community/town hall | There are 3 community halls in Pitlochry (including church halls and community buildings). |
| Post Offices | There is one post office in Pitlochry. |
| Public Houses & Hotels | There are 16 public houses & hotels in Pitlochry. |
| Recycling Points | There is one recycling point in Pitlochry. |
| Recycling Centres | There is one recycling centre in Pitlochry. |
| Council Offices | There are 2 council offices in Pitlochry. |

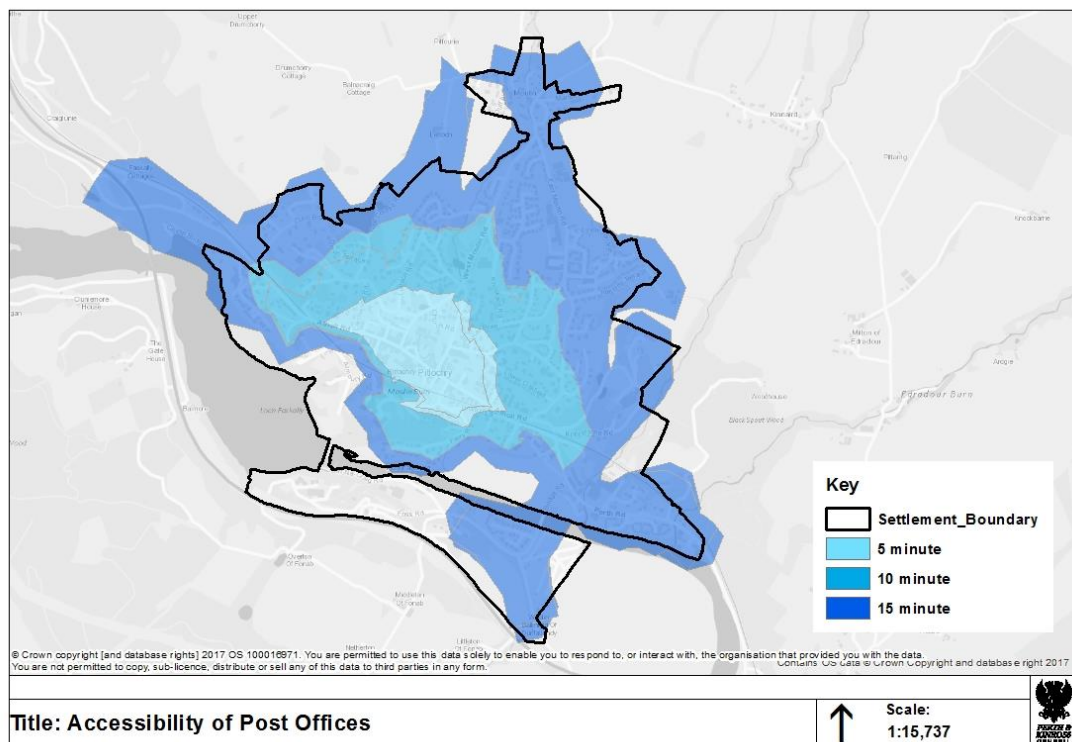
The table above highlights the provision of community facilities within Pitlochry at the time of the survey in 2015. The maps below show the accessibility of some of these services. The analysis highlights the number of properties that are within 5, 10 and 20 minutes walking distance to services.



1607 households are less than 20 minute walk from a library in Pitlochry. This is **96%** of all households included in the survey.



1649 households are less than 20 minute walk from the nearest leisure facility (e.g. sport centres, clubs). This is **99%** of all the households included in this survey.



1616 houses are less than 20 minute walk away from the nearest post office. This is **97%** of all the households included in this survey.

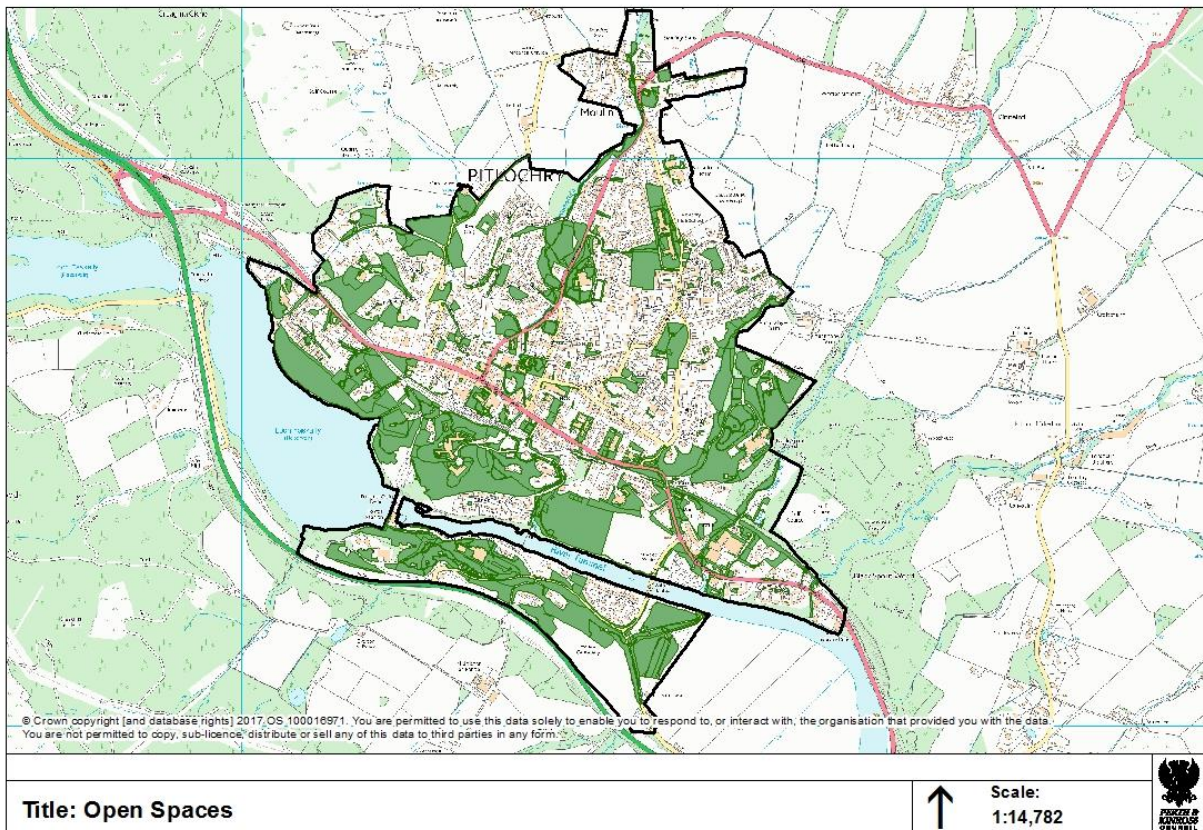
1.1 Implications for the Proposed Plan

The analysis indicates that people have access to a range of facilities in Pitlochry. Leisure facilities include the Pitlochry Theatre, the golf club, a fitness centre and a bowling green. Due to the compact shape of the settlement most of these are within walking distance. There is no perceived issue to highlight in this section.

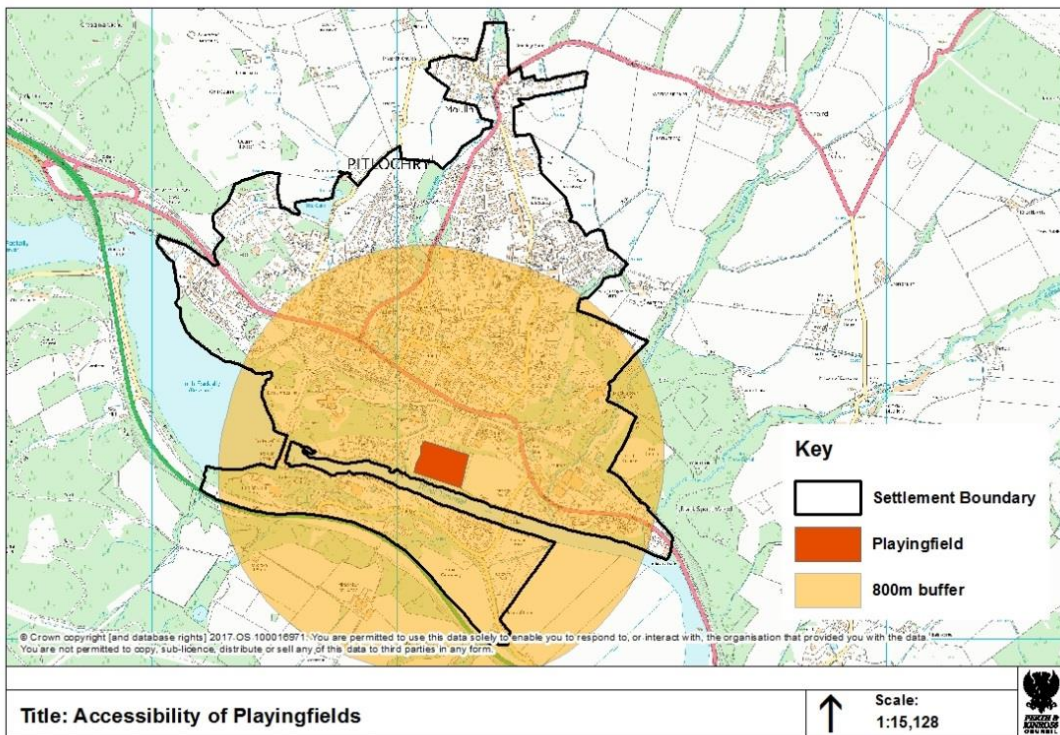
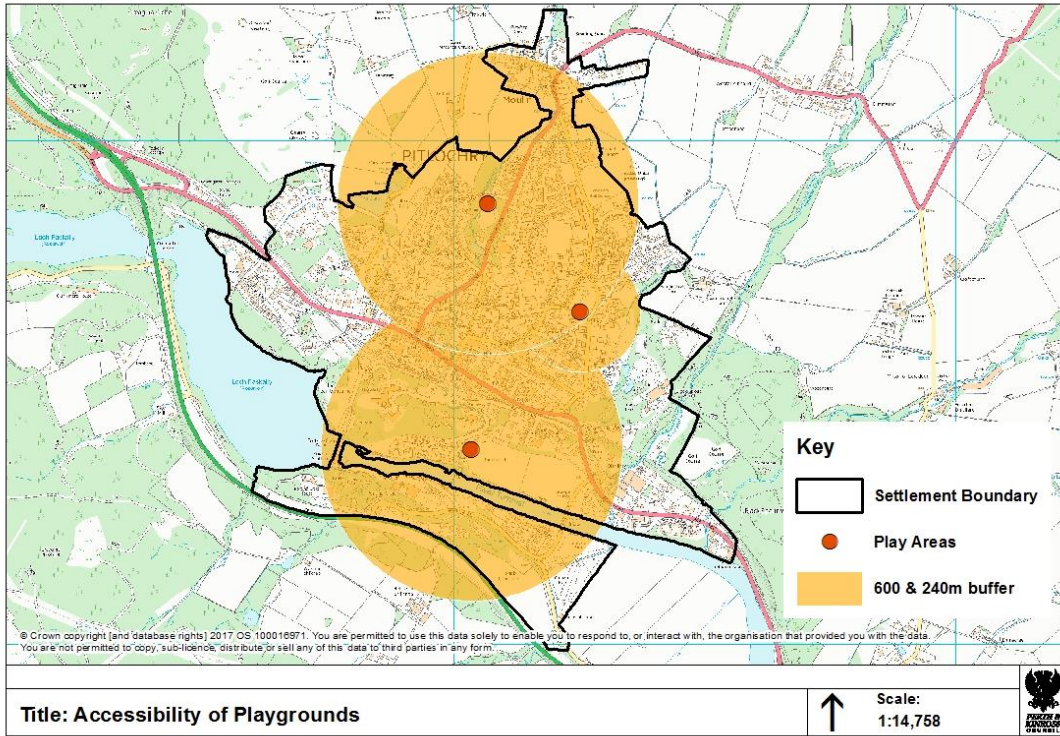
2. Open Space

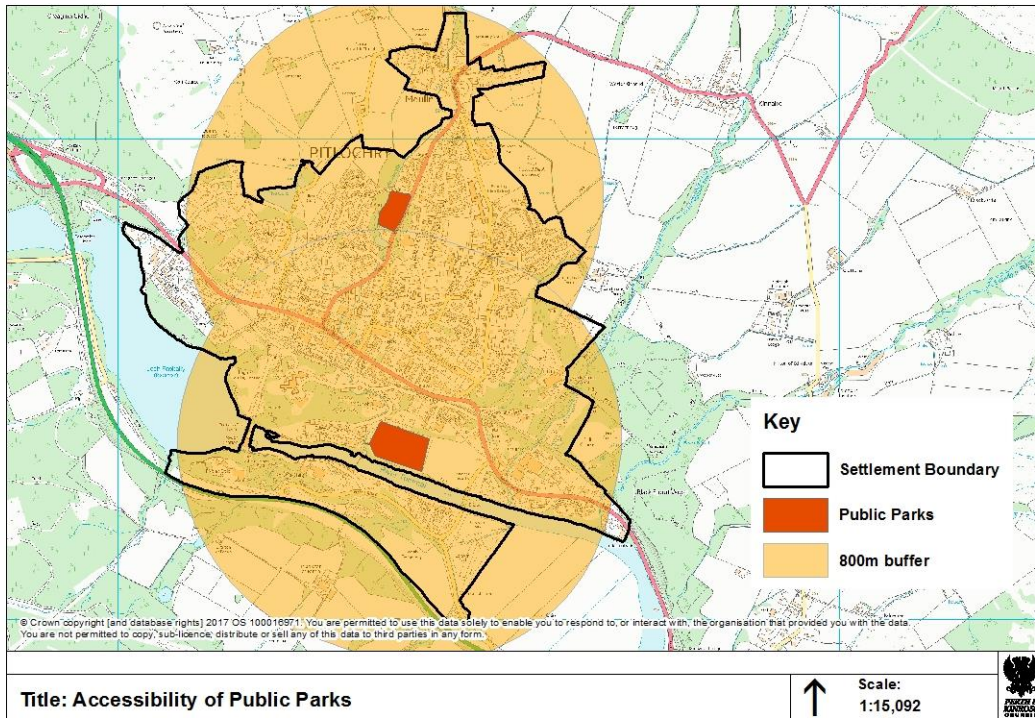
Open space is crucial within a settlement and adds value to the community for both recreational and amenity purposes. The natural environment is a valued national asset offering a wide range of opportunities for enjoyment. Open Space makes a positive contribution to quality of life by breaking up the built up urban areas and creates wildlife habitats which increases biodiversity. Open space should be present in every settlement and should be accessible by all residents. This study will comment on the suitability of the current open space provision in the face of population growth and highlight any shortfall which needs to be addressed.

The map below highlights all the open space within Pitlochry which is used for outdoor activities or provide visual amenity for residents. The open space provision of the settlement is approximately 76.5 ha which is 23.3 ha/ 1000 people.



2.1 Access to open Spaces





60% of households are within 10-15 minute walk of a playing field in Pitlochry. Besides the highlighted pitches, small kickabouts and the Pitlochry High School playing field also provides access to this function.

97% of households are within 10-15 minute walk from a public park or garden in Pitlochry.

76% of households are within a distance from playgrounds which is considered to be appropriate for children at target ages.

2.2 Cemetery Provision

The cemetery at Fonab; Pitlochry was identified in 2014 as having 7 years capacity therefore its expansion will be necessary to support the town's expansion.

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:

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|----------------|---|
| Playgrounds | Currently the provision of playgrounds is slightly below the standard and an additional 0.09ha would be required to offset the impact of growth. Allocated development may be required to provide smaller play spaces in line with the Council's Play Strategy. |
| Playing Fields | The audit did not highlight any issues with the provision. To offset the impact of population growth an addition of another full sized pitch could be justified however the accessibility of playing fields is very high and schools also provide sport facilities. |

| | |
|--------------|---|
| Public Parks | The study did not highlight any issues with the provision. Both allocated housing sites have the opportunity to create good connections to existing public parks and potentially contribute to their quality. |
| Cemeteries | It is stated in the Proposed Plan that an area will be reserved for the future expansion of the cemetery as part of the Fonab development. |

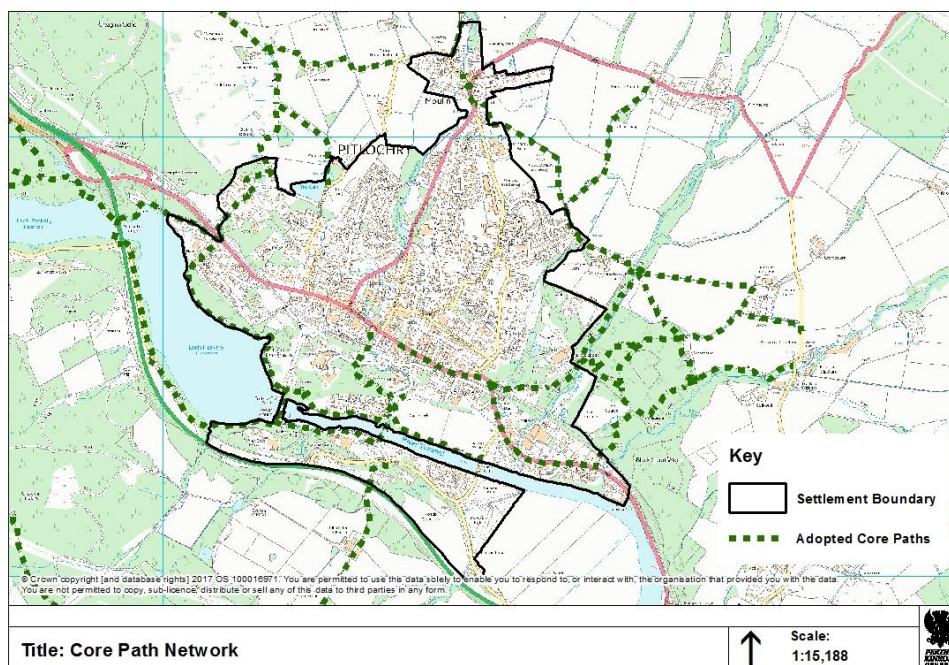
Table 1. The table summarises the conclusion of the quantity and accessibility audit and the Future Cemetery Strategy.

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 Pitlochry, and the surrounding areas are well served by existing core paths. The Proposed Plan requires new development to connect to the existing network and create new connections.



3.2 Cycling

The national cycle route 77 goes through Pitlochry and connects it to Perth on the south, Inverness on the north as well as other Highland settlements towards Loch Tay. These routes are a mixture of on road and off road sections.

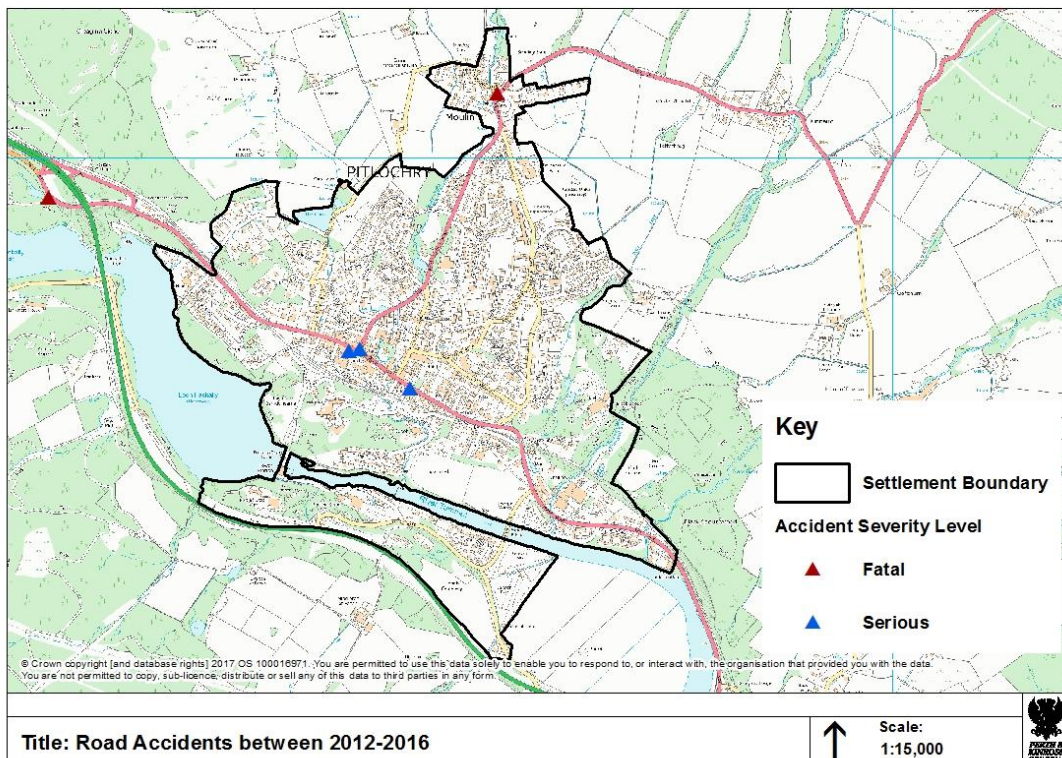
3.3 Public Transport

Pitlochry is connected to Perth both by bus and rail. Stagecoach services which take approximately 1hour 30 minutes run hourly to Perth until 19:30. There are also some Megabus services running between Inverness and Edinburgh/Glasgow that serve Pitlochry. Scotrail services which take 40 minutes run hourly to Perth until 10pm. Sunday service is irregular with 6-7 trains during the day. Pitlochry is also connected by bus to Aberfeldy and Dunkeld & Birnam. The map below marks bus stops and shelters within Pitlochry. There is a local bus service which runs throughout Pitlochry where services are provided to the smaller catchment areas surrounding the town. For a visual representation of bus routes, see Appendix A.

3.4 Road Capacity

The current transport network has sufficient capacity for the current level of traffic. However, the demand is highly seasonal as this is a major tourist town and traffic flows do fluctuate quite markedly in the main tourist months during summer. Although there is no known road safety issues on the local road network, parking can be a problem in the main street in the summer months as can slow moving tourist traffic.

3.5 Accident Records



The map above shows accidents within Pitlochry over a four year period. There have been 3 accidents between 2012 and 2016 none of which were fatal. Trend within the council area show a decreasing in the number of traffic accidents.

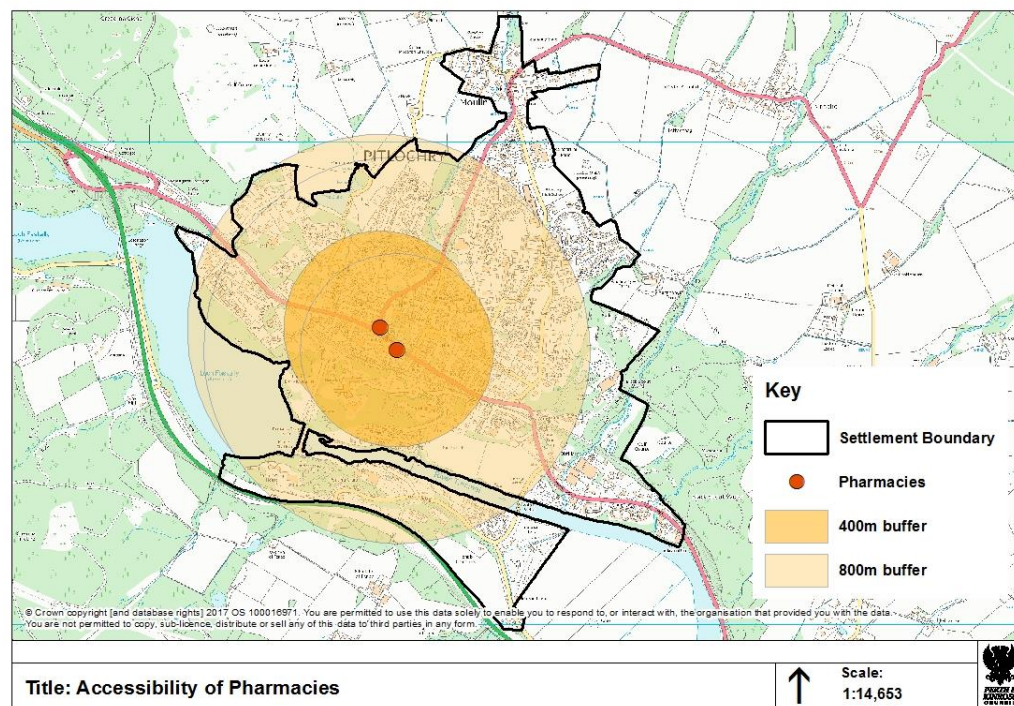
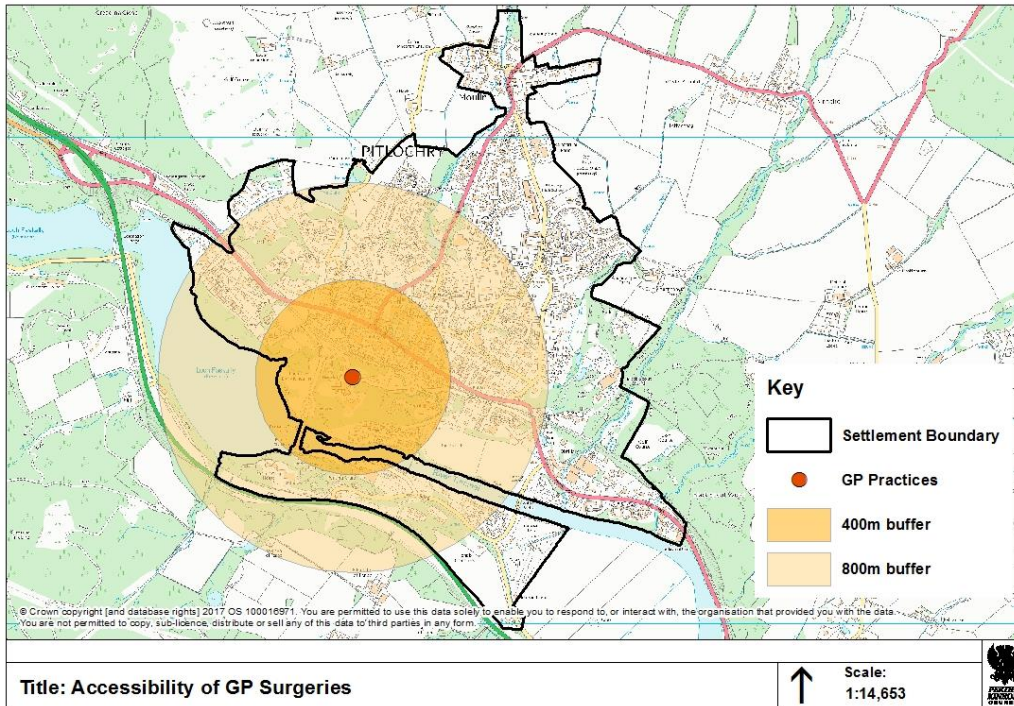
3.6 Parking

There are four car parks within Pitlochry, some pay and display. On street parking is available however there can be a capacity problem during the peak summer months. Electric vehicle charging facilities are available in the Rie-Achan Road Car Park.

4. Health

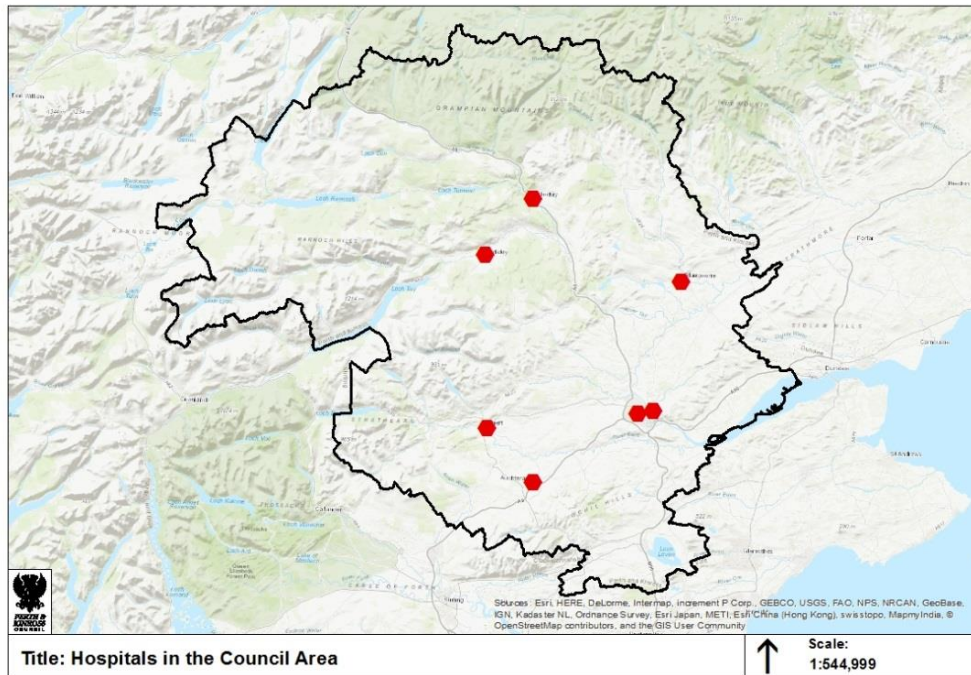
For a community to thrive is it essential that they have access to healthcare. The Council work closely with partners in the NHS to ensure that this can be delivered and that consideration is given to the impact of future development on exiting services.

Within Pitlochry there are **two pharmacies as well as one GP surgery** located in Pitlochry Community Hospital. This GP surgery has capacity and there are no plans for development, re-location or closure or either of these facilities. The map below highlights access to these facilities.



The maps show the walking distance to pharmacies & GP surgeries. The survey shows that **57%** of households are within a 10-15 minute and 19% are within a 5-7 minute radius from GP surgeries. In case of Pharmacies, **75%** of households are within 10-15 minute radius and 31% are within a 5-7 minute radius from surgeries. Those living further away from these facilities may access it by public transport as there is a frequent bus service running through the settlement.

There are also currently two dentists within Pitlochry providing NHS services. However it is important to note that dentists operate as a private business and are out with the control of the NHS.



Besides the GP surgery, Pitlochry Community Hospital provides a number of basic services and patients with minor injuries and illnesses can be treated. More serious conditions need to be treated in Perth Royal Infirmary which is approximately 40 minute drive away.

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.

Both Pitlochry high School and Pitlochry primary school have sufficient capacity to support future levels of growth.

6. Retail and Employment

Both retail and employment are significant aspects of the development of any town or village. Perth and Kinross Council completes an annual Employment Land Audit which provides information on how much land there is available and establishes whether or not there is a need to provide more employment land to facilitate economic growth in the area.

Within Perth and Kinross Council's identified Windfall sites, it is shown that there is a total of 0.15 hectares of employment land within Pitlochry. The take up of employment land will be closely monitored across the council area to establish whether or not there is a need for further employment land within the area. The provision of future employment land opportunities however is constrained by topography and flooding constraints.

To measure retail capacity within Perth and Kinross a Town Centre Retail Study was undertaken in 2016. This study concluded that This study concluded that Pitlochry's retail offer is mainly focused on tourism. There was a planning consent for a larger supermarket in the town however there is no certainty that this proposal will progress in the near future.

Most of the shops present in Pitlochry are independent operators and vacancy rates are relatively low. There are four retail units available totalling 375 sqm. Those interviewed during the survey generally rates the quality of shops and the town centre environment high, however opinions differed about the range of shops available. This study concluded that there is no immediate requirement for significantly more retail floor space within Pitlochry.

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 Pitlochry.

7.2 Waste Water Network Capacity

There is capacity at the waste water work within Pitlochry.

7.3 Is the opportunity to connect to the national grid?

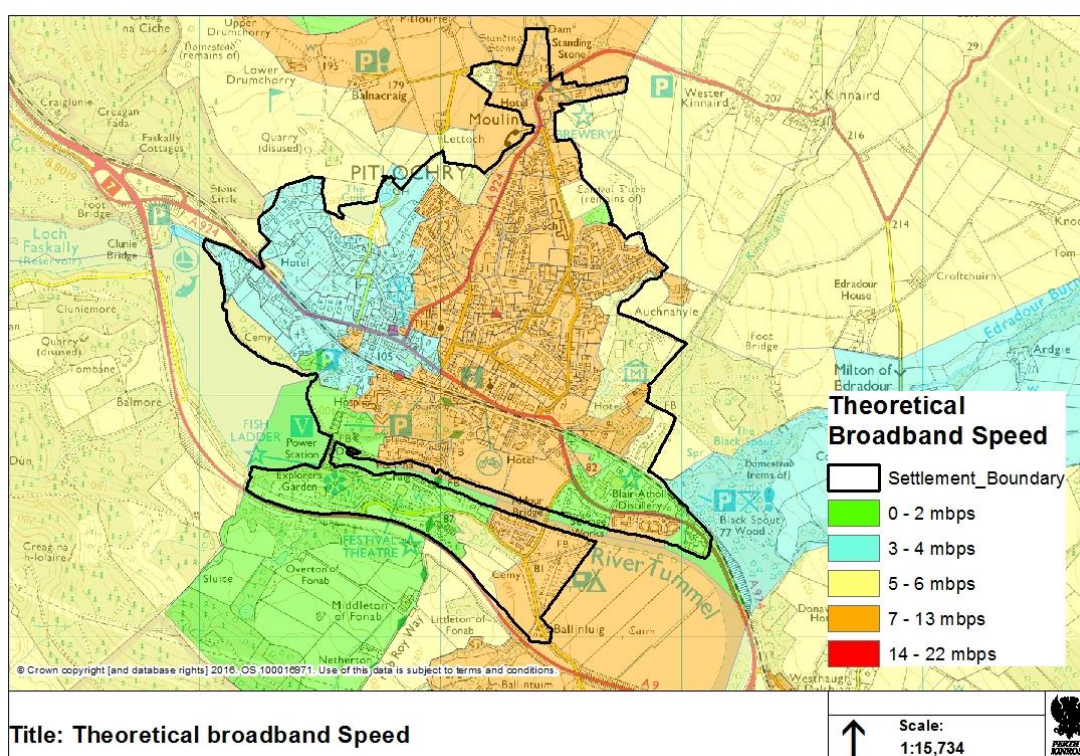
Properties within Pitlochry are connected to the national grid.

7.4 Is the opportunity to connect to gas supply?

Most properties within Pitlochry are served by gas mains.

7.5 Access to High Speed Broadband

Fibre broadband has been deployed within Pitlochry. The vast majority of premises are covered, although not necessarily all (Digital Scotland, Scottish Government). The map shows that broadband speed varies across the settlement from 0-2 mbps to 7-13 mbps.



Conclusions

Pitlochry is a thriving small town in Highland Perthshire, largely due to its appeal to tourists. Its location adjacent to the A9 means it is highly accessible from the south and north, and its landscape setting and open spaces make it an attractive place to both live and visit. The significant influx of tourists, particularly in the summer months, does however cause congestion and puts pressure on the local road network, and the surrounding environmental constraints means that future development opportunities are likely to be limited.

| SWOT Analysis | |
|--|--|
| <p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High quality landscape setting • Good access to a range of quality open spaces and the wider countryside • Offers a good quality of life to residents with a good level of accessible community services and facilities • Offers a good range of visitor services and facilities • Good range of independent shops • Location on the A9 means easy access by public and private transport to both north and south | <p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distance from cities (Perth to the south and Inverness to the north) • Amount of seasonal / tourism-related employment • Impact of high volume of tourists in the summer months on the local road network and parking • Aging population likely to increase pressure in the future on health care services • Low internet speed at some locations |
| <p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential to build on existing tourism offer • Potential for the future dualling of the A9 | <p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited serviced employment land • Limited future development opportunities beyond existing allocations due to the physical constraints of the settlement |

Appendix A: Bus routes

