Harrogate Borough Council

"The standard methodology provided by TRACC allows us to demonstrate we havebeen fair to everyone. If the results are considered at examination I am confident to stand behind the TRACC outputs"
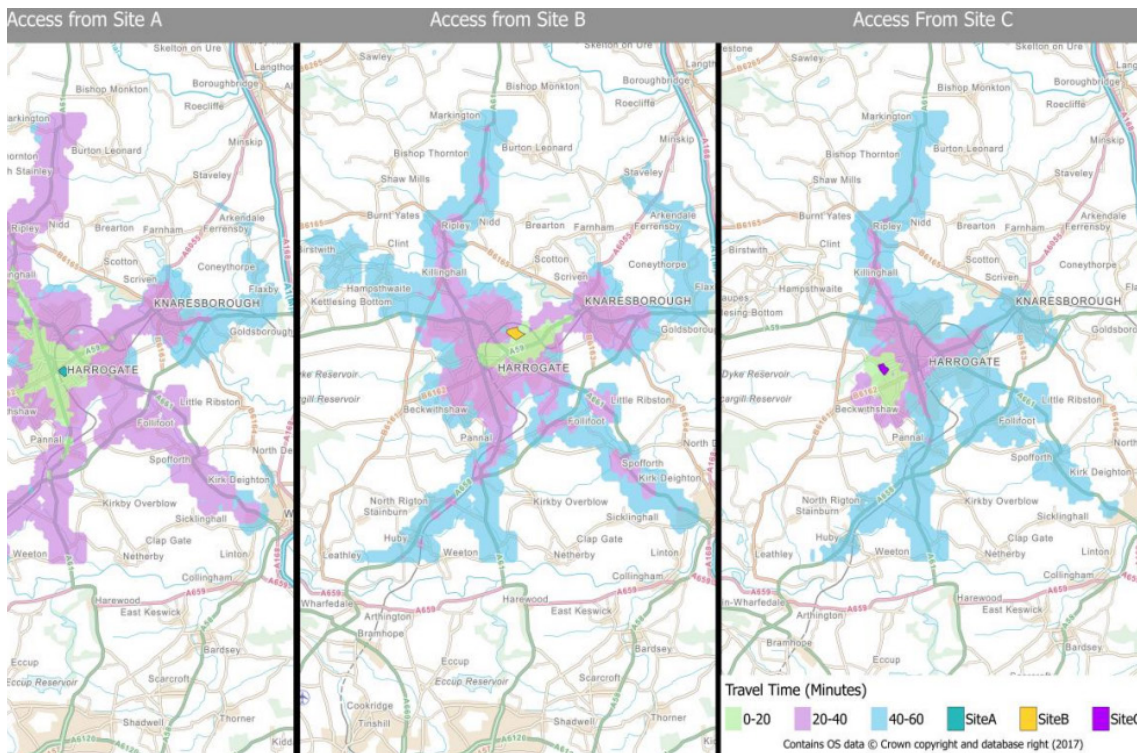
Challenge

As part of their core responsibilities, Harrogate Borough Council manage planning and development for their authority. The planning team at Harrogate Borough Council use TRACC software to help with assessments for every development site put forward by developers for consideration in the Local Plan. Prior to using TRACC, accessibility assessments were carried out by manually calculating the distance between development sites and their nearest services, this process added weeks to the council's already stretched workload.

Tom Horner, a Strategic Transport Planner at Harrogate, had used both the ACCESSION and then TRACC software in a previous role and suggested this work "could be done in one morning if using TRACC which would also provide a more standardised assessment system."

Solution

TRACC quickly and easily produces accurate, multimodal travel time contours and reports between any number of origins and destinations. Tom felt the manual approach that Harrogate had been using not only took time, but could potentially be seen as a subjective methodology. By using TRACC they can plug in 500+ sites, add all the destinations and run the calculations between the two "giving us an accurate figure that's difficult to argue with".

By using a standard methodology for all assessments, they are able to confidently show developers how far they are from the nearest services. "So, if we were trying to decide between two sites, we could use TRACC to see that one was a 40 minute walk to the nearest primary school and one was a 15 minute walk, the site closer to the primary school would get an extra tick in the box. These accessibility indicators form an essential part of our full sustainability appraisal."

Travel Time (Minutes) 0-20 20-40 40-60 SiteA SiteB SiteC

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The Solutions

Tom explained that the cost saving aspect of the TRACC software was the strongest argument when proposing achange in methodology to the council. "When we are talking about 500+ sites to assess and someone manually assessing the distance between each single site and every different service, then on a time saving basis you can justify the cost of purchasing TRACC. Using TRACC was a bit of a no-brainer for us to be honest."

"Once your repository is set up, it's very easy to add in additional sites and run quick calculations. I find it really easy to use as it's very straightforward." Tom highlighted the importance of using standardised methodology to produce the accessibility reports as this is a vital part of the evidence base for getting a local plan in place.

"Politicians need to be sure that all the evidence has been collected properly and fairly and we were able to confidently show that TRACC has allowed us to deliver this."

"I don't really know what we would do if we didn't have TRACC, these reports would take me a couple of weeks rather than a couple of hours"

1	**Save Time**
	Save time – calculations run in seconds
2	**Save Money**
	Save money – no external consultancy costs
3	**Flexible**
	The software is now in house and can be used for ad hoc analysis

Harrogate are now keen to use TRACC to help them with their emerging economic growth strategy by using the large-scale calculations and map outputs to show that business parks in the district offer fantastic locations for access to the North of England. Tom supported news of the new version of TRACC saying "the fact that TRACC is continuously being improved and loading in the latest data such as OS Highways gives us the opportunity to use exciting new datasets and do other analysis that wasn't previously possible."