



RIVERSIDE RESIDENTS NEWSLETTER

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ENQUIRY INTO STAINES CONSERVATION AREA HOTEL SCHEME TO EXPLORE "POSSIBILITY OF MISCONDUCT AND/OR FRAUD"

An independent enquiry will explore "the possibility of misconduct and/or fraud" in the provenance and contract between Spelthorne Borough Council and the Arora Group for a massive hotel and apartment scheme on the Bridge Street Car Park and Hanover House site in the riverfront Staines Conservation Area. This was announced yesterday evening by Cllr John Boughtflower, Leader of Spelthorne Borough Council. ([Click here](#) for the full text of the enquiry's terms of reference).

"This announcement is extremely welcome and meets the concerns the community and many councillors have long expressed. We have believed for some time that the proposed Arora development was the product of a corrosive cocktail of secrecy, over-reach, extraordinary power in very few hands, and the absence of both proper scrutiny and local democratic accountability," says a spokesperson for the Riverside Residents (Staines) Coalition. "With comprehensive and robust terms of reference in place, critical now is who will conduct the enquiry. This must be someone who is truly independent, particularly from any of the officers, councillors, consultants and others directly involved in the provenance of the scheme and drawing up the contract."

"The Arora hotel and apartment project, two-and-a-half times higher and several times the mass of anything anywhere near it in the sensitive riverfront Conservation Area, shocked the community and overwhelming majority of councillors when it was announced by the Council's previous leadership a year ago. This grotesque scheme, quite apart from driving a coach and horses through the Council's legal obligation to "protect or enhance" the Conservation Area, would destroy the town's appearance, amenity, townscape and skyline for generations. If the enquiry is as thorough as its terms of reference suggest, it will get to the root of how this travesty of town planning and lack of both internal scrutiny and public accountability came about."

For more background on the Arora scheme [click here](#).

Riverside Residents (Staines) Coalition – a Working Group of six residents' organisations serving the interests of residents on both sides of the river.

Supported by the Staines Town Society.

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