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A TOPOGRAPHIC ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF THE 18TH CENTURY MILITARY ROAD AT LOCH ARKLET

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BA MA MA MEng MfA

PROJECT SUMMARY SHEET

<i>Client</i>	FORESTRY COMMISSION, SCOTLAND
<i>National Grid Reference</i>	NN 370 095
<i>Parish</i>	BUCHANAN
<i>Council</i>	STIRLING
<i>NMRS No.</i>	NN 40 NW 3
<i>Oasis No.</i>	HEADLAND1-84300
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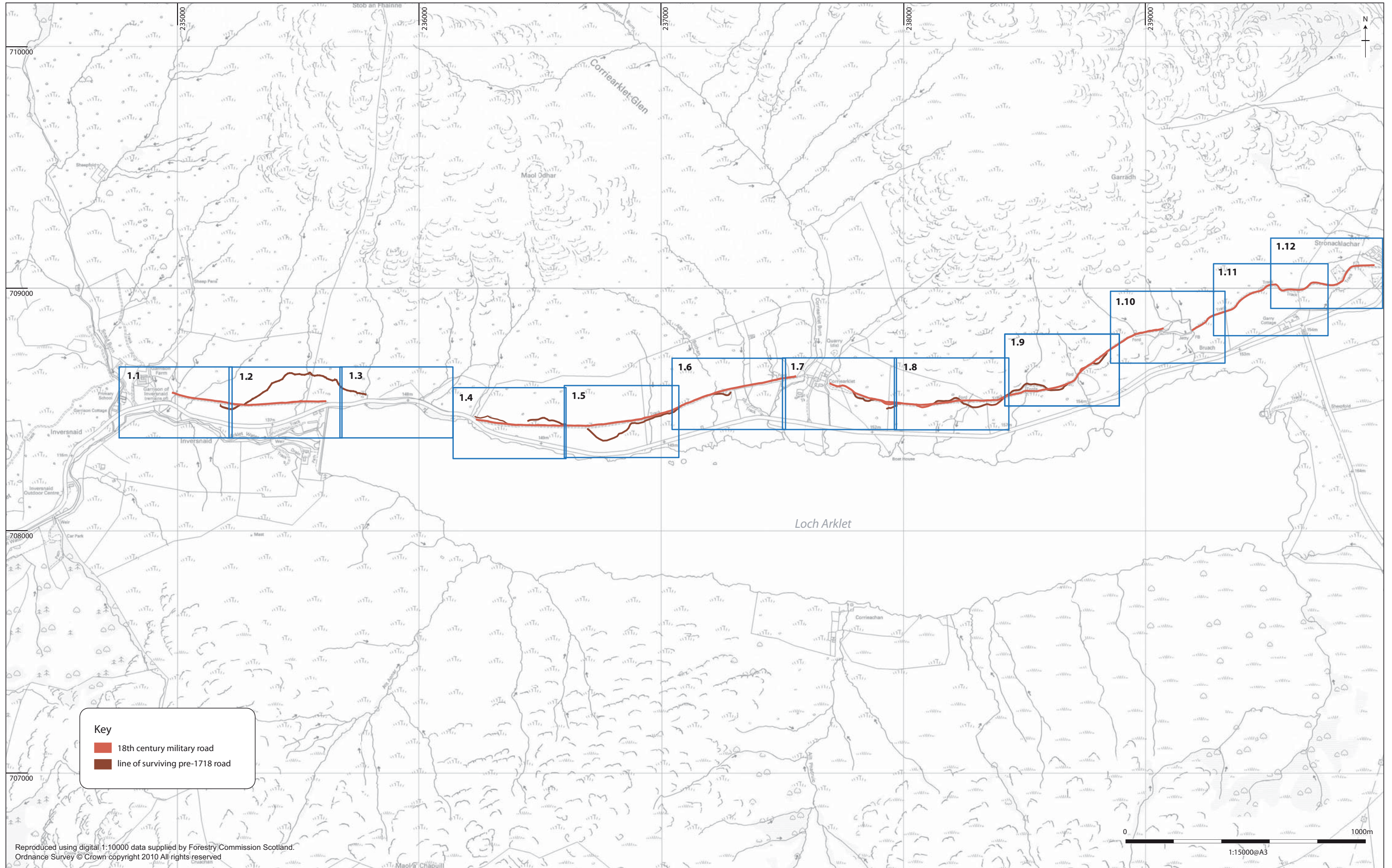
Signed off by:

Dr Sorina Spanou MA(Hons) PhD, Project Manager

Date:.....

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A TOPOGRAPHIC ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF THE 18TH CENTURY MILITARY ROAD AT LOCH ARKLET

by Magnar Dalland

A topographic archaeological survey of the 18th century military road at Loch Arklet was carried out between 6th and 10th September 2010. The area surveyed runs for some 5km east to west from the former garrison at Inversnaid to Stronachlachar. The road is still well preserved and clearly visible on the ground. An earlier and more sinuous road line was recorded at several points along the road. This has been identified as part of an older military road network depicted on maps from 1718.

1. INTRODUCTION

Forestry Commission Scotland (FCS) has commissioned Headland Archaeology Ltd to carry out a detailed topographic archaeological survey of the 18th century military road at Loch Arklet (Illus 1). The archaeological survey was commissioned in order to provide a detailed mapping of the earthworks and surviving structural features along the road in advance of the proposed construction of a modern path that follows the historic route. The archaeological survey will inform both the exact route of the proposed new path and any future presentation and interpretation material.

The survey was carried out in accordance with a Specification prepared by Headland Archaeology ltd based on a Brief provided by FCS. The work was carried out between 6th and 10th September 2010.

2. BACKGROUND

The military road is part of a network of military roads linking strongholds in the Highlands. The line of the 18th century military road runs for c.5km east to west from the former garrison at Inversnaid (NN 348 096) to Stronachlachar (NN 400 100) (Illus 1) It is situated on the lower south-facing slopes of Loch Arklet in an area of open moorland on the national forest estate and runs largely parallel with and 120m to 180m to the north of the modern road.

The road is still well preserved and clearly visible on the ground for most of the route. It has been truncated by the modern road at the west end of Loch Arklet near the dam, over a distance of some 650m (NN 356 095–

NN 362 094) and also by a small reservoir to the west of Bruach (NN 391 098). The road has been obscured by the Corriaklet steading (NN 376 096), immediately to the east of Corriarklet Burn over a distance of some 120m.

3. METHODS

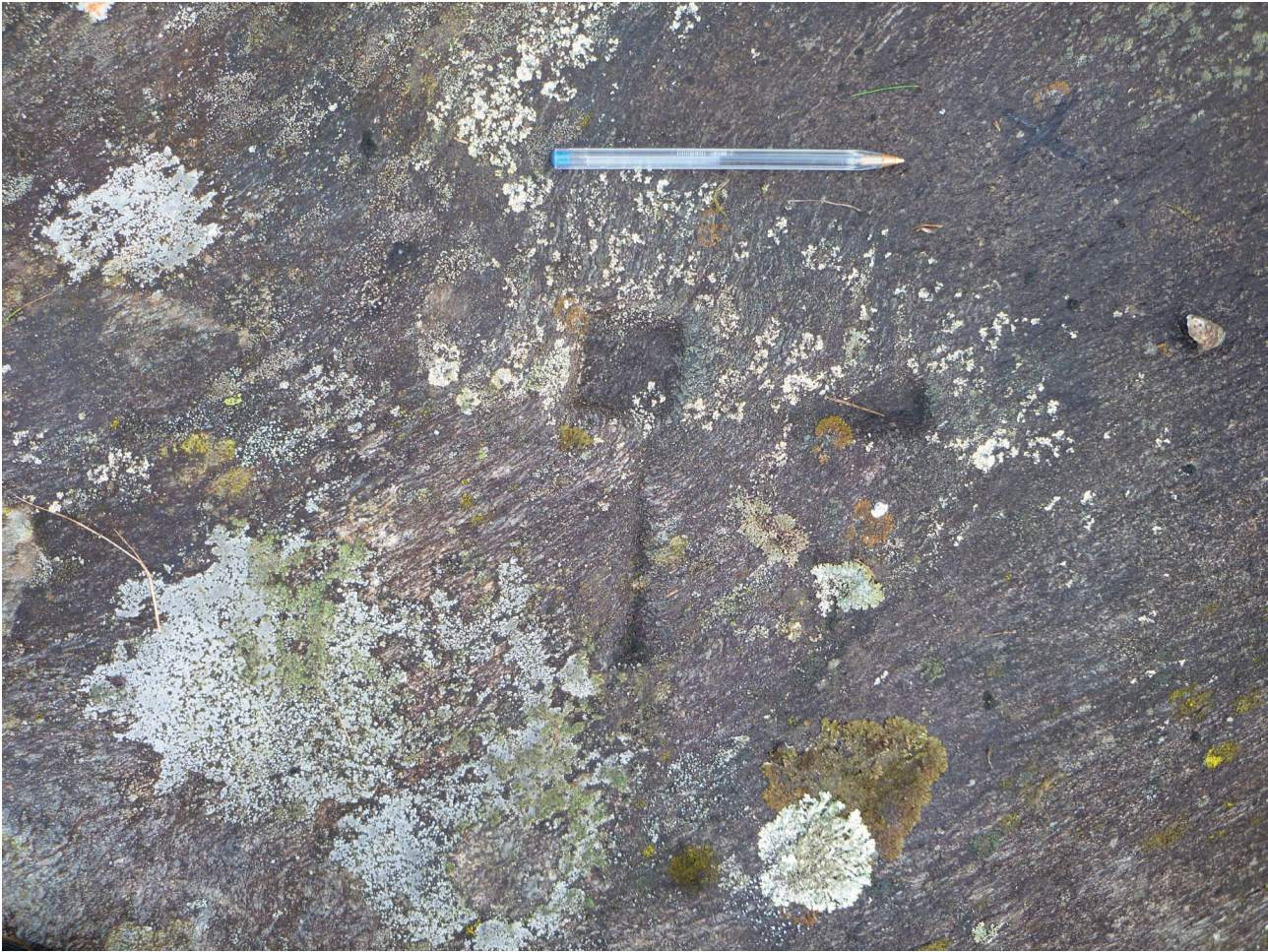
3.1 Topographic Survey

A topographic survey of appropriate residual archaeological features such as earthworks and structures was undertaken along the route of the road (c.5km in length) and the area immediately surrounding it. The survey was undertaken consistent with a Level 2 (RCHAMS 2004) survey.

The survey was initially carried out using Trimble R6 Differential Global Positioning System (DGPS) with VRS-Now technology which produces readings at sub-decimetre accuracy. However, due to lack of mobile phone coverage most of the survey was carried out using a base and rover system. There was sufficient coverage however for the VRS system in order to locate the initial base station which ensured that the entire survey was at sub-decimetre accuracy.

The density of survey points was adapted to a reproduction of the survey at 1:1250. Generally, points were recorded at 4m intervals along the road line. In the case of smaller features (quarries and culverts) smaller point intervals were used. Due to difficulties reproducing small features at this scale, only the main cuttings and embankments were recorded. In addition to features, the main areas of bracken and areas of boggy ground were recorded.

The brief indicated that the survey should cover features within a 50m zone centred on the road. However, as some



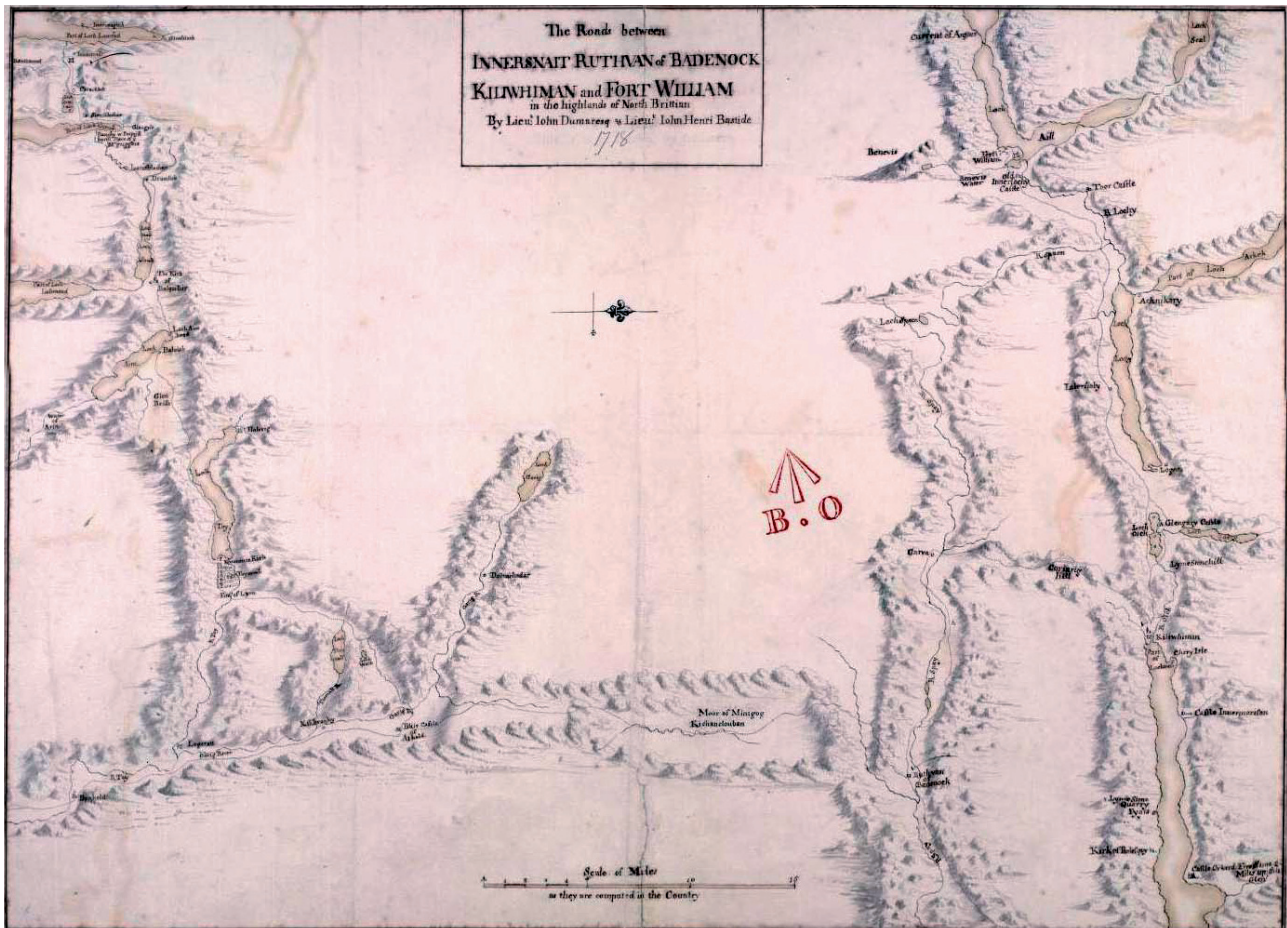
Illus 2

18th century benchmark on exposed bedrock in the 18th century road at NN 38326 09535



Illus 3

1st edition OS map surveyed in 1861



Illus 4

Map from 1718, showing military roads linking 'Inversnait, Ruthven of Badenock, Kiliwhiman and Fort William'

stretches of the earlier phase of the road deviated further away from the road it was decided to record the full extent of the earlier phase.

The results of the survey are shown on Illus 1. Due to the large area surveyed, the survey has also been reproduced on 12 separate tiles at 1:1250 (Illus 1.1–1.12, Appendix 3).

4. RESULTS

The road is still remarkably well preserved despite having been abandoned over 150 years ago. The reason for this could be that it was maintained as a farm track for some time following its replacement by the current road. Some culverts are still functioning; others have been blocked up due to lack of maintenance. It is possible that there were some original fords along this road, but it was difficult during the survey to distinguish between a ford and a blocked culvert.

An old benchmark was noted in an area of exposed bedrock some 650m to the east of Corriarklet (Illus 2). It comprised a central square with two wedge-shaped arms carved into the bedrock and aligned exactly south and east.

An older and more sinuous road line was recorded at several stretches along the road. At one point three phases of the road were noted (237950, 709520) (Illus 1.7,

Appendix 3). The two road lines were generally intertwined with the later route appearing to have been built as part of a 'road-straightening' upgrade. This pattern was most prominent along the central sections of the road. The eastern end of the road deviated significantly to the north before merging into the later road line just east of Inversnait Garrison. There were no traces of an earlier phase at the western section beyond Bruach reservoir.

There was very little damage to the road. In some places, blocked culverts had resulted in boggy ground covering the road, as the water built up upslope and flooded across the road. In a few places, a blocked culvert had resulted in erosion of the road surface, but this was usually confined to a narrow segment across the road.

Some segments were covered by bracken, mostly in the eastern stretches of the road. Usually the bracken was confined within the sides, but in some places the bracken covered the entire road.

5. DISCUSSION

The survey has produced an accurate, detailed record of the 18th century military road within the survey area. It clearly demonstrates how this road is an upgrade of an earlier, more sinuous and slightly narrower road.



Illus 5

Map from 1718 of the area around Inversnaid garrison showing the military road in detail

The 1st edition OS map surveyed in 1861 shows the current road running parallel with the old road from Inversnaid to Stronachlachar (Illus 3). When the Loch Arklet dam was built in 1914, the new road had to be shifted north in the area around the west end of the reservoir to avoid the dam and to move the road out of the flooded area, thus destroying a 650m long segment of the 18th century road.

The military road is part of a network of military roads linking strongholds in the Highlands. However, it was

built along the line of an older road. This older road is depicted on maps dated to 1718, showing military roads linking 'Inversnait, Ruthven of Badenock, Kiliwhiman and Fort William' (Illus 4). A separate map of the area around Inversnaid garrison shows the road in more detail which resembles the layout of the pre-1718 road that was recorded in the area to the north of the Arklet dam (Illus 5).

APPENDICES

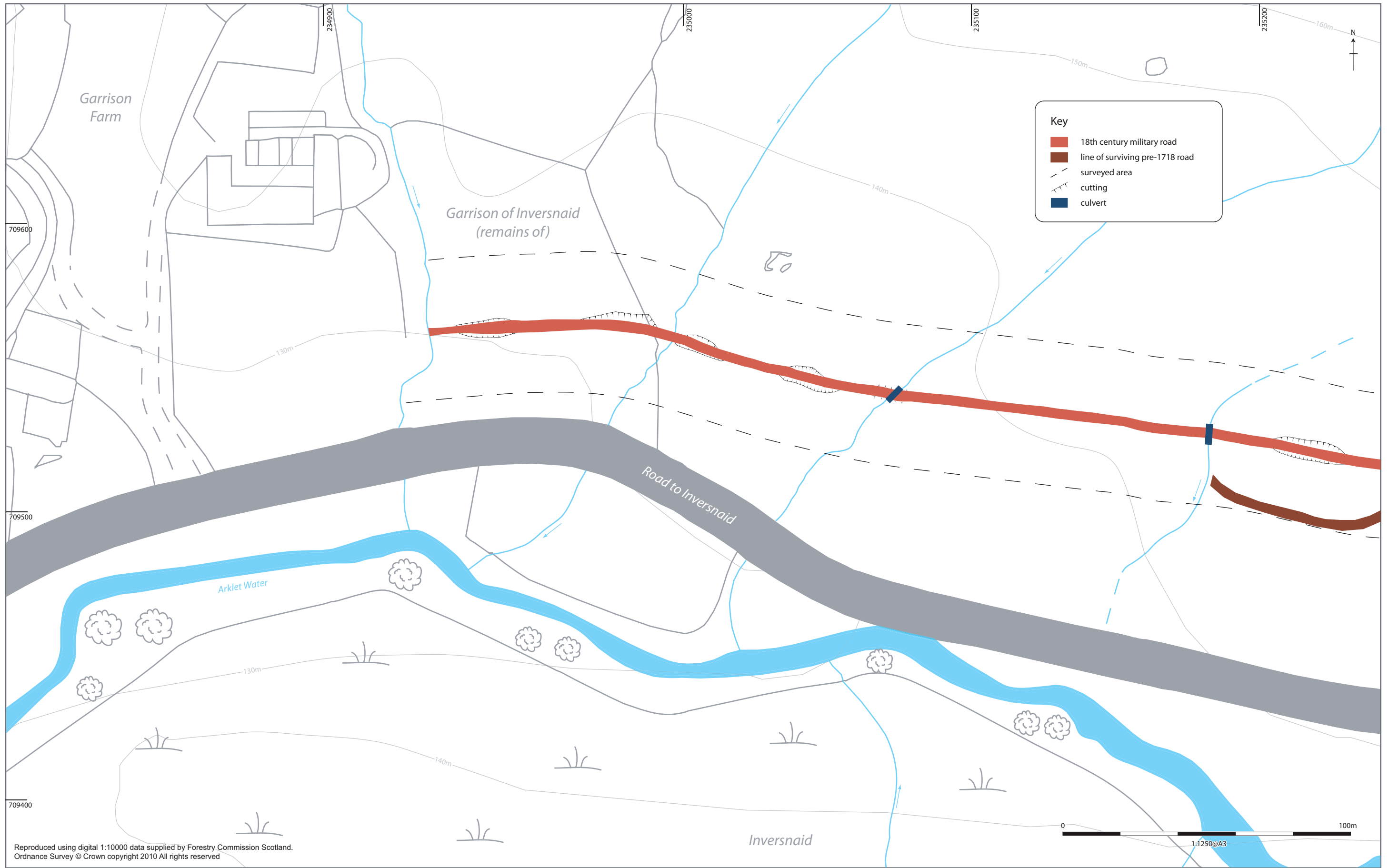
Appendix 1 – Photographic register

Photo	Digital file name	Position	Facing	Description
1	LAMR10-P01	234 930/709 576	WSW	View of stream crossing the road SE of Inversnaid Barracks
2	LAMR10-P02	234 930/709 576	E	View of the road SE of Inversnaid Barracks
3	LAMR10-P03	235 010/709 572	SW	View of stream crossing the road ESE of Inversnaid Barracks
4	LAMR10-P04	235 068/709 541	NE	View of culvert remains at 235 072/709 545
5	LAMR10-P05	235 077/709 550	SW	View of culvert remains at 235 072/709 545
6	LAMR10-P06	235 070/709 543	NE	Remains of culvert at 235 072/709 545
7	LAMR10-P07	235 180/709 527	N	View of culvert remains at 235 181/709 532
8	LAMR10-P08	235 230/709 500	ENE	View along earlier phase of road E of Loch Arklet Dam
9	LAMR10-P09	235 168/709 524	ESE	View along earlier phase of road E of Loch Arklet Dam
10	LAMR10-P10	235 409/709 526	NW	Old quarry on N side of road at 235 393/709 529
11	LAMR10-P11	235 512/709 529	NE	South opening of blocked culvert at 235 514/709 532
12	LAMR10-P12	235 519/709 539	SW	Upstream side of blocked culvert at 235 514/709 532
13	LAMR10-P13	235 644/709 531	W	Old road merging with modern road N of dam.
14	LAMR10-P14	235 782/709 561	WNW	Earlier phase of road running uphill N of dam
15	LAMR10-P15	236 233/ 709 463	E	Two phases of road emerging from modern road E of dam
16	LAMR10-P16	236 341/709 442	E	View of road
17	LAMR10-P17	236 465/709 447	W	Old quarry in earlier road phase at 236 447/709 450
18	LAMR10-P18	236 734/709 384	NW	Earlier road phase running uphill towards General Wade's road
19	LAMR10-P19	236 981/709 475	WSW	View of two road phases
20	LAMR10-P20	237 212/709 552	NE	Culvert at 237 216/709 564
21	LAMR10-P21	237 343/709 592	NNE	Culvert at 237 345/709 596
22	LAMR10-P22	237 927/709 529	WNW	Two phases of road merging at 237 880/709 541
23	LAMR10-P23	237 931/709 499	NE	Third phase of road some 280m to the E of Corriaklet steading
24	LAMR10-P24	238 105/709 519	E	View of road
25	LAMR10-P25	238 105/709 519	W	View of road
26	LAMR10-P26	238 048/709 522	SE	Slight stream erosion due to blocked culvert at 238 052/709 520
27	LAMR10-P27	238 137/709 518	N	Downstream culvert opening covered in bracken at 238 137/709 523
28	LAMR10-P28	238 325/709 534	N	Detail of old benchmark at 238 325.6/709 534.7
29	LAMR10-P29	238 325/709 534	NE	Old benchmark on exposed bedrock at 238 325/709 534
30	LAMR10-P30	238 320/709 534	E	Exposed bedrock within line of road at 238 325/709 534
31	LAMR10-P31	238 500/709 580	S	Upstream opening of culvert at 238 500/709 575
32	LAMR10-P32	238 493/709 578	SE	Slight stream erosion next to working culvert caused by meltwater?
33	LAMR10-P33	238 963/709 807	NNW	Blocked culvert at 238 962/709 810
34	LAMR10-P34	238 715/709 645	E	Ford or possibly blocked culvert at 238 722/709 645

Appendix 2 – Discovery and Excavation Scotland

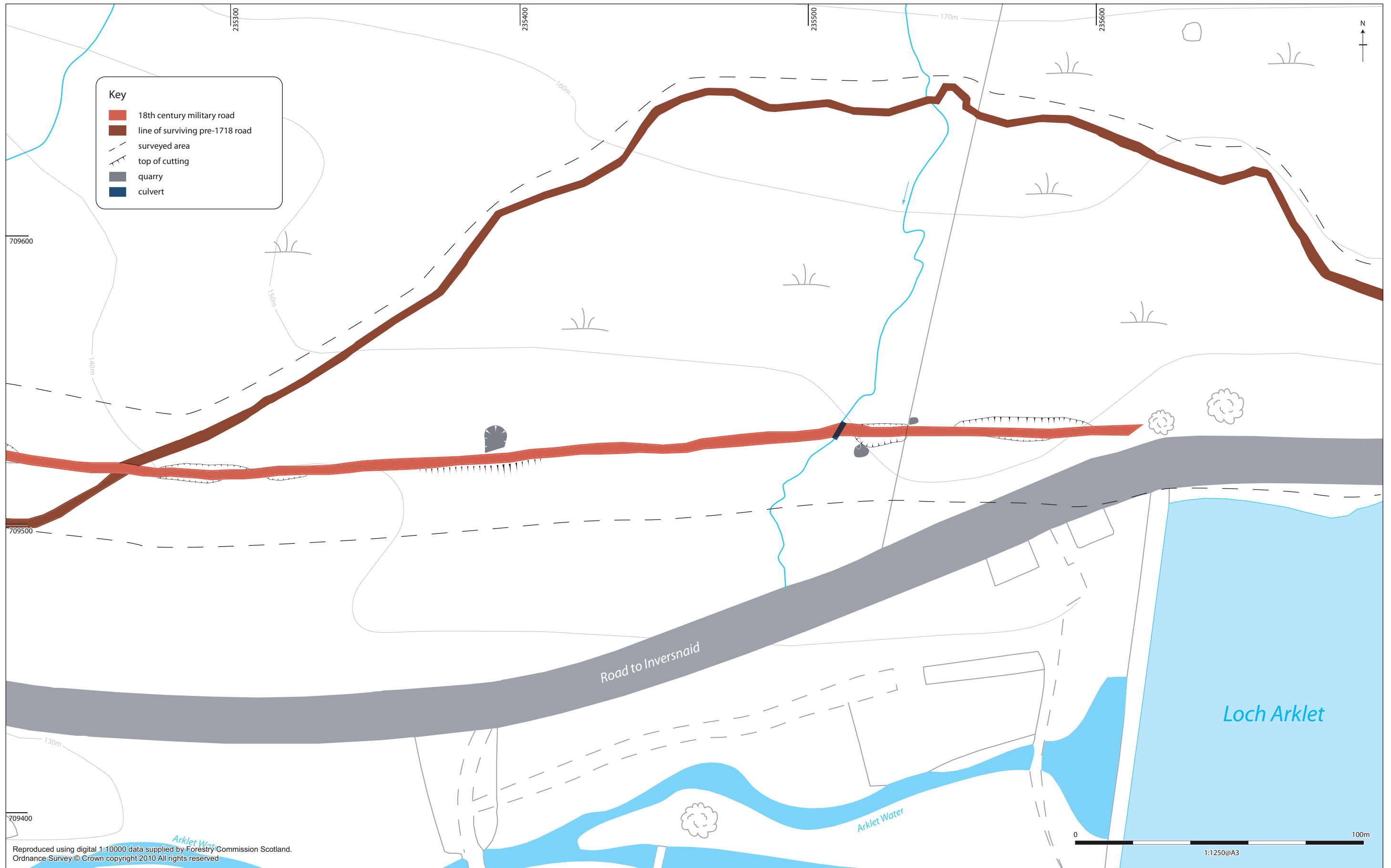
LOCAL AUTHORITY:	Stirling
PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME:	A topographic archaeological survey of the 18th century military road at Loch Arklet
PROJECT CODE:	LAMR10
PARISH:	Buchanan
NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR:	Magnar Dalland
NAME OF ORGANISATION:	Headland Archaeology
TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:	Survey
NMRS NO(S):	NN30NE 4
SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):	Military Road
SIGNIFICANT FINDS:	None
NGR (2 letters, 8 or 10 figures)	NN 3750 0950
START DATE (this season)	06-09-2010
END DATE (this season)	10-09-2010
PREVIOUS WORK (incl. <i>DES</i> ref.)	Dalland, M 'Results of an Archaeological Survey around Loch Katrine & Loch Arklet' <i>DES</i> 2006, p164
MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION: (May include information from other fields)	A topographic archaeological survey of the 18th century military road at Loch Arklet was carried out between 6th and 10th September 2010. The area surveyed runs for some 5 km east to west from the former garrison at Inversnaid to Stronachlachar. The road is still well preserved and clearly visible on the ground. An earlier and more sinuous road line was recorded at several points along the road. This has been identified as part of an older military road network depicted on maps from 1718.
PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:	Not known
CAPTION(S) FOR ILLUSTRS:	–
SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:	Forestry Commission Scotland
ADDRESS OF MAIN CONTRIBUTOR:	Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd, 13 Jane Street, Edinburgh EH6 5HE
EMAIL ADDRESS:	Magnar.dalland@headlandarchaeology.com
ARCHIVE LOCATION (intended/deposited)	NMRS

Appendix 3 – Illus 1.1–1.12

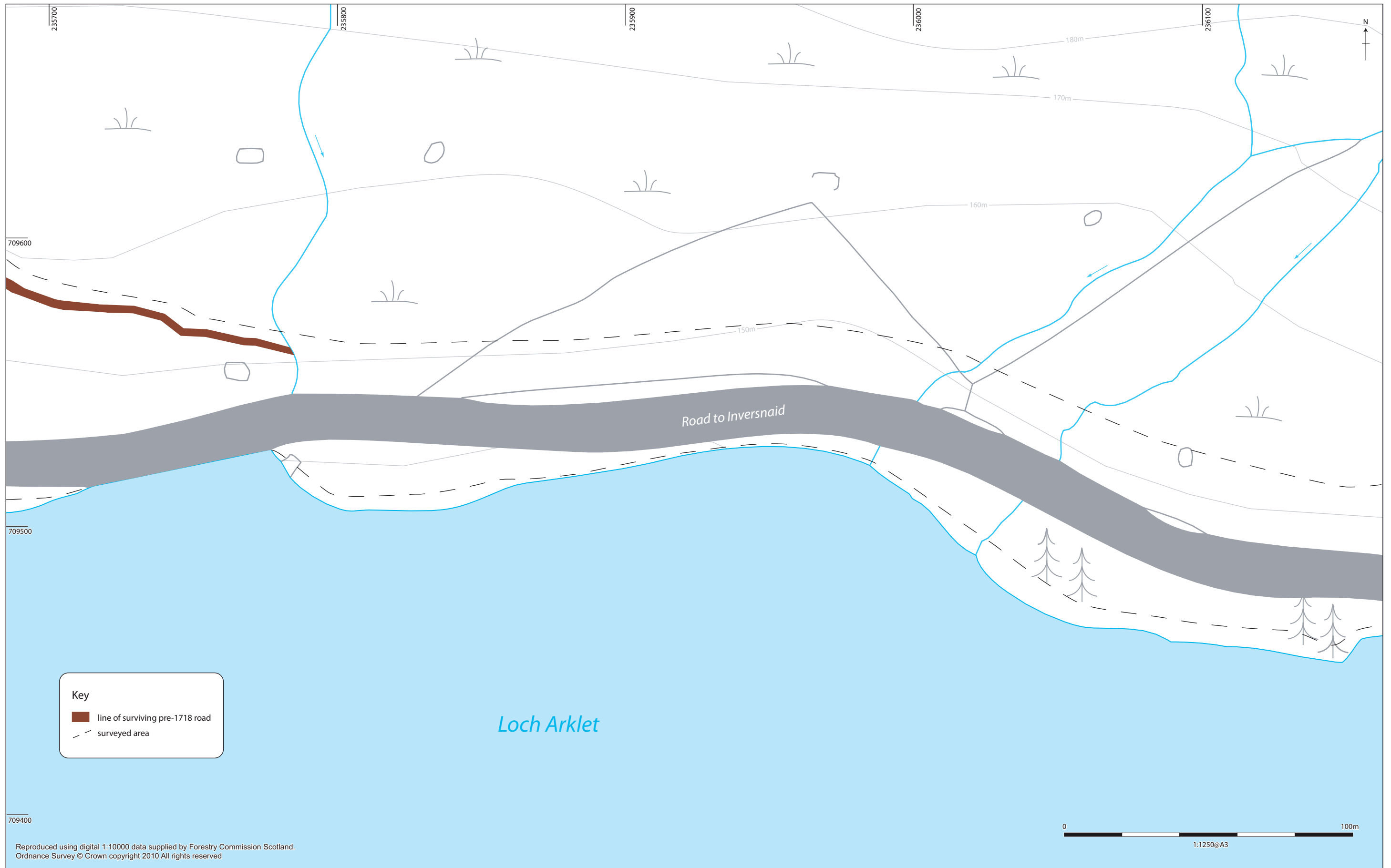


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Illus 1.1

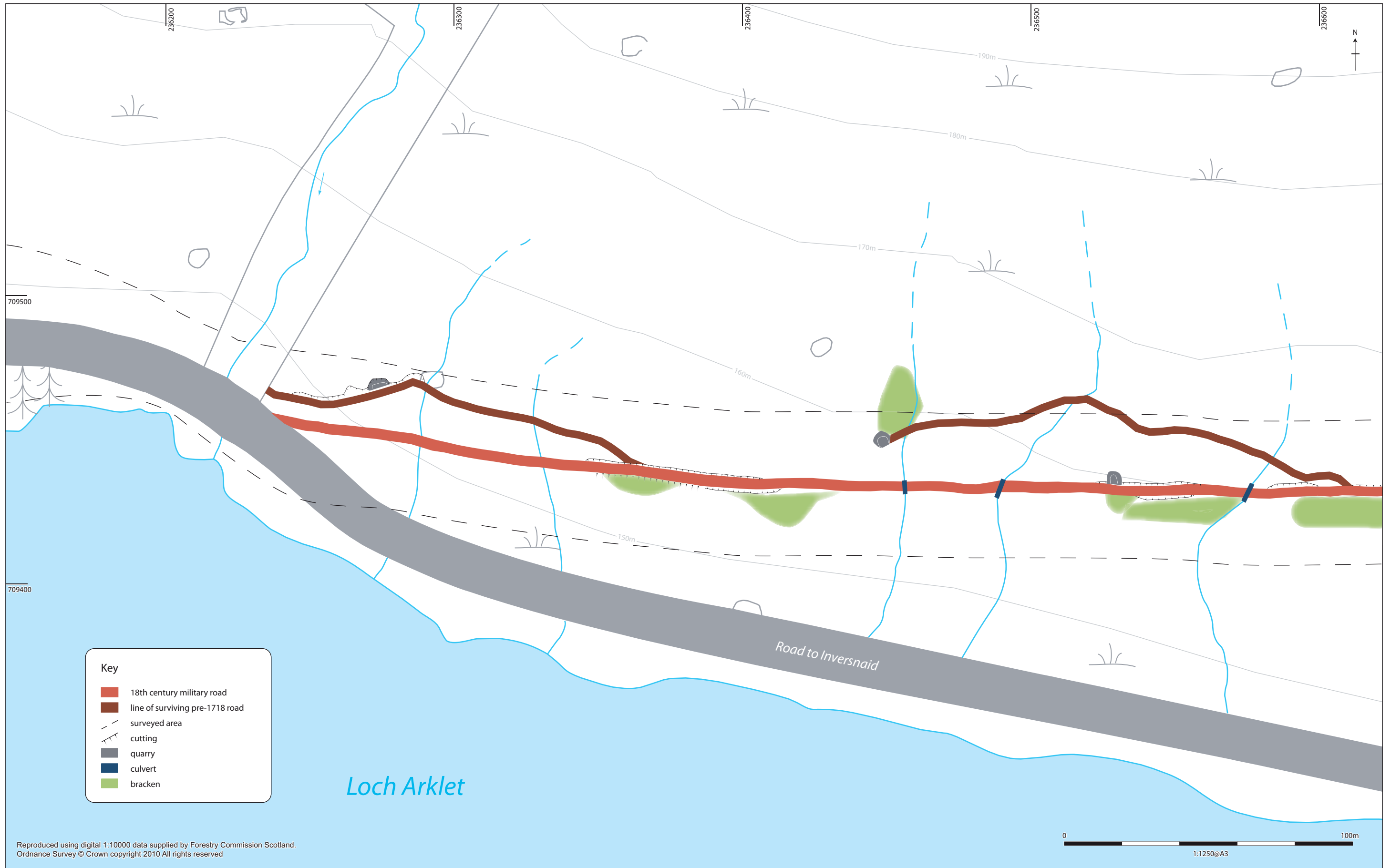


Illus 1.2



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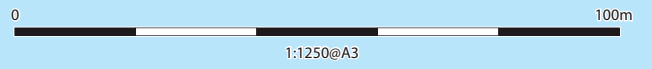
Illus 1.3



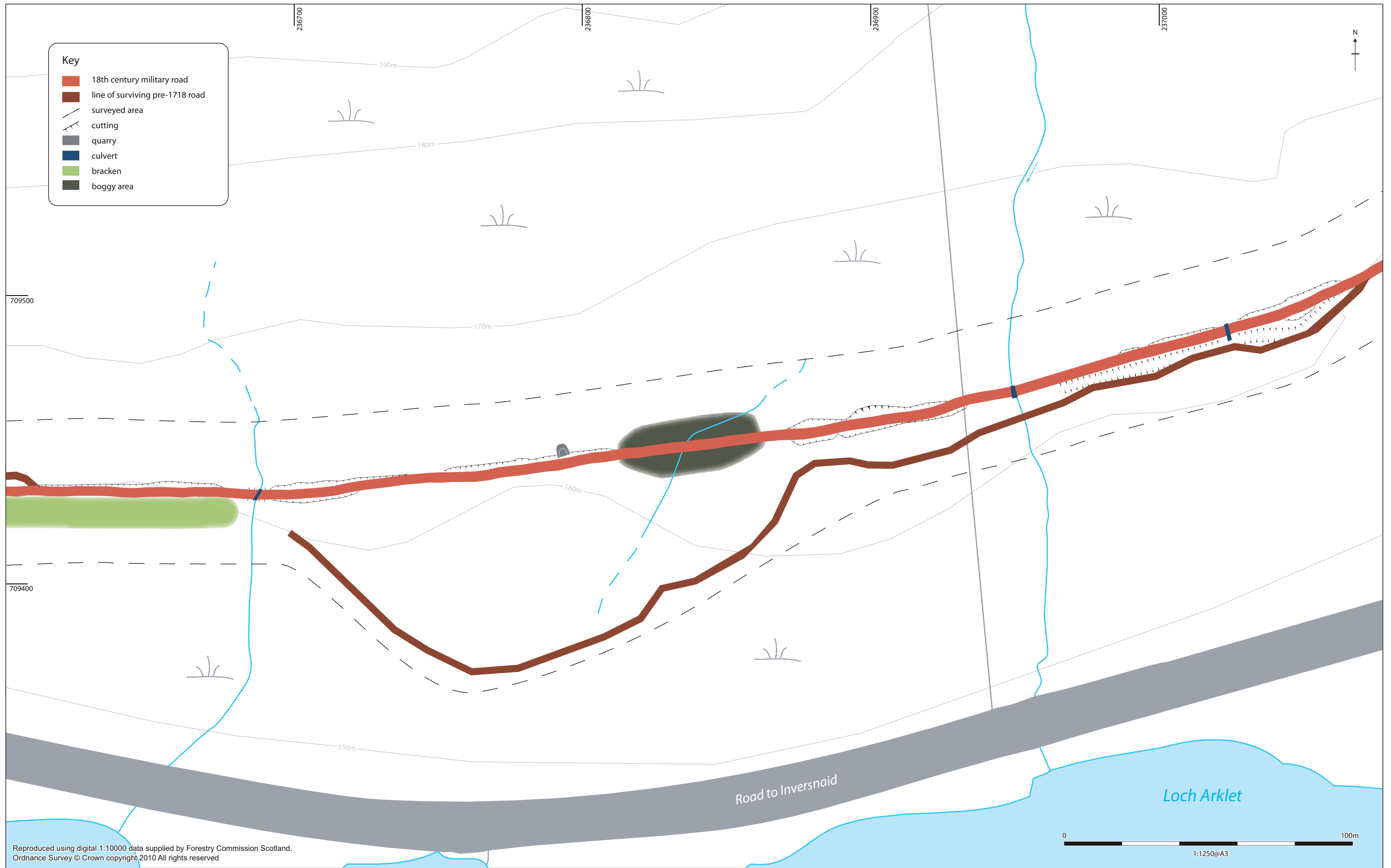
Key

- 18th century military road
- line of surviving pre-1718 road
- surveyed area
- cutting
- quarry
- culvert
- bracken

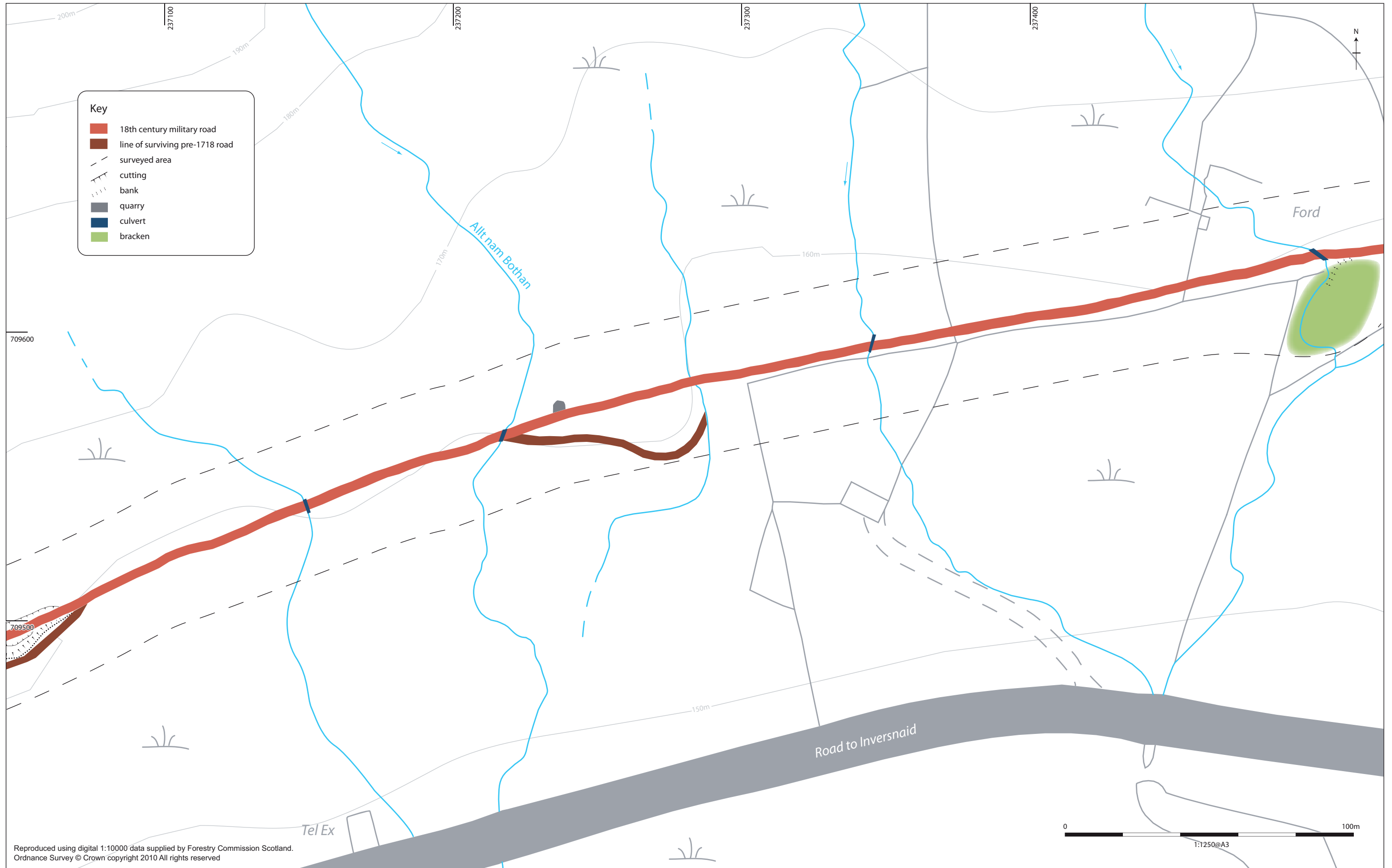
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Illus 1.4



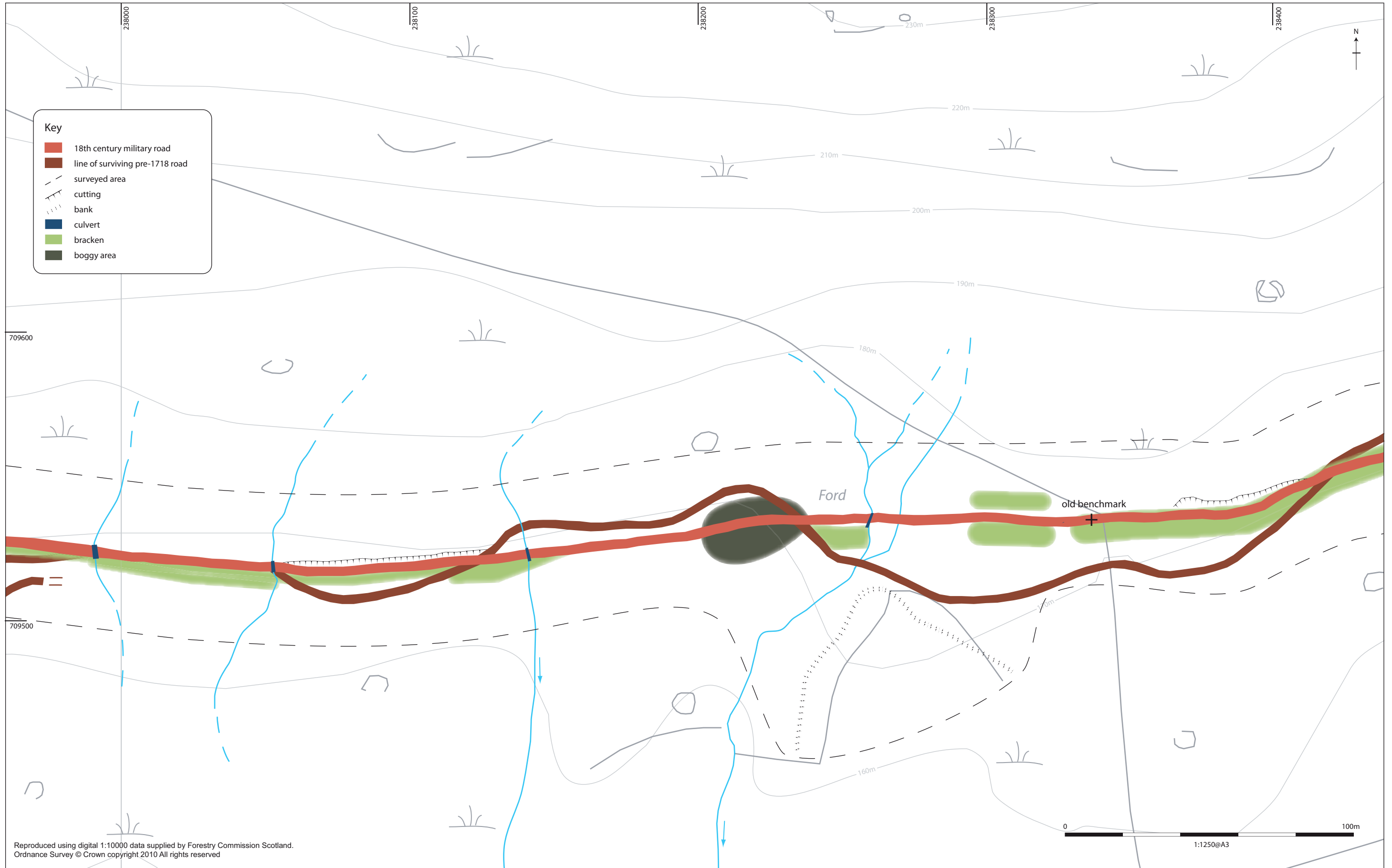
Illus 1.5



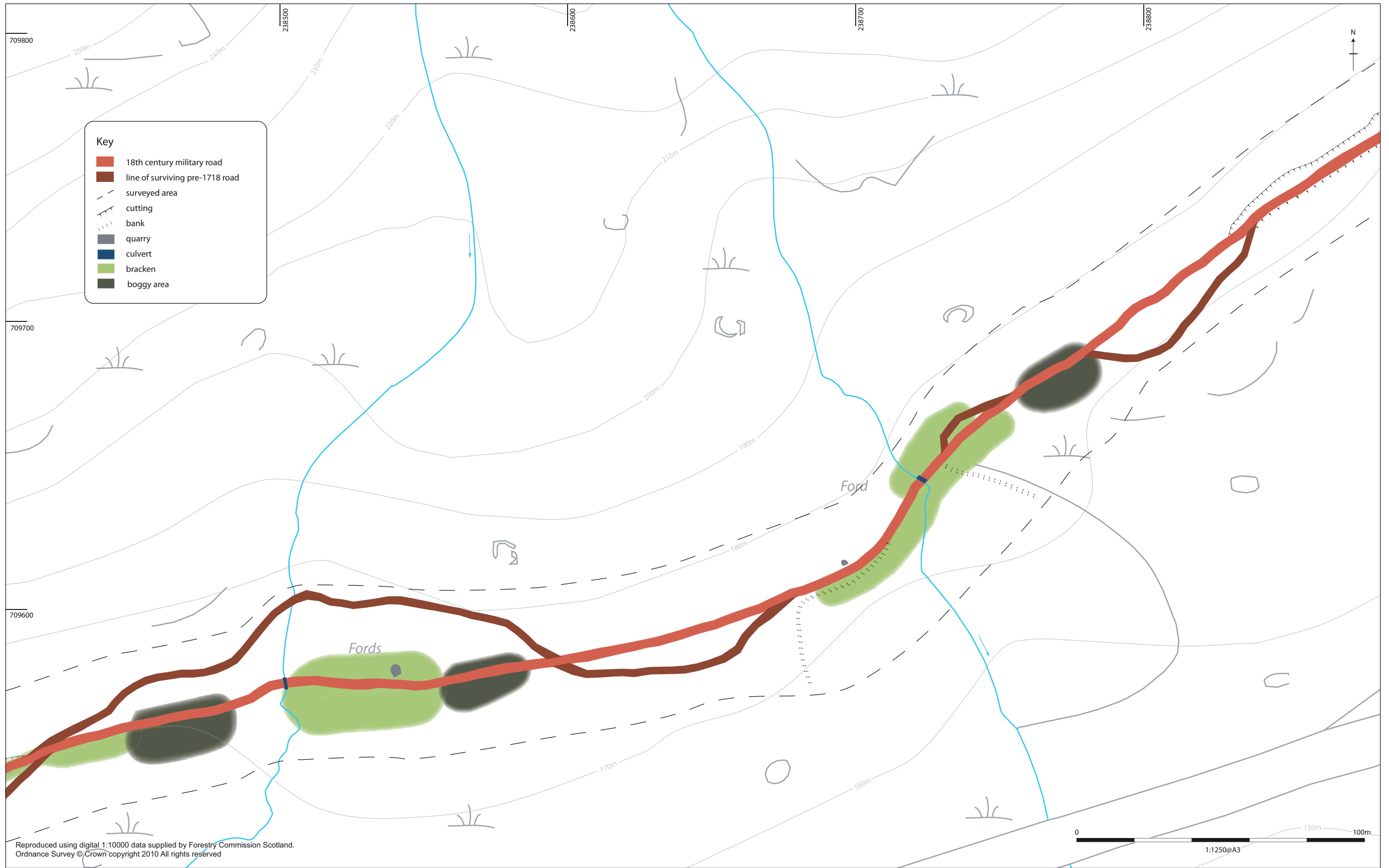
Illus 1.6



Illus 1.7



Illus 1.8



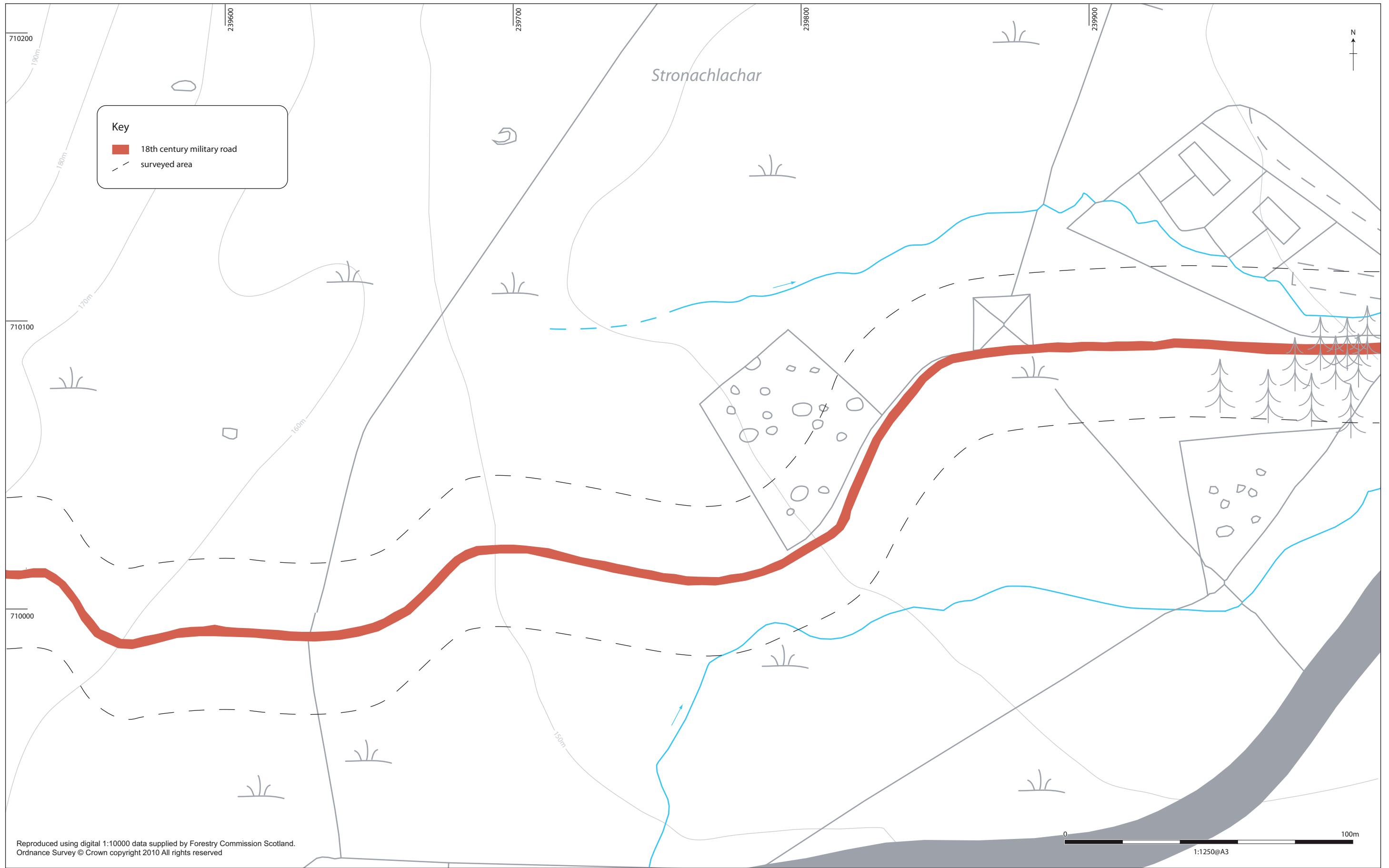
Illus 1.9



Illus 1.10



Illus 1.11



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1:1250@A3

Illus 1.12