

COMMISSIONED REPORT

Commissioned Report No. 376

The Special Landscape Qualities of the Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park

(iBids and Project n° 648)

Produced in partnership with

The Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park Authority



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COMMISSIONED REPORT

Summary

The Special Landscape Qualities of the Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park

Commissioned Report No. 376 (*iBids and Project n° 648*)

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Background

In 2007/8 Scottish Natural Heritage used a standard method to determine the special qualities of Scotland's National Scenic Areas. In 2009, in partnership with the National Park Authorities, this work was extended to determine the special qualities of the two National Parks, including the National Scenic Areas within them. The result of the work for the Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park is reported here.

Main findings

- The park is large and diverse with significantly different landscape characteristics in different areas. Hence as well as listing the landscape qualities which are generic across the park, the qualities for the four landscape areas of Argyll Forest, Loch Lomond, Breadalbane and the Trossachs are also given.
- The special qualities have been derived using a professional, transparent and repeatable method. This involves background research on the National Park; identification of key viewpoints giving representative coverage; the use of field sheets at each viewpoint to record the characteristics of the landscape; and finally the combination of the viewpoint information with the background research to produce a list of the special qualities.
- The format is such that the qualities can be presented in the form of a short, bulleted list of qualities, or a longer, more evocative textual description.
- The identification of the special qualities provides a sound baseline for future work on the celebration, promotion and safeguarding of the Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park. It also underpins the original reason for designating the two National Scenic Areas found within the park – Loch Lomond NSA and The Trossachs NSA.

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Table of Contents	Page
PART 1 BACKGROUND	
1 INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Background to the work	1
1.2 Scope of the report	1
2 METHOD USED TO DETERMINE THE SPECIAL QUALITIES	3
2.1 Approach taken	3
2.2 Summary of the method	3
2.3 Deskwork and fieldwork undertaken	5
2.4 Layout of the qualities	5
2.5 The National Scenic Areas	5
3 SPECIAL QUALITIES AND THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT	6
4 CONCLUSIONS	7
5 REFERENCES	8

List of Figures	Page
Figure 1. Deciding what is special – a guide to the approach	4
Map 1. Boundaries of the National Park and National Scenic Areas	10
Map 2. Landscape Areas used in the survey	11

PART 2 THE SPECIAL LANDSCAPE QUALITIES OF THE LOCH LOMOND AND THE TROSSACHS NATIONAL PARK

Summary List of Special Qualities	12
1.0 General Qualities	14
2.0 Argyll Forest	18
3.0 Loch Lomond	23
4.0 Breadalbane	27
5.0 The Trossachs	33
Selected Bibliography	37

List of Photographs	Page
1. Loch Lomond, Ben Lomond and the Arrochar Alps from Duncryne Hill	14
2. Loch Eck from above Whistlefield	18
3. The wooded shores of Loch Lomond at Millarochy Bay	23
4. Glen Dochart from Bovain Farm	27
5. Leny House policies north of Callander	33
APPENDIX 1	
National Scenic Area descriptions from <i>Scotland's Scenic Heritage 1978</i>	38
APPENDIX 2	
Analysis of key viewpoints used in the fieldwork	39

This report has been produced by **Scottish Natural Heritage**



in partnership with the **Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park Authority**



and in association with
Historic Scotland



and the
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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the work

Scotland is renowned for its outstanding scenery, and 40 of its very best areas have been designated as National Scenic Areas (NSAs). Legislation defines these as areas “of outstanding scenic value in a national context” (OPSI, 2006). To-date the only descriptions for most NSAs are the short paragraphs given in the 1978 report *Scotland’s Scenic Heritage* (CCS, 1978) which formed the basis for their subsequent designation in 1980/1. A few NSAs have more detailed descriptions from later work. In 2006 SNH considered it was time to revisit these early descriptions and identify in a systematic manner what particular aspects contribute to the inspiring scenery of each NSA.

To this end SNH in 2008 published *Guidance for Identifying the Special Qualities of Scotland’s National Scenic Areas* (SNH, 2008), based on research commissioned from David Tyldesley and Associates (Tyldesley & Associates, 2007). Thereafter SNH had surveyors visiting the NSAs during 2007/8 and applying this standard methodology, resulting in the report *The Special Qualities of the National Scenic Areas* (SNH, 2010a).

Four of Scotland’s National Scenic Areas lie wholly within the two National Parks: the Cairngorm Mountains NSA and Deeside and Lochnagar NSA occur within the Cairngorms National Park, and Loch Lomond NSA and the Trossachs NSA within Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park. Additionally, the western extremity of the River Earn (Comrie to St Fillans) NSA lies within the Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park.

In discussion with SNH, staff of both National Park authorities considered the above work on NSA special qualities provided an opportunity to determine the special qualities of not just the NSAs within the parks but of the whole parks themselves.

Hence the work presented here is the result of application of the special quality methodology to the whole Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park during 2009. Together with the work in the Cairngorms National Park (SNH & CNPA, 2010) and the rest of the NSA suite (SNH, 2010a) the work here completes the picture for Scotland’s nationally designated landscapes derived from the application of a standard methodology across all NSAs and National Parks. Although to-date it has been a professional-led process, it does provide a firm basis for wider public and stakeholder consultation.

1.2 Scope of the report

A given National Park or NSA will have many qualities, some special and some not. The definition used here is from the guidance (SNH, 2008) where ‘special qualities’ are defined as ‘the characteristics that, individually or combined, give rise to an area’s outstanding scenery’.

It should be emphasised that the term as used here refers to the special landscape qualities. A given area may well have other special qualities, but this work only analyses the qualities of the landscape as a whole.

The National Park Authority has previously identified a wider suite of qualities for the whole park in a report titled *Special Qualities 2006* (LLTNPA, 2006); the report here, which looks at the landscape qualities in more detail, has been titled *The Special Landscape Qualities of the Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park* to distinguish it from the previous work.

This work moves beyond objective description of the landscape to an assessment of the qualities of the landscape. Hence it is necessary to differentiate between a 'description' and a 'quality'. For example, a given view might contain a loch and a mountain, and an objective description of the view would be:

OBJECTIVE DESCRIPTION: "*A loch and a mountain.*"

However, such views are common in Scotland, and this does not convey what is special about this particular juxtaposition of loch and mountain. The conversion of a description to a quality involves making an assessment based on the response that the described landscape evokes: the mountain might appear 'massive' and the loch 'sinuous and gloomy'. Hence, a special quality might appear as follows:

SPECIAL QUALITY: "*Massive mountain towering above a sinuous, gloomy loch.*"

Although it is relatively easy to produce a description of a landscape, it is generally more difficult to assess the qualities of the landscape and sometimes it can be difficult to express a given special quality in words. Where this is the case, a good description can serve the purpose in that it creates a strong mental image of the scene that in turn evokes a special quality or qualities. For example, the description "an indented rocky coast with many islands" can create an appealing seascape in the mind, giving to the landscape a quality which it is hard to express.

In summary, although ideally it is important to separate a description of a landscape feature from its qualities, this is not always possible. Hence some of the 'special qualities' derived by this method contain more description than others, in which case the 'specialness' is derived from the presence of the particular described feature or features.

2 METHOD USED TO DETERMINE THE SPECIAL QUALITIES

2.1 Approach taken

The application of the method as reported here has to-date been a professional-led process designed to produce a consistent overview of the park using a standard and transparent method. The output of this process, the special qualities of the National Park, does, however, provide a firm basis for future public consultation.

In undertaking this work the following approach was taken:

2.1.1 Existing sites and boundaries

This work made the assumption at the outset that, as the National Park had previously been identified as worthy of a national designation, it did have special qualities of national merit. The work also made the assumption that the qualities were contained within the existing boundaries, and fieldwork was confined to these.

2.1.2 Not comparing one location with another

The work was not comparative. The identification of the features that came across as special was made without reference to other areas, whether neighbouring or distant, being instead based on the qualities found in the defined area. Hence there has been no attempt to compare one National Park or NSA with another, or even with the undesignated surrounds.

2.1.3 No ranking of landscape types

Neither has there been any attempt to rank different landscape types. For example, mountainous terrain has not been ranked higher or lower quality than lowland terrain, or seascapes higher or lower than inland landscapes.

2.1.4 No ranking of qualities

Nor has there been any attempt to rank the qualities listed, to say that one quality is more important than any other. The disaggregation of the landscape into separate qualities is to some extent an artificial exercise because it is the combination and integration of all the individual qualities which creates the appealing landscapes deemed worthy of national designation. However the disaggregation does help us understand what is special about a given National Park, and makes it easier to plan future management in keeping with individual qualities.

2.2 Summary of the method

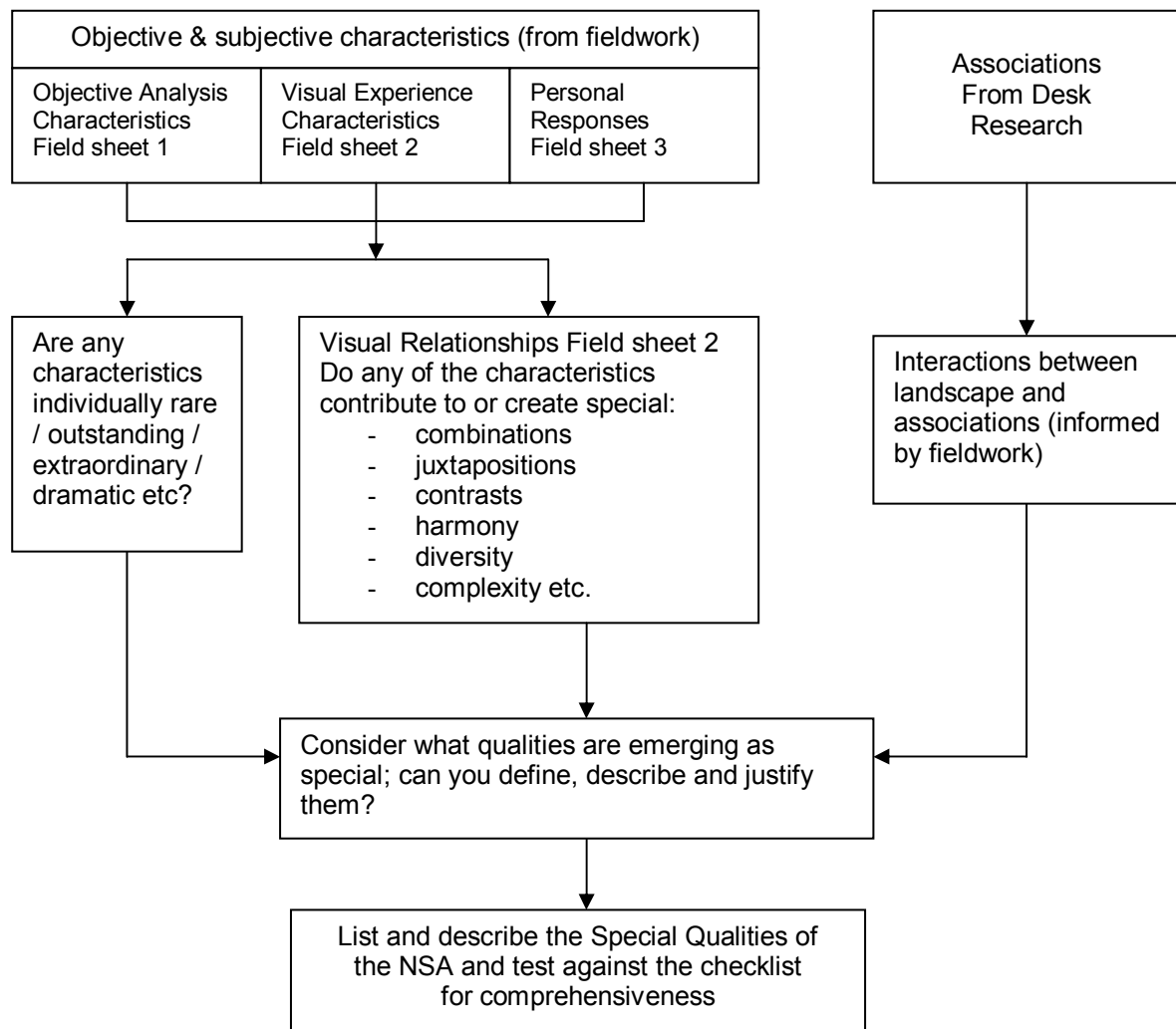
The method used to determine the special qualities followed the guidance mentioned in 1.1. above (SNH, 2008) and follows a similar approach to that used when carrying out a Landscape Character Assessment (SNH & Countryside Agency, 2002), although with its own distinct steps. See the guidance for the full details, but in summary the process consists of:

- a) A desk study to collect background information on the National Park, including the relevant description in *Scotland's Scenic Heritage*, Landscape Character Assessment, Historic Land Use Assessment (HS & RCAHMS, 2009) and other literature.
- b) A familiarisation visit to the National Park, and the identification of key viewpoints that will give representative coverage.

- c) Fieldwork at each key viewpoint, where three field sheets are completed:
 1. An objective description of the landscape.
 2. A visual analysis.
 3. A personal response.
- d) Analysis and collation of viewpoint information.
- e) Combining of viewpoint information and background information to determine what is special about the landscape.

The decision on what qualities to include as special will be the judgement of the surveyors. Identifying the special qualities is a challenging task, but the method used here enables a systematic, transparent and professional approach to explain its conclusions in a consistent manner. Figure 1 below illustrates the process of teasing out the qualities from the preceding deskwork and fieldwork.

Figure 1. Deciding what is special – a guide to the approach



2.3 Deskwork and fieldwork undertaken

Deskwork and fieldwork was undertaken during the period April to July 2009. Drafts of the special qualities were agreed with staff of the Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park Authority, Scottish Natural Heritage, Historic Scotland and the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland.

The landscape of the park is particularly heterogeneous, taking in coastal scenery, lowland scenery, lochs, hills and mountains. Hence it is difficult to identify qualities that apply to the park as a whole that are not either too general or merely banal (e.g. 'presence of lochs, glens and hills'). Thus it was felt best to break the park up into the landscape areas of Argyll Forest, Loch Lomond, Breadalbane and the Trossachs, a classification used in the previous special quality work (LLTNPA, 2006), and to work within these. The results are also presented in this format, prefaced by overview qualities that were applicable to the whole park.

The location of the viewpoints used in the fieldwork together their analysis is given in Appendix 2.

There is a bibliography at the end of the special qualities section which lists the main texts consulted, the relevant Landscape Character Assessment being a key source. Other standard texts were consulted which will not have been listed in the bibliography and these are the relevant entries in the Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes (HS, 2010) and data on nature conservation sites within the National Park (SNH, 2010b).

2.4 Layout of the qualities

The first qualities listed are overview qualities that apply throughout the National Park, followed by qualities classified by the four sub-areas mentioned above. In some cases the qualities have been brought to life by the addition of quotes.

Each quality has a bullet point heading followed by a textual description. A succinct list of the qualities can be created by bringing together all the bullet-point headings, as given at the start of Part 2 below. Alternatively a more evocative textual description can be had from running together the longer text, with or without the bullet-point headings.

2.5 The National Scenic Areas

There is strong overlap between the Loch Lomond landscape area used here and the boundaries of the Loch Lomond National Scenic Area (see maps). Hence if the special qualities of the Loch Lomond NSA are required, then they equate to the qualities of the landscape area under the heading Loch Lomond in Part 2 below.

In contrast, the Trossachs NSA is significantly smaller than the Trossachs landscape area used in this survey (see maps). The qualities given in Part 2 under the Trossachs heading which will not apply to the NSA are those relating to Lochs Ard, Chon and Arklet, Aberfoyle, Callander, and the Lake of Menteith.

The original descriptions of the National Scenic Area from *Scotland's Scenic Heritage* (CCS, 1978) are given in Appendix 1 as they still provide a succinct overview of the NSAs contained within the National Park.

3 SPECIAL QUALITIES AND THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

This work presents a snapshot of the qualities of the National Park as they appear today. However the importance given to different qualities does vary over time, reflecting the attitudes and aspirations of the society of the day.

It is recognised that this landscape is the current endpoint of a long period of evolution, involving a complex interplay of the natural elements of climate, geology, geomorphology, soil development, vegetation succession and herbivore impact – and with a rich overlay of human elements linked to settlement, transport, farming and forestry. Similarly, we should expect these landscapes to continue to evolve in future in response to on-going social, economic and environmental change.

Previous land-use has had a significant influence on the landscape today, in particular the clearances of the 18th and 19th centuries, and the associated changes of land-use such as the creation of sheep farms and sporting estates. Additionally, many west coast locations now seen as remote were at the centre of transport routes when the sea was the main highway and travel inland was difficult. Hence, although application of the special qualities methodology has identified ‘wildness’ and ‘remoteness’ as qualities of some areas of the park, there is ample evidence that these qualities would not have applied in the past, particularly at lower altitudes.

Abandoned features, such as farmsteads, shielings, field systems and defensive structures, are reminders of earlier times when the landscapes were more populated, and eloquently evoke the historic events that changed this situation. These relict landscapes can be complex and multi-period, often including prehistoric elements, and contribute to the understanding of the human forces that have helped shape the landscape.

This archaeological evidence is of great cultural significance because it relates to areas or periods for which there are no written records and is therefore of fundamental value in understanding the development of the current landscape. The historic environment makes a special contribution to the landscape of the National Parks and the NSAs within them through the story it tells of past history, through providing a human scale to the dramatic natural environment and through vividly demonstrating the tenacity and strength of the human spirit in the face of difficult circumstances. This evidence of historic land use is consequently an important quality of the landscape of much of the National Park.

4 CONCLUSIONS

The landscape of the National Park is highly valued by residents and visitors alike. This work has identified the qualities that makes the landscape and scenery special and hence underpins the reason for the designation of both the National Park and the National Scenic Areas within them. This should make it easier to direct future landscape change so that we can pass on the appeal and value of the park to future generations. This work will also provide a solid basis for any activity designed to promote the area, whether to residents, businesses or visitors.

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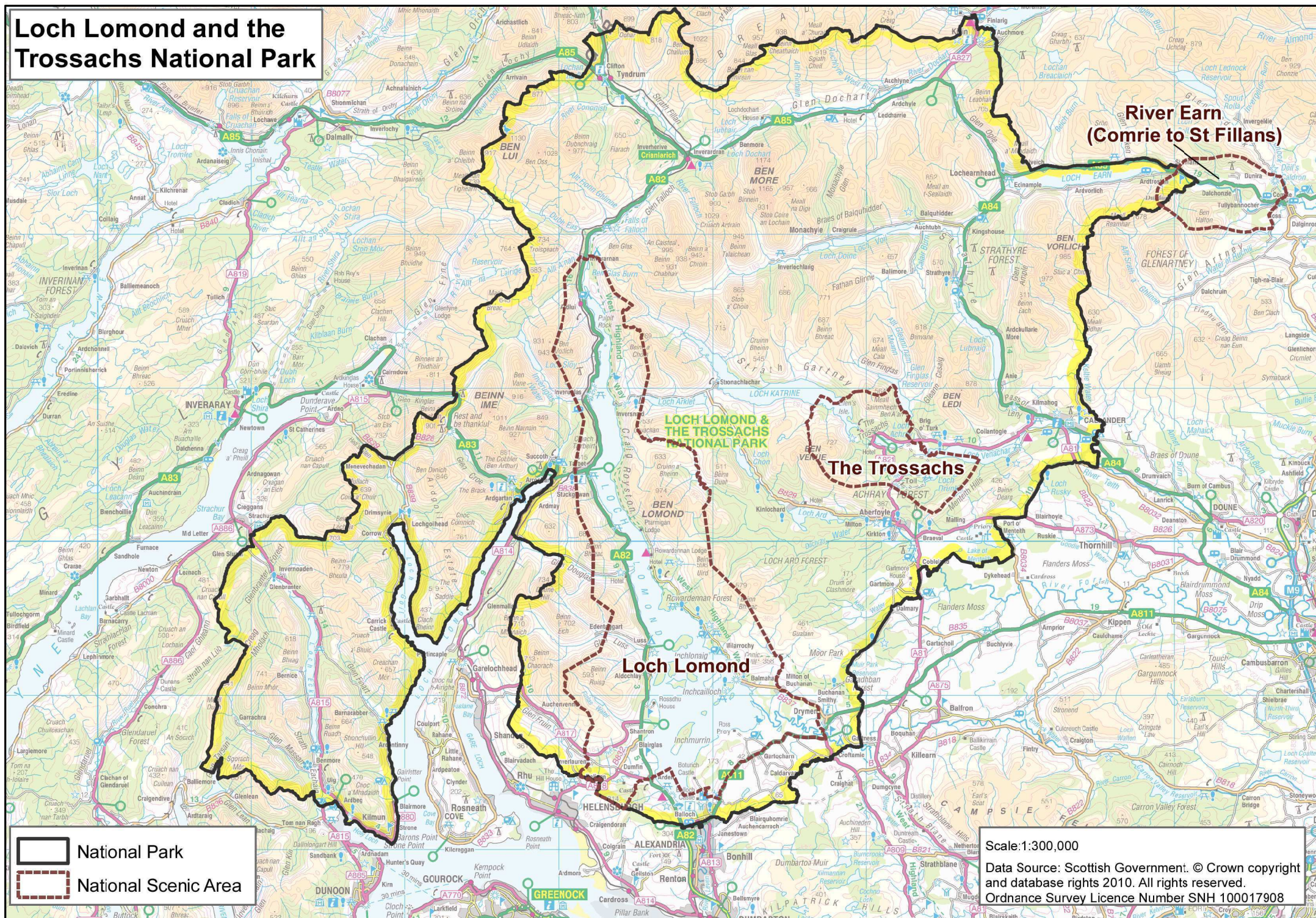
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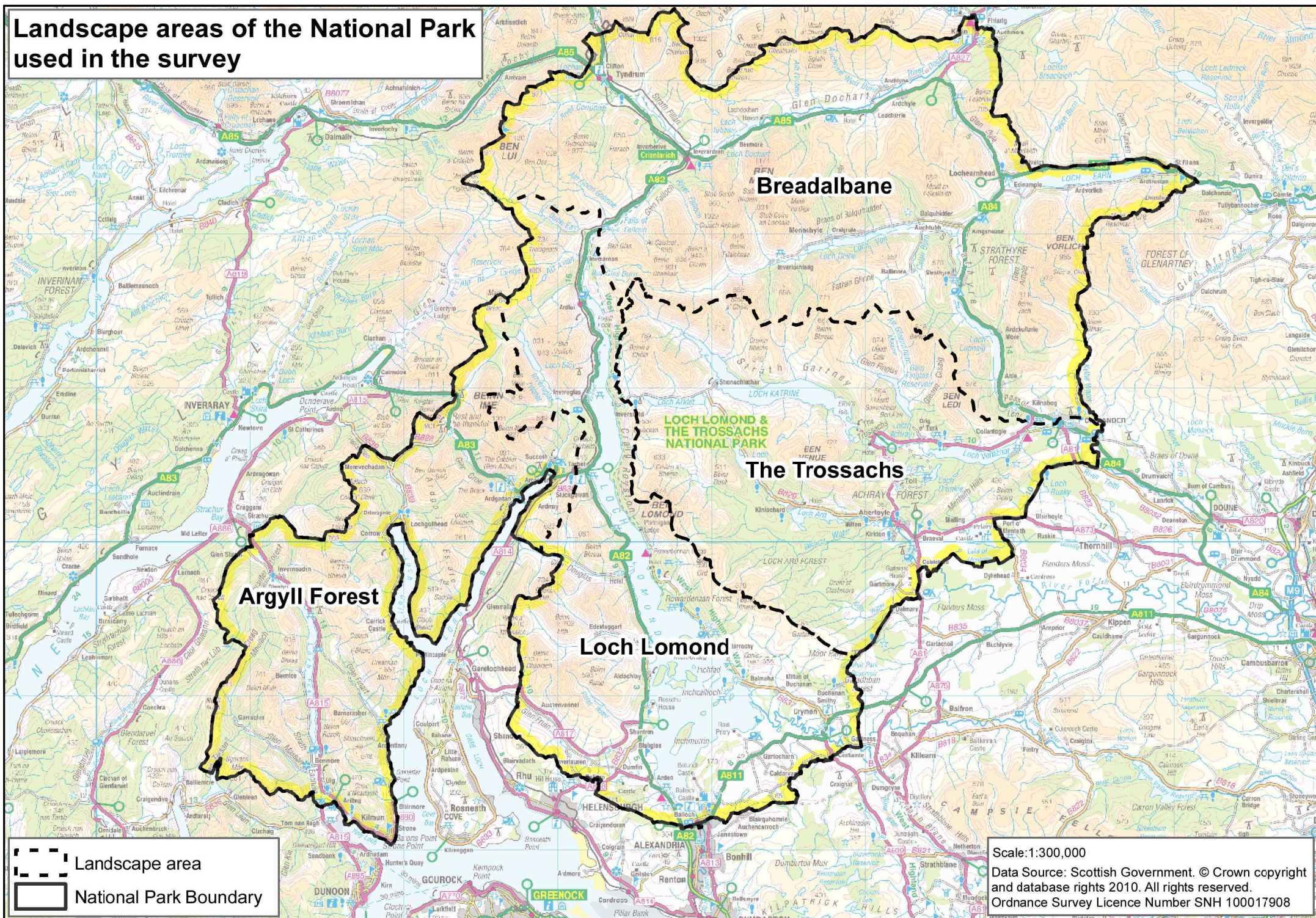
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Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park



Landscape areas of the National Park used in the survey



PART 2
THE SPECIAL LANDSCAPE QUALITIES OF
THE LOCH LOMOND AND THE TROSSACHS NATIONAL PARK

Summary List of the Special Qualities

1.0 General Qualities

- *A world-renowned landscape famed for its rural beauty*
- *Wild and rugged highlands contrasting with pastoral lowlands*
- *Water in its many forms*
- *The rich variety of woodlands*
- *Settlements nestled within a vast natural backdrop*
- *Famous through-routes*
- *Tranquillity*
- *The easily accessible landscape splendour*

2.0 Argyll Forest

- *A remote area of high hills and deep glens*
- *A land of forests and trees*
- *Arrochar's mountainous and distinctive peaks*
- *The variety of glens*
- *The slender jewel of Loch Eck*
- *The dramatic pass of Rest and Be Thankful*
- *The seaside architecture of Kilmun and Blairmore*

3.0 Loch Lomond

- *Immensity of loch and landscape*
- *Two lochs in one*
- *A multitude of beautiful islands*
- *Distinctive mountain groups*
- *Ben Lomond, widely known, popularly frequented*
- *Banks of broadleaved woodland*
- *Peaceful side glens*

4.0 Breadalbane

- *Steep mountains and long glens*
- *Crossroads within remote mountain ranges*
- *A landscape of distinctive glens and straths*
- *The narrow Strathyre and Loch Lubnaig ribbon*
- *Beautiful Balquhadder*
- *Wide and straight Loch Earn*
- *The rocky pass of Glen Ogle*
- *Killin and the Falls of Dochart*

- *Expansive Glen Dochart*
- *Wide Strath Fillan*
- *Sinuous Glen Falloch*
-

5.0 The Trossachs

- *A traditional 'Gateway to the Highlands'*
- *A harmonious concentration of lochs, woods and hills*
- *Rugged Ben Venue, the centrepiece of the Trossachs*
- *Loch Katrine, the 'Queen of the Trossachs'*
- *A landscape of beautiful lochs*
- *The romance of the Trossachs*
- *The resort of Aberfoyle and the Duke's Pass*
- *The curious wooded hillocks of Aberfoyle*
- *The gateway town of Callander*
- *The tranquil Lake of Menteith*

1.0 General qualities



Photograph 1. Loch Lomond, Ben Lomond and the Arrochar Alps from Duncryne Hill

- ***A world-renowned landscape famed for its rural beauty***

This world-renowned landscape has Loch Lomond as its centre, an immense, island-studded loch that leads from the pastoral Lowlands into the heart of the mountainous Highlands, with dramatic contrasts in scenery along its length.

The loch's iconic status is reinforced by the well-known traditional song that endows it with romantic connotations. The words are perceptive in encapsulating Loch Lomond's landscape, its '*bonnie banks, bonnie braes, shady glens, hieland hills, the steep, steep side of Ben Lomond, the wild birdies, the wild flowers, the sunshine on the waters*'. This portrait underpins the 'love of the countryside' that the area engenders, so that the loch symbolises the rural beauty of Scotland, an appreciation that endures. Hence the loch and its surrounds epitomises Scotland: a distinctive and inspiring country of loch, farmland, glens and mountains.

The loch was one of the highlights of the Scottish tour of the 18th and 19th centuries, when it was the visitor's last experience of Highland scenery or, where the route started from Glasgow, the first. In the accounts, poetry and paintings of these early travellers, a huge contrast was drawn between the sombre dramatic scenery of Glencoe and Loch Lomond's Highland pastoral beauty.

'The transitional nature of the landscape itself, pastoral lake scenery on the border of the Highlands.' Andrews (1989)

Extract from the song 'Loch Lomond' (Traditional):

*By yon bonnie banks and by yon bonnie braes,
Where the sun shines bright on Loch Lomond,
Where me and my true love were ever wont to gae
On the bonnie, bonnie banks o' Loch Lomond.*

*We'll meet where we parted in yon shady glen,
On the steep, steep side o' Ben Lomond,
Where in purple hue the Hieland hills we view,
And the moon looks out frae the gloamin.*

*The wild birdies sing and the wild flowers spring.
An' in sunshine the waters are sleepin...*

Extract from 'Inversnaid', Gerard Manley Hopkins (1844-1889):

*This darksome burn, horseback brown,
His rollrock highroad roaring down,
In coop and in comb the fleece of his foam
Flutes and low to the lake falls home.*

*Degged with dew, dappled with dew
Are the groins of the braes that the brook treads through,
Wiry heathpacks, flitches of fern,
And the beadbonny ash that sits over the burn.*

- **Wild and rugged highlands contrasting with pastoral lowlands**

Mountains and large hill ranges are found across the Park, the massifs separated by sea lochs, freshwater lochs and deep, glacially scoured glens. The Arrochar Alps, the Luss Hills, the East Lomond hills, the Beinn Mhor hills, the Trossachs and the Breadalbane mountains are wild upland landscapes, all with distinctive characters. Individual, well known summits are present, including Ben Lomond, The Cobbler, Ben Vorlich, and Ben Venue.

The flat-bottomed glens that penetrate the hills are inhabited and farmed, presenting a pleasing contrast to the bare hills and summits above. Additionally, the whole area of mountains and glens, comprising great tracts of wild and rugged land, contrasts sharply with the gentle, rolling, low-lying farmlands and parklands found in the south. The uplands, with their pasture on the glen floors, their sides of rough moorland, native woodland or dark conifer plantations and their craggy hills, presents a highly textured, more desolate and generally, less populated scene than the green and fertile lowlands.

- **Water in its many forms**

Water in its many forms is rarely absent from the view. There occur deep, indented sea lochs, long inland lochs, some straight, some sinuous, lochans, rivers, burns, waterfalls and rapids; a lowland lake, and also wetlands, marshes and mires of many sizes and types. This great variety in combination with the range of landscape settings results in a diverse and beautiful landscape. As well as Loch Lomond itself, other well-known lochs are Loch Katrine, Loch Earn, Loch Voil and the Lake of Menteith.

- ***The rich variety of woodlands***

Despite vast swathes of commercial forest cover in some areas, previous woodland management has led to great woodland variety throughout the Park, with ancient broadleaved plantations, wood pasture, farmland trees and policy plantings. The woodlands define the lower and mid-glen slopes, distinguishing them from the open uplands, they enclose settlements, and they clothe loch shores and islands. The woods and the trees are important visually, bringing a tapestry of texture and colour that changes throughout the year.

'Many semi-natural broadleaved woodlands, and also parkland, hedgerow and roadside trees, have been allowed to grow relatively undisturbed since their last period of economic management well over 100 years ago.' Quelch (1997)

- ***Settlements nestled within a vast natural backdrop***

The area possesses a long and rich history of habitation, with houses and other structures, both ancient and modern, confined mainly to the lower-lying land. Nowadays human populations are low across much of the Park, and the settlements that are present are often small-scale, nestled within the backdrop of vast landforms of mountain, hill, glen and loch. This engenders a strong sense of surrounding, all-enveloping nature, even though much of the landscape has been modified by human activity over the centuries.

- ***Famous through-routes***

Throughout the Park, major communication routes lead along the main glens. These long-established routes, both roads and tracks, date from many different periods. They overlie one another because they are constrained within narrow passes, so that there is a concentration of features – road and rail bridges, viaducts, ancillary buildings, lengths of track and road – often all intervisible, within short distances of each other. Some routes have associations with late medieval pilgrimages, such as to sites associated with St Fillan, and the earliest droving routes formed the basis for the early 18th century military roads leading north and westwards.

The 19th century saw the arrival of the railways. Some have since disappeared, leaving a legacy of bridges and viaducts that remain as marked features. The scenic and world-renowned West Highland Railway traverses the Park, through the contrasting scenery of inhabited villages, farmland, loch shore, glens, moorland and mountainside. The 20th century saw the creation of the West Highland Way, giving the opportunity for a slower journey from lowland to highland, deep into the Breadalbane mountains and beyond.

Overall, these routes create a strong sense of movement through the area, with the National Park being at the crossroads of cultures and human transport throughout time.

- ***Tranquillity***

It is easy to find tranquillity within the Park, to find uncrowded places where there is a predominance of natural sounds and sights, whether beside a shimmering loch, following the course of a mountain burn, walking the sheltered woodlands or climbing an open hill. This sense of peacefulness is enhanced by the small scale of human settlement within the expansive landforms, and by the general absence of large-scale development.

- ***The easily accessible landscape splendour***

The landscape splendour of the Park is easily accessible from major centres of population within the Central Belt, with some three million people within one hour's easy travel. Although the area is popularly known as 'Glasgow's playground', it is also a major draw for visitors not just from nearby Glasgow but from all over the world. It is a prime tourist destination, and an end in itself, with many not venturing further into the Highlands beyond.

'Visions of happy summer holidays, not sullied even by the sight of Glasgow's chimneys peering through a cloud of smoke...' Scottish Mountaineering Club (1901)

2.0 Argyll Forest



Photograph 2. Loch Eck from above Whistlefield

- **A remote area of high hills and deep glens**

This is a mountainous area of distinctive summits rising above forested slopes and steep-sided, glacially-carved troughs filled with sea lochs, lochs or flat-bottomed glens. The uplands are rugged and wild, especially in the north, and the whole area has a sense of remoteness and isolation, emphasised by the sometimes persistent cloud, drizzle or rain.

The high mountains and long sea lochs restrict access by road into the area, so that travel by sea has always been the easiest, preferred means of travel. This continues today with the ferries across the Firth of Clyde providing access into Holy Loch, Loch Goil and the lower reaches of Loch Long.

'All who travel by land into Cowal must follow the twisting road from Tarbert through Glen Croe. Above the skirts of the forest the brooding Cobbler (2,891 feet, 881 metres) surveys the lonely glens where Loch Goil and Loch Long bring probing fingers of the sea deeply into the high peaks of Arrochar. The distinctive shapes of the mountains here are partly due to the tough intrusive diorites amongst the quartzose mica schists...' Whittow (1977)

- **A land of forests and trees**

Extensive conifer plantings cover most of the lower hillsides, with the afforested tracts of such vast scale and density that they are a distinguishing feature of the scenery. In places broadleaved woodland clothes the lower hill slopes and glen floors, providing a lighter foreground to the dark backdrop of coniferous plantations. However, compared to the more

open-canopied Lomondside woods of broadleaf trees, this rugged hill country of afforested slopes can appear sombre, especially on a cloudy, dull day.

In the uninhabited areas the dense forests accentuate the sense of remoteness, whereas around houses and settlements the woods provide a sense of shelter and seclusion. The forests can restrict long distance views, creating a visual and perceptual barrier between the farmed glen floor and the upper, bare and open hill summits. Often the forests end abruptly at a distinctive tree-line.

Some forest types are of particular value because they are ornamental, part of formal designed landscapes, or form evergreen surroundings. Many exotic trees reach gigantic stature, with forested walks such as Puck's Glen, Black Gates and Kilmun offering the opportunity to experience steep slopes clothed with towering trees, allowing a strong sense of solitude to be found.

This distinctive forest character is clearly seen from the panorama at the William Wright Smith Gazebo, on the slopes of A'Chruach at Benmore. Benmore Garden hosts an important plant collection and its woodland policies, in recreating different geographical regions of the world, adds a great diversity of canopy, with the colours and varied forms standing out in the local scene. Seasonal colour is a keynote of the Benmore estate and the great Redwood Avenue of 1863, with 50 specimen trees over 50m (165ft), creates a prominent landmark.

Throughout the Argyll Forest, the configuration and composition of both forest and woodland display the development of forestry in Scotland: starting with early plantings in the 1820s by private landowners, through the planting of over six million trees in Strath Eachaig between 1871 and 1883; through the setting-up of Forestry Commission in 1919, to modern-day plantations. This lends a well-established, mature forest character, which imbues the area with a great sense of time depth and continuity.

Nowadays, the Argyll Forest Park, set up in 1935 and the first in Britain, seeks to combine commercial forestry with the recreation, enjoyment and scenic beauty of the extensive forests.

'The valleys are so heavily wooded with spruce and pine that they appear gloomy and sombre after the scenic sparkle of The Trossachs and Loch Lomond, although the natural woods of Strachur and Glen Branter bring some relief. The tiny farms are few and far between in this region... In the whole, however, Cowal will be remembered for its forests...' Whittow (1977)

- **Arrochar's mountainous and distinctive peaks**

A distinctive mountain group, popularly called the Arrochar Alps, fills the northern corner, and extends into the Loch Lomond area. The hills are visually striking, curiously-shaped, and rocky with craggy peaks and crests. Each is distinctive and recognisable. They are highly visible from the shores and open waters of Loch Long and Loch Lomond and offer spectacular panoramas from their summits. Their proximity to the sea means that snow seldom lies deep on the summits.

These hills are important in the history of Scottish mountaineering, principally because they provide good climbing and are easily accessible from Glasgow, whether by train or car or, in the past, by steamer to Arrochar. Although popular with climbers, nevertheless the tops

harbour a sense of remoteness and stillness, away from the busy road through Glen Croe at the head of Loch Long.

'Narnain stands very high from a panoramic point of view. From here the long stretch of Loch Lomond extends with but slight break from Inversnaid to the islands at its south-eastern extremity, forming a noble foreground for Ben Lomond and its attendant buttresses. Loch Katrine with Ben Venue, and the Lake of Monteith direct the eye to where the windings of the Forth lead down to Stirling and, shall we say, Edinburgh.

'Farther north the Crianlarich peaks, as well as Ben Lui and Ben Cruachan, are within touch, and Loch Etive, Loch Linnhe, and the Ardgour peaks are well seen. Mull, Jura, and the glittering Atlantic pass us on to Arran, Ailsa Craig, and the visionary Ayrshire hills, while the stretches of the Clyde near its junction with Loch Long and the smiling Gareloch... Below, Loch Long, and the Cobbler, and the Brack fill up the foreground, and it requires but the magic hour of sunset and the snowy garland of winter to complete the ravishing scene'. Scottish Mountaineering Club (1901)

- **The variety of glens**

Deep glens carve through the uplands, their floors permanent pasture and their slopes often afforested. All are generally quiet and peaceful, with built development and habitation sparse, although each has its own distinct character.

Gleann Beag and **Gleann Mor**, along with **Glen Croe**, form a circuit through the mountains of Arrochar. Each is deeply carved into the hills with rocky slopes reaching up to summits some 800m high and glen floors narrow and uneven, Gleann Beag (known popularly as Hell's Glen) especially so. Here large boulders and steep rocky crags emerge from thick forested slopes, the rocks and cliffs with distinctive shapes and overhangs above the narrow road, the weather often creating dramatic swirling patterns of mist, curling and hanging over the trees and slopes.

The farmed glens reaching into the Beinn Mhor hills offer a contrast, varying one from another, with the farmhouses and their buildings markedly contributing to their characters. **Glen Massan** is hidden, leading northwestwards from the south of Strath Eachaig. Settlement is confined to isolated farmsteads in the upper and mid-glen and it has a remote feel. Bordered by broadleaved woodlands, the River Massan carves a convoluted passage, crashing through a deep rocky channel and falls, the thundering waters and steep channel giving a powerful feeling of natural forces and energy, the rapid movement and roar dominating the senses.

By contrast **Glen Finart** offers a more pastoral scene with a broader glen floor of wet, rushy pastures. Here steep afforested glen slopes give way to riparian woodlands that mark the course of the River Finart across the glen floor, and there are also the rich Craighoye Woods of oak and birch on rocky slopes. The broadleaved trees lighten the overall surrounding, dense coniferous greens. This is a very harmonious, welcoming place. More settled, it forms a welcome contrast with the busier stretches of Cowal coast and the long, linear shores of Loch Eck.

- ***The slender jewel of Loch Eck***

Loch Eck has been described as the jewel of the Argyll Forest Park, lying as a long, narrow, gently winding ribbon of silver, shining against its surrounding, thickly-forested slopes. It fills the glen floor, with only a very narrow margin passable to travellers. Settlement along the western shore is nowadays confined to a single isolated farmstead at Bernice, although ruins at Stuck indicate that this has not always been the case. The loch feels very tranquil, quiet and remote, even empty and wild.

Views over Loch Eck are impressive, whether from the loch shores where unobstructed by trees, or from high ground such as pass over from Glen Finart. Steep hillslopes appear to plunge directly into the water, and the series of interlocking slopes on both shores dip their toes into the loch, creating a rhythmical, scalloped shoreline of bays. This echoes the series of open, lumpy curving mountains above that stretch along the west shores from Creachan Beag in the south to Cruach Bhuidhe in the north, and along the east shores from Creag Liath to Beinn Dubhain.

- ***The dramatic pass of Rest and Be Thankful***

The dramatic mountain pass through Glen Croe forms a natural, major route leading through the mountain ranges between Lochs Long and Fyne. It provides a long uphill passage into the Western Highlands, marked by tumbling burns and waterfalls, with views back down to the distant mountains enclosing Lochs Long and Lomond. This memorable view is framed between, on the one side, the impressive series of steep, rocky hill slopes of Beinn an Lochain, Ben Donich and The Brack, and on the other, the Arrochar massif. The desolate, wild qualities of Glens Croe and Kinglas derive from their contrast with the greener, lush shores of Lomondside to the east and the ducal splendours of the Inveraray policies to the west.

The road is a route of historical and cultural significance. Originally a drove road, in the 1740s it was made into a military road by troops of the 24th Regiment, who erected a stone seat bearing the inscription 'Rest And Be Thankful' at the summit of the long upward haul. Further on is another landmark, The Butterbridge, on the military road set at the junction of Glen Croe with Glen Kinglas.

Following its completion as a Wade-Caulfield military road, it became the standard route to be followed on the 'Scottish tour', marking the 'opening-up' of the Highlands. There are many accounts by visitors who recorded the steep, bare rocky and desolate scene, the wild landscape and gloomy, melancholy images evoked. In support of this idealised image of desolation, Glen Croe is said to be the wettest spot on the western mainland.

The older military route can still be seen today, far below the newer route constructed 1937-1941. These routes provide a strong sense of departure and arrival, from Highland to Lowland and vice versa.

'If Glencoe did not exist, Glencroe would be famous. It is several miles long, lonely, sterile, and desolate. A stream rages down the hollow, fed by tributary burns that dash from the receding mountain-tops. The hill-sides are rough with boulders, as a sea-rock is rough with limpets. Showers cross the path a dozen times during the finest day. As you go along, the glen is dappled with cloud-shadows; you hear the bleating of unseen sheep, and the chances are, that, in travelling along its whole extent, opportunity will not be granted you of bidding "good-morrow" to a single soul. If you are a murderer, you could shout out your secret here, and no one be a bit the wiser. At the head of the glen the road becomes exceedingly steep; and as you pant up the incline, you hail the appearance of a stone seat bearing the welcome motto, "Rest, and be thankful." ... At this point the rough breast of a hill rises in front, dividing the road; the path to the left runs away down into the barren and solitary Hell's Glen, in haste to reach Loch Goil; the other to the right leads through bare Glen Arkinglass'. Smith (1865)

'Proceeded southwards over Glen Croe, a bleak and dreary region now made easily passable by a military road, which rises from either end of the glen by an acclivity not dangerously steep, but sufficiently laborious. In the middle, at the top of the hill, is a seat with the inscription Rest and Be Thankful...' Samuel Johnson (1773), quoted in Osborne (2005)

'And when is there a day in the year free from rain in Glen Croe? And on the hill called 'Rest and Be Thankful'? No day; no not one!'...Glen Croe... has charms for me, and I was sorry to lose sight of it.' Sarah Murray (1796), quoted in Osborne (2005)

- **The seaside architecture of Kilmun and Blairmore**

The Clyde coast resorts of Kilmun and Blairmore, extending around the tip of the Cowal peninsula, possess a distinctive 'seaside resort' architectural quality not found elsewhere in the National Park. They provide good coastal views over Loch Long, across to the far shores of the Roseneath peninsula, Helensburgh and the Clyde coast.

Principal villas, hotels and public buildings along the shore face seawards and are set back, lining the landward side of the coastal road. The predominant style of house is the 19th century Clydeside villa, set in a streetscape ornamented with designed features that enhance the buildings. Many of these are of a recognisable pattern-book style – the boundary walls and ornamental iron railings; quartz rusticated arches; gate piers and gates; garden grounds, including exotic planting of palms and other ornamentals; terraced gardens; and garden features such as fountains. There are also a number of focal public buildings.

The numerous piers and jetties emphasise the history and past importance of sea-borne traffic, principally holidaying city dwellers. Piers can be found at Strone, Kilmun (c. 1828) and Blairmore (1855), with a ticket office and waiting rooms at the latter. There are also private stone and concrete jetties associated with villas, as at Dunselma and Strone.

3.0 Loch Lomond



Photograph 3. The wooded shores of Loch Lomond at Millarochy Bay

- ***Immensity of loch and landscape***

Loch Lomond is a truly vast, capacious area of freshwater, the largest expanse in Britain, covering an area of 70 square kilometres and 36 kilometres in length. It is surrounded by mountains and high hill ranges along its northern half, with Ben Lomond soaring to 974 metres, dominating the western skyline, and the Arrochar Alps to the northwest reaching 1011 metres on the summit of Ben Ime.

These vast waters and high summits make for a landscape and sense of space that is expansive and large-scale. By comparison, within these naturally majestic surroundings, individual human and man-made elements appear small and modest. They are often barely discernable against the larger, rolling backdrop, and the substantial, horizontal and bulky landmass. When man-made features are clearly seen, as at Inveruglass where the Sloy power station with the hydro-electric pipeline descends the steep slopes, the overwhelming broadness of the hill slopes can make such a large-scale engineering installation appear modest in scale. At the same time, piers and jetties along the shore-edge attest the long use of the Loch for industry and recreation.

- ***Two lochs in one***

Loch Lomond has a remarkable geographic position, being the one loch that sits astride the Highland Boundary Fault and hence comprising characteristics both lowland and highland:

The Lowland 'Lake'

From the south the loch has the character of a southern, lowland lake, settled and prosperous. It appears broad and shallow, with gently shelving banks. Its shores abound

with rolling farmland and farmsteads, with designed landscapes surrounding country mansions together with their attached policies, and estate villages. Neat and ordered, the rectilinear enclosed fields are bounded by shelter belts and copses.

The loch itself bears the evidence of human use: as well as numerous piers and jetties, there is notably a rare timber crannog in the water near Balmaha, the remains of a medieval church on the island of Inchcailloch, and other ruins and deserted settlements on the islands and shores of the loch.

The Highland Loch

In the north, Loch Lomond fills a great, deep glacial trough surrounded by steeply sloping hillsides with only a narrow lochside margin. The loch is fjord-like, being narrow, linear, and deep (153m). In some views it appears as a broad and mighty river snaking through interlocking mountain ranges to reach its northern head at Ardlui.

Settlement in this northern tract is sparse and low density, lying along the main road that hugs the western shore. The east shore north of Rowardennan is largely uninhabited. What farmland there is, at the head of the loch and along the pass to Arrochar, is characterised by enclosed pasture, although many of the drystone dykes are now relict. The ruinous remains of settlements and field systems that can be seen along most of glens leading down to the loch show that these areas were once more settled than they are now, adding to the sense of time-depth and local character.

The loch 'partakes of the two geological worlds to either side of the [Highland Boundary] fault; the northern part is a typical Scottish loch lodged in the Highlands, narrow and deeply shelving and ice-scoured, while the southern part is an altogether gentler lake, where you can paddle in places, and yacht clubs have a chance of making a profit...

'Although its place in Scottish mythology is assured, it is truly anomalous. It is wide and irregular and dotted with islands at its southern end, narrow and straight to the north.' Fortey (1996)

- **A multitude of beautiful islands**

The southern loch has numerous islands of various shapes and sizes, and this island-studded scene is one of the most distinctive, well-known images of Loch Lomond. In contrast, the northern half is nearly island-free, with only a few small, round islets.

The linear spread of islands parallel to the south shore and across the widest section of the loch emphasises the horizontality of both loch and shoreline in views from the south, such as from Duncryne Hill. The islands are made up of small hillocks, knolls and hummocks, a form that contrasts with the surrounding mountain ranges, especially those to north and west. This makes the islands strongly appealing, inviting and tantalisingly accessible. Additionally, they are mostly tree-covered which provides a sense of unity with the wooded loch shores and a sense of seclusion when visited, a quality which in earlier times must have added to their attractiveness for settlement, defence and religious retreat.

As well as their contribution to the overall scene, the islands are in themselves highly distinctive, each varying in character. Some are inhabited, and many have a long history of habitation, with important remains still visible.

- **Distinctive mountain groups**

Loch Lomond and its immediate surrounds are enclosed by hills and mountains on three sides which provide an impressive backdrop to views across the loch and grand panoramas from their summits. The three major mountain groups are each distinctive in their own way, adding to the variety of scene around the shores.

North of Tarbert the loch is over-shadowed on its west side by the **Arrochar Alps**. These are large in scale and highly irregular in form, with craggy peaks rising from broad rocky ridges and slopes. They are cut by U-shaped valleys and deeply incised glens. Large forestry plantations cover the lower slopes, especially the distinctive conical hill of Cruach Tairbeirt that lies directly on Loch Lomond's shores, and heads the Arrochar-Tarbert corridor.

Enclosing Loch Lomond to the west are the **Luss Hills** ranging from Glen Fruin in the south to Tarbert. This is a large upland hinterland of rounded conical hills and smooth, sweeping slopes dissected by broad U-shaped valleys.

To the east are the **East Lomond Uplands** with their steep, craggy slopes. The ridges lie parallel to the loch, interrupted by peaks and dissected by steep valleys. South of Ben Lomond the uplands become less dramatic in form, the hill sides dropping more gently to the loch shores until they eventually form a series of foothills to merge with the moorlands and pasture lowlands of the southern loch shores. The outlier of Conic Hill is striking with its whaleback ridge.

- **Ben Lomond, widely known, popularly frequented**

Ben Lomond, the most southerly Munro at 974m (3195ft) towers over Loch Lomond's eastern shores. With its distinctive sloping ridge suddenly giving way to its steep, summit slopes, it is a distinctive landmark visible from as far away as Edinburgh.

Sometimes known as 'Glasgow's Hill', it is easily accessible from the city, attracting some 30,000 visitors a year to its summit. Its popularity and qualities are widely expressed in poetry, painting and travelogues of climbers and visitors. Its summit offers a superb viewpoint with views extending across much of the Southern Highlands and the Central Lowlands.

'Possibly without exception Ben Lomond possesses the proud distinction of being one of the most widely known and most popularly frequented of our Scottish mountains. Its name transcends in familiarity that of any of its Highland compeers, and it occupies a geographical situation peculiarly favourable for receiving a very wide and constant recognition... He has afforded pleasure to thousands of tourists. He has formed the theme of the poet as he has the subject of the painter. The preacher has found him a fit emblem for illustration. The climber has recorded his rambles in diaries and journals; and like all claimants to fame and popularity he has not escaped the facile pen of the humorist.'

Scottish Mountaineering Club (1894)

*Vales, lakes, woods, mountains, islands, rocks, and sea,
Huge hills that heaped in crowded order stand,
Stretched o'er the northern and the western land;
Vast lumpy groups, while Ben, who often shrouds
His loftier summits in a veil of clouds,
High o'er the rest displays superior state,
In proud pre-eminence sublimely great.*

Scottish Mountaineering Club (1894)

- ***Banks of broadleaved woodland***

Broadleaved woodlands clothe most of Loch Lomond's banks, growing alongside the open water and on the lower and middle hill slopes up to about 500m. The upper tree-line is often clearly visible along the loch's length, accentuating the loch's linearity. Woods on the upper slopes can be stunted and more scattered, giving an appearance of trees hanging on to less accessible rock outcrops and gullies.

The substantial woodlands around the shores and on the islands create a distinct sense of place and a luxuriant sense of growth, fertility and shelter in comparison with the high, rugged mountain tops and rough, uneven, steep and often deeply fissured hill slopes.

Frequently, woodlands or groups of trees fill the promontories jutting out into the water, emphasising the sinuous loch shore, and contributing to low-lying watery views receding into the distance. Woodlands structure the landscape further by framing near and distant views to opposite shores and high mountain tops. Such views and images are widely appreciated and popularly used on postcards and in literature.

The Lomond woodlands provide a seasonally changing canopy of varying textures and colours, and the moss-rich oak woods found along these damp, humid shores are renowned for their carpets of wild hyacinth (otherwise known as bluebells or *Brog na Cuthaig*, Cuckoo's Shoe).

As well as being beautiful places to visit and enjoy, the woods also are of great historical interest, having been intensively managed in the past for wood, charcoal and tannin.

- ***Peaceful side glens***

Peaceful countryside is readily accessible along the glens that lead down to Loch Lomond. **Glen Luss**, deeply enfolded and set into the surrounding hills, leads deep into the interior of the Luss Hills. From within there are surprising long distance views out onto Loch Lomond and the glen retains a distinct pastoral, sheltered character with a feeling of remoteness. The estate style of the village of Luss at the base of the glen, and of the farms and cottages within the glen, lend a distinctive uniformity of style.

In contrast to this, is **Glen Douglas** where long distance views out over Loch Lomond are lacking. The glen is enclosed by rough slopes with a few stock farms set regularly along the way, the cattle enlivening the scene which otherwise could appear desolate. The glen floor is broader and flatter than that of Glen Luss, and there is a confined sense of passing through and between mountain ranges, whereas in Glen Luss the sense is of constantly climbing upwards into the interior of the highlands, the road clinging onto the steep slopes.

4.0 Breadalbane



Photograph 4. Glen Dochart from Bovain Farm

- ***Steep mountains and long glens***

Breadalbane is a great tract of hills and mountains rising steeply and dramatically from the glen floors: Ben Lui, Cruach Ardrain, Ben More, Ben Vorlich, Ben Ledi, and others. These form the Southern Highlands – the southernmost extent of the Grampian mountains. The hills dominate the scene, with human activity constrained.

The bare upper hillsides and summits appear untouched, remote and wild, rising above the long glens where farming, forestry and infrastructure are found. Flat land is scarce, but where it does occur, it is settled and intensively used.

- ***Crossroads within remote mountain ranges***

Although Breadalbane's mountains form formidable ranges, the glens provide natural communication routes east to west, and north to south, the area having long been a crossroads of many ways and routes, ancient and modern. This gives an overwhelming sense of the passage of people and cultures over time.

The experience of movement, constrained at the base of such large mountains, acutely emphasises the remoteness and silence of the high summits. There is a strong feeling of travelling through constrained passes, of a limited choice of direction along the way.

- ***A landscape of distinctive glens and straths***

Each glen or strath has its own distinctive character, although the following tend to be common to all:

- A sparsity of settlement, with dispersed and secluded farms and a scattering of Highland villages straddling the main roads.
- Many ruins found in now uninhabited areas, indicating the region was once more populous.
- Farmed glen floors, adding a living, working feel to the glens.
- Broadleaved woodland and trees along rivers and burns, contributing to the pastoral scene.
- Considerable tree cover on the lower slopes, often of dense, impenetrable commercial forestry.
- Higher slopes of open, rocky moorland, the craggy summits standing proud on the skyline.
- Uninhabited side glens with fast flowing burns and waterfalls and a rugged terrain of crags, screes and boulders, used for grazing and often containing ancient shielings.
- Landmarks natural and man-made, ancient and modern, contributing to the individual sense of place.

- ***The narrow Strathyre and Loch Lubnaig ribbon***

The Gaelic name of Loch Lubnaig translates as 'crooked loch', aptly describing its distinctive, curving shape. It is nestled between the steep hill flanks of Ben Ledi and Ben Vorlich, their summits unseen from within the strath itself. The narrowness of the strath, its north-south orientation, its heavily afforested slopes and over-shadowed road, altogether mean that the strath can appear dark, sombre and constricted. The rocky, mountainous slopes of Ben Ledi dominate the view from the main road, the loch itself glimpsed only between stands of broadleaved trees and shore-line woodland.

The settlement of Strathyre is a distinctive village, domestic in scale with houses forming a formal street-line and some Victorian gabled houses interspersed and set back behind the main frontage. The village invites exploration, for further westward lies the older settlement of Strathyre, a quiet, secluded area that typifies the rural qualities of the strath away from the bustle of the main road.

The elongated, ribbon-like forms of loch, strath and settlement form a unified character which relates well to the flow of movement along the contemporary, major transport route. But there are dramatic changes when entering or leaving the strath: at the junction with Balquhiddy, distant views to the mountains beyond offers a strong feeling of relief from the tightly constrained route; and at the southern end, Loch Lubnaig issues into the Garbh Uisge, a river which tumbles in spectacular manner through the narrow and enclosed Pass of Leny, over the Falls of Leny, and with a sense of relief as the glen finally opens out into Callander.

- ***Beautiful Balquhiddy***

The Glen of Balquhiddy has changing qualities along its twelve mile length, from the broad lower glen with the meandering River Balvag, through the Braes of Balquhiddy alongside

Loch Voil, then into the remote, craggy upper glen with its strong sense of wildness. From a broad, relatively well settled strath it becomes a narrow, incised and sparsely populated glen. In the middle, the broad expanse of Loch Voil and its attendant Loch Doine fill most of the glen floor, contributing to the exceptional views looking both up and down the glen.

While Balquhider shares qualities in common with the other major Breadalbane glens, it surpasses them for solitude, remoteness and tranquility. These qualities are not confined to the higher hill slopes and summits but can readily be found along the glen and loch shore, owing to it being the only glen that is not also a principal transport corridor.

Overall, Balquhider possesses a jewel-like quality. It is a highly coloured mosaic of cultural and natural elements that come together to form a memorable and lasting visual impression: a working landscape of farm and forestry, with features of past use still visible; the estate village of Balquhider, with its church and burial ground; rocks, often weathered into curious shapes, scattering the hillsides; beautiful woodlands and wood pasture; lochs, rapids, waterfalls, rocky burns and rivers; and magnificent uplands.

The variation, intricacy and combinations of features in Balquhider makes the richest and most varied of all these Breadalbane glens. With its long history of habitation, and much visited by artists and poets for its scenery, it is its quality as the living, working Highlands that endures. It is this memorable quality which Wordsworth expressed in the poem *The Solitary Reaper* that he was inspired to write from his memories of Balquhider. The glen has many important associations with the archetypal Scottish hero immortalised by Sir Walter Scott, Rob Roy MacGregor, who is buried at Balquhider.

*Behold her, single in the field,
Yon solitary Highland Lass!
Reaping and singing by herself;
Stop here, or gently pass!
Alone she cuts and binds the grain,
And sings a melancholy strain;
O listen! for the Vale profound
Is overflowing with the sound.*

Extract from 'The Solitary Reaper' by William Wordsworth
written after a visit to Balquhider in 1803

- **Wide and straight Loch Earn**

Surrounded by high mountains, with Ben Vorlich in particular towering above the loch, the waters of Loch Earn fill the floor of the western end of Strath Earn. The loch is straight and wide, with only a narrow strip of level ground between the loch and the hill slopes, excepting the occasional alluvial fans which push out into the loch, providing space for pasture and farms.

With plentiful native woods of oak, birch and alder along the shore and on the lower slopes, this large loch can in turn be peaceful, with the woods and hills reflected in mirror-calm waters, or stormy, with the wind howling down the loch, raising white horses and foam-flecked waves. The back road along the southern shore meanders in and out of the woods, and provides a quiet contrast to the trunk roads that normally traverse these Breadalbane glens.

Locheearnhead is nestled at the foot of Glen Ogle at the loch's eastern end. From the south shores of Loch Earn, the village in its setting presents a classic scene against the backdrop

of the huge Breadalbane mountains. Edinample Castle policies on this south shore consolidate the rural qualities of Loch Earn at this, its western end.

St Fillans presents a similar scene at the eastern end. Overlooking the loch and the river, it stands at the extreme eastern edge of the park and at the edge of the River Earn National Scenic Area, and is the start of the transition to the Perthshire lowlands. Rocky St Fillans Hill, rising straight from the flat glen floor surmounted by Dundurn hill-fort, is a site of great historical significance and a grand viewpoint, both looking westwards into the National Park and eastwards into the National Scenic Area.

- ***The rocky pass of Glen Ogle***

Glen Ogle, a rugged pass through the mountains linking Lochearnhead with Glen Dochart, is a major thoroughfare where a busy trunk road clings to the eastern slopes, a relict railway line the western slopes (now the route of the Rob Roy Way) and an old military road the glen floor. It is memorable for the spectacular, old railway viaduct, high up on the west side, and also for the impressive rockfalls that the railway passed through.

However the glen possesses a desolate air, with its name derived from the Gaelic *Gleann-eagal* 'The Valley of Dread.' This is emphasised by deserted townships that lie to both sides of the road near the southern foot of the glen and by its looming, steep rocky slopes marked with runnels, crags and irregular rocky ridgelines.

The rock outcrops, however, are nowadays the heartland of sport climbing in Scotland. From the glen, the mountain of Ben Vorlich provides a grand prospect to the south, and fine views of the mountains to the north can be had when descending into Glen Dochart.

'The Khyber Pass of the North.' Queen Victoria

'A close, gloomy defile... Hundreds of runnels streak its cliffs, which look to have been shattered by shock of earthquake'. Groome (1882-5)

- ***Killin and the Falls of Dochart***

Killin and the Falls of Dochart form a highlight within Breadalbane, memorable places with a strong identity in a spectacular mountain setting. The River Dochart rushes out of Glen Dochart in a series of spectacular waterfalls. The water gathers speed and falls more steeply as it heads towards Loch Tay, to become a very broad, rocky, series of rapids at Killin where it is crossed by the Bridge of Dochart, unusual with seven-spans, four main arches and seven culverts. The Falls of Dochart present high drama – the all enveloping sounds, sights, feel of the spray and smell of the waters make the falls an open-air, enveloping spectacle.

Killin is dominated by the sight and the sound of the falls, a roaring backdrop to human activity. Its traditional, stone buildings and its bridge are low, small, domestic in scale and strongly horizontal in form. In contrast, the mountain backdrop soars vertically skyward, while the river and falls plunge dramatically down.

Inchbuie or Innes Bhuidhe, an island in the river, contains the Clan McNab burial ground surrounded by verdant riverside plantings. Nearby features, such as the prehistoric stone circle and medieval castle, stand witness to an even older past and long history of human presence in this area.

- **Expansive Glen Dochart**

Glen Dochart is broad and wide with an open, expansive feel. The main road flanks the southern slopes, which are characterised by dense forestry plantations alternating with steep slopes leading directly to the summit of Ben More. The River Dochart meanders across a level flood plain, a landscape of enclosed pastures, traditional farms at the base of the hills, and rough slopes of moorland, woods and crags rising to the northern hills.

The glen's Highland pastoral scenery is of notable quality, having been lauded since the 18th century. Highlights are the two enclosed and intimate lochs of Dochart and Iubhair, the former famous for the ruins of Castle Dochart on its small island. These lochs formed picturesque highlights of the 18-19th century 'Highland Tour.'

Although the landscape has changed significantly in recent years, particularly through commercial afforestation, the continual presence of fields, rough grassland, native trees and woods, intimate lochs and the sinuous river means that the glen maintains a rich pastoral quality.

'We saw a small lake before us after the vale had made a bending to the left... the afternoon breezes had died away, and the water was in perfect stillness. One grove-like island, with a ruin that stood upon it overshadowed by the trees, was reflected on the water. This building, which, on that beautiful evening, seemed to be wrapped up in religious quiet, we were informed had been raised for defence by some Highland chieftain. All traces of strength, or war, or danger are passed away, and in the mood in which we were we could only look upon it as a place of retirement and peace. The lake is called Loch Dochart.' Dorothy Wordsworth (1803)

- **Wide Strath Fillan**

Strath Fillan is the extension of Glen Dochart northwestwards, the river also changing its name from Dochart to Fillan. It shares many of the characteristics of Glen Dochart, although its southern slopes are less steep and the river and its pastoral flood plain are mainly hidden from view from the road.

The river tightly meanders across the strath floor, forming a series of gravel-shored islets, while riparian trees and regenerating stands of native woodland further divide up the strath, creating quiet, secluded areas. Most of the floodplain is farmed, with smooth green fields, contrasting with the hill slopes above of rough hummocky moorland or dense forestry plantation.

The old mines at Tyndrum, highly visible on the slopes of Sron nan Colan, stand out barren within the surrounding woodlands, and are witness to the economic activity of the past. The strath has strong associations with the 8th century St Fillan, who retired to the area, and later with Robert the Bruce. The ruined priory of St Fillan and the nearby St Fillan's Holy Pool in the River Dochart were once important places of pilgrimage.

Common to all routes through the strath, whether modern road, railway or path, or older military road, drove road or pilgrimage way, are distinctive views to the high summits of Beinn More and Stob Binnein to the south. Glimpses are also obtained of Ben Lui at the head of the Glen Cononish, with its spectacular eastern cliffs retaining their snows until well into the summer. The flat-bottomed Glen Cononish leads into the heart of high mountains

and at its eastern end is found the ancient Caledonian pinewood of Coille Coire Chuilc, a dark canopy of rounded crowns and orange bark.

'The waters of the river Fillan... were famous for their curative powers, especially in cases of insanity. The patient was walked twice round a neighbouring cairn on which he would have to place a small amount of money as an offering. He was then immersed three times [in St Fillan's Holy Pool], bound hand and foot, and confined for a night in a ruined chapel nearby. If he was found loose the following morning he was pronounced cured, but if still bound, incurable. The prescription was enough to unbalance any sane person.' Andrews (1989)

- **Sinuuous Glen Falloch**

The floor of Glen Falloch, wherein lies the river, road, railway and West Highland Way, is narrow and winding, tightly constrained by its surrounding slopes, with views outwards restricted by numerous trees and woods.

The picturesque Falls of Falloch and the conical hill of Dun Falloch are focal features within the glen, although the former are largely obscured by trees. It is only from the summit of Dun Falloch, or the other higher slopes of the glen, that the memorable quality of Glen Falloch can be experienced, that is a feeling of spaciousness brought about by the expansive open hillsides. The ridges and rocky summits that surround the glen are visually dominant, although no one summit or hill is especially distinctive in form. They form a stark backcloth contrasting with the pockets of native woodland on the lower slopes, and along the burns draining the steep, rough hillsides.

The northern end of the glen contains the southernmost remnant of native Caledonian pinewood, dark trees with rounded crowns scattering the hillside. The nearby Allt Criche wood pastures also present a fine prospect – of pollarded trees spilling downslope, with a hummocky appearance which complements the rounded, hummocky landform. Regenerating woodland alongside the railway line is also a distinguishing feature, marking its route across the landscape.

'One mile north of the confluence of the Dubh Eas and the Falloch is a circular hill-top called the Dun, but more usually known as the Round Hill. Three sides are precipitous and the summit is over 1300 feet above sea-level. On the west the slopes are not steep, but, to a host occupying it, the height would be a well-nigh impregnable position as well as an admirable observation-post. Not only does it command a view of Glen Falloch, upper and lower, but none could use the track way by Ghleann nan Caorunn to or from Dalmally without attracting the attention of watchers on the Round Hill... the hill does not show any signs of added fortification...' Lacaille (1929) [Note: this refers to the hill Creag an Dùin north of the road rather, than the smaller hill Dùn Falloch south of the road]

5.0 The Trossachs



Photograph 5. Leny House policies north of Callander

Note: The Trossachs National Scenic Area is significantly smaller than the landscape area this section refers to. The special qualities that will not apply to the NSA are those relating to Lochs Ard, Chon and Arklet, Aberfoyle, Callander, and the Lake of Menteith.

- **A traditional ‘Gateway to the Highlands’**

The Trossachs occupies a small area that defines the transition from the settled pastoral Lowlands to the rugged Highlands. From the south, after travelling through a gentle landscape of fields and farms it offers the first hint of the wilder lands to the north and west and is sometimes called ‘the Highlands in Miniature’. It is generally regarded as a very attractive and comforting landscape, and occasionally spectacular.

As with Loch Lomond and its surrounds, the area is at once the ‘Gateway to the Highlands’ and also a goal, beyond which many will choose not to venture, instead sampling this inviting Scottish idyll where views can vary from the expansive to the intimate: from a large loch with the mountains beyond, to a mere glimpse of a loch or a hill through a gap in the woods, through to a moss-covered crag amongst the trees. The summit of Ben Venue is a particularly good place for grand panoramic views, northward to the Highlands, southward to the Lowlands.

‘Although the terrain is extremely broken, the tree cover and quiet water bring a gentleness to the rugged landscape. Compared with the adjacent lowlands, the area is wild and rugged, yet compared with the northern Highlands, its small scale and dense tree cover reduce its grandeur, though contributing to variety and beauty. For many people the scenery... epitomises the landscape of Scotland. ’ Leney (1973)

- ***A harmonious concentration of lochs, woods and hills***

The beauty of the Trossachs lies in the tight concentration and harmonious blending of the three elements of loch, woodland and open hill. Broadleaved woodland frames the lochs, being particularly attractive around Loch Achray and the eastern end of Loch Katrine, and frames the open hillsides, particularly those of the dominant Ben Venue.

The change from water to woodland, and woodland to open hillside is sometimes transitional, broken and intricate, as in Loch Katrine's relationship with Ben Venue or in the wood pastures of Glen Finglass; and sometimes the change can be abrupt, as in upper Gleann Riabhach's plantations. Frequently the three elements come together to give a horizontal banding to the glens, from loch through trees to the open hill.

- ***Rugged Ben Venue, the centrepiece of the Trossachs***

From many approaches the alpine-like profile of the upper open slopes of Ben Venue stand out, suggesting a mountain of greater stature and challenge than its actual height of 729m. It is, nevertheless, the centrepiece of the Trossachs and guards the narrow entrance to the beauty of Loch Katrine and the expanse of the Highlands beyond.

- ***Loch Katrine, the 'Queen of the Trossachs'***

Loch Katrine is perceived as the Queen of the Trossachs. Dominated by Ben Venue, it offers the viewer both intimate close vistas of inlet and dense woodland, hinting at its depth, and yet also the chance of further travel beyond the comfort of the Trossachs and into the openness of the glens beyond. Its popularity now owes much to the presence of the last steam driven passenger vessel operating in Britain, fittingly named the Steam Ship *Sir Walter Scott*.

Together with Loch Arklet, it also offers a blend of beauty and utility, the latter arising from the structures associated with the 19th century waterworks, designed to supply water to the city of Glasgow.

In his poem *Lady of the Lake* which refers to Loch Katrine, Sir Walter Scott wrote:

*'So wondrous wild, the whole might seem
The scenery of a fairy dream...*

*'Where, gleaming with the setting sun,
One burnished sheet of living gold,
Loch Katrine lay beneath him roll'd
In all her length far winding lay,
With promontory, creek and bay,
And islands that, empurpled bright,
Floated amid a livelier light,
And mountains, that like giants stand,
To sentinel enchanted land.'*

- ***A landscape of beautiful lochs***

The lochs are essential components of the overall blend, yet each loch has its own distinct character. Only Loch Achray can make claim to being a natural entity, with the others all

shaped to varying degrees by water supply infrastructure. Yet the Victorian infrastructure possesses great historical and aesthetic interest in its own right.

- **Lochs Achray and Venachar** offer a soft blend of tranquillity and openness as they shelter within their lush frames of broadleaved woodland. The building and terraces on the north shores of Loch Achray, once the Trossachs Hotel, provides an eye-catching prospect when rounding Achray Toll at the head of the Duke's Pass.
- **Glen Finglas Reservoir**, hidden behind the tight and wooded entrance to the glen and separated by a higher relief than the other lochs, exudes peacefulness and isolation belying its accessibility and artificial nature.
- **Loch Drunkie** hides within coniferous plantations with only hints of a broadleaved woodland frame softening its edges. However, its interlocking fingers of land and its surrounds of gently sloping woodlands, grassland and marsh blend to form a sheltered, tranquil place, constantly enticing the viewer to discover the next turn of path or track.
- **Loch Ard, Loch Chon and Loch Arklet**, each different in appearance, line the route to Inversnaid, charting progress through to a more remote and highland area. **Loch Ard** mostly surrounded by thick woodlands and with a highly indented shore has a sheltered and enclosed feel. Its northern shore is lined with Victorian villas and houses, pointing to its popularity as a resort since the 19th century, and its shores are dotted with boathouses and jetties, built for the peaceful pastimes of fishing and boating.

The smaller **Loch Chon**, its surrounding slopes heavily afforested and with few buildings, feels more remote. Remoteness increases significantly once **Loch Arklet** is reached, which is at the centre of an open, rugged moorland landscape. The landform can be clearly seen, with slopes falling steeply down to the very edge of the loch, and the open shores reflected in the deep waters. There are dramatic views to the craggy hills above and to the summits of the Arrochar Alps beyond. However, the clearly visible remains of old settlements indicate that the area has not always been so wild and uninhabited.

- ***The romance of the Trossachs***

Many writers, poets and artists have been drawn to the romantic shores of Katrine, including William and Dorothy Wordsworth, Samuel Coleridge, James Hogg and John Ruskin. But it was the publishing of Sir Walter Scott's romantic poem *Lady of the Lake* in 1810 and his novel *Rob Roy* in 1817 that brought fame and popularity to the scenery of the area, establishing the Trossachs as a major tourist attraction, perhaps the epitome of the romantic highland landscape.

In *Rob Roy*, Scott wrote of the tales of Rob Roy MacGregor and the 'children of the mist', referring to his followers of the Clan MacGregor who lived amidst the wild hills. Rob Roy was born in Glen Gyle at the western end of Loch Katrine and is buried nearby at Balquhider. Queen Victoria visited the area on many occasions and had a holiday house built overlooking Loch Katrine.

- ***The resort of Aberfoyle and the Duke's Pass***

The village of Aberfoyle, once important for its slate quarries, quickly developed into the southern gateway of The Trossachs following the publication of Walter Scott's *The Lady of the Lake*. In the 1880s it became a popular Victorian watering-hole, even with its own branch railway. Today, its distinct Victorian architecture remains a feature of the village.

The Duke's Pass is the direct route from Aberfoyle into The Trossachs and is now part of the Trossachs Trail, a scenic route for motorists. Taking the motorist over the hills in a series of sweeping curves, and with spectacular views of the lochs, woods and hills beyond, it provides anticipation of the Highland landscape to come. Named after Rob Roy's arch rival, the Duke of Montrose, it follows the route once followed by Rob Roy's cattle drovers and, after the construction of the road in 1886, by the horse-drawn carriages of 19th century tourists.

- ***The curious wooded hillocks of Aberfoyle***

Achray Forest extends to the south-west of Aberfoyle. The coniferous forest plantations clothe, and largely obscure, a series of parallel ridges (the Highland Boundary Fault). These forested areas form an important backcloth for a series of broadleaf wooded hillocks that are intriguing, and arrest the attention on the approach into Aberfoyle. The knolls of Doon Hill and Fairy Knowe have given rise to traditional, local fairy tales, which lends a further air of mystery and anticipation to the scene.

- ***The gateway town of Callander***

Callander is the town guarding this gateway to the Highlands. It is linear in form, with a well-ordered plan and traditional built forms at its centre. Set astride the Highland Boundary Fault it benefits from a dramatic, natural setting with high ranges to the north and lower farmed landscapes extending southeastward.

The south-facing hill slopes to the north of Callander are laid out with the ornamental policies of Leny Park, forming a gradual and verdant transition from the built and managed townscape to the surrounding countryside. These areas of soft green parkland ornamented with trees, extend against a backdrop of rough moorland and distant uplands.

- ***The tranquil Lake of Menteith***

The Lake of Menteith is a complete contrast to the long and narrow lochs of the Trossachs in their rugged Highland glens. With its gently shelving and curving shores, its wooded islands and its ruined abbey, it presents a peaceful and tranquil prospect.

Surrounded by farmland and woodland, the mix of fields, trees and water epitomises the best of the lowland scene on the southern fringes of the Park. This is enhanced by the important history associated with the lake and its surrounds, whether the prehistoric Peace Stone, the Roman camp and fort on the southwestern shore, or Inchmahome Priory and its association with Mary Queen of Scots. Additional value comes from the lake's rich wildlife of birds and plants.

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APPENDIX 1

National Scenic Areas within the Loch and the Trossachs National Park.

Descriptions from *Scotland's Scenic Heritage 1978*

LOCH LOMOND

At the southern mainland extremity of the Highlands, Loch Lomond is the largest water body in Great Britain. The loch straddles the highland boundary fault, and thus has a variety of scenery stretching from the lowland character of the south shore to the deeply entrenched fjord-like northern head of the loch at Ardlui. There is a large amount of deciduous woodland, nowhere more noticeable than at the wide island-studded section of the loch, where the semi-natural woods of the islands are complemented by the fine policy woodlands on the shore. The east side of the loch also has extensive coniferous plantations which contribute variety to the scene as part of the Forestry Commission's Queen Elizabeth Forest Park. North of Ross Point the loch becomes a ribbon or finger lake, dominated by the towering summit of Ben Lomond (974m). Waterfalls, waterside meadows, and wooded promontories enliven the scene. The changing seasonal colours of bracken and heather, deciduous and coniferous woodlands, and the range of vertical relief, ensure that there is no time of year when the environs of the loch do not live up to their oft-sung fame

THE TROSSACHS

The highland scenery of the Trossachs is particularly striking in comparison with the adjacent lowland. The terrain is extremely broken and, although coniferous plantations cover many hillsides, there is a large amount of deciduous woodland, and broadleaved trees fringe most of the roads, rivers and lochs. A superb blend of mountain, wood and loch, seen at its best in rocky Ben Venue, overlooking the wooded shores of Loch Katrine with its islands, bays and promontories, the area is one of the most celebrated literary beauty spots in Britain, associated with Scott and Ruskin. In 1974 Fiona Leney wrote: 'Although the terrain is extremely broken, the tree cover and quiet water bring a gentleness to the rugged landscape. Compared with the adjacent lowlands, the area is wild and rugged, yet compared with the northern Highlands its small scale and dense tree cover reduce its grandeur, though contributing to variety and beauty. For many people the scenery epitomises the landscape of Scotland.'

This National Scenic Area extends 2km into the National Park, with an overlap of 275 hectares (the total area of the NSA is 3100 hectares).

RIVER EARN (COMRIE TO ST. FILLANS)

This upper part of Strathearn lies at the conjunction of highland and lowland scenery and the variety of landscape elements that derive from this combination result in a very distinctive character of pleasing appearance. There is a strong textured pattern resulting from the variety of vegetation and landform. The hillsides are punctuated by rocky outcrops and patterned with heather, bracken, grass or plantation. The valley has a strong sense of enclosure though the hills are not high. There is an intimacy of scale reinforced by the strong human influence of well managed farmland and woodland but the hill tops have a wild rugged character. Plantations make a major contribution to the scene, the shape and extent of afforested areas respecting and relating well to the natural landform.

There are very fine strands of broadleaved trees in the form of woodlands, parklands and hedgerow plantings, and the river is alternatively swift and leisurely, open-meadowed or alder enclosed. Buildings are generally traditional in appearance and in tune with their surroundings. This is a landscape of great harmony.

APPENDIX 2

VIEWPOINT ANALYSIS

Analysis of viewpoints used in fieldwork May 2009
Krystyna Campbell, Scottish Natural Heritage

ARGYLL FOREST
Viewpoints 1-3

LOCH LOMOND
Viewpoints 4-10

THE TROSSACHS
Viewpoints 11-17
(viewpoints 12-17 from David Tyldesley & Associates in 2006)

BREADALBANE
Viewpoints 18-24

ARGYLL FOREST

Loch Lomond & the Trossachs National Park Viewpoint 1: Argyll Forest – Glen Finart, Barnacabber Glen Finart Hotel looking NW. 6th May 2009 GR NS 179889

Objective	Visual	Personal/Emotional
<p><i>LCT: Farmed strath floor; Forested Upland Glen; Highland Hills</i></p> <p>A series of parallel rocky ridges with interlocking slopes descend to a farmed strath floor. In profile the slopes are jagged and uneven, moderately steep at 45°. The strath floor, relatively flat to the base of the hill slopes, is cut by the meandering, fast flowing Finart Burn. Sporadic rock outcrops lie along the length of the valley, at the base of the enclosing hill slopes.</p> <p>While the hill summits are bare and rocky, the hillside and glen floor have greatly varied land cover. The upper slopes are a mosaic of heather, birch and rocky outcrops, descending to broadleaf woodlands with coniferous forestry plantations (Forested Upland LCT). The farmed glen floor, dominated by wet, rushy, grassland comprises a variety of rectilinear fields enclosed between the road and the foot of the hills. Riparian alder grows alongside the Finart Burn, flowing the length of the glen.</p> <p>In addition to farming there is a livery stable with newly erected post and railed paddocks; an outdoor centre and caravan site at Ardentinnny. Settlement varies along the glen. South of Ardentinnny in the lower glen, settlement is linear, with isolated farmsteads in mid glen. The upper glen is devoid of settlement. There are some large farmhouses in a traditional 'Victorian' style with gabled roofs and bargeboards.</p> <p>The varied age structure of the trees is marked with many notable, large broadleaf trees, especially on the site of Dun Daraich; small woods and tree groups; there is a lengthy beech hedge along the roadside.</p> <p>A pylon line extends along Am Binnein.</p>	<p>The linearity of this large-scale glen is broken up by the intricacy of scattered tree and woodland planting, the forestry and the field configurations. This creates a succession of open areas along the glen floor and on the hill slopes amidst small woods and groups of trees, although large-scale, extensive woodland and forestry predominate in the scene. This means that all buildings and settlement appear small-scale and, especially in mid-glen, incidental to the broad wooded and forested scene.</p> <p>The glen floor is the only area of flat land, its horizontality contrasts with the surrounding wooded slopes. Both the road and burn meander through the glen, across the flat glen floor. Many areas along the glen are hidden between the hill spurs and woodlands, whereas all hill tops are open and exposed. The eye picks out some regularity and rhythm to the 45°hill slopes aligning the glen sides, with parallel rocky ridges and small rock peaks and crags just beneath the summits and mid-slope. The lower hill slopes appear like 'foothills' to the major enclosing range.</p> <p>Despite the mist and rain at time of survey, the scene is still very colourful because of the fresh new leaf growth, the varied age, structure and species of tree. Conifer planting lies predominantly higher up the slopes providing a dark backdrop to the broadleaf trees on the strath floor and lower hill slopes; the beech hedge adds a highlight of brightest green. The hill-slopes advance and recede in the hanging mists, so that the grey-gradation of the hills and the outline of the rocky ridges become two-dimensional. Plumes of mist rose vertically up the hillsides;</p>	<p>The rugged hills contrast with a 'bosky' glen floor; this is a rich landscape with many textures including the early spring leaf growth, the tree canopies at different stages and the widely different tree forms and shapes. The view is very lush and verdant.</p> <p>As you pass through the glen, the view of successive woodland, enclosed glades and enclosures makes this a very appealing place, inviting walking and exploration. The glen forms a 'siding', a byway off the main route down Loch Eck.</p> <p>Both the east and west sides of the glen appear uniform in structure and appearance; they appear to be in balance with one another. This same make-up of land-use, landform and land cover produces an air of harmony and unity.</p>

Loch Lomond & the Trossachs National Park Viewpoint 2: Argyll Forest – Arrochar, Loch Long
Composite VP looking W to Ardgartan Forest from Tighness/Arrochar Boundary, and E from S of Succoth. 6th May 2009 GR NN 295037 & 291044

Objective	Visual	Personal/Emotional
<p><i>LCT: Sea Loch Foreshore, Sea Loch Shore Fringe, Settled Loch Shore; Open Glen Side; Open Highland Hills</i></p> <p>A broad panorama of the Arrochar ‘Alps’ – a sweep of conical, pyramidal mountains oriented NE-SW along the lochside, with knobbed, irregular rocky peaks and crests. Between the peaks are distinct, smooth, curving shoulders. The tips of higher, prominent crags and overhangs peep over the main visible summits. The loch curves gently, with promontories situated at the mouth of burns draining into the loch. The narrow lochside shore has an abrupt margin, from the VP the head of the loch cannot be seen and the skyline of high interlocking peaks completely encloses the VP.</p> <p>The summits are bare rock, with lower rough grassland slopes descending to coniferous plantations and mixed woodlands, interspersed with some open, felled coupes. The road skirts the loch shore built on a man-made embankment, with promenade railings and street lighting; below is a shingle foreshore, with some lengths of rock outcrops. This is a tidal sea-loch, so that mudflats are exposed according to the tides.</p> <p>The major land use is forestry. The settled loch shore serves as a transport corridor on its east side, around the head of the loch and then as far as the Ardgartan peninsula on the west shore. The settlement of Arrochar is very distinct, set linearly around the head of the loch, lining the shore road. Settlement is concentrated on the east shores, with the Kirk a prominent feature set centrally facing a small bay. Houses are small scale, of mixed style, many painted black and white, many substantially extended and modernised; large hotels and coach parks are prominent along the roadside and in the view.</p> <p>There is a derelict pier on both east and west (Torpedo testing station) shores, and a caravan site at Ardgartan. Power lines along the east hillside recede against the backdrop of the large scale open slopes; also noticeable is the route of the West Highland Railway. The footpath along the roadside set high above the foreshore and lined by railings has a ‘promenade’ character.</p>	<p>Loch Long is oriented SW-NE. The surrounding mountains are vast, and the sea loch is large, open and although enclosed by hills, it is exposed as the wind funnels up the loch from the SW. The scene is visually highly structured with high open mountain tops descending to forestry and broadleaved woodland that cover most of the enclosing lower and middle hill slopes. All settlement and human activity form a human ‘corridor’ around the loch. This is very marked with the lochside wall, settlement and traffic ‘scurrying’ at the foot of a high, large-scale landmass, subservient to large scale, vertical ‘scenery’. The massif forms a ‘wall’ - a seemingly impenetrable landmass around the settlement with no readily visible passage leading through, because of the heavily wooded lower hill slopes.</p> <p>The interlocking peaks sweep along Loch Long into the distance containing views and creating a strong feeling of distance. There is a distinct, repetitive pattern to these pyramidal peaks and broad based hills lining the loch. This contrasts with the strong horizontal line of loch and its shore lying parallel to the tree line, linear road corridor and sea wall. From the west shores the vista appears flatter because fewer peaks can be seen receding into the distance due to the curve and orientation of the loch.</p> <p>The mountain peaks are misty and soft but, where visibility is clear, they are rugged. The weather is very changeable with a cold, breezy wind off the loch; brilliant sun follows showers; there are shifting clouds and mists. The sound of the West Highland Railway precedes its arrival into view and there is the background noise of the lochside traffic –a fairly busy route. The colourful planting of the domestic gardens and trees in Arrochar is noteworthy, the spring blossom and fresh colours of exotic trees and shrubs stand out against the wooded and forested background. This highlights the intensity of land-use and activity along the lochside and base of the hills.</p>	<p>The Arrochar hills are highly distinctive, singular mountains, spectacular and exciting. The individual peaks within the range can be readily identified.</p> <p>The settlement’s location, set against the high chain of peaks popularly considered to most resemble Alpine hills, is distinctive. The scene offers a memorable picturesque image – with white/black buildings and drystone dykes – set out along the road and lochside. However, individually the buildings need investment, appearing unsympathetically extended with poor landscape detailing; the uncompromisingly large hotels with their extensions and coach parks dominate the townscape at the detailed, roadside level.</p> <p>The sea wall – the ‘promenade’ was built around 1926. There is a long history of tourism at Arrochar, Dorothy Wordsworth’s account, among others. Prior to the opening of the West Highland railway line in 1894 tourists reached Arrochar by steamer. The seaborne views to this part of the coast and the hills give a completely different experience to that from the road – with better appreciation of the form of the sea loch striking in between the surrounding highlands is gained.</p>

**Loch Lomond & the Trossachs National Park Viewpoint 3: Argyll Forest – Younger Botanic Garden, Cowal
VP from William Wright Smith Gazebo, slopes of A'Chruach looking NE to SW. 7th May 2009 GR NS 139855**

Objective	Visual	Personal/Emotional
<p><i>LCT: Farmed Strath Floor including Designed Landscapes; Forested Upland Glen; Open Highland Hills</i></p> <p>VP lies at 135m on the shoulder of A'Chruach, the southernmost hill in the Beinn Mhor range that rise up to N and NW behind the VP. It lies where two LCTs meet, the Forested Upland Glen, with Open Highland Hills.</p> <p>Eastwards lie the Ben Ruadh chain oriented N-S, lying parallel with Loch Eck. They enclose the strath to the east, cut by Upper Inverchapel Brae forming a deep V-shaped glen. Ben Ruadh's concave hill slopes fall to Strath Eachaig, a broad farmed strath, across which the meandering misfit River Eachaig flows south from Loch Eck for some 5 miles, to drain into Holy Loch. The latter is seen with the successive horizontal ridges of the Ayrshire Hills beyond. On the skyline to the SW is Dunrod Hill (298m) lying beyond Gourock, and Creuch Hill (441m), Ayrshire at 25km distant.</p> <p>Dunoon lies on the shores of Holy Loch, at its narrowest point (Strone Point), where it opens out into the Firth of Clyde. The settlement ranges linearly along the shoreline with a nucleated centre set around a promontory dividing East and West Bays. Within Strath Eachaig settlement is set on the flat strath floor, mainly estate houses and farms of the Benmore policies.</p> <p>The bare, open upland hills have rocky outcrops and summits, with areas of rough grassland and heather. The upland glen is predominantly forestry cover dating from different planting periods from the 1820s onwards; set within this large planting matrix is the Benmore designed landscape, originating from 1862, and subsequent plantings of the Younger Botanic Gardens (Royal Botanic Gardens).</p> <p>As well as farming and forestry, a variety of land-uses are visible in the view; tourism, forest park recreation, plant collection and research, fishing (sea and river) and transport. The strath is predominantly improved pasture (cattle,sheep) set within riparian and policy woodlands. There is a caravan site at the foot of Loch Eck. Boats are anchored in the bay off Dunoon, and the Dunoon-Gourock ferry is sailing.</p>	<p>This is a vast panorama of afforested and wooded, expansive hill ranges enclosing a broad strath, the latter leading linearly from Loch Eck - a 'ribbon' loch - to Holy Loch. Beyond Holy Loch, the Clyde Basin appears as a vast outer landscape to the immediate scene. Within the panorama the farmed enclosures on the strath floor are medium scale; in the immediate foreground and middle ground are smaller, intimate garden glades.</p> <p>The open hill tops form a receding series of horizontal ridges, with a far-distant skyline. The curve of bay and river flow through the view cutting across the rectilinear fields set out on the strath. These fields form a framework within which the tree coupes form a mixed series of 'curving' blocks, with only a few straight-edged vertical, woodland/forestry boundaries appearing down slope. The conifer plantations are species mixed, therefore an over-ordered, commercial character does not predominate. To the east the V-shaped, Inverchapel glen is very distinctive, but elsewhere in the scene the angle and gradient of the surrounding hill slopes are masked by tree-cover.</p> <p>This is a highly textured, colourful landscape, especially with the highlights of colourful ornamental shrubs and trees. The major sound is the sound of water from heavy rain and the roar of an outflow descending off the bare hills to rear of VP. Strong wind can be heard in the trees.</p> <p>Notable features in the panorama are the chimneys of Inverkip power station in the far distance; The Dunan, by Dunoon; Dunoon Bay which draws the eye because its colour contrasts with the predominant greens of tree-covered hillsides and strath; the telecoms masts beyond Gourock on the skyline. The meander of the river attracts your attention as it flows through the scene to the bay on the shores of the Holy Loch, drawing you to look at the water and Firth of Clyde beyond.</p>	<p>This harmonious panorama is full of interest. It is a truly spectacular view because of its expansiveness; the landmarks help you locate, at a regional scale, exactly where you stand in relation to Cowal and the Clyde. There are many points of interest in the view that hold your attention, layer of interest and features, with no one dominant feature. All man-made features within the view are (at this distance) relatively small-scale and domestic. Forestry is the major land-use and man-made change, but perceived by many as a 'natural' organic form and not built development.</p> <p>The overwhelming sense is one of shelter. Despite extremely wet weather at the time of field survey, there are many visitors to both the gardens and this viewpoint. This is not a particularly peaceful spot as it is so well visited. That said, it is easy to walk out within the forest park surrounding the gardens, and even the gardens themselves, to find peace and solitude.</p> <p>The forestry dates from the 1820s with the establishment of plantings of Scots Pine, Norwegian Spruce and Beech. Between 1871-1883 a grand period of forestation saw the planting of over 6 million trees; then in 1929 Benmore Botanic Garden is listed on the Inventory of Designed Landscapes, thereby acknowledged as on national importance.</p>

LOCH LOMOND

Loch Lomond & the Trossachs National Park Viewpoint 4: Loch Lomond North – The Drovers, Inverarnan Looking East 8th May 2009 GR NN 317184

Objective	Visual	Personal/Emotional
<p><i>LCTs: Farmed Strath Floor; Wooded Upland Glen; Open Glenside; Open Highland Hills</i></p> <p>The steep, rocky linear ridge, the NW face of the Ben Lomond massif descends steeply to the flat strath floor. River Falloch, a misfit river, meanders across the glen floor to meet the Ben Glas Burn, which forms a series of waterfalls down the steep, rocky crags and slopes of Creag an Fheidh (Deer Crag). To the south, Cnap Mor (164m) a prominent hill within the Ben Glass massif, stands at the head of Loch Lomond, the latter cannot be seen due to the large rocky outcrops and crags of Garabhal Hill (453m) to the west.</p> <p>The hill summits and upper glen slopes are bare rock descending to a mosaic of bracken, rough grassland, scrubby and stunted birch and deciduous woodland. The strath floor is covered with wet grassland, areas of rush, riparian alders and sycamore with whin clumps. There is knotweed around the car park to The Drovers Inn – probably arising from spoil associated with car park construction, fencing, septic tank.</p> <p>The Drovers Inn, dating from the 18th century, is a 'traditional' stone building that retains much of its architectural character and is a prominent landmark. There is a caravan/camping site adjacent to the inn, both are adjacent to the A82 trunk road. To the west of the A82 is the West Highland Rail route, some forestry, the Glenfalloch Lodge policies and a pylon line on the hillside. To the east, another pylon line extends along the hillside and, prominent in the scene are the Ben Glas Burn falls.</p> <p>Settlement is dispersed, linearly along the route of the A82, and the lochside; the Beinglas farmstead with livestock pens lies across the strath floor from The Drovers Inn.</p>	<p>The viewpoint is situated on the strath floor, midway along lower Glen Falloch, a long linear glen. Visually, the space is enclosed by uplands and trees, masking its linearity, Loch Lomond to the south and other reaches of the glen to the north. Although Glen Falloch curves gently to the north-east, it is also hidden from view behind the planting and topography.</p> <p>This is a large scale landscape – the strath floor, hills, waterfall and extent of woodland cover. Although the ridge and open hills are exposed the strath feels very sheltered because of the trees, with only the centre of the glen open where there are fields with no tree cover. Overall, this is an enclosed place, due to the high surrounding hills.</p> <p>The scene is diverse visually, principally due to the amount of human activity along the A82 corridor</p>	<p>Despite the man made/tourist clutter along the A82 corridor, the waterfalls and thickly planted glen sides hold your attention, you can immerse yourself in the sublime 'natural' landscape. The fields feel restful and serene across the glen, and away from the passing traffic.</p> <p>The low grade landscaping at the VP and amenity is an eyesore – evoking contrasting emotions from being excited and uplifted by the stunning waterfalls and exuberant woodlands to being dispirited and disappointed by a comparatively poor quality impact of visitor/car facilities on the surroundings.</p>

Loch Lomond & the Trossachs National Park Viewpoint 5: Loch Lomond North – Pulpit Rock, Stuckendroin
VP assessment and composite notes from other lochside spots in vicinity 8th May 2009 GR NN 324166 & others

Objective	Visual	Personal/Emotional
<p><i>LCT: Wooded Upland Glen; Inland Water; Open Highland Hills</i></p> <p>Views lie eastwards, as the A82 is hard up against the base of the Arrochar hills to the west, to the long rugged ridge and crags of the East Lomond uplands. Promontories on both Loch Lomond shores enclose bays, forming a sinuous loch shore. The promontories are of different heights, some rise just above the water level while others are higher and shelve steeply to the loch shore with craggy outcrops.</p> <p>A distinctive feature is 'Pulpit Rock' a massive boulder set in an open lochside glade, at a point where the loch narrows. South of it, stretches of the loch shore are made up of rocky cliffs rising vertically alongside the road edge; the lower slopes have scrubby tree growth on them hiding the rock faces. Ornamental planting on Island I Vow, south of the VP, stands out against the surrounding broadleaf woodlands.</p> <p>On both sides of the glen, lower and mid hill slopes are covered in broadleaf woodland, comprising coppiced hazel stands and a ground flora rich in bluebells, honeysuckle, blackberry. Above the tree line, the open hill slopes are rough grass with swathes of bracken; the top slopes and summits are bare rock and patches of grassland. Litter and spoil heaps are strewn around roadside/laybys. There is an absence of power lines.</p> <p>The A82 transport corridor, a major tourist and haulage route hugs the loch shore, close up against both hill sides to the W and loch shore to E. Recreation for walkers, tourists and water-based on the loch is a major land use. Some of the grassy loch side promontories are grazed by sheep. The loch shores are sparsely populated, with a single farmstead at Stuckendroin and an isolated farmstead at Doune on the east shore, the latter now a bothy on the West Highland Way. Unseen from the VP, the West Highland Railway lies high up on the west hillside, there are sheep creeper incorporated under the railway, and the roadside walling (many stretches in disrepair) date to its construction.</p>	<p>Surrounding wooded hill slopes appear to envelop this spot. There is a marked contrast between this 'natural' landscape and the linear movement of the trunk road and its associated human activities and signage. Views are directed eastwards, because of the busy road and due to the VP being hard up against the foot of the west hill range.</p> <p>The steep hill sides are scored by vertical gullies and crevasses with tumbling burns and waterfalls. The promontories are angled out into the loch, visually enclosing the loch to N and S. At the VP the loch shore is steep with numerous, vertical tree trunks that contrast with the horizontality of the shore opposite.</p> <p>The varying shoreline masks the linearity of the loch. In views out to the east shore, the promontories appear flattened so that the furthest shore appears as a strong horizontal across the scene. Some of the promontories on the near shore reach far out into the loch making them seem like islands.</p> <p>The landscape is large-scale. The loch waters and hillsides dominate and contrast with small fields on the promontories, the confined lay-bays and the apparently 'miniature' scale of Doune on the far shore. The hill tops, upper hill slopes and central loch are all open and exposed while the wooded loch sides are sheltered. The loch shores with are the most diverse areas with woodlands, the fresh and varied greens of the new/young leaf growth, sporadic open glades, rocky shores and varied ground flora.</p> <p>This is a 'watery' landscape, emphasised by the lapping of waves on the shore and squalls of rain passing across. There is the constant roar of traffic – and of waterfalls to the west of the road. Birdsong is constant.</p>	<p>A fantastic spot where the surrounding natural landscape envelops you, but it is easy to feel disassociated from it, distracted by the busy, fast traffic on the A82. The loch shore is totally dominated by the A82 leading to a sense of confinement, while walking/visiting this stretch of Lomondside. Places along it, and there are few places to stop easily, are 'commercialised', with development hiding the 'natural' landscape qualities or hindering access to the loch shore. Footpaths are in an appalling state of repair, no maintenance, dangerous to use, inhibiting off-road use and exploration. Lay-bys feel threatening to sole individuals due to litter, unkempt appearance, thick scrub and undergrowth</p> <p>The stretch of loch side road at Pulpit Rock is memorable – because of Craig-an-tairibh (Gael. the Bull's Rock; O.S. map Clach nan Tarbh). This monumental boulder has a deep recess, formed like a large doorway, in its rock face. Iron bolts which supported the pulpit's platform and reading desk, can be seen. It was used as a pulpit for open air services and 'for communions, when people gathered from far and near. The preaching continued during the greater part of the week, and bread and cheese and whisky were sold to the assembled people from a booth erected behind the pulpit rock'. The name 'Bull Rock' is said to derive from a Lomond legend.</p> <p>The castle ruins on Island I Vow were inhabited up until the late 18th/early 19th century, with ornamental planting dating from this period. It stands out against the surrounding broadleaved woodland.</p>

**Loch Lomond & the Trossachs National Park Viewpoint 6: Loch Lomond North – Ardvourlich, looking to Ceann Mòr
360°VP from meadow adjacent to the Ceann Mòr promontory. 8th May 2009 GR NN 326122**

Objective	Visual	Personal/Emotional
<p>LCT: Open Glen side; Wooded Upland Glen; Inland Water; Open Highland Hills</p> <p>The VP is enclosed by high hill ridges on all sides. To the east forming the skyline are the craggy, rocky ridges of the East Lomond hills that enclose and lie parallel to Loch Lomond; the peak of Ben Lomond appears over this ridge. Its slopes are incised by steep clefts and gullies, with waterfalls, boulder-strewn slopes and crags interrupting the slopes. Southwards lies another, lower ridge; to the west a longer ridge complex crossed by crags, outcrops, knolls and low cliffs extends, with the ridge to the north descending steeply and sharply to enclose the glen. Scrubby deciduous woodland grows on some cliffs and rock outcrops; overall the steep high slopes are wooded.</p> <p>The loch fills the glen floor, its gently shelving foreshore is made up of fine shingle with small stretches of sand. A low, flat alluvial meadow leads out from the A82 to the loch shore which is interrupted just to the north-east of the viewpoint by Ceann Mòr, a rocky promontory. The meadow is wet grassland with marsh vegetation and large areas of rush.</p> <p>There are ornamental trees around the farm and along road edge, whereas the promontory is wood pasture that includes fine, open crowned oaks. An ancient, full crowned, specimen yew grows at the centre of the promontory surrounded by boulders. A field boundary marks the boundary between Ceann Mòr and the meadow, made up of a ditch and oak trees – including veteran trees. The meadow and promontory are grazed by sheep with most being open grazing, the only visible boundaries are the roadside and distinct field boundary separating the promontory from adjacent meadow.</p> <p>The Ardvorlich farmstead is isolated, situated on the lower hill slope, a 'traditional' single storey building (now a holiday home?). Further up-slope is a newer build house.</p> <p>The flat lochside wet meadow land is the only flat land, everything else is rugged, craggy rock or water.</p>	<p>This large panorama looks out onto loch side hills stepping up from Loch Lomond, through a series of rock outcrops to a high craggy ridge topped with triangular summits; glimpses of higher summits appear over the ridge line. This large ridge and the loch side promontory of Ceann Mòr, contrast with the smaller scale beaches on the loch shore, the house and garden. Shelter is found within wooded Ceann Mòr, which is secluded, and beyond the curved loch shore are other hidden bays.</p> <p>This is a diverse landscape with a complex landform and varied land cover. The loch curves 180° around the VP with no one complete vista to the loch, which is glimpsed through trees, woodland and beyond intervening promontories and headlands. At the viewpoint hills curve around, enclosing it visually. The slopes are scored by a series of gulleys angled and radiating down slope. The road corridor takes up the narrow, flat loch shore fringe at this point. It cuts the loch and Ceann Mòr off from the enclosing hills.</p> <p>Trees on Ceann Mòr stand out in the view due to their brighter-coloured, new leaf growth and full canopy spread; the individual full-crowned specimens contrast with the surrounding woodlands in the view. The carpet of tussocky rushes across the meadow contrast with the open loch waters.</p>	<p>This place offers an opportunity to distance oneself from the busy road corridor, but it is not easy to stop here as there is no clearly defined or dedicated stopping place.</p> <p>It is tranquil by the loch side but this is left behind as one draws nearer to the road. Ceann Mòr is an interesting spot, the ancient trees and massive boulders make it very distinctive, picturesque and lend a great feeling of passage of time. It feels a complete place 'in itself', enclosed and sheltered as it is on the loch side</p> <p>The very large, beautifully formed trees, stone dyke and farm present a well-established pastoral scene, very peaceful in itself. There is a dilapidated stone dyke with a new fence line alongside it – resulting in some loss of character within a highly distinctive small farmed unit.</p>

**Loch Lomond & the Trossachs National Park Viewpoint 7: Loch Lomond North – Inveruglas
360° view from pier and visitor centre, 9th May 2009 GR NN 323098**

Objective	Visual	Personal/Emotional
<p>To the E the steep, rocky slopes of Cruachan plunge down to the loch, with the parallel, lower slopes of Craig Royston ridge descending and appearing to enclose the loch. On the skyline the triangular peak of Ben Lomond lies central to the view. To the W is the lower ridge of Cruach Tairbeirt, with more gentle slopes, with the pyramidal peak of A'Chrois (1849m) glimpsed over the ridge. The indented loch shore is marked by promontories and bays, Inveruglas island lies in the loch to the west.</p> <p>The tree line along the mid glen slope is marked, above it the hill summits and upper slopes of bare rock and rough grasslands and below are wooded slopes descending to densely wooded loch shores. The coniferous forested slopes of Cruach Tairbeirt give way to broadleaf woodland. Improved grassland pasture extends along the loch shore-with some large stands of knotweed. The road corridor is busy with traffic and mixed-uses, a caravan park, visitor centre, the Sloy power station and its ancillary development.</p> <p>Settlement is isolated, with seasonal caravan use; the visitor centre has designated open hours, thus the site must be quiet at night, out of hours and out of season. Sloy power station, pipeline and bridge are major features on the W shore with the jetty and ferry service over to Inversnaid and for loch tours. Across on the E is the Inversnaid Hotel.</p>	<p>The central focus of the vista looks over low promontories descending to, and enclosing the loch in the distance. These sloping, diagonal hillsides draw the eye to, and then around, Inveruglas, the island and the loch's indented, undulating shoreline. The skyline is formed by triangular peaks appearing above the ridge, with Ben Lomond in the far distance and nearer in to the view, A Chrois. The stillness and flat, calm surface of the loch contrasts with these rugged diagonal hill slopes; there is a contrast in textures with a smooth loch surface and the shores highly textured with trees and rock surfaces.</p> <p>The loch appears vast, open and exposed. Within this Inveruglas is small and sheltered, almost secluded with the tourist centre 'inserted' into this. The scene is visually varied and diverse, especially the environs of Inveruglas and the rugged mountain scene enclosing the scene to the SW.</p> <p>Despite the rainy weather, the loch appears still and calm. While the road and visitor centre are busy with traffic, car engines idling in the car park, tourists embarking on the boat, the chugging of boat engines and tannoy of the tourist guide.</p>	<p>This is a classic loch side view – still and calm, with lush woodland around the loch and framing the loch side views. It feels very 'holidayish' and although the road is very busy, the view holds your interest and distracts you from it.</p> <p>Sloy power station is a handsome building, the pipeline and power station give some idea of the mountain sizes because, as buildings go they are very large. This emphasises the vertical scale of the mountains that loom over you.</p> <p>The scene speaks of the power of water – you are surrounded by it here, it is very elemental. Power of nature and beauty of nature.</p> <p>Castle on the island is hidden from view.</p> <p>Waterfall at Inversnaid, on far shore, can be seen, visible as you move along the A82.</p>

Loch Lomond & the Trossachs National Park Viewpoint 8: Loch Lomond Luss Hills – Glenmolloch Bridge, Glen Luss
Panoramic view over South Loch Lomond from within Glen Luss 9th May 2009 GR NS 330942

Objective	Visual	Personal/Emotional
<p><i>LCT: Wooded Upland Glen, Inland Water, River Valley Farmland</i></p> <p>This extensive view is seen from the brow of deep, steep sided Glen Luss. The focus of the view is out to a skyline view of the Balfron Gap/Endrick Water lowland river valley, with the Campsie Fells and Dundrennan Hill, end of Ben Lomond/Ben Bhraic massif, Gulain due E. This forms a backdrop to south Loch Lomond with numerous loch isles and lowland shores. The VP is enclosed by steep rounded, convex slopes of the Beinn Dubh massif. To rear of VP, view is enclosed by rounded conical summits of the Luss Hills, incised by deep, narrow, incised gulleys with tumbling burns.</p> <p>Sparse clumps of trees on upper/mid glen side give way to thick deciduous woodlands on the mid/lower glen sides – the glen floor cannot be seen. There are some areas of improved pasture, but the upper slopes are rough grazing. Grazing is a mixture of upper, open grazing and some enclosed pastoral farmland. The upper glen contains dispersed upland farms; in the lower glen smaller cottages are scattered along the roadside. Drystane dykes border the road along its length, and enclose the woodlands. The head dyke along the hillside is distinct.</p> <p>Deep gulleys drain the glen slopes, with small groups and lines of trees alongside the stream beds. Luss Water is crossed by the Glenmolloch stone bridge (with a foundation stone) and interrupted by steep waterfalls.</p>	<p>This is a vast panorama looking out onto a lowland scene, in the far distance. This flatter landscape is viewed from within a steep-sided, upland landscape with no flat land or calm water. Glen Luss curves gently southeast to northwest. The viewpoint surrounded by large-scale hills, is in Upper Glen Luss, at about 130m O.D. and looks out obliquely across the glen. The view is channelled down through the smaller-scale of the mid glen, and then out onto a vast, outer landscape. The Luss Water is enclosed, descending though the glen in a deeply incised bed, so falling rapidly out of view.</p> <p>There is a major contrast between the smooth forms of the Luss Hills and the craggy massif seen elsewhere in the park, to north and east. The enfolded hills with smooth, steep sided U-shaped glens are a marked contrast. The greatly diverse landscape includes the complex islandscape and distant lowlands in the outer vista, as well as the simpler environs of Glenmolloch Farm. Colours are muted in the distance and hilltops further-up the glen, but vibrant in mid-glen; textures vary greatly with highly textured tree slopes seen against smooth rounded hills; smooth improved pastures and rough grazings.</p> <p>The complex loch scene with enclosing mountains, islands and loch shores is full of intricate detail compared to the simple, gently sloping hill profiles of the Luss Hills. There is no flat land in the view and sloping ridges enclosing the glen recede into the distance, enhancing the sense of distance.</p>	<p>This is a secluded, quiet, peaceful place, withdrawn from Loch Lomond's shores. It is tranquil, and easily accessible, leaving behind t busy thoroughfares.</p> <p>This feels a relatively 'hidden' glen. The scene, which extends over a great distance, is restful on the eye. Loch Lomond and the lowlands beyond draw the eye out to the horizon, with the corresponding feeling that you are deep inside the hills.</p> <p>You cannot see the glen floor because the woodlands and road running along the low/mid slopes of the glen; you feel that you are 'high-up' the glen side when in fact you are not.</p>

Loch Lomond & the Trossachs National Park Viewpoint 9: Loch Lomond South – Duncryne Hill
360°viewpoint, 10th May 2009 GR NS 435859

Objective	Visual	Personal/Emotional
<p>A panorama of Loch Lomond enclosed by interlocking slopes, ridges, promontories and islands, clearly displaying the Highland/Lowland boundary line. The Highlands extend from NW – NE, with the sweeping, rounded Luss Hills dissected by V-shaped Glen Luss, beyond them Glen Douglas and to the north the craggy, rocky summits of the Arrochar Uplands, where the summit of The Cobbler is seen rising just above Glen Douglas. To NE, the Ben Lomond range is visible with the lower irregular ridge of Beinn Bhrac.</p> <p>Loch Lomond is scattered with numerous islands across its southern extent – exhibiting the fault line of the Highland Border Complex with the Lowlands to its south. The Lowlands are gently rolling and farmed, the Endrick valley is seen clearly, the river flowing out from the loch south-eastwards. To the VP's E–SE are hill ranges all oriented NE–SW, being the Ochils on the skyline, the Gargunnock Hills and Campsie Fells. Southwards, the Kilpatrick Hills continue this trend, appearing as a series of lower ridges with the small outlying dome of Auchineden Hill. Westwards lies broad farmed lowlands and the Cowal peninsula.</p> <p>The high summits in this long-distance panorama are covered with snow, while other lower peaks are bare rock. Land uses across the area are many and varied. Many hill slopes in the view have commercial forestry plantations; with other wooded areas (especially around the Lomond shores), rough grassland, and heather on the Ben Lomond range. The loch shores and islands are wooded, with occasional forestry stands. Areas of policy woodland and large areas of pastoral farmland are seen, especially the south loch shores and lowlands, where there are many rectilinear fields. Field patterns are especially marked to the SE of Gartochan; and there are areas of cleared forestry in the foreground. A caravan site on the south loch side is visible.</p> <p>Balloch is the major settlement seen, with other smaller centres along the loch shores. Elsewhere across the lowlands, settlement is scattered, mainly isolated farms and cottages, of varied building types.</p>	<p>This is a truly vast panorama giving a classic 'view' of the Highland/Lowland landscape and the Highland Boundary Zone cutting across, forming the division between the two. Loch Lomond appears as a broad, horizontal loch contained by a high mountain massif and lower ridges. The scatter of islands accentuate this broad horizontal character and, by breaking up the loch surface and receding into the distance, they carry the eye up into and between the mountain ranges – suggesting the lochs greater extent, beyond actual area visible.</p> <p>The Highland mountains have distinctive, individual profiles compared to the Lowland hills, where it is the ranges that are distinctive, as opposed to the individual summits within them. The further northwards into the panorama that you look, so elements in the view get steeper, with more angular lines, craggier summits and ridges. South of the loch farmed slopes and a patchwork of lines and textures, and more intricate details predominate.</p> <p>In the scene the distant Highlands and northern shores are muted – with a constantly changing pattern of cloud and light. The great sweeping slopes and angles of this mountainscape, is punctuated by the long linear island chain across the loch's horizontal surface. To the south the panorama is less distinctive, made up of long horizontal slopes and blocks of backlit hills. The foreground to the scene is highly coloured with whin and a carpet of wild flowers around and upon Duncryne Hill.</p> <p>The weather is very changeable – bright sun interspersed with heavy showers and breeze. Although there is the constant distant roar of traffic (especially motorbikes), the immediate sounds on the hill are birdsong.</p>	<p>A stunning spectacular 360° view. A well-know, beauty spot. An iconic view – widely seen on postcards and in books.</p> <p>Awesome, grand and truly vast. Dramatic. This encapsulates what many visitors expect to see in Scotland, a 'classic' view – it is a unique view, a unique place, which encapsulates Loch Lomond and its oft sung landscape.</p> <p>There is no other loch like this in terms of scale, extent and complexity. Easily identifiable. Familiarity with this view is not disappointing – there is so much to see, examine, interpret and enjoy.</p>

**Loch Lomond & the Trossachs National Park Viewpoint 10: Loch Lomond Inversnaid
View from Inversnaid Hotel Car park, 11th May 2009 GR NN 336088**

Objective	Visual	Personal/Emotional
<p>The VP is situated on a slight, V-shaped promontory on the east loch shore, with Inversnaid Gorge to the rear. On the opposite (western) shore the individual, craggy, knobbly peaks of the Arrochar Uplands (Ben Narnain, Ben Ime, Ben Vane and the lower slopes of Ben Vorlich) form a backdrop encircling the lower, rounded headland of Cruach Tairbeirt. Inveruglas Glen, to its north, is U-shaped. The low lying loch shore in the foreground appears straight, gently shelving to the loch.</p> <p>Cruach Tairbeirt's slopes are covered with conifer plantation, with a broadleaf belt along its lower hill slopes and the loch shores. Some broadleaf planting on the slopes above Inveruglas, include a belt along the hydro pipeline. The east loch shores are clothed with thick deciduous woodlands, and the shoreline is rocky. The car park at Inversnaid Hotel fronts onto the loch, topped with asphalt. A great variety of land use is represented in the scene - the hotel; water based recreation (fishing, ferry trips); the West Highland Way that passes through Inversnaid; forestry; power generation with good views across to Slochd power station; holiday caravans and chalets. The settlement is predominantly seasonal and limited to the loch shores.</p> <p>The jetty at Inversnaid and the waterfall behind the hotel are the distinctive features in the scene, as is the knobbled outline of the Arrochar massif, enclosing the VP to the west and north.</p>	<p>The VP gives a near view of the Arrochar 'Alps' - their large size is apparent, with the VP looking 'square on' at them. The large pylons across the loch are belittled by the mountain ranges. From here, the loch appears foreshortened, as neither of its ends is visible; its linearity is lost. Not can you experience the depth of the Inversnaid gorge, or verticality of the shore and waterfall. The hills on the opposite shore are distinctive, and a characteristic of the view is the 'banding' of tree planting from deciduous at the lower levels and loch shore, through to conifer planting giving out to the open hillsides above.</p> <p>The view is strongly 'horizontal': the expansive, loch shore extends horizontally across the view, bounded above by the rhythm of the pyramidal mountain summits and punctuated by the vertical hydro-pipeline. Noticeable are the strong diagonals of the hill slopes, higher to the left and lower to the right of the view. The hills are muted in colour and the loch appears silvery, with the brownish greens of the unfolding deciduous trees and the darker greens of the conifers markedly predominant. The landscape appears broken into distinct 'blocks', of planting, movement, line and even specific sounds from specific directions.</p> <p>The boats sailing across the loch add movement and focal interest to the view; the water is gently but constantly rippling adding a 'rocking' movement to the scene and lapping against the jetty. This contrasts with the falling water, the tumbling and pounding of the Inversnaid waterfall; all interspersed with the chattering of people in the car park, picnicking, embarking and the tannoy of commentary on the ferry.</p> <p>The urban detailing of the car park and hotel landscape, uses a variety of incongruous materials in this rural setting, that are at odds with the old stone jetty. The hotel has innumerable extensions to it – you can chart its development in the differing styles. It lacks an overall, unifying architectural 'style'.</p>	<p>This is a lovely spot, long visited and renowned because of the amazing natural splendours of the Inversnaid waterfall and Lomond shores. Snow on the peaks of the mountains adds a 'wild' quality to the view.</p> <p>The hotel is, in itself, an anticlimax to the journey here, by Loch Chon, through and around the Inversnaid gorge. This beauty spot is let down by the quality of materials and buildings design; there is little appreciation apparent of the appropriateness of form or materials, which do little to enhance the man-made activities at the site.</p> <p>Planting along the hydro-pipeline emphasises it, and draws the eye to its route. Does it detract from the view?</p> <p>This has long been a popular spot with many past traveller's accounts of the scenery, especially the waterfalls.</p>

THE TROSSACHS

Loch Lomond & the Trossachs National Park Viewpoint 11: The Trossachs Samson's Stone, Callander 12th May 2009 GR NN 604078

Objective	Visual	Personal/Emotional
<p>A panoramic view with the skyline formed by the Pentland Hills and the west Ochils; landmarks that can be seen include Longannet power station, Forth Road Bridge towers, Dumyat Hill Fort, Wallace Monument, with Braes of Doune windfarm in mid-distance. The VP is situated on the crest of a hill slope above the flat glen floor of Eas Gobhain, that flows from Loch Venachar in the west into the River Teith. To NW hill slopes lead up to the craggy upland ridges of Ben Ledi with a series of long, flat ridges extending south of the glen. The sinuous river Gobhain leads out into the Teith, which flows south-eastwards to pass through the lowlands south of Callander.</p> <p>The rock summits of Ben Ledi descend to rough grassland, bracken and heather. South of VP, the lower/mid hill slopes and valley floor are dominated by commercial forestry, with deciduous riparian woodland. Among the plantations, on the lower N facing slopes, are enclosed fields of improved pasture with woodland boundaries and patches of whin. Marshy, wet grasslands extend along the lowest riverside slopes and the rivers edge. There are a variety of land uses, especially in the glen and lowlands around Callander – a caravan park; fish farm; forestry; pastoral farming with both rough grazing and improved grasslands; recreational areas (Woodland Trust access land and footpaths), fishing and watersports on Loch Venachar; the Braes of Doune windfarm. The planned town of Callander is prominent in the scene, with regularly dispersed farms in its neighbouring countryside. The kirk tower in Callander's centre acts as an eyecatcher, while the large policies of Leny House on the SW facing slopes spread out on SW of the town attract your attention. Overall, buildings are long, low and small-scale. The temporary accommodation provided at the caravan park, is a fairly large element in the scene.</p> <p>Alongside this spot, is Samson's Puttin' Stone, a large glacial erratic, 'balanced' on the hill top. The GDLs around Callander at Leny House and Invertrossachs House are distinctive, as are the waterworks on Loch Venachar's edge and Gartchonzie bridge. Near to Callander, the Braes of Doune windfarm and Wallace Monument are landmarks. Loch Venachar is a major physical component of the scene, its N facing slopes are blanket forestry, as well as the slopes of Boncastle Hill behind the VP. Footpath up Ben Ledi can be seen.</p>	<p>The farmed glen floor links the broad lowlands with the Highlands, by way of Loch Venachar and these lower enclosing hills. This VP lies within a transition zone, between the Highlands and the Lowlands. The HGDL of Leny House is the foreground to the Highlands, before arriving into Callander and the Lowlands.</p> <p>A varied view, opening up to a vast, lowland landscape eastwards and a more contained, enclosed landscape westwards. Openness varies with the glen floor enclosed, contrasting with the exposed upper slopes. The scene is complex and visually very diverse with a range of land uses, a great variety of features and landforms to take in and look at. The scene northwards is simpler, due to the expanse of Ben Ledi and its adjoining craggy ridges.</p> <p>The colours vary from the bright greens along the glen floor and the varied colours at and around Callander; just as textures vary greatly, especially the deciduous woodlands along the loch shores and the ornamental Leny policies. The built forms and textures at Callander are interspersed with tree cover, a good mixture of trees and buildings contrasting with the barer grassland slopes of Carig Bheithe which dominates the view.</p> <p>Other point features are the radio masts on Ben Gullpen, and the grass earthworks of Dun Mor hillfort, west of Samson's Stone, giving the name 'Bochastle' to the farm on the glen floor below.</p>	<p>A green pastoral scene with a rich variety of features to absorb; the wide range of land-uses is remarkable, pointing to a very productive landscape; windfarm, fisheries, farming. The farm stock are varied with sheep, cattle and horses.</p> <p>Callander is the second largest settlement in the National Park. This is a very good panorama of it in its setting, from this vantage point is reveals a well structured, planned settlement – very appealing. The town forms a 'Gateway' to the Highlands/Lowlands.</p>

Loch Lomond & the Trossachs National Park Viewpoint 12: Summit of Ben Venue
(David Tyldesley & Associates 2006) GR NN 477061

Objective	Visual	Personal/Emotional
<p>Modest Mountain Summit or High Hill summit in central western point of the NSA. Relatively pronounced 'peak' to Ben Venue, consisting of the most prominent element of the Trossach's topography at 729 metres. Steeper upper sections gradually lose gradient with decent in height.</p> <p>Terrain of the immediate viewpoint is of steep grassy slopes punctuated regularly by rocky outcrop and exposed strata, well worn footpaths and erosion in environs of Trig Point/Cairn. Craggy environment of immediate viewpoint changes dramatically across the viewshed into the heart of the NSA. Grass and rocky summit, through mixed heather and grass moorland, areas of peat bog/moss on flatter sections and an abrupt transition to dense coniferous plantation. Within the plantation towards the environs of Loch Achray and Loch Katrine clear felled areas of lower, less steep slopes. Beyond the plantations merge with the deciduous woodlands of the Loch basins.</p> <p>Elements of the viewshed are vast and extend across the wider NSA, its framing to the west by the Ben Ledi massif, across Loch Achray and Loch Venachar, over Duke's Drive Plantations to Menteith Hills and beyond. Viewpoint affords extensive vistas across Loch Katrine and its islands and wooded inlets, to significantly higher and extensive mountains of the National Park and beyond. Horizons are generally distant. Burns and lively mountain streams punctuate the hillsides before being lost in plantation woods.</p>	<p>A massive panoramic vista from which delineation of only the NSA is artificial to the appreciation of its qualities. Scale vast, a sense of exposure pervades from the viewpoint, although this is soon alleviated a short distance from the summit itself.</p> <p>Vistas take in a very complex as well as massive interplay of land-cover, terrain and water elements. Open summits and dense plantation juxtapose with open water lochs and broad-leaved coniferous woodland.</p> <p>Colours in the landscape are generally muted, although the influence of overcast weather conditions may be in part responsible at time of survey. There is however contrast in tone, with the loch surfaces and coniferous plantations presenting dark solid masses, whilst the open moor and broadleaved woodland offer a more textured appearance. Patches of rocky outcrop and the more distant views of mountain suggest a rugged appearance to the landscape.</p> <p>Vastness of the sky and extensive tracts of open water provide a degree of movement in the landscape, again heavily dependent on prevailing weather conditions. The viewpoint offers a very quiet environment although the wind in the grasses and rocks introduces a very natural sound element. On ascent and descent, noise from mountain streams and cascades is constant outside the plantations which flatten most sound except birdsong.</p> <p>Whilst the panorama offered at the viewpoint is of a full 3600 , the eye is drawn not exclusively to the immediate NSA , but to the north and west, into the heart of highland Scotland. Conversely, vistas on the ascent to the viewpoint are often closed in or constrained by plantation or relief of landform. A major experience of the ascent of Ben Venue from loch Achray is the opening out of the sudden vista at ridge between the Achray and Katrine basins.</p> <p>The views afford a clear appreciation of the transitional landscape of the Menteith Hills and Trossachs from the pastoral lowlands north of Sterling through the Calander area through the changing relief and waterscape of the NSA to the highlands of LLTNP.</p> <p>The vista into the NSA from Ben Venue presents a very complex patchwork of open moorland and rocky outcrop, woodland and waterscape. Here there are complex mosaic combinations of broadleaf woodlands (in mid spring), coniferous blocks of plantation and scared areas of recently felled plantation.</p>	<p>The vistas from Ben Venue offer an inspiring and exciting glimpse of the grandeur and wildness of true upland Scotland. It draws the eye out of and away from the NSA itself, although the detail and intricacy of the landscape closer to hand is nevertheless highly attractive.</p> <p>This view point is the site of a clear stepping stone from the familiar and safe pasture and settlement of the central Scotland belt, into the wild and rugged interior.</p> <p>Elements of the northerly and westerly vistas are at first surprising and then exciting and challenging. The offer of real adventure is close at hand.</p> <p>The views offer great contrast between the intimacy of the Trossachs NSA itself and the wildness beyond. Together these elements make for a truly classic view.</p> <p>But the reward of the views comes only after real effort, and the climb to the summit is considerable if not truly challenging or adventurous. Nevertheless, the first opening out of north and westerly vistas is at once surprising, exciting and truly grand. The effort required serves to amplify the reward on completion. Ben Venue flatters to deceive, with its distinctive alpine profile (from the east) suggesting greater height and challenge than it really presents.</p> <p>From the summit of Ben Venue the NSA itself is pleasing to behold, complex in pattern and texture, water and land, but represents a small element of all on view. It is however a distinct step change between what has been before and what lies ahead – A gateway to the highlands, and at the same time a safe, manageable sample of what lies before a more determined traveller.</p> <p>The islands and densely wooded inlets of eastern Loch Katrine offer both interest and softness to the wilder aspect of the western parts of the NSA, with hidden corners suggesting secret places and shelter from the highland elements.</p>

Loch Lomond & the Trossachs National Park Viewpoint 13: Black Water Marsh
(David Tyldesley & Associates 2006) **GR NN 528061**

Objective	Visual	Personal/Emotional
<p>The predominant feature within the Black Water Marsh area is the immediate expanse of flat marshland. This central low lying flat marsh is framed by encroaching plantation woodland on higher ground to each side. Occasional self set birch dots the foreground.</p> <p>The tussocky grassland, rush and sphagnum marsh continues for some distance, and is eventually met by distant hills. Being at such a distance, their colours are of murky purple hues and are frequently clouded over.</p> <p>This marshland has an isolated farmstead and open grazing. It is considerably flatter than the majority of the Trossachs NSA.</p>	<p>The marshland offers an open relief from the rather enclosed plantation woodland that surrounds it. To travel from a dark and confined coniferous plantation into the open and large scale of the marshland is a complete contrast.</p> <p>The view is simpler than most in the NSA, with a subtle blend of green and reds, with the latter as a result of older rush vegetation and variation in the sphagnum colouration. Contrast is also evident between the long view of the flat foreground and the stark change to higher peaks in the very far distance.</p> <p>Weather is a significant influence, with the marshland looking bleak and murky in bad weather, yet remaining calm and still. In fine weather it is imagined that the greens and reds will be an attractive feature, and that bird and insect</p>	<p>A refreshing feeling of openness after the enclosed plantation is immediately felt when the marsh land opens up. It is a real escape from the forest.</p> <p>The isolation of the marshland, and its contrast to its plantation surroundings make it feel like a secret valley, tranquil and undiscovered, despite its obvious use as grazing land. The waterlogged nature of the marsh prevents any venture forward, but it is appreciated from its edge.</p> <p>The view is quite different from others in the area and its isolated farmstead and traditional grazing management of the marsh gives a 'time stood still' feeling. Agricultural influences are very few in the Trossachs NSA, and the traditional and extremely low key presence here does not detract from the overall feeling of naturalness in the wider area, yet it is in keeping that this unit is on the edge of the eastern NSA boundary, beyond which grazing land is commonplace.</p> <p>The key qualities of this view are its secrecy, tranquillity and surprising difference from the majority of the NSA, yet the distant peaks remind the viewer of the presence of the more typical landscape.</p>

Loch Lomond & the Trossachs National Park Viewpoint 14: East Shore, Glen Finglas Reservoir
(David Tyldesley & Associates 2006) GR 529086

Objective	Visual	Personal/Emotional
<p>A view of Loch, woodland and low mountain, high hills.</p> <p>A long, softly convex ridgeline delineates a solid, regular aspect hillside against the sky.</p> <p>Land cover is a blend of forestry (on the lower and mid slopes), consisting of coniferous plantation, pockets of deciduous woodland, particularly by the loch shore, with grass and rocky outcrops punctuating otherwise regular angle of slope to distinct horizon.</p> <p>Bold open horizon to north west, becoming encroached by tree cover to the slightly lower south- western extent of viewshed.</p> <p>Upper extent of woodland very irregular and 'naturalised'. Small islands of grassland punctuate the lower mass of treescape. Upper slopes predominantly grassland with mossy tracts around rocky outcrops and small pockets of scree.</p> <p>Small wooded island in the reservoir almost impossible to read against the back-drop of wooded slope.</p>	<p>Clear layered split of the viewshed. – Water, plantation, fell, to sky. A simple banding, but with irregular boundaries / transition from woodland to open fell.</p> <p>A medium to large scale landscape, with extensive views north, but out-with the NSA. The middle distance solid horizon presents a very solid and abrupt block on more distant views. The waterscape of the foreground offers an openness to an otherwise enclosed aspect. The composition of the view simple (banded).</p> <p>Texture is contrasting between the loch surface - ever changing, the coniferous and deciduous woodland and open fell and rock. The uniform, dark green of the dominant plantation woodland contrasts with the softer and fresher greens of the broad-leaved trees and the more muted greens and browns of the open grassland.</p> <p>Clear lines in landscape are evident at the waters edge and at the skyline.</p> <p>The Glen did have a peaceful atmosphere, but the noise of watercourses and birdsong avoided silence or stillness. The wider unit as a whole, inclusive of the western fellside and open rock and grass/heather summit was large in scale, rounded in form but with areas of broken surface and rocky exposure, without (generally) being precipitous. Lower and middle fellsides displayed a general uniformity in slope angle.</p>	<p>A dramatic vista after the enclosure of the woodlands and the bottleneck of the valley entrance following a steep climb from the hamlet of Brig' O' Turk.</p> <p>This opening out in relatively sudden and dramatic way, and its isolation from the concentration of lochs, roads and settlement in the Lochs Venechar/Katrine corridor affords the glen a sense of secrecy and peacefulness.</p> <p>The heavy broad-leaved, ancient woodland above the valley entrance seems to <i>guard</i> the secret glen.</p> <p>The opening out of the vista draws the eye along the linear reservoir and waterscape to the open and dramatic fell of Meall Cala.</p> <p>The viewscape offers drama and strength without being spectacular or overbearing. It suggests wilder things above and beyond, but affords no tempting glimpse. The mass of Meall Gainmheich /Ben Anna plateau stands as a buttress against what greater things might lie beyond.</p> <p>The viewscape offers therefore a real contrast between the intimacy of the shoreline woods and the openness and exposure of the fell top and plateau above, all within a relative compact spatial unit.</p> <p>Colour and texture, particularly of the newly emerging broadleaf foliage standing in comforting contrast to the slight hint of menace offered by the rocky exposure of the neighbouring upper slopes.</p> <p>The over-riding character of the glen is of separation (but not isolation) and peacefulness.</p>

Loch Lomond & the Trossachs National Park Viewpoint 15: Loch Achray
(David Tyldesley & Associates 2006) **Various views including from GR NN 511062, 506069**

Objective	Visual	Personal/Emotional
<p>Views taken from various viewing points around Loch Achray. The loch itself remains the central theme. Immediate visual boundaries remain tight around the loch basin, which is densely vegetated with broadleaved woodland on the lower slopes, gradually grading out to coniferous plantations above. The coniferous plantation forms the horizon line in the majority of views, thus creating a sawtoothed edge to the horizon.</p> <p>Loch shores give way to wet woodland of willow and alder, lush with moss and dense rushes, which grades into the broadleaved woodland if the lower slopes, which is dominated by birch but has significant oak and ash. The loch is accessible around much of its edge.</p> <p>Occasional long distance views are caught in some locations, revealing very distant mountains. A minority of views around the loch reveal the odd glimpse of the Menteith Hills in the south east.</p> <p>Ben Venue is located to the west, and when in view becomes a prominent feature with its typical upland form and vegetation including bare rock, heather, bilberry and scattered trees.</p> <p>Recent clear-felling of coniferous trees has left stark treeless patches with disturbed ground.</p> <p>Tigh-Mor is a distinctive building with a formal lawned frontage, conical towers and grey stone walls. A further hotel is situated on the south west shore and a small house is tucked into the lower slopes of the loch basin. The historic Trossachs Church blends well into the loch side and is generally only visible from the southern shore.</p> <p>Japanese knotweed is present along the Pass of Trossachs road on the northern shore of the loch, which significantly detracts from the woodland, but is currently localised.#</p>	<p>The loch remains the dominant feature from all viewpoints, and the eye is always drawn back to it. The loch basin sides progress in horizontal stripes of broadleaved woodland, mixed woodland and then coniferous woodland at the higher slopes, all generally at the small to medium scale. This is then contrasted with the distant bare mountains when the generally constrained views enable a more distant glimpse of far away mountains. With generally more immediate views dominating the scene, the occasional distant hill or mountain is not imposing and their size is never fully appreciated, however views of the distant hills do improve if a view is taken from a little further up the loch basin.</p> <p>Ben Venue is in the middle distance when views are taken to the west, which is a refreshing contrast to the rich green loch slopes. Only when assessing the scene in this direction is the eye drawn with interest to a greater distance. Bare rocks splashed with bilberry lead you through the scene to the distant summit. The landscape still remains comfortable and Ben Venue does not impose but offers an unthreatening challenge.</p> <p>There is a diversity of colour and texture in the loch basin, all associated with the variety of woodland in a range of green hues. The loch basin appears horizontally layered as a result.</p> <p>The loch itself varies significantly in varying weather, being incredibly reflective of the scene above it in calm, but losing all such mirror images if there is a slight change towards more unsettled weather. Circling gulls over the loch break the otherwise quietness, with the background hum of an occasional vehicle.</p> <p>Achray Water is in notable contrast to the usually calm loch, with its bubbling riffles and wide shallow meander attracting more wildlife.</p> <p>Woodland birdsong and bluebell carpets take you back into the broad-leaved woodland areas, which are much more intimate and secluded, with dappled light amongst the variety of green shades and mossy mounds.</p>	<p>The loch basin is idyllic and relaxing. Changes in light and weather are amplified by the loch, but the scene continues to remain soft and unimposing. The scene is warmed by the vivid range of green shades.</p> <p>The wet woodlands are a cool and intimate experience where a feeling of tranquility and closeness to nature is appreciated. The woodland is full of birdsong and life, yet the more open loch basin is devoid of any obvious wildlife other than circling gulls. Pasture land is limited to a couple of locations only and consequently agricultural ties to the landscape are lacking.</p> <p>Loch Achray is soft, calm, welcoming and very accessible. Its unimposing and relaxed beauty makes it an inviting place where hours can be idled away.</p> <p>Tigh-Mor looks like a fairytale castle and adds some enchantment and intrigue, along with the historical Trossachs church.</p> <p>Mirror reflections of the wooded slopes on the loch surface add further harmony to what is a simply beautiful scene. The lack of drama in the viewscape does not reduce its special value. In contrast, its intimacy, symmetry, calmness, safety of a peaceful central loch lifted by vibrant coloured but gentle slopes makes Loch Achray a place of relaxed and simplistic beauty.</p>

Loch Lomond & the Trossachs National Park Viewpoint 16: Loch Drunkie
(David Tyldesley & Associates 2006) **GR NN 521037 & 538037**

Objective	Visual	Personal/Emotional
<p>Loch Drunkie is central to the scene in its location within the view, but does not in any way dominate it. The loch is highly reflective and glass like, providing dark and rich colours. Streams are evident flowing down the hillsides towards the loch, and fen areas are present in the low-lying flats that merge into the loch edge.</p> <p>An interlocking network of hills slope from each side of the scene, covered by three main vegetation types: plantation woodland, open tussocky grassland and young woodland patches of birch with occasional rowan.</p> <p>The plantation woodland comes right to the loch edge in some places and there is a greater variety of species present here than in other areas within the NSA, including sitka spruce, Norway spruce and larch, which gives a wider diversity of colour amongst the plantation blocks.</p> <p>Open tussocky grassland includes areas of bracken and also heather. Young self set birch are dotted across these more open areas, which in time will become more enclosed as the woodland develops.</p> <p>Young birch woodland is emerging around the area. It is felt that the scene will develop as these trees mature.</p> <p>Distant hills are in the long view, and are draped in cloud. Additional features are smaller in scale; old stone walls topped with post and wire fencing and a small ruined hut hint at past land uses.</p> <p>The sky contributes to the overall scene, adding further colour, patterns and light, and it too is reflected in the loch water.</p> <p>It is imagined that there would be great diversity in the scene between seasons, particularly with regard to changing colours.</p>	<p>One of the key features of this viewshed is the interlocking and layered jigsaw of slopes from the foreground right back to the distant hills, all of which proceed down to the central loch.</p> <p>This layering, along with subtle linear features such as tumbledown stone walls, offers the eye a route through the landscape, from the foreground of rough grassland and fen and loch edge, to the intermediate varied patchwork of slopes, and then on towards the distant bare fells.</p> <p>The loch itself appears to meander through the landscape towards a vanishing point, almost river-like in form, and further provides a route into the scene. Loch Drunkie is calm, smooth and highly reflective, with a mirror image of the landscape clearly seen, which adds emphasis to the vanishing point with the strong angles of the slopes being represented symmetrically in the water.</p> <p>The variety and intensity of colour makes an important contribution, with the bracken litter being a distinctive orange, the variety of coniferous species offering a range of dark greens and the young birch saplings adding a bright green freshness. These colours are vividly reflected in the loch surface.</p> <p>The complexity of colour, lines and texture is warm and encouraging, and this combined with the visual journey into the landscape, which beckons the viewer further and tempts exploration beyond that which is currently seen. There is a real feeling of intrigue about where the landscape will lead.</p> <p>The eye is lead around and through the entire view by its composition; from the foreground right towards the far distance, and importantly the eye is also brought back into the nearer ground, and around its complexity of features. Not all features are seen on the first glimpse, and as the eye travels around, new features are seen. In this sense it is felt that the view conforms to all the basic rules of a landscape painting.</p>	<p>The landscape shapes and form are in complete harmony, with the loch being perfectly framed by a complexity of slopes and considerable colour.</p> <p>The scene is truly balanced by the loch reflection of the landscape above. The view feels calm, perfect, peaceful, gentle and intimate whilst also being exciting and inviting. Human influence on the landscape, in terms of the loch being a reservoir, and the hints of previous land uses with walls, fencing and a tumbledown hut, does not detract from the attractiveness of the view, nor does it immediately influence the viewer's feeling of nature.</p> <p>The meandering loch and routes out of view, travelling behind the layers of slopes, draws the viewer forward with some intrigue and mystery and the glass like reflection hides what may be beneath the loch surface.</p> <p>The variety of colour adds much of the interest and the sky is influential both as a feature to which the scene allows the eye to be drawn on its journey, and also in its role of changing light, which offers dramatic colour changes and further interest. Colours are complementary and blend perfectly.</p> <p>The calmness of the scene is an important feature, and it evokes a feeling of complete detachment from a busy world. A serene oasis. Captivating and contemplating. A special place.</p> <p>Sound is important in its contribution to the feelings of serenity, especially the sound of birdsong and running water.</p> <p>There is a feeling of the fullness of life, with wildlife being evident and adding movement. Jays dart into the plantations to feed, and a lone fly fisherman pulls the occasional fish from the water. The odd walker or car travelling tourist disappears into the distance around a bend. Changes in light can rapidly alter the range of colours on the hills. Yet despite this movement time feels as if it is standing still.</p> <p>The essence of the scene at Loch Drunkie is its picture perfect composition of a meandering loch framed by a patchwork of slopes, it's welcoming intrigue, its colour and reflections, harmony and meditative qualities.</p>

Loch Lomond & the Trossachs National Park Viewpoint 17: Loch Katrine
(David Tyldesley & Associates 2006) **GR NN 485092 & 495073**

Objective	Visual	Personal/Emotional
<p>The Loch is a dominating feature of the scene, closely followed by the peaks of the loch's western backdrop. Its' large expanse and continuation considerably out of the NSA boundary means that views from around the shore only take in small parts of the loch.</p> <p>Views from the southern end of the loch close to the pier include a number of small wooded islands, which obscure a long distance view. Views taken from the eastern shore are much more panoramic, with the western shore in the immediate distance but with much longer views to each side, panning up the length of the water-body, although the ends of the loch are still not visible.</p> <p>The view over to the west is mountainous, with bare rock, bracken and heather. Immediate hills are backed by hints of a greater expanse of mountains in the far distance, and Ben Venue is visible. A very small amount of plantation and broadleaved woodland is apparent on the lower slopes.</p> <p>Promontories of short rabbit grazed grassland occasionally project from the shore, with rocky outcrops and heather fringes. These are easily accessible and make excellent viewpoints.</p> <p>The eastern shore is heavily wooded, predominantly birch and oak, with willows increasing close to the loch edge. Typical woodland ground flora and considerable bryophyte carpets are present. Both fallen deadwood and live trees are covered in lichen.</p> <p>The pier area provides tourist facilities.</p>	<p>Th loch's expanse gives is a real prominence in the scene, and its choppy moving waters and lapping waves generate a feeling of being next to the sea. The loch surface gives a strong horizontal line in the landscape.</p> <p>Loch Katrine is in contrast to the other two lochs within the NSA ; the smaller Loch Achray and Loch Drunkie, in that it's greater size allows for more movement. This displaces the focus from glass like reflections to a greater influence of movement, panoramic expanse and contrasts between mountain and water, rather than bringing the two together in reflections.</p> <p>The view of the mountainous area to the west includes the purple, brown, pink and reds of the upland vegetation, which rapidly change as they are caught by the sun or shaded by cloud. Transitions between the vegetation are subtle and natural in form. These areas appear unmanaged, and the pockets of plantation are a minor feature against the loch and mountain.</p> <p>In contrast the wooded western shore is lush and soft, with the eye being drawn to the detail rather than the whole expanse. Woodland flowers and tiny waterfalls are noticed and appreciated.</p> <p>The view back to within the NSA, towards the southern point of Loch Katrine is a distinct contrast to that taken towards the north west, where the loch unfolds but and end point is not reached before the horizon. The southern view is dotted with wooded isles and the rolling slopes are heavily laden with shades of woodland green.</p> <p>The pier is a honeypot location, providing tourist facilities and interpretation material. This makes one aware of the holiday emphasis on the location, and although this detracts slightly from the surrounding natural beauty it is confined in area and is likely to be welcomed by those visiting.</p>	<p>The landscape feels more dramatic than that experienced at the smaller lochs, and contrasts are more pronounced. There are the beginnings of feelings of expanse and wilderness, with the rugged peaks, large moving water-body and openness of the view. Recollections of being by the coast are triggered by the expanse of water, movement and rocky shores.</p> <p>Sound is an important feature of this viewshed, with waves hitting shores and rocks being a constant reassurance, or conversely adding to an awareness of exposure. The wind is also noticeable, sometimes giving a slight unnerving feel.</p> <p>The strong angles, cloud tipped peaks and dramatic changes in colour as the clouds roll away is inspiring and refreshing; a small taste of upland Scotland whilst being viewed from the warmth and safety of a more intimate and welcoming landscape.</p> <p>The haven of the sheltered bays, small islands and lush and enchanting woodland is easily accessed from the honey-pot pier area. The track quickly takes you into a woodland that is intimate and magical. The splashes of colour from delicate woodland flowers, texture and intricacies of fern and moss fringed streams and waterfalls draws the viewer to an appreciation of the small scale detail.</p> <p>It is the contrasts seen within the views that is an important feature as well as the landscape itself. The contrast between the dramatic peaks and intimate woodlands, the strong visual divide between the peaks and the loch in terms of colour, shape and form, and the contrast between the more immediate view into the NSA towards the bright green wooded slopes and dotted isles of the southern shore and the distance and the expanse of the view out of the NSA towards the north west as the loch opens out, are key qualities of the Loch Katrine area.</p>

**Loch Lomond & the Trossachs National Park Viewpoint 18: Balquhiddier, east of Ardcarnaig
View overlooking Loch Doine at foot of Stob Invercarnaig. 12th May 2009 GR NN 457190**

Objective	Visual	Personal/Emotional
<p>Balquhiddier Glen is enclosed by steep sided, gently concave slopes. On the south side, Stob Bhreac's irregular peak (668m) has a craggy, rocky summit; its steep, diagonal slopes descend and are cut by Invernenty Glen, a V-shaped glen with interlocking slopes. This landform is repeated the length of the glen's south side. The glen floor is broad, filled by Loch Doine and, the far larger, Loch Voil. Loch Doine is rectilinear in form, with a sinuous shore. Loch Voil is longer, broader, its shores lie parallel to one another and are gently sinuous, interspersed with both rocky and flat promontories. The lochs are separated one from the other by a broad promontory at Monachyle. The head of Loch Doine is fed by the meandering River Larig that flows from the west through a craggy massif.</p> <p>The lower to mid glen slopes are extensively forested, mostly on the south glen side. The upland summits are bare rock, descending to rough grassland. There is less broadleaved woodland on the south loch shores/glen sides (north facing slopes) than the north. However, on both loch shores, broadleaf trees and woodlands extend down to the water's edge. Enclosed, wet grassland pastures are common along the length of the north loch shore, with areas of drystone dykes, although post and wire fencing has superseded many of the older enclosures. Large, glacial erratic boulders are scattered the length of the glen, the road curving to negotiate the larger boulders and rock outcrops. The upper glen is managed for deer stalking (Inverlochlarig), with the mid and lower slopes used for forestry, sheep and cattle grazing. There is fishing on the loch. A car park at the road end, beyond Ardcarnaig provides for hill walkers and recreational users.</p> <p>Settlement is dispersed along the glens north side, with isolated farms, cottages and a hotel all situated at the foot of the lower hill slope, along and to either side of the road. The south shore is less settled. The road leads along as far as Stronvar, but beyond this point there is only a forestry track.</p>	<p>A large-scale panorama of steep hillsides sweeping down to the loch, and interlocking hill slopes sweeping way into the distance to where Balquhiddier Glen (oriented E-W) meets Strathyre (N-S). The hills descend steeply, although their lower slopes dip gently, to form promontories and bays creating an indented and sinuous loch shore. The glen is extremely broad but appears practically filled by water, with only a narrow flat land margin for the road and farmland. The loch and glen floor hold the eye rather than the hillslopes or skyline due to the mosaic of pastures, trees, rock outcrops and boulders, and features like the burial ground. Hills terminating the view are large, rounded amorphous shapes – not especially distinctive, although elsewhere along the glen, there are spectacular views to Ben Vorlich.</p> <p>The scene is made up of curves, sweeping diagonals and the horizontal plane of the water. There is a lack of settlement or housing, only one roof is seen and, although the vertical upland scale is dominant, there is an absence of vertical forms in the view. There is some homogeneity: the hill slopes are similar in form, conifer plantations on the north facing slopes are of a type.</p> <p>Diversity is located at the loch and lower glen sides, where there is the most human activity, creating a complex visual mosaic of colour, texture, form and activity to holds your attention. The regular, geometric conifer plantings contrast with irregular, random forms of broadleaf trees and woods, the curves of the loch shores and river and the undulating and uneven lower slopes. This further accentuates the visual interest of the glen floor.¹⁸</p> <p>The scene is very colourful in bright sun, highly textured with rocks, lichen and moss-covered boulders, rough grassland textured with mosses and rushes. This contrasts with the smooth, improved pastures. Water on loch and river are rippled by the breeze. Nevertheless, it is calm and peaceful. Birdsong is continuous all along the glen. The promontory between the two lochs is particularly prominent visually, as it cuts across the band of blue water that virtually fills the glen floor.</p>	<p>This panorama of a broad, Highland glen portrays a very peaceful, productive and tranquil scene. It typifies a 'Highland pastoral beauty'. The absence of through traffic is a great attraction – contrasting with Loch Earn or Glen Ogle. The lack of development, buildings and tourist infrastructure, engenders a feeling of experiencing the countryside for its intrinsic nature. It feels 'uncluttered' and unspoilt. There are no street lights!</p> <p>Cultural associations Rob Roy, Bruce, Cup and ring marked stones, burial ground.</p>

Loch Lomond & the Trossachs National Park Viewpoint 19: Loch Lubnaig
View from S end looking NW. 12th May 2009 GR NN 585106

Objective	Visual	Personal/Emotional
<p>The west loch shore is bounded by rugged ridges with steep crags on most hill slopes. The rounded, bulky shoulder of Ardnandave Hill (715m) juts out, directing the curve of the loch, round, north-westwards. The slopes of Meall Mhor, with a distinct, rounded top, enclose the east shore; its slopes peppered by 'pudding shaped' domes of rock descending to the lochside. The south end of the loch shore is flat with a shingle beach and slightly raised terraces adjoining the loch shore.</p> <p>Overall, the uplands are bare rock and scree, with craggy rock faces, rough grassland, moorland and patches of heather. There is extensive forestry all around the VP, interspersed with blocks of brash from felling and regenerating forestry. Deciduous trees grow on the flat plain and lower hill slopes but, overall, the flat loch edge is grassland. The viewpoint is located in a small car park, off the A84, it is surfaced with a loose aggregate and bounded with boulders.</p> <p>Forestry is the main land-use, but within it lie the Strathyre Forest lodges. The loch is a popular destination for holidaying and tourism; a tent belonging to some visiting fishermen, stands by the car park and a man with a kayak is setting off from the shore. There is an isolated farm with a distinctive pitched roof and bargeboards in the distance, but, apart from this, no other settlement is visible.</p>	<p>In this scene your eye is drawn up the loch to where it curves and 'disappears', beyond Ardnandave Hill. Although the open canopy of the deciduous trees along the loch side and its south end contrasts strongly with the mass of dense conifers, the transition between the two plantings is managed to some degree, with a gradual mixture and mingling of species.</p> <p>This is a medium scale landscape, enclosed by the hills and ridges containing Loch Lubnaig. The steep slopes angle up sharply from the loch, with the slopes appearing more rounded where they terminate the view, and forming an undulating skyline. Irregular blocks of conifers are set across these slopes. The most striking feature in the view is the curve of the loch across the scene and the horizontal flat plain of the lochside meadow.</p> <p>Breezy, bright sun, lapping of loch waters, gentle waves on loch. Passing traffic is fairly constant (Monday morning 10.00am). Birdsong.</p> <p>There are large boulders dotted about the shores and the ridges of the holiday lodges emerge through the lochside trees, the lodges sit well down on the loch shore.</p>	<p>This is a harmonious landscape, with no one element dominating unduly. This is the first Highland glen that you meet travelling north from Callander, an introduction to an ever strengthening theme the further north that you go.</p> <p>Well-used stopping point, after this stretches the Strathyre corridor.</p>

**Loch Lomond & the Trossachs National Park Viewpoint 20: Loch Earn, south side
View from Edinample Castle, looking to Lochearnhead. 12th May 2009 GR NN 597226**

Objective	Visual	Personal/Emotional
<p>This view looks directly NW, onto Lochearnhead, positioned at the lower end of Glen Ogle. The interlocking steep glen slopes enclosing Glen Ogle form the backdrop to Lochearnhead. The hillsides to either side of the town have distinctive profiles because of their smooth, rounded convex shape surmounted by a series of undulating rock blocks facing into the inner glen. This gives them a crenellated appearance abutting a smooth landform. The south side of Loch Earn is contained by smooth slopes that descend gently to the lochside, but steeper upslope, beyond the road. A long undulating ridge to the west is similar in form to the hillsides enclosing Glen Ogle.</p> <p>There is a mix of land-uses and land cover. The hill tops are bare rock giving way to heather/grassland grazings with areas of felled forestry, standing forestry plantations and broadleaf woodland mainly on the glen floor and lower lochside slopes. Edinample Castle's policy planting is highly ornamental; within the policy walls are improved grassland pastures with other areas of lochside rushy/wet pastures. The broad, linear expanse of water is well-used for fishing, boating and watersports. There are extensive caravan parks on the south side of Loch Earn, beyond and not visible from the viewpoint.</p> <p>Lochearn, situated at the junction of Glen Ogle and Loch Earn, lies at the natural crossroads between routes N-S and E-W. Houses are set along the linear loch shore, intermittently as far as St Fillans. The town is contained to the east by field boundaries. Edinample Castle is a marked focal feature on the south shore –the policies are bounded by a roadside stone dyke, and a road bridge leading over some falls. A pink house is situated on the haughland and over on the Lochearnhead side the head dyke along the hillside is another distinctive feature.</p>	<p>This scene is characterised by a lot of movement passing by (predominantly caravans); looking up into Glen Ogle you can see traffic winding through on the A84 and A85, boating and water sports on the loch. The north loch shore road stands out in the view. There is a lot of visual movement within this vast landscape, especially the flat linearity of the loch and winding loch basin that flow through the scene.</p> <p>The scene is complex in terms of its diverse components; the building forms and stages of development visible in Lochearnhead; both the castle policies with specimen trees and hillslopes have a varied combination of land uses and landforms. The open hillsides are large in scale, especially looking up Glen Ogle and down Loch Earn, and to the rear of the viewpoint. The hills are very broad based and appear as a great solid mass, a backdrop to the varied and intricate lines of buildings, and trees.</p> <p>Elsewhere, the farmland, settlement along the loch shores, the policies and glen are enclosed and sheltered.</p> <p>The straight planting boundaries of some of the forestry plantations are very marked, especially on Meall a Mhadaidh.</p>	<p>This is a classic, postcard view of Lochearn and Lochearnhead. The view gives you a good appreciation and understanding of settlement location in relation to topography. Apart from the extensive forestry blocks this is a very pleasing view.</p> <p>This is a peaceful spot, although it is very accessible and there is traffic along the south loch shore road – all visitors and tourists. Loch Earn is popular with facilities catering for tourists concentrated on Lochearnhead and a series of caravan parks along the south loch shores. Facilities at Lochearnhead seem to be in scale with the town, accommodating visitors without being over-dominated by large hotels or coaches.</p> <p>Lochearnhead grew up at the junction between the main north-south road from Callander to Killin, and the road along Loch Earn from Perth. The military road from Stirling to Fort William was opened in 1761, passing through the village and improving communications.</p> <p>The Callander to Oban railway opened in 1870, and took the same route over Glen Ogle as the military road. In 1904 it was extended along the Loch from Crieff & St Fillans to join at Lochearnhead. This brought tourists to Loch Earn. A number of small hotels were built in the 1900s. The St Fillans rail link closed in 1951 and the main line in 1965.</p> <p>Edinample Castle was built by 'Black' Duncan Campbell of Glenorchy in the 17thC. Above Lochearnhead is Ben Vorlich (985m), a steep sided pyramid shaped peak.</p>

Loch Lomond & the Trossachs National Park Viewpoint 21: Glen Ogle
View alongside National Cycle Route No 7 and the West Highland Way, bridge south of Lochan Larig Cheile 12th May 2009 GR NN 562275

Objective	Visual	Personal/Emotional
<p>VP is situated midway along the glen. Ben Our (733m), a rounded hill, encloses the glen to the SE, it is backed by the flat ridge and angular summit of Ben Vorlich, standing to its rear on the skyline. To either side of Glen Ogle is a series of irregular, steep, craggy ridges with stepped declines and steep slopes leading to the uneven glen floor. It steps down unevenly, sloping to the south-east. The nearest slopes have distinct, sheer rock faces and craggy outcrops; boulders are strewn along the lower slopes.</p> <p>Bare rock predominates with rough grassland and bracken on the mid-lower hillsides; birch scrub grows on rocky knolls and sparsely on the lower slopes. There is some forestry and a power line along the east side of the glen.</p> <p>This is a major transport corridor (A85) but also a major recreation route – with a national cycle route and the WHW on the old Crianlarich to Callander/Lochearn railway route – and a transmission line. It appears uninhabited, although its south end leads into Lochearnhead and, behind the viewpoint on the west slopes of Beinn Leabhain, are the remains of shielings.</p> <p>The old railway route lies on the modified lower slopes of the southern massif enclosing Glen Ogle, the slopes of Sgorrach Nuadh. Its viaduct is distinctive, a prominent feature, with the northern section in a cutting, now overshadowed by deciduous trees. The A85 revetments and bridge are major features and the glen floor in the foreground is disturbed from the recent dismantling and undergrounding of a section of the power line.</p>	<p>Although flat, the glen floor distinctly slopes downwards, away from the VP, down to the SE. The horizon is dominated by the triangular peak of Ben Vorlich, which is the major focus of the view, and the edge of the Glen Artney massif. The distant hill slopes and slopes at the far end of Glen Ogle look softer in texture due to the distance, whereas land on nearer slopes, summits and glen floor are all rugged.</p> <p>The peaks and hill slopes enclosing the glen are large, and the glen appears of medium scale but the viewpoint is from midway within the glen. It is a very exposed place, sheltered only in the railway cutting. This is a very simple landscape, almost homogenous because of the landform, the land cover is simple and there is little overall variation. The scene is less colourful than elsewhere and the rough and rugged textures are the key characteristics, due to the vegetation, landform and drainage patterns.</p> <p>The railway and road on the opposite side of the glen appear to converge in the distance, as do the strong angular diagonals of the hills slopes. There is a distinct break in the hill slopes at Loch Earn.</p> <p>This is a windy, exposed spot. There is the constant noise of road traffic and of helicopters ferrying aggregate on to the hillside pylon route. Walkers and cyclists along the WHW are hidden in the cutting.</p>	<p>A busy road corridor, and a wind tunnel – a place to pass through, to travel through but not to stop in.</p> <p>This is a ‘dry’ glen compared to others with lochs that seem to fill the glen floor.</p> <p>Views down Glen Ogle, looking southwards to Ben Vorlich are more distinctive and distinguished than views travelling northwards.</p>

Loch Lomond & the Trossachs National Park Viewpoint 22: Breadalbane – Glen Dochart
Road to Bovain farm, Killin 13th May 2009 GR NN 542307

Objective	Visual	Personal/Emotional
<p>View over Glen Dochart from the east, towards Ben More and Stob Binean. To the rear of the VP is Craig Mhor and the lower craggy slopes and ridges of Creag Bhuachaille. Glen Dochart is enclosed on its south by long undulating foothills to Craig Ghlas. The gently sloping hillsides are broadly concave so that the summits of the hill range are not visible. Glen Dochart is very broad with a flat floor cut by the meandering, fast flowing River Dochart. There are a series of moraines along the glen side.</p> <p>There is extensive forestry at Lix, on the south side, and only sparse broadleaf trees set out elsewhere, on the lower slopes/glen floor. The upper hill slopes are heather moorland with grass and considerable amounts of bracken on the lower slopes. Improved grasslands and some semi-improved rush pastures grow along the length of the strath floor and flushes of wet grassland along the run-off runnels from the hillslopes. The A85/A827 extends the length of the glen, south of the river and the minor road to Killin north of it. The major land use is forestry, with the enclosed pastoral farmlands a significant activity. Forestry extends from Ardchyle eastwards to Loch Tay – an extensive area, although some of the western compartments within Glen Dochart are now cleared, the felled areas are visible.</p> <p>Isolated farms are set out along the glen, and some houses along the roads were, in the past, farmhouses. Bovain Farm buildings are stone, traditional with a house and a farmstead range set at right angles; mature trees are planted around the farm. An orderly complex of drystone dykes surrounds Bovain, some seem turf topped. Ditches cross the strath floor to the river, edged by drystone dykes/fences. A triangular planting of poplar on the glen floor, alongside the river, is noticeable as are whin thickets on the hillsides. Boulders are strewn across the hillsides.</p>	<p>Glen Dochart is large and broad. Extensive forestry dominates its east part, at a 'mega-scale' contrasting markedly with the domestic-scale of Bovain Farm. These rectilinear blocks conflict with the meandering form of the river, the undulating ridgelines and the glen floor. In the west glen, forestry and deciduous woods are more broken in outline, and do not extend as far onto the glen floor. There is a better transition from the afforested slopes onto the glen floor.</p> <p>The broad glen feels very open but there are areas of marked enclosure, within the shelter of the farmyard as well as the forest – a considerable length of the A827 lies within forestry. The glen floor is highly diverse, whereas the surrounding forestry imparts a homogenous character to the hills. The hills are muted in colour, while the forestry is sombre in colour. Elsewhere in the view, by comparison, there is a great amount of colour, especially on the glen floor, the whin covered hillsides and sparkling River Dochart; the white buildings act as highlights within the scene. The glen floor varies in texture from smooth to rough, increasingly more rough in texture, the away from the farm as the glen floor is managed less intensively.</p> <p>The sinuous river flows centrally through the view with the rectangular fields ranging down slope to meet its banks. The surrounding hills have long, sinuous slopes and the forestry blocks appear with long, low straight edges at ground and glen level, with varied upper margins. The old road (back road to Killin) undulates, fitting well into the topography. Pylon lines extend horizontally across the view to the south.</p>	<p>The forestry is overwhelming in scale and in terms of its position and mass, its configuration pays no respect to the glen. The opposite feeling is evoked along the back road to Killin. The road turns, rising up and down to negotiate the landform; the farms and field along it have a traditional feel, and all seems in harmony. This minor road, turns off the A85 leading into Killin, so you are off the main tourist route and far from the crowds visiting the Falls of Dochart in the village.</p> <p>This is Killin's 'back door', originally a cattle droving route. As you approach Killin the road lies alongside the river. This falls across a series of rocky outcrops, a precursor to the Falls of Dochart, where Killin is centred. There are also a series of ruined houses, marking the extent of previous township settlement, between Bovain and the edge of Killin.</p>

Loch Lomond & the Trossachs National Park Viewpoint 23: Breadalbane – Glen Falloch
360° view from Dun Falloch 13th May 2009 GR NN 367233

Objective	Visual	Personal/Emotional
<p>The peaks of the Arrochar Alps form the southern skyline above an amorphous, long ridge intersected by U-shaped glens that enclose the view southwards. To the west, the glen slopes are concave, of uniform gradient, smooth with a pattern of gullies and intersected at the north and south ends by small upland glens. On the east, hill sides are more rugged with individual craggy peaks with the range incised by shallow, U-shaped glens. The glen floor is U-shaped with the River Falloch incised and gently meandering across the glen floor. There is no flat land and the floor is dotted with many drumlins.</p> <p>Some bare rock on the upper slopes, gives way to rough grassland and heather. Areas of the glen floor are enclosed to encourage woodland regeneration, with areas of heather. There are bands of riparian broadleaved woodland, which also grows along the West Highland Railway. Keilattor Farm is surrounded by improved grassland. Elsewhere along the glen, the hillsides are covered with blocks of conifer plantation.</p> <p>The major land use is forestry with deer stalking, rough grazing on the upper slopes and pastoral farmland on the lower slopes. A number of routes pass through the glen, the West Highland Way long distance route, the West Highland Railway and A82 Tarbet-Crianlarich on the north side; a pylon route also runs the length of the glen, crossing from north to south.</p> <p>Settlement is isolated (Keilattor Farm and one cottage), with the pattern of stone dykes and a sheep fank by the farm being distinctive features on the glen sides; the mature pine trees are distinct features on the glen floor, as is 'Dun' Falloch, a prominent conical hill. It is very distinctive and commands views along /across the glen.</p>	<p>No one focal point dominates the view. To the south, the eye is led to the peaks of the Arrochar Alps which contrast with the amorphous ridges; to east and west the view is bounded by hills enclosing horizontal ridges, these channel views. To the north there is no prominent focus. The farm on the glen side holds attention due to the surrounding bright green pastures and its built form, as does the road which leads the eye out into the distance. The viewpoint is above the glen floor, with the Dun feeling like a point mid-way along the glen.</p> <p>The view is only wholly enclosed to the west. Turning through 270°, the summits of surrounding hills can be seen, which makes the scale appear vast. This is an exposed place, although there are some enclosed areas within the glen floor and along the river, which is deeply incised and hidden from view.</p> <p>This appears to be a very simple landscape with muted colours and rough, rugged textures of rocks, and forestry. There is no dominant form or line throughout the 360° panorama. To the west are the undulating horizontals of the road, rail, path and power lines, together with the long horizontal ridge of Ben Lui massif. SW are the triangular peaks of the Arrochar range; the north end of the glen is bounded by random sloping peaks but to the south are a range of solid, bulky hills with strong diagonal hill slopes. The forestry blocks are angular. Different hill heights mean that the eye wanders from one peak to another. There is a great deal of movement – the road traffic and RAF jets overhead. You can hear the flowing river and constant birdsong.</p>	<p>This is a busy road corridor – not many who pass through experience the glen for what it is. The movement of the traffic passing through contrasts strongly with the feeling of restfulness within the glen.</p> <p>There is a lot here to appreciate - a great sense of space looking NE-SW, the VP elevated above the glen floor. The road and passing traffic emphasises this feeling of space, further accentuated by the hills extending beyond the forestry, into the distance.</p> <p>There is a great feeling of expansiveness. It feels challenging and exhilarating – because of the views of the hill tops which surround the glen to most sides.</p>

Loch Lomond & the Trossachs National Park Viewpoint 24: Breadalbane – Strath Fillan
View from top of drumlin to south of St Fillan's Pool 13th May 2009 GR NN 350285

Objective	Visual	Personal/Emotional
<p>The VP is situated on a drumlin, a range of drumlins are noticeable at the base of hill slopes along the lower glen sides. Lying to the SE is the massif of Ben Mor (3852m) and Stob Coire Bhuidhe with the recognisable broad triangular peak of Stob Binnean (3821). Flanking buttresses and the ridge of Grey Height descend to Allt Coire Ardrain with a V-shaped corrie. Northwards, Strath Fillan is enclosed by a gently sloping ridge leading up to a distinct angular summit and steep slope to lower Fiarach, and NE are the rounded foothills to Ben Challum.</p> <p>On the skyline to the west is the snow covered peak of Ben Lui. The mining deposits at the base of Beinn Chuirn are visible in the distance. The strath floor is uneven, broken by drumlins and glacial deposits, broadening out below the VP to become flatter and more even with gentler slopes leading into the foot of the hills. A series of improved and enclosed fields are laid out on the flatter strath floor to east, elsewhere the lower slopes are used for rough grazing. Belts of deciduous woodland surround the farm and railway but, overall, the dominant land use is commercial forestry with conifer shelter belts around the enclosed sheep farm.</p> <p>By the farm are holiday chalets and, behind the drumlin, a depot (SSE). The A85 cuts through the strath, separating Kirkton Farm (SAC) and pastures from St Fillan's Holy Pool, that broadens out of the River Fillan, hidden from view in the trees. The WHW passes through the strath, the route crossing from one side to other at this spot.</p> <p>The settlement pattern of isolated farms has filled in, in recent years, with holiday accommodation (Guest houses, B&Bs, holiday lets) and caravans.</p>	<p>The landscape scale is vast; the strath forms a linear transport corridor entering the glen from the north. From the VP, the strath's linear character is 'lost' visually, because of the enclosing hills and slopes to all sides that make a complex skyline with a complex strath floor made up of different heights and slopes. The drumlins, glacial drift and some large glacial erratics give the strath a distinctive character. The river bed and floodplain are very stony and stone dykes make up some of the field boundaries.</p> <p>Some areas are strongly structured with tree lines, enclosures and planting but, elsewhere the hills are featureless, made up of varying heights and slopes, with no strongly defining forms apart from the recognisably highest summits. Overall, this is an exposed place, but there are sheltered spots along the strath floor, in the lee of drumlins and shelter belts, alongside the river and pool enclosed by riparian trees and bushes.</p> <p>The simple, outer uplands contrast with the diverse and complex strath floor in colour, texture, visual form and line. The uplands are muted; vibrant greens, especially the brilliant green of the improved pastures, occur on the strath floor. Angular peaks, summits and slopes contrast with rounded drumlins and convex lower slopes. The uneven strath floor, dotted with glacial deposits, boulders and the 'rippled' surfaces of the soil creep on the lower hill slopes give a textured view, contrasting with uplands although the angular bedding planes on Beinn Chuirn stand out. Point features, that relate to a 'busy' strath floor are sheep grazing, farm buildings, a signal box on the railway line, houses sited well down within the strath, the works depot. There is a great deal of human activity, in contrast to the uplands. Coherence in the scene has been disrupted by some elements – a modern, large detached house sited with a different orientation from the longer-established dwellings; the trunk road cutting across from one side of the strath to the other – in contrast to the railway line that respects the strath sides. This is a very windy place, the wind in the trees and traffic from the main road are the major, constant, sounds.</p>	<p>A considerable amount of human activity within the scene, which is invisible from the road. It can only be found and experienced by travelling off the trunk road and taking the minor road to the parking at the Community Woodland, or to Kirkton Farm.</p> <p>The vista to Beinn Mhor as you travel along the road is a well-known view, of a distinctive mountain panorama. There are contrasting feelings and experiences – the strong and 'silent' uplands, lacking in human activity outwith the busy road corridor, but off-road there is a distinct feel of activity – mining, forestry, farming, travel, recreation. This is a surprising place – the strath is fairly flat and intensively farmed, something that is not apparent from travelling through the strath on the A85.</p> <p>Holy Pool, Church, St Fillan: have always been an important place.</p>