

# Rail Safety Technology expert OnTrac revolutionises possession planning for Network Rail with mapping tool

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Rail technology specialist **OnTrac** has created a mapping tool to transform possession planning for Network Rail.

The RAIVS possession visualisation solution was adapted by OnTrac, the UK's number one rail safety technology provider. The company is well-known within the industry for its acclaimed RailHub suite of software and apps, which are used by companies across the supply chain, with a userbase of over 45,000.

This development is a prime example of how the pandemic has accelerated the adoption of **innovation throughout the rail sector**. The industry has been increasingly encouraged to use technology to improve, efficiency, communication, sustainability, and most importantly, safety. In the post-COVID world, the rail industry will rapidly help economic recovery, requiring advanced and unified technology such as 5G and AI.

Subsequently, innovation is now at the core of future improvement plans; for instance, the RSSB launched its **Rail Technical Strategy** in October last year, which focuses on making rail easy to use, lowering

emissions, optimising train operations, improving reliability and ease of maintenance, and using data to drive efficiency and technical progress. These priorities are vital to the railway's long-term success, and they rely on new technology.

Network Rail is leading the way with digital transformation, and RAIVS is one of the latest pieces of innovation they've implemented. The tool will revolutionise the way planning for rail projects across the country is carried out.

As the owner and infrastructure manager of most of Britain's railway network, Network Rail is responsible for maintaining track spanning 20,000 miles across the UK. Network Rail plans and delivers hundreds of projects each year to ensure the continual improvement of our railways. The planning process can be arduous; as there are so many projects, work needs to be planned years in advance at times. With the number of different improvement projects in the pipeline, planning processes are being looked at to make sure they're as efficient as possible, especially with the increased pressure to assist in post-pandemic economic recovery.

A common issue is under or overused resources, as it's difficult to decipher when a given asset is available for use without visual representation. RAIVS allows for regions to submit their plans for resource usage over several years, which enables the team to identify where resources are being over-allocated. The system takes in data from various Network Rail databases such as P6, PPS, NROL & DWWP, and shows this possession data visually for easier planning.

Network Rail also required the ability to show where PPS possessions and worksites were geographically, to help the access mapping team. OnTrac was able to draw colour-coded possessions to be placed on top of the track data, which matched the existing processes used by the planning teams, creating a seamless transition over to the new platform. The RAIVS tool will save substantial time and effort when planning works in advance, enabling much quicker completion of projects.

The tool is an adaptation of OnTrac's existing visualisation offering, eTrac-GIS. Callum Clift is Product Owner of eTrac-GIS and led the RAIVS project. He had the following to say: "We noticed a gap in the market and an opportunity to significantly speed up and improve planning processes. Currently, we offer our eTrac-GIS product on a bespoke basis, made to fit the customers exact requirements. RAIVS gave us the perfect opportunity to adapt our existing capabilities and create something new to engrain us further into the fabric of Network Rail. We're really happy with how it's turned out and most of all how happy Network Rail is with the solution; it's made a significant difference to their planning process."

RAIVS project sponsor, Gemma Arnold, commented on the RAIVS tool: "OnTrac's RAIVS Possession Viewer tool exceeded our expectations and has helped to transform the ways we consume and interact with our data. The team listened and created a bespoke tool to fit our needs, communicating with us consistently throughout product development. Having the ability to see resource allocation and possessions visually represented on a map makes the whole process so much easier and allows us to make the most of our resources for full efficiency."

OnTrac has worked extensively with Network Rail over its years in business and continues to be closely aligned with their goals and objectives. Their next joint effort will be Network Rail's biggest safety

programme yet, with more to be announced later in the year.

You can find out more about the RAIVS project here: <https://on-trac.co.uk/case-studies/>

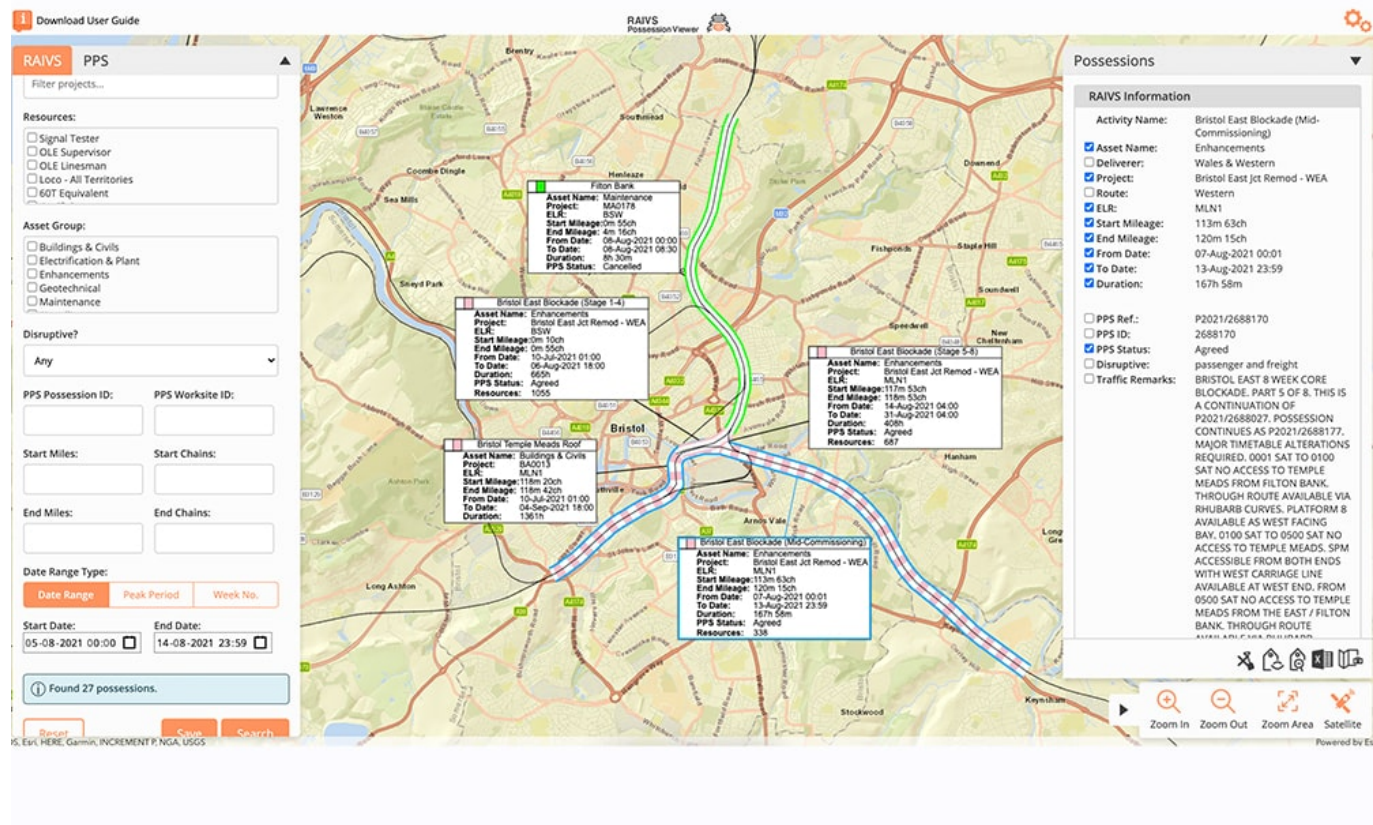


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