

## 4.3 Site History

- 4.3.1** The first map of the site is Roy's Map 1747-55 which shows the site with a small settlement, 'Cambusmore', shown with almost as many dwellings as 'Avemore' on the other side of the Spey. The land is bare and generally grazed, but with some tilled land by the River Druie, with deciduous trees along the Spey. The escarpment above the flood plain is also shown and the hill of the Craig of Callart is clearly marked.
- 4.3.2** The Estate Map of 1789 shows the site with the title, 'Moor of Callart Well Worth Improving', this note relates to the fact that by the end of the eighteenth century most estates were investing in the land and making improvements. The map also shows the Dell and Guislek with new buildings and fields around them beginning to be enclosed and the construction of a track to Nethy Bridge. It also shows that the trees along the river have been cut, but that other areas have been planted. 'Cambus More' is shown with 5 houses.
- 4.3.3** The Ordnance Survey Map of 1869 shows no trace of the old settlement which had been cleared or abandoned at least 20 years before. The moor has been enclosed and it is almost entirely covered with trees of varying ages. Beyond the site it shows the new railway station at Aviemore before almost all the consequent development or a bridge across the Spey. The escarpment is shown, with the larch trees and the land to the west of the site is shown as rough grazing with a pond in it.
- 4.3.4** The Ordnance Survey Map of 2001 shows the site as 'Cambusmor', partially wooded and partially as rough grazing. Beyond the site it shows changes in the field pattern, including the land to the west which was previously rough grazing. Aviemore has transformed, filling the west side of the Spey valley. Bridges are shown across the Spey and new development has occurred in Inverdruie and Coylumbridge to the south. The main change in farming is the development of a fish farm by the river Druie.
- 4.3.5** The site is currently used for agriculture, commercial forestry and occasional recreation.
- 4.3.6** The maps referred to in paragraphs 4.3.1 to 4.3.3 are on pages 14 and 15 of the Proposed Masterplan Report.

## 4.4 Site Character

### Geology, Climate, Drainage and Soils

- 4.4.1** An Camas Mòr exhibits certain geomorphological and hydrological features. In geomorphological terms the site has evidence of meltwater channels and relict kettle holes with glacio-fluvial deposit forming terraces. Inclusive of this are kame features which can be seen across the valley. The site has no rock outcrops and

bedrock is believed to be at such a depth so as not to be impacted upon by the proposed development.

- 4.4.2** The central area of the site is likely to be underlain by (a solid geology of) interbanded gneissose psammitic and subsidiary semi-peltic rocks of the Central Highland Migmatite Complex. It is anticipated that the remaining underlying rock types will be predominantly psammitic, with beds of semi-peltic rocks, schists and quartzites. The superficial (drift) geology of the site comprises alluvial terrace deposits of sand and gravel. Deposits are likely to have significant thickness across the site, potentially greater than 5 m in thickness. The deposits have been reworked by the River Spey in the past, forming the terraces or escarpments to the west and south of the site boundary. The site is also underlain by Quaternary sands and gravels. The superficial deposits comprise silts, sands, gravel and cobbles and form terraced and gently undulating terrain. The groundwater chemistry is variable, but mineralisation is typically weak.

## Flora and Fauna

- 4.4.3** An Camas Mòr as defined by the Local Plan boundary has had a mixed land use in the past. It is likely to have originally been a Scot's pine dominated open forest with some birch and possibly other scattered tree species such as rowan, holly and aspen. In recent history (1700's and most of the 1900's) the area has been used for grazing and this grazing history is evidenced by the proposed development of a heathland with areas of grassland. During the 1800's the area was a source of naturally grown pinewood. At present, there is a mosaic of habitats present with some older open woodland and Scot's pine trees, planted commercial Scot's pine forestry and recently planted shelterbelt forestry with non-native species including spruce. There are areas of open heathland and planting in the centre of the site, which, due to the cessation of stock grazing, are now naturally colonising with trees, mainly Scot's pine but also some areas of birch.

## Cultural Heritage

- 4.4.4** Twenty-three cultural heritage sites and features have been identified within the proposed development area. Of these, 11 are located within the An Camas Mòr site and 11 lie within the access corridors to the south. The precise location of one site is not known. There are two unscheduled sites assessed in THC's Historic Environment Record (HER) as being of regional importance – a possible hut-circle and a township at Drumchork. There are some prehistoric and medieval remains within the proposed development site and various features relating to historic land uses.

## Landscape

- 4.4.5** An Camas Mòr is located within a landscape of many contrasts. The area possesses a rich natural heritage, ranging from the rarefied arctic vegetation of the high mountain plateau to the rivers, wetlands and farmlands of the straths. The mountains are surrounded by vast remnants of Caledonian Forest, and throughout Rothiemurchus, the pines of the upper forests give way to a mixture of pine and birch on the lower ground, which in turn lead to the rich and diverse

policy woodlands of the Strathspey valley and the peaty waters of the River Spey itself. The wooded flanks of the Cairngorms Mountains form a crucial setting to the open and bare mountain massif, whilst the lower straths are significantly enhanced by the rising forests and their mountain backdrop. Equally, to the west of the River Spey, the rising flank of the Monadhliath range forms a mountainous backdrop to Strathspey and forms the western setting to An Camas Mòr.

- 4.4.6 Man made elements of the landscape are an important aspect of the general character of the area, and the farmland of the straths and lower hills, the estate policies of mixed woodlands and parkland trees and the historical built heritage of the area are all particularly distinctive.
- 4.4.7 This rich diversity of landscape types creates an area of considerable scenic attractiveness, which has been celebrated from the 19th century onwards. The area continues to act as a magnet to visitors for a wide range of passive and active recreation activities.

## **4.5 Site Protection**

### **Cairngorms National Park**

- 4.5.1 The Cairngorms National Park was designated in 2003 by the Scottish Parliament because it satisfied the conditions for a National Park as set out in the National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000.
- 4.5.2 The Act in Section 1 sets out the aims of a National Park and in Section 2 the conditions for designation of an area as a National Park:
  - a That the area is of outstanding national importance because of its natural heritage or the combination of its natural and cultural heritage:
  - b That the area has a distinctive character and a coherent identity.
  - c That designating the area as a National Park would meet the special needs of the area and would be the best means of ensuring that the National Park aims are collectively achieved in relation to the area in a coordinated way.
- 4.5.3 The Act in Section 1 sets out the four aims of a National Park:
  - a To conserve and enhance the natural and cultural heritage of the area;
  - b To promote sustainable use of the natural resources of the area;
  - c To promote understanding and enjoyment (including enjoyment in the form of recreation) of the special qualities of the area by the public;
  - d To promote sustainable economic and social development of the area's communities.