

Tenure Review of the Grampians Pastoral Lease – Summary of Substantive Proposal



May 2021

Background

The Grampians pastoral lease is a 16,057-hectare property located in the Mackenzie District 20kms south of Lake Tekapo and extending into the northern Hakatamea valley. The lease is made up of moderately steep mountainous terrain and gently sloping fans and terraces. A location map can be found in **Appendix One**.

The Grampians pastoral lease is held by Grampians Station Limited (the Holder) and is run in conjunction with 2,108 hectares of existing freehold land. The pastoral lease land is used for extensive sheep and beef farming.

Advice on the inherent values of the lease was provided by the Department of Conservation (DOC) in the form of a Conservation Resources Report (CRR) dated July 2006. The CRR was supplemented by information gathered during field visits by DOC and LINZ throughout the consultation phases.

Following public notification of the preliminary proposal, a substantive proposal has been put to and accepted by the Holder. The Proposal provides for the protection of 6,308 hectares (approximately 39% of the lease) as conservation area – **an increase of 1,222 hectares** from that provided for in the preliminary proposal. The remaining 9,749 hectares is designated as freehold land, with 1,522 hectares subject to conservation covenants.

A plan showing the substantive proposal designations for the Grampians (the **Plan**) together with a copy of the substantive proposal can be found [here](#) (the **Proposal**).

Consultation & public submissions

The Grampians preliminary proposal was advertised for public submissions in August 2015 and 12 submissions were received. A report analysing the submissions together with full copies of individual submissions can be found [here](#).

The submissions expressed concerns about the proposed public access provisions. Submitters also sought changes to the boundaries of some of the proposed conservation areas to secure the protection of additional areas of the lease and changes to the conditions of the proposed conservation covenants.

Consultation was undertaken with the Director-General of Conservation (DGC) and Holder to seek their views on accepted points from the public submissions and changes to the preliminary proposal.

The main points arising from the public submissions and how they have been addressed in the Proposal are summarised in **Appendix Two**.

Summary of the Substantive Proposal Designations

The Grampians substantive proposal designations are summarised below.

CA1 – 277 hectares to be restored to or retained in Crown ownership and control as conservation area



Figure 1 – a section of the Grays River within CA1

CA1 encompasses wetlands and minor tributaries of the Grays River (see Figure 1), a significant habitat for threatened species of birds, fish, and invertebrates. It also contains a narrow gully environment of the Mackenzie River supporting indigenous shrubland and herbfield.

The designation of CA1 and CA4 (described below), as conservation areas enable the protection of a complete sequence of a threatened ecosystem, being the entire outwash fan of the Mackenzie River from its source on the Dalgety Range to its terminus at the Grays River. Parts of CA1 are substantially modified through cultivation and cropping – however, native vegetation is expected to recover within these areas with rabbit control and retirement from grazing. There is also potential for re-vegetation efforts.

CA2– 16 hectares to be restored to or retained in Crown ownership and control as conservation area



Figure 2 – view of CA2 taken from the south-east corner

CA2 covers part of the alluvial floodplain environment of the Snow River and supports indigenous shrubland, herbfield and stonefield, and areas of modified grassland (see Figure 2). It provides significant habitats for birds and invertebrates and is categorised as “At Risk” within the Land Environments of New Zealand (LENZ) classification. The area will be fully retired from grazing and is already fenced.

An easement concession (‘x-y1’ on the Plan) along an existing farm track that passes through the middle of CA2 provides access to adjacent freehold areas. The easement allows for the movement of machinery, horses, farm dogs, guns and stock. Public access to CA2 is provided by two easement routes (‘w-x’ and ‘y-z’ on the Plan).

CA4 – 1,928 hectares to be restored to or retained in Crown ownership and control as conservation area



Figure 3 – looking east across CA4



Figure 4 – CA4 looking along the Mackenzie River

CA4 encompasses alluvial floodplain and outwash terrace environments of the Snow and Mackenzie Rivers (see Figure 3). The outwash flats are regarded as a distinctive and highly memorable feature of the Mackenzie Basin, with clearly defined post-glacial structures. The flats are ranked “Chronically Under Protected” under the LENZ system. The incised gorge shown in Figure 2 is particularly significant as there are very few features of a similar nature in the Mackenzie Basin.

The area supports native shrubland, herbfield and stonefield, and areas of modified grassland, including at least two threatened plant species. It also provides significant habitats for birds and invertebrates. While the vegetation in parts of this area is degraded with considerable bare ground, there are traces of original vegetation that have never been developed or intentionally modified. Retirement from grazing and intensive rabbit control is likely to lead to gradual improvement in vegetation cover. The size of CA4 has increased significantly from the preliminary proposal to include land designated as freehold land subject to a sustainable management covenant in the preliminary proposal and land previously identified as CA7 and CA3.

CA4 is subject to easement concessions for farm management access and water supply shown as blue broken lines on the Plan. The easements protect existing farm tracks and water pipelines servicing existing and new freehold areas. The whole of CA4 will be retired from stock grazing.

CA5 – 738 hectares to be restored to or retained in Crown ownership and control as conservation area



Figure 5 – northern faces of CA5 (background) and CC2 (foreground), near Mackenzie Pass

This area covers parts of the upper catchment of the Mackenzie River and western slopes of the Dalgety Range (see Figure 5). It comprises high altitude shrubland, intact and depleted tussockland, rockland and boulderfield, and some lower altitude shrubland, depleted tussockland and modified pasture. It provides significant habitats for birds, lizards and invertebrates. The area will be retired from grazing and is already fenced, although a section of the existing fencing will require upgrading.

Two easements are proposed to provide public and conservation management access to CA5. These are shown on the Plan ('h-i', 'w-x' and 'y-z') and provide access from Mackenzie Pass along the Dalgety Range to CA5 and out to Hakataramea Pass Road to the south, where the easement allows for car parking.

CA5 is also subject to an easement concession for access to and operation of the Holder's communications aerial facility (shown as 'i-j' and 'j' on the Plan).

CA6 – approximately 3,399 hectares to be restored to Crown ownership and control as conservation area

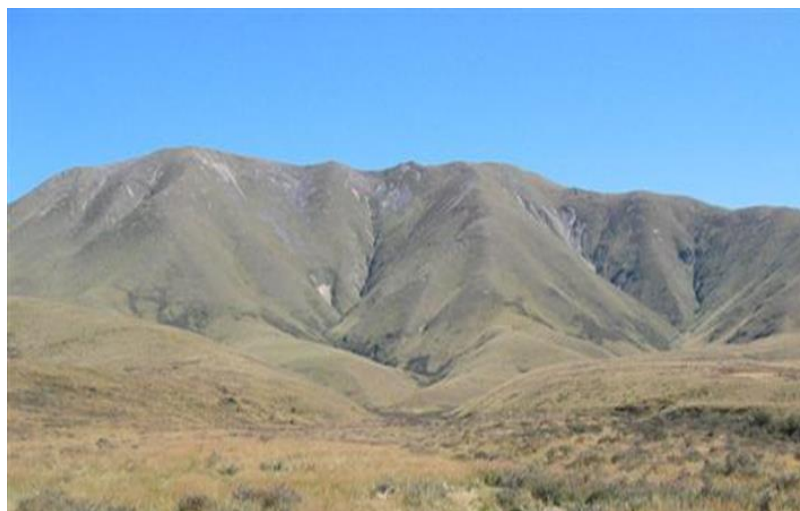


Figure 6 – Looking north onto the southern part of CA6, west of Grampian Stream

This area covers most of the eastern side of the Grampian Mountains, from Hakataramea Pass at about 940 metres above sea level, to the top of the Grampian Mountains at about 1,900 metres above sea level. The area supports high-altitude rockland, boulderfield, herbfield, cushionfield, intact tussockland and shrubland, and lower-altitude rockland, shrubland, depleted tussockland and modified pasture. It provides significant habitats for birds, lizards and invertebrates, including several threatened species. It is also a significant natural landscape with prominent visual values (see Figure 6).

Along with the provision of adjoining public access easements, the protection of CA6 will secure public foot and vehicle access along the Grampian Mountains.

The whole of CA6 will be retired from stock grazing and all new boundaries will be fenced. An easement concession ('t1-u1' and 'c1-h1' on the Plan) secures permanent access to adjacent freehold areas: 't1-u1' provides for the movement of stock, machinery, horses, farm dogs and guns; while 'c1-h1' does not provide for stock movement.

CC1a & b – freehold land of 818 hectares subject to a conservation covenant



Figure 7 – example of the prostrate kowhai found in CC1b

This covenant covers low and mid-altitude slopes on the northern end of the Grampian Mountains. It contains the largest known population of prostrate kowhai in the Mackenzie Basin/South Canterbury area and associated areas of rockland, depleted tussockland and herbfield (see Figure 7). The covenant is in two parts:

CC1a covers approximately 808 hectares and will not be fenced. Ongoing extensive grazing of this area is permitted.

CC1b covers approximately 10 hectares and will be fenced. No grazing is permitted in this area, as it contains the highest concentration of prostrate kowhai.

The covenant prohibits spraying, over-sowing, top-dressing and burning. The removal of native vegetation is only permitted in CC1a to the extent required to clear defined stock access routes. The covenant also specifies that the Minister of Conservation may design and implement a monitoring programme for the land to ensure its ecological integrity is maintained.

CC2 – freehold land of approximately 629 hectares subject to a conservation covenant

CC2 supports threatened plant and bird species and contains a diverse range of indigenous plant communities and habitats including shrubland, tussockland, rockland and herbfield communities.

The mountain slopes within the northern section of this area, although modified, form part of one of the most memorable and spectacular landscape vistas in the Canterbury high country (see Figure 5 above).

The covenant allows for grazing, but prohibits the removal of native vegetation, further planting of exotic tree or shrub species, and any further tracking, fencing or the erection of other structures. Over-sowing, top-dressing, and clearance of defined stock access routes across gullies are permitted.

CC3 – freehold land of approximately one hectare subject to a conservation covenant

The purpose of this covenant is to protect one of the few known areas of the Nationally Critical plant species *Ceratocephala pungens*, a native buttercup that has been observed inside a stock holding pen at this site. The covenant will cover the pen and a surrounding area which is considered to be a suitable habitat for the species.

Current evidence suggests that *Ceratocephala pungens* requires some disturbance and may benefit from light stock grazing of adventive pasture species. The covenant provides for ongoing farming of this area but prohibits tracking, cultivation, and the erection of structures. The covenant also provides for scientific research and future changes to the management of the area should monitoring indicate this is required.

CC4 – freehold land of approximately 74 hectares subject to a conservation covenant

This covenant protects the matagouri shrublands adjoining the Grampian Stream and its western tributary (Figure 8). The area also contains *Olearia odorata* and *O. bullata*. The shrublands are regarded as characteristic of the original vegetation of this area, and they occur in a “Chronically Threatened” LENZ environment.

The covenant prohibits spraying or other removal of shrublands. Due to the dense thickets the extensive shrublands have created, no additional fencing or specific limitations on stock grazing are proposed.



Figure 8 – matagouri shrublands adjoining the Grampian Stream

Freehold land of 8,227 hectares

Approximately 8,227 hectares are designated as unencumbered freehold land. These areas are shaded green on the Plan and shown in Figure 9 below. They have economic use for extensive pastoral farming and the continuation of those uses is considered ecologically sustainable. Much of

this land has been cultivated or over-sown and top-dressed. These areas have limited potential for further development due to environmental conditions and constraints imposed by the relevant district and regional plans.

The freehold areas are subject to public and conservation management access easements to provide access to the Grays River, CA2, CA5 and CA6. Provision has also been made for access over CC2 and CC1a. The access routes are shown as a dashed orange line on the Plan.

Figure 9 –Freehold land



Freehold in Grampian Stream area south of Hakataramea Pass



Freehold west of Haldon Rd (vicinity of b2)



Freehold north of Hakataramea Pass



Freehold – Fett Stream area (vicinity of easement y-z)

Objects of Part 2 of the Crown Pastoral Land Act 1998

Section 25 of the CPLA requires the Commissioner of Crown Lands to take into account the objects of tenure review as set out in section 24 of the Crown Pastoral Land Act 1998 when developing a tenure review proposal:

- (a) to –
 - (i) promote the management of reviewable land in a way that is ecologically sustainable;
 - (ii) subject to subparagraph (i), enable reviewable land capable of economic use to be freed from the management constraints (direct and indirect) resulting from its tenure under reviewable instrument; and
- (b) to enable the protection of the significant inherent values of reviewable land –
 - (i) by the creation of protective mechanisms; or (preferably)
 - (ii) by the restoration of the land concerned to full Crown ownership and control; and
- (c) subject to paragraphs (a) and (b), to make easier –
 - (i) the securing of public access to and enjoyment of reviewable land; and
 - (ii) the freehold disposal of reviewable land.

The Proposal is considered to be consistent with the objects of Part 2 of the CPLA as it:

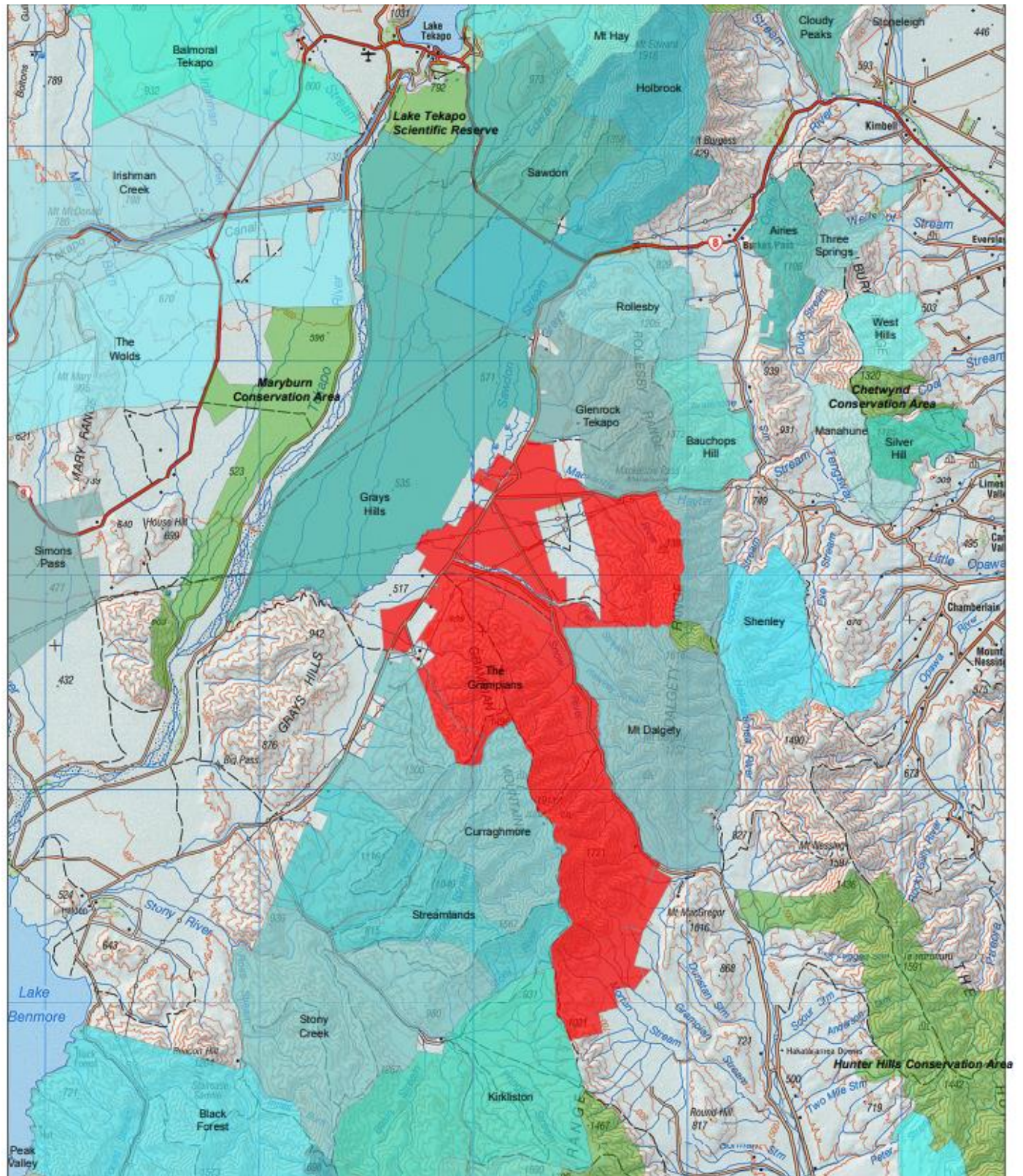
- Promotes the management of the land in a way that is ecologically sustainable (section 24(a)(i)) by removing land with high conservation values from grazing and further development for farming purposes. Ongoing extensive pastoral uses on the proposed freehold land are considered to be ecologically sustainable provided appropriate inputs are maintained. The property has little potential for non-pastoral uses;
- Recognises that parts of the land can support economic uses by providing for those areas to be freed from the management constraints of pastoral lease tenure (section 24(a)(ii)). As noted above, this land is well suited to its current use and those uses are believed to be ecologically sustainable;
- Enables the protection of significant inherent values (SIVs) of the lease by the designation as conservation area (section 24(b)(i)) of wetland and riparian environments along the Grays River, alluvial outwash fans of the Mackenzie River, high altitude landscapes of the Dalgety Range, and significant habitats for birds, lizards and invertebrates;
- Enables the protection of SIVs of the lease by the creation of conservation covenants (section 24(b)(ii)) over proposed freehold areas containing shrublands at the northern and southern ends of the Grampian Mountains, landscape values associated with land adjoining the Mackenzie Pass, and a community of the rare plant *Ceratocephala pungens* within a stock holding pen near the Hakataramea Pass Road;
- Secures public access to and enjoyment of the reviewable land (section 24(c)(i)). The new conservation areas can be accessed directly from public roads and/or public access easements over freehold land. Seasonal restrictions associated with the easements are minimal, and the provision of motor vehicle access across the top of the Grampian Mountains is a notable gain from this review; and
- Provides for 9,749 hectares of freehold land (section 24(c)(ii)) of which 1,522 hectares will be subject to conservation covenants.

Other matters taken into account

Section 25 of the CPLA also requires the Commissioner to take into account:

- The principles of the Treaty of Waitangi. A Cultural Values Report was obtained from Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu, which has informed the development of the Proposal. Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu was also consulted on the preliminary proposal as required under section 44 of the CPLA and provided further advice that informed the development of the Proposal.
- Whether the land or any part of it is used or intended to be used by the Crown for any particular purpose. No other Crown purposes have been identified for this land.

Appendix One – Grampians Location Map



Appendix Two – Summary of public submissions and how they have been considered in the Proposal

Submission Points	Response
Providing for public access to the Grays River, CA6 and from the end of legal roads to the southern end of the property.	Additional public access easements have been included in the Proposal to provide access to the Grays River and CA6. Consideration was given to access via legal roads to the southern end of the lease, but it was determined that practical access along this route could not be achieved.
Stopping motorized access on easement 'a1-b1-c1' at Monkey Rock.	This easement will be closed to motor vehicles during the winter. Motorized access is provided during summer months to enable access to existing conservation areas that allow 4WD access.
Adjustments or alternatives to access easements 'w-z' and n1.	This easement has been retained but the route has been reconsidered and changed to an easier route.
Extending CA1 westward to provide for additional buffering and protection of SIVs.	This area was reconsidered and re-inspected during consultation on the Proposal. CA1 now encompasses all the land within this block to enable protection of a full sequence of the outwash fans of the Mackenzie River through to the Grays River.
The integration of CA2 and CA4 to provide an ecological corridor and buffering.	A connection between these two areas has not been provided for in the Proposal due to farm management requirements. Marginal strips in this area will provide a level of connection between CA2 and CA4.
Extending CA3 westwards to include part of the SMC Land.	CA3 has been absorbed into CA4 and CA4 has been extended to encompass most of the land previously designated as freehold land subject to a sustainable management covenant.
An extension to CA4 to the legal road running from Haldon Road to approximately 500m west of CA2 and the legal road from that point back to Haldon Road further north.	The area identified in this submission is not considered to contain values requiring protection. Accordingly, no provision has been made for the protection of this area in the Proposal.
The inclusion of CC2 in CA5 on the basis that CC2 contains the same SIVs as CA5 and therefore deserve the same level of protection.	While parts of CC2 are considered to have similar values to those contained in CA5, much of this area has been subject to an ongoing programme of over-sowing and top-dressing. A conservation covenant is considered an appropriate outcome for the protection of values in this area.
An extension of CA6 and boundary changes to this area.	The boundaries of CA6 were reconsidered and re-inspected during consultation on the Proposal and were determined appropriate.
No provision should be made for over-sowing in CC1.	The covenant for CC1 has been amended to include a prohibition on over-sowing and topdressing.

Extending the SMC over other areas of land identified for freehold disposal.	The sustainable management covenant designation has not been carried forward in the Proposal. Most of this land is now designated as conservation area (CA4 and CA1).
Providing for the grazing of CA4.	Grazing has not been provided for in this area given the SIVs present.
Prohibiting stock grazing in CC3.	CC3 encompasses a stock holding pen and current advice is that disturbance and high fertility is needed for the species the covenant is seeking to protect. As such, grazing is considered beneficial and has been provided for in the covenant. The covenant makes provision for monitoring and changes to covenant terms if grazing is subsequently determined to not be appropriate.
A better outcome could be achieved if the property remains a pastoral lease.	The Proposal is considered to provide a better outcome than the property remaining a pastoral lease.