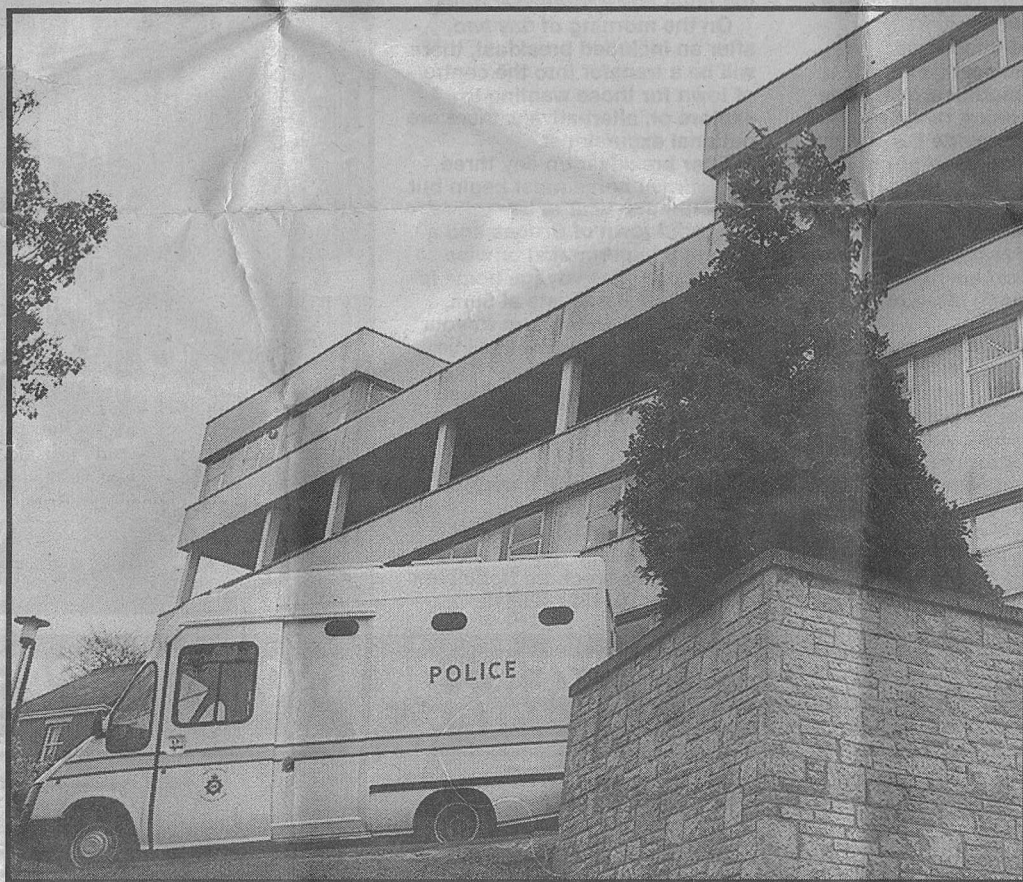


Stroud: Architect proposes solar panel project to revitalise town's eyesore

Police station today — power station tomorrow

11/2/96



■ The exterior of Stroud police station. But could it become a mini power station? Photo: Simon Pizzezy

STROUD Police Station should be covered in solar panels and turned into a mini-power station, says the architect behind plans for a new tourist attraction to house the replica Woodchester Roman Pavement.

by Andy Read

Peter Waller told town councillors the scheme raised the possibility of making better use of the station, widely regarded as one of the town's biggest eyesores.

"Because of its position its solar context is second to none," said Mr Waller of Stroud-based Pantechnicon.

"It could produce enough heat to heat the whole project. It would become the greenest police station in the country."

Replica

Mr Waller was addressing councillors on his £5.4 million scheme to house the replica in a purpose-built centre on part of the Church Street car park in Stroud.

Stroud District Council has already seen a bid to the Millennium Commission turned down and is about to commission a feasibility study into the project, before deciding whether a bid for Arts Council cash is likely to succeed.

Mr Waller said such an attraction was much needed to

bring a bigger share of tourism into Stroud.

At present around 4.5 million people visit the Stroud district each year, but very few actually come into Stroud itself.

"A town like Stroud needs a tourist ticket to ensure its future," he said.

The replica features 1.6 million pieces and took Bristol-based brothers John and Bob Woodward 10 years to complete.

Rival

However it has not been put on "display locally for a decade and Mr Waller said he thought up the scheme to head off rival plans to house the acclaimed replica in Bristol or Keynesham.

The real pavement, despite being regarded as one of the most important Roman discoveries in Britain, has remained buried under a Woodchester graveyard for more than 20 years.