



Location and Context

The *Upland Glen- Ayrshire* Landscape Character Type occurs in three places in Ayrshire, focused to the far south and east; the valley of the Afton Water, immediately to the south of New Cumnock, and Glen Tig and Glen App, draining to the Ayrshire coast, close to the boundary with Dumfries and Galloway.

Key Characteristics

- Distinctive profile comprising steep, often craggy valley slopes, and a rounded valley floor, containing a comparatively small 'misfit' river.
- Complex and prominent ridgelines along tops of steep valley sides.
- Pasture on the valley floors and lower valley slopes giving way rapidly to rough grassland and heather moorland on higher ground.
- Broadleaf woodland is scarce but small to medium scale coniferous forests are found on the valley slopes.
- Small scale landscape with some areas of remote and wild character.
- Views contained by the steep valley sides

Landscape Character Description

Landform

The distinctive landscapes of the *Upland Glen- Ayrshire* Landscape Character Type have been created where glacial erosion has enlarged river valleys draining the Southern Uplands. The solid geology of the glens is similar to the enclosing Southern Uplands, comprising sedimentary greywackes and shales of the Ordovician period. The process of glacial erosion has created a dramatic, distinctive valley profile comprising steep, often craggy valley slopes, and a rounded valley floor, containing a comparatively small 'misfit' river. Fast flowing rivers cut into morainic deposits left by retreating ice sheets on the valley floor.

Landcover

Landcover is diverse. Valley floors, together with some of the shallower and lower valley

slopes, comprise improved pastures, enclosed within drystone dykes constructed from glacially rounded boulders. The pastures give way rapidly to rough grassland and heather moorland on slopes above the valley floor. Broadleaf woodland is scarce, usually comprising lines of riparian trees tracing the course of the river, a few field boundary trees and small farm woodlands. Small to medium scale coniferous forests are found on the valley slopes. However, Glen Tig is characterised by belts of semi-natural, broadleaf woodland along its lower slopes. There are more extensive mixed policy woodland and coniferous plantings, interspersed with semi-improved pastures and heather-flecked grass moorland on steep upper slopes

Settlement

Modern settlement is limited, mainly confined to a scatter of stone farmsteads, many of which are on historic sites. Most roads are minor. The valley of the Afton Water contains the Afton Reservoir and associated water treatment facilities.

Perception

The narrowness of these glens creates small-scale, intimate landscapes with a largely undeveloped, remote character. Glen Tig is particularly remote in character, accessible only on foot, although it can be seen from nearby minor roads. While retaining a 'wild' upland character, it is also quite intimate in scale. Views are contained by the steep valley side which rise to form complex and prominent ridgelines. Views from roads tend to focus on the heads of the glens.

A number of well-defined hills on the edges of the glens form landmark features and are especially dramatic where the glens are contained by the high ground of the *Southern Uplands* Landscape Character Type.

This is one of 389 Landscape Character Types identified at a scale of 1:50 000 as part of a national programme of Landscape Character Assessment republished in 2019.

The area covered by this Landscape Character Type was originally included in the Ayrshire (Land Use Consultants), published 1998.