



PUBLIC PETITION NO.

PE01537

Name of petitioner

Shona Brash on behalf of Coastal Regeneration Alliance

Petition title

Proposed Energy Park at Cockenzie

Petition summary

Calling on the Scottish Parliament to urge the Scottish Government to abandon the proposal for the development of an Energy Park at Cockenzie, and ensure that any future proposals are subject to full public consultation and do not extend beyond the existing footprint of the former power station.

Action taken to resolve issues of concern before submitting the petition

- **Letters to Iain Gray, East Lothian MSP:** Iain Gray MSP contacted and raised community concerns with Cabinet Secretary For Finance, Employment and Sustainable Growth, John Swinney MSP
- **Letters to all ELC East Lothian Ward councillors bordering the proposed development:** contacted by letter expressing deep community concerns” Out of 12 only 4 replied
- **Petition to East Lothian Council:** rejected because “what is being sought is not within the power of East Lothian Council. The proposals are in the hands of Scottish Enterprise, Scottish Power and others”;
- **Meeting with Scottish Enterprise:** unsuccessful as SE continue to drive forward with planned development regardless of community concerns expressed. SE also told us no discussions had taken place with Scottish Power, yet it is reported that all land belongs to Scottish Power;
- **Meeting with Inch Cape:** informative but ultimately unsuccessful;
- **Meeting with Iain Gray MSP:** Iain Gray, MSP sympathises with communities and their concern and opposes development, but powerless to stop it;
- **Community meetings:** Community meetings have been held since July 2014 with numbers growing from 25 at first meeting to over 800 members of the community at most recent meeting in September and more than 4000 local signatures on petition supporting our community concerns;
- **Attendance at ELC Planning Committee meeting on Inch Cape (September 2014):** CRA spoke to ask for a 2 month deferment of judgement on the battlesite development on local countryside land to enable CRA to seek a meeting with Scottish Power to establish why land currently unused on existing energy footprint at Cockenzie could not accommodate Inch Cape. Request unsuccessful;
- **Efforts to secure meeting with Scottish Power:** SP Generation Director finally

responding by email but refusing to meet whilst consideration to commercial approaches and options for the site being considered. Scottish Network planned to meet but cancelled meeting because "Scottish Generation dealing with matter". A meeting with SP has since been scheduled for late October 2014;

- **Contact with office of David Martin MEP** to discuss proposals;
- **Public consultations:** Vision gathering sessions held by Coastal Regeneration Alliance to enable the community to put forward their vision of the areas in question;
- **Press Releases** issued weekly to local & national newspapers with support from press for the community;
- **Analysing petition signatures** to demonstrate local feeling to community councils & secure Community Councils support for community action;
- **Contact & support** from organisations linked to Battle Of Prestonpans;
- **Contact & advice** from Greenpeace, Marine Conservation Society and Marinet of the dramatic effects of coastal dredging of the proposed deep water site and effects of local East Lothian beaches and also proposed Underground Coal Gasification drilling near our coastline;
- **Poems, songs & video presentations** created to demonstrate extent of community concern and the positive & peaceful actions taken to voice this concern into public domain;
- **Pop-up stalls** held weekly in local communities to provide information, petition and letter signing opportunities for those who are concerned and without online access;
- **Bumper stickers & #keepourcoast T-shirts** produced & widely available locally;
- **Leaflets produced & delivered** to premises immediately bordering proposed site initially, and now wider East Lothian county.

Petition background information

The Coastal Regeneration Alliance is formed by the communities of Prestonpans, Cockenzie & Port Seton and Meadowmill who are deeply concerned that the proposed Energy Park will be situated in the midst of residential & community areas, and create a divide between communities which have a strong historical link.

We wish to:

- retain existing Local Plan policies for land adjacent to Cockenzie Power station and historic battlefield;
- allow the communities to participate in how their area is developed and take into account community suggestions;
- consider an alternative positive community proposal for the site;
- recognition of planning permission of a gas fired power station at Cockenzie but any changes be by community consultation.

The communities to the West of the county of East Lothian realise the impact of the Proposed Energy Park could have significant consequences which could change their communities forever.

Our first concern is the lack of any adequate consultation and information on such a substantial change in land use and the marine environment. Most people in the community are not aware of what is being proposed within the current planning timescale.

Major concerns are:

- East Lothian Council have indicated support for the proposals against the wishes of the community and have, to date, refused to listen to community;
- Lack of public information regarding the proposed Cockenzie Energy Park and little community consultation despite contacting all the parties concerned - Scottish Enterprise, Scottish Power, East Lothian Council;
- No public consultation prior to the publication of the proposals within NPF3;
- No definition or explanation within NPF3 as to what an Area of Coordinated Action or Energy Park might be;
- No involvement of East Lothian Councillors in the development of the proposal, which was promoted by East Lothian Council Executive;
- Lack of proper plans, models, drawings, designs on how this will impact on the landscape, townscape and seascape of the local area and community;
- Planning permission being granted to convert existing power station to gas powered but lack of any information by Scottish Power as to viability, progress of plans or future plans of a gas power station and potentially favouring an energy park;
- the impact on the Forth including fishing, marine and bird life, coastal recreation and potential destructive effects to East Lothian beaches;
- introduction of an inappropriate large industrial facility within an established residential community;
- Scottish Enterprise tell us a maximum of 1000 jobs will be created but compared to Methil Energy Park figures will be much less and Nigg Energy Park only created 330 long term jobs. Job losses will result from fishing related, tourism related and local businesses if proposals go ahead, so very few jobs – if any - will be gained;
- complete disregard, to date, of community involvement in the use of these sites;
- loss of green space historically enjoyed by the communities for leisure and recreation. Significant reduction in green space for communities to enjoy;
- loss of the traditional road link between Prestonpans and Cockenzie communities with a proposed replacement road potentially causing major disruption to all residential communities, particularly Cockenzie & Port Seton;
- potential isolation of communities;
- catchment area for local high school and local sporting clubs will be fragmented;
- potential depression in local housing market;
- loss of key area of historic Battle of Prestonpans site and historic Wagonway;
- loss of opportunity to maximize the growing tourism potential in our area enjoyed by our whole county;
- impact on Cycle Route 76;
- impact on John Muir Way;
- loss of fishing industry, tourism and related jobs, offsetting jobs created;
- Plans and licences given to carry out Underground Coal Gasification exploratory drilling in 95 square miles of the Forth that includes part of the local coastline;
- British Geological Survey on Shale Gas and Oil identifies our coastline and Forth for potential exploration;
- The energy park proposal may be seen as an opportunity to establish and fund development of an inappropriate marine port facility, the use of which could subsequently be changed to included passengers, freight, containers, gas or oil traffic.

Unique web address

Related information for petition

Do you wish your petition to be hosted on the Parliament's website to collect signatures online?

YES

How many signatures have you collected so far?

1

Closing date for collecting signatures online

05 / 11 / 2014

Comments to stimulate online discussion

We welcome suggestions by the local communities to transform our communities in a vibrant, positive manner whilst retaining our rich heritage and history.