

WHY? RIVERSIDE WALK UNDER CONSIDERATION

C.T. July 5, 1957

*He was told to "launch" his boat. It would not have stood up to the battering of the water so he burnt it.

*Homes for 30 years have been deserted and a 27 year old boatyard in the trees has "disappeared".

*One family are packing their bags and going to Australia as soon as their houseboat is sold.

*A resident struggled for 10 days to move his houseboat almost 75 yards from the shrubbery into the water.

Both banks of the River Stour, between Wick Ferry and Tuckton Bridge, are "in the news." The local authorities on either side—Christchurch and Bournemouth—are considering the provision of "riverside walks."

In the case of the Christchurch side, this land, stretching from the river to the playing fields was originally zoned in the development plan as public open space. But a suggestion was made that the Planning Committee might alter the plan to allow property owners to retain some of their land, leaving a stretch of land on the riverside as a public footpath.

It would be a further condition that the Planning Committee would only consent to a rather better class of development than at present. This did not apply to all the plots, said the Town Clerk, Mr. J. Macfadyen, but some of them.

CONSIDERATION

This suggestion has been put to the owners and occupiers and their observations are now the subject of consideration.

On the Bournemouth side a general "tidying up" of the banking has already begun. Last Monday was the last day in which houseboat dwellers and boat owners were given to move their craft from the banking. They had been given two months in which to do this, one owner told the C.T.

In some cases the "launching orders" have caused considerable difficulty. One owner, who decided his boat was not river-worthy, burnt it on the banking on Sunday to get it out of the way.

Another owner worked for 10 days in an effort to move his converted landing craft into the water from between 50 and 75 yards back. It was a gruelling process and when he finally got it into the water the boat leaked. Had he moved it into mid-stream it would have sunk. One boat had only one coating of paint applied when it had to be "pushed in".

PURCHASE

The land at this point is at the moment owned by Mr. William Charles Mills but is in the process of being purchased by Bournemouth Corporation. Mr. Mills has had a small boatyard there for about 27 years but has cleared all his stock and when the purchase is finally completed will move off the land himself.

An official of Bournemouth Corporation said that one boat owner had been given another four weeks because his craft is not yet seaworthy. Other people had asked for alternative moorings but the Parks Committee of the Corporation are to visit the site this

month to see if any of those people displaced can be allowed to moor on some part of the banking owned by the Corporation.

THREE YEARS

Referring to a number of houseboats moored towards Wick Ferry, the official said his Council agreed to them staying for three years.

Most of the people who had been asked to leave their huts have now been rehoused by the Bournemouth Corporation, said the official.

One family who have lived on the "Queen Dolphin", which is moored opposite Wick Ferry, for about three years, are selling their home to go to Australia.

They are Mr. and Mrs. Arthur McGrath and their two children, Dianne, aged two, and Michele, aged four months. These recent activities on their side of the river have helped them to make up their minds.

FOOTNOTE: If the Christchurch Planning Committee suggestion is approved the "riverside walk" is not expected to be provided before 1961.