

respect, but I do not consider any case has been made out to justify the continuance of a branch line through the main street of the town to serve a terminus less than a mile from the Central Station. The sorting in Wellington of traffic for Te Aro would involve two additional handlings in the central warehouse, and finally a special-train service to Te Aro, which would make the expense to the merchant prohibitive, having regard to the short distance intervening between the two stations. The expense and the time lost in performing the additional terminal services would entirely preclude Te Aro Station being of any real value as a goods-depot. The plea advanced by the advocates of Te Aro is that cartage-costs would be saved; the additional railway charges would be considerably more than the 3d., or at most 6d. per ton for cartage.

If Te Aro is to be used for goods traffic, two lines of rails will have to be laid down Waterloo Quay across the entrance to the Harbour Board's property; additional land will have to be bought for a goods-station at Te Aro, and a portion of Taranaki Street practically closed to vehicular traffic.

It is not usual to have two stations within three-quarters of a mile of each other in towns such as Wellington. The traffic at present being dealt with at Te Aro is legitimate tram traffic, and can be better handled by the trams. In my opinion the greatest good to the greatest number will be promoted by closing Te Aro Station altogether.

Wellington Suburban Lines.

The necessity in the near future of relieving the Manawatu line out of Wellington by the construction of a new railway from Wellington, junctioning with the Manawatu line about Tawa Flat, has been referred to in dealing with the improvements of the Main Trunk.

Consideration of a deviation line to avoid the Rimutaka Incline is also referred to in this report. When the latter deviation is decided upon the Hutt Valley line should be duplicated between Lower and Upper Hutt.

Both the north line and the Hutt Valley schemes affect the future of Wellington vitally, because it will not be possible to cater satisfactorily for a much-increased suburban business without additional facilities for working the traffic. The north line is the more urgent, because of the heavy through traffic and the limitation caused by the severe grades.

Wairarapa Line.

Train-working on the Wairarapa line is greatly interfered with by the heavy gradients existing between Upper Hutt and Summit, and the Rimutaka Incline between Cross Creek and Summit. The grade of the latter is 1 in 15, and the length 2 miles 79 chains. Special engines have to be employed exclusively for this portion of the line. The maximum load per engine is 60 tons dead weight (say, about 20 tons actual traffic); frequently four engines are employed to haul a train of 240 tons, dead weight, from Cross Creek to Summit. The minimum time for the journey is forty minutes. Every train has to be remarshalled at the Summit and similarly at Cross Creek. This involves a loss of at least fifteen minutes to a train at each station. On an average one hour twenty minutes is required to negotiate the three-mile journey up the incline. This puts a definite limit upon the amount of business from the Wairarapa which can be dealt with. The cost per engine-mile is 3s. 1d. A special track with a third rail for gripping and braking purposes has to be maintained at considerable additional expense compared with the ordinary track. The importance of this route and the productivity of the country which the existing and projected railways will serve justify consideration of the abandonment of the incline and the construction of a deviation with gradients that will enable all trains to be worked with the standard types of engines. A really satisfactory service via the Wairarapa route is impracticable while trains have to be worked over the Rimutaka Incline. A considerable expenditure will be involved in carrying out the deviation, but the work, nevertheless, will have to be considered in the near future.

Accommodation at Christchurch and Lyttelton.

The facilities for dealing with the Christchurch and Lyttelton business have been short of requirements for some years; the work can only be carried on with difficulty and at excessive cost.

A new station and marshalling-yard is required at Christchurch, a double line through the tunnel, and a new yard at Lyttelton. The inter-working between the two places is so intimate that it is necessary to regard the requirements as a whole.

Christchurch Station and Yard.

The available room for the station and yard in Christchurch is limited, the surrounding property having been built over. The station is penned in on the north by Moorehouse Avenue and on the south by Carlyle and Mowbray Streets, whilst numerous crossing streets restrict the length of the station east and west.

At the present time inconvenience and delay are caused to trams, vehicles, and pedestrians owing to shunting over Colombo Street. This cannot be avoided while the station and yard, which abut the street, have to be shunted from the west end. In order to reduce the inconvenience to a minimum the rearrangement includes shifting the station away from Colombo Street and back to its original site, with the main entrance off Madras Street. The goods-yard has been laid so as to remove the shunting off Colombo Street, and by this means the obstruction of this street will be reduced to trains entering and leaving the station. The space available is only sufficient to provide for the passenger and goods stations, and in consequence another site has had to be found for the necessary yard for sorting and holding Christchurch traffic. It is proposed to place this yard on vacant land between Addington and Middleton. The scheme has the advantage of economy, whilst in addition relieving Christchurch streets of a considerable amount of obstruction during the shunting operations.