

## THREE PROPOSED NEW / EXTENDED NATIONAL NATURE RESERVES IN THE CAIRNGORMS

### Summary

1. This paper presents proposals for the first tranche of 'new' National Nature Reserves (NNRs) to emerge from the review of the 'old' Cairngorms NNR against the NNR policy. The proposal is to extend existing reserves to create Abernethy NNR, and Invereshie and Inshriach NNR, and to declare a new NNR at Glenmore. These proposals involve granting Approved Body status to Forestry Commission Scotland (FCS) in respect of the latter two NNRs, and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) in respect of Abernethy.

### Action

2. Main Board are asked to approve the following (paragraphs 15 and 21):
  - **Declaration of an extended Abernethy NNR, and approval of the RSPB to manage the major part of this NNR as an Approved Body. SNH owns and manages the Dell Woods component of this NNR.**
  - **Declaration of an extended Invereshie and Inshriach NNR, and approval of Forestry Commission Scotland to manage the Inshriach part of this NNR as an Approved Body. SNH owns and manages the Invereshie component of this reserve.**
  - **Declaration of a new Glenmore NNR, and approval of Forestry Commission Scotland to manage this NNR as an Approved Body.**
3. The Board are also asked to note that there will be resource implications in meeting the relevant NNR standards (paragraphs 22 - 28), and the proposed timetable for launching the new NNRs (paragraphs 29 – 31).

### Preparation of paper

4. This paper was prepared by Debbie Greene (East Highland) with input from John Mackenzie and Keith Duncan (East Highland), and Jill Matthews (DASU). It is sponsored by Andrew Bachell. For the benefit of new Board members, a separate 1 page '*NNR glossary*' has been circulated with the papers for this Board meeting. This explains NNR-related terms used throughout this paper.

### Background

5. The Board have previously discussed the review of the Cairngorms NNR against the new NNR Policy on four occasions (see list of papers on page 7). The Board's key decisions to date are briefly summarised in the following paragraphs. A fuller account of the Board's various previous papers and decisions on the Cairngorms NNR is available in SNH/06/02/5. The 'NNR Policy' and 'NNR Review' are explained in the *NNR glossary*.
6. In July 2003 the Board considered the future of the Cairngorms NNR in closed session (SNH/03/5/4), and agreed that they wished to see an NNR retained in the central Cairngorms provided the policy could be met. They also asked staff to consider the possibilities for the NNR to be extended onto suitable adjacent ground.
7. In February 2006 the Board agreed that the way forward to complete the review of the Cairngorms NNR would be to declare new NNRs in 'tranches', as and when agreement

had been reached with the estates in the 'old' NNR and the adjacent estates where expansion was possible (SNH/06/02/5).

8. This paper presents proposals for the first such 'tranche' of new NNRs in the Cairngorms. Discussions with the various other estates in and around the 'old' Cairngorms NNR are on-going, and proposals for subsequent 'tranches' of new NNRs will be brought to the Board as agreement is reached with owners. As a consequence of this phased approach, there will be an interim situation where parts of the 'old' Cairngorms NNR continue to exist alongside the new NNRs.
9. In February 2006 the Board also agreed that in future SNH will promote the suite of 'Cairngorms NNRs' in the National Park collectively, manage them in a more coordinated way, and develop their role in delivering the Cairngorms National Park Plan. As a consequence they noted a need for the Cairngorms NNR to be re-named to avoid confusion with the 'Cairngorms NNRs'.
10. Staff considered the options and have decided that the best approach is to have separate names for individual estates, or for small groups of estates that only meet the NNR policy in combination. This approach is supported by CNPA. The estates in and around the 'old' Cairngorms NNR that have expressed a view are content, although one owner noted the possibility of confusion where an NNR covers only part of an estate with the same name. We have received a range of views from other stakeholders. Some acknowledge the need for the name change, but some NGOs strongly prefer the old name. On balance, we remain of the view that individual NNR names within a wider suite of 'Cairngorms NNRs' is the best way forward and the proposals in this paper are based on this approach.

#### **The cases for the extended and new NNRs**

11. In this first 'Tranche', we propose to declare three new/extended NNRs. Key facts about all three are summarised in Table 1 overleaf, and maps showing the old and proposed new NNR boundaries are attached at Annex 1. In summary:
  - Abernethy NNR will include all of the ground owned by the RSPB at their Abernethy property, with the exception of a small area under crofting tenure at Tulloch. It will also include the SNH owned ground at Dell Woods that is currently within Abernethy Forest NNR. Abernethy NNR will therefore include part of the 'old' Cairngorms NNR, all of the 'old' Abernethy Forest NNR, and additional land between and adjoining these 'old' reserves which is not NNR at present.
  - Invereshie and Inshriach NNR will include Invereshie, which is owned by SNH and is currently within the 'old' Cairngorms NNR, and a small area of adjacent ground owned by Forestry Commission Scotland (FCS) at Inshriach which does not currently hold NNR status.
  - Glenmore NNR is a new NNR that will include that part of Glenmore Forest Park which is managed for the benefit of the remnant native pinewood in the area. Glenmore NNR is a working name which may be changed prior to declaration.

**Table 1. Proposed new / extended NNRs in the Cairngorms: key facts**

New NNR	Area (Ha)	Former NNR status	Former NNR Area (Ha)	Owner	Legal status (see <i>NNR glossary</i> )
Abernethy	12,585	Cairngorms NNR (Glenavon)	2076	RSPB	Approved body / SNH ownership
		Abernethy Forest NNR	2296	RSPB	
		Abernethy Forest NNR (Dell Woods)		SNH	
		Previously undeclared	0	RSPB	
Invereshie & Inshriach	3476	Cairngorms NNR (Invereshie)	3142	SNH	Approved body / SNH ownership
		Inshriach previously undeclared	0	FCS	
Glenmore	2100	Previously undeclared	0	FCS	Approved body
<b>Total NNR Areas</b>	<b>18,161</b>		<b>7,514</b>		

12. The new / extended NNRs have been assessed against the NNR Policy (<http://www.snh.org.uk/pdfs/polstat/nnrpolicy.pdf>), and awarded 'Utility Scores' (see *NNR glossary*). The results are summarised in Table 2 below, and Annex 2 contains full assessments. Table 2 shows that all three NNRs meet the four essential attributes outlined in the NNR policy. NNRs are also required to fulfil at least one of the three possible purposes, but in fact these proposed NNRs each deliver all three of the purposes. This is reflected in their relatively high utility scores. It is therefore clear that these proposed NNRs meet the NNR policy.

### Public consultation

13. SNH organised a three month public consultation from April 20<sup>th</sup> - July 19<sup>th</sup> 2006 on these three proposed new and extended NNRs in the Cairngorms. A consultation report is available from Debbie Greene ([debbie.greene@snh.gov.uk](mailto:debbie.greene@snh.gov.uk)) on request. Although the consultation was well publicised and staff attended relevant meetings to explain the proposals in more detail, there were only eight responses. This may have been influenced by overlaps in timing with other local consultations. However the responses contained useful comments and suggestions, several of which have been incorporated into the proposals.

**Table 2. Assessment of new / extended NNRs against the NNR policy**

	Abernethy NNR	Invereshie and Inshriach NNR	Glenmore NNR
<b>Essential attributes:</b>			
National Importance	Yes	Yes	Yes
Primacy of nature	Yes	Yes	Yes
Continuity of management	Yes	Yes	Yes
Best practice Management	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>Purposes:</b>			
Raising National Awareness of the natural heritage	Yes	Yes	Yes
Providing specialised management	Yes	Yes	Yes
Encouraging research and demonstration	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>Utility Score</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>73</b>

14. Not all respondents expressed a view on the specific proposals for the three new and extended NNRs, but of those who did, all were in support. There were a variety of helpful suggestions about the name for the NNR at Glenmore, one of which has been adopted as the working title. Respondents also made a number of comments about future NNR management, or about NNR status for other estates in and around the 'old' Cairngorms NNR; these will be taken into account later as these matters are progressed. One respondent wished to see decisions on the NNRs postponed until an independent wildlife audit can be carried out to confirm whether SNH's stewardship is working. This view was not held more widely, and staff have decided not to introduce further delays; management issues can be discussed later during consultations on Management Plans. Respondents' views on changing the 'Cairngorms NNR' name were outlined in para 10.

### **Recommendation**

**15. The Board is asked to approve the declaration of**

- **An extended NNR at Abernethy;**
- **An extended NNR at Invereshie and Inshriach; and**
- **A new NNR at Glenmore.**

### **The Cases for Approved Body status for RSPB and FCS**

16. The 1981 Wildlife & Countryside Act allows SNH to declare as NNR land which is "held and managed" by bodies which have been approved for that purpose by SNH (see *NNR glossary*). Approved Body status is only granted for specified NNRs, and the status cannot be awarded to an organisation in general.
17. The criteria for an Approved Body are:
- a. That the applying body (in legal terms any group of two or more persons) has a proven track record of managing land for nature conservation and appropriate experience of visitor management, interpretation and community involvement;
  - b. That it understands the principles of nature conservation management;
  - c. That it acknowledges/understands the nature conservation value of its relevant land;
  - d. That it can demonstrate the institutional objectives, structures, governance and financial stability necessary for long term management of land as an NNR;
  - e. That the body is willing to manage the land for NNR purposes as defined by SNH.
18. The SNH Board have awarded Approved Body status to RSPB for Vane Farm, part of Loch Leven NNR (SNH/02/3/13), for Insh Marshes NNR (SNH/02/6/8) and for the new Flows NNR (SNH/06/05/1). The Vane Farm paper included an assessment of RSPB against criteria a–d above so the information is not repeated here. However SNH are required to confirm that the management plans for the property comply with the NNR Policy. A new management plan is currently in preparation for Abernethy, following the expiry of the last plan in 2005 (period 2000 – 2005). SNH are about to be consulted over the new plan, and as part of this process will ensure the final version meets NNR requirements.
19. The SNH Board have previously awarded Approved Body status to FCS for Glen Affric NNR (SNH/00/8/8) and part of Glen Nant NNR (SNH/03/2/1). Again, these papers included an assessment of FCS against criteria a–d above so the information is not repeated here. A draft Forest Design Plan for Glenmore, incorporating the area of the

proposed new NNR, has just been issued by FCS for consultation. SNH are happy at this stage that the Forest Design Plan should also represent the NNR management plan, and will ensure its final content meets the NNR policy. The same approach is being adopted for the FCS owned ground forming part of Invereshie and Inshriach NNR. Here, the current Forest Design Plan is to be reviewed in 2007.

20. It is therefore clear that the RSPB meet the Approved Body criteria at Abernethy, and that FCS meet the criteria at Glenmore, and at Invereshie and Inshriach.

## Recommendation

### 21. The Board is asked to approve that

- **RSPB is granted Approved Body status in respect of Abernethy NNR;**
- **FCS is granted Approved Body status in respect of Invereshie and Inshriach NNR;**
- **FCS is granted Approved Body status in respect of Glenmore NNR.**

## The NNR Programme and resource implications

22. The current annual estimated costs of the existing NNRs that are included within the three proposed new and extended NNRs are set out in Table 3. Costs have been estimated after excluding non-NNR work on the same ground and NNR costs on land outwith new NNRs.

**Table 3 Indicative estimates of SNH resources spent on activities closely related to the existing NNR areas.**

<b>Existing NNR</b>	<b>SNH staff time planned for 06/07</b>	<b>SNH funding: average over recent years</b>
Abernethy Forest NNR: Dell Woods (SNH-owned)	40 days	£5k pa net
Abernethy Forest NNR: RSPB-owned area	5 days	£1k pa *
Cairngorms NNR: Invereshie (SNH owned)	60 days	£12k pa net
Cairngorms NNR: RSPB owned area	2 days	0 *

\* Note that between 1983 and 1990 NCC also provided £700k in total towards various RSPB land purchases at Abernethy.

23. SNH has recently developed the NNR Programme (see *NNR glossary*) in order to ensure that NNRs are effective in delivering the new NNR policy, key Scottish Executive policies and SNH corporate objectives. Work is underway nationally to collate assessments of the extent to which all the NNRs in Scotland already meet the 'minimum' and 'advanced' standards, to assess the resources required to meet those standards not already met, and to plan a programme of delivery. This work is not yet complete, and will be brought back to the Board later this year.
24. The existing NNRs listed in Table 3, and the proposed new NNRs, do not currently meet all the 'minimum' standards. The actions required to do so include preparing NNR Management Plans and implementing the recommendations of the disability discrimination audit on the SNH owned NNRs, and producing new NNR entry signs, reserve leaflets and webpages for all the reserves. The cost implications of the activity

required are not yet prepared, but it is clear that both the staff time and financial costs will need to increase, at least in the short term, and particularly on the SNH-owned NNRs.

25. The three new and extended NNRs proposed in this paper will result in some additional costs. Invereshie and Inshriach NNR and Glenmore NNR only need to meet the 'minimum' standards while Abernethy NNR will need to meet the 'advanced' standards as we have agreed with RSPB that it will be a 'spotlight' NNR (*see NNR glossary*). Although the overall level of these additional costs cannot be provided at this stage, for the reasons set out below, it is not expected that they will make a significant difference to the overall NNR programme on sites already agreed by the Board. However, affordability issues may result in a slightly increased period of implementation of the whole programme.
26. Despite the substantial increase in NNR area created by the proposals in this paper, it is expected that the *additional* costs to SNH of meeting the NNR standards will however be comparatively modest in scale. The greatest costs to SNH are on NNRs owned and/or managed by ourselves, and the proposals in this paper do not increase this area. The cost of meeting some of the standards (e.g. a webpage) on the two extended NNRs will not be significantly greater than meeting them on the existing NNR areas.
27. Whilst Glenmore will be a wholly new NNR, it already meets 13 out of 18 'minimum' standards, and meeting the remaining 5 is not likely to require significant SNH funding or time inputs. Finally, any SNH funding towards meeting the NNR standards over the *extended areas* at Abernethy, Glenmore and Inshriach will only be *partly additional* to existing expenditure. This is because we have previously grant-aided both the RSPB and FCS towards the sort of interpretive, access and habitat restoration projects within these extended areas that would contribute towards meeting the NNR standards. An annual average of approximately £16k pa in SNH grant aid has been spent in this way over the 5 year period to 04/05.
28. In deciding on SNH's position on the proposed Abernethy NNR, the Board should be aware that the final outcome will remain subject to satisfactory conclusion of current discussions between SNH and RSPB over funding. In future it is intended that SNH funding to the RSPB at Abernethy NNR will be via a Highland-wide framework agreement based upon the delivery of key performance indicators (KPIs). SNH and RSPB are currently working up the details of this agreement. The KPIs will specifically include work required to meet the 'minimum' and 'advanced' standards on NNRs, and RSPB are proposing costs for meeting these standards, together with other running costs. These costs and the KPIs will be agreed before the new Abernethy NNR is declared.

### **Next steps**

29. If the Board approve the three proposed new / extended NNRs, SNH will prepare the necessary Approved Body and declaration documentation during the winter of 2006 / 2007, this with a view towards declaration of the new / extended NNRs in early 2007. This would allow public events to celebrate the declarations to be held next spring or summer, and links to be made with the *Scottish Year of Highland Culture 2007*. The launch of Abernethy NNR will be dependent on the conclusion of the funding arrangement referred to in para 28.
30. Discussions with the other estates in the 'old' Cairngorms NNR and with potential adjacent estates will continue with a view to bringing further proposals to the Board as agreement is reached. This will depend on the extent to which the ground or estates in

question can be successfully managed to meet the NNR criteria. It is hoped that proposals for a second 'tranche' of new / extended NNRs can be brought to the Board within the next 12 months.

31. Once the future boundaries of all the NNRs in the area are clearer, it is proposed that SNH, FCS and RSPB review the boundaries of these 'tranche 1' NNRs in order to check for overall ecological, geomorphological and management coherence. This may lead to proposals for minor boundary amendments.

### **Conclusion**

32. This paper has established that the proposed NNRs at Abernethy, Invereshie and Inshriach, and Glenmore all qualify for NNR status. It has also shown that the RSPB and FCS both fit the criteria required for recognition as Approved Bodies for the management of the relevant parts of these three Reserves.

*Previous papers on the review of the Cairngorms NNR:*

*SNH/06/2/5*

*SNH/04/5/5*

*SNH/03/5/4*

*SNH/00/1/7*

### **Contacts:**

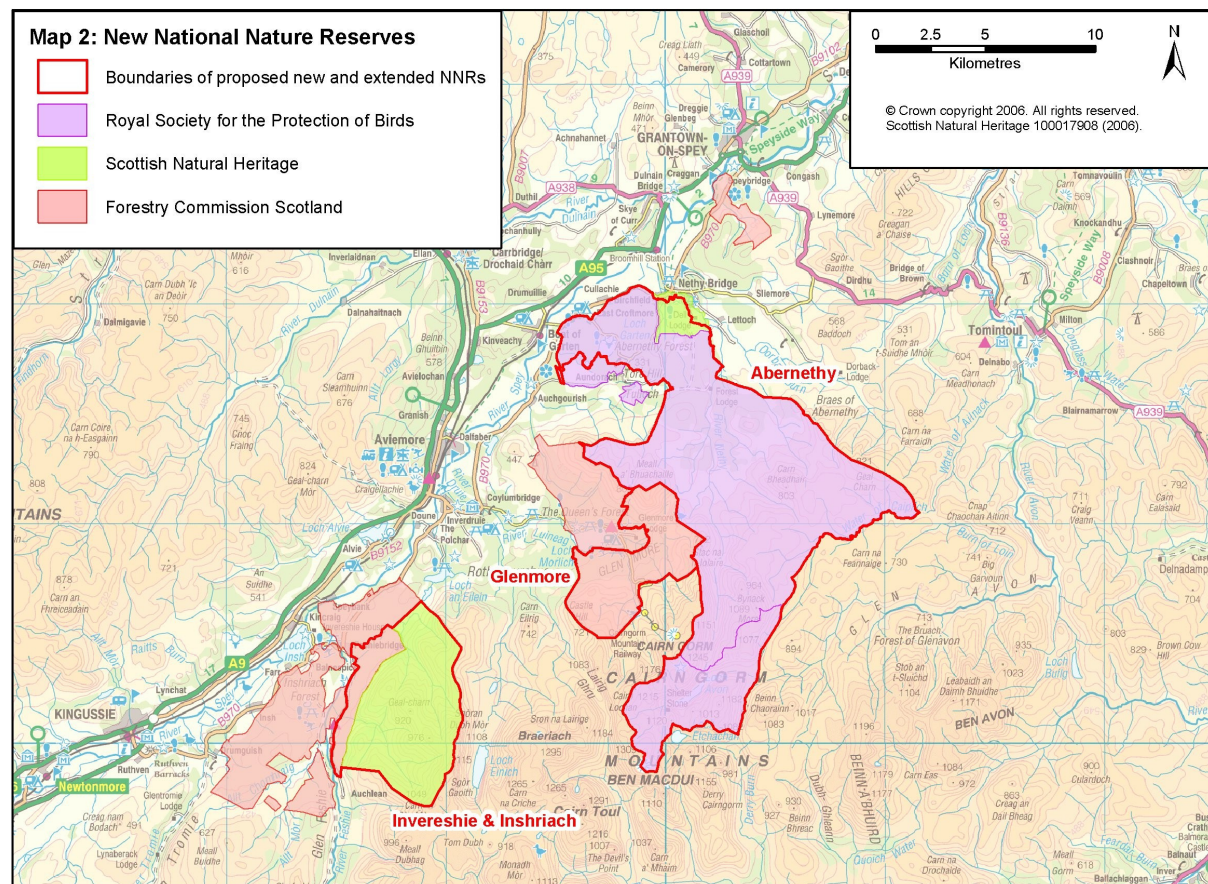
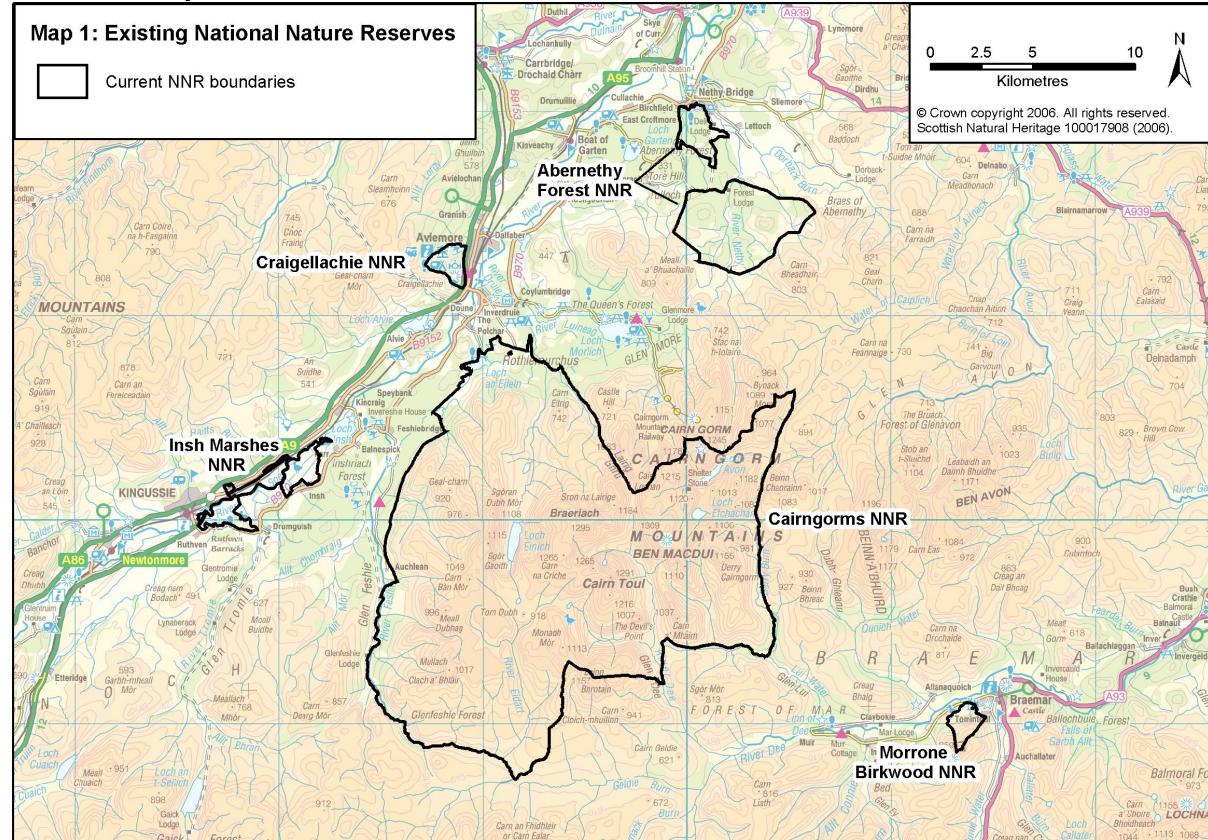
**Debbie Greene, Operations Manager, Cairngorms. Tel: 01479 810477**

**John Mackenzie, Operations Manager, East Highland. Tel: 01479 810477**





## Annex 1: Maps



## Annex 2: Assessments of the proposed new NNRs against the NNR policy

### Abernethy NNR

General		
Designations	3 SACs; 2 SPAs; Ramsar site; 2 SSSIs; NP; NSA; Unnotified GCR.	
Examples of key natural heritage features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Largest area of Caledonian pine woods in UK</li><li>▪ Scottish cross bill</li><li>▪ Bog woodland</li><li>▪ Glacial landforms</li><li>▪ Wet and dry heaths</li><li>▪ Snow bed vegetation</li><li>▪ Dotterel</li></ul>	
Rationale for boundary	<p>The boundary has been selected to follow the RSPB property boundary, with the exception of a small area at Tulloch subject to crofting tenure and the addition of a small area of adjacent ground managed by SNH at Dell Woods. This is the most pragmatic boundary for management, and effectively brings the NNR boundary in line with the integrated approach to managing the whole RSPB landholding, with its full altitudinal range of habitats and species, that has been taking place since their purchase in 1985. Various adjacent landholdings to the south and east are also proposed or under discussion for NNR status, which presents good potential for coordinated management of nationally and internationally important ecosystems, landforms and habitat networks.</p> <p>There is a very small area of land owned by the Naylor family / Rynettin Trust within the current Abernethy Forest NNR. The area in question was retained by the Naylor family at the time of a sale of the surrounding land to the RSPB. Although the land remains the subject of NNR declaration, no Agreement or similar arrangement exists in support. This is an anomalous situation and there is action by staff to work towards a resolution.</p>	
NNR essential attributes		
National importance	Yes	The majority of the ground proposed as NNR is SSSI, SAC and SPA. Much of the remainder is an unnotified Geological Conservation Review site for quaternary landforms. The undesignated ground also provides important opportunities for developing habitat networks and natural altitudinal transitions between habitats, and increasing connectivity between the designated areas. Considered as a whole, the proposed NNR therefore meets this attribute.
Primacy of nature	Yes	Nature conservation has been and remains the main land use at Abernethy. Both RSPB's 2005-2010 Abernethy Management Plan, and SNH's Dell Woods Management Plan are currently in preparation, and both organisations will ensure each plan delivers primacy of nature.
Continuity of management	Yes	The area proposed as NNR is owned and managed by SNH and RSPB. RSPB manage the current Abernethy Forest NNR under the terms of a Nature Reserve Agreement. It is proposed the new NNR is managed on the basis of Approved Body status instead.
Best practice management	Yes	The RSPB and SNH are committed to best practice management, particularly in respect of forest regeneration in the absence of fencing, bog restoration, track restoration, fence removal, visitor management, and interpretation.



NNR purposes		
Raising national awareness	Yes	The proposed NNR is already well-known and very popular for wildlife watching and nature-based tourism - the RSPB estimate that approximately 80-100,000 people visit Abernethy every year. The RSPB have invested heavily and successfully in the visitor infrastructure at Loch Garten and elsewhere on the low ground, providing a variety of opportunities for visitors and locals to observe and learn more about nature without causing damage or disturbance. In addition, there is a network of popular paths in Dell Woods maintained by Explore Abernethy, a local community group which employs a seasonal Ranger to interpret many of the natural and cultural features to locals and visitors. A wide variety of types of informal recreation also takes place within the proposed NNR, ranging from short walks and cycling, to winter climbing and ski touring. There is good potential to develop ways of helping the large numbers of people who use the ground for these activities to learn more about its special natural and cultural qualities.
Providing specialised management	Yes	Specialised management is extensive and includes tree regeneration in the absence of fencing, restructuring pine plantations, deadwood creation, track reinstatement, management of wet woodlands, bog restoration, visitor management, and developing infrastructure for remote wildlife viewing.
Research & demonstration	Yes	There is considerable research and monitoring activity across Abernethy ranging from visitor and bird monitoring on the Cairngorms plateau, to monitoring narrow headed ants and investigating postglacial vegetation history. The site is also used to demonstrate techniques for native pinewood management and restoration.
<b>Conclusion</b>	Meets NNR policy.	

### Invereshie & Inshriach NNR

General	
Designations	2 SACs; SPA; SSSI; NP; NSA; Unnotified GCR.
Examples of key natural heritage features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Bog woodland</li> <li>▪ Capercaillie</li> <li>▪ Caledonian pine woods</li> <li>▪ Glacial landforms</li> <li>▪ Highest natural pine tree-line in UK</li> <li>▪ Wet and dry heaths</li> <li>▪ Alpine and sub-alpine heaths</li> </ul>
Rationale for boundary	The boundary includes all the SNH owned ground at Invereshie, which has until now been part of the Cairngorms NNR. A small extension of NNR status onto part of the FCS owned ground at Inshriach is proposed to include a designated area of bog woodland and some adjacent planted Scots pine. The proposed extension area is contiguous with the extant NNR and covers a suite of de-glacial landforms. The extension has the advantage of increasing the range of habitats included within the reserve, and providing links between areas of native pinewood and suites of de-glacial landforms. The extension also brings the boundary of the NNR out to meet the Glen Feshie public road and a number of suitable gateway points. This provides considerably greater opportunities for increasing national awareness and providing visitor infrastructure and interpretation (the boundary of the current NNR is remote from the public road, which is seen as a limiting factor in many ways) The inclusion of a greater area of Inshriach within the proposed new NNR was discussed at length with FCS; both SNH and FCS however agree that the area under discussion does not currently fully meet the NNR criteria.

NNR essential attributes		
National importance	Yes	Almost all the area is designated as nationally and internationally important, and the small undesignated area provides valuable opportunities for linking the designated sites (and increasing national awareness).
Primacy of nature	Yes	The SNH owned ground is managed primarily for nature, and FCS have managed the bog woodland area for this purpose since 1998, when the EU LIFE Wet Woods project commenced. Primacy of nature conservation requirements will be built into the revised Forest Design Plan for Inshriach, which is due in 2007.
Continuity of management	Yes	All the ground is owned outright by SNH and FCS, and it is proposed that FCS gain Approved Body status.
Best practice management	Yes	SNH undertakes best practice management on Invereshie in relation to tree regeneration in the absence of fencing, and footpath repairs and maintenance. FCS have undertaken best practice management for capercaillie and in reinstating pine and birch woodland, bog woodland and hydrology.
NNR purposes		
Raising national awareness	Yes	As outlined above, the Invereshie part of the Cairngorms NNR offered limited potential for increasing national awareness due to its location away from the road and public access points; this made the provision of signage and infrastructure largely unsuitable. This is despite the considerable number of people (approx 9,000 pa <sup>1</sup> ) who visit Invereshie to enjoy forest walks, hill walks, ski-touring and cycling, most of whom are probably unaware of NNR status. In addition, some groups from local outdoor centres also use the area. The proposed extension onto Inshriach will enable a significant increase in delivery of this NNR purpose, and effort is needed to make it easier for those who visit the NNR for recreational activities and outdoor education to learn more about the special natural heritage features.
Providing specialised management	Yes	The key elements of specialised management are deer control to allow tree regeneration in the absence of fencing, bog woodland restoration, and discreet visitor management through the provision, location and maintenance of paths.
Research & demonstration	Yes	Considerable research and monitoring activity remains ongoing, through for example the Environmental Change Network (ECN) site in the Allt a'Mharcaidh catchment on Invereshie. Invereshie is also used to demonstrate the delivery of tree regeneration in the absence of fencing.
<b>Conclusion</b>	Meets NNR policy	

### Glenmore NNR

General		
Designations	2 SACs; SPA; 3 SSSIs; NP; NSA; Unnotified GCR.	
Examples of key natural heritage features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Caledonian pine wood</li> <li>▪ Narrow-headed wood ants</li> <li>▪ Only known locality of the fly <i>Xylophagus junki</i></li> <li>▪ Glacial landforms</li> <li>▪ Capercaillie</li> <li>▪ Fluvial landforms</li> <li>▪ Juniper scrub</li> <li>▪ Wet and dry heaths</li> <li>▪ Alpine and sub-alpine heaths</li> </ul>	

<sup>1</sup> Approximate estimate derived from data presented in Taylor & MacGregor, 1999. *Cairngorms Mountain Recreation Survey 1997-8*. SNH.

Rationale for boundary	The boundary includes the area at Glenmore managed by FCS as a Caledonian Forest Reserve. The areas within Glenmore that are managed for other priorities are excluded. Various adjacent estates are also proposed, or under discussion, for NNR status, which presents good potential for integrated management of nationally and internationally important ecosystems and landforms over a wider area. In particular, Glenmore provides a key strategic link between the pinewoods and deglacial landforms of Abernethy and Rothiemurchus.	
NNR essential attributes		
National importance	Yes	Almost all of the area is designated as being of national or international importance, and the remaining small area provides important opportunities for habitat networks linking the designated sites. The key features designated for international importance include capercaillie, Scottish cross-bill, Caledonian forest, bog woodland and juniper scrub.
Primacy of nature	Yes	FCS has been working to restore the Caledonian pine wood in Glenmore for 15 years. The draft Forest Design Plan demonstrates primacy of nature over the area proposed as NNR.
Continuity of management	Yes	FCS own almost all the land outright and it is proposed that they are awarded Approved Body status. The Reindeer Company have a lease over some of the ground at the south of the site, and the lease is currently being revised with a view to the terms being compatible with NNR status.
Best practice management	Yes	Best practice management has been followed for several years in relation to deer control to allow tree regeneration without fencing, the removal of exotic species, removal of redundant fencing, path management, visitor management, education and interpretation.
NNR purposes		
Raising national awareness	Yes	FCS have invested heavily in infrastructure to help visitors and locals enjoy and learn more about the special natural and cultural features of this area. There is a network of waymarked paths in the forest, car parks, interpretation points and panels, leaflets, a Ranger Service, and a visitor and interpretation centre just outside the proposed NNR boundary. Glenmore as a whole receives large numbers of visitors (approx 270,000 pa <sup>2</sup> ), so this proposed NNR offers excellent scope for delivering this NNR purpose.
Providing specialised management	Yes	The key elements of specialised management are promoting Caledonian pine wood regeneration through deer control and sensitive removal of exotic species, and management for capercaillie including discreet visitor management aiming to minimise disturbance.
Research & demonstration	Yes	Glenmore Forest has been used extensively for silvicultural research, and also research into natural regeneration, narrow-headed wood ants, and visitor monitoring. The site is also used to demonstrate techniques for capercaillie management, removal of exotic tree species, access provision and interpretation.
Conclusion	Meets NNR policy	

<sup>2</sup> As estimated in Mather, 2000. *Rothiemurchus and Glenmore Recreation Survey 1998-99*. SNH.