This lecture will explore how terrain is a useful concept to think about the materiality of territory. Terrain combines geophysical issues alongside strategic ones, and shows how we need to go beyond narrow understandings of territory. All attempts at fixing territorial boundaries and shaping territories, and the legal regimes in, above and beyond them are complicated by dynamic features of the Earth. These would include such physical features as rivers, oceans, polar-regions, glaciers, airspace and the sub-surface – both the sub-soil and the sub-marine. Terrain makes possible, or constrains, various political, military and strategic projects. It is where the geopolitical and the geophysical meet. How should political-legal understandings of territory better account for the complexities of the geophysical?

**Stuart Elden** is Professor of Political Theory and Geography at the University of Warwick and Professor in the Faculty of Arts at Monash University, Australia.