

# Western Dorset Economic Growth Strategy

## An Economic Growth Strategy for: Weymouth & Portland, West & North Dorset

*Design to be developed*

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Western Dorset Economic Growth Strategy – the joint Economic Growth Strategy of North Dorset District, West Dorset District, Weymouth and Portland Borough and Dorset County Councils – the Western Dorset Economic Growth Partnership.

Economic Growth is a key part of the National agenda, with Local Enterprise Partnerships contributing to the national plan through their local visions. Our strategy sets out how we will contribute to Dorset's Economic Ambition described in the Dorset LEPs Strategic Economic Plan, and how it will address the economic needs of our area while respecting our natural environment.

Our strategy describes both our aspiration for the area and also that of others so that it is truly an economic growth plan for Western Dorset.

It is apparent in times of change – political and fiscal - that the Western Dorset Economic Growth Partnership cannot achieve **its** economic vision without the support and participation of key partners and businesses.

We look to our Schools, Colleges, and Universities to support our identified skills needs not just for our young people but also those in employment looking to or needing to upskill.

We look to our business growth partners and agencies to work with us and support our business growth and productivity expectations.

We look to **national and local** developers to bring forward new homes and employment sites that will accommodate our growing population, and provide the suitable modern business environments that will facilitate **XXX** growth.

We pledge to keep economic growth at the forefront in our policy development and implementation.



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**Signatures and names of the 4 council leaders to be entered**



## 2. OUR VISION AND ECONOMIC GROWTH STRATEGY

### **Western Dorset “the natural place to do business”**

**By 2033 the Economic Growth Strategy will have supported and delivered:**

- 20,000 new homes including affordable homes
- 13,200 new full-time equivalent jobs (plus new jobs at the Dorset Enterprise Zone)
- a minimum of 70 hectares of new employment land;
- the proportion of the workforce achieving Level 4+ qualifications from 25% to 35% and;
- an additional £564 million of GVA from the Western Dorset area

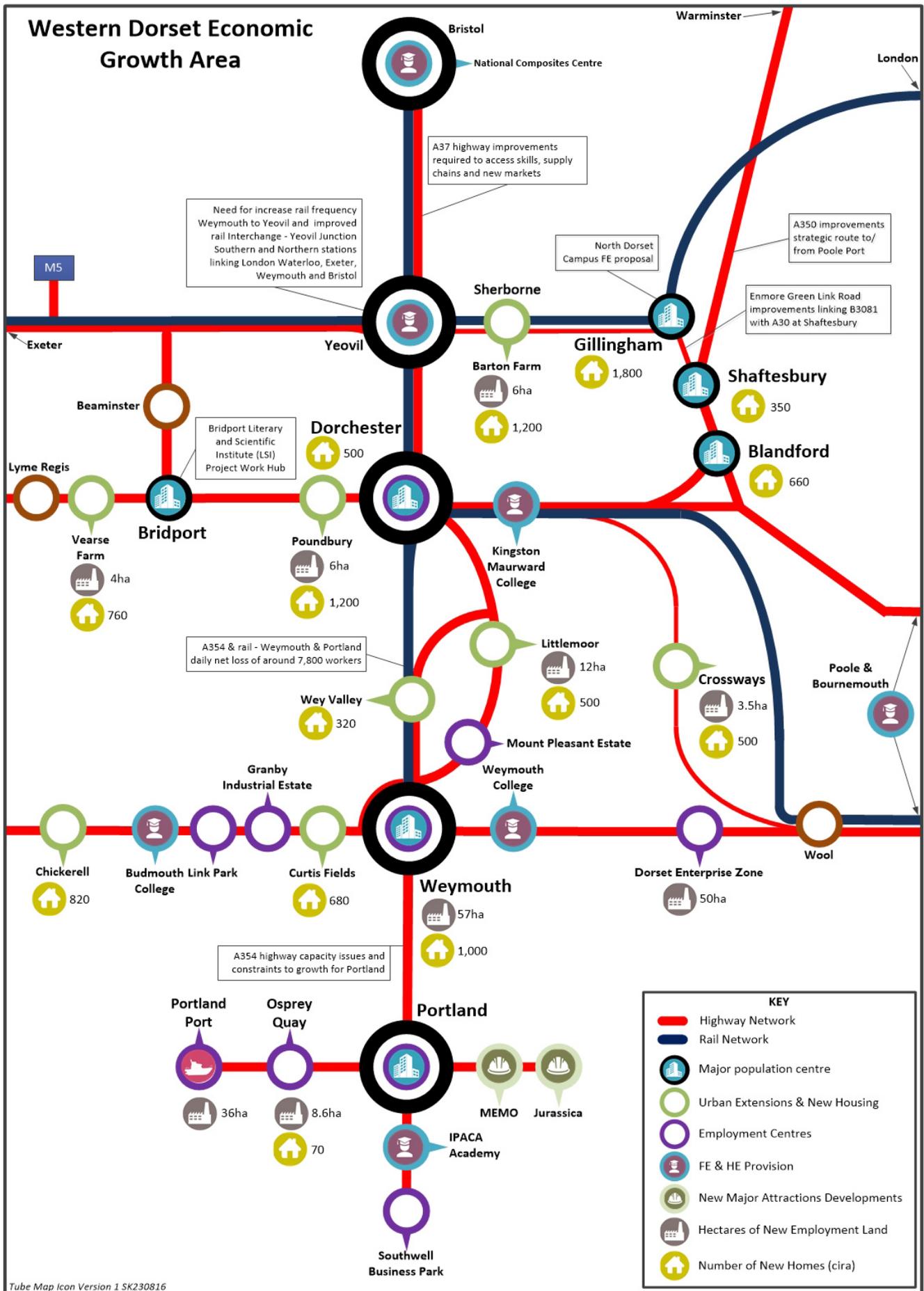
**Our Principal Growth Zones:** The most urban locations are set within functional economic areas of Weymouth, Dorchester and Portland in the West and Gillingham, Blandford, Shaftesbury in the North. The economic growth aspiration for these two distinct economic growth areas is to achieve a better balance and more sustainable future for the towns whilst releasing the major housing, employment and investment potential these two economic areas have.

**Our Rural Growth Area:** Most of our rural area is in two Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), and includes the towns of Bridport and Sherborne along with the smaller settlements around these growth towns, such as Beaminster and Sturminster Newton and many thriving villages. These towns and villages are essential to both our local economic growth and to rural Dorset's future prosperity.

**Our Coastal Communities:** Incorporating our World Heritage designated Jurassic coastline and marine environment at Lyme Regis and Bridport, and the strategically important harbours at Portland and Weymouth.

**Our Growth Strategy** has the flexibility to ensure appropriate growth in higher quality jobs, improvements in productivity, leading to increased skills and higher wage levels that are more comparable with the rest of Dorset and England. It will also ensure economic growth in each of the different areas is compatible with its local housing and population growth plans. Whilst the Strategy has been established to meet the strategic economic growth opportunity and demand across Western Dorset, economic development programmes that are more localised will continue to be supported in our smaller settlements.

A snapshot of the shared economic ambition across our area is expressed in table 2.1 and illustrates the most significant economic infrastructure assets and connections across the Western Dorset area along with some key planned and potential development projects from many partners across Western Dorset. These physical developments, accompanied by our sector, skills and policy interventions will deliver our growth ambitions.



**Table 2.1 – Western Dorset – economic growth ambition and opportunity**

### 3. A DISTINCTIVE PART OF DORSET

Western Dorset is the natural place to do business. It is a resilient and diverse economy set within the only natural UNESCO designated World Heritage site in England – The Jurassic Coast – and with extensive Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty it is the home to many successful national and international companies and renowned brands.

Our area of Western Dorset covers from Lyme Regis to Gillingham and Portland to Sherborne, and is an area of 1,733 square kilometres<sup>1</sup> and home to 235,509 residents<sup>2</sup> and 12,405 businesses<sup>3</sup>.

It is a successful area with obvious strengths such as the landscape and coast which help to drive tourism, inspire creativity, and attract people to live.

The Economic Growth Strategy is set in two Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and a World Heritage Site coastline recognised internationally and nationally. Our towns and settlements are historic in nature with a high proportion of listed buildings. This high quality natural and built environment offers a sense of place, a lifestyle and a quality of life creating a distinctive character that will be enhanced by the Strategy.

Our new job opportunities will come from the development of our key employment and housing sites in our urban locations and growth towns. We will also sustain our important agricultural and coastal landscape and rural businesses, helping to improve their productivity.

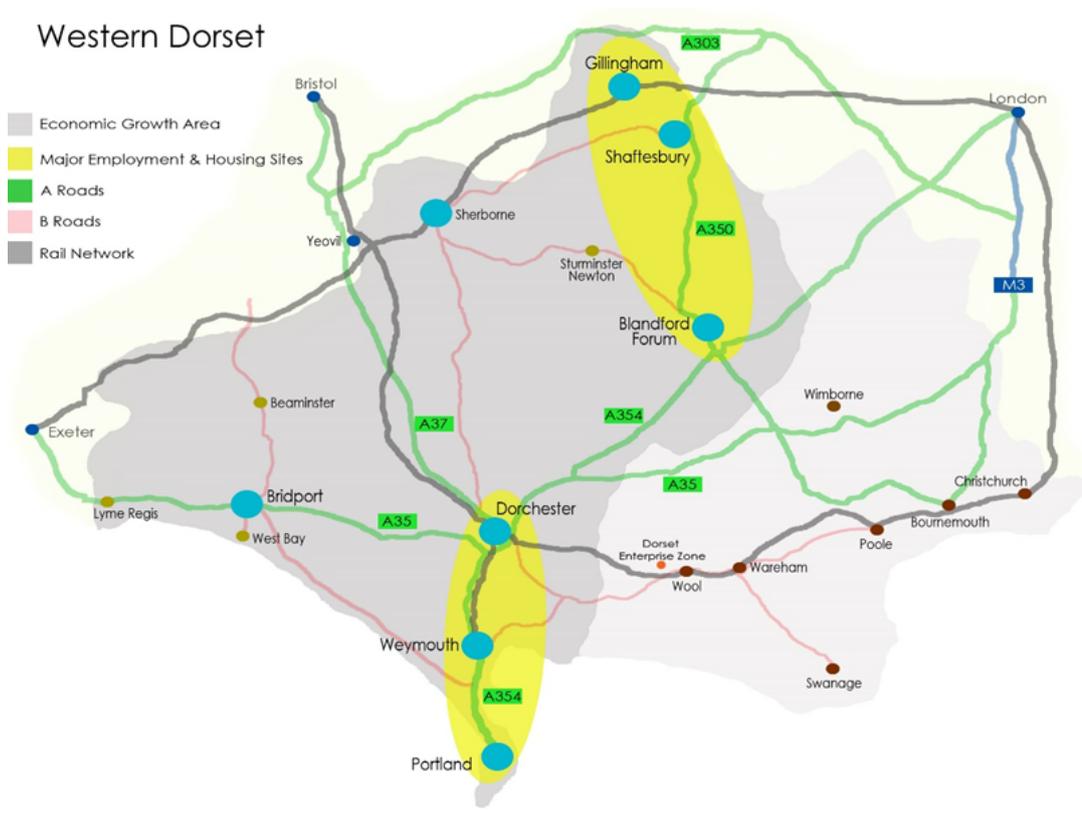
The quality of the local environment gives the area a competitive advantage that is attractive to businesses and residents that want a more balanced lifestyle and quality of life, and is also an attractor for visitors to our area.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Combined areas from adopted local plans

<sup>2</sup> Source: GeoWessex : 2014 Mid Year Estimates ONS

<sup>3</sup> Source: GeoWessex: UK Business Activity Size Location 2014 (ONS)



## 4. ECONOMIC ASSESSMENT AND SECTOR PRIORITIES

Our area is a beautiful place in which to live and work with a perceived affluence that masks some significant underpinning challenges that must be addressed to achieve growth:

- New homes completion rates below target
- Housing affordability<sup>4</sup>
- The “demographic crunch” – high numbers of elderly people, declining numbers of working age and young population
- The “productivity challenge” – low skills levels, high proportion of lower value sectors
- High dependence on sectors in decline

This strategy is underpinned by an evidence based assessment, identifying issues, needs and opportunities and is also informed by a range of research and feasibility studies supported by the Dorset LEP through Growth Deal 2.

The strategy is ambitious and seeks to deliver a level and quality of economic growth greater than would have been achieved without the proposed interventions. This is illustrated in the following charts which take gross value added (GVA) and full-time equivalent (FTE) jobs as the main indicators of economic growth.

The assessment analysed and assessed key ‘layers’ of our local economy such as infrastructure, housing, business and sectors. This has helped to identify potential gaps and barriers to economic growth, the possible interventions needed to help support growth and

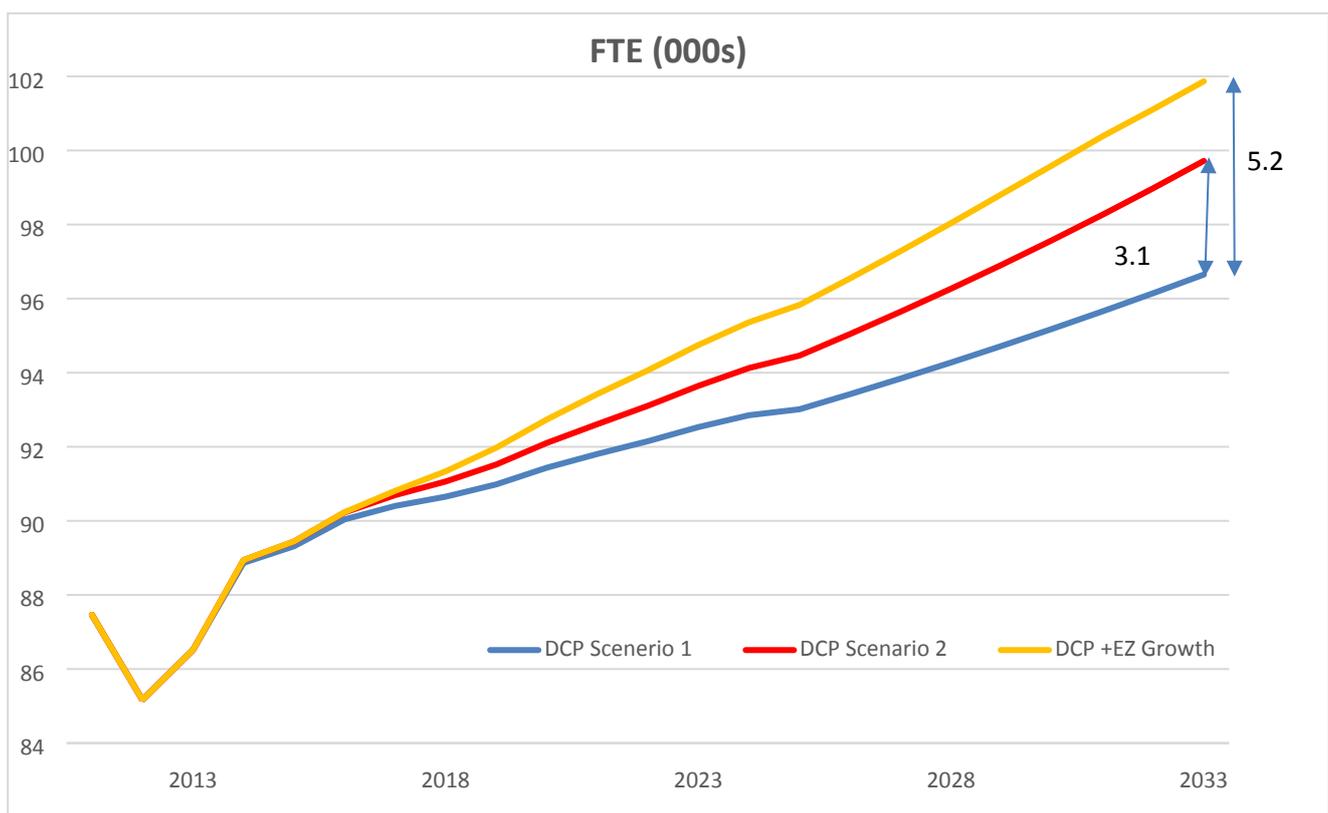
<sup>4</sup> Ratio Lower Quartile House Prices to Lower Quartile earnings 2015 >8.7 - data.gov.uk

investment, and potential integration and collaborative work with partners across the area. A longer term strategic economic vision has been developed which draws out the crucial infrastructure requirements, clear timescales and a realistic projection of outputs in terms of employment, homes, skills and productivity.

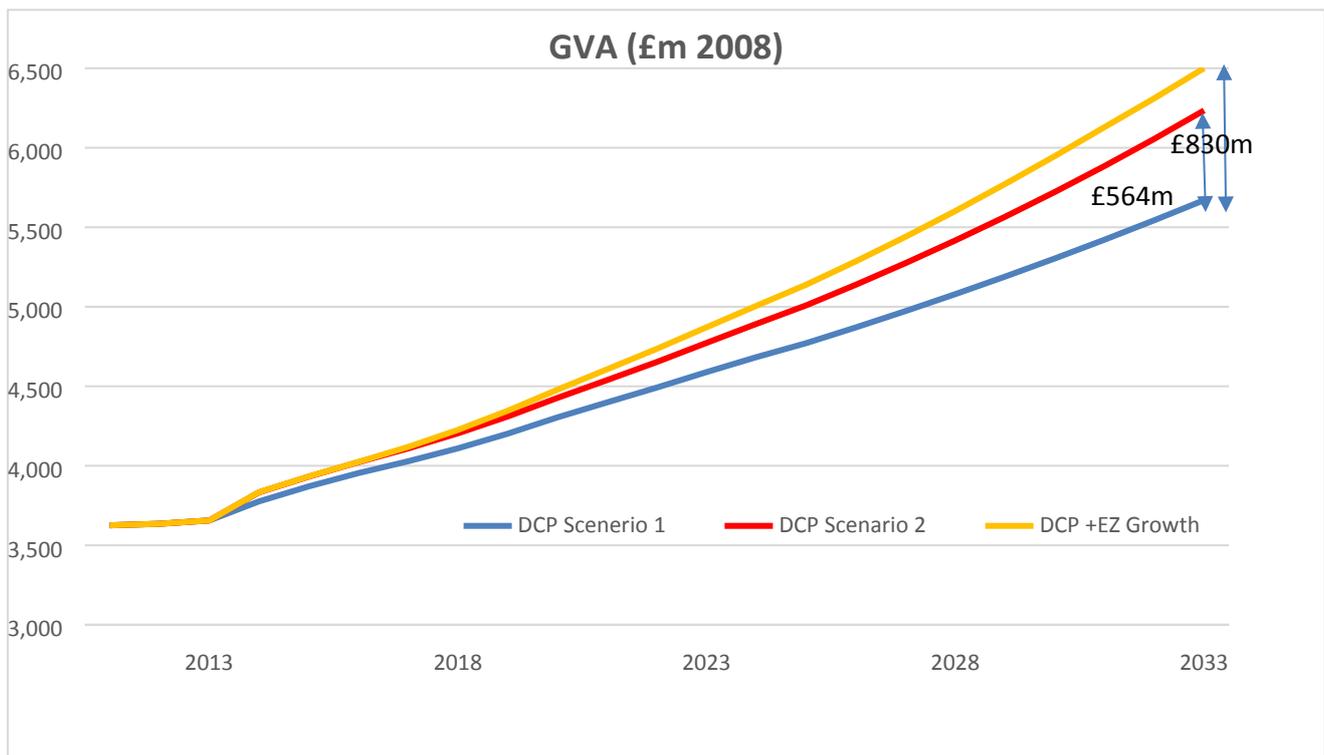
The economic assessment projections are derived from the Cambridge Econometrics Local Economy Forecasting Model (LEFM) for Dorset 2015. The following graphs illustrate the outcome of three economic growth scenarios in terms of growth in full-time equivalent jobs and GVA across Western Dorset. Each scenario starts from a baseline of 2011 Census of Population workplace based employment data, then applies varying assumptions:-

- Scenario 1 (blue) – employment growth rates from the LEFM have been applied for the period 2013-2033, with some adjustments for local knowledge
- Scenario 2 (red) – employment growth rates for sectors adjusted to reflect aspirations for growth, and anticipated decline, in identified sectors (see sector table page 12)
- Scenario 3 (yellow) – as scenario 2, and adding anticipated impact of growth at the Dorset Enterprise Zone

This strategy, and the subsequent action plan, are based on achieving scenarios 2 and 3. Balanced and sustainable growth is essential, and the levels of growth projected are consistent with the provision of residential and employment land in current local plans.



**Chart 4.1:** the higher level of growth proposed by the Economic Growth Strategy would result in an additional 3,000 FTE jobs above trend, with a further 2000 directly and indirectly as a result of the Enterprise Zone.



**Chart 4.2:** the more ambitious growth scenario would result in an additional £564 million of GVA to the Western Dorset area, and a further £266m if the impact of the Enterprise Zone is considered.

The evidence based economic assessment has helped to identify common need and individual opportunity rather than a 'one-size-fits-all' approach. This method has enabled the Strategy to identify and establish strategic interventions aimed at maximising economic growth in key areas whilst recognising the distinctive character of local economies so that appropriate and sustainable economic growth can take place.

The higher levels of jobs and business growth are associated with the development of employment sites and the additional FTEs that could be potentially accommodated on these.

The new Dorset Enterprise Zone is established (operative from 1 April 2017) and focussed on the development of an exemplar Technology Park (previously Winfrith) in Purbeck and lies mid-way between Dorchester/Weymouth and Bournemouth/Poole. The delivery of the Enterprise Zone will play a key role in serving the needs of the surrounding locality, the regional and wider business communities.

The ambitious level of growth proposed by this scenario will require collaboration, concerted effort and investment of resources from a broad range of local and national partners. Such ambition and determination is especially required at times of economic uncertainty, such as those currently experienced in the UK.

The ambitious, but realistic, growth scenario is based upon a number of assumptions about the performance of key sectors in the local economy.

Collaboration and synergy between sectors is crucial and productive. The local economy takes strength from its diversity, resilience and ability to withstand the worst of global downturns and volatility.

### New and affordable homes

The delivery of housing has yet to achieve target rates in Local Plans for a number of years. A shortage of supply and growing demand from net in-migration<sup>5</sup> makes it difficult to attract or retain key employees.

Low wages and high house prices continue to make it difficult for particularly our young people to afford to live and work locally.

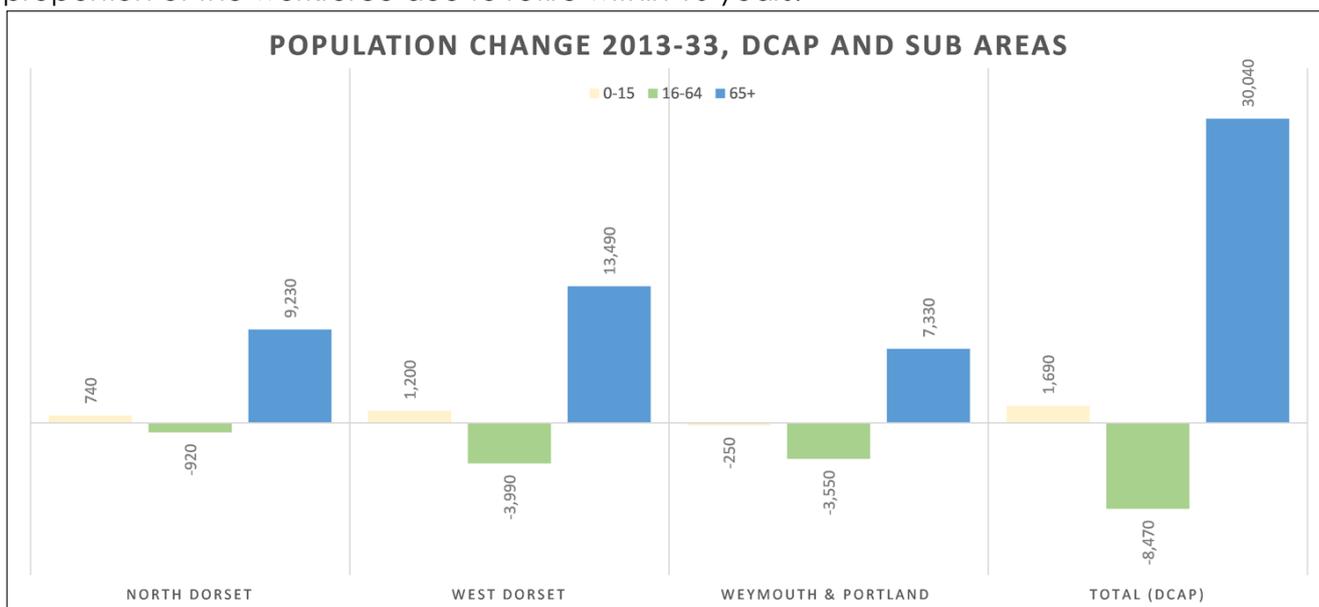
### The 'productivity challenge'

In recognition of the importance of people and skills in contributing to the productivity of the Western Dorset economy, one of the key challenges in Western Dorset is the limited supply of labour (as shown by decreasing working age residents and high levels of economically active and employed residents). In parallel, but less tangible, is the challenge of overcoming the perception of the area as a 'returning to retire' destination.

There is a need to drive growth through increasing the skill levels of residents. Higher skilled workers help to drive productivity which highlights the importance of growing talent in Western Dorset but there is a need to retain this talent locally to capture the benefits of this investment. This illustrates the importance of both upskilling and reskilling residents to meet the changing shape of skills demand.

### The 'demographic crunch'

Dorset is characterised by a population with a particularly high proportion of elderly people, falling numbers of working age and young population; this means that a significant proportion of the workforce due to retire within 10 years.



Looking forward, projections for Dorset as a whole suggest negative growth in the working age population, creating the potential for a severely constrained labour market when considered against the scale of future labour requirements.

There is also a need to increase young people's exposure to local employers whilst in learning to improve employability and productivity.

**The digital infrastructure** is vital to local economic growth. The Dorset Digital Infrastructure Strategy which informs this strategy, aims to stimulate significant economic growth by

<sup>5</sup> Internal migration estimates 2015 - ONS

providing Dorset businesses and learners with access to high speed digital connectivity that will contribute to Dorset becoming more skilled, competitive and sustainable.

**The development and investment in the transport infrastructure** is an enabler to economic growth and has to be developed whilst enhancing our natural and built environment. The Western Dorset Economic Growth Partnership will work to deliver the infrastructure programme for the public transport network, the Ports, roads, rail and cycle networks that are vital to the success of this Strategy.

### Sectors

There are a number of important sectors which will drive growth in Western Dorset. The opportunity to increase the value of these sectors should be sought. There is also recognition of the importance of enabling sectors to meeting population needs (e.g. health and social care) and there is a need to develop quality and excellence in these sectors. In some aspects, this is already underway.

The economic assessment has identified sectors that, through appropriate local intervention and support, will:

- provide significant growth, either above trend or in contrast to the regional and national predictions (table 4.1)
- contribute to local growth if local challenges are addressed (table 4.2)
- require intervention to avoid a shock to our economy (table 4.3)

Our economy is predominantly made up of small businesses. A small increase in productivity from a large number of businesses will make a significant contribution to our economic growth. Increased Broadband coverage and speeds, 4G connectivity and access to business support will aid an increase in productivity.

<b>4.1 – Growth sectors to be actively supported</b>			
<b>Sector and 2016 Position</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>2033 Growth Scenario</b>	<b>Interventions</b>
<b>ADVANCED ENGINEERING &amp; MANUFACTURING</b>  2,600 jobs 4% of GVA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Significant, well established, knowledge intensive sector, including businesses with strong international reputation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scope to deliver strong local growth, and develop supply chains, in high and medium-high technology manufacturing</li> <li>• Focus on aerospace marine and defence</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Account Management with DIT (former UKTI)</li> <li>• Cluster development</li> <li>• Skills</li> <li>• Enterprise Zone</li> </ul>
<b>CONSTRUCTION</b>  9,000 jobs 10% of GVA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Key role to play in supporting economic growth and housing provision</li> <li>• New skills/technologies required</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase in jobs and productivity anticipated</li> <li>• Need to ensure availability of skilled and adaptable workforce</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Housing development</li> <li>• Employment site development</li> </ul>
<b>ICT SERVICES</b>  1,000 jobs 1% of GVA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Crucial sector to underpin economic growth</li> <li>• Superfast and ultrafast broadband being rolled out across the area</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Productivity anticipated to grow above national average</li> <li>• Support and infrastructure for other sectors growth</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Superfast and Ultrafast broadband</li> </ul>

<b>4.2 Sectors requiring specific interventions to address barriers and boost growth</b>			
<b>Sector and 2016 Position</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>2033 Growth Scenario</b>	<b>Interventions</b>
<b>HEALTH &amp; SOCIAL CARE</b>  11,300 jobs 9% of GVA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Crucial sector for Dorset given the demographic crunch</li> <li>Issues around training and retention of workforce to address</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Significant job growth anticipated</li> <li>Link to e-health and e-care solutions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establishment of Care Academy at Weymouth College</li> </ul>
<b>LAND BASED INDUSTRIES</b>  2,900 jobs 2% of GVA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Significant impact on stewardship of the environment</li> <li>Traditional sectors due to geology and historical development</li> <li>Scope to improve productivity through application of technology</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agri-tech a priority sector for investment and development of workforce skills</li> <li>Collaborative approach with neighbouring areas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Investment in facilities and training at Kingston Maurward College</li> <li>Joint South West promotion of inward investment opportunities</li> </ul>
<b>TOURISM &amp; LEISURE</b>  7,000 jobs 5% of GVA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Traditionally a major part of the Dorset economy</li> <li>Need to address issues of seasonality low pay, low skills and limited career opportunities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Job numbers to remain steady, but invest to improve the Dorset 'offer' and address issues</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Working with DTA to support delivery of Destination management plan</li> <li>Skills development</li> </ul>

<b>4.3 Sectors predicted to change requiring mitigation</b>			
<b>Sector and 2016 Position</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>2033 Growth Scenario</b>	<b>Interventions</b>
Financial and professional services  7,600 jobs 12% of GVA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Average representation in Dorset economy</li> <li>Financial services focused on Bournemouth/Poole</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Marginal falls in jobs and GVA anticipated, reflecting national trends</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DLEP focus on financial services offer of south/central England to attract inward investment</li> </ul>
Public administration defence  7,900 jobs 12% of GVA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Currently the largest employment sector across area</li> <li>Highly skilled workforce</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Likely to experience continuing reduction in jobs and investment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Entrepreneurship programme to encourage skills &amp; knowledge retention</li> <li>Public sector apprenticeship programme</li> </ul>
Retail  8,900 jobs 9% of GVA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Retail sector has experienced job losses and closures in line with national trends</li> <li>Impact upon vitality and viability of town centres</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Jobs fall anticipated in line with national trends and changes in retail patterns</li> <li>Changing nature of retail towards online</li> <li>Reduced requirement for multiples to have presence in smaller locations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Weymouth Town Centre masterplan</li> <li>Dorchester retail led development</li> <li>Entrepreneurship programme</li> </ul>

It is evident that not all economic growth will come from the delivery of employment sites as there are limitations for the amount of employment land available and the need to protect our local environment.

It is therefore vital to raise the productivity through development of the infrastructure, skills and knowledge and encouraging innovation and enterprise. The new Apprenticeship Levy will contribute to raising skills and productivity but is focussed on larger companies so business support for the SME and micro business will be an important part of the Strategy.

The economic assessment and recent studies has produced a clear direction for the Strategy but also gives a strong warning that unless there is intervention the local economy it will start to fail between the next 5 and 10 years bringing significant pressure to our economic sustainability and growth and the quality of life.

## 5. STRATEGIC ECONOMIC PROGRAMME

Whilst the Economic Growth Strategy sets a vision and direction towards 2033, it is a living document that will be based on 5-year Strategic Economic Programme modules to allow the impact of our growth plan to be measured, enable a period of time to reflect, react and where appropriate adjust to meet economic need and/or opportunity arising, and allow for the changing role of the public sector and other players.

A number of key studies have been undertaken as part of the economic assessment, which have been supported by the Dorset LEP, that has enabled a wide range of engagement with partners, businesses, organisations, FE, students and young people. The outcomes from these studies have generated a large number of proposed actions for both the Councils, businesses (sectors) and partner organisations.

The outcomes from these studies are being used to inform a wider Economic Growth Action Plan with the private sector, organisations and FE leading in relevant areas and which the Councils will support.

The studies have an economic growth focus and some, such as Transport and Movement, have been undertaken specifically to enable economic growth. The range of studies include:

### Transport and Movement

- Assessment of transport and movement to test the physical infrastructure requirements of redevelopment sites and how they relate to the existing infrastructure and car parking including Park & Ride;
- Assessment of possible improvements to the traffic system to encourage use of public transport;
- Assess improvements and creation of more pedestrianisation and;
- Improvement to bus and rail interchanges.

### Employment and Skills Study

- Creating highly skilled employment in the area, as well as fostering and increasing the potential of existing sectors;
- Ensuring all our young people are able to reach their potential and;
- Encourage and support all residents to enter into meaningful employment.

### Weymouth Town Centre Key Sites

- Economic viability of the redevelopment sites;
- Assessment of under-utilised sites
- Assessment of a greater range of food and entertainment based family-friendly uses and;
- Improve the image of the town centre and to reflect the character and heritage of the town, to include leisure, heritage, public realm, bars, cafes and restaurants as well as shops

### Culture and Tourism

- Feasibility to develop the tourism brand;
- Assess improvements to service and quality standards across tourism and heritage;
- The need to diversify and improve the product and widen the market appeal and extend the length of season);
- Festivals and Events assessment;
- Assess future policy of Council owned hotels identifying investment opportunities and;

- Assessment of the creation and delivery of new focal spaces for the town centre

**The 5-year Strategic Economic Programme** sets out the principal areas for intervention across five strategic economic themes:

### **A. Infrastructure**

There is a vital need to improve electronic and physical connectivity, particularly through high-speed broadband, establishment of an efficient and sustainable transport infrastructure to enable delivery of the economic potential of the area. Collaborate and co-ordinate with all partners to make the area more connected for business, learning, leisure and visiting.

#### **Key Points:**

- An infrastructure that supports economic growth
- Digital Infrastructure – Ultrafast and broadband rollout and improved mobile (broadband G3, G4) coverage
- Improving digital and physical connectivity
- Integrated spatial and infrastructure planning

**Strategic Outcomes to be achieved:** improved access to employment and learning, improved productivity, improved access to markets, increase in GVA, less of a need to travel, when travelling public transport better option, reduced congestion, reduced carbon footprint and improved quality of life.

#### **Key Projects:**

1. Superfast and Ultrafast Broadband
2. Weymouth Inner Harbour Flood Defence
3. Enmore Green Link Road
4. North South road rail routes and connectivity
5. Dorchester Transport network improvements

### **B. Homes and employment sites**

Housing affordability is a significant issue with housing affordability ratios higher than nationally. The lack of affordable housing is a major barrier to economic growth and in particular to retaining and/or attracting young people to the local labour market. There is a history over the past twenty years of employment land not being brought to the market without public sector intervention. High housing values and good returns on investment for residential development, coupled with low rents and poor returns on investment for employment site development deter developers and investors from delivering the employment land allocations.

#### **Key Points:**

- The actual rate of new homes delivery is well below the Local Plan allocation and projections,
- Opportunity to attract and retain younger people using the Government's new starter homes initiative;
- Delivering suitable employment land and workspaces;
- Promote the supply of land and provide real incentives;
- Challenges of bringing sites forward and current infrastructure issues

**Strategic Outcomes to be achieved:** To establish an affordable housing programme aimed at the economically active population, unlock major housing sites generating new homes, the local construction sector has increased employment opportunities and has a requirement for a higher skilled workforce that is supported by local education and training providers.

**Key Projects:**

1. Weymouth Town Centre Masterplan
2. North Dorset Employment Sites
3. Accelerated housing delivery
4. Dorchester Town Centre Retail development

**C. Employment and skills**

Investment in skills and training is vital to be able to create a highly employable and economically productive population that can generate economic growth, improved productivity and a sustainable local economy.

**Key Points:**

- Wages are below the regional and national levels, workforce that is less skilled than the national average and many jobs in lower skilled occupations;
- The 'demographic crunch' - an ageing population, relatively stagnant population growth in Weymouth and Portland, and a falling working age and young population.
- Projections for Dorset as a whole suggest negative growth in the working age population, creating the potential for a severely constrained labour market.
- Equitable access to quality education, training and employment opportunities, recognising that there are physical gaps which exist (particularly in the North and West)
- A need to enhance connections between people, jobs and skills infrastructure.
- The 'productivity challenge' -the importance of people and skills in contributing to the productivity of the local economy,
- Limited supply of labour (decreasing working age residents and high levels of economically active and employed residents).
- The perception of the area as a 'returning to retire' destination, which highlights the importance of growing talent in WDCG but there is a need to retain higher skilled workers locally. who help to drive productivity
- Preparing school leavers better for work and retention in the local economy with improved Careers Advice

**Strategic Outcomes to be achieved:** increase in wage level, more people enter into employment, improved productivity, improved access to learning, sustained low unemployment levels (sector change)

**Key Projects:**

1. Productivity improvements
2. Improved careers IAG (information, advice and guidance) programme

**D. Businesses and sectors**

There is a need to tackle low productivity, low business start-ups and survival rates if our local economy is to be sustainable and have economic growth.

**Key Points:**

- Residents income more than workers suggests wider commuting patterns
- Business start-ups have been growing but at a lower rate than in the UK
- Public funding cuts reducing ability to support and enable economic growth
- Declining sectors displacing workforce – transition to growth sectors
- Locally important Sectors: Advanced Engineering (marine and maritime); Advanced Manufacturing; Agricultural Technologies; Care Sector; Construction; Environmental; ITC, Retail and Tourism and Leisure

**Strategic Outcomes to be achieved:** more people enter into employment, improved productivity, increase in GVA, more and higher spending visitor, sustained low unemployment levels (sector change)

**Key Projects:**

1. Account Management, including collaboration with DIT
2. Destination Management and the Dorset DMO
3. Advanced Engineering cluster development

**E. Assets and Policy**

With the changing Government policy, which is focused on economic growth, a review of existing Council policy is required to maximise the potential of Strategic Economic Growth Strategy and the local economy. Commercialisation and income generation has to be at the heart of the Strategy and changes in policy should lead by example especially around employment, apprenticeships and learning and land and property assets. Use of local authority assets and/or the use of capital receipts need to be utilised to generate real incentives for investors and developers to enable rapid economic growth, support community development and capacity and increase the sustainability of the local economy.

**Key Points:**

- Procurement - to maximise economic and employment opportunities
- Determine reuse and realisation of assets to deliver economic growth
- Planning system has a key role to play in enabling economic growth
- Not taking a silo approach in decision making and planning/development of major economic developments and regeneration

**Strategic Outcomes to be achieved:** an increase of apprenticeships, work placements and skills training through improved local authority procurement and processes, new income streams for the local authorities from new developments and regeneration projects/schemes, increased capital receipts that are reinvested in economic growth,

**Key Projects:**

1. Business rates retention
2. Procurement
3. One public estate
4. Assets to deliver affordable housing

The rationale for intervention at detail level within each of these themes is derived from consideration of:

- Evidence of need or opportunity, and priority within the economy
- Strategic fit of a chosen intervention with the strategy and other partner strategies
- Availability of power and capability between delivery partners to affect the change desired
- Likelihood of achieving successful project delivery
- Scale of intervention and availability of associated resources required for delivery
- Scale of outputs, outcomes and benefits compared to value of resource investment
- Likely length of delivery and outputs timetable

As a key enabler, public sector landowners mainly Local Authorities, will have a particular role to play in developing the physical economic infrastructure comprising land, premises, and connectivity.

During the development and delivery of the Economic Growth Strategy these key players will be considering ways to leverage their assets for general economic benefit. This will however be alongside current imperatives to generating income to address their own continuing funding reductions through:

- seeking opportunities to generate capital receipts through the sale of assets;
- to generate revenue income streams;
- and/or rationalise investments.

This has been recognised and will be integral to their role in implementation of the Strategy whilst maintaining functional and effective Council services.

With a coordinated approach to our economic growth, this Growth Strategy is intended to make a significant contribution to the objectives of the Dorset Local Enterprise Partnership's Strategic Economic Plan and will meet the five strategic objectives of Sustainability and Competitiveness, workforce retention and higher skills, accessible and affordable homes, high class environment and quality of life and growth across Dorset; for the needs of our businesses and communities.

The 2017 to 2022 Economic Growth Action Plan is shown at Appendix A.

## 6. GOVERNANCE

**Delivery of Our growth strategy** will be achieved through strong focussed partnership working, by the Western Dorset Economic Growth Partnership (which forms the key strategic lead for delivery of this strategy), with Dorset LEP, Dorset Growth Hub, DTA, DIT, HE and FE providers, BIDs, local chambers and coastal community teams (and any successor organisations) and the private and third sectors. Each partner will have a clear and complementary role to play in delivering the Western Dorset Economic Growth Strategy ambition alongside its own aims.

It will not be constrained by boundaries; as well as working with the Dorset Local Enterprise Partnership, we will seek to create stronger economic partnerships with other Local Enterprise Partnerships, HE and FE bodies, and neighbouring local authorities, especially those immediately adjacent to Dorset that contribute to and support the local economies of our own communities such as Lyme Regis, Sherborne and Gillingham.

**Our local economy** is urban, coastal and rural. Our challenge is to deliver real growth that helps our principle growth zones to flourish whilst delivering sustainable growth for our growth towns and coastal economies. Therefore,

**Delivery will require resourcing** at a number of stages and levels including:

- Partnership building and maintenance
- Strategy overview, impact monitoring, and steering
- Programme building and project identification
- Project design, planning and implementation
- Project delivery and output monitoring

**It will be achieved by:**

- Targeted project teams drawn from across relevant partners and stakeholders in the public, private and third sector.
- Local authorities teams drawn from many of the Service Units within Dorset County Council and the Dorset Councils Partnership
- Partner organisations delivering their own projects

- Maximising external resources to achieve local ambitions
- Partner organisations delivering accessible services across Western Dorset