

The Friends of Abingdon Civic Society is extremely concerned about the way in which large developers are using the planning process. It is apparent that they are taking advantage of the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development' and using their financial muscle to obtain planning permission for inappropriate developments regardless of serious local concerns. The opinions of the Town Council, local residents, and others count for nothing. In addition, even when conditions are placed on a planning permission, large developers are able to tweak them to their advantage, or even contravene them altogether, with little, if any, penalty being applied. Large developers have deep pockets and can afford to use every possible legal channel to ensure that they eventually get their own way. Of course, this is not an option that is open to District Councils which do not have the funds to defend continual legal challenges.

All in all, the planning procedure has become a sham and a worthless exercise, and needs a complete overhaul. At the very least, more weight should be given to local concerns and developers should not be allowed to continually resubmit applications.