

Crown Pastoral Land Tenure Review

Lease name: Mt Grand

Lease number: PO 349

Public Submissions - Part 1

These submissions were received as a result of the public advertising of the Preliminary Proposal for Tenure Review.

April

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CENTRAL OTAGO RECREATIONAL USERS FORUM

26 January 2010

Address for Service

186 Faulks Road,
RD 2,
Wanaka 9382.

Name

Jan Kelly, Secretary of CORUF.

**To**

The Commissioner of Crown Lands
c/o David Paterson,
David Valuations,
P. O. Box 215,
DUNEDIN.

Submission to Preliminary Proposal, Mt Grand Pastoral Lease Po 349

Dear Sirs,

CORUF appreciates the opportunity to submit to the Review of Mt Grand Pastoral Lease.

I have seen the Lease, taking the opportunity to inspect it by joining the visit arranged by Central Otago / Lakes Branch of Forest & Bird Society on Friday 22 January 2010.

We sincerely thank Darroch Valuations, and the lessee Lincoln University, for the courtesy of making this visit possible.

Central Otago Recreational Users Forum

The Central Otago Recreational Users Forum is a voice for a diverse group of user interests, representing over 60 recreational clubs and groups. A significant part of our brief is to represent recreation by the public to the statutory managers of public lands.

A fundamental principle guiding us is the belief that public lands should be accessible to, and able to be enjoyed by, the general public.

An associated principle is for due care and respect, to the land, the landscape, natural and historical values, and to the private landowners whose properties have easements on them giving us access to public conservation land.

The Central Otago Recreational Users Forum makes the following submissions.

Mt Grand Pastoral Lease Po 349. Preliminary Proposal for Tenure Review.

PROPOSAL

1. **CA2, CA3. An area of approximately 126 hectares to be restored to or retained in full Crown ownership and control as conservation area under Section 35 (2)(a)(i) Crown Pastoral Land Act 1998.**

CA2 being the notable "Bluenose" geological feature, down-slope to Lagoon Creek below; and CA3 covering the Tor ridge in the north east corner of the property. A new fence will be built to complete the enclosure of each.

CORUF is in support of the creation of CA2 to protect the Bluenose geological feature, but we believe that given the range of good Kanuka and diverse native plants on that slope, the area set aside is not wide enough. We believe also that the proposed fence "D-C" is too high on the slope and will be an intrusive feature in what is presently a landscape unmarked by bulldozed lines.

The head of the basin adjacent to CA2 is quite eroded and would seem to not support grazing sustainably. Giving it more complete protection by fencing most of it into the Conservation Area CA2 may assist it to recover its stability and to restore varied natural environments.

SUBMISSION : that the proposed new fence starts at the saddle on the lowest part of the ridgeline and proceeds down hill, at or near the main creek, isolating the damaged, sliding slopes from grazing and allowing them to recover their complex natural values within CA2.

See our map, following, for identification of this area.

CORUF is in support of setting aside the area CA3 to protect the dramatic tor landscape in the extreme north east area of the property, and its values, but we note that the area set aside is not as extensive as the RAP B4 described for the same landscape (see the CRR report.).

SUBMISSION: We submit that:

(a) area CA3 be widened to match the original RAP B4, thus covering more of this unusual landscape, and bringing it more into line with the proposed Conservation Area immediately adjacent across the boundary fence (see our map, below)

OR

(b) that CA3 be widened significantly, to match the boundaries established for the proposed adjacent conservation area, CA5 - Lake Hawea, thus creating a coherent landscape unit.

2. **CA1. An area of approximately 330 hectares to be retained in Crown control as conservation area under Section 35 (2)(a)(i) Crown Pastoral Land Act 1998.**

CA1 being the landscape unit around and including Grand View peak.

We approve of this designation, including access to it from below via Hospital Creek by "k. I", and note that it includes most of the RAP AB as shown in the Conservation Resources Report.

The map provided in the Preliminary Proposal is so small that exact detail cannot be determined, but it seems that the proposed public access walking track "g, f, d," is all outside of CA1.

SUBMISSION: that CA1 be extended westwards, matching the recommended boundary of RAP AB as shown on the Conservation Resources Report, Plan 1, to ensure that the adjacent portion of the walking track “g, f, d” is included in CA1. We understand that the farm would then need an easement to enable them to freely use it, but we feel that this is a better outcome for the public, to be able to openly and freely walk from any part of the designated track across any adjacent part of the land west of the track, to access the views from Grandview Mountain.

3. An area of approximately 1519 hectares to be designated as land to be disposed of by freehold to Lincoln University, subject to protective mechanisms.

We have several concerns with this designation.

A. We see that there is a disconnect between this property and the adjacent Lake Hawea Station, which is at the Substantive Proposal stage of the Review process. The highly visible front faces of that adjoining property have been protected with a landscape covenant, (*CCI Lake Hawea*) and the adjacent front slopes on Mt Grand have not been protected.

We can see no reason for this omission as it is all the one landscape. The fence line that is the common boundary between the two Leases does not mark a landscape change.

The front face of Grandview Mountain is a much-loved and iconic view at all seasons, it is a significant and highly visible landscape element within in the whole entity that is the Wanaka / Hawea basin, and must be protected for its high public value.

SUBMISSION: CORUF recommends that the front face of Mt Grand, with the exception of its lowest, flatter slopes, be placed under a landscape covenant to control what happens to that landscape. The Landscape Covenant should preclude major or detrimental changes to the present appearance of the mountain’s front slopes, including a prohibition on significant vegetation changes, on the installation of visible tracks and buildings.

B. A second disconnect is that on the northern eastern boundary of Mt Grand pastoral lease, the fenceline that is the boundary with Lake Hawea pastoral lease lies about 1/3 of the way up a slope that is indistinguishable from top to bottom in quality and character. The portion of the slope that is in Lake Hawea Pastoral Lease has been set aside in a proposed Conservation Area (*CA5 - Lake Hawea*) for its high natural values as a landscape unit. Across the fence, the same landscape qualities and values have been included in the uncontrolled and uncovenanted area proposed for free-hold on Mt Grand. This is an illogical outcome and we protest it.

SUBMISSION: CORUF recommends that the area of Mt Grand pastoral lease that is across the fence from *CA5 - Lake Hawea* has protection placed on it to conserve its landscape values and tussock qualities, and its obvious place within a wider protected landscape, the whole headwaters of Grandview Creek.

Appropriate protection could be either a Landscape Covenant to protect the tussock and the appearance of the Mt Grand side of that basin, or that the upper part of the headwaters of Grandview Creek basin be simply included in CA3.



Photo 1. There is no visible difference in terms of natural values between the dramatic land in Lake Hawea Station designated CA5 (left, background), and the land on Mt Grand designated Freehold (right, foreground). We submit that free-holding the front slope, the foreground of this picture, without protections, will create a difference where none exists now, and will devalue the entire very impressive landscape of the Grandview Creek headwaters. The land should be given equal and matching protection on both sides of the boundary line.

Running through this landscape is the unformed legal road that was the old Grandview Track, an additional route available to the public for the enjoyment of this wild landscape.

C. The main public foot access proposed is via a track following Grand View Creek on Lake Hawea Station, and working its way uphill by a series of switchbacks on a very steep tussock slope. It comes into the Lease at an area of good snow tussock at a point where one instantly feels one is on a mountain in fairly natural surroundings (*see Photo 2 below*). Grandview Peak can be seen ahead as one moves upslope.

We understand that the land at this point will be freeholded unconditionally. We protest this, as described above (and note with dismay that just downhill of the access point some of the snowgrass and tussock has been burned.)

Public access to the whole block has been limited by the terms of the proposal, and so we propose that in this significant area, a protective designation be placed on these slopes to protect and enhance their evident visual and natural qualities.

SUBMISSION: CORUF recommends that the high natural values and landscape qualities of the “public entry” region, around and from point “h, g”, be protected via the Landscape Covenant proposed by us above.

Protective Mechanisms:

3.1 Conservation Covenant. CC1, approximately 4 ha., to protect the native fish values in Lagoon Creek.

CORUF supports this protective designation for the creek and its uncommon *Galaxias* and notes in passing the very evident use of the creek by cattle.

SUBMISSION: We submit that the designation CC1 be fenced, to protect the riparian vegetation around Lagoon Valley Creek, and the aquatic life within it.,

3.2 Conservation Covenant CC(Landscape), approximately 200 hectares, to protect the highly visible landscape values on the front of the range between CA1 and CA2.

CORUF agrees with the recognition that this CC(Landscape) covers a significantly visible landscape that is important to the "Front Range " view of this line of mountains, and approves the fact that protection is being given to it.

However as noted above in relation to CA2, we are perplexed to know why this highly erodable and somewhat fragile basin will have continued grazing on it, albeit under a landscape covenant. On page 5 of the preliminary proposal, last sentence, the text notes "smooth rounded slopes descending steeply..." We found that in fact the "smooth rounded slopes" have a high proportion of schist-slab scree on them. This is not very sustainable grazing land, and would be particularly unsuitable for cattle, for the damage they would do. It has a good mix of native species on it that would recover if left unhindered, and a lot of moths and lizards.

There is no doubt that the flat-slab scree throughout the designation gives rise to the "high lizard values" noted in the CRR for the eastern portion of CC(Landscape). No protection has been offered via the Preliminary Proposal to the geckos and skinks that make their home on these sliding slopes.

SUBMISSION: We submit that in view of the erodable nature of the land, and its values other than providing some tussock for grazing, the whole designation should be reassessed and a more realistic protective outcome be investigated, including placing the more vulnerable parts of it into adjacent CA areas. We support the logic of protecting it for its high visibility and natural appearance in the Wanaka-Hawea basin, as a significant element on the front range of these mountains.

We recommend that the eastern area marked High Lizard Values on the CRR report should be given special protection within this designation; in particular it should be fenced against grazing intrusion by cattle.

Qualified Designations:

3.3 Public Access and Min. Conservation purposes Easement in Gross.

3.3.1 Public access for foot, non-motorised vehicles over tracks e,d,b,c, d,f,g,h, f,i, and k,l, as marked on the plan.

These numeral describe all of the routes being made available for public access.

The Crown Pastoral Land Act requires that reasonable public access be provided, and that public enjoyment of reviewable land will be an outcome of a Review.

The Grandview Ridge is a much loved track and destination, and there should be a “grand-view” excursion across it, available to ordinary people including visitors to the Wanaka area.

The Lease has provided only one access option for walkers.

On page 6 of the preliminary proposal it is noted that access onto the Range has been provided at Sandy Point, for bikes and horses. This track starts about 15 km away (12 km as the crow flies). While it might be used by bikers and horse riders who generally wish to access the long public route on top of the range, it is not a realistic option to have to take a 30 km return walk (more or less) just to get to the beginning of an area that one desires to visit.

The single, main public access route is not on the Lease, it is potentially by arrangement with Lake Hawea Station via a track about 5 - 6 km long up Grandview Creek. This proposed route is still under negotiation, as the Tenure Review process for that Lease has not been completed.

It is an attractive route, coming into the Lease from a zig-zag track up a steep slope to an area of fairly good snow tussock on a ridge with great views. It leads to both CA1 and CA3. We accept this route, should it eventuate, and believe that it will be both well used and popular. We do however regret its general steepness, as this will limit the range of people able to use it.



Photo 2. The white star and green strip of track forward of it mark point “h” where the proposed track emerges from Lake Hawea Station, coming up from Grandview Creek far below to the right.

For **public access to CA2, Bluenose**, the arrangements are far less promising.

Firstly we find that because the Designations map is small it is nearly impossible to determine what public access is being provided in the vicinity of CA2, and the text does not clarify this.

For the purposes of this Submission we deduce (but may be wrong) that the route “e,d,c,b,” a switchback road down the valley in front of Bluenose, is to be a freeholded route 20 m wide within CA2. It seems that there will be a public-use easement somewhere within that 20 m wide strip, one would assume it is on the road.

It appears that having made one’s way to the lowest elevation of CA2 (approximately 14 km from the Nook parking area on Grandview Creek), one may not exit on down the valley. The only option being made available is to go back over the track, by the 1360 metre elevation by Grandview peak, and descend on its north side again through Lake Hawea Station..

This “*only one exit*” proposal is not reasonable. Should the weather change on the mountain top, as it readily does, then the return trip becomes dangerous, if not impossible. The proposed arrangement that excludes public access over “a, b” thus works to preclude “reasonable public access”, as well as working against general public safety.

By the proposed arrangement, the CA2 faces, ending only 2 kilometres from a public road, are being isolated by distance.

There is in fact a public route, an unformed legal road abutting the Lease boundary, which could possibly be opened to foot and non-motorised access. It is shown on Map 2 of the Designation plan. We feel that a public track using some agreed-upon route across the lower farm could readily and sensibly be linked to this legal road and thus to the public road. We have not inspected the location.



Map 1, CORUF, showing potential for a track using the unformed legal road that is adjacent to the lease boundary and links it to the formed public road.

SUBMISSION: We submit that the full route “a,b,c,d,e” be opened to public walking access, and that a way be found to open a route out to the road near point “a” by reasonable means.

Access for tenants, agents, contractors and invitees of the minister, etc, etc., over routes a,b,c,d,e, d,f,g,h, f,i, j,g, k,l.

being the route up to the "Bluenose" bluffs from Lagoon Creek road.

This route provides good access into the CA2 area, being a formed track with a reasonable grade. Recreationists on bikes, horse riders, and walkers will find it accessible, and as it is to be also used for management purposes, it will always exist.

SUBMISSION: that the route "a,b,c,d,e" be opened to full public use, not just for management purposes, but to all of the public, allowing access to CA2 in a reasonable manner. To lead users away from the farm buildings, the part of "a,b," that crosses the paddock is to be poled, and a stile provided over the fence, joining to the legal road that leads to the public road.

ADDITIONAL ROUTE.

We support the suggestion made by Lakes and Central Forest & Bird Society that an additional recreational route be created, that would be of high benefit to the adjacent local community.

This would be a cycling route "around the contours" as shown in blue on our map below.

The Tenure Reviews are not providing casual exercise routes for the local populace who simply want an hour or so of exercise in the evening, on a fairly undemanding track, with refreshing and invigorating "great views". The existing round-slope tracks on this Lease provide the possibility for such a low-impact track to be created, and to be enjoyed by local persons.

SUBMISSION: that a low-impact cycling - biking route be created on the farm tracks on the lower slopes of the lease, as shown on our map following. The track would join Lagoon Valley to Hospital Creek, exiting onto the public road at each end, from the route "a,b" at one end, to "q,k" at the end, being placed as appropriate.

We thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Jan Kelly
Secretary,

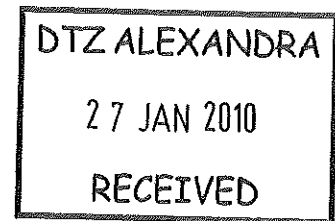
Central Otago Recreational Users Forum.

26 January 2010



Our explanatory map follows:

10 Smacks Close
Papanui
Christchurch 8051



Re: Mt Grand Tenure Review

Dear Sir,

Although I've tried to forget this review, it continues to bother me.

In the review the significant inherent values of this property is expressed and its high visibility from the Hawea basin is stated and yet you have this proposal to split up the conservation area into two pieces, thus reducing it's appeal and value.

The CC Landscape should be removed and one conservation area covering CA1, CA2 and the CC Landscape amalgamated, thereby keeping a cohesive unit and maintaining its inherent value.

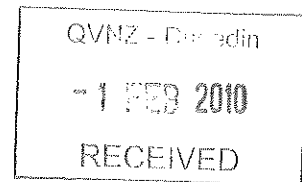
There have been many times in the past where the opinions that I have just expressed are given as justification, in the review, for including land into a conservation area i.e. it gives balance, proportion,helps sustain the special quality and integrity of the landscape.

I request that these three areas be combined into one conservation area.

The proposal to freehold a 20 metre wide corridor through CA2 is just asking for trouble in the future, I feel.

Regards
Geoff Clark

Submission for Mt Grand Tenure Review
Mt Grand, Po 349 - Tenure Review, Preliminary Proposal.



I inspected the Mt Grand property on 22nd January 2010 and these are my conclusions on how I would like to see the outcome of this tenure review.

The two historic trig stations (Trig D & Trig J) should be formally protected with public access to them, as they are significant historic sites that mark major turning points in the Upper Clutha's history.

I am very pleased to see areas CA1, CA2, CA3 being returned to the crown as I agree with the reasons given that they have very high conservation values.

All land above 1000m should have a conservation covenant that allows a specified number of units that can be grazed sustainably to preserve the native vegetation.

Convent to include

- Access for the Department of Conservation or their representative to inspect the covenanted area to check on the health of the native ecosystem for abuse.
- Return of affected land to the crown if land under covenant is degraded or compulsory exclusion of grazing until recovery of flora and fauna.
- No top dressing, no over sowing or introduction of exotic plants.

Public foot access easements are necessary all year round at two point's areas that are marked on the map for easements.

- Up Hospital creek to area CA1
- Lagoon Creek to area CA2 Blue Noise

These easements are necessary for health and safety. If the weather turns bad quickly it maybe necessary to exit at either of these points. If you are in the lower part of CA2, it is a long walk to Exit at Hospital creek, the extra time spent on the hill at higher altitude on exposed ridges could be the difference between life and death.

Also it would create a loop track from Lagoon creek to the Cameron Creek track. This would be more popular than having to return the way you came if you're visiting Blue Nose

Area 1

That I have outlined beside area CA2 should be included with CA2, area 1 in the area marked CC

- Landscape covenant has got very good lizard habitat.
- I saw very high numbers of skink in this area. There is plenty of insect life and fruit here for the skinks. Also it would let the human induced erosion area to recover. The erosion is clearly seen from parts of Wanaka.
- The other part of area 1 is out side of area CC and has good rock out crops that are necessary habitat and refuges for any reptiles in the area.

Area 2

That I have out lined in Lagoon Creek catchment should also be include in area CA2.

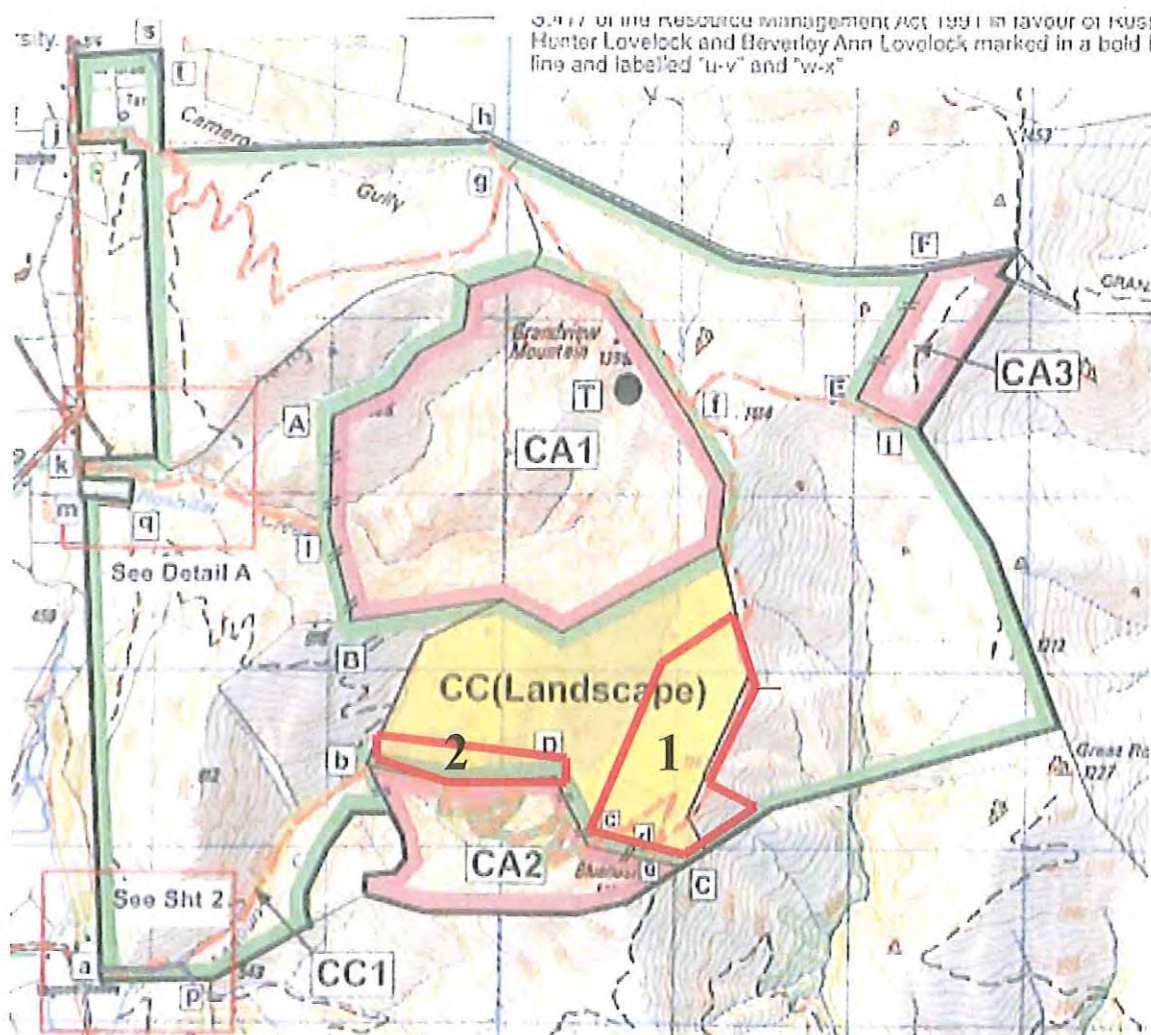
- This area would protect the regenerating scrub in the bottom of the valley and also the *Olearia* species above the creek.
- Also included would be the rocky outcrop as seen in the photo.
- The plant in the photo appears to be *Olearia moschate*; this plant isn't on the conservation report.
- The photo below shows the approximate position of the plant from the farm track.
- In this are there is also is another *Olearia* , possibly *Olearia fimbriata*





Below is area 1 showing approximate boundaries of the area that has high conservation values that I would recommend including with CA2.
Also the erosion mentioned in this article is clearly visible from Wanaka.
Photo taken from 84 Meadow stone Drive Wanaka.





Submission for Mt Grand Po 349

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