

POLICY CONTEXT

National Guidance

National – National Planning Framework 3

Through the National Planning Framework 3 (NPF3) (June 2014), the Scottish Government has identified Cockenzie as a national development site for thermal energy generation as well as a location of significance for renewable energy.

Cockenzie and the Torness areas in East Lothian are identified as an area that *'has potential for significant investment in energy related business development'*, in a similar way as The Fife Energy Park which extends from Methil to Longannet. The Action Programme for NPF3 identifies Cockenzie as one of five Energy Hubs – Areas of Co-ordinated Action.

For Cockenzie, the Scottish Government places emphasis on prioritising uses that *'make best use of this location's assets and which will bring the greatest economic benefits'*.

The National Planning Framework is due to be updated by June 2019, based on the 5-year review period. However, no announcement has formally yet been made regarding NPF 4.

NPF3 affirmatively *'safeguards'* Cockenzie as a site for future thermal generation and carbon capture and storage, in line with National Development 3. This is not

limited only to the site of the deemed (now lapsed) planning permission for a gas fired power station at the Cockenzie site; rather, the Council interprets this 'safeguard' to relate to the wider site owned by Scottish Power.

NPF3 notes that there are potential subsidiary benefits of the Cockenzie site. This is why NPF3 passively indicates that the site *'may'* present significant opportunities for renewable energy-related investment, but NPF3 is not specific about what the nature of that investment might be. In view of the contextual discussion within NPF3, and the weighting it gives to such potential opportunities that may exist at Cockenzie, NPF3 may be referring to the following type of investment in the following order of priority:

- On-shore grid connections for off-shore wind energy developments. This would be the type of investment that would meet the description of National Development 4, which promotes an enhanced high voltage energy transmission network. An Interconnector for the Inch Cape Offshore Wind Farm would fall within this category;

- Investment in the marine renewable energy industry and manufacturing, potentially including associated new build port and harbour facilities. Whilst the National Renewable Infrastructure Plan (N-RIP) and NPF3 identifies Leith Port as a key location in the region (within the Low Carbon/Renewable East Enterprise Area), NPF3 refers to Cockenzie and Torness as locations in East Lothian that have potential for significant investment in energy-related business development.

To align with NPF3 in its proposed East Lothian Local Development Plan (ELLDP), the Council is of the view that the potential for new build port or harbour facilities at Cockenzie should relate to 'energy' development, and not be restricted only to 'marine renewable energy related development'. In terms of the ecological impacts of such a port development, this would need to be assessed fully at project level, potentially through an environmental impact assessment if necessary. If acceptable, the matter of on-going management and maintenance of any dredging, including its ongoing costs, is not a matter for the Council to consider, but for any operator.

Overall, NPF3 is anticipating a situation where a range of potential projects seek to locate at Cockenzie. However, as a first principle, NPF3 wants to ensure that any potential subsidiary opportunities at the site do not undermine the ability to deliver the priority 'safeguard' for National Development 3. This is why NPF3 acknowledges that a wider range of subsidiary uses / development may be accommodated there, if they do not undermine the primary objective for the site. In that context, a collaborative approach to master planning is expected to maximise the opportunities at the site. However, the preparation of such a shared masterplan is dependent on the ability to assess the site requirements and planning merits of separate projects at the same time or in an appropriate sequence.

Regional

Approved Strategic Development Plan

The approved Strategic Development Plan is SESplan (June 2013). Cockenzie is identified as a National Development for New Non-Nuclear Baseload Capacity of the existing site (at that time). Policy 10 Sustainable Energy Technologies promotes sustainable energy sources and supports the future development and associated infrastructure requirements of Longannet and Cockenzie power stations in relation to their role as non-nuclear baseload capacity generators and the reuse of waste heat from these developments.

Proposed Strategic Development Plan

The Proposed Plan (October 2016) identifies the former Cockenzie Power Station site as part of the 'Forth Coast Cluster'. This cluster of coastal sites is considered to be suitable for providing opportunities for a range of uses, in particular port use such as renewables manufacture and servicing, thermal and low carbon energy generation or other uses associated with an Area of Co-ordinated Action.

Local Development Policies

Adopted East Lothian Local Plan 2008

At the time of publishing the Cockenzie Power Station was operational and safeguarded by Policy NRG1 – Electricity Generating Stations. At this time East Lothian had two power stations: coal fired Cockenzie Power Station was rated at 1200MW and Torness Nuclear Power Station was rated at 1250MW.

Both were intended to remain in operation during the life of this local plan. The Local Plan identified the significant contribution that these power stations make to the economy and to local employment. The operational land used for power generation will continue to be safeguarded in the Local Plan.

Proposed Local Development Plan 2016

The former Cockenzie Power Station site is included as part of the "Prestonpans Cluster". Proposal EGT1 in the Energy section of the Proposed Plan safeguards land at Cockenzie Power Station, consistent with the Scottish Government's National Planning Framework 3 aspiration for the future use of the land, for thermal power generation and Carbon Capture and Storage.

Proposal EGT1: Land at Former Cockenzie Power Station

The site of the former Cockenzie Power Station is safeguarded as a site for future thermal power generation and Carbon Capture and Storage, consistent with 'National Development 3' in the Scottish Government's National Planning Framework 3. Other forms of development within the site will not be supported during the lifetime of NPF3 to avoid prejudicing its future use for this National Development, unless and until an appropriate thermal power generation proposal is implemented and the extent of any residual land that could be used for other purposes has been confirmed.

If the NPF position is reviewed by Scottish Government during the lifetime of this Plan the Council will prepare Supplementary Guidance to guide the redevelopment of the site, if appropriate consistent with any revised NPF. If any thermal generation proposal is implemented and there is surplus land remaining, Supplementary Guidance will be prepared to guide redevelopment of this surplus land. Any redevelopment proposal will be expected to make best use of the location's assets and bring significant economic benefits.

Proposals will be subject to a Habitats Regulations Appraisal and, if necessary, an Appropriate Assessment under the Habitats Regulations.

The expectations of NPF3 in terms of the use of this land are a key consideration in identifying the uses that could be accommodated on the site of the former Cockenzie Power Station. In principle, the future development of the site should be 'energy-driven', to include a mix of appropriately compatible uses which provides the greatest economic and social impact and create the environment and opportunities that support a flourishing economy and help build a prosperous, safe and sustainable location. The area of land currently within Scottish Power ownership is an appropriate site to define for National Development 3 and for NPF3's 'Area of Coordinated Action'. This is because it is now the area with the greatest potential to deliver the Scottish Government's aspirations for a low carbon thermal energy generating station with proven carbon capture and storage facilities in the future in accordance with NPF3, along with any other uses that may be able to coexist with any such facility in line with NPF3's 'Area of Coordinated Action'.

Greenhills, the open space to the north and south of Edinburgh Road, is an important area of public open space which is protected by policy.