

**COMMITTEE:** Planning Committee  
**MEETING DATE:** 2 June 2026  
**BY:** Depute Chief Executive - Resources and Economy  
**REPORT TITLE:** Application for Planning Permission for Consideration

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*Note: This application has been called off the Committee Expedited List by Councillor Collins for the following reason: Concern of road safety around Queens Road and the Spott Road Industrial estate by local residents, business owners, and users of the Industrial Estate.*

Application no. **25/00947/P**

Proposal Formation of car park and ride facility and associated works for a temporary period of five years

Location **Land to the South of  
Spott Road Industrial Estate  
Dunbar  
East Lothian**

Applicant Metlen Energy and Metals

Per Zander Planning Ltd

**RECOMMENDATION** Granted Permission

## **PLANNING ASSESSMENT**

The application site consists of 1 hectares of unused former farm land immediately to the south of the Spott Road Industrial Estate, Dunbar. The site is part of a larger allocated site, Proposal DR7: Land at Spott Road of the adopted East Lothian Local Development Plan 2018 (ELDP). Proposal DR7 allocates the land for employment uses. The site is within the Dunbar II Battlefield Site.

The application site is in the north west section of the of the ELDP allocated site DR7. To the north the site is bounded by the ELC operated Dunbar Recycling Centre within the existing industrial premises. To the south and west is vacant land

and to the east is the main east coast rail line. The site includes a section of the road within the existing industrial estate.

There is no relevant planning history for this part of the wider allocated land.

## **PROPOSAL**

Planning permission is sought for a Park and Ride facility. The proposed development would provide 261 parking spaces, cycle parking and bus stops to serve staff employed in the construction of the convertor station that is an integral part of the Scottish Power upgrade of the east coast electricity grid - the Eastern Link 1 (EGL1) project - which comprises a new subsea High Voltage Direct Current (HVDC) link between East Lothian, Scotland and Hawthorn Pit in County Durham, England which were approved by planning permission in principle 22/00852/PPM and Approval of Matters Specified in Conditions of Planning permission in principle Ref: 25/00083/AMM. Those applications approved included approval for the new converter station to be located at Oxwellmains which this Park and Ride facility would serve.

The Transport Statement submitted with the application informs that the works to construct the EGL1 project will require a substantial workforce. As it is not possible to accommodate the convertor station site construction workforce on site at Oxwellmains an off-site Park and Ride facility is required.

The Park and Ride facility will operate 6am to 7pm Monday to Friday and 6.30am to 3.30pm weekends. The applicant estimates that there will be four round trip bus movements to the site and four round trips from the site each day. The facility is expected to last for three years. It is proposed that routing for the park and ride facility will be dependent on direction of travel. For travel from the Park and Ride facility to the Convertor Station site the bus will travel using Spott Road, along the A1 turning off onto the A1087 to the Oxwellmains Quarry Road. For travel from the Convertor Station site back to the Park and Ride facility the bus will use the A1087 road north to Queens Road and then south onto Spott Road. This routing has been selected to avoid buses making a right turn across the A1(T) ensuring safer and more efficient bus movements.

The site is roughly rectangular in shape and measures 62m across and 204m north to south at its largest. The proposal includes 11 rows of parking bays formed in gravel. The vehicle movement space and pavements are formed in asphalt. There is a circular bus route in the north section of the site with a collection point and shelters in the central area. The site will have lighting columns throughout. There will be a gate at the vehicular entrance point to prevent unauthorised access. There is an element of land retention, approx. 1m in height, on the west boundary.

The application is supported by a Revised Planning Statement Transport Statement, revised Technical Statement, Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and a Green Travel Plan. The application includes a drainage design and surface water management plan.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

An EIA screening request was submitted 1/9/25. On 19/9/25 this Planning Authority issued a screening opinion confirming that an EIA was not required.

## **DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

Section 25 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 requires that the application be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The development plan is National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) and the East Lothian Local Development Plan 2018 (LDP).

NPF4 Policies 1 (Tackling the climate and nature crises), 2 (Climate mitigation and adaptation), 3 (Biodiversity), 7 (Historic assets and places), 13 (Sustainable transport), 26 (Business and Industry).

Proposal DR7: Land at Spott Road and Policies CH5 (Battlefields), EMP1 (Business and Employment Location), DP1 (Landscape Character), DP9 (Development Briefs), Policy CH4 (Scheduled Monuments and Archaeological Sites), CH5 (Battlefields), NH10 (Sustainable Drainage Systems), NH11 (Flood Risk), T1 (Development Location and Accessibility) and T2 (General Traffic Impacts).

Also relevant to the determination of the application is the Council's Development Briefs Supplementary Planning Guidance, and specifically the DR7 - Spott Road, Dunbar Development Brief contained within it, and the Council's Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) Supplementary Planning Guidance.

## **REPRESENTATIONS**

The application has received 12 objections. The main grounds of objection are:

- o Noise from workers arriving and departing;
- o Roads safety, noise and pollution on A1087, Queen's Road;
- o What happens at end of five consent years;
- o Additional traffic on Spott Road will cause congestion and road safety issues;
- o Spott Road and industrial estate junction has poor visibility;
- o Contrary to policy DR7;
- o Road within industrial estate is not suitable for additional cars and buses;
- o No assessment of impact on local network as required by policy T2 General Transport Impact;
- o Potential for vehicles to use Newhouse Place as a short cut with negative impact on residents, and
- o Will contribute to further deterioration of road condition on Spott Road.

## **COMMUNITY COUNCIL**

Dunbar Community Council and West Barns Community Council were consulted and both have objected on the grounds that;

- \* Increased congestion on the surrounding road network;
- \* Increased noise and emission from traffic;
- \* Consideration of alternative sites nearer Oxwellmains;
- \* Alternative vehicle routing should be considered;
- \* The developer should finance upgraded pedestrian and cycle access along Spott Road;
- \* No traffic lights should be installed at the junction of Spott Road and Queens Road;
- \* Appropriate licenses and reports should be obtained in relation to badgers and bats;
- \* There should be evidence of net biodiversity gain;
- \* The proposed SUDS is not suitable for this site;
- \* Increased vehicle movement in Broxburn.

The consideration of alternative locations is not material in this case and the proposal will be assessed on its own merits;

The consideration of alternative routes is not material in this case and the proposal will be assessed on its own merits;

This application does not propose any alterations or traffic lights to the Spott Road and Queens Road junction.

Following consultation with the biodiversity officer a suitable condition requiring a Species Protection Plan is recommended.

## **PLANNING ASSESSMENT**

The site is located within a larger area site allocated by Policy DR7 of the adopted ELLDP for Employment uses. Policy 26 of NPF4 states that development proposals for business and industry uses on sites allocated for those uses in the LDP will be supported.

Proposal DR7 states that any new development proposals for the site must include a comprehensive masterplan for the entire allocated site that conforms to the relevant Development Brief. Proposal DR7 further confirms that Policy EMP1 of the LDP applies.

Policy EMP1 states that within areas allocated for business and employment, uses within Use Classes 4, 5 and 6 of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) (Scotland) Order 1997 are supported. Proposals must not adversely affect amenity and must be able to co-exist satisfactorily with existing or proposed uses on the site and in the surrounding area.

The use of the site as a temporary Park and Ride is not a use within Classes 4, 5 or 6 of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) (Scotland) (Order) 1997. Neither is it strictly an employment generating use. However, this is not proposed as a public park and ride, but is one that supports and facilitates the construction works of the EGL1 project. Thus, it is indirectly an employment use. Furthermore, the EGL1 project is a nationally important development that is required to

safeguard the energy needs of the country. The completion of this nationally important project and the relationship of the park and ride facility to it is an important material planning consideration in the determination of this planning application. Therefore, as an indirect employment generating use, as the use is for a temporary period of five years after which period it can return to its previous use the use of the site as a temporary park and ride is in this particular circumstance acceptable.

Policy EMP1 further states that proposals must not adversely affect amenity and must be able to co-exist satisfactorily with existing or proposed uses on the site and in the surrounding area. With regard to whether the proposed development would prejudice any existing employment use, there is no reason in principle why the proposed use could not satisfactorily co-exist with the nearby existing employment uses. The application site is not bound by any sensitive land uses, with the closest residential properties being located on the other side of the East Coast railway line. Therefore the proposed use of the site as a temporary park and ride facility would not be contrary to Policy 26 of NPF4 or Policy EMP1 of the adopted ELLDP 2018.

The proposed development would integrate satisfactorily into its setting and would not be harmful to the character and appearance of the area. On the considerations of landscape impact the site will be seen within the context of the wider allocation for employment use and the existing adjoining industrial estate and settlement. There will be no adverse impact on the landscape and the proposal is in accordance with policies DP1 and DP2 of the ELLDP 2018.

The **Council's Environmental Protection Manager** advises that they are satisfied that the use would not harm the amenity of any nearby residential property in respect of noise or air quality impact. They do acknowledge that there is potential for light pollution. The proposal includes lighting on 6m high masts, and this has the potential to impact on residential properties on the east of the rail line. However, subject to a condition being imposed on any grant of planning permission to ensure any lighting is at a level which does not unacceptably impact on neighbouring dwelling the Council's Environmental Protection Manager does not object to the application.

NPF4 Biodiversity policy 3. c) states that measures should be proportionate to the nature and scale of development. This site forms part of a larger site allocated for employment use in the ELDP. The proposal is also for temporary permission and therefore it is not considered appropriate to require biodiversity enhancement in this instance. It is important that the site be reinstated to its current condition once the use has ceased, thereby achieving a neutral biodiversity impact. This impact is considered appropriate given the limited biodiversity value of this site, the temporary nature of the proposal and the wider allocation within the ELLDP.

The **Council's Biodiversity Officer** has reviewed the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and subject to a condition to secure the production of a Species Protection Plan for birds and to ensure that prior to construction a walk over survey of the area should be conducted by a suitably qualified ecologist no sooner than 48 hours prior to pre-construction clearance works she raises no objection to the application. Therefore, subject to that aforementioned condition the proposal is not

contrary to Policy 3 of NPF4.

**Historic Environment Scotland** raise no objections to the application being satisfied that it would not have a significant adverse affect on the key features of the Battle of Dunbar II historic battlefield site. The proposal accords with policy 7 of NPF4 and policy CH5 of the ELLDP 2018.

The **Council's Archaeology/Heritage Officer** advises that the application site has seen a high degree of disturbance, including during the construction of the East Coast main line, which means that any archaeological remains which may have been present are likely to have been destroyed. The Archaeology/Heritage Officer therefore raises no objection to the application. The proposal accords with CH4 of the ELLDP 2018.

The **Council's Structures & Flooding Team** has been consulted on the application which include a drainage design solution. They have considered the flooding aspect as well as the SuDS proposals and have confirmed they have no objection to the proposed development. The proposals are consistent with Policies NH10 and NH11 of the LDP and with the Council's Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) Supplementary Planning Guidance.

The Park and Ride facility will operate 6am to 7pm Monday to Friday and 6.30am to 3.30pm weekends. The applicant estimates that there will be four round trip bus movements in and four round trip bus trips out each day. It is proposed that routing for the park and ride facility will be dependent on direction of travel. For travel from the Park and Ride facility to the Converter Station site the bus will travel using Spott Road, along the A1 turning off onto the A1087 to the Oxwellmains Quarry Road. For travel from the Converter Station site back to the Park and Ride facility the bus will use the A1087 road north to Queens Road and then south onto Spott Road. The route will avoid making a right-hand turn from the A1087 onto the A1 and will instead approach the site from the A1087 via Spott Road and making the left turn from Queens Road onto Spott Road 8 times a day.

The **Council's Road Services** have considered the details of the bus routing and frequency and confirm this is not considered to make a significant impact on the Queen Road/Spott Road junction. A condition has been imposed to ensure that this approved route is implemented.

Road Services have also reviewed the initial traffic modelling and an addendum which also examines the weekend departures from the site which coincide with peak Saturday background traffic. Road Services are satisfied that all modelling shows that the junction of the industrial estate with Spott Road will continue to operate below its full capacity. Therefore, the Council's Road Services have raised no concern about the impact of the construction or operation of the Park and Ride on the condition of the local road network.

Road Services have raised no concerns in respect of road safety or road/junction capacity for either pedestrians or vehicles on the local road network.

**Transport Scotland** have also confirmed that they raise no objection to the

proposal.

The proposed development is consistent with Policy 13 of NPF4 and Policies T1, T2 and T31 of the adopted East Lothian Local Development Plan 2018.

At its meeting on 27 August 2019, the Council approved a motion declaring a Climate Emergency. Thereafter, at its meeting on Tuesday 3 September 2019 the Council's Planning Committee decided that a condition requiring a developer to submit for the approval of the Planning Authority a report on the actions to be taken to reduce the carbon emissions from the buildings and from the completed development should be imposed on relevant applications for planning permission. Given the temporary nature of this permission, it is not considered reasonable to impose a condition in this instance.

It is acknowledged that the proposed temporary facility could be adapted to serve the wider allocated site, once its use as a park and ride is redundant. While the current design is not to an adoptable standard in terms of pedestrian access, connections and construction details it could be adapted with a minimal level of intervention. This potential adaptation would be a sustainable reuse of the site and its materials and therefore a condition is attached to allow this option to be accommodated. The proposed development would be consistent with Policies 1 and 2 of NPF4.

In conclusion, the proposal is in accordance with the provisions of the stated relevant Development Plan policies and there are no material considerations which outweigh the proposal's accordance with the Development Plan.

## **CONDITIONS:**

- 1 Planning permission is granted for a period of 5 years from the date of the decision after which time all equipment, infrastructure and hard surfacing shall be removed from the site and the land shall revert to its former condition, suitable for agricultural use, no later than 6 months after the period of said permission unless an alternative road design, including pedestrian, cycle and vehicle space extending to the north, west and south site boundaries, is submitted to and agreed in writing by the Planning Authority, prior to the expiry of this consent. Where an alternative road design is agreed in writing by the Planning Authority the works shall be carried out in full within 12 months of the expiry of this planning permission or an alternative timescale agreed in writing by the Planning Authority.

### **Reason**

To accord with the timescales applied for and to ensure that the park and ride facility is removed and the land reinstated to its former use while allowing the possible future sustainable adaptation of the infrastructure, to include adequate pedestrian and cycle space, and connectivity to the wider site and existing land to the north.

- 2 No development shall be undertaken during the breeding bird season (March to August), unless in strict compliance with a Species Protection Plan for breeding birds, including provision for pre-development supplementary survey, that shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority.

### **Reason**

To protect the ecological interest in accordance with Local Development Plan policy NH5.

- 3 Notwithstanding the approved drawings the design and construction of any proposed

artificial lighting should take account of the Guidance contained within Annex 1 to Appendix 2 of Scottish Government Guidance to Accompany the Statutory Nuisance Provisions of the Public Health etc (Scotland) Act 2008. Accordingly, within an E2 Zone, i.e. Low district brightness areas such as Rural, small village, or relatively dark urban locations, the following criteria should be met prior to any external lighting units becoming operational:

- o Light Trespass (onto windows) of neighbouring residential properties, measured as Vertical Illuminance in Lux, (Ev), shall not exceed 5 between the hours of 0700-2300 and shall not exceed 1 between the hours of 2300-0700.

Hours of operation

The hours of operation shall be limited to 06:00 - 1900, Monday to Friday, and 06:30 - 15:30 at weekends, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Planning Authority.

Reason

To ensure the facility operates within the parameters assessed in the consideration of this application.

- 4 The buses operating from this park and ride facility shall solely serve the EGL1 construction site at Torness and shall be limited to the routes set out on the approved bus route plan whereby trips to the EGL1 construction site will on the A1 and returning trips will be along the A1087.

Reason

Roads Safety.