

Crown Pastoral Land Tenure Review

Lease name: RICHMOND

Lease number: PT 087

Public Submissions - Part 1

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

January

06

Barry Dench

From: Alpine Recreation [climb@alpinerecreation.com]
Sent: Monday, 19 September 2005 11:41 a.m.
To: Barry Dench
Cc: cstewart@doc.govt.nz; mclare@doc.govt.nz
Subject: Submission Richmond Station Tenure Review



Attachments: MAP1.jpg; MapTR.jpg; RoundHill1.jpg; RoundHill2.jpg; RoundHill3.jpg; MAP2.jpg; MAP3.jpg



MAP1.jpg (290 KB) MapTR.jpg (611 KB) RoundHill1.jpg (101 KB) RoundHill2.jpg (89 KB) RoundHill3.jpg (115 KB) MAP2.jpg (358 KB) MAP3.jpg (321 KB)

Dear Sir,

Please find below my submission to the Richmond Station Tenure Review Preliminary Proposal

Submission

"MapTR" is the scanned image of the Tenure Review map supplied. Files "Map1", "Map2" and "Map3" are detailed maps that I put together and that I am referring to. These are sections of the same map from north to south. Files "RoundHill1", "RoundHill2" and "RoundHill3" are photos taken at the ski field.

There are four problems that need to be addressed:

1. Protection of landscape values
2. Protection of native grasslands on the northern block (referred to as FH1 on my map)
3. Public access lines
4. Conflict with Ski Field Lease

To 3. and 4. The ski field lease is owned by Tekapo Ski Field Ltd of which the Richmond Station leasee is a shareholder. The Richmond Station tenure review is closely linked with the running of the ski field and therefore needs to be looked at in combination. The ski field lease is one of the old type leases, that gives the leasee the right to control trespass. It has a "peppercorn" \$150 per annum ground rental, plus a 2.5% fee on turnover of business generated on that land. While this land is vested in the Department of Conservation, it is in fact quite similar to the traditional Pastoral Lease with regard to public access.

With this type of lease the public has no right to access the area marked yellow on maps 1 to 3. It is of particular concern to the Board that the proposed Conservation Areas CA4 and CA3 are disjointed and that the public has no right to access to CA3 from the proposed public access line / ski field road. While there is provision in the Tenure Review document for the ski field owner to access the ski field via the ski field road easement on CA4, the public is effectively excluded from accessing the conservation area

CA3 via this road. In order to secure public access to CA3 from the ski field road Tenure Review must only proceed after the ski field lease has been amended to allow foot, mountain bike and horse access along the line "x-y-z".

The Tenure review document makes reference to the use of this road by the leasee for farming purposes. The ski field area is solely let for ski field and tourist purposes, farming is not permitted (clause 2 of ski field lease). Any farming / grazing of the ski field block would be in breach of the lease agreement. The only farming purpose could therefore be the maintenance of the top fence line bordering CA3. There is a 4WD track along the eastern side of the fence line on CA3. Any motorised vehicle traffic on CA3 needs to be sanctioned through a concession and should not be allowed without.

There is evidence that the ski field block has been grazed in the recent past. While this is not permitted under the ski field lease, grazing has been inevitable since the ski field block is not fenced.

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There is an anomaly with the ski field area and the adjacent farming area proposed for freehold, see purple circle on "map2". The actual fenced area takes in the western corner of the ski field area (Trig 1138m - y - z) , with farm a gate at "y". Grazing is not permitted in the ski field area.

Either the ski field lease needs to be rewritten or the fence line has to be realigned. With no fence line existing or proposed along the boundary of the southwestern corner of the ski field area, this is a recipe for "unintentional grazing" of the conservation area through the back door.

The ski field has been in serious breach of clause 11 of its lease agreement for many years: For many years a block of wilding pines has been allowed to spread. See picture "RoundHill1" and "RoundHill3". Wilding pines in this location pose a serious threat to the neighbouring conservation land. These pines should be removed by the leasee as a matter of urgency. The Board wishes to be informed when this has happened.

The ski field is in serious breach of clause 6 of its lease agreement: Building as pictured on "RoundHill2" is in disrepair. The building should be removed. The Board wishes to be informed when action has been taken.

Public access lines "h-i" and "a-b" . These public access lines are completely inadequate and unsuitable for reasonable foot or mountain bike access. Line "h-i" forces the walker through dense Matagouri scrub, line "a-b" is on the edge of a rocky bank. Some 150 years ago unformed public roads were set aside for the public to access the mountains beyond the station. One such line exists near the southern boundary of the station and one in the northern block. While both lines were never surveyed, they were drawn somewhere in an office without reference to the lay of the land, their intent was clearly to provide reasonable access to the public on horse back.

Now, Tenure Review is the opportunity that the intention of these access lines is honoured. The southern line is almost identical with an existing farm track. This track needs to become the southern line for public access for foot, horse and non-motorised vehicles, not the rocky bank of the river.

For the northern line I suggest the existing 4WD track to the existing farm gate at the northeastern corner of the fence. It also needs to be assured that both lines are at all times safe. The northern line "h-i" as per Tenure Review document, would not protect the walker from deer if the farmer decided to turn this block into a deer paddock.

Public access to the lake shore is inadequate. One or two more lines of foot access need to be established from the Lilybank Road to the lake shore.

To 2. The northern block consists of largely unmodified grasslands and alpine shrubs. It is being used for low density Merino grazing. The proposed freehold block, FH1 on map1, is suggested to extend to about 980m asl. There is a fence line on the flat land on the bottom of the hill. To establish a new fence line higher up on steep hill side would mean a bulldozer line across the contours. This will not only leave an ugly scar in the landscape, it will also be a source of erosion. Farm roads further north are evidence for this. There are also wetlands on the bottom of the hill east of the existing fence line. There is a very good reason why a fence line was established there in the first place. I object to having a fence line established half-way up the hill and is concerned for the loss of biodiversity if this block is converted to intensive farm management or deer farming.

I favour a solution whereby the northern block is returned to the Crown in its entirety with a provision for lease back to the farmer for sheep grazing only and with control on stock numbers, and only as far as the existing eastern fence line. Thus the status quo for the farmer would be maintained, the public would have the opportunity to use the existing 4WD track for foot and mountain bike access without the possibility of danger from deer in the future.

A corridor would then exist for native vegetation and wild life from the lake shore to the mountain tops. This block with its small tarns is also of outstanding landscape value. It connects the Mount Gerald Conservation area with the lowland and provides for suitable public access to it. The Mount Gerald Conservation area spans all along to the north of the Two Thumb Range and would make an excellent High Country Conservation Park. All it needs is a link from the lowland. Such a park would have enormous benefit to the wider community in general and the Lake Tekapo community in particular. With its vicinity to the Southern Alps the views from the ranges to the mountains and onto the lakes are spectacular. There is potential for a multi-day hike given the right facilities and access to it.

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Lake Tekapo township is surrounded by pastoral lease land with very limited opportunity for recreation. The future of the township depends on the availability of tracks for walking and mountain biking. The northern block in its unmodified form provides for this. Controlled sheep grazing would not conflict with this .

To 1. It is of serious concern to see the entire lake shore block freeholded. With the Mackenzie District Plan being inherently weak, there is a recipe for subdivision and residential development all along the lake shore. We have seen the same on the shores of Lake Wanaka and Lake Wakatipu, and Lake Pukaki is in the making. Lake Tekapo with its outstanding landscape values needs firm protection, protection that the District Plan does not provide. The protection of this landscape is of national and of international importance.

I wish to note that the present Tenure Review proposal is in contravention of the Government Tenure Review guide lines that have identified protection of landscape values as one of its objectives. Long term protection of the lake shore is only possible if the land between the Lilybank Road and the lake shore remains in Crown ownership. This block, identified as FH3 on "map1" and "map3", should then be leased back to the farmer with provisions suitable for the present type of use.

Summary. I do not believe that the present Tenure Review proposal addresses the needs of the public for long term landscape protection, for public access or for biodiversity protection. The present proposal needs to be rejected.

I would also like to stipulate that Richmond Station Tenure Review should only proceed after the ski field lease has been amended to remove the present anomaly with its western corner and after a suitable public access arrangement has been found for line "y-z", so that CA3 can be accessed from the ski field road.

I would also like to stipulate that firm guide lines need to be established for practical public walking and mountain biking access. Directing the public to walk or bike along a fence line for kilometres, through dense scrub and over boulders, through ravines and gorges is simply unacceptable. The face of rural New Zealand is changing towards tourism use and public recreation. Tenure Review which brings huge benefits to the farmer by obtaining freehold title needs to be balanced against real benefits for the wider community.

The Richmond Station Tenure Review proposal is an example that the present Tenure Review system does not work. A system based on rent review with rent incentives for the retirement of conservation land and for public access should be investigated. There must also be middle ground, i.e. a continuation of leasing of certain areas for controlled grazing without the need to freehold or to destock.

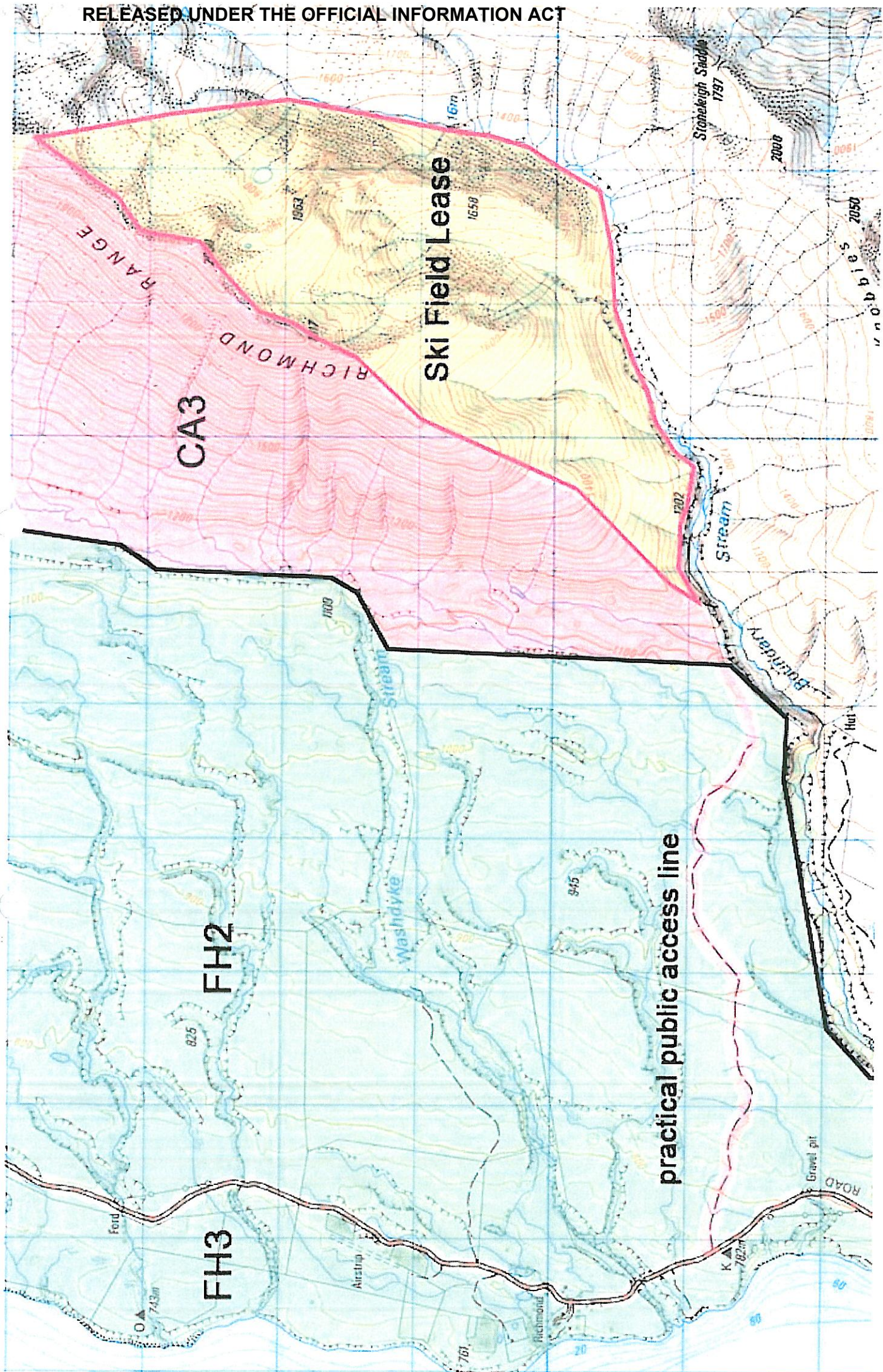
Yours sincerely,

Gottlieb Braun-Elwert

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RICHMOND RANGE

CA3

Ski Field Lease

FH2

FH3

practical public access line

Stream

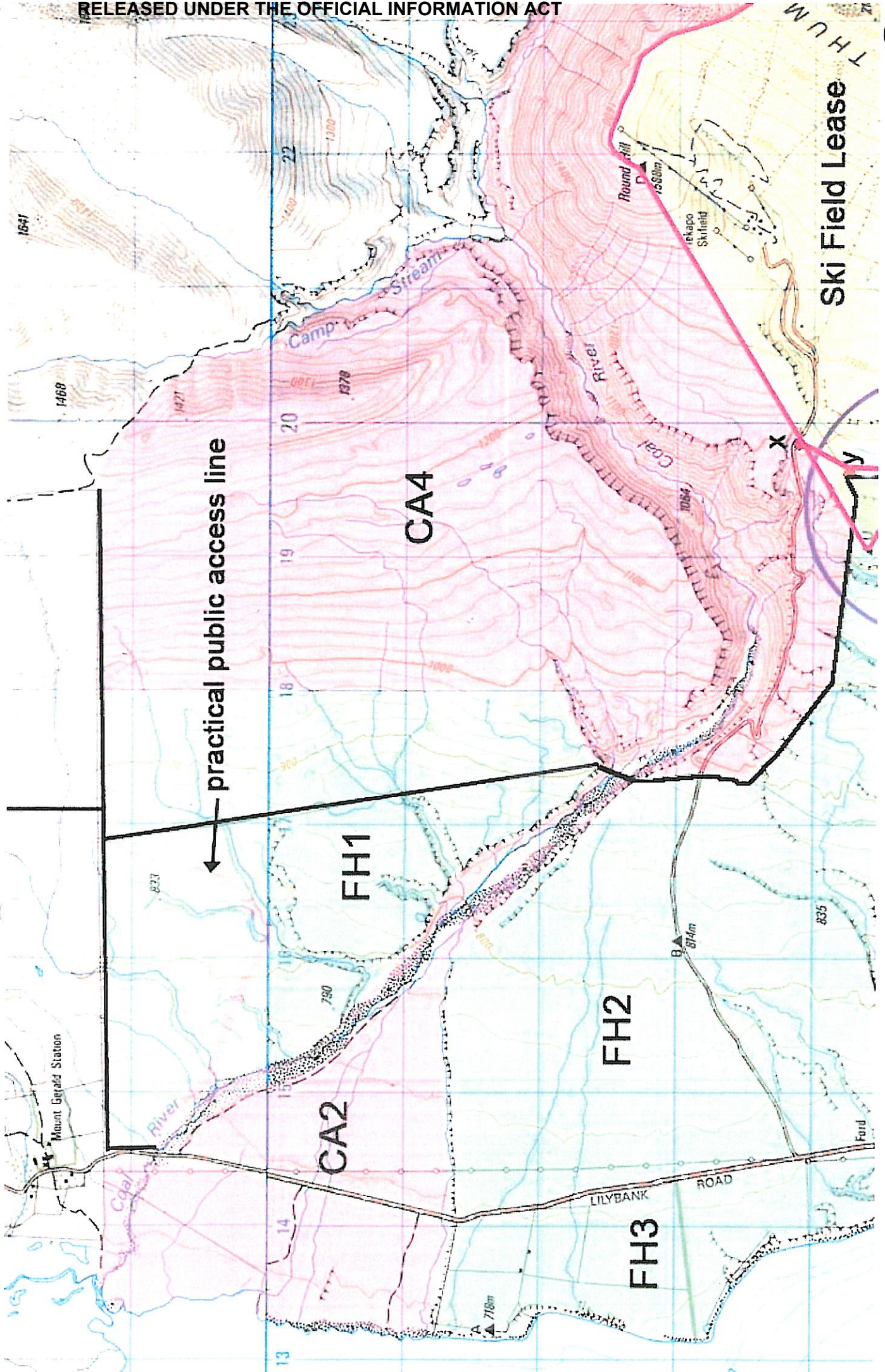
Boundary

ROAD

Gravel pit

1

(1)



practical public access line

Ski Field Lease

CA4

FH1

FH2

CA2

FH3

Mount Gerald Station

Coal River

Camp Stream

Round Hill

Tekepo Ski Field

LILYBANK ROAD

Ford

THUM

A 718m

B 814m

835

1469

1641

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

22

1427

1378

1400

1300

1400

1300

1200

1100

1084

1000

1000

1000

1000

833

800

800

800

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800

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800

(1)

