Action Point 62: Density assumptions informing Policy PLP3: Tipner West

1.1 On Day 4 of the Examination Hearings (20th October 2026), the Inspectors asked for clarification as to how the residential density of the 1,000 new homes proposed at Tipner West ("the Site") under policy PLP3 has been calculated. The Inspectors noted that the Site is identified in the first bullet point of paragraph 8.10 of the IQR [PCC06] as having a developable area of 20.30ha, which would result in a density of 49.3dph for the site based upon 1,000 homes proposed in the allocation. It was noted that the Site falls within a "High Density" areas on Figure 6.1 of the Plan and so is required by Policy PLP21 to achieve at least 120dph.

1.2 The total developable site area of 20.30 ha referenced in the IQR is land suitable for all development including housing, employment and linked infrastructure. Of this 20.30 ha only 9.76ha is suitable / available for residential development. Land south of the firing range (which is part of the terrestrial SPA and Ramsar) was excluded from the developable area during the preparation of the Local Plan Addendum. The 1,000 new homes at Tipner West on 9.76 ha of land would be delivered at a density of 102 dph.

1.3 The development quanta set for the Site in Policy PLP3 followed a robust optioneering exercise undertaken by the Council as outlined in section 4.0 of the Tipner West Topic Paper [TP10] and in sections 4.3 and 5.3 of the Sustainability Appraisal [KD11]. In particular, each of the three options explored in the early 2025 optioneering identified a residential density range based upon 96dph to 120dph. The reasons for this were:

i. There had already been detailed project-level evaluation by the PCC Promoter team through detailed 'proving' masterplan layouts produced in relation to the previous iteration of policy PLP3: Tipner West & Horsea Island East. This would have delivered a marine hub and sought to optimise viability outcomes based upon established input assumptions at that time, which included advice from local residential market experts, surveyors and valuers. A site layout was prepared by the PCC Promoter team which proposed a residential density of 96dph based upon a mix of 64% houses/36% apartments. PCC Local Planning Authority Officers have highlighted that this is less than the 120dph requirement set in Policy

PLP21, but accept that the PCC Promoter team state that it reflects the 'best fit' solution for this constrained site.

ii. The developable area includes the required employment floorspace. Of the 20.3ha of developable area, the preferred Option 1 assumed 9.76ha for residential development, 4.61ha for employment and 5.93ha for site-wide infrastructure (including public open space, parking/roads, Flood Risk Activity Permit (FRAP) zones and services/substations) - **see paragraph 4.6 of the Tipner West Topic Paper [TP10] for further background**). The assumed area for infrastructure followed previously modelled ratio of 0.6ha to 1.0ha of residential development. The assumed quantum of employment floorspace and required land area was premised upon a standard ratio of 0.4:1 land:floorspace for employment sites (*Note: a marine hub as envisaged in previous iterations of policy PLP3 would have required significantly more land due to the need for more open yard space for larger vessels*). A maximum residential storey height of 11 storeys and a residential parking ratio of 0.61 spaces per dwelling (some accommodated within an on-site multi-storey car park) were also assumed.

iii. The optioneering process as outlined in chapter 4 of the Tipner West Topic Paper considered **a density range from 96dph (as previously modelled by the Promoter team as 'optimal') and 120dph as set out in draft policy PLP21 for the Site.** This concluded a preferred residential development range of 937-1171 dwellings on the site, as noted in paragraph 4.7 of the Topic Paper. This approach was adopted for Options 2 and 3, using 96dph to 120dph for different land use areas. Option 1 was confirmed as generating the least financial viability deficit (at £107m) and a mid-point of the density range was taken forward in the policy, being 1,000 dwellings. This gives a residential density of **102dph** when assessed against the residential development area of 9.76ha.

It is acknowledged by the Council that 102 dph is below the minimum density for the location set in Policy PLP21, however, it must be noted that Policy PLP21(2) recognises that such circumstances will occur at the time more detailed site assessment is made. The optioneering discussed above is an example of the form of 'robust evidence and rationale' that PLP21(2) envisages, and the indicative housing quantum of PLP3 has been proposed accordingly to appropriately reflect a deliverable sound allocation. However, the Council does not feel it appropriate to further constrain the future ambition of the site owner and development management process and would therefore retain the 'high density' threshold (120dph) for this site. The tension between the PLP21 threshold and the indicative capacity is not considered to be contradictory, but is considered to assist future decision making to

ensure the future development is achieved at the highest sustainable housing density at the time it comes forward.