



DORSET

Local Enterprise Partnership

Port of Poole – Townside Improvements

End of Project Report

June 2021

Port of Poole Programme Summary

The Port of Poole and surrounding area is an important business region in Dorset and one of the county's key assets.

£22 million from Dorset Local Enterprise Partnership's Growth Deal fund has been invested into major transport schemes to improve access into and around the Port of Poole. The investment will help drive local economic growth and bring an anticipated £500 million of leveraged private investment into the area.

- Darby's Corner
- Dunyeats
- Gravel Hill
- Hatch Pond
- Poole Bridge
- Cabot Lane
- Townside

This programme would help:

- Support the regeneration of Poole delivering around 2,500 new homes around the Port of Poole.
- Unlock regeneration sites to create business opportunities and help to make Poole an attractive place for businesses to invest in
- Drive local economic growth and bring an anticipated £500 million of leveraged private investment into the area.

The Port of Poole Programme was launched in April 2016; it highlighted the work that would be completed through an infographic and a map.



The final scheme, to be delivered as part of this programme, is **Townside**. The investment has been utilised to address the following:

- Accessibility to the Port of Poole;
- Severance;
- The inability to unlock development potential in the Regeneration Area;
- Areas of deprivation;
- Hunger Hill capacity and congestion issues;
- Accidents in the Townside area;
- Poor accessibility/infrastructure for sustainable modes; and
- Poor urban realm and sense of place

Overview of the Townside scheme

The location of the Poole Townside Improvements scheme is shown below:



The Poole Townside Improvements scheme consists of major access and place-making improvements to the townside area of the Back Water Channel. The scheme also delivered a reconfiguration of the Hunger Hill junction, which connects with both West Quay Road and A350 West Street on its southern approaches, and the A350 Holes Bay Road and B3068 Towngate Bridge on its northern approaches.

Review of Townside Business Case

In March 2014 the Dorset Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP), covering the geographic areas of the Borough of Poole, Bournemouth Borough and the County of Dorset, submitted its Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) to Government. It identifies the Port of Poole and its surrounding area as an important business region in Dorset and one of the county's key assets.

The Poole Townside Improvements scheme was identified, in the Dorset Local Enterprise Partnerships' (LEP) Strategic Economic Plan (SEP), as a priority scheme for completion as the transport infrastructure improvements it provides will improve vehicle, pedestrian and cycle links between the Port of Poole, Lower Hamworthy and routes onward to the town centre, while supporting the regeneration of the Port area. The scheme will, therefore, help to prevent transport constraints from becoming a barrier to growth.

To enable current and future businesses to operate successfully, the enhanced highway network supports essential trips while encouraging sustainable travel for short trips through the town, in line with the Dorset LEP's Vision 2016 and the Bournemouth, Poole and Dorset Local Transport Plan 3. The scheme provides the improvements necessary to sustain and encourage growth, particularly around the proposed regeneration area, providing the required capacity for the highway network to operate efficiently.

The proposed scheme has been assessed against a "do minimum" option, which forecast a worsening of the issues identified, with the future economic growth and development of Poole, and the Port of Poole in particular, being at risk. The local highway network was predicted to experience increases in congestion, journey times, severance, potential points of conflict and accident potential. These would have been accompanied by decreases in journey time reliability, network resilience and the appeal of sustainable travel modes. A number of scheme options were devised with a final option (Option 6) being selected for delivery based on a benefit-cost ratio of 3.27 which represents high value for money. These benefits are attributable to time, accident and vehicle operating cost savings, while also supporting local development and the regeneration of Poole's economy, compared to the "do minimum".

Dorset County Council carried out an audit of the Business Case to assess whether the Business Case met the Dorset Local Transport Board (DLTB) Assurance Framework eligibility regarding current guidance for business cases and value for money assessments. Dorset County Council concluded that it did meet the criteria and that the benefit-cost ratio showed very high value for money.

In September 2017 the Dorset Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) Access to Poole Port Programme Delivery Board confirmed that the Council's full business case for the Townside Improvements scheme had been approved.

Change Request

The following change requests were submitted as a result of changes to programme delivery schedules and funding:

- (i) For reprofile of spend (July 2018) - to balance out the wider PoP Programme
- (ii) Reprofile of spend (March 2019 & Dec 2019)) - to align with revised timescales following delays incurred because of utility company issues and to reflect delays resulting from wider consultation period for placemaking elements

Planned Outputs and Outcomes

The Townside improvement works were designed to achieve the following:

Outputs:

- create a well-connected highway network in the townside area which will reduce severance and improve journey time reliability, network resilience and safety for all transport users.
- improve accessibility between the Port of Poole, town centre and Strategic Road Network, as well as providing access to development opportunities in the Poole Regeneration Area.

Outcomes:

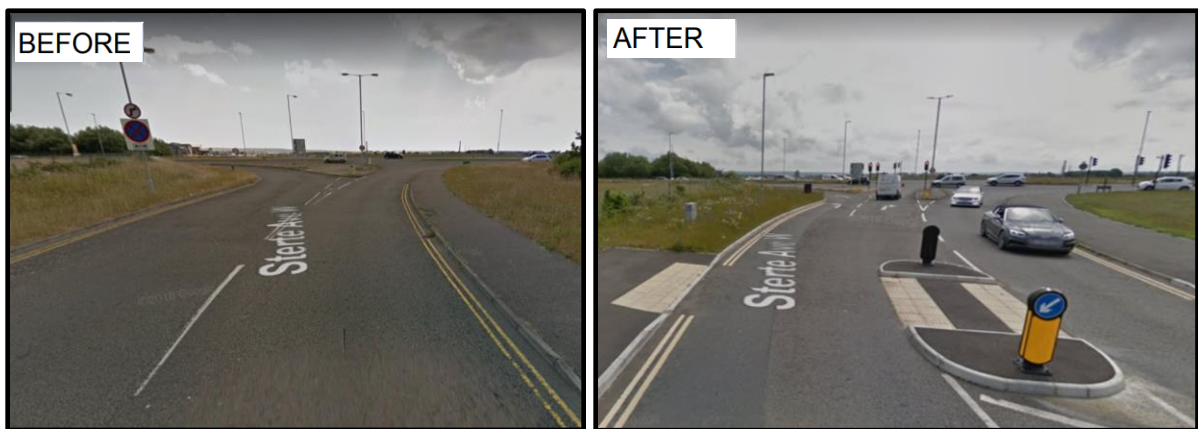
- Improved journey time reliability between the town centre and Port of Poole
- Support improvements in the quality of life, attractiveness and liveability of the Poole townside area for residents, workers and visitors
- Improved accessibility to the Port of Poole and townside businesses
- Reduced congestion at Hunger Hill To improve journey time reliability between the town centre and Port of Poole
- Improved accessibility between the Port of Poole, town centre and Strategic Road Network, as well as providing access to development opportunities in the Poole Regeneration Area
- Increased use of walking and cycling
- Reduced number of accidents, and casualties, in the townside area, including Hunger Hill
- Improved accessibility to the Port of Poole and townside area businesses
- Improved local economy through regeneration and facilitation of development and economic growth

Achievement of Outputs

BCP Council's Environmental Services team undertook the majority of the highway infrastructure works together with the construction and landscaping of the new green space created at Hunger Hill, the re-landscaping of Barbers Piles and the wider planting/placemaking throughout the townside area. Mildren Construction were appointed as the primary contractor for the Hunger Hill phase of works which encompassed the reconfiguration of the former roundabout to a new signalised junction. This involved:

Phase 1: 2018

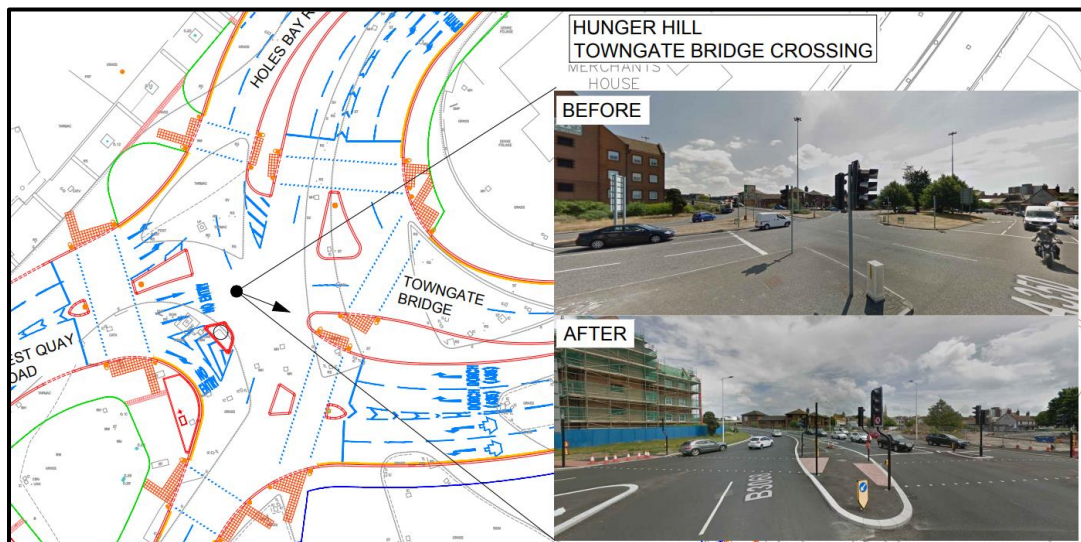
Sterne Avenue West: delivered a new signalised junction to allow traffic to turn right onto Holes Bay A350, without needing to use the Hunger Hill junction. It also provided a new pedestrian crossing across Holes Bay Road and a refuge island across Sterne Av West.

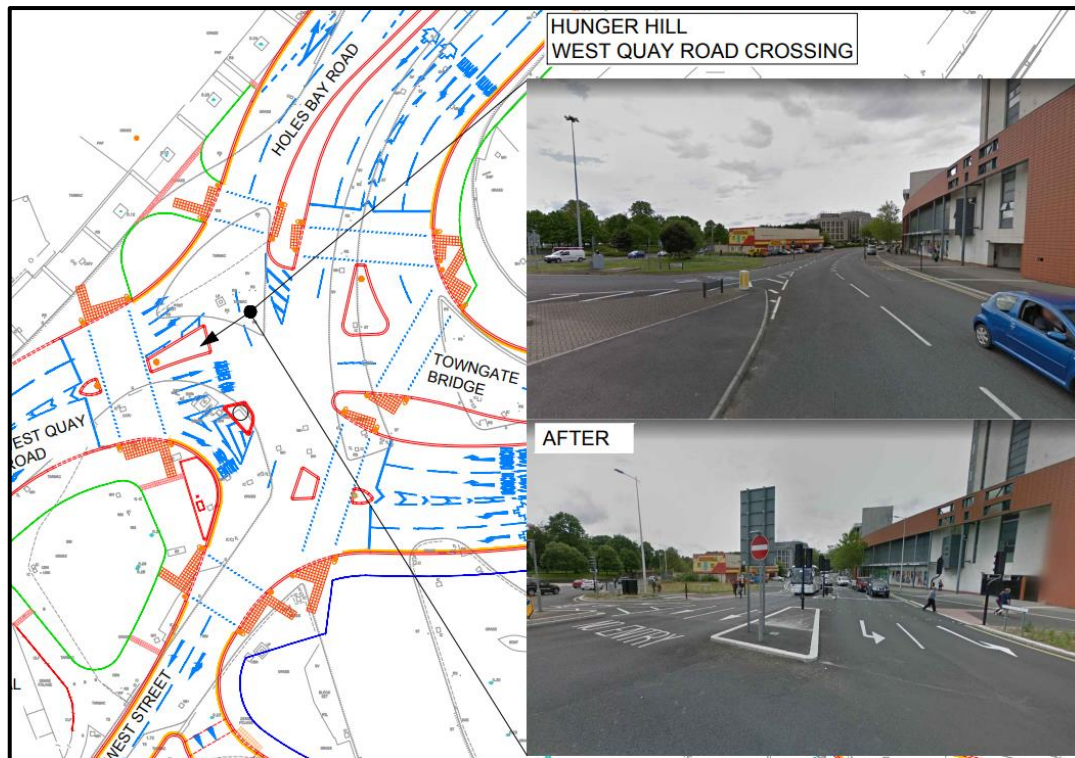


Marston Road: enabling works to permit a later change in Phase 2 of the direction of traffic, from one-way to two-way. It allowed effective circulation of traffic between West Street and West Quay Road; designed into its original construction in 2011.

Phase 2: 2018-2019

Hunger Hill junction: improve the efficiency of the junction together with more direct and safer crossings for pedestrians and cyclists. Changing the direction of traffic on West Street (towards the bridges only) and West Quay Road (towards Hunger Hill only).





Phase 3: 2018-2021

Hunger Hill to Poole Bridge: completing the links for pedestrians, cyclists and other road users, on West Street and West Quay Road. Plus placemaking elements of the work including improvements to the Poole Rail Station subway, wayfinding and public art.

WEST STREET

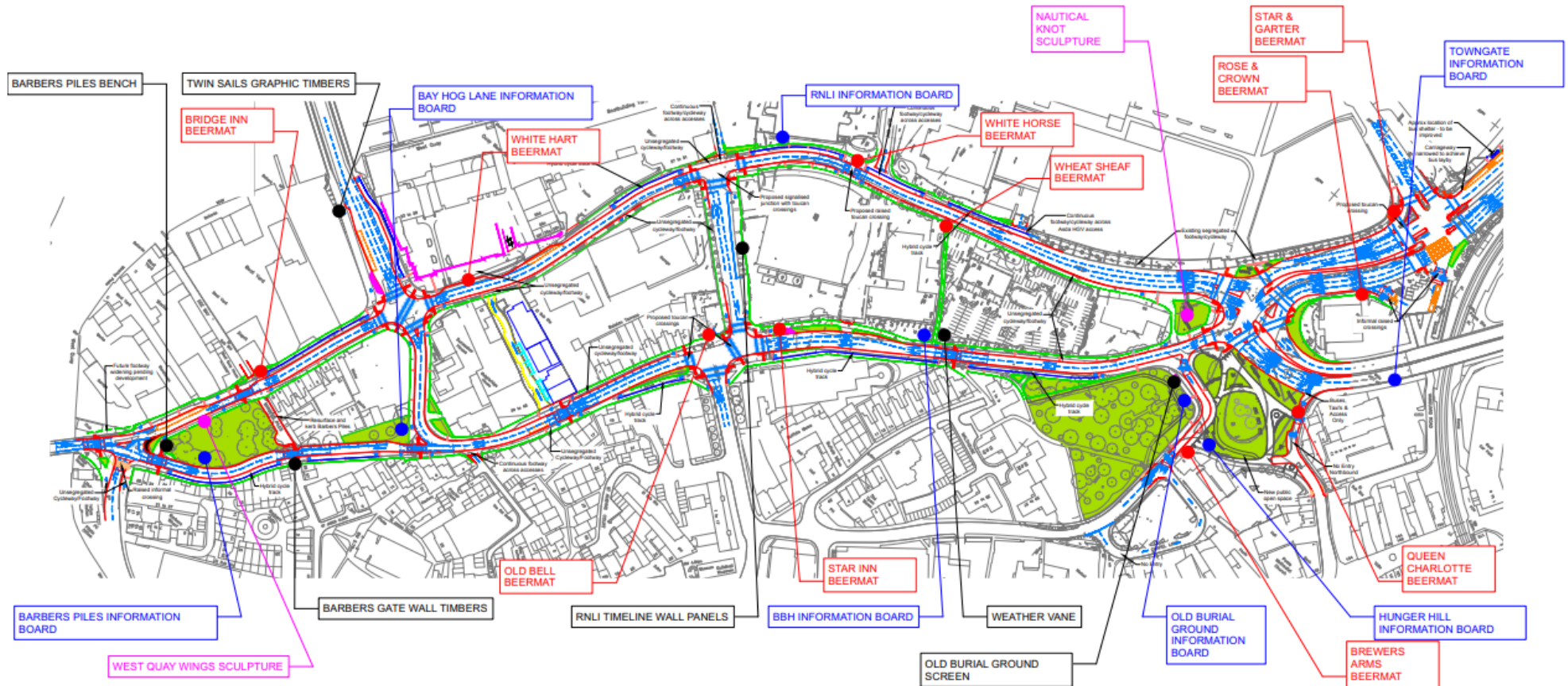


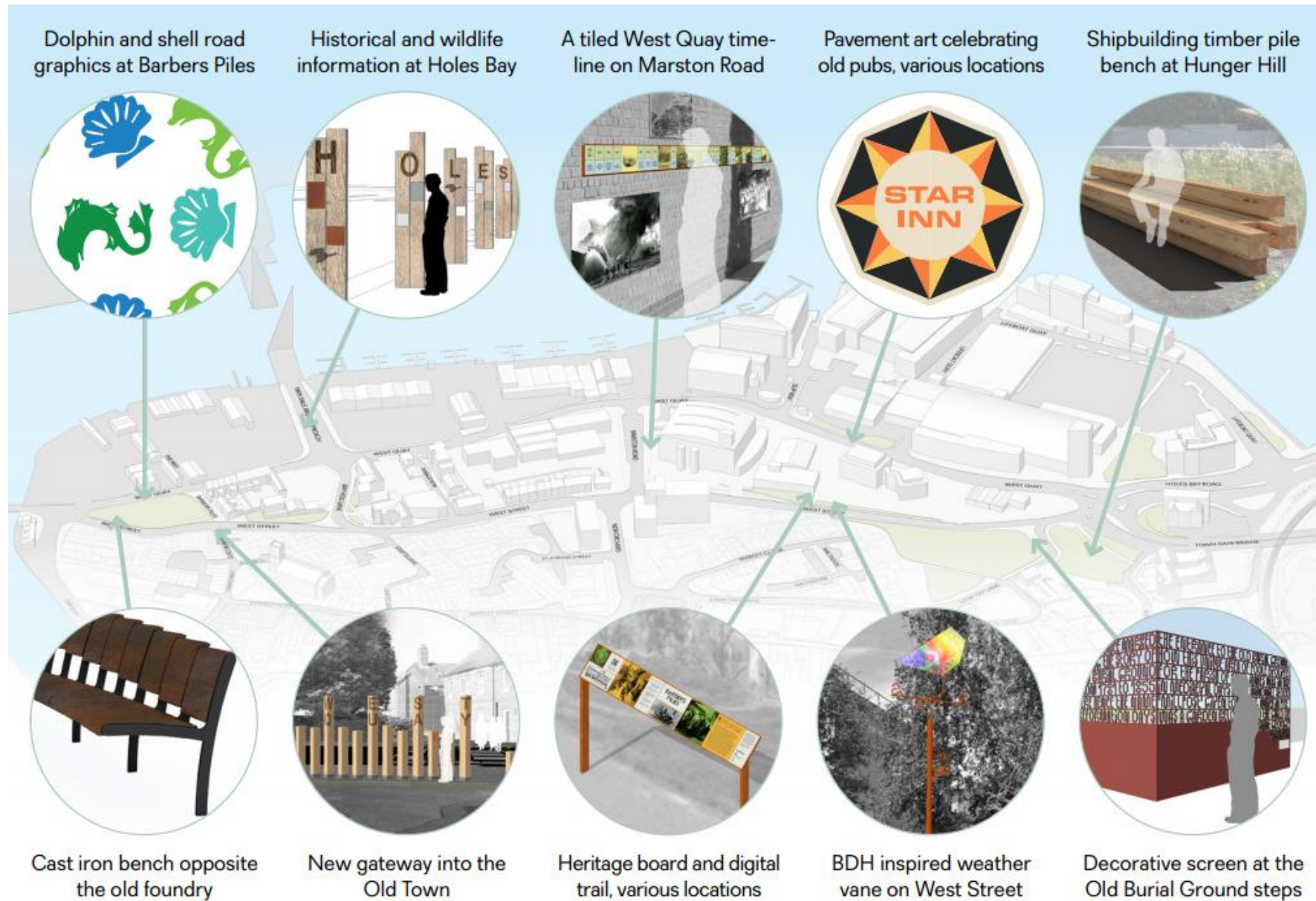
WEST QUAY ROAD



Placemaking:

Creating a sense of place and an environment in which residents, businesses and visitors wanted to spend time was a key objective of the Townside Improvements scheme and this has been very successfully completed through the creation of new greenspace, landscaping throughout the area and introduction of artwork, wayfinding and heritage pieces.







Benefits Realised to date

Reconfiguration of the highway layout completed in July 2019 created the opportunity to form a new accessible greenspace at [Hunger Hill](#) between Dear Hay Lane and North Street. This includes tree lined pedestrian and cycle routes, a rose and flower walk, a rain garden, and a large central green for informal play and events use.



Together with the improvements to The Old Burial Ground and the creation of a Maritime Garden at Barber Piles accessibility to open/green space in the heart of the Poole has been significantly increased.

Improvements will contribute to a healthier town in the face of climate change by increasing biodiversity through the extensive programme of planting, achieving urban cooling through tree planting, and the sustainable management of surface water.

Further, the improvements aim to enhance the health and well-being of users by providing opportunities for contact with nature, informal play, socialising and relaxation.

More efficient vehicle movements have been achieved as a result of the reconfiguration of the previous layout together with new traffic signals equipment.

Greater provision for active and sustainable travel modes has been realised through the infrastructure installed – semi-segregated cycle lanes, wider pavements, additional or upgraded crossing facilities, reduction in speed limits.

BCP Council developed a communications plan, which Dorset LEP fed into, to outline the communications required during the delivery of the Townside improvements scheme. The proactive communications meant that people were aware of the implications associated to the specific phases of construction – what was happening, when, how long for and why. This robust communications plan that included all elements of the works ensured that complaints were limited, and the activity/improvements have been viewed positively.

Review of Project Objectives

RAG Review of Objectives	Status	Comments
Time		Major infrastructure works completed by the funding deadline of end March 2021 with a small number of the placemaking/artwork elements being significantly delayed due to impacts of COVID-19; those remaining to be fully delivered during 2021 and funded by BCP Council as local contributions.
Cost		Scheme came in on budget, with additional funding secured by BCP Council via the Dorset LEP Pipeline Bidding process that was also fully utilised within the funding timeframe.
Quality		The project delivered all outputs exactly as described in the business case.
Scope		The project delivered the scope as defined in the business case.
Benefits		The benefits realised to date are in line with those identified within the business case
Risk		No significant risks reported.

Finances

	Indicative DLEP Funding	Match Funding	Total Funding
Total Funding	£9,930,516.99	£359,281.00 *	£10,289,797.99 *

* Forecast figures as scheme not yet complete

Lessons learned

1. Beneficial for projects like this to be thought of as a programme, so that value for money on schemes are sought to reinvest into other areas of the programme that cost more than originally thought, or were not originally funded.
2. Early contractor involvement was a crucial element in securing an understanding of the scope/scale of the Hunger Hill phase of works and delivering effective budget management.
3. Bi-monthly invoicing (rather than quarterly as originally offered) which has enabled tight cost control.
4. Closer working relationship or control over utilities companies required to prevent/ reduce/mitigate failure by them to meet expected deadlines for diversion of their equipment.
5. The proactive communications meant that people were aware of the scheme phases the impact they were likely to have and their duration of the works, which was viewed positively.
6. Landscaping and placemaking components of the scheme have been very positively received by local residents, businesses and visitors alike.

7. Strong and robust governance structures and systems helped ensure effective scheme delivery.

Conclusion

Growth Deal Funding has enabled BCP Council to deliver a comprehensive scheme of improvement works in the townside area that have:

- laid the foundation for continued economic prosperity and large-scale regeneration,
- delivered a renewed sense of place for current and future residents/businesses through creation of green spaces and points of interest.
- provided new infrastructure that both promotes and enables increased use of sustainable travel modes
- improved accessibility to the Port of Poole, Poole Town Centre and key transport hubs for all modes
- Created a safer, efficient, more accessible and inviting environment in the heart of one of BCP Council's largest development zones.

Dorset LEP

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