

The Christchurch Times, 2 March 1956.

Mr. Nicholson's New Route to Tuckton?

Construction of another by-pass for Christchurch was approved by the Borough Council on Tuesday. Approved in principle were plans for the construction of a new road from Sopers Lane to Tuckton. Its route will be from near South View Road via Willow Way to Stour Road.

Members were told by Coun. W. E. Morgan, chairman of the Health and Highways Committee, however, that the scheme must, of necessity, be a long term one. 'For anything along these lines to materialise it is most desirable that the preliminaries should be put in hand while the necessary land is still completely undeveloped,' he added.

Coun. Morgan said that for a long time there had been a demand for an alternative route, by-passing the centre of the town, from the Quay to Tuckton. Whether Willow Way as a whole should be made up was a matter to be considered but it was suggested that the survey should include that.

Wick Lane would also be widened very shortly, he added, and he had no doubt a number of people would take that route in preference to going through the town.

Asked by Coun. Mrs. D. Baker why a new route was planned after South View Road had been closed, Coun. Morgan said the County Council were very concerned about the possible danger to the hundreds of pupils who crossed over South View Road during the day.

The Christchurch Times, 9 March 1956

Correspondence

Insane Proposal

Sir,

I have never heard such an insane proposal as Willow Way being made a new route to Tuckton. The idea of the council making a carriageway there is out of all reason when there is South View Road to be opened. Furthermore I consider the council had no right to close part of it after it had been open to traffic for seven years.

In 1938 when the County Council bought the land where the senior school now stands they offered to hand over the piece of land from Sopers Lane up to the made-up part of South View Road, to Christchurch Town Council free of charge, with a proviso that no road charges were to be made to the frontager, who was, of course, the County Council. Christchurch Council agreed to this. The land was handed over to them and the late Mr. Farmer, then Borough Engineer, at once removed the hedges at Sopers Lane and the end adjoining the made-up part of South View Road and the road to be used by traffic.

This was allowed for six years and it would be interesting to know who had an axe to grind by having the road closed to traffic. I am certain if Mr. Farmer had not died this would never have happened.

The ratepayers should demand at once that South View Road should be opened to through traffic. Such action would relieve the congestion in the High Street and on the main road.

Yours, etc.,

T. H. McARDLE,

Wick Lane Farm, Christchurch.

The Christchurch Times, 21 March 1958.

Topics of the Times [editorial by 'M.']

'Who's Afraid?'

It is not the least bit surprising that the erection of a footbridge over South View Road has been turned down by the Christchurch Development Sub-Committee on the grounds that it would be seriously detrimental to the amenities of the neighbourhood.

I agree. In fact I imagine this inevitable fate was always in the backs of the minds of some who have previously given lip-support to the provision of a bridge. It was a fairly safe safeguard.

Now, however, the project has reached a critical stage with the despatching of a deputation from the Christchurch Council to meet the County Council to discuss the problem of South View Road.

The battle of the bridge is about to begin. Let us therefore survey the battlefield.

Hampshire County Council owns the land on both sides of that part of South View Road and by some benighted transaction of the not very distant past it occupied the strip between, subject to the existence of a public right of way along it.

By the erection of a Siegfried-line defence works at each end, the enemy has forcibly restricted that right of way to pedestrians and cyclists who are sensible enough to lift their cycles over the barriers.

Wire netting has been thoughtfully placed in position to prevent others from wielding their offspring beneath the defence works.

The enemy seeks to justify its territorial ambitions by professing solicitude for the safety of small groups of children, eleven years old and over, who quite infrequently, and only at certain times of the year, cannot be trusted, under supervision, to cross a straight road where there is practically no traffic about.

On the grounds that county councillors as well as local councillors are servants of the public, may I be permitted to take this opportunity of openly challenging the public to say whether they are afraid for the safety of their children? Who is, in fact, afraid?

Are the children afraid? Is it likely that youngsters in their teens like to consider they cannot be trusted to cross a quiet road?

Are the parents afraid? If they cannot trust their offspring in South View Road, what agonies must they endure every time the little dears cross Stour Road to get to school, or High Street to get to the butcher's?

What unspeakable terror life must hold for the mothers and fathers living on the Somerford Estate, whose children (even smaller ones) have to go to Mundeford School!

Have the parents of children of the Stourbank Road school considered the terrible injuries their children might sustain if they fell off the top of the bridge, if it were built, to the hard surface of South View Road beneath?

Are the teachers afraid? Are they so physically incapable of controlling individual children who, when they get to the other side of the road, will be expected to submit themselves to the discipline of the team game?

Who, then, is afraid?

It is a handful of county councillors directing warfare from the impermeability of the safe underground public-opinion-proof bunker concealed in the bowels of their great costly new fortress by the West Gate.

I hope when the deputation of Christchurch councillors is ushered into the Presence it will tell them what the public jolly well thinks of **them**.

Of course an accident might happen in South View Road. So might it be in Bub Lane, Christchurch, or the Cathedral Close, Winchester.

[That evoked a reply from Stanley Kermode the following week:]

The Christchurch Times, 28 March 1958

Correspondence

South View Road

Sir,

Will you please permit me to correct some of the rather misleading statements made in 'Topics of the Times' on March 21st. I will try to be brief.

There never was a 'public right of way' along what may become the extension of South View Road. All that existed was a 'public footpath' along the line of the ditch.

That footpath has been moved to a new position and put into good repair.

When I was Chairman of the Christchurch Highways Committee and sometime before the County Council acquired their playing field, the managers of Twynham School, who were all Christchurch people, including a number of aldermen or councillors, requested the Highways Committee to erect barriers to stop people cycling along the footpath.

Barriers similar to those erected at Creedy footpath, which are designed to permit the passage of a pram but not a cycle, were erected.

The school managers have considered this matter on several occasions and each time have requested the County Education Committee to oppose the extension of South View Road. The suggestion of a bridge was made at a joint meeting by Christchurch councillors, not the County Council.

It was a Christchurch Councillor who spoke against the proposed bridge at the area planning meeting quite recently.

The reason given by Christchurch Council for wishing to extend South View Road was to ease the traffic problem in the High Street and allow Southbourne-bound traffic to use that route.

South View Road being a cul-de-sac is a quiet road now, but it would not be if it became the route from Christchurch to Southbourne.

To safeguard our children mainly against motorists – who incidentally knocked down three old people from Homelands in Stour Road during the past year – the Education Committee provide a traffic warden. We also provide a warden to conduct children across the road from Somerford to Mudeford.

The County Education Committee is guided by the local school managers and they are against there being a through road for the following reasons:

1. Further building is to take place on the existing playground, and within the next year several more classrooms are to be built.
2. At a later date an assembly hall must be provided.
3. The number of children is likely to stay in the region of 700 to 800, and when all building projects are completed part of the playing field will be needed for normal playground purposes and not just for organised games.

May I conclude by expressing my personal point of view. It will cost Christchurch ratepayers nearly £4,000 to make the road, and to this must be added the cost of any bridge.

The correct thing to do is to use Willow Way as the route from Christchurch to Southbourne. This is an existing road which can be put in good order at the expense of the frontagers without costing the ratepayers anything, except for the acquisition of a little land to straighten it out.

This riverside shambles is a disgrace to Christchurch and should be tidied up, allowing plot owners to develop their land, with the *proviso* that a riverside footpath is made available to the public.

Even if I accept your view that the risk to children would be very slight if South View Road were extended, I see no reason why we should take even that risk when it is so easy to make up Willow Way, save the ratepayers about £5,000, and avoid any risk whatsoever to our children or *et cetera*.

S. KERMODE

77 Barrack Road, Christchurch.

The Christchurch Times, 21 November 1958.

CCA to ask for South View Road concessions

Christchurch Citizens' Association on Monday unanimously agreed that the appropriate authorities be recommended to make South View Road acceptable for pedal cycles, invalid carriages and prams without delay.

An amendment by Mr. F. D. Lane – that the meeting favoured the opening of South View Road, and requested the authorities to continue the road across Stour Road and the river to Iford Lane – was not accepted.

Cllr. Barrington Myers, chairman, said that the matter concerning Mr. Lane's amendment had not been adequately discussed by the Association, and he was not prepared to accept the amendment at that meeting.

Members were told that the opening of South View Road was now out of the question, and were given brief details for the new scheme for the making up of Willow Way as an alternative.

Present at the meeting was Mr. E. D. Wise, borough engineer; Cllr. W. V. Morgan, chairman of the Christchurch Council's highways committee; and Cllr. J. F. H. Smith.

The meeting expressed thanks to the Borough Council for the provision of facilities for the parking of pedal cycles in the new town car park.

The Christchurch Times, 25 April 1958.

'Legal Difficulties Over Willow Way – CCA meeting'

The question of Willow Way and a riverside walk was again discussed at a Christchurch Citizens' Association meeting last week.

Cllr. Barrington Myers, Chairman, reported that the Council's Development Subcommittee had said that the provision of a riverside walk at Willow Way had been abandoned until open space proposals and a development plan were implemented.

There was a difficulty regarding any 'making up' of Willow Way by the Council, because at the moment it was a private road. There were also various legal difficulties.

[End of article.]