

The plans and sections have only been completed during the past year, and until they were made no trustworthy estimate of the cost could be arrived at in so rough a district.

The estimate now submitted will complete the line to Featherston, but a new appropriation of £120,000 will be required for the Masterton section of 24 miles.

TERMINAL STATION AT WELLINGTON.

As the line is extended into the interior, the present temporary station at Wellington will be quite insufficient. It will cost £60,000 to make a convenient and roomy station, including £12,000 for reclamation of the land, and £25,000 for a new railway wharf, which will be required.

WORKSHOPS.

A sum of £20,000 will be required to meet the cost of workshops for the manufacture and repair of rolling stock at Wellington and Auckland.

The following Table shows the above new works, with their estimated cost:—

Name.	Appropriation as a Tramway.	Estimated Cost.	Total Length.	Under Construction.	Not yet Begun.
	£	£	Miles ch.	Miles ch.	Miles ch.
Extension—Waitara to Wanganui, on account ... ..	...	30,000	...	...	...
Extension—Wanganui—Manawatu ... ..	...	30,500	5 ...	...	5 ...
Extension—Napier—Waipukurau	30,000	57,000	13 14	13 14	...
Featherston—Masterton ... ..	...	120,000	24 ...	...	24 ...
Terminal Station at Wellington ... ..	...	35,000	...	...	...
Wharf at ditto ditto ... ..	...	25,000	...	...	...
Workshops at Auckland and Wellington ... ..	...	20,000	...	...	...
Total, North Island	30,000	317,500	42 14	13 14	29 ...
Station at Port Chalmers ... ..	...	10,000	...	...	...
Workshops at Dunedin ... ..	...	15,000	...	...	...
Coal Staiths and River Protection, Mount Rochfort ... ..	...	30,500	...	...	...
Total, South Island ... ..	...	55,500	...	...	...
„ North Island	30,000	317,500	42 14	13 14	29 ...
Grand Total	30,000	373,000	42 14	13 14	29 ...

I will now report briefly on the several works which have been sanctioned by the Legislature.

NORTH ISLAND.

KAWAKAWA RAILWAY.

Work on this line has not been begun, pending the completion of the agreements to be entered into between the Government and the Coal Mine Company.

KAIPARA TO RIVERHEAD.

The rails are laid over the whole line, but the ballasting is not completed. This line was commenced by the Provincial Government of Auckland, and no change in the original designs has been made.

Both the termini are very inconvenient, and will eventually have to be altered; the cost of making proper stations would be not less than from £20,000 to £25,000. I do not recommend that this outlay be incurred at present, until more is known of the probable traffic; but think it will be necessary within a year or two.

The fern and clay ballast has been tested to some extent by the late wet weather, and is answering pretty well; but should the traffic increase, it will have to be changed for proper ballast. This line may be expected to be opened, with present termini, by end of August.

AUCKLAND TO RIVERHEAD.

No work has been done on this line, but the plans and specifications are prepared.

It has been proposed by some of those most interested in the line to change its direction, so as to keep it along the shore of Auckland Harbour.

The extra cost of doing so would be very great, and even the small amount of local traffic which may be expected on the present line would be lost. The through traffic would be benefited, but this will probably be very small for years to come. The whole traffic, indeed, will be so small, that I do not recommend any further expense in the construction of this line; and cannot, therefore, recommend the proposed change in its general direction.

AUCKLAND TO MERCER

Was opened for public traffic on the 20th May. The cost has exceeded the estimate by £20,000, or 5·8 per cent. The rolling stock has cost £38,000, the estimate having been £22,000. Permanent way in England has cost £50,226, the original estimate having been £47,200. The insufficiency of the estimate is confined to these two items.