

Shops May Be Demolished In Bargates

Owners Will Object At Next Month's Planning Inquiry

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IN a little over three weeks' time, an Inspector of the Ministry of Housing and Local Government will be at Winchester to receive objections and representations relating to the County Development Plan. Among the many objectors will be three shopkeepers from Christchurch, whose livings will be affected by the proposed by-pass. If the by-pass goes forward as planned their premises will have to be demolished.

The premises are situated close to the traffic lights, in Bargates, and comprise a furniture shop, a hairdresser's shop and a grocer's shop.

Mr. Frank Elliott's furniture business has stood at the corner of Pound Lane for 24 years, and his shop will be one of the first to go. Since the first mention of a by-pass he has been fighting to save his business.

Like the other shopkeepers he is aware that the authorities are not compelled to find him alternative business accommodation.

Hardship

"This is a first class trading position and I have no desire to move," he told a reporter yesterday. "My two sons want to come into business with me when they are old enough to do so, and bringing a road through my premises would cause tremendous hard-ship."

Mr. Dennis Newbury, a hairdresser, took over the old-established business from his father after the war. He has no idea where he will go if his shop is pulled down.

"Of course there will be compensation, but it is impossible to make plans. All the while this threat is hanging over our heads it is hardly worth putting money into the business. It is very unfair to upset people's livings in this way," he said.

Worked Hard

The Parker brothers have only had their grocery business in Bargates for about two years, but during that time they have worked hard to make it a success. Their objections will also be stated to the Inspector.

The fish shop between the hairdresser's and the grocer's will also be affected but no official objections are being lodged.

The manager, Mr. Keith Challenger, son of the owner, feels that little purpose can be served by objecting. He has no real objection to the shop coming down if the compensation is adequate.

"We have been told by the doctor that for my mother's health we should sell the business. The trouble is who is going to buy if the premises are to be demolished? This business has been built up over 30 years, but that won't affect compensation," he said.