

modation had to be provided, then the platform would have to be made wider still. In order to get this accommodation one of two things was necessary: either that we should, as shown in red on the plan, take the extra width for this main street from the Railway Reserve, and push the buildings and platforms towards the south; as an alternative to that, as shown in green, the question was to take a sufficient area of land on the north side of Main Street, which is at present built on with hotels, shops, and other business places generally, and keep the platforms somewhat more to the north than they are at present.

I want you now to give the Commission your reasons for or against the scheme shown in red in regard to its practicability.—The scheme as shown in red has a fatal objection—namely, that it would leave a small area of land for the general sidings, goods-shed accommodation, and local traffic accommodation.

Is it from a railway point of view a practicable scheme?—Quite impracticable if the whole business of Palmerston North is to be dealt with at that station.

As an engineer in charge of the railways of this country, would you take the responsibility for it?—I would emphatically give my opinion that it is an impossible scheme.

So that you would not take the responsibility for it?—No. It has a further disadvantage that would be shared by any scheme at the present site—namely, that shunting would have to be carried on both over the Square and over West Street: that is the street bounding the railway on the west and the public square on the east.

Is that all you desire to say about the red scheme?—Yes.

Now, with regard to the scheme as outlined in green: what do you say about that?—That scheme also curtails very seriously the accommodation that can be provided on the site. It also involves, as I have said, in the red scheme, shunting over the Square and over the street, and it involves an enormous expenditure in the purchase of property.

When you speak of expenditure in the purchase of property, you are referring to compensation?—Yes.

And have you in mind the fact that you are dealing all along with a street with businesses where you have got to meet the serious question of goodwill?—That is so. It is impossible to say what the compensation would be. I should imagine it would run into a quarter of a million altogether.

How far down would you have to take it?—Probably from near Andrew Young Street to well on to Short Street.

It is a pretty considerable length?—Yes, probably about 30 chains.

And you would necessarily have to destroy the sections and buildings?—Yes, the main street would have to be diverted to a new position.

Still dealing with the scheme outlined in green, and apart from the question of compensation, would there be a considerable expenditure in the general railway lay-out of the scheme?—Yes, there would certainly be a very huge expenditure in connection with that which it is practically impossible to estimate. There is the difficulty, in carrying on alterations like that, of carrying on the traffic at the same time.

May I take it that in a scheme such as the one outlined in green it is impossible to make anything like more than an approximation by way of an estimate?—That is so. You could not possibly make an accurate estimate.

Is that because of the indefiniteness of the considerations which you have to deal with?—Yes, that is so.

Have you ever endeavoured to make a comparison as to the expenditure between the scheme as outlined in green and the diversion as shown on Plan No. 26453?—No. I have made a comparison between the scheme shown in red, and its necessary consequence, with the proposed diversion scheme. The comparison has been made on the basis that the business to be dealt with at this station would be purely through and local passenger traffic and the local delivery traffic. That is what we call the traffic arising to and from this station.

Then, does the red scheme involve some other lay-out or scheme apart from the actual scheme in the neighbourhood of the railway-station?—Yes.

What does it involve?—The adoption of such a proposal involves in the first place the formation of what we call a sorting-yard some considerable distance out of Palmerston itself—that is, a yard where the marshalling and making-up of trains and storage of wagons and carriages would be provided for. It further involves the construction of another line of railway from Palmerston North to Terrace End, and a continuation of that line to the sorting-yard. In addition to that it involves the removal of the engine-depot from its present position near West Street to some other locality as near Palmerston North as possible.

On the southern side?—It would preferably and probably be on the southern side.

So that you would have your engine accommodation on the southern side and the sorting accommodation on the northern side?—Yes. Perhaps I could explain it better on Plan No. 26453. This plan shows the present position of the station. There is at the present time a double line of railway from the station to Terrace End—that is, one line of railway for the Napier Section and one line of railway for the northern traffic. A sorting-yard would have to be provided somewhere to the north of Palmerston North. The nearest place that such a sorting-yard could be provided would be about three miles from the station, but there would be limitations there in the way of the accommodation that could be provided, and probably the sorting-yard would have to go some four miles and a half to five miles out.

Would that be past Terrace End and on the northern line?—Yes. A subsidiary sorting-yard would have to be made alongside the Napier line of railway, with a connection between the main sorting-yard and this subsidiary yard. The engine-depot would probably have to be made somewhere