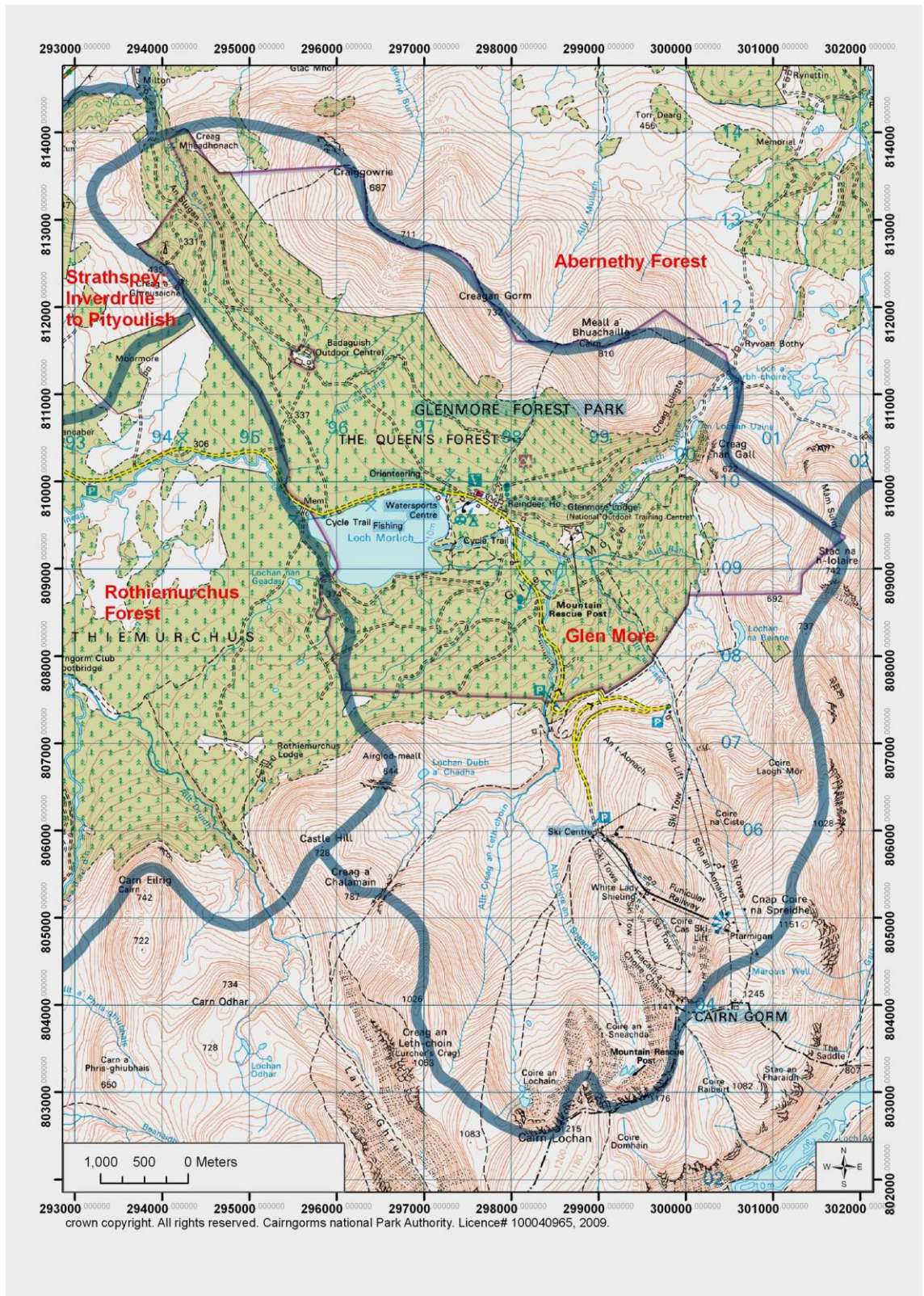


I.1 Glen More



1.1.1 *Landscape character*

- This is the upper part of a bowl-shaped landform, extending east from the Rothiemurchus character area, contained by the arc of the high granite “pluton” of the Cairngorms massif to the south and the Kincardine Hills to the north-east.
- On the slopes that rise around Glenmore there are some very large moraines and melt water channels, which are often hidden in the woodland, but where they appear above the forest, for example at Ryvoan, they appear as dramatic, large steps on the hillside.
- When exposed by rivers or manmade excavations, the gravelly deposits are revealed.
- The huge scale and bold form of amphitheatre-like corries, deeply cut valleys and ridges of the bulk Cairngorms create a dramatic skyline
- Glenmore Forest covers much of the gently dished lower ground of this character area. It is predominantly composed of pine and is largely commercially managed.
- Larger ‘specimen’ native pine fringe Loch Morlich and young native pine regeneration is evident on the upper slopes of the Kincardine Hills, increasingly creating a more naturalistic, fragmented upper margin to the forest.
- Occasional mature ‘granny’ pine can be found as small stands or individual trees within the forest
- Loch Morlich forms a focus within the forest, its simple, rounded form, sandy beach and light-reflective surface standing out amidst the extensive dark green coniferous cover.
- This character area is sparsely settled, with a single focus of settlement at Glenmore, where development is often related to recreational use of the forest and surrounding mountains
- Summer shielings can be found on the east slopes of Airgiod-meall ridge. There are likely to be others hidden in the forest, along the main rivers and burns
- Loch Morlich is a focus for recreation with a large camp site and water sports facility abutting the sandy beach on its eastern shore. Glenmore Forest accommodates a network of well-used tracks and footpaths popular with cyclists and walkers. A plethora of signs marks a range of other recreational and commercial facilities accessed from the public road to the Cairn Gorm ski centre, which passes through the forest.
- The ‘ski road’ climbs upwards from Loch Morlich on the steep lower slopes of Cairn Gorm in a series of looping, switch-back bends which offer glimpse views of gravel banks where the river is eroding old glacial deposits

- A large car park is sited at the foot of the funicular railway and the ski slopes which are marked by snow fences, metal gantries and ski lifts. It offers expansive views across the basin of Glenmore Forest and Strathspey.

1.1.2 *Landscape experience*

- Glenmore Forest, Loch Morlich and the Cairngorm mountains are a focus for recreation and as such it is difficult to experience a strong sense of seclusion within this character area, particularly in the more popular areas, and with skiing infrastructure extending onto the mountain slopes
- While the presence of the ski road, which provides access high up onto the slopes of the northern Cairngorm Massif, reduces the degree of remoteness experienced it does allow spectacular views into the deep valleys and corries of the mountains and enables an accessible appreciation of their huge scale and dramatic form
- The northern corries offer an accessible but alpine experience of corrie, lochan and crag, dominated by the dramatic vertical scale of the corrie faces
- Adverse weather conditions at any time of the year can emphasise the scale and elemental qualities of the mountains, even from the exposed car park at the head of the ski road
- The Cairngorm massif, its skyline, corries and major glens, forms a dramatic backdrop seen from Loch Morlich and from footpaths within the Kincardine Hills

1.1.3 *Relationship to adjacent character areas*

This landscape is strongly contained by woodland and views of adjacent character areas are only possible from the open upper slopes of the Cairngorms and the Kincardine Hills. This landscape forms a transition between the more managed and settled Aviemore/Strathspey area and the mountainous core of the National Park.

1.1.4 Assessment of distinctiveness

There is a strong sense of being surrounded by the massive bulk of the Cairngorm mountains in this area, and the sense of enclosure is reinforced by the woodland. While the dramatic landform of the north face of the Cairngorms looms dramatically into views, often quite suddenly, Loch Morlich also forms a visual focus within the dense cover of darker woodland.



The 'bowl' of the Glen More area, as seen from the ski lift car park



Loch Morlich and the Cairngorm massif, with high summits and rounded profile of glens and corries



Recent felling of woodland creates a fragmented upper edge above which are the stepped moraines of Ryvoan



Signage along the road to the ski lifts at Glenmore



Woodland across corrugated landform of long ridges, moraines and melt water channels



Upper forest margin of regenerated pine in the foreground, with planted upper margin in the background

