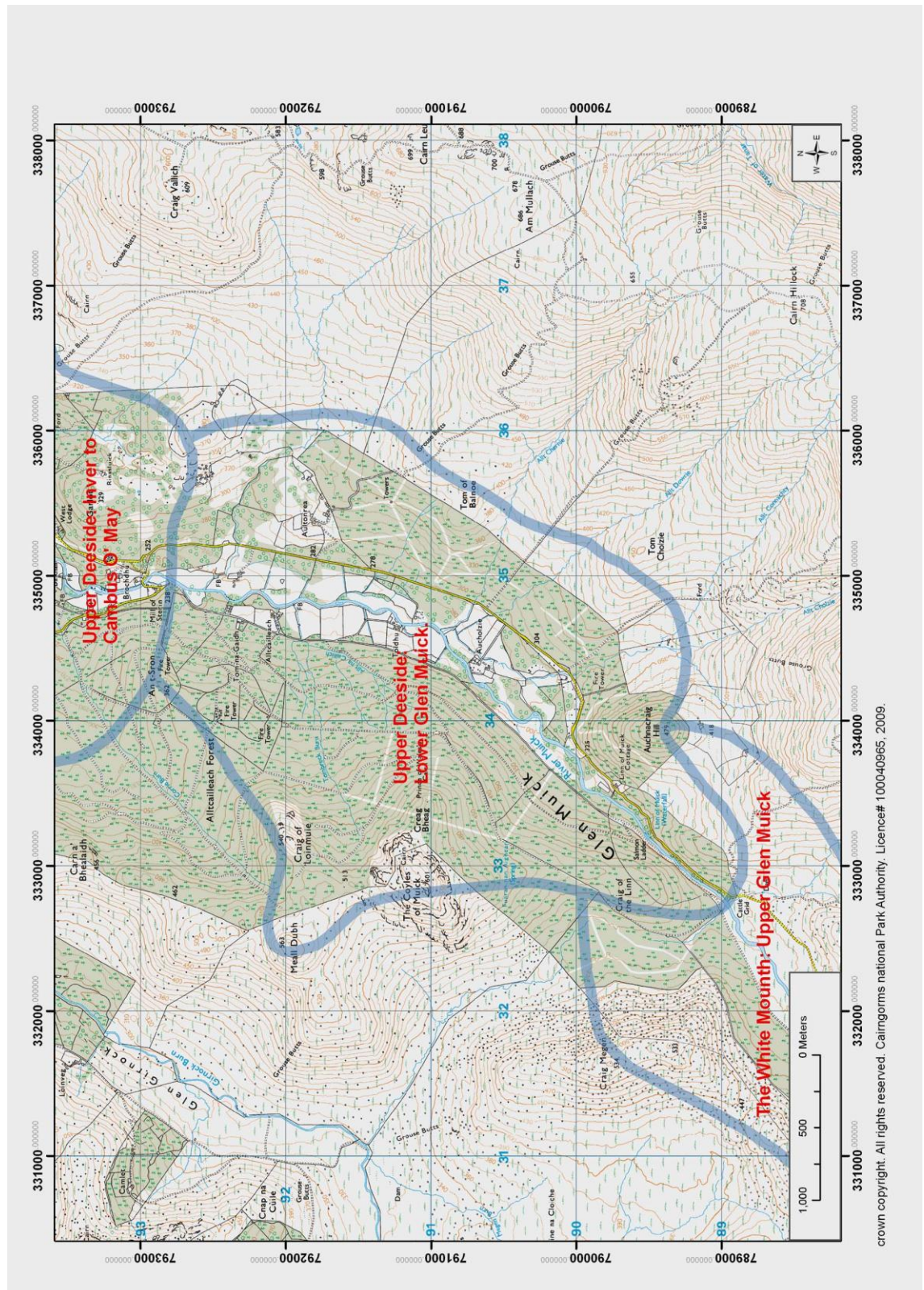


I.1 Upper Deeside: **Lower Glen Muick**



1.1.1 *Landscape character*

Lower Glen Muick extends south-south-west from Deeside at Birkhall, where the broad alluvial fan at the confluence of the Muick with the Dee is incised to form a trench-like valley which is contained by steep wooded slopes

The valley floor is gently undulating in the north, with a narrow floodplain contained within glacial-fluvial deposit at the base of the steep slopes

Numerous tributaries cut down the side slopes to join the River Muick as it winds its way through farmland, fringed by birch and willow riparian woodland

The hill slopes which contain the glen are predominantly covered with conifer woodlands of pine, spruce and larch. The distinctive pointed peaks of The Coyles of Muick are exposed above this woodland

Birch woodland increasingly dominates the glen floor to the south, and native woodland extends up the hill side to the north east

The glen narrows further upstream to form a steep-sided 'V' shaped gorge, the Linn of Muick. The river falls dramatically over a rocky ledge to a deep pool at this point; a concrete fish ladder is sited on its western bank.

Straight edged, late 18th/19th century improved fields, enclosed by stone dykes and more recent fences, are arranged along the flat floodplain, sometimes tucked against the slight hummocks and woodland

Small farmsteads are located on the floor of the glen, but are raised above the flood plain

A single-track public road passes through Glen Muick and is well used by people accessing the mountains of the White Mounth and the Loch Muick area. It is particularly narrow and overhung with woodland at the Linn of Muick, reinforcing the sense of 'pinchpoint' in the glen

1.1.2 *Landscape experience*

Lower Glen Muick feels sparsely settled and relatively tranquil

Although the Linn of Muick is not visible or easily accessible from the minor public road to upper Glen Muick, the sound of pounding water can be heard. The engineered structure of the fish ladder appears incongruous in its juxtaposition with the elemental qualities of the waterfall.

The wooded gorge of the Linn of Muick forms a 'pinch point' marking a distinct change between the narrow containment of the lower glen and the open and expansive upland character of Upper Glen Muick

1.1.3 *Relationship to adjacent character areas*

The strongly contained nature of this landscape limits inter-visibility with adjacent character areas.

1.1.4 *Assessment of distinctiveness*

Lower Glen Muick forms a narrow farmed valley which is increasingly contained by steep densely wooded hill slopes to the south. The Linn of Muick is a key feature although not readily seen. Small scale pastures and dispersed compact farms accentuate the small scale and semi-upland character of this glen.



The Linn of Muick set within a deeply incised wooded gorge



Valley floor pastures are increasingly interspersed with birch scrub higher up the glen