3.3.2 Resulting Elastograms

The 2-D locally regularized tissue strain estimation algorithm described in Section 3.2.3 was used in combination with the simulated resultant b-mode ultrasound images (Figs. 3.4c and 3.4d) in order to generate elastogram images which were used in the subsequent analysis. Sample source code for generating these elastograms is given in listing B.3 in Appendix B. An example elastogram resulting from the simulation presented in Fig. 3.4 is shown in Fig. 3.5. Throughout the entire domain on this sample elastogram, regions outside of the stiff lesions showed compressive strains of approximately 5 % as expected due to the compression applied to the upper boundary of the model. The entire lesion region showed relatively consistent low strain amounts of approximately 2.5 %, which is consistent with the lesion being stiffer (and so straining less) than the surrounding tissue. Of note is the increased strain pattern which appeared both axially and laterally around the lesion. While generally symmetric about the axial direction, this stress field was largely concentrated above the lesion when the lesion was deep (close to the bone). This may be explained as a stress concentration brought about by the sudden change in mechanical material properties of the tissue and may serve to fuel the conditions of excessive cell deformation and ischemia which initiated the formation of a deep tissue injury in the first place, exacerbating the wound and assisting its expansion toward the surface. Further, a largely variable strain field artifact is seen along the superior surface of the elastogram shown in Fig. 3.5. While this field does not appear to affect the remainder of the generated elastogram, it will serve to mask any extremely shallow legions in the tissue, though given as deep tissue injuries generally form immediately superior to