

Underground Parking For Quomps?

Feasible But Only Very Large Authorities Could Afford It—Borough Surveyor

CHRISTCHURCH TIMES. JANUARY 22. 1960

OUT of Monday evening's meeting of Christchurch Citizens' Association came a suggestion which would solve the town's car parking problem.

It was for the provision of an underground car park at Quomps. Coun. Barrington Myers, chairman of the association, asked as to the practicability and financial feasibility of such a scheme. He believed it would cost a vast amount of money, but it had been done in other parts of the world and might still have to be done in this country as a solution to the car parking problem.

Mr. E. B. Wise, Borough Engineer and Surveyor, who was a guest speaker at the meeting, said the scheme would be perfectly feasible. It would be almost feasible to have two storey car parks underground, but it was only the very large authorities which could afford such schemes.

Cost of an over ground multi-storey car park was between £250 to £300 per car parking space and an underground park would be considerably more.

RULED OUT

Mr. Wise added that unless they were given a very substantial Government grant the question of a multi-storey car park or an underground park would be ruled out for a town like Christchurch.

Coun. Myers said that in the foreseeable future the number of cars on the road would increase tremendously. "Where are we going to put them? In 50 or even ten years' time we shall be very sorry that we did not find the money for it now." Subject under discussion at the meeting was "Town Centre—Quay traffic problems," and included the Council's new proposals and car parking at Quomps. Ald. W. E. Morgan, chairman of the Council's Highways Committee, was also a guest speaker at the meeting.

FURTHER CONSIDERATION

It will be recalled that the Council's Municipal and Health Committee previously suggested that Quomps itself should be made up to a ground level car park. But following strong protests from local residents the matter was referred back for further consideration.

The matter went back to the Highways Committee which, in the first place, asked the Municipal and Health committee to take over the problem as it concerned an open space. The Highways committee met yesterday to reconsider Quomps.

Ald. Morgan said he was to some extent responsible for the "troublesome moments" they had had because he visited the Quay and saw the state of chaos during certain months of the year, and there had been requests that the problem should be tackled.

SOMEONE'S CORNS

"Our trouble is that whatever we do in the Highways committee to resolve the problem we have got to step on someone's corns, and that happened in our original conception and no doubt it will happen in this one.

"Our job is to try and get the various opinions of the people vitally interested — the police, Chamber of Trade and yourselves — and having got that to try and come to what we consider a fair conclusion. That is what we are trying to do now."

Outlining the proposals for the town centre, Ald. Morgan said it was proposed to make Millhams Street, Church Lane and Whitehall into one-way streets, and it was possible that one-way traffic in Wick Lane might be reconsidered.

MILLHAMS STREET

So far as Millhams Street was concerned, the police agreed with the one-way system, but the Chamber of Trade did not.

Castle Street was considered for unilateral parking. The Chamber of Trade agreed to this, but the police did not. The police asked that there should be no parking on either side of the road.

Next to be considered was the dangerous corner of High Street by the silent policeman. Both the Chamber of Trade and police agreed to no waiting, but the police felt that the no waiting should stretch to Boots' chemist with unilateral parking from this point to the pedestrian crossing

LAST LINE OF DEFENCE

The police had to keep traffic moving, but the committee felt that unless they had to make restrictions they would not do so. They would only make them as a last line of defence to keep the traffic moving.

Ald. Morgan recalled that a previous Council meeting was inundated by citizens who said that the Council must not encroach on Quomps. There were two points of view on this subject.

"If you want to have additional car parking space then you have to hurt someone or something." The Council had also to consider that if additional no waiting were introduced they had to have car parks reasonably adjacent.

The Ministry would not agree to no waiting areas unless there were sufficient car parks at hand. That had to be remembered when criticising the committee.

MR. WHITE'S PLAN

Mr. Allen White put forward his plans for a car park in the Corporation yard adjoining the pumping station at the Quay.

This particular land, he said, was used for storage of sand and gravel, pipes and rubbish which could be transferred to Stanpit where the Council planned a new depot.

Mr. Wise said it was true that the Council's long term policy was to build a new depot at Stanpit and that part of the present depot would be surplus to requirements.

But there was a fully equipped engineering workshop which not only maintained the sewage disposal plant, but the Council's vehicles and other plants which would expand in the future.

VALUABLE PLANT

He suggested that if the buildings at the present depot, with the exception of the engineering shop were demolished, there might be room for 40 or 50 cars. It would mean scrapping a valuable and substantial plant, and the Council would have to seriously consider the matter before coming to any decision.