



RIVERSIDE RESIDENTS NEWSLETTER

26 AUGUST 2021

HOUSING MINISTRY CONFIRMS SCOPE TO REDUCE HOUSING TARGET

The Ministry of Housing confirmed this week to the Riverside Residents (Staines) Coalition that there is scope to reduce the borough's housing target. Our *Residents Newsletter* of 10 August reported that Spelthorne's MP Kwasi Kwarteng is backing the campaign against tower-block developments in Staines and suggested a fresh approach to lowering the borough's housing target. The Ministry has now set out the possible context for this.

The Housing Ministry confirmed earlier this week: *"With regard to the specific exceptional local circumstances that could justify a reduction in the housing number, we would emphasise that the standard method is only the starting point for local authorities in identifying the housing need in a local area. Local housing need does not set a target for the number of homes to be built ... This recognises that not everywhere will be able to meet their housing need in full ... We would add that if an authority feels that their circumstances warrant an alternative approach to the standard method, then they should set the reasons for this out as part of the plan-making process"*.

"We hope Spelthorne Council will seize this opportunity with enthusiasm and above all urgency. All that is missing is for the council to produce a compelling case for a reduction in the housing target ... and that must surely already exist if the issue has been enough of a priority for the Council," says a spokesperson for the Riverside Residents (Staines) Coalition. "The Council's draft plan to pepper Staines with tower-blocks of tiny flats is based on the perceived need to meet a too-high housing target. We know a former deputy leader of the Council wrote to the government about this a while ago without success. But now Spelthorne's MP has pledged to take this up with appropriate government colleagues. We have today written to the Council Leader and Chief Executive urging them to follow up urgently and to publish at least a summary of the 'compelling case' so the community can have confidence in the efforts being made."

Riverside Residents (Staines) Coalition – a working group of six residents' organisations representing several hundred residents. Supported by other residents' organisations across Staines and the Staines Town Society.

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