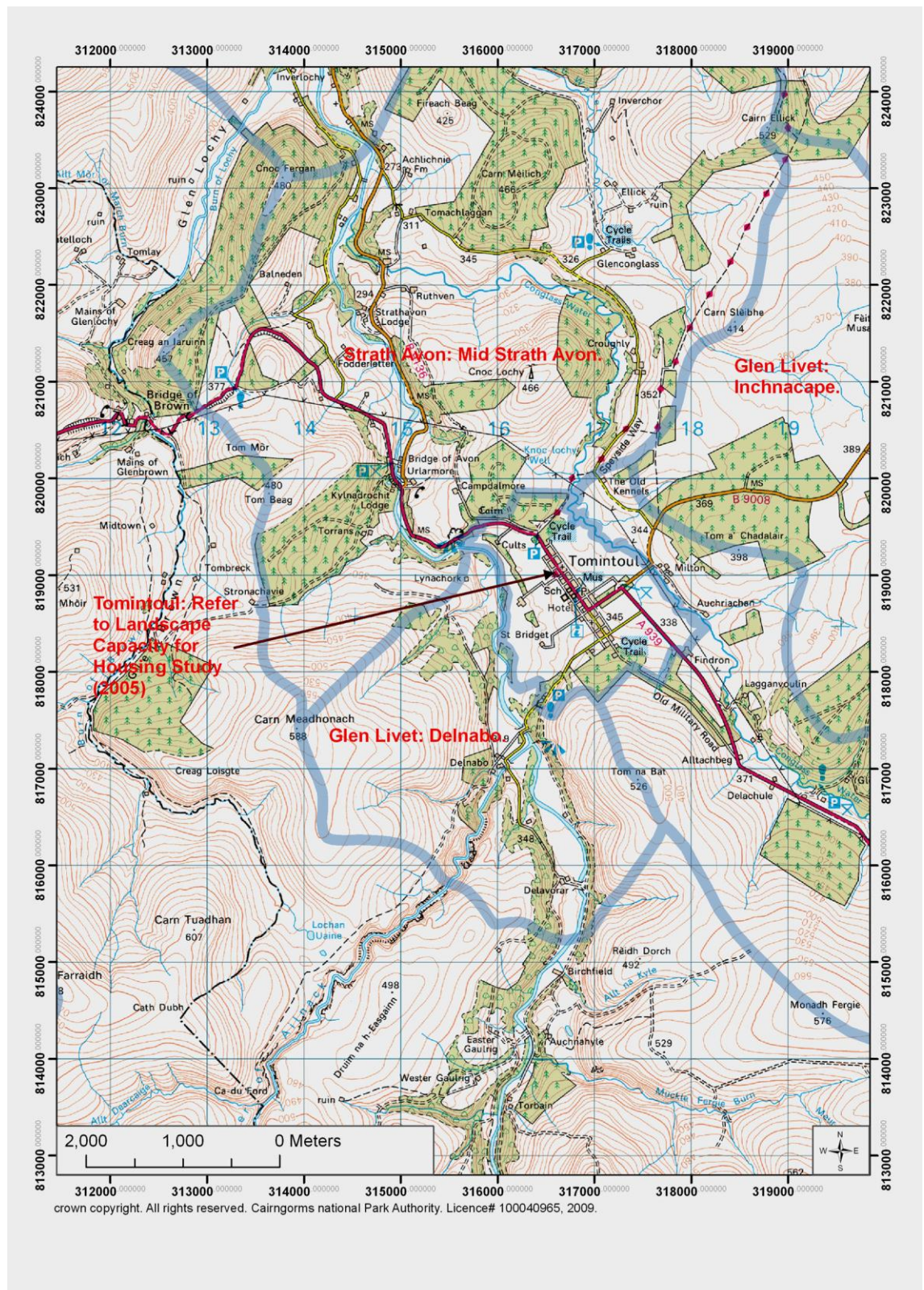


I.1 Glen Livet: Delnabo



1.1.1 *Landscape Character*

These are the upper reaches of Strath Avon, where the river has carved its way through a narrow valley northwards to eventually form a wide strath with a level floodplain just west of Tomintoul. The floodplain is well defined by long, flat topped terraces and steep slopes which rise abruptly from the level floor of the strath. To the south west lies the mouth of the steep sided Ailnack gorge, deeply cut into Devonian sediments. Extensive birch-dominated broadleaved woodland, and some conifer woodland, occupy the steeper side slopes of the glen, reinforcing enclosure of the floodplain. Policy woodland, associated with Delnabo Lodge, adds to the woodland diversity. The strath is subdivided into large, often bright green and fertile looking, regularly shaped late 18th/19th century improved fields, which enclose grassland and some arable crops. These occasionally, although rarely, extend up onto the slopes above the floodplain, where there are better drained hummocky deposits. There are traces of the curved field boundaries and early enclosures of pre-improvement and prehistoric field systems as well as later farmsteads on well-drained hummocky deposits and sheltered upper slopes within the inner glen. A dispersed pattern of farms, lodges, and other buildings occupy the terraces above the floodplain, generally sitting at the very edge of a terrace adjacent to a tributary overlooking the strath, sheltered by surrounding woodland. The narrow public road hugs the undulating landform and generally follows a break in slope. The public road extends only a short distance up this glen, but there is a car park at Queens Cairn, overlooking the river, where a bridge crosses the river and there is a cluster of built estate-style features associated with Delnabo. Remaining access is on estate roads and tracks, which link the many dispersed hill side farmsteads and provide some access onto the flanks of the higher hills.

1.1.2 *Landscape experience*

There is a strong sense of enclosure within the inner glen, created by the pronounced containment of the valley sides which is often reinforced by woodland. This secluded glen is quiet and 'tucked away'. The access to the dramatic Ailnack Gorge, perhaps the most spectacular canyon in the eastern Grampians, is concealed behind

Delnabo Lodge, reinforcing the sense of discovery when it is encountered

The narrow road is elevated as it leaves Tomintoul, offering fine views of the wide floodplain at the north end of this strath

1.1.3 *Relationship to adjacent character areas*

This sheltered glen and fertile floodplain is a marked contrast to the more exposed moors and open landscapes around much of the rest of Tomintoul.

1.1.4 *Assessment of distinctiveness*

The presence of the river and the abrupt transition from the flat flood plain to the steep enclosure of the valley sides are a particularly dramatic feature of this glen. This is further emphasised by the difference in vegetation pattern, with bright green fields on the flat floodplain, extensive semi-natural broadleaved woodland on the enclosing side slopes and farmsteads perched on the edges of the glen.



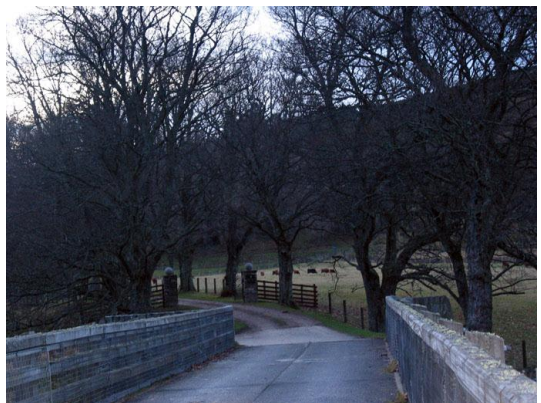
The wide mouth of this floodplain just west of Tomintoul



The floodplain narrows as the glen extends south into the hills, with the improved fields on the floor of the valley



Occasionally, the improved fields extend up onto better drained rolling terrain. There is extensive birch woodland along steeper side slopes



An avenue at Delnabo, and built features associated with the estate