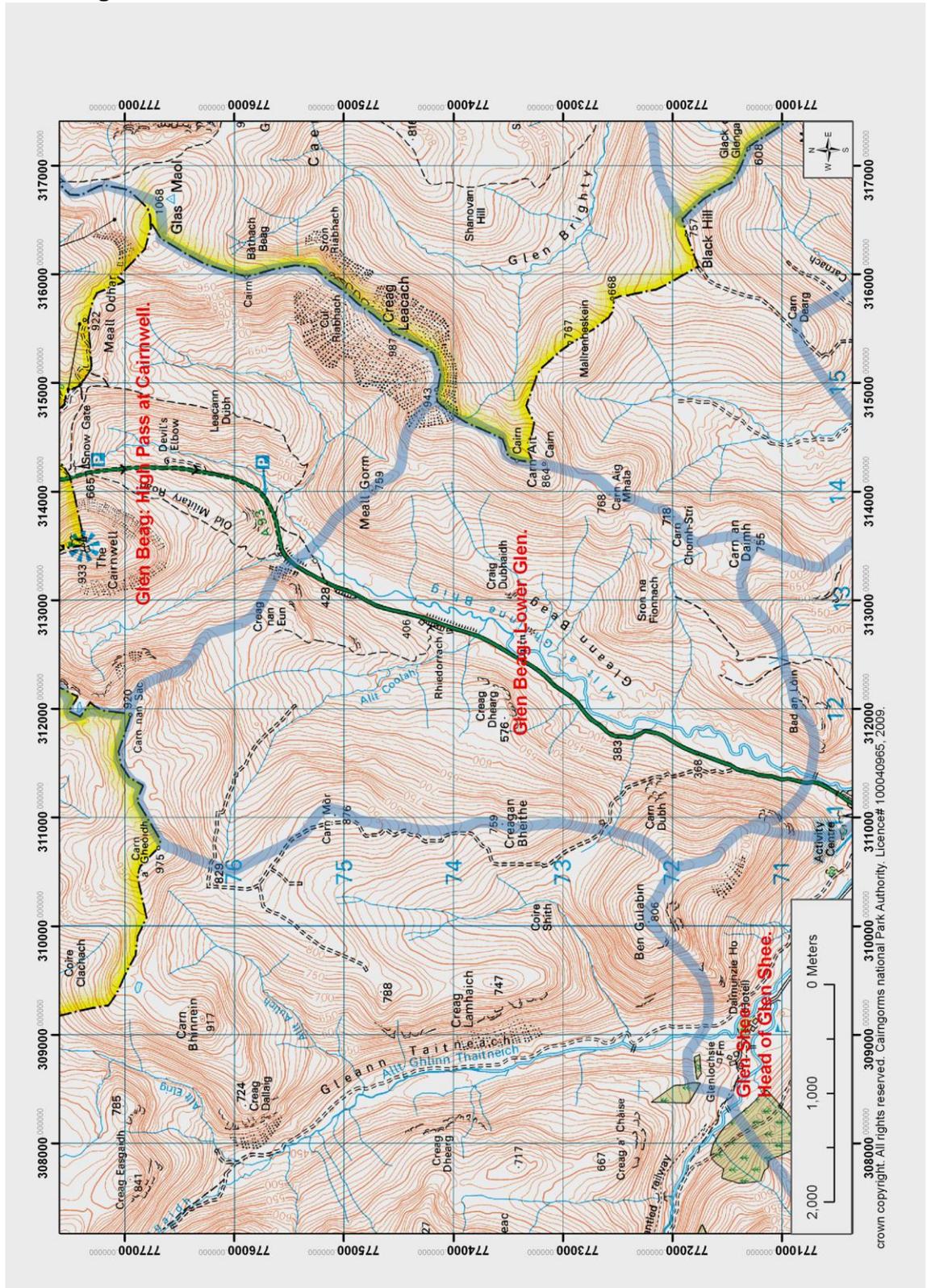


# I.1 Glen Beag: Lower Glen



### 1.1.1 *Landscape Character*

The narrow southern 'gateway' to this upper glen, framed by the steep side slopes of Bad an Loin and Ben Gulabin, opens out into a wider glen floor before climbing to the high pass of the Cairnwell

Orientated NNE/SSW, the glen is contained by a complex topography of shallow side glens, intervening rocky ridges and terraced terrain created by a glacial valley sitting within a much older, broader valley – the cliffs are spurs of the older valley truncated by glacial action

The upper slopes are topped by distinct summits of individual hills, some of which have extensive areas of quartzite scree, while the eastern ridge is knobbly

The well drained glacial-fluvial deposits on the lower slopes have in part been worked into terraces and a level floodplain by the meandering river

Unimproved grassland extends along much of the glen floor, with the ruins of small pre-improvement farmsteads and field systems evident, particularly where grass is low and if there is strong side light

The lower southern hill slopes of the glen are extensive unimproved grassland, while the upper, northern part of the glen is clothed with heather, which is managed as grouse moorland

There is a prominent head dyke which marks the break in slope but which has been supplemented by a fence further up slope

The evidence of past settlement is all the more striking because there is now no settlement in this part of the glen, apart from a single house and barn at Rhiedorrach, an elevated well drained terrace near to the road

The road largely hugs the profile of the topography

### 1.1.2 *Landscape experience*

The glen is perceived as a strongly 'upland' character, in part due to the very pronounced contrast with the farmed Glen Shee to the south, and in part due to the elevation and simple vegetation pattern

The 'threshold' to and from the glen from the south has a very pronounced sense of 'gateway' created by the narrow pass and the curve in the road, which reinforces the sense of 'surprise' on arriving at Glen Beag

### 1.1.3 *Relationship to adjacent character areas*

The glen is relatively self-contained, but as its character contrasts strongly with Upper Glen Shee, the sequence of travelling between the two creates a sense of drama.

### 1.1.4 *Assessment of distinctiveness*

This glen has a pronounced 'upland' character. Sparsely and simply vegetated, it is dominated by the grazed, unimproved grassland and lack of contemporary settlement. The

grazing and lack of trees helps to reveal the evidence of extensive past settlement and land use, as well as emphasising the profile and form of the topography.



*This is the narrow pass between Glen Beag and upper Glen Shee, the light catching on a distinct terrace*



*The wide, but wet and uncultivated glen floor, edged with better drained glacial-fluvial and slope deposits*



*The road hugs the landform, following its ridges and dips, here the verge defined by a metal fence*



*Medieval and post-medieval settlement and field systems can be seen on these better drained areas*