



**DORSET**  
Local Enterprise Partnership

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Local Growth Fund (LGF)

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End of Project Report

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## PROJECT SUMMARY

Local Growth Fund was allocated to deliver a package of transport improvement schemes within Gillingham town centre.

The schemes aimed to unlock and deliver the development of up to 1800 houses and 2500 jobs.

Project start date	01 December 2018
Project construction start date	13 January 2020
Project completion date	31 March 2021

## CHANGE REQUEST

- Change request for reallocation of funds within the scheme budget (Jan 2020) – Approved
- Change request to include the signalling of the Le Neubourg Way Waitrose Junction (Jan 2020) – Rejected
- Expression of Interest approved for additional funding from the Growth Deal programme underspend for enhancement of the High Street in Gillingham – Approved
- Request for The Manse residual land – provide additionality to the project by utilising the residual site (approximately 711m<sup>2</sup>) to provide additional residential housing, or possibly a social care facility, with details to be confirmed – Approved

## OUTPUTS AND OUTCOMES:

### Outputs:

Infrastructure works delivered included:

- Shaftesbury Road/New Road junction improvement
- Newbury/Le Neubourg Way junction improvement
- Sustainable transport improvements – walking, cycling links between the development, station, town centre
- Public realm improvements to enhance the High Street (enhanced carriageway, footways, streetlights, etc)
- Split Cycle Offset Optimisation Technique (SCOOT) installation on 5 junctions along the B3081/B3092 corridor
- Enmore Green Link Road design

Outputs reported to Dorset LEP:

INDICATORS	FY 2019/2020	FY 2020/21	COMMENTS
Length of resurfaced road (km)	0.003km	Gillingham Town Centre enhancement scheme Resurfacing of the access area to the communal field 1.412km	Complete

<b>Length of new cycle ways (km)</b>	1.079km	1.187km	Complete
<b>Floor rationalisation – Demolition of the Manse</b>		212m <sup>2</sup>	Complete
<b>Public realm improvements</b>		<p>Gillingham Town Centre enhancement scheme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhanced carriageway</li> <li>• Enhanced footways</li> <li>• Enhanced table tops using imprinted asphalt</li> <li>• Replacement railings on the historic bridge</li> <li>• Replace streetlights with lanterns</li> <li>• Overall enhancement of the public realm</li> </ul>	Complete

**Outcomes:**

The following outcomes are projected by Dorset Council to be delivered against agreed outcomes:

INDICATORS	ACTUALS 2020/21	FORECAST OUTCOMES				FY 25/26+	TOTAL ACTUAL + FORECAST	COMMENTS 2020/21
		FY 21/22	FY 22/23	FY 23/24	FY 24/25			
<b>Jobs created</b>	0	0	0	175	175	2150	<b>2500</b>	The number of jobs created is dependent upon the rate at which the development takes place. Dorset Council has no direct control of that, however by delivering the infrastructure we have facilitated the accelerated delivery of the allocated employment land.
<b>New housing Units</b>	0	0	70	140	160	1430	<b>1800</b>	1710 is the number of homes for which there is outline planning permission, a further application for 90 homes is expected as a separate application.
<b>Unlocked employment land (HA)</b>	9HA					N/A	<b>9HA</b>	The junction package will enable the employment land to be developed more quickly when a developer comes forward for the site. While this is to a certain extent dependent on the wider economy, having delivered this improvement the land will be more attractive prospect for investors.
<b>Support economic growth - Increased visitor numbers to the town footfall counts.</b>	0	400	50	0	0	N/A	<b>450</b>	This is based on the most recent available data (2015).
<b>Support economic growth - Changes in Council car-park usage – number of vehicles</b>	0	13,156	374	0	0	N/A	<b>13,530</b>	Rolling annual total, provided twice a year.
<b>Support economic growth - Retail / commercial property vacancy rates</b>	0	<10%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	<b>&lt;10%</b>	
<b>Old Manse Residual Land – provide additional residential housing, or possibly a social care facility, with details to be confirmed.</b>	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Complete		Planning permission and budget secured for additional residential housing or a social care facility by 2023. Additional residential housing or social care facility completed by 2026.

## **BENEFITS REALISED TO DATE**

This project achieves the following Local Growth Fund Objectives

- Enabling growth in key housing and employment sites
- Creating the right conditions for economic growth

This project has removed capacity constraints that hold back the build out of the Gillingham Southern Extension and has thereby unlocked employment and housing land for development. Progress to securing outline planning consent for the Gillingham SSA has moved forward considerably in the last few months with outline planning consent granted for Land west of Shaftesbury Road and resolutions to grant outline planning subject to completion of s106 on Taylor Wimpey and CG Fry controlled sites. Welbeck has commenced marketing of their first phase through Cater Jonas. This investment supported the Business case for the successful bid to the Government's Housing Infrastructure Fund, overseen by Homes England for the Principal Street through the development. Work to deliver new road commenced in earnest in August following the completion of various legal agreements enabling Dorset Council to access the land. The construction project is on track for completion by the end of March 2022.

The finalised scheme cost for the Enmore Green Link Road has put Dorset Council in a position to bid for further funding through major bidding opportunities including future funding opportunities which while yet unknown, may include future rounds of the Housing Infrastructure Fund or the Levelling Up Fund.

- Working towards a more sustainable future for Dorset

The new cycle and walking infrastructure has extended the existing sustainable transport network within Gillingham by creating a spine which forms the core of the new network, enabling and supporting sustainable patterns of growth and giving residents, employees and visitors more choice about how they travel around town. In addition, the investment contributed to a successful bid to South Western Railway's Customer and Community Investment Fund for sustainable transport and onward travel information to improve the visitor experience to Gillingham.

- Supporting Dorset businesses

The High Street Enhancements have contributed a revitalised town centre and made Gillingham more attractive to help with the recovery from COVID19.

## **FINANCES**

- Initial budget: £3,450,000
- Match funding: £61,000 (plus £350,000 contributions post 2021)
- Total actual spend: £3,429,881.87

## **LESSONS LEARNT**

- A lesson learnt from this scheme was that the original bid should have included the signalling of the Le Neubourg Way Waitrose Junction. Future funding bids should ensure a fully developed package is considered for the whole area where other schemes may have added benefit.
- The main risks and issues that affected the scheme are detailed below:

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Mitigation</b>
Corona virus outbreak	Followed National Guidance. Construction stopped for 6 weeks but resumed with social distancing measures in place. Work progressed well with restrictions in place, and the physical works were substantially completed on programme.
Individual junction costs exceed available budget	Scheme cost estimates regularly updated, and the overall budget reallocated to each scheme. End of scheme cost estimates predicted an overall underspend.
Political and Public opposition	Ensured members were aware of the scheme objectives and funding constraints and were supportive. Considered issues of public concern and where practicable amended design to mitigate concerns. Public exhibitions held in July 2019.
Statutory undertaker equipment affecting junction design and cost	Liaised with Statutory Undertakers to identify any diversion necessary or alter design to avoid diversion.
Delay in purchasing The Old Manse	Liaised with developers and property owner (through Dorset Council Valuer) throughout the design process. Proposed that developer would serve the Option on the property owner whilst Dorset Council separately negotiated purchasing the property directly – property was purchased directly by the council and the option was not served.
<b>Issue</b>	<b>Mitigation</b>
Corona virus outbreak	Followed National Guidance.
Public opposition	Public exhibitions held in July 2019 and comments reviewed; the proposed removal of the mini-roundabout at the Le Neubourg Way/Newbury/Shaffesbury Road junction was not favoured by the public. The public were also opposed to the installation of traffic signals. Further modelling of the roundabout was undertaken. Final scheme retained mini-roundabout with improved pedestrian and cycle facilities and was supported by the Local Members and Town Council.
Delay to the demolition of The Old Manse due to finding asbestos in the soffit boards, which earlier surveys did not pick up.	Worked in accordance with HSE guidelines for the removal, and disposal, of the asbestos. Demolition completed 23 October 2020 and highway construction commenced on 26 October 2020.

## SUCCESS STORY

The funding has been used by Dorset Council to enhance key junctions through Gillingham, improve cycle links to the train station and fund the design of the Enmore Green Link Road.

Work started in January 2020 with the installation of a cycleway on Le Neubourg Way between Cemetery Road and Station Road, with signals installed at Waitrose Junction funded by the council's Local Transport Plan funding.

Pavements were then widened in Higher Station Road, and a southbound one-way restriction introduced for vehicles, to improve the pedestrian environment.

Pedestrian and cycle safety improvements were made at Newbury junction with Shaftesbury Road, with a new toucan crossing installed on Le Neubourg Way and pavements widened to provide a new shared-use footway/cycleway around the busy junction.

Modifications at the New Road junction included the demolition of The Old Manse to allow for the widening of the junction to increase its capacity.

SCOOT (Split Cycle Offset Optimisation Technique) has been installed to link the traffic signalised junctions on Le Neubourg Way to manage the traffic flows through the corridor.

Finally, enhancements were carried out in High Street to help make the town a more attractive place to visit – encouraging new shoppers to the area and more residents to shop locally. This included replacing uneven block paving with new slabs or using an imprinted technique and renewing the surface and 'raised table' features.

High Street Enhancements:





**Le Neubourg Way:**



Wyke Road Junction:



Cemetery Road:



Station Road (Higher):



**Station Road (Lower):**



Newbury Roundabout:



Shaffesbury Road/New Road Junction:



**Dorset LEP**

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