

BEN ALDER CIRCUIT

Distance	Ascent	Time	Difficulty
71.5km	1312m	5.0-7.0 hours	Moderate/Difficult

Surface

Good metalled road to Dalwhinnie and rover track to Culra. Well-engineered stalkers paths round Ben Alder with lots of water bars.

Hazards

High Mountains – the route climbs to over 700m in remote country.

Start

Crubenbeg

Finish

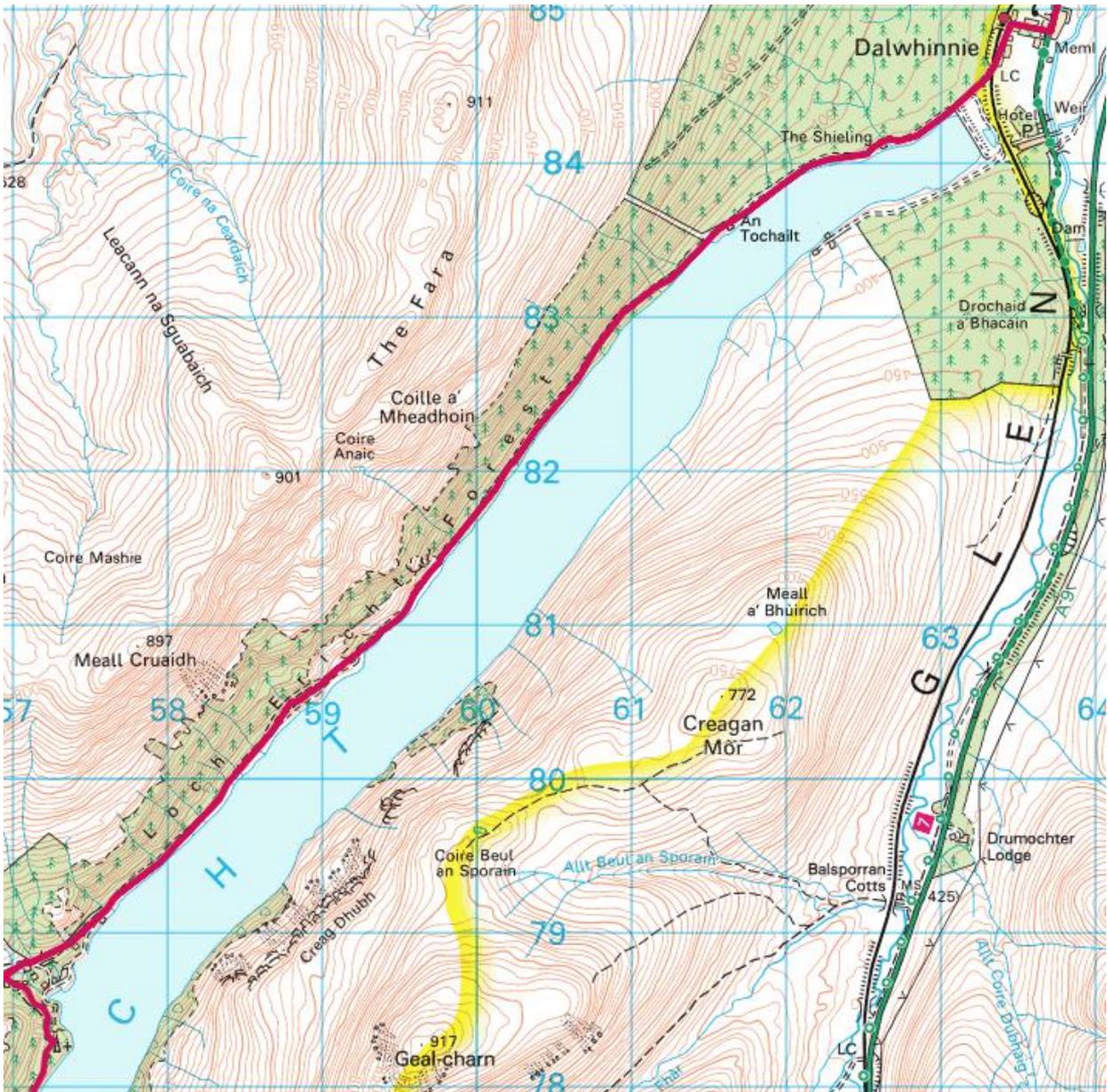
Crubenbeg

Route

Follow the old A9 from the end of the road to the cottages to Dalwhinnie. Turn right in Dalwhinnie following signs to the station. Turn left just before reaching the station and follow the road past the railway cottages. Cross the railway by the level crossing to pick up the land rover track to Ben Alder Lodge.

Follow the land rover track past the imposing gatehouse (use the pedestrian gate if the main gate is locked) and the equally impressive building at An Tochalt. Continue along the shore of Loch Erich to the entrance to Ben Alder Lodge.

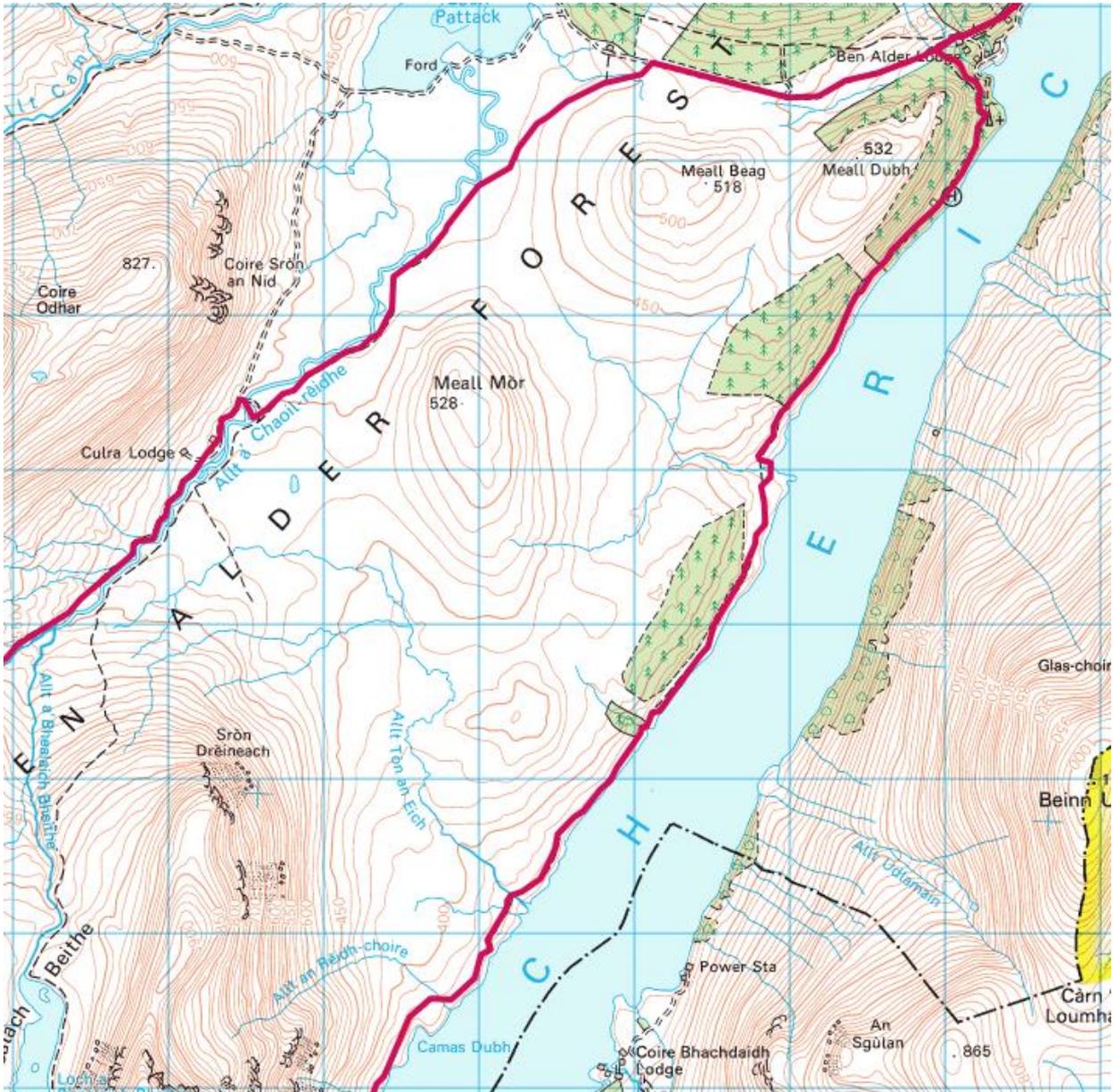
Turn right at the entrance to Ben Alder Lodge and follow the land rover track up the hill skirting the lodge boundary fence and across the bridge to reach open ground.



Keep left where the land rover track forks and leave the land rover track after c.200m to cross the small burn on a footbridge.

Follow the single track path through the woods bypassing Ben Alder Lodge to reach the shore of Loch Ericht and join the land rover track that passes the chapel and helipad. Turn right on the land rover track and follow it to its end at the Allt Camas nan Cnamh.

Cross the Allt Camas nan Cnamh and continue along the shore of the loch following a well-engineered stalker's path, which is surprisingly dry given the boggy ground it passes through.



The stalker's path continues all the way to An Dun, the headland before Alder Bay and Ben Alder Cottage. A gate in the fence around An Dun marks the beginning of a 500-600m hike-a-bike section, which is rough and steep in places (and the best line is not always obvious) as it traverses the steep slopes on An Dun. The gate in the fence at the far side of An Dun marks the end of the difficulties and the path improves again as it nears the reputedly haunted Ben Alder Cottage.

From Ben Alder Cottage, follow the channels of the Allt Bealach Breabaig uphill, crossing the braided burn where possible. The well-engineered stalker's path becomes more clearly defined on the far bank and is followed up to the Bealach Cumhann. The riding is generally easy (if uphill), but there are water bars every few meters.

Follow the stalker's path round the shoulder of Ben Alder to climb steadily then steeply to Bealach Dubh. Descend the path from Bealach Dubh (steep and loose at first) towards Culra. Cross the Allt a' Chaoil-reidhe by the bridge beyond Culra and turn left to follow the path on the far side until it ends. Turn right on the land rover track and follow it back to Ben Alder Lodge.

