



ORCHARD

Talent Group

EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

Local Planning Panel and Regional Planning Panel members, 2027 to 2030

NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure

July 2026



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About this opportunity

The Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (the Department) is building the next pool of members for local planning panels (LPPs) and regional planning panels (RPPs) across New South Wales, for a term running from 2027 to 2030.

Local and regional planning panels determine complex development applications and provide advice on planning proposals, independent of council and ministerial direction on matters of substance. Panel members bring specialist expertise and sound judgement to decisions that shape the places communities live and work in.

Local planning panels. Each LPP has a chair, two independent expert members and a community representative. The Department is recruiting a pool of approximately 220 expert members and 160 chairs, approved by the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces (the Minister), for appointment by councils across the state. Recent planning reforms are extending the LPP model further across New South Wales, so this recruitment also supports the establishment of new panels as the model expands.

Regional planning panels. There are currently 4 RPPs operating across New South Wales. The Department is recruiting 4 chairs, 8 state members and 25 alternate members for a term from 1 January 2027 to 31 December 2029. RPP appointments are made by the Minister and are subject to Cabinet approval. As the statewide LPP model continues to roll out, RPP terms may end before 31 December 2029, so RPP candidates are particularly encouraged to also apply for LPP roles.

Candidates are welcome, and encouraged, to apply for both LPP and RPP roles.

Panel work is designed to sit alongside your existing professional commitments, rather than replace them, so most members continue in their usual role while serving on a panel.

Further background on how local planning panels operate is available on the Department's planning panels page.



Panels we're recruiting for

This round covers the following regional planning panels and local planning panels. Local government areas across New South Wales continue to be added to the LPP model as the Government's planning reforms roll out, so we warmly encourage candidates from outside the areas listed below to apply. Being outside a current panel area now does not rule you out of the pool for future appointments.

Regional planning panels

- Hunter and Central Coast Regional Planning Panel
- Northern Regional Planning Panel
- Southern Regional Planning Panel
- Western Regional Planning Panel

Local planning panels

Local planning panels currently cover the following council areas:

Bayside	Blacktown	Blue Mountains
Burwood	Camden	Campbelltown
Canada Bay	Canterbury-Bankstown	Parramatta
Cumberland	Fairfield	Georges River
Hawkesbury	Hornsby	Hunters Hill
Inner West	Ku-ring-gai	Lane Cove
Liverpool	Mosman	North Sydney
Northern Beaches	Penrith	Randwick
Ryde	Strathfield	Sutherland
The Hills	Waverley	Willoughby
Wollondilly	Woollahra	Central Coast
Wingecarribee	Wollongong	City of Sydney



Building a panel that reflects our communities

Good planning decisions are shaped by the breadth of experience and perspective around the table. The Department is building a pool of experts and chairs that reflects the diversity of the communities these panels serve: candidates of all genders and cultural backgrounds, and strong representation from regional and rural New South Wales, are warmly encouraged to apply.

- We particularly encourage applications from Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge and leadership are vital to good planning outcomes, particularly on matters affecting Country, cultural heritage and community, and we want that leadership reflected in the pool of experts and chairs appointed to these panels.



Who can apply

The *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (NSW)* sets out who can be appointed to these panels, in sections 2.13, 2.14 and 2.18, and Schedule 2.

Local planning panels. Each LPP has a chair and 2 other independent expert members, approved by the Minister, plus a community representative appointed by the council. The chair must have expertise in law, or in government and public administration. All 3 independent members must have expertise in at least one of the fields listed under Areas of expertise, below.

Regional planning panels. State members of an RPP are appointed by the Minister and must have expertise in at least one of the same fields. Each applicable council separately nominates 2 people as its own council nominees for the panel.

Who is not eligible

You are not eligible for appointment to a panel if you are:

- a property developer, within the meaning of section 53 of the *Electoral Funding Act 2018 (NSW)*
- a real estate agent, within the meaning of the *Property, Stock and Business Agents Act 2002 (NSW)*
- currently employed by the Department or a council
- currently bankrupt, or have applied for the benefit of any law for the relief of bankruptcy, are an insolvent debtor, or have compounded with your creditors or made an assignment of your remuneration for their benefit

Carrying on business as a planning consultant does not, on its own, make you ineligible.

Councillors. Sitting councillors are not eligible for appointment to local planning panels.

Term limits

If you have already been appointed to a particular council's LPP for a total of 6 years, you are not eligible for reappointment to that same LPP. You remain eligible to apply to other councils' LPPs where you have not previously reached that limit.

Payment arrangements

Panel members are paid as individuals through payroll. Members cannot invoice for their services through a company or other business structure.

Declaring your history

The application form will ask whether you are, or have previously been, a councillor, an LPP member or chair, a property developer or real estate agent, or an employee of the Department or a council. If you answer yes to any of these, you will be asked for the date that involvement ended, or is expected to end.



What we're looking for

Areas of expertise

Expert members and chairs are required to have expertise in one or more of the following fields:

Planning

Architecture

Heritage

The environment

Urban design

Economics

Traffic and transport

Law

Engineering

Tourism

Government and public administration

Chairs. Chair candidates must have expertise in law, or in government and public administration, in addition to demonstrating the broader capabilities below.

Key capabilities

All expert members and chairs should be able to demonstrate:

- the ability to communicate complex and sensitive information clearly and tactfully
- a sound understanding of the NSW planning and legislative framework, and of accountability and governance principles
- extensive senior-level experience in their area of expertise
- a professional and ethical approach, and the capacity to form independent, well-reasoned views
- integrity, sound judgement and a commitment to putting the panel's interests ahead of personal or commercial interests
- the ability to identify and appropriately manage conflicts of interest, including disclosing them promptly and stepping aside from a matter where needed
- sound judgement in handling confidential and sensitive information
- the resilience to make decisions free of outside pressure, including a preparedness to disclose any attempt by a councillor, developer or other party to lobby you on a matter

Chair candidates should additionally be able to demonstrate:

- leadership qualities and the ability to guide constructive, timely discussion among panel members
- the ability to work with a diverse range of parties and to negotiate contentious matters with tact
- experience managing significant areas of risk and complex governance matters

Standards of conduct

If appointed, you will be required to agree to abide by the Code of Conduct for Local Planning Panel Members, which sets out standards of conduct, how to manage conflicts of interest, and requirements around gifts, benefits and confidentiality.

Remuneration and term

Panel members are remunerated in line with the determination set by the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces, available on the Department's statutory rules page. The standard maximum term for a single appointment to a panel is 3 years.



How to apply

You can submit your application online using the button and link below or by visiting orchardtalent.com.au/planningpanels. The form will ask you for:

- your personal and contact details
- a declaration confirming you meet the legislative eligibility criteria set out above
- your areas of expertise, and the local government areas and panels you are interested in being considered for
- details of your prior involvement as a councillor, LPP member or chair, property developer, real estate agent, or Department or council employee, where relevant
- the details of 2 referees
- a statement of up to 500 words addressing your suitability for the role
- your consent to probity checks, as set out below
- a current curriculum vitae
- your signed declaration

🍃 We recommend having your curriculum vitae and referee details ready before you begin, as the form cannot be submitted without them. We will give you notice before contacting your referees, at the appropriate stage of the selection process.

Submit application

form.jotform.com/261848287309065



Probity checks

If you are shortlisted, probity checks must be completed before a recommendation for appointment can be made. These checks are in addition to the register checks the selection panel undertakes as part of the initial assessment of all applicants.

Checks Orchard Talent Group will undertake

Orchard's own team will carry out the following checks directly:

- a councillor status check, against current NSW Electoral Commission and council records
- a real estate agent registration check, against the NSW public register
- a property developer status check, against your declaration and the relevant legislation, including open source checks (Google search, etc.)

Checks Probity People will undertake

Orchard Talent Group has engaged Probity People, an independent specialist probity provider, to carry out:

- a national police check
- a bankruptcy check
- a qualifications check

Your consent

By submitting your application, you consent to:

- Orchard Talent Group undertaking the checks listed above, if you are shortlisted; and
- Orchard Talent Group providing your contact details and the relevant information from your application to Probity People, so that Probity People can carry out their checks on our behalf.

If you are shortlisted, Probity People may contact you directly to request further information or documentation. What to expect at that stage is set out below.



What Probity People will ask for

National police check

This check is coordinated through the Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission (ACIC) and has strict identity requirements. You will need to provide:

- one Commencement of Identity document, such as an Australian birth certificate, citizenship certificate, passport (current or expired within the last 3 years), visa with corresponding passport, or ImmiCard
- one Primary Use in the Community document, such as an Australian driver licence (front and back), current Australian or foreign passport with valid visa, proof of age card, or ImmiCard
- one Secondary Use in the Community document, such as a Medicare card, bank card, student ID, academic transcript, Working with Children Check, government-issued photo ID, tax file number, electoral enrolment, or Centrelink or DVA documentation
- a self-captured photo of yourself holding your photo identification, as required by the ACIC to confirm your identity
- your residential address history for the past 5 years

 The identity requirements for this check are strict. If you are unable to provide the documents above, Probity People will not be able to complete your police check.

Bankruptcy check

For this check, you will need to provide one identity document (an Australian driver licence, Australian or international passport, or Medicare card), your contact details, and your 2 most recent residential addresses.

Qualifications check

For each qualification you would like verified, you will need to provide the institution, the qualification obtained, and the year completed. Some institutions may ask for additional information, such as the name you completed the qualification under, a copy of your certificate, your student number, or a signed consent form. If an institution charges a verification fee, Probity People will contact you for approval before proceeding.

If you have questions

Probity People's support team can help with any questions about the screening process, Monday to Friday, 8:30 am to 5:30 pm (AEST):

- Phone: 1300 333 246
- Email: support@probitypeople.com.au
- Live chat: available through the Probity People website and portal



Key dates

The stages most relevant to candidates are set out below. All dates are indicative and may be adjusted as the process progresses.

Stage	Timing
Expression of interest opens	20 July 2026
Expression of interest closes	17 August 2026
Initial assessment and shortlisting	Late August to early September 2026
Probity checks (shortlisted candidates only)	Week commencing 31 August 2026
Deadline to provide requested probity information to Probity People	By 4 September 2026 (end of the probity check week)
Minister's approval of the expert pool	By the end of 2026



Outcomes

When will I know if I have been appointed to the pool of experts?

The Department expects to confirm the approved pool of experts and chairs before the end of 2026, subject to the Minister's approval. Shortlisted candidates will be notified as decisions are made in the week commencing 31 August 2026. Candidates who are not shortlisted by the selection panel will be notified by 14 September 2026.

Does being approved mean I will be appointed to the panels I applied for?

Not automatically. Approval means you join a pool of experts able to be appointed to local or regional planning panels at the discretion of the Minister, the Secretary or the relevant local council(s). Being approved does not guarantee appointment to a specific panel, and appointment decisions take into account the needs of individual councils and panels at the time.

Enquiries

Most questions are answered in this document. If yours isn't, contact Orchard Talent Group at planningpanels@orchardtalent.com.au.

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