

levy such rates on the property, or levy such license fees on the vehicles that use the road, as will recoup itself and make this company pay a fair share of the burden of the borough. No proof was given that the bulk of the shareholders in the Freezing Company resided in Wellington.

Much of the argument of the two learned counsel who represented Petone was directed towards showing what some of the other districts ought to pay, and it appeared to me that this was done for fear I should follow Mr. Haselden's apportionment, which was seven twenty-fourths or about 29 per cent. of the cost against Petone. I have tried to ascertain why he assessed Petone at such a high rate, but cannot find the reason. The traffic returns certainly did not support it, and I can only assume that he considered that Petone was specially dependent upon the road, and that there was a great future development before it.

The evidence before me did not disclose any special dependency, but it showed that the road is largely used by it, and for this reason the road must be of considerable benefit to it. I think, also, that there is something to be said as to the future development of Petone, and the benefit of the road in connection with the same. I am of opinion that both by its position and by the fact of its large area of flat ground, Petone will ultimately become the main manufacturing centre for the Wellington District, and that there will be a dense population extending to the Lower Hutt. It has a water-frontage which may be made better use of as time goes on than it is at present. It has several large industries, and another one is about to start, and any day may see some cheap mechanical traction invented that will successfully compete on the road against the railway and thus benefit these industries. The opening of the new Hutt Bridge will divert traffic through Petone that now goes by way of Lower Hutt, and I am of opinion that as this advance takes place, the Hutt Road will be of much more use proportionately to Petone than to any other district. For these reasons, and allowing something off for the use of its main road, but adding something from the fact that 3 chains of the road are in Petone Borough, it appears to be just that Petone should pay a larger contribution than is indicated by the results of the tally of traffic, and after full consideration I assess this contribution at 18 per cent.

Lower Hutt.

The use of the road for the purposes of this district is shown by—

Result No. 1	..	..	..	..	12.87 per cent.
Result No. 2	..	..	..	..	13.27 „
Result No. 3	..	..	..	..	7.84 „
Mr. Haselden's report	..	..	..	..	17.06 „

He assessed the borough at five twenty-fourths or 20.8 per cent. In this case also, I think, he must have taken into account the fact of the future development of the borough. In my opinion this will take place as Petone develops, but not at first to the same extent. For this reason, and as the quota of heavy traffic concerning this district is only 13.27 per cent., and after most carefully considering the matter, I assess the Lower Hutt at 14 per cent.

Hutt County.

In this case the use of the road for the purposes of the county is shown in—

Result No. 1 as	..	..	..	..	7.42 per cent.
Result No. 2 as	..	..	..	..	8.44 „
Result No. 3 as	..	..	..	..	3.23 „
Mr. Haselden's report	..	..	..	..	20.05 „

But this latter was before Onslow Borough and Makara County were separated from the Hutt County.

It is clear that the Hutt County does not derive anything like so much benefit from the road as do some of the other districts. The part of the county at all likely to use this road lies several miles away from it. This county is mostly rough and broken, and is hardly of a character to carry a great population or be of much value, and I do not think that traffic from the county will increase in the same proportion as in other districts. Taking all facts into consideration, I think that about 8 per cent. would be a fair assessment.

Counsel for the Hutt County propounded a scheme of apportionment based on the mean results of the total of traffic valuation and population for each district, and, to evade the difficulty which is obvious under such an apportionment by which Wellington would be severely