

Department of Agriculture, Wellington, 6th September, 1922.

Tuapeka Mouth Railway.

The Engineer-in-Chief, Public Works Department, Wellington.

YOUR memorandum 19/74 of 8th July last: As desired, a report on the proposed railway routes to Tuapeka Mouth has been prepared by the District Superintendent and the Instructor in Agriculture, Dunedin, and I forward their report herewith for your information.

C. J. REAKES, Director-General.

Department of Agriculture, Dunedin, 31st August, 1922.

Director-General of Agriculture, Wellington.

WITH reference to your memorandum of 12th July, in which you ask for a report on the proposed railway routes to Tuapeka Mouth: We have gone into this question as fully as possible, and have studied the various routes from a purely agricultural point of view. In going into the matter we viewed the subject in the light that you wished to report, giving particulars as to which route would serve the greatest number of settlers, taking into consideration the existing means of transport to and from the respective localities. At the outset we wish to make it clear that, owing to lack of information in so far as the agricultural statistics of products is concerned, we are unable to give in actual data the amount of produce and stock that would be conveyed on the routes. This report therefore gives only in a general way an indication of which route would to our mind seem most advantageous to the district as a whole, our opinion being based on the type of country, in conjunction with the existing and potential farms which the various routes might serve, together with the produce and stock which would probably be raised in those districts, thus becoming available for railway transport.

In the case of two routes—namely, Crichton to Tuapeka Mouth via Hillend, and Lovell's Flat to Tuapeka Mouth via Lovell's Creek and Hillend—these pass through inferior grazing-country, very poorly cultivated and sparsely settled. To our mind neither of these routes need be considered. In regard to the proposed route from Stirling through Balclutha and along the Clutha River to Tuapeka Mouth, this route follows the bank of the river and only serves the country adjacent to it on the Bruce County side. For the first nine miles the country is of no agricultural consequence. Thereafter the route passes through fairly good second-class country until it enters the Greenfield district. The Greenfield district need not be taken into consideration, as it would be equally well served by either of the other proposed routes. In our opinion this is not the route which would be of most economic importance from an agricultural point of view.

We are of the opinion that the proposed route from Lovell's Flat via Stony Creek and Hillend is the best, from the fact that it passes through good second-class agricultural land throughout its whole length. We would expect large quantities of produce and stock to be transported from the districts through which it would pass, and greater facilities would be given to develop that part of the country by conveying to the farmer manures, lime, &c. The country through which this route would pass is very well developed and fairly closely settled, and these factors certainly must be taken into consideration. We have no hesitation in recommending this particular route, which undoubtedly would be the greatest possible use to the country by developing a district which is already one of considerable agricultural importance.

The map forwarded for our information is returned under separate cover.

R. B. TENNANT, N.D.D., Instructor in Agriculture.
W. D. SNOWBALL, District Superintendent.

Tuapeka Mouth Railway.

The Director-General, Department of Agriculture, Wellington.

Wellington, 19th September, 1922.

I HAVE to thank you for yours of the 6th instant, forwarding report by Messrs. Tennant and Snowball, of your Dunedin office, with reference to the probable traffic over the Tuapeka Mouth Railway. I regret, however, that this report does not come down to £ s. d. Without any knowledge of agriculture, a casual inspection from a motor-car leads one to exactly the same conclusion as that given by Messrs. Tennant and Snowball; but the line via Stony Creek and Hillend is much more expensive both to construct and work than one via the river-bank, and what we wished was actual estimates, if records are not available, of the amount of produce which would probably be brought off the land served by each of the routes after the line was made, and, conversely, the amount of traffic likely to be carried on to the land in the form of manures and other things. In that way we would be able to balance the increased revenue likely to be derived from the Hillend line against the greater cost of interest and working-expenses. In the absence of some figures, either estimated or recorded, you will see that we cannot really come to a valuable decision.

There is another point, mentioned in my fourth paragraph, which your officers have not dealt with at all—that is the question of whether the areas shown as tributary to each of the lines fairly represent the actual conditions.

F. W. FURKERT, Engineer-in-Chief.

Department of Agriculture, Wellington, 17th October, 1922.

Tuapeka Mouth Railway.

The Engineer-in-Chief, Public Works Department.

WITH further reference to your memorandum 19/74, dated 19th September: A further report has been obtained from Messrs. Tennant and Snowball, and is now submitted herewith.

C. J. REAKES, Director-General.

Department of Agriculture, Dunedin, 14th October, 1922.

Tuapeka Mouth Railway.

Director-General of Agriculture, Wellington.

FURTHER to your memorandum of the 20th ultimo in regard to the above proposed railway: We have noted the Engineer-in-Chief's remarks upon our previous report on this subject, and have again considered the question since reading Mr. Furkert's comments.

We find it quite impossible to give in actual figures an estimate of the amount of inward and outward traffic that is likely to accrue from each of the proposed railways, and feel assured that any estimates given by us would only be misleading and of no material value. What we would like to stress, however, is the fact that a line from Lovell's Flat via Stony Creek and Hillend will carry at least twice the amount of freight inward and outward that may reasonably be expected from any of the other proposed routes. The district through which this route passes has potential possibilities far in excess of the other proposed routes, and we feel assured in our own minds that the adoption of any other route in preference to the one recommended in our previous report, whilst probably being cheaper to construct, would prove of less value to the district as a whole, and would not offer such facilities for developing the country.

In regard to the areas tributary to lines hatched out on the map, these on the whole are fairly correct. It should be noted, however, that the area on the map hatched in red and supposed to represent the additional area shown by the river-bank route is within a few miles of Balclutha, and even if a railway does not proceed along that route those farmers in that locality are already well served.

Under separate cover the map of proposed lines is returned.

R. B. TENNANT, N.D.D., Instructor of Agriculture.
WM. D. SNOWBALL, M.R.C.V.S., District Superintendent.