

Will you point out the proposed level of the railway-line, and the level of the land over which it runs ?—At what point ?

I am not referring so much to the Longburn end as to the station end, where most of the filling will have to be done ?—At the place you are talking about the railway is 7 ft. above the level of the ground—nearly opposite Wood Street.

That is about the centre of the site of the railway-station ?—It is about 10 chains from Wood Street. Where the centre of the station will be is about 2 ft. above the level of the road.

How far back from the boundary of the road will the station be situated ?—The centre of the line of railway will be about 10 chains from Boundary Road.

Do you propose to take the whole of the land ?—I refuse to answer a question of that kind.

As a matter of economy, would it not be wise to take it ?—That is for us to consider.

If you do not take that land of course the speculators will ?—That may be.

You have two public roads which will be of enormous convenience in the matter of handling the traffic, and I am putting it to you to show the value of taking the land up to Boundary Road ?—I thought from your statements that the scheme was a perfectly valueless one.

But you are going to make this particularly valuable land. If you make a central railway-station there you must enormously increase the value of the property ?—That may be. I am not going to say whether we are going to take that land or not.

I ask you as a matter of economics whether it would not be advisable to take it ?—We will consider your advice.

Do you know how much filling you will have to do in connection with the land you require ?—Yes.

How many tons ?—We do not deal with those things in tons.

Well, in yards ?—From start to finish the earthworks will probably amount to half a million yards.

Do you think that is going to be quite sufficient ?—Yes, quite sufficient.

*Mr. Marchbanks.*] Is that bank and cutting ?—500,000 yards of cutting will make 500,000 yards of banking. There are 500,000 yards of stuff that we will have to get.

*Mr. Luckie.*] You will have to level up practically the whole of the 80 acres you have to take ?—Not the whole of the 80 acres, but whatever we require of it. We will take more land than we require according to your advice.

You have on various occasions prior to this proposal for the deviation of the line considered other proposals for an improvement in the condition at the Palmerston North Railway-station ?—We have considered the question from time to time—first in 1887, then in 1889, in 1890, and so on right up to the present time.

And the railway-station still remains pretty much the same as it did in 1890 ?—No.

To what extent has it been improved ?—Very considerably.

To what extent ?—I cannot give you the details.

For many years it has been very seriously congested, has it not ?—Yes, it has.

And other methods have been suggested from time to time and met with the approval of the management for temporarily dealing with the congestion ?—I do not quite follow the meaning of your question.

I mean, other methods from time to time have met with the approval of the management without going into the question of the deviation ?—Extensions of the station-yard have been carried out from time to time.

And extensions of the station-yard have been planned and not carried out ?—If you refer to that plan which was prepared in 1911, that was a mere sketch-plan as a basis on which to work. It was not a plan that was proposed to be carried out at all.

But the land must have been taken with that end and object in view ?—It was realized that some extension was necessary, and that land had to be taken to provide for any extension at all.

Then at that time there was no thought of a deviation at all ?—As I said before, it was suggested at that time that a site in another part of the town altogether might have to be provided.

But it was never actually carried into effect till your formal report in 1919 ?—It was never crystallized into a report.

But, on the other hand, improvements were carried out for the purpose of improving the present station ?—For ameliorating the present conditions.

Under those existing conditions, how long is it likely to take you to complete the proposed deviation ?—I have already answered that question ; I think it could be done in four years.

In the meantime Palmerston North has got to carry on as it is ?—Not necessarily ; we will probably have to do something to keep things going in Palmerston.

You have not yet thought what you will do ?—As soon as the Commission has decided we will think about it.

With reference to the level-crossing question, there will be a good many level crossings on the public highways rendered necessary by your deviation, will there not ?—Not that I am aware of.

What are you going to do with them at these road stations on the proposed line ?—Put them overhead.

There will be eleven overhead bridges. When doing that you do not get rid of the Palmerston North Station trouble, do you ?—Certainly. [Explained on plan.]

The present arrangement is to carry the line on as it is now in the meantime ?—[Explained on plan.]

There will be eleven overhead bridges when the complete station is made ?—Yes, and seven at the start.

Will they all be overhead bridges ?—Seven in the line as now proposed.