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# Home plan blow to museum bid

THE giant disused factory earmarked for a new museum in Stroud could become a £1 million nursing home.

Haven Health Care say the home is badly needed in the town, but the idea will come as a blow to campaigners who want to develop a museum at the Hill Paul factory at Cheapside.

Stroud District Council has already surveyed the building for a museum of Stroud's history, but last week voted against a

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by Nick Skinner

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bid to spend £600,000 buying the factory and doing it up.

Leisure and tourism manager Alan Caig said it was also unlikely a steering group set up to develop a museum would be able to act fast enough to secure the building.

Now the planning department has received an application to divide the factory into 61 rooms for people of all age groups who need nursing home care – whether because of strokes, disability or old age.

Haven Health Care proprietor Simon Weir, who already operates two homes in the town, said: "At the moment we are turning away around five people a week so there is definitely a demand."

The building would provide a home for 68 people and the equivalent of 45 full-time jobs.

He said the town centre site was ideal for conversion to a home and would complement his other homes at Church Court at The Shambles, and Brookfield on Lansdown.

The building is on the market for £300,000, and Mr Weir said plans to divide it into bedrooms and living areas would cost a further £800,000.

The district council leisure and tourism committee voted against a £600,000 plan to buy and renovate the building, and instead decided to spend £40,000 turning their Brimscombe depot into a store for the museum collection.