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## SUBMISSION ON NOTIFIED APPLICATION CONCERNING RESOURCE CONSENT

(Form 13)

### Section 95A Resource Management Act 1991

To: The Chief Executive  
Central Otago District Council  
PO Box 122  
Alexandra 9340  
[resource.consent@codc.govt.nz](mailto:resource.consent@codc.govt.nz)

### DETAILS OF SUBMITTER

Full name: Jenny Grimmett

Contact person (if applicable):  
\_\_\_\_\_

Electronic address for service of submitter: jenny.k.grimmett@gmail.com

Telephone: 0292003057

Postal address (or alternative method of service under [section 352](#) of the Act):  
\_\_\_\_\_

610 Ida Valley Back Road, RD2, Oturehua 9387

This is a submission on the following resource consent application: RC No: **240065**

Applicant: **Helios OTA Op LP** Valuation No: **2828012800**

Location of Site: **48 Ranfurly-Naseby Road**

Brief Description of Application: **Land Use Consent to Construct, Operate and Maintain a Solar Farm (Maniatoto Plain Solar Farm) being a Renewable Electricity Generation Activity in a Rural Resource Area.**

The specific parts of the application that my submission relates to are:

**The entire proposal, as per the attached letter, with key issues relating to noise and vibration from pile driving and operational noise on quiet hot days, the length of time for landscape mitigation to be effective in screening the development, risk of contaminants in event of fire (battery components), glint and glare on the road, and risk of ineffective site remediation at end of project.**

This submission is: *(attach on separate page if necessary)*

*Include:*

- *whether you support or oppose the specific parts of the application or wish to have them amended; and*
- *the reasons for your views.*

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**I neither support or oppose the development.**

**I consider further information is required, as per comments above and as outlined in attached letter.**

I/We seek the following decision from the consent authority:  
*(give precise details, including the general nature of any conditions sought)*

**Decline the application in its current form.**

**If the application is approved, more control is required in conditions to cover the matters of concern listed above, as outlined in the attached letter.**

I  neither support or oppose (select one)

I wish  to be heard in support of this submission (select one)

I  am not\* a trade competitor for the purposes of [section 308B](#) of the Resource Management Act 1991 (select one)

\*I  am not (select one) directly affected by an effect of the subject matter of the submission that:

(a) adversely affects the environment; and

(b) does not relate to trade competition or the effects of trade competition.

*\*Delete this paragraph if you are not a trade competitor.*

**\*I/We will consider presenting a joint case if others make a similar submission**

*\*Delete this paragraph if not applicable.*

I [REDACTED] do not request (select one), pursuant to [section 100A](#) of the Act, that you delegate your functions, powers, and duties to hear and decide the application to 1 or more hearings commissioners who are not members of the local authority. “See note 4 below as you may incur costs relating to this request.”



**10 December 2024**

**Signature**

**Date**

*(to be signed by submitter or person authorised to sign on behalf of submitter)*

In lodging this submission, I understand that my submission, including contact details, are considered public information, and will be made available and published as part of this process.

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**Notes to submitter**

1. If you are making a submission to the Environmental Protection Authority, you should use [form 16B](#).

The closing date for serving submissions on the consent authority is the 20th working day after the date on which public or limited notification is given. If the application is subject to limited notification, the consent authority may adopt an earlier closing date for submissions once the consent authority receives responses from all affected persons.

2. You must serve a copy of your submission on the applicant as soon as is reasonably practicable after you have served your submission on the consent authority.
3. If you are a trade competitor, your right to make a submission may be limited by the trade competition provisions in [Part 11A](#) of the Resource Management Act 1991.
4. If you make a request under [section 100A](#) of the Resource Management Act 1991, you must do so in writing no later than 5 working days after the close of submissions and you will be liable to meet the additional costs of the hearings commissioner or commissioners, compared to our hearing panel. Typically these costs range from \$3,000 - \$10,000.
5. Please note that your submission (or part of your submission) may be struck out if the authority is satisfied that at least 1 of the following applies to the submission (or part of the submission):
  - it is frivolous or vexatious:
  - it discloses no reasonable or relevant case:
  - it would be an abuse of the hearing process to allow the submission (or the part) to be taken further:
  - it contains offensive language:

it is supported only by material that purports to be independent expert evidence, but has been prepared by a person who is not independent or who does not have sufficient specialised knowledge or skill to give expert advice on the matter.

The Chief Executive  
Central Otago District Council  
PO Box 122  
Alexandra 9340  
By Email Only: [resource.consents@codc.govt.nz](mailto:resource.consents@codc.govt.nz)  
Attention: Adam Vincent

Dear Adam

**RC240065 – Submission on Application by Helios Op LP to Construct, Operate and Maintain a Solar Farm in the Rural Resource Area at 48 Ranfurly-Naseby Road**

This letter is provided in support of the attached completed submission form referencing the above project.

Overview

My submission relates to the entire proposal, with key issues relating to noise and vibration from pile driving and operational noise on quiet, hot days/nights, the length of time for landscape mitigation to be effective in screening the development, risk of fire and contaminants in event of fire (battery components), glint and glare on the road, and risk of ineffective site remediation at end of project. There is also missing information in the application relating to the details of the substation and 220V transmission connections.

I neither support nor oppose the proposed development.

I consider further information is required to understand the effects of the proposal as outlined under the following headings.

If the application is approved, I consider more control is required in conditions of consent to cover the matters of concern set out in this submission.

I am not a trade competitor.

I wish to be heard in support of my submission. I am happy to present a joint case if others make a similar submission.

I am not directly affected by the proposal, apart from the potential visual and glare effects when I drive near the site, and the lack of effectiveness of landscape planting to mitigate visual effects when viewed from the roads nearby.

Noise and Vibration

The application refers to the use of galvanized steel piles for installing the proposed 550,810 solar panels and that they are to be driven into the ground by 2.5 to 3 metres.

The acoustic assessment refers to the type of pile driving equipment (Vermeer PD10 pile driver, Section 8.1 page 19), and references more than 20 hours of pile driving in various locations over a 2-year construction period: *“The total duration of solar farm construction on this site is expected to be approximately 24 months and to take place between 7:30 to 18:00 hours, Monday to Saturday. The total duration of piling is likely to be longer than 20 weeks, however the activity will not be stationary during this time and piling in any one location will occur for shorter than 20 weeks”.*

It is not clear how many piles are required for each panel, but even with one per panel the noise from pile driving will be consistent and have a stressful / nuisance effect for people living nearby and visitors to the area.

The Marshall Day report states that the construction noise meets the relevant standards. However, the ongoing noise over 24 months may breach Section 16 of the Resource Management Act.

***“16Duty to avoid unreasonable noise***

*Every occupier of land (including any premises and any coastal marine area), and every person carrying out an activity in, on, or under a water body or the coastal marine area, shall adopt the best practicable option to ensure that the emission of noise from that land or water does not exceed a reasonable level”.*

It is also questioned whether the noise levels during operations will be higher than assessed during the Marshall Day investigation, due to the higher temperatures in the area requiring fan cooling. This could have an unpleasant resonance effect that travels from the site, even if the noise is below the District Plan standard.

These noise effects need to be questioned further.

Landscape Mitigation

The visual and landscape character effects of the proposal as well as the glint and glare effects are heavily reliant on the proposed mitigation planting. This mitigation is not expected to reduce adverse effects until the plants are at mature height, in about five years, according to the Boffa Miskell report.

While irrigation and maintenance are proposed, this is going to be addressed at detailed design once the construction has commenced.

The Boffa Miskell report has selected species that they consider are suited to the harsh climate of the area. They suggest planting at future required spacings, and use of wind shelter. There is no assessment of what the wind shelter will look like or how this will be maintained for the period it is required to be in place.

The success of planting (especially native species) can be limited in the area proposed due to the harsh climate. Any consent conditions will need to be very robust in terms of site preparation prior to planting, and ongoing plant maintenance and irrigation.

Risk of Fire

The risk of fire in this area is significant, and with the high winds that occur locally on a regular basis, fighting fire is difficult and fire has the potential to travel fast over a long distance.

The applicant has stated that they are consulting with FENZ and offered a consent condition. They have not responded to the FENZ list of requirements in the application documentation with sufficient detail to give confidence that they are familiar with the local conditions and the limits of rural and small urban fire-fighting teams and the shortage of water for many months of the year.

More detail is needed to provide reassurance to the community that their properties and livelihoods are not at risk of an uncontrollable fire.

### Risk of Contaminants in the Event of Fire

The application and supporting documents refer to two or more types of lithium ion batteries that may be used to store the generated energy. It is understood that one of these is considered safer to use in the event of fire as it does not release so many contaminants. The number of batteries on site has the potential to release considerable contamination in the event of a fire and this can place a risk to the quality of our precious ground and surface water, which feed into stock and potable water supplies.

More information is required to address this, as well as measures to contain contaminants in the event of fire. It is also not clear whether a fire at the solar farm would result in air contaminants that could “plume” and adversely affect the health of residents and people in the area.

### Glint and Glare

There is no coverage of the effects of how the proposal will comply with the requirements for the Naseby Dark Skies community standards, and whether full moon or bright moonlight will cause glint and glare that detracts from the dark skies that Naseby and the wider region rely on for tourist income.

The comments on glint and glare effects on road users assume that a fleeting effect is safe. The brightness of the glare from sunlight can cause temporary blindness and at 100kph is a safety issue on the State Highway 85 and the adjoining local roads. If the landscape planting does not reach ideal height for five years, this is not going to be effectively mitigated. We have a mix of locals and tourists on the roads. The latter are not familiar with the area and the glint and glare could be an added hazard.

### Site Remediation

The applicant has stated that they are responsible for the clean up and remediation of the site at the end of the 35-year project lifespan (back to its original condition). They also note that the solar panels will need to be replaced in about 20-25 years.

There is no mention of where the development infrastructure will be taken at completion or when components are replaced. The local refuse centres are not large enough to cater for this level of waste, and may not be equipped to deal with the nature of the waste.

This clean up, recycling of infrastructure, or disposal of it needs to be addressed early, and robust consent conditions in place to protect the landowner and others from having to do the clean-up in the event the applicant defaults on the development for any reason. This should include a bond of some sort based on a realistic cost to deal with the waste in 35 years' time.

It is assumed the mitigation planting will remain at the time of remediation.

### Missing Information and Other Matters

#### *ORC Consents*

There are allusions in the application documents to the need for consents to be obtained from Otago Regional Council (ORC) for works within specified distances of wetlands or other waterbodies on the site, including the need for existing culvert crossings to be upgraded. The ORC consultation record attached with the application indicates consents may not be required.

It would be good to have more detail of what is proposed so the need for consents from ORC or otherwise is confirmed.

It is also considered that the CODC consent should not be approved without ORC consents being approved, or that conditions of consent should require the ORC consents to be confirmed (and if required) to be in place before works commence. Ideally the application should have been jointly notified as it allows the community to understand all aspects of the proposal at the same time and ensure competing interests and conflicts and effects can be addressed in an integrated manner.

#### *Legislation and Technology*

It seems that legislation and District Plan provisions have not caught up with technology and is not fit for purpose as it does not appear to recognize the range of risks and hazards associated with the lithium ion batteries and other operational requirements of the solar farm. However, while the Council's hands may be tied by this legislation for an activity that may be considered nationally or regionally significant infrastructure/facilities, the proposal is still a Discretionary Activity and therefore any matter can be considered.

The information on the substation and associated infrastructure required to connect with the Transpower network is relevant and integral to the proposal so should be considered. Towers of 24 metres height and lines need to be considered in terms of the potential visual and landscape character effects on the local environment.

The Boffa Miskell report noted the big skies and plains as a unique landscape that is internationally recognised. It is very important to the local tourist industry, including the Dark Skies Community significance being promoted by Naseby and covered in the District Plan.

#### General Comments

The applicant seems to be relying on statements that the proposal will benefit the community, while the power generated will be provided via 220v lines to the North Island, and will not provide more resilience for the community in terms of local renewable power generation.

Workers may need to be specialists, so may be flown into the country. It is not clear how many local people could get work on the construction project. The operation of the development only requires low key maintenance by 1-2 people. There is no clear benefit to the community in terms of social and economic effects, other than the land owner who will still be able to graze their sheep on the land. This is not "consistent" with the objectives and policies in the District Plan that seek to support the local community.

#### Conclusion

It is considered that the proposal should not be approved without additional information being considered first, and if it is to be approved any decision needs to include robust conditions to ensure the effects of the proposal are effectively avoided, remedied or mitigated. I am happy to respond to questions on this submission.

Yours faithfully

Jenny Grimmett  
610 Ida Valley Back Road  
RD2, Otarehua 9387

Phone: 0292003057

J Grimmett Submission on Helios Solar Farm RC240065

CC: Helios OTA Op LP  
C/- The Property Group  
L3 Craig Investment  
36 Grant Road  
Frankton  
Queenstown 9300  
Attention: Mishka Banhidi

**By Email only: [mbanhidi@propertygroup.co.nz](mailto:mbanhidi@propertygroup.co.nz)**