

Transforming the planning process in Ireland

MyPlan

The Challenge

- 400+ Development Plans, Local Area Plans and Zoning Plans all in different formats
- No single point of access for national plans and other data related to the planning process

The Benefits

- Easy access to consistent nationwide data to support government decision making
- Efficiency gains for professionals involved in making planning applications
- A more open and transparent system for citizens



The Customer

The mission of the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government is to encourage and support sustainable development in Ireland. As part of its mission, the department sets an overall regulatory and policy framework for planning delivered through the local authorities and An Bord Pleanála to secure proper planning and sustainable development and balanced regional development.

The Challenge

There are presently 88 separate planning authorities, including city and county councils, town councils and borough councils. Together these authorities have adopted over 400 statutory Development Plans and Local Area Plans. These plans include as many as 1,000 identified areas of potential development, each with its own additional Zoning Plan. All the 400+ Development Plans, Local Area Plans and Zoning Plans from the different authorities are produced in a variety of formats, and these differences in format hamper the delivery of an effective overview of the plans with regard to practical matters such as the extent of lands identified for future development and other purposes across the many different land uses, whether residential, commercial, community or amenity.

The department therefore set out to:

- Improve co-ordination across local authorities by
- Creating a single source of consistent, up-to-date planning information for all of Ireland to support government decision making
- Make information about development planning more accessible to the people of Ireland
- Support the economy by helping to improve the efficiency and quality of the planning application process

The Solution

Already very familiar with the power of geographic information system (GIS) technology, the department called upon Esri Ireland to help it design and build an online GIS service that would achieve its objectives. As a key part of the project, Esri Ireland worked with the Local Authorities to help them enhance and enrich their Development, Local Area and Zoning Plans to form the basis of a consolidated and consistent national planning dataset.

In collaboration with the department, Esri Ireland then built the online development planning solution, known as MyPlan, using Esri's ArcGIS for Server and the ArcGIS Viewer for Flex Open Source software. The solution took advantage of Ordnance Survey Ireland's MapGenie service to stream background mapping, including street maps, aerial photography and historical maps, directly into the application. Esri Ireland also provided a cloud based infrastructure for the MyPlan development and production environments.

Esri Ireland

Dublin

Block B | Ashtown Gate

Navan Road | Dublin 15

T +353 (0) 1 8693900 | F +353 (0) 1 8693901

Belfast

T +44 (0) 2890730165 | F +44 (0) 2890730167

E help@esri-ireland.ie | W esri-ireland.ie

Environmental Systems Research Institute Ireland Ltd. VAT No IE 6373903G Registered in Dublin No. 353903. Registered Office: Riverside One, Sir John Rogerson's Quay, Dublin 2. All rights reserved.

The Esri globe and Esri products, services and trademarks mentioned are trademarks of Environmental Systems Research Institute, Inc. Other companies and products mentioned herein are the property of their respective trademark owners.

Learn more at: esri-ireland.ie

“MyPlan will enable a much more open and transparent system for tracking the integration of plans across the country and is, I believe, a game changer....”

Jan O'Sullivan, TD Minister of State, Department of Environment, Community and Local Government with special responsibility for Housing and Planning



Tuam local area plans showing community facilities zoning.

MyPlan incorporates a vast amount of supplementary information that could affect where people choose to live and what types of developments are most suitable. These additional layers include data on important national monuments, architectural heritage, areas of special protection, nature reserves, flood plains, population census and education services.

The launch of MyPlan attracted a lot of national publicity and, in the first few weeks, usage of the www.Myplan.ie site rocketed up to 2,000 concurrent users. Today, the site attracts, on average, 400-600 users per day, of which 75% are repeat visitors. Bruce McCormack, Planning Inspector at the department says: *“The high number of returning users is proof that people are finding the site very useful.”*

Benefits

MyPlan gives people in Ireland unprecedented access to information about planning and development throughout the country. Individuals and organisations alike can easily use the online solution to zoom into their local community to see precisely what land is designated for development and access a wide range of data on factors, such as population growth, that might impact planning decisions. The system is available entirely free of charge at www.MyPlan.ie.

The availability of MyPlan is expected to lead to significant efficiency gains for property developers, architects, surveyors, lawyers and planning consultants. These professionals no longer have to source information from to different organisations and piece it together as they can now get the information they need from one place, and this saves many days of effort. Developers can also put forward better quality planning applications, because they and their advisors have improved insight into what development might be permitted and how designs for new buildings should be adapted to reflect risks (such as flooding) and environmental sensitivities.

Within central government, the development of MyPlan is tremendously significant, because it enables government ministers to deliver a more joined-up, understandable and accessible service for Ireland's citizens. Speaking at the launch of MyPlan, Jan O'Sullivan, TD Minister of State, Department of Environment, Community and Local Government with special responsibility for Housing and Planning said that MyPlan *“will enable a much more open and transparent system for tracking the integration of plans across the country and is, I believe, a game changer in terms of how the public will view the operation of the forward planning system.”*

Employees within the department can now answer questions from the Oireachtas more quickly and provide accurate information to support central government decision making. *“Information about the quantity of land zoned for different purposes across Ireland is now a click away,”* says McCormack, *“analysis which would have been more difficult in the past.”*

McCormack also believes that MyPlan enables the Department to improve its oversight and co-ordination of the planning process.

Esri Ireland Dublin

Block B | Ashtown Gate
Navan Road | Dublin 15

T +353 (0) 1 8693900 | F +353 (0) 1 8693901

Belfast

T +44 (0) 2890730165 | F +44 (0) 2890730167

E help@esri-ireland.ie | W esri-ireland.ie

Environmental Systems Research Institute Ireland Ltd. VAT No IE 6373903G Registered in Dublin No. 353903. Registered Office: Riverside One, Sir John Rogerson's Quay, Dublin 2. All rights reserved.

The Esri globe and Esri products, services and trademarks mentioned are trademarks of Environmental Systems Research Institute, Inc. Other companies and products mentioned herein are the property of their respective trademark owners.

Learn more at: esri-ireland.ie