

Council Vote 14-2 For Rowing Club Long Lease

Christchurch Times July 28, 1961

CHRISTCHURCH Borough Council on Tuesday agreed to the granting of a long lease to Christchurch Rowing Club to enable the club to erect a permanent boathouse and ancillary buildings on the existing site at Mayors Mead. At present the club members use a nissen hut described by one councillor as an "eyesore".

A condition of the lease is that a riverside walk be preserved for the public.

Only two members of the Council voted against the granting of a long lease. Fourteen members were in favour.

The matter had been referred to the full Council from a meeting of the Municipal Committee on July 4. On that occasion, explained committee chairman Coun. Barrington Myers, the committee did not shirk a decision, but was equally divided. Rather than decide such an important matter on a casting vote by the chairman it was agreed to refer it to the full Council.

Proposing that the long lease be approved, Coun. K. L. Smith congratulated the Rowing Club on its success. This, he said, was through wise leadership and enthusiasm of members. The Council should give every encouragement to the club to carry on its work.

The club was doing a remarkable job for the youth of the town by encouraging them to take part in an interesting and healthy outdoor sport. This could not be carried on in the existing headquarters. There was no room for expansion in the existing building — an old nissen hut — which was an eyesore.

NECESSARY

The time had come, said Coun. Smith, to erect a permanent boat-house and a long lease was necessary. Coun. Smith referred to an article in last week's issue of the Christchurch Times. What made the article all the more serious, he said, was a remark which was alleged to have been made by the Mayor.

Turning to the Mayor he said: "I am certain you didn't make it and it is very discourteous of the writer to print second-hand information. The least thing the writer can do is make an apology to you in next week's issue."

One of the councillors who voted against the move was Coun. T. Staniforth who maintained it would be improper to grant a long lease to the club to enable it to build permanent premises on what he described as a "most precious piece of land".

He believed that the land could be laid out in such a way that the Council could provide recreational facilities for residents and visitors and at the same time earn large sums of money for the relief of the rates. He thought that by granting a long lease they would be virtually selling the land.

Coun. B. E. Mulhall also opposed the granting of the lease. He said he was very much concerned about the preservation of open space. There was so little owned by the Council in the Borough. They could be proud of the Rowing Club but he did not think sentiment should detract them from the real issue which was open space.