

Parking plan starts storm

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A POLICE CALL FOR A TOTAL PARKING BAN IN ONE OF CHRISTCHURCH'S BUSIEST MAIN THOROUGHFARES, BARRACK-ROAD, HAS RAISED A STORM AMONG LOCAL TRADERS. "IT WOULD BE CRIPPLING TO TRADE," SAID ONE SHOPKEEPER MR. HARRY WILLOUGHBY, YESTERDAY. HE RUNS A RADIO, ELECTRICAL AND CYCLE SHOP.

Over 40 traders crowded into the Quality Restaurant on Wednesday and formed a Barrack - road Traders Association to fight the ban.

Afterwards Mr. Willoughby, who was largely responsible for calling the meeting, gave a personal opinion on the police idea.

"If you knew how many speeding offences there had been in the last 12 months," he said. "If you're going to remove all parking it is going to make Barrack-road faster still and traffic is going to race through.

"The pedestrian crossings are going to be an utter death-trap. We are listening to the screech of brakes every day, and regularly one car a week bumps into another at those crossings.

"I don't understand the police attitude to this. I know that at peak periods there is congestion and hold-ups of traffic. But the simple answer, I am positive the police must agree, is not parked vehicles."

OBJECTIONS

The meeting formed a committee which will meet next Tuesday to formulate objections to the police suggestion.

Mr. Willoughby said some of the traders had been under the impression the ban would operate only between 8 am to 9.30 am and 4.30 pm and 6.30 pm, and they were "taken aback" to hear that those hours referred to loading and unloading by delivery vehicles. Private vehicles would be banned from parking at all hours.

Mr. Willoughby is a member of Christchurch Chamber of Trade committee, which is meeting on Monday to discuss the parking ban.

"We hope they will accept the Barrack-road Traders Association as an affiliated member," he said, but as far as we are concerned we are going to fight the ban ourselves."

Christchurch Council has asked local organisations to give their views on the parking ban, and Jumpers Residents Association committee met on Thursday of last week and drew up a 7-point plan for easing the traffic jams in Barrack-road, which runs right through the ward.

The committee suggests a roundabout at the Stour-road junction. MEXE should construct a road from its existing bridge so that works traffic would have access from Iford-lane instead of Barrack-road. Traffic bound to and from Boscombe and Southbourne should be encouraged to use Stour-road and Tuckton Bridge and not Barrack-road

Sopers-lane should be widened by taking part of the recreation ground (a scheme which was recently turned down by the town council), so that traffic could be invited to use the lane and Willow-way, which is shortly to be improved, to get to Tuckton Bridge.

STAGGERED HOURS

Bus lay-bys should be constructed in Barrack-road. Somerford factories should be asked to stagger their working hours. The Christchurch approach to the Iford-lane roundabout should be widened, because, says the committee, hold-ups at the roundabout are the cause of much of the congestion in Barrack-road.

The association's spokesman, Mr. H. B. Rice, said they were going to get together with Christchurch Chamber of Trade to try and find "common ground."

"The side street facilities for parking are not very good—some of them are too narrow—so there is not much alternative.

"We have in mind unilateral parking. We would rather that than have a ban. We have had a look down there and cannot see any place where a municipal car-park could be put. MEXE would not give up any land. We think a parking ban will increase speed in Barrack-road."