

## Local planners approve Hurn scheme

# MOTELS CLASH

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**A CONFLICT of interest is developing between Bournemouth, Christchurch and Ringwood over a plan to build two motorway - style service areas at Week Common, Hurn, on the proposed 'Bournemouth Spur' from the A31 London Road.**

The service areas, each of which would include a 24-bedroom motel, licensed restaurant, cafeteria, petrol station, and caravan "night port," would rob Bournemouth of custom.

Christchurch and Ringwood, over whose territories the road will run, would gain a new source of rate revenue and prestige.

The conflict reached the South-West Hampshire Area Planning Committee at Lyndhurst on Wednesday.

The committee—on which Christchurch Town Council and Ringwood and Fordingbridge RDC, but not Bournemouth Council, have representatives—heard Hampshire planning officials argue that there was no "overriding need" for the motels and service areas.

But the committee sent the plan forward to the County Planning Committee and added the recommendation that planning permission be given.

The Bournemouth Spur, which used to be known as the Matchams-lane scheme, is designed to take Bournemouth-bound traffic from Ringwood across Matchams "and Hurn into Holdenhurst.

Vehicles would then cross Castle-lane, where a roundabout was recently made with provision for a flyover, and proceed down Holdenhurst-road.

A few days ago directors of Southern Motels Ltd. met Hampshire planning officials on the proposed site of the two service areas.

The areas would be opposite each other on the dual carriageway and completely unconnected and self-contained. One, on the western side, would cover 3.3 acres, and the other 2.8 acres.

In a letter read to the committee on Wednesday, Southern Motels Ltd. said that the service areas would be about three miles from Bournemouth—which was approximately in accordance with Ministry of Transport practice on the motorways.

### FIVE REASONS

The sites had a "nil" agricultural value. The company chose them for five reasons:

There was a growing requirement for modern service facilities on new highways; the public preference was for motels and service areas outside crowded towns; motorists preferred accommodation on their route rather than just off it; the sites would serve both traffic using the highway and travellers using Hurn Airport; the proposal provided comprehensive service and motels in one properly controlled development.

One of the directors of the company owned adjoining land and it was possible for the company to meet any requirement of the highway authority for acceleration and deceleration lanes.

Referring to the fact that the motels development were within the proposed Hampshire Green Belt, the letter said the Minister of Housing and Local Government had

said on August 2 that he did not accept that such development must necessarily be prohibited by a Green Belt.

Mr. K. C. Jeremiah, area planning officer, told the committee the road led to Bournemouth where there were "very considerable facilities" for accommodation. People would not normally use the road on their way to somewhere else.

#### REFUSAL PLEA

The committee was told that the Ringwood and Fordingbridge Development Sub-committee had recommended approval of the proposals if it was accepted that motels should be permitted within a few miles of Bournemouth.

Mr. Jeremiah had suggested to the sub-committee that the proposals be refused on the grounds that: there was no overriding need that would justify the creation of additional traffic hazards; the use of the land would be seriously detrimental to amenities; it would be inconsistent with the county development plan; it would be out of character with the rural amenities; and it was inappropriate for a rural area in the proposed Green Belt of great landscape value.

The Deputy County Planning Officer, Mr. Hockley, said they all recognised the need for motels and service areas at the appropriate places

The County Surveyor and Planning Office had discussed the problem with Bournemouth officials, and their view was that ample facilities existed on the roads into Bournemouth.

Other roads, such as the A31 and the A338, should also be considered and probably one service area for the whole area would be needed.

Coun. W. E. Tucker, Christchurch Planning chairman, said the site was ideal for a motel. There was an overriding need, for there was no accommodation in Bournemouth for "one night people."

Coun. Tucker moved the recommendation which was carried.

The committee recommended the County Committee to refuse planning permission for two other proposals to erect three filling stations on the Bournemouth Spur—one at Blackwater and two at Avon Common.