

BEFORE THE PANEL ON BEHALF OF

Environment Southland

APP-20211740

UNDER

the Resource Management Act 1991

IN THE MATTER

of an application for resource consent

by **Platinum Dairies Limited**

to discharge agricultural effluent to
land, take 120,000L/day of
groundwater, land use for a feed pad,
and land use
for an expanded dairy farm.

STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE OF JARED COLLIE ON BEHALF OF

PLATINUM DAIRIES LIMITED

21 June 2022

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Introduction

1. My name is Jared Collie and I am the Chairman of Platinum Dairies Limited (PDL)
2. PDL is a dairy equity partnership with 4 equal shareholders
 - a. JG and PJ Collie Trust
 - b. JEL Investments Limited
 - c. J and R McConachie Investments Limited
 - d. Thornton Family Trust
3. PDL has 4 directors
 - a. Jared Collie
 - b. Jeremy (Jerry) Excell
 - c. James (Jamie) McConachie
 - d. Patrick (Paddy) Thornton
4. Each of the shareholders and directors have a vast amount of experience and expertise and have contributed to the dairy sector and the wider agriculture/aquaculture industry over many years.
5. I am a born and bred Southlander and my wife Prue is originally from South Canterbury, we are both from farming families. We have farmed in the Southland area since 2005. We currently operate a 400-cow dairy farm and large-scale breeding and finishing sheep and beef property. We have 3 young boys all with an interest and enjoyment in farming. We both have a strong involvement in our local community. I have previously been an Agribusiness banker, part owner and worked in Farm Forward, a farm management, effluent and consultancy business and am currently a Director of Alliance Group a lamb/sheep/cattle and deer processing and marketing company. Prue is a part time Primary School Teacher with a heavy voluntary involvement in various sports and activities involving our children.
6. Jerry and Kellie are both born and bred Southlanders. Jerry has been a fisherman for over 30 years. He has been previously involved with Fiordland Marine Guardians for 12 years and is currently a Director of Fiordland Lobster Company and Chairman of Cray8 Management Committee. They have 2 children both studying. Kellie, post her career has had a heavy voluntary involvement in various sports and activities involving their children.

7. Jamie and Raelene are born and bred Southlanders. They have been involved in the Sheep Shearing industry for 40+ years and have owned and run their own Shearing Contracting business for 26 years. Both have given a lot back to the shearing industry with Jamie also being President of the NZ Shearing Contractors Association for 5 years. They have owned and operated their own sheep/cattle and deer farming business for 27 years. They have 2 adult children who are both farming orientated. Both, over the years, have had a heavy community involvement, particularly more latterly with the acquisition of an accommodation business catering for the residential and pastoral needs of many of their shearing industry staff.
8. Paddy and Debbie are born and bred Northlanders and have had a lifelong association with the dairy industry. Paddy has over 50 years' experience. They operate 2 dairy farms in Northland milking 900 cows combined, as well as 2 dairy and beef run off blocks. Both have had years of community involvement with Debbie helping local children with their education and Paddy being a Volunteer Fireman for over 30 years, and Chief Fire Officer for the last 6 years. Paddy has been a judge in the Dairy Industry Awards for over 10 years. They have 2 adult children, as well as 2 grandchildren.
9. PDL started in July 2011 with the purchase of 160ha milking 500 cows and was the coming together of four families to begin a new business venture. Today the business has grown to be milking 1000 cows on 256ha with the neighbouring 61.5ha purchased in 2018 before land use rules changed but settled in 2019.
10. In 2012/13 PDL decided to upgrade our effluent system as part of the consent renewal at the time. We spent considerably more money than what was required to go above and beyond to future proof the farm environmentally. For example, the ability to apply effluent to 212ha when pre upgrade the farm could only apply to approx. 80ha.
11. The farm has always operated with Contract Milkers who have employed their own staff. Since we have started our business, we have only had to employ 3 Contract Milkers in 11 seasons.

12. As farm owners, we pride ourselves on the standard of our farm and the people who work for us. We have supported the previous two Contract Milkers to progress into Sharemilking roles. The current Contract Milker has set up their own Effluent business outside of the farm.
13. Craig and Olivia MacGregor (current Contract Milkers) have been involved with the Southland Dairy Industry Awards since being employed by PDL where they came 3rd in 2020 and 3rd in 2021. In 2020 they won the health and safety and the environmental sections of the competition. Their Herd Manager also came 2nd in 2021 in the Manager's section. All this was achieved while being involved with PDL.
14. PDL also continues a relationship post the property purchase with the Muir family through their swede growing and harvesting business which provides employment and financially supports their family.

Existing Operation

15. 256ha milking platform with 61.5ha run off milking up to 1000 cows.
16. The current Contract Milker employs 4 fulltime staff plus one part timer.
17. We have now been operating the dairy platform for 11+ years. This has given us a good understanding of the limitations and opportunities that the property presents. We have held consent to milk 1000 cows on the existing block but have typically not milked up to our full entitlement (938 cows last year). The reasons for this are simply because we believe that full 1000 cows would be too intensive for the existing platform. Whilst it could be done, it would put us right at the edge of the farm's capabilities from an animal welfare and environmental perspective. Essentially, we like to operate with a bit more of a buffer so if things don't go quite to plan you have some scope to deal with the things that inevitably crop up in farming, for example, weather events.
18. All waterways are currently fenced off.
19. The Muir block is been used for wintering, young stock grazing and feed harvesting to support the dairy platform.

Background to Application

20. We (PDL) were approached by the Muir family to purchase their property during 2018 as they had been watching over the fence the way PDL operated and wanted their farm to be well cared for into the future. Due to various factors, settlement didn't occur until 2019.
21. Unfortunately for us during this time, land use rule changes came into place. We have continued to operate the Muir block as a wintering/grazing property and grass block, supporting our milking platform.
22. PDL has maintained a relationship with the Muir family in where they harvest up to 50% of the swedes we grow for human consumption. This also allows us to move over the crop with the cows at a faster rate again meaning less time for cows in the same area and less potential for damage or adverse environmental impacts.
23. The Muir block provides us an opportunity to increase the footprint of the platform, and effectively decrease the overall intensity of the farm system allowing us to have good scope for managing the environmental effects of our activities, internalise most of our needs and optimise the profitability of the business. Being able to spread the cows over a larger area during wet periods will reduce the risk of pugging and nutrient loss.

Summary of Consent Proposal

24. In developing this proposal, we have sought to 'pull all the levers' to mitigate effects. The detail of this is set out in the Farm Environment Management Plan. We have actively engaged with Environment Southland and professional specialists to ensure what we are proposing is the right thing to do. We have taken their advice and tried to incorporate it where practical to deliver the best long-term outcomes.
25. A good example of this is the critical source area (CSA) identified that will be fenced off and included as part of our overall riparian planting plan.
26. The Muir block ticks a lot of boxes for how we like to run our Dairy Farming operation by giving us the ability to better manage the feeding of our cows by being able to spread our animals over a larger area rather than harvesting from one block to then cart it and feed it out on the milking platform. It will give us a larger area to spread the nutrients over, allowing us to target applications to the areas that need it most based on our Nutrient Management Plan. Overall, we think it will enable us to operate a more sustainable farm both environmentally and economically.
27. By simplifying our operation to solely a milking platform, it will 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. We are also proposing a model that has less area in crop, therefore less chance of environmental damage/impact occurring. This will also mean only 3-4% of our property would be in crop at any one time versus an industry standard of around 10% to 15%.
28. Put simply in farmer terms,
- a. We are proposing to do what we are currently doing over a larger land area which results in a far better environmental outcome and simplifies our farming business.

Summary

29. We, at PDL pride ourselves on being caring people, good operators, forward thinking and early adopters of science and technology in all aspects of Dairy Farming.

30. We seek to operate a highly sustainable operation. We are acutely aware of the need to work within the environmental limitations of the property. We believe we have demonstrated this through our approach and our commitment to environmental improvement previously and through what we are proposing into the future.

- a. Reduction in winter crop area
- b. Reduction in Olsen P
- c. Further identification and management of critical source areas
- d. Riparian planting management plan

31. We will continue to apply this philosophy to our whole operation at Lochiel.

32. In doing this we are able to support our own families and those of our employees, and the surrounding community.

Jared Collie

Chairman

Platinum Dairies Limited

21 June 2022

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