

MT LESUEUR RESERVE SYSTEM

1.0 Background

The Lesueur reserve system has been subject to several recommendations in the past regarding its tenure and purpose. In summary, these are:-

- (a) 1976 EPA recommends reservation of the reserve system shown in Figure 1. This was to create Class 'A' reserve for Conservation of Flora and Fauna and Water, vested in W.A. Wildlife Authority.
- (b) 1983 Cabinet endorsed a Class 'C' reserve for the same area, with same purpose and vesting. It specifically allowed mineral exploration.
- (c) In 1985 the West Coast Working Group recommended an excision from the western boundary of the proposed reserve to allow for a future highway alignment. The northern boundary of reserve 24496 was also rationalised. (see Map 2)

2.0 Existing Reserve System

The existing reserve system at Lesueur consists of a number of vested and unvested reserves, as well as vacant crown land.

The following reserves are included:-

- (a) Reserves generally agreed to be part of the system.

<u>RESERVE</u>	<u>PURPOSE</u>	<u>VESTING</u>	<u>AREA (ha)</u>
15018	Horse Breeding	unvested	15,000 (approx)
pt 24496	Protection of Flora	unvested	3,600
24275	Education Purposes University of W.A.	unvested	789
1223	Water and Stopping Place	Shire of Dandaragan	259*
968	Stopping Place for Travellers	Shire of Dandaragan	239*
Road No 301	Stock Route	--	1050

<u>RESERVE</u>	<u>PURPOSE</u>	<u>VESTING</u>	<u>AREA (ha) cont.</u>
35594	Protection of Flora	unvested	55
24437	Water and Camping	unvested	22

Vacant Crown Land adjacent to Reserve 15018, to north

* May need discussion with Shire, but generally accepted as part of the overall system.

(b) Further negotiations are required to clarify the following:

35593	Gravel	Shire of Dandaragan	348
Victoria Locations 1433 and 1730-Freehold land			60
Pastoral Lease 3114/825 (Cockleshell Gully)			200

(c) Possible addition.

Vacant Crown Land Between Victoria Loc. 10598 and pastoral lease 3114/825	20
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The Vacant Crown Land to the east of reserve 15018 is the area subject to the mining proposal. It is the boundary between Reserve 15018 and this land which is a major issue to resolve.

2.1 Granted Mining Leases

The vast majority of tenements held by the proponent are granted Mining Leases and creation of a national park over these leases will not on its own alter that status. While the Company is required to gain EPA approvals and specific mining design approvals their right to mine is already established as a result of the pre existing title. Creation of a national park over parts of the coal resource would create a public expectation that mining will not take place, at least not without prior Parliamentary approval. In practise this may not be the case and other mechanisms may be required to prevent mining taking place within the park if this is required by Government.

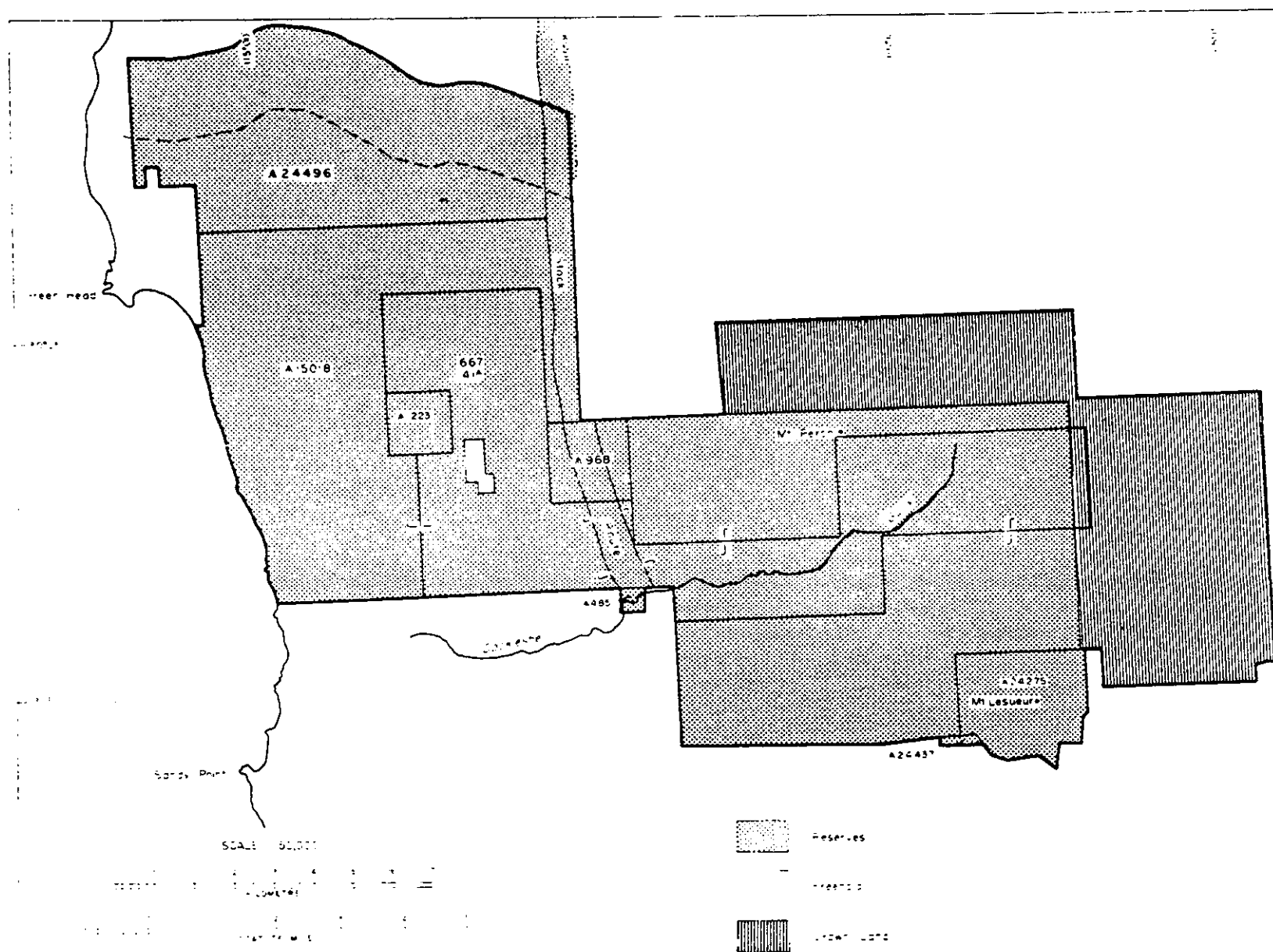
3.0 Boundaries of a Proposed National Park

The boundaries agreed by Cabinet in 1983, and the excisions from the western and northern boundaries of Reserve 24496 form the core of a potential national park.

The following change is proposed:--

- (a) Deletion of Reserve 35593 from the national park pending future discussions with the Shire.

Figure 5.7 Mt. Lesueur area map



MAP 1

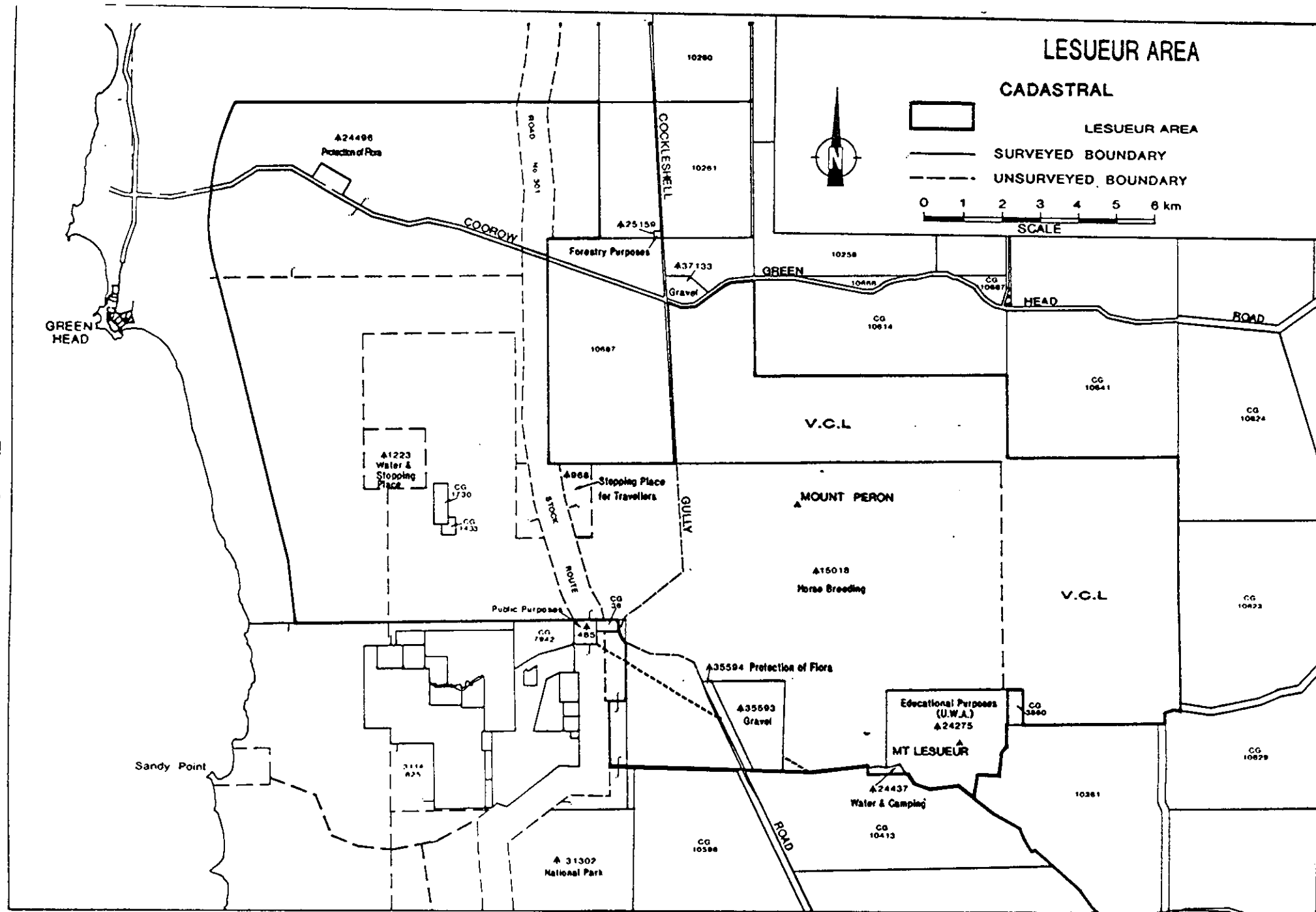


Figure 3.1

The outstanding issue is the resolution of the eastern boundary of Reserve 15018 and Vacant Crown Land. This boundary is approximately six kilometres long and is oriented directly north-south. It straddles the westernmost of the coal measures defined by the proponents of the coal mine/power station (the "Gardner" area). This area has the shallowest coal and there are small outcrops in the headwaters of Cockleshell Gully. The coal dips eastwards and the Gardner area, being the shallowest is also the most accessible and cheapest to mine. Discussions with the proponents indicate that this is the area which they intend to mine first. There are, however, four other areas which are coal bearing and would provide alternative starting points for any future mining.

The Gardner measure is the most sensitive of the coal deposits because:-

- (a) it straddles the major drainage divide between Cockleshell Gully and Coomallo Creek.
- (b) it occupies one of the highest ridge lines in the area, and is highly visible from coast, including Jurien Bay.
- (c) there is high potential to introduce dieback into the Cockleshell Gully system

3.1 Options for eastern boundary

The overall aim of establishing the eastern boundary is to ensure that the principal coal measures are not included in the proposed National Park. This needs to be balanced against the conservation of the major natural systems of the Lesueur area.

Three options are proposed:-

- (a) Exclude all coal deposits from the National Park - (Map 4)
- (b) Use the cadastral boundary of Reserve 15018 - (Map 5)
- (c) Water shed boundary - (Map 6)

<u>OPTION (a)</u>	<u>ADVANTAGES</u>	<u>DISADVANTAGES</u>
Exclude all coal deposits from National Park.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Allows mining to proceed unhindered by land tenure * Future mining proposals would only lead to excision from National Park in the future 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Future management problems with drainage, dieback. * Integrity of rainage system threatened. * High degree of landscape impact.

OPTION (a)(cont)**ADVANTAGES****DISADVANTAGES**

- * Difficulty of defining workable boundary on the ground.

OPTION (b)**ADVANTAGES****DISADVANTAGES**

Use the Cadastral boundary of Reserve 15018

- * Uses existing cadastral boundary.

- * Does not relate to any biological, geographic or geological boundary.
- * Difficulty of defining workable boundary on the ground.
- * Does not protect drainage system.

OPTION (c)**ADVANTAGES****DISADVANTAGES**

Watershed boundary

- * Protects entire Cackleshell Gully drainage system.
- * Reduces potential impact of dieback, acid drainage.
- * May reduce landscape impact.
- * Boundary easily defined and manageable.

- * Includes part of Gardiner coal deposit in National Park.
- * May create expectation that area would not be mined.

4.0 Stake Holder Analysis

There are a number of stake holders with interests in the area. There are three main stakeholders; the proponents, the conservation movement and local landowners. Other stakeholders include the Shire of Dandaragan and Shire of Coorow, wider mining interests, and the State Government. This discussion will briefly indicate the possible implications for the three main stakeholders.

	<u>PROPONENTS</u>	<u>CONSERVATION MOVEMENT</u>	<u>LOCAL LANDOWNERS</u>
Option (a)	//	XX	X
Option (b)	X	X	X
Option (c)	X	//	/

// = likely strong support
 / = likely neutral
 X = likely opposition
 XX = likely strong opposition

Option (a) will be most acceptable to mining interests.
 Option (c) will be most acceptable to conservation interests and local landowners. It gives best effect to EPA recommendation 5 17.

5.0 Remaining Portion of Vacant Crown Land east of Reserve 15018

This area constitutes the primary area of interest to the mining company. Its current status as vacant crown land means that there is little active management occurring in the area. The proponents have set in place a number of measures to ameliorate the effects of visitors and workers to the area.

These measures include upgrading of creek crossing and some access tracks, signs warning of rare flora and dieback, flagging of rare plants and rehabilitation of drilling pads. This management has occurred because of the exploration program undertaken by the proponents. If a hiatus develops in the program this management will undoubtedly cease.

There remains several major ongoing problems such as fire management, dieback control, protection of the rare flora and control of ad hoc access. There is a need to complement the National Park with a appropriately managed reserve, which recognises its mining potential and conservation values.

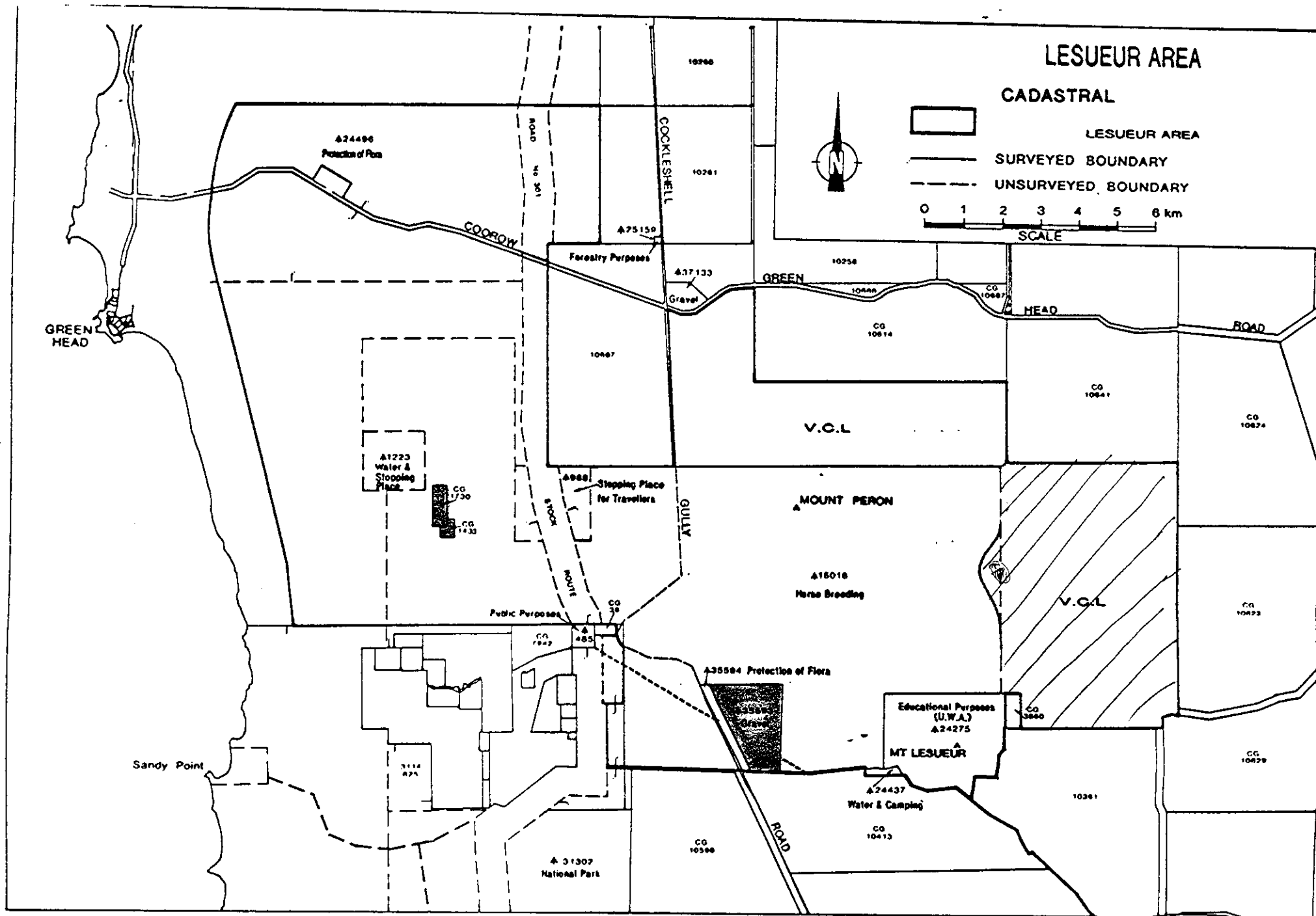
It is proposed that this becomes class 'A' "Resource Management Area" vested in the Lands and Forests Commission. (see Appendix)

Recommendations

- (a) Subject to Cabinet endorsement of Option (a), (b) or (c) for the eastern boundary of reserve 15018 the Lesueur reserve system be declared as a Class 'A' National Park vested in the National Parks and Nature Conservation Authority. (see Map _)
- (b) Discussions be held with the Shire of Dandaragan to clarify the boundaries of Reserve 35593 for possible inclusion in the National Park.

- (c) Future consideration be given to the inclusion of Pastoral lease 3114/825, Victoria Locations 1433 and 1730 small portion of V.C.L. to the south to the main reserves, with a view to connecting Lesueur to Drovers Cave National Park.
- (d) Reservation and vesting of Vacant Crown Land to the east and adjacent to Reserve 15018 should recognise its conservation and mineral production potential.

Figure 3.1



PROPOSED ADDITIONS
PROPOSED NATIONAL PARK.

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT RESERVE.