

1.1.1 *Landscape Character*

This area of very low, rounded hills and a lower storey, undulating terrain of glacial-fluvial deposits separates Strathspey from the pass which extends up onto Dava Moor from Grantown on Spey

The undulating terrain and long, low ridges with often interlocking land forms, creates a landscape of relatively small scale, hidden areas tucked in around the smooth, rounded hill slopes

The Allt na Fhithich cuts through the middle of this area, the gorge, a former melt water channel, through which it cuts forming a dramatic feature to the north, before relaxing into a more gentle river valley as it extends south

Extensive pine and broadleaved woodland, and smaller conifer shelter woods, alternate with large, regularly shaped 18th/19th century improved fields and occasional policy woods to reinforce the complexity of the landscape

There are frequent stands of mature pine and broadleaved woodland associated with the wider policies of Castle Grant, while parkland provides the immediate setting for the castle. The designed landscape includes centuries of historic land use focussed round this ancient, fortified site

Castle Grant, re-designed in the mid-late 18th century, is located on a long-established, elevated site and is visible from a number of surrounding hill sides

The outer policies of the estate can be traced along a stone wall, which encircles a large part of this character area, and is reinforced by formal architectural features, such as stone gateposts and gatehouses at key entrances, all of which were added in the mid-late 18th century re-design

While many of the buildings in the interior of this area are associated with Castle Grant, there are several houses and farms on the periphery

The area is only accessible on private roads and vehicle tracks, as well as access tracks used by walkers, especially through the woodlands

1.1.2 *Landscape experience*

There is a sense of privacy experienced in this area, in part because of the undulating land form and extensive woodland, which hides much of the area, and in part because of the long estate wall, surrounding the long established estate policies and in part limiting access

The sense of enclosure and small scale of the landform is reinforced by the hummocky terrain and the extensive woodland

1.1.3 *Relationship to adjacent character areas*

This area is relatively self-contained, especially from within, although it is overlooked by adjacent, more elevated character areas, especially from the north and west

1.1.4 *Assessment of distinctiveness*

This area is strongly influenced by the unifying sense of seclusion or privacy, including the extensive woodland and the subtle but containing landform and estate style architectural features, including the encircling stone wall.



Large fields, here subdivided by a wall, on gently undulating terrain set within woodland



The complexity of the glacial-fluvial deposits within this character area, and the pattern of fields within woodland



Stands of mature pine are located across the area



A gatehouse – one of the most obvious architectural features which also reinforce the sense of 'privacy'