

Landscape Character Type: Broad Ridges and Valleys

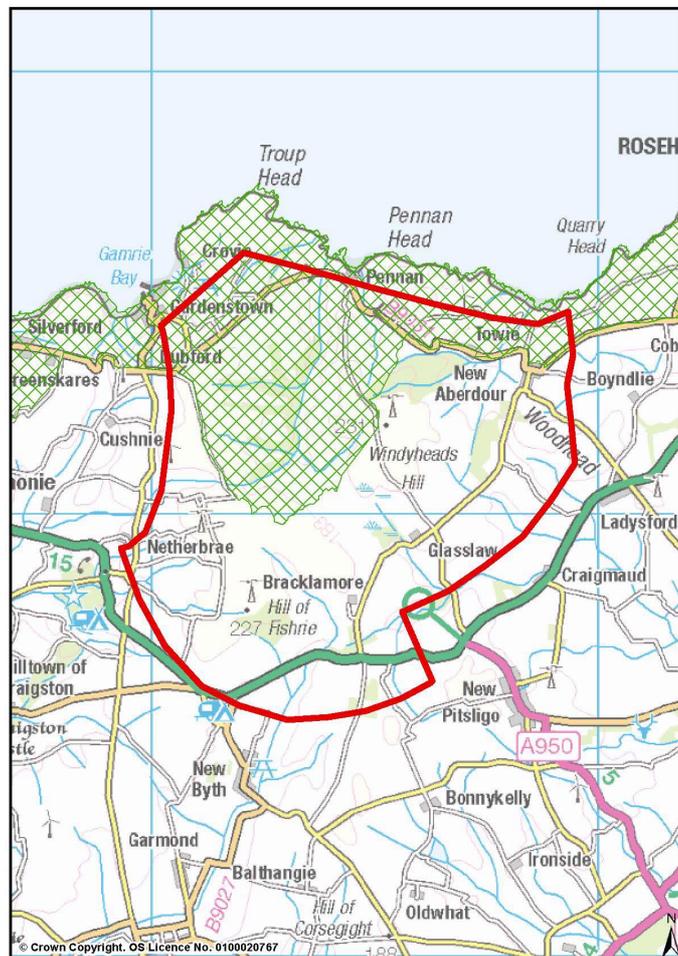
Overview

This Landscape Character Type is higher and hillier than the plains of the surrounding character landscapes. It comprises broad ridges, hilltops and enclosed valleys. The land falls gradually to the south, merging with the *Undulating Agricultural Heartlands* Landscape Character Type.

To the south of the promontory of Troup, where an outcrop of Old Red Sandstone protrudes north-eastwards to the coast, this striking and exposed feature provides a backdrop to the surrounding lowland and coastal stretches.



Map 1 *Broad Ridges and Valleys*



Key Landscape Characteristics

Sensitivity – The *Broad Ridges and Valleys* Landscape Character Type is inextricably linked with the coast. The North Aberdeenshire Coast Special Landscape Area (SLA), shown as the hatched area in Map 1, recognises the high scenic value of this rugged coast and its associated recreational use. The SLA designation recognises the influence of strong elemental qualities associated with exposure to the North Sea, and the coast's contribution to nature conservation.

Landform – Distinctly moulded landform of open hill tops and enclosed valleys. Ridges, long hills and valleys often oversized for their watercourses e.g., the ravine at Tour of Troup.

Vegetation – Woodland confined to the Tere of Troup and a few blocks of coniferous planting such as at Windyheads Hill.

Field Pattern – Well farmed landscape, although moorland occurs on the steeper slopes and on the hill tops.

Settlement – Farmsteads dot the valley infrequently.

Specific Guidance

General

- Being largely bare and exposed, The *Broad Ridges and Valleys* Landscape Character Type is highly sensitive to the intrusion of large-scale elements.
- Apart from where there is a croft like pattern of frequently dispersed small holdings on gentler west-facing slopes, farmsteads are not common in this landscape. This pattern should be maintained.

Land Use – Residential

- Residential buildings are usually located individually or with farm buildings.
- The simple form of single to 1½ storey cottages is the prevailing pattern which should be maintained, or a modern attractive interpretation provided thereof.
- Whitewash and stone including sandstone are common finishes/materials.



Trees and Woodland

- Mixed tree groups occur frequently around farmsteads.
- Integration of new buildings could be achieved by locating development close to existing shelterbelts and trees.

Boundaries

- Post and wire fencing is a common boundary treatment that could apply to new development for minimising landscape impact.
- No boundary treatment may also be acceptable.

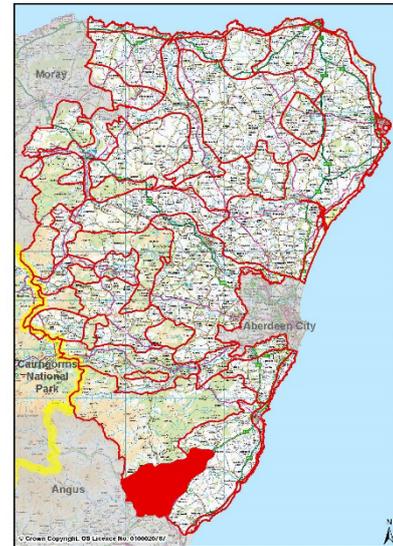
Landscape Character Type: [Broad Valley Lowlands - Aberdeenshire](#)

Overview

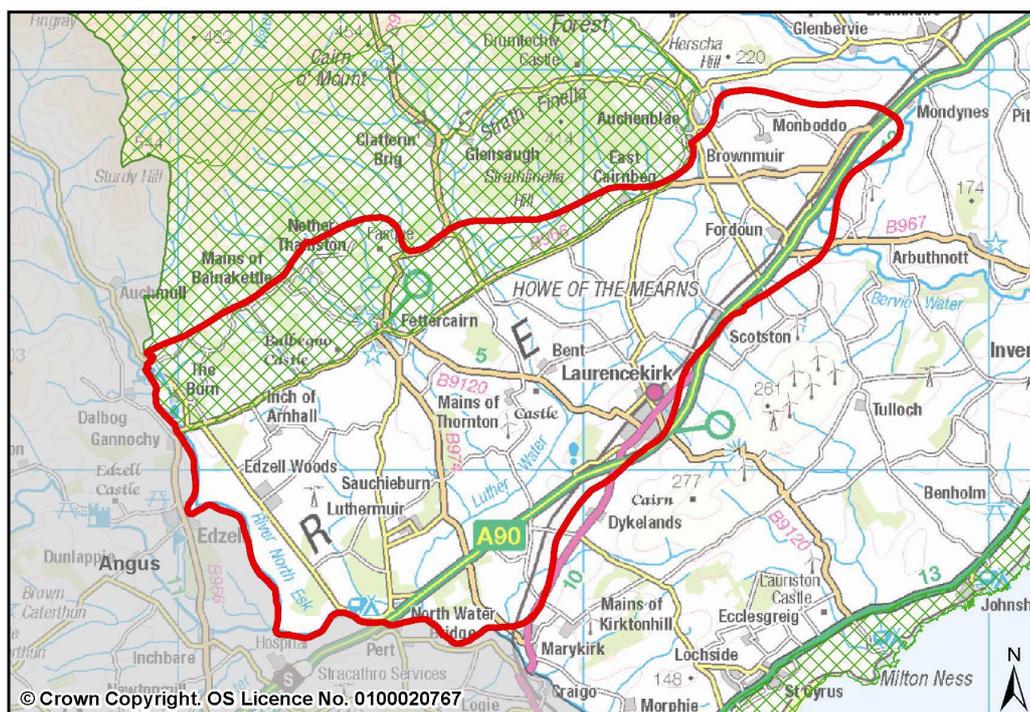
This Landscape Character Type is characterised as a broad and gently undulating strath, with a distinctive patchwork of large open fields, crops and woodlands. The landscape provides a striking contrast with the backdrop of the rugged steep scarp of the Mounth uplands which rise to the northwest.

The upper steep moorland slopes mark the line of the Highland Boundary Fault and contain the broad valley lowlands. The lower, rounded ridge of Garvock Hill to the south provides a lesser degree of containment.

The open, low-lying colourful landscape of the Howe of the Mearns has a large patchwork of fields of red soil and bright green pastures or cereal crops, while at other times fields of rape and daffodils. Agricultural wealth from the most fertile soils in Scotland has nurtured the growth of villages, farms, estates and many historic buildings.



Map 1 *Broad Valley Lowlands – Aberdeenshire:*



Key Landscape Characteristics

Sensitivity – The *Broad Valley Lowlands – Aberdeenshire* Landscape Character Type is strongly linked with the backdrop of the adjacent steep moorland slopes of the Mounth which contain this landscape. To the northwest, lies the Braes of the Mearns Special Landscape Area (SLA), shown by the hatched area in Map 1. The SLA designation recognises the highly visible nature of the Highland Boundary Fault, and the contrast between the rugged upland qualities and the distinctive flat farmed valley of the Howe of the Mearns below.

Landform – Broad, low lying, gentle undulating valley.

Field pattern / Land Use – Intensive agriculture. Large geometric fields of seasonally changing colours dominate in a distinctive patchwork divided by ditches and fences interspersed with small conifer woodlands.

Vegetation – Beech woodlands and avenues with stone walls associated with scattered estates. Small coniferous plantations and pockets of rowan and birch coppice stand out within the expanse.

Settlement – Red stone houses, bridges and stone dykes giving warmth to the landscape, but mixed with newer houses of diverse styles and materials.

Other – Corridor for major road and rail links. There are several wind energy developments across the Howe of the Mearns.

Specific Guidance

General

- The *Broad Valley Lowlands – Aberdeenshire* Landscape Character Type is a highly visible landscape, and any change will be widely seen.
- The colourful farmland tapestry is sensitive to homogenisation of land uses.
- The setting of estates and features associated with the landscape pattern are sensitive to neglect. Policy grounds, woodlands and gardens that are well maintained have a positive impact on landscape character.



Land Use – Residential

- Buildings are sparsely distributed and highly visible in the flat landscape, particularly in the more open part of the Howe to the east.
- Small groups of buildings that form a more coherent visual focus than numerous isolated buildings will be preferable for new development. However, larger groups are more appropriately located in a town or village.
- Houses are generally a maximum of 1½ storeys.
- Traditional styles and colours of buildings are distinctive. The red colour of the landscape is a key characteristic which could be reflected in new development through use of local sandstone or in materials that reflect this theme.
- There are some traditional whitewashed cottages and farmhouses and it may be appropriate to reflect this feature in new homes (particularly small-scale housing) where sandstone buildings are less of a feature.
- Beech hedges or stone dykes are traditional boundary treatments and similar materials should be used to enclose new houses.

Trees and Woodlands

- Broadleaf avenues are pronounced in the landscape and the management and replacement of over-mature trees will benefit these important features.

- Shelterbelts are well established in this landscape and extension and reinforcement of these or linkages with hedgerows can help accommodate new development within the landscape.
- Pockets of trees also help integrate houses into the landscape.



Land Use - Agricultural

- Large scale new agricultural buildings will have an impact on the landscape due to its uniformly flat landform. Where possible buildings should be set against a backdrop of mature trees and grouped with existing buildings.



Roads

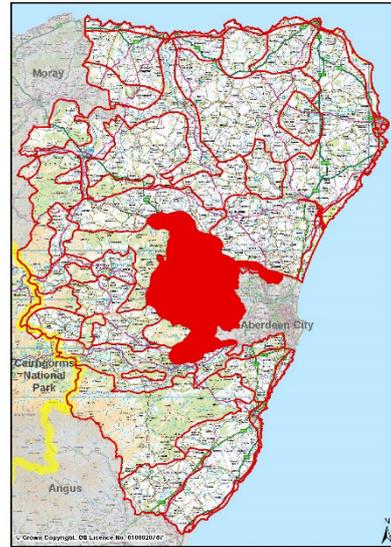
- Clearly defined transport and infrastructure corridors will confine the extent of impact from linear infrastructure.
- Various good design measures can be utilised to help integrate roads with the landscape. Landscape planting is key but should avoid emphasising linearity. Clumped planting tends to break up lines.

Landscape Character Type: [Wooded Estates - Aberdeenshire](#)

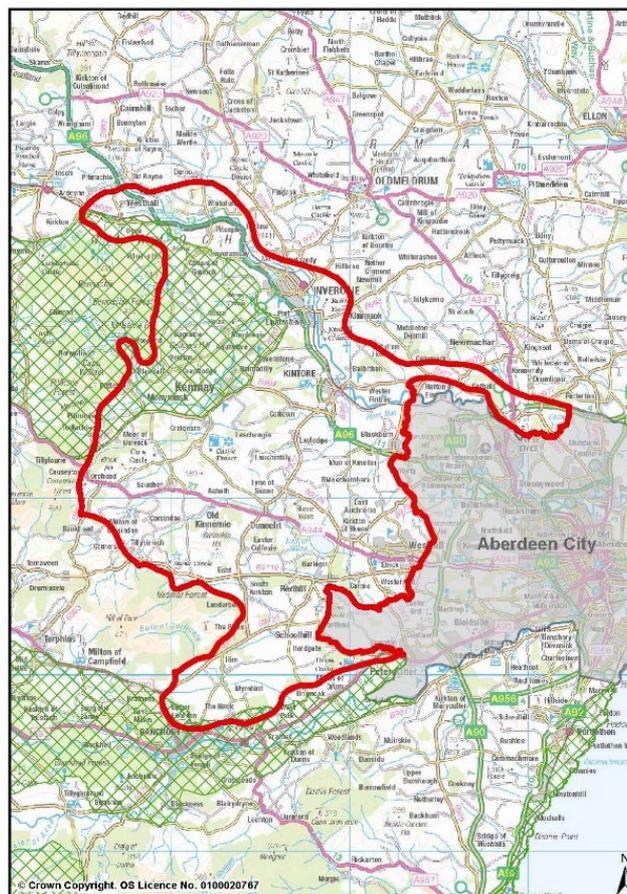
Overview

This Landscape Character Type lying between the Rivers Don and Dee Valleys, is a substantial area of low hills, wide valleys, and dense woodland appearing as a consistent feature. The strong woodland structure is largely associated with numerous policy grounds. There is also mixed farmland with varying size and pattern of fields.

Long views across open farmland into the distance contrast with sudden enclosure by woodland which create a more intimate landscape experience. The prominent *Outlying Hills and Ridges* Landscape Character Type provides a backdrop to the west, with moorland spurs forming dark ridges across the skyline contrasting with the green lowlands.



Map 1 *Wooded Estates – Aberdeenshire*



Key Landscape Characteristics

Sensitivity – Adjacent areas of high scenic value provide a backdrop to the *Wooded Estates* – *Aberdeenshire* Landscape Character Type. The Bennachie Special Landscape Area (SLA) designation extending from the northwest, and the Dee Valley SLA to the south (shown as the hatched areas in Map 1), emphasise the significance of these areas to Aberdeenshire's landscape identity. These areas are highly popular with visitors and play an important role in the tourist experience, as well as being important for nature conservation.

Landform – Topography varies from broad sweeping floodplains and valleys, to hills with pockets of small-scale relief. This is reflected in the landscape pattern with large open arable fields in some areas, and small fields of pasture enclosed by drystone dykes in others.

Vegetation – Dense woodland is the consistent feature including small coniferous woodlands, and thick clumps and shelterbelts of mixed broadleaf policies, or meandering riparian woodlands along the River Don. Mature beech avenues and field trees and mixed woodlands also feature.

Field Pattern – Where the valley is broader and the landscape character is more open, pasture fields are frequent. Field boundaries are often absent, but fields are clearly defined into a mosaic of geometric shapes largely by woodland forms of dark clumps and shelterbelts. Field patterns are enhanced by seasonal colour changes.

Settlement – Widespread settlement and more recent housing development fringing existing towns, as well as scattered throughout the countryside.

Other – A significant network of main roads extending radially from Aberdeen, with the A96 to the north being a prominent feature. More minor routes criss-cross the landscape. Numerous pylon lines are present.

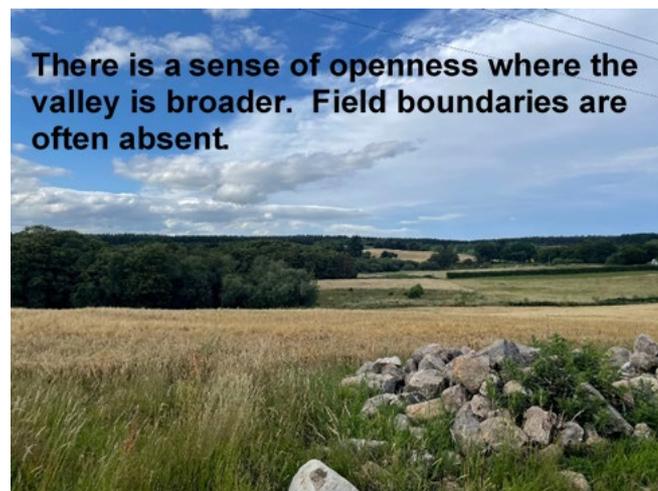
Specific Guidance

General

- The *Wooded Estates – Aberdeenshire* Landscape Character Type has a strong woodland structure of varied size. Large policy woodlands are susceptible to neglect and decline.



- Where the valley is broader the landscape has a very open character. Fields of pasture or arable cropping are frequent and field boundaries are often absent. This enhances the smoothness of the landscape.



- Where present, drystone dykes and copses are susceptible to damage and neglect.
- Open views from and to stately homes/castles, should be protected and their setting maintained.

Trees and Woodland

- Woodland is a key feature of this Landscape Character Type.
- Areas of lowland moss with birch and pine enhance the landscape diversity and increase the sense of enclosure and small scale.
- Native broadleaf trees may be used to integrate and contain new housing estates and soften the edge of urban developments.
- Broadleaf woodlands with a mix of species help maintain a well-balanced woodland structure.

- Conifer plantations can enhance woodland structure, but stark geometric features should be avoided and more diverse rounded shapes with a broadleaf edge create a more natural character.
- Beech lined avenues are a feature in places.



Land Use - Residential

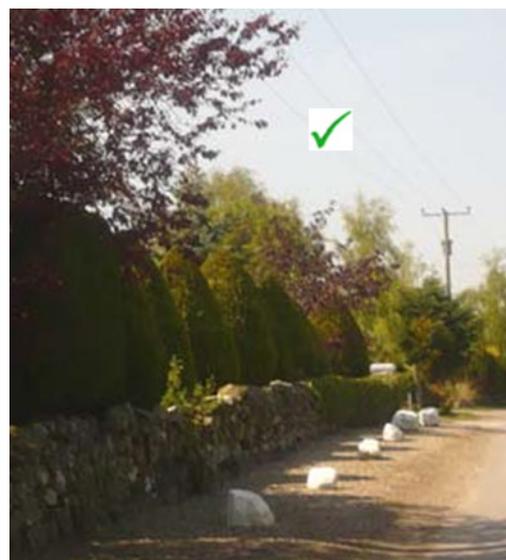
- Use of local stone can help to integrate buildings in the landscape.
- Alterations and extensions risk eroding landscape character unless designed sensitively. Contemporary interpretations of vernacular character can provide a good fit in the landscape through appropriate use of materials.
- Houses and farmsteads are often associated with woodland screening or hedging.





Boundaries

- Woods, shelterbelt and drystone dykes (occasionally with coping stone) enhance estate settings. These should be maintained to create a more unified landscape structure.
- Outwith estates, drystone dykes feature in much of the area, although they are sometimes tumbledown dykes.
- Hedging is a feature of this landscape, although it varies from well-maintained beech hedges to scrubby gorse.
- Post and wire fencing is also a common boundary treatment.
- Slatted wooden fencing or inappropriate suburban style harled walls generally do not fit with the landscape character.



Other

- Sites for quarrying should maximise use of existing woodland and landform.

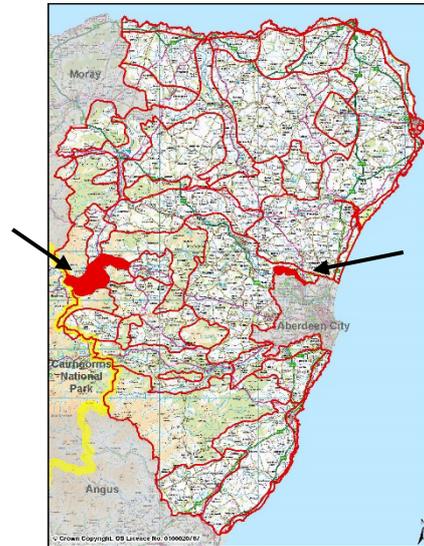
Landscape Character Type: Narrow Winding Farmed Valley

Overview

This Landscape Character Type is defined by its steeply banked and winding river valley landform. These characteristics are a feature of the narrow stretches of the River Don valley upstream at the western edge of Howe of Alford, and downstream for a small section close to Aberdeen City on the northern side of the river.

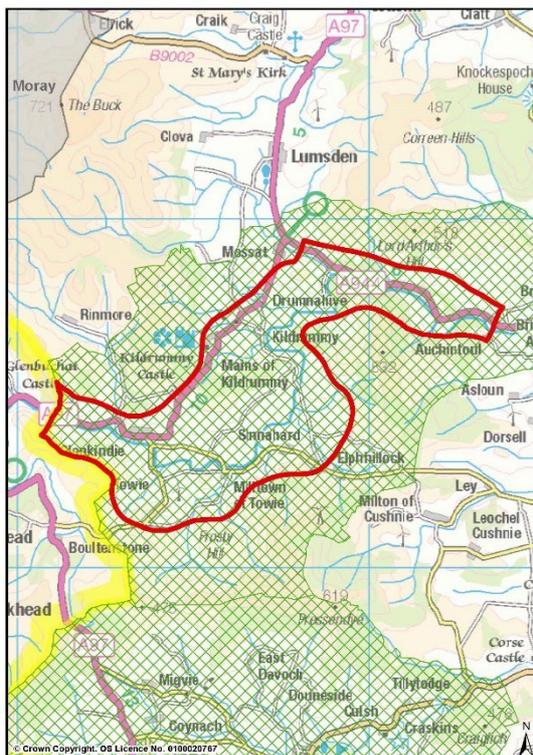
Extending westwards from Aberdeen, the river valley landform becomes broader with a less distinct valley shape and is therefore encompassed within the *Wooded Estates – Aberdeenshire* Landscape Character Type.

The *Narrow Winding Farmed Valley* Landscape Character Type has a strong historic character and includes estate parklands and buildings with striking bridges.

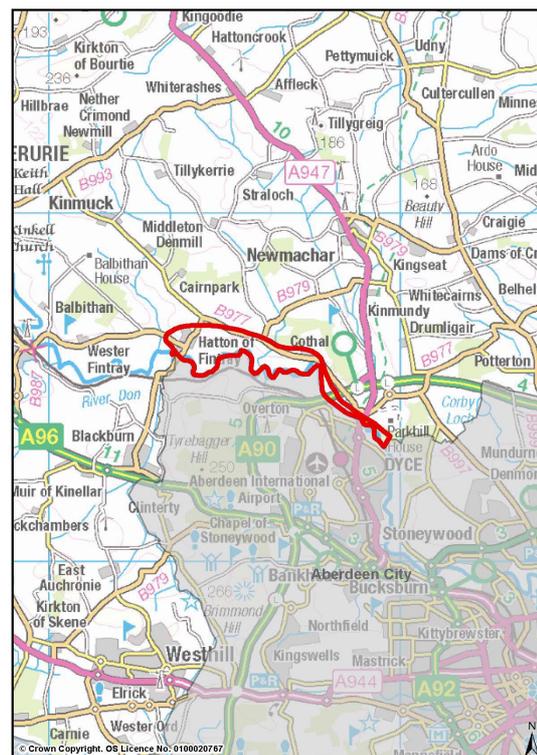


Narrow Winding Farmed Valley:

Map 1 Upper Don



Map 2 Lower Don



Key Landscape Characteristics

Sensitivity – The Upper Don Valley Special Landscape Area (SLA) designation, shown as the hatched area in Map 1, recognises the high scenic qualities of this valley with its naturalness, woodland network and strong relationship with the Cairngorms National Park. The high connectivity created by the river corridor is also acknowledged.

Landform – Well defined, incised valley with well wooded slopes. On the valley floor there are open areas of floodplain. The river is generally fast flowing and gently meandering but channelled into a more constricted valley floor close to the City.

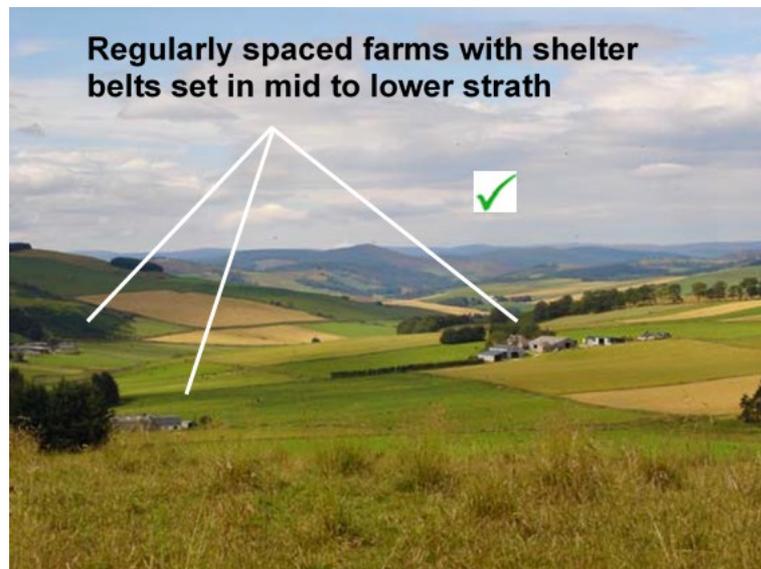
Vegetation – The strong containment of the valley is accentuated by often dense woodland. Semi-natural riparian woodland and trees and marginal vegetation along the riverbanks pattern the generally open floodplain. The valley sides are wooded with a diverse mix of policy woodland shelterbelts and clumps of mature trees. Farming is however the dominant land use on the valley floor and lower valley sides.

Settlement – Apart from small-clustered villages such as Hatton of Fintray, settlement is limited to scattered farmsteads and cottages. There are archaeological historic features with distinctive character including chapels, bridges, estate policies and buildings and old mills.

Specific Guidance

General

- The managed landscape of the sandstone strath in the Upper Don Valley of the *Narrow Winding Farmed Valley* Landscape Character Type is highly sensitive to any changes.
- The farmed landscape is sensitive to changes affecting the regular pattern of fields, settlement and woodland.
- Farming is the dominant land use on the valley floor and valley sides.
- Regular spacing of farms within shelterbelts is characteristic.



- Closer to Aberdeen, the valley scale changes and there is a stronger sense of containment as the valley sides steepen, accentuated by wooded ridgelines.

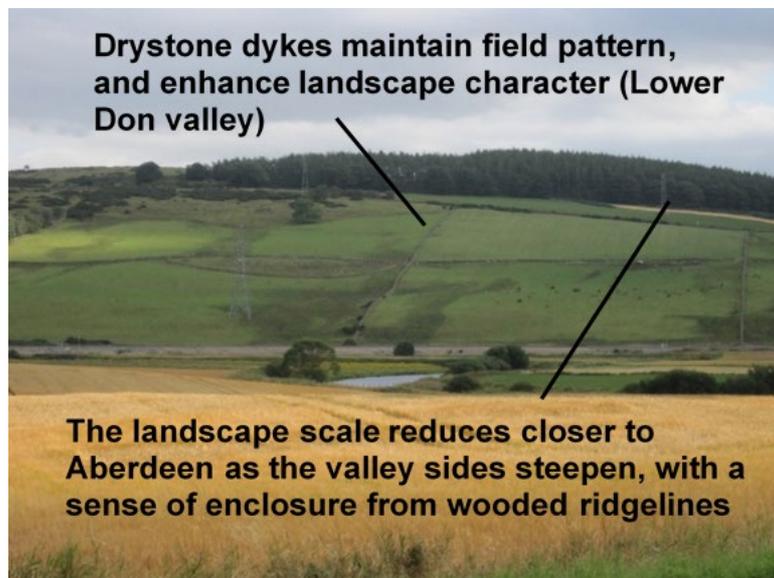
Land Use - Residential

- Insensitively located new development will disrupt the landscape.
- New housing should be grouped with existing farm buildings. Particularly in the Upper Don Valley, there are few homes set individually in the landscape and new housing would disrupt the existing pattern of regularly spaced built development.
- Within the strath of the Upper Don Valley development is generally set in the mid to lower parts of the strath and set back from the road.
- Within the glens new homes should reflect the pattern of evenly spaced farms and estate lodges. Farms are generally on the upper to middle reaches of the glen with cottages and lodges located along the roadside.
- Housing should generally be single to 1½ storey within shelterbelt planting as this is characteristic of the area.



Boundaries

- In the Upper Don valley landscape field boundaries are often minimal or absent. This has the effect of enhancing the smooth fields of pasture. In other parts, noticeably in the Lower Don valley, maintenance of stone dykes augment field pattern and so enhances landscape character.

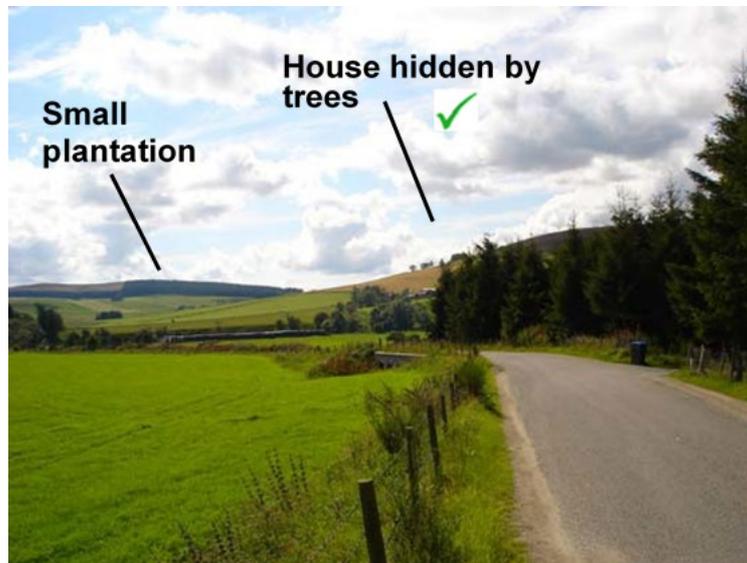


Land Use - Agricultural

- New agricultural buildings should be well related to existing farm buildings and not be of a scale that dominates the existing farmstead.
- Farm buildings can be successfully screened by small hummocks and shelterbelts.

Trees and Woodland

- Small shelterbelts and plantations reflect existing patterns. Characteristic shelterbelts augment the field structure and screen buildings.



Roads

- Infrastructure such as roads should follow breaks in landform and minimise visual intrusion.

Landscape Character Type: Broad Wooded and Farmed Valley

Overview

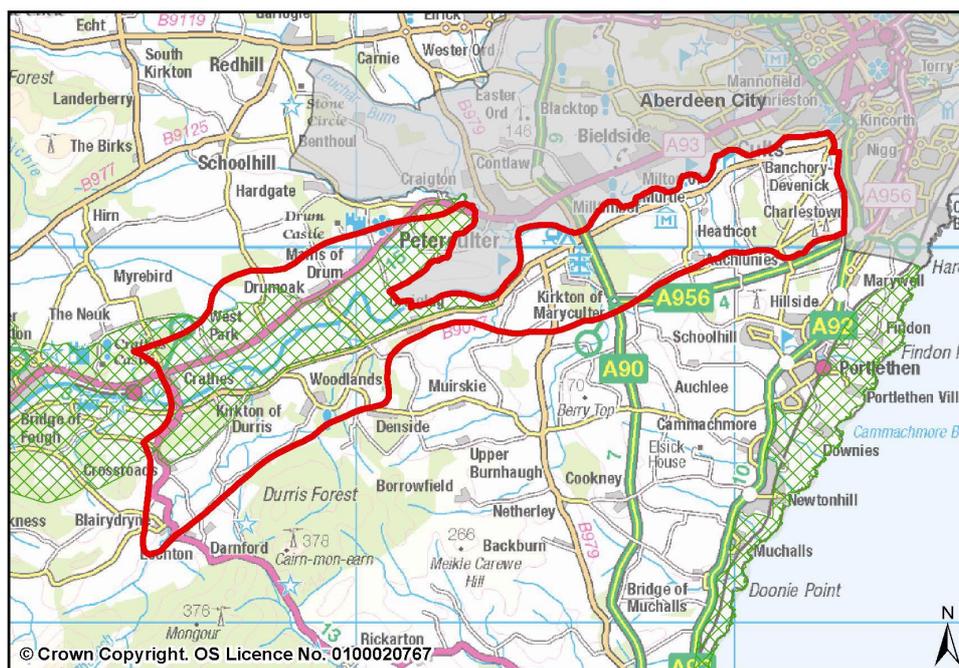
This Landscape Character Type is defined by the meandering River Dee along its eastern stretch. The river valley is a well-defined strath extending from Crathes to the west of Aberdeen, towards the Bridge of Dee at the city boundary.

The sides of the broad valley form a series of rolling terraces patterned with bands of birch and pine, interspersed with walled pastureland. Open farmland is more of a feature to the east and along some tributaries, contrasting with the more densely wooded valley further west in adjoining landscape character types. There are rich colours with contained views of woodland, water and buildings, with occasional distant glimpses of heather-clad hills.

To the east, the northern bank of the valley is within Aberdeen City. Upstream, through Deeside, the landscape continues as the *Broad Wooded Valley with Estates* Landscape Character Type.



Map 1 *Broad Wooded and Farmed Valley*



Key Landscape Characteristics

Sensitivity – The *Broad Wooded and Farmed Valley* Landscape Character Type is closely associated with Aberdeenshire's landscape identity. This is recognised by the Dee Valley Special Landscape Area (SLA) designation, shown by the hatched area on Map 1, and which extends westwards throughout the Deeside area. The designation emphasises the importance of the River Dee for tourism and recreation as well as nature conservation. This also recognises the rich scenery of the landscape and its strong historic associations which brings numerous attractions of castles and estates.

Landform – A valley landform, with the shallow, meandering River Dee often divided into channels by small, wooded islands across a broad valley floor. Has varied side slopes, with rocky areas higher up.

Vegetation – Predominantly a combination of farmland and woodland, with trees bordering fields adding to the varied sequence of open space and enclosed woodland along the valley. A more open agricultural basin extends eastwards to the lower Dee, towards Aberdeen.

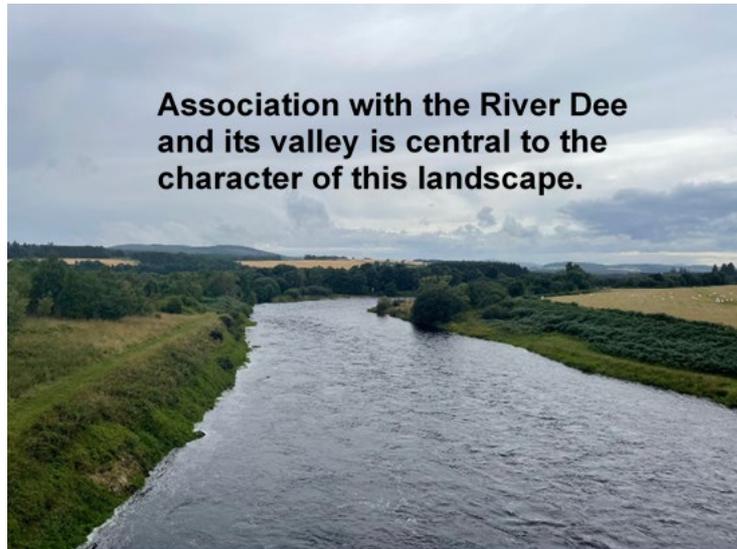
Settlement – Deeside forms a natural communication channel associated with a sequence of villages, small towns and groups of houses, although mainly along the northern side of the river. Built development is mainly focussed on the series of settlements from Peterculter eastwards to Aberdeen.

Other – Roads follow the valley floor, with a network of minor roads on the south side slopes providing frequent views of the river. Victorian and older castles with public facilities add to the sense of an area well used for recreation.

Specific Guidance

General

- The association with Deeside and its large houses and castles set amongst policy woodlands is integral to the character of the *Broad Wooded and Farmed Valley* Landscape Character Type. This character should be maintained to avoid degrading and homogenising the landscape.

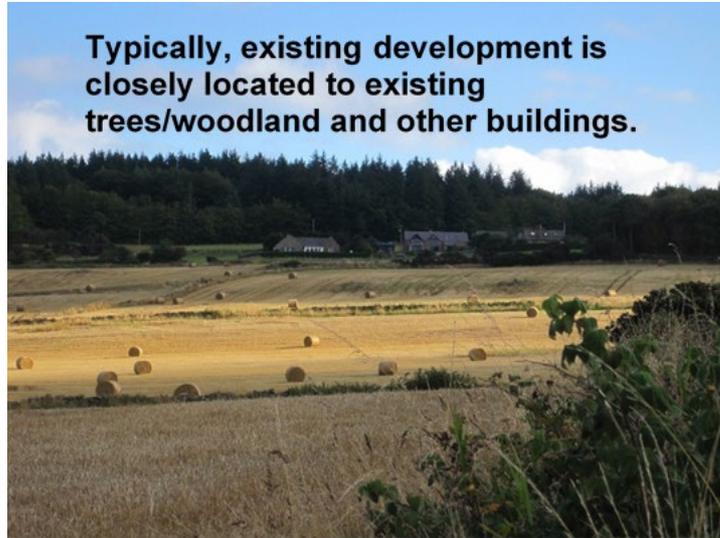


- Where long views into and out of the area are a feature, these should be retained.
- Preservation and management of policy woodlands and stone dykes and replanting of avenues will benefit both estates and the wider landscape.
- Closer towards Aberdeen City, the varied sequence of open space, small scale farmland and enclosed woodland becomes an increasingly distinctive and discernible pattern. This character should be maintained.



Land Use - Residential

- Houses and farmsteads are predominantly sited within or adjacent to woodland or have woodland screening.



- Integration of new buildings could be achieved by locating development close to existing trees, woodland and buildings.
- Linear sprawl will degrade the landscape; small, clustered settlement patterns are more appropriate and will acquire greater community identity.
- Use of stone and traditional materials and colours will reflect the local character. The aesthetic of traditional proportions and window style should be referenced. Renovations should be achieved through careful and sensitive design.



- Traditional cottages may be located on the roadside or close to the road. However, towards Aberdeen City newer/ larger development is typically sited in unobtrusive locations, low down in the landscape and embedded within or on the edge of woodland.



Trees and Woodland

- Mixed deciduous and coniferous woodlands are generally responsive to the landform and provide a major contribution to the character of the valley landscape.
- Removal of woodland in order to accommodate development should be avoided. However, new development can be integrated with existing tree belts or woodlands.
- Small blocks of commercial forestry are likely to fit within the existing farmland pattern.

Boundaries

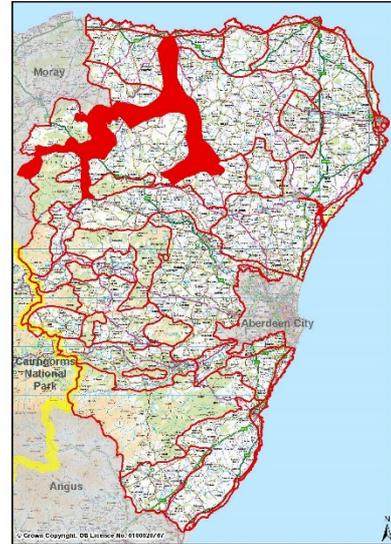
- Preservation of traditional field boundaries, such as drystone dykes and hedgerows, will enhance the landscape pattern.
- Beech hedges can provide successful boundary treatments as are stone dykes. Coniferous hedges and fencing used for plot boundaries can be very intrusive and impact on the pastoral landscape character setting.

Landscape Character Type: [Farmed and Wooded River Valleys](#)

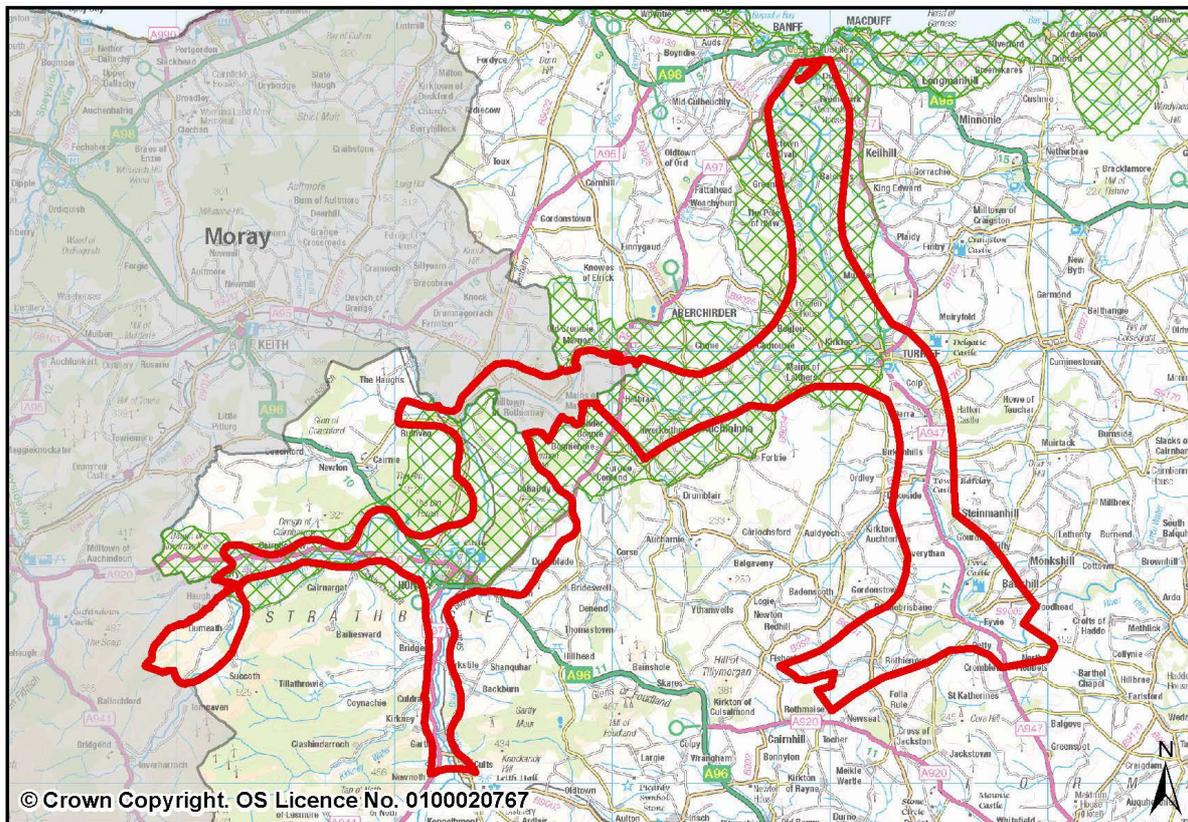
Overview

This Landscape Character Type is characterised by the well settled, wooded and diverse valleys of the Rivers Deveron, Bogie and Ythan. Forming a significant feature within the extensive agricultural heartlands of Aberdeenshire, and flowing out to sea at Macduff, these straths are largely farmed. There are mixed pastures and arable fields in the flatter floodplain areas, whilst on the valley sides the farmland is interspersed with mixed woodlands.

Both the Bogie and upper Deveron west of Huntly are strongly contained by adjacent hills and less intensively farmed. The Ythan valley has an open, broad character between Turriff and Fyvie, whilst east of Fyvie it is narrow and deeply incised.



Map 1 *Farmed and Wooded River Valleys*



Key Landscape Characteristics

Sensitivity – The *Farmed and Wooded River Valleys* Landscape Character Type overlaps with the Deveron Valley Special Landscape Area (SLA). This designation, shown by the hatched area in Map 1, acknowledges the high scenic quality resulting from the meandering River Deveron bounded by rolling wooded hills. These form an important setting to settlements along the valley floor and sides, and backdrop to castles and estates.

Landform – Predominantly shallow, wide valleys bounded by broad rolling hills, although the Ythan flows through a narrow gorge east of Fyvie and the upper Deveron west of Turriff lies within a deeper valley.

Field Pattern – The straths are largely farmed with mixed pastures and arable fields set out in the flat floodplain and gently rolling sides. Farmland is interspersed with mixed woodlands on valley sides, many of these comprising policy woodlands associated with the estates which are a key characteristic of this landscape.

Vegetation – Mixed woodlands contribute to the rich diversity of these valleys, and the policies of designed landscapes that extend onto rolling hill tops.

Settlement – Roads run alongside the rivers and small towns such as Fyvie. Turriff and Huntly are located at confluences and key bridging points. Farms are evenly dispersed along the straths, usually sited on lower slopes. The busy A947 Aberdeen to Banff arterial route which is tightly aligned to a tributary of the Deveron, contrasts starkly with the sense of seclusion experienced along quieter roads and pathways along the Deveron Valley. Castles, mansion houses and other historic features contribute an architectural interest to these valleys.

Other – The area has attracted a small amount of wind turbine development. Wind farms in neighbouring Landscape Character Types along the edges of the valleys are visible from this landscape.

Specific Guidance

General

- The *Farmed and Wooded River Valleys* Landscape Character Type will easily degrade if subject to linear sprawl or large-scale developments leading to homogenisation of landscape character.
- The setting of estates and large houses are susceptible to neglect or changes in land use. Preservation and management of policy woodlands and stone dykes and replanting of avenues will benefit both estates and the wider landscape. Development that impacts on these elements should be resisted.
- The straths are largely farmed with mixed pastures and arable fields, with mixed woodlands on valley sides. Where long views into the landscape are a feature, these should be retained.

Straths are largely farmed with mixed pastures and arable fields.

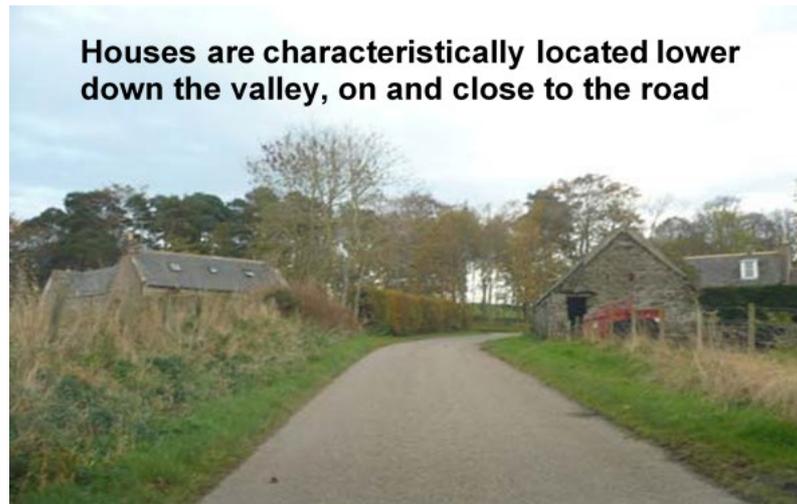


Land Use – Residential

- Farmsteads are evenly dispersed along the straths, frequently sited on lower slopes and terraces above floodplains, whilst houses are generally located on the roadside or close to the road.

Characteristically, farmsteads are located on valley sides, with limited development on valley floor.





- Houses and farmsteads predominantly relate closely to trees and woodland or have woodland screening.



- Integration of new buildings could be achieved by locating development close to existing buildings, shelterbelts, hedgerows and trees, avoiding linear sprawl.
- Clustered settlement patterns are appropriate and will acquire greater community identity. Expansion of existing settlements may be restricted through woodland containment.
- Housing should have relatively modest tree planting around them, with small groups of trees being more characteristic.
- Use of stone and harling finishes should enhance local character.

Trees and Woodland

- Small blocks of commercial forestry will fit within the existing farmland pattern.
- Local prominent landscape features such as the stands of Scots pine on mounds may be enhanced through management.
- Broadleaf and mixed woodland is a feature along river valleys, particularly the upper Deveron valley.
- Preservation and management of policy woodlands and replanting of avenues of trees will benefit the estate and the wider landscape.
- Riverside trees are an attractive feature of the valleys and should be retained.
- Mixed deciduous and coniferous woodlands generally respond to the landform and provide a major contribution to the character of this valley landscape.
- Whilst removal of woodland in order to accommodate development should be avoided, new development can be integrated with existing tree belts or woodlands. Planting native trees will replicate copses traditionally planted for shelter.

Boundaries

- Preservation of traditional field boundaries, such as drystone dykes and hedgerows will enhance the landscape pattern.
- Beech hedges are successful boundary treatments as are stone dykes.



- Coniferous hedges and fencing used for plot boundaries can be very intrusive in rural locations.

Limited planting within curtilage but links well with mixed woodland backdrop



Stone dyke with hedging above

Land Use - Agricultural

- This Landscape Character Type is characterised by a large variety of farm buildings ranging from traditional steadings to larger modern buildings.
- New buildings are generally grouped together with the original farmstead.
- Traditionally, signature colours have been used to paint doors and rainwater goods and other outbuildings. Colours include rich reds and blue.



Red corrugated roofing occurs regularly

Landscape Character Type: Broad Wooded Valley with Estates

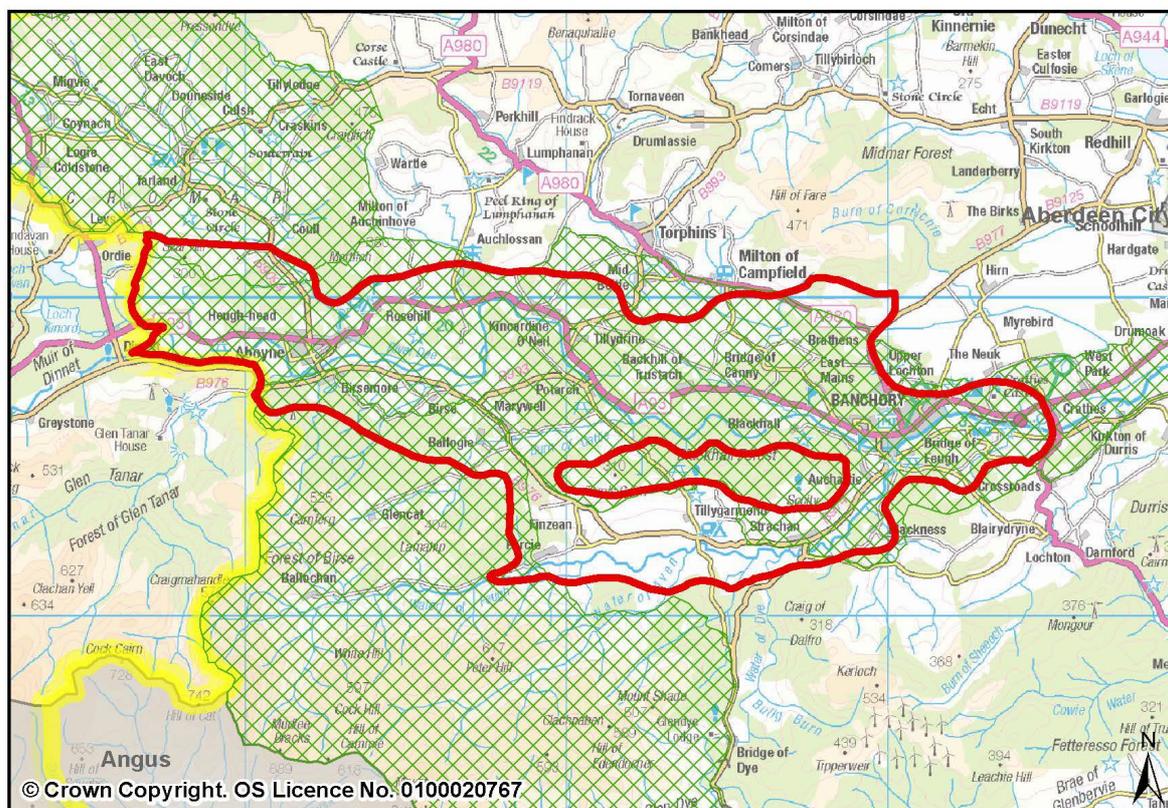
Overview

This Landscape Character Type is defined by the richly wooded, broad valley setting of the River Dee. This valley landscape is grand in scale and associated with the presence of numerous wooded estates and attractive small towns. The Water of Feugh, although smaller in size than the Dee, is dramatic with its rocky chasm and sequence of waterfalls. Both river valleys exhibit overall a similar mix of wooded slopes together with open fields and settlement.



From east to west, the landscape transitions from a pastoral area of green fields and shady woods to a more highland character, with steep wooded sides rising to moorland as the valley continues into the Cairngorms National Park.

Map 1 *Broad Wooded Valley with Estates*



Key Landscape Characteristics

Sensitivity – The *Broad Wooded Valley with Estates* Landscape Character Type is closely associated with Aberdeenshire's landscape identity. The Dee Valley Special Landscape Area (SLA) designation, shown as the hatched area in Map 1, emphasises the importance of the River Dee for tourism and recreation and its rich scenery and strong historic associations, with numerous attractions of castles and estates contributing a strong sense of identity.

Landform – Large scale river valley with its sides formed by granite hills. The valley is narrower and steeper to the west. Moving eastwards, the river becomes wider and shallower where hillsides tend to be set further back from the river, so creating a wider and more open valley landform for this Landscape Character Type.

Vegetation – Dense broadleaved and Scots pine woodlands engulf valley sides around and west of Banchory. To the east the valley sides become less densely wooded. A great diversity of trees overall including a rich understorey in areas.

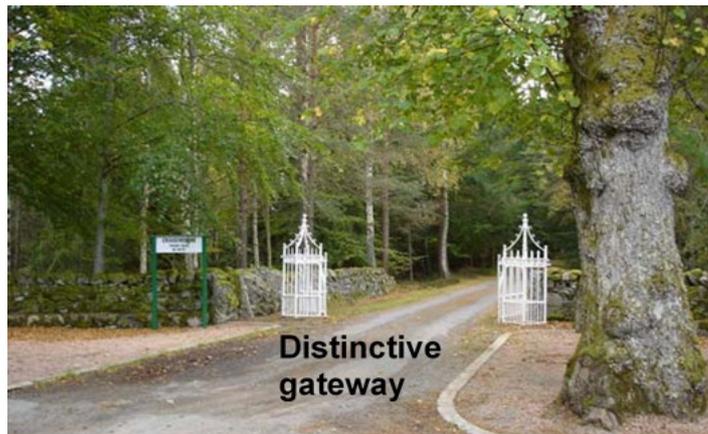
Settlement – Deeside provides a natural channel into the heart of the Grampians towards Braemar. Has a range of settlements from small towns and villages, mostly on the north banks of the rivers, to groups of houses, estates with fine buildings and grand gateways and stone boundary walls, and steadings. Grand castles hotels and houses give an impression of a well-settled, prosperous and traditional character.

Other – Main road corridor mainly on the north bank, with a network of minor roads on both sides of the river. Occasional, traditional bridging points create landmarks, and the old railway line provides a well-used recreation and active travel route.

Specific Guidance

General

- The *Broad Wooded Valley with Estates* Landscape Character Type is sensitive to development which may cause loss of woodland. Development should seek to retain woodland and enhance the richly wooded landscape through planting.
- The setting of castles and estates are vulnerable to change; landscape features such as policy woodland, shelterbelts, parkland, boundary walls and gatehouses are sensitive features should be maintained.



- Pressure from built development may result in loss of settlement shape and character. Dispersed development on the edge of settlements should be avoided and any development proposed should seek to replicate the prevailing settlement pattern.
- Periodic open views to the uplands are essential to the experience of this landscape. Extension of tree cover and introduction of screening risks closing off these views further.
- Historically a densely settled area overall, but where the landscape character is of a more sparsely populated nature, new development should be clustered around a core group with existing buildings to minimise encroachment into the open countryside.
- To resist over development of the valley and the coalescence of settlements, mixed woodland may be used to limit expansion of the outer edges of settlements; linear ribbon development should be avoided.
- Road improvements within a confined corridor may have a significant impact.

Land Use - Residential

- When considering new development, the grouping and spacing of the prevailing pattern should be considered and followed. In some areas, homes are generally grouped together and well screened. In other areas homes are well spaced but continue to be sheltered by trees and shrubs or tucked into folds in the landform with clumps of trees to minimise landscape impact.



- In limited circumstances more adventurous and grand architecture may be appropriate in this landscape given the history of large estates. However, careful siting and design will be paramount.



- There is a varying range of house styles within the character landscape, however the most common are single or 1½ storey with small front porches. Homes should generally be set back from roads within garden space. Overly manicured grounds/gardens or ornate detailing on walls looks out of place.



Boundaries

- Stone dykes with shrubs, hedging or picket fencing with shrubs are successful boundary treatments. Away from the more settled parts, post and wire fencing or gorse can be more characteristic.
- In some parts, distinctive estate walls and metal fencing are characteristic, and it may be appropriate to continue this theme around new development to visually link development to its setting.
- Distinctive boundary features and gateways commonly signal the entrance to an estate or large country houses, often when the house itself is screened by woodland and not visible.

Trees and Woodland

- New planting should reflect the variety of species present within the locality and where possible new planting such as screening and shelterbelts should aim to link with existing woodland or plantations.



- Maintenance of policy woodlands, open parkland, boundary walls, gatehouses, and avenues will enhance these landscape features.
- Where clumps of trees and shelterbelts are more characteristic of the local landscape, typically in the more sparsely populated parts, this pattern should be reflected in any planting around new development.



Land Use - Agricultural

- New agricultural buildings should generally be associated with the original farmstead. Hummocks, landform and shelterbelts should be used to help screen large buildings.
- New agricultural buildings should generally be proportionate to existing buildings, which are small-scale and grouped with existing buildings.



Tourist Facilities

- The banks of the River Dee are susceptible to intrusive campsites and caravan parks. These are best accommodated using clumped screen planting which retains views from within.
- Stretches of open, undeveloped riverbank are important for fishing and to experience the qualities of the river. Development in these areas should not impinge on this recreational use nor the qualities of the river.
- Parking places within picnic areas that are sheltered by the wooded network will integrate better into the valley.