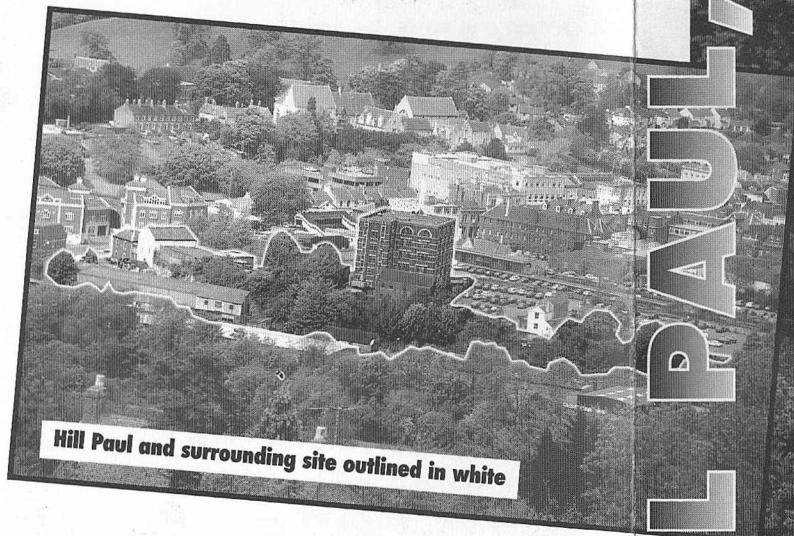


It has immediate access to the rail link with London (1½ hours to Paddington) while the M5 is no more than six miles away. A few minutes walk brings one to the town centre.

"Hill Paul" itself and the total site of about 1.6 acres might well house –

- office suites
- an exhibition/conference centre
- a series of craft workshops
- a restaurant
- a cinema (something sorely missed in Stroud)
- retail outlets for locally produced goods
- the Woodchester Pavement replica (in need of a permanent home and potentially a huge tourist attraction with its ancillary displays & events).

The site might also lend itself to penthouse flats or some other form of housing. Other possibilities will doubtless occur to other minds – including, perhaps, yours!



Hill Paul and surrounding site outlined in white

For more information, or a prospectus

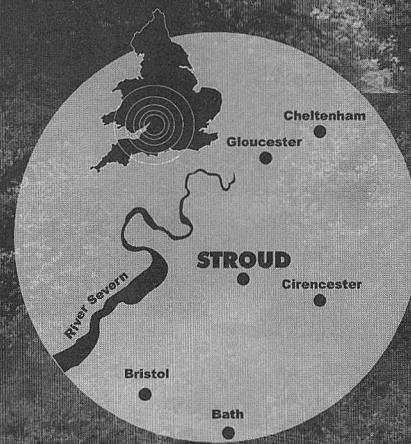
Phone 01453 767100

Or fax 01453 767174

**Or write to 48 High Street
Stroud
Gloucestershire
GL5 1AN**

Visit our website at: www.hillpaul.org

HILL PAUL, STROUD



Hill Paul Regeneration Group Spring 2001

HILL PAUL
REGENERATION GROUP
STROUD

www.hillpaul.org

THE HILL PAUL REGENERATION GROUP

Who are we?

A group of Stroud (Gloucestershire) people concerned for the future of an important area of our town. We are of all ages and from a wide range of backgrounds and occupations but are united in that concern.

What is "Hill Paul"?

A large building just to the south of Stroud station sited on about 1.6 acres of land. It is an impressive piece of late Victorian architecture, which for almost a century housed a clothing factory of which many Stroud people have fond memories. For innumerable Stroud folk it is part and parcel of their town, visible from many quarters, and a familiar presence in the background of our lives. Its distinctive architecture has been reflected in some of the newer buildings in the town.

A few years ago the site containing the building was bought by a firm which at first proposed to develop "Hill Paul" as flats but later decided more money would be made by demolishing it and selling off the whole site. It was this prospect which brought our group into being. (Stroud District Council gave planning consent for its demolition, thus abdicating responsibility for it.)

The total area (in a part of Stroud called Cheapside) contains a small and graceful block of Victorian Gothic offices, now empty, as well as some neglected land.

Why does it matter?

This area, close to the town-centre, is potentially of enormous importance to Stroud. Properly developed and used, it would give a great lift to the renewed vitality which we all wish to see in our town.

What has the Hill Paul Regeneration Group done about it?

A number of members of the Group have now formed a company – Hill Paul Regeneration Limited – which has undertaken to buy the whole site, so removing – for the moment – the threat of demolition. Its object is to safeguard the site and work towards its development, with the help of the larger Hill Paul Regeneration Group in campaigning and in fund-raising to complete the purchase. Much remains to be done and much money has still to be raised if the situation is to be secured.

The Group raised £85,000 in the first two weeks of the campaign but a total of £1.3 million needs to be found or the building and the site will be lost. We need to maintain the flow, not only of money and ideas, but of volunteer workers, especially those with practical skills.

In all this, one thing stands out: this is not the action of any official planning authority at County or District level, publicly funded and employing specialist officers, nor that of a big commercial developer with its eye on the profits to be made out of one small town before moving on to the next. This comes from the wish of people living and working in the area to have some say in what concerns their own lives, and from their willingness to spend time and effort in achieving it.

What is special about Stroud?

Something is, most certainly, for it continues to attract people to live and work here. Once settled, they are reluctant to leave. With a district population of just over 100,000, Stroud

has the feel of a town, albeit a small one. Looking about, one may wonder where all these people live. The answer lies in the many outlying villages, large and small, often tucked away in the folds of hill and valley. "Subrural" is a much better word for the area than "suburban".

The town stands at the junction of the "Five Valleys" which were once studded with mills making the West of England cloth and the famous "Stroudwater" coloureds. As that industry declined, its place was taken by a diversity of trades and industries, for adaptability and resilience are characteristic of our people.

A feature of the old industry was that the mills and cottages were sited in luxuriantly green countryside. "Green and pleasant" rather than "dark Satanic" has remained the character of much of its industry to this day. "Green" it is in more than one sense, for there is a high environmental concern. Indeed, Stroud was the first town in the country to have council representatives from the Green party. For more than a century this part of Gloucestershire has attracted craftspeople, examples of whose work are much sought after, and Stroud continues to attract more and more artists and skilled artisans. All this is set in the rolling Cotswold countryside immortalised in the writings of Laurie Lee.

What are the possibilities?

The Hill Paul building itself has six storeys. It is of locally-made brick with a parapeted roof. There is a main staircase in the central lobby as well as an external one designed so as not to interfere with the uniform size of the rooms. For its time it was a technically-advanced building, having a lift and fire-proof doors, with separate access to each floor. The upper storeys give panoramic views across town and country – and what country!

THE HILL PAUL REGENERATION GROUP