

Crown Pastoral Land Tenure Review

Lease name: KILLERMONT

Lease number: PO 207

Public Submissions - Part 3

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

July

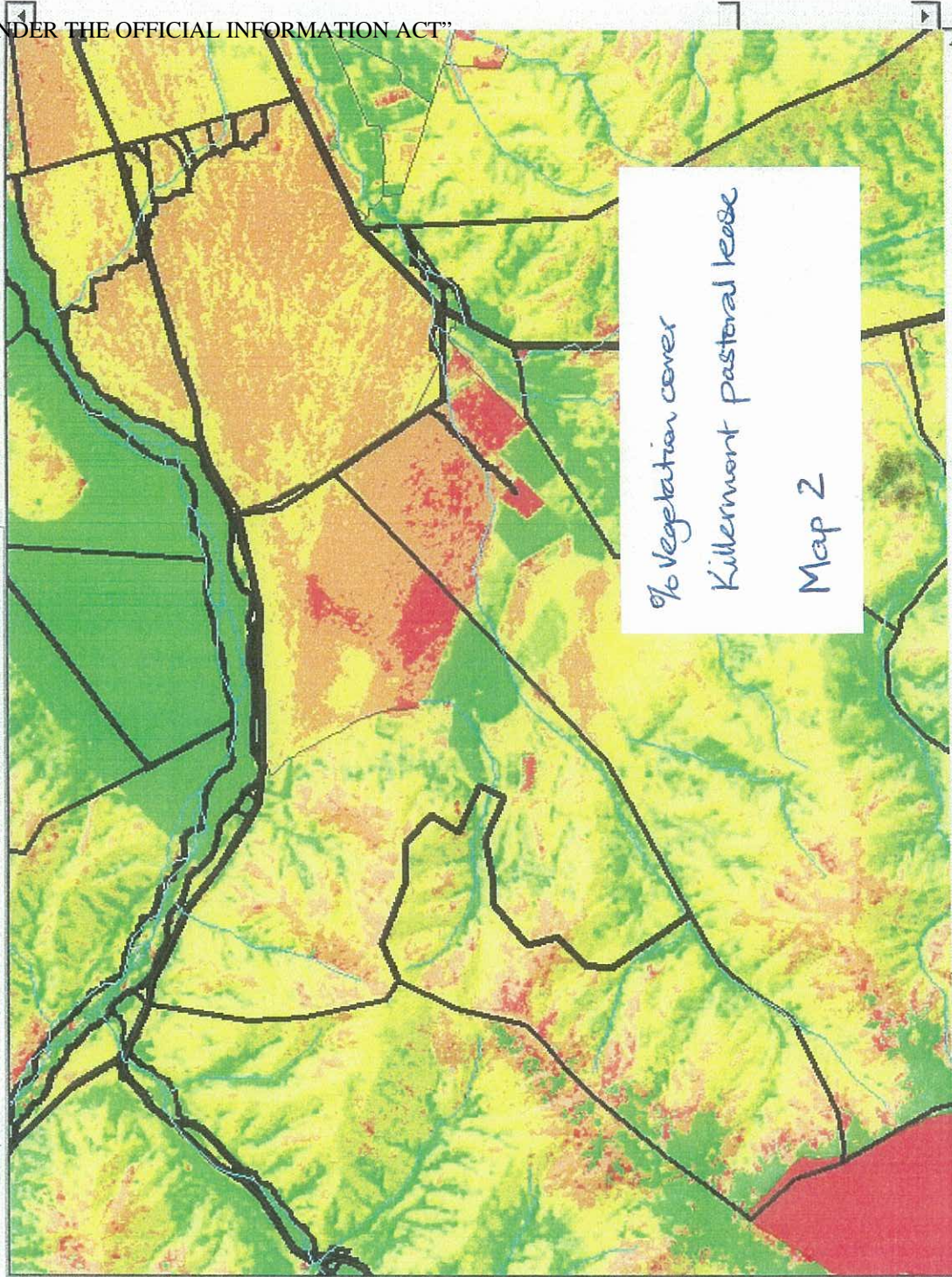
05

3D Analyst Layer: landcover_unspecified_draft_2004C 1:80,862 Layer: Rivers

Editor Task: Create New Feature Target:

Layers

- Rivers
- Roads
- index polygon
- parcel polygon
- LUC class (ex NZLRI)
- landcover_unspecified_draft_20040515
- I39A.TIF
- I39B.TIF
- I39C.TIF
- I39D.TIF
- control_5_region.img
- flats_region.img
- % Living on land above 600m asl (summr)
- pc_living_veg_etm77.img
- hillshade.img

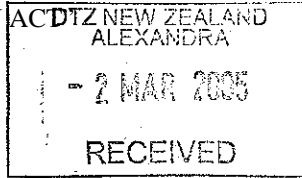


Display Source Selection

Drawing 10 100%

2250868.39 5619951.93 Meter

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**FOREST
& BIRD**

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28th February 2005

**SUBMISSION ON PRELIMINARY TENURE REVIEW PROPOSAL FOR
KILLERMONT - AHURIRI VALLEY**

INTRODUCTION

I write on behalf of the Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society, which represents over 55,000 members nationwide in 57 branches. The Society has been an active advocate of the protection and conservation of New Zealand's natural and physical resources since 1923.

THE PROPOSAL

F&B notes that the proposal includes the following designations:-

1. An area of approximately 1125ha (CA 1) to be restored to full Crown ownership and control as a conservation area.
2. An area of approximately 25ha (CA 2) to be restored to full Crown ownership and control as a conservation area.
3. An area of approximately 3675ha to be disposed of by freehold disposal to Killermont Run Ltd. subject to a protection mechanism.

GENERAL COMMENTS

Forest and Bird supports return to full Crown ownership of CA1 and CA2. However, both these areas need to be expanded in order to meet the CPLA objectives. The society does not consider this proposal meets the objectives of the Crown Pastoral Lands Act (CPLA), as it proposes to freehold areas that have been identified as having significant inherent values. Other areas containing significant inherent values were not identified in the conservation resources report, and are not included in the proposal.

Forest and Bird notes that the recent cabinet minute (POL Min (05) 2/9) clarified the interrelation of the various high country objectives, under the CPLA and the extended objectives to make it clear that primary importance must be given to ecological sustainability and the protection of significant inherent values.

It is clear that the CPLA enables land to be freeholded provided that significant inherent values are protected.

COMMENTS ON SPECIFIC ELEMENTS OF THE PROPOSAL

1: Ahuriri River Flats

We note the Proposed Delegations Report (PDR) recommended an area of 56 ha be designated as a conservation area. This was in two blocks separated by a small block of Crown land. Both areas were described as having significant inherent values (siv's) including meeting PNAP criteria for identifying significant natural areas, containing sites of special wildlife significance, landscape values, public access and areas contributing to the natural functioning and integrity of the Ahuriri River. Despite acknowledging the siv's of the north western area in the PDR it is proposed to freehold this. It appears that the LINZ advisors/contractors changed their minds during consultations with the lessees, and decided that the top and bottom ends of the river contained few SIV's. This is blatantly untrue as the Conservation Resources Report identifies these flats as having high landscape values. It is apparent that the conservation assessment did not include a LENZ analysis.

That the Ahuriri River is protected by a water conservation order is evidence of its nationally outstanding status.

Forest and Bird considers that this area must be returned to full Crown ownership along with the eastern area between the Ahuriri River and Omarama-Lindis Pass Road.

LENZ Environments

The river terraces are mapped as environment N62a which consists of extensive glacial outwash material and alluvium with recent soils. According to LENZ Level IV environments these river terraces are identified as being chronically threatened (less than 20 % remains in indigenous cover nationally). Nationally less than 6.5 percent of this environment has been protected (see attached maps). On Killermont these environments have been substantially modified and are generally dominated by exotic pasture grasses, extensive areas of Hieracium with some briar. However, some short tussock remain along with many small native herbs, and cushion plants. These

grasslands retain a high component of native species and continue to support a diversity of indigenous insects, lizards and birds. It is possible that these flats may provide habitat for banded dotterels. The summary of the PP suggests that these are merely Hieracium infested river outwash flats. This does not give a true picture of this highly significant area.

Experience at Flat top Hill in Central Otago indicates that conservation management can gradually restore such degraded environments.

In order to ensure that the outcome of this tenure review, meets the CPLA objectives and is consistent with the NZ Biodiversity Strategy, and the Government's objectives for the high country, it is important that these river terraces are protected as they are representative of what are now critically scarce habitats.

Landscape Values

In addition to the ecological significance of these flats, these areas also have significant inherent landscape values. As noted on page 3 of the Conservation Resources Report (CRR) these flats have high values for their openness, general absence of trees and high apparent naturalness. These flats are also important in allowing excellent views of the Clay Cliffs from State Highway 8 and also views of the large braided Ahuriri riverbed. The absence of tall vegetation is critical to the roll the flats play in the experience of this part of the Mackenzie. The Omarama-Lindis Pass road is a significant tourist route. Freeholding these flats will expose them to risks of development which will degrade their very high scenic values and potentially obscure views of the Clay Cliffs.

The Resource Management Act cannot be relied upon to protect the open space. We understand that references to the Mackenzie District Councils Plan are seeking the exemption of lands that have been freeholded through tenure review from any vegetation clearance rule and landscape rules.

The Ahuriri River periodically changes course and in places is undercutting its river banks. The comment in the Killermont Designations Report (28 June 2002) that the bank terraces contribute to the overall natural functioning and integrity of the Ahuriri ecosystem and that including the terrace edge will allow the river to move in its natural riverbed applies to the whole length of Killermont's margin along the Ahuriri River.

Ecological sustainability of Ahuriri River

A 20m wide marginal strip along the river is inadequate to protect riparian and wetland values, and public access up and down the river.

There is increasing recognition of the value of protective management of riparian vegetation in buffering water quality from the impacts of adjacent land uses and in protecting aquatic ecosystems. Nutrient run-off (especially nitrogen and phosphorus) as a result of fertiliser application and stock effluent run-off close to waterways can stimulate aquatic plant growth and can cause nuisance growths of algae (algal blooms) and other aquatic plants.

A wider marginal strip is also needed to protect water quality and the nationally outstanding values of the river. It would better buffer the river from the effects of adjacent land uses including pastoral development. Fertiliser applied close to the river risks nutrient enriched run-off. Cultivation risks elevated sediment levels. Stock can directly harm wildlife.

The draft proposal includes no proposal to keep stock out of the riverbed. Fencing the marginal strip/ riparian boundary would compromise landscape values. This can be avoided by making the boundary the road.

Removal of stock from the terraces will enable the long-term restoration of these ecosystems. Although briar may initially increase this represents an early seral stage through which the ecosystem is likely to progress towards a more general low woody state. Removal of grazers from other dry land ecosystems has shown that these communities have a capacity to return to a more indigenous state.

Public Access

Allowing public access only through CA2 and along access easement e to f is likely to cause problems. Locals have indicated that overseas fishers have been charged substantial fees to use farm tracks to get exclusive access to sections of the river. Allowing such a large area of riparian land to be freeholded with such a narrow marginal strip will compound this.

The Ahuriri River is one of the more accessible rivers in the Mackenzie Basin because of the lack of hydro development, the gentle gradients of the land beside the river, and the fact that the public road is close to the river.

In such an open and gentle landscape, people's inclination is to want to stop, get out and walk to the river, photograph it or picnic beside it. Freeholding this area between the road and the river will prevent this and is likely to create management problems in future, particularly if ownership changes.

Killermont, in 2002 erected large "Private Property- Keep Out" signs on the gates and fences beside the State Highway north of the Ben Avon/ Birchwood turnoff to prevent people accessing this downstream stretch of the Ahuriri River. During Easter 2002 several people, including overseas tourists, said they were very frustrated by seeing the river close to the highway but being unable to get access to it because of the signs.

Decision sought

Return the entire Ahuriri River terraces between SH8 and the Ahuriri River to full Crown ownership and control.

2:

Ostler Fault

The Conservation Resources Report recognises the landscape values of the Ostler Fault but fails to acknowledge its national importance as a unique landform. On Killermont station, the Ostler Fault does a sharp bend. This is probably the only example of a recent fault scarp making a bend in New Zealand. The unusual shape of

the fault terrace at this locality could provide useful information on the likely magnitude and mechanism of the next earthquake on the Ostler fault. This fault stretches from the Ahuriri valley to beyond the Ohau River. The Ostler Fault last moved only 3,500 years ago. It is regarded as an active fault and has numerous implications for the dams in the Mackenzie Basin. For future studies, it is important that the fault trace is not obscured by structures or by tall trees or disturbed by cultivation. Forest and Bird considers the Ostler Fault trace meets the criteria for the assessment of geo-physical sites of national importance in the DoC Tenure Review Pastoral Manual. GNS geologists can attest to its scientific importance if needed.

Decision Requested

That a landscape covenant to protect open space and prevent shelter belts tree planting or other developments that obscure the Ostler Fault trace be created between SH8 and the Ostler Fault where it passes through land to be freeholded.

3: CA 1 Whether Range

Forest and Bird supports the return to full Crown ownership and control of the 1125 ha area of CA1. However, the proposal excludes several areas that are recognised as containing siv's.

Halls Totara

The earlier proposals included protection for all the significant remnants of Halls totara. The CRR notes that Halls totara is an important forest type in this area and that there are few examples of these forests or shrublands left so that all remnants are important. These totara remnants are of high visual interest and are at risk from land development, burning, grazing and tracking by domestic stock. These remnants occur in LENZ environments Q1.1b (mountain tops and range crests) and Q2.1b (montane), which are both considered to be critically underprotected. There is no doubt that these qualify as siv's under the CPLA.

Decision Sought

Extend the boundary of CA1 to that proposed in the draft Preliminary Proposal to include the remnant Halls totara stands.

Manuka Creek Shrublands

The shrublands in Manuka Creek extend east of the CA1 boundary down to approximately opposite the tank. These shrublands, although dominated by matagouri, contain a diversity of Olearia, Coprosma and Hebe species, native broom, porcupine shrub and cottonwood. Protection of these shrublands from fire, stock and development is important for the water quality of Manuka Creek and consequently, Ahuriri River. The shrublands are significant as they have provide key habitats for indigenous fauna, particularly invertebrates. They contribute to the ecological sequence from the valley bottom to the mountain top and provide a natural landscape feature along the proposed access easement c-b. A riparian strip is not wide enough to protect these shrublands.

Decision Sought

Extend the boundary of CA1 along the margin of Manuka Creek down to the area opposite the tank.

Killermont Hill

The CRR reports on page 4, that the North end of the Dunstan range, known as Killermont Hill, is particularly significant as *"it is the closest part of the ranges to the highway and increasingly dominates the view from SH8 travelling South, as the highway runs straight toward it and around its base"*.

Tall tussock grassland dominates over the upper slope with modified short tussock and shrubs on the lower slopes.

It is clear that this area has significant inherent landscape values. Although it would be preferable that this area be returned to full Crown ownership and control to enable it to naturally regenerate, Forest and Bird accepts that a landscape covenant which allows for continued grazing by sheep is appropriate.

Decision Sought

Create a landscape covenant from the road to the top of the Whether range adjoining CA1 and as mapped on the Killermont values map in the CRR.

4: Public Access

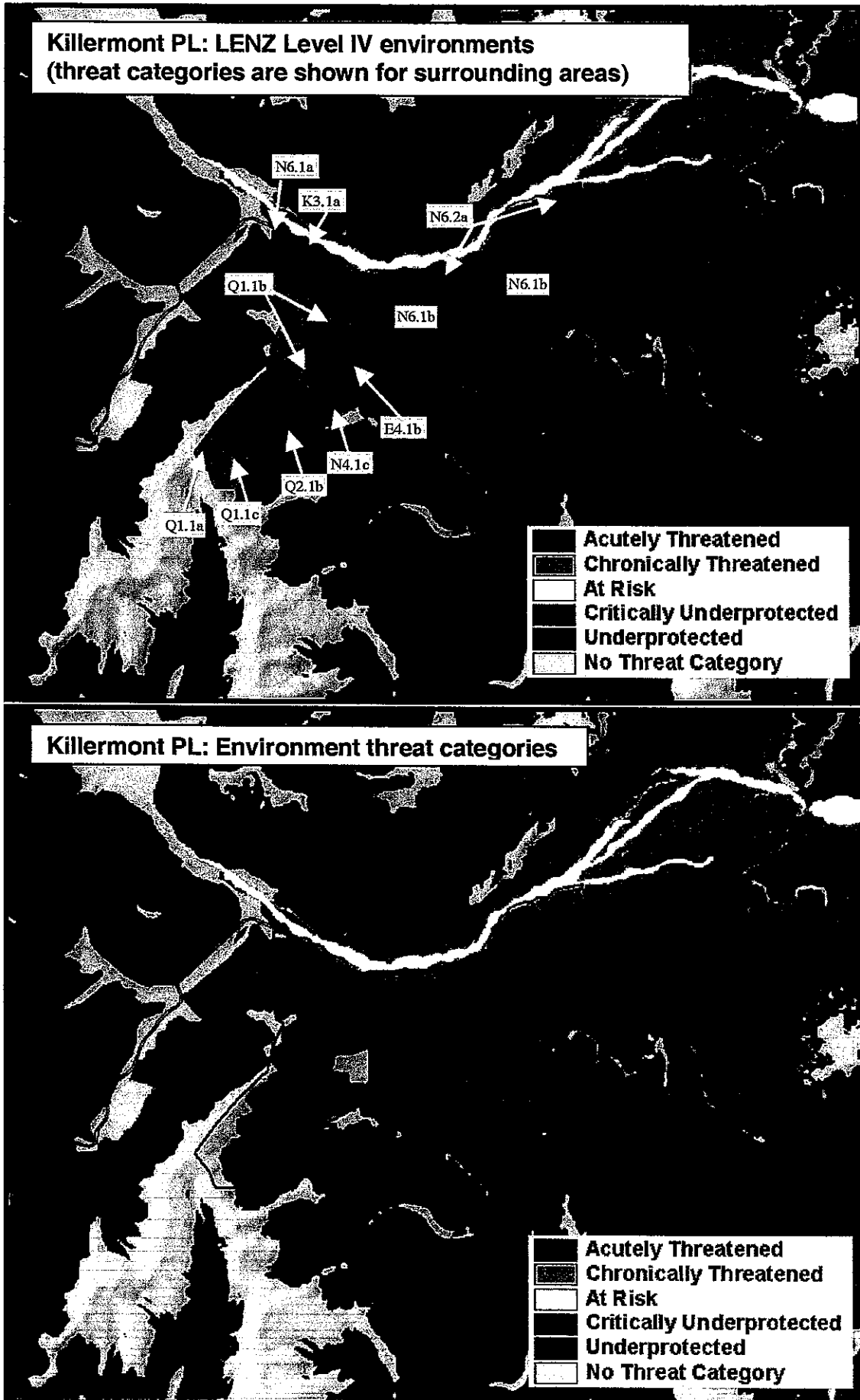
The Society appreciates the access provided at g-h and supports FMC's submission.

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission.

Yours sincerely



Sue Maturin
Southern Conservation Officer



Killermont Pastoral Lease: statistics

Table 1. Environment threat categories: areas on Killermont Pastoral Lease (Killermont PL) and % of lease

Threat_category	Area (ha) on Killermont PL	% of Killermont PL
Chronically Threatened	376	7.8
At Risk	101	2.1
Critically Underprotected	3228	67.2
Underprotected	844	17.6
No Threat Category	252	5.3

Table 2. Statistics for LENZ Level IV environments on Killermont PL

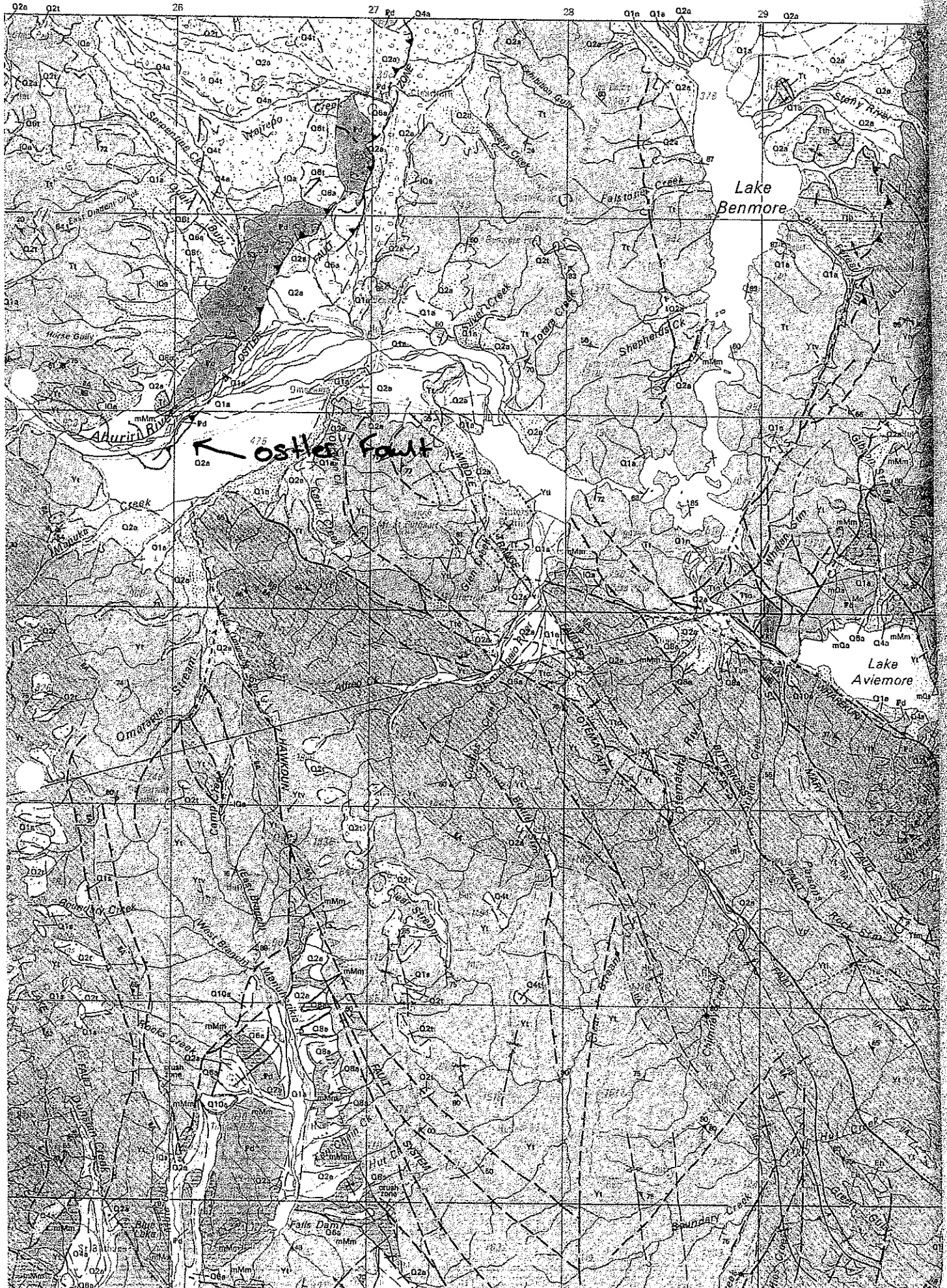
LENZ Lvl_4	National statistics for Environment			Statistics for Killermont PL	
	% Indigenous Cover remaining in environment	% Protected	Threat_category	Area (ha)	% Area
E4.1b	27.0	3.8	At Risk	93	1.9
K3.1a	27.2	3.0	At Risk	8	0.2
N4.1c	48.6	1.2	Critically Underprotected	388	8.1
N6.1a	33.0	2.1	Critically Underprotected	5	0.1
N6.1b	66.4	3.8	Critically Underprotected	2072	43.2
N6.2a	17.6	6.5	Chronically Threatened	376	7.8
Q1.1a	98.4	24.8	No Threat Category	252	5.2
Q1.1b	77.1	8.4	Critically Underprotected	82	1.7
Q1.1c	91.2	17.9	Underprotected	844	17.6
Q1.2a	99.0	37.2	No Threat Category	0	0.0
Q2.1b	66.4	4.3	Critically Underprotected	680	14.2
Q2.2a	39.9	3.9	Critically Underprotected	1	<0.1
				4801	100.0

Table 3. Recommended categories of threat to environments, and defining criteria.




Category	Acutely Threatened	Chronically Threatened	At Risk	Critically Underprotected	Underprotected
Criteria	<10% indigenous cover remaining	<20% indigenous cover remaining	<30% indigenous cover remaining	>30% indigenous cover remaining <10% legally protected	10-20% legally protected

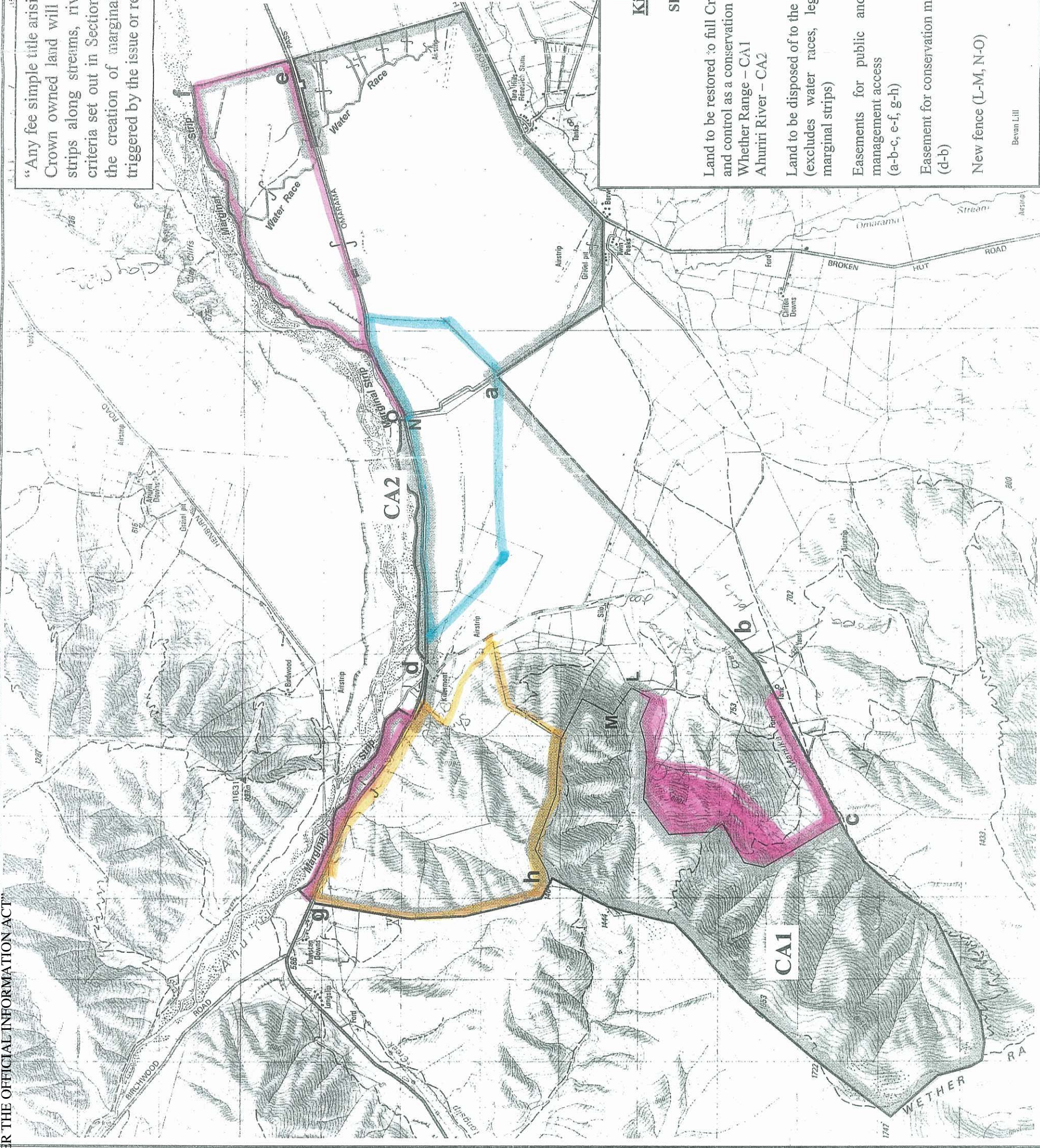
Ostler Fault

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“Any fee simple title arising from freehold designation of Crown owned land will be issued subject to marginal strips along streams, rivers and lakes (that meet the criteria set out in Section 24 Conservation Act 1987) if the creation of marginal strips has not already been triggered by the issue or renewal of a lease.”

-  Land to be restored to full crown ownership & control as a Conservation Area
-  Oyster fault Covenanted
-  Whether Range landscape Covenanted



Po 207
Killermont
Sheet 1 of 1

Land to be restored to full Crown ownership and control as a conservation area
Whether Range - CA1
Ahuriri River - CA2

Land to be disposed of to the holders (excludes water races, legal roads and marginal strips)

Easements for public and conservation management access (a-b-c, e-f, g-h)

Easement for conservation management only (d-b)

New fence (L-M, N-O)

Bevan Lill
7-December-04

DTZ
John McMeeking
DTZ Mapping, Dunedin
03 474 0571
25.11.2004

The boundaries shown on this plan are indicative and are for illustrative and discussion purposes only. No guarantee of accuracy can be given until the survey data supporting the boundary positions is researched thoroughly when the survey prescription is prepared.

Marginal Strip Subject to Sec 24(9) Conservation Act

Killermont
Scale 1:50,000
0 1 km 2 km 3 km

This plan accurately portrays the boundary of Killermont Pastoral Lease and the land status is unchanged from that certified by the Chief Surveyor on 25/03/01.
Murray Braclay, Crown Accredited Supplier

Version	1	2	3	4	5
Chicago Land District	Topographical Map 260-H39				
Sheet 1 of 1	Date 25.11.2004				