

STRATFORD PARK DEVELOPMENT

AMENDED SCHEME TO COST £28,980

COUNCIL'S APPROVAL

Stroud Urban District Council at a special meeting last night approved the amended scheme for the development of Stratford Park which is to cost £28,980.

The amendments had to be made consequent upon the suggestion of the Ministry as a result of the inquiry earlier in the year. The original scheme involved an expenditure of £26,047.

Mr. T. Langham presided over the meeting, and said that a special meeting was held because it had previously been decided that as soon as any definite information could be put before the members, they would hold a special sitting so that it could be gone into fully.

Mr. F. Dell, Chairman of the Stratford Park Committee, said they would see that the cost in the first instance for the baths, pavilions, drainage and sewerage was £19,529. After the inquiry the Ministry recommended various alterations, and there was some delay not due to the Council or to the engineers in getting the necessary particulars. A great deal had to be done in getting new tenders.

Costly Delay

That delay had unfortunately involved them in about £500 extra costs in advanced prices, materials and labour. As they knew they were scrapping the original septic tank and were carrying the sewage from the baths and pools direct to the sewer. That had necessitated the construction of something between 300 and 400 yards to join up with the closest point of the existing sewer.

That would cost £1,200, and the new figure for the baths and pavilions, including the internal drainage was £21,562, which represented an increase of £2,033 on the original figures. If they added to that the cost of the construction of the sewer the additional cost was £3,233.

He would like to point out, he added, that for that sum they would be getting a much better scheme. They were heating the water, a point to which the Ministry drew their attention as they rightly pointed out it would considerably lengthen the bathing season and would mean extra revenue. The extra cost of the heating and filtration plants was £1,592, and the amended drainage was costing £943 more. The advances in the cost of labour and materials was £495, and for contingencies and engineers' fees £203, making the increase of £3,233.

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The committee, he added, felt rather disappointed about that extra cost, but he was afraid that the Council was now committed to the scheme to such an extent that it would mean incurring extra cost to turn it down. He moved the adoption of the report.

Mr. F. L. Daniels seconded. He said he was a member of the park committee, but not a member of the original council. The new drainage scheme would do away with maintenance charges that would have been necessary with the old one, and the heating of the water would mean an increased revenue.

Capt. L. Dudbridge said they all knew his opinion of what he regarded as an extravagant scheme, but he did not want to go into that matter except to raise one or two points. The question of the sewage was rather important, and although he was looked upon as a member of the opposition, he wanted to be fair and he was leaving any reference to that out. Regarding the heating of the water, however, it had been mentioned that the old Council did not enter into the scheme in a blindfolded manner, but he could not understand why they left out the subject of heating. It seemed to him to be a matter of the utmost importance which should have received attention when the scheme was put forward. There could have been a saving of £312 or three-farthings in the £.

The Chairman said the Council gave due consideration before they submitted the scheme and the question was considered. They had a suggestion from the Ministry that it would be worth while, but before that suggestion the committee wanted to keep the figures down because they did not know what loan could be secured.

Sixpenny Rate

Mr. O. J. Pearce said it was stated a year ago that the scheme would cost about a 6d. rate. The product of a penny rate was £380, and if they borrowed on a 20-years basis it would work out at an average of £2,254 a year. A 6d. rate would produce £2,280. Some of the loans would be for a shorter period.

The Chairman said the general impression was that if the scheme could be covered by a 6d. rate there would be no objection by the ratepayers, because they would realise that they would get value for their money.

Mr. W. M. Revell said in the figures before them the cost of the swimming pools, tennis and bowling pavilions, drainage and sewerage were all given together, and he thought the ratepayers were of the opinion that the pools were costing that amount. He thought it would be better if the cost of the pools could be given on its own.

The Clerk (Mr. H. S. Gibbons) said it was a difficult matter to separate them, but he thought it would be in the region of £11,000.

In reply to further questions, Mr. Gibbons said that the estimates were based on the first year. Some of their loan periods would be for five years. The 6d. rate was the difference between all expenditure and revenue.

The amended scheme was approved, four members voting against, and the Clerk was authorised to submit them to the Ministry.

The meeting also decided that the Stroud Urban District Council should be officially represented at the County British Legion rally and that all the members who were able to, should attend the same church. The Stroud Parish Church was chosen.

**COULD NOT STAND STRAIN
ANY LONGER**