

## ePlanning Spatial Viewer

The ePlanning Spatial Viewer is the NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment's new digital mapping service. It provides up-to-date information on how planning controls and other planning matters affect a given property and the surrounding area. The service was launched in May 2019 as part of the redesign of the NSW Planning Portal.

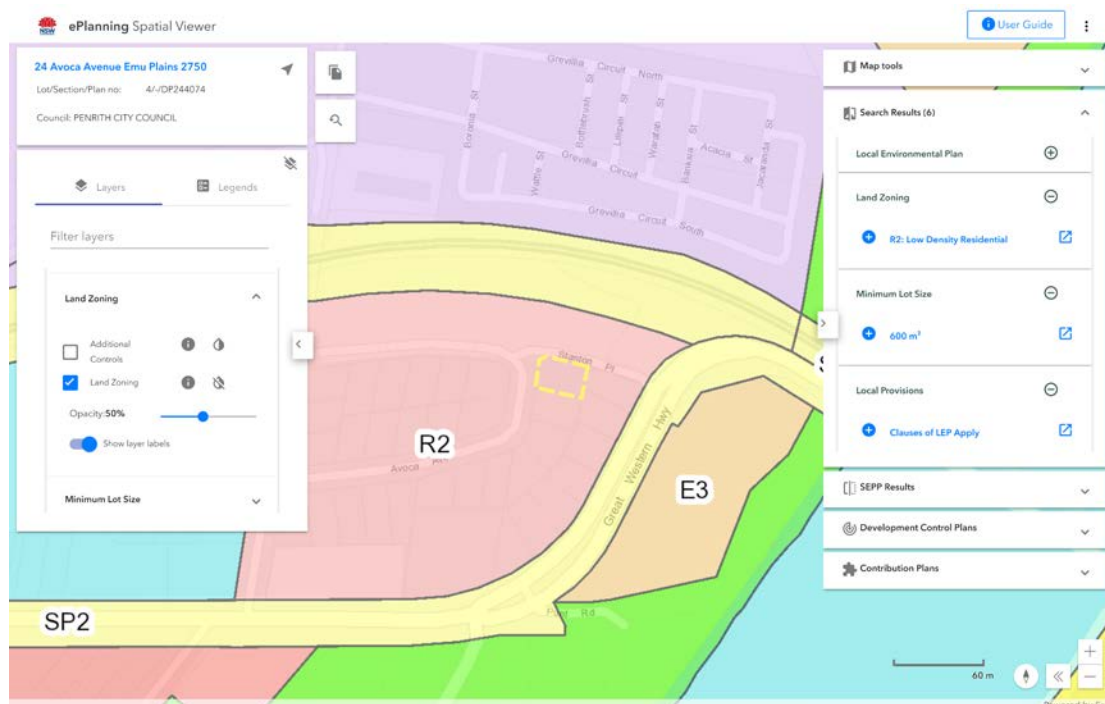
The ePlanning Spatial Viewer:

- provides a single source of truth for planning-related data mapping in NSW
- improves transparency of planning processes
- supports evidence-based decision-making.

“The ePlanning Spatial Viewer is a crucial part of the ongoing digital transformation of the NSW planning system,” says Gino Cavallaro, Executive Director ePlanning. “For the first time, community, industry and government have access to the same planning information, in a way that is easy for everyone to understand.”

### How the ePlanning Spatial Viewer Works

Visitors to the NSW Planning Portal can search for a property by lot number and street address or by zooming in on the map and making a selection. Planning controls, such as State Environmental Planning Policies (SEPPs), Local Environmental Plans (LEPs) and Development Control Plans (DCPs), are represented as coloured layers (polygons) that can be activated or deactivated.



*ePlanning Spatial Viewer provides a clear understanding on how planning controls and other planning matters affects a particular site and the surrounding area.*

To provide a better understanding of those planning controls, the Spatial Viewer links to the relevant legislation on the Legislation NSW website.

There is a range of background maps highlighting different physical elements, such as topographical features, aerial photography and relevant mapping layers.

A detailed summary of all the planning controls impacting a property can be generated as a PDF using the Property Report tool.

“The aim is to help everyone involved in a proposed development by giving them the information they need to make sound planning decisions,” says Cavallaro. “An applicant preparing a DA can discuss floor space ratio with their planner over the phone, confident they are both looking at the most up-to-date information. Or councils can work with the Rural Fire Service on issues relating to Bush Fire Zones. The service improves transparency and therefore accountability of all parties.

“Strategically, it provides a valuable perspective on a specific area regardless of local government boundaries. This will help councils preparing their Local Strategic Planning Statements (LSPS) and help developers better understand zoning across multiple boundaries.”

## How the ePlanning Spatial Viewer is built

In technical terms, the Spatial Viewer is a single-page application (SPA) built on an Esri mapping-and-spatial database platform called ArcGIS. This is the software that enables a visual representation of how planning controls affect a given site. It is responsive in design, which means the Spatial Viewer works equally well on PCs, laptops, tablets and smartphones.

What sets the Spatial Viewer apart is the quality and breadth of the data to which it has access. The Spatial Viewer draws all its information from the NSW Planning Database – creating a single source of truth for planning information in NSW.

The NSW Planning Database is a digital repository of planning documents, spatial data sets, environmental planning instruments and legislation that is maintained by the Department. The management of the spatial data-set updates is in line with the QMS 9001:2015 certified process as well as the Department’s Information Management and Data Quality Framework.

Some State agency data sets, such as Sydney Trains Corridor and Infrastructure protection zones, are provided via APIs (Application Programming Interfaces). There are also arrangements for agencies to provide updates on a regular basis by other means. For example, Spatial Services’ Cadastre and Address Database updates are provided nightly via XML feed.

The Department recently enhanced the functionality of the Property Report to include details of additional land attributes, such as classified roads, high-pressure pipelines and Sydney Trains assets. This gives a clearer understanding of the features and development constraints which are likely to require additional consideration through the planning and assessment process.

For data that is sensitive, access is restricted to the degree stipulated by the custodian of that data. For example, high-pressure gas lines won’t be shown on the digital map for security reasons. However, if those assets impact an individual site, it may be itemised in the Property Report for that site.

“We have also integrated the Spatial Viewer and the NSW Planning Database with the Department’s Online DA service,” says Cavallaro. “This means an applicant will have access to both a digital map of their site, showing the scope of planning controls, as well as a written summary of those planning controls, without having to leave their digital dashboard.

“The aim is to integrate our digital services in a way that simplifies how everyone interacts with the NSW planning system. We want all the parties to a proposed development to feel confident they have the information they need at every stage of the planning process. The ePlanning Spatial Viewer is a great step forward in achieving this.”

## Testimonials

*“The ePlanning Spatial Viewer is so simple to use, putting all the planning information I need at my fingertips. Within seconds of a client calling about a new project I can discover all the key planning controls for the site, along with aerial photos and a smart summary report that I can email or print out.”*

*“The improved browsing experience combined with direct links to LEPs and DCPs makes navigating the NSW planning system easy.”*

**Peter Smith, Director – Architecture and urban design, Smith & Tzannes**

*“Every time I use the ePlanning Spatial Viewer it saves me time and my client money. In a recent matter we were able to identify that the land was subject to an item listed on the State Heritage Register. Based on that information, we were able to work out what was required to develop the site.”*

**Peter Holt, Special Counsel, Holding Redlich**

For more information on the ePlanning Spatial Viewer, contact Tanya O'Brien, Director ePlanning at [tanya.obrien@planning.nsw.gov.au](mailto:tanya.obrien@planning.nsw.gov.au).