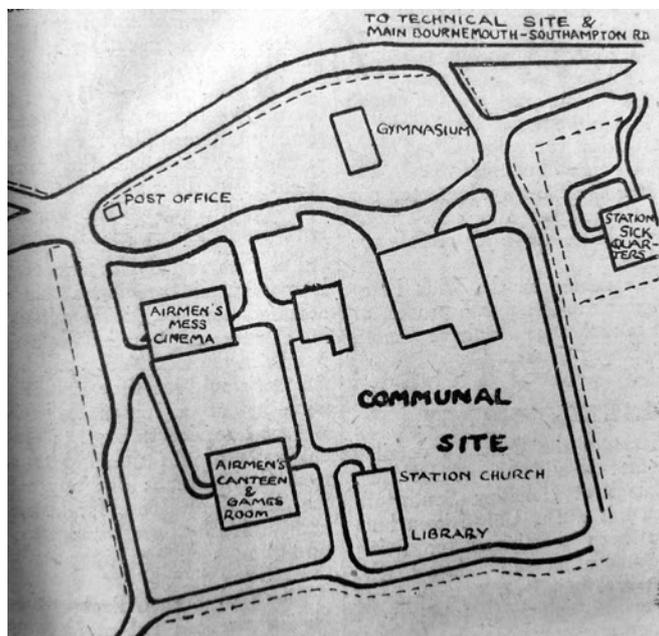


AERODROME HOMES ARE TAKING SHAPE

First Details Of Council's Plan

C.T. January 4, 1947



This plan shows some of the buildings on the communal site. The airmen's mess, the building opposite, the canteen and the library are all being converted into flats. The large L-shaped building to the right is Beech House, which is still retained by the R.A.F.

WHEN Christchurch Town Council receive the next report from their Housing Committee chairman, Councillor W. Bingham, on the conversion of ex-R.A.F. buildings at Holmsley South aerodrome into housing accommodation, they should be well satisfied with the progress that has so far been made.

In company with Councillor Bingham and the Borough Engineer (Mr. E. B. Wise), a Christchurch Times reporter visited the 'drome on Tuesday, and found that in little over a fortnight an almost complete transformation has taken place within some of the huge communal buildings.

It is the conversion of these larger buildings that the Council are concentrating on first and already a series of flats is rapidly taking shape in each one. There remains, however, a great deal to be done before the flats are ready for occupation, but it is anticipated that within the next few days a greater labour force will be available and that the work will be considerably accelerated.

NUMBER MAY BE REDUCED.

So far as the conversion of the communal buildings are concerned; the contractors have been working to a plan to construct approximately 46 flats, but it may now be found desirable to decrease the total number in order to make some of them larger. While the biggest proportion of the flats comprise three rooms—a general living room and two bedrooms—there are others with four rooms and some with only two rooms.

The buildings are being divided up by means of breeze block walls with a corridor running the entire length, the flats being situated on either side of the corridor. Consideration is being given to the installation of a hot water system, utilising the central boiler house previously used by the R.A.F. A supply of kitchen ranges have already arrived, and as there are no other forms of heating at present the possibility of reinstating some of the slow combustion stoves used by the R.A.F. is also being considered.

A COMMUNITY CENTRE?

No decision has yet been reached as to whether the former camp cinema, which adjoins the airmen's mess, is to be converted into living accommodation, but if it is not used for this purpose it may eventually become a community centre. If the demand arises the Council will make living accommodation out of the former living quarters of the airmen, but at the moment, these Nissen huts, which are of course much smaller than the communal buildings, are not being tackled. It is understood, however, that one of these huts is occupied by a family who were prepared to move in without any alterations being made.

From what our reporter saw, it was obvious that the Housing Committee have done a fine job of work under difficult circumstances, and the accommodation they will be able to provide when the work is completed, will considerably ease the housing situation in the Borough pending the completion of the other Council schemes.

Allocation of Accommodation.

Coun. Bingham has asked the Christchurch Times to make it clear that in his report on housing at the last meeting of the Town Council he stated that all the worst cases—not everyone on the Council's housing list—had been circularised with regard to the accommodation that would be available at Holmsley.

He also points out that it is not the duty of the Housing Committee to allocate houses. It was their duty to provide them but the allocation of them was the work of the Municipal Committee.