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## Californian town up for sale on eBay for £1m

- Prime riverside real estate to suit enthusiastic DIYer
- Second internet auction in four years begins in April

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Looking for somewhere quiet? Bridgeville might be just the place. The town boasts no shops, no cafes or restaurants, one two-lane road and very few people. And it's for sale. The entire 83-acre (34-hectare) town, set amid the imposing redwoods of northern California, is to be sold on the online auction site eBay. Bids are invited, starting at \$1.75m (£1m).

The sale, which will begin on April 4, will offer the riverside town as a potential college campus, ranch or resort. "Or you could recreate your own working town," the advert will say. "This truly is beautiful country, just outside of the fog zone where the majestic 'old growth' redwoods stand."

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This is not the first time that the town has been offered for sale on eBay. In 2002 a winning bid of \$1.78m was lodged just before the online auction closed. But despite the seller's warning that "many of the structures included with the town could be described as fixer-uppers", and that the buyer should "be prepared to do a lot of work to get the town into sparkling condition", the buyer pulled out after visiting the town.

Instead, Bridgeville was bought two years later by a financial broker from southern California named Bruce Krall. He planned to turn it into a retreat, but said at the weekend that family concerns meant he had to sell the town.

Mr Krall told the Associated Press news agency that despite spending several hundred thousand dollars on the town, "we can't move up there. It only makes sense to pass it on to somebody else."

Prior to its brush with online fame, Bridgeville had fulfilled the stereotype of a sleepy one-horse town. Set 260 miles north of San Francisco, it was a product of California's 19th-century gold rush.

Founded in 1865 by a trapper named Slaughter Robinson as a stopover for miners and timber workers on the northern coast, it was notable for reputedly being the "only town without a Chinaman" in northern California at the end of the 19th century.

It became privately owned in 1909 when it was bought by Henry Cox. His family resold it through a classified advertisement in the Los Angeles Times to an antiques dealer named Elizabeth Lapple in 1972 for \$150,000. After unsuccessfully trying to sell the property to a religious group in 1977, she eventually placed it on eBay in 2002. Now it is back on the market.

"It's kind of like the town that nobody wants," a local rancher, Mel Shuman, told the LA Times. "I don't know why the fellow bought it in the first place."

Mr Krall was upbeat, pointing out that "finding riverfront property for sale in California is rare".

However, another resident, Wanda Adams, said it would take determination to turn Bridgeville around. "It's very picturesque," she said, "but it's going to take the right person, some money and commitment."

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