

**Station: Oban**  
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## 1 Executive Summary

This document sets out the Station Travel Plan for Oban, which is being delivered through ScotRail's wider Station Travel Plans programme. The programme aims to improve station patronage, deliver enhancements to rail station facilities and onward connectivity, and promote and facilitate the role of rail stations in driving forward economic development, supported by strong community involvement.

### 1.1 Strategic Context

Oban rail station is the terminus for one branch of the West Highland Line. All services from Oban station are operated by Abellio ScotRail. It is served by seven trains per day Monday to Saturday; six of which serve Glasgow Queen Street, with a typical journey time of just over three hours, and one of which is an afternoon Oban to Dalmally service, with a typical journey time of 44 minutes. On Sundays, there are four train services between Oban and Glasgow Queen Street in the summer, and three in the winter.

In 2017, Caledonian Sleeper introduced a new bus service between Crianlarich in central Scotland and Oban in partnership with West Coast Motors, offering a more efficient connection for Sleeper passengers to the west coast. The bus, which is funded by Transport Scotland and initially operating on a 14-week trial, enables passengers at Crianlarich to connect directly to Oban without the need to wait for a connecting rail service. It is understood that Caledonian Sleeper has aspirations to look at similar initiatives going forward.

Patronage at Oban grew by 61% between 2006-07 and 2015-16, with year-on-year variations of between -5.4% between 2008-09 and 2009-10 and 32% between 2013-14 and 2014-15.

The station is located in the town centre, adjacent to Oban Harbour. Oban is known as the 'Gateway to the Isles' and the ferry terminal at Oban Harbour offers connections to destinations in the Inner and Outer Hebrides such as the islands of Mull, Barra and Tiree, serving approximately 500,000 passengers per year. The station is also in close proximity to the bus station and local restaurants and retail facilities, and in walking distance of major tourist attractions in the surrounding area such as McCaig's Tower. Oban is also the start point for the Oban to Fort William section of Route 78 (Caledonia Way) on the National Cycle Network.

The rail station is built at street level and the main entrance is accessed via Station Square on Station Road. There are two platforms in total (Platform 3 and Platform 4), which can be accessed via the station concourse. Platform 3 is the main platform and used for the majority of train arrivals and departures, and Platform 4 is only used during the summer months. Access to both platforms is step-free.

The station is a focal point for the major Oban town centre regeneration project delivered by Argyll and Bute Council in 2016. The scheme focused on the regeneration of Station Square, to make Oban a more attractive place for residents, visitors, and inward investment. The Station Travel Plan offers an opportunity to add value to these improvements and to address any outstanding issues.

In addition, the future importance of the station is highly recognised. Firstly, both Argyll and Bute Council and HITRANS have proposed options for improving the interchange at Oban transport hub, in particular the interchange between rail and ferry services, with the rail station acting as a key focal point. Secondly, the Draft Oban Action Plan (2012) published by Argyll and Bute Council states that the creation of an improved interchange in Oban will help to alleviate traffic congestion in the town centre, by increasing the attractiveness of non-car modes. The Station Travel Plan will identify measures which can support these proposals.

The overall role of the Station Travel Plan is to further increase the importance of the station in the sustainable development of the wider town, with a focus on the visitor and tourism economy.

1.2 Drivers for Station Travel Plan Development

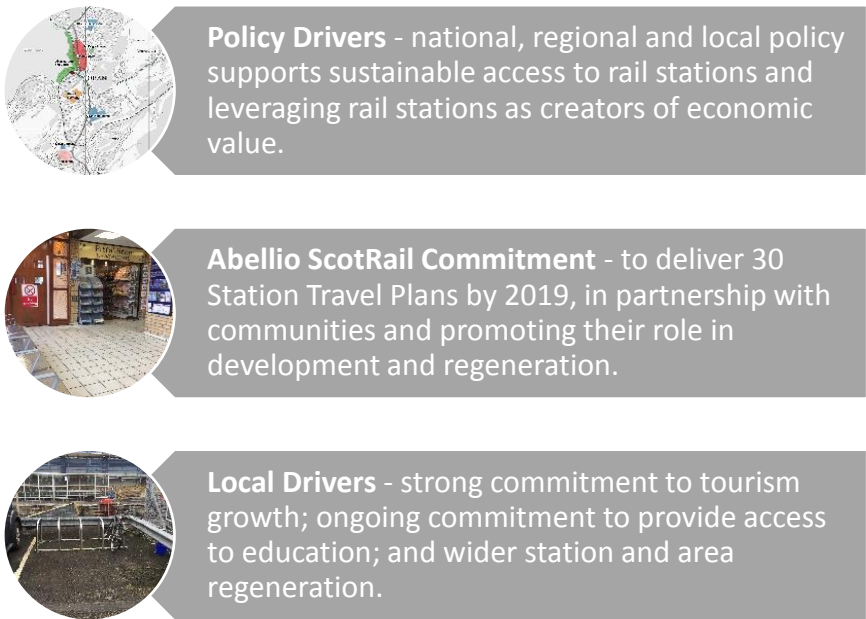
Station Travel Plans are a tool designed to improve connectivity to and from a rail station, setting out a package of behavioural, operational and infrastructure measures to promote and facilitate effective access, with a focus on sustainable modes such as walking, cycling and public transport. Importantly, they also perform a much wider role in recognising the importance of a rail station in driving forward sustainable economic and community development, particularly in areas where there is forecast growth in the residential, employment and visitor markets.

Station Travel Plans provide a mechanism through which the activities of public and private stakeholders can be brought together to achieve these and other common goals, including:

- Increasing passenger satisfaction;
- Supporting access to employment, education and training opportunities;
- Delivering sustainable growth in rail patronage;
- Supporting local and strategic plans for growth and economic development;
- Adding value to work already carried out by community groups; and
- Contributing to wider objectives around health, social equality, and sustainable development.

The key drivers for Station Travel Plan development at Oban station are illustrated in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Key Drivers for Oban Station Travel Plan



1.3 Setting the Vision, Ambition and Objectives

A series of strategic objectives have been developed for Oban Station Travel Plan, which provide a basis for identifying the proposed measures. These have been developed based on consideration of the strategic context of the station, the passenger markets it serves, existing developments and

initiatives where there are the greatest opportunities to add value and the role that the Travel Plan will play in the ongoing development of Oban.

The objectives are as follows:

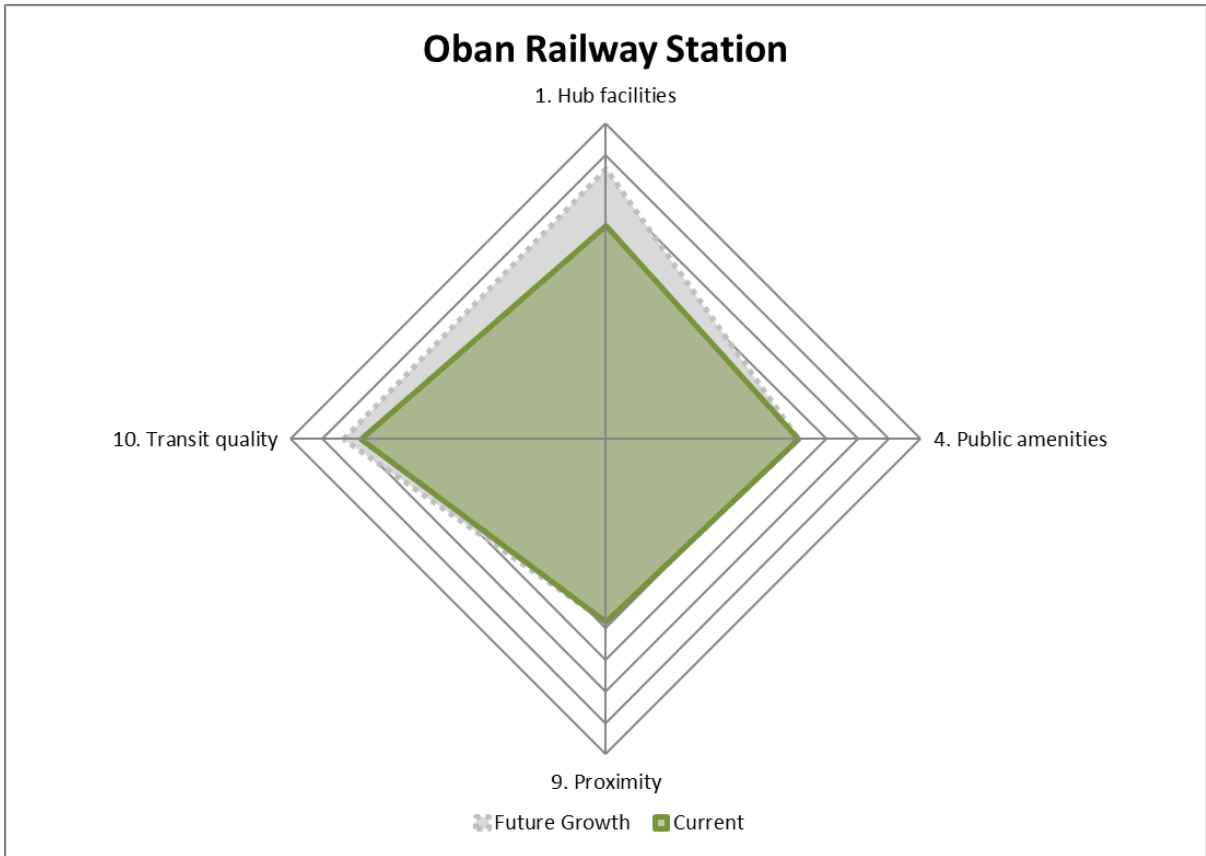
- To support initiatives that improve ferry/rail integration within the town, making it easier for people to transfer from rail onto ferry (and other public transport modes) and vice versa for longer distance connecting journeys and promoting the bus/rail/ferry stations as a key public transport interchange in the town centre.
- To support continued growth in patronage at the station, particularly amongst the visitor market.
- To further promote Oban as a desirable tourist destination in itself, rather than only as a gateway to the western isles, and to promote rail as the mode of choice for visitors to Oban and the surrounding area.
- To provide passengers travelling on the West Highland Line with an enjoyable and memorable experience that reflects the significance of the route as one of the world's most scenic rail journeys.
- To complement existing travel planning initiatives and investment in active modes in the local area, providing a tool that links these initiatives together to increase the use of sustainable modes.
- To promote and facilitate walking and cycling as the 'modes of choice' for short trips to and from the station, and to support improvements to station facilities and information provision to encourage the use of these modes.
- To bring together local stakeholders to develop wider travel planning initiatives in Oban, particularly major employers, aligning with their travel plans and introducing area wide initiatives to achieve common goals.
- To maximise the contribution made by community and voluntary groups to developing, implementing, and managing the Station Travel Plan and wider initiatives, with a strong sense of community 'ownership'.

Fundamental to the successful development and ongoing implementation of the Station Travel Plan is a sense of ownership amongst the local community. As set out in this document, an extensive stakeholder engagement programme has been undertaken, which not only provides information and evidence on the key issues and opportunities that the Travel Plan can address, but also supports capacity building that will then create legacy going forward.

Identifying the key values of a station or transit hub can help to unlock its overall potential, by analysing existing performance against a series of indicators and identifying the scope and level of ambition for improvement. A Station Travel Plan and its constituent measures can then help to fill in the gaps between the existing situation and the target situation.

This approach, which is known as MODE (Mobility Oriented Development), assesses the quality of key elements of transit developments and ranks them against a benchmarked selection of the world's leading transit related developments using a Mobility Oriented Development Index (MODex). An initial MODex analysis has been undertaken for Oban, using the adapted version of MODex to help assess the current position according to four key indicators that are considered appropriate for a station of its size and context: Hub Facilities, Transit Quality, Public Amenities, and Proximity. The initial MODex analysis for Oban station is illustrated in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Initial MODex Analysis for Oban Station



The station currently scores well for Transit Quality and relatively well for Hub Facilities and Public Amenities. The future growth aspirations for Oban station have been identified to allow a MODex analysis to be completed for the future situation. This was used to identify where the gaps between the current and future growth aspirations lie, which supported the development of the Travel Plan measures in terms of the key focus areas.

Aspirations for Proximity and Transit Quality are limited for a station of the size and strategic context of Oban; however, there are areas where growth can be targeted in terms of Hub Facilities and Public Amenities. Greater and more secure cycle parking, as well as improvements to wayfinding through the transit hub have been identified as particular areas for improvement.

1.4 Key Issues and Opportunities

The key issues and opportunities that the Station Travel Plan can help to address have been identified through the development of a comprehensive evidence base that has been developed according to the results of a station and ‘last mile’ site audit, passenger travel surveys, stakeholder engagement interviews, a stakeholder workshop and desktop research.

The most pressing key issues that the Station Travel Plan can help to address have been identified as:

- A lack of information about what Oban can offer in terms of visitor attractions and shopping and leisure facilities, especially for people visiting for the first time.



- Insufficient directional signage between the train station, ferry terminal, bus station and town centre.
- Insufficient timetable integration between certain bus, rail and ferry services, resulting in inter-modal connection times which are either too long or too short. For example, rail/ferry integration to Mull is considered to be good; however, rail/ferry integration train times for Coll, Tiree and Barra are not considered to be as convenient due to long connection times between the two modes.
- Lack of sufficient pedestrian crossings and walkways between the train station, ferry terminal, bus station and town centre.
- The increasing demand on public transport services caused by the growing tourism sector in Oban.
- Poor first impressions of Oban for first time visitors, due to a lack of sense of arrival at the station and a perceived 'unwelcoming feeling'.
- Limited car parking provision in Oban, which is considered to be insufficient for demand during the summer months, especially parking which is free of charge.
- Poor cycle parking facilities at the station.

The key opportunities for the Station Travel Plan are:

- Promote walking and cycling as 'modes of choice' for travel to and from the station by improving the pedestrian routes and cycle parking facilities at the station, and improving and promoting bike hire services within the town centre, particularly to visitors arriving by rail.
- Re-brand Oban as a tourist destination in itself, as well as continuing to promote its role as the gateway to the western isles, building on the existing promotional activity undertaken by ScotRail, VisitScotland and other organisations.
- Better inform visitors of onward travel options within the station through the provision of improved information regarding cycling, walking, car hire and ferry services.
- Ensure rail user needs are reflected through Argyll and Bute's proposed car park audit of Oban.
- Create a better physical integration between the rail station, bus station, ferry terminal and city centre by improving direction signage between each.
- Improve linkages with Oban and Glasgow airports.
- Add value to the new Station Square regeneration project.
- Improve the 'welcoming' feeling of the station by providing a 'Welcome to Oban' sign.
- Exploit the growing tourism sector with the 'Gateway to the Isles' and nearby National Cycle Routes.
- Remove unnecessary clutter from Oban station and Oban town centre.
- Improve safety at night in the area surrounding the station by introducing ScotRail's 'Station Friends' service.
- Provide a designated area for car passenger drop-off and pick-up outside the station.



- Improve ease of access to Oban's Shopmobility service in order that rail users can access equipment directly at the station, and promote accordingly.
- To better inform visitors of local attractions in the surrounding area within the station.

The following quick wins have been observed:

- Provide covered, higher quality cycle parking spaces at the station.
- Improved provision of onward travel information regarding cycle routes, ferry services, car hire and bike hire services within the station.
- Joint marketing and promotion between rail, bus and ferry services, and local tourist attractions.
- Provide more information at the station about the local area, especially tourist attractions and how to reach them.
- Implement ScotRail's 'Station Friends' scheme in Oban.
- Review timetables between transport services from Oban to identify how they could be better integrated.
- Review and identify potential improvements to pedestrian crossings between the rail station, ferry terminal, bus station and town centre.

These issues will require co-ordinated working between a number of stakeholders to identify the most appropriate solutions.

Longer term actions could focus on identifying and support infrastructure improvements to the local pedestrian environment surrounding the station. However, it is recognised that this could require a significant funding commitment.

## 1.5 Action Plan

A detailed Action Plan has been developed, that sets out the measures that will be implemented through the Station Travel Plan to address the key issues and achieve the objectives. The Action Plan covers the period of the current ScotRail franchise, which runs until March 2022. For each action, the timescale for implementation is set out, alongside details of the stakeholders responsible for implementation and potential funding sources.

The actions contain a blend of 27 behavioural, operational and infrastructure measures that have been grouped into five categories to address the identified key issues:

### Communications, Information Provision and Awareness Raising:

1. Strategic Communications
2. Real-Time Bus/Rail/Ferry Information
3. Enhanced Visitor Experience
4. Enhanced Onward Travel Information
5. Local Cycle Facilities Promotion
6. Cycle Route Promotion
7. Glasgow Airport/Oban Integration
8. Short Interchange Visits to Oban

- 9. Interactive Travel Map
- 10. Re-Timing Visitor Trips

#### Enhanced Mode Choice:

- 11. Bus/Rail/Ferry Timetable Coordination
- 12. PlusBus
- 13. Oban Airport Bus Services

#### Infrastructure Enhancements:

- 14. Station Cycle Parking Improvements/Active Travel Hub
- 15. Local Cycle Parking Enhancement
- 16. Bus/ Rail/ Ferry Physical Integration
- 17. Town Centre Presentation
- 18. Station Concourse Presentation
- 19. Pedestrian Environment in Town Centre
- 20. Station Parking
- 21. Car Drop-Off and Pick-Up Facilities
- 22. Station Environment

#### Partnership and Coordinated Working

- 23. Parking in Oban
- 24. Shopmobility Promotion & Enhancement

#### Station Facilities, Safety and Security

- 25. Station Friends
- 26. Boarding Control Gate
- 27. Station Toilet Opening Times

A robust ongoing management and monitoring regime will be put in place to ensure that the Station Travel Plan remains effective going forward. The ScotRail Station Travel Plans programme places significant emphasis on stakeholder and wider community involvement and ownership, and it is intended that this document becomes a living plan that is implemented by an Oban Station Travel Plan Management Group that also takes responsibility for monitoring and refreshing the objectives and measures on an annual basis.

## 2 Station Travel Plan Overview

### 2.1 What is a Station Travel Plan?

Station Travel Plans are a tool designed to improve access to and from rail stations, which set out a package of measures that promote and facilitate the use of sustainable modes, including walking, cycling, public transport and car sharing. STPs provide a mechanism for working collaboratively and coordinating the activities of stakeholders, helping to complement, and inform local plan making processes whilst delivering on a number of transport-related and wider economic and social objectives, including:

- Increasing rail passenger satisfaction;
- Supporting access to employment, education and training opportunities;
- Delivering sustainable growth in rail patronage, helping to support the business case for station redevelopment and improvement schemes;
- Supporting local and strategic plans for growth and economic development, promoting rail as the mode of choice for longer distance journeys to accommodate growth in the demand for travel;
- Adding value to work already carried out by community groups such as transport improvement schemes, safety campaigns and social equality initiatives; and
- Contributing to the achievement of wider objectives around health, social equality, and sustainable development.

A Station Travel Plan can help to lever in funding for standalone or complementary projects that add value to existing initiatives, supporting the business case for grant funding applications and the use of developer funding for transport improvements through Section 75 agreements.

### 2.2 Why Do We Need Station Travel Plans?

Station Travel Plans help to identify and understand local circumstances and wider strategic issues that impact on local peoples' transport choices. Some key triggers are:

- Station access issues that act as a barrier to growth;
- Potential opportunities to increase local customer demand for sustainable forms of travel;
- Links to housing, employment, and other proposed developments in the local area;
- Potential opportunities for small but significant changes to walking and cycling routes near to the station; and
- Stimulating stakeholder interest and support for improvements, especially from local authorities, station groups and community representatives.

Enhancing the mode choice for journeys to and from the station in order to reduce unnecessary private car use forms one part of the development and implementation of Oban Station Travel Plan, supported by other measures that will help people to consider how best to make their journey. The Travel Plan adopts the '5Rs' approach to travel demand management, which encourages people to:

- **'Re-think'** the rationale behind their travel choices;
- **'Re-mode'** to more sustainable alternatives;

- **'Re-duce'** the need to travel on a routine basis;
- **'Re-time'** journeys to avoid the busiest periods; and
- **'Re-route'** journeys to maximise road safety and route convenience.

These concepts were integrated into the rationale for the measures proposed in the Action Plan.

## 2.3 What is in a Station Travel Plan?

Key elements of a Station Travel Plan document can include:

- Solutions to help specific journey types involving an interchange i.e. bus to rail;
- Identification of sustainable alternatives that can reduce single occupancy car use;
- Mechanisms for ongoing partnership working, from informal coordination through to legally binding Service Level Agreements (SLAs);
- An Action Plan to promote sustainable travel, improve the passenger experience and increase rail patronage;
- Helping funders identify and commit future resources towards improvements; and
- Providing a framework for coordinating specific elements of local transport and development plans.

The remainder of this document sets out the strategic context in which Oban Station Travel Plan has been developed, the evidence base that underpins the measures and the Action Plan for implementation.

## 3 Strategic Objectives

### 3.1 Station Travel Plan Objectives

A series of strategic objectives have been developed for Oban Station Travel Plan, which provide a basis for identifying the proposed measures. These have been developed based on consideration of the strategic context of the station, the passenger markets it serves, existing developments and initiatives where there are the greatest opportunities to add value and the role that the Travel Plan will play in the ongoing development of Oban.

The objectives are as follows:

- To support initiatives that improve ferry/rail integration within the town, making it easier for people to transfer from rail onto ferry (and other public transport modes) and vice versa for longer distance connecting journeys and promoting the bus/rail/ferry stations as a key public transport interchange in the town centre.
- To support continued growth in patronage at the station, particularly amongst the visitor markets.
- To further promote Oban as a desirable tourist destination in itself, rather than only as a gateway to the western isles, and to promote rail as the mode of choice for visitors to Oban and the surrounding area.
- To provide passengers travelling on the West Highland Line with an enjoyable and memorable experience that reflects the significance of the route as one of the world's most scenic rail journeys.
- To complement existing travel planning initiatives and investment in active modes in the local area, providing a tool that links these initiatives together to increase the use of sustainable modes.
- To promote and facilitate walking and cycling as the 'modes of choice' for short trips to and from the station, and to support improvements to station facilities and information provision to encourage the use of these modes.
- To bring together local stakeholders to develop wider travel planning initiatives in Oban, particularly major employers, aligning with their travel plans and introducing area wide initiatives to achieve common goals.
- To maximise the contribution made by community and voluntary groups to developing, implementing, and managing the Station Travel Plan and wider initiatives, with a strong sense of community 'ownership'.

### 3.2 Action Planning - SMART Objectives

The measures contained within the Action Plan have been assessed to ensure that they are SMART to be able to withstand scrutiny and the test of time. Each action is therefore:

**S – Specific:** Measures are relevant to the context, clear, concise and without ambiguity;

**M – Measurable:** The ability to be able to assess the success of implementing each measure;

**A – Achievable:** Ensuring that the proposed measures can be adopted in reality;

**R – Realistic:** The measures can be funded and would receive support and backing; and

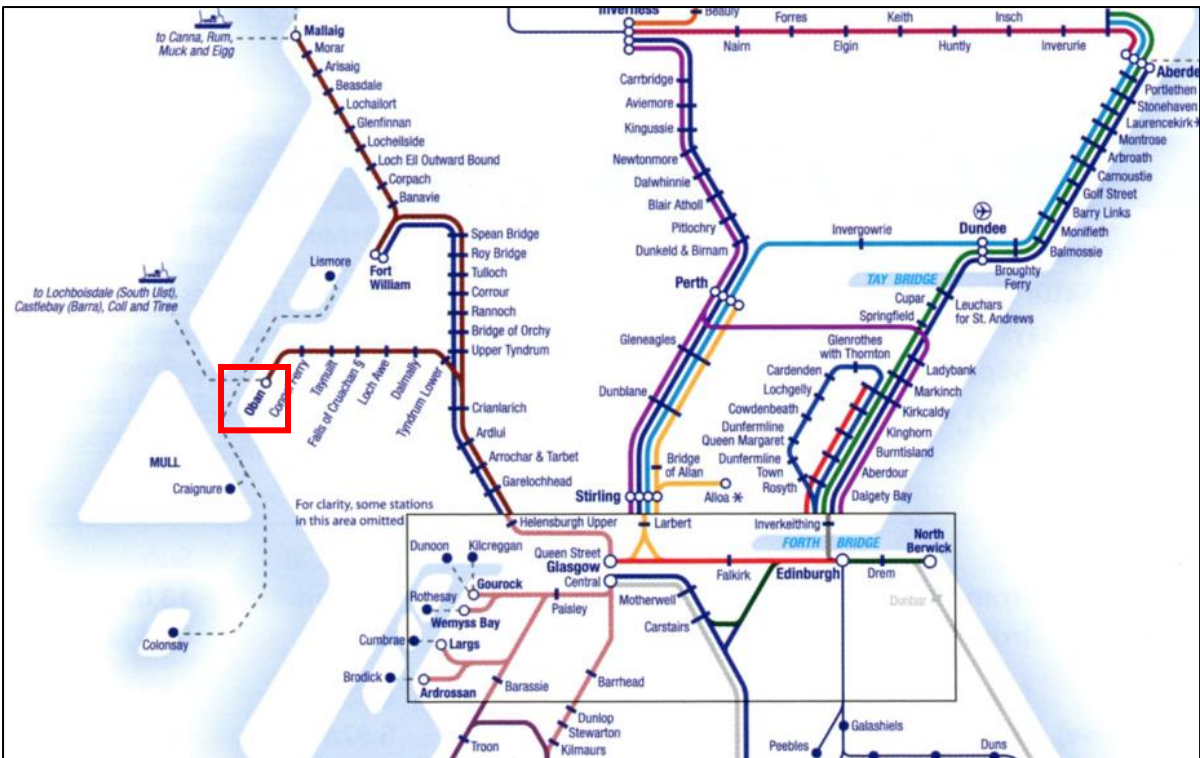
**T – Time Based:** A set timeframe is identified for the implementation of each measure.

## 4 Strategic Context

### 4.1 Oban Station

Oban station is the terminus of one branch of the West Highland Line as shown in Figure 3. It is situated just over one-hundred miles north-west of Glasgow Queen Street by rail. All services from Oban station are operated by Abellio ScotRail. It is served by seven trains per day Monday to Saturday; six of which operate between Glasgow Queen Street and Oban, with a typical journey time of just over three hours, and one of which operates in the afternoon from Oban to Dalmally, with a typical journey time of approximately 44 minutes. The afternoon Dalmally service was introduced by ScotRail to fulfil the need for local students to travel to school, and the subsidy was moved from bus to rail by Argyll & Bute Council and HITRANS accordingly. On Sundays, four trains travel to and from Glasgow Queen Street in the summer, and three in the winter.

Figure 3: ScotRail Network Map: Oban Services



In 2017, Caledonian Sleeper introduced a new bus service between Crianlarich in central Scotland and Oban in partnership with West Coast Motors. The bus, which is funded by Transport Scotland and initially operating on a 14-week trial, enables passengers at Crianlarich to connect directly to Oban without the need to wait for a connecting rail service. It provides a more efficient connection for Sleeper passengers to the west coast and onwards to the isles via connecting ferry services.

Table 1 shows the annual changes in patronage (entries and exits) at Oban station over the period 2006-07 to 2015-16. Overall, there has been a growth in patronage of 61% between 2006-07 and 2015-16, although this varies significantly from -5.4% between 2008-09 and 2009-10 and +32% between 2013-14 and 2014-15. It is considered that the growth over the period 2013-14 to 2014-15 was a result of significant service enhancements at Oban that were introduced in May 2014. Daily train services



between Oban and Glasgow were doubled from three to six services, following a new partnership agreement between ScotRail, HITRANS and Argyll and Bute Council. The additional early morning service, which arrives at Oban before 09:00, and additional afternoon services enable school children to travel to and from schools in Oban by train from towns in the wider area, such as Dalmally, Taynait, and Connel Ferry.

Table 1: Oban Station Patronage Data, 2006-07 to 2015-16

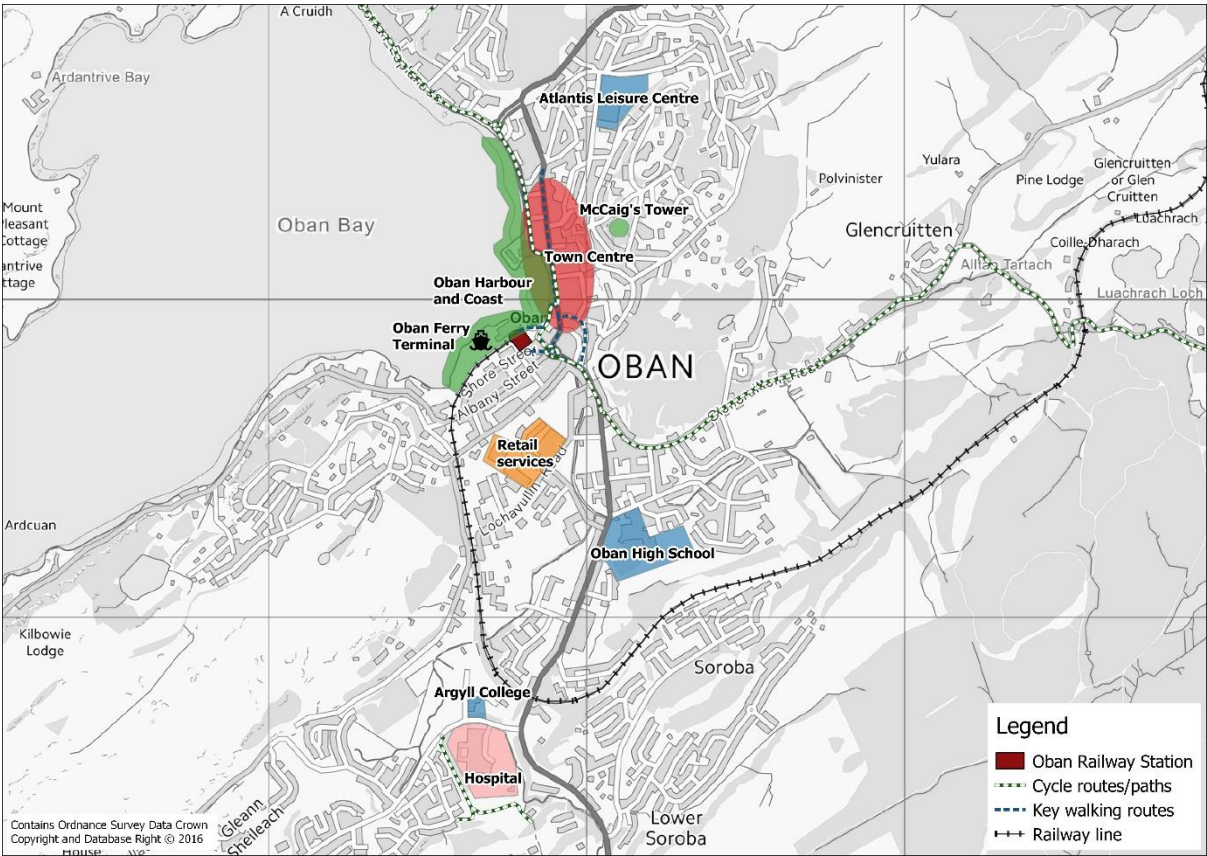
Year	Total Passengers	Percentage Change (%)
2006-2007	109,053	-
2007-2008	108,903	-0.1
2008-2009	126,676	16.3
2009-2010	119,876	-5.4
2010-2011	121,746	1.6
2011-2012	125,900	3.4
2012-2013	122,568	-2.6
2013-2014	129,311	5.5
2014-2015	170,682	32.0
2015-2016	176,104	3.2

Source: Office of Rail and Road

Oban station is built at street level, and the main entrance is located just off Station Road via Station Square. There are two platforms in total; labelled Platform 3 and Platform 4. The main platform is Platform 3, and this platform provides seating and shelter and is used for most train arrivals and departures. Platform 4 is narrower, although it is still considered to be accessible for passengers using wheelchairs and pushchairs. It has no station furniture and is only used on a Sunday during the summer months. Both platforms can be accessed via the main station concourse.

Figure 4 shows the location of the station in the wider town in relation to key trip attractors. The station is situated at the edge of the town centre and to the southeast of Oban Harbour and Oban Ferry Terminal, which is approximately a two-minute walk from the station. The station also lies within a short walk from the shopping centre, the leisure centre, and Oban High School, and within a 20-minute walk of Argyll College Campus and the Lorn & Islands District General Hospital.

Figure 4: Oban Station – Strategic Context



The main concourse area offers a number of facilities, including a ticket office, customer toilets (including a disabled toilet), luggage trolleys, a convenience shop, and lockers (Figure 5). The station is staffed between 05:00 and 20:36 Monday to Saturday, and between 10:45 and 18:11 on Sunday. The toilet facilities are only accessible to ScotRail customers and are open 15 minutes before and after a train is due to arrive or depart.

Figure 5: Oban Station Concourse Facilities



Bus services can be accessed directly outside the entrance to the rail station at Station Square. Additional bus shelters (Figure 6) were installed in 2016 as part of wider public realm improvements to Station Square delivered by Argyll and Bute Council. The buses serve a range of locations in the wider area such as Dalmally, Taynuilt, Dalavich, Connel and Fort William, and operate between 06:15 and 22:20. The bus service to Dalmally also integrates with the CityLink services to major Scottish cities including Glasgow, Edinburgh, Perth and Dundee. At the bus station, as well as paper timetables, Real Time Information (RTI) is provided for bus services. There are also plans to install a large, totem-style RTI board at Station Square, which will include real time information for train, ferry and bus services. There is also a taxi rank provided at the entrance to the station, just off Station Road. During the station audit, the taxi rank was observed to be well served by taxis.

**Figure 6: Bus Stops in Station Square**



Accessibility at the station itself is generally good. The station is built at street level and can be accessed through automatic doors with wheelchair accessible buttons. Step-free access is available throughout the station and there are ramps available on both platforms to allow customers with mobility problems to access the train. Additionally, the ticket office counters are height adjustable, to provide easier access for wheelchair users.

However, access to the station itself may cause an issue for some passengers. Firstly, there are no crossing points from the north side of Station Road to Station Square. Additionally, Station Square itself is shared space and has a lack of tactile paving which may present an issue for people who are visually impaired. Other issues identified for people with visual impairments include the presence of cleaning trolleys at the station entrance, which can present a trip hazard, and there is a lack of clearly defined walk routes and waiting areas within the station, which is particular an issue when the station is crowded.

Shopmobility services are not directly available at the rail station. The closest service is offered at Mathesons Furnishings on Soroba Road, approximately 0.6 miles from the station. This is around a 13-minute walk for someone without mobility problems, or a bus service is available from Station Road, which takes approximately 7 minutes.

On-site car parking is provided on the western side of the main rail station building and can be accessed via Station Road. There are fifty-two parking spaces, two of which are for blue badge holders. At the time of the station audit in winter, the car park was approximately three quarters full, although feedback



from stakeholders suggests that during the summer, the car park is generally full. A tariff of £3 per day is levied; however, this can be reclaimed if the driver is a rail passenger, or leaves the car park within 30 minutes of entering. In the car park, there is a parking ticket validation machine for rail passengers. Stakeholder feedback has identified an issue with the car park barrier in that on occasions it will not raise if the car park is full, even if blue badge spaces are still available. There is an intercom system to request access; however, stakeholders feel it would be beneficial if the barrier could grant access to those spaces.

Cycle parking is available within the station car park, as shown in Figure 7. Five bike stands are provided, which accommodate ten bikes. The facility is overlooked by CCTV. However, both the location and quality of the facility are considered to be poor, with the unsheltered stands located at the far end of the car park away from the station building. This may discourage people from cycling to and from the station, particularly given the fact that there is limited cycle storage capacity on train services to and from Oban. At the time of the site audit, there was only one bike using the facility.

**Figure 7: Cycle Parking Facilities in the Station Car Park**



Signage within the station is generally adequate; however, a number of issues have been identified in terms of directional signage for passengers leaving the station. Signage for cyclists is available outside the station, which provides directions towards the Caledonian way cycle route. However, this is not immediately clear on arrival at the station and cannot be seen from platform level. Pedestrian signage towards the ferry terminal is limited. At the station, small signs direct travellers towards the terminal; however, it is considered that these may not be clearly visible to disembarking passengers. The signage directs travellers to walk through the station car park, and through a small gate that provides access to the ferry terminal. However, the dedicated pedestrian walkway only covers half of this route and there is no intermediate signage between the station and the ferry terminal. This is particularly challenging for people with visual impairment due to the potential for conflict with vehicles. Feedback from HITRANS suggests that the station car park is also used by commercial vehicles accessing nearby businesses, which increases the potential for pedestrian/vehicle conflict. There is an alternative, quicker pedestrian route along a side street which connects the station car park to the ferry terminal. This would align better with observed pedestrian desire lines; however, this is not the route indicated by existing signage.

## 4.2 The Role of the Station in the Wider Town

The rail station plays a key role in the wider town in terms of supporting sustainable access to Glasgow, the West Highlands and islands and the wider local area. The station acts as a key interchange with the adjacent ferry terminal at Oban Harbour, which offers connections to destinations in the Inner and Outer Hebrides such as the islands of Mull, Barra and Tiree, via Caledonian MacBrayne (CalMac) ferry services. Information provided by Argyll and Bute Council suggests that passenger numbers for the ferry terminal are in the region of 500,000 passengers per year. The station also acts as an interchange for the bus station, which offers services to locations in the wider local area such as Dunbeg, Oban Airport and Fort William, as well a connecting service to integrate with the CityLink to Glasgow, Dundee, Perth, and Edinburgh.

The overall vision for Oban station, and the wider town centre, as set out in regional and local policy, is to increase station usage by enhancing station facilities and providing a more welcoming atmosphere, improve physical connectivity within the town centre and beyond, by encouraging active travel (walking and cycling) and the use of public transport, and to re-brand Oban as a destination in itself, as well as a gateway to the western isles.

There is a strategic opportunity to build on the success of existing visitor promotional campaigns. The West Highland Line is considered to be one of the most scenic rail journeys in the world, and the highlights along the route are already promoted by ScotRail. A number of travel passes and ticketing discounts are offered, including the Spirit of Scotland and Highland Rover travel passes and the Rail & Sail and Kids Go Free tickets.

The future importance of the station is highly recognised by Argyll and Bute Council in its published policy and strategy documents. The station's central position between the town centre, the bus station, retail services and Oban Harbour offers an opportunity for the rail station to support economic development and act as a focal point for community activity. The Appraisal of Options to Improve Interchange at Oban Transport Hub (2009) identified Oban station as a key focal point for improving interchange between transport modes in Oban. Furthermore, the Draft Oban Action Plan (2012) highlights that the creation of an improved interchange in Oban will help to alleviate traffic congestion in the town centre, by increasing the attractiveness of non-car modes.

The station is also of central importance to Argyll and Bute Council's multi-million-pound Oban town centre regeneration scheme, which was completed in 2016. The scheme focused on the regeneration of Station Square, aiming to make Oban a more attractive place for residents, visitors and investors. Improvements delivered as part of the scheme include additional seating, three additional bus shelters on Station Square, and Real Time Information (RTI) display boards in all five bus shelters on Station Square. There are other future plans for development in Oban and the wider area. A new 80-bedroom Premier Inn is under construction adjacent to the station and a thirty-six berth transit marina facility is planned. Argyll and Bute Council also plans to install a totem-style RTI board for rail, bus, and ferry services at Station Square.

Feedback from the Station Travel Plan stakeholder workshop (discussed in more detail later in this report) suggests that the station can support local development by acting as a focal point for transport activity within the city. Currently, the lack of integration between the rail station, bus station and ferry terminal acts as a barrier to this. Additionally, feedback from the stakeholder workshop suggests that there is a huge opportunity to promote cycling as a 'mode of choice' for onward travel due to its location on Route 78 (Caledonia Way) of the National Cycle Network.

The station can also play a key role in promoting local events and attractions in the town to both locals and other rail passengers. The station is often the first point of call for first-time visitors to Oban, and this provides a great opportunity for the station to promote Oban as a tourist destination in itself. For example, the station can act as a key point of information provision in terms of 'what's on' in Oban, as well as provide information regarding the details of relevant local businesses and attractions such as McCaig's Tower and cycle hire shops.

The focus of the Station Travel Plan is to continue to enhance the role that the station plays in supporting visitor access to Oban and the surrounding area, with an emphasis on improving onward connectivity.

## 5 Station Travel Plan Drivers

### 5.1 National, Regional and Local Policy Drivers

At the national level, Scottish transport policy focuses on improving accessibility, with a focus on the delivery of a reliable, equitable transport system that supports sustainable economic growth. The development and implementation of Oban Station Travel Plan will support the delivery of the government's three Key Strategic Outcomes for Transport, as set out in the National Transport Strategy (January 2016):

- *Improved journey times and connections between our cities and towns and our global markets to tackle congestion and lack of integration and connections in transport* – by supporting increased patronage on the rail network, which in turn can help to make the case for increased services and investment in station and rail infrastructure;
- *Reduced emissions, to tackle climate change, air quality, health improvement* – by promoting rail and sustainable connections to rail e.g. walking, public transport and cycling through the Station Travel Plan, and implementing measures that make it realistic for people to make healthier, more sustainable travel choices; and
- *Improved quality, accessibility, and affordability, to give choice of public transport, better quality services and value for money, or alternative to car* – the Station Travel Plan and its associated measures will make rail travel a more appropriate and attractive mode for a wider audience, and help to ensure that rail travel is a realistic alternative to the car.

The 2016 refresh of the National Transport Strategy recognises the role that local communities should play in transport decision-making, in particular that resources be directed to priority town centre sites that have good accessibility by public transport, walking and cycling, in order to drive growth and development.

Oban Station Travel Plan also supports mode-specific policies at the national level, including the 2014 National Walking Strategy and the 2017-2020 Cycling Action Plan for Scotland. These strategies make the point that the benefits of active travel need to be more widely promoted, including not only the health and economic benefits but also the social benefits of stronger community building and placemaking that can be achieved through the provision of walking and cycling infrastructure.

At the regional level, the draft Transport Strategy for the Highlands and the Islands (HITRANS, 2017) sets out a number of strategic points that the Station Travel Plan can support, in particular, improving the quality, accessibility, availability, and integration of travel, and improving connectivity within the region. The Station Travel Plan can also help to address strategic points highlighted in the draft Regional Active Travel Strategy (HITRANS, 2016), in support of the overall vision to change travel behaviour by facilitating a modal shift towards more sustainable modes of transport across the region. In particular, the Station Travel Plan can highlight measures to support the marketing and promotion of active travel, an increased provision of walking and cycling infrastructure and public transport integration.

At the local level, the Argyll and Bute Local Development Plan (2015) sets out a number of strategic objectives which can be supported by the Oban Station Travel Plan, such as increased tourism, improved transport connectivity and infrastructure, and a reduced carbon footprint.



Additionally, at the local level, transport objectives set out in the Argyll and Bute Local Transport Strategy (2007-2010) can be supported by the Station Travel Plan. In particular, the Station Travel Plan can provide measures to address issues such as improving people's personal security and transport experience, as well as improving infrastructure for active travel.

## 5.2 Abellio ScotRail's Commitment to Station Travel Plans

As part of the new ScotRail franchise which commenced in 2015, Abellio committed to the delivery of 30 Station Travel Plans over the period to March 2019. Oban Station Travel Plan is being brought forward in 2017 as part of a package of eight Station Travel Plans in accordance with a framework and toolkit developed through the preparation of pilot plans for Motherwell and Johnstone stations in 2016.

Rather than simply adopt a traditional Station Travel Plans approach which focuses solely on encouraging and facilitating sustainable travel to and from the station, the Abellio programme has a much wider focus on the role that a Station Travel Plan can play in supporting wider growth and development, and in helping local communities to take ownership of that development in a sustainable way. This includes:

- Measures to support increased patronage and engaging with non-users of the station to identify measures to address suppressed demand;
- Reducing dependency on station car parks from existing station users to release space for current non-users;
- Integrating each station into its community, making best use of local volunteers and Local Authorities in Station Travel Plan development, ownership, and implementation;
- Identifying and promoting new development near stations, and emphasising the role that the station can play in accommodating travel needs;
- Attracting third party funding, including funding achieved through the planning process; and
- Influencing Local Transport Plans and wider local policy to promote rail usage and enhanced links to and from the station.

5.3 Local External Drivers

The local context in Oban also provides a number of drivers for Station Travel Plan development, as illustrated in Figure 8.

Figure 8: Local Station Travel Plan Drivers



## 6 Research and Emerging Themes

### 6.1 Overview

The evidence base for Oban Station Travel Plan has been developed based on the following key activities:

- A station site and area audit undertaken on 9<sup>th</sup> March 2017;
- Passenger travel surveys at the station undertaken on 24<sup>th</sup> May 2017 and 27<sup>th</sup> May 2017;
- Travel surveys undertaken with rail users and non-users via ballot boxes left at key stakeholders and visitor attractions within the town over the period May to July 2017;
- Stakeholder interviews undertaken over the period January to July 2017;
- A stakeholder workshop undertaken on 25<sup>th</sup> July 2017; and
- Desktop research, comprising policy review, identification of wider development proposals and schemes, review of existing Travel Plans in the local area and research into station patronage data.

Each activity is described in more detail below.

### 6.2 Site and Area Audit

A site and area audit was undertaken for the station itself and the key routes between the station and key trip attractors, in order to identify the key issues and opportunities for all user groups on a typical weekday.

Appendix A provides the full audit template and the audit write-up, and a summary of the issues examined is as follows:

- Station facilities e.g. retail, customer toilets, accessibility (including step-free access), seating areas;
- Onward travel facilities at the station e.g. travel information, cycle parking, cycle hire, bus/rail integration, car parking;
- Immediate station area e.g. accessibility for cyclists, pedestrians, public transport users, car users; and
- Key routes between the station and key trip attractors in terms of accessibility and facilities, reflecting popular movements and local patterns.

The focus of the audit was not to record every facility or piece of infrastructure in place, but rather to pinpoint the key issues and opportunities that the Station Travel Plan can help to address. The focus was on the quality of infrastructure and evidence of whether demand is adequately met by capacity.

The audit also identified businesses that could support Abellio's emerging 'Station Friends' programme; an initiative that offers a safe place of refuge to station users when the ticket office is closed, where they may need to wait for a connecting bus service/a lift home, or somewhere safe to make a telephone call and use the toilet facilities.

### 6.3 Travel Surveys

Passenger surveys were carried out on Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> May on the 08:21 rail service from Glasgow and then on the return service from Oban at 12:11. Passenger surveys were also carried out on Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> May, on the 08:21 service to Oban and the return service to Glasgow at 16:11. A total of 207 respondents were interviewed across the two survey days. It should be noted that surveys were not carried out with passengers under the age of eighteen; therefore, the survey responses do not capture students travelling to and from school.

The main objectives of the surveys were to identify the existing mode share of rail passengers for travel to and from the station, examine the reasons behind mode choice and identify potential areas of concern or areas for improvement in terms of the station and its facilities and the wider town centre. On-train rather than at-station surveys were required due to the relatively low frequency of rail services to and from Oban. It should therefore be noted that questions which ask a respondent about the station at which they boarded the train may not always relate to Oban station.

The weekday and weekend survey results have been analysed both together and separately, in order to capture any significant differences between the weekday and weekend passenger markets. A summary is provided here, and the full survey results are provided in Appendix B.

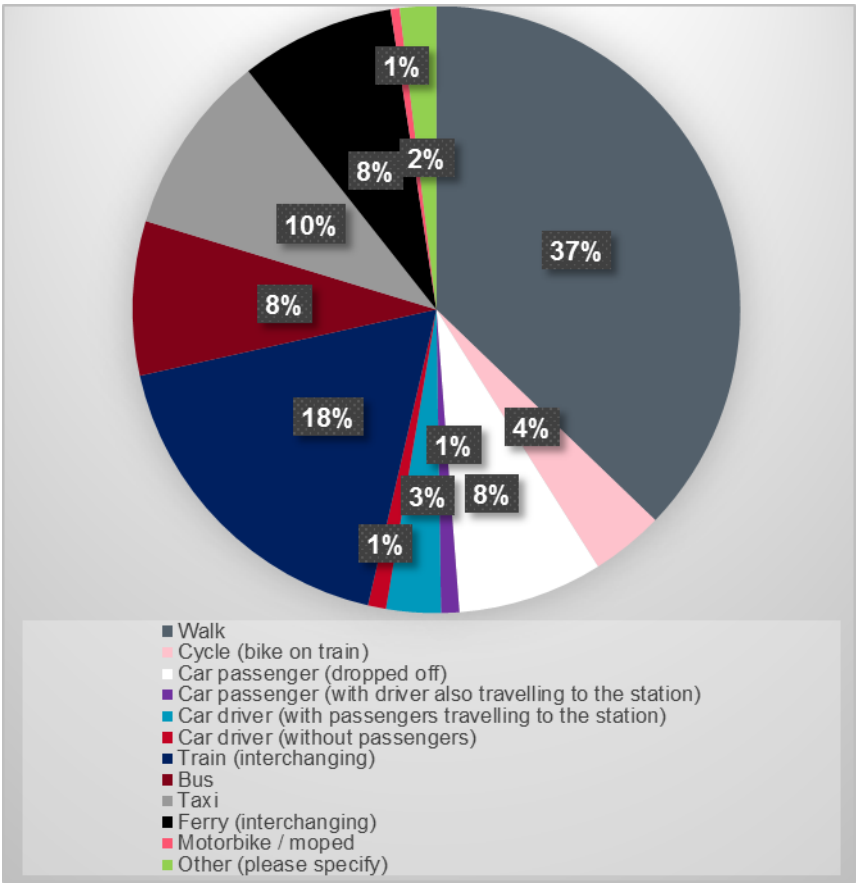
#### Combined Weekday and Weekend Survey Results

This section gives an overview of the combined weekend and weekday survey results.

Of the 207 respondents, the majority of respondents were travelling towards Oban at the time of the survey (145; 70%). The remaining respondents were travelling from Oban or subsequent stations (62; 30%).

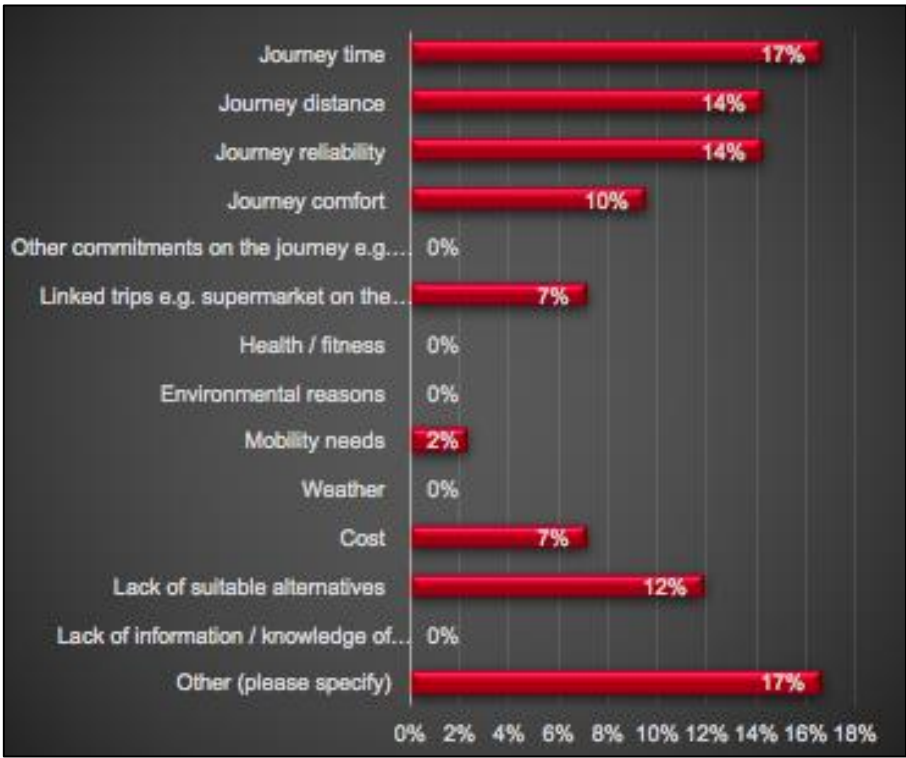
Figure 8 shows how respondents travelled to the station at which they boarded the train. The largest proportion (37%) stated that they walked to the station. A further 18% of respondents were interchanging trains, 10% travelled by taxi, 16% travelled by bus or ferry and 4% travelled by bike. Overall, only 13% of respondents stated that they travelled by car, either as a driver or a passenger.

Figure 8: Mode of Travel to the Station



In terms of the reasons behind travelling by car, the top three reasons given by respondents were journey time (17% of responses), journey distance (14% of responses) and journey reliability (14% of responses) (Figure 9). Additionally, 12% of respondents stated that there was a lack of suitable alternatives. 17% of responses were received for 'other' and these included reasons such as 'no other choice', 'enjoyment' and 'journey independence'.

Figure 9: Reasons Behind Using the Car



In terms of journey purpose, the majority (87%) of respondents were travelling for leisure purposes (including shopping, entertainment, visiting friends and family and day trips). Out of the 207 respondents, only 6% were travelling either to or from work or for business purposes and a further 3% were travelling for education purposes. It is known that the train is used by school children in Oban and the surrounding areas in place of a school bus; however, the surveys were only carried out with passengers over 18, hence the low education response rate.

Out of 207 respondents, the largest proportion of respondents were infrequent users of the train, travelling less frequently than 1 to 3 times per month (63%). Conversely, only 8% of respondents use the train 1 to 2 days a week and, 7% on 5 or more days a week and the remaining 3% use the train on 3 or 4 days per week.

Respondents were also asked whether anything could be improved about the station facilities or onward travel facilities at Oban. Out of the 50 respondents who boarded the train in Oban, 38% stated that nothing would improve their experience. Other responses included station car parking (8% of responses), station cycle parking (2% of responses), onward travel information (7% of responses) and integration of bus/rail/ ferry (8% of responses). 21% of responses were for 'other' and included toilet facilities, a larger station concourse area and device charging points at the station were mentioned.

46% of respondents stated that they interchanged with ferry services at Oban (total response rate for this question was 50). Out of the 46% of respondents who interchanged with ferry services at Oban, the majority (87%) were satisfied or very satisfied with the ease of the rail/ferry integration. The remaining 13% stated that they were either unsatisfied or very unsatisfied with the rail/ferry integration.

Respondents were also asked whether they had used the local cycle hire facilities on their visit to Oban. All 50 respondents who answered this question stated that they had not.

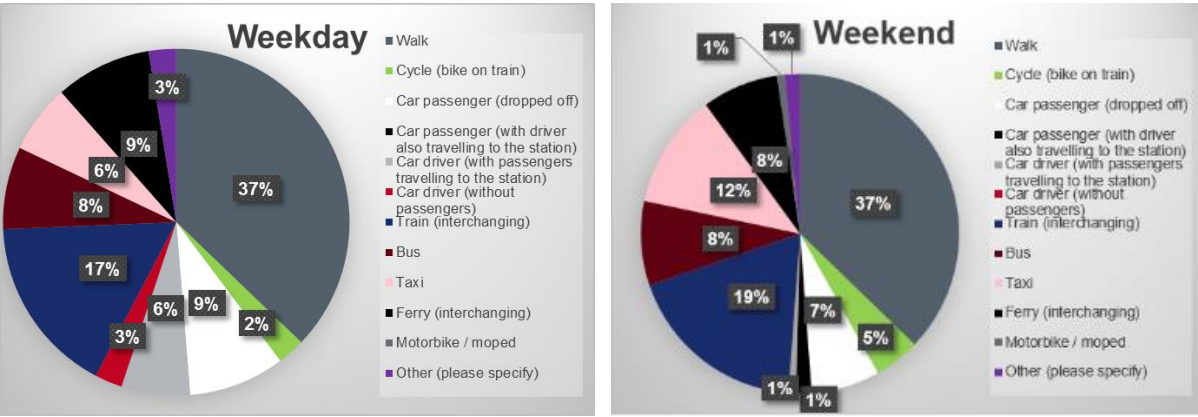
Comparison of Weekday and Weekend Survey Results

This section provides separate analysis of the weekday and weekend survey results. A total of 78 surveys were carried out on the weekday, and 129 surveys were carried out on the weekend.

During the weekend survey, a higher proportion of respondents were travelling towards Oban (78%, compared to 56% during the weekday survey). During the weekday survey, a higher proportion of respondents were travelling from Oban or subsequent stations (44%), compared to 22% during the weekend survey.

As shown in Figure 10, overall, on both weekdays and weekends, the majority of respondents walked to the station (37% and 37% respectively). Respondents from the weekday survey were more likely to travel by car (either as a driver or passenger); 9% more respondents travelled by car compared to the weekend survey. Additionally, weekend respondents had a higher incidence of taxi use (12% compared to 6% on a weekday). Cycle usage was more common amongst the weekend respondents, at 5% compared to 2% amongst weekday respondents.

Figure 10: Mode of Travel – Weekday/Weekend



During the weekday survey, the top three reasons for travelling to the station by the chosen mode were journey distance (29% of responses), journey time (22% of responses) and a lack of suitable alternatives (15% of responses). During the weekend survey, the most popular reason was journey comfort (22% of responses, compared to 7% of responses for the weekday survey).

Journey purpose did not differ considerably between the weekday and weekend surveys, with the majority of respondents travelling for leisure on the weekend (87%) and the weekday (86%). As would be expected, during the weekday survey, a higher proportion of respondents were travelling to or from work (5% compared to 2% at the weekend) and travelling on business (5% compared to 2% at the weekend).

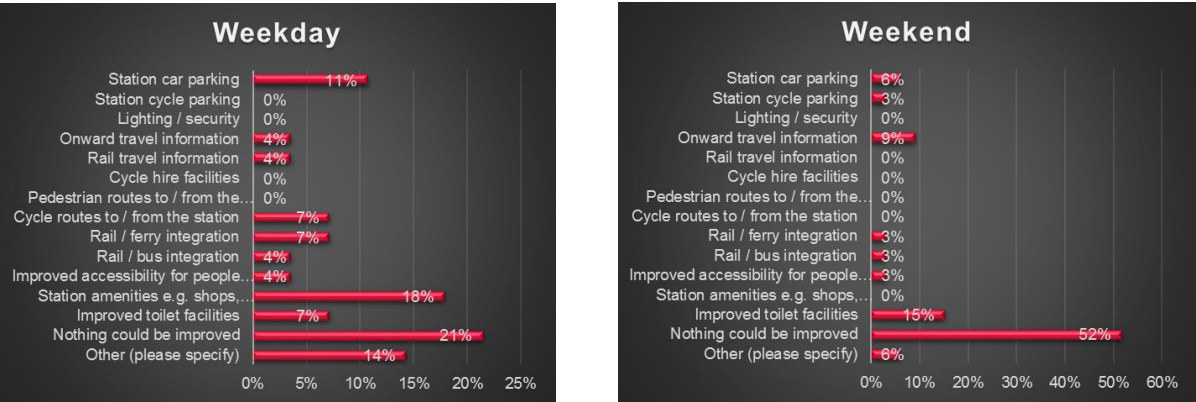
In terms of frequency of travel on the train, during the weekend, a higher proportion of respondents travel less frequently than 1 to 3 times a month (67%) when compared to the weekday survey results (56%). During the weekday, a higher proportion of respondents travel 1 to 2 days a week (14%), compared to the weekend survey results (5%).

Figure 11 shows the responses to the question regarding whether anything could be improved regarding the station facilities or onward travel. During the weekday survey, the top two responses were 'nothing could be improved' (21% of responses) and station amenities (18% of responses). 14% of responses were received for 'other', where half of the responses indicated an improved/larger concourse and the



others did not specify. Station car parking improvements also accounted for 11% of all responses. During the weekend survey, the most popular responses were ‘nothing could be improved’ (52% of responses) and ‘improved toilet facilities’ (15% of responses).

Figure 11: Improvements to Station – Weekday/Weekend



Respondents who interchanged with ferry services were asked how satisfied they were with the ease of rail and ferry integration (total response rate for this question was 50 respondents). During both the weekday and weekend surveys, the percentage share of respondents who were satisfied or very satisfied was very similar (total of 90% during the weekday survey and 84% during the weekend survey). 10% of weekday respondents were very unsatisfied, however, no weekend respondents chose this response. 15% of weekend respondents did however state that they were unsatisfied.

User and Non-User Field Surveys

Additional surveys were carried out at key trip attractors in Oban, to also capture the non-user market. The full results are provided in Appendix B and a summary is provided here. A total of 127 surveys were submitted; 45% were residents and the remaining 55% were either visitors or tourists.

9% of respondents stated that they almost always travel by rail to and from Oban, 25% regularly, 39% occasionally, 23% rarely and 7% never use rail. The most common forms of travel outside of Oban and the immediate area are car, train, and bus. In comparison, in terms of forms of travel within Oban and the immediate area, there is a greater reliance on car and walking, closely followed by bus and car share. These results indicate that there is scope to introduce active travel interventions to encourage modal shift, especially to further encourage mode shift away from single occupancy car use.

The respondents were also asked how they would travel, or currently do travel, to and from Oban station. The results show that walking (39%) is the most common mode of travel to Oban station, followed by car alone (23%) and car – dropped off/picked up (26%). When asked how easy it has been finding and getting around Oban, 35% of respondents found it ‘very easy’, whilst 47% found it ‘easy’, 4% found it ‘hard’ and 3% found it ‘very hard’. The mode choice for respondents travelling within Oban showed that nearly 67% of respondents most commonly walk, whilst 7% travel by car alone, 13% car share, and 4% by car – dropped off/picked up.

6.4 Stakeholder Interviews

A comprehensive programme of stakeholder interviews was carried out, based on the results of a stakeholder mapping and identification exercise. The interviews were carried out in person and via telephone, and a topic guide was developed to guide the discussion.

Table 2 identifies the stakeholders that were interviewed and their role in their respective organisations.

Table 2: Stakeholder Interview List

Name	Organisation & Role	Date Interviewed
Frank Roach & Fiona McInally	HITRANS – Partnership Manager & Active Travel Officer	30 <sup>th</sup> January 2017
David Adams McGilp	Visit Scotland – Regional Director	6 <sup>th</sup> June 2017
Carron Tobin	Argyll & the Isles – Development Manager	5 <sup>th</sup> June 2017
Paul Jennings	Oban Harbour – Harbour Manager	27 <sup>th</sup> June 2017
Fiona Morrison	Oban and District Disability Forum and Access Panel – Chair/Secretary	10 <sup>th</sup> July 2017
Marie Harrower	Oban and District Disability Forum and Access Panel - Member	14 <sup>th</sup> July 2017

The key points from each interview were recorded in bespoke interview record sheets. Some of the key themes that arose from the stakeholder engagement include:

- Oban is largely tourism and education driven and the main trip attractors include hotels, Argyll College, Marine Science University, retail, and an interchange for ferry departures to destinations in the Inner and Outer Hebrides.
- Currently, there is a lack of integration between the ferry/bus/rail timetables for some services. For example, the rail/ferry timetable integration to Mull is considered to be good; however, rail/ferry timetable integration for Coll, Tiree and Barra is not considered to be as convenient.
- Coach, bus, and taxi pick-up/drop-off at the station is perceived to be sufficient. They all use the same space outside the station, Station Square, and it does not cause any operational issues.
- Accessibility for disabled people at the station is generally good. The station is all on one level and there has recently been an accessibility upgrade (automatic doors, a height adjustable ticket counter and a disabled toilet). Additionally, the station staff are perceived to be very helpful to disabled people.
- A key issue for rail/ferry integration is that the route between the rail station and ferry terminal feels like a ‘back alley’. A lot of people have to rely on asking local people for directions if they have not visited the area before due to the lack of directional signage.

- Network coverage in the town is limited which limits usage of journey planning apps.
- Information at the station regarding onward travel could be improved.
- The Shopmobility service in Oban is run by Matterson’s furniture shop which is located on the opposite side of Oban to the station. Service users have to visit the service to hire equipment which is often a problem for station users, especially tourists.
- Oban lies at the start of Route 78 on the NCN, so rail/cycle integration is an important issue for the Station Travel Plan to address.
- There is an opportunity to re-brand Oban as a destination in itself, rather than a ‘gateway’ to the islands, by creating a more welcoming feeling at the station and improving information about local attractions.
- There is an identified issue in relation to the boarding control gate at Oban, which is now reported by stakeholders to be left unlocked but which was previously locked. There are instances where passengers board the train before staff have the opportunity to complete the cleaning and put out the seat reservations.
- In summer, there is often traffic congestion and parking issues in the town centre.
- The Station Travel Plan should look to address the increasing number of tourists. There is currently a lot of investment in the tourism sector such as proposals for an 80-bed Premier Inn hotel just outside the station and a 36-berth transit marina facility for yachts. Therefore, the station needs to support this growth by encouraging a greater number of people onto rail.
- Better connections to Oban Airport to make short visits easier for tourists would be beneficial.
- Connections between Glasgow Airport and Oban could be made easier by providing timetabling information at the station and online to show how people can travel between these two locations.

6.5 Stakeholder Workshop

A stakeholder workshop was held on 27<sup>th</sup> July 2017, at which the Project Team presented the key findings to date and sought feedback from stakeholders on the issues and opportunities presented and potential Station Travel Plan measures. Invitations were sent to twenty-five stakeholders (in addition to Project Team members) and nine confirmed their attendance. Six stakeholders attended on the day, in addition to three members of the Project Team, as shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Stakeholder Workshop Attendees

Name	Organisation & Role
Neil Mackay	Oban Tourism Association - Director
Colin Young	Argyll and Bute Council – Strategic Transportation Delivery Officer
Marie Harrower	Oban and District Disability Forum and Access Panel - Member
Eilidh MacLeod	Car Plus Bike Plus (Edinburgh)

Name	Organisation & Role
John Watson	Community Liaison and Adopt a Station (ScotRail)
Frank Roach	HITRANS – Partnership Director

The feedback from the workshop, which has been used to shape the development of the Station Travel Plan, has been analysed and grouped into the following key themes:

- A large number of rail trips to and from Oban are undertaken by school children – in the region of 40,000 school-based journeys per year. HITRANS, Argyll & Bute Council and ScotRail worked together to provide an enhanced rail service to Oban from May 2014, which doubled the number of trains per day between Glasgow and Oban from three to six trains. One of the main drivers for such a significant increase in service provision was use of the train by students at Oban High School.
- A representative of Argyll and Bute Council stated that a total of 124 rail passes for trains to Oban have been paid by the Council thus far for the 2017/18 school year. This figure tends to rise throughout the year; however, this is the starting figure. A total of 68 passes have been issued for Taynuilt to Oban, 35 passes have been issued for Dalmally to Oban, 17 passes have been issued from Connel Ferry to Oban and 4 passes from Loch Awe to Oban.
- Parking is perceived to be a key issue in Oban which may deter people from travelling from the wider area and then using the train, particularly in the summer. There is a lack of sufficient parking in and around the station; however, land in Oban is very expensive so it is unlikely that it would be bought for parking. The Council is in the process of commissioning a parking survey for Oban, which will include both on and off street car parking.
- Car passenger drop-off and pick-up at the station is considered to be insufficient as the only designated area is inside the station car park, for which a maximum 30 minute waiting time is allowed before the full daily tariff is charged.
- Easier journeys to and from the station would encourage people to use the train to travel to Glasgow for the day or weekend.
- During the winter, roads are often closed due to high snowfall which causes long delays so rail transport is very important during this time.
- Ensure that the information in the station regarding onward ferry services is clear, in particular, ensuring the small islands (e.g. Tiree) are featured.
- Accessibility issues at the station, on trains and the wider area are perceived to be important. For example, there should be a clear policy on how to move bikes out of the way for wheelchair users on trains. Additionally, Station Square is difficult to use for people who are visually impaired due to the shared space and lack of kerbs and tactile paving.
- HITRANS support an integrated transport hub for Oban station and ferry terminal. HITRANS has undertaken a Pre-Feasibility assessment of options to improve the station and ferry terminal layout and enhance integration in Oban.
- Traffic management on the Pier was highlighted as needing to be improved as the space is shared between fuel tankers and pedestrians.

- The pedestrian route between the station and ferry terminal is considered to be insufficient. There is a conflict in users between employee parking, refuse lorry access and pedestrians. Additionally, the demarcation for the footpath does not extend along the full route.
- There have been plans to create an Integrated Transport Hub (2009) in Oban; however, this has not yet materialised.
- Cycle integration at the station and wider area of Oban is viewed to be important. It is important to support and promote cycling businesses in Oban and on the islands (such as the electric bikes on Mill and McLellan Motors on Tiree). There is an opportunity for bike shops to seek grants (Local Growth Accelerator (LGAP) funding) to support the expansion of their bike hire offering.
- The importance of tourism should be clearly set out in the Station Travel Plan.
- Better integration between bus, rail and ferry timetabling is needed to increase rail patronage.

6.6 Desktop Review

The following documents and sources of information were reviewed and relevant information was incorporated into the travel plan development process:

- Policy documents:
  - National Transport Strategy (Transport Scotland, 2016)
  - National Walking Strategy (Scottish Government, 2014)
  - Cycling Action Plan for Scotland 2017-2020 (Transport Scotland, 2017)
  - Regional Transport Strategy for the Highlands and Islands (HITRANS, 2008)
  - Draft Regional Transport Strategy for the Highlands and Islands (HITRANS, 2017)
  - Draft Regional Active Travel Strategy (HITRANS, 2016)
  - Argyll and Bute Local Transport Strategy 2007-2010 (Argyll & Bute Council, 2007)
  - Argyll and Bute Local Development Plan Written Statement (Argyll & Bute Council, 2015)
  - Argyll and Bute Strategic Economic Development Action Plan 2016/21 (Argyll & Bute Council, 2016)
  - Draft Oban Action Plan (Argyll & Bute Council, 2011)
- Office of Rail and Road (ORR) patronage data, 2006-7 to 2015-16
- Appraisal of Options to Improve Interchange at Oban Transport Hub (Argyll and Bute Council, 2009)
- BID4Oban Business Plan 2012-2017 (BID4Oban, 2012)
- Oban Station Ferry Terminal Integration: Pre-Feasibility Assessment (HITRANS, 2016)

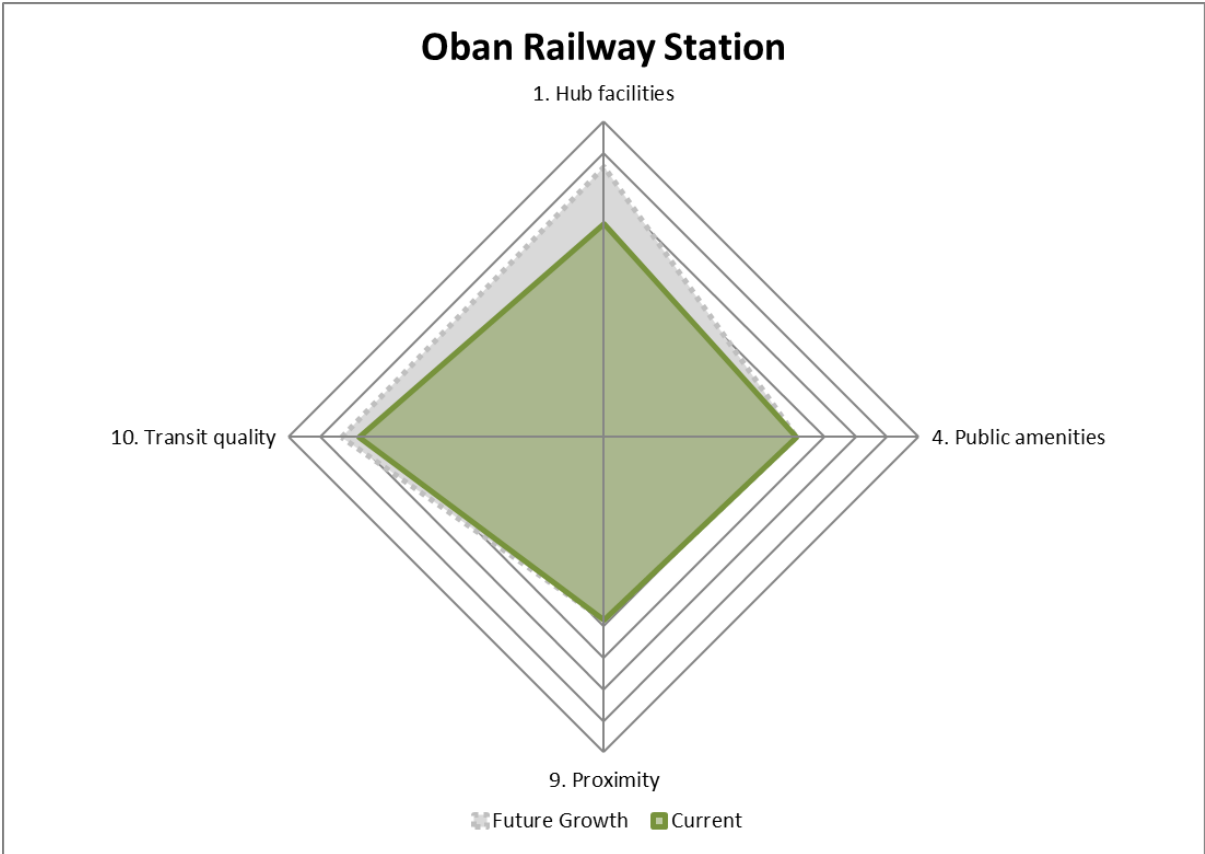
6.7 Setting the Vision and Ambition

MODE, which stands for 'Mobility Oriented Development', is an approach to achieving integrated development at multi-modal transit hubs developed by Arcadis. MODE is underpinned by a tool called MODex, which facilitates an assessment of a station and the station area, helping to identify the gaps

between the level of ambition for future growth and the current status, based on a series of key indicators. This then helps to identify the areas where the Station Travel Plan measures should focus.

The application of the full MODex model is suited to larger transport hubs; therefore, a refined version has been used to assess the current status of Oban station. For this assessment, four of the full set of ten indicators have been assessed and given a score to reflect the existing situation at the station as part of a proportionate assessment. The selection of the indicators was based on those considered to be most relevant to Oban station and the aims and objectives of what a Station Travel Plan looks to achieve: Hub Facilities; Public Amenities; Proximity and Transit Quality. The MODex model for the existing situation at Oban station is shown in Figure 12, and the full analysis is provided in Appendix C.

Figure 12: Draft MODex Model for Oban Station



The station currently scores well for Transit Quality and relatively well for Hub Facilities and Public Amenities. A summary of the current situation for each of the four indicators is shown in Tables 4 to 7.

The future growth aspirations for Oban station have been identified to allow a MODex analysis to be completed for the future situation. This was used to identify where the gaps between the current and future growth aspirations lie, which supported the development of the Travel Plan measures in terms of the key focus areas. Greater and more secure cycle parking and improvements to wayfinding through the transit hub have been identified as particular areas for improvement.

Hub Facilities

The hub facilities are rewarded with points for the presence and quality of these facilities within or around the station. Four levels are considered and given a relative score:

- Absent: the function is missing [0]
- Insufficient: the function is present but not functioning, poorly maintained or not sufficient for the number of passengers using the station [1]
- Present: the function is present and functioning but not high quality (judgement call) [2]
- Excellent: this function is present and meets the highest standards [3]

This may be to do with these facilities being available and easily accessible; it may be to do with the number of spaces for different facilities available; or it may be to do with complete step-free access for all platforms. The score for these variables can then be used as a base to which future aspirations can be built on. The total maximum score is 28, based on a maximum score for each indicator of 2, except for the presence of step free access and the presence of disabled access/visually impaired access, where the maximum score is 3.

Table 4: Hub Facilities indicator – Current Situation

1. Hub facilities			
Variables	Rating	Points	Notes
Presence of real time information	Present	2	-
Presence of ticket machines	Absent	0	-
Presence of serviced ticket office	Present	2	-
Presence of information desk / journey planning	Present	2	-
Presence of disabled access / visually impaired access	Present	2	Present, including height adjustable ticket counter.
Presence of step free access	Present	2	Present across the whole station.
Presence of toilets	Present	1	Customer toilets are present; however, limited opening times (available 15 minutes before a train departure or after a train arrival). Feedback from stakeholders indicates that customers would prefer longer opening times; however, it is acknowledged that the emphasis needs to be on providing customer rather than public toilets.
Presence of waiting room / safe waiting areas	Present	2	Present, although it is a relatively small space.
Presence of car parking	Insufficient	1	The number of spaces does not appear to be sufficient during peak times during summer.
Presence of taxi rank	Present	2	Present; directly outside the station and well-served by taxis.
Presence of bicycle parking	Insufficient	1	Higher quality (sheltered) storage facilities could be provided in a more prominent location.



Presence of wayfinding	Insufficient	1	Lack of directional signage/maps/onward travel information within the station and vicinity.
Presence of public art	Insufficient	1	Lack of public art in the station and on platforms.
Total		19	
Max		28	

Public Amenities

The presence of the following facilities within 800 metres of the station are rewarded with points for the presence and quality of these facilities within or around the station. We consider four levels:

- Absent: this function is missing [0]
- Sparse: this is present but only marginal, i.e. poor-quality hotel or you would expect a lot more hotels in this location [1]
- Present: this function is present and functioning up to expected levels for the locations [2]
- Excellent: this function is present and meets the highest standards and has more than enough capacity [3]

Table 5: Public Amenities Indicator – Current Situation

4. Public amenities (within 800m)			
Variables	Rating	Points	Notes
Presence of sporting amenities	Present	2	Leisure centre. Football pitches present but just outside of the 800m radius.
Presence of hotel amenities	Excellent	3	Several hotels and guesthouses within the 800m radius.
Presence of food and beverage outlets	Excellent	3	-
Presence of nightlife	Present	2	Bars, Open Mic Night, Pubs.
Presence of cinemas / theatres	Excellent	3	Cinema and theatre just inside the radius considered. Theatre is a National Theatre of Scotland.
Presence of event stadium	Present	2	Theatre hall holds live events. Mossfield Stadium (used for Oban Live events) located just outside the 800m radius. Station Square also used for live events.
Presence of cultural amenities	Present	2	Library and museum present.
Presence of government and community amenities	Present	2	Community centres located in the 800m radius. Local council's customer service point located near to the station.
Presence of educational amenities	Sparse	1	High school present. College just outside the 800m radius.
Presence of childcare and playgrounds	Sparse	1	-

Presence of healthcare	Present	2	Doctor's surgery present. Hospital located outside the 800m radius.
Presence of tourist information services	Present	2	-
Total		25	
Max		36	

NB the maximum score is 36, which is determined by adding the points from each variable.

Proximity

Points (up to a maximum of 10) are awarded based on the time/distance between the station and the key destinations shown below.

Table 6: Proximity Indicator – Current Situation

9. Proximity					
Item		Time Distance	Unit	Score (Current)	Notes
1. Car park	Time to walk to nearest Car Park	0 - 2	Min.	10	-
2. Airport	Time to travel to nearest Airport	0 - 0.5	Hour	10	-
3. Inner city	When middle of central district can be reached within a 10-minute walk, measure time walking. Otherwise use time by public transport.	5 - 10	Min.	9	-
4a Inter city	Number of <b>independent</b> towns/cities (larger than 0.5 mln inhabitants) that can be reached from the station by public transport within less than <b>30 minutes</b> .	0	#	0	-
4b Inter city	Number of <b>independent</b> towns/cities (larger than 0.5 mln inhabitants) that can be reached from the station by public transport within <b>30 to 60 minutes</b> .	0	#	0	-
Total (average score)				5.8	
Max				10	

NB the total score is an average of each of the individual scores, with the maximum score being 10.

Transit Quality

The number of transport modes and transportation lines determine the score on transit quality. Each transport mode weighs the same in the score for multimodality. The maximum score is 9. For the intermodality variable, the ease of transit is the efficiency or compactness of the transfers within the transit hub. This is determined by the number of transportation lines divided by the surface area of the transit hub (in m<sup>2</sup>) multiplied by 100,000. The number of transportation lines is defined as the number

of unique end-stops a traveller can reach from the considered station with no transfers with all available public transport modes.

Table 7: Transit Quality Indicator – Current Situation

10. Transit Quality				
A. Multimodality (no. of transport modes & transportation lines)				
Variables	Yes/No	Points	Score (Current)	Notes
HSR	No	0	0	
Rail	Yes	1	1	
Metro	No	0	0	
Tram	No	0	0	
Bus	Yes	1	1	Bus stops considered to be inside the station area (Station Square).
Ferry	Yes	1	1	
Car (Kiss & Ride)	No	0	0	
Bike (public service)	Yes	1	1	Cycle storage in the station.
Pedestrian Access	Yes	1	1	
Total			5	
Max			9	
B. Intermodality				
Variables	No. of Transport Lines	Transfer Zone (m²)	Formula	Score
Ease of transit: efficiency/compactness of the transfers (Transfer ratio)	16	4,413	No. of transport lines / Transfer zone X 100.000	363
Total				160
Max				160
Current				
Score A. Multimodality	5.6			

Score B. Intermodality	10.0
Score	7.8
Max	10

\*=Multimodality Score (5) / Max (9) \* 10 to give score out of 10  
\*\*=Intermodality Score (20) / Max (160) \* 10 to give score out of 10

Further indicators which do not form part of MODex but which use station data can also be used to compare transit hub facilities for current and aspirational scenarios at the station, as shown in Table 8. The data for Oban can be compared with the other stations included in Abellio ScotRail's Station Travel Planning Programme as they are taken forward, with reference made to the function, location, and level of patronage of each station and analysis of the appropriateness of the level of provision

Table 8: Facilities Provision Context; Oban Station Area in Current Situation

Total Passengers: 176,104*	
Spaces	% Spaces / 1,000 Passengers
Cycle Spaces: 10	5.68%
Car Spaces: 50	28.39%
Taxi Spaces: 8	4.54%
Drop-Off Spaces: 0	0.00%
Accessible Parking Spaces: 2	1.14%

\*ORR station data, 2015/16

6.8 Key Issues and Opportunities

The key issues and opportunities have been collated into a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis that has been split into two parts. One has been developed for the station and interchange facilities and the second focuses on the last mile and key routes to and from the station as shown in Tables 9 and 10.

6.9 Research Summary

The most pressing key issues that the Station Travel Plan can help to address have been identified as:

- A lack of information about what Oban can offer in terms of visitor attractions and shopping and leisure facilities, especially for people visiting for the first time.
- Insufficient directional signage between the train station, ferry terminal, bus station and town centre.
- Insufficient timetable integration between certain bus, rail and ferry services, resulting in some inter-modal connection times which are either too long or too short. For example, rail/ferry timetable integration to Mull is considered to be good; however, rail/ferry timetable integration for Coll, Tiree and Barra is not considered to be as convenient.
- Lack of sufficient pedestrian crossings and walkways between the train station, ferry terminal, bus station and town centre.

- The increasing demand on public transport services caused by the growing tourism sector in Oban.
- Poor first impressions of Oban for first time visitors, due to a lack of sense of arrival at the station and a perceived 'unwelcoming feeling'.
- Limited car parking provision in Oban, which is considered to be insufficient for demand during the summer months, especially parking which is free of charge.
- Poor cycle parking facilities at the station.

The key opportunities for the Station Travel Plan are:

- Promote walking and cycling as 'modes of choice' for travel to and from the station by improving the pedestrian routes and cycle parking facilities at the station, and improving and promoting bike hire services within the town centre, particularly to visitors arriving by rail.
- Re-brand Oban as a tourist destination in itself, as well as continuing to promote its role as the gateway to the western isles, building on the existing promotional activity undertaken by ScotRail, VisitScotland and other organisations.
- Better inform visitors of onward travel options within the station through the provision of improved information regarding cycling, walking, car hire and ferry services.
- Ensure rail user needs are reflected through Argyll and Bute's proposed car park audit of Oban.
- Create a better physical integration between the rail station, bus station, ferry terminal and city centre by improving direction signage between each.
- Improve linkages with Oban and Glasgow airports.
- Add value to the new Station Square regeneration project.
- Improve the 'welcoming' feeling of the station by providing a 'Welcome to Oban' sign.
- Exploit the growing tourism sector with the 'Gateway to the Isles' and nearby National Cycle Routes.
- Remove unnecessary clutter from Oban station and Oban town centre.
- Improve safety at night in the area surrounding the station by introducing ScotRail's 'Station Friends' service.
- Provide a designated area for car passenger drop-off and pick-up outside the station.
- Improve ease of access to Oban's Shopmobility service in order that rail users can access equipment directly at the station, and promote accordingly.
- To better inform visitors of local attractions in the surrounding area within the station.

The following quick wins have been observed:






- Provide covered, higher quality cycle parking spaces at the station.
- Improved provision of onward travel information regarding cycle routes, ferry services, car hire and bike hire services within the station.
- Joint marketing and promotion between rail, bus and ferry services, and local tourist attractions.

- Provide more information at the station about the local area, especially tourist attractions and how to reach them.
- Identify appropriate locations within the station area as 'Station Friends' that can be considered for inclusion in ScotRail's emerging Station Friends scheme.
- Review timetables between transport services from Oban to identify how they could be better integrated.
- Review and identify potential improvements to pedestrian crossings between the rail station, ferry terminal, bus station and town centre.

These issues will require co-ordinated working between a number of stakeholders to identify the most appropriate solutions, and a significant funding commitment. The evidence presented in the Station Travel Plan will help to support the case for such longer-term improvements.



The points raised through the research and SWOT analysis were the key drivers behind developing the Action Plan for Oban station, which is presented in the next chapter.



Table 9 - Station and Interchange Facilities		
Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Central and convenient location within the town centre, adjacent to the bus stops (Photo 1) and taxi rank at Station Square and Oban Harbour. The station also lies within a short walk from the shopping centre, the leisure centre, Oban High School, Argyll College Campus and the hospital.</li><li>Oban is known as the 'Gateway to the Isles' and many tourists who travel to Oban and the west coast of Scotland arrive by train.</li><li>Facilities in the station include customer toilets, luggage trolleys, exposed and sheltered seating, a convenience shop and lockers (Photo 2).</li><li>Accessibility for disabled passengers at the station is perceived to be sufficient. The station has recently had an accessibility upgrade which included automatic doors, a height adjustable ticket counter and a disabled toilet. Access is step free from street level to platform level, with ramps available on the platforms to enable disabled customers to board and alight trains.</li><li>Station car park is free for rail passengers, with a validated parking ticket. Vehicles may wait for up to 30 minutes free of charge for drop-off/pick-up.</li><li>Oban station and its rail services play a key role in facilitating education based trips. A large proportion of school children get the train to Oban station to get to school, rather than taking a bus. The Council pay for a certain number of rail passes for school children each year.</li><li>The rail journey along the West Highland Line to Oban is considered to be one of the most scenic rail journeys in the world.</li></ul>	<div><div><div>1</div></div><div><div>2</div></div></div>
Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Cycle parking at the station is perceived to be insufficient due to a lack of shelter and a poor location (Photo 1) in the station car park.</li><li>Poor signage at the station to enable passengers to easily connect to local ferry services, which causes confusion for first-time visitors, and potential for pedestrian/vehicle conflict along the marked pedestrian route from the rail station to the ferry terminal.</li><li>The appearance of the station is perceived by some visitors and stakeholders to be unattractive and unwelcoming.</li><li>The car park at Oban station is small and often full in busier months (Photo 2).</li><li>The station car park barrier causes issues for some people. Firstly, the ticket machine at the barrier is hard to reach from inside a car. Additionally, the car park barrier does not open for people to access vacant disabled spaces if the non-disabled spaces are already full.</li><li>There is considered to be insufficient capacity for cycle storage on train services to and from Oban, which limits the ability of visitors to bring their bikes with them.</li><li>There is a lot of clutter in the middle of the station concourse such as bins and cleaning trolleys which affects movement at the station, especially for people with disabilities such as visual impairment or people using wheelchairs.</li><li>Signage for cyclists is not immediately clear on arrival at the station.</li><li>Information and signage regarding onward travel at the station is limited.</li><li>Information for visitors at the station regarding the surrounding area of Oban is limited.</li></ul>	<div><div><div>1</div></div><div><div>2</div></div></div>
Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Provide higher quality, sheltered cycle parking at the station, in a more convenient location.</li><li>Journeys to Oban could be better promoted at Glasgow Queen Street station, with a focus on the quality of the journey itself as well as the destination.</li><li>Better promotion of cycle hire businesses in Oban to visitors who are planning a trip to Oban as an alternative to people taking bikes onto the train.</li><li>Improved promotion of car hire businesses in Oban to visitors who are planning a trip to Oban.</li><li>Computerised arrival and departure information boards at the station.</li><li>Improve the 'welcoming' feeling of the station by providing a 'Welcome to Oban' sign on arrival.</li><li>Improve the commercial opportunities within the station and integrate with surrounding retail (Photo 1).</li><li>Provide more information for visitors at the station regarding local attractions such as McCaig's Tower, the Route 78 (Caledonian Way) cycle route and details of relevant local businesses.</li><li>Clear unnecessary clutter from the station concourse.</li><li>Address the technical issue with the barrier at the station car park so that disabled passengers can access the disabled spaces when the rest of the car park is full.</li><li>Provide a specific area for car drop-off/pick-up outside the station.</li><li>Find a way to make the existing shopmobility service more easily accessible for rail passengers arriving at/departing from Oban station.</li><li>Provide additional car parking at the station to encourage people to travel by train – although this may discourage existing rail users who currently travel to and from the station using non-car modes to use the car instead.</li><li>Capitalise on the fact that the rail journey to Oban along the West Highland Line is one of the most scenic rail journeys in the world, as part of marketing and visitor promotion initiatives.</li></ul>	<div><div><div>1</div></div></div>

Threats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is low cost public car parking in the area surrounding the station, which may threaten the use of non-car modes for station access.</li> <li>Buses to Fort William and Glasgow are quicker and cheaper than the train. Additionally, bikes can often be taken on board.</li> <li>It takes less time to drive to Glasgow than to take the train.</li> <li>The station building does not ‘sell’ Oban to visitors. It is a very low-key building.</li> <li>Passengers who miss their connecting ferry/rail service are discouraged from making the same journey again, due to relatively long waiting times between services.</li> <li>Land in Oban is expensive and it is therefore unlikely that the Council will have the opportunity to purchase land to provide additional public car parking.</li> </ul>
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Table 10 - The Last Mile and Key Routes to and from the Station

Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is a bike shop in Oban (Oban Cycles) which offers one-way cycle hire for people travelling to the islands, where the bikes can be returned to the shop by ferry once the cyclists have finished using them. This makes the return journey from the islands easier for visitors.</li> <li>The number of tourists in Oban is increasing year on year. Tourism is now more year-round, rather than a peak in the summer.</li> <li>Oban has recently benefitted from the new Station Square development located just outside the station, which is a shared space for taxis, coaches and buses, enabling efficient integration between modes.</li> <li>Stakeholder feedback suggests that there are generally no operational issues at Station Square despite it being a shared space for different modes of transport. However, some concerns have been raised by visually impaired users.</li> <li>Oban has a good independent retail sector and good restaurants supplied by local food and drink manufacturers (Photo 1).</li> <li>Good bus services from Oban to locations in the wider area such as Dalmally, Taynuit, Dalavich, Connel and Fort William. Additionally, the service to Dalmally also integrates with the CityLink to Glasgow, Dundee, Perth, and Edinburgh.</li> <li>The bus station has electronic RTI display boards with bus information. There are also plans for an additional totem-style RTI board with combined rail, bus, and ferry information at Station Square.</li> <li>The cost of station car parking can be reclaimed by rail passengers.</li> <li>Oban as a destination is largely tourism driven due to its location next to Oban Harbour, key attractions such as McCaig's Tower and range of services and amenities such as hotels (Photo 2), restaurants and local retail businesses.</li> <li>The education sector is also prominent in Oban, with Argyll College Campus, Oban High School and primary schools in the local area, which help to drive demand for rail services into Oban.</li> <li>Oban has annual events at Station Square such as the ‘Oban Live’ music festival which attract a lot of interest from local people and tourists.</li> <li>Train times to Oban station make connections with the ferry service to Mull easy.</li> <li>Oban has a good independent retail sector and good restaurants, supplied by local food and manufacturers.</li> <li>Oban lies at the centre of Route 78 on the National Cycle Network, which can support combined rail/bike journeys.</li> </ul>	<div>   </div>
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Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>There is a lack of physical integration between the station and ferry terminal. The marked pedestrian walkway between the station and ferry terminal only covers half of the route and the pedestrian signage along the route is poor. Additionally, stakeholders consider the pathway to be unattractive and comment that it feels like a 'back alley'.</li><li>Stakeholder feedback suggests that a lot of people rely on local knowledge for wayfinding.</li><li>A lot of the buses operated by West Coast Motors (main local bus operator) stop running before 6pm, which limits the potential for combined bus/rail journeys.</li><li>Network coverage is limited in Oban. This means that journey planning apps which rely on an internet connection cannot be relied upon for planning journeys using sustainable or public transport.</li><li>The signage between the rail station, bus station, ferry terminal and city centre is perceived to be insufficient, especially for first-time visitors to Oban.</li><li>Vegetation overgrown on the rail route from Glasgow Queen Street to Oban blocking scenic views.</li><li>Timetables for some ferry, bus and train services are not well integrated. Sometimes connections are too short so people may miss their next departure and then have to wait for a significant length of time, and sometimes they are too long so passengers need to wait for an extended period of time. Rail/ferry integration to Mull is considered to be good; however, rail/ferry integration for Coll, Tiree and Barra is not considered to be as convenient.</li><li>Station Square has a lot of shared space (used by pedestrians, taxis, buses and cars) (Photo 1). The area is all on one level which is considered to present issues for people who are visually impaired (who usually use kerb lines for navigation) and which could restrict their accessibility to the station. Additionally, the shared space is considered by some to be dangerous for young children.</li><li>Lack of long-stay car parking at Oban ferry terminal for passengers visiting the islands.</li><li>The Shopmobility service in Oban is located on the other side of the town from the station, which means that people who want to hire equipment must either walk or take a bus to hire it.</li><li>Clutter on pavements in surrounding area.</li><li>Lack of pedestrian crossing points nearby to the station.</li><li>Lack of sufficient integration between the rail station and Oban airport.</li><li>Lack of sufficient information regarding travel between Glasgow airport and Oban station.</li></ul>	
Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Improve the physical integration of the rail station, bus station and ferry terminal by creating an integrated transport hub with efficient, safe, well-signed connections between all modes.</li><li>Improved signage between the bus station, train station, ferry terminal and city centre.</li><li>Rebrand Oban as a destination in itself, rather than just a gateway to the islands.</li><li>Provide additional parking at the ferry terminal.</li><li>Better connections to Oban airport to make short visits easier for tourists.</li><li>Improved online information regarding journeys between Glasgow airport and Oban station.</li><li>Better promotion of Oban as the start of Route 78 (The Caledonia Way) on the National Cycle Network.</li><li>Improve rail and cycle integration to better promote cycling as a 'mode of choice' for onward travel.</li><li>Address the increasing demand on the tourist sector in Oban by providing good transport services.</li><li>More effective timetable integration for bus, train and ferry services to make connections between modes easier. If adjustments are not possible, better information to allow people to plan their journeys would be beneficial. For example, connections to buses and ferries should be shown when booking a train.</li><li>Caledonian Sleeper has recently partnered with West Coast Motors to carry out a trial for a bus connection service from Crianlarich to Oban, facilitating more efficient journeys between London and Oban. Feedback from HITRANS suggests that Caledonian Sleeper is keen to continue with such initiatives.</li><li>Improve cycle hire facilities in Oban. There is an opportunity for bike shops to seek grants (Local Growth Accelerator (LGAP) funding) to support the expansion of their bike hire offering.</li><li>Look into feasibility of improving and increasing the number of pedestrian crossing points in the area surrounding Oban station.</li><li>Station friends could include local hotels and restaurants (Photo 1).</li><li>Remove clutter such as advertising signs from pavements in the wider area.</li></ul>	
Threats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Opportunities to promote rail as a means of commuter travel are limited, as Oban is primarily serves the inward visitor market.</li><li>Limited opportunities to significantly increase rail service provision along the Oban-Glasgow line to cater to large increases in demand.</li></ul>	

## 7 Action Plan

### 7.1 Overview

The Action Plan has been developed on the basis of the key issues, opportunities and emerging themes identified during the evidence collection and research phase. It covers the current ScotRail franchise period, which runs until March 2022.

The full Action Plan is provided in Appendix D, and a summary version is provided in Table 12 overleaf. For each measure, the Action Plan identifies the type of intervention (behavioural, operational, or physical), the objectives it supports, the lead organisations with responsibility for delivery, the cost level, timeframe, and predicted impact.

Funding for a number of these measures could come from, where applicable, developer contributions through Section 75 agreements, Station Improvement Fund, Network Rail funding programmes such as Access for All, local Council funding as part of active travel strategy, community volunteer work and through Sustrans Community Links Plus funding and other grant applications.

### 7.2 Glossary of Key Terms

Table 11 provides a glossary of key terms used in the Action Plan.

Table 11: Glossary of Key Terms

Term	Description
<b>Behavioural Intervention</b>	A type of measure focused upon changing perceptions and attitudes towards travel choices through communication streams.
<b>Operational Intervention</b>	A type of measure to help with the effective co-ordination and management of travel services, timetables and working procedures.
<b>Physical Intervention</b>	A type of measure focused on tangible provision requiring installation and maintenance.
<b>Operational Efficiency</b>	How the proposed measure can help to improve a system's dynamics and ease of use.
<b>Improved On-Site Access</b>	How the proposed measure can help improve conditions for moving within the station area.
<b>Improved Local Access</b>	How the proposed measure can support better connections from local streets to the station.
<b>Links with Local Plans / Strategies</b>	How the proposed measure can adhere to current local planning and transport policy.
<b>Modal Shift</b>	How the proposed measure can lead to and uplift in sustainable travel to/from the station.
<b>Safety</b>	How the proposed measure can contribute to increasing perceptions of safety.
<b>Increase Patronage</b>	How the proposed measure can contribute to a rise in the number of people using rail annually.

<b>Lead Stakeholder</b>	The lead stakeholder(s) responsible for delivering the proposed measure or intervention.
<b>Cost</b>	The predicted level of cost of intervention; L – Low; M – Medium; H – High.
<b>Timescale</b>	The indicative period for implementing a measure; S – Short Term (within a year); M – Medium Term (1 – 3 years); L – Long Term (3 to 5 years and the end of the plan period).
<b>Key Measurable Outputs</b>	The outputs that will be monitored/measured to determine the effectiveness of the measure in achieving its objective(s).
<b>Predicted Impact</b>	The predicted level of impact that the measure will have in terms of meeting the stated objective(s); H – High; M – Medium; L – Low.

Table 12: Summary of Action Plan

No.	Name	Detailed Intervention	Intervention Type			Supports							Lead Stakeholder(s)	Cost (L/M/H)	Timescale (S/M/L)	Key Measurable Outputs	Predicted Impact
			Behavioural	Operational	Physical	Operational efficiency	Improved on site access	Improved local access	Links with local plan/strategy	Modal shift	Safety	Increased patronage					
Communications, Information Provision and Awareness Raising																	
1	Strategic Communications	Strategic communications between travel plan stakeholders and the development of strong partnerships.	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	All Station Travel Plan Stakeholders, led by ScotRail	L	L	Number of joint initiatives/events, effective partnership working arrangements, alignment of projects to deliver successful outcomes	H
2	Real-Time Bus/Rail/Ferry Information	Examine the feasibility of better coordinating bus, rail, and ferry timetables as part of a coordinated effort between operators.		✓	✓				✓	✓		✓	ScotRail/ CalMac/West Coast Motors	M	M	Passenger/visitor survey responses - greater bus/rail/ferry integration for onward journeys	M
3	Enhanced Visitor Information	Promotion of Oban as a tourist destination by working with relevant stakeholders to promote local businesses/attractions. Also promote day trips from Glasgow via online campaign and on-train advertising.	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	ScotRail/Visit Scotland/Argyll and Bute Council/ BID4Oban	M	S/M	An increase in visitor numbers to Oban; increase in visitors who arrive in the town by rail	M
4	Enhanced Onward Travel Information	Provision of enhanced onward travel information (for walking, cycling, car hire, public transport, ferries, and taxis) at the station exit for last mile solutions, that also links these to local attractions and how to reach them.	✓		✓			✓	✓	✓		✓	ScotRail	L	S	Increase in sustainable transport mode share reported in passenger surveys	M



No.	Name	Detailed Intervention	Intervention Type			Supports							Lead Stakeholder(s)	Cost (L/M/H)	Timescale (S/M/L)	Key Measurable Outputs	Predicted Impact
			Behavioural	Operational	Physical	Operational efficiency	Improved on site access	Improved local access	Links with local plan/strategy	Modal shift	Safety	Increased patronage					
5	Local Cycle Facilities Promotion	Work with local bike shops to promote services in the surrounding area and provide maps and display boards in the station to show where they are located and how to reach them. Consider the possibility of introducing electric cycle hire and longer-term cycle hire.	✓		✓			✓	✓	✓			ScotRail/Cycle Shops/Cycle Hire Organisations/ BID4Oban/ Argyll and Bute Council	L	S/M	Uptake of cycle hire, visits to cycle shops and cafes	L
6	Cycle Route Promotion	Promote Oban as the start of the Route 78 (Caledonia Way) National Cycle Network at the station, via only campaigning and on rail services.			✓			✓				✓	ScotRail/Argyll and Bute Council/Visit Scotland	L	S/M	Passenger/ visitor survey responses regarding onward travel	L
7	Glasgow Airport/ Oban Integration	Provide better information online and in Glasgow airport showing how people can travel from Glasgow airport to Oban by bus/ rail.			✓	✓		✓		✓		✓	ScotRail/West Coast Motors/ City Link	L	M	Increase in sustainable travel mode share from Glasgow airport; bus patronage data	L
8	Short Interchange Visits to Oban	Develop a scheme whereby passengers with a longer rail/bus/ferry interchange time are made aware of opportunities to leave the station and make a short visit to Oban. Provide a map of the last mile and key attractions and promote and enhance the existing left luggage facilities at the station.	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓			✓	ScotRail/ HITRANS/Argyll and Bute Council	L/M	S/M	Usage of left luggage facilities, feedback from visitors	M
9	Interactive Travel Map	Development of a bespoke interactive travel map to provide information on active travel and public transport routes in the local area. To be offered at the station and online.	✓					✓	✓	✓		✓	ScotRail/ HITRANS/Argyll and Bute Council	M	M	Number of printed map copies handed out, number of online map downloads	M
10	Re-Timing Visitor Trips	Promote re-timing of visitor journeys to reduce issues of overcrowding on the 08:21 service from Glasgow and promote travel on the 10:37 and later services, to help accommodate needs such as cycle storage and wheelchair accessibility.	✓			✓		✓					ScotRail/Visit Scotland/	L	S	Train loading figures for the different services to Oban; passenger feedback on quality of the experience based on repeat surveys.	M

No.	Name	Detailed Intervention	Intervention Type			Supports							Lead Stakeholder(s)	Cost (L/M/H)	Timescale (S/M/L)	Key Measurable Outputs	Predicted Impact
			Behavioural	Operational	Physical	Operational efficiency	Improved on site access	Improved local access	Links with local plan/strategy	Modal shift	Safety	Increased patronage					
Enhanced Mode Choice																	
11	Bus/Rail/Ferry Timetable Coordination	Examine the feasibility of better coordinating bus, rail, and ferry timetables as part of a coordinated effort between operators.		✓		✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	ScotRail/ CalMac/West Coast Motors/ Argyll and Bute Council	M	M	Passenger/visitor survey responses - greater bus/rail/ferry integration for onward journeys	M
12	PlusBus	Consider the introduction of PlusBus in Oban, in partnership with bus operators, based on analysis of potential demand, to improve rail/bus ticketing and thus support greater rail/bus integration.	✓			✓		✓	✓	✓			ScotRail/Bus Operators	L	M	Introduction of a PlusBus scheme; number of combined tickets sold	L-M
13	Oban Airport Bus Services	Work with local bus operators to investigate the feasibility of providing an enhanced bus service to the airport, to make short visits to Oban easier.			✓	✓		✓		✓		✓	ScotRail/ West Coast Motors	L/M	M	Delivery of an enhanced service; bus patronage data	M
Infrastructure Enhancements																	
14	Station Cycle Parking Improvements / Active Travel Hub	Improvements to cycle parking facilities in terms of shelter. Closely monitor capacity as patronage continues to grow. In the longer term, investigate the potential to provide an active travel hub at or near the station, that provides cycle parking/hire/maintenance/training, information and journey planning and other initiatives such as outreach work at schools and major employers to promote sustainable travel.	✓		✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	ScotRail/HITRANS/ Argyll & Bute Council/Sustrans/ local cycle businesses	M/H	M/L	An increase in cycle parking occupancy at the station, higher mode share for bike in passenger travel surveys, opening of an active travel hub in the longer term	M/H
15	Local Cycle Parking Enhancement	Work with Argyll and Bute Council to examine the feasibility of providing additional cycle parking and end of trip facilities in the town centre, to support active travel more generally and for combined rail/ cycle journeys.			✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	ScotRail/Argyll and Bute Council	M/H	M/L	Increase in sustainable transport mode share reported in passenger travel surveys, increase in town centre cycle parking occupancy	M

No.	Name	Detailed Intervention	Intervention Type			Supports							Lead Stakeholder(s)	Cost (L/M/H)	Timescale (S/M/L)	Key Measurable Outputs	Predicted Impact
			Behavioural	Operational	Physical	Operational efficiency	Improved on site access	Improved local access	Links with local plan/strategy	Modal shift	Safety	Increased patronage					
16	Bus/Rail/Ferry Physical Integration	Improve signage at the rail station towards the ferry terminal and bus station and vice versa. Improve signage along the route between the rail station and ferry terminal in both directions.		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	ScotRail/Argyll and Bute Council/ HITRANS	M	M	Passenger/visitor survey responses - greater bus/rail/ferry integration for onward journeys	M
17	Town Centre Presentation	Identify opportunities to improve the presentation of the town centre in terms of de-cluttering street furniture, rationalising signage and refreshing the local environment.			✓			✓	✓				Argyll and Bute Council	M/H	M/L	Less clutter on streets, improved feedback on city centre appearance in resident/visitor surveys	M
18	Station Concourse Presentation	Identify opportunities to improve the presentation of the station concourse in terms of de-cluttering cleaning trolleys and bins.			✓	✓	✓		✓				ScotRail	L	S	Less clutter in the station, improved feedback on station appearance in resident/visitor surveys	L
19	Pedestrian Environment in Town Centre	Examine the feasibility of providing additional pedestrian crossings in the town centre, with a specific focus on links to and from the rail station. Work with the local access group to identify areas for improvement and to shape the proposals.			✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Argyll and Bute Council/Oban and District Disability and Access Forum	M	M/L	Increase in sustainable transport mode share reported in passenger travel surveys	M
20	Station Parking	Resolve technical issues with the car park barrier (i.e. access to disabled spaces when the rest of the car park is full).		✓	✓		✓	✓		✓		✓	ScotRail	M/H	M/L	Increase in rail passengers using Oban station in travel surveys	M
21	Car Drop-Off and Pick-Up Facilities	Promote use of station car park for pick-up and drop-off, and promote use of Station Square for drop-off/pick-up via station signage, to reduce informal drop-off/pick-up activity in the area surrounding the station.	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓			✓		ScotRail	M	M	Observations of drop-off activity occurring in the local area	M
22	Station Environment	Identify opportunities to improve the station environment by promoting a more 'welcoming' feeling.			✓			✓				✓	ScotRail	M	M	Passenger/ visitor survey responses regarding the station environment	L

No.	Name	Detailed Intervention	Intervention Type			Supports							Lead Stakeholder(s)	Cost (L/M/H)	Timescale (S/M/L)	Key Measurable Outputs	Predicted Impact
			Behavioural	Operational	Physical	Operational efficiency	Improved on site access	Improved local access	Links with local plan/strategy	Modal shift	Safety	Increased patronage					
Partnership & Coordinated Working																	
23	Parking in Oban	Work with Argyll and Bute Council to make sure that rail user needs are reflected through Argyll and Bute's proposed audit of car parking in Oban.		✓				✓		✓		✓	ScotRail/Argyll and Bute Council	L	S	Passenger/ visitor survey responses regarding parking in Oban	L
24	Shopmobility Promotion & Enhancement	Work with Oban Disability & Access Forum and Mathesons to identify ways to make equipment available at the station; for example, a staff member meeting an incoming train with pre-booked equipment. In the longer term, if a new active travel hub is opened in Oban (see action 14), consider provision of equipment there. Promote at the station and on relevant websites.		✓				✓				✓	ScotRail/ Oban Disability & Access Panel/ Mathesons	L	S	Increase in rail passengers using Shopmobility service	L
Station Facilities, Safety and Security																	
25	Station Friends	Develop ScotRail's Station Friends Scheme by engaging with potential businesses identified through the site audit, then promoting this at the station.		✓				✓			✓	✓	ScotRail/ BID4Oban/ Argyll and Bute Council	L	M	Increase in rail patronage to and from Oban station	L
26	Boarding Control Gate	Improve ease of cleaning trains and putting out seat reservations at Oban station by keeping the boarding control gate closed and locked so that passengers cannot board the train until an appropriate time.		✓								✓	ScotRail	L	S	Improved survey feedback from station staff at Oban.	L
27	Station Toilet Opening Times	Consider lengthening customer toilet opening times at the station so that they are available for a longer period before train departures and after train arrivals, in response to stakeholder feedback. Provide clear signposting to public toilet facilities for non-station users.		✓				✓					ScotRail	L	S	Extended toilet opening times; positive feedback based on repeat passenger travel surveys	L

### 7.3 Monitoring & Management

It is essential that the Station Travel Plan is implemented effectively and continually managed and monitored to ensure it maintains its effectiveness and achieves the objectives set. One of the key challenges with any Travel Plan is to embed legacy into the process, to ensure that the Travel Plan continues to remain relevant and effective over the longer term.

It is proposed that an Oban Station Travel Plan Management Group (TPMG), comprised of representatives from the various stakeholders identified during the development phases, is set up. Within the TPMG's remit should be the implementation, development, and monitoring of the Travel Plan. It is suggested that the TPMG includes representatives from ScotRail and Argyll and Bute Council, as well as from other key stakeholders such as HITRANS, West Coast Motors, and Oban Harbour. Local community groups have a key role to play in ensuring that the Station Travel Plan remains current and responsive to the needs of the local community, and groups such as the Oban and District Access and Disability Forum and BID4Oban, should therefore play a key role in this group.

Wider consultation with organisations such as Visit Scotland will also be important, to help promote the visitor angle in Oban and raise awareness of what it has to offer as a visitor destination, in particular getting the message out to people who may not previously have considered it.

Table 13 illustrates the main stakeholders or 'owners' of the Station Travel Plan, who have responsibilities for its continued development, implementation and management. It shows the level of involvement and responsibility held by each owner, based on the actions set out in the Action Plan.

Table 13: Station Travel Plan 'Owners'

High	ScotRail, Argyll and Bute Council, HITRANS
Medium	BID4Oban, Visit Scotland, Cycle Hire Shops/Cafes, Oban Harbour, West Coast Motors
Low	Oban and District Access and Disability Forum, Shopmobility, local bus operators

The progress of each measure, as identified in the Action Plan, should be monitored, and assessed against predicted timescales, costs, key measurable outputs, and impacts. Where appropriate, measures should be refined and amended in line with new sources of information and funding.

Effective monitoring and management of the Oban Station Travel Plan will help achieve a legacy arising from the implementation of the proposed measures, and set a precedent for the development and implementation of similar Travel Plan schemes.

Table 14 sets out the ten main indicators against which the implementation of Oban Station Travel Plan will be monitored. These indicators are standard across each of the eight Station Travel Plans being prepared during the current phase of ScotRail's Station Travel Plan programme, and have been developed to capture each of the main aims and objectives of the programme.

It is recognised that the focus of each Station Travel Plan will differ; for example, for some stations the main issues and opportunities identified may focus on the station itself and associated facilities, whereas for others the focus may be on the last mile, and supporting links to and from the station. Each Station Travel Plan will contribute to all ten indicators in some way; and a rating system has been developed to indicate where the focus areas lie. The rating system is as follows:

- Green – highest priority area
- Amber – medium priority area
- Grey – low priority area (however, the Station Travel Plan will still support the indicator to some extent)

The rating system has been applied based on the evidence collected on the key issues and opportunities and the actions set out in the Action Plan.

Table 14: Oban Station Travel Plan Indicators

1.	Mode Shift	
2.	Peak Spreading / Re-Timing Journeys	
3.	Overall Passenger Experience	
4.	Interchange Experience	
5.	Improving Patronage	
6.	Local Station Usage	
7.	The Last Mile	
8.	Active Travel	
9.	Economic Growth & Development	
10.	Access for All	



## **List of Appendices**

**Appendix A: Site & Area Audit Write-Up**

**Appendix B: Passenger & Public Travel Survey Results**

**Appendix C: MODex Analysis**

**Appendix D: Full Action Plan**