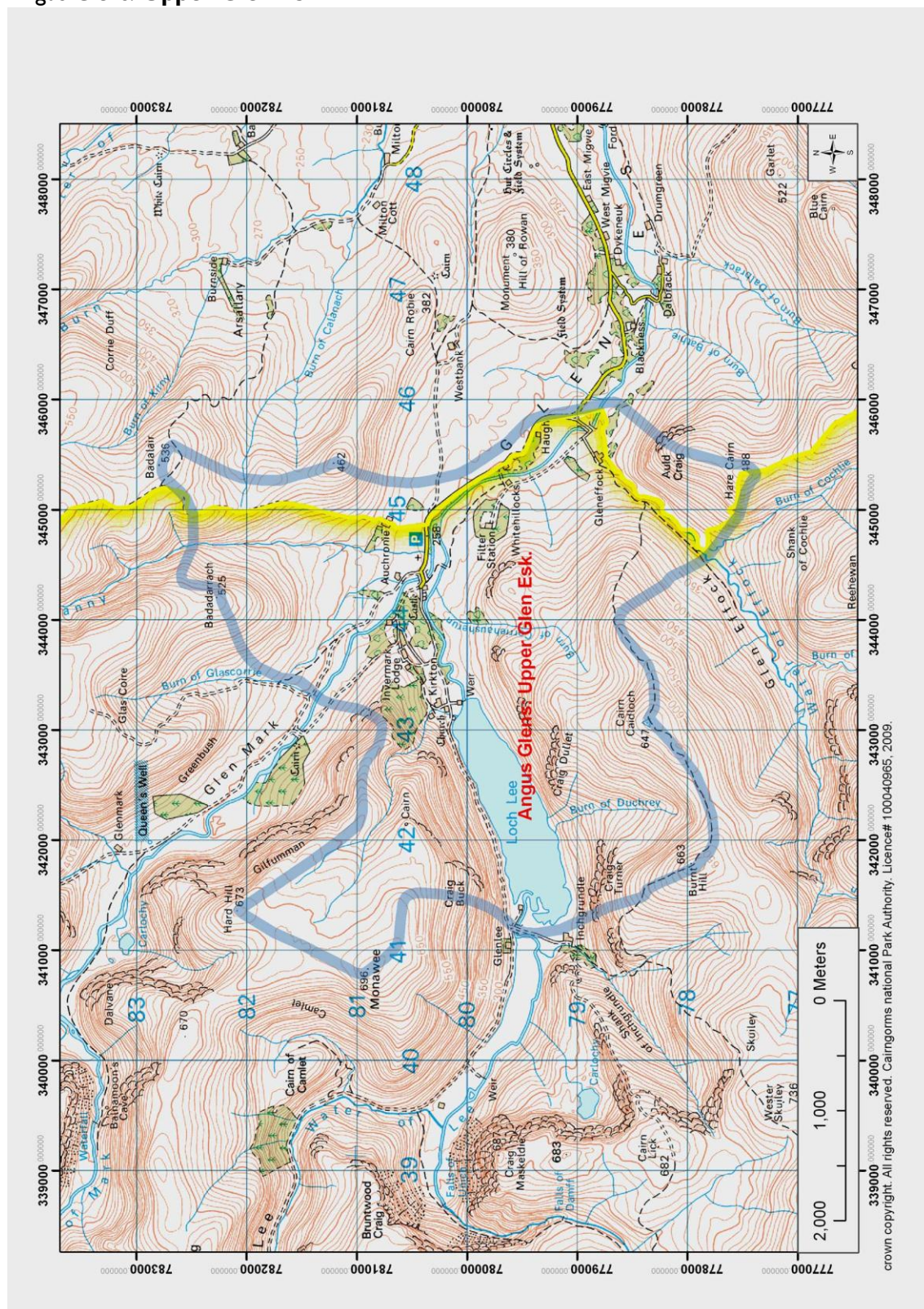


1.1



1.1.1 *Landscape Character*

- The glen floor broadens at this junction between Upper Glen Esk, Glen Lee, Glen Mark and Glen Effock, where gently undulating glacial-fluvial deposits form well-drained and accessible slopes
- The glens are contained by slopes which have been steepened and roughened by glacial activity, which has left behind scree and exposed rocky crags, which extend along the glens into the mountain interior
- Loch Lee, a reservoir used to provide drinking water, occupies the whole of the trough-like lower Glen Lee, and has been included in this character area as it contributes to the diversity of the character type and is a focus for accessible recreation
- Generous and diverse woodland, including mature broadleaved woodland, riparian woodland, some conifer woodland and Scots pine shelter woods, extends widely across this area
- Upper slopes are managed heather grouse moor, with some upland grassland, occasional bracken and remnants of birch woodland or regenerating willow associated with watercourses and wetland
- The lower slopes and gravelly terrain along the glen floor are farmed, with broadly rectilinear-shaped, fenced late 18th/19th century improved fields are now largely used for pasture, some of which are reverting to wetland
- The landmark 14th century 'tower house' of Invermark Castle is strategically located at the junction of Glen Mark and Glen Lee, at the head of Glen Esk
- The area is the focus of settlement, indicating the final, habitable reaches of upper Glen Esk. The focus of settlement is around Invermark Lodge, and other estate buildings of a consistent architectural style
- Existing and abandoned farms have a very particular association with the mouths of the side glens, sitting at edge of the improved fields where both Glen Mark and Glen Effock join with Glen Esk
- The public road stops at a car park, from where there is easy access on foot and bicycle on vehicle tracks into the surrounding more remote glens and mountain interior

1.1.2 *Landscape experience*

- The area is both a 'destination' at the head of Glen Esk, and a 'threshold' to other, more secluded and remote glens and the mountainous hinterland beyond
- This part of Glen Esk is tranquil, although it is too busy to be secluded

1.1.3 *Relationship to adjacent character areas*

This area is a 'gateway' into the interior of the mountain areas of the north eastern hills, with views particularly along Loch Lee into Glen Lee and easy access to Glen Mark.

1.1.4 *Assessment of distinctiveness*

This is a diverse landscape, with a range of woodland types, farmed land and the presence of Loch Lee contributing to a contemporary setting for historical features, such as Invermark Castle and the 17th century church on the shores of the loch.



Gentle gradients and wooded character



Loch Lee, a reservoir, fills the lower part of Glen Lee



Fields, now partly reverting to wetland



Invermark Lodge – a landmark feature