



RIVERSIDE RESIDENTS NEWSLETTER

31 March 2022

COUNCIL MUST FACE DOWN BULLY-BOY DEVELOPERS

... Debenhams building 'locally listed' and developers threaten legal action ...

SPELTHORNE BOROUGH COUNCIL must face down the increasingly arrogant, litigious and bully-boy tactics now being employed by greedy developers who see an open goal for the overdevelopment of Staines with tower blocks of tiny flats. The Council's Planning Committee has been roundly criticised and threatened by developers for not 'accepting the inevitable' and not readily approving their high-rise proposals for Staines.

Yesterday the Planning Committee considered and approved with no votes against a 'local listing' of the Debenhams building (recognising its iconic and heritage status). Prior to the meeting lawyers for the developers Future High Street Living who now own the site threatened the Council with legal action if a local listing of the building interfered with their plans to replace it with twin towers of tiny flats. They said they were "confident" the Council would have to pay a "significant" sum.

Some months ago Inland Homes were reported to have tried, unsuccessfully, to have certain members of the Committee removed from considering their application to build twin towers of tiny flats on a site just behind the Debenhams building. In the end the Committee refused permission unanimously. The developer won on appeal, and their chief executive, complaining about the Committee's decision, said on social media recently "Bailiffs on the door taking away their furniture might make them think a bit more clearly."

"Government policy as well as the Council's long delayed Local Plan and inadequate design requirements have left the door wide open for developers to move in with the kind of uninspiring 1970s/80s style tower blocks coming from the likes of Inland Homes and Future High Street Living," says a spokesperson for the Riverside Residents (Staines) Coalition. "Legal threats and childish gloating such as we've seen from these developers is gratuitously offensive. It reflects the overwhelming priority of their shareholders' interests and a disdain for the local community and local democracy. The Planning Committee has so far sought to protect the appearance and amenity of the town for those who live and work here against these onslaughts. We need a little more spine and determination from others in the Council to support them ... and more than anything the Council needs to set much higher standards for the design of the new high-rise developments which will dominate the Staines of the future, and that includes sites where the Council is the developer."

Riverside Residents (Staines) Coalition – a working group of six 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.

[WWW.residentsresidentsstaines.org.uk](http://www.residentsresidentsstaines.org.uk)

[E Mail riverside.residents.staines@gmail.com](mailto:riverside.residents.staines@gmail.com)

[FB Riverside Residents Staines](#)