



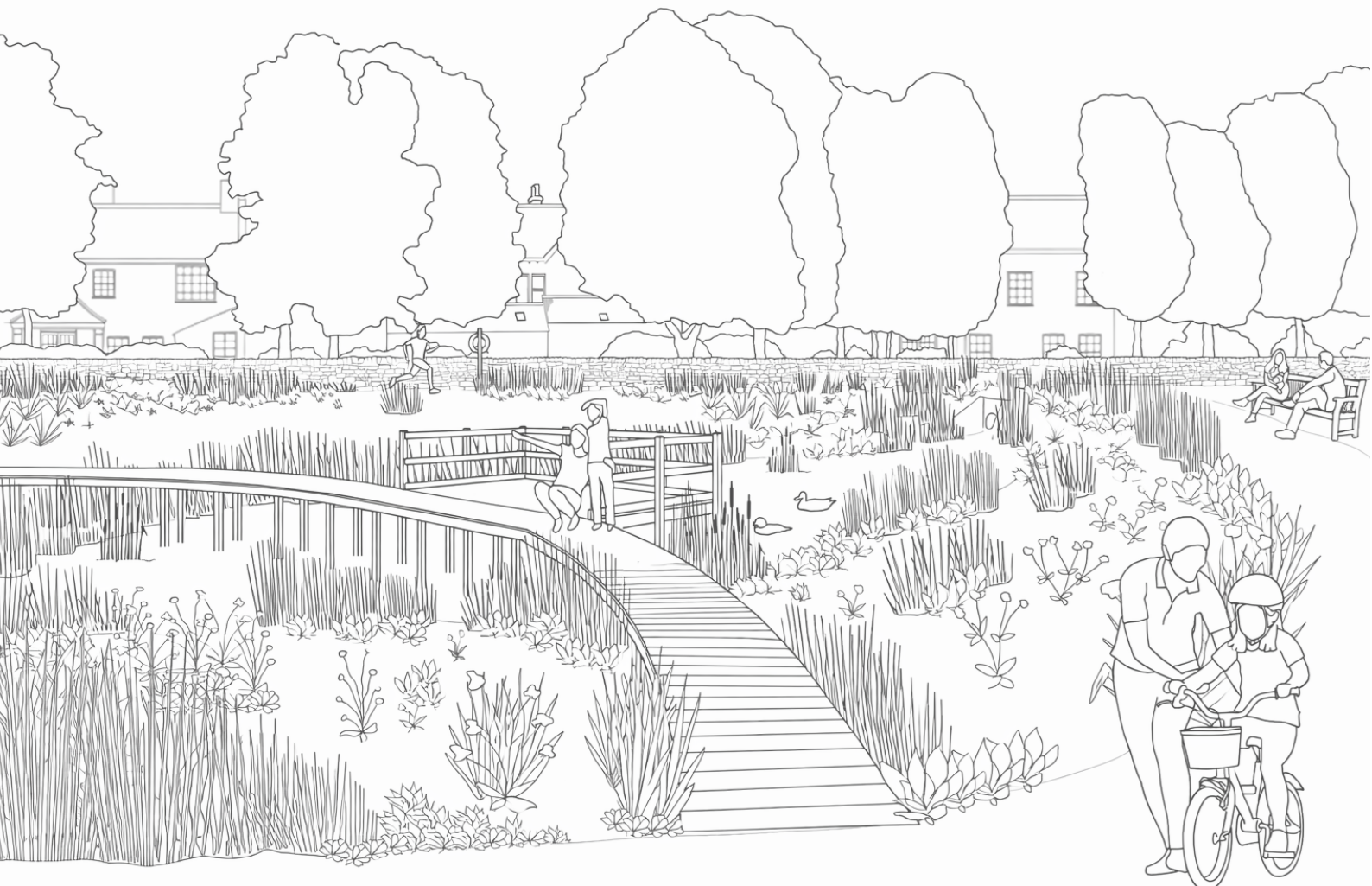
Cairngorms
National Park Authority
Ùghdarras Pàirc Nàiseanta a'
Mhonaidh Ruaidh

Sustainable places

Schedule 6: Landscape

Cairngorms National Park Local Development Plan: Evidence Report

March 2026





Schedule 6: Landscape

March 2026

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Requirements addressed in this schedule

Table 1 Information required by the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997, as amended (CNPA003), regarding the issue addressed in this schedule.

Section	Requirement
Section 15(5)	The principal [physical], [cultural], economic, social, built heritage and [environmental] characteristics of the district.
Section 15(5)(f)	Any change which the planning authority think may occur in relation to any of the matters mentioned in paragraphs (a) to (eb).
Section 16(2)(a)	to take into account— <ol style="list-style-type: none">The National Planning Framework andAny local outcomes improvement plan (within the meaning of section 6 of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015) for the part of their district to which the local development plan relates,Any registered local place plan (see schedule 19) that is for the part of their district to which the local development plan relates.
Section 16(2)(b)	Are to have regard to such information and considerations as may be prescribed.
Section 16(2)(c)	May have regard to such other information and considerations as appear to them to be relevant.
Section 16B(3)(a)	The evidence report is to set out the planning authority's view on the matters listed in section 15(5) for land in the part of the authority's district to which the local development plan will relate,
Section 16B(3)(e)	Include such other matters as are prescribed.
Section 16B(4)(c)	The evidence report is also to include a statement on the extent to which the views expressed under paragraphs (a) and (b) have been taken into account in the report.
Section 264A	In the exercise, with respect to any land in a National Park, of any power under the planning Acts, special attention shall be paid to the desirability of exercising the power consistently with the National Park Plan as adopted under section 12(7)(a) of the National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000 (asp 10).



Links to evidence

International documents

- CNPA690 - IUCN Management Categories of Protected Areas

Legislation

- CNPA003 - Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997
- CNPA004 - National Park (Scotland) Act 2000
- CNPA634 - Natural Environment (Scotland) Bill as passed

National documents

- CNPA008 - National Planning Framework 4
- CNPA015 - Scotland's Landscape Charter
- CNPA648 - National Planning Framework 4 Explanatory Note November 2022

Key agency documents

- CNPA017 - Cairngorms Special Landscape Qualities
- CNPA018 - National Scenic Areas
- CNPA021 - Wild Land Areas
- CNPA022 - Mapping of Scotland's Wildness and Wild Land: Non technical Description of the Methodology
- CNPA603 - Special Landscape Qualities – Guidance on assessing effects

National Park Authority documents

- CNPA010 - Cairngorms National Park Partnership Plan 2022
- CNPA016 - Cairngorms Local Development Plan 2021
- CNPA019 - Cairngorms Landscape Toolkit
- CNPA020 - Cairngorms Landscape Character Assessment
- CNPA024 - Mapping hill tracks in the Cairngorms National Park
- CNPA026 - Cairngorms Local Development Plan Interactive Map Engagement Report
- CNPA027 - Cairngorms Youth Action Team Place Standard Tool Engagement Report
- CNPA028 - Cairngorms National Park Gypsy / Traveller Engagement Report 2024
- CNPA528 - Heritage Horizons – Cairngorms 2030
- CNPA681 - Kingussie High School Higher Criminology Students Place Standard Tool Engagement 2024



- CNPA682 - Kingussie High School S1 Geography Students Place Standard Tool Engagement 2024
- CNPA683 - Kingussie High School S3 Geography Students Place Standard Tool Engagement 2024
- CNPA833 - Cairngorms Local development plan place standard tool engagement with Kingussie High School Youth Forum 2025
- CNPA834 - Local development plan place standard tool engagement with the Cairngorms National Park Junior Rangers 2025
- CNPA1104 - Cairngorms National Park Local Development Plan engagement – gamification approach 2025
- CNPA1105 - Local Development Plan engagement – Planning Power with Cairngorms 2030
- CNPA1346 - Topic: Landscape – engagement version

Local authority documents

- CNPA638 - 2024 – 2027 Highland Outcome Improvement Plan
- CNPA636 - Aberdeenshire Local Outcomes Improvement Plan 2017 – 2027 (website)
- CNPA637 - Angus Community Plan 2022 – 2030
- CNPA639 - Moray Local Outcomes Improvement Plan v2
- CNPA640 - Perth and Kinross Community Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan) 2022 – 2032
- CNPA1091 - 2024 – 2027 Highland Outcome Improvement Plan – Delivery Plan

Community action plans

- CNPA011 - Community action plans
- CNPA065 - Grantown-on-Spey Community Action Plan: Looking to 2030
- CNPA121 - Braemar Community Action Plan 2017
- CNPA122 - Carrbridge Community Action Plan: Looking to 2030
- CNPA125 - Dalwhinnie Community Action Plan: Looking forward to 2030
- CNPA131 - Nethy Bridge Community Action Plan: Looking to 2030
- CNPA132 - Newtonmore Community Action Plan: Looking to 2030
- CNPA133 - Strathdon Community Action Plan: Looking to 2030
- CNPA331 - Dulnain Bridge Community Action Plan: Looking to 2030

Data sources

- CNPA023 - Cairngorms Dark Sky Park



- CNPA174 - Cellmapper
- CNPA649 - Dorenell Wind Farm Extension and Biodiversity Enhancement Plan
- CNPA650 - Balnespick Wind Farm
- CNPA930 - Onshore Windfarm Proposals

Consultation material

- CNPA604 - Topic Landscape – Interim Consultation – NatureScot Comments
- CNPA1340 - Evidence report engagement responses

Summary of evidence

Policy Context

National Planning Framework 4

National Planning Framework 4 (CNPA008) recognises Scotland's rich heritage, culture and outstanding environment as national assets which support our economy, identity, health and wellbeing.

The identification and protection of nationally important landscape assets are provided in Policy 4 Natural Places with the intent to protect, restore and enhance landscapes and to ensure they are managed in a sustainable way. The protection Policy 4 affords applies to both National Parks and the National Scenic Areas that sit within them.

Policy 4c has two stages of the policy test for managing change from development proposals and has a high level of protection, where development will only be supported where:

- The objectives of designation and the overall integrity of the areas will not be compromised: or
- Any significant adverse effects on the qualities for which the area has been designated are clearly outweighed by social, environmental or economic benefits of national importance.

Wild Land Areas (as identified on NatureScot's 2014 mapping) are afforded some protection within Policy 4. As a protected landscape and not a designation in statute, the level of protection is less than that for the National Park or National Scenic Areas and applies strictly to the defined boundary as indicated in Policy 4g. Within the Wild Land Area, the level of protection applies only insofar as assessments of renewable energy developments can illustrate that they support meeting defined targets for



generation, or where proposals are small scale development linked to crofting or fragile communities. Buffer zones around wild land will not be applied, and the effects of development outwith wild land areas will not be a significant consideration in the determination of development proposals.

Policy 11 Energy requires local development plans to realise the areas full potential for electricity and heat from renewable, low carbon and zero emission resources by identifying a range of opportunities for energy development. This is to encourage, promote and facilitate all forms of renewable development onshore. The exception to the National Park (and National Scenic Areas in Policy 11b) is that wind farms proposed in these designations will not be supported¹.

Policy 14 Design, quality and place gives a strong steer of the importance of a design led approach to encourage, promote, and facilitate well designed and successful places. This requires local development plans to be place based and created in line with the Place Principle adopted by the Scottish Government illustrating commitment to a collaborative design and inclusive approach with local communities.

According to Policy 14 the spatial strategy of local development plans should be underpinned by the six qualities of successful places and provide clear expectations for design, quality and place, taking account of local context, characteristics, and connectivity. The production of detailed design guidance, using formats such as development briefs and masterplans, is expected and encouraged. Use of the Place Standard Tool is expected in the preparation of the local development plan and design guidance, and to engage with communities and other stakeholders. National Planning Framework 4 sees the connection of this policy with all other policies in the Framework, imparting a strong steer on the importance of siting and design to deliver sustainable growth, even in the context of the global climate crisis and a just transition to net zero. This would draw on information gathered through approaches including Place Standard assessments.

Other policies which raise new or particularly significant issues directing change within the National Planning Framework are:

Significant expansion of the existing woodland resource in the National Park is proposed. Policy 6 Forestry, Woodland and trees seeks to protect and expand forests, woodland and trees and ensure their sustainable management. This policy requires the

¹ See Schedule 9: Energy for detailed consideration of these matters.



production of an up to date Forest and Woodland Strategy. National Planning Framework 4 cites both Policies 4 and 6 as being key connections and which should influence the siting and design of the forestry and woodland proposals recognising and responding to the Special Landscape Qualities of the National Park².

Policy 21 Play Recreation and Sport place a requirement in the local development plan to identify sites for sports, play and outdoor recreation for people of all ages. This is particularly salient in a National Park where one of the four distinct aims, as amended by the Natural Environment Bill (CNPA634) is to promote the understanding and enjoyment of the areas natural and cultural heritage, including enjoyment in the form of recreation. The existing management and development of new facilities and spaces should be based on an understanding of the needs and demand in the community and informed by the planning authorities Play Sufficiency Assessment and Open Space Strategy. For the purposes of the Open Space Strategy, National Parks are not considered to be a planning authority and therefore are not required to do this. In any event open space assessment information is not required to inform the evidence report but is required for the new Local Development Plan. The National Park are required to produce an audit of play sufficiency, which will be developed in consultation with the relevant local authorities.

Linked to this Policy 20b considers the Open Space Strategy to be an appropriate means for the design of blue and green infrastructure to take account of existing provision and new requirements and network connections for well designed and integrated infrastructure. In the preparation and publishing of an Open Space Strategy, National Parks are not considered to be a planning authority and as such are not required to produce one³.

There are no specific policies addressing the development of private roads and ways within National Planning Framework 4.

Legislation and national documents

National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000

The National Park has four distinct aims as set out in The National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000 (CNPA004). As outlined in Schedule 1: Plan outcomes, these will be amended by

² See Schedule 5: Natural heritage for detailed consideration of these matters.

³ See Schedule 17: Play, recreation and sport for detailed consideration of matters related to Policies 20 and 21.



the Natural Environment Scotland (Scotland) Bill (CNPA634) once enacted. These are, as to be amended by the Natural Environment (Scotland) Bill:

- To conserve and enhance the area's natural and cultural heritage.
- To promote sustainable management and use of the area's natural resources.
- To promote public understanding and enjoyment of the area's natural and cultural heritage.
- To promote sustainable economic, social and cultural development of the area's communities.

All of the aims are relevant to the matters discussed in this schedule. The aims are all to be pursued collectively. However, if there is conflict between the first aim and any of the others, greater weight is given to the first aim (as set out in Section 9(6) of the 2000 Act).

Scottish Landscape Charter

The Charter (CNPA015) sets out a vision on the importance of Scotland's landscapes. With regard to development, it recommends that developers' meet best practice standards, and ensure new development enhances landscapes and townscapes, and results in high quality surroundings' and:

- Ensure that the siting, design and use of materials in new development are in keeping with, or contribute positively to, the local townscape and landscape.
- Seek views from the community on development proposals at an early stage, and look to incorporate their aspirations for their local landscape.
- Design the landscape with future climate change in mind, while providing greenspace and maximising opportunities for walking and cycling.
- Ensure that your organisation has access to landscape expertise which, for new development, will deliver integrated design, implementation and management that is sensitive to the landscape.

This approach is supported by the National Park Partnership Plan (CNPA010) and may inform the preparation of the Proposed Plan, particularly through promoting good design, ensuring that development does not adversely affect the Special Landscape Qualities of the National Park (see page 13), and incorporating community views into the drafting of place based information.



National Park Authority documents

National Park Partnership Plan 2022

The Partnership Plan (CNPA010) sets out the vision and overarching strategy for managing the National Park and provides the strategic context for the local development plan. The Partnership Plan seeks to strike the right balance to ensure that the National Park strives for both nature and people in the future. The landscapes of the National Park are the fundamental way people (communities and visitors alike) experience all that the Cairngorms has to offer, its nature, culture and settlements.

The National Park also has a significant role to play in delivering the policy ambitions of Scottish Government and is pursuing several ambitious projects like Heritage Horizons: Cairngorms 2030. Across these projects Heritage Horizons will bring about transformational change in the Cairngorms, benefiting people's health and wellbeing, delivering on proposals to tackle climate change and enhancing nature across the National Park. Whilst all the projects are relevant to the appreciation of the landscapes in the National Park, in particular two projects have direct or significant implications:

- Landscape and Communities
- Effective Community engagement and outreach

Within the Partnership Plan, Policy A4 seeks to conserve and enhance the Special Landscape Qualities of the National Park. Within this the Partnership Plan places a particular emphasis on the conservation and enhancement of the special qualities of wildness and dark skies. Woodland expansion is supported where it maximises opportunities for long term enhancement of the Special Landscape Qualities through good design. Policy A4 also seeks to enhance the opportunities for communities and visitors alike to enjoy and experience the landscapes of the National Park. In open moorland, Policy A4 applies a presumption against new constructed tracks. Where there is agreement for their provision, new tracks are to be constructed to a high standard.

Wild Land Areas within the National Park are identified as a Special Landscape Quality of the National Park and as such have a higher level of protection than that afforded by National Planning Framework 4 Policy 4g. Areas beyond the wild land boundary, but still within the National Park and which still retain high scores of wildness and contribute significantly to the experience of the wildness Special Landscape Quality, will also be given a higher level of protection than that afforded by National Planning Framework 4 Policy 4g.



Proposals for constructed private roads and ways in the upland landscapes of the National Park are currently considered against Partnership Plan Policy A4 (f) and Local Development Plan Policy 5.2. The inclusion of a policy to manage the numbers and improve the siting and design of all tracks reflected that this is a significant development issue for the National Park. The National Park remains of the opinion that the policy on tracks should remain in place.

Local authority documents

Local outcome improvement plans

Local outcome improvement plans outline key priorities for each community board area that have been identified through a range of engagement processes and are based on the needs of local communities. They set out an approach to working with and empowering our local communities, enabling them to contribute to, influence and shape locally identified actions around the priorities to achieve improved outcomes for their areas. The five local authorities which overlap the Cairngorms National Park all have individual Local outcome improvement plans (in some cases referred to as community plans).

While the Cairngorms National Park Partnership Plan (CNPA010) is the source of the vision for the local development plan (as explained in Schedule 1: Plan outcomes) the local development plan may support the delivery of the vision and priorities of local outcome improvement plans. A summary of issues relating to this schedule for each local authority are set out below.

Aberdeenshire Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2017 – 2027

The Aberdeenshire Community Planning Partnership's Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (CNPA636) sets a 10 year vision. One of two current priorities agreed in September 2024 is place based community planning. While there are no local place plans registered covering any areas in the National Park, the Proposed Plan will have regard to the community action plans.

Angus Community Plan 2022 – 2030

Landscape issues are not considered in the Angus community plan (CNPA637).

2024 – 2027 Highland Outcome Improvement Plan

Landscape issues are not considered in the Highland outcome improvement plan (CNPA638). There are no references to landscape issues in the Highland outcome improvement plan delivery plan (CNPA1091).



Moray Local Outcome Improvement Plan v2 (2016 – 2026)

Landscape issues are not considered in the Moray Planning Partnership's local outcome improvement plan (CNPA639).

Perth and Kinross Community Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan) 2022 – 2032

Landscape issues are not considered in the Perth and Kinross Community Planning Partnership's community plan (CNPA640).

Community action plans

There are currently 18 community action plans in place across the National Park (CNPA011). Whilst there is some variation in content and style, all the action plans included some level of community engagement, through a survey and / or workshop days ('Big Conversations'). Most of the action plans used the approach outlined in the Place Standard and the National Standards for Community Engagement to assist in involving the community and shaping the action plan. This improved inclusivity and representation of views and helped to generate a dialogue about what is important in their community and what actions to take.

The majority of the action plans recognised the importance of their local landscapes and valued them as such. Key factors that are relevant to many of the communities outlined in the action plans are:

- The location of the communities within the mountainous setting and within the scenic Cairngorms National Park.
- Spectacular views and scenery.
- The rural setting and natural environment, typically surrounded by hills and often situated in a strath beside a river or confluence of rivers – many natural features are important to setting and sense of place (including Creag Choinnich (Kenneth's Crag) at Braemar (CNPA121), Ben Alder at Dalwhinnie (CNPA125), Roche Moutonnée at Dulnain Bridge (CNPA331), the Anagach Woods at Grantown-on-Spey (CNPA065), Abernethy Caledonian Pine Forest at Nethy Bridge (CNPA131), Newtonmore at the confluence of the Rivers Spey, Calder and Allt Laraidh (CNPA132), Ben Newe at Strathdon (CNPA133)).
- Iconic landmark buildings and structures (including Blair Castle (CNPA064), old packhorse bridge at Carrbridge (CNPA122), Glenbuchat and Corgarff Castles along Strathdon (CNPA133), Castle Roy and the Telford Bridges at Nethy Bridge (CNPA131), Dalwhinnie Distillery (CNPA125), Braemar Castle (CNPA121)).




- Characterful historic centres of traditional stone built houses, many from the Victorian era.
- Quiet and peaceful character of many settlements.
- Remoteness and surrounding wild land, surrounded by 'unspoilt and unpopulated countryside, with dark skies.
- Immediate access to the surrounding landscape of woodland, heather moorland, mountains, rivers – strong emphasis on the high quality of outdoor life and links to Long Distance Routes – the Deeside Way, the East Highland Way, Badenoch Way.
- Countryside that supports a rich and diverse flora and fauna.
- Inspiring landscape influencing poetry, songs, storytelling and art and, more recently, television and film.

Baseline of landscape matters

This schedule summarises a number of matters including the Special Landscape Qualities of the National Park, National Scenic Areas, wildness, dark skies, private roads and ways, wind energy and digital infrastructure.

There are links between this policy area and:

- Schedule 1: Plan outcomes
- Schedule 2: Policy monitoring
- Schedule 3: Site assessment methodology
- Schedule 4: Climate change
- Schedule 5: Natural heritage
- Schedule 7: Historic and cultural heritage
- Schedule 8: Land use, soil and resources 
- Schedule 9: Energy
- Schedule 16: Blue and green infrastructure
- Schedule 20: Digital infrastructure.

The Cairngorms National Park

At 4,528 square kilometres, and comprising 6% of Scotland's land area, the Cairngorms National Park is the UK's largest protected landscape. It is one of only two National Parks in Scotland. It is without doubt one of the United Kingdom's finest montane environments and possesses a range of special qualities, often unique to the area, imparting a strong natural and cultural identity. Furthermore, nearly half of the National Park's land area is classified as being 'wild land'.



The National Park is an International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Category V protected area, which is a protected landscape 'where the interaction of people and nature over time has produced an area of distinct character with significant, ecological, biological, cultural and scenic value: and where safeguarding the integrity of this interaction is vital to protecting and sustaining the area and its associated nature conservation and other values' (CNPA690). The safeguarding of the National Park's landscape is therefore an important factor in the development of the Proposed Plan and its spatial strategy⁴ and core to pursuing the National Parks aims (CNPA004).

Special Landscape Qualities of the Cairngorms National Park

In 2010 work was conducted to identify the Special Landscape Qualities of the Cairngorms National Park landscape, carried out by NatureScot and the Park Authority (CNPA017). The Special Qualities identified are drawn on the distinct landscape and visual character of the National Park, but it is how these qualities are experienced and valued by communities within, and visitors to, the National Park that make them important to our understanding of the National Park's place and identity. While most landscape qualities are appreciated in daylight, dark skies are an important characteristic for many areas of the National Park that contribute to a sense of wildness.

The current Cairngorms National Park Local Development Plan 2021 (CNPA016) policy 5.1 states that 'There will be a presumption against any development that does not conserve or enhance the landscape character and Special Landscape Qualities of the Cairngorms National Park including wildness and the setting of the proposed development'. This policy approach, which is supported by the National Park Partnership Plan (CNPA010), should be carried forward into the development of the Proposed Plan.

A key way that this may be achieved is through the use of the spatial strategy to focus development and using available development land in the most efficient way. This is particularly important when considered alongside other environmental factors and constraints, such as the protected sites and other natural heritage priorities⁵ and flood risk⁶. An efficient use of land includes measures such as not allocating more land than necessary to meet need (for example, housing land) and discouraging low density development on allocated sites.

⁴ See Schedule 1: Plan outcomes for further information on the spatial strategy.

⁵ See Schedule 5: Natural heritage for further information.

⁶ See Schedule 19 Flood risk and water management for further information.



This approach is consistent with the sustainable development principles set out within National Planning Framework 4 (CNPA008), the National Performance Framework (CNPA007) and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (CNPA002). This approach is in accordance with the National Park aims (CNPA004), in particular the first aim ‘to conserve and enhance the area’s natural and cultural heritage’, which according to Section 9(6) of the Act is to be given greater weight if conflict arises in the collective pursuit of all aims.

Table 1 provides a summary of the Special Landscape Qualities identified. Full details can be found in the Special Landscape Qualities of the Cairngorms National Park via (CNPA017):

- <https://cairngorms.co.uk/uploads/documents/Local-Development-Plan-Evidence-Report/External-documents/CNPA017-Cairngorms-Special-Landscape-Qualities.pdf>

Table 1 Summary of the Special Qualities of the Cairngorms National Park (CNPA017).

General Qualities	
iv.	Magnificent mountains towering over moorland, forest, and strath
v.	Vastness of space, scale, and height
vi.	Strong juxtaposition of contrasting landscapes
vii.	A landscape of layers, from inhabited strath to remote, uninhabited upland
viii.	‘The harmony of complicated curves’
ix.	Landscape both cultural and natural
The Mountains and Plateaux	Trees, Woods and Forests
x.	The unifying presence of the central mountains
xi.	An imposing massif of strong dramatic character
xii.	The unique plateaux of vast scale, distinctive landforms and exposed, boulder strewn high ground
xiii.	The surrounding hills
xiv.	The drama of deep corries
xv.	Exceptional glacial landforms
xvii.	Dark and venerable pine forest
xviii.	Light and airy birch woods
xix.	Parkland and policy woodlands
xx.	Long association with forestry



xvi. Snowscapes	
Moorlands	Wildlife and Nature
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> xxi. Extensive moorland, linking the farmland, woodland and the high tops xxii. A patchwork of muirburn 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> xxiii. Dominance of natural landforms xxiv. Extensive tracts of natural vegetation xxv. Association with iconic animals xxvi. Wild land xxvii. Wildness
Glens and Straths	Visual and Sensory Qualities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> xxviii. Steep glens and high passes xxix. Broad, farmed straths xxx. Renowned rivers xxxi. Beautiful lochs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> xxxii. Layers of receding ridge lines xxxiii. Grand panoramas and framed views xxxiv. A landscape of many colours xxxv. Dark skies xxxvi. Attractive and contrasting textures xxxvii. The dominance of natural sounds
Culture and History	Recreation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> xxxviii. Distinctive planned towns xxxix. Vernacular stone buildings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> xl. Dramatic, historical routes xli. The wistfulness of abandoned settlements xlii. Focal cultural landmarks of castles, distilleries and bridges xliii. The Royal connection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> xliv. A landscape of opportunities xl. Spirituality

Guidance has been prepared by NatureScot, the Cairngorms National Park Authority and the Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park Authority which sets out how to assess effects on the Special Landscape Qualities of Scotland's National Scenic Areas and National Park. This may be used in the assessment of effects on Special Landscape Qualities where a proposed development or other land use change is likely to result in



significant adverse effects on one or more Special Landscape Qualities within a National Scenic Area or National Park. This can be accessed here (CNPA603):

- <https://cairngorms.co.uk/uploads/documents/Local-Development-Plan-Evidence-Report/External-documents/CNPA603-Special-Landscape-Qualities-Guidance-on-assessing-effects.pdf>

The Proposed Plan may be informed by this guidance. The Proposed Plan may also direct those seeking planning permission to use the guidance in the development of their proposals.

Cairngorms 2030 – Landscape and communities’ project

This project explores how communities of place and interest perceive, experience and value the landscapes of the National Park, and establishes these community preferences for landscape change (CNPA528). The current suite of Special Landscape Qualities was devised through the application of a technical methodology by professional consultants. Community engagement on this work was not undertaken at that time. However, this project seeks to engage communities directly into the development of an updated suite of Special Landscape Qualities (that may draw on the existing work) with a programme of engagement extending over the next five years.

This innovative work has significant implications for how the Special Landscape Qualities are presented going forward. Work has already begun considering how to spatially map some of the Special Landscape Qualities, providing a more rigorous and transparent evidence base on which to draw from and in turn to inform the local development plan. This thinking will be developed throughout the next five years of the delivery phase of this project.

Draft spatially mapped Special Landscape Qualities are being tested, which illustrate where Special Landscape Qualities are located, and where these qualities are particularly strongly represented or ‘enhanced’. The Special Landscape Qualities include:

- Wildness and Wild Land – this approach uses the four components of the NatureScot wildness mapping (ruggedness, naturalness, remoteness, and absence of human artefacts) but are mapped using a simplified method which should be easily repeatable but importantly is tailored in approach specific to the National Park.
- Dark Skies and the spatial mapping of levels of light intensity.
- Magnificent Mountains.
- Juxtaposition of Settled and Rural landscapes.



- Steep Glens and High Passes.
- Heritage Paths and Bridges.
- Grand panoramas, Elevated Views, and Distinctive Scenery.

The mapping will help inform the preparation of the Proposed Plan, particularly through the site assessment process and in the drafting of place based information.

National Scenic Areas

The landscapes of the Cairngorms National Park have long been regarded as worthy of protection, with three National Scenic Areas being designated in 1980 / 1981 (CNPA018). Two, namely the Cairngorm Mountains and Deeside and Lochnagar, are located entirely within the National Park boundary. These National Scenic Areas are largely centred on the highest mountain plateau at its core (Figure 1), but also include lower hills and areas of moorland, woodland, and inhabited strath (NatureScot and Cairngorms National Park Authority, 2010). Combined, the two National Scenic Areas cover an area of around 1,072 square kilometres, which equates to just under 25% of the National Park's land area. The third designation is the Loch Tummel National Scenic Area which very slightly overlaps the National Park's boundary at Killiecrankie, near Blair Atholl. The area of this National Scenic Area within the National Park is insignificant when considering its full dimensions.

National Scenic Areas are designated under Section 263A of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 (CNPA003) and are defined as 'of outstanding scenic value in a national context'. The legislation also states that within a National Scenic Areas 'special attention is to be paid to the desirability of safeguarding or enhancing its character or appearance'. Most new developments within National Scenic Areas need to be accompanied by a design statement, and there are restrictions on certain permitted development rights.

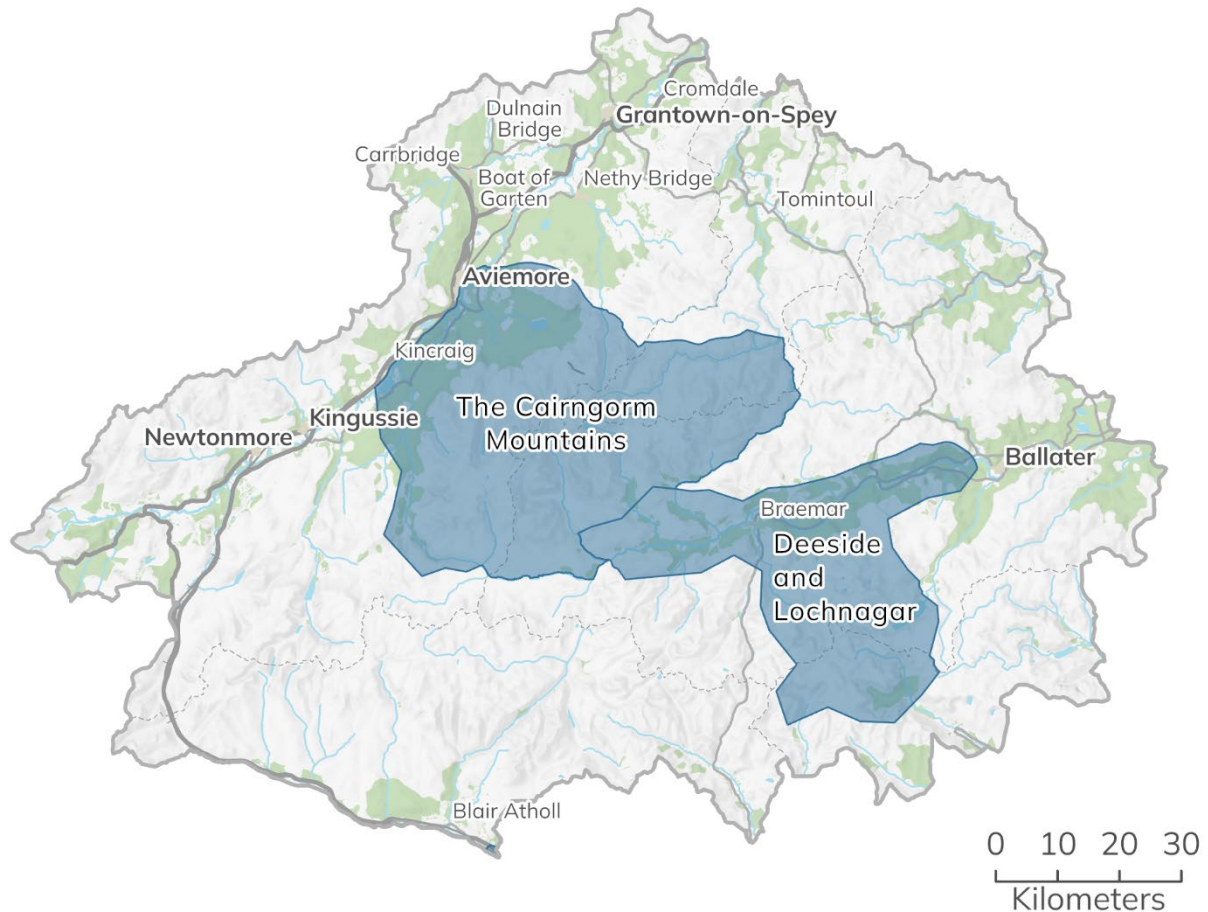


Figure 1 National Scenic Areas within the Cairngorms National Park (CNPA018). Cairngorms National Park Authority © Crown copyright and database rights 2026 Ordnance Survey AC0000821810. Contains data © NatureScot, 2026.

The original descriptions given in the 1978 report Scotland's Scenic Heritage, which lead to the designation of National Scenic Areas, may be found in the appendices of The Special Landscape Qualities of the Cairngorms National Park (NatureScot and Cairngorms National Park Authority, 2010 (CNPA017):

- <https://cairngorms.co.uk/uploads/documents/Local-Development-Plan-Evidence-Report/External-documents/CNPA017-Cairngorms-Special-Landscape-Qualities.pdf>

This information will inform the preparation of the Proposed Plan, particularly through the site assessment process and in the drafting of place based information.



Cairngorms National Park landscape character assessment

The key characteristics of the whole of the Cairngorms National Park have been identified and described within discrete Landscape Character Areas and can be categorised as belonging to either its Uplands or Glens and Straths (Figure 2) (CNPA020). This assessment of Landscape Character Areas provides the building blocks to our understanding of the extent, nature, and variety of character across the National Park, and underpins the identification of the Special Landscape Qualities.

These areas are all different and distinct from each other reflecting local context. However, within each area there is a consistency of character influenced by different factors such as the topography, land use, vegetation patterns, settlement, and the way the landscape is experienced. Within the glens and straths there tends to be more diversity of landscapes in a smaller area, whereas in the uplands the landscape tends to be similar over much larger areas.

The character areas provide a spatial framework for the delivery of the National Park's responsibilities, duties and policies. A description of their key characteristics, the way these are experienced and the key sensitivities of each area, along with a succinct summary of what makes the areas distinctive from elsewhere in the National Park, is provided on the Park Authority's website. It can be accessed via the Park Authority's good practice design and landscape guidance (CNPA019):

- <https://cairngorms.co.uk/uploads/documents/Local-Development-Plan-Evidence-Report/Supporting-Documents/CNPA019-Good-practice-design-and-landscape-issues.pdf>

This information will inform the preparation of the Proposed Plan, particularly through the site assessment process and in the drafting of place based information.



Landscape character area categories

- Glens and straths
- Uplands
- Settlements

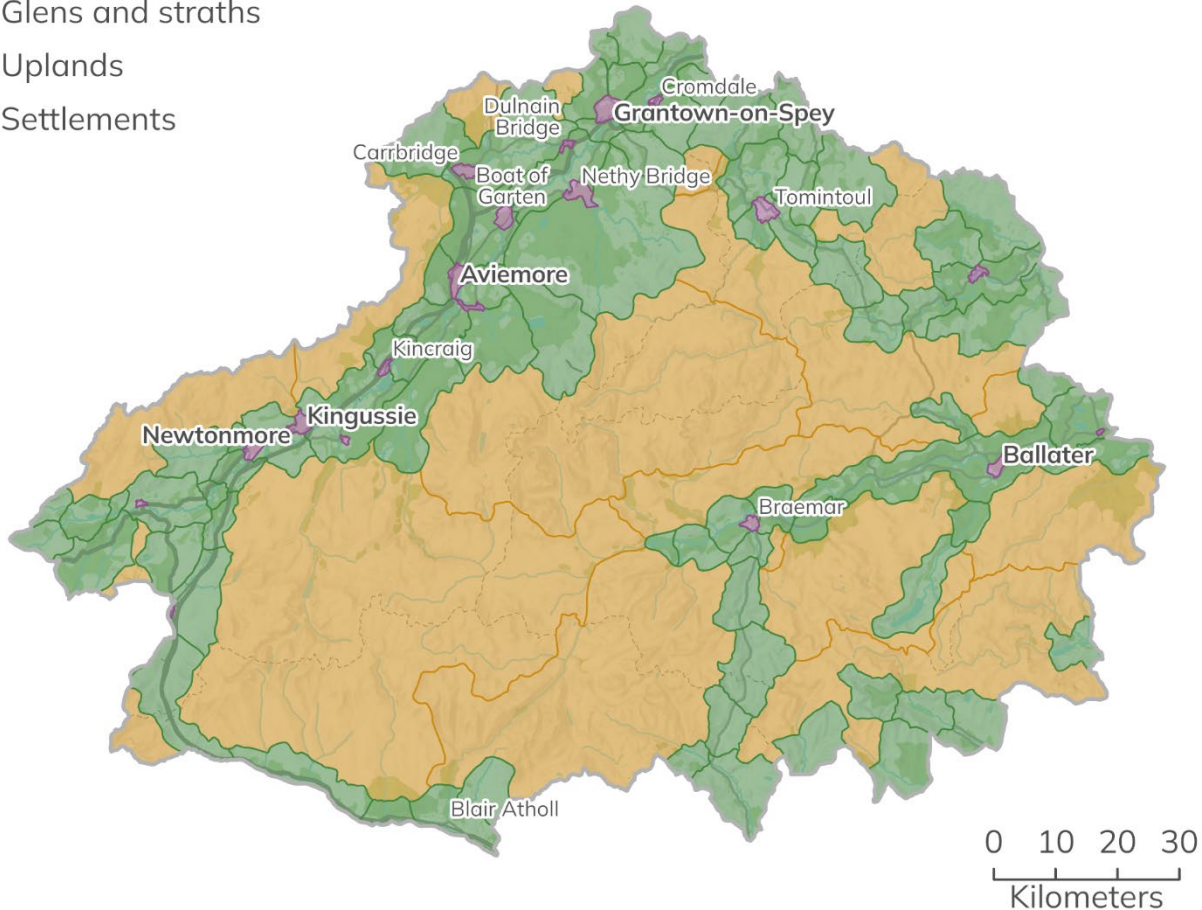


Figure 2 Cairngorms Landscape Character Areas (CNPA020). Cairngorms National Park Authority © Crown copyright and database rights 2026 Ordnance Survey AC0000821810.

Wild land

Based on the work carried out to measure relative wildness, NatureScot published a map of Wild Land Areas (CNPA021), which represent the most extensive areas of high relative wildness in Scotland. This is a national dataset and the areas defined and adjusted based on ensuring national coverage in the scale and location of Wild Land Areas including some of Scotland's island landscapes.

Following this methodology, NatureScot's national mapping of relative wildness (covering the Cairngorms National Park) is provided on their website. This includes mapping of the four attributes which combine to give an overall score of relative wildness.



Around 2,100 km², or 46%, of the Cairngorms National Park has been identified as 'wild land' as defined by its perceived naturalness, rugged or challenging terrain, remoteness from public mechanised access and lack of built modern artefacts.

Five areas (and their descriptions) have been identified within the National Park (Figure 3) namely:

- Rannoch – Nevis – Mamores – Alder (WLA 14)
- Cairngorms (WLA 15)
- Lochnagar – Mount Keen (WLA 16)
- Braeroy – Glenshirra – Creag Meagaidh (WLA 19)
- Monadhliath (WLA 20)

Of these areas 15 and 16 are almost entirely located within the National Park, while the other three only just overlap its boundary.

These wild and remote areas have a distinct and special character, which is highly valued and increasingly rare to find. A key component of Scotland's identity, they bring significant economic benefits, attracting visitors and tourists. Many people derive psychological and spiritual benefit from their existence, and they provide increasingly important havens for Scotland's wildlife. The importance of these Wild Land Areas is reflected in the wild land Special Landscape Quality (see Table 1).

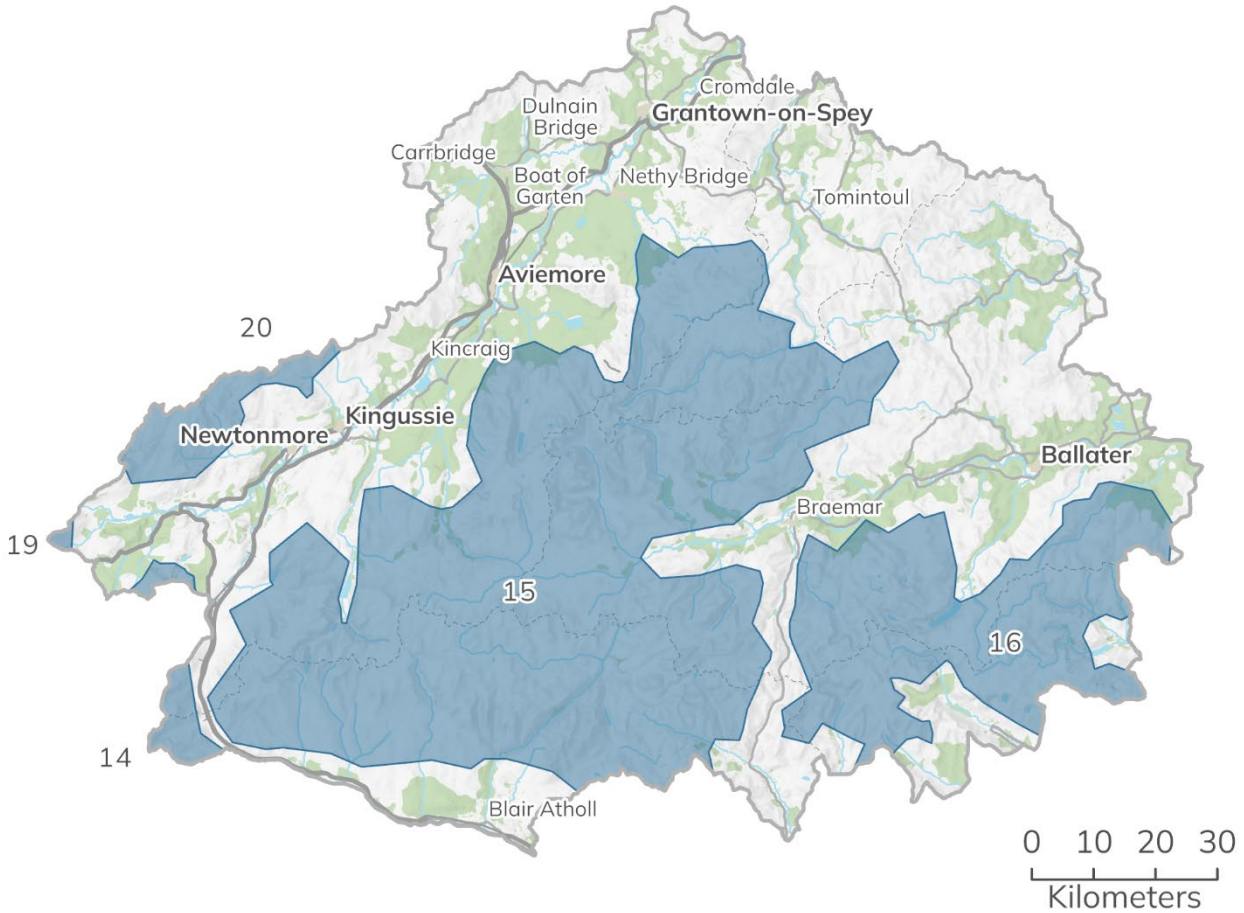


Figure 3 Wild land areas within the Cairngorms National Park (CNPA021). Cairngorms National Park Authority © Crown copyright and database rights 2026 Ordnance Survey AC0000821810. Contains data © NatureScot, 2026.

Wildness is recognised as a Special Landscape Quality and the information will inform the preparation of the Proposed Plan, particularly through the site assessment process and in the drafting of place based information. See [page 13](#) for information on implications of Special Landscape Qualities for the Proposed Plan.

Relative wildness

Wildness is a quality experienced by people when visiting places of a certain character and is typically (but not exclusively) associated with a reduction in or lack of built development. Measuring wildness is inherently difficult, as people respond differently according to their personal experience and their expectations of a place. However, work carried out by NatureScot considered wildness through four physical attributes being present, which they measured and mapped (CNPA022). These attributes are:

- The perceived naturalness of the land cover (Figure 4).



- The ruggedness of the terrain which is therefore challenging to cross (Figure 5).
- Remoteness from public roads, ferries or railway stations (Figure 6).
- The visible lack of buildings, roads, pylons and other modern artefacts (Figure 7).

Percieved naturalness

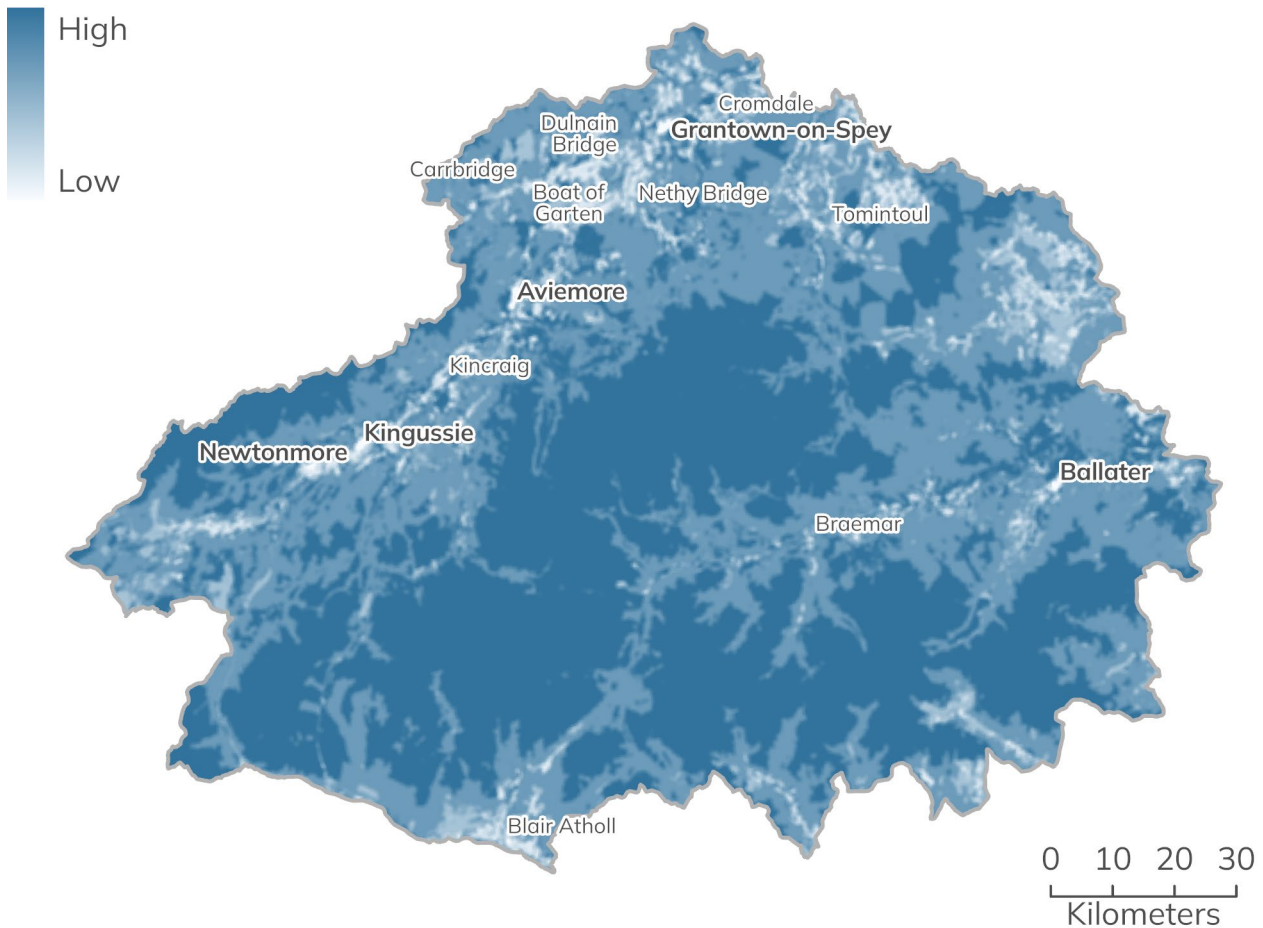


Figure 4 The perceived naturalness of the land cover within the Cairngorms National Park (CNPA022). Cairngorms National Park Authority © Crown copyright and database rights 2026 Ordnance Survey AC0000821810. Contains data © NatureScot, 2026.



Rugged or challenging terrain

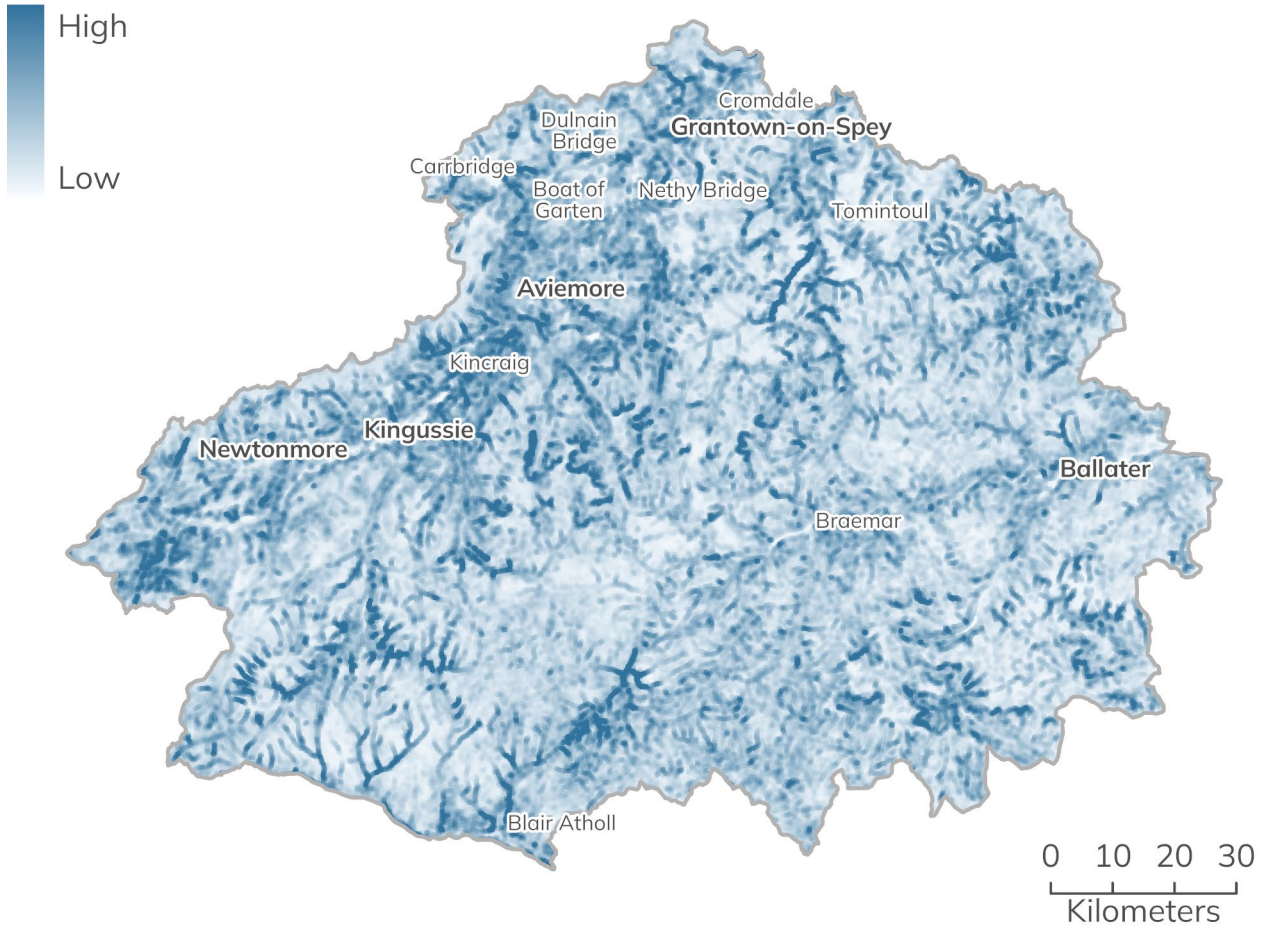


Figure 5 The ruggedness of the terrain within the Cairngorms National Park (CNPA022). Cairngorms National Park Authority © Crown copyright and database rights 2026 Ordnance Survey AC0000821810.



Contains data © NatureScot, 2026.
Remoteness from roads

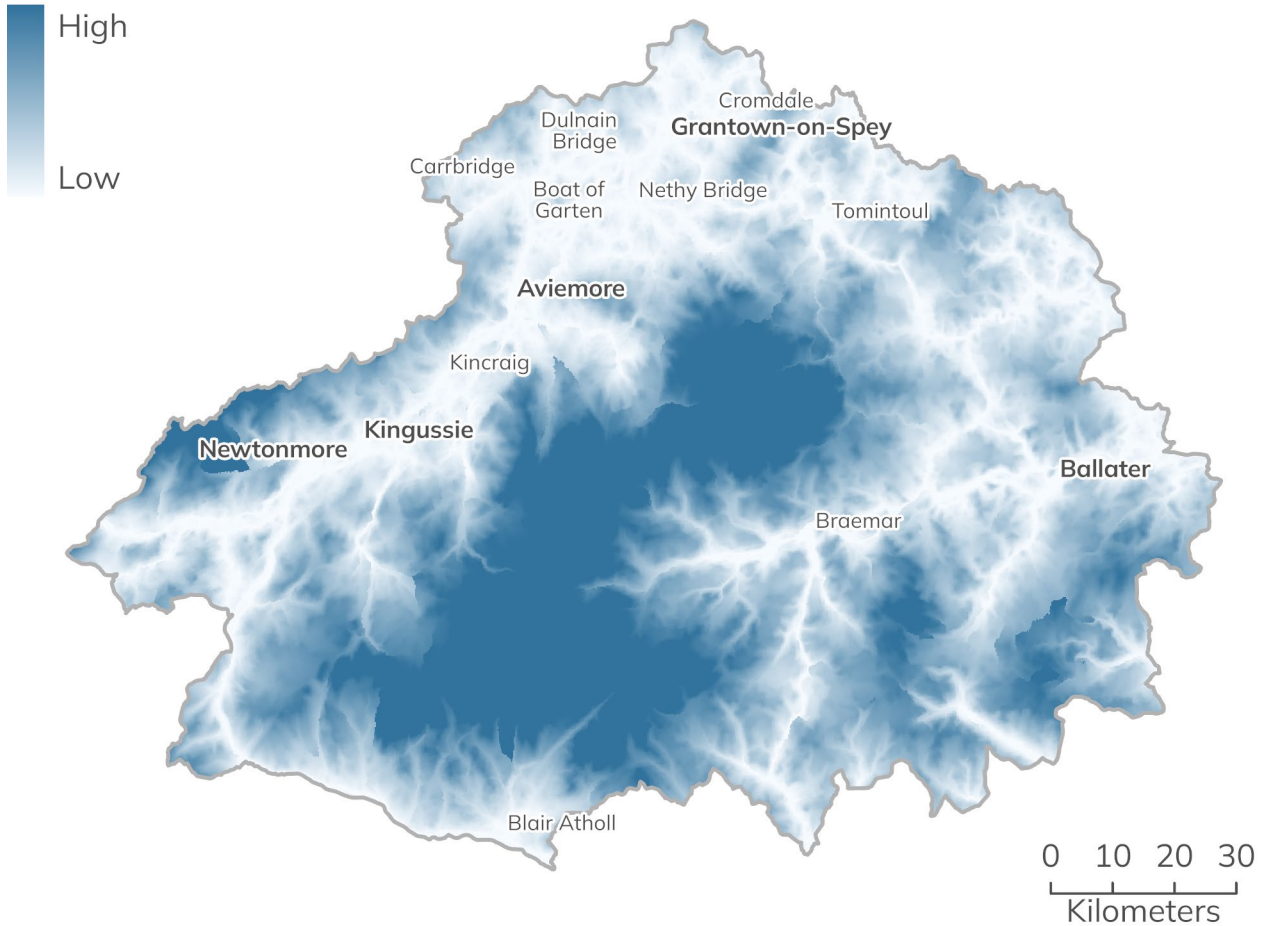


Figure 6 Remoteness of land from public roads, ferries or railway stations within the Cairngorms National Park (CNPA022). Cairngorms National Park Authority © Crown copyright and database rights 2026 Ordnance Survey AC0000821810. Contains data © NatureScot, 2026.



Lack of built artifacts

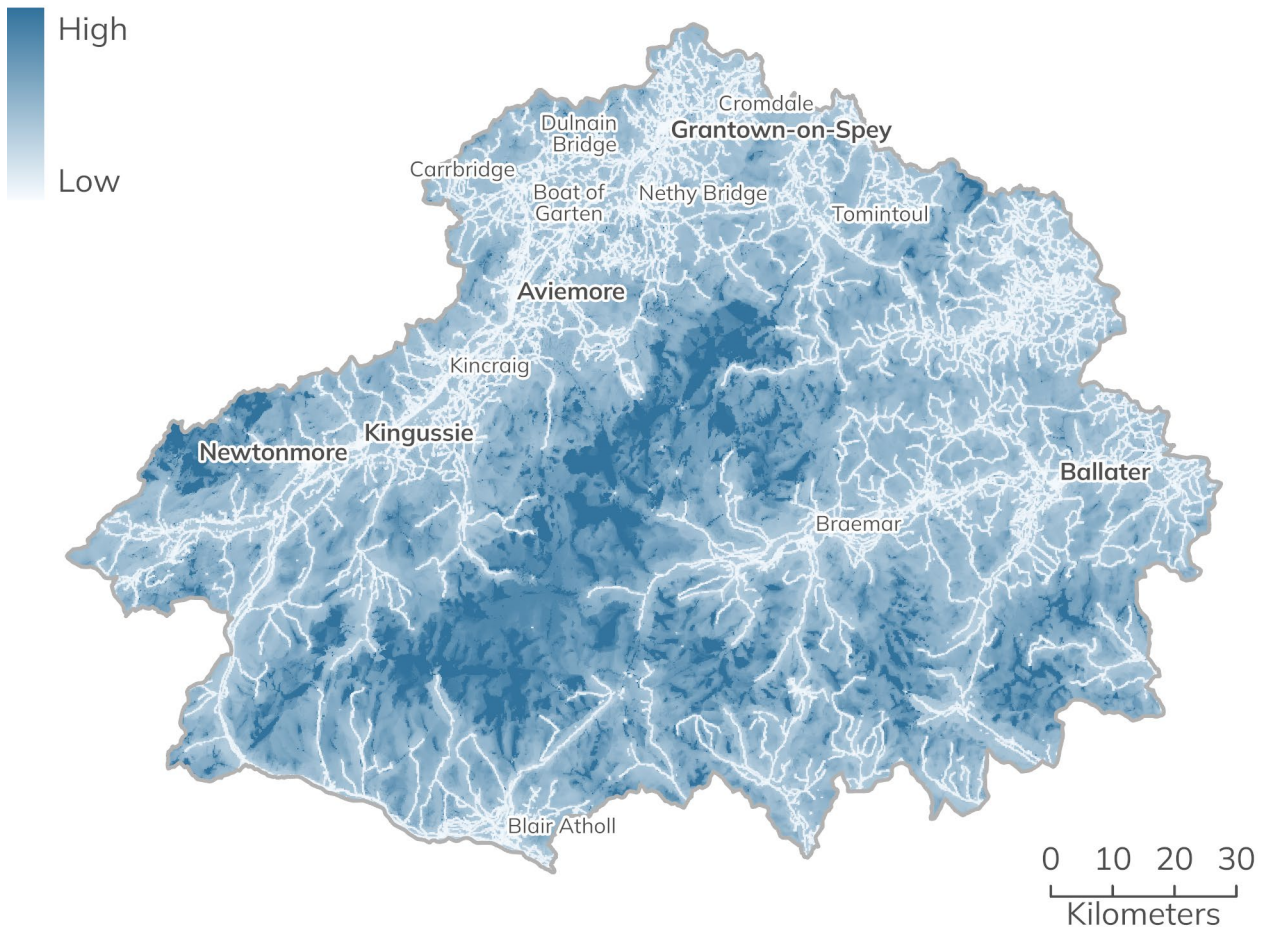


Figure 7 The visible lack of buildings, roads, pylons and other modern artefacts within the Cairngorms National Park (CNPA022). Cairngorms National Park Authority © Crown copyright and database rights 2026 Ordnance Survey AC0000821810. Contains data © NatureScot, 2026.

These four attributes were then combined to produce a composite or combined map of relative wildness of the whole of Scotland (Figure 8). This work illustrates that higher relative wildness scores extend beyond the Wild Land Areas, reflecting that the experience of 'wildness' is in many places prevalent as a defined Special Landscape Quality of the National Park.

This mapping work underpins the initial definition of the Wild Land Areas (see page 20).

Wildness is recognised as a Special Landscape Quality and the information will inform the preparation of the Proposed Plan, particularly through the site assessment process and in the drafting of place based information. See page 13 for information on implications of Special Landscape Qualities for the Proposed Plan.



Relative wildness

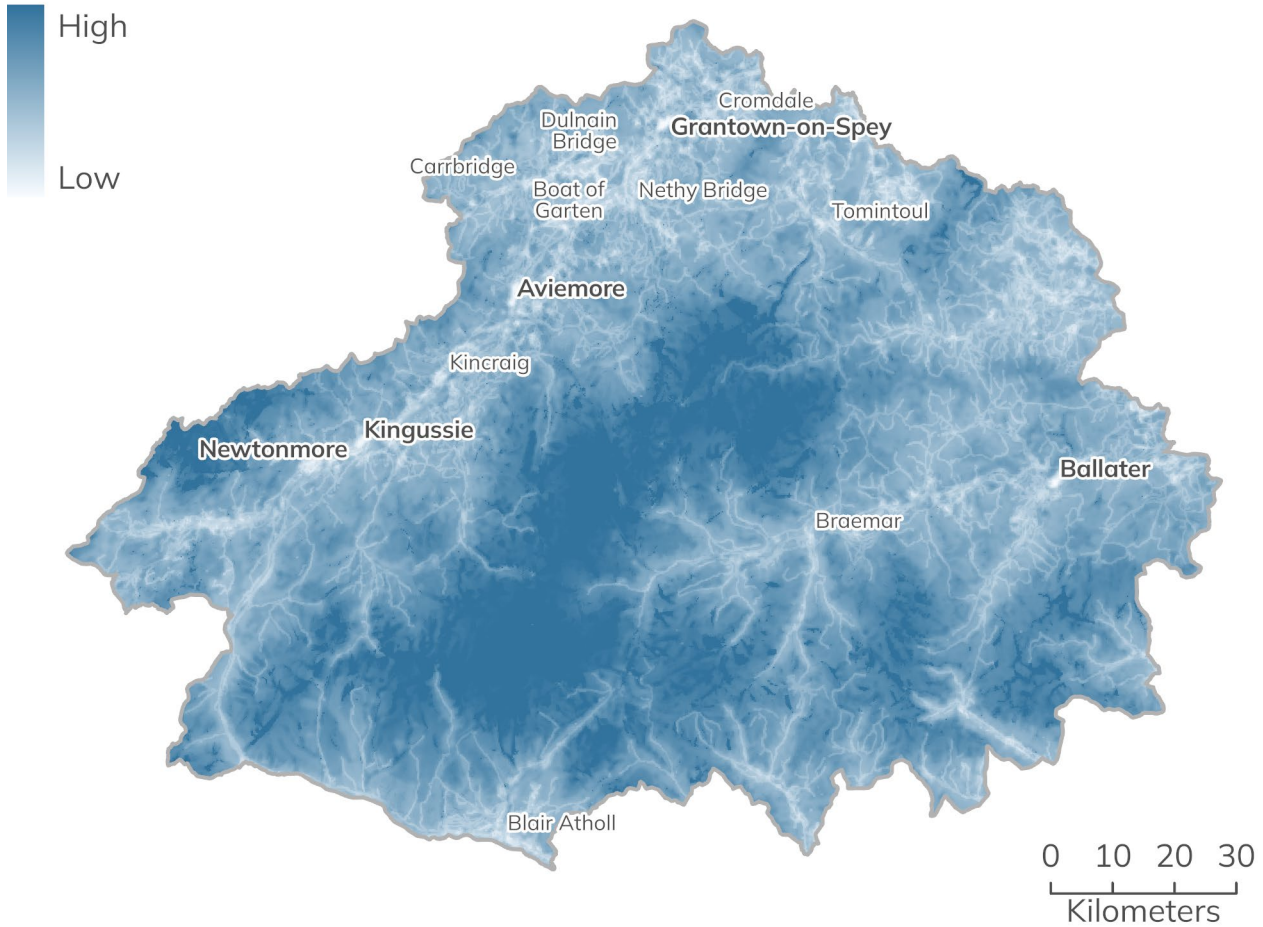


Figure 8 Relative wildness of land within the Cairngorms National Park (CNPA022). Cairngorms National Park Authority © Crown copyright and database rights 2026 Ordnance Survey AC0000821810. Contains data © NatureScot, 2026.

Dark skies

Tomintoul and Glenlivet Dark Sky Park (Figure 9) is certified as part of the International Dark Sky Places Program by the International Dark Sky Association (CNPA023). Within the protected landscape of the National Park, the certification encourages the implementation of good outdoor lighting and the provision of dark sky programs for visitors. Status updates are required regularly to ensure commitment to dark sky preservation. In the context of the Cairngorms National Park, the Dark Sky Park certification reinforces the more widespread, but not spatially defined Dark Skies Special Landscape Quality.

Both these criteria reflect the relative low development levels across the National Park and current attention given to the management of artificial lighting. In turn these



contribute to the numerous positive benefits of managing light pollution, including but not limited to wellbeing and health, reduced energy use, reduced effects on species and habitats, and contributing to the wider, more resilience base for tourism extending beyond the lighter warmer months.

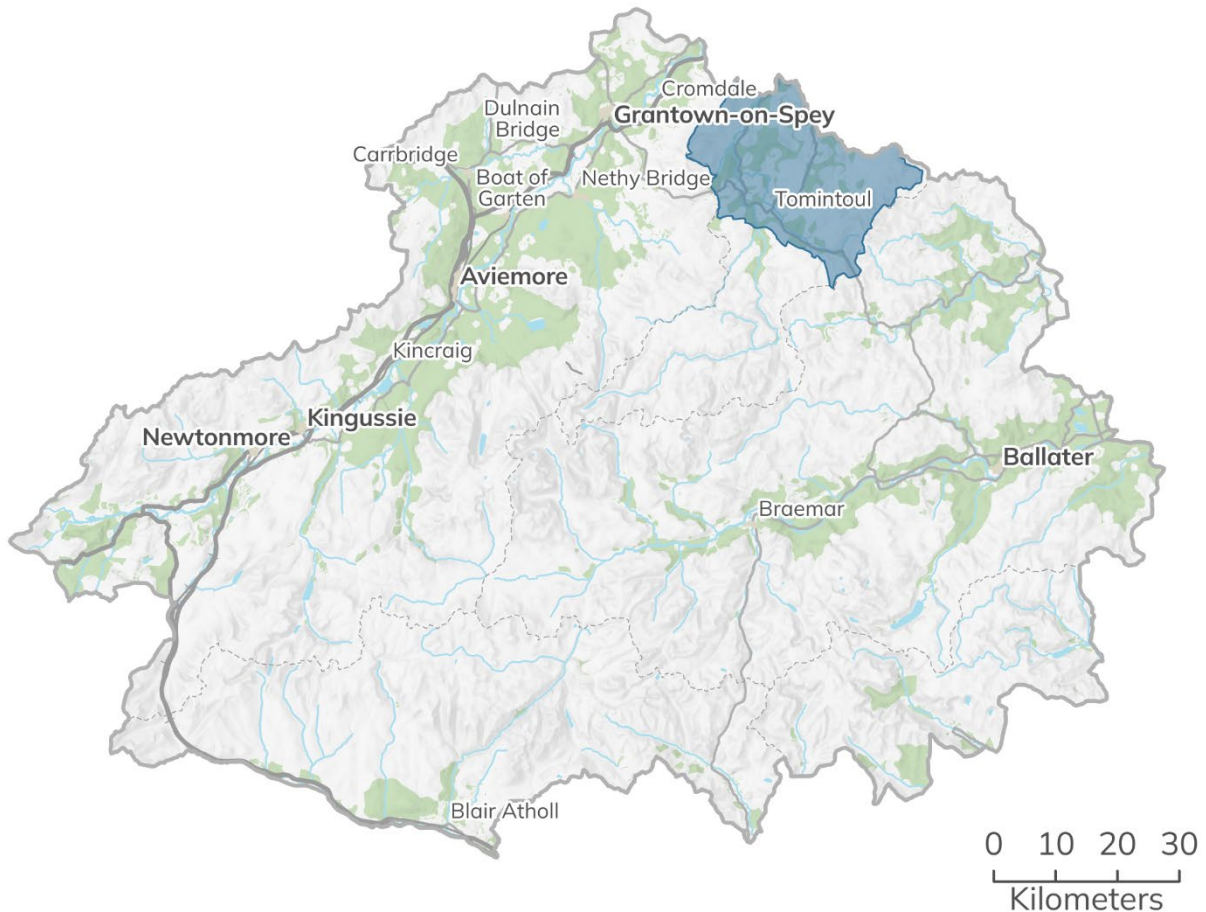


Figure 9 Tomintoul and Glenlivet Dark Sky Park (CNPA023). Cairngorms National Park Authority © Crown copyright and database rights 2026 Ordnance Survey AC0000821810.

The whole of the National Park has extremely limited extents of artificial lighting. Where artificial lighting is displayed, this is largely confined to along the main straths and river valleys, focussed around settlements and areas of industry, in particular security lighting for whiskey distilleries warehouses.

This evidence links to that of commercial scale renewable wind energy (beyond but potentially affecting the Special Landscape Qualities of the National Park) where innovations in wind turbine technology, entail that turbines over 150m blade tip height require lighting under Civil Aviation Authority guidelines.



Mapping of the Dark Skies Special Landscape Quality forms part of the Cairngorms 2030 Heritage Horizons project to be delivered over the next five years.

This information will inform the preparation of the Proposed Plan, particularly through the site assessment process and in the drafting of place based information for the Tomintoul and Glenlivet areas.

Private roads and ways

Planning for constructed tracks in the upland landscapes of the National Park, are currently considered against Partnership Plan Policy A4 (f) (CNPA008) and Local Development Plan Policy 5.2 (CNPA016).

Work undertaken by the National Park Authority in 2019 found that there has been a significant increase in the number of upland tracks (both constructed and informal) since the establishment of the National Park in 2003 (CNPA024). Constructed tracks are defined in the report as having a formalised surface whereby ex-situ material has been excavated and laid, often requiring machinery in the building process. Constructed tracks typically have characteristics such as drainage ditches, wider running widths and borrow pits. This work excludes the full extent of disturbance from ground excavation either side of the track and as such potential environmental effects are likely to be greater than suggested by the spatial information. Informal tracks considered more historic tracks with a lighter imprint, all terrain vehicle (ATV) tracks (<2m widths) and driven lines / desire lines / tramlines.

This work indicated that there has been a threefold increase in the number of constructed tracks between 2017 and 2018. For informal tracks this increase is greater, going from 29 recorded in 2017 to 170 in 2018. It is anticipated that, whilst there has been some reduction in the number of proposals for new tracks in the National Park, this is not of an extent that suggests a policy on tracks can no longer be supported. The current Cairngorms National Park Local Development Plan policy 5.2 (a – c) (CNPA016) states that there will be a presumption against new private roads and ways in open moorland unless the proposal can demonstrate an essential need for land management, is designed to minimise landscape and environmental impacts and enhance Special Landscape Qualities, and forms part of a programme of work to deliver wider net benefits for the Special Landscape Qualities^[7]. This approach remains relevant for the preparation of the Proposed Plan, which should include a policy to manage the development of private roads and ways.



Spatial mapping of the tracks is provided within the original Cairngorms Hill Tracks report (CNPA024):

- <https://cairngorms.co.uk/uploads/documents/Local-Development-Plan-Evidence-Report/Supporting-Documents/CNPA024-Mapping-Hill-Tracks-in-the-Cairngorms-National-Park-2019.pdf>

Wind energy

National Planning Framework 4 Policy 11 Energy (CNPA008) seeks to encourage, promote and facilitate all forms of renewable energy development onshore (and offshore). This includes energy generation, storage, new and replacement transmission, and distribution infrastructure, and emerging low carbon and zero emissions technology.

In relation to energy generation from commercial onshore wind, National Parks and National Scenic Areas, development proposals in these designations will not be supported (Policy 11b).

The currently adopted Local Development Plan (Policy 7.3) (CNPA016) complements National Planning Framework 4 where large scale commercial wind turbines are not compatible with the landscape character or Special Landscape Qualities of the National Park and will not be supported. These turbines are defined as more than one turbine and more than 30m height. This approach remains relevant for the preparation of the Proposed Plan, which should also set a threshold for wind turbine development within the National Park.

In this context the main pressure for significant effects on the National Park Special Landscape Qualities is from commercial scale wind energy developments, beyond, but proximal to the National Park. This pressure is predicted to increase with the significant weight National Planning Framework 4 Policy 11 places on the contribution of the development proposals to renewable energy generation targets and on greenhouse gas emission reduction targets.

Additional pressure is also predicted from the National Planning Framework 4 'Strategic Renewable Electricity Generation and Transmission Infrastructure' which is one of six national developments that support the delivery of sustainable places across Scotland. This aims to facilitate the large and rapid increase in electricity generation from renewable resources. In this context, onshore electricity generation including electricity storage, comprising renewable development exceeding 50 megawatts capacity, is designated a national development. From the National Planning Framework 4



Explanatory Report⁷ National Developments (CNPA648) do not have a 'presumption in favour' status, as the need for development is established and other policies also apply in determining applications for consent.

Resourcing landscape advice on wind energy proposals beyond, but significantly affecting, the Special Landscape Qualities and integrity of the National Park is managed through a Landscape Casework Agreement between the National Park and NatureScot.

Excluding commercial scale wind energy, National Planning Framework 4 requires local development plans to realise their area's full potential from electricity and heat from renewable sources. Policy 11a(ii – vii) sets out the development proposals that will be supported, and Policy 11e sets out how any effects arising can be addressed, taking into consideration other policy drivers within the National Park.

The increased strength of renewables policy facilitated through National Planning Framework 4 is already being experienced across Scotland (through Reporter's determinations for a number of wind energy applications where significant weight was given to National Planning Framework 4) and in the landscapes around and immediately adjacent to the National Park (Figure 10). In particular for the National Park this represents a marked shift in the levels and likelihood of significant adverse effects on Special Landscape Qualities and National Park integrity, from the increased proximity (scoping proposals ~ 1km from the National Park boundary) and scales of development (scoping development of 200m high turbines).

Since these developments occur outwith the National Park, the local development plan is not the tool used to influence their development. From a National Park perspective, it is the National Park Partnership Plan (CNPA010) that is used as the framework for setting out the Park Authority's views on such proposals.

⁷ National Planning Framework 4 Explanatory Report: November 2022 PART 2 – National Developments page 42.

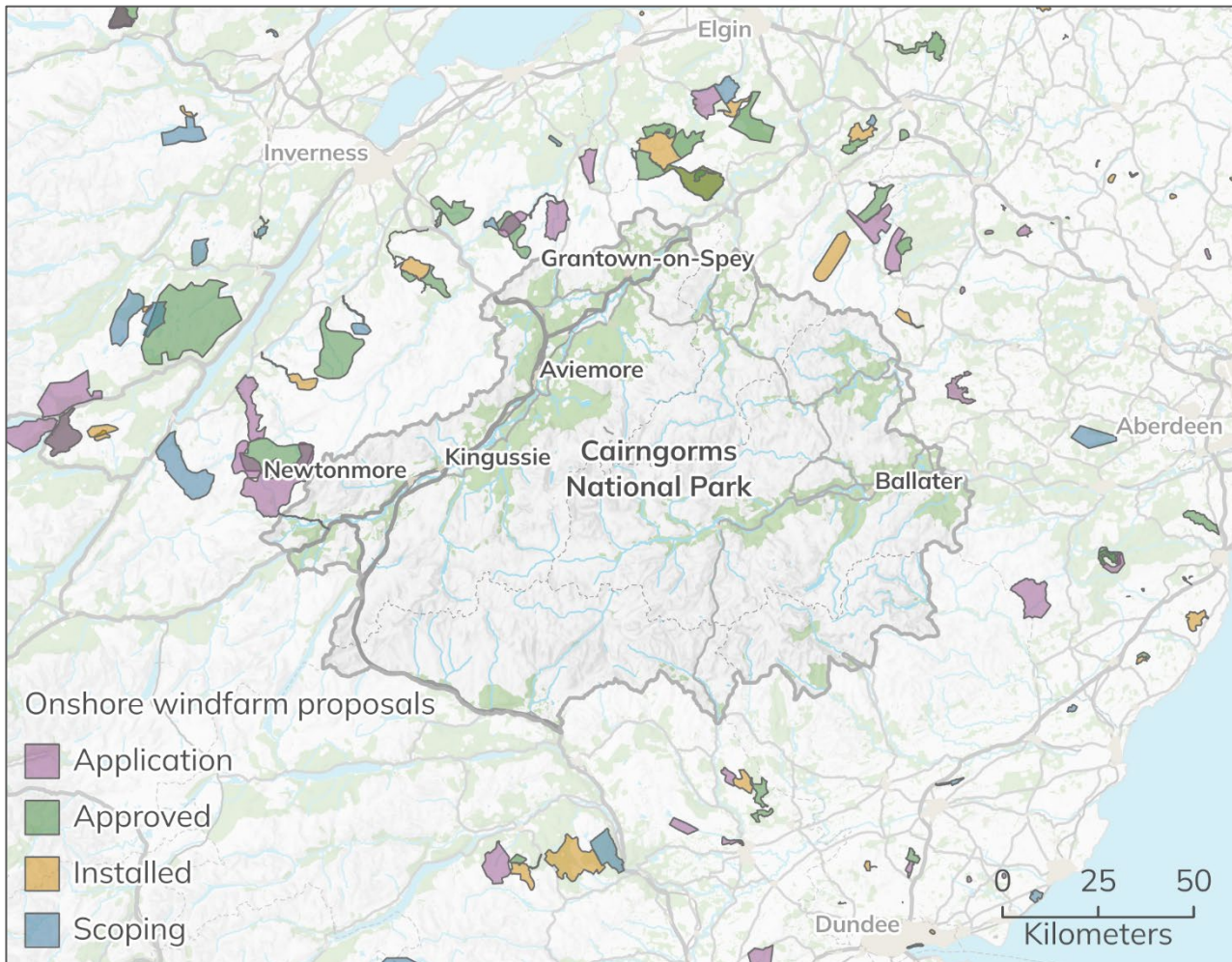


Figure 10 Location and Status of commercial scale wind energy development beyond the Cairngorms National Park (CNPA930). Cairngorms National Park Authority © Crown copyright and database rights 2026 Ordnance Survey AC0000821810. Contains data © NatureScot, 2026.

The wind energy spatial data mapped in Figure 10 is current as of July 2023 (CNPA930). This information will be updated at the time of consultation. The National Park Authority are aware of two wind energy proposals currently at Scoping proximal to, but beyond the National Park Boundary:

- Dorenell Wind Farm Extension and Biodiversity Enhancement Plan (CNPA649):
<https://dorenellextension.co.uk/>
- Balnespick Wind Farm (CNPA650):
<https://www.balnespickwindfarm.co.uk/>

Further information on wind energy and its implications for the Proposed Plan are covered in Schedule 9: Energy.



Digital infrastructure – mobile coverage

Good digital connectivity is increasingly seen as a basic service that is required by residents, businesses, students, visitors and the public sector. The current location of telecommunication masts within the National Park is displayed on Figure 16 of Schedule 20: Digital infrastructure (CNPA174). The policy context for this is considered in more detail in Schedule 20: Digital infrastructure.

In relation to mobile coverage, there are several 'not spots' within the Cairngorms National Park for mobile reception⁸. However, the Scottish 4G Infill programme, which sought to address up to 60 'not spots' in Scotland by 2022, does not include any areas within the National Park. There are still areas within the National Park that have no 4G coverage, with any of the four main carriers.

Instigated in 2020 the Shared Rural Network programme (comprising agreement between the four mobile network operators EE, Three, VMO2 and Vodafone, and the UK Government) aims to deliver mobile broadband to 95% of the UK, providing additional 4G coverage along the UK's roads and improve geographical coverage within National Parks.

The National Park have received a number of pre application and application enquiries for masts and associated infrastructure, including hill tracks. Proposed in typically upland and more remote locations these masts both individually and cumulatively have the potential to introduce significant adverse effects on the National Park's Special Landscape Qualities. The Proposed Plan should seek to ensure that telecommunication mast development does not negatively impact on the Special Qualities of the National Park. See page 13 for further information on the implications of Special Landscape Qualities on the Proposed Plan.

Evidence gaps

There are no identified evidence gaps in this schedule.

⁸ See Schedule 20: Digital infrastructure, Figure 9, Figure 10, Figure 11, Figure 12, and Figure 13 for further information and policy context.



Summary of stakeholder engagement

Early online public engagement was carried out from 9 August – 9 October 2023 (CNPA026). Landscape did not feature strongly as a theme, although the National Park's landscape was highlighted as being of high quality.

Focused early engagement on landscape matters was held with NatureScot and their recommendations were incorporated into the schedule of the Evidence Report prior to undertaking wider public engagement (CNPA604).

Engagement with children and young people highlighted the National Park's 'strong landscape and outdoor culture' as a positive contributor to the area's sense of identity (CNPA027, CNPA681, CNPA834, CNPA833, CNPA682 and CNPA683).

The Planning Power game shows that landscape consistently emerged as a priority. Participants across all games recognised the intrinsic value of the landscape, often referring to its beauty, tranquillity, heritage, and importance to tourism. Many groups cited the National Park's status as a reason to exercise particular care when considering development, arguing that protecting landscape qualities should be a "baseline" or 'non negotiable' condition (CNPA1104 and CNPA1105).

Engagement with Gypsy / Traveller communities within the National Park was undertaken between October 2023 and March 2024 (CNPA028). In relation to landscape, the engagement highlighted that elders in the community felt that their knowledge of the landscape should be better used by conservation efforts. The following actions / recommendations were suggested, not all of which fall within the remit of the local development plan:

- More work to recognise where barriers to land have been placed in the landscape, working in partnership with landowners and communities to remove these wherever possible.
- Support more Gypsy / Traveller inclusion in development of conservation and climate change infrastructure / planning.

Public engagement on the schedule (see CNPA1346 for engagement version) was carried out from 10 June – 16 August 2024. Thirteen completed responses were received (CNPA1340).



Summary of implications for Proposed Plan

Based on the available evidence and engagement with key agencies and other interested parties, the Park Authority consider this schedule to provide a sufficient evidence base on which to prepare the Proposed Plan.

The Proposed Plan needs to be prepared in accordance with:

- The four aims of the National Park as set out in The National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000 (CNPA004).
- Section 9(6) of the 2000 Act, which states that while the aims are to be pursued collectively, if there is conflict between the first aim and any of the others, greater weight is given to the first aim.
- The spatial strategy and principles of National Planning Framework 4 (CNPA008).

The Cairngorms National Park is a Category V protected landscape and the UK's largest. Its scenic value is illustrated by its Special Landscape Qualities, which are central to determining the impact of development on landscape value. The policy approach in the adopted Local Development Plan (CNPA016) recognises this and contains a presumption against any development that does not conserve or enhance the landscape character and Special Landscape Qualities. This policy approach, which is supported by the National Park Partnership Plan (CNPA010), should be carried forward into the development of the Proposed Plan. A key way that this may be achieved is through the use of the spatial strategy to focus development and through the use of available development land in the most efficient way. An efficient use of land includes measures such as not allocating more land than necessary to meet need (for example, housing land) and discouraging low density development on allocated sites.

In its preparation the Proposed Plan should therefore seek to:

- Protect the landscape character of the National Park, both through its identification of allocated sites and policy content.
- Protect and enhance the Special Landscape Qualities of the National Park in general.
- Protect and enhance wild land and wildness Special Landscape Qualities.
- Protect and enhance dark skies Special Landscape Qualities and the Tomintoul and Glenlivet Dark Sky Park.
- Protect and enhance landscapes of local importance, and the sense of place of communities.
- Support the delivery of community action plan and local place plan priorities and actions through the placemaking process.



- Minimise the effects from the construction of upland hill tracks through a policy based approach.
- Minimise the effects from the construction of wind turbines through a policy based approach⁹.
- Minimise the effects of telecommunication mast development¹⁰.

Statements of agreement

The following people / organisations agree that the evidence presented is sufficient to inform the preparation of the Proposed Plan:

- Historic Environment Scotland (C002)
- NatureScot (C004)
- Scottish Environment Protection Agency (C010)
- ScotWays (C055)
- Ann Wakeling (C069)
- Ann Miles (C068)
- Michael Cuff (C099)

Historic Environment Scotland (C002)

Historic Environment Scotland request that reference be made to draft guidance on the Assessment of Effects on Special Landscape Qualities being consulted on by NatureScot, the Cairngorms National Park Authority and the Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park Authority.

Park Authority response

This guidance was not in the public domain when engagement began on the Landscape topic paper. It has now been added to the schedule.

Anne Wakeling and Michael Cuff (C069 and C099)

Ann Wakeling and Michael Cuff requested further information on:

- Cover limitations of existing infrastructure for example mobile phone coverage
- Woodland expansion
- Biodiversity and wildlife (for example red listed species)
- Outdoor recreation

⁹ See Schedule 9: Energy for further information on matters relating to renewable energy.

¹⁰ See Schedule 20: Digital infrastructure for further information on matters relating to telecommunication mast development.



Park Authority response

These matters are covered in other Schedule 20: Digital infrastructure, Schedule 4: Natural heritage, Schedule 16: Blue and green infrastructure, Schedule 11: Sustainable transport and Schedule 23: Tourism.

Statements of dispute

Agroecosystems Ltd (C030)

Agroecosystems Ltd states that information on the farmed landscape is missing and that there is no mention of characteristic woodland types (pine, mixed birch, aspen, hazel). They suggest information from the species rich grassland inventory, native woodland inventory and local aspen inventory should be included.

Park Authority response

In terms of landscape quality and importance, these matters are covered within the summary on the Cairngorms Special Landscape Qualities and Cairngorms landscape character assessment. The character assessment offers a wealth of information and highlights where agriculture is an important part of the local landscape. Further information on farmland is provided in Schedule 8: Land use, soil and resources. Further information on woodlands and grasslands is provided in Schedule 5: Natural heritage.

Cairngorms Crofters and Farmers Community (C035)

The Cairngorms Crofters and Farmers Community do not believe there is sufficient evidence to prepare the local development plan.

They suggest that communities be asked how they would feel if their local landscape character were to change.

They request further detail about what impact the significant woodland expansion will have on the Special Landscape Qualities of the National Park.

They state that there is no mention about Crofting and farming landscapes being recognised as important in their local landscapes and that there is too much emphasis on reduced / abandoned farm management and not enough on the value of farmed landscapes.

Park Authority response



Community engagement on landscape change is being carried out through the Cairngorms 2030 landscape and communities project (CNPA528). This includes matters relating to woodland expansion. This engagement is informing work on reviewing and mapping the Cairngorms Special Landscape Qualities, which the local development plan will seek to protect and enhance. Further information on woodland expansion is provided in Schedule 5: Natural heritage and Schedule 16: Blue and green infrastructure.

Information on crofting and farming landscapes, including their contribution to landscape quality and character is covered by the summary of the Cairngorms landscape character assessment (CNPA020).

Further information of agricultural and Croft land is provided in Schedule 8: Land use, soil and Resources.

Deirdre Falconer (C077)

Deirdre Falconer states that the intention to minimise effects from the construction of upland hill tracks is hypocritical. They infer that some estates are treated more favourably than others.

Park Authority response

Hill tracks requiring planning permission are determined in accordance with the policy framework set out within National Planning Framework 4 (CNPA008) and the Cairngorms Local Development Plan 2021 (CNPA016). The evidence continues to indicate the need for a local policy.