

SESSION II.
1906.
NEW ZEALAND.

GERALDINE BRANCH RAILWAY

(REPORT ON PROPOSED).

Return to an Order of the House of Representatives dated the 12th September, 1906.

Ordered, "That there be laid before this House Mr. Wilson's report on the branch railway to Geraldine."
(Mr. FLATMAN.)

REPORT ON THE PROPOSED BRANCH RAILWAY TO GERALDINE.

Public Works Office, Springfield, 24th May, 1906.

Proposed Railway, Orari to Geraldine.

Memorandum for the Under-Secretary for Public Works, Wellington.

A BRANCH line from Orari to Geraldine would be through level country, with only a few streams to cross, and would be a cheap line to construct. The distance is only four miles and a half. It would be made for about £3,700 per mile, as under :—

Four and a half miles formation, at £500 per mile	...	...	£	s.	d.
Four and a half miles platelaying and ballasting, at £1,600 per mile...	...	...	2,250	0	0
Bridging—184 ft., at £6 per foot	...	...	7,200	0	0
Culverts and pipes, £80 per mile	...	...	1,104	0	0
Station-yard at Geraldine...	...	...	360	0	0
Alterations to yard at Orari	...	...	2,500	0	0
Land (25 acres) and fencing	...	...	1,000	0	0
Contingencies	...	...	800	0	0
			1,586	0	0
			16,800	0	0

The road reserve could be utilised in part for the railway, but the purchase of a width of a quarter of a chain more land along it would be necessary, also something extra at the angles of the road for curves.

The Orari Station would have to be shifted to enable road reserve to be used. A suitable site for a station-yard at the other end, 20 chains long by 4 chains wide, is obtainable, and is not at present built on; it is on the left bank of the Waihi River, close to the upper end of the Town of Geraldine, and stands 7 ft. or 8 ft. above the river. The yard would require some inexpensive protection against the river at its up-stream end.

The steepest grade on the line would be 1 in 100, leading down to the station-yard at Geraldine; the other grades would be very easy, and the alignment and curves good. Water openings along the line would consist of 12 in. to 18 in. pipes, a few open culverts, and three small bridges, the largest consisting of three 20 ft. and two 11 ft. spans on low concrete piers, the others three 20 ft. spans and one 20 ft. and two 11 ft. spans respectively. When nearing the Geraldine Station the line would have to leave the road and diverge towards the river, most of the way in cutting.

It is not possible to say from the data obtained exactly what trade a railway from Orari to Geraldine would have. It would take some of the trade now going from Winchester to Geraldine. Owing to the shortness of the branch the tariffs chargeable would be low: for grain, 2s. 6d. per ton; for wool, 1s. per bale; for sheep, 15s. per truck, are the tariff rates for five miles.

Geraldine, which is the centre of a productive and improving district, is conveniently within touch of the railway at present.

Special arrangements would have to be made for working the branch, probably by the slow trains running on main line, and passengers to and from Geraldine, in place of finding the town served five times a day each way, as at present, would be fortunate if they got two trains a day each way.

As regards produce, I do not look on a branch to Geraldine alone as a necessity or as certain to be a help to the revenue of the colony, or a benefit to all the settlers; in some cases these would still cart to Orari and Winchester when they had their teams yoked up and the loads on, thus saving railage.

The only thing which would seem to justify such a line would be if it formed part of a loop-line, as shown on Mr. Ussher's plan in green, enabling the coal and fireclay deposits in the Kakahu Valley to be worked, or if it formed part of a branch from Geraldine to Anama.

J. A. WILSON,
Resident Engineer.

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