

# Owners will not 'willingly sell land in Willow Way'

C.T. August 13, 1971

**IF the borough wants a river front walk along Willow Way, the council will have to buy the land — and the owners would not be willing sellers, the CT was told this week.**

The controversy over whether a public walk should be provided along the bank of the river arises from a plan to develop Willow Way for holiday facilities. This plan has been "called in" for consideration by the Secretary of State for the Environment, and goes to a public inquiry at the Town Hall on September 30.

Willow Way is marked as "public open space" on the Town Map, although it has been occupied by bungalows and caravans on temporary planning permission for many years.

The cost of buying the land for an open space would be high — the district valuer put it at least £250,000 a couple of years ago.

With the threat of the local authority having to buy the land for open space in mind, the county planners decided on a comprehensive development of holiday facilities. The Christchurch Harbour Conservation and Recreation Plan envisages restaurants, chalets, a riverside walk, boat hire and yacht harbour.

In the face of some chivvying from the local authority — they were told that their temporary planning permissions would not be renewed — eight of the owners got together to produce a comprehensive scheme for holiday chalets, boat dock, public house and other facilities. Christchurch Council added a motel and transit caravan park on land it owns on the opposite side of Willow Way.

## NO ACCESS

But no public access to the river bank is provided for in the plan. When it approved the scheme in outline, one of the conditions imposed by Hampshire planning committee was that a riverside walk should be provided.

A petition with almost 900 signatures organised by Miss Jane Edge, of Beaconsfield Road, Christchurch, called for the inclusion of a riverside walk.

However, the owners aren't prepared to include a walk in their plan.

Said Mr. J. M. Sparrowe, one of the owners who runs a holiday caravan park: "If the local authority decided that it must have a riverside walk, then it will have to pay for the land. Nobody down here is going to be a willing seller.

## UNPREPARED

"Nobody has ever come to us and said 'How much do you want for this piece of land?' I don't think anyone down here would be prepared to give away his best asset.

"It would be unfair to expect private owners to hand over their most valuable asset." If the owners had to give up their river frontages for a public walk, the value of their property would immediately be brought down, whatever the property were being used for, said Mr. Sparrowe.

The moorings on the other side of the river suffered because there was public access along the river bank. There was a fair amount of damage. The same could happen on the Willow Way side if there were public access, he said.

"We may not have a piece of land here for the few local people who may want to walk on it, but we do provide holiday facilities, which are taken up. If we had more facilities, more people would take them up. We have to refuse hundreds of applications a year for holiday accommodation. If the area is developed, the accommodation could be doubled, and there is a need for it

"People who come to Willow Way spend their money in Christchurch. If we are allowed to develop here, the majority of shopkeepers would benefit. Christchurch is a holiday centre, and the sooner people realise it the better."

Although open space was "very nice to have", there was already a tremendous amount in Christchurch, and not a great deal in the way of holiday facilities.

"If the town had no public open space I could understand ratepayers kicking up a shindig and wanting to get some. But people would probably not use it anyway," added Mr. Sparrowe.

Reports that Mr. John Cordle, MP for Bournemouth East and Christchurch, had asked to see the Secretary of State for the Department of the Environment to ask him on behalf of objectors to turn down the development scheme, angered Mr. Sparrowe.

"It would be most unfair if Mr. Cordle were to try to influence the Minister before the inquiry," he said. He wrote to the Minister asking for an assurance that Mr. Cordle wouldn't be allowed to influence the Minister's impartiality before the inquiry.

Mr. Cordle is at present on holiday. His secretary had "no comment" to make.

In a letter to Mr. Cordle, the Minister of Local Government and Development at the Department of the Environment, Mr. Graham Page stated: "The Secretary of State is well aware of the complicated issues raised by the proposed development, and it was in the light of these that he directed the application be referred to him for determination."

## WILLOW WAY

Letter to the C.T. August 13, 1971

No doubt many of the objectors to the further commercial development of Willow Way will be by now aware of the date for the public inquiry, and before then, September 30, will possibly be subjected to more blasts like the accusation of "having a damned cheek" for protesting.

It is deplorable that such an important issue as equal privilege for visitors and residents alike to share the last stretch of riverside area should arouse such acrimony.

To say that there is a tremendous amount of open space in Christchurch is possibly correct if those as shown on Town Maps were truly available for the public, but that is what all the so-called fuss is about. Much of it is only available to visitors. Surely then this is the time to do something about the provision of public access along the river frontage for residents and visitors alike from Wick Lane to Stour Bridge before further travesties of planning are indulged in.

The effort is to be applauded for clearing a certain area and providing idyllic surroundings for 1,000 visitors a season on the grounds that planning permission was granted for only ten years.

These restrictive measures operated from the outset, so are we, the public now to take ourselves to task because a speculation will not "pay off" if the original terms are adhered to. Was it not expected they would be? Discussion and an appreciation of the residents need to at least share what, but for lack of foresight would have been as delightful as the opposite bank is surely not too much to expect.

This, it would be remembered is also a plea for posterity.

Need the cost spread over the years be such a burden?

Dealing with delinquents and pollution could easily be more costly if we continue to create the climate in which they proliferate.

JANE EDGE,

27 Beaconsfield Road,  
Christchurch.

## Willow Way land 'could be worth £½ million'

C.T. September 24, 1971

**AFTER hearing that the value of the Willow Way river front land could be up to half a million pounds, Christchurch Chamber of Trade on Monday decided to oppose any suggestion that the borough council should buy it "in view of the cost involved".**

The traders had heard from one of the Willow Way landowners, Mr. J. M. Sparrowe, that there was to be a public inquiry next week into a plan for comprehensive holiday facilities, including chalets and a motel, on the riverside.

The land was marked on the Town Map as public open space, and if it remained so the local authority would have to buy it, although the idea of having it open space had been abandoned in 1970.

Two years ago the district valuer had put a price of £250,000 on it. Now, said Mr. Sparrowe, the value could be between £300,000 and £500,000.

Mr. Sparrowe, one of the owners who, with the borough council, have put forward the development scheme, asked for the support of the chamber of trade.

## DEPRIVE

"Bournemouth Council and some residents are against this scheme, so the outcome of the public inquiry could deprive me of my livelihood," he told the traders.

The traders supported a resolution from Mr. Sparrowe that "my premises in Willow Way continue as a holiday centre, either in its present form or as part of a comprehensive development, and that I have security of tenure for all time."

# INQUIRY TOLD OF COUNCIL'S PLANS FOR WILLOW WAY

C.T. October 1, 1971

## **CHRISTCHURCH Council put forward its plan for holiday development beside Willow Way to a public inquiry on Thursday.**

Mr. John Macfadyen, Christchurch Town Clerk described plans to build holiday chalets, a yacht basin, a public house, a chandlery, yachtsmen's cabins, boat showrooms and workshop, motel, restaurant and transit caravan park together with associated car and dinghy parking areas.

The council owns part of the land on Willow Way and Mr. Macfadyen said the area was placed on the Christchurch town maps as a public open space in 1955 and 1962. Development was only covered by temporary planning permission, which expired in 1970. Since then permission had been renewed on an annual basis.

Mr. Macfadyen said his council felt it was impractical and uneconomical for the land to remain as public open space and thought it was not a vital requirement as there was other open land not far away from Willow Way.

He said his council was the owner of land in the north side of Willow Way and a road—taking traffic to Bournemouth — was proposed which would become part and parcel of the development.

This particular proposal was acceptable in principle subject to certain conditions to the local planning authority. It was also subject to approval of the Secretary of State, he said

He said it would provide a desirable improvement for the somewhat haphazard development in Willow Way.

This haphazard development, said the town clerk, was claimed to give charm to the area.

He said his council did not regard the riverside walk as a vital requirement.

He said if it was practical for land to be obtained for a riverside walk, his council would be happy to maintain it.

The development would be planned so a walk could be made.

Mr. Macfadyen said it had been said the holiday site would increase the already heavy boat traffic on the River Stour and Christchurch Harbour. He said there was no way to control this, as the public had right of navigation. He claimed the development would provide only a minimal increase.

## THE COST

Coun. John Beauchamp, chairman of Christchurch Planning Committee, said from time to time the council had taken advice as to the cost of acquiring land for the purpose of implementing the open space proposal in the Town Map but rather than incur the cost involved preferred to grant the temporary planning permissions.

He said his committee noted the redevelopment plan proposed to site buildings some distance back from the river bank, giving the owners an opportunity to sell land to provide a public walk. At present it did not consider it would be right to acquire the land as substantial costs were involved; nor did it think it appropriate to seek a compulsory purchase order for a walk.

"My committee feel that if the redevelopment takes place on the lines suggested the result will be attractive and beneficial to the town. They do not think it will give rise to so much more traffic on the roads or on the river, in excess of what is already engendered by current development in Willow Way, as to be objectionable on this account," he said.

The town hall was crowded for the inquiry with over 20 people, including some representing organisations, registering their objections.

The inquiry is due to last until Monday.

## WILLOW WAY

Letter to the C.T. October 8, 1971

Some people might be interested in the former use of the land between the Stour on the west South View Road on the east and Sopers Lane on the south.

This land was formerly used as a Stint Ground. "Stint" in this instance meant that holders of the stints could put ewe lambs to graze on the Stint Ground, the number varying with the number of Stints owned. This was a unique form of ownership of land.

In or about the year 1929 this use was discontinued and I am the only person now living who can say of his own knowledge how this discontinuance came about.

The late Major G. T. Druitt of the firm of Druitt and Sons and I went to London and conferred with the late Alfred F. Topham KC, who advised that the land could be sold free of the rights of the Stint holders.

Following this the land was sold to the late Mr. Curling Hunter who was then acquiring land in the neighbourhood. I suggested to the Inspector at the inquiry this week that the council should then have approached Mr. Curling Hunter with a view to acquiring land for a riverside walk.

Nothing was done and the council subsequently granted licences for the erection of wooden and other temporary dwellings on the land fronting the Stour.

J. B. FOGATY.

7 Twynham Avenue, Christchurch.

## Clear policy needed for future of Willow Way—county council

C.T. October 8, 1971

**HAMPSHIRE County Council is asking the Ministry of the Environment for a clear policy line for Willow Way which can be followed in the future.**

**The request was made at the end of the three-day inquiry into proposed development at Willow Way. The scheme is for holiday chalets, a yacht basin, a public house, chandlery, yachtsmen's cabins, boat showrooms and workshop, motel, restaurant and transit caravan park, car and dinghy parks.**

Comprehensive development proposals for the riverfront were prepared jointly by most of the private landowner's and the borough council, which owns the part of the site proposed for the motel and caravan camp.

Mr. A. C. Johnson, for Hampshire County Council, said the planning authority thought the proposals were permissible subject to a number of conditions. These included the proviso that the holiday homes should not be occupied from November 1 to March 1, except with planning authority approval.

He said the objective was to secure that accommodation which was intended for and built to holiday use standards should be used for holiday purposes.

**However, during the inquiry the planning authority conceded that one permanent residence should be allowed on each site where the present owner now used the site as a permanent home.**

Also it agreed that a warden should be allowed to stay during the winter months in order to protect property and where boats were kept in conjunction with the site, their owners would be allowed to live there provided they did not stay there as their principal or only place of residence.

The county's condition that there should be no winter residence had brought strong objection from the owners of the riverfront sites.

The design of the buildings should make provision for the floor levels of all permanent buildings to be at least eight feet above the water level. This said Mr. Johnson, was a condition put in at the request of the river authority.

## CRITICISM

Criticism had been levelled at the various facilities to be provided. He wondered whether the objection to the public house was aimed at the environmental and amenity impact of the building or at more beer being sold in that part of the borough. Really this was for the licensing justices to consider.

The size and the nature of the transit caravan site was not intended to cater for long distance holiday flow. It was to meet the needs of a small number of caravans which were circulating in this particular area.

As for the boat facilities, he said they would be used by the smaller class of boat and would be extremely unlikely to attract larger boats. The Christchurch Harbour Plan said the capacity of the yacht harbour may be increased by some 350 boats.

Mr. Johnson agreed that a riverside walk would be advantageous, but its provision would be up to the borough council.

Mr. E. S. Johnson, divisional planning officer, said he thought it impracticable to have a walk going round properties. This, in any case, would not result in a riverside walk, he said.

In a statement the divisional planning officer said Willow Way's present appearance was not attractive, but the application had been designed to retain as much as practicable of the existing vegetation.

Mr. F. R. C. Hart, Christchurch Borough Engineer said it was the council's intention to build a road replacing Willow Way, as the present road was narrow, winding and generally inadequate because of its poor surface, lack of surface water drainage and absence of footways. He said the new road would run between Sopers Lane and Stour Road and would provide a much needed and improved route for traffic between Christchurch Quay area and the Bournemouth Area.

"If the proposed comprehensive development is not approved there will be difficult problems of access for existing properties to Willow Way which have yet to be resolved," he said.

He said the present unsatisfactory junction with Stour Road close to Tuckton Bridge would be eliminated. The new road should be open to traffic in July 1972 and be completed by September 1972.

Any traffic problems arising from the proposed development would be satisfactorily accommodated by the new road, said Mr. Hart. He said there was no recent traffic count along Willow Way, but a census taken nine years ago showed 1,500 to 1,600 vehicles daily.

He said there would be car parks for each development.

Cesspools, septic tanks and "Elsans" could be replaced by a gravity sewer. Pumping would be necessary at the west end of Willow Way to cope with low lying properties.

## TRANSIT CAMP

"My council feels there is a demand for a small hotel and transit camp for traffic coming from the east," said Mr. Hart.

Mr. Barrie Taylor, architect for the owners, said that the scheme had been designed in such a way, that if at any time it were agreed, and were practical in the future to provide a riverside walk for the general public this could be arranged.

The owners considered it not at all reasonable to suggest that the public should have unlimited access to what had long been private land.

It had been borne in mind during the planning that each or any owner might well wish to develop his site independently.

A permanent car park serving the whole area, suitably landscaped with trees, would give a green "buffer" for the whole of the development to separate it from main roads.

He had been most surprised to see the county's condition that the chalets should not be occupied during the winter months. At present many owners live there permanently.

The scheme, said Mr. Taylor, had been designed to incorporate approximately the same number of living units as at present. There were 89 licensed caravans and chalets in the area.

Mr. Taylor said the present scheme designed in accordance with the principles set out in the harbour plan, would be an aesthetic and economic advantage to the area.

## WANTED DOCK

Mr. Roland Roddis, for Mr. J. M. Sparrowe, said his client wanted to build a dock with access to the river and holiday chalets.

He said this development could be carried out independently to the main building.

Mr. Sparrowe, he said, would find the riverside walk more objectionable than would any of the other developers.

Mr. Roddis said it had been made clear that the council regarded the path as desirable but not necessary but was not prepared to exercise compulsory purchase powers.

"My client's attractive and novel proposal to provide a dock and boats would be ruined by it," he said.

He wanted the Secretary of State to recommend that a footpath did not cross the front of Mr. Sparrowe's land but (if there was to be one) it should go behind the building.

Mr. Barrington Myers, appeared for Mrs. M. E. Robinson of 24 Willow Way; Mrs. N. M. Emmett of 15 Willow Way; Mr. P. Collins of 18 Willow Way and Mrs. L. Hewitt of 19 Willow Way. He said the majority of the owners wanted the situation to remain unchanged.

The riverside walk was "a mammoth red herring" he had heard.

"Plans submitted have made provision for a river walk if and when it should ever become sufficiently desirable, necessary or practical.

"At this stage it is none of these things — except to those who would wish to have a walk but are not in a position to compel it through the authority which has the right to take compulsory action.

**"It is no good closing your eyes to the fact these are private properties and there will not be a walk there unless there is an agreement between the owners and the local authority or compulsory purchase is made—which the authority has indicated is not appropriate," he stated.**

Miss Jane Edge of 27 Beaconsfield Road, Christchurch said she lived a short distance from the river and walked along there regularly.

## PETITION

She said she organised a petition containing 900 signatures, objecting to the development, which was received by the County Council in July, 1970.

Miss Edge complained of the adverse effect such a development would have on the part of the borough, destroying any claim Christchurch might have to maintaining the character of the ancient Priory town.

She was worried about traffic hazards which would result from increased vehicles going to the complex.

"A further reason for the objection is raised because of the effect of possible pollution occasioned by the increasing number of boats and cars to this area. The expulsion of so much more carbon monoxide from both the boat engines and the cars together with whatever means are employed by the boats and the yachts must constitute an added pollution danger in this confined water space and would be very difficult to estimate," said Miss Edge.

She said the noise which would be generated from such traffic would almost rule out any possible pleasure one could expect from a riverside area, and have more than a nuisance effect on local residents.

She complained about the visual impact the proposed development would have on the residents of both sides of the river.

Miss Edge said the area had been marked as public open space on the Town Map. In 1969 the Christchurch Harbour Recreation and Conservation Plan said the policy was to include a riverside walk and in October 1970 Christchurch Highway and Works Committee thought it desirable to have a riverside walk in conjunction with the proposals.

She said it had been the declared policy of the borough council to implement the provisions shown on statutory town maps, so a petition to preserve this area as a riverside walk, for the benefit of the public in any development would seem quite reasonable.

Mr. David Pratley, senior planning assistant at Bournemouth, said that his council was the planning authority for the area immediately opposite the Inquiry site on the south side bank of the River Stour and were therefore interested in the effect upon amenities of the proposed development

The Stour Valley was of considerable amenity and recreational value, not only locally but regionally. It represented a "green wedge" separating two major parts of the urban area.

His council considered the development would mean a traffic flow increase in parts of Bournemouth.

Mr. Pratley said in the amendment to the Bournemouth Development Plan in 1966 the whole of the bank between Tuckton Bridge and Hengistbury Head was zoned as public open space. However, in the Christchurch Harbour Recreation and Conservation Plan, jointly prepared by Hampshire and Bournemouth councils, holiday facilities such as restaurants, chalets, a riverside walk, boat hire and yacht harbour would be considered at Willow Way. New recreational development on the shores would only be permitted where it was compatible with the character of the area.

It also said that footpaths, wherever practicable, would be expected to provide increased pedestrian access to the waterside to complete the system of footpaths around the harbour.

Mr. Pratley gave examples of areas which had been turned into public open space by his council at the expense of possible development. Plans had been negotiated to build a yacht basin, but there was considerable opposition to the size of the development. The council was now thinking in terms of a park for 50 dinghies. The council would keep any building to a minimum, and would also reserve facilities for a continuation of the planned riverside walk.

"With regard to the site itself, whilst it is agreed that the area may be suited to some well-designed holiday or recreational development, it is considered essential that the frontage land should, as far as possible, receive similar treatment to that on the south.

"The character and scale of the river at this point is such that it does not satisfactorily accommodate buildings closely fronting to it," he said.

Mr. Pratley said although the site was at present used for caravans they were generally well back from the river and screened by trees. Two- and three-storey development near the water's edge would completely destroy the open aspect. It was considered three-storey buildings were not desirable on this site and that two-storey buildings should only be used at the very rear with single-storey predominating.

## UNSATISFACTORY

Mr. Pratley said it was Bournemouth Council's view the proposals did not allow for the provision of a satisfactory riverside walk or for satisfactory landscaped areas. A minimum building line of 100 feet should be adopted, he said. This would allow for a pedestrian walk along this section of the river and would be likely to overcome the problems of ensuring privacy for the chalets.

He said it was possible that no public access would be forthcoming, particularly as the proposed dock and public house would lie across the line of the route.

Mr. Pratley said the proposals for the public house, motel, and transit caravan park would generate a great deal of traffic and there was not sufficient car parking space provided. Traffic flow on Stour Road in August, 1970 was calculated at 18,600 vehicles in a 16-hour day.

The river was already widely used by boats and Bournemouth Council felt any proposal to provide a yacht basin should be considered very carefully.

**Mr. Norman Chaplin of the West Hants Water Company said the time had come to put up a "full house" notice: the number of boats in Christchurch Harbour had reached the limit.**

**He said the effect of the proposed development was such it would increase water traffic.**

Mr. William Scott Atkinson, chairman of Jumpers Residents' Association, said the greatest need was for car parks. He considered the whole area between the boatyard and the new road at its western end should become a car park.

He wanted a riverside walk and green verge provided, and the various present landowners given additional land to the north (including the old roadway) in exchange for land taken for public use.

## INSPECTOR HEARS APPEAL

On Tuesday, Ministry Inspector Mr. K. Dodds, heard an appeal by Mr. W. Gale of number 7; Mrs. C. M. Gibson of number 8; and Commander Michael Wallrock of number 3 and 4; against the failure by Hampshire County Council to issue a decision within the statutory period over an application for planning permission to build holiday chalets on land at Willow Way.

Mr. A. C. Johnson, for the county, said the application was submitted on December 18, 1970. It had been reported to Christchurch Planning Committee, which had felt unable to reach a decision upon the proposal until the inquiry.

The appeal site is outside the main development area.

## WILLOW WAY AND ALL THAT

Letters to the C.T. October 15, 1971

Does not the Willow Way controversy rather portray the present-day tendency to do nothing for the public good unless there is something to be got out of it? We have been told repeatedly that this land had been designated as an open space on the Town Map, yet as soon as it was estimated that it was worth £½M the Chamber of Trade suddenly became alarmed that vested interests were at stake, owners of property would only sell at their price, and so on.

Can we not look at this sensibly? Let us visualise Willow Way as part of a co-ordinated plan to provide recreational facilities, not just for summer visitors, but for the all-round-the-year enjoyment of the 31,000 inhabitants.

Besides Willow Way there is the suggested water park at Dudmoor, the proposed leisure centre in Bridge Street, the country park scheme at Matchams, and so on. All jolly good ideas, but they need joint planning to avoid duplication and unnecessary expense.

There is only one future for Willow Way and that is the continuation of the riverside walk, from Town Bridge to Tuckton. Not just a riverside walk either. Not just a riverside walk either. What a wonderful opportunity and challenge is offered to the parks department to create a really beautiful riverside setting in keeping with the opposite bank. An avenue of trees along the new road would complete the picture. Chalets and itinerant caravans would be out of place here. They could be sited at Dudmoor perhaps. One does not want to see a fun fair at Willow Way any more than a Longleat at Dudmoor.

One can sympathise with the half dozen or so residents in Willow Way and their interests must be respected and in return no doubt they would be willing to co-operate.

If a marina were necessary there is more room for one on the other side of the bridge where there is already a riverside hostelry. There was some talk of a dinghy park at Wick Hams.

In any case the proposed leisure centre provided for a yacht basin and many recreational facilities. The siting there of a hotel is much more sensible than one at the extreme western end of the town at Willow Way which Mr. Hart describes as fulfilling "a demand for traffic coming from the east".

Additional facilities could be provided on the north side of Willow Way with the extension of the playing field to include hard and grass tennis courts, bowling green and even perhaps a children's boating lake. Then no one need be left out. Would it not be fitting to name this new area Twineham Gardens to commemorate the original name of the town?

Mention has been made of the danger of additional traffic along the new road. This could be obviated by making it one-way outwards to Stour Road, and back along an extended Southview Road. Similarly at the other end traffic from Purewell to the Quay should go one-way down Whitehall and back along Wick Lane with no left turn at the High Street. St. Margaret's Avenue would thus only be used by traffic to Bournemouth via Willow Way, with no right turn into Sopers Lane, and traffic from Southview Road to Quay only.

With a little commonsense, mutual co-operation and understanding and really thoughtful planning — and this applies equally to Route 10 — Christchurch can become a town equal to none.

MICHAEL G. STEUART.

22 Whittingstall Road, London, S.W.6.

## THE WILD LIFE OF WILLOW WAY

I was most interested in Mr. J. B. Fogaty's letter in your issue of October 8 and now find myself dismayed to discover that the verges of Willow Way have been ruthlessly rooted out.

In my walks accompanied by my dog Blackie I often saw a friendly robin basking in the brambled hedgerow and he typified to me a host of living creatures which sought the security of its shadows.

I have picked out the delightful antics of a hedgehog in my car lights before he scampered into the hollow that gave him shelter.

Many generations of Christchurch citizens have regaled themselves on the blackberries which fruited so readily, alas — no more. A fascinating picture was also presented by the host of dancing butterflies which in due season graced the leafy bowers.

Often the browsing ponies would nudge up to me as I walked in this last vestige of a world that seems to be fast disappearing. I doubt if a planned riverside walk will ever restore the nostalgia which Willow Way has nurtured in me and many others in this area.

MISS M. ANDREWS. 10 Priory House, Quay Road, Christchurch.

## WILLOW WAY: CCA HAD NO OBJECTION TO DEVELOPMENT

May I through your paper explain to the many citizens who have asked why the Christchurch Citizens' Association was not represented at the recent Willow Way Inquiry.

A written objection was sent to the appropriate authorities in the early stages. The objection was: That the CCA have no objection to the development in Willow Way, providing the public have a footpath to and along the river bank.

As you can see it was similar to other objections put forward, and this I think is the reason it was not read at the inquiry, but these objections are still used in the summing up of the result by the inspector. It is at the inspector's discretion as to what views are heard or read. On the matter of personal representation, it was unfortunate that our representative was unable to attend for personal reasons.

C. D. FORD.

Chairman.

Christchurch Citizens' Association, 72 Somerford Road, Christchurch.

## Willow Way chalets plan too intensive — Ministry

C.T. February 4, 1972

**THE Secretary of State has turned down an application to develop part of Willow Way for holiday accommodation. The scheme was the subject of a local inquiry on September 30.**

The inspector thought the proposed redevelopment scheme was in some respects unsatisfactory and its submitted embryonic form had not reached the stage where planning approval properly could be granted.

In view of the present land uses and the attitude of the borough council, he said, it was almost certain the town map allocation (as public open space) would never be implemented and that part, at least, of the area would be redeveloped at some time.

He considered the recommendations of the Christchurch harbour plan should replace those of the town map — except that any form of intensive development would be inappropriate.

Applications were made by Christchurch Council and a number of others to build holiday accommodation. Mr. W. Gate, Mrs. C. Gibson and Cmdr. C. Wallrock appealed against the failure of Hampshire County Council to issue a decision within the statutory period on an application dated December 15, 1970 for planning permission to build holiday chalets.

The inspector, in his report, thought the plans indicated rather intensive development with buildings sited too near the water's edge to allow for a wide enough riverside walk.

If two- and three storey buildings were introduced, to a substantial degree, the present wooded open appearance of the area when viewed from Tuckton Bridge and across the river would be seriously jeopardised.

He said in any further scheme for the area there should be a less intensive development than that suggested by the applications; it should include more room for a riverside walk; it should pay less regard to the stultifying effect of multi-ownership of land; it should consist almost entirely of one- or two-storey structures; and it should incorporate some permanent homes for long term residents who would otherwise be dispossessed.

Opportunity should be taken for a further investigation into the possibility of the motel, caravan park and riverside public house, whose merits and demerits seemed to be equally balanced, but whose scope and scale warranted fuller consideration.

In his conclusions the Inspector said that in some respects the submitted scheme was unsatisfactory. It would be premature to grant outline planning permission for the development proposed by the two applications.

Any further applicants to develop this land were asked to take note of the Inspector's observations.



October 1971