



Dorset Local Enterprise Partnership

Lansdowne Business District
End of Project Report

Local Growth Fund (LGF)

PROJECT SUMMARY

- **Lansdowne** is incredibly diverse, with corporate businesses, educational institutions, start-ups (particularly digital), businesses, independent traders, retail, restaurants, bars, private residences, student residences, commuters and tourists. Its proximity to the Travel Interchange (Train, Coach and Bus Station) to the north of the area makes Lansdowne a key **gateway to Bournemouth Beach and Town Centre**, all within a 10 to 15 minute walk.
- The vision for Lansdowne which was first devised back in 2016 within the **C-Side Vision** document and reflected in Bournemouth Borough Council's **Delivery Plan** from 2017 is very much a **long term outlook**, with this project seen as the first stage in delivering the bigger picture. As such the initial aims and objectives of improving the area for business, educational institutions, residents, students and visitors alongside changing the priorities in favour of pedestrians and cyclists has been initiated with these early works. Over time the key elements of the Vision and Delivery Plan will be delivered, enabling the multitude of **economic and social benefits** to bed in and **trigger further investment, improvements and positive change** which will then enable the area to fulfil its true potential.
- The key focus for this first phase of improvements is to create **attractive, vibrant and green public areas with people at the heart of the vision**. These plans are already attracting significant investment from a range of interests, including Bournemouth University, which in turn may trigger additional **private investment** into further developing and promoting Lansdowne as an ideal location for people to **live, work, study and enjoy**.
- Lansdowne Bournemouth will be an **exciting place where ideas, innovation, technology and enterprise flourish** close to the free and relaxed climate of the beach. Workers, visitors, residents and students will have the opportunity to exchange ideas and knowledge in the many vibrant streets, plazas and parks. The synergy of education, places to live, dynamic workspaces and culture will create an atmosphere of enterprise. The key aims over the coming years include improving the landscape and environment for the local community, encouraging private investment and job creation, and increasing residential occupancy in Lansdowne whilst promoting alternative modes of transport in and around the area.

Project start date	19 th December 2018
Project construction start date	18 March 2020
Project completion date	31 st March 2021

CHANGE REQUEST

Two change requests were submitted to cover funding reduction from original £8,500,000 to final funds of £4,800,000 and to amend the subsequent changes to specific target areas and outcomes of the programme.

OUTPUTS AND OUTCOMES:

Outputs delivered predominantly relate to public realm improvements, introduction of inviting, functional green spaces with pedestrian and cycle prioritisation in favour of their desire lines over & above those of the motor vehicles.

These outputs have been focussed on Holdenhurst Road between Lansdowne Roundabout and Station Roundabout, Lansdowne Roundabout and bordering Meyrick Road.

Outputs for this first stage of the longer term Vision:

- Wider pavement, with stylish paving instead of cheap, bumpy asphalt pavements on the eastern side with new durable resin surface on the western side.
- New two-way cycleway on the eastern side with clear markings to highlights designated usage.
- New slimmed down road widths, 20 mph speed limit & road surface to instil a sense of prioritisation for pedestrians & cyclists.
- Colour differentials between road, paving, cycleway and crossing points to assist disability groups in navigating the area.
- Planters, seating, bike facilities and greenery including trees.
- Art Installation – unique light and sound artwork.
- Event space created for community usage.
- Future proofing to provide for events along Holdenhurst Road and / or the Fire Station Square event space.

Images of Holdenhurst Road – see attached at the end of the report.

Outcomes:

Whilst Dorset LEP are seeking to measure outcomes realised by 2025 the Lansdowne Programme has always had a much longer term outlook and vision with multiple benefits resulting from various stages of the planned improvements works. These outcomes may be tangible with others intangible but all contributing to the economic & social improvements enjoyed in the area as a result of current and future changes.

In general and despite Covid-19 creating an unprecedented situation where the entire world was in lockdown a number of outcomes have been partially achieved.

- Land unlocked continues to progress, resulting in both housing units & commercial units being delivered.
- Investment into the area has been apparent with the Educational Institutions leading the way such as the BU Gateway development for c.£38m, the influx of student accommodation developments, mixed use developments and a new 5 to 18 year old Academy favouring the digital and technical aspects of education in accordance with the areas growing reputation as a creative digital hub.
- New businesses, particularly the start ups & creative digital organisations have been attracted to the area, with other existing businesses looking for central modern commercial space also moving into new developments.
- All signs point towards realisation of the planned outcomes in the main, despite the fundamental shift in people's living & working patterns as a result of Covid-19 and Government rules.

	AGREED OUTCOMES	COMMENTS
Commercial Floorspace Completed (Sq ft)	136,500	On target
Jobs created	393	On target
New apprenticeships	25	On target with 1 delivered through the construction programme and others likely through organisations across Lansdowne
Land unlocked (Ha)	1.7	Achieved

New/Relocated Businesses	317	On target
Commercial Floorspace Refurbished (Sq ft)	600	On target
Length of Road Resurfaced this Period (Km)	0.7	Achieved
Length of Newly Built Road this Period (Km)	0.19	Achieved
Length of New Cycle Ways (Km)	1.3	On target – Station Underpass cycle way opened
New Visitors to the Area (Ppl)	120	Achieved
New Housing Units	300	Achieved
Direct Foreign Investment (Mil)	£7	On target with Digital and Building Developments being the prime areas
GVA (Mil)	£66	On target

Evaluate the success of outcomes associated with completion of the project. This involves providing evidence to support outcome generation.

- Positive feedback from key stakeholders combined with an increase in larger scale planning applications that meet BCPs mixed use preference for this region, delivering modern commercial and residential units to the area.
- Growth of the creative digital industry with higher skilled workers drawn to area to both live & work. This also lends itself to the talent retention aspirations wherein the local educational institutions attract talent who study here and then obtain work, buy their first flat & enjoy the best work-life balance less than 15 minutes walk from town or the beach.
- Attractiveness of the area following the improvements results in the independent café's, bars & restaurants benefitting from the local community spending in the local area. This in turn results in greater demand for business premises and more people attracted to the area.

Please state the type of evidence that you will submit on an annual basis to support your projections. The type of evidence that can be used is detailed in Annex A of the Monitoring and Evaluation Plan.

- Chamber of Commerce updates for relevant outcomes
- Commercial & Residential Management Agencies
- Images highlighting the increased use of the area for events etc.
- BCP data via IoT networks and other sources

BENEFITS REALISED TO DATE

What benefits have been realised through the delivery of the project?

- Clear social and economic benefits are already apparent despite the works not being complete & fully accessible.
- As this initial programme of works are still being delivered at present the only apparent benefit is the overall positivity around the impact the improvements will have on the area and their relevant interests.
- The local stakeholders are keen for the works to be finished & the space to be fully reopened in order for the local independent businesses and educational establishments to take full advantage of the new spaces created, including the event space.
- Despite works being on going the local café's/restaurants have utilised the completed areas of wider paving with outdoor seating which enabled them to trade in accordance with strict Government guidelines for the hospitality sector.

- Fibre Network, Internet of Things network and data collection, Free Wi-fi offering alongside a new 5G test bed network attracting creative digital entrepreneurs as well as give cause for smart place test cases to be conducted.
- Development of a Smart Places Digital consortium to help share ideas and learning and build on the network and opportunities created in Lansdowne.

FINANCES

Please state the original budget awarded versus the actual spend.

- Original budget - £8.5m
- Actual Spend - £4.8m

Please state the amount of matched funding from other sources spent on / invested into the project.

- £2.89m Match Funding from CIL, LTP & s106 contributions

Were any savings within the Dorset LEP budget realised and reinvested?

- £3.7m was returned to Dorset LEP as it was unlikely the funding would be spent by 31 March 2021. It was subsequently reinvested into other Dorset projects.

If savings were reinvested into the project, what were the additional outputs, outcomes and subsequent benefits delivered as a result of the reinvestment?

- The pipeline bids that benefitted from the £3.7m returned to Dorset LEP will have resulted in additional outputs, outcomes and subsequent benefits.
- One of these is the smart place challenges initiative which has reported separately to Dorset LEP but would not have happened without the Lansdowne investment into the digital network and personnel.

LESSONS LEARNT

What did the delivery partner learn from the delivery of the project? What would you do differently next time?

- Programme's ambition was too high for the funding awarded and limited timeframe
- Political change impacting programme priorities, design and deliverables requires strong senior officer leadership to manage and mitigate against negative impact on progress, design and budget
- Internal re-structure impacting on programmes vision, priorities, design, timeline, expectations and stakeholder relationships requires strong senior officer leadership to manage and mitigate against negative impact on progress, design and budget

What were the major risks & issues and how were they mitigated?

- **BCP restructure and Administration changes** – impacting on political priorities, expectations from programme, design changes and delay.
Early focus on building positive relationships with new Members & Portfolio Holders including briefing on the programme long term vision and constraints. Design compromise enabled progress and delivery.
NB: The impact of Political priorities changing can be mitigated against to an extent but this programme experienced unprecedented administration changes which negatively affected programme design, timeline and costs.

- **Bus Operators support/objection** – power of the operators as statutory stakeholders with the consequences of their objecting to changes resulting in the programme failing to meet the Dorset LEP spend requirements and the area would lose the funding.
Early focus on relationship building and information sharing to instil a sense of co-design resulted in positive steps forward & acceptance of the pedestrianisation vision. BCP internal changes resulted in Bus Operators returning to threatening behaviours and BCP agreed to drop the pedestrianisation & £2m investment in bus hub Christchurch Road mitigations during the Unity Alliance Administration in favour of Holdenhurst Road two way 24/7 access which gained operators support.
- **Insufficient Funding** – inflationary rises in labour & material costs, combined with the impact of Brexit and Covid-19 dramatically reduced the scale of programme outputs, ambition and preferred quality in favour of more viable & sometimes cheaper alternatives.
Contingency funding was retained but following two administration changes, design priority shifts, additional design & modelling costs plus consequential delays the contingency pot was exhausted.
Scope reduction, compromise on design and ambition plus cost savings made on materials and landscaping design to maintain budget and still deliver transformational changes.
Although the decision to reduce the Dorset LEP budget considerably was the correct decision at the time it resulted in additional compromises being forced onto the programme.
- **Insufficient time to spend funding by 31 March 2021** – as a result of the points raised above alongside the complexities of delivering the vision, progress was slowed and this was added to by the loss of 12 months prior to appointing a project team to deliver the programme and spend the funding. Highly complex elements to the programme such as historic motor vehicle dominance versus ambition of modal shift, growing congestion issues, power of bus operators, expectations for local community and Town Centre BID, starting from scratch with concepts to detailed design & delivery whilst navigating complex & often contentious issues.
Brexit & Covid-19 added to the pressure, with the availability of skilled resource and shortage of fundamental materials being unprecedented. Again compromises were made to find solutions to these problems where possible.
Compromise was the key, alongside agreeing to reduce funding by £3.7m, which brought with it a whole new set of risks and pressures.
- **Stakeholders support** - for overall vision and first stage of improvement works. Multiple influential stakeholders both internally & externally were identified, briefed and regularly updated, alongside designing to meet local community expectations whilst delivering the Vision. Ongoing consultation was key to the evolution of the design but time and budget limitations were massive influencers of design and deliverables alongside an appreciation/acceptance by the programmes governance structure that not all stakeholders will be supportive of key decisions.
Multiple levels of stakeholder engagement by officers & Members minimised where possible any negative impacts from stakeholder objections and where necessary the programme compromised in order to find a way forward.

SUCCESS STORY

Please provide a summary looking at how the project has achieved its wider aims and objectives whilst contributing to a wider impact. Please provide any photos that could help to tell the story.

- Initial improvements to the **paving & cycleway** have been positively received, providing the hospitality businesses with much needed outdoor space given Covid-19 Government trading restrictions and creating a clear hierarchy in favour of non-motor vehicles in the area. The overall design and materials chosen work incredibly well and lend themselves to the **sense of width and space** for the non-motor vehicle users.
- **Carriageway width reductions** and raised tables has heavily impacted on the speeds traffic travel along Holdenhurst Road, resulting in a far **safer & slower environment** for pedestrians and cyclists to enjoy. It is likely that motor vehicles will alter their routes and utilise the ring road instead of the slow moving Holdenhurst Road.
- **Relocation of bus stops** from the southern end to a more central or northern location (subject to Highways constraints) has resulted in **reducing noise & air pollution** away from the more **public realm pedestrian prioritised areas**, allowing for the creation of a more cosmopolitan outdoor eating/drinking experience.
- Introduction of **new trees & planters** will tone down the stark nature and appearance of the road, resulting in a much **softer and more inviting environment** for people to enjoy. The trees having already been introduced have been received positively with certain establishments offering to keep them safe particularly during the night time economy hours.
- Introduction of other **street furniture such as seating & cycle stands** encourages people to **linger in the area**, socialise with friends & colleagues and ultimately **support the local economy** and independent venues. The road has already seen an increase in activity on the newly created pavement with hospitality venues providing outdoor seating.
- Overall the creation of a more **welcoming and calmer environment** for non-motor vehicles is key to developing the area as a **destination place** in its own right. The local traders are keen to utilise the newly created areas on a daily basis as well as with regular events. Investors are more likely to **invest** in the area now it is more **aesthetically appealing** following these improvement works. This has & will encourage more people to the area, whether to set up offices, businesses, live, study or simply enjoy the area.
- Wayfinding from the Travel Interchange to the town centre and beach via the impressive new Holdenhurst Road also adds to the **positive first impression** for visitors to the area. This in turn may help persuade more to travel by **sustainable modes** such as bus, bike or on foot.
- During the construction works & subsequent re-routing of all traffic, a number of bus passengers have aired preferences for a **bus hub along Christchurch Road** following the removal of the southern Holdenhurst Road stops. This supports the original part pedestrianisation designs that included approx. £2m investment in bus infrastructure along Christchurch Road/ St Swithun's route, which the Bus Operators had been involved in designing. It would and could be a key element for **future delivery phases** adding further to the **modal shift** away from the motor vehicle.
- Whilst clearly some benefits have already been noted and delivered the longer term economic and social benefits will materialise over time but the initial positivity towards the improvements from the local and wider community bodes well for the future.

Has the project resulted in the formation of any collaboration or other partnerships?

- Digital elements have resulted in the creation of a digital consortium with a variety of collaborative projects & plans discussed. This element of the programme has also helped create more interest across the BCP conurbation in the use of sensors and the Internet of Things data collection opportunities that could enable council wide cost saving & efficiencies to be made.

- Closer working relationships created with the Town Centre Bid representatives for the Lansdowne Creative Quarter as well as other local businesses and independent traders.
- Collaborative plans ahead between the educational establishments and BCP Council in respect of arts, culture and digital skills of the students as well as contributing to design creation for future Lansdowne projects.

Has the project enabled investment into the organisation or local area?

- Following the award of funding a number of potential development sites identified by BCP during the bid process subsequently became developments and delivered a range of commercial and residential mixed use buildings.
- This in turn has encouraged more investment and potential development opportunities to be brought forward and a number of planning applications are live for the Lansdowne area.
- Numerous enquiries have been received regarding the use of the event space and the desire to hold events along the improved road and newly created public realm spaces, which will result in a boost for the local economy.
- Investment and planned investment from the Educational Institutions with facilities and students located in the area adds to the strength & depth of the local student population and ambition, which in turn helps to bring more talent to the area and potentially retain that talent for local businesses.

Dorset LEP

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Images

Holdenhurst Road from Lansdowne Roundabout – looking north - 2016



During Construction images along Holdenhurst road relating to phase 1 & phase 2







