

SUBMISSION FROM EAST LoTHIAN COUNCIL

5 May 2015

SECURITY OF SUPPLY: CALL FOR WRITTEN EVIDENCE

Historically in East Lothian, Energy has been recognised as a local economic sectoral strength, with significant national strategic infrastructure assets in the form of the former Cockenzie Power Station and Torness nuclear power station located within the local authority area. East Lothian's ambitious Economic Development Strategy identifies renewable energy as a potential emerging sector in the area

NPF3 supports the continued use of Cockenzie Power Station site for thermal energy generation and carbon capture and storage, and is identified as a National Development. The Scottish Government Energy Consents Unit has issued planning permission for the works necessary to convert the power station from coal to gas fired. Planning permission has also been approved for a new gas pipeline to supply fuel to the power station. The site is currently being decommissioned and there are no confirmed plans or timescale for the current consents on the site to be implemented.

Torness nuclear power station continues to operate with two reactors, and a British Energy Consultation Zone exists around the facility. There are no confirmed plans or timescale for decommissioning the station and the current generating license extends to 2023.

NPF3 identifies that Cockenzie and the Forth coast, extending to Torness, is a potentially important energy hub. It identifies significant plans for offshore wind to the east of the Firths of Forth and Tay and suggests that Cockenzie may present significant opportunities for renewable energy-related investment. Consent has been granted at Cockenzie for a substation/s to connect future offshore wind farms to the grid. NPF 3 sets out its expectation that the Council and key agencies, including Scottish Enterprise, will work together to ensure that best use is made of the existing land and infrastructure in the area. It goes on to state that *'given the particular assets of Cockenzie, if there was insufficient land for competing proposals, we wish to see priority given to those which make best use of this location's assets and which will bring the greatest economic benefits'*.

In June 2014 Scottish Enterprise submitted a Proposal of Application Notice (PAN) to the council in respect of an 'Energy Park' at Cockenzie to service the offshore wind market. Scottish Enterprise has recently announced that they will not be proceeding with their proposals.

East Lothian currently finds itself at a crossroads in relation to the future role it will play in relation to the provision of energy infrastructure, both existing/consented and potential. It is our understanding is that this is a direct result of the current transmission charging system and lack of sufficient clarity in the role which renewable energy, and offshore wind in particular, will play in terms of future generation and how that has played out through policies and regimes put in place through Electricity Market Reform

As an authority, we are moving towards taking major decisions in respect of our proposed Local Development Plan, in particular, in relation to the Cockenzie Power Station site. Within the context of what I have outlined, it has become increasingly difficult for us to strategically plan in land use and economic development terms in respect of the expectations which NPF3 places on us in and around this area, given the reality of the energy market. This is something which the Council will be pursuing further with the Scottish Government.

I hope that our contribution is helpful.

Yours sincerely

Angela Leitch

Chief Executive