

Regarding the block of land on southern portion of property of 5,697 acres, subdivided some time ago by Mr. Haszard for settlement purposes, I have to inform you that when the outlets are made as authorised by you about 1,000 acres on the banks of the Piako River will be suitable for settlement, and I believe will be readily taken up if offered for selection. The work necessary for this can, if funds are available, be completed within three months. The rest of the block I would advise to be kept until the drainage of the lower portions of the swamp is more developed. Several drains along the road-lines have been made, and the excavated material deposited on the roads; but the drains are not deep enough to afford any appreciable improvement. Further, the outlets do not allow of sufficient fall; but if a special vote of, say, £500 can be obtained for the further improving of the channel of the Waitoa River up to the northern boundary of this block, then the whole area could be satisfactorily dealt with. This estimate (£500), of course, does not include cost of drains which have to be made, or the deepening of those already made within the boundaries of the block. The work already done by me under the special vote in the Waitoa during the past season has lowered the water of the river at the point above indicated—*i.e.*, north-eastern corner of block—between 2 ft. and 3 ft.

Roads.

The lithographic plan which accompanies this report shows a general scheme of the main roads necessary for the settlement of the whole area of the plains. The subdivisional roads can be determined later; but it is only my intention for the present to ask your authority for making drains and forming roads with excavated material therefrom so far as is necessary to give frontage or access to the portions coloured dark-red on the lithograph. You will notice that the main road will be the Turua-Waitakaruru Road, and when this road is completed there will be almost direct communication from the lower Waikato to the Thames and Paeroa.

The other roads, as indicated on the plan, show their own necessity as main arteries, besides giving access to the lands they afford frontage to.

Principal Works proposed.

The principal works proposed for the ensuing year are making the drains and constructing the roads referred to in last paragraph, including bridges and culverts.

1. The formation of the road, being portion of the Turua-Piropoa-Wairangi Road, from the canal to Waitakaruru, and, beyond the £500 voted, a further sum would be required for the portion from Coxhead's house to where the formation is completed from Wairangi. A sum of money is also required for completion of the road from Waitakaruru to Morrinsville. Also the two roads from the boundary of the Hauraki Plains to Turua. I refer to these two last-mentioned roads particularly, as I presume they will come within the jurisdiction of the Public Works Department.

2. The progression of the works pertaining to the construction of the canal, and the formation of a road on each side with excavated material therefrom.

3. The completion of the stop-bank to Waitakaruru.

4. The completion of the drain and track from Piropoa Block southwards as far as the proposed subdivisions go.

5. The making of a drain and track on the eastern bank of the river where same intersects the Crown lands.

6. The completion of the construction of the flood-gates.

7. The construction of culverts and erection of wharves or landing-places and bridges as may be required within the area proposed to be offered for settlement during the year.

8. The construction of a drain as overflow for the Waitoa River along the boundary between Te Huihui and Kaikupenga Blocks.

9. The construction of the outlet into the Piako River through Te Whanake up to the southern boundary of the Hauraki Plains. I do not propose to construct any drains on any portion of the property except that area proposed to be first offered for selection.

Of course, there are many minor works not enumerated above which require performance, but the items above are the principal features of the work proposed to be carried on next year.

In conclusion, I have great pleasure in stating that I am satisfied with the property as a very valuable asset, and when the sections are offered for selection the result will prove to your satisfaction that I have not been too sanguine in my expectations or anticipations.

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