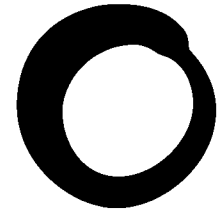


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Infosheet

Development control



**Friends of
the Earth**

What is development control?

Development control is when planning applications e.g. for a new supermarket or housing development is submitted to a local planning authority (your local council) for approval or rejection.

Why do I want to know about it?

If you want to have a say in what's being built or changed in your area, it is a good idea to respond to new developments such as supermarkets or housing by objecting to planning applications. In this way you have an opportunity to improve them, or even stop them if they are really damaging.

Who's in charge of development?

There's a few different players involved in development control. First of all there is the developer themselves. There are lots of smaller developments that people might apply for (e.g. extensions), but the larger developments are usually brought forward by companies.

Then there is the Department for Communities and Local Government, led by the Secretary of State, who sets out planning policy. This is the guidance that local councils have to look at and consider when making their decisions on a proposal such as a supermarket. The local council's planning officers gather responses from any consultation, and then make a report for the councillors (members) who will make the decision in a meeting of the Council's planning committee. If the committee says yes, then the planning officers will write to let the developers know. If the committee says no, then the developer might appeal, and the application goes to the Planning Inspectorate. Some really big developments can be called in by the Secretary of State, but very few are.

What's happening at the moment?

The Government really wants to encourage more development so it is making it easier for development to happen. There are lots of pressures in development – the need for places to live, the way we shop, where we spend our free time, and how we get around are all in the mix when developments are put forward. But these things aren't always considered from a people's perspective by the local authority or by developers.

Take action

It's likely there will be a development near you sometime. So it's really positive to respond and say what you think – you have an opportunity to do this because you are consulted about a planning application. But you do need to keep track of what's coming forward – announcements in local papers, on your local council's web site. The more people who get involved in telling the developer and local council what sort of development they want to see, will make a difference to your community.