

Data discoverability

1. Project

What is your idea? What outcomes are you trying to achieve? What will the impact be on customers?

Ideas can include new data sets, functionality enhancements, customer research, business process development etc.

Improve data discoverability within LDS so that customers are more quickly and easily able to find the data they need - search results are more relevant and meaningful.

This project could include enhancements to the search algorithm itself and ranking of results, as well as to the display/ordering of search results, the ability to search by location, and the usability/visibility of the search results sorter.

To enable a successful outcome, LINZ may also need to undertake a parallel piece of work to make changes to the terms used to tag and describe its datasets, and to dataset lifecycle management.

2. Problem

What problem are you trying to solve? What are the challenges, triggers, root causes? What evidence do you have to support this issue or demand?

LDS customers have told us that 'finding data' is the biggest pain-point in using the service (33%). Many of the 'find data' issues relate to discoverability and usability, and the frustration customers experience with searching for data, in particular the relevance and ranking of search results:

"The search tool does not return meaningful results"

The type of comments received include feedback related to:

- search terms

"You can't find data is you're not sure what to search for"

- location

"I can't search by location"

- results ordering

Another specific problem we are interested in resolving is that related to search results and the default ranking of these results by popularity. In some cases, particularly those related to aerial imagery, customers are seeking the latest data but are being shown the oldest. Because of this, older imagery is continuing to be downloaded more often than new imagery for the same area. How do we allow customers to more easily find the latest data if this is what they desire?

"I can't find the latest data easily"

E.g. the results of the current search <https://data.linz.govt.nz/search/?q=greymouth+imagery> are displayed by the default popularity ranking - no other ranking options are available, making the most recent imagery difficult to find

3. Contribution

How will this project help us achieve LINZ's strategic objectives/outcomes? Which goal does it relate to and how?

This project directly contributes to LINZ's outcome of "high-value geographic and property information", by enabling LDS customers to more easily find and access the key datasets they need

4. Benefits

Which customer group will benefit from this project and what difference it make for them? What is the likely scope and scale of the user benefit and business benefit:

- expected user gains
- \$ business benefits
- technical benefits

This development will again have benefit for all LDS customers, especially those who prefer to use search rather than browse for data. In particular this includes customers who are not very familiar with LINZ data or non-GIS natives. These customers are less likely to have the experience or know-how to work around these barriers to data discoverability.