

LATEST MOVES IN LOCAL HOUSING PLAN

50 STEEL PRE-FABS ASKED FOR

C.T. June 8, 1946

SOME IMPORTANT DEVELOPMENTS HAVE TAKEN PLACE IN CHRISTCHURCH DURING THE PAST FEW DAYS IN REGARD TO SOLVING THE SERIOUS HOUSING PROBLEM.

As an outcome of the recent meeting between local builders and the Housing Committee, eight definite proposals have been submitted by different builders and three of them have already been accepted by the committee.

The remaining five require modification either in regard to price or design, and the Borough Engineer has been instructed to carry out negotiations with the builders concerned.

Another big step taken by the committee is that of asking the Ministry of Health to allocate to Christchurch 50 of the new permanent prefabricated steel houses, a product of the British Iron and Steel Federation.

The three proposals which the committee found immediately acceptable will, if approved by the Ministry result in 13 bungalows being erected. Four of these will be in Wickfield Avenue, seven in Stanpit and two in Highcliffe. They will all be traditional brick built types and will be erected on land owned by the respective builders.

The five proposals which have been deferred pending an agreement with the builders regarding necessary modifications relate to eight houses and 18 bungalows, and the committee are very hopeful of being able to accept them very shortly.

In addition to all these definite proposals, five other firms have expressed their willingness to build for the Council, either on their own land or on Council land. In some cases draft plans of suggested developments have already been prepared and are being considered.

THE STEEL HOUSE.

With regard to the B.I.S.F. steel house, the committee at their last meeting had before them an offer from the Ministry of Health to make this type of building available to the Borough. Built in pairs, these houses have a much more traditional external appearance than the temporary prefabs. On the ground floor there is a large living room with dining recess, a hall and well appointed kitchen, whilst upstairs there are three bedrooms and a bathroom.

These houses are completely prefabricated in the factories and require only the minimum of skilled labour to erect them.

COUNCIL APPROVE STEEL PRE-FABS.

C.T. June 29, 1946

Christchurch Town Council, at their meeting last week, approved a recommendation of the Housing Committee to apply to the Ministry of Health for 50 permanent pre-fabricated houses of the B.I.S.F. type for erection on the Somerford site.

The houses, particulars of which were given in the Christchurch Times on June 8th, are a product of the British Iron and Steel Federation.

Councillor Kermode asked the Borough Surveyor (Mr. E. B. Wise) for his opinion of these houses and in reply Mr. Wise said cost of maintenance would probably be high, as the steel structure would have to be kept well painted. He said that although the construction would necessitate some extra expenditure, the Ministry had agreed to subsidise that extra, so that there would be no extra cost incurred by the local authority.

WORTH WHILE TRYING.

Mr. Wise explained that these houses had steel frames covered with iron sheeting and the roofs were of corrugated asbestos. He would not like to say whether they would last 60 years, but the committee in bringing forward the recommendation were influenced by the fact that the houses would be available very shortly. He thought it would be worth while trying this type of house.

Replying to another point raised by Councillor Kermode as to whether there was any substantial difference between structure of this type of house and the temporary pre-fab., Mr. Wise said the main difference was the substitution of corrugated iron for asbestos for the walls.

Councillor Kermode said that although the Ministry would subsidise actual purchase cost there would be no subsidy for maintenance, which the Borough Surveyor considered would probably be high.

"In spite of this, however," he said, "I feel that we have got to take whatever houses are offered to us, and I heartily support this recommendation."

Councillor McArdle asked what the rents would be, and the Mayor replied that it had not yet been fixed. The recommendation was carried unanimously.