



<p><b>Legend</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Urban Limit</li> <li>Surveyed Open Spaces</li> <li>Open Space*</li> <li>Priority Regeneration Areas</li> <li>SIRR Areas</li> </ul>	<p><b>Local Plan Proposals and Opportunities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Environment</li> <li>Recreational &amp; Community Facilities</li> <li>Transport</li> <li>Economic Development</li> <li>Housing</li> <li>Path proposals</li> </ul>	<p><b>Access Routes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sustrans Cycle Route</li> <li>Green Travel Path</li> <li>Green Travel Proposed Route</li> <li>Right of Way</li> </ul>	<p><b>Strategy Key</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Potential lack of access to semi-natural open space</li> <li>Potential lack of access to public parks</li> <li>Potential lack of access to sports area</li> <li>Potential lack of access to play spaces</li> <li>Improve connections between open space</li> <li>Improve access to open space</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conserve + enhance regional semi-natural spaces for biodiversity</li> <li>Enhance local biodiversity through local biodiversity toolkit</li> <li>Conserve + enhance awareness of cultural heritage</li> <li>Opportunity for new allotments/ community gardens</li> <li>Promote + enhance canal as a national green space</li> <li>Priority quality improvements required</li> </ul> <p>* Areas of open space may include open water.</p>	<p><b>Falkirk Open Space Strategy</b>                  Figure 7.7K (BLK.6)                  Conceptual Strategy - Blackness</p>
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## Blackness

### Survey/Issues

- Blackness has a population of approximately 131 people, and 015ha of public open space within its urban limit. This excludes access to surveyed public open spaces adjacent to the urban edge and to the surrounding shoreline and countryside.
- A very high percentage of households (almost 99%) has access (within 400m) to one or both of the two surveyed public open spaces.
- The supply of private gardens, with an average of 286m<sup>2</sup> per household, is somewhat lower than the average village supply of 384m<sup>2</sup> but higher than the average town supply of 193m<sup>2</sup>.
- The two surveyed open spaces (68 – Castlehill Park, and 69 – St Ninian's Way Playground) are both of good quality and fit for purpose. Therefore almost all households (99%) have access within 400m to one or both fit for purpose surveyed public open spaces.
- As the village's two surveyed open space are settlement-level public parks and gardens – one with a playspace – of good quality, they offer facilities that are good enough for the local population to access and use in a manner which maximises their quality of life.
- There is therefore excellent access to surveyed public parks and gardens in Blackness, with 99% of households having access to one or both (within 400m).
- There is no access to a surveyed sports area in Blackness (within 800m).
- There is very good access (within 400m) to the surveyed site with a playspace.
- There is no access (within 1200m) to surveyed sites containing natural/ semi-natural greenspace.
- Muiravonside Country Park is the nearest surveyed national open space – it is over 13km from the centre of Blackness. Bo'ness Foreshore is the nearest regional open space – it is over 6km from the village.

### Strategy Overview

**Both surveyed open spaces are accessible, of good quality and fit for purpose. Priority improvements should therefore be related to improving diversity rather than quality, with an emphasis on sports facilities and semi-natural open space. Although the beach is not a surveyed open space it is a major open space resource, and coastal links, the unique setting, and the visitor attraction of Blackness Castle should be maximised.**

### Strategy Actions

#### National/Regional-Level Open Space

- Public transport connections to Muiravonside Country Park should be examined, as it offers a diversity of facilities.

#### Settlement-Level Open Space

- Castlehill Park – this settlement-level public park is of good quality and meets 'fitness for purpose' requirements. Although improvements to quality are not a priority, more diverse facilities for sports and management as semi-natural habitat of part of the site would benefit the community.
- St Ninian's Way Playground – this settlement-level public park and playspace is of good quality and meets 'fitness for purpose' requirements. Although improvements to quality are not a priority, more diverse facilities for sports and management as semi-natural habitat of part of the site would benefit the community.

#### Neighbourhood-Level Open Space

- No neighbourhood-level spaces were surveyed in Blackness. However, from the quantitative audit there appear to be some other small areas of public open space in the centre of the village.

#### General

- Access to surveyed green corridors and natural/ semi-natural open spaces is not provided for in Blackness, although the unsurveyed foreshore and woodlands nearby will contribute and should be surveyed as a priority action. The adjacent surveyed sites are also large enough to make a contribution to the natural/ semi-natural greenspace resource. Managing these for biodiversity, and improving connections to other natural/ semi-natural open spaces should be a priority.
- Access to surveyed sports areas is also not provided for. Consultation to determine community interest should be undertaken as a priority.
- The strategy, in terms of typology provision, should be to focus on improving provision of and/ or access to sports areas as a priority.
- Increasing provision in Blackness should consider: diversifying the typology and facilities within the two existing sites rather than providing new sites (new play facilities are secured for site 69).
- Implement local biodiversity 'toolkit' for the settlement and other unsurveyed neighbourhood-level spaces.
- Maximise opportunities for a green coastal corridor, including upgrading of foreshore path, and potential of Forth setting, and ensure appropriate conservation and management for natural heritage and biodiversity benefits. Correlate location of visitor facilities (benches/ bird-watching hides etc) with views.
- Manage spaces to avoid potential user conflict, e.g. bird watching and dog walking, footpath condition and sand removal, and maintain to avoid deterioration of sea defences and improve foreshore cleanliness.
- Enhance awareness of the cultural history and importance of the settlement through innovative interpretation of the unique resource of Blackness Castle and how the sites historically and physically link with it.