

and litigation usually resulting from uncertainty of boundaries and rights of ingress and egress would unquestionably arise. Moreover these preparatory proceedings as to defining boundaries and providing road-accommodation would, it is believed, have to be repeated on every future occasion of similarly dealing with those areas.

2. That the cost of laying-out such roads and areas would in itself be absolutely prohibitory, inasmuch as the survey of a section of two hundred acres, at the present survey rates, would amount to £20, a sum very far exceeding that which, under the most favourable circumstances, could be obtained for the lease of the land. And this consideration has apparently hitherto operated in the direction of submitting to the public areas coterminous with blocks already surveyed.

3. That the Survey Department would not, on the bare assumption that a large tract of land was purely kauri-gum-bearing, feel justified in incurring a large and probable wasteful expenditure of money in subdividing into sections and which on subsequent explorations might prove to contain gum in such small and widely-scattered quantities as to render many of the sections unmarketable, and others liable soon after lease to be abandoned without further payment of rent. It is a well-known fact that as a rule all kauri-gum land is unfit for profitable cultivation.

4. Experience of the pecuniary resources of persons carrying on the actual avocation of gum-digging leads us to believe that they would not be able to pay on leasing the cost of survey and proportionate rent obviously payable in the first instance, and the effect of such a demand would practically be to exclude such persons from becoming the possessors of those lands under license.

5. That, prior to the constitution of the Land Board, namely, in the month of June, 1876, during the provincial administration of Sir George Grey, it is found that nearly twenty thousand acres were, in one block, let at a premium or foregift for gum-digging purposes. This seems to be the first instance of leasing gum-fields, and we have no doubt that the practice was inaugurated after mature deliberation and with a due regard to the interests both of those connected with the industry and the public at large.

Speaking generally, for the foregoing reasons, and also after fully considering the question, we think that the probable effect on the kauri-gum industry of leasing small areas, to which the present powers of the Board are limited, would (if the law were strictly adhered to) be probably to destroy the industry altogether. Therefore, to meet the due scope of this trade, which, unlike most other industries, essentially involves, we believe, the element of large areas, we beg to recommend that the Board should, in this direction, obtain extended powers by legislative enactment.

We have, &c.,  
D. A. TOLE,  
Commissioner, Crown Lands.

S. PERCY SMITH,  
Assistant Surveyor-General.

The Auckland Board.

---

#### CORRESPONDENCE RELATING TO THE LEASING OF HUKERENUI BLOCK, IN AUCKLAND, AS A GUM-FIELD.

Mr. READER WOOD to the Hon. the COLONIAL SECRETARY, Wellington.

SIR,—

Superintendent's Office, Auckland, 21st March, 1876.

In conformity with section 86 of "The Auckland Waste Lands Act, 1874," I have the honour to request that the approval of the Governor in Council may be obtained to the proposed terms and conditions for leasing the Hukerenui Block, in the Bay of Islands district, set forth in the accompanying report from the Commissioner of Crown Lands.

I have, &c.,

READER WOOD (for the Superintendent).

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary, Wellington.

---

The COMMISSIONER of CROWN LANDS to His Honor the SUPERINTENDENT, Auckland.

SIR,—

Crown Lands Office, Auckland, 20th March, 1876.

I have the honour to request that the approval of His Excellency the Governor in Council may, in conformity with section 36 of "The Auckland Waste Lands Act, 1874," be obtained in respect of the following terms and conditions under which it is proposed to lease the Hukerenui Block, Bay of Islands District, the same being a purchase under "The Immigration and Public Works Act, 1873." I may observe that the block in question has been ascertained by inspection to be third-class land, and that, as such, it is competent to be dealt with in the manner provided by the section of the Act above quoted. Proposed terms and conditions: To lease, either by public auction or by public tender, for a period of two years, at a premium or foregift, the right to dig for and remove kauri gum on and from the Hukerenui Block, situate in the Bay of Islands district, and containing (by recent admeasurement) 19,500 acres.

I have, &c.,

D. A. TOLE, Commissioner of Crown Lands.

His Honor the Superintendent, Auckland.

---

Forward copy to Colonial Secretary with recommendations as suggested by Mr. Tole.—R. W.

Accordingly, 21/3/26. Bk. 84, f. 10,