

**REPORT TO:** East Lothian Council

**MEETING DATE:** 16 November 2021

**BY:** Executive Director for Place

**SUBJECT:** Cockenzie Power Station Site 360 Project Feasibility Study

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## **1 PURPOSE**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval for funding of a feasibility study for a community-based project arising known as the 360 Project, which aims to develop a climate change centre and public space on part of the Cockenzie site.

## **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 That Council:
- approves expenditure of up to £30,000 to support a feasibility study into the potential for the 360 Project and to note that this funding is subject to the forthcoming draft of National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) allowing greater flexibility and acknowledging the potential for a range of uses on the site.
  - delegates authority to the Head of Development to award the funding assuming the flexibility is achieved in draft NPF4 and a suitable proposal is put forward by the 360 Project team.

## **3 BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The current National Planning Framework 3 designates the Cockenzie site as nationally important for thermal generation and carbon capture and storage. Meetings have been held with Scottish government officials seeking to have this outdated designation removed from the site to allow greater flexibility for its regeneration for wider employment-generating uses, as well as the proposed substations for the landing of power generated by wind turbines offshore. The draft National Planning Framework 4 is due for publication in the next few weeks.

- 3.2 The 360 Project is a community-based project which has been developed by members of the community, which aims to achieve a positive legacy for local people arising from the power station site. The proposal is for a climate change research and education centre and public space to the north east of the wider Cockenzie site. This community group, run by a core of enthusiastic and committed community activists has asked for funding to instruct an expert to advise on the feasibility of their proposals. They are also talking to third parties, seeking additional methods of funding. The feasibility study will follow up and build on the Vision document that the group prepared in March 2021 with the assistance of the environmental consultancy AECOM.
- 3.3 At this stage, it is not clear whether any funding will be available from these other bodies although the potential is there. The group estimates that a feasibility study will cost £30,000. It is requested that up to this sum is approved to fund the feasibility study with the provisos that it will not be awarded to the group unless sufficient flexibility for the site is granted through the draft of NPF4, a robust proposal is put forward by the group and alternative funding sources have been explored and will be used to help fund the study if available. It is requested that the award of the funds is delegated to the Head of Development who will ensure that the conditions noted are met.

#### **4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 None

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

- 5.1 An impact assessment is not required for the feasibility study.

#### **6 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 Financial – The Council will make a contribution of up to £30,000 to fund the feasibility study into the 360 Project. The cost of the study can be met from specific provisions established by the Council to support developing the Cockenzie site and accelerating growth.
- 6.2 Personnel – None
- 6.3 Other – None

#### **7 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 7.1 Council Report – 23 February 2021: Cockenzie Former Power Station Site Update / NPF4 Position Statement and Associated Response  
[https://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/download/meetings/id/22055/07\\_cockenzie\\_former\\_power\\_station\\_site\\_update\\_national\\_planning\\_framework\\_4\\_position\\_statement\\_and\\_associated\\_response](https://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/download/meetings/id/22055/07_cockenzie_former_power_station_site_update_national_planning_framework_4_position_statement_and_associated_response)

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