

Appendix one – Response from agency



Office of the Secretary

IRF22/1882

Margaret Crawford
Auditor-General for New South Wales
Via email: mail@audit.nsw.gov.au


Dear Auditor-General

Thank you for your correspondence on 17 May 2022, attaching the NSW Audit Office Report (final).

I acknowledge and thank the Audit Office of NSW and its team for the collaborative approach taken with the Department of Planning and Environment (the Department), its stakeholders and specifically, our Digital Analytics and Insights team during the audit process.

The Department accepts and is already working to implement your three recommendations. We will provide a report to the Audit Office of NSW on our progress in December 2022.

I appreciate your acknowledgement that the Department's ePlanning program has progressively achieved its objectives and that our improvements to the planning, implementation and governance of the program has resulted in improved delivery.

At this point in time, the ePlanning program consists of nearly 30 digital planning services, has more than 180,000 registered users and has accepted more than 170,000 development applications. An adjustment period and stakeholder issues are to be expected when a digital transformation of this magnitude is progressively introduced.

I am pleased to say that more than 85 per cent of users gave the 'thumbs up' through the Departments customer service feedback widget.

As the number of digital planning services increases, the Department will intensify its work with its stakeholders, as well as adapt its change management approach by increasing training, customer support, communications, and stakeholder forum opportunities.

The ePlanning program has led the digital transformation of the NSW planning system from a heavily paper-based, low democratised and opaque system to one that is digital, transparent and provides access to near real-time data.

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As testament to this achievement, the NSW Government's ICT Assurance Review conducted in December 2020 noted that "the program had effectively adopted an agile development methodology which has contributed to a consistent record of delivery. This approach, along with a council stakeholder feedback loop, has contributed to a strong level of engagement with stakeholders and the continual improvement of the Portal".

Should you have any further inquiries, please do not hesitate to contact my office.

Yours sincerely

Mick Cassel
Secretary
NSW Planning

8 June 2022

CC:

