

46. Do you know what revenue is at present derived from the estate?—I have some rough idea only—somewhere about £1,000.

47. It amounts to about £1,200 a year?—So I have heard.

48. If you value the land at £500 per acre for 250 acres, that represents about 1 per cent.?—I do not think it is more.

49. *Mr. Ngata.*] Will the statement that is to be prepared by the Town Clerk show the expenses of roading?—Yes; I have directed him to include the expenses for surveying and roading.

50. As to your suggestion for a local board of management: what advantage would a Wanganui Board have over one located at Wellington?—For one thing, they would be on the spot; and for another thing, I suppose, the members would be citizens of Wanganui, and would, therefore, have a keener personal interest in seeing the estate put to its best possible use.

51. Is that the only defect in the present constitution?—Of course that is one great objection. I am only voicing my own personal opinion in saying that I do not believe that church officials are the best possible trustees for such an estate.

52. *The Chairman.*] Why not?—Because they are not men of business.

53. *Mr. Ngata.*] You are practically making two suggestions—you want the managing board located at Wanganui, and you want it to consist mainly of business men?—Yes.

54. *The Chairman.*] With regard to the question of streets, you remember the Liverpool Extension?—Yes.

55. Had the trustees any difficulty in arranging with the Borough Council about that street?—Of course, I was not on the Borough Council then. There was a good deal of negotiation over it, but, so far as I know, the borough was not unreasonable.

56. Has the Borough Council ever given a penny towards the construction of the street?—I do not believe it has.

57. Did the Council not insist that that street should be formed and metalled, and footpaths made, and drains laid down before the Council would allow it to be opened as a public street?—Yes, and I believe the Council was quite justified in so insisting.

58. Although the Borough Council benefited very largely (in the way of additional rates) by the cutting-up of the estate, it would not contribute a single penny towards the formation of the roads?—No; and supposing a private individual cuts up his land to put it on the market, the Council never assists him in any way.

59. But the Council maintains the roads afterwards?—Yes.

60. *Mr. Liffiton.*] I would like you in making out the return for Smiley's paddock to include separately the cost of the gas-laying, the water-laying, the cost of the footpaths, the cost of metalling, and also the cost of metalling that portion of Purnell Street that abuts on Smiley's paddock, because I think it would be of a great advantage to the Commission to have this evidence?—If you will supply me with the particulars you require I will see that the borough officials furnish them.

61. Will you also supply the Commission with a return of the area of borough land that is let for grazing purposes, the area of borough land that is cut up and unlet, and the area of borough land that is still unroaded, as it will be very important for the Commission to know this in comparing the conduct of these properties?—Yes, I will endeavour to see that you get them.

62. Are you aware if any proposal from the trustees in regard to cutting up and roading the estate is now before the Borough Council?—So far as I know, none has ever been submitted. If one was submitted it was before I was on the Council. I have only been on the Council a few months.

63. *Rev. Mr. Maclean.*] Do you know that such a proposal has been before the Council for the last six months: I am astonished that the Council knows nothing about it?—I was only elected to the Council last November. I do not say it has not been before the Council, but it has not come before me.

64. Has nothing been done that the Mayor has never heard of it?—It has never come before me.

65. *The Chairman.*] Perhaps you will inquire about it and let us know later on?—Yes, I will do so.

66. I suppose in subdividing and leasing this estate the trustees would be competing with the Borough Council?—Not to a great extent, because a great part of our reserves have been leased now.

67. My point is this: if this estate had been thrown into the market on terms similar to the Corporation terms—when Smiley's paddock was leased—there would have been competition between the borough and the trustees to a certain extent?—To a certain extent.

68. Then, it would be to the interest of the borough to have this land locked up as long as possible?—Oh, no; I would not say that.

69. *Mr. Hogben.*] Can you say what the total cost per chain would be of roading, and metalling, and draining, and making footpaths on such an estate as this trust's lands?—Of course, it would vary according to the position, and so no. I will instruct the Foreman of Works to be present, and give any information you may require on these matters.

70. Have you formed any idea of the total length of roading that would be required?—It would be considerable—several miles, I should imagine.

71. On the idea that the roads on the other side of Victoria Avenue and fronting Ingestre Street are continued through the estate, with the exception of a certain block to be reserved for the immediate use of the school, have you any idea as to the length of streets required?—I could not tell you unless I worked it out.

72. Do you propose that the school should be moved away, and that the whole area should be cut up?—No. I think the proposal was that the school should be shifted back from its present position on the Avenue to a part more at the back of the estate beyond the railway-line.

73. Is that land suitable for such a purpose?—I think so. It is all flat land. Of course, I make no suggestion as to the removal of the school, but I understood the trustees had that in their mind's eye.