

Buyers queue up for fort on hilltop

AGENTS selling an historic hilltop fort above Stroud have received several "acceptable" bids, they have revealed.

Anyone interested in buying the landmark Rodborough Fort had been given until noon on Wednesday to make an offer.

After the deadline ended, Tim Lawson of agents Knight Frank and Rutley, said he had received more than six bids, of which a number were at acceptable levels.

Quickly

"We should be in a position to accept one of them pretty quickly," he said.

But he said they would be thinking about the offers, together with the fort's owners the Halifax Building Society, over the next 24 to 48 hours before making a decision.

The fort was repossessed by the building society earlier this year from former beauty queen Joanne Willies-Williams.

The ex-zookeeper, who wanted to create a monkey

by Citizen reporter

sanctuary in the grounds, caused a national outcry last year when she revealed she was having her £220,000 mortgage on the fort paid by the State.

Since she was evicted in May, the building society has moved in contractors to make the Grade II listed building fit for sale.

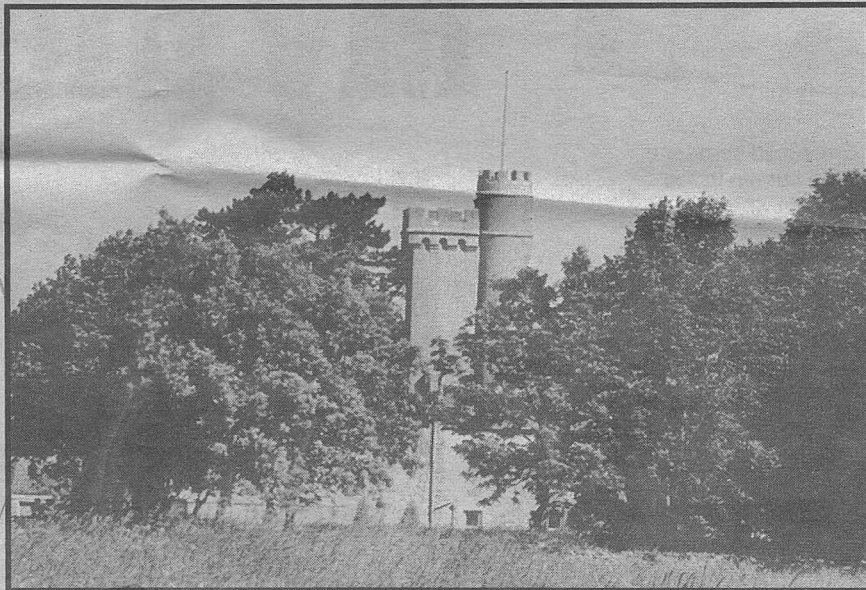
The guideline price for potential buyers of the 14-roomed property had been set at £295,000 and the indications today were that several offers of about that figure had been received by the agents in Cirencester.

The agents have warned potential buyers that it will be necessary to spend about another £300,000 restoring the property after years of neglect.

The fort, which has a distinctive tower visible for miles around, was built in 1761.

It was converted into an elegant Victorian house in 1869.

Before Mrs Willies-Williams moved in about seven years ago it had been run as a caravan park.



■ Rodborough Fort... estate agents say they will accept an offer soon on the hilltop folly near Stroud.