CAIRNGORMS
NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

Building the Toolkit

CNP Landscape Principles: A Foundation

The CNPA has developed a set of Landscape Principles for the Park. These 10 principles have been used in the development of the Landscape Toolkit.

Landscape Principles 1

Special Landscape Qualities - the special landscape qualities of the National Park are the basis of its appeal, its designation and tourism economy, (and in particular its spectrum of wildness), we should sustain and care for them. On occasion this may include remedying the adverse effects of past land use decisions where they have had an adverse effect on the special landscape qualities.

Landscape Principles 2

Landscape Character – In responding to pressures for landscape change we will use an understanding of landscape character to maintain, strengthen and enhance landscape character locally and Park wide.

Landscape Principles 3

Landscape Change - All landscapes evolve and change over time, some change is inevitable and necessary. Different landscapes, depending on their special qualities and landscape character will have different sensitivities to change. Landscape change should be managed positively and sympathetically and an informed and inclusive approach to landscape change is essential.

Landscape Principles 4

Through the Generations – some kinds of change can have near immediate effect, whereas others may take years and possibly generations to make a mark on the landscape. When planning for change we should look to achieving not only short term landscape benefits but also longer term benefits for our own and future generations.

Landscape Principles 5

Settlement Landscapes – The character of the landscape within and around our settlements is instrumental in defining individual and community sense of place. We should recognise that settlement landscapes make a huge contribution to sense of identity and pride of place.

Landscape Principles 6

Local, National and International - We should be aware that decisions affecting our landscapes will have local outcomes but may also generate legitimate interest further afield given the national and international status of the NP.

Landscape Principles 7

Managed by Few, Valued by Many - There are relatively few land managers with direct control over the landscapes of the Park. It is through their work that the landscape has become what we value today. Therefore opportunities to work with these interests to benefit of our landscapes and those who enjoy them should be encouraged

Landscape Principles 8

Connectivity - Ecological connectivity is necessary across the landscape at both a large scale and small scale. We should prioritise ecological connectivity that also enhances people's experience of the landscape.

Landscape Principles 9

- **Key Characteristics-** We should recognise and where appropriate protect;
- **Views** - Views are the principal way that people engage with their landscape.
- **Cultural Heritage and Historic Landuse** - People's unique personal connection with landscapes is enhanced by experience, understanding, imagination and material evidence in the landscape.
- **Prominent features and local landmarks -** From prominent crags, to hill-top monuments and village memorials, both natural and man-made features facilitate location, navigation and sense of identity.

Landscape Principles 10

National park Setting – Our consideration of activities out with the National Park will be guided by the effect they might have on the Special Landscape Qualities, character and enjoyment of the National Park landscapes.

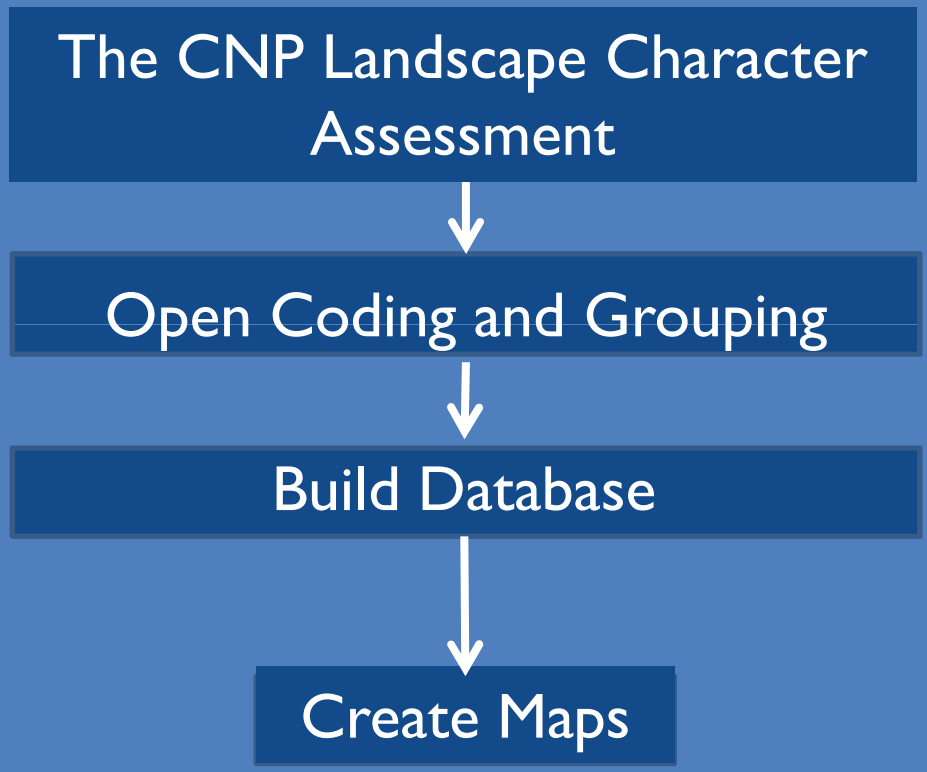
The CNP Landscape Character Assessment: A Foundation

- A Park-wide assessment
- More detailed than previous assessments
- Required to underpin the landscape Toolkit
- Required to integrate the Historic Landuse Assessment produced by Royal Commission for Ancient and Historic Monuments in Scotland
- Required to integrate information from British Geological Survey

3Parts to Methodology

- Mapping Characteristics
- Mapping Sensitivities
- Settlements

Part I
Mapping Characteristics/Features



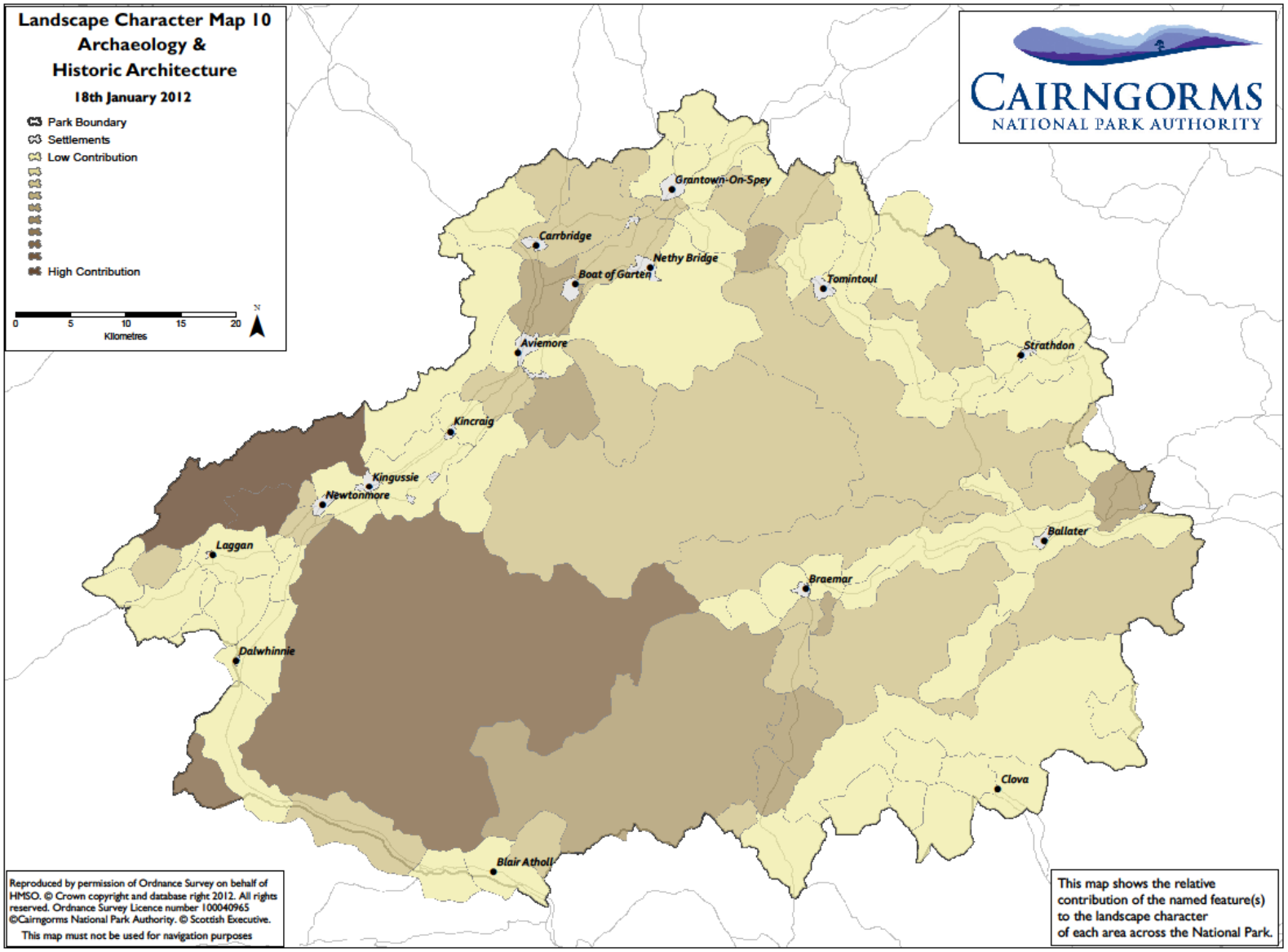
Example of Open Coding and Grouping

Coded Group	Search terms
Designed Landscapes and Estates	
designed landscapes - built elements	‘Castle’ or ‘castles’
	‘Lodge’ or ‘lodges' or ' large house'
	‘Gateway' or 'gate house' or 'gate posts'
	‘monument' or 'folly'
	‘Estate architecture’
designed landscapes - policies	‘Policy woodlands’
	‘Parkland’
	‘designed landscape”

The Process

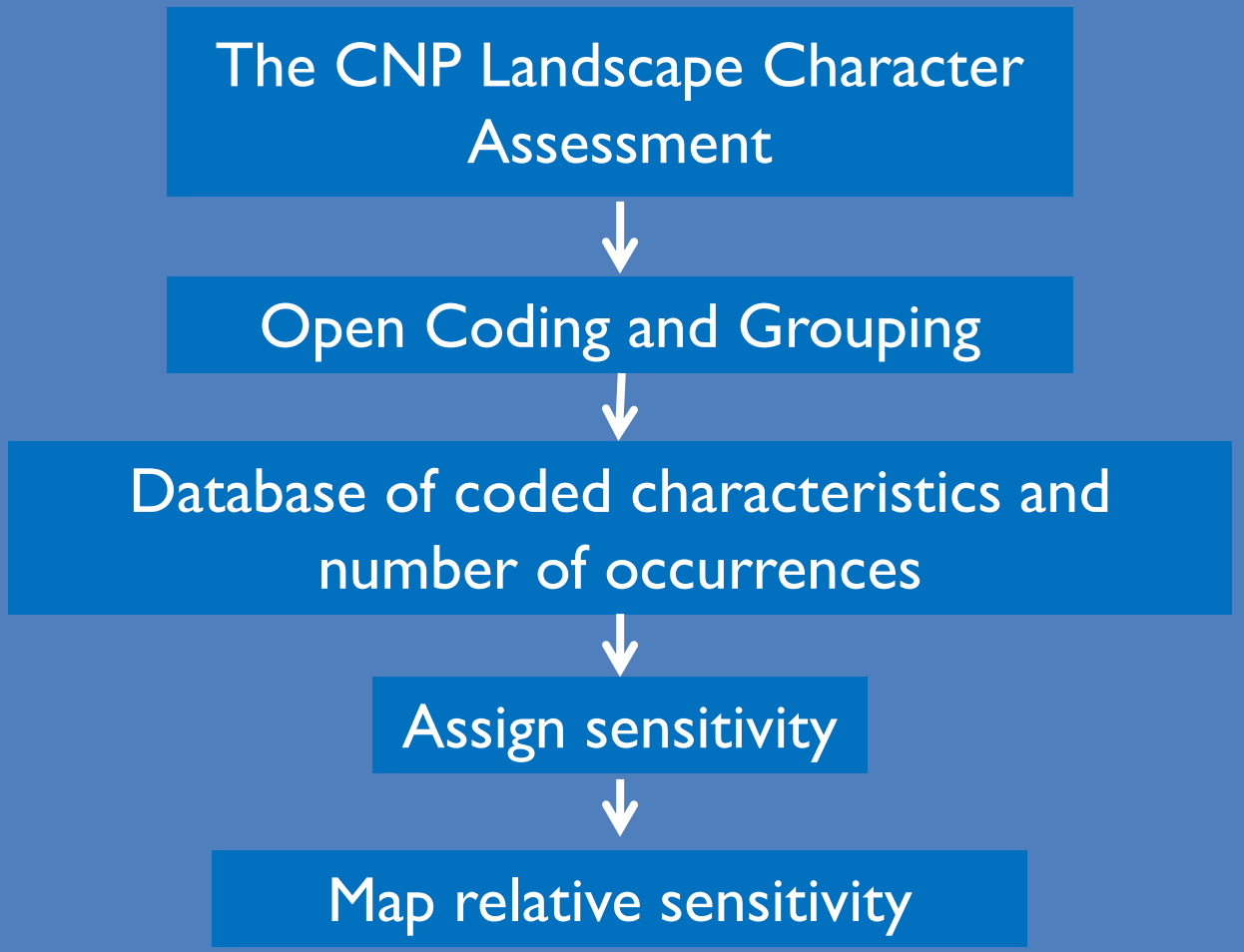
- Each landscape character area description was searched using Microsoft Word Search.
- Characteristics recorded by coded group
- the number of times characteristics occur recorded as an indicator of relative contribution
- The code and number is attached to each landscape character area GIS polygon and this is mapped.

Contribution to Landscape Character – archaeology



The colour ramp shows relative contribution to landscape character across the Park

Part II Mapping Sensitivity



Landscape Sensitivity to Change

The focus in the Toolkit is on the drivers of landscape change which are likely to have a marked effect on CNP landscapes and which we/and or our partners can influence.

- Woodland expansion and associated fencing
- Renewable energy (small scale wind and hydro)
- Decline in farm management
- Hill tracks

Assessing Potential Impact of a change on landscape characteristics

- The Change Assumptions
- Establish Impact Levels
- Making judgements

An Example - Assumptions for Montane Woodland Creation

"Montane woodland in this context is assumed to be regenerating or planted scrub woodland generally at the upper edge of existing, planted or regenerating native woodland, or in isolated patches in gorges and on cliffs. It will be made up entirely of native species; low-growing birch, willows, juniper, creeping birch, tall-growing heather and vaccinium species. It is assumed that growth will in the main be slow with some more exposed areas taking many years to become evident in the landscape. Fencing is not included in this sensitivity assessment ..."

Assessing Impact

Impact level	Character effects	Special qualities effects
3 (high)	Significant effect, change is irreversible, or is likely to persist for a period of 1 or more generations.	inducing public response
2 (medium)	Moderate effect, temporary or gradual	some public response
1 (low)	Minor effect, temporary or very gradual	no public response.
0 (zero)	Effect positive, neutral or negligible	No public response or a positive response

Making Judgements

The significance of the effect of a change on a landscape characteristic is judged in the context of the Landscape Principles and specifically on the retention and /or enhancement of The Special Landscape Qualities of the Cairngorms National Park.

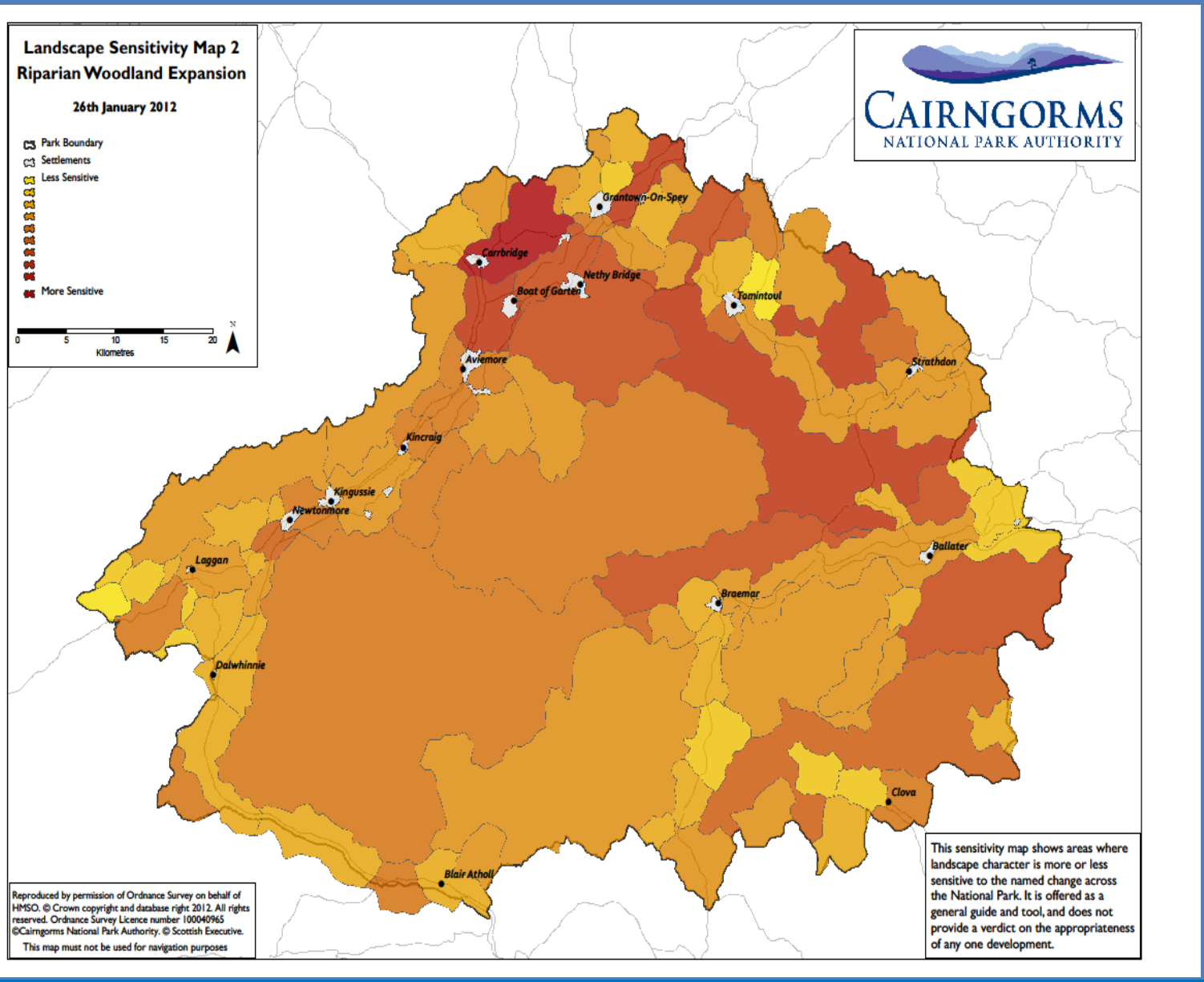
An Example - woodland expansion

Historic landuse and settlement	Potential Effects on Character	Related Special Qualities	Potential Impact
archaeology	direct damage, masking or screening	The wistful ness of abandoned settlement	3
historic architecture	structures may be hidden within woodland or screened from view	vernacular stone buildings, focal cultural landmarks of castles, distilleries and bridges	2
historic routes		dramatic historical routes, steep glens and high passes	0
field pattern	risk to this aspect of cultural heritage by direct disturbance, or hiding from view	a landscape of layers, landscapes both cultural and natural, strong juxtaposition of contrasting landscapes, broad farmed straths, a landscape of many colours	3

For each Landscape Character Area (LCA) polygon			
characteristic	Impact	Number of times characteristic occurs in description for that area	Sensitivity
characteristic 1	3	3	9
characteristic 2	0	1	0
characteristic 3	2	2	4
Sum		This is what is mapped	13

The sum of the sensitivities of all individual characteristics occurring in that area gives an overall measure of sensitivity to that change.

Landscape Sensitivity to Riparian Woodland Expansion



The colour ramp on the map shows relative sensitivity across the park

Guidance

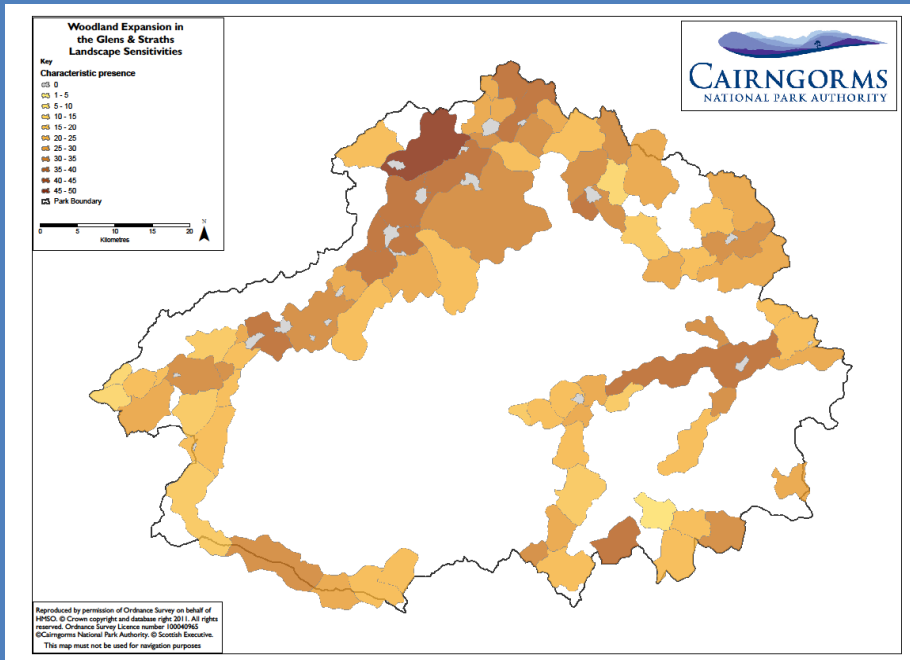
Mapping relative landscape sensitivity supports a strategic Park-wide approach to identifying opportunities and providing guidance

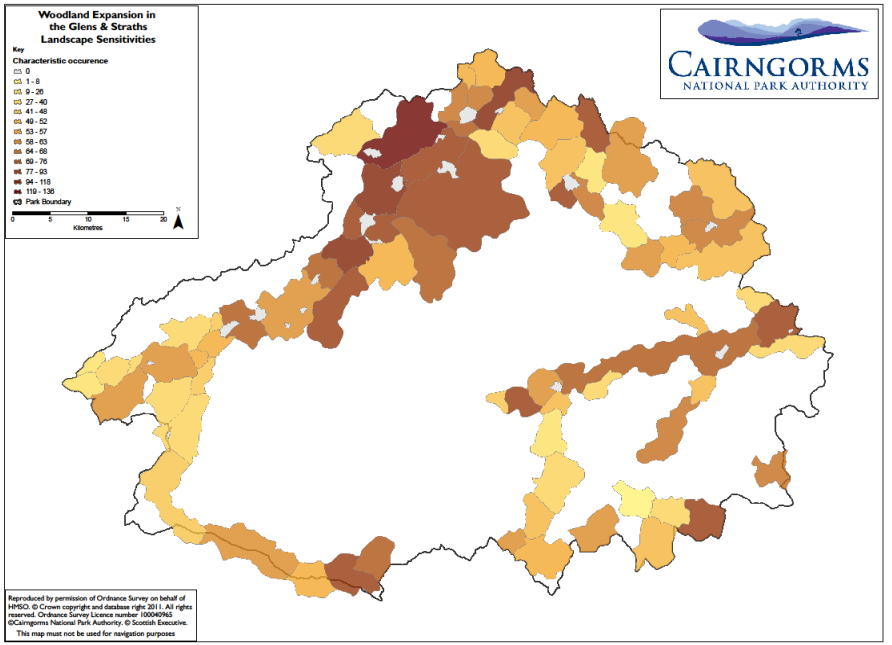
Expansion of native woodland;

Less sensitive landscapes		More sensitive landscapes
a wide range of woodland planting including large scale native woodland creation and management for timber and firewood production.	⟺	natural regeneration, individual tree planting, small woodland planting where it enhances existing woodland and woodland features, landmarks, designed landscapes and the setting for archaeological and built heritage.

The Concept of Contribution

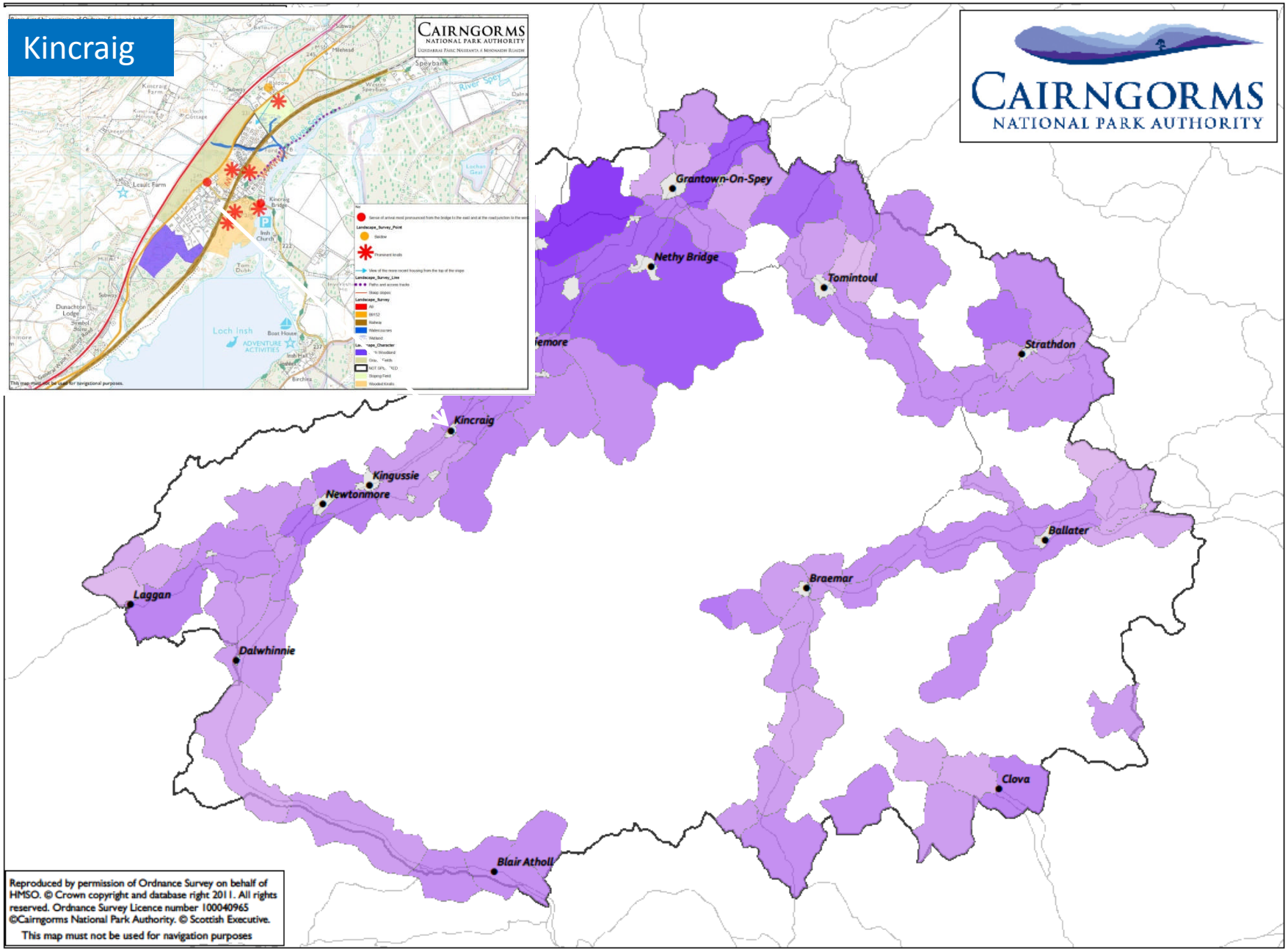
- **Presence/absence of characteristics**
- **Contribution of characteristics**





3. The Settlements

Kincraig


CAIRNGORMS
NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY
Grantown-On-Spey
Nethy Bridge
Tomintoul
Strathdon
Kincraig
Kingussie
Newtonmore
Ballater
Braemar
Laggan
Dalwhinnie
Clova
Blair Atholl
Loch Insh
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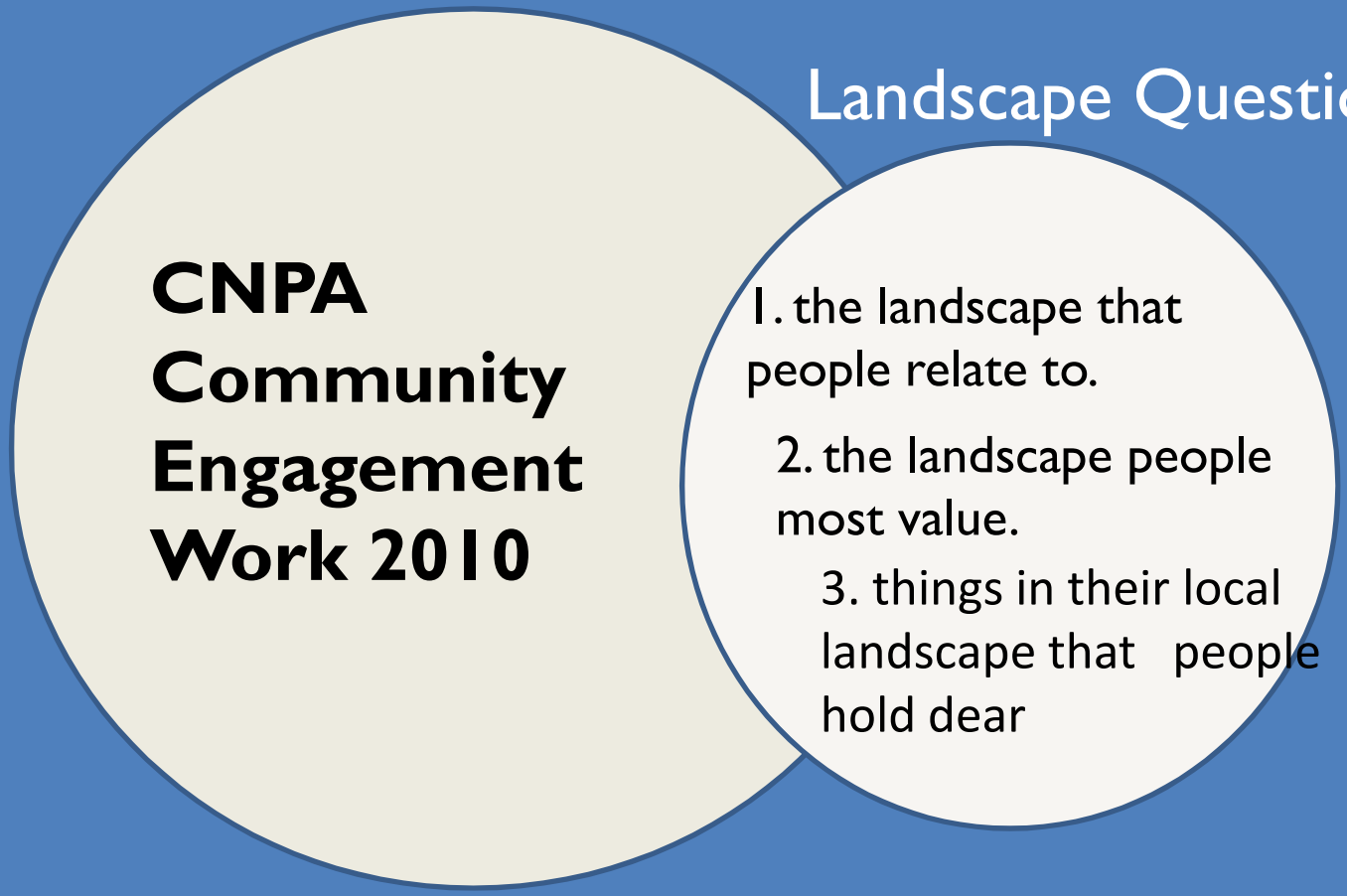
1. Natural Landscape of the Settlement

Captures the contribution that geology and biodiversity make to the landscape and experience of place, especially what is characteristic and distinctive.

2. Historical Landscape

A succinct description encapsulating those aspects of the historic development of the settlement that most influence its character and experience as a place.

3. The Things People Value in Their Local Landscape



Landscape Priorities and Opportunities (Ballater)

- Enrich the experience of Ballater in its natural setting
- Identify key views within wooded areas and ensure that wherever possible these are kept open for the enjoyment of all.
- Identify those individual features of the village landscape that are most valued and prioritise their maintenance and enhancement e.g. veteran street trees, monuments, walls and familiar historic landmarks.
- Use tranquillity mapping to assess this quality and identify actions to enhance it.
- Attain 'Dark Sky Place' status for ballater. Dark Sky Places are areas or sites that have been officially recognised for their low levels of light pollution and good public access. www.darkskyscotland.org.uk
- Improve the quality and range of 'river-side-spots'. Enhance opportunities for safe access and avoid restricting existing access.

A Landscape Toolkit

- The landscape Framework is not about ‘yes’ or ‘no’.
- It is about putting information into the public domain
- Achieving solutions for people and the landscape
- A web-based tool of many parts