

No. 2.

The Hon. the MINISTER for PUBLIC WORKS to the RAILWAY COMMISSIONERS.

Public Works Office, Wellington, 1st August, 1892.

The Proposed Goods- and Passenger-station at Te Aro.

Memorandum for the Railway Commissioners.

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith for your information copy of a report by Mr C. Napier Bell, M.Inst.C.E., on the above-mentioned subject, and to request that the Commissioners will kindly favour the Government with their opinion on the same.

R. J. SEDDON,
Minister for Public Works.

No. 3.

The RAILWAY COMMISSIONERS to the Hon. the MINISTER for PUBLIC WORKS.

Head Office, Wellington, New Zealand, 9th August, 1892.

Proposed Goods- and Passenger-station at Te Aro.—Report by Mr C. N. Bell.

Memorandum to the Hon. the Minister for Public Works.

THE Commissioners have the honour to express their opinion on Mr C. N. Bell's report, as requested by you in your letter of the 1st instant.

The report deals with the question of the location of a station or stations at Te Aro, and the subject of the extension of the line to Newtown.

In the first place, as regards the extension to Newtown, we think the proposal to carry the railway through the city objectionable. In the United States, where such practices have been pursued on an extensive scale, millions of money are being spent by the railways, States, and municipalities to abate the evils which have arisen, and which have been found intolerable. We should be warned by experience elsewhere, and not attempt to carry the railway along and across the chief thoroughfares, the tramway, and the Basin Reserve in the manner proposed. With personal knowledge of the practice in many large cities in Europe and the United States, the Commissioners do not know of any precedent for working mixed traffic with stations at such short intervals located as shown on the plan submitted. We think Mr Bell must have had in his mind lines for purely passenger purposes when he refers to steam-tramways, &c. A line for city-passenger traffic should be upon an entirely different basis to one intended to form the terminal portion of a main trunk line carrying mixed traffic such as this Newtown extension would be.

If no other route than that through the Basin Reserve were possible we think it would be better to abandon any further extension. A good route is, however, obtainable on the outskirts of the town by travelling the Mount Victoria Range, and approaching Newtown by the Constable Street Saddle. A terminus to the main trunk line for Newtown and Island Bay could thus be obtained without the many evils and difficulties surrounding the route through the city. In our opinion, it is not necessary to construct a railway for city passenger traffic, which can be better served by the tramways and busses.

The passenger-station proposed at the foot of Tory Street properly provides for two platforms but according to the plan they would not be available for the object for which they would be needed. The Commissioners' plan, forwarded to you with their letter of the 24th February last, is a simpler and cheaper one, and will answer the purpose for which it is required, and we do not think Mr Bell's proposal desirable.

We do not favour the proposal for a station at Kent Terrace. Among other objections, such an extension, while it would add materially to the cost of the line, would be unlikely to secure any more passenger-traffic than one at Tory Street.

The location of a goods-station at the foot of Tory Street as indicated would prove an obstruction to the conduct of the traffic of the section, and increase the expenses without giving any corresponding increase in traffic.

With regard to the future development of the harbour-works and basin, and the supposed utility of the sidings and shed which Mr Bell has indicated, speaking with a great many years' departmental experience, we consider that the sidings and accommodation proposed would not be of any use in dealing with ships' goods.

As regards protection from the north-west winds, the station must, of course, be fenced and roofed. If a goods-station were placed further out in the harbour, as proposed, such protection would be still more necessary.

In our opinion, therefore, none of Mr Bell's proposals should be adopted.

We see nothing to alter our opinion that the plan for a station at Tory Street, forwarded to you with our memorandum of the 24th February last, is the most suitable for the accommodation of the railway traffic.

JAMES MCKERROW,
Chief Commissioner

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