

## Members' Library Service Request Form

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Originator	Graeme Marsden
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Document Title	Cockenzie Levelling Up Fund Bid Update

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Additional information:

Authorised By	Michaela Sullivan
Designation	Head of Development
Date	11/08/22

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**REPORT TO:** Members' Library Service

**MEETING DATE:** August 2022

**BY:** Head of Development

**SUBJECT:** Cockenzie Levelling Up Fund Bid Update

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## **1 PURPOSE**

- 1.1 On 28 June, East Lothian Council confirmed its support for the a £10-15M bid to round 2 of the UK Government Levelling Up Fund for site preparation works at the former Cockenzie Power Station site. Council also granted delegated authority for finalising and submitting the bid package to the Head of Development, in consultation with the Council Leader and Provost.

## **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 Members are asked to note that the following progress has been made since the 28 July Council Meeting:
- The value of the proposed site preparation works at Cockenzie has been estimated at £12.520M. With the Council required to contribution 10% of the cost of the works (£1.252M), the value of funding sought was £11.267M;
  - The bid is still comprised of the same component elements – bund removal and regrading of the coal store; grouting and infilling of the power station void; raising and repairing the parapet of the sea wall along the site boundary; removal of the John Muir Way pedestrian bridge and re-routing around the power station outfall; and raising and resurfacing the John Muir Way alongside the sea wall;
  - Letters of support were received from MSPs Paul McLennan, Craig Hoy and Martin Whitfield in addition to the pro-forma completed by Kenny MacAskill MP confirming his support;

- Following completion of the technical studies, the application package was finalised and reviewed by the Head of Development. The Council Leader and Provost were then appraised of its content and agreed with the Head of Development that the application package could be submitted prior to the deadline on 2 August, which it subsequently was.

### **3 BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 Full details of the background to the Levelling Up Fund and the proposed Council bid are set out in the 28 June Council Report, which is available as a background paper.

#### Submission

- 3.2 The 28 June Council Report advised that bids were required to be submitted by 6 July 2022. However, the bid deadline was delayed because the launch of the online portal to be used for submitting bids was delayed until mid-July and the final bid deadline was set as midday on Tuesday 2 August 2022. All of the Council's bid submission documents were uploaded by 1 August.

- 3.3 The main content of the bid submission was responses to questions in six sections to the Levelling Up application form. These were: Gateway Check; State Aid and Subsidy; Bid Summary; Strategic Fit; Economic Case and Deliverability. Accompanying these responses were a number of annexes, including technical reports containing diagrams and tabular evidence that could not be submitted in the responses, evidence of MP and MSP support, the 2017 Masterplan, a risk register and proof of site ownership.

#### Next Steps

- 3.4 Despite the delay in the submission from early July to early August, the UK Government Department for Levelling Up, Communities and Housing (DLUCH) has advised that it still intends to assess all bids and announce successful ones in Autumn 2022. Given the high number of bids that were likely to be submitted, the Council does not expect this announcement to be until late October at the earliest, with November more likely. If the bid is successful, the Council, as required, will make its bid submission publicly available on its website, although with sensitive commercial information redacted.

- 3.5 As stated at the 28 June Meeting, if the bid is successful, officers will present a report to Council seeking full authorisation to progress with preparation and procurement of the works, including budgeting, as well as how local people will be consulted and kept informed. Actual physical works are not programmed until late 2023 and will be dependent on planning approval.

- 3.6 In the interim, and also stated at the June meeting, officers will be beginning work on environmental impact assessment screening, materials testing and preparation for procurement of a multi-disciplinary consultant to undertake environmental studies and design works to support planning applications in 2023. Progress on these matters cannot wait until bid award appointment as this would lead to delay in the project programme, which requires project completion by April 2025.

#### **4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 The proposal is aligned with the draft National Planning Framework 4 (NPF), the National Strategy for Economic Transformation (NSET), the Regional Prosperity Framework (most notably Big Move 4 – Regeneration of the Forth) and the Council's own Economic Development Strategy 2012-2022.
- 4.2 The bid is in line with approved 2017 Masterplan and does not conflict with any element of it. A feasibility study has been undertaken into port development at the site and a feasibility study into the 360 project is underway. Neither of these alternative site uses would be in conflict with the proposals and both would benefit from the measures proposed in the bid.
- 4.3 The proposal aligns with Local Development Plan Policy PROP EGT1 Land at Former Cockenzie Power Station Site. The proposed package of works will require environmental assessment screening and be subject to planning.

#### **5 INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

- 5.1 The 28 June Council report noted that due to technical work not being complete, it would not be possible to undertake and Integrated Impact Assessment at that stage. This assessment will be completed prior to presenting a report to Council, if the bid is successful.

#### **6 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 Financial – If the bid is successful, the requirements of the project will be worked up as part of budget development for February 2023. Detailed arrangements for the energy related developments that were referenced in other Cockenzie related reports to June Council, provide the potential for the Council's 10% financial contribution to be met from capital receipt(s).
- 6.2 The fund rules require that there is some capital expenditure required on the project in the current 22/23 financial year, but that this can include design works and studies. This funding can be identified from the

Accelerating Growth line within the approved 22/23 capital budget. Projected expenditure on the project in the 22/23 is likely to be low (£281K), with the Council contributing 10% of that (£28K).

## 7 BACKGROUND PAPERS

### 7.1 [Cockenzie Levelling Up Fund Bid](#) – Council – 28 June Council 2022

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