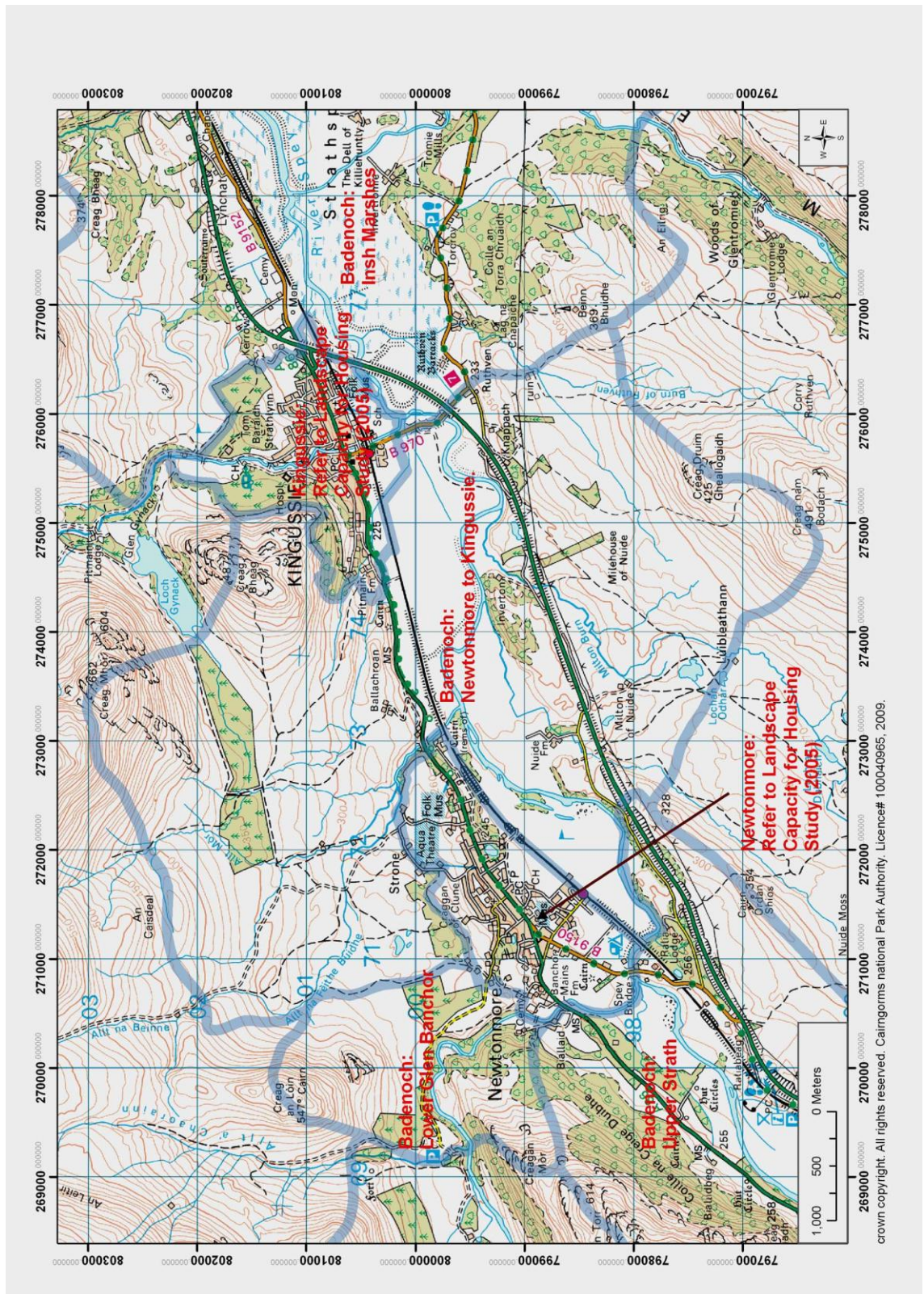


I.1 Badenoch: Newtonmore to Kingussie



1.1.1 *Landscape Character*

This wide strath, where the River Spey has worked the gravelly glacial-fluvial deposits into a relatively flat floodplain, is enclosed by gently graded side slopes leading to low hills which can be identified as individual rocky summits

To the north, the flat plain is contained by well drained terraces which form a well-defined steep edge to the strath floor

Along the southern edge of the strath there is an extensive area of complex, interlocking hummocks, terraces and ridges of glacial-fluvial deposit are interspersed with lochans and small flats of farmed land

Shallow basins and gentle gradients along the upper side slopes and subtle side glens, such as the valley of the Milton Burn, which follows the line of the Ericht-Laidon fault, reinforce the sense of expansiveness

The strath floor is partially drained and cultivated, with regularly shaped late 18th/19th century improved fields, and now used for improved grassland, fodder and arable crops

There is a golf course south of Newtonmore, which occupies part of the floodplain

There is some woodland on the side slopes, including a large area of conifer woodland near Loch Gynack, but scattered trees across the strath and along the river flats, and birch woodland on the more hummocky terrain are a more pronounced characteristic

There are additional trees associated with field boundaries and riparian woodland, and occasional narrow conifer shelter woods cross the extensive hummocky terrain along the southern edge of the strath

Settlement avoids the floodplain, and the two larger towns – Newtonmore and Kingussie – are clearly linked to the alluvial fans of large tributaries of the Spey

Individual houses and farms are set on elevated terraces and tucked in between hummocks of gravelly deposit, especially on the southern side of the strath, with the ruins of pre-improvement farmsteads and field systems in evidence across elevated, south facing slopes

The A9 strikes through, and is often hidden by, the hummocks and terraces of deposit on the south eastern side of the strath

To the north of the River, the old road hugs the sinuous line of the break in slope, its slight elevation offering extensive views, while the railway sits on top of an embankment above the flood plain

1.1.2 *Landscape experience*

The broad scale and expansiveness of this wide stretch of strath is reinforced by the relative openness maintained by the cultivated fields of the floodplain and the low surrounding topography

The complex, intricate terrain of interlocking hummocks and terraces enclosing small areas of wetland, pools and farmed flats along the south eastern edge of the strath creates a small scale landscape which contrasts with the more expansive main valley floor. It is easily experienced from the A9.

1.1.3 *Relationship to adjacent character areas*

The openness of the strath allows frequent views of the adjacent character areas, particularly the more mountainous hinterland of the Monadhliath and the Cairngorms.

1.1.4 *Assessment of distinctiveness*

The small scale, complex terrain of hummocks, terraces, wetland and cultivated flats and its juxtaposition with the simple level floodplain of the River Spey is a key feature of the area.



The expanse of the grazed strath – the railway is elevated on and embankment



Hummocky terrain and terraces of glacial-fluvial deposit on the southern side of the strath



The A9 cuts through the hummocky terrain



The road between Kingussie and Newtonmore hugs the bottom of a well defined terrace