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WATER, WATER EVERYWHERE...

PROPERTY OF THE WEEK

Bodalla

Agents: John Murray,
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BOUNDARY disputes will be the least of the worries for the buyer of "Cooper's Island", a unique South Coast grazing property which (as the name implies) is almost entirely surrounded by water.

The 319 hectare (788ac) property originally formed part of the Bodalla Estate, established in 1858 by the entrepreneurial Thomas Sutcliffe Mort to mimic the agricultural estates of his English birthplace.

At its peak the Bodalla Estate ranked as Australia's biggest dairy farm, with a rich sprawl of nearly 12,000 hectares of developed country milking 1200 cows and employing more than 200 workers.

"Cooper's Island" was the site of one of the estate's nine dairy factories, most of which were geared to the manufacture of the cheeses for which Bodalla became globally renowned.

The property is owned today by brothers Garry and Peter Evans, whose father, Albert, bought "Cooper's Island" in 1968. They are selling to retire.

They have listed "Cooper's Island" for sale with Whale Coast Realty of Narooma and Webster Nolan Real Estate of Sydney, and it will go to auction on April



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21 with price expectations of \$3.5 million to \$4m.

Inquiry has been reported from established dairying and beef cattle interests, both local and interstate, attracted by the property's scale and its production capabilities.

The property also has

buyer appeal as a lifestyle proposition, due to its favoured location and watery surrounds. Situated four kilometres north of Bodalla township and 23km south of Moruya, "Cooper's Island" sits within the estuary of the Tuross River and boasts 25km direct

frontage to the river and related waterways.

Part of the property fronts the Princes Highway, from where the main "island" portion is accessed by a causeway across Bowns Creek.

The property is one of the larger dairying operations on the South Coast, typically milking between 300 and 320 cows with milk production ranging from 4000 litres a day in winter to 7000L in spring.

Of the total area, about 242ha is described as alluvial flats, all of which is sown to perennial pastures

or fodder oats, and top-dressed. A further 60ha is elevated grazing country while 20ha is retained native timber.

Average rainfall is 890mm and stock water is pumped from an adjacent freshwater lake to 16 paddock troughs and the dairy facility.

Fodder conservation is an important component of the annual program, with 800 to 1600 bales of silage pressed each year.

Working infrastructure includes a 24-a-side herringbone dairy shed equipped with automatic

cup removers, and cows are typically milked at a rate of about 170 an hour.

Other structures include a seven-bay machinery shed with lockable storage bay and workshop, a second machinery shed, silos, hay and calf sheds and a small set of steel cattle yards.

The main homestead is of weatherboard construction with three bedrooms.

Listing agent David Nolan said the property could also serve as a beef operation, potentially carrying 300 breeders.

- PETER AUSTIN