

**Item name:** Dungog Cooperative Dairy and Butter Limited - Site 1

**Location:** 80-81 Fosterton Road Dungog 2420

Dungog

**Address:** 80-81 Fosterton Road

**Planning:** Hunter & Central Coast

**Suburb/nearest town:** Dungog 2420

**Local govt area:** Dungog

**Parish:**

**State:** NSW

**County:**

**Other/former names:** Dungog Co-operative Dairy Company Limited- Site 1

**Area/group/complex:**

**Group ID:**

**Aboriginal area:**

**Curtilage/boundary:**

**Item type:** Archaeological-Terrestrial

**Group:**

**Category:** Factory/ Plant

**Owner:**

**Admin codes:**

**Code 2:**

**Code 3:**

**Current use:**

**Former uses:** Dairy and Butter Manufactory

**Assessed significance:** Local

**Endorsed significance:**

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

The Dungog Co-operative Butter Factory Limited, later known as the Dungog Co-operative Dairy Company Limited, is considered to be of local significance to the community of Dungog as it demonstrates the first co-operative company to be established in Dungog in relation to the dairy industry. The co-operative was seen as a positive influence in the dairy industry, as it offered local farmers a central place to offload their milk products while receiving regular competitive payments. The heavy focus on the dairy industry at the turn of the 20th century demonstrates the shift and change having been made to pastoralism based on the productivity of agriculture and certain crops at this point in time.

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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.<sup>1</sup> 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.

By the start of the 20th century, local farmers and businesses involved within the dairy industry in the Dungog fathomed that a co-operative formation would be a positive way to produce dairy products with the most returns for all involved. Communication and discussions through meetings shortly followed and by March 1905, at a meeting held by the 'Farmers and Settlers' Association at Underbank', it was decided that a co-operative butter factory would be established in Dungog "with a nominal capital of £5000".<sup>2</sup> The local residents of Dungog heavily supported the establishment of a co-operative agreement, as it allowed farmers to offload all of their milk and cream products to a single place for an agreed set price. In May 1905, a location was selected along Fosterton road, just outside the main town centre of Dungog, for the construction of the butter factory: "That Mrs J.K. Mackay's offer of a site of 5 acres near the old slaughter house for £300 be accepted".<sup>3</sup>

The Dungog Co-operative Buttery Factory officially opened on the 15th November 1905, with Mr F.A. Hooke named as chairman of the Directors. Hooke encouraged the local farmers and residents of Dungog of the economic success which would be felt from the establishment of the co-operative by stating: "Under cooperation the farmers would get the value of their cream and greatly benefit by the establishment of the factory they were officially opening that day."<sup>5</sup>

The factory and its co-operatives business model were deemed a quick success, as the factory originally opened holding an agreement with 95 suppliers.<sup>6</sup> However these numbers increased rapidly, jumping to 141 suppliers by December 1906.<sup>7</sup> The popularity and use of the co-operative butter factory most likely increased once dairy farmers realised that the co-operative could offer competitive prices for their milk and cream. Its convenient location just outside of the Dungog city centre also likely increased the number of suppliers to the factory. At this point in time, the butter was being branded and sold under the name "Durham".<sup>8</sup>

While the butter factory continued to enjoy growth and success, the introduction of the North Coast railway in 1911 which ran directly through Dungog caused the co-operative to decide to relocate the butter factory. In approximately 1913-1914, the second factory was constructed fronting Stroud Hill road, at its intersection with Alison road. The rear of the new factory backed directly onto the North Coast railway line, which meant that stock could be loaded onto the trains from the same location that the products were being produced, thus vastly reducing all previous transport costs. It appears that the second factory consisted of both butter and pasteurised milk production, an expansion compared to the initial factory. In 1914, the butter co-operative was renamed the 'Dungog Farmers and Dairymen's Milk Company', and later became known as the 'Dungog Co-operative Dairy Company Limited'.<sup>9</sup> The co-operative appears to have regularly expanded their factory on Stroud Hill road, having introduced the production of powdered milk on the site in 1966.<sup>10</sup> At the time of this improvement, the butter produced at the factory was branded and sold as 'Peachblow'.<sup>11</sup>

Butter production at the second factory on Stroud Hill road stopped in 1979, and the factory as a whole was shut down in 1990. The site still stands today, but for the most part is unoccupied.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>1</sup>"Vacy Creamery", Paterson River History, online resource accessed 2nd March 2013  
<http://www.patersonriver.com.au/places/vacycreamery.htm>

<sup>2</sup> Australian Town and Country Journal (Wednesday 1st March 1905), p. 13.

<sup>3</sup> "Meeting 13th May 1905" in 'Dungog Co-operative Dairy Company Limited: Annual report 1980- 75th Year (1980), p. 5.

<sup>4</sup> 'Dungog Co-operative Dairy Company Limited: Annual report 1980- 75th Year (1980), p. 2.

<sup>5</sup> 'Dungog Co-operative Dairy Company Limited: Annual report 1980- 75th Year (1980), p. 3.

<sup>6</sup> The Sydney Morning Herald (Tuesday 30th January 1906), p. 7.

<sup>7</sup> The Sydney Morning Herald (Tuesday 25th December 1906), p. 2.

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8 "Meeting 3rd November 1905", in 'Dungog Co-operative Dairy Company Limited: Annual report 1980- 75th Year (1980), p. 5.

9 Communication with Maureen Kingston from Dungog Historical Society, 25th March 2013.

10 Maitland Mercury and Hunter River General Advertiser (1st December 1966).

11 Communication with Maureen Kingston from Dungog Historical Society, 25th March 2013.

12 Communication with Maureen Kingston from Dungog Historical Society, 25th March 2013.

| <b>Themes:</b> | <b>National theme</b> | <b>State theme</b> | <b>Local theme</b> |
|----------------|-----------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
|                | 3. Economy            | Agriculture        |                    |
|                | 3. Economy            | Industry           |                    |

**Designer:**

**Builder:**

**Year started:**

**Year completed:** 1905

**Circa:** No

**Physical description:** The current study site area appears to have shifted from an industrial area to a predominantly residential area which is positioned on the north-western outskirts of the Dungog city centre. The probable original location of the study site contains one story residential dwellings, some set back from the front of Fosterton Road.

**Physical condition level:**

**Physical condition:** Based on documentary research, it appears that none of the dwellings or structures associated with the first butter factory site on Fosterton road is still standing. Based on the site's original construction date and subsequent use, it can be suggested that there exists a moderate potential for archaeological features and deposits relating to the occupation and use of the site as a milk and butter factory in the early 20th century. Archaeological evidence may be found in the form of footings for walls, occupation deposits pertaining to the industrial use of the site as a butter factory, and rubbish pits associated with discard and waste from industrial processes.

**Archaeological potential level:**

**Archaeological potential Detail:**

**Modification dates:**

**Recommended management:** Prior to the approval of any 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.

| <b>Management:</b> | <b>Management category</b> | <b>Management name</b> |
|--------------------|----------------------------|------------------------|
|--------------------|----------------------------|------------------------|

**Further comments:**

**Criteria a): [Historical significance]** The first Dungog Co-operative Butter factory located on Fosterton Road, Dungog, can be considered to hold local historical significance to the local community of Dungog. The butter factory signifies the first cooperative business established in the Dungog region for the dairy industry, which was subsequently deemed a success by farmers who could offload the majority, if not all of their stock to the sole factory for a competitive return. The site is significant as it demonstrates the congregation of local farmers and business enterprises in and around Dungog, which ultimately created a company which benefits a large number of individuals for more than 80 years.

**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 Dungog community, as the factory was once an important economic factor to many farmers of the Dungog township. This may include descendants and workers of the factory.  
[Social/Cultural  
significance]

**Criteria e):**  
[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 butter factories were operating around the Dungog region during this time as agricultural ventures were readily progressing in this direction. However at the same time, the concept of a co-operative company could be considered to be rare in the fact that the 'Dungog Co-operative Butter Factory Limited' was the first to be established in the Dungog region; although this does not cause the archaeological remains to be rare themselves.  
[Rarity]

**Criteria g):** The first butter factory owned and occupied by the 'Dungog Co-operative Butter Factory Limited' is representative of the economic change to the greater area of Dungog at the turn of the 20th century. Based on the nature of the surrounding environment, along with the capability of production turn over, it appears that a shift from tobacco and wheat growing to the dairy industry was a change welcomed by many individuals. The study site can be considered to be of local significance under this criterion.  
[Representative]

**Intactness/Integrity:** Extent of archaeological remains and their integrity is unknown.

| References: | Author   | Title   | Year         |
|-------------|--|---|--------------|
|             | Carste Studio Pty Ltd: Williams, Mich Walsh, Brian | "A History of Three Rivers. Dungog Shire Heritage Study- The "Vacy Creamery" in Paterson River History, Last updated Febr | 2012<br>2013 |
|             | Dungog Co-operative Dairy Company                  | "Dungog Co-operative Dairy Company Limited: Annual report   | 1980         |
|             | The Sydney Morning Herald, 30th Jan                |   | 1906         |
|             | Australian Town and Country Journal,               |   | 1905         |
|             | Maitland Mercury and Hunter River G                |   | 1966         |
|             | Maureen Kingston, 25th March 2013; 1               |   | 2013         |

| Studies: | Author        | Title                        | Number | Year |
|----------|---------------|------------------------------|--------|------|
|          | Carste Studio | Dungog Heritage Study Review | 21     | 2013 |

| Parcels: | Parcel code | Lot number | Section number | Plan code | Plan number |
|----------|-------------|------------|----------------|-----------|-------------|
|----------|-------------|------------|----------------|-----------|-------------|

**Latitude:**

**Longitude:**

**Location validity:**

**Spatial accuracy:**

**Map name:**

**Map scale:**

**AMG zone:**

**Easting:**

**Northing:**

**Listing: Name**

**Title**  
Heritage study

**Number**

**ListingDate**

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