

## Summary

- 7.3.33** The impacts upon Geology & Soils all occur during the construction phase.
- 7.3.34** An assessment of the effects on the geological and geomorphological features of the site for the proposed development, demonstrates that the overall significance of the effects of the development to be Insignificant or Minor, these effects are not significant.
- 7.3.35** It has been proposed that the 'kettle hole' features within the site would be left intact, forming natural landscape features within the development. Therefore, the impact upon these features is considered to be Insignificant, that is not significant.
- 7.3.36** The remaining features comprise glacio-fluvial terrace deposits and evidence of meltwater channels (only visible from aerial photographs). These features are also considered to have Low sensitivity due to their common occurrence in the Aviemore area and therefore the effect on them is not significant.
- 7.3.37** The effects of construction upon the topsoil and sub-soils within the site can be reduced using a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP). These effects are not significant.

## 7.4 EFFECT ON THE LANDSCAPE RESOURCE

### Introduction

- 7.4.1** This summary outlines the findings of the assessment of the proposed new community at An Camas Mòr on the landscape resource.
- 7.4.2** The landscape resource is defined as:
- The distinct spatial distribution, at a given moment in time, on the surface of the earth, of the physical components resulting from the interaction between natural and human processes over time, and which contribute to landscape context and character and how this is experienced and valued.

### Scope

- 7.4.3** The scope of this assessment considers the likely effect of the proposed new community on the landscape resource at a local level, on the wider landscape setting to the site and in relation to the Cairngorms National Park and The Cairngorm Mountains National Scenic Area (NSA); both landscape designations of national importance. A range of information is brought together to describe the baseline conditions of the landscape resource for these different levels of assessment; the introduction of the proposed new community is assessed against these baseline conditions, in relation a series of different stages of development and over different time periods.

## Possible Effects and Inter-relationships

- 7.4.4 Several possible effects and Inter-relationships have been identified as relevant to the assessment of the effect on the Landscape Resource. Table 7.11 lists the various effects and Inter-relationships with the Environmental Impact Assessment topics. Possible Inter-relationships have been identified with Visual Amenity, Ecology and Nature Conservation, Cultural Heritage and Night Lighting.

## Influence of Periods A-D on Assessment Periods

- 7.4.5 The assessment of the effect of the proposed new community is considered at four separate stages of the proposed development process, related to the phasing set out in the Local Plan and Indicative Land Use Plans ((Volume 2 Chapter 9 Annex A Figure 10 and Chapter 5 Figures 5.2 to 5.5). The key assessment stages in the proposed development process are:

- Assessment Period A – 2011, with the completion of 100 units in total;
- Assessment Period B – 2016, with the completion of 400 units in total;
- Assessment Period C – 2018, with the completion of 600 units in total; and
- Assessment Period D – 2027, with the completion of 1500 units in total.

## Consultations

- 7.4.6 The following consultations were undertaken:

- 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2008- Cairngorms National Park Authority Landscape Officer and The Highland Council Landscape Officer to discuss general methodology, scope of assessment and associated issues. A note of the meeting is contained within the Report of Scoping Consultations. The key points discussed were:
  - 4 assessment periods related to the development of the proposed new community;
  - Assessment to be transparent and clear in its assessments and conclusions;
  - Use of TJP 'Cairngorms' landscape assessment as basis for assessing impact on National Park;
  - Consideration of issue of 'wildness' within the Park; and

- Importance of open space design within overall layout of new community.
- 21<sup>st</sup> November 2008 – Cairngorms National Park Authority staff – to present initial assessment conclusions, initial 3D model of proposed development and outline visualisations and to receive feedback. The main issues raised were;
  - The need for more connectivity within the development in terms of tree cover and open spaces, to assist in reducing impact and the need to test different layout scenarios.
- 11<sup>th</sup> December 2008 - Cairngorms National Park Authority Landscape Officer to present revised 3D model and visualisations and to receive feedback. The meeting reaffirmed the need for further consideration of tree cover and pattern within the new community;
- 6<sup>th</sup> January 2009 - Cairngorms National Park Authority Landscape Officer to present further revised 3D model and visualisations and to receive feedback. A note outlining CNPA's response is included in the Report of Scoping Consultations.

## The Study Area

**7.4.7** It is normal practice, in undertaking a landscape assessment, to identify a study area related to the type and scale of development concerned and to the landscape context in which the development is proposed. In relation to this assessment, based on consideration of the above factors, it is considered that the proposed new community has the potential to have an effect on the landscape resource at two different levels:

- At the local landscape setting, in terms of effects on the landscape features and character of the site itself and its immediate surroundings; and
- At a wider landscape setting, in terms of effects on the general character of the surrounding area.

**7.4.8** However, it is recognised that any changes and associated effects to these two levels of landscape character considerations, resulting from the introduction of the proposed new community, would be occurring within both the Cairngorms National Park and The Cairngorm Mountains NSA, both landscape designations of national importance. Consequently, it is therefore important to also consider and assess how any changes and effects occurring at the local and wider setting levels might affect the character and qualities of the wider National Park and NSA landscape. This level of assessment would consider any likely effects on the whole of the National Park and the NSA.

**7.4.9** Consequently, differing extents of 'study area' are utilised in this assessment, in relation to the consideration of the likely effect of the proposed new community at these different levels: each of these levels of assessment therefore has its own specific 'study area'. Equally, the structuring of the description of the baseline landscape characteristics is related to these different levels of assessment.

**7.4.10** The following study areas have been considered;

- The landscape character of the local setting, considering the An Camas Mòr site and its immediate surroundings, based on work included within the Cairngorms Landscape Capacity for Housing study and landscape analysis and characterisation work undertaken for this assessment; and
- The landscape character of the wider setting of the surrounding forest landscape and mountain context of An Camas Mòr, using the SNH-Landscape Character Assessment work as its basis.

**7.4.11** However, it is noted that the wider landscape setting of An Camas Mòr forms part of the Cairngorms National Park and consequently a discussion of the special qualities of the National Park, drawing on work undertaken by CNPA, is used to introduce the description of the baseline landscape character of the wider setting of An Camas Mòr. Equally, issues related to 'wildness' within the National Park, based on a draft CNPA study, are extrapolated in relation to the SNH-LCA character areas and commentary on this issue is incorporated into the general baseline description of each landscape character area (Volume 2 Chapter 9 Section 2. sub-section 2.7).

**7.4.12** Consideration of the likely impact on the landscape of The Cairngorm Mountains NSA is undertaken within a separate section of the assessment considering landscape designations.

## **Baseline Conditions**

### ***Overview of the An Camas Mòr Landscape Context***

**7.4.13** Located within the 10,000 hectare Rothiemurchus Estate, the proposed site of An Camas Mòr extending to 105ha, lies to the east of Aviemore, close to the River Spey. It is within a landscape setting characterised by the inter-relationship of the low-lying settled and farmed strath, with its estates and policy woodlands, the remnant Caledonian Forest which densely clothes the adjacent foothills, and the granite mountain plateau of The Cairngorms, which comprises the most extensive area of land over 1000m in Britain.

**7.4.14** As such, the landscape context of An Camas Mòr as a proposed new community is probably unrivalled in Britain. The wooded flanks of the Cairngorm Mountains form a crucial setting to the open and bare mountain massif beyond, whilst the lower straths are significantly enhanced by the rising forests and their mountain backdrop. Equally, across the River Spey, the rising flank of the Monadhliath range forms a mountainous backdrop to Strathspey to the west.

- 7.4.15** This rich natural heritage, which represents one of the fullest expressions of the ecological continuum in eastern Scotland, is contrasted by the humanised straths, where an intimate mix of farmland, estate policy plantings and mixed woodlands, the historical built heritage of the area and the main settlements of Strathspey, combine to create a particularly distinctive landscape. Here, the influence of man is clearly evident in contrast to the woodlands and mountain plateau, where natural processes are dominant.
- 7.4.16** This wide diversity of landscape combines to create a setting to An Camas Mòr of considerable scenic attractiveness and the area acts as a magnet to visitors for a wide range of passive and active recreation activities. The scenic and recreational importance of the area, along with other factors, was instrumental in the recent establishment of the Cairngorms National Park, which covers an extensive area of the Cairngorms and their surroundings, including the site of An Camas Mòr. The site of An Camas Mòr is also located on the northern edge of The Cairngorm Mountains National Scenic Area (NSA), which lies entirely within the National Park.
- 7.4.17** The combination of a rich and diverse landscape setting with landscape designations of national importance therefore provides a challenging context in which to introduce the proposed new community of An Camas Mòr.

### ***Landscape Character of the Local Setting***

- 7.4.18** In landscape character terms, it is not possible to separate the An Camas Mòr site from its immediate surroundings, as various physical and visual features combine across the site boundary to create the major landscape components of the site and its surroundings. Consequently, there is a clear pattern of openness and enclosure across and around the site created by the inter-relationship between woodland, heathland and agricultural land with the underlying topography. Four Local Landscape Character Areas (LLCA) have been identified within the local landscape setting of An Camas Mòr:

- Elevated Woodland;
- Heathland/Pasture;
- Cultivated Fields; and
- Flood Plain Agricultural Land.

### ***Landscape Character of the Wider Setting***

- 7.4.19** The wider landscape setting of An Camas Mòr is formed by the combination of the landscape of the River Spey with the extensive forest landscape and rolling foothills of Rothiemurchus which surround An Camas Mòr to the east, and the dramatic elevated mountainous backdrop of the Cairngorm Mountains to the east and south, and the Monadhliath Mountains to the west and north-west. These elements combine to form a continuous surrounding skyline of mountains and forests which embrace An Camas Mòr. The wider landscape setting to An

Camas Mòr forms an important part of the landscape character of the Cairngorms National Park.

**7.4.20** Scottish Natural Heritage has mapped the whole of Scotland according to landscape character types and areas in a series of Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) reports. These reports form the primary source of reference for defining the existing baseline landscape character information of the Study Area.

**7.4.21** The proposed new community at An Camas Mòr is located within the Landscape Character Area identified as 'Speyside' within the Cairngorms SNH-LCA. Landscape Character Areas which are adjacent to that of the proposed new community, or which contribute to the wider setting of the site of An Camas Mòr, are identified as 'The Monadhliaths', 'Badenoch', 'Rothiemurchus/Abernethy', 'The North-Eastern Hills' and 'The Central Massif'.

**7.4.22** The assessment of the wider setting of An Camas Mòr considers the effect on:

- 'Speyside' LCA;
- Other LCAs of the Wider Landscape Setting; and
- The Cairngorms National Park.

## **Designations**

**7.4.23** There are several Designations relevant to Landscape Resource of the area within which the proposed development is located:

- The Cairngorms National Park; and
- The Cairngorm Mountains National Scenic Area.

## **Key Considerations**

**7.4.24** The key considerations in relation to Landscape Resource are:

- Impact on the local landscape setting;
- Impact on the wider setting; and
- Impact on the designated landscapes.

**7.4.25** The possible impacts on which the key considerations for the assessment are based are:

- Change to the landscape character of the elevated woodlands , flood plain agricultural land and cultivated fields Local Landscape Character Areas (LLCA's);
- Change to the landscape character of the Speyside Landscape Character Area (LCA);
- Change to the 'Wildness' of the National Park;
- Change to overall character and distinctive landscapes of the Cairngorms National Park; and
- Impacts on the Cairngorm Mountains NSA.

## **Assessment Methodology**

**7.4.26** The key components are:

- Establishing the baseline conditions of the existing landscape character of the study area concerned, together with its sensitivity to change in the context of the development proposed;
- Establishing the value attached to the study area in terms of any designations;
- Determining the magnitude of change to the baseline conditions resulting from the introduction of the proposed development, in relation to individual components of the landscape or the distinct spatial distribution of these components which produce recognisable patterns in the landscape;
- Determining the nature and significance of any likely effects on the baseline conditions, resulting from the changes identified;
- Consideration of any mitigation measures to prevent, reduce and where possible offset any significant effects identified; and
- Description of any residual significant effects.

## **Effects**

**7.4.27** To determine the effects of the proposed development on the Landscape Resource, the extent of the constructed development was based on the layout and building heights shown on the Indicative Land Use Plans for Periods A (2011) to D (2027) and the 3D model corresponding to these plans and building height information.. For each Period the effects on the Local Landscape Setting and the Wider Landscape Setting were assessed (Volume 2 Chapter 9 Section 2 Sub-section 2.11). The Wider Setting includes an assessment of the effects on

the Cairngorms National Park and the Cairngorm Mountains National Scenic Area.

**7.4.28** Utilising historical information from Rothiemurchus Estate regarding growth rates of particular tree species on the site of An Camas Mòr, a Tree Heights statement was prepared, indicating the heights to which existing small and newly planted trees could be assumed to have grown in relation to the different assessment periods. This information is included within the Supporting Document Indicative Land Use Plan Strategies and was used to set tree heights in the 3D model.

**7.4.29** These heights have been used in this assessment in determining the contribution that tree growth would play in influencing the level of landscape impact resulting from the development of the proposed new community over the different assessment periods.

## Significance of Effects at Assessment Periods

### *The Landscape Resource*

**7.4.30** Table 7.3 indicates the levels of likely effect predicted on the various categories of landscape resource included in the assessment.

**Table 7.3: Summary of the Significance of Effects on the Landscape Resource**

Category – Local Landscape Setting	Sensitivity	Effect in Assessment Period A	Effect in Assessment Period B	Effect in Assessment Period C	Effect in Assessment Period D
'Elevated Woodland' LLCA	Medium	Moderate Adverse	Moderate Adverse	Moderate Adverse	Substantial Adverse
'Heathland/Pasture LLCA	High	No Effect	No Effect	No Effect	No Effect
'Cultivated Fields' LLCA	High	Slight Adverse	Slight Adverse	Slight Adverse	Slight Adverse
'Flood Plain Agricultural Land' LLCA	High	Slight Adverse	Slight Adverse	Moderate Adverse	Moderate Adverse
'Speyside' LCA	Low	Slight Adverse	Slight Adverse	Slight Adverse	Slight Adverse
Other LCAs of Wider Setting	High Medium	No Effect	No Effect	No Effect	No Effect
Cairngorm National Park	High	Slight Adverse	Slight Adverse	Slight Adverse	Slight Adverse

**Note: moderate and substantial effects are considered to be significant.**

## The Cairngorm Mountains NSA

7.4.31 Table 7.4 below describes the key characteristics and likely effects upon the designated area.

**Table 7.4: Key Characteristics of The Cairngorm Mountains NSA Highlighted in ‘Scotland’s Scenic Heritage’ and Likely Effects**

Key Characteristics	Likely Effects
<p>“The granite plateau of the Cairngorm Mountains forms the most extensive area of land above 1,000m anywhere in Britain”, although “its height is less immediately apparent than its bulk.</p>	<p>An Camas Mòr would be not be located in this area of the NSA, and would therefore not affect this characteristic.</p>
<p>“The high plateau is bleak and bare and it is the immensity of scale, once realised, which impresses.”</p>	<p>An Camas Mòr would not be located in this area of the NSA and this characteristic of the plateau would not be affected by its introduction.</p>
<p>Murray, 1962, is quoted “with the vast corries, the massive slopes, the long passes, the wide skies, and the very bareness of the ground, where the elements work with a power not known at lower altitudes, gives to these plateaux their distinctive quality”.</p>	<p>An Camas Mòr would be not be located in this area of the NSA, and would therefore not affect these characteristics, nor affect the distinctive quality of the plateaux.</p>
<p>“The edge of the plateau, where not etched by corries, is well defined by long smooth steep slopes which from Speyside or Deeside rise in tiers.”</p>	<p>An Camas Mòr would be not be located in this area of the NSA, and would therefore not affect this characteristic.</p>
<p>“Lower down, deer forest, sheep grazing and forestry assume a greater importance in the appearance of the landscape. It is the forests around the plateau foot which for many people characterise the Cairngorm Mountains; three extensive and differing remnants of the native Caledonian Pine Forest occur at Rothiemuchus and Abernethy, Glen Feshie and Mar.”</p>	<p>Only the native pine forest at Rothiemurchus would be likely to be affected by the introduction of An Camas Mòr. Whilst there would be some progressive loss of woodland/forest cover as An Camas Mòr is developed, the overall woodland character of the lower areas of the NSA would be retained. Areas of remnant native pine wood within and around the site of An Camas Mòr would be retained, with only minor tree loss. New woodland planting would be undertaken as part of the peripheral buffer zones to compensate for that which would be removed. Where new buildings would be seen, these would be within a woodland setting, due to the provision of generous buffer areas along the boundary of An</p>

Key Characteristics	Likely Effects
	<p>Camas Mòr and by the retention and management of existing forests and woodland immediately around the site as part of an agreed long term management plan. The predominance of tree cover around the site of An Camas Mòr would be retained. The general mixed land use character of the lower areas of the NSA would be retained around the site of An Camas Mòr, as part of the diverse land use management of the Rothiemurchus Estate. An Camas Mòr would have a compact footprint in relation to other settlements within Strathspey, and consequently its impact in relation to loss of tree cover would be limited.</p>
<p>“In Rothiemurchus, the pines on the upper forest slopes give way to a mixture of birch and pine, and then to the rich policy woodlands of Strathspey. The forests are deeply carpeted with heather, blueberry and other flora, and the woods are interspersed with lochans of varying character, and views culminating in the peaty waters of the Spey itself.”</p>	<p>Areas of existing pine and birch, predominantly around the boundary of the site, would be retained as part of the development of An Camas Mòr, along with the larch tree belts on the nearby escarpments. The predominantly wooded character of the area would be retained, and any new tree planting associated with An Camas Mòr would be of pine, birch and other native species. There would be some loss of ground flora species where buildings, roads and gardens are introduced, but this would be of a small scale in relation to the extent of the wider Rothiemurchus area. When seen from the surrounding area, the forest, woodland and heathland character of the site would generally be retained, due to the provision of generous buffer areas along the boundary of An Camas Mòr and by the retention and management of existing forests and woodland immediately around the site as part of an agreed long term management plan. No lochans would be affected by the introduction of An Camas Mòr. The River Spey is not particularly visible from within the site of An Camas Mòr, due to the intervening river terrace and its associated riverside tree belts, which would not be affected by An Camas Mòr.</p>

Key Characteristics	Likely Effects
<p>“Glen Feshie is wilder and sterner, the pines mature and solitary, interspersed with juniper. The river dominates the forest, a great braided mountain stream with shingle beds cast over an uneven flood plain, almost continental in scale.”</p>	<p>An Camas Mòr would not be located within Glen Feshie and therefore would not affect this characteristic of the NSA.</p>
<p>“Mar Forest is different again. Higher, and therefore less rich than Rothiemurchus in its flora, it graduates from birch, pine and fir to massive pines alone.....Like Glen Feshie, the rivers are important here but not for their scale or grandeur. They are noisy burns dashing over granite boulders washed brightly pink by their clear waters, a lively element in the landscape.”</p>	<p>An Camas Mòr would not be located within Mar Forest and therefore would not affect this characteristic of the NSA.</p>
<p>“These woodland flanks of the Cairngorm plateau form a setting of rare beauty for the mountain massif, and are in turn enhanced by the mountain backdrop”.</p>	<p>The overall scale and extent of the woodland flanks to the mountains would not be significantly altered by the introduction of An Camas Mòr, and woodland would remain the predominant character of the area around An Camas Mòr. An Camas Mòr would be located on low ground close to the River Spey, and the rising wooded flanks of the Cairngorms would not be affected by the introduction of An Camas Mòr. An Camas Mòr would have a compact footprint in relation to other settlements within Strathspey, and consequently its effect in relation to loss of tree cover would be limited. Consequently, the introduction of An Camas Mòr would not alter the fundamental relationship between the woodland landscape and the mountain backdrop, and the characteristic woodland setting to the mountains would essentially be retained.</p>

**7.4.32** Much of the citation for The Cairngorm Mountains NSA refers to the plateaux where the introduction of An Camas Mòr would have no physical effects. Where references are made to the woodland setting and character of the Rothiemurchus area, it is considered that the introduction of An Camas Mòr would not alter the fundamental characteristics of this area, as the predominant woodland character of the area around the site of An Camas Mòr would be retained, in accordance with the agreed Rothiemurchus Estate Forest Plan, and the area would continue to provide a woodland setting to the mountain plateaux beyond. The site of An Camas Mòr lies at the north-west corner of the NSA, and much of the NSA is located outwith the extent of the wider landscape setting to An Camas Mòr established as part of the landscape character assessment process.

Consequently, it is considered that the key characteristics of the NSA would remain essentially intact following the introduction of An Camas Mòr.

- 7.4.33** On account of the characteristics described above, the magnitude of effects upon the integrity of The Cairngorm Mountains NSA by An Camas Mòr is judged to be **low**.
- 7.4.34** On account of the characteristics described above, the significance of effects upon the underlying character and integrity of The Cairngorm Mountains NSA by An Camas Mòr is judged to be **slight adverse**, and **not significant**, and that the underlying character and integrity of the NSA would remain essentially unaltered.

## Mitigation

- 7.4.35** Volume 1, Chapter 5 has described the comprehensive design development process which has accompanied the preparation of the layout of the proposed new community at An Camas Mòr. This process has aimed to prevent, reduce and where possible offset any significant adverse effects on the landscape resource where possible, through consideration of the general layout, built form and character, retention of existing trees and areas of woodland, open space and internal tree block provision and treatment of boundaries.
- 7.4.36** Significant adverse effects have been identified on the 'Elevated Woodlands' and 'Flood Plain Agricultural Land' LLCAs as part of the assessment process, and therefore potential mitigation measures require to be considered for these areas.
- 7.4.37** The 'Elevated Woodlands' LLCA covers the site of the proposed new community and therefore there would inevitably be considerable changes to, and associated effects on, its landscape character as a result of the introduction of the proposed new community. The scale, extent and density of built development which would be introduced would result in woodland no longer forming the dominant characteristic of the LLCA, with a consequent effect on its existing rural character. Such effects are considered unavoidable.
- 7.4.38** However, measures have been incorporated into the layout and design of the new community to be economic with the use of land, retain as much existing tree cover as possible, particularly around the periphery of the site, and to incorporate new tree planting, with the objective of creating a woodland setting for the proposed new community. By 2027, it is considered that this tree planting would not be effective in terms of scale within the higher and medium density zones to reduce the effect of these areas on the overall character of the LLCA, although the combination of retained existing trees and newly planted trees within the lower density zones would be contributing positively to the woodland setting and character of these areas. Within the new community though, existing retained and new tree planting in terms of street trees, open space trees and belts which connect through the overall development would be making a positive contribution to the landscape and townscape character of the new community, providing a strong impression at a human scale of a new community within a woodland setting.

- 7.4.39** Beyond 2027, further tree growth would increase and reinforce the woodland setting character of the new community, such that the level of effect on the LLCA would gradually reduce over time.
- 7.4.40** It is considered that no further mitigation measures are feasible or appropriate to consider in terms of preventing, reducing and where possible offsetting the significant adverse effects on the 'Elevated Woodlands' LLCA which have been identified.
- 7.4.41** The introduction of the district distributor road through the 'Flood Plain Agricultural Land' LLCA would inevitably fragment the existing field pattern, irrespective of its particular alignment. This particular effect is considered unavoidable, given the requirement to connect the new community to the B970 at some point in the vicinity of Inverdrue. Field patterns would be modified to relate to the distributor road alignment and avoid the creation of awkward shaped small-scale fields resulting. The vertical alignment of the district distributor road has been designed to follow the existing ground profile as closely as possible, with the road being no more than 300mm above the existing ground level, except where it crosses the escarpment. This would assist in achieving a gradual and smooth transition between the road level and the existing field levels. It is considered that no further mitigation measures are feasible or appropriate to consider in terms of preventing, reducing and where possible offsetting the significant adverse effects on the 'Flood Plain Agricultural Land' LLCA which have been identified.

## Significance of Residual Effects

- 7.4.42** The residual effects of the proposed new community are those outlined in 7.5 below.

**Table 7.5: Summary of Significance of Effects on the Landscape Resource**

Category – Local Landscape Setting	Sensitivity	Effect in Assessment Period A	Effect in Assessment Period B	Effect in Assessment Period C	Effect in Assessment Period D
'Elevated Woodland' LLCA	Medium	Moderate Adverse	Moderate Adverse	Moderate Adverse	Substantial Adverse
'Heathland/Pasture LLCA	High	No Effect	No Effect	No Effect	No Effect
'Cultivated Fields' LLCA	High	Slight Adverse	Slight Adverse	Slight Adverse	Slight Adverse

'Flood Plain Agricultural Land' LLCA	High	Slight Adverse	Slight Adverse	Moderate Adverse	Moderate Adverse
'Speyside' LCA	Low	Slight Adverse	Slight Adverse	Slight Adverse	Slight Adverse
Other LCAs of Wider Setting	High - Medium	No Effect	No Effect	No Effect	No Effect
Cairngorm National Park	High	Slight Adverse	Slight Adverse	Slight Adverse	Slight Adverse

## Summary

### ***Local Landscape Setting***

**7.4.43** Given the proposal to introduce a new community into an area with a strong rural character, where no such scale of built development currently exists, even given the design responses associated with the proposed layout, there would inevitably be considerable changes to the landscape character of the local area, and associated adverse effects. The 'Elevated Woodlands' LLCA covers the site of An Camas Mòr, and this LLCA would be the most affected by the introduction of the proposed new community, with considerable new buildings and associated roads introduced and areas of the existing woodland cover considerably reduced. The introduction of An Camas Mòr would result in the character of this LLCA changing from an elevated woodland plateau to a new built community within a woodland setting, where woodland was no longer the dominant characteristic, resulting in a substantial adverse, and therefore significant, effect on this LLCA. Equally, within the adjacent 'Flood Plain Agricultural Land' LLCA, there would be moderate adverse, and therefore significant, effect resulting from the proposed district distributor road, although the effect is more limited in extent compared to the 'Elevated Woodlands' LLCA. Consequently, the introduction of An Camas Mòr would result in significant adverse effects on the local landscape character.

**7.4.44** It is recognised that the changes and significant effects on local landscape character areas would be occurring within a landscape where woodlands, plantations and tree belts generally predominate. This tree cover plays a major role in contributing to the creation of a woodland setting for the proposed new community, both within and around the site, and is subject to a Forest Plan established and undertaken by Rothiemurchus Estate, where the primary objective is to increase the general woodland cover over a 20 year period and to retain the generally wooded character of the An Camas Mòr site and its wider setting beyond the lifetime of the development of the new community. This approach, in association with the measures to retain existing trees and woodland

on the site and supplement this with new tree planting, would ensure that in the period beyond that included within this assessment, that is beyond 2027, the longer term effect of the proposed new community would gradually reduce.

### **Wider Landscape Setting**

**7.4.45** Whilst the introduction of An Camas Mòr would result in localised significant effects on landscape character, which would be limited to two LLCAs, any effects associated with its introduction in relation to the landscape character of the wider 'Speyside' LCA, the other LCAs which form the wider setting to the An Camas Mòr site and the landscape character of the Cairngorms National Park would not be considered to be significant. Equally, no effects on The Cairngorm Mountains NSA are considered to be significant. Whilst important in local landscape character terms, the site of An Camas Mòr and its immediate surroundings are not considered to make a major contribution to the overall character and distinctive landscapes of the Cairngorms National Park, and form only a small part of the wider 'Speyside' LCA, where settlements form part of the key characteristics of the LCA. Therefore, the introduction of An Camas Mòr would have only a slight adverse effect on the landscape character of the 'Speyside' LCA, the Cairngorms National Park and The Cairngorm Mountains NSA and no effect on the landscape character of the other LCAs of the wider setting, and which would be considered not significant.

## **7.5 EFFECT ON VISUAL AMENITY**

### **Introduction**

**7.5.1** This summary outlines the findings of the assessment of the proposed new community at An Camas Mòr on visual amenity.

**7.5.2** Visual amenity is defined as:

- The assembly of components which provide an attractive visual setting or backcloth for activities.

### **Scope**

**7.5.3** The scope of this assessment considers the likely effect of An Camas Mòr on visual amenity. Consideration is given to the baseline visual characteristics of the site and its surrounding area, patterns of theoretical visibility of An Camas Mòr are considered and a series of viewpoints are selected from which to assess the visual effect of the introduction of An Camas Mòr over different time periods. Each selected viewpoint is considered in relation to its location and users, the existing visual amenity and how this would change through the introduction of An Camas Mòr, and an assessment of the level of visual effect which this would have on the viewpoint is undertaken for each of four different assessment time periods.

### **Possible Effects and Inter-relationships**