

A landing stage at Foxton being common to both routes is not included.

Manawatu, 8th May, 1871.

JOHN T. STEWART,
District Engineer.

P.S.—The disadvantages mentioned as attending route *via* Motoa are the transfer of goods from tramway to punt or steamer at Motoa, and again at Ngawhakarau from vessel to tramway.—J.T.S.

No. 11.

MEMORANDA by Dr. HECTOR and Mr. BLACKETT for the Hon. the MINISTER for PUBLIC WORKS.

I HAVE always understood that the opening up of the Manawatu-Napier road line was to be undertaken as a Colonial work, on the ground of its probable effect in securing the permanent settlement of a troublesome Native district. To induce this settlement, a tramway was to be laid on the lower part of the line, as being less expensive and more effective than metalling, for the purpose of enabling the totara timber of the Upper Manawatu to be brought to market, a cheap supply of which timber will greatly reduce the cost of construction of railway lines in other parts of the Colony, and to a great extent obviate the necessity for importing timber. If a break is left in the line, such as is proposed between Ngawhakarau and Motoa, involving a transshipment and two extra handlings of the timber, this important object will be defeated; and there would be no valid reason for making this tramway, or at least the lower portion of it, between Motoa and Foxton, out of general funds, as it is open country and quite fit for light traffic in its present state, while the heavy traffic, such as lumber, would be more cheaply carried all the way to Foxton by water, after its being removed from the waggons and placed in barges. This long and expensive water carriage, however, will still involve a second transshipment to seagoing vessels at Foxton.

As the object is to reduce the expensive carriage to a minimum, and, by fostering the settlement of the district, to make the tramway self-supporting, I think, for the reasons I have stated, that it would pay Government better to make the tramway the whole way.

I observe in Mr. Stewart's estimate that he does not include the cost of steamer and barges for the fifteen miles by river. It is true that such provision need not be made by Government, but if allowed to pass into other hands, the success of the whole line would be out of Government control.

Thus, if the tramway could carry say 100 tons per diem, and the river arrangements only 50 tons, the Government property will be idle for half time and only bring in half the possible returns; and on this ground alone, I think there can be no doubt that if the Government determine to construct this tramway at all, it should be continuous throughout its whole extent.

Further, as there is a reasonable prospect in this case of traffic that will be both directly and indirectly remunerative to the country, the line should be continued the whole way to the seaport at Foxton.

I look upon this line with great interest, as there is no doubt should it prove successful, that similar tramways will be adopted in other parts of the Colony, as precursors of railway lines, especially through bush country, where the land is soft.

13th May, 1871.

JAMES HECTOR.

Dr. Hector has stated reasons for making the line through to Foxton, and not to Motoa, with which I fully concur. It would, on all grounds of utility, be most inadvisable to have a break or breaks in the mode of transit.

19th May, 1871.

J. BLACKETT. C. E.

No. 12.

Mr. KNOWLES to Mr. J. T. STEWART.

SIR,—

Public Works Office, Wellington, 27th May, 1871.

With reference to your memorandum of the 1st instant relative to the proposed tramway from Ngawhakarau to Foxton, and to your further memorandum of the 8th instant relative to an alternative line *via* Motoa, I am directed by Mr. Gisborne to inform you that the Government have decided to adopt the line reported on in the memorandum first mentioned in preference to that suggested *via* Motoa.

The whole work having been authorized to be undertaken either by contract or piecework, you will be good enough at once to take such steps as may be necessary for carrying into effect the intention of the Government; reporting those steps from time to time, as often as may be necessary to keep Mr. Gisborne fully advised of the progress made.

J. T. Stewart, Esq., District Engineer,
Manawatu.

I have, &c.,
JOHN KNOWLES,
Under Secretary.

No. 13.

MEMORANDUM from Mr. J. T. STEWART to Mr. KNOWLES.

I HAVE just returned from the Gorge, where I have been since the 12th.

In regard to telegram No. 259, authorizing tramway Ngawhakarau to Foxton, and inquiring as to tramway Palmerston to Ngawhakarau, the excessively wet season and unusually heavy floods, acting on the newly formed road here, have so affected it that it is quite impracticable to commence laying the tramway (except on about two miles at Palmerston) until dry weather sets in, and dries road surface somewhat. This will not probably now be until spring.