

Site Bought For Future Town Hall

Hillside property at New Plymouth.

Suggested eventually as a magnificent site for a town hall, the property known as Marsland View comprising 2 roods 2.1 perches, running from Liardet Street to Carrington Road, was purchased yesterday by the New Plymouth Borough Council. When the present tenant vacates the premises it is intended to convert the boardinghouse of 30 rooms into six flats for troublemen employed by the municipal electricity undertaking.

The price, subject to the approval of the Taranaki Land Sales Committee, is £4295. With the addition of the closed end of Leach Street next to the borough buildings the total area of new land made available to the borough by the transaction will be more than 130 perches. The property has been acquired for utility purposes, and in the meantime it will be used by the electricity undertaking.

Alteration Into Flats.

No statement was available yesterday about when the boarding-house will be vacated, but Mr. J. W. Darby, chairman of the electric light and tramways committee, said that the alterations necessary to convert the place into flats would be undertaken as soon as possible. These will be rented to troublemen, who will thus be centralised under the control of the department. Mileage and tyre costs will be reduced, their motor vehicles being housed in a garage in the adjoining borough yards. For the purposes of night calls the flats will be connected with the adjoining sub-station by telephone, and there will be a direct saving in time and costs in comparison with the current system under which troublemen have telephones in their homes situated in various parts of the town.

The troubleman service is badly in need of expansion, Mr. Darby explained. At present there are two men so employed, but with the provision of the flats it is intended to increase the number by four. Staff shortages are aggravated by the absence of 17 electric light department employees overseas and ten serving with the armed forces in New Zealand.

Future Possibilities.

It is, however, about the use of the hillside site ultimately for the erection of a town hall that Mr. Darby is most enthusiastic. With glass bricks incorporated to ensure copiously lit interiors, he visualises an imposing modern building of four storeys overlooking Carrington Road and two storeys on the Liardet Street frontage. From Carrington Road each succeeding floor would be "stepped back," thus adding greatly to the appearance of the structure as it would be seen from the western part of the town. An important feature of Mr. Darby's plan for recessed floors is that it would provide for a series of steps and landings capable of accommodating at least 4000 persons for open-air civic receptions. "The absence of such a place in the town at present is sorely felt periodically," he commented yesterday.

He knew of no site in the borough more admirably suited for a town hall, Mr. Darby said. Besides being central, the hillside section would provide an exceptional opportunity for architectural display. He foresaw, in addition to a concert chamber and municipal administrative offices, committee rooms and, perhaps, facilities for a community centre, with the floors connected by automatic and manually-controlled lifts. Mr. Darby's enthusiasm for the possibilities of the purchase is shared by the mayor, Mr. E. R. C. Gilmour, who described it yesterday as an "excellent site with a beautiful view."

P
ma
for
wi
op
N
will
anc
reo
at
ho
day
few
day
sh
un
aga
V
mo
Sat
A
obs
exc
ust
clo
exc
on
hol
F
lat
mo
Tu
mo
sh
day
op
C
nal
un
tio
or
op
Sal
H
for
on
an
sn
50
scr
Pl
of
ex
A
to
nig
Ho
pos
ex
mo
the
Ea
tha
M
ma
tin
of
ser
on
pro
lor
mo
M
Pro
M
of
in
Sir
L.
for
I
pos
me
bet
Gr
is