

Coal Depôts, &c.

It will be necessary to have depôts for coal, firewood, &c., at each end of the city, no matter what site is determined on. The best places for them is the space between the present railway and Anderson's Bay Road, at the south end, and a similar space near Pelichet Bay Station at the north end; the latter space will probably be enlarged when the Port Chalmers line is straightened.

We have, &c.,

W. N. BLAIR.

WM. CONYERS.

The Hon. the Minister for Public Works.

No. 61.

Mr. R. OLIVER, M.H.R., to the Hon. the MINISTER for PUBLIC WORKS.

(Telegram.)

Dunedin, 29th July, 1878.

CONFERENCE between City Council, Harbour Board, and Chamber of Commerce quite unanimous recommending adoption of Harbour Board plan for station. By this plan 123 acres less reclamation than former Conference plan. Feeling here growing very bitter on this subject, and public meeting talked of. Can you not adopt this plan?

The Hon. J. Macandrew, Wellington.

R. OLIVER.

No. 62.

The UNDER SECRETARY for PUBLIC WORKS to His Worship the MAYOR, Dunedin.

SIR,—

Wellington, 30th July, 1878.

I am directed by the Hon. the Minister for Public Works to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 23rd July, forwarding a copy of a resolution passed by the Borough Council of South Dunedin in reference to the site for the railway and goods station.

I have, &c.,

JOHN KNOWLES,

Under Secretary Public Works.

His Worship the Mayor, Dunedin.

No. 63.

The SECRETARY, Otago Harbour Board, to the Hon. the MINISTER for PUBLIC WORKS.

SIR,—

Otago Harbour Board Office, Dunedin, 1st August, 1878.

I have the honor to acknowledge receipt of a letter (No. 3,237, 25th July, 1878) from your office, and am instructed to forward the following reply thereto.

The Board offers no objection to the suggestion of the Hon. Mr. Macandrew that the matter should stand over in the meantime. It was proposed by the Board more with a view of assisting the Government in a publicly acknowledged desirable improvement of the railway line than for any advantage to the Board, which would chiefly have consisted in supplying a convenient place for depositing spoil lifted by the bridges, and so of saving time in completing the making of the channel. Being a new work in the sense of being over and above the plans already sanctioned by the Governor in Council, the Board at once recognized the Governor's right to refuse its assent.

The Board cannot admit, however, that "some of the members of your Board lay small stress upon the opinion of Sir John Coode." As stated in previous communications to the Government, the members of the Board do attach great weight to that opinion, and, in proof of which, readily withdrew from the Conference plan, in so far as increased reclamation is concerned, as soon as it was made aware of his objection to it. That plan, it may be observed, was approved by Messrs. Carruthers and Blair, the Government Engineers, but was not approved by the Board's Engineer, he only having yielded to it being in the minority. What the Board objects to, however, is—First, that Sir John Coode should so far exceed what was asked of him as to decide on the site for the railway station after a forty-eight hours' stay in Dunedin—a matter which persons residing in this city, in the Board's opinion, are more competent, and can far better decide for themselves; and, second, the strained and self-contradictory interpretation put upon his interim report by the Government officers, which, in a former letter from the Board to the Minister of Customs, dated 4th July, was clearly pointed out, and which still remains unanswered.

The Board has repeatedly stated that it accepts the opinion of Sir John Coode, which simply amounts to confirming the expressed opinion of the Board's Engineer—viz., that reclamation at the head of the bay should not be increased in extent beyond the already authorized plans, and the Board begs it may be distinctly understood that it does not desire that any increase of the total quantity of reclamation should be made, but, if found to be for the public interest that an increase should be made thereof in one part, that it be balanced by a decrease elsewhere.

The Board recognizes that, in the interests of the colony as a whole, the Government is bound to exercise every reasonable (not "possible") precaution in seeing that the Port of Otago is not spoiled. The Board also fully understands its own position, in having had remitted to it by the Legislature the work of harbour improvement, and would point out to the Hon. Mr. Macandrew that the Legislature in all probability considered that, in making over this piece of local self-government to residents here, the Board would consist chiefly of mercantile men whose interests were most closely identified with the prosperity of Dunedin, and in the conserving and even improvement of the entrance to the port. The full importance of the trust and serious responsibility connected therewith the members of the Board