



MEDIA RELEASE

14 October 2026

Small council, big leap: Huon Valley builds Tasmania's first AI powered planning suite in-house

Huon Valley Council has launched two more AI-powered planning tools, that cut costs, shrink wait times and give people greater confidence navigating the planning system. They join Council's free 24/7 AI planning phonenumber, already taking calls, and a full end-to-end planning portal now being trialled with builders and planners ahead of its launch early next year.

The free Planning Enquiry tool lets anyone check what they can build. Users find their property on the map, sketch their proposed building and set its height, then receive instant information on the zone, overlays, site coverage, setbacks, codes triggered and likely permit pathway.

The second tool, an online Preliminary Planning Information report, makes early planning advice faster, cheaper and easier than ever, cutting the cost from \$280 to just \$50.

Customers submit their plans online, and AI instantly checks the right documents are included and prepares an initial report. A Council planner then reviews every report, so customers get the speed of AI with the expertise of a real person. Taking much of the administrative work off planners makes the process significantly faster and more efficient, and in most instances, customers will receive their report within two business days.

The report flags any clauses that would make an application discretionary, requiring advertising and possible consideration of the Planning Authority at a Council meeting. Knowing this early gives designers and clients the choice to revise plans before lodging, making the formal application quicker and easier.

Mayor Sally Doyle said building the suite in-house was an incredible technical achievement.

For all media enquiries, contact:

Huon Valley Council
Principal Communications & Media
communications@huonvalley.tas.gov.au
(03) 6264 0305



"Our team moved quickly to harness new AI technology and build tools that could transform planning across Tasmania. It shows small Councils can achieve big things with the right leadership," Mayor Doyle said.

"Planning can feel daunting. These tools put clear information in people's hands from day one, at a fraction of the cost and time."

Technical Manager Planning Innovation Sarah Wimmer said the tools would also give planners time back.

"Beyond faster reviews, we'll spend far less time on administration and routine enquiries, so we can focus on quality assessments and helping customers get it right the first time," Ms Wimmer said.

The planning portal is currently being trialled with local builders and planners. It will bring referrals, requests for information, digital signatures, planner notes and correspondence into one system, ending lost paperwork.

Since launching earlier this year, the AI planning phonenumber "Michael" has been answering around 160 calls a month about zoning, permits and planning rules, any time of day or night.

Try the new tools:

Planning Enquiry: planning.huonvalley.tas.gov.au

Preliminary Planning Assessment: [Preliminary planning information — Huon Valley Council Planning Portal](#)

For all media enquiries, contact:

Huon Valley Council
Principal Communications & Media
communications@huonvalley.tas.gov.au
(03) 6264 0305