



Legend

- Urban Limit
- Surveyed Open Spaces
- Open Space*
- Priority Regeneration Areas
- SIRR Areas

Local Plan Proposals and Opportunities

- Environment
- Recreational & Community Facilities
- Transport
- Economic Development
- Housing
- Path proposals

Access Routes

- Sustrans Cycle Route
- Green Travel Path
- Green Travel Proposed Route
- Right of Way

Strategy Key

- Potential lack of access to semi-natural open space
- Potential lack of access to public parks
- Potential lack of access to sports area
- Potential lack of access to play spaces
- Improve connections between open space
- Improve access to open space

- Conserve + enhance regional semi-natural spaces for biodiversity
- Enhance local biodiversity through local biodiversity toolkit
- Conserve + enhance awareness of cultural heritage
- Opportunity for new allotments/ community gardens
- Promote + enhance canal as a national green space
- Priority quality improvements required

* Areas of open space may include open water.

Falkirk Open Space Strategy

Figure 7.7Y (WHI.6)

Conceptual Strategy - Whitecross

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Whitecross

Survey/ Issues

- Whitecross has a population of approximately 797 people, and around 1.2ha of public open space within its urban limit. This excludes access to surveyed public open space adjacent to the urban edge and to the surrounding 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 249m² per household, is lower than the average village supply of 384m² but higher than the average town supply of 193m².
- Of the two surveyed open spaces, one (80 – Whitecross Recreation Ground) is of good quality and fit for purpose, and the one (81 – Whitecross School Recreation Ground) is of only fair quality and requires upgrading. 53% of households have access within 400m to the one fit for purpose surveyed public open space.
- Site 80, a settlement-level sports area with a playspace, is of a quality that offers facilities good enough for the local population to access and use in a manner which maximises their quality of life.
- Site 81, a settlement-level school-ground with a playspace, does not currently offer sufficient facilities to the community.
- There is no access to surveyed public parks and gardens in Whitecross (within 400m).
- There is excellent (100%) access to a surveyed sports area in Whitecross (within 800m).
- There is also excellent access (99% within 400m) to the surveyed site with a playspace.
- There is very poor access (less than 9% within 1200m) to surveyed sites containing natural/ semi-natural greenspace.
- Muiravonside Country Park is the nearest surveyed national open space – it is 1.4km from the centre of Whitecross. Polmont Woods is the nearest regional open space – it is over 4km from the village.

Strategy Overview

Although access to surveyed semi-natural open space is underprovided for, the extensive semi-natural habitats in Muiravonside Country Park are just beyond the 1200m threshold – connections to this and other un-surveyed semi-natural spaces should be prioritised before considering new provision of this typology. Priority improvements should therefore be related to new settlement- or neighbourhood-level park facilities, and improving quality in the School Recreation Ground, taking into account future residential expansion.

Strategy Actions

National/Regional-Level Open Space

- Whitecross benefits from the national facilities of Muiravonside Country Park being under 20 minutes walk from the centre of the village.

Settlement-Level Open Space

- Whitecross Recreation Ground – this settlement-level sports area with a playspace is of good quality and meets fitness for purpose requirements. Although improvements to quality are not a priority, there are opportunities to improve local streamside biodiversity, vary play facilities and improve the roadside edge.
- Whitecross School Recreation Ground – this settlement-level school-ground and playspace is of only fair quality and is not currently fit for purpose. Improvements to quality are a priority, and should include better play facilities and lighting, bins, the use of planting to create separate areas, and better maintenance to address habitat variation and litter.

Neighbourhood-Level Open Space

- No neighbourhood-level spaces were surveyed in Whitecross. From the quantitative audit there appear to be a few other areas of un-surveyed public open space.

General

- Access to surveyed green corridors and natural/ semi-natural open spaces is not well-provided for in Whitecross within 1200m. However, Muiravonside Country Park, which has extensive semi-natural resources, is just beyond the distance threshold, and improving access should be a priority consideration, as should a quality survey of un-surveyed sites such as the disused railway corridor large enough to make a contribution to the natural/ semi-natural greenspace resource.
- Access to a public park is also not provided for within 400m. Although the Country Park is 1.4km from Whitecross, settlement- or neighbourhood-level provision should be a priority if a quality survey of the remaining open space confirms underprovision, and community consultation should inform location and design.
- The strategy, in terms of typology provision, should be to focus on improving provision of and/ or access to natural/ semi-natural open space, and providing village park facilities, as a priority.
- Increasing provision in Whitecross should consider: resolving potential underprovision to semi-natural greenspace, improving the quality and educational value of site 81; and creating a village park facility, potentially through changes to the design and characteristics of site 81 and extending it to connect to site 80 and surroundings.
- Future open space provision in new development will be necessary to meet quantity, quality and accessibility standards in the SIRR.

- Implement local biodiversity 'toolkit' for the settlement and other un-surveyed neighbourhood-level spaces.
- Maximise opportunities for green linkages along the burn and railway corridors, ensuring appropriate conservation and management for natural heritage and biodiversity benefits.