

*Mr. Myers.*] What Mr. Luckie means is, will not the diversion of the railway draw the town towards the new station?—I think it will draw the town more rapidly in the direction in which it is now going.

*Mr. Luckie.*] That is what I wanted to know, and it goes to show that the natural consequence of taking a railway centre of that size and of that importance in or about Palmerston North is bound to bring the city round where the station is?—I do not think so.

Perhaps you can tell us from the plans where it is proposed to construct the railway-station, and where the yards are to be. [Plan referred to.] What land is it proposed that the Government shall acquire?—The land necessary for the station.

What area is it proposed to acquire?—That is not absolutely decided. [Centre of station indicated on the plan.]

What area of land do you consider necessary the Department should acquire for the purposes of the railway-station, goods-sheds, running-yards, engine accommodation, and engine-houses?—Is it wise to answer that question?

It has a considerable bearing upon the necessity or otherwise of going so far afield for the land you require?—To provide for present requirements and for future development we think it will be necessary to take land sufficiently long—about 80 acres for the passenger-station and about the same for a marshalling-depot.

That is 160 acres altogether?—For all purposes we might require that, but we do not propose to occupy as much as that.

How much do you propose to occupy: it might be very useful and wise to take land that you do not intend to use?—Probably half that.

Then you will probably require to occupy about 80 acres?—Yes.

Will you tell the Commission in what proportion you would like to have that land—how long and how broad?—It would be an advantage to us to have an uninterrupted communication free of all level crossings for the whole length of the railway.

For the whole length of the railway-station and yards?—Yes.

You have got 80 acres—how would you propose to divide that?—In varying proportions of width.

You want it much longer than you require it in width?—Yes.

What is, roughly, the proportion of length and width that you would desire in order to make the most effective use of it for the Department?—I think it would be very inadvisable to answer that question. We have yet to buy that land.

It is not a question of buying it—it is not a question of price?—Yes, it is a question of price.

The more important is the question of locality. What is the most effective measurement for the 80 acres—what length and breadth?—I might put it this way: At present the site we have is 50 chains in length: that is absolutely inadequate. At the proposed site we have 80 chains between the roads, and those roads will be bridged, so that practically we will have an uninterrupted communication for something like two miles and a half.

That is the length; and what will be the average width—10 chains?—No, not so much as that; about 4 or 5 chains. I dare say it would vary, but I suppose the average would be 5 or 6 chains.

If you had 80 acres 5 chains wide that would be about 160 chains long. There is an economical proportion to make the best use of land for yard purposes?—Not necessarily.

It is better to have it a certain length and width than to have it all square?—Certainly.

There is an economical basis of length by breadth?—It depends upon the nature of the traffic.

I take it you would want 160 chains in length. Where would you have the passenger-station?—About the centre of the station block [indicated on plan].

And in which direction do you propose to have the goods-yards?—In the same direction—the same place.

Which way would they extend?—The same place. The passenger-station and goods-yards will be placed between the two roads. The plan has been before you since the beginning of the Commission.

You say that you know of no site as suitable for all purposes as the one you have now proposed?—That is so.

I take it there will be a certain amount of filling and adjustment of levels required when you come to the site?—Yes, there is in every railway. There are slight variations.

And they fall a little below the roadway?—I do not know that they do at that point.

From my experience of them the land is below the level of the road in some places?—It is very slightly below, and in other places it is above.

We know that some of it floods at certain times?—Very little.

You have not had any levels taken or any details carried out, have you?—Yes.

And have the foundations been prospected for?—Yes.

And have they all been found to be satisfactory?—Yes.

Has anything more than a survey been made of the proposed line and deviation—have you got a detailed survey?—We have no detailed plan. We have detailed levels, but we have not worked out all the details of the scheme yet. We prepared a longitudinal section of the railway.

Then you have had a survey showing the levels?—Yes.

There are certain levels, but only of a general character?—Yes.

What do they vary from—how much below the level of the road at the worst?—I cannot say from memory; there are a great many levels.

Have you got that plan here?—I gave you the plans [produced].