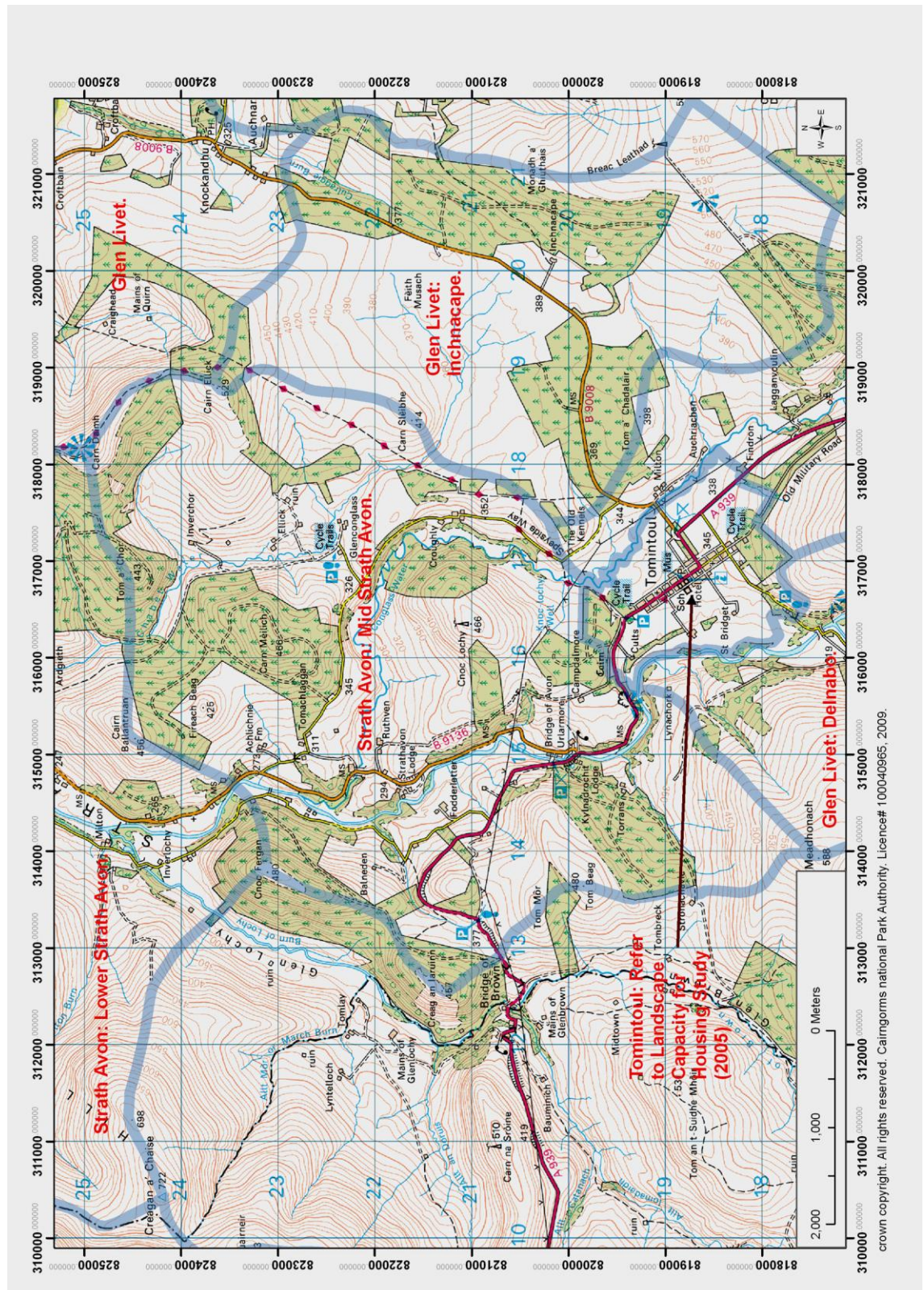


I.1 Strath Avon: Mid Strath Avon



1.1.1 *Landscape Character*

The quartzite bedrock locally forms smooth, rounded upper slopes and low hills within this complex topography

The upper slopes rise above narrow, deep glens where fluvial deposits have been partially worked to create narrow floodplains

Sandy soils, locally covered by deposits and in places underpinned by limestone and black schist, create a more fertile soil than that which lies across surrounding metamorphic rocks, allowing fields to extend quite far up the side slopes

Conifer woodland on the upper slopes extends over the hill summits on former heather moorland

Broadleaved woodland is established on steep sided slopes, including banks of possible former river terraces, and along the narrow glens of the watercourses

Fenced, late 18th/19th century improved fields of arable and improved grassland occupy well-drained lower slopes, but also extend up onto elevated, gently graded slopes, shallow bowls and terraces.

These higher fields are in places reverting to unimproved grassland.

The side glen of the Conglass Water is an exception to the more generally farmed landscape, as the river meanders across a level floodplain of wetland and rush

Farms are generally located on level terraces or natural breaks in slope on the upper slopes, surrounded by fields

There is a widespread network of narrow, winding roads which follow the glen floors or traverse the upper slopes along an elevated contour line

1.1.2 *Landscape experience*

The topographical complexity of this area creates small scale enclosure along the glen floors

This complexity is easily experienced from the narrow roads and farm access routes along the valley floor which wind around hummocks and along terraces

There are contrasting panoramic views from the upper slopes, including from elevated roads

1.1.3 *Relationship to adjacent character areas*

This complex topography of this area contrasts with the relative simplicity of the linear lower reaches of Glen Avon to the north. The intensity and extent of the improved fields, farmed land and conifer woodland also contrasts with the more simple, moorland dominated landscapes to the east.

1.1.4 *Assessment of distinctiveness*

This area is strongly influenced by the complex topography which creates a landscape of intimate scale. This complexity is complemented by the diverse pattern of strongly

rectilinear fields of varied crops combined with different types of woodland, which includes very naturalistic as well as strongly managed elements.



The complex topography, with the narrow river valley hidden in broadleaved woodland, and fields extending over upper slopes.



Conifer woodland over the summits of rounded hills and smooth slopes improved pasture fields



Along the valley of the Conglass Water, the meandering river has worked deposits into a level floodplain of wetland and rushy pasture



Extensive fields system, enclosed in the 18th/19th centuries with farms often located on the upper slopes surrounded by fields