Letter template to write to Councillors about Tipner West

[Insert date]

Dear [Insert Councillor name],

My name is [insert name here] and I’m writing to you today to ask you to object to Portsmouth City Council’s Lennox Point super-peninsula proposals for 3,500 homes at Tipner West.

This development poses one of the most significant threats to wildlife in recent times. The proposal would be devastating for the Solent’s wintering wading birds, commercially important fish species as well as completely undermine nature laws and Portsmouth’s ability to reach net-zero climate targets.

The current proposals at Tipner West will:

* Concrete over 67 acres of intertidal mudflats (roughly the size of 50 football pitches), already protected as a Site of Special Scientific Interest, a Special Protection Area and a Ramsar Site in recognition of the value for wildlife.
* Devastate an area that supports 30% of the UK’s population of dark‐bellied brent geese, as well as dunlin, black‐tailed godwits and many other wintering waders. Commercially important fish species such as sea bass and mullet would be negatively impacted, as well as invertebrates, shellfish and essential micro-organisms.
* Disturb the mudflats, releasing carbon currently locked away and reducing its ability to store more, counter-acting Portsmouth’s attempts to reach net-zero. Every year, the mudflats at Tipner West absorb the same amount of carbon every year as 262 tree seedlings grown for ten years!
* Set a dangerous precedent across England for building over nationally and internationally protected habitats for housing.

These habitats are also crucial to protect Portsmouth from erosion and provide natural filtration of nitrates and phosphates from sewage. Even more fundamentally, the plan to build a defended new urban area in this location is highly unsustainable, given the inevitable rises in sea-level.

This issue is extremely important to me because [reasons/your experiences].

I am very concerned that… [insert your concerns or use this template – “if approved, this development will set a dangerous precedent for building over protected habitats across the UK. If an area with the highest level of protection for wildlife can be destroyed and built upon, nowhere will be safe for nature anymore. Not only this, but Portsmouth is already a densely populated city with strained services and little green space as it is.”]

COVID-19 has made us all realise how precious our local green spaces are for our mental and physical health. I feel that the land at Tipner West has huge potential to be redeveloped into a space that is beneficial for both the community and nature’s recovery.

Therefore, I am asking you to publicly back Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust’s and RSPB’s campaign to object to the Lennox Point super-peninsula at Tipner West. So far over 22,000 people have signed their petition to save wildlife from the current plans. For more information please visit: <https://www.hiwwt.org.uk/tipner>

I ask that you write to the Portsmouth City Council Leader on behalf of the local community, objecting to the current proposal and vote against a local plan that includes the current Lennox Point super-peninsula proposals.

Please respond to my letter and outline the steps you intend to take to address my concerns.

I look forward to hearing your response.

Yours sincerely,

**[Name]**

**[Full address including postcode]**