

STROUD & DISTRICT NEWS

Stroud: 'Stunningly ugly' building's timepiece to be restored

Hill Paul clock is set to tell the time again

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by Andy Read

COUNCILLORS have decided that the time has come to restore one of Stroud's most prominent landmarks to its former glory.

The clock on the top of the former Hill Paul clothing factory at Cheapside has been stuck at one o'clock for more than a decade.

The multi-storey building itself has remained empty since the factory closed down.

Despite campaigns to turn it into a museum or community facility the building is now to be converted into 36 flats after Stroud District Council approved a scheme by Surrey-based Harper Homes.

One of the conditions of the scheme is that developers restore and maintain the landmark clock.

Stroud Mayor John Marjoram said the clock was in a prominent site close to the town centre and railway station and should be restored.

Regeneration

"I support the designation of this area for housing because the regeneration of Stroud is about getting housing close to the town centre and not in the middle of the countryside," he said.

There was also praise for the scheme, but from a different point of view, from council leader Steve Greenwood.

"This is the most stunningly ugly building I've seen in some time. I'm pleased that such an ugly building is being put to such good social use," he said.

And Councillor Brian Adde added: "I know beauty is in the eye of the beholder but this building always reminds me of a prison block. However I agree there is nothing worse than having a prominent building with a clock that never works."

Permission already existed to convert the building and coach house into 30 flats. Now the five floors of the mill will be converted into 34 flats and the coach house at the rear will be turned into two, three-bedroomed homes.

Although the site is next to a public car park the scheme also includes 21 parking spaces.