

1917.

VICTORIA.

R E P O R T

FROM

THE PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE
ON RAILWAYS

ON THE QUESTION OF

RAILWAY CONNEXION WITH WANDO VALE,
DERGHOLM, HARROW, EDENHOPE, AND
BOOROOKI DISTRICTS ;

TOGETHER WITH

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE AND PLAN.

Ordered by the Legislative Assembly to be printed, 2nd August, 1917.

By Authority:

ALBERT J. MULLETT, GOVERNMENT PRINTER, MELBOURNE.

RAILWAYS STANDING COMMITTEE REPORT No. 4.—[9d.]—9557.

EXTRACTED FROM THE VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS OF THE
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

THURSDAY, 17TH DECEMBER, 1914.

3. LINES OF RAILWAY REFERRED TO STANDING COMMITTEE.—Mr. Mackinnon moved, pursuant to notice, That the following questions be referred to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Railways for inquiry and report :—

* * * * *

(9) The question of connecting the districts around and between Wando Vale, Dergholm, Harrow, Edenhope, and Booroopki with the existing railway system by means of a railway.

* * * * *

Debate ensued.

Question—put and resolved in the affirmative.

MEMBERS OF THE PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON RAILWAYS.

(*Eleventh Committee.*)

S. BARNES, Esq., M.L.A., Chairman ;

The Hon. J. W. Billson, M.L.A.,
The Hon. A. Hicks, M.L.C.,
The Hon. D. Melville, M.L.C.
(Vice-Chairman),

R. H. Solly, Esq., M.L.A.,
R. F. Toutcher, Esq., M.L.A.

APPROXIMATE COST OF REPORT.

Compilation.*	£	s.	d.
Printing (400 copies)	7	0	0

* The compilation was a portion of the work of the Secretary of the Railways Standing Committee, who is paid by annual salary.

R E P O R T.

THE PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON RAILWAYS, to which the Legislative Assembly referred the question of connecting the districts around and between Wando Vale, Dergholm, Harrow, Edenhope, and Boorooopki with the existing railway system by means of a railway, has the honour to report as follows :—

DESCRIPTION OF DISTRICTS.

1. The districts for which closer railway facilities were sought lie to the west of the railway now under construction from Toolondo through Fulham, Balmoral, and Cavendish to Hamilton (which will give direct connexion by rail between the Wimmera country and the seaboard at Portland), and to the south of the Goroke line, and north of the branch railways terminating at Coleraine and Casterton respectively. This area of upwards of 850,000 acres is all beyond 10 miles from any railway, and is intersected by the Glenelg River, which flows westward between Balmoral and Fulham, and past the township of Harrow, Mooree, and Connewirricoo till approaching Dergholm, where it turns southward, flowing through Casterton on its way to the sea. About two-thirds of the acreage is on the north side of the Glenelg River. The South Australian boundary forms the west side of this large area. A few miles across that dividing line is the narrow-gauge railway from Wolseley to Narracoorte and Mount Gambier. This railway runs parallel with the boundary for 100 miles, and, having a branch line to Kingston, a South Australian port, it serves part of the Victorian territory. The country between Coleraine—Casterton, and Harrow—Connewirricoo is, on the whole, of better quality than that across the Glenelg River; but it is hilly, being broken by numerous valleys, creeks, and gullies, which makes railway construction more costly than on the north side of the river, where the district is flatter and streamless. For several miles north of both Coleraine and Casterton the country, though hilly, is rich, but these fertile areas are within a reasonable distance of the railway stations at those towns. Nevertheless, if the line to Harrow or Edenhope started from either Coleraine or Casterton the farmers at Koonongwootong or at Wando Vale would benefit from such extension by having their cartage lessened. North of Koonongwootong the country continues hilly, but fairly open, and could be used for cereal-growing more largely than it is if the cost of cartage could be reduced. Around Nareen the land is rich, and would grow root crops, but its area is restricted. From thence northwards to Harrow and Mooree the country is suitable for the production of oats and wheat. It is timbered with large redgum trees averaging two or three to the acre. After leaving Wando Vale and going northward a belt of inferior country is passed through on the way to Chetwynd. Around the latter township the land improves in quality, and could with nearer railway facilities be used for general agricultural purposes to a much greater extent than it is. The Dergholm district is on the west side of the Glenelg River about 25 miles from Casterton. The land in the narrow valley of that stream is good, but back from the Glenelg towards the South Australian border it is flat and poor, fit only for grazing, the carrying capacity being small.

2. On the north side of the Glenelg River from Harrow and Connewirricoo in the direction of Wombelano, Kadnook, Edenhope, and Apsley, and on towards Boorooopki and the Goroke railway the country varies from a reddish sandy loam of very fair quality in the eastern and central parts, timbered with a few redgum, box, and messmate trees to the acre, to much lighter land, with some crab-hole country, in the western part around Apsley and on to the South Australian border. The western part of the district is well covered with bulloak and some box timber, but has intervening belts of inferior sandy country, on which honeysuckle, stunted gums, heath, and other scrub usually associated with poor land are growing. A rough classification of the

area on the north side of the Glenelg River would be—rather more than a third adapted for grain-growing—wheat, oats, and barley; slightly less than a third occupied by lakes, swamps, and low-lying ground invariably flooded in winter, and therefore unsuited for cropping until a comprehensive drainage scheme is undertaken; and a third poor, sandy country fit only for grazing, and of small carrying capacity.

3. About 30 years ago portions of this land were cultivated, but as the farmers had to cart their grain 35 miles or so to Natimuk on one side, or a similar distance to Naracoorte, South Australia, on the other, they found the cartage too long and costly, and many of them abandoned their holdings, the farms being in most instances purchased by the owners of adjacent large estates. In those early days the selectors got blocks of 320 acres only. That area was too small to carry on farming successfully, at least 600 acres being necessary to enable the land for cropping to be fallowed. There are on the north side of the Glenelg River from near Wombelano to close to the South Australian border thirteen estates, totalling nearly 200,000 acres. The majority of the owners expressed their willingness either to let the land suitable for cropping to farmers on the shares system or to sub-divide and sell part of their estates if nearer railway facilities were provided, as the existing cartage charge of 1s. per ton per mile was a bar to agricultural development; the distance to a railway station being too far to attract any settlement of farmers. The nearest railway station to Edenhope is Hynam, in South Australia. It is 26 miles away, whilst Goroke, the closest Victorian station, is 30 miles distant.

4. The average annual rainfall of the district is 23 inches, it being said that the district had a rainfall equal to that of the Western Plains and the warm climate of the Wimmera territory. In 1914, the drought year, over 12 inches were recorded. Evidence was given that yields of wheat up to 30 bushels per acre had been harvested; but the average was between 15 and 20 bushels of good, hard, milling grain; oats yielded 35 to 40 bushels; whilst hay gave from 1½ to 2 tons to the acre. Good yields of barley of superior quality had also been obtained. In 1916 there were 15,000 acres in this area under cultivation, of which half was sown with wheat, 5,000 acres for hay, and most of the remainder with oats. It was also stated that around some of the permanent lakes or swamps in this country was a margin of superior land on which fodder crops and lucerne could be readily grown with the aid of irrigation, which would not be costly, owing to the nearness of the water supply. In that way dairying could be successfully carried on, and also fruit-growing, the soil being adapted for the production of the softer varieties, such as peaches, apricots, grapes, &c. Scattered throughout the district are small fertile areas suitable for potatoes, onions, and other vegetables. The present value of the land in the Wombelano, Edenhope, Apsley, and Boorookpi districts was stated to be from £2 to £4 per acre, the average being £2 15s. to £3. The ordinary carrying capacity of the land is slightly over ¾ sheep to the acre. It was estimated that the railway would increase the value of the land (except the belts of poor, sandy, scrub country) from 10s. to 20s. an acre.

SUPPLIES OF TIMBER.

5. As already stated, there are some thousands of redgum trees scattered through the area on both sides of the Glenelg River. They are not in a dense forest, but are spread over a wide acreage, mostly in the eastern portion of the district seeking nearer railway connexion, around Harrow, Pine Hills, Kadnook, and near Edenhope. It was computed by the engineer of the Kowree Shire Council, whose head-quarters are at Edenhope, that there were two sound trees to the acre, and that each would give 1,250 superficial feet, or a total output of 3,000,000 tons, as such of the timber as was not suitable for building purposes, bridges, sleepers, fencing, &c., could be cut into blocks for street paving. He estimated that with a railway close at hand the royalty was worth 2s. per 100 feet super., or 25s. per tree, thus yielding the land-owner £2 10s. per acre from the sale of the standing timber alone. With this estimate of value of the timber some of the large land-owners who had redgum growing on their estates generally concurred. A local sawmiller, however, put the royalty down at 30s. or so an acre. It was urged that these timber supplies would be one of the chief sources of traffic on the railway.

6. Whilst proceeding from Hamilton to Edenhope the Committee observed beyond Cavendish a saw-mill cutting redgum blocks for use in the streets of Melbourne.

Inquiries subsequently made at the Melbourne Town Hall showed the City Council had been so satisfied with the quality of this timber that a further order for 250,000 of these blocks had been recently given to the contractor, and that the work of wood-blocking the streets of the city was likely to continue for the next 20 or 30 years.

7. The extension of the Cavendish railway through Balmoral and Fulham to Toolondo now under construction will make available additional supplies of redgum within reasonable cartage distances of Balmoral and Fulham.

8. Mr. R. Kellway, Traffic Officer, Victorian Railways, who visited the district in conjunction with an engineer of the Railway Construction Branch, estimated that the redgum areas which would be served by a railway from Fulham through Mullagh to Edenhope would aggregate between 200,000 and 250,000 acres, with an average of two milling trees to the acre, yielding 2,500 superficial feet, or 7 tons to the acre. The total quantity obtainable would, therefore, be approximately 600,000,000 superficial feet. These figures were confirmed by a report furnished by an officer of the Forestry Department. Mr. Kellway had, in computing his estimate of revenue for the proposed line, allowed for two saw-mills being established in the district, each having a weekly output of 25 tons of paving blocks. In addition to that, supplies of sleepers and bridging and building timber would be despatched over the new railway. Owing to the insufficiency of supplies of redgum on the Melbourne market, jarrah timber had been imported in large quantities from Western Australia, although the shipping charge from that State to Melbourne was 22s. 6d. for 40 cubic feet. Mr. M. E. Kernot, Chief Engineer for Railway Construction, had informed him that Victorian redgum is more durable than jarrah, and was always in demand for railway construction and maintenance, but it was difficult to obtain sufficient supplies. Mr. H. R. Mackay, Conservator of Forests, had told him that no difficulty was experienced in obtaining markets for any redgum coming forward, whilst the Deputy Town Clerk of Melbourne had stated that redgum was preferred to jarrah for street-paving blocks, but sufficient supplies of the former not being forthcoming, the City Council had had to use jarrah. Melbourne timber merchants had likewise assured him that there was a good and constant demand for Victorian redgum, which was sold at a lower price than jarrah.

LENGTHS AND COSTS OF PROPOSED RAILWAYS.

9. As already stated, the country on the south side of the Glenelg River is more hilly and broken by gullies and small water-courses than that on the north, where there are no streams to cross, only small lakes and swamps, which could easily be avoided in constructing a railway. It was pointed out by the Committee in its Report in 1911 on the question of the route for a direct railway from the Horsham-Nhill district to the seaboard at Portland that it would be more costly to extend the Coleraine line north-west near Koonongwootong and Wando Dale to Connewirricoo, close to the junction of the Glenelg and Chetwynd rivers, than to carry the Casterton line northward through Wando Vale and Chetwynd to the same point, as the former route was 38½ miles, as against 31 from Casterton. This view was evidently accepted by the residents of Coleraine, as on this occasion they made no claim for the extension of their line to Connewirricoo and Edenhope. Evidence was received at Casterton, Wando Vale, and Chetwynd for the extension of the railway from Casterton northward through Wando Vale and Chetwynd to Edenhope. The view, however, taken by the residents on the north side of the Glenelg River was that the route to best serve the Harrow, Wombelano, and Edenhope districts was from near Fulham westwards through Mullagh about 7 miles north of Harrow and 4 miles south of Wombelano, and thence direct to Edenhope. This line would not only be cheaply constructed—there being no engineering difficulties on that route, whilst supplies of redgum sleepers and posts and also suitable ballast were obtainable close at hand—but it would give the producers a choice of the Horsham, Ballarat, and Melbourne markets for the sale of live stock, and either Geelong or Portland for the export of frozen meat and wheat to Europe. It was urged that a railway terminating at Edenhope would be of no service to Boorookpi, as a belt of sandy country would have to be crossed in carting to that terminus, and, moreover, there is a nearer and better road to the Goroke railway station. Consequently, the extension of the Goroke line towards Boorookpi and Minimay was sought as a separate proposition.

10. Mr. M. E. Kernot, Chief Engineer for Railway Construction, furnished the Committee with the following rough estimates of costs for the several suggested routes, the rates for rails and materials being based on pre-war prices, and the wages of labourers at 9s. 6d. per day:—

Route.	Approximate Length in Miles.	Ruling Gradient.	Rough Cost per Mile.	Rough Total Cost.
Casterton to Edenhope, <i>viâ</i> Chetwynd	46 $\frac{3}{4}$	1 in 40	£ 5,000	£ 233,750
Coleraine to Edenhope, <i>viâ</i> Connewirricoo	53 $\frac{1}{2}$	1 in 40	5,000	267,500
Casterton to Edenhope, <i>viâ</i> Glenelg Valley (Dergholm)	46 $\frac{1}{2}$	1 in 50	4,900	227,850
Fulham to Edenhope, <i>viâ</i> Mullagh	32 $\frac{1}{4}$	1 in 75	3,350	108,000
Toolondo to Edenhope, <i>viâ</i> Mullagh	36 $\frac{1}{4}$	1 in 75	3,350	121,430
Goroke to Edenhope	26	1 in 75	3,350	87,100

11. These sums were exclusive of the cost of land and rolling-stock.

SELECTION OF ROUTE.

12. After inspecting the country and hearing the local evidence, the Committee came to the conclusion that, whilst the Casterton route was preferable to the one from Coleraine, the district which was most in need of nearer railway facilities was on the north side of the Glenelg River around Wombelano, Kadnook, and Edenhope, and that this territory could be better and more cheaply served by a broad-gauge line from Fulham westwards through Mullagh to Edenhope. It accordingly asked the Railway Commissioners to furnish the Committee with estimates of revenue and working expenses for this proposal.

REPORT OF TRAFFIC OFFICER.

13. Mr. R. Kellway, Traffic Officer, Victorian Railways, in his report on the probable traffic over the proposed line from Fulham to Edenhope, stated that this extension would serve approximately 450,000 acres within a 10-mile limit, and about 75,000 acres outside of that area from which passengers and also live stock, wool, and some general goods traffic would be drawn. The tributary area consisted of a tableland about 500 feet above sea level. The valley of the Glenelg River was some 200 feet below the adjacent country, and consequently the cartage of timber and grain from the south side of that stream—up the hills from Harrow, Mooree, or Connewirricoo to the new line—would be difficult. He added that the water in the shallow lakes and swamps is generally conserved with the object of providing green pasturage for stock during summer, but as the country had a gentle fall towards the north-west and west in the direction of the South Australian border, these shallow swamps could, if necessary, be drained at a comparatively small cost so as to permit of a portion of the submerged country being placed under cultivation. A belt of poor sandy land, varying from 2 to 4 miles in width, and timbered with stringybark, extends from near Fulham along the north side of the Glenelg River to the south of Edenhope, and also from the east of that town in a north-westerly direction towards Boorookpi, the estimated area being about 75,000 acres, which is mostly Crown lands leased at 1d. per acre per annum for pastoral purposes. He considered that at least one-third of the tributary area, or roughly 150,000 acres, were suitable for cultivation, and of this 100,000 acres were either already cleared or so lightly timbered that they could be soon made available for cropping. Last season there were 7,500 acres in this district under wheat, 1,020 under oats, 5,200 sown for hay, and 1,480 with barley and other crops. The wheat crops had yielded from 20 to 30 bushels to the acre. The rainfall around Edenhope, Apsley, and Kadnook and also the climatic conditions would be favorable, he considered, for the production of wheat when there might be a failure on account of drought in the northern districts. There were approximately 200,000 sheep, mostly merinos; 1,750 cattle; and 1,800 horses in the tributary area. Mr. Kellway estimated that 44,000 acres, mostly in the Mullagh, Wombelano, Charam, Edenhope, and Ullswater districts would be under crop when the railway was opened, and that, assuming the wheat would yield 12 bushels per acre, oats and barley 18 bushels, and hay 1 ton, and that most of the hay and oats produced would be used for local consumption, and

also 2 bushels of wheat per acre for seed, flour, and poultry, the annual outwards tonnage over the railway would be as follows:—Wheat, 9,400 tons; other agricultural produce, 1,100 tons; timber, 3,000 tons; wool, 530 tons; salt (from Salt Lakes), 1,400 tons; bark, 100 tons; hides, skins, &c., 180 tons; or a total of 15,710 tons. The inwards traffic would be—manures, 1,500 tons; groceries, drapery, hardware, 610 tons; wool-packs and cornsacks, 141 tons; or a total of 2,251 tons.

RAIL AND STEAMER COMPETITION.

14. It was shown by a table prepared by Mr. Kellway, based on the recent increase in rates, that even if a railway were made from any part of the Victorian system to Edenhope it would still be cheaper to get supplies of groceries, drapery, and other higher-class goods either by rail from Adelaide to Hynam and cart them to Edenhope, or by steamer from Melbourne to Kingston and thence by rail to Hynam and road to Edenhope, than to send them direct by rail from Melbourne to Edenhope. The particulars furnished were as follow:—

Route.	Goods.			
	Class C, per Ton.	Class 1, per Ton.	Class 2, per Ton.	Class 3, per Ton.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Rail from Melbourne to Edenhope ..	3 9 0	4 12 8	5 19 1	*
Rail from Adelaide to Hynam, and cartage to Edenhope	2 18 0	3 6 3	3 14 6	4 2 9
Steamer from Melbourne to Kingston, rail to Hynam, and cartage to Edenhope	3 4 7	3 10 1	3 16 9	4 3 10

* No third class goods rate on Victorian railways.

15. The above figures include 25s. a ton cartage from Hynam to Edenhope, and also, in the case of goods sent *via* Kingston, the agents' charges, and wharfage and shunting at that port. Apsley, being nearer to Hynam, the cartage charge to that town would be but 12s. 6d. per ton, thus shutting out all likelihood of these higher-class goods being despatched from Melbourne by rail through Edenhope.

16. As regards groceries, drapery, &c., intended for consumption in the Minimay district the same competition would prevail. These goods would be obtained either from Adelaide through Frances railway station, and carted from there to Minimay, or from Melbourne by steamer to Kingston, and thence by rail to Frances and road to Minimay, thus leaving the Victorian railways with only the grain and other low-rate freight to carry. The storekeeper at Minimay said in evidence:—"We do not get stores from Melbourne by way of the Goroke railway. I get all mine by the Kingston route, and would continue to do so even if the Goroke line were extended to Minimay. The superphosphates and other artificial manures, however, come by rail from Melbourne to Frances, and with an extension they would come by rail through Goroke."

ESTIMATE OF REVENUE AND WORKING EXPENSES.

17. The Railways Commissioners furnished the Committee with the following estimate of revenue and annual charges, including working expenses, for a broad-gauge line running from Fulham westwards through Mullagh to Edenhope, for a tri-weekly train service, to be run from Hamilton, *via* Cavendish:—

ANNUAL CHARGES.

Interest at 4 per cent. per annum on £111,439, being cost (£107,200) of constructing 32 miles of 5 ft. 3 in. railway from Fulham, <i>via</i> Mullagh to Edenhope, at a wage rate of 9s. 6d. per day for labourers, with £4,239 added for rolling-stock	£4,457 11 2
Traffic expenses	416 11 10
Maintenance charges	2,592 0 0
Locomotive expenses, including repairs and renewals of rolling-stock	1,242 19 9
General charges	106 5 9
Total annual charges	£8,815 8 6

REVENUE.

	On New Line.	On Other Lines from New Traffic from New Line.	
Passengers	£1,289 19 1	£422 11 11	
Parcels	120 0 0	..	
Mails	240 0 0	..	
Class goods	204 16 8	177 2 10	
Wool	113 16 10	182 15 0	
Live stock	220 16 2	245 19 5	
Grain	574 5 1	2,152 18 11	
Timber	196 13 8	720 9 10	
All other traffic	87 15 0	66 8 3	
	£3,048 2 6	£3,968 6 2	£7,016 8 8
Estimated loss first year of operation			£1,798 19 10

REDUCTION IN ANNUAL LOSS.

18. The foregoing estimates of revenue were based on the railway rates prevailing prior to 1st July, 1917. Mr. Kellway considered the increased rates imposed on that date would give about £650 additional income, bringing the estimated loss in the first year of operation down to approximately £1,150. On the other hand, the rate of interest on the proposed capital expenditure has been computed by the Railways Commissioners at 4 per cent., but it is probable a higher rate would have to be paid for the borrowed money. An additional $\frac{3}{4}$ per cent. would add £800 to the annual interest charge, thus making the loss in the first year of operation about £1,950, notwithstanding the recent increases in fares and rates. The Committee, however, considers that Mr. Kellway under-estimated the wheat yield per acre when reckoning it at an average of 12 bushels per acre. But, at the same time, it thinks he over-stated the acreage likely to be under that crop in the first year of operation of the railway, and did not, therefore, disturb his estimate of revenue from the carriage of grain. The Committee also considers he under-estimated the output of redgum timber, and that an additional £200 or £300 of revenue would be obtained from that traffic.

RAILWAY TO BOOROOKPI AND MINIMAY.

19. Representations were made to the Committee that the Goroce railway should be extended westward for 18 miles so as to serve Lemon Springs, Boorookpi, and Minimay. The distance between the railway stations at Goroce and at Frances, South Australia, is 34 miles. It was urged that as some of the farmers around Minimay had to cart their wheat close on 20 miles to a station, it was too far and interfered with working the fallowed land and also with seeding operations. Witnesses said that if the Goroce railway were extended to Minimay it would cause more land to be cultivated, and would also divert to the Victorian lines wheat and other traffic which was now carried on the South Australian railways. The Committee was of opinion, however, that an extension to Minimay would be taking our railway system too near to that of South Australia and causing unnecessary competition for the same traffic. Furthermore, the extra land which would be brought under cultivation would not warrant the outlay on the proposed railway, some of the country between Minimay and Frances being crab-hole and too wet in most winters for cropping, whilst the nearness of the Little Desert on the north would prevent agricultural expansion in that direction. Estimates were obtained from the Railways Commissioners for a line from Goroce $5\frac{1}{2}$ miles westward to Mortat, with the view of lessening the cartage of the Minimay farmers to a reasonable distance. It was shown that this extension would cost £21,045, and that the annual interest charges and working expenses would come to £1,486, and the revenue to £214 only, leaving a loss of £1,272. This poor financial return was due to such an extension causing but little extra production for the reasons stated above, and also to the operation of the tapering rates making little, if any, difference in the freight rates from Mortat as compared with those from Goroce.

VIEWS OF THE COMMITTEE.

20. The Committee is of opinion that the extensive area on the north side of the Glenelg River towards the South Australian border will never be developed, from an agricultural standpoint, without nearer railway facilities so as to lessen the cost of cartage, which is a hindrance to settlement and a bar to increased production. Owing, however, to it being cheaper to obtain groceries, drapery, and other high-class goods by rail from Adelaide or by steamer from Melbourne to Kingston, South Australia, and thence by rail and road to not only Apsley, but also to Edenhope, than by rail direct from Melbourne, thus leaving the Victorian lines with merely the low-class freight, it is obvious that before a railway to Edenhope can become a payable undertaking constructional costs must be lower than they now are, and steps must also be taken to insure greater production in the district to be served by the proposed line by having some of the swamps or depressions on private lands around Edenhope, Ullswater, and Wombelano reclaimed, as it is unlikely any freight will be forthcoming from the belts of poor heathy country in that part of the State. The Committee, therefore, considers that no railway should be constructed into the Edenhope district until constructional costs have been reduced, and a scheme to drain at least 10,000 out of the 50,000 acres or so of swamps or lands which are usually inundated for several successive weeks each winter has been prepared and approved by a Drainage Trust representing the local municipal authority or the land-owners concerned, and arrangements have been made to undertake such reclamation works simultaneously with the construction of the railway. Sufficient supplies of redgum sleepers to meet railway construction and maintenance purposes for several years, and also redgum blocks for street paving, will be made available near Balmoral and Fulham by the extension of the Cavendish railway now under construction.

21. For the foregoing reasons the Committee considers it is not expedient, at present, to connect the districts around and between Wando Vale, Dergholm, Harrow, Edenhope, and Boorooopki with the existing railway system by means of a railway.

SAMUEL BARNES,
Chairman.

Railways Standing Committee Room,
State Parliament House,
Melbourne, 31st July, 1917.

[Minutes of Evidence are not printed.]