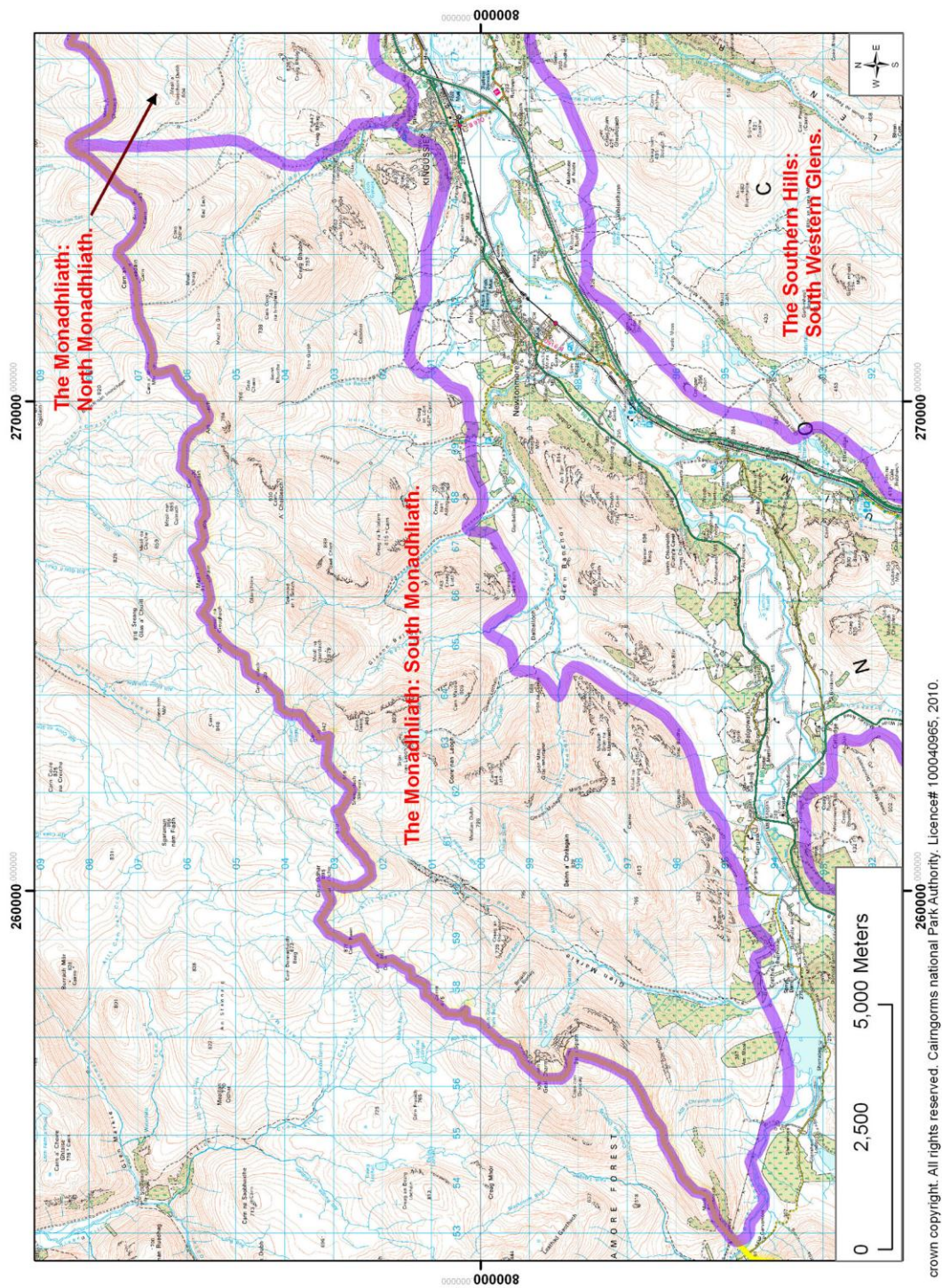


I.I The Monadhliath: South Monadhliath



1.1.1 *Landscape Character*

The southerly and south easterly orientated glens and slopes of the rounded hills and long ridges of the Monadhliath form the north western boundary to the Park

While within the wider extent of the Monadhliath, long glens and ridges extend north-east/south west, here side valleys and shallow bowls of land drain south-eastwards to the Spey and its tributaries

Peaks and separate summits in the south Monadhliath can reach 800m, and the high tops have been steepened a by glacial erosion of corries

On lower hills, other glacial activity has formed crags and rocky outcrops along the upper flanks of the side glens, often on the east/south east facing hills directly overlooking Strathspey

Glacial erosion has also created rocky outcrops and rockfalls along the south east faces of slopes above Strathspey

The side glens tend to be elevated, with many tributaries feeding into burns which cut into glacial-fluvial deposits

There is very occasional riparian woodland along these watercourses

Heather and upland grassland dominates the upper slopes, and this vegetation can extend down to the glen floors, although areas of grassland and rush, with occasional lochans are located on poorly drained areas dominated by peat

There is extensive evidence of past land use on the lower, south facing slopes above the rivers Spey and Banchor, with numerous prehistoric sites amongst the pre-improvement townships, a feature of this character area

Many former shielings, often recognised by their bright green sites, cluster around most of the watercourses flowing south from the high hills

Tracks for off road vehicles are largely confined to the floors of the glens, with footpaths and smaller tracks then branching off to access ridges and summits

1.1.2 *Landscape experience*

This area includes some of the most remote hills and glens in the Park, an experience which is reinforced by the height of the hills, the roughness of the terrain and the difficulty of accessing this area from the north

The mountains are formidable, forming a robust edge to the Park and from the tops they are experienced as the outer edge of the much larger, remote and relatively inaccessible Monadhliath range

1.1.3 *Relationship to adjacent character areas*

The southern Monadhliath form the visual backdrop and the more remote hinterland to the landscape character areas within Upper Spey and Badenoch. These mountains are also highly visible from southern hill ranges and the Cairngorm massif.

1.1.4 *Assessment of distinctiveness*

This area of high peaks and craggy upper slopes combines relative remoteness with numerous sites of historic and even prehistoric, settlement and land use, many of which are found across the lower slopes, while summer shielings are found higher up, along the numerous minor glens in this area.



The side glens are elevated above the main trunk glens, with craggy upper slopes formed by glacial erosion – the bright green areas are often likely to be shieling sites



Tracks, often located along the glen floors, leading into the interior hills – here leading through the grass-covered slopes of Glen Markie



Long ridges, and extensive views to the south west, out with the Park



Hills slopes steepened and roughened by glaciation