

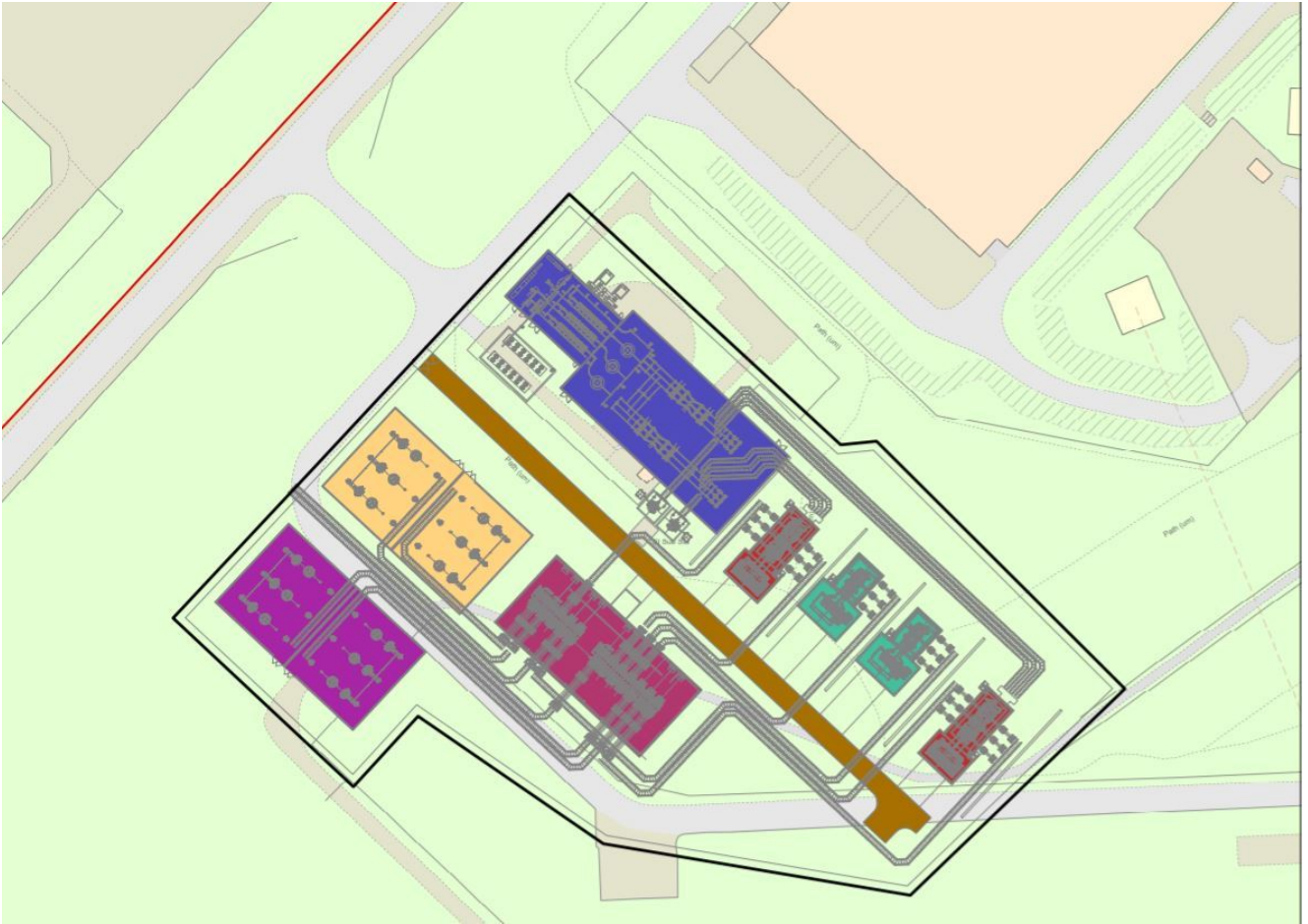
Second planning application for electricity substation at Cockenzie

A SECOND plan to build a substation to bring energy onshore at the former Cockenzie Power Station has been lodged with East Lothian Council.

The latest planning application from Seagreen Wind Energy shows the substation built on top of a former gasholder site stretching across paths which the firm admits may have to be diverted.

Seagreen sparked local concern when its initial consultation appeared to put the entire Greenhills – a popular recreational spot between the communities of Cockenzie and Prestonpans – in its proposed site.

However, the plans now lodged with the council show the substation across the road from the former power station's main footprint on an old gasworks area now being used for a temporary car wash business.



Acknowledging concerns raised by community councils over the loss of green space, Seagreen's application says: "As far as possible, the proposed substation (as well as other elements of the proposed development) will be sited to avoid any areas of habitat value.

"Where not possible, we confirm that any potential loss of woodland or scrub would be compensated for by post-construction landscape planting."

And they added that any loss of existing footpaths was still to be discussed to agree how to mitigate it, adding: "This will likely involve a diversion to the existing footpath. If this is required, we will seek to minimise the length of this diversion as far as possible."

Seagreen currently has a £3bn offshore wind farm development under construction after it was granted exclusive rights for the Firth of Forth Zone of the UK's Round 3 offshore wind farm development programme.

Phase One within the zone includes the development of two offshore windfarms – Seagreen Alpha and Seagreen Bravo – located more than 27km from the Angus coastline.

Work is already under way to bring the energy online at a number of sites, with Cockenzie the latest one to be put forward.

The former Cockenzie Power Station site was bought by East Lothian Council from ScottishPower after the station's iconic chimneys were demolished.

It has been marketed by the local authority for projects, with a visionary masterplan setting out a wide range of employment, energy and recreational uses for the large 37-hectare site and surrounding area.

To date, a substation which will bring energy onshore for Inch Cape Offshore Ltd is the only proposal given planning permission for the site.

Seagreen's proposals cover an area of land outwith the power station footprint itself, including a beach car park next to it, where underground cables would be brought on land, under the main road and into the National Grid inshore.

The proposal includes an onshore substation, underground electricity cables and "temporary and permanent infrastructure to export electricity".

by Marie Sharp. Marie is The Local Democracy Reporter covering East Lothian Council. The Local Democracy Reporting Service (LDRS) is a public service news agency: funded by the BBC, provided by the local news sector, and used by qualifying partners. Local Democracy Reporters cover top-tier local authorities and other public service organisations.