

**BEFORE THE COMMISSIONER APPOINTED BY
ENVIRONMENT SOUTHLAND**

IN THE MATTER

of an application
for resource
consent APP-
20211381

BY

**CASHMERE BAY
DAIRY LIMITED**

Applicant

**BRIEF OF EVIDENCE OF GEORGE RAYMOND ON BEHALF OF
CASHMERE BAY DAIRY LIMITED**

DATED 6 MAY 2022



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BRIEF OF EVIDENCE OF GEORGE RAYMOND

Introduction

1. My name is George Edward Digby Raymond. I am a director and shareholder of Cashmere Bay Dairy Limited. Cashmere Bay is a family operation and I run it with my wife, Sarah. Cashmere Bay Dairy is owned by ourselves and my brother Henry and his partner, Liz. The Otama farm is run in conjunction with a second operation on the West Coast. Sarah and I are based in Otama and Henry and Liz are on the West Coast property.
2. Sarah and I are both from dairy farming families.
3. Sarah was born into a farming family in Kaponga, Taranaki and moved to Southland in the mid 1990's with her parents to continue farming. Her family have now established a successful business around Southland and Otago.
4. My family originated from Mid Canterbury. We were brought up on a dairy farm in Hinds. In 1998 I moved to Southland along with my family, where I went to a sharemilking job in Edendale.
5. We went on to purchase the original 160 ha at Otama in 1999 and converted it from sheep to dairy. Over the years the farm has grown from 160 ha to over 500 ha. The Otama property has been great for my family as it has supported my parents through their retirement and my brothers into other businesses.
6. The Otama property now employs 5 full time staff. In recent years we have enjoyed learning about different cultures through employing people from the Philippines and Nepal. Currently we have two Nepalese families that have been with us for several years. We are enjoying watching them bring up their families in rural New Zealand, where they are extremely happy.
7. In 2008 we purchased a 320 effective ha dairy farm on the West Coast at Cashmere Bay. It is positioned on the edge of Lake Brunner. It was soon identified that some of this land had been over developed too

close to the lake to remain environmentally sustainable. On our own accord we decided to retire 60 ha of the 320 ha milking platform and reduce cow numbers from 700 to 600.

8. In 2012 we started an intensive riparian planting program and fenced and planted 10km of waterways. The family is very proud of this property and what has been achieved to keep it an environmentally sustainable dairy farm in what is a challenging environment.
9. In 2018 Sarah and I took on a lease farm (separate to Cashmere Bay Dairy) which we purchased in 2021. Part of the reason for purchasing this property was to create an opportunity for an employee and his family who had been with us for 12 years. They have gone onto successfully farm it for the past four years. This property is located on the Pomahaka River in West Otago. Over the last four years we have fenced all waterways with significant buffer zones as some of this farm is prone to flooding. We have recently upgraded the dairy effluent system to an above ground Kliptank and have had one of the first Otago Regional Council effluent discharge consents granted. This was not a council requirement, but something we felt was necessary as the previous system was an antiquated pond system and not environmentally sustainable. The new system has the latest low application technology.

Reasons for the application

10. In 2018 an opportunity arose to purchase a neighbouring 80 ha which we saw as an opportunity to expand our Otama dairy operation, which also included some bull beef and winter grazing.
11. We have now owned the 80 ha for four years. Over this time we have utilised this property for raising extra beef and the winter grazing of our dairy cows. Since taking on this land we have fenced all waterways. We have also planted some areas with significant buffer zones around a sensitive wetland area. We have full intentions to plant the entire creek from Jaffray road to the South boundary of the property.

12. We are seeking consent to simplify our operation to solely dairy cows. This would allow us to rotate our winter grazing program around the entire property rather than repeatedly winter grazing on the same land, which we consider unsustainable on soil structure and for nutrient losses. Being able to winter graze around the entire property would allow us to pair paddocks up with standoff paddocks for extreme weather events which will improve our ability to manage the operation during these times.
13. We are pleased that we are able to have a fully self-contained operation where we have total control of our effects on the environment. This consent would be a further step towards this.
14. In developing this extension proposal, we have sought to 'pull all the levers' to mitigate effects. The detail of this is set out in the Farm Environmental Management Plan.
15. Overall, we think it will enable us to operate a more sustainable farm both environmentally and economically.

Catch Crops

16. In the section 42A report the writer indicated that reduced less weight would be placed on our use of catch crops to further mitigate nutrient losses. I thought it would be helpful to describe the decision-making process that we follow when deciding whether to use a catch crop.
17. Effectively a catch crop is sown as a short-term interim crop between our normal winter feed crop and the next crop or new pasture. The purpose of it is to take up extra nutrients that might be in the soils. Given this there is a relatively short window to get the crops in and established. We really need to be sowing them by mid-September when conditions allow and have a reasonable weather window in the following fortnight to ensure that they germinate and do not get flooded out.
18. They are reasonably expensive to put in so we do need to be fairly confident that they will be able to grow quickly enough to produce a

decent amount of feed. They are either harvested for baleage or grazed between mid-November and Christmas to ensure that our next crop or new pasture is sown in time.

19. Given this we do need the 'stars to align' to a certain extent. We have been using catch crops for the last 4 years. Based on this experience I would say that the right conditions occur roughly 50% of the time. We have lost 2 of the crops that we have tried to put in because the weather was not kind to us.
20. In my view it is still a worthwhile mitigation tool to have in the toolbox. Whilst it might not be deployed every year, it does have benefits when it is used and we do use it when it is possible to do so.

Conclusion

21. As I have set out, we seek to operate a highly sustainable operation. We are acutely aware of the need to work within the bounds of the property and not push the boat out too much. We have demonstrated this through our approach on our other farms and our commitment to environmental improvement through appropriate land retirement and riparian management.
22. We will continue to apply this philosophy to our operation at Otama.
23. In doing this we are able to support our own families and those of our employees who we actively support to improve their own wellbeing.

George and Sarah Raymond

Cashmere Bay Dairy Limited

Dated 6 May 2022