

Wanganui Improvements.

Durie Hill Garden Suburb Scheme.

The installation of a passenger lift has been the means of developing a Garden Suburb at Durie Hill, Wanganui. It appears that the Durie Hill elevator is only five minutes' walk from the Wanganui Post Office and lands passengers (after a trip occupying about 40 seconds) within one minute's walk of the Garden Suburb. The elevator is capable of making about 40 trips an hour with 15 to 20 passengers, and as the concession fare works out at about a penny per trip, the benefits of the country air may be enjoyed at a minimum cost of transit. Mr. Edward Crow, A.M.A.S.C.E., designed and supervised the tunnel, shaft and elevator construction, and is now engaged in designing the asphalt roads and footpaths.

Position.

According to Mr. Hurst Seager, F.R.I.B.A. (who reported on the scheme), there can be no doubt that the position is as fine a one as can possibly be obtained for the carrying out of a scheme of this kind. The fact that the site is only about six or seven minutes' distance from the Post Office, and that it is at an elevation of about 270 feet above sea level, gives it a very distinct advantage over other suburban developments. In this short time one can reach sections from which a magnificent view of the river and headlands can be obtained, and which are adjacent to park lands and playing-grounds. Conditions are thus created of which the people of Wanganui will probably not be slow to take advantage.

The Lay-out.

It will be noted by the plan illustrated herewith that the general lay out provides for the roads being arranged in such a way that they follow the contour lines, and thus the sections are reached by very easy grades. By avoiding any right angles the roads give access and good frontage to a larger number of sections than is possible under the usual method. This makes for great economy in road construction and in the sewage, gas, and electric light and water services.

The main entrance to the estate is at the north-western corner close to the lift. It will be a very effective one by reason of the division of the main avenue into curved roads, that to the right leading down to the circular garden at the north-western angle, and that to the left to the main avenue leading to the park, and to the roadways on the spurs. The entrance avenue continues in an easy curve and grade on the land which may be intended for a Residential College, but which, if not used for this

purpose, can be very efficiently used for sections as shown. It will be seen the sections vary very much in size. They are purposely formed in this way, because in all garden suburb schemes it is recognised as a cardinal principle that the suburb should be for people of very varying incomes. The suburb would not be intended for any particular class, but would be suitable for all members of the community. The smallest section is therefore about one-ninth of an acre, whilst they vary in size up to about half an acre. The only necessary restriction is that whatever the size of the houses, they shall all have the same architectural character, and this could be assured even in houses ranging from 3 or 4 rooms up to 9 or 10 roomed houses.

Roads.

Continuing his report, Mr. Hurst Seager says that it is not necessary to have a chain-wide street formed for a residential area such as this. The roads cannot by any chance become main thoroughfares, and are simply formed for the purpose of reaching the houses which will be erected; but in case it may not be possible to secure titles unless a chain-wide road is dedicated it is proposed, as shown by the sectional drawings on the plan, to dedicate the full 66 feet, but to allow 15 feet 6 inches of this on each side to be used by the owners or tenants of the sections, as suggested by Mr. Crow. It is proposed that the space reserved for the actual roadway shall be 33 feet, and that this shall be divided into the actual road, 13 feet wide, and two footpaths each of 3 feet 6 inches, and the balance (6 feet 6 inches) on each side being laid in grass, a slight fence dividing the roadway from that portion of the reserve allotted for the houses of the tenants or owners. The trees shown would be planted within these fences, on that portion of the 66 feet thrown into the sections. The building line is in each case shown, and it will be noted that in no case are the frontages of the buildings less than two chains apart.

View from Houses.

In setting out the estate, the positions of the houses has been arranged so that all can get a good view. None of the houses directly block the view from the others. The houses surrounding the circular garden (the shrubbery) in the western angle are on land sloping towards the view over the river; thus the upper northern houses on the higher land can get a good view over the roofs of those on the