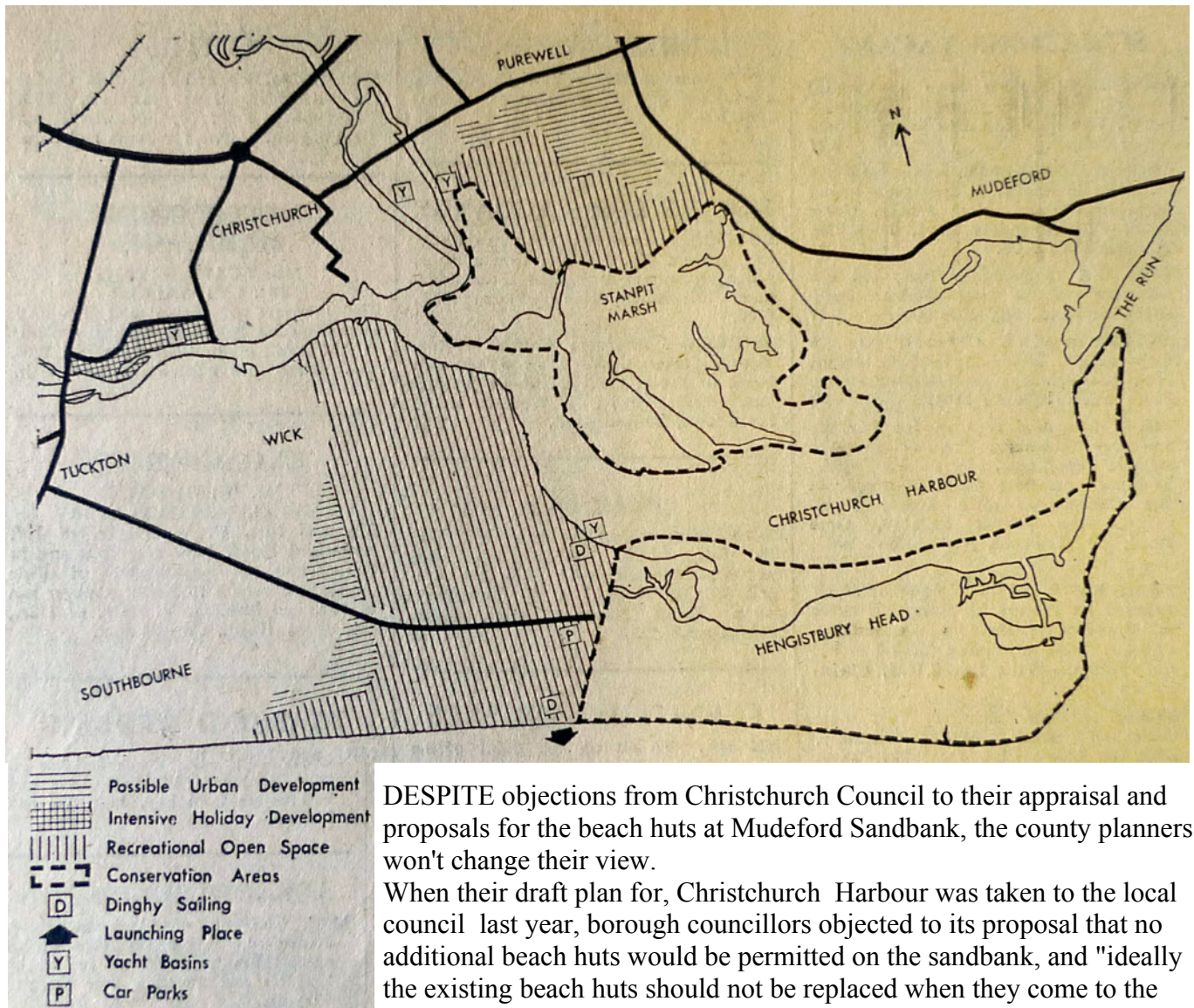


BEACH HUTS SHOULD GO SAY PLANNERS

C.T. Sept. 27, 1968



DESPITE objections from Christchurch Council to their appraisal and proposals for the beach huts at Mudeford Sandbank, the county planners won't change their view.

When their draft plan for, Christchurch Harbour was taken to the local council last year, borough councillors objected to its proposal that no additional beach huts would be permitted on the sandbank, and "ideally the existing beach huts should not be replaced when they come to the end of their useful lives." Christchurch, which runs the sandbank,

thought the huts provided a "valuable amenity".

This week the plan for the harbour was published by the county. The policy remains the same. Says the statement: "However, the implications of such a policy will require further consideration with the local authorities concerned." Said deputy county planning officer, Mr. Robert Stoddart: "We have a problem here, with the local council taking a different view from ours. Ideally there shouldn't be any development there. We think the huts are unfortunate in the landscape." They have also extended the Hengistbury Head "conservation area" to include the whole of the sandbank, instead of its original line stopping half way along it.

Planning officer, Mr. A. Foster, explained that "quite drastic" erosion had taken place on the headland. The idea was to try to restrain cliff falls and the loss of vegetation. Willow Way is planned as an area for holiday facilities. Says the statement: "The development of such facilities as restaurants, chalets, a riverside walk, boat hire and a yacht harbour will be considered at Willow Way, subject to the preparation of a comprehensive scheme incorporating car parks and landscaping, and the buildings being of a high standard of design."

Originally the planners intended this area to be public open space, but have now dropped this idea. "We are now accepting that public open space there is not practicable," said Mr. Stoddart.

Proposals for limiting moorings to 1,150—at present there are 750—are also put forward. Mr. Foster said this capacity had been worked out on the number of boats which enter through the Run on a flood tide. When this number was reached, the planners would look again to see if more could be accommodated. Four places are shown on the plan as suitable for yacht basins, at Willow Way, Double Dykes, on the island formed by the two branches of the Avon, and on the east bank of the Avon. Fifty of the extra moorings could be accommodated in the channel, say the planners, the remaining 350 being in yacht basins. This number would probably be more economically accommodated in fewer than four basins, so applications would be considered on a first come, first served basis. Another problem from moorings could be pollution, and the planners would insist on adequate shore-based facilities at yacht basins. Christchurch Sailing Club didn't agree that any more moorings could be accommodated in the harbour, said Mr. Foster.

"A detailed study is needed to explore the methods of improving conditions at the Run, so that optimum use can be made of this very restricted harbour entrance. For example, more comprehensive channel marking and measures to control boat traffic in the Run might be factors which would improve the existing unsatisfactory situation," says the statement.

As for dinghy sailing, the planners felt that these should ideally be launched directly into the sea, as most races took place in the bay. However, only one place for this, at Double Dykes, could be found. Possibilities at Avon Beach had been looked into, but these would be too expensive.

Other points in the plan include discouraging powerboats and water-skiing in the harbour as incompatible with the objects of the plan; retaining the open character of the area between Wick and Double Dykes—with perhaps a golf course; a riverside park at Convent Meadows; inclusion of footpaths for extra access to the waterside in new development; more supervision of boats for hire and of the five knot speed limit.

A conservation plan for the Mundeford Quay area is also proposed, but Mr. Stoddart said that this would not have a high priority in the planning department. A public meeting will be held on October 16 at Christchurch Town Hall at 7.30 pm, when planning officers will explain the plan in detail. Representations from the public must be made before the end of November.

The plan was produced jointly by Bournemouth and Hampshire. Bournemouth has already accepted it in principle, but any objections in the Bournemouth area will be passed on by the county council.