

Mr. O'Connor.

2nd Dec., 1879.

171. What would this branch to Kumara cost?—£25,000.
172. Mr. Seddon.] That is £4,000 per mile. From Kumara to Goldsbrough; what did you estimate that at?—It would cost at least £8,000 per mile.
173. And from Goldsbrough to Flowery Creek?—It would cost at least £10,000 per mile.
174. Hon. Mr. Gisborne.] Where does Kumara get its supplies from?—From Greymouth and Hokitika; principally from Greymouth, I think.
175. What is the present traffic from Hokitika to Kumara?—Between Hokitika and Kumara there are two coaches each way daily, besides drays and wagons.
176. Have you any means of giving us a comparative return of the traffic on what would go by the railway in the shape of freight and passengers? There are four lines proposed now. There is one laid out at present: what would be the estimated traffic on that? One by loop line: what would be the estimated traffic on that? One a branch to Goldsbrough and Stafford: what would be the estimated traffic on that? And one to Kumara: what would be the estimated traffic on that? Have you no means of giving us a comparative estimated traffic on each of those lines?—We have not sufficient data to give an estimate accurately, but I went into the matter carefully this morning, and have formed some idea of it, and I find, first, that it was stated in the original estimate, made some years ago, that the traffic would probably amount to £200 a week on the beach line; and, second, that though the route, if the branches are made, may affect the question of working expenses, it will not naturally affect the quantity of traffic, and I estimated that, to connect with Kumara, Stafford Town, and Goldsbrough, by loop or branches, would probably increase the returns by £60 a week over and above those estimated for the beach line.
177. And if there is a branch to Kumara alone?—Well, I cannot say exactly; but I do not think it makes very much difference going to Stafford Town.
178. What would be the difference in the cost of working between the loop line and the two branches?—The working expenses of the branches would be perhaps about £50 a week in excess of those of the loop.
179. The loop will be so much less?—Yes. I think you would have to have an engine and carriages for each of the branches if the traffic is considerable.
180. If there were no branches I suppose the cost of working would be about the same. I mean that the loop line would not cost more than the beach line to work per mile?—It would cost a little more on account of the grades.

WEDNESDAY, 3RD DECEMBER, 1879.

Mr. Wylde.

3rd Dec., 1879.

- Mr. JAMES WYLDE, Town Clerk and Engineer for the Borough of Kumara, examined.
181. The Chairman.] Your name is Wylde?—Yes.
182. And you are engineer and clerk?—I am Engineer and Clerk for the Borough of Kumara.
183. Have you made any survey of the proposed line of railway?—I have made a slight survey of it—not a detailed survey, but a reconnaissance survey of a great portion of the line, and I have made myself acquainted fully with all the levels of the country.
184. Are there many engineering difficulties in this proposed detour?—The one shown here on the map?
185. Yes.—This is a plan I have not seen, and I shall require to examine it a little more first. A portion of this corresponds with what I would have suggested myself, and a portion of it does not correspond. Over about two-thirds of the line there is no difficulty whatever. It is as easy country as I have seen anywhere on the coast for bush country.
186. Do you know the distance of the present line? It is twelve miles all but 11 chains.
187. From where?—From Teremakau River to the Arahura River.
188. What additional length would it make in making this deviation?—It would make between eight and nine miles.
189. And what would you estimate roughly the cost per mile in constructing the railway over such country as this?—I should put it at the lowest cost that Government railways are costing at the present time in flat bush country; and, from what I know of the course of line, I should say that £5,000 a mile would be ample provision for it completed. I am aware of work being done now at a cost very much lower than it was supposed could be done. Five thousand pounds a mile is ample, with an allowance of £5,000 for a little extra work between Goldsbrough and Stafford Town.
190. The heavy part of the work is between Goldsbrough and Stafford Town?—There is no heavy work anywhere in heavy cuttings or bridges, except the ordinary culverts over small creeks; and the only part where a little extra expense would be incurred would be between Goldsbrough and Stafford Town; and, if I did it, I would take it down to Waimea Creek, which would make it slightly more expensive there. Assuming it to be nine miles, which would be fully the extra length, I would consider an extra £50,000 would be ample.
191. Then, as an engineer, you consider that the line of railway could be constructed at an additional cost, in this direction, of some £45,000 or £50,000 over and above the original estimate?—Yes; but we have to consider that if the original line is made it was always understood there would be two branches.
192. You might give some information about distances.
193. Mr. Seddon.] Mr. Wylde, you are acquainted with the country between the proposed deviation and the original line. How long has that original line been surveyed?—Well, I have nothing at all to prove the survey of it, but I believe it is three or four years or more. I could not give a definite answer to that. It was surveyed before the present line of country we are speaking of was settled—before gold was discovered to the extent that it is now. It was laid off before we discovered Kumara Gold Field.
194. Is there a range of hills running from the township at Kumara to Flowery Creek?—You could hardly call it a range. There is a cluster of hills between Teremakau River and Arahura.