

NSW Planning Portal Industry Reference Group

Quarter 3 meeting

11 September 2024

Acknowledgement of Country

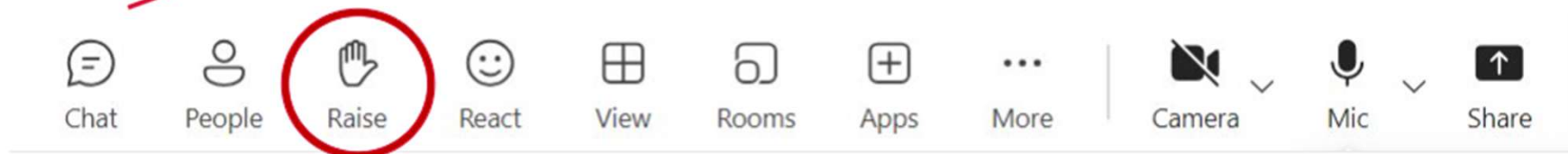
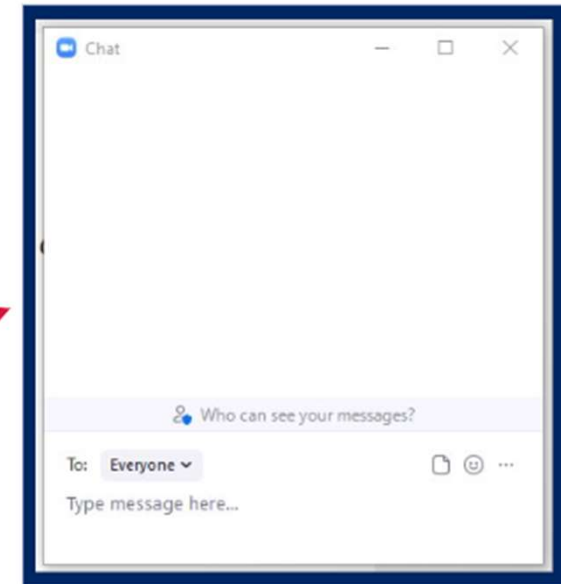
We acknowledge that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are the First Peoples and Traditional Custodians of Australia, and the oldest continuing culture in human history.

We pay respect to Elders past, present and emerging, and commit to respecting the lands we walk on, and the communities we walk with.



Housekeeping

- Please mute your device unless asking a question.
- Press 'Raise Hand' to ask a question.
- You can also ask questions using the chat function. Any questions we do not respond to in the meeting, will be responded to post-meeting.



Agenda



No.	Description	Speaker
1	Acknowledgement of Country and welcome	Jane Blakeney / Nerida Mooney
2	NSW Planning Portal Customer First program update	Nerida Mooney
3	Program update: Customer support	Margaret Gomez / Jane Blakeney
4	Development application co-design findings	Yashna Kumar
5	Workshop: Backlog items	Kieran Babich
6	Other matters	Jane Blakeney

NSW Planning Portal Industry Reference Group – Quarter 3 meeting

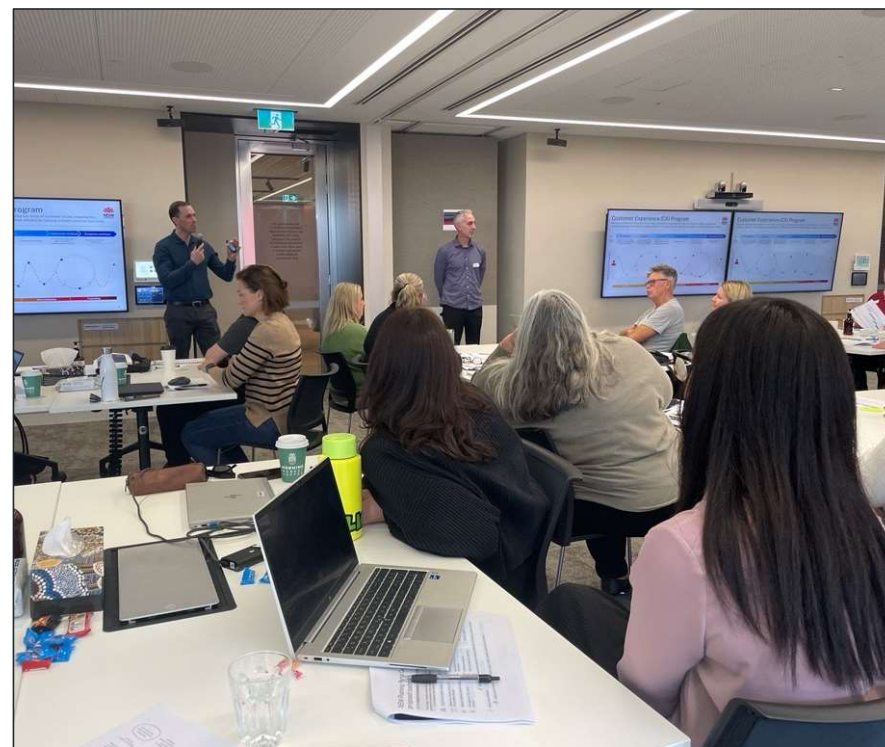
NSW Planning Portal Customer First program update

Nerida Mooney

Situational context – June 2024

The Minister for Planning and Public Spaces, the Hon. Paul Scully, announced a renewed direction for the NSW Planning Portal, which included **\$20.4 million** in this year's budget to improve NSW Planning Portal operations.

- Communications by the minister highlighting the new initiatives that we will be focusing on over the next financial year. These included:
- **Prioritising co-design with stakeholders to implement Portal updates to fix legacy issues.**
- Implementing the NSW Planning Portal Customer First Program to improve user experience.
- Strengthening cybersecurity resilience and improving user information privacy.
- Enhancing accessibility and inclusivity for all Portal users.
- Publishing a feature and technology roadmap for the next 2 years, including mandated and optional features.



NSW Planning Portal Customer First co-design workshops: Council

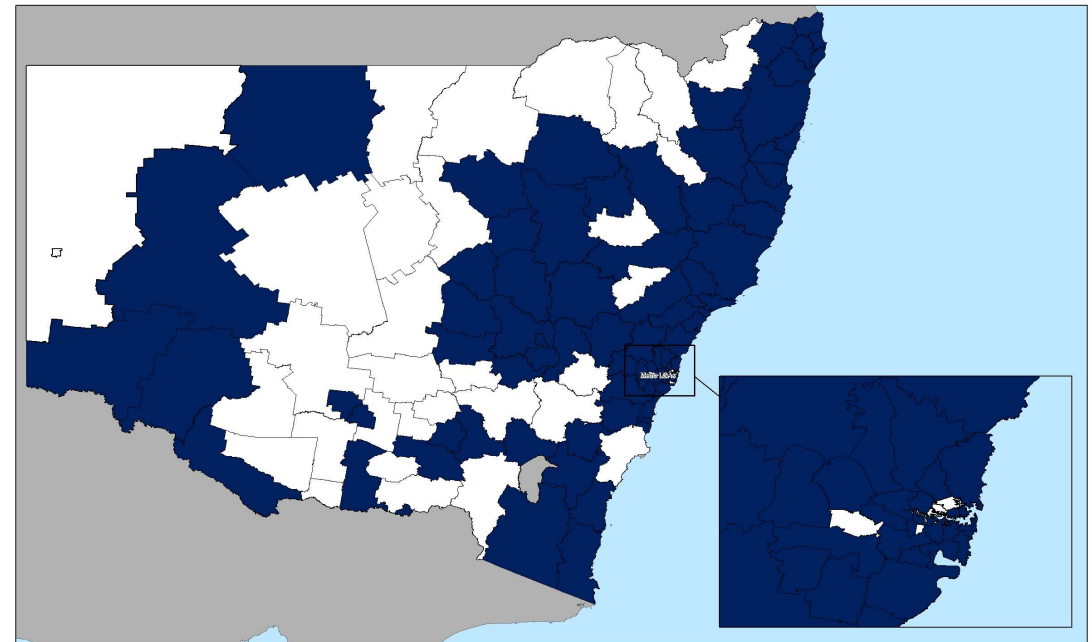
In July and August 2024 we ran:

- Face-to-face co-design workshops in Orange, Coffs Harbour, Newcastle and Parramatta.
- 2 virtual co-design workshops.

There were 232 attendees from 92 councils.

September, we started connecting with broader range of industry and stakeholder groups:

- Urban Development Institute of Australia
- Planning Institute of Australia
- Association of Consulting Surveyors NSW
- Environment and Planning Law Association NSW
- Technology vendors



Council co-design workshop attendees

Big Rocks that we've heard



User Experience	Technology & Digital Services	Policy and Process	Support	Content and Navigation	Data
Portal has created a lot more work, than the paper-based system	Portal is slow, clunky and crashes with increasing processing time	Changes to Portal result in downstream impacts on Councils that are not always considered or budgeted for	Need for relevant training, guidance and instructions for the Portal	Complex language is used which is difficult to understand	Inconsistencies in data collected
Portal is frustrating for applicants and councils	The technical functionality is the big issue	Lack of flexibility around admin rights	User support is slow, we get a ticket number and have to wait for a reply, if it comes	Duplicate and out-of-date website content	Single source of truth – spatial viewer, local gov maps, or planning certificate
Portal is far too complex and tries to be all things to all people	Capability to complete BAU functions such as add a new or different document to a submission	Inconsistent naming rights for documents and lack of accessibility	Inconsistent support, SNSW refer the public to council when there are Portal issues	Navigation on the planning websites makes it difficult to discover things	Validation of data in the Portal
Manual workarounds and duplicate efforts – uploading documents	Missing functionality - the ability to edit development applications	Requires additional resources and budget to use the Portal	Communications are inconsistent and confusing leading to frustration and delays	It's a struggle to search for information – simplify navigation	Reporting is inconsistent and at times inaccurate

Big Rock Summary

Big Rocks

User Experience	Technology & Digital Services	Policy and Process	Support	Content and Navigation	Data
Portal has created a lot more work, than the paper-based system	Portal is slow, clunky and unstable (spinning wheel)	Owner consent not mandatory, the applicant needs to run the full process	Need for relevant training, guidance and instructions for the Portal	Complex language is used which is difficult to understand	Inconsistencies in data collected
Council dashboard inflexible around personalisation, assigning work and search	No clear roadmap for changes, impacting downstream resource and funding	Lack of flexibility around admin rights especially edit DA and legal management	User support is slow, and inconsistent (SNWS refer to council when it's a Portal issue)	Duplicate and out-of-date website content	Single source of truth - spatial viewer, local gov maps, or planning certificate
Portal is far too complex and tries to be all things to all people	Capability to complete BAU functions such as add a new or different document to a submission	Lack of clarity around mandatory questions resulting in costly and time-consuming work	Section 68 process unclear	Lack of clarity or expectation setting around what application is required, and the steps involved	Validation of data in the Portal
Can't search by address, can't see all linked applications	Missing functionality - the ability to edit DA applications if errors are made	Consent and conditions process via the Portal is inconsistent	Communications are inconsistent and confusing leading to frustration and delays	It's a struggle to search for information - simplify navigation	Reporting is inconsistent and at times inaccurate

Functionality!!!!!!

Big Rocks that we've heard from Councils

Handwritten notes: All not just OPS, RFI is changed, Portal time

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Big Rocks that we've heard

Handwritten notes: worded well, Peak in July 2024, Peak in July 2024, Peak in July 2024, Peak in July 2024

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What we're hearing around improvements

Handwritten notes: Circular, Data handling, Data handling, Data handling, Data handling

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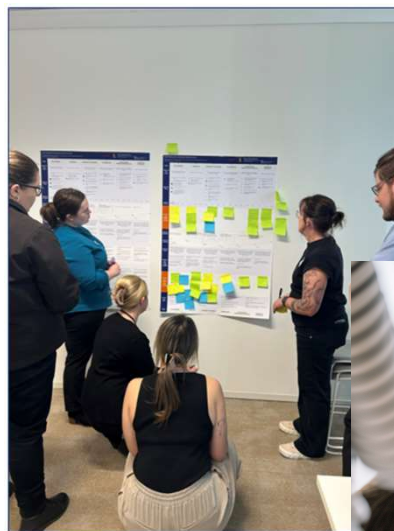
What we're hearing around improvements

Handwritten notes: Not just, Enough notice

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Portal is frustrating for applicants and councils	The technical functionality is the big issue	Lack of flexibility around admin rights	User support is slow, we get a ticket number and have to wait 10 days	Duplicate and out-of-date website content	Single source of truth - spatial viewer, local gov maps, or planning certificate
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What is next?

1. Seek validation of identified issues with agencies, industry and other stakeholders.
2. Implement quick wins in October & December 2024 releases.
3. Design and estimates on Must Do features and drive to implementation.
4. Measure if improvements are making an impact.
5. Close the feedback loop for continuous improvement.



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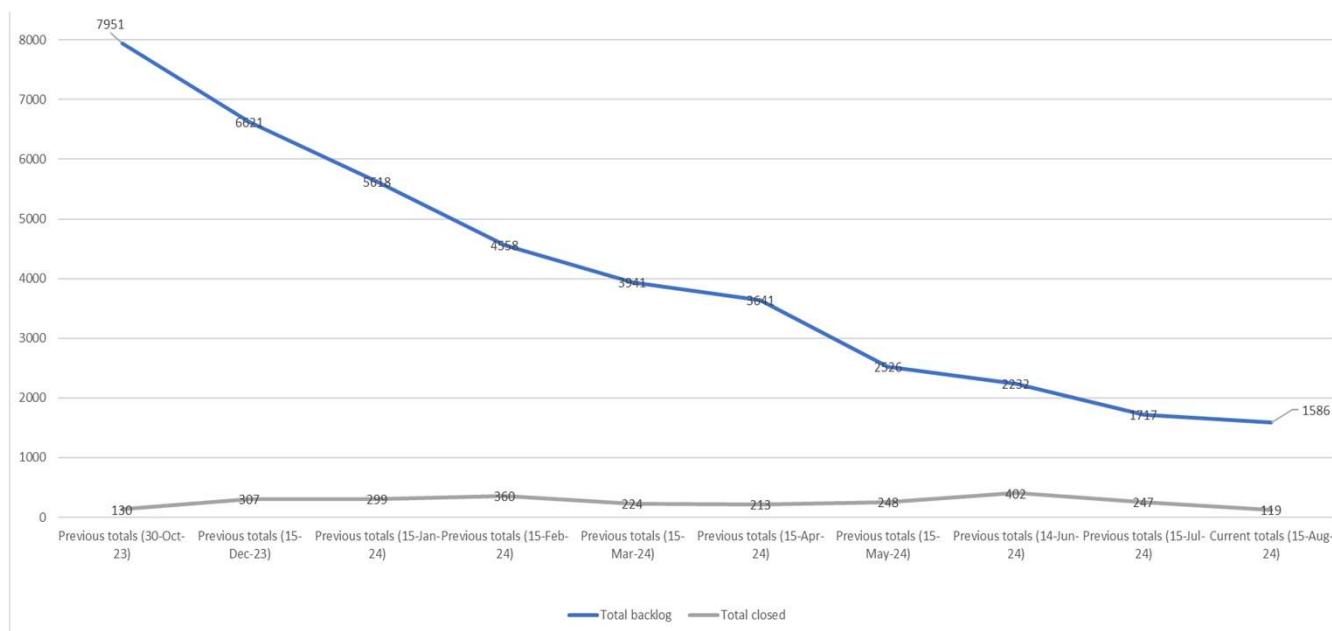
Program update: Customer support

Margaret Gomez

'Brute force' customer support

Additional customer support resources. 7951 in October 2023, 1586 in August 2024.

Reduced the number of defects awaiting development from 979 tickets in May 2024 to 132 tickets in July 2024 (85% reduction). This has decreased the number of repeat call tickets.



NSW Planning Portal Support Hub

Caitlin Williams

NSW Planning Portal Support hub



-
- Accessed via the existing NSW Planning Portal help and resources page
 - The 'Support hub' will house all FAQs, step-by-step guides, information sheets and training resources including short videos
 - Will be developed in 3 phases:
 - Phase 1: Migrate the existing help resources to the 'filter view' format (Target date: End of October).
 - Phase 2: Migrate the resources within PEGA to the 'filter view' format (Target date: End of November)
 - Phase 3: Add a series of questions to refine the list of resources / information available to those relevant to the user. This can include information on the planning lifecycle, tips, links to training or step-by-step guides.
 - There will be opportunity to be involved in user testing.

NSW Planning Portal Support hub



Support Hub

Step-by-step instructions, frequently asked questions, video tutorials and TAFE NSW training modules.

Filter results

Keyword

Category

- ☐ Frequently asked question
- ☐ Step-by-step guide
- ☐ TAFE NSW training module
- ☐ Video tutorial

User type

- ☐ Applicant
- ☐ Council staff member
- ☐ Developer
- ☐ Practitioner

[Show all user types \(6\)](#)

Service

- ☐ Activation precinct certificate
- ☐ BASIX
- ☐ Building information certificate
- ☐ Complying development certificate

Showing results 1 - 10 of 856 results

Sort by

Relevance

Frequently asked question

13 March 2023

[Creating a Digital Design System for NSW Government](#)

A lot of exciting things are happening across the NSW Government in the digital space, but there's currently no consistent approach for how we design digital services, reusable...

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Support Hub

Step-by-step instructions, frequently asked questions, video tutorials and TAFE NSW training modules.

Let us know what you think

Filum morbi nullam et sine causa, nollam me tamen laudenda maioribus malis corrupti nec voluptas sit.

[Text link](#)

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Note: This is a mock-up for discussion only.

Support hub: Design clarification



Category

- ☐ Frequently asked question
- ☐ Step-by-step guide
- ☐ TAFE NSW training module
- ☐ Video tutorial

User type

- ☐ Applicant
- ☐ Council staff member
- ☐ Developer
- ☐ Practitioner

[Show all user types \(6\)](#)

Service

- ☐ Activation precinct certificate
- ☐ BASIX
- ☐ Building information certificate
- ☐ Complying development certificate

[Show all services \(22\)](#)

Application type

- ☐ Activation precinct certificate
- ☐ Appoint a principal certifier
- ☐ BASIX
- ☐ Building information certificate

[Show all application types \(26\)](#)

NSW Planning Portal Industry Reference Group – Quarter 3 meeting

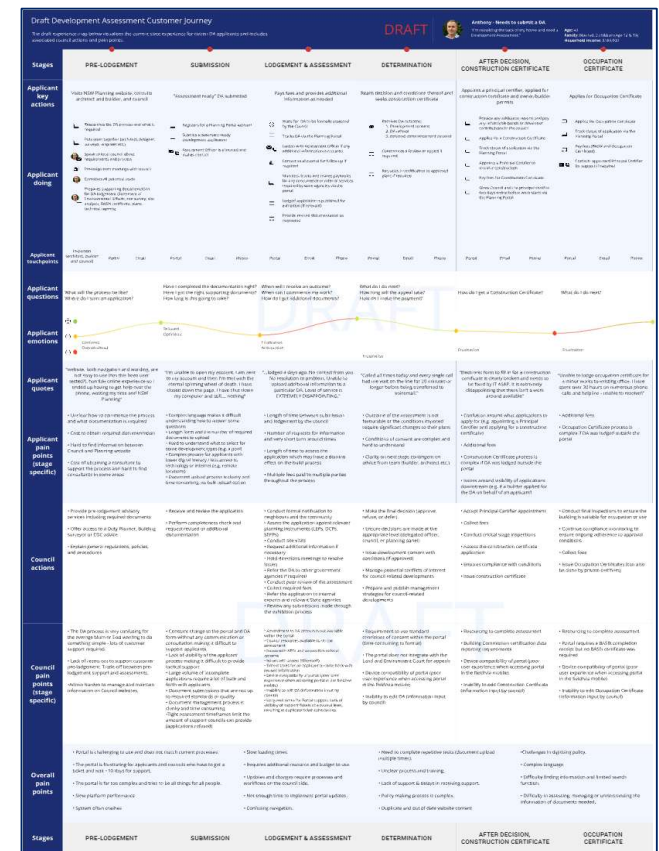
Development application co-design findings

Yashna Kumar

Overview - DA online co-design activity



- Our DA co-design activity built on work undertaken by the CX team and mapped key actions and pain points from a council perspective.
- The blueprint has since been updated to incorporate the data gathered in these sessions to create a full list of pain points and highlight opportunities.
- This was important because it allowed us to prioritise essential and urgent areas of improvement for applicants and councils to improve the customer and user experience (primarily the pre-lodgement and submission stages of the process).



Moscow Prioritisation Framework

Through the co-design sessions, we asked attendees to use the MOSCOW framework to bring together multiple perspectives and help the Department prioritise focus, funding and resources.

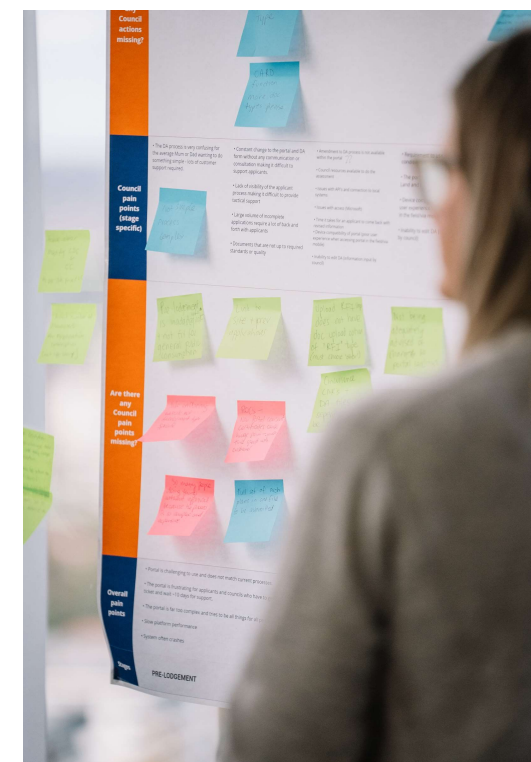


MUST DO	SHOULD DO	COULD DO	WOULD LIKE
These features <i>must</i> be implemented to meet legislative requirements and timelines, be mandated, overcome primary reliability, security or performance constraints	If feasible, these features offer clear improvements to end-user value, they are not essential and, thus, are less urgent to implement in the near-term.	These features make a marked impact on the success and viability of a service and should be implemented – but only if the product development team has the time to implement them without affecting other must-have features. Can be sacrificed in the near-term.	These features are not essential in the near-term and will likely be addressed in future iterations. If service or user priorities evolve, these features could easily move up in the order of priorities at any time
<i>Essential and urgent</i>	<i>Essential and less urgent</i>	<i>If time and budget allows</i>	<i>To be reprioritised later</i>

Top 5 pain points from DA co-design

Across all workshops, there was a consensus on areas that cause the biggest delays for DA approvals through the Portal and will be used to form the streams of work for the Program.

Top 5 themes:	Orange	Parramatta	Coffs Harbour	Newcastle	Virtual
1. Enable council staff to have admin rights	Must do	Must do	Must do	Must do	Must do
2. Improve pre-lodgement support / information provided to applicants	Could do	Must do	Could do	Should do	Must do
3. Consolidate DA and related applications (DA, CC, PCA, OC) into a single form	Should do	-	Should do	Could do	Must do
4. Improve the process for generating conditions of consent	Must do (if mandatory)	Could do	-	Could do	-
5. Reduce the complexity and simplify language of the DA form	Must do	Must do	Must do	-	Must do



Priority pain points from DA co-design



Themes:	Orange	Parramatta	Coffs Harbour	Newcastle	Virtual
1. Enable council staff to have admin rights	Must do	Must do	Must do	Must do	Must do
2. Improve pre-lodgement support / information provided to applicants	Could do	Must do	Could do	Should do	Must do
3. Consolidate DA and related applications (DA, CC, PCA, OC) into a single form	Should do	-	Should do	Could do	Must do
4. Improve the process for generating conditions of consent	Must do (if mandatory)	Could do	-	Could do	-
5. Reduce the complexity and simplify language of the DA form	Must do	Must do	Must do	-	Must do
6. Review the customer support model	-	-	-	Should do	Should do
7. Making applications visible to interested parties (owner, applicant etc.)	Should do	Must do	-	-	-
8. Improve the transparency of reporting (league tables, stop the clocks)	-	-	Must do	-	-
9. Search by address	Should do	-	-	-	-
10. Poor quality of documents and submission	Must do	Should do	Could do	-	-
11. Make owners consent mandatory	-	Must do	-	-	-
12. Greater clarity around the process and what to expect at each stage	Should do	Should do	Must do	-	Must do
13. Review the RFI process	-	-	-	Must do	-

Priorities from DA Online Process

Across all workshops, there was a consensus on areas that cause the biggest delays for DA approvals through the Portal and will be used to form the streams of work for the Program.



Theme	Pain Points	Emerging Opportunities	Ideas	Ranking
Admin Rights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unable to make changes to applications, including minor errors Unable to go back or cancel action Numerous tickets to Portal support to reopen applications to resolve minor changes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How might we rectify errors in a DA application once it's been submitted? How might we make management of minor issues more efficient and reduce time spent in support tickets? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creating a 'super user' role type with the ability to make certain changes Instating an undo/back button, review before submit Within legislation, allow Council teams to make necessary changes to correct minor issues. 	Must do
Simplification and transparency of process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The questions in the DA form are difficult to understand Language throughout the form is planning terminology heavy and not in plain English Many of the questions are not mandatory and can trigger unnecessary document upload requirements when mistakenly completed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How might we simplify the questions and information in the DA? How might we help guide applicants through the process, so they know what to expect as they go? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Combine applications so applicants provide their information and documents once (DA, CC, PCA, OC etc.) Streamline the questions (removing non-mandatory ones) and simplify language on the form to plain English. A checklist and flowchart built into the portal to help applicants know where they are in the process, with friendly plain English email notifications 	Must do
Pre-lodgement support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DA instructions / requirements are overwhelming Councils have different requirements and varying degrees of info on their websites Terminology and process is complex Not all councils have the resources to provide hands on pre-lodgement support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How might we simplify the guidance provided to applicants before they apply for a DA? How might we streamline the number of applications to complete (DA, CC, OC)? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make pre-lodgement advice on website plain English and easy to interpret, with interactive tools to guide you to the right information. Structuring information by development type (e.g. dwelling, pool, shed etc.) Direct applicants to councils from the portal so they don't bypass the pre-lodgement advice from council 	Could do
Landowner Rights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Multiple parties might be involved in a development activity (landowner, builder, consultant etc.) currently only the applicant can see the application which can impact subsequent applications downstream. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How might we improve the visibility of applications to all interested parties (e.g. builder, landowner etc.)? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Link application to address so you can see all applications for a single property Create an interested parties register to authorise access / notifications to relevant people (e.g. builder, landowner, consultant etc.) 	Should do

Priorities from DA Online Process (continued)



Theme	Pain Points	Emerging Opportunities	Ideas	Ranking
Data and reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discrepancies between portal data and council data Lack of clarity around what rules are considered for KPI's (when do clocks stop and start) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How might we improve the consistency and accuracy of data and reporting from the portal? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ability to generate / export to excel for council reporting and audit purposes Clear process maps / service blueprints articulating stop the clock provisions Ability to customise dashboards and reports within the portal 	Must do
Compliance and process reviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The current process for generating conditions of consent within the planning portal is inefficient and time consuming The current Section 68 process doesn't enable efficient re-referrals under multiple clauses The RFI process enables applicants to close the request (sometimes without providing the right information – impacting processing times). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How might we make the conditions of consent process more efficient? How might we simplify the section 68 process? How might we simplify the RFI process? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the conditions of consent process to inform the priority of fixes (e.g. formatting) in line with policy requirements to use the portal. Review the section 68 process to unpack issues such how the form can be re-referred under multiple clauses. Complete an in-depth review of the RFI process to unpack issues such as who should be responsible for closing an RFI. 	Should do
Customer service and support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Applicants are often passed back and forth between portal support and councils causing frustration Long wait times to receive support Lack of visibility of P-tickets at a council level causing duplication Calls to Service NSW are not helpful / don't provide any value to councils or customers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How might we provide easier and more timely access to customer support for applicants? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Redirect funding from Service NSW to councils to enable greater resourcing for customer support / In-person support for DA's at Service NSW Create a dashboard view so councils can track and manage all open P-tickets at a council level Better training and access for portal support staff to be able to resolve more issues on the spot 	Should do
Document management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Large volume of RFI's due to missing or poor-quality documents Managing documents once uploaded is clunky/time consuming (version control and naming conventions) Applicants need to reupload docs for post consent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How might we streamline the process to upload and manage documents? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide greater guidance / rules around minimum standard for documents (e.g. site plan to scale) Greater ability for councils to enforce required documents through the portal (custom checklists) Clearer categories / naming conventions for document types on the portal 	Should do

Next steps

Quick wins

- Review of non-mandatory questions
- Collaborating with policy to identify questions that can be removed

Simplifying content

- Simplifying form content, tool tips and notifications to plain English

Structural redesign

- Larger scale redesign of the form structure to be more intuitive and easier to navigate



NSW Planning Portal Industry Reference Group – Quarter 3
meeting

Workshop: Industry backlog

Kieran Babich

Backlog to date

1	2	3	4	5
Technology & Systems	User Experience/ Interface	Policy Application & Process	Support & Training	Data & Reporting
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited document management functionality (e.g. no ability to filter by date of upload, version control and efficiently supersede documents) Layers of rules in the system unclear how to follow the process and be compliant New capability to have super user accounts to administer private organisation accounts/notifications. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Required documents are unclear Inconsistent notifications, help text Ability to link documents to related applications Poor load speed and performance of the Portal, frequent outages Application register search capability by address Capability to act on behalf of applicant. BASIX process and connection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inconsistent workflows Complexity of application for a single development LEC process is inefficient and needs review. (breaks when not linear) Class 1 building classification issues Streamlining payment process for broad range of stakeholders involved. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support and service review process Access to test accounts/training space to better understand applicant view and greater training No provision portal training/ certification e.g. accreditation for higher access Communication around releases, roadmap and funding could be improved. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unclear on 'stop-the-clock' and concurrence and referral capability Limited access to/visibility of NSW Planning Portal reporting such as access to local government area data Need for additional Spatial Viewer layers.

NSW Planning Portal Industry Reference Group – Quarter 3
meeting

Other matters

Caitlin Williams

Release communications



Current process

- Overview of upcoming releases at quarterly NSW Planning Portal Reference Groups
- Pre-release email to NSW Planning Portal Industry administrators and reference group members (to share with impacted colleagues)
- Post-release email to NSW Planning Portal Industry administrators and reference group members (to share with impacted colleagues)
- Release summary published on NSW Planning Portal
- News items in the Planning Bulletins.

Proposed future process

Current process PLUS:

- Subscription form to enable interested parties to subscribe to certain updates
- Banner message on NSW Planning Portal dashboard to advise of next release date and view summary of changes / Link to the release summary post release
- Showcase webinar of the changes
- Industry groups encourages to publish the pre-release communications to inform their members.

Please check these emails are not being sent to your Junk / Spam folders.

Under development: Subscription form

Subscribe to our mailing list

First name

Value

Last name

Value

Email address

Value

User type

Value



Organisation

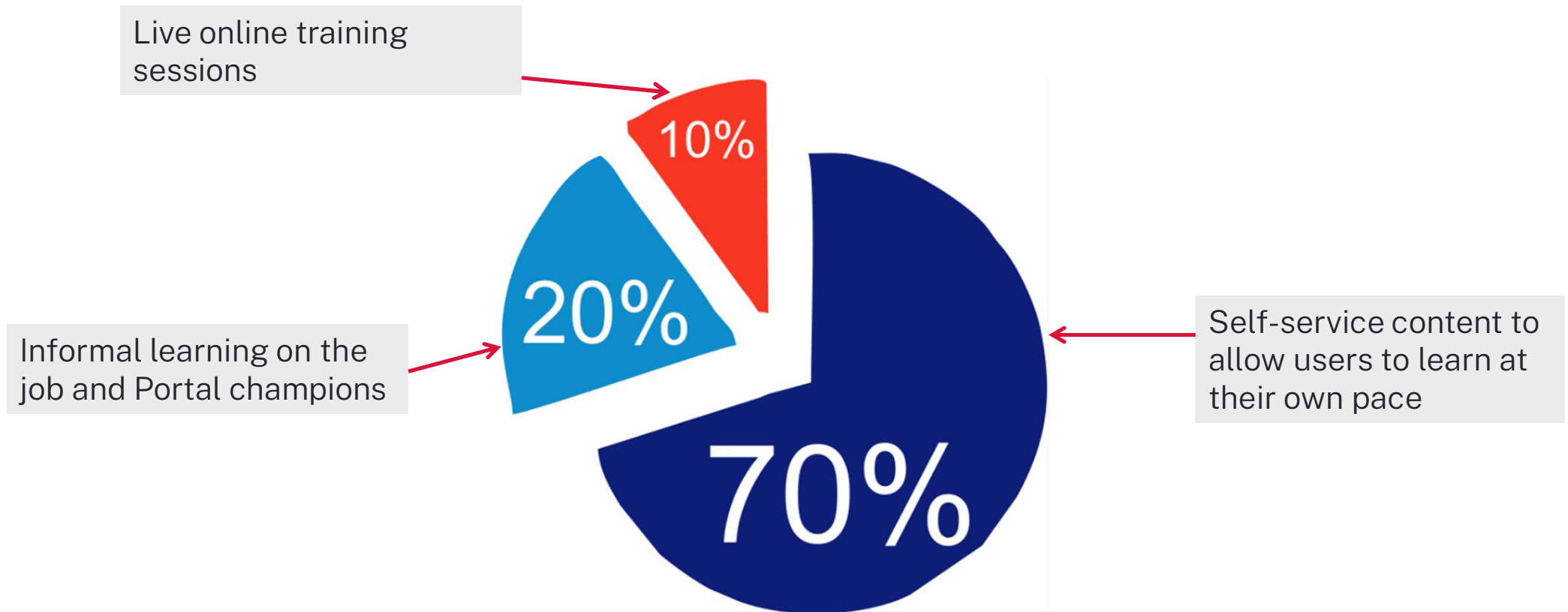
Value

Which mailing list(s) would you like to subscribe to?

- ☐ API communications
- ☐ Planning Portal program updates
- ☐ Release communications
- ☐ System outage notifications

Subscribe

We are introducing a multi-approach to NSW Planning Portal training



2024

January							February							March						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6					1	2	3						1	2
7	8	9	10	11	12	13	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
28	29	30	31				25	26	27	28	29			24	25	26	27	28	29	30
																				31
April							May							June						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6					1	2	3	4						1
7	8	9	10	11	12	13	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
28	29	30					26	27	28	29	30	31		23	24	25	26	27	28	29
																				30
July							August							September						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6						1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
7	8	9	10	11	12	13	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
28	29	30	31				25	26	27	28	29	30	31	29	30					
October							November							December						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5							1	2	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6	7	8	9	10	11	12	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
20	21	22	23	24	25	26	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
27	28	29	30	31			24	25	26	27	28	29	30	29	30	31				

The last meeting date for 2024 is **14 November 2024.**



Department of Planning and Environment