

Item name: Butter Factory (Former)**Location:** 90 Allyn River Road (Park St) East Gresford 2311

Dungog

Address: 90 Allyn River Road (Park St)**Planning:** Hunter & Central Coast**Suburb/nearest town:** East Gresford 2311**Local govt area:** Dungog**Parish:****State:** NSW**County:****Other/former names:****Area/group/complex:****Group ID:****Aboriginal area:****Curtilage/boundary:****Item type:** Archaeological-Terrestrial**Group:** Farming and Grazing**Category:** Buttery**Owner:****Admin codes:****Code 2:****Code 3:****Current use:****Former uses:****Assessed significance:** Local**Endorsed significance:** Local

Statement of significance: The study site likely contains archaeological remains pertaining to an early 20th century butter factory, which is considered to be of potential local archaeological significance. The site represents the progressive development of the dairy industry within the greater Dungog region.

As the exact construction date of the butter factory originally owned by J. Ireland and Co. is not known, it must be acknowledged that the construction date of this first factory (to which no documentary evidence has been found) may in fact pre-date the 20th century. Regardless of this, the establishment and operation of a butter factory at the turn of the 20th century demonstrates the significant change made to pastoralism and the agricultural industry of the Dungog region primarily based on the environmental changes to the area which subsequently reduced productivity of the tobacco and wheat industry. In particular, this butter factory demonstrates the shift from small independent butter and dairy factories into a more mainstream co-operative business which produced dairy products at a significantly larger scale while still benefiting the local dairy farmers of the greater Dungog region. As a whole, the co-operative business method was seen as a great success for the dairy industry and this principle development continued to grow throughout the 20th century.

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Historical notes of provenance: By the second half of the 19th century, the greater area of Dungog experienced a significant shift concerning the main sources of income production for the community. Initially focused on tobacco production, wheat growing and sheep rearing during the first half of the 19th century, these agricultural exploits had predominantly dried up or relocated to more prominent and better suited inland areas.² As the community required more agricultural enterprises in order to sufficiently survive, a heavy shift in focus towards dairying and the production of milk by-products quickly became one of the largest and valued business enterprises to the Dungog region.

The exact establishment and construction date of the butter factory located at East Gresford is unknown. It is known that the main period of occupation and use of the site began in 1907 to which the property was leased to the Bowthorne Co-operative Butter Factory Limited.³ Initially starting as a sole factory in the town of Bowthorne in 1892, the Bowthorne Butter Factory soon realised the advantages of operating as a co-operative company.⁴ The co-operative company was formed in December 1906, and it was reported to be leasing a second factory at Gresford from 'J. Ireland and Co where butter was being produce'.⁵ While the current study site is listed as being located at East Gresford, it can be suggested that this factory which was noted as being located in Gresford in early 20th century documentary records is in fact the same factory leased and later owned by the Bowthorne Co-operative Butter Factory Limited. Parish maps of the greater Gresford area do not list any areas as East Gresford, and the Sand's Country Commercial Directory for 1919 only lists Gresford as a town. Therefore it can be suggested that the documentary records which note the Bowthorne Co-operative as operating a factory in Gresford is in fact the current study site listed at East Gresford. The earliest reference to the factory at East Gresford dates to 1930.⁷

The formation of a co-operative appears to have given the Bowthorne Butter Factory more funds and a direct increase in suppliers, as a newspaper article dated to August 1907 regarding a meeting held by the co-operative members noted the decision to construct a new and larger factory at the East Gresford site: 'The meeting unanimously empowered the directors to proceed with the erection of a new factory at Gresford'.⁸ With this in mind, it can be suggested that by this point in time the company had either purchased the property from J. Ireland and Co, or that Ireland's company had decided to join the co-operative and sell his premises as incorporation into the co-operative. The expansion and construction of a new building at (East) Gresford suggests that profits and success were being felt by the co-operative. By 1910, three factories at Bowthorne, (East) Gresford and Morpeth were all owned by the co-operative company. In March 1912, reports of losses by the factory at East Gresford for a half year period totalled £429, which in turn was heavily reducing the overall profit margin felt by the co-operative.⁹

It can be suggested that vast improvements or a large increase in product turnover must have been made in order for the factory to have stayed afloat. It is not exactly known when the East Gresford factory ceased operations, although it is known that it was still operating under the Bowthorne Co-operative in 1930. By 1952 the co-operative dissolved into the Hunter Valley Co-operative Dairy Co Limited, which was also previously known as the Raymond Terrace Dairy Company and held many dairy and butter factories around the greater Dungog region. It is possible that the butter factory at East Gresford continued to operate during this later period under a different name, however it is also possible that the Bowthorne Co-operative sold the property sometime after 1930 and prior to their takeover in 1952.

² "Vacy Creamery", Paterson River History, online resource accessed 2nd March 2013
<http://www.patersonriver.com.au/places/vacycreamery.htm>

³ "Bowthorne Butter Factory", Paterson River History, online resource accessed 4th March 2013
<http://www.patersonriver.com.au/places/bowthornebutterfactory.htm>

⁴ "Bowthorne Butter Factory", Paterson River History, online resource accessed 4th March 2013
<http://www.patersonriver.com.au/places/bowthornebutterfactory.htm>

⁵ "Bowthorne Butter Factory", Paterson River History, online resource accessed 4th March 2013
<http://www.patersonriver.com.au/places/bowthornebutterfactory.htm>

⁶ Sand's Country Commercial Directory (1919).

⁷ Singleton Argus (28.2.1930), p.6.

⁸ The Sydney Morning Herald (31.8.1907), p. 9.

⁹ The Sydney Morning Herald (11.3.1912), p. 7.

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Themes: National theme

3. Economy

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State theme

Agriculture

Industry

Local theme

Designer:

Builder:

Year started:

Year completed: 1907

Circa: Yes

Physical description: Research has indicated that the early 20th century butter factory located at East Gresford is no longer standing. However at the time of the 1987 Dungog Heritage Study, the structure containing the original butter factory was still standing. It was described as a "large fibro building, two storey". Its use at the time of the 1987 site inspection was noted as a scout hall.

Physical condition level:

Physical condition: Personal communication has noted that the butter factory no longer stands on the study site, having been demolished sometime after the 1987 Heritage study assessment of the property. Regardless of the removal of the structure, it can be suggested that there exists a low to moderate potential for archaeological features and deposits pertaining to the presence of an early 20th century butter factory on the study site. Archaeological evidence may be found in the form of footings for walls, postholes for fencing, rubbish pits and yard deposits associated with the industrial use and occupation of the site.
(Personal communication between Elizabeth Evans of Carste Studios and the current owner of the property, March 2013)

Archaeological potential level:

Archaeological potential Detail:

Modification dates:

Recommended management: Documentary evidence notes the distinct possibility of the presence of one late 19th or early 20th century factory and another early 20th century butter factory, which were once located on the study site. Personal communication has suggested that the remains of the factory have been since removed and built over. Regardless of this, prior to the approval of any further development of the study location an archaeological assessment and, if appropriate, relevant endorsements from the Heritage Branch should be sought where archaeological remains may be affected. Assessment of the site should be made prior to impact or disturbance being made to the current ground level surface.

Management: Management category

Management name

Further comments:

Criteria a): [Historical significance] It can be suggested that the butter factory located at East Gresford and owned by Bowthorne Co-operative Butter Factory Limited holds local historical significance as it is indicative of the development of both the dairy industry and the establishment of co-operative business entities. These co-operatives were established in an effort to grossly profit many of the local farmers and residents in the greater Dungog region. The popularity of these co-operatives at the start of the 20th century is a direct reflection of the newly accelerated dairy industry.

Criteria b): [Historical association significance]

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Criteria c):
[Aesthetic/
Technical
significance]

Criteria d): The site may hold local significance to the members of the East Gresford and Gresford region, as the factory was once an important economic factor in the development and sustainability of this area.
[Social/Cultural
significance]

Criteria e): The early 20th century butter factory at East Gresford is representative of the growth of the dairy industry within the greater Dungog region. The shift to dairying practices was a direct result of the demise of the tobacco manufacturing and wheat growing industries; alongside the advancement and availability of new machinery and technology allowing for wide spread production. This early 20th century factory demonstrates the shift from small independent butter and dairy factories into a more mainstream co-operative business which produced dairy products at a significantly larger scale while still benefiting the local dairy farmers of the Dungog region.
[Research
significance]

Criteria f): It can be suggested that the presence of a butter factory on the study site is not considered rare or uncommon to this area. Many small dairy and butter factories were operating around the greater Dungog region during this time as agricultural ventures were readily progressing in this direction.
[Rarity]

Criteria g):
[Representative]

Intactness/Integrity: Extent of archaeological remains is unknown.

References:	Author	Title	Year
	Walsh, Brian	"Bowthorne Butter Factory" in Paterson River History, Last up	
	The Sydney Morning Herald, 31st Aug		
	Singleton Argus, 28th February 1930		
	Sand's Country Commercial Directory		

Studies:	Author	Title	Number	Year
	Perumal, Wrathall & Mur	Dungog Heritage Study	R25	1986
	Carste Studio	Dungog Heritage Study Review	6	2013

Parcels:	Parcel code	Lot number	Section number	Plan code	Plan number
	LOT	20		DP	608401

Latitude:

Longitude:

Location validity:

Spatial accuracy:

Map name:

Map scale:

AMG zone:

Easting:

Northing:

Listing:	Name	Title	Number	ListingDate
		Local Environmental Plan Heritage study		01/01/2006

Data entry: Data first entered: 14/07/2011

Data updated: 11/07/2013

Status: Partial

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