

Idox. Do more.



Savills

Savills uses Idox's groundMapper to develop SMART, an innovative digital platform for managing large land referencing and land assembly projects.

Overview:

World-leading property agents providing best-in-class property consultancy to businesses and individuals

Savills is a multi-disciplinary firm of Chartered Surveyors advising clients on all aspects of property management, development and transactions. With 600 offices across America, Europe, Asia Pacific, Africa and the Middle East, the company takes pride in providing forward thinking and practical advice to all sectors of the property market including Commercial, Residential, Rural, Energy and Infrastructure.

Challenges:

Inefficiency of systems leading to data fragmentation and information silos
Savills' Infrastructure team specialises in providing land referencing and land assembly services to its customers across the UK. Land referencing and land assembly involve researching and identifying people and organisations that have a legal interest in land or property and compiling the details of those interests. Land referencing is a critical early step in any development project and has a major influence on the design options, securing land access, managing stakeholder engagement and the legal processes relating to land assembly.

Savills Infrastructure is responsible for consulting landowners to allow for surveys to take place or obtain agreements for work to be carried out, for example, upgrades to an existing pipeline or construction of an overhead electricity line. Traditionally, much of this work required utilising a variety of maps, trackers, emails and legacy systems such as documents and spreadsheets – leading to data fragmentation and information silos. There was also a need to coordinate with multiple stakeholders with different needs and expectations on each project. To deliver a more effective land agency service, Savills was therefore seeking to deploy a user-friendly, map-driven, digital project platform that could streamline the process and scale up to support expected growth.

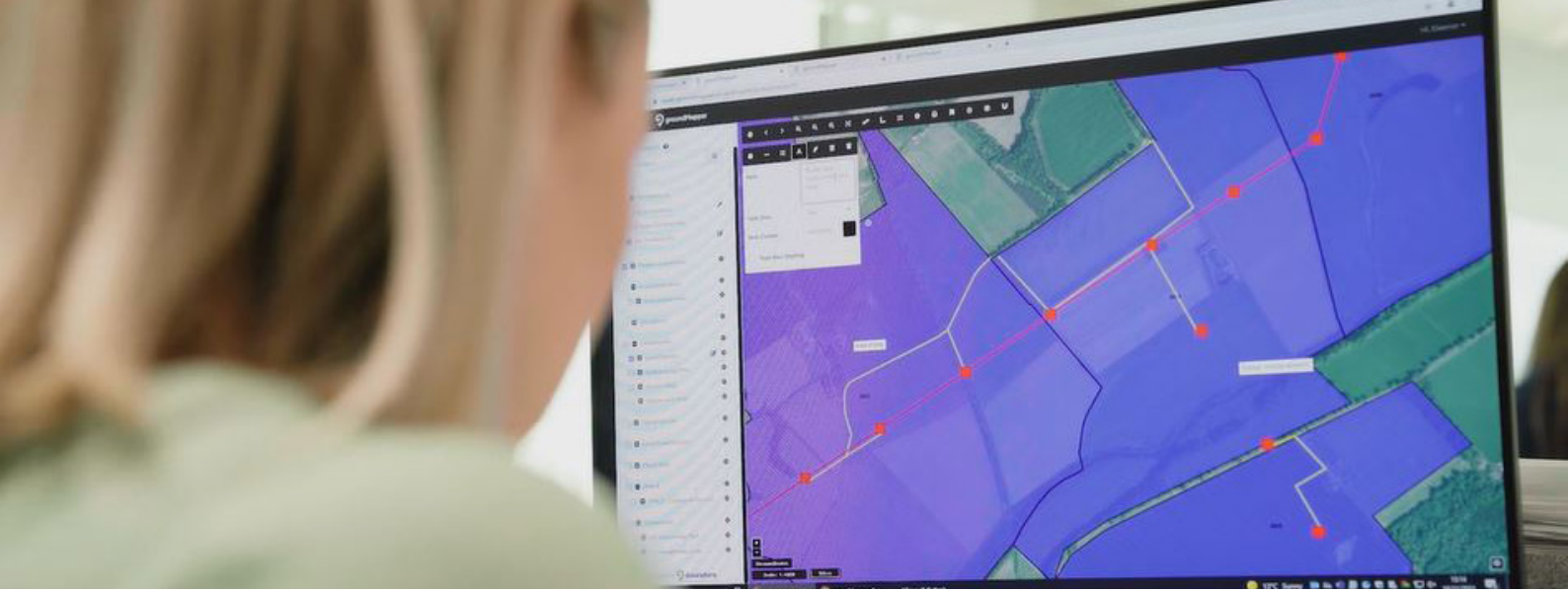
Solution:

An innovative digital platform that helps multiple stakeholders work collaboratively and efficiently on land assembly projects

Savills collaborated with thinkWhere as its technology partner in 2019. Idox since acquired thinkWhere in 2021 and has continued working with Savills since then.

“The project managers dependence on one or two GIS or land agency specialists has diminished – the user experience is simple, meaning that novice users of the system can easily undertake their work, reducing dependencies on others and liberating the use of data. Equally, these specialists can focus their time on other value-added activities, developing their skills and capabilities, and driving continuous improvement.”

Eleanor Mair
GIS Manager
Savills



As part of the collaboration, a core system was developed and extended in a modular fashion, to produce an innovative solution that delivered an integrated, digital projects platform – SMART (Savills Mapping and Referencing Tracker). SMART is a collaborative digital platform powered by Idox's core GIS SaaS platform, groundMapper. It is a secure, map-driven, cloud-based solution that supports multi-projects and multi-users with permission-driven access to content from a single source of truth. SMART helps the team at Savills work together more efficiently with colleagues, clients and other stakeholders working on land assembly projects.

"Our initial discovery work with Savills highlighted the needs and significant opportunities that a single geospatial platform would bring to the key workflows associated with land referencing and land assembly. Using groundMapper as our core solution, our collaborative work with Savills has delivered a highly effective system driven by the key use cases involved. The adoption of our Software as a Service approach with groundMapper has not only generated efficiencies for Savills but has enhanced the experience for their users and increased their competitive advantage," says Alan Moore, Idox Head of Geospatial Services.

Outcome:

Increased efficiency, effective stakeholder engagement, and streamlined digital user experience

With SMART, Savills has significantly increased its project efficiency as teams no longer need to spend as much time looking for essential information in email accounts or remote file locations and data can be readily uploaded, accessed cross-referenced and downloaded. Project engagement has become much more effective with stakeholders able to self-serve information from a single source of definitive and authoritative data, generating a much stronger sense of ownership, trust and buy-in across the supply chain. "We launched SMART just before the COVID-19 pandemic," says Eleanor Mair, GIS Manager, Savills. "While initially, we couldn't showcase the system to clients in a face-to-face environment

due to the lockdown, virtual client meetings and demo presentations became much easier with the system. Our clients like SMART and see the benefits it brings, including helping mitigate challenges like information silos. Now, information is available for everyone on the project team to access – thereby reducing the risks associated with a single point of failure or the need for multiple local systems. SMART has democratised data access and unified systems to enable a streamlined digital experience for users of all abilities. Moreover, data related to land and landowners is protected in a secure environment and presented in an easy-to-understand way.

The platform has helped our users in many ways, including freeing up time in accessing data, which can now be done immediately at any time. It also means that for some tasks, users are no more reliant on other business functions, for example, the platform removes dependence on the GIS team for simple map production."

As SMART is hosted in the cloud, it is the perfect solution for remote working – providing the team with a hub for projects without the need for traditional on-premise infrastructure.

Commenting on the working relationship with Idox, Eleanor says, "While Idox and Savills operate in very different industries, both companies have come to understand each other's ways of working over the years which has immensely benefitted our cutting-edge product development. Going beyond the innovative design of the solution, Idox has continued to provide high levels of support along the journey, down to providing user manuals and in-person training when SMART launched. This helped our user groups understand the system and its functionalities better. Subsequently, the team also provided us with ongoing support via a service desk, they're quick to respond to any queries we have and go above and beyond to ensure that we are getting the most out of SMART," she adds.



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