

CONTENTS

1.0	INTRODUCTION.....	1-1
1.1	Background	1-1
1.2	The Applicant	1-2
1.3	The Proposed Project.....	1-2
1.4	The Development Consent Process.....	1-3
1.5	Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and the Purpose of the Preliminary Environmental Information (PEI) Report.....	1-3
1.6	Structure of this PEI Report.....	1-7
1.7	Consultation	1-8
1.8	Statement of Competence.....	1-8
1.9	References.....	1-8

TABLES

Table 1.1	Location of information required by Regulation 14(2) within this ES
-----------	---

FIGURES

(Refer to PEI Report Volume 2)

Figure 1.1	Proposed Project Location (Plan)
Figure 1.2	Proposed Project Location (Aerial)

APPENDIX

(Refer to PEI Report Volume 3)

Appendix 1A	Slough Multifuel Scoping Report (November 2021)
Appendix 1B	Slough Multifuel Scoping Opinion (December 2021)
Appendix 1C	Summary of Competence and Experience

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 This Preliminary Environmental Information Report ('PEI Report') has been prepared by AECOM on behalf of SSE Slough Multifuel Limited ('the Applicant') in relation to an application for development consent ('the Application') for the construction of the Slough Multifuel Extension Project (hereafter referred to as the 'Proposed Project').
- 1.1.2 The Proposed Project comprises works to increase the efficiency and output of a generating station with capacity up to 50 megawatts (MW) (the "Consented Development") which was originally consented in June 2017 under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 ('TCPA') regime (Planning Ref. P/00987/024 and P/00987/025), to achieve up to 60MW peak electrical output (MWe). As the electrical output would exceed 50MWe the Proposed Project requires development consent (granted in the form of a Development Consent Order) pursuant to Sections 31, 14(1)(a) and 15 of The Planning Act 2008.
- 1.1.3 The Proposed Project involves improving the efficiency with an increase in the gross generation of the Consented Development. This increase in gross generation capacity will be achieved through a number of physical works that are "engineering operations" and therefore "development" for the purposes of Section 32 of the Planning Act 2008. The engineering operations represent the "extension" of the Consented Development.
- 1.1.4 Consent for the operation of the generating station at over 50MW is also required (see sections 36(1) and (1B) of the Electricity Act 1989) and will also be sought pursuant to Section 140 of the Planning Act 2008.
- 1.1.5 This PEI Report presents:
- a description of the Proposed Project;
 - the likely significant environmental effects of its construction, operation and decommissioning based on the preliminary environmental information available at the time of writing;
 - measures to avoid or reduce such effects; and
 - the reasonable alternatives considered.
- 1.1.6 Its purpose is to support consultees in developing an informed view of the likely significant environmental effects of the Proposed Project.
- 1.1.7 All the land required for the Proposed Project (and included within the Application site boundary) is referred to in this PEI Report as 'the Site' or 'Proposed Project Site'.

- 1.1.8 The Proposed Project Site is located within the Slough Heat and Power site and includes the site for the Consented Development. All elements of the Proposed Project are within the administrative boundary of Slough Borough Council (SBC), in Berkshire.
- 1.1.9 This chapter is supported by Figure 1.1 and Figure 1.2 (PEI Report Volume 2), which illustrates the Proposed Project location on base mapping and an aerial image, respectively.

1.2 The Applicant

- 1.2.1 The Applicant is SSE Slough Multifuel Limited (SMF). SMF was established in April 2021 and is a 50:50 joint venture between SSE Thermal and Copenhagen Infrastructure Partners (CIP).
- 1.2.2 SSE Thermal, part of the FTSE-listed SSE plc, is a leading developer, owner and operator of flexible generation, energy-from-waste, and energy storage assets, with over 600 direct employees across the UK and Ireland. SSE Thermal's vision is to become the leading provider of flexible thermal energy in a net-zero world. SSE Thermal was granted planning permission in June 2017 to construct the Consented Development at the Site. SSE Thermal currently operates the existing Slough Heat and Power Plant.
- 1.2.3 Copenhagen Infrastructure Partners (CIP) was founded in 2012 and is a fund management company specialised in offering tailor made investment in energy infrastructure assets globally, in particular within the renewable energy sector. CIP are renewable market pioneers with involvement in some of the World's largest offshore wind projects and other major energy infrastructure projects in North-Western Europe, North America, and Asia Pacific. CIP has extensive biomass and energy from waste experience in the UK.

1.3 The Proposed Project

- 1.3.1 The Consented Development commenced on 4th January 2021 pursuant to a section 73 decision notice (Planning Ref. P/00987/035 dated 3 March 2020). On 1st February 2022, a further section 73 was granted (Planning Ref. P/00987/051) to permit minor changes to the approved plans. The target completion date for the Consented Development is 31st October 2024.
- 1.3.2 The Proposed Project will improve the efficiency of the Consented Development with the objective of increasing the gross generation of the consented scheme from up to 50MWe to up to 60MWe.
- 1.3.3 The engineering operations are predominantly internal, within the Consented Development building envelope. These include the installation of primary and secondary air preheating systems to the boilers to increase the thermal efficiency of the generating station, comprising heat exchanger bundles, pipework, valves,

pipe supports, thermal insulation, instrumentation, cabling and containment, mechanical modifications to the steam turbine inlet control valve to increase the steam capacity and to the turbine control system and distributed control system to allow for an increase in the gross output of the generating station. The only external works is a small section of above ground pipework connecting two buildings.

- 1.3.4 It is expected that the construction works will be 2 months' duration and should overlap with the current construction programme for the Consented Development.
- 1.3.5 There will be no increase in permitted vehicle movements and deliveries required for the Proposed Project during operation.
- 1.3.6 A detailed description of the of Proposed Project is set out in Chapter 2 and details of the Site are in Chapter 4: Existing Site Conditions of this PEI Report.

1.4 The Development Consent Process

- 1.4.1 The Proposed Project falls within the definition of a 'nationally significant infrastructure project' (NSIP) under Section 14(1)(a) and 15(2) of the Planning Act 2008 (hereafter referred to as 'the 2008 Act') as an extension of an onshore generating station in England, which (when extended) would have a capacity more than 50MW'.
- 1.4.2 Development consent for the Proposed Project is therefore required from the Secretary of State (SoS) for Business Energy and Industrial Strategy. This is granted in the form of a Development Consent Order (DCO). A DCO has the effect of granting consent for construction of a development in addition to a range of other consents and authorisations, as well as removing the need for some consents (such as planning permission). Consent for the operation of the generating station at over 50MW will also be sought as part of the DCO.
- 1.4.3 An application for development consent is submitted to the Planning Inspectorate (PINS), acting on behalf of the SoS. Subject to an application being accepted, PINS appoints an inspector (or panel of inspectors), known as the Examining Authority (ExA), to examine the application. The examination must be completed within six months, following which the ExA has three months to write a report providing a recommendation to the SoS whether to grant development consent. The SoS will then make a final decision on whether to grant development consent.

1.5 Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and the Purpose of the Preliminary Environmental Information (PEI) Report

- 1.5.1 The Applicant has notified the Secretary of State in writing under Regulation 8(1)(b) of The Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (as amended) (the 'EIA Regulations') that it intends to provide an Environmental Statement (ES) in respect of the Proposed Project. The

Proposed Project is 'EIA development' for the purposes of the EIA Regulations and an Environmental Statement (ES) will form part of the Application.

1.5.2 Following the completion of an EIA Scoping Report and publication of PINS's Scoping Opinion, the EIA for a DCO is reported in two stages:

1. the PEI Report is prepared to inform consultation with the public and other stakeholders about the Proposed Project, based on the preliminary environmental information available at the time of consultation; and subsequently
2. an ES is prepared to accompany the Application.

The EIA Scoping Process

1.5.3 The purpose of the EIA Scoping process is to determine which topics should be included in the ES, and the level of detail to which they should be assessed. An EIA Scoping Report and a request for an EIA Scoping Opinion pursuant to Regulation 10 of the EIA Regulations was submitted to PINS on 17th November 2021.

1.5.4 The EIA Scoping Report (see Appendix 1A in PEI Report Volume 3) was developed with reference to standard guidance and best practice and was informed by the EIA team's experience working on a number of other similar projects, including the EIA for the Consented Development, which was completed in December 2018.

1.5.5 The EIA Scoping Report set out:

- details of the Proposed Project (including comparison with the Consented Development) and the Site;
- a summary of alternatives to be considered;
- a summary of existing and future baseline conditions;
- an outline of the likely environmental effects of the Proposed Project;
- a description of the matters to be scoped in and out of the EIA;
- proposed assessment methods; and
- the proposed structure of the ES.

1.5.6 The PINS Scoping Opinion was received on 22nd December 2021 and is included within Appendix 1B in PEI Report Volume 3. The matters raised by PINS have been reviewed and are being taken into consideration in the relevant technical assessments for the Application. Further details on the EIA Scoping Opinion are set out in Chapter 6: Environmental Impact Assessment Methodology of this PEI Report.

The PEI Report

- 1.5.7 This PEI Report has been prepared to satisfy the requirements of Regulation 12 of the EIA Regulations. In accordance with Regulation 12(2)(b), the PEI Report presents “*the information referred to in Regulation 14(2) which... has been compiled by the applicant ... and ... is reasonably required for the consultation bodies to develop an informed view of the likely significant environmental effects of the development (and of any associated development)*”. Regulation 14(2) describes the requirements of an ES.
- 1.5.8 Table 1.1 identifies where the information defined by Regulation 14(2) can be found within this PEI Report.

Table 1.1 Location of information required by Regulation 14(2) within this PEI Report

Specified Information	Where information is provided (within this PEI Report unless otherwise stated)
a) <i>A description of the proposed development comprising information on the site, design, size, and other relevant features of the development</i>	Volume 1 Chapter 2: The Proposed Project; Chapter 3: Alternatives and Chapter 4: Existing Site Conditions and supporting figures and appendices to these chapters in PEI Report Volume 2 and PEI Report Volume 3.
b) <i>A description of the likely significant effects of the proposed development on the environment</i>	PEI Report Volume 1 Chapters 7 – 12
c) <i>A description of any features of the proposed development, or measures envisaged in order to avoid, prevent, or reduce and, if possible, offset likely significant adverse effects on the environment</i>	PEI Report Volume 1 Chapter 2: The Proposed Project and Chapters 7 - 12
d) <i>A description of reasonable alternatives studies by the applicant, which are relevant to the proposed development and its specific characteristics, and an indication of the main reasons for the option chosen, taking into</i>	PEI Report Volume 1 Chapter 3: Alternatives

account the effects of the development on the environment

e) <i>A non-technical summary of the information referred to in subparagraphs (a) to (d)</i>	Non-Technical Summary (standalone document included with PEI Report)
f) <i>Any additional information specified in Schedule 4 relevant to the specific characteristics of the particular development or type of development and to the environmental features likely to be significantly affected</i>	Baseline conditions relevant to each assessment are described in PEI Report Volume 1 chapters 7 – 12, 'Baseline Conditions' sections. Assessment methods are described in PEI Report Volume 1, Chapter 6: Environmental Impact Assessment Methodology, and Chapters 7 – 12, 'Assessment Methodology and Significance Criteria' sections. Any limitations and/or difficulties with the assessments are described in PEI Report Volume 1 Chapters 7 – 12, 'Limitations or Difficulties' sections.

1.5.9 PINS Advice Note Seven: Environmental Impact Assessment: Process, Preliminary Environmental Information and Environmental Statements (PINS, 2017) notes *“A good PEI document is one that enables consultees (both specialist and non-specialist) to understand the likely environmental effects of the Proposed Development and helps to inform their consultation responses on the Proposed Development during the pre-application stage.”*

1.5.10 In order to enable consultees to understand the likely environmental effects of the Proposed Project, this PEI Report presents preliminary findings of the environmental assessments undertaken to date. This allows consultees the opportunity to provide informed comment on the Proposed Project, the assessment process and preliminary findings prior to the finalisation of the DCO application and the ES. The Applicant is seeking the views of consultees on the information contained within this PEI Report, and there is opportunity within the process up to submission of the DCO application for both the EIA and the project design to have regard to comments received.

1.5.11 It should be noted that this PEI Report does not constitute a full ES, but rather presents the findings of the EIA process to date. The information presented in this PEI Report describes the current extent of the environmental assessment work undertaken based upon the information available. The various assessments are at differing stages of completion, although due to the way the Proposed Project

has evolved from the Consented Development, for which a comprehensive EIA was undertaken, many aspects of the assessments have already been completed. It is considered that this PEI Report presents sufficient preliminary environmental information to enable consultees to develop an informed view of the Proposed Project.

- 1.5.12 Following statutory consultation on the preliminary environmental information this PEI Report will be developed into a final ES taking into consideration comments raised during the consultation. The ES will be submitted as part of the suite of DCO application materials.

1.6 Structure of this PEI Report

- 1.6.1 The format of this PEI Report reflects the proposed format of the final ES, and covers the assessment topics agreed through the EIA Scoping process.
- 1.6.2 Volume 1 of this PEI Report is structured into chapters, as follows:
- Chapter 1: Introduction;
 - Chapter 2: The Proposed Project;
 - Chapter 3: Alternatives;
 - Chapter 4: Existing Site Conditions;
 - Chapter 5: Consultation;
 - Chapter 6: Environmental Impact Assessment Methodology;
 - Chapters 7 to 12 – assessments of the likely significant effects of the Proposed Project in relation to the environmental topics scoped into the EIA; and
 - Chapter 13 – assessment of the likely inter-relationships between the topics covered in Chapters 7 – 12 (combined effects), and between the Proposed Project and other planned developments in the surrounding area (cumulative effects).
 - Chapter 14: Summary of Environmental Effects.
- 1.6.3 Volume 2 and Volume 3 of the PEI Report comprise the figures and technical appendices (respectively) that accompany each chapter of Volume 1.
- 1.6.4 A separate standalone document has also been prepared to provide a non-technical summary (NTS) of this PEI Report.

1.7 Consultation

- 1.7.1 Consultation is integral to the preparation of DCO applications and to the EIA process. The views of consultation bodies and the local community serve to focus the environmental studies and to identify specific issues that require further investigation, as well as to inform aspects of the design of the Proposed Project. Consultation is an on-going process and the publication of this PEI Report forms an important part of that process.
- 1.7.2 The 2008 Act) requires applications for development consent to undertake formal (statutory) pre-application consultation on their proposals.
- 1.7.3 Details of the approach to consultation is presented in PEI Report Chapter 5: Consultation.

1.8 Statement of Competence

- 1.8.1 The final ES will include a statement of the relevant expertise and qualifications of each of the contributors as required by Regulation 14(4)(b) of the EIA Regulations. For this PEI Report a summary of competence and the experience of the EIA Co-ordinators is provided in PEI Report Appendix 1C (Refer to PEI Report Volume 3).

1.9 References

HM Government (2008) The Planning Act 2008.

HM Government (2017) The Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (SI 2017 No. 572).

HM Government (2009) Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed Forms and Procedure) Regulations 2009 (as amended) (SI 2009 No. 2264).

HM Government (2018) The Environmental Assessments and Miscellaneous Planning (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2018

Planning Inspectorate (PINS) (2020) Advice Note Seven: Environmental Impact Assessment: Process, Preliminary Environmental Information and Environmental Statements, Version 7, June 2020.

Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (2020) Guidance on Procedural Requirements for Major Infrastructure Projects, July 2020.

Planning Inspectorate (2021) Advice Note Fourteen: Compiling the Consultation Report, Version 3, February 2021.