



# Automation transforms planning process to delivering data-driven decisions in Nottingham

Case Study: Nottingham City Council





Nottingham  
City Council


*“As a planning authority, we want to improve publication of planning data through enhanced reporting capabilities with data interoperability at the heart of what we do. Our automated approach, enabled by FME, enables us to keep pace with the growing demand for planning information and helps us to derive more value from planning data through efficient and effective publishing and improved reporting. This not only supports digital planning reform but is also essential for statutory reporting and publication of statutory registers.”*

- Mick Dunn, GIS Service Manager, Nottingham City Council

 **Industry** Government

 **Customer** Nottingham City Council

 **Challenge** To address and meet increased demand for planning data, whilst also tackling in-house capacity and resourcing issues.

 **Solution** In conjunction with IDOX and by using FME Server the data integration ‘glue’, the Council could fully automate and connect their datasets to produce visual reports.

## Key Benefits:

- Realises the DLUHC’s reform of the planning system in England by supporting the planning ecosystem related to applications and decisions.
- Drives added value for users of the planning system.
- Improves data quality, use, availability, & transparency.
- Makes better use of planning data and increases sharing of reusable components and practices.
- Produces tangible products that can be shared with other planning authorities.
- Addresses increased demand for planning data and the issue of capacity, expertise and resources experienced by all local authorities.



Nottingham City Council has a long-standing track record of deriving added value and proactively publishing data; [opendatanottingham.org.uk](http://opendatanottingham.org.uk) is testament to that. As part of planning reforms and a desire to meet growing demand for planning information, it has worked with partners, 1Spatial and IDOX, to build an automated integration between its core systems which improves reporting and data maintenance to drive added value for users.

### Challenge

Data management and publication is critical for all planning authorities, but it is time consuming and can be inefficient and inaccurate without the right processes in place.

Nottingham City Council wanted to address – and meet – increased demand for planning data, whilst also tackling capacity and resourcing issues so that it could deliver more by freeing up in-house expertise to focus on value added work.

### Solution

***“This project has given Nottingham City Council a deployed enterprise FME environment that can be scaled and used for planning, but also many other data integration challenges. 1Spatial has been delighted to provide bespoke training and mentoring to support the data management transformation project and help enable data-driven decisions.”***

- David Eagle, FME Division Manager, 1Spatial

Nottingham City Council successfully applied for funding under the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) Development Management Software Pathfinder Programme. As part of the DLUHC’s reform of the planning system in England, this supports the part of the planning ecosystem related to applications and decisions.

By establishing clear reporting processes, the aim was to develop efficient and effective core data management to provide users with quick and easy access to planning information and improve data currency and quality.

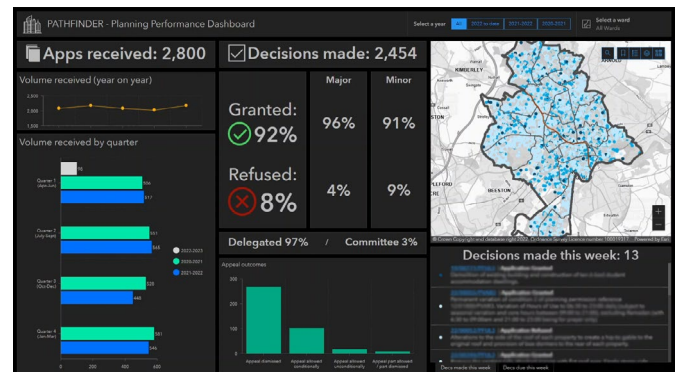
To meet the critical challenge of accessing and publishing data held within the core development management system, the Council worked in partnership with 1Spatial and IDOX to build an automated integration between its core systems. FME server is the data integration ‘glue’ that provides a no-code automated data dissemination and reporting workflow within the enterprise infrastructure. Fully automating and scheduling data maintenance

tasks facilitates statutory reporting, publication of open data and dashboard visualisations.

Together with 1Spatial, the Council built an FME process that connects to the Oracle database sitting behind IDOX Uniform Enterprise. This queries, joins and aggregates data from multiple sources to populate a templated Excel worksheet for the Council’s PS ‘district’ planning matters return. The return runs on a quarterly schedule managed by FME Server. The output set of metrics are emailed to a senior planning officer for sign off before being reported to central government. This same FME process is also available as an FME Server Workspace App for planners to create customised versions of the report based on case officer, date range and ward.

By implementing the IDOX Uniform Enterprise solution, the Council supports in-system data use for case management performance to enable quick and easy access to planning information in different formats through a simple user interface.

These capabilities empower planning officers with self-serve data discovery, enabling them to use simple metrics to extract, publish and share reports without the need to involve members of the GIS Team. Whilst there is a complicated data model behind the solution, data is accessed through an easy-to-use interface, which requires no expert training or specialist knowledge, with outputs received via an Excel spreadsheet.



The innovation with Uniform Enterprise and the data integration with FME Server are delivering time savings for planning and data specialists, and with the addition of spatial data extraction, planning officers can construct queries and create reports much more quickly, in greater volumes and with greater knowledge of the data.

### Benefits

- Improves efficiencies by alleviating burdens associated with data maintenance through automated scheduling.
- Significantly reduces the time taken to prepare new datasets for publication.
- Delivers operational data to better understand current performance levels, manage performance against national targets, and enable analytical work to be undertaken more quickly.
- Enables quick and easy access to planning information in different formats to planning officers, internal colleagues, elected members, other public sector bodies, Central Government, residents, developers and businesses.
- Introduces dynamic querying and publishing of data held within the development management system.

To find out more, please contact [fme@1spatial.com](mailto:fme@1spatial.com)

