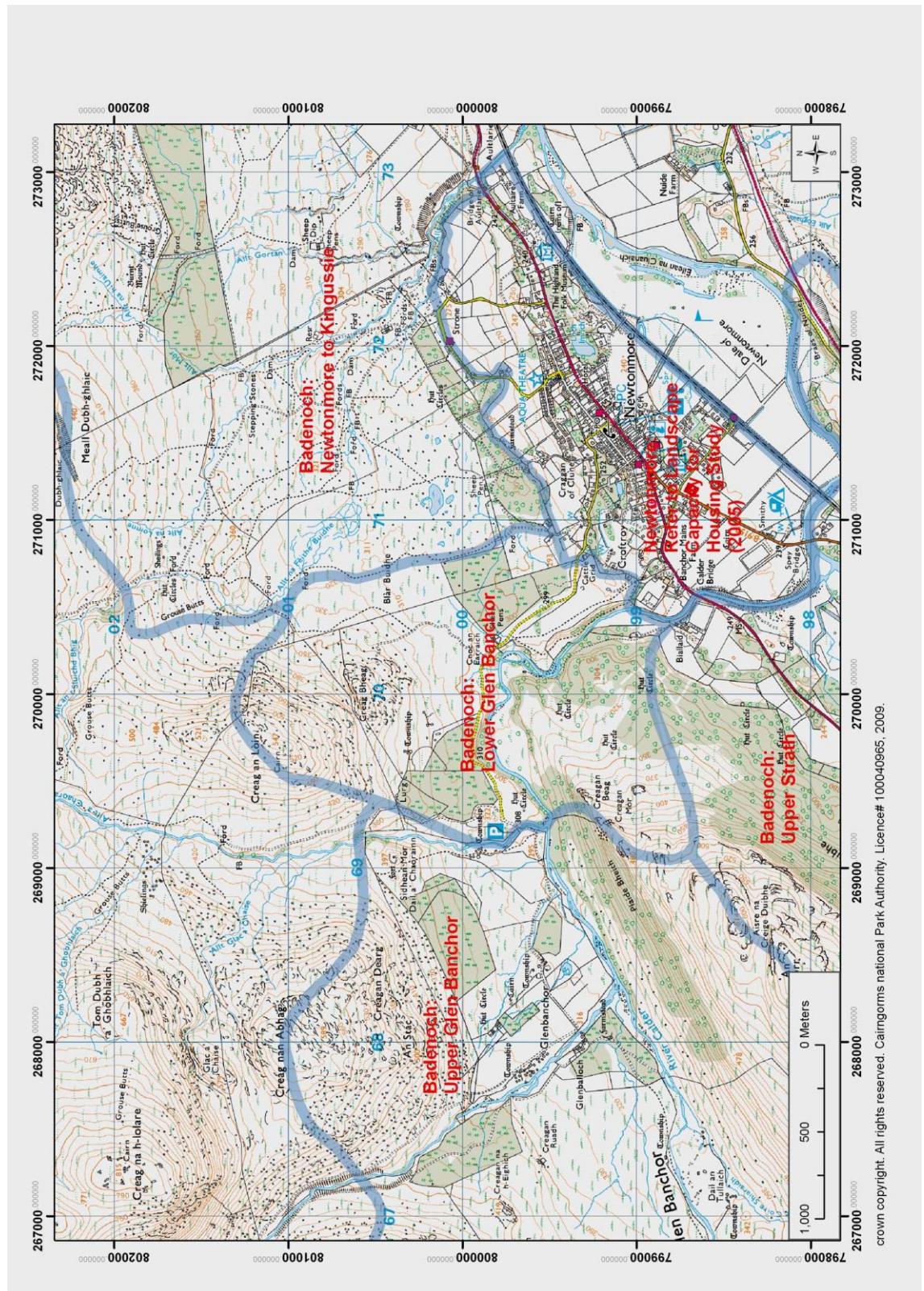


I.I

Badenoch: Lower Glen Banchor



1.1.1 *Landscape Character*

This area forms the 'transition' between Newtonmore and Strathspey and the more hidden glen of upper Glen Banchor

Although comparatively low-lying, it is still significantly elevated above Strathspey

The fast moving River Calder has cut through terraced, gravelly fluvial deposits to create a well defined and dramatic deep, steeply sided gorge, with several waterfalls

The hillside of Creag an Loin is strewn with shattered rocks and boulders left behind when glaciers melted, but it rises from more hummocky terrain of gravelly deposits and moraine ridges which lies north-east of the gorge

Two large areas of straight-edged conifer woodland are established on the lower slopes

Birch dominated woodland along the River Calder is supplemented by recent planting along the steep slopes of the river valley

More extensive birch woodland occupies the east facing slopes of Creag Dubh which reinforce the containment of the gorge of the River Calder

The lower glen, although still elevated, is a relatively level terrace above the gorge

Most of these lower slopes and level land is extensive but partially improved grassland, with some wood pasture, including occasional, prominent clumps of substantial birch trees

There is extensive and visible evidence of past settlement across this grassland, including pre-improvement townships, numerous turf walls, enclosures and clearance cairns on the open, free draining ground

There is no contemporary settlement

The area is very popular for local recreation, being easily accessible from Newtonmore, and there are several benches placed along the glen to take advantage of views to the river

1.1.2 *Landscape experience*

The area provides a pronounced transition or 'threshold' to the upper reaches of Glen Banchor

The sound of the river pervades the space, especially when in spate

There is clear evidence of extensive past settlement which influences the perception of the landscape

1.1.3 *Relationship to adjacent character areas*

The area forms a transition area between the 'hidden' glen of Upper Glen Banchor and Strathspey. In addition, there are fine views across Strathspey to the Cairngorm massif from much of this area.

1.1.4 Assessment of distinctiveness

The drama of the river, cutting its way through a steep sided small glen within this area and framed by semi-natural woodland, is a focal point and a scenic feature. The scattered woodland and wood pasture is a particular characteristic of this landscape, as are the numerous and easily visible remains of pre-improvement farms and associated enclosures.



The slopes of Creag and Loin rise up from hummocky, well drained glacial-fluvial deposits which support grassland



Woodland along the steep sided gorge of the River Calder which has cut through the gravelly deposit



Clumps of mature birch trees – ‘wood pasture’ on the grassland



The remains of a circular enclosure – one of many traces of extensive past settlement and land use