Tipner West Regeneration

Delivery Approach

March 2026

Portsmouth CITY COUNCIL

Contents

Contents

1. Introduction....1
2. Strategic Ambition....2
3. Delivery Considerations....5
4. Next Steps....10
5. 15 Year Project Programme....11

1. Introduction

1.1 Tipner West represents a significant long-term strategic development opportunity, with capacity for approximately 1,000 new homes and 25,000sqm of employment space within a mixed-use waterside neighbourhood. Notwithstanding its potential, substantial technical challenges and viability issues necessitate a collaborative partnership strategy to enable effective delivery.

1.2 This report is prepared by Portsmouth City Council (PCC) as landowner and promoter of the Tipner West site. It examines key delivery considerations and essential milestones required to advance project proposals for Tipner West and should serve as a foundation for dialogue with strategic partners in establishing a comprehensive project-level delivery strategy. PCC Property and Investment team has worked closely with the PCC Local Planning Authority to progress a new Local Plan policy for the Tipner West site.

1.3 This report is structured as follows -

1.3.1 Strategic Ambition – highlights the guiding strategic objectives that have been agreed to date regarding the direction and ambition of the regeneration of Tipner West.

1.3.2 **Delivery Considerations** – discusses key issues that continue to influence the delivery of regeneration at Tipner West.

1.3.3 Next Steps – outlines the key tasks and work streams required to further derisk the Tipner West site with the aim of supporting delivery and disposing of the site.

1.3.4 Programme – identifies the project milestones achievable over a 15-year timeframe and early project priorities required for delivery in the first 5 years.

2. Strategic Ambition

2.1 This is not a comprehensive strategic policy review and should be read in conjunction with existing emerging and adopted policy for Portsmouth City Council and wider strategic policy for economic development of the Solent region.

City Deal and Tipner West

2.2 The site forms part of the wider Tipner-Horsea Island area, one of the two principal growth sites identified in the Southampton and Portsmouth City Deal[1]. It is allocated along with Tipner East, which forms draft Policy PLP4 of the Local Plan, and together the two allocations will form a new gateway to the City. As discussed in the Development Strategy chapter of the draft Local Plan, the wider Tipner-Horsea Island area is one of the two principal sites identified in the Southampton and Portsmouth City Deal. The Tipner allocations must also be considered alongside draft site allocations for Horsea Island Strategic Open Space (policy PLP9) and for Port Solent (PLP11) as these also deliver part of the City Deal.

Figure 1: City Deal sites (note that dwelling and employment figures are estimates from 2013)

1 https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5a7c3d4be5274a1b004226bd/2013111_Southampton_and_Portsmouth_City_Deal_Document_and_Implementation_Plans.pdf

2.3 The City Deal is a joint agreement between Portsmouth and Southampton City Councils, Hampshire City Council and the Solent Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) (now 'Solent Partners'[2]) with the UK Government, signed in November 2013. Its intention is to maximise the economic strength of these two coastal cities and the wider Solent area, by supporting further growth in the area's maritime, marine and advanced manufacturing sectors. The City Deal recognised that the development of Tipner West (together with Tipner East, Port Solent, Horsea Open Space and Horsea Island East) would create an opportunity to meet the marine and maritime sector demand, whilst at the same time help to unlock funding for sea defences, site decontamination plus much needed employment and housing opportunities across the Solent. Since 2013, all parties to the City Deal have continued to work to deliver on its aspirations.

2.4 The City Deal also recognised that, despite the opportunities these sites offered for regeneration, the challenges were so costly that the private market would not resolve them. To unlock these sites and facilitate the land assembly, funds were provided by the City Deal to support the delivery of enabling infrastructure and lever local government and/or private investment. The City Deal was underpinned by a central Government grant of £48.75m to PCC to help deliver the following:

- Maximising the economic impact of marine and maritime assets in the area;
- Unlocking critical employment sites to enable the marine, maritime and advanced manufacturing sectors of the region's economy to expand;
- Providing new housing to support the growing workforce;
- Ensuring people have the right skills to access employment in those growing sectors;
- Providing effective support to their small and medium enterprises to enable them to grow, including marine and maritime small and medium enterprises.

2.5 The preparation of a strategic site allocation in a new Portsmouth Local Plan has been lengthy, commencing with Issues and Options consultation in 2017, subsequent Regulation 18 and Regulation 19 Consultations. These are detailed in the Tipner West Topic Paper[3] which forms part of the evidence base supporting the Pre-Submission Portsmouth Local Plan Addendum 2025. The Pre-Submission Portsmouth Local Plan Addendum (2026) proposes a new strategic site allocation for Tipner West under policy PLP3.[4]

[2] https://solentpartners.com/

[3] https://www.portsmouth.gov.uk/services/development-and-planning/planning-policy/portsmouth-local-plan-evidence/tipner-west-and-horsea-island-east-strategic-site/

[4] See pages 21-32 at https://www.portsmouth.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/pre-submission-local-plan-addendum-nov-2025-aa-accessible.pdf

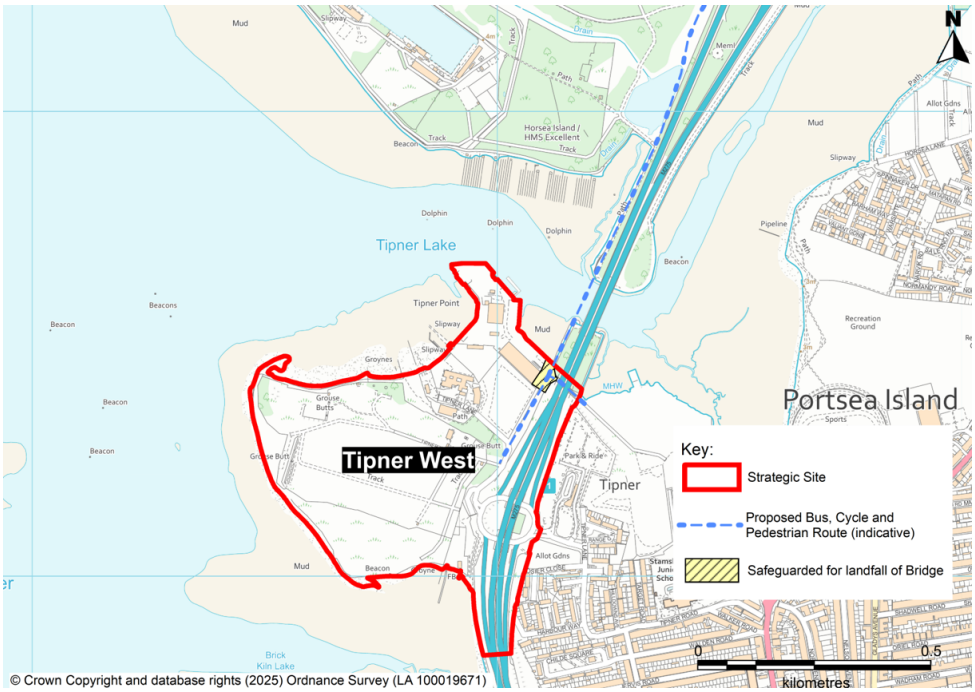

Figure 2: Map of Tipner West Strategic Site Allocation

2.6 The policy states that '*Tipner West is allocated as a strategic site because, alongside Tipner East, it will form a new gateway to the City".* It is allocated for a mixed-use residential and employment development on the site that delivers upon the aims of City Deal.

2.7 However, in order to avoid losses (that can't be mitigated) to the protected habitat sites surrounding the site (SPA and Ramsar sites), the new policy allocation omits previous references to a regionally-significant marine hub with deepwater access and the requirement to provide a bridge connection to HIE. The developable area of the site is also reduced to remove land south of the firing range and avoid any land reclamation or dredging.

2.8 The revised policy seeks to deliver the following:

- Approximately 1,000 new homes
- Approximately 25,000sqm employment (Ei, Eii, B2, B8): '*industrial, research and development, storage and distribution employers, including those from the marine and maritime sector'.*
- essential goods retail (Class F2a);
- community premises (Class F2b);
- Retention of Grade 2 listed buildings and heritage assets
- Sea and flood defences
- Safeguarding land for future bridge connection to HIE.

2.9 The supporting Tipner West Topic Paper comments: '*The Council remains committed to delivering upon the aspirations of the City Deal award but the inability to undertake deep water dredging or reclamation significantly constrains the ambitions for a marine hub of regional significance. In addition, the implications of removing the bridge delivery component from the policy… and the loss of land south of the firing range from development assumptions needed to be evaluated, not least implications upon financial viability and deliverability'.*

3. Delivery Considerations

3.1 The following section provides an overview of key delivery issues and principles:

Site Assembly

3.2 PCC successfully completed on the remaining freehold acquisition of the Pounds scrap yard in January 2024, which marked a significant project milestone and provided PCC with greater control over the Tipner West site asset. Previous acquisitions included the former MOD firing range in 2020; Horsea Island East in 2018; and the Tipner Park and Ride Junction in 2014, facilitated by the City Deal award.

3.3 However, the Freehold of Tipner West is without vacant procession and there remain leaseholders on site, with leases varied in both timescale and clause. Primary leaseholder Interests include: the Harbour School (owned and operated by the City Council), Tipner Boating and Angling Club; TJ Waste; Portsmouth Harbour Crusting Club and the Nautical Seamanship and Training Corps. Further short-term agreements or flexible terms are in place with temporary site users including Vivid Road Access; Victorious Camping; Baker Trayte; and BBLP.

Figure 3: Existing site lessees

3.4 Leaseholders were first engaged about Tipner West's long-term redevelopment plans in 2019. The Estate Team or agent will continue working with them to address individual relocation needs and facilitate voluntary lease termination and relocation, as required. While PCC is not legally obliged to fund relocations, offering support can minimise risks and help achieve site objectives.

3.5 A clear strategy for interim use of Tipner West will be developed to safeguard future regeneration efforts. Temporary uses can establish the site's brand and attract new users, or alternately, keeping the site occupied can maintain safety, avoid blight, and generate revenue.

Relocation of The Harbour School

3.6 The relocation of The Harbour School has been mooted for several years to facilitate the regeneration of Tipner and enable flood defence and remediation to take place. The Harbour School is a special school for children with extra behavioural and educational needs and currently exists in an educational complex, which includes: The Bay Campus; Primary at The Bay; and The Lighthouse Campus.

3.7 The original post-war Bay Campus school buildings need significant investment and due to the anticipated relocation of the school, minimal maintenance and repairs have been undertaken more recently, further eroding the quality of the buildings and school environment.

3.8 A new campus would be built to *Building Bulletin 104 Guidelines* and would create a bespoke learning environment for the needs of its pupils. It is anticipated that a campus would be required of c.3,500sqm to accommodate between c.60-90 pupils. This is likely to require a capital budget of c.£20m and would take 18 months to achieve planning, and a further 18 months to build. Subject to relevant approvals and smooth planning process, the earliest opportunity to create a new operational facility and vacate the Tipner site would be from September 2030.

3.9 An initial massing and scoping exercise was commissioned from in-house architectural services in January 2024. The next stage of relocating the school would be to undertake a full design and planning process for a new school.

Managing Heritage Assets

3.10 The existing heritage assets on Tipner West provide an opportunity to create a unique urban environment of interest, which capitalises and celebrates the legacy of the area, but in doing so creates further cost implications and physical constraint to the development of the site. The listed buildings on the site are significant heritage assets in terms of the City's military history and have potential as historic attractions as part of a wider heritage trail. Further exploring how PCC might best balance the opportunities, risks and associated costs could benefit project viability.

Policy Guidance

3.11 The revised policy allocation could be further refined through supplementary guidance, and/or a locally approved **development framework or brief** as required. This type of document would articulate continued alignment and refocusing of the City Deal ambition.

Technical Library

3.12 There are significant numbers of background technical documents held by the PCC Development Team. PCC holds an extensive and wide-ranging evidence base that provides an in-depth analysis of desk-top and site-based investigation into technical and under-ground constraints that will impact upon the design approach and viability for Tipner West. In addition, there are extensive background documents prepared to support the optioneering work by the project team in support of the earlier and more ambitious iterations of policy PLP3 (which included the marine hub, greater numbers of homes, a bridge and deep water dredging).

3.13 This information resource will be made available to strategic partners as required to support delivery.

Sea Defence

3.14 Portsmouth are partner delivering £150m of Sea Defences already in Southsea and Eastern Road/North Portsea. PCC have the option of allocating the City Deal funding towards direct delivery of the sea defences at Tipner West.

3.15 This can be implemented in the short to medium term, and will protect:

- against flooding - for 1:200 year predicted flood risk mapping.
- against leachate of contaminants associated with previous uses of the site into the harbour in the event of a flood.
- existing occupiers.
- listed buildings.
- M275 embankments and the major arterial connection to the city.
- existing development (including the Park & Ride facility) at Tipner East; and
- the site for future development.

3.16 It is anticipated that Sea Defences will be provided from a variety of public and private sources dependent on the programme, phasing, delivery partner, final design etc.

Strategic Partners

3.17 Tipner West represents a unique waterfront opportunity, which PCC continues to discuss at a strategic level with Homes England, Central Government and wider Private Sector Investment partners involved in both maritime marine employment and residential development. The opportunity is presented internationally at property conferences such as MIPIM, UKReiff and ExpoReal, with our partner organisations South Central and the UK Cities & Partners.

3.18 During 2024, the former Department of Levelling Up, Homes and Communities (DLUHC (now the Ministry of Homes, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG)) visited Tipner West where PCC introduced the site and explored key opportunities and challenges to delivery on the ground and discuss guidance available in promoting strategic sites. The visit was well received by DLUHC and since that time strategic dialogue with **Homes England** has been strengthened on three key projects in Portsmouth, including Tipner West. Information packs have been issued to the regional Markets, Places and People (MPP) lead, and their viability team is primed to provide greater support to PCC on delivery and disposal.

3.19 Regional teams in Homes England have been restructured to offer a greater multi-disciplinary support to local authority partners, and the team will explore viability, soft-market testing, funding, and delivery options in more detail. Ongoing dialogue with Homes England and other Strategic Partners is essential to aligning regeneration objectives and unlocking funding opportunities.

3.20 Whilst Tipner West forms a longer-term opportunity in Portsmouth's development programme, Homes England have agreed to work with PCC to explore delivery options in greater detail, supporting Portsmouth to derisk the site and deliver initial site remediation work.

3.21 Progressing this will involve the preparation of a formal Business Case by Homes England. This two-stage process, includes an outline and full business case with supporting benefit analysis, is essential to unlocking future funding opportunities through Government and is applicable to all Government Agencies. Homes England can flag Tipner West as requiring limited revenue funding, to further explore the development opportunity through due diligence investigations

and developing the business case. NB, there has been a general shift away from allocating grants, to offering fiscal loans to support project delivery, with Agencies remaining a long-term financial partner.

3.22 The Development Team are continuing to engage with **local Strategic Partners** and potential end-users, including *inter alia* the Port Company, the MOD and the University of Portsmouth, and key local employers about the future of the site. This dialogue will continue to inform soft-market testing exercises to explore and capture regional growth markets.

Routes to Delivery

3.23 PCC are in conversation with Homes England to explore different delivery and disposal options for Tipner West, both with and without planning permission to identify the most effective route to delivery, whilst promoting the regeneration ambitions for the site. These could include:

- Straight Disposal
- Strategic Disposal via a Delivery Partner Dynamic Purchasing Selection (DPS) (or equivalent)
- Strategic Development Partnership; or
- Joint Venture

3.24 Each approach aims to transfer financial risk away from PCC, whilst maintaining an element of control through delivery. This work will be brought together in a project-level Disposal and Delivery Strategy for Tipner West.

3.25 Market testing with potential development partners (or purchaser) will explore a variety of site uses and delivery options to inform a credible land offer, which will most likely include:

- alternative land use configurations, capacity, and tenure.
- alternative site remediation and flood defence design.
- most effective build and sales routes.
- cost engineering and market testing to refine solutions; and
- innovative approaches to structuring land deals with PCC.

3.26 Working with a delivery or development partner will inform the scope of the build, design and delivery route and therefore exploring these issues in an open and transparent partnership approach from the outset to explore and agree a best option.

Viability

3.27 The amended Tipner West strategic policy changes the development capacity of the site in favour of a consolidated developable area, with a reduced residential and employment output. This reduces the residual income generated through future sales and doubles the additional funding requirement for the site to **c.£107million**.

3.28 This onerous financial constraint, together with the known technical complexities, significantly impact upon project viability and the appetite of the market to deliver a successful scheme. PCC remains committed to supporting a scheme that responds to the identified regeneration ambitions and will continue to work with partners to unlock these constraints, with a focus on derisking the site.

3.29 To support this activity, PCC and its strategic partners will seek to achieve:

- A clear and unincumbered site – legal security
- Site investigations and technical security – technical security
- A streamlined consenting route – planning security
- Policy certainty – Adopted local plan policy
- Market testing – a market-facing scheme
- Access to funding – financial security
- Delivery/development partners – route to build

3.30 Mitigating or removing elements of unknown cost from the project will better allow scheme viability to be addressed.

3.31 Further consideration will be required to discuss and agree the policy ambition for the following issues, which impact on scheme viability:

- Affordable housing provision - the percentage and tenure of any affordable housing allocation
- Design aspirations and space standards (e.g. NdSS, low cardon, Passivhaus)
- Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)
- Any other S106 contributions that may be sought
- CIL.

3.32 Viability remains the key issue to overcome to bring forward any development on Tipner West due to onerous technical constraints and former land uses. Open and on-going dialogue will be required between the PCC and its strategic partners, including the Local Planning Authority, to explore and prioritise development outputs and obligations for the site and the city, with any future development partner.

4. Next Steps

4.1 The chapter outlines the next steps recommended for progressing Tipner towards delivery:

- **Clear and unencumbered site** - Although PCC control the freehold of Tipner West, various short- and medium-term leases still restrict development. Each leaseholder needs to be relocated in phases, which could take several years, including moving The Harbour School campus. An agreed **Decanting Programme** will help coordinate this process, ensuring key decisions and spending are prioritised. Development cannot begin until all current leaseholders and occupiers, including The Harbour School, are moved to new premises—estimated to take 5+ years and incur capital costs for PCC.
- **Underground Site Investigations and Technical Security** - Although various technical studies have been conducted at Tipner, a comprehensive Stage 1 Site Investigation Technical Report is needed to consolidate existing data and outline further desk-based and intrusive investigations for assessing viability and technical security. PCC could undertake these investigations, which are essential for competitive site disposal, credible land offers, and informed planning applications.
- **Market Testing** - Engaging with strategic and local stakeholders including both potential end-users and employers will continue to support the evidence base and determine market demand, including marine industries and residential and other supporting markets. Whilst previous market research activities have taken place there is a need for an independent review of the information to determine where information needs to be updated; and how best to gain targeted feedback going forward. Accurate and up to date market testing is essential to informing credible development proposals.
- The emerging Local Plan Addendum streamlines policy allocation for Tipner West by consolidating the developable area within the existing land mass. This approach is designed to minimise adverse impacts on protected SPA/Ramsar habitats, thereby avoiding complex and costly planning procedures as well as financial obligations associated with habitat compensation. However, there is a need to set out the approach to development activity in a form that can be officially supported and promoted by the Council to **guide development activity**. The form of this could vary but needs to clearly articulate the scale and vision of the development, including a layer of design ambition and development output. A development brief, masterplan, design framework, or outline permission for example could assist, all of which can establish key parameters of design and delivery and will guide the discussion on viability and funding.
- **A streamlined consenting route –** Whilst the 2026 Addendum simplifies the policy route for Tipner, removing both the requirement to provide a bridge to HIE and avoiding the complexities associated with the HRA Derogation stage (including advance costs of creating compensatory habitat), the inherent site complexities and remediation requirements may be assisted through an updated Consenting Strategy in due course.
- **Viability and Funding -** Viability is the main challenge for delivery, and gap funding will be necessary due to technical issues like site remediation, flood protection, and heritage asset retention. It is important to continue exploring ways to mitigate risks and lower costs through design and market testing, both locally and strategically, while seeking gap funding opportunities. PCC will work closely with strategic partners to secure funding and meet the required criteria. Although initial discussions with DLUHC (now MHCLG), Homes England, and The Environment Agency have begun, a coordinated approach is needed to align national, strategic, and local goals, collaboration with partner agencies to prepare a formal Business Case for Tipner West and unlock future funding.

5. 15 Year Project Programme

5.1 An indicative 15-year project programme (for the Plan period 2025--2040) has been provided below to estimate when delivery milestones will be achieved, noting that once a partner is identified delivery may be accelerated subject to agreeing the scope and scale of development activity.

Deliverables 0-5 year	**Deliverables 5-10 year**	**Deliverables 10-15 year**
Stage 1 Flood defence work design and delivery	Stage 2 flood defence work	
Stage 1 lease termination and relocation programme	Stage 2 lease termination and relocation programme (complete)	
Early site contamination remediation	Site remediation on-going	Site remediation completed
Scoping and Design Framework agreed	c. 10,000sqm Employment	c. 15,000 sqm Employment
Secure planning for phase 1 – potential hybrid application	Phase 1 - 500 build new homes Secure planning for phase 2	Phase 2 - 500 build new homes
Planning, design and build new school (offsite) – capital cost to PCC	New school opens (offsite) – demolition of Harbour School site.	Site redeveloped as Phase 2.

Early Wins (0-5 years)

5.2 The following table identifies deliverables required up to 2030, to facilitate project development and delivery. Ultimately this work is interlinked and will be guided and informed through joint working with strategic partners.

	Project Tasks	**Timescales**
1	Strategic Partner Engagement Programme - Funding and delivery - formalise ask.	On-going
2	Finalise remaining Tech reports - (Comprehensive Document Library)	25/26
3	Topographical Survey - Remaining inaccessible areas to be surveyed for complete coverage.	2026
4	Development Framework/Brief/OutlinePP - including design and development outputs.	26/27
5	Delivery Strategy - to include site assembly programme; market assessment; viability and funding strategy; project development appraisal (working assumption).	26/27
6	Progress Site Assembly – user relocation and lease termination programme, including bespoke engagement with all leaseholders.	25/30 (on-going)
7	Flood Defence planning, design and business case	26/27
8	New School design and planning to accommodate The Harbour School - Sport England dialogue and planning strategy to be considered from 2026	26/27 (18mnths)
9	Public Engagement and Communication Programme	2027
10	Flood defence and enable works construction	27/29
11	Market Testing with residential and employment partners (engagement/route to market)	26/28
12	The Harbour School - Enabling build and relocation	28/30

Summary

5.3 This report has been prepared to support the submission of the local plan addendum and does not constitute a comprehensive Delivery Strategy, but an approach for further discussion with strategic partners. It aims to summarise the key issues that will need to be addressed to facilitate delivery. A detailed Delivery Strategy will be required once the supplementary 'guide to development activity' has been developed and a delivery vehicle is further progressed.