

1892.
NEW ZEALAND

BUILDING OF A SECOND GOODS-STATION IN WELLINGTON

(CORRESPONDENCE RELATIVE TO).

Return to an Order of the House of Representatives, dated 22nd July, 1892.

Ordered, "That a return be laid before the House of all correspondence between the Minister for Public Works and the Railway Commissioners relative to the building of a second goods-station in Wellington."—(Mr. WRIGHT.)

No. 1

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

New Zealand Government Railways (Head Office), Wellington,

11th January, 1892.

(Memorandum.)

Te Aro Extension, Station, &c.

In reply to a memorandum addressed to you on the 21st February last, in which the Commissioners had the honour to direct your attention to the 31st section of the Government Railways Act, which provides for the Commissioners being the authority to decide upon the position, character, and suitability of all stations, sidings, &c., you were good enough to inform us that you had directed the Acting Engineer-in-Chief to consult the Commissioners in future. This understanding has not been carried out in the case of the Te Aro extension, and, on examining the plans exposed for tender, it is found that the proposed arrangements at Te Aro are quite unsuited to the suburban traffic for which the line is solely needed, and, if carried out, they will require extensive alterations before the Commissioners take over and work the line. The Commissioners beg, therefore, to ask you to cause the present plans to be entirely cancelled, and to adopt a modified plan, suitable for the traffic, which they will furnish.

While on the subject the Commissioners think it well to point out that the service between Thorndon and Te Aro can only be of the nature of a tram-service, and the natural course to follow in this case, as in other parts of the world, is to lay the line flush with the street, and to dispense with all fencing except around the passenger-station. The fencing and level-crossings elsewhere will merely prove expensive and embarrassing.

Further, with reference to the Harbour Board's interview with the Premier, the Commissioners think a siding on Jervois Quay very objectionable from a traffic and public point of view, and they beg to point out that a recent decision in the New Zealand Court has shown that such a work, and such working as it entails, cannot legally be carried out on a public thoroughfare without special legislation. As the authority named in the Government Railways Act to decide these matters, the Commissioners could not at present see their way to agree to such an arrangement.

The Commissioners also beg to draw your attention to the desirability, on economical grounds, of considering the question of laying the line along Customhouse Quay, near the breastwork, but not so as to interfere with foot passengers or the boats, thus avoiding the destruction of the boat harbour and interference with the use of the breastwork by small craft.

A few railway trains per day run along the roadway on a line laid flush with the street will not be much more inconvenient than a tram-service, and there seems to be no need to execute such costly and elaborate works as are proposed.

The Commissioners also desire to direct your attention to the maintenance clause in the specification. It was arranged many years ago with the late Engineer-in-Chief and with his predecessor to dispense with this arrangement, which has always proved a source of embarrassment and inconvenience. With some exceptions, which were the result of oversight, the arrangements made with the late Engineer-in-Chief and with his predecessor have been uniformly carried out, and it seems unnecessary to reintroduce a practice which has proved inconvenient.

The Commissioners hope you will be able to see your way to direct the Acting Engineer-in-Chief to modify the specification to meet the convenience of the Commissioners, who are chiefly concerned.

JAMES MCKERROW,

The Hon. the Minister for Public Works.

Chief Commissioner