



RIVERSIDE RESIDENTS NEWSLETTER

21 March 2022

STAINES COUNCILLORS PLEAD WITH OFFICERS TO DELAY DEBENHAMS DEMOLITION

Residents have till Thursday to join write-in campaign

WARD COUNCILLORS FOR STAINES are appealing to Spelthorne Borough Council Officers to delay the demolition of the Debenhams building at the top of Staines High Street until either planning permission has been granted for a new development on the site or the building can secure long-term protection.

The owners of the site, Future High Street Living, have lodged a planning application to build two 14-storey tower blocks of tiny flats on the site but this has not yet been considered by the Council's Planning Committee. Meantime a subcontractor to the developer has notified the Council of its intention to demolish the iconic building. The Council has until the end of this month to decide and the decision currently rests with Council Officers. **Residents have until this Thursday (24th) to join the write-in campaign too ... [Click here](#) to comment.**

The Staines Councillors are pleading with the Officers to prevent the demolition on the following grounds:

- With close to 3,000 signatures on a petition to save the Debenhams building.
- The imminent decision on local listing and a review of the extension of the Staines Conservation Area.
- The heritage value of the building is recognised by Historic England, 20th Century Society, Save Britain's Heritage, and even the developer's own heritage consultant.
- The developer has not submitted an Environmental Impact Assessment concerning the dust and particulates that would be caused along the High Street and Thames Street from the demolition, and a survey of the building for asbestos.
- The forced closure of a Right of Way, and
- We should be refurbishing, renovating, and re-using our buildings.

Cllr Malcolm Beecher is leading a campaign to secure a 'Local Listing' for the building which would give it some protection. This will be considered by the Council's Planning Committee at the end of this month. Council Officers have done a good deal of work on this and support the Local Listing proposal, but this alone cannot prevent the demolition.

"Planning law is heavily biased towards developers; but to demolish the existing iconic building before planning permission is granted for a development to replace it is arrogant corporate vandalism," says a spokesperson for the Riverside Residents (Staines) Coalition. "Staines Councillors are also appealing to Councillors elsewhere in the borough to insist the Officers do all they can to prevent the demolition from happening. Residents need to support this effort too by giving their views urgently. [Click here](#) to comment by this Thursday."

Riverside Residents (Staines) Coalition – a working group of residents' organisations serving the interests of residents on both sides of the river. Supported by other residents' organisations across Staines and the Staines Town Society.

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