

The Proposed Plan For Mudeford (1960)

Area Planning Officer's Report

CHRISTCHURCH Development Sub-committee's recommendation concerning flat development at Mudeford was made public at Wednesday's meeting of the South West Area Planning Committee at Lyndhurst.

A report of Wednesday's discussion appears on page 1. Below we print a full preamble explained by Mr. F.F. Freeth, area planning officer and the recommendation in full.

Mr. F.F. Freeth's report stated: The committee will be aware of the fact that various proposals have been put forward for high density flat development in Mudeford.

A preliminary survey has been made of the area between Argyle Road and the sea front at "Gundimore". This is an area which contains quite a large number of old houses which, during the next 25 years or so, will have outlived their usefulness and have become uneconomical to maintain. Proposals have already been put forward for flat development just east of Argyle Road, at "Inveravon", at "The Lawn" and at "Sandhills". Consent has been given for a two storey block of flats at "Green Loaning". The fact that redevelopment will take place along the harbour frontage in this part of Mudeford is, in my opinion, inevitable. If this redevelopment were to take the form of speculative building such as bungalows and houses on the normal small plot after the manner of the neighbouring estates, it will result in the destruction of the tree screen and the entire spoliation of this attractive landscape.

It is suggested that consideration should be given to an overall scheme for the redevelopment of the land between Mudeford Road and the Harbour and that the first action to be adopted here would be to ask the County Planning Committee at the first review of the Development Plan to amend the Christchurch Town Map to include for a higher density within the area. It will, of course, be appreciated that this area includes a portion of "Sandhills" which is at present shown in the Town Map as "public open space" and has been included the Green Belt proposals. It is however, understood that the economic background has been considered by the Borough Council and the suggestion put forward that favourable consideration should be given to some form of flat development at least on part of this property. I would, however, stress the importance of preserving the maximum of open space both in the interest of amenity and providing for the ever increasing number of visitors to this attractive place. If the committee were agreeable to the suggestion of a considerable increase in density to allow for flat development, it is suggested that a joint report on the effect of such a proposal should be prepared by both the Borough Engineer and the County Planning Officer, as quite obviously dense development would have a considerable effect on public services such as water, gas, electric light and sewerage. The County Planning Officer has been instructed by the County Planning Committee to prepare a report on the effect of high density development. Consideration would also have to be given to the effect it would have upon road traffic: obviously, provision would have to be made for improved access toward the town centre in the form of road improvements affecting Mudeford Road and Stanpit.

Redevelopment of the area suggested would of course, necessitate very careful consideration being given to the provision of adequate means of access from the main road. Some form of development roads would have to be introduced. Furthermore, great care would have to be taken to maintain the amenities of the area as a whole. The trees within this area are not, as individual trees, of great value but their massing particularly from the Harbour, is of major importance. Any final scheme prepared should make provision for the preservation of as many trees as possible and provide for future planting to ensure a continuity of amenity.

COULD ENHANCE THE PICTURE

The question of heights of buildings has been given some consideration. It will, of course, be appreciated that without a detailed survey the actual siting of new buildings cannot, at this stage, be determined but the general principle of flat development has been looked at from the amenity aspect and it is suggested that at on at least part of the area tall blocks of buildings properly designed, would not be out of keeping with the landscape—in fact, they could enhance the picture. In this connection I would point out that already quite

considerable-sized houses are existing in this area. Many of these are visible—particularly from the Harbour, in fact they form part of the picture on this northern shore.

Consideration has been given to the possible future area for redevelopment including Argyle Road westward as far as the open space. It is suggested that at this stage any scheme for redevelopment would be premature but that in this area, provision could be made for a service area to serve the high density development to the east.

It was recommended (1) that the County Planning Committee be requested to give consideration to providing for increased density by flat development and open space with public access to the water front; (2) that the area of "Sandhills" and its surroundings be rezoned to include for flat development in part, and open space with public access to the sea front; (3) that in general, any proposals for individual plot development in the form of bungalows or small houses within the area be not entertained; (4) that a joint report on the effect upon public services of flat development of increased density in the area be prepared by the Borough Engineer and the County Planning Officer.