GORE DISTRICT COUNCIL

HISTORIC HERITAGE ITEM RECORD FORM

HERITAGE ITEM NAME	former Otamita Dairy Factory
ADDRESS	249 Otamita Road, Knapdale
PHOTOGRAPH	

(April 2022)

DISTRICT PLAN ITEM NO. (at time of assessment)	n / a	**HNZ LIST NO. & CATEGORY**	n / a
LEGAL DESCRIPTION	Section 38 Block XI & Lot 2 DP 5027		
GDC FILE NUMBER	3215589 & 3259821		
DATE OF CONSTRUCTION	1909		
ARCHITECT/DESIGNER/ BUILDER	Owen Kelly, contractor		
STYLE	Industrial vernacular		

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

Single-storey building with rectangular footprint and gabled roof forms. Flared roof and two, cross-gabled bays on east elevation; four ventilators on main ridgeline. Large door openings and limited fenestration.

MATERIALS/STRUCTURE

Timber, concrete, corrugated metal.

ADDITIONS/ALTERATIONS

Addition at south-east corner; loading bays on east elevation sheathed in corrugated metal (date unknown).

SETTING

The former Otamita Dairy Factory stands on a rural property on the south side of Otamita Road, west of its intersection with Wilson Road. The Mataura River is to the south and the factory site is roughly midway between Otamita in the west and Knapdale in the east. The scheduled setting comprises the two land parcels on which the building is located.

HISTORY

A dairy factory for the production of cheese was erected at Otamita/Knapdale in late 1887 by Alline Wayte. Wayte, who was in partnership with his brother for a time, operated the factory for about 15 years until it was acquired by G Reeves in c.1905. The factory passed to Jonas Dumbleton (aka John, 1868-1941), who had previously run the Mataura Dairy Factory, in July 1906. Dumbleton's factory burnt down on 13 October 1909 but was replaced within a month by the present building. A dinner party at the Criterion Hotel in Gore was held in early February 1910 to acknowledge the speed with which Owen Kelly, the contractor, had rebuilt the factory. After several years of discussion on the topic, the factory was taken over by the Otamita Co-operative Dairy Factory Company in January 1913; it appears that Jonas Dumbleton's brother Samuel then managed the concern for some years. In January 1938 the district held celebrations to mark the 50th anniversary of the dairy factory. In 1956, by which time the dairy company was in liquidation, the factory property was sold. The former factory has passed through a number of hands since 1956 but remains in light industrial use.

HISTORIC AND SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE

The former Otamita Dairy Factory has historic significance as an early 20th century dairy factory that represents the district's farming history and Southland's history as one of the leading dairying regions in New Zealand.

CULTURAL AND SPIRITUAL SIGNIFICANCE

The former Otamita Dairy Factory has cultural value as a demonstration of the way of life of its former workers and their suppliers. In the years before on-farm collection, dairy factories and creameries often served as a social hub for local farmers.

ARCHITECTURAL AND AESTHETIC SIGNIFICANCE

The former Otamita Dairy Factory has architectural value as an industrial structure that was designed to be fit for purpose. At the time of its opening the factory was described as an improvement on the former factory building.

TECHNOLOGICAL AND CRAFTSMANSHIP SIGNIFICANCE

The former Otamita Dairy Factory has technological significance for its timber construction and the evidence it could provide about early 20th century dairy factory technology. Owen Kelly (c.1862-1926), an Irish-born carpenter, was one of Gore's most successful builders.

CONTEXTUAL SIGNIFICANCE

The former Otamita Dairy Factory has contextual significance as a local historic feature.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND SCIENTIFIC SIGNIFICANCE

Although the building pre-dates 1900, its site has potential archaeological significance relating to its earlier use and development.

SUMMARY OF HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

The former Otamita Dairy Factory has overall heritage significance to Otamita/Knapdale and to the district of Gore as a whole. The building has historic significance for its association with the history and development of the local dairy industry and cultural value as a demonstration of the way of life of its former workers and their suppliers. The former Otamita Dairy Factory has architectural value for its utilitarian design and technological significance for its timber construction by successful Gore contractor Owen Kelly. The former Otamita Dairy Factory has contextual significance as a local historic feature and its site has potential archaeological value in view of its historic use and development.

REFERENCES

- *Mataura Ensign* 17 November 1898, p. 3; 15 November 1909, p. 4; 2 February 1910, p. 4; 17 September 1910, p. 5; 19 September 1910, p. 6; 22 July 1911, p. 5.
- *Southland Times* 18 October 1909, p. 5; 22 January 1926, p. 6; 30 November 1926, p. 4.
- *Otago Daily Times* 15 June 1905, p. 2; 28 January 1938, p. 12; 25 September 1942, p. 6; 27 July 1949, p. 11.
- *Southern Cross* 12 May 1906, p. 10.
- *Western Star* 30 October 1903, p. 3.
- *Otago Witness* 25 August 1909, p. 39; 5 January 1910, p. 45 (supplement); 24 September 1913, p. 35.
- *New Zealand Times* 14 October 1909, p. 5.
- *Manawatu Times* 5 May 1936, p. 2; 7 October 1941, p. 2.
- *NZ Herald* 15 September 1911, p. 7.

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Extent of scheduling, limited to the two northerly parcels shown here, former Otamita Dairy Factory, 249 Otamita Road, Knapdale. Below: the factory in January 1910.