PROGRESS REPORT
FROM
THE PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON RAILWAYS
ON
PROPOSED EXPENDITURE UNDER RAILWAY LOAN APPLICATION ACT, NO. 3417
(ITEM NO. 97, "VARIOUS")
(PROVISION OF CONNECTING LINES BETWEEN GLENROY AND ALBION, TOTTENHAM GRAVITATION YARDS, AND MELBOURNE GOODS YARDS, ETC.);
TOGETHER WITH
MINUTES OF EVIDENCE AND PLANS.

RETURN to an Order of the House,
Dated 30th June, 1926, for—
(Mr. Eggleston.)

Ordered by the Legislative Assembly to be printed, 30th June, 1926

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MEMBERS OF THE PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON RAILWAYS.

(Fifteenth Committee.)

J. D. Deany, Esq., M.L.A., Chairman. *
A. E. Lind, Esq., M.L.A., Vice-Chairman. †

The Hon. A. Bell, M.L.C.
The Hon. A. E. Chandler, M.L.C.

R. H. Solly, Esq., M.L.A.
The Hon. G. C. Webber, M.L.A.

* Mr. J. D. Deany, M.L.A., was appointed Chairman on 3rd February, 1936, in succession to the Hon. A. Bell, M.L.C., whose term of office expired on that date.
† Mr. A. E. Lind, M.L.A., was appointed Vice-Chairman on 3rd February, 1936.

APPROXIMATE COST OF REPORT.

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<th>Description</th>
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PROGRESS REPORT.

The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Railways has, in accordance with the
requirements of Section 21 of the Railways Standing Committee Act 1915 (No. 2717),
inquired into the proposed expenditure of £30,000 towards the provision of
connecting lines between Glenroy and Albion, Tottenham Gravitation Yards, and
Melbourne Goods Yards, &c., authorized in the Schedule to the Railway Loan
Application Act 1925 (No. 3417), subject to the outlay being first approved by the
Committee, and has now the honour to report as follows:—

PREVIOUS REPORT OF COMMITTEE.

1. On the 20th April, 1923, the Honorable the Minister for Railways asked the Committee
to report on a proposal of the Railways Commissioners that £370,000 should be expended in
constructing a double-track railway suitable for heavy goods traffic from near Glenroy station
south-west, passing on the east side of Keilor, to Albion, so as to give direct connexion by rail
between the North-eastern main lines and the Tottenham Gravitation and Marshalling Yards, thus
avoiding the necessity for the goods traffic passing over the Essendon suburban railway, and
practically abolishing the congestion in the Melbourne Yard by the use of the new Tottenham Yards.
On 29th August, 1923, the Committee wrote the Minister that, having regard to the gradients
required, it considered the route proposed the best obtainable, and suggested that the Board of
Land and Works should acquire for the Railways Commissioners the necessary land for four tracks,
two for slow goods traffic, and two for fast passenger traffic. The Committee also recommended
that a suitable area of land to the north-east of Albion might be used for factories and dwellings
under the supervision of the Metropolitan Town Planning Commission, providing that water
supply and sewerage facilities were found to be satisfactory. The Committee added that, although
it was recommending the immediate acquirement of the land for the proposed Glenroy to Albion
railway—

"... and believes that the congestion of traffic on the Essendon railway will before
long necessitate the diversion of the goods traffic from and to the North-eastern line by
the suggested route. . . . . . . . . . It seems doubtful if the traffic can be materially
relieved while the Live Stock Isle Yards remain at Newmarket, even if the proposed
Glenroy–Albion railway be constructed, and some of the North-eastern traffic be diverted
to Tottenham Marshalling and Gravitation Yards."

2. In September, 1924, the Committee inquired what action the Department was taking,
and was informed that in addition to the Glenroy–Albion connexion it was essential for an
independent connexion to be made between Tottenham and the Melbourne Yard. The Committee
thereupon proceeded to deal with the two proposals in conjunction, but it has not been practicable
to deal finally with the matter, because of a proposal to serve the Keilor–Bulla districts (dealt
with in a separate Report) having to be considered in conjunction with the Glenroy–Albion
proposal, and, later, the possibility of a site for a live-stock market being selected near the
proposed line has led to further delay pending the Government’s decision on this matter.

3. However, the Railways Commissioners have repeatedly represented that the connexion
is urgently required, irrespective altogether of the live-stock traffic, and that the serious congestion
which has recently occurred in the Melbourne Yard, leading in turn to a shortage of tracks in
various parts of the country, has been largely brought about by the absence of this line.
Having regard to these factors, the Committee has felt that while a final decision should be delayed
awaiting developments with regard to a site for a live-stock market, the independent goods line
between Tottenham Yards and the Melbourne Yard can now be dealt with, and the position
summarized regarding the proposed connexion with the North-eastern line.

DESCRIPTION OF TOTTENHAM YARDS.

4. The Tottenham Marshalling and Gravitation Yards, which are about 2½ miles in length,
are situated between West Footscray and Sunshine, from 5 to 7½ miles from Melbourne. The
gradients are approximately 1 in 120 through the bottle-necks, and 1 in 200 for the groups of
sidings. The tracks run parallel with the main line, on the north side, and consist of three
arrival roads at the Sunshine end, then eight first-classification roads (where the trucks are
marshalled in line order), thirteen second-classification roads (where sorting takes place into
station order), and five departure roads leading towards West Footscray. Independent through
7807...2.
lines from West Footscray to Sunshine and an up independent line from Sunshine to the entrance of the arrival roads at the northern end are also provided. There is a double-track truck weighbridge in the first-classification sidings. Each siding will hold eighty vehicles at least, which is substantially more than the present longest train load.

5. This Committee in 1919 recommended an expenditure of £75,000 for the completion of the first section of the Tottenham Yards. This was gradually increased, and in 1922 approximately £350,000 had been spent on the yards, leaving them much in the position they are to-day. The Tottenham Yards are now utilized merely for the marshalling of loading collected from the various industries at and in the vicinity of Sunshine, St. Albans, and the Brooklyn line between Sunshine and Newport, averaging about 300 trucks per day. The capacity of the yards with a cross-country connexion and an independent line to the Melbourne Yard would be over 1,000 trucks per day.

6. Tottenham Yards differ from the Melbourne Yard in that, while the Melbourne Yard deals with general transfer goods and delivery at the Melbourne Yard sheds, marshalling and sorting, &c., and may handle up to 6,600 trucks in a day. Tottenham is intended for use solely as a gravitation marshalling and sorting yard, and is laid out for a maximum handling of 2,800 trucks per day when completed. It will be possible to link up with 80 per cent. of the mileage of the Victorian Railways when the yards are completed and the necessary connexions made.

NECESSITY FOR CONNEXION WITH NORTH-EASTERN LINE.

7. The Railways Commissioners are seriously handicapped by the restricted space in the Melbourne Yard, and there is urgent need of the Tottenham Marshalling Yards being made available. The difficulties of operation (and consequent higher working cost) have been accentuated recently because of portion of the Melbourne Yard area being absorbed by the new suburban passenger platforms at Spencer-street. The existing facilities provide for the free handling of approximately 4,500 trucks daily; but the average number now handled is over 5,000 daily, including an average of over 900 transfer trucks, which have in most cases to be handled three times, while as many as 6,600 trucks have had to be dealt with in one day (including up to 1,450 transfers), with the result that serious congestion and delays have occurred.

8. With regard to the North-eastern connexion, under existing conditions no down North-eastern goods train can be worked through from Melbourne between 4.30 a.m. and 9 a.m. and between 2 p.m. and 6 p.m., owing to the busy suburban and country passenger traffic, and even between 9 a.m. and 2 p.m. and between 6 p.m. and midnight serious delays occur at Kensington by reason of the heavy suburban passenger traffic. When the Glenroy–Albion connexion is provided it will be practicable to spread the North-eastern goods traffic more evenly throughout the 24 hours, and obtain more satisfactory results from the goods service to and from the North-eastern District. The only portion of the suburban track that the North-eastern goods traffic will then pass over will be that between Glenroy and Broadmeadows, instead of the long sections from Melbourne to Essendon and Essendon to Broadmeadows. As a matter of fact, if the connexion be made between Albion and Broadmeadows, as has more recently been proposed, the good traffic will entirely clear the suburban passenger trains.

NECESSITY FOR CONNEXION WITH MELBOURNE YARD.

9. The direct connexion from Tottenham via Footscray to the Melbourne Yard is required in order to relieve the congestion which now takes place on the main line between Footscray and South Kensington Junction, which is one of the busiest sections in the suburban area.

During the period—the Maribyrnong River box is open, i.e., from 5.45 a.m. to 10.45 p.m., the headway in each direction is as follows:—

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>&quot;Down&quot; Trains</th>
<th>Passenger</th>
<th>Goods</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>South Kensington–Maribyrnong River Box</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3½</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maribyrnong River Box–Footscray</td>
<td>2½</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>&quot;Up&quot; Trains</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>South Kensington–Maribyrnong River Box</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maribyrnong River Box–South Kensington</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Before and after those hours, when the Maribyrnong River Box is switched out and the section is South Kensington–Footscray, the headway is as under:—

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>&quot;Down&quot; Trains</th>
<th>Passenger</th>
<th>Goods</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>South Kensington–Footscray</td>
<td>4½</td>
<td>7½</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>&quot;Up&quot; Trains</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Footscray–South Kensington</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
10. Although these sections are short the number of trains which can be scheduled over them is governed by the length of section further out, i.e., the four-minutes section Tottenham to Sunshine in the case of Sunshine trains, and the six-minutes section Sunshine to St. Albans in the case of St. Albans trains, as well as the four-minutes section on the Williamstown line between Footscray and Yarraville.

11. Moreover, "down" goods trains for the Williamstown line must be scheduled to depart from South Kensington at least seven and thirteen minutes ahead of passenger trains for the Sunshine and Williamstown lines, while the goods trains for the Sunshine line must depart from South Kensington seven minutes ahead of Williamstown and thirteen minutes before Sunshine passenger trains, because there are no facilities for side-tracking trains between South Kensington and Newport or Sunshine, and when the goods trains referred to obtain possession of the lines they must continue on until they clear the suburban area. Similar intervals must obtain between "up" goods and passenger trains leaving Newport and Sunshine.

12. The trains on the various lines are scheduled at times suitable for traffic requirements, and in the case of country passenger and goods trains due consideration must be given to the length of block sections in the districts through which they run, and to the connexions to be made with branch-line trains at junction stations, while the departure of goods trains from Melbourne is also governed by the necessity to meet the requirements of consignors and also for allowing proper time for marshalling in the Melbourne Yard.

13. The method pursued for dealing with Gippsland traffic would be that the incoming trains would be marshalled at country depots such as Warragul, Nyora, &c., and loading to be discharged at Melbourne Goods Sheds placed so that inward loading could be readily cut off at North Melbourne, and the balance taken on to Tottenham. Conversely, outward loading accepted at the Melbourne Goods Sheds for the Eastern districts would be shunted to North Melbourne and picked up there by outgoing trains.

14. So far as the question of using the outer circle line from Oakleigh to Fairfield Park is concerned, if the Gippsland goods business were brought that way it would not be possible to work it over the already congested section from Clifton Hill, while in order to take it to Tottenham via North Fitzroy and North Carlton it would be necessary to construct at least three additional loops, regrade about 9 or 11 miles of track, duplicate certain portions of the existing track, and still have to work the traffic over sections of busy suburban lines. The traffic would need to be diverted by a new loop between North Carlton and South Brunswick, and brought in via the unused Somerton line, as it would be utterly impracticable to bring goods via Royal Park to North Melbourne and cross the whole of the country and suburban passenger tracks in order to reach the goods lines on the west side of North Melbourne station. In addition, with such a route the engine would be at the wrong end of the train for continuing the journey to Tottenham, and further shunting movements would be necessary.

15. The Committee when it looked into this matter originally had in view the utilization of the connecting line for both goods and passenger services. However, owing to the growth of the goods traffic, the Commissioners contend that it is important for the efficient and economical working of the goods traffic to and from Tottenham Yards that the proposed connecting line be used solely for goods purposes. They state that on all railway systems comparable with the suburban lines of the Victorian Railways, it is an axiom of railway working that the goods traffic should be entirely separated from the passenger traffic, and point to Sydney and suburbs, where large sums of money have been spent in providing separate lines and facilities for independent goods trains. They urge that the whole scheme is devised with the object of affording direct access to Tottenham Yards in such a manner that the goods trains can be operated without interference from passenger traffic, and make the suggestion that, as an alternative to allowing passenger traffic from the Keilor-Bulla district to be carried on the line, they be authorized to conduct a road motor service between the district to be served and the Broadmeadows station, from which station there is a good service of fast electric trains."

16. The Commissioners state that one of the main reasons actuating them in their desire to separate the goods and passenger traffic is the essentially different nature of the services. The goods trains are slow-moving, and a large amount of headway is required between passenger trains in order to get the goods trains through at all, while the time available for dealing with the goods traffic in the suburban area is becoming less between trains, and the expansion of "peak" periods for passenger traffic is further restricting the already limited number of hours when goods trains may run at all.
17. A great advantage of the independent goods line apart from permitting goods-train working at all hours is that the Department would not have to provide much storage accommodation at the terminals. When the traffic can be brought in at any time the terminal point can be fed regularly, but if the trucks cannot be brought in as required a sufficient number must be held at the terminal point to keep things going there while the suburban passenger peak traffic prevents the movement of goods trains. It is usually a very expensive matter to acquire land at terminals, and obviously the accommodation there should be used, as far as practicable, for working purposes, and not for storage.

18. To cope with the goods traffic it is apparently necessary to complete the Tottenham Yards with consequent rail connections, or duplicate the existing tracks, and it would cost more to resume land now settled on alongside the present lines and duplicate the tracks than to build a cross-country line to feed Tottenham, and in any case with duplication it would be too devious a route from the North-eastern line to Tottenham via Essendon and the Melbourne Yard. Moreover, trains entering the Tottenham Yards by such a route would be facing in the wrong direction, and would have to traverse the departure, second-classification, and first-classification tracks to reach the arrival roads.

ENFIELD MARSHALLING YARDS, NEW SOUTH WALES.

19. The New South Wales Commissioners have spent approximately £3,870,000 in providing additional facilities between Enfield and Darling Harbour, &c., so as to enable tracks to be available for the full twenty-four hours of the day. The Committee inspected the Enfield Marshalling Yards, in company with Mr. C. A. Hodgson, Metropolitan Area Commissioner and Chief Traffic Manager, New South Wales Railways, and Mr. C. H. Fethney, Inspecting Engineer of the Victorian Railways. The New South Wales Railway Department has an independent goods system to serve the Sydney metropolitan and suburban area, the head-quarters of which are at the Enfield Marshalling Yards, which alone have over 37 miles of track, and a capacity for dealing with 5,462 trains. Enfield is 9½ miles from Sydney as compared with 5 to 10½ miles in the case of Tottenham, but Mr. Hodgson stated in evidence that the location at Enfield has been entirely satisfactory, both for marshalling purposes and as a location for the goods engines of the Department. The amount of light running of engines between Enfield and Darling Harbour is very small.

20. It was explained that the proposal to run independent goods lines at Sydney originated from the disorganization that took place owing to it being necessary to restrict the goods traffic on the suburban lines to about seven hours a day. The Commissioners have had a number of requests to permit of passenger trains running on the independent goods lines, but they stated that they will not agree to it because it would not permit of a perfectly even flow of traffic from the goods dépôt, and would in fact stultify the huge expenditure already incurred in providing " fly-overs," " dives," loops, and separate tracks for the goods traffic.

LIVE STOCK MARKET SITE.

21. The location of the present Live Stock Market at Newmarket means that cattle trucks from the North-eastern line must be worked through the busy Essendon line suburban traffic to reach their destination. The usual procedure is for the trains to run through to the Melbourne Yard, where the trucks are marshalled and complete train loads made up and run out to Newmarket. Occasionally a North-eastern train is shunted at Newmarket station on its journey towards Melbourne and run out on the live-stock sidings. This is, however, not possible in the busier hours of the day. Live-stock trucks from other country stations are sorted in the same manner in the Melbourne Yard and made up into train loads for the Newmarket sidings.

22. The selection of a new site for the Live Stock Market has complicated the position in regard to the proposed connecting line, because if a site were selected on either the Northern or North-eastern lines, just above or below Glenroy or Albion, the Committee would most probably recommend a route terminating or commencing at the site selected in order to economize in traffic working, and so that a minimum of shunting would be necessary for the live stock. Furthermore, if a site were selected at an intermediate point between the two lines, it might prove advantageous to run the proposed line through that site in making the cross-country connexion. It will thus be evident that the matter of the live-stock site is intimately bound up with the proposed connecting line, but the congestion on the railways is approaching the stage when something must be done to relieve it, and to use the Tottenham Yards, irrespective of a change being made in the location of the Live Stock Market.
23. Evidencing the necessity for a cross-country connexion for goods purposes, apart from the live-stock business altogether, it may be mentioned that for the section Melbourne to Wallan the number of up and down goods and live-stock trains scheduled during the month of December last was—five stock only, 71; goods and live stock, 722. The trains conveying goods only were not specially listed, but the great majority of the 722 would be purely goods trains against 71, or, roughly, 10 per cent. conveying live stock only. The percentage of purely live-stock trains to the total number of trains varies slightly, however, in different months of the year; in August last it was 11.6 per cent., in July 13.8 per cent., and in June 5.9 per cent. Figures supplied in the recent report of the Metropolitan Town Planning Commission on the removal of the Live-stock Soleyards indicate that approximately 23 per cent. of the live stock of the State reaches Melbourne via the North-eastern line; but, while the live-stock traffic is undoubtedly heavy, the goods traffic presents a far more pressing problem to the railway authorities.

24. If the Newmarket Stock Yards remain in their present position and the cross-country line to Albion and to Tottenham Yards is constructed live stock from the North-eastern line will, during the suburban passenger traffic hours, be diverted over the Glenroy-Albion connexion, through the Tottenham Gravitation Yards, and over the independent goods line into the North Melbourne Gravitation Yards, and then taken direct to Newmarket. The only suburban passenger line to be traversed will be that between Kensington and Newmarket, less than a mile long. Stock from the North-eastern District coming along after midnight and before the first suburban passenger train in the morning would be run direct to Newmarket through Essendon as at present. The provision of the connexion will enable stock from the North-east to be taken to Newmarket at any time except during the hours when the suburban passenger traffic is at its peak.

25. Combined live-stock and goods trains from the North-eastern districts will be taken into the Tottenham Yards via the new connexion, the ordinary goods portion left there, and the live-stock trucks and perishable goods taken through to Melbourne by the same engine. Stock to and from the Pig Market will be dealt with as at present, i.e., brought into Melbourne and discharged in the vicinity of Dynon-road, North Melbourne.

ROUTES AND ESTIMATED COSTS, NORTH-EAST CONNEXION.

26. The matter of the exact location for the connecting line has been given a great deal of consideration. The original proposal of the Commissioners was to link up Albion and Glenroy. The Committee held the view that a connexion further out would be an advantage, because the growth of the closely-settled suburban area, which will extend eventually to Broadmeadows and probably beyond, would necessitate the provision of a frequent electric-train passenger service, which for the section between Glenroy and Broadmeadows might clash with the times of arriving and departing goods trains. As a matter of fact, the passenger train service to Broadmeadows now comprises 28 trains in 18½ hours on an ordinary working day, or approximately an average of a train each 40 minutes. The Committee visited Glenroy and heard well-founded local objections to the line going through Glenroy township. Later plans of the Commissioners, however, provided for keeping well to the north of Glenroy, and joining the main North-eastern line at a point 60 chains above Glenroy station (practically half way to Broadmeadows), and running thence to Broadmeadows on two independent goods tracks, so that the proposal has really become Albion via Glenroy to Broadmeadows.

27. With a view to possibly serving the Keilor-Bulla districts, and also Oaklands Junction, the Committee obtained estimates of costs (which are set out herein) for lines from Craigieburn via the Sanatorium to Albion and from Craigieburn via Oaklands Junction to Albion. This latter route would come within 1½ miles of Bulla township and 1½ miles of Keilor. On learning of the high cost of these proposals the Committee obtained data as to taking off at Somerton, and running via Tullamarine to Albion. This route, however, although shorter in mileage, would actually cost £25,000 more than the Oaklands route to Craigieburn, owing to the more difficult construction. Any of the routes from Craigieburn or Somerton would to an extent serve the Keilor-Bulla district, and the Somerton route would traverse the proposed live-stock sale yards site at Tullamarine; but if it is intended to have the connecting line for goods traffic only, it would be necessary to lay duplicate tracks for passenger purposes, or alternatively to use stations in that district for goods and live-stock purposes only.
28. The following are the particulars of the routes and estimated costs for the Albion connexion, the grades in each case being not greater than 1 in 120 for "up" traffic, and 1 in 70 for "down" traffic, viz. :

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>From</th>
<th>From Melbourne Direct</th>
<th>Estimated Total Cost at 25 May, 1928</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Glenroy</td>
<td>1.52</td>
<td>9.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broadmeadows, via Glenroy</td>
<td>5.25</td>
<td>10.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somerton, Northern Route</td>
<td>12.8</td>
<td>13.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somerton, Southern Route</td>
<td>13.34</td>
<td>13.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Craigieburn, via Oakland Junction</td>
<td>17.38</td>
<td>16.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Craigieburn, via Sandtonton</td>
<td>16.31</td>
<td>16.11</td>
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* Estimates at lower amounts were used in some of the earlier estimations.

**ROUTES AND ESTIMATED COSTS, WEST FOOTSCRAY-MELBOURNE YARD.**

29. A connexion between the Tottenham Yards and the North-eastern line will not alone suffice to ensure the use desired of those yards. The Committee considers that an independent goods track will also be necessary between the "up" or Melbourne end of the yards at West Footscray and the Melbourne Yard. The Commissioners’ proposal is to run two additional tracks alongside the existing line from West Footscray to Footscray. These tracks would leave West Footscray on the north side of the passenger platform, so as not to interfere with the passenger lines and about 3 chains before reaching Footscray station they would dive under the main Bendigo line, continue in a deep open cut across the railway reserve, pass under the Geelong line, crossing under Hyde-street at its intersection with Bunbury-street, then entering a tunnel and proceeding down the centre of Bunbury-street, emerging at its intersection with Moreland-street, then continuing as a surface line to the river bank, and across the river by a new railway bridge in a line with Bunbury-street to Sims-street on the West Melbourne bank of the Maribyrnong River. The tunnel down Bunbury-street would be 20 chains in length, and would be made on the cut-and-cover principle, the street being opened up, the lines laid, an arch built over them, and the street filled in again. The proposed line after leaving Sims-street runs in a north-easterly direction, crossing Dynon-road and the adjoining tidal channel by an overhead bridge; thence alongside Highton-street to the south side of the South Kensington station, a distance of approximately 1.5 miles; and thence to the North Melbourne and Spencer-street Yards.

30. The estimated cost for the section West Footscray to Maribyrnong River, including cost of land and erection of a railway bridge over the river, was on 1st May, 1926, £379,000, and for the section from the Maribyrnong River bridge via South Kensington, to the Melbourne Yards £113,000.

**REGRADING GEELONG LINE AT NAPIER-STREET.**

31. While not an integral portion of the West Footscray to Melbourne Yard scheme, the Commissioners urge that the regrading of the Geelong (and Williamstown) line at Naper-street, Footscray could with advantage be carried out at the same time as the regrading of the Bendigo line in the vicinity and the abolition of the level crossings at Albert-street and Nicholson-street. This work would cost £46,200 if carried out at the same time as the other works proposed, but a great deal more if postponed and dealt with separately.

**ABOLITION OF LEVEL CROSSINGS.**

32. In carrying out the proposed works advantage will be taken of the opportunity of regrading the Bendigo line, so that the roadway will pass over both the independent goods line and the Bendigo main line at Albert-street and at Nicholson-street, Footscray. There will also be a roadway bridge over the independent goods line as it crosses the Footscray railway reserve, while the line will pass under Hyde-street, which will be left at its full width, near the entrance to the Bunbury-street tunnel. The bridge over the Maribyrnong River, at the continuation of Bunbury-street, will be for railway purposes only. The Geelong line level crossing at Naper-street, Footscray, is a very busy traffic point, and, as Naper-street is also a potential tram crossing, being included in the General Scheme of the Melbourne and Metropolitan Tramways Board, it is intended to put in a vehicular and pedestrian subway, 66 feet in width, at this spot. The Footscray Council offers no objection to any of the proposals.
VIEWS OF THE COMMITTEE.

32. The Committee has inspected on a number of occasions the district between Albyn and stations on the North-eastern line between Essendon and Greigeburn, also the Tottenham Yards, the site of the proposed regrading and tunnelling at Footscray, the South Kensington depot, and the Melbourne Yard. It is, broadly speaking, in agreement with the views of the Commissioners and their officers that, in order to alleviate the present congestion at the Melbourne Yard, much further use must immediately be made of the Tottenham Yards, or, which the sum of £375,000 has already been spent. The traffic from the new Moama Balranald line, which is expected to be very heavy, is also being carried to Melbourne via Seymour and Wallan, and this will increase the need for a connection to Tottenham without traversing the Essendon suburban section and the North Melbourne or Spencer-street Yards.

34. The Committee questioned the Commissioners as to why the proposed connexion should not be brought in on the Tottenham side of Sunshine instead of at Albyn, but the reason was advanced that it was desired to bring it in at Albyn in order to avoid the necessity for reverse movements with North-eastern line trains. Moreover, the town of Sunshine could not be avoided, and very costly resumptions of property would be necessary.

35. It is considered that for the present the section of the main line between Albyn and Sunshine will be quite capable of carrying the additional traffic which will be diverted to it by the provision of the connexion from the North-eastern line. The Department, however, realizes that at some later date it may be necessary to duplicate this section of the line, taking in portion of the area in front of H. V. McKay's Harvester Works. One of the disabilities associated with the provision of another line from Albyn to Sunshine is the level crossing near the Sunshine station, and it is desirable that some alteration be made at this crossing, if possible before the existing track is duplicated.

36. The original plan for the lay-out of the Tottenham Yards provided for the cross-country connexion which is now regarded as urgently necessary, and while its early construction is undoubtedly desirable and justified, the Committee is loath to recommend an exact route until some determination has been arrived at by the Government in regard to the location of the Live-stock Saleyards. It has been already explained that even if the yards are not removed from Newmarket this cross-country line will still be necessary for goods traffic only, so that it is not a matter of the cross-country line being recommended contingent upon a new location being found for the saleyards. The position is, however, that a location may be selected which would be unsuitable for a definitely approved cross-country route to serve. For instance, if Sydenham or Diggers' Rest were chosen then the line from the North-eastern railway should come in at either of those stations and not at Albyn. If Craigieburn or Somerton were chosen it would be an advantage to start the North-eastern connexion from either of those places rather than from a station on either side. Finally, if an intermediate site be chosen, such as at Oaklands Junction, Tallarooka, or elsewhere, the route of the proposed railway to Albyn and the Tottenham Yards might be diverted to traverse the chosen area. To make a decision in the absence of a knowledge of the intentions of the Government and of Parliament on the matter would be quite probably inviting a re-opening of the whole matter within a few months.

37. However, the position, as far as the Railway Department is concerned, is that facilities must be afforded to relieve the congestion of trains at Melbourne to cope with the goods traffic of the State, and the Committee, although it is withholding temporarily the recommendation of a definite route for the North-eastern and Northern lines connexion, intends recommending the provision of separate and independent goods tracks from the Melbourne end of the Tottenham Yards (adjoining West Footscray station), via Footscray and the old West Melbourne seawarp area (which is ultimately to be reclaimed, largely by excavated material from the new Appleton Dock), to South Kensington, North Melbourne, and Spencer-street Yard as outlined on the accompanying plan. This portion of the work will take some considerable time to complete, and can be put in hand at once without awaiting the fixation of a definite route from Albyn to the North-eastern line, which, however, will be approved at the earliest possible date consistent with obtaining definite knowledge of the intentions of Parliament in regard to a site for the Live-stock Saleyards.

RECOMMENDATION OF THE COMMITTEE.

38. The Committee, for the foregoing reasons, recommends Parliament to approve of the Railways Commissioners' proposals as under, viz. :—

(1) To construct duplicate independent goods tracks from West Footscray to the Melbourne Yard, including the necessary re-grading of the Botanic grounds and alteration to the Albert and Nicholson streets crossings at Footscray, also the
simultaneous regard for the Geelong line to abolish the level crossing at Napier-street, Footscray; such goods tracks to run practically parallel with the existing Bendigo railway line from West Footscray to a point approximately 3 chains from the up end of the Footscray station platforms; thence to dive under the main-line tracks, cross the Footscray railway reserve in a cutting, pass under the Geelong line and Hyde-street, tunnel under Bambury-street, emerging at its intersection with Moreland-street; thence across the Maribyrnong River by a new railway bridge; thence to South Kensington, North Melbourne, and the Melbourne Yard, at estimated costs for the section from West Footscray to the proposed Maribyrnong River bridge of £379,000, from the proposed Maribyrnong River bridge to the Melbourne Yard of £113,000, and for the proposed regrading and abolition of the level crossing at Napier-street, Footscray, of £46,200.

(2) The Committee intends recommending that a connection be made from the Northern line, probably from Albion, to a point on the North-Eastern line, possibly between Glenroy and Craigieburn, but owing to the uncertainty existing as to the location of the new Live-stock Saleyards, and because it believes that the recommendation of a definite route at this juncture might lead to costly extensions and to slow and inconvenient methods of working the traffic in the future, the Committee is making this a Progress Report only, and will, as early as circumstances allow, report further to Parliament upon this proposal.

39. Land Purchase.—As the proposed railway from West Footscray to the Spencer-street railway yard is to be used wholly in connection with facilitating the goods traffic of the Victorian Railways, is for the better and more economical working of the railway service, and does not provide any additional conveniences for the residents of the districts traversed by the line, who accordingly cannot be expected to pay for the land required, the Committee is further of the opinion that the land necessary for the construction of this railway should be paid for by the Railways Commissioners and be added to the capital cost of the railway; and the Committee therefore recommends that a clause embodying these suggestions be included in the Bill authorizing the construction of the line. The estimated amount for land purchase and compensation for the section now recommended (West Footscray to Melbourne Yard) will amount to only about £10,000; but this item will be substantially more for the cross-country connexion to be dealt with later.

J. D. DEASY,
Chairman.

Railways Standing Committee Room,
State Parliament House,
Melbourne, 10th June, 1925.

[Minutes of Evidence are not printed.]