

SLOUGH MULTIFUEL EXTENSION PROJECT

[PINS Ref: EN010129]

Environmental Statement Volume 1 – Environmental Statement

Chapter 1 - Introduction

Application Document Reference: [6.2.1]

APFP Regulations 5(2)(a)

Revision Number: 1.0

Planning Act 2008
Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed
Forms and Procedure) Regulations 2009

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 This Environmental Statement ('ES') [**Application Document Reference 6.2**] 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 extension of the consented Slough Multifuel Facility, an energy from waste electricity generating station, including associated development (the 'Proposed Project') on land at Edinburgh Avenue, at the Slough Trading Estate, Slough.
- 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/00987/051 (being a section 73 variation of P/00987/024 and P/00987/035) and P/00987/025, P/00987/052, and P/19876/000), 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. A DCO is required for the extension as it falls within the definition and thresholds for a 'Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project' (a 'NSIP') under Sections 14(1)(a) and 15(1)(2)(a) to (c) of the Planning Act 2008, being the extension of an onshore electricity generating station in England which, when extended, will have a capacity of more than 50 megawatts ('MW'). The DCO, if made by the Secretary of State (SoS), would be known as 'The Slough Multifuel Extension Order 202[X]' (the 'Order').
- 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 ES presents:
- a description of the Proposed Project;
 - the likely significant environmental effects of construction, operation and decommissioning of the Proposed Project based on the data and findings from the required assessments and surveys that have been undertaken;
 - measures to avoid or reduce such effects;

- the reasonable alternatives considered;
 - a non-technical summary;
 - any specific additional information in relation to Schedule 4 of the Planning Act.
- 1.1.6 This ES is provided in accordance with the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 ('the EIA Regulations'), in order to inform the consideration of the Application and provide the Secretary of State with the environmental information that must be taken into account when determining the Application.
- 1.1.7 The Proposed Project will be located within the 'Order limits' (the land shown on the **Works Plans** (see [**Application Document Reference 4.3 – Works Plan**] and **Land Plans** (see [**Application Document Reference 4.2 – Land Plan**])). All the land required for the Proposed Project (and included within the Application site boundary) is referred to in this ES 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 [Application Document Reference 6.3.1 – Proposed Project Location (Plan)]** and **Figure 1.2** of this ES [**Application Document Reference 6.3.2 - Proposed Project Location (Aerial)**] which illustrates the Proposed Project location on base mapping and an aerial image, respectively.

1.2 The Applicant

- 1.2.1 The Applicant, SSE Slough Multifuel Limited ('SMF'), 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 Generation Limited was granted planning permission in June 2017 to construct the Slough Multifuel Facility (the 'Consented Development') at the Site. SSE currently operates the existing Slough Heat and Power Plant at the Slough Trading Estate through a company called Slough Heat and Power Limited.

CIP was founded in 2012 and is a fund management company specialising in offering tailor made investment in energy infrastructure assets globally, in particular within the renewable energy sector. CIP is a renewable market pioneer 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 Demolition works commenced on the Consented Development in early 2019 followed by enabling works in 2019/2020 and site set up in 2021 pursuant to a Section 73 permission (Planning Ref. P/00987/035 dated 3 March 2020). On 1st February 2022, a further Section 73 permission 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 is an extension to the Consented Development comprising the carrying out physical works (Work No. 1 at Schedule 1 'Authorised Development' of the draft DCO, Document Ref. 2.1) which will increase the efficiency and gross installed capacity of the extended generating station from just under 50MW to circa 60MW. The physical works comprised in the extension are 'engineering operations' and therefore 'development' for the purposes of Section 31 of the PA 2008.
- 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 (including pipe supports and thermal insulation) between two buildings.
- 1.3.4 It is expected that the construction works will be two 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. A detailed description of the of Proposed Project is set out in **Chapter 2: The Proposed Project [Application Document Reference 6.2.2 – ES Chapter 2]** of this ES and details of the Site are included in **Chapter 4: Existing Site Conditions [Application Document Reference 6.2.4 – ES Chapter 4]** of this ES.

1.4 The Development Consent Process

- 1.4.1 A DCO is required for the extension as it falls within the definition and thresholds for a 'Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project' (a 'NSIP') under Sections 14(1)(a) and 15(1)(2)(a) to (c) of the Planning Act 2008, being the extension of an

onshore electricity generating station in England which, when extended, will have a capacity of more than 50 MW. The DCO, if made by the SoS, would be known as 'The Slough Multifuel Extension Order 202[X]' (the 'Order').

- 1.4.2 The Proposed Project is an extension to the Consented Development comprising the carrying out of physical works (Work No. 1 at Schedule 1 'Authorised Development' of the draft DCO, Document Ref. 2.1) which will increase the efficiency and gross installed capacity of the extended generating station from just under 50MW to circa 60MW. The physical works comprised in the extension are 'engineering operations' and therefore 'development' for the purposes of Section 31 of the PA 2008.
- 1.4.3 It is the extension which is the NSIP pursuant to section 14(1)(a) and 15(1) of the PA 2008, and the development forming part of the extension (being the Authorised Development) which requires development consent pursuant to section 31 of the PA 2008. The Consented Development is consented and constructed pursuant to the TCPA. It is not an NSIP, nor does it form part of one.
- 1.4.4 Separately, the extended generating station requires an ancillary authorisation to 'operate' at over 50MW pursuant to section 36 of the Electricity Act 1989, and this is included within the DCO. The Proposed Project also includes associated development within the meaning of Section 115(2) of the Planning Act 2008, including temporary construction laydown areas, contractor facilities, vehicle parking and cycle storage facilities. The Proposed Project will not increase the throughput of waste, vehicle movements, emissions, or operating hours at the Slough Multifuel Facility, and will not alter the scale or external appearance of the consented buildings and structures.
- 1.4.5 A more detailed description of the Proposed Project is provided at Schedule 1 'Authorised Development' of the draft DCO [**Application Document Reference 2.1 – Draft Development Consent Order**] and Chapter 2 'Proposed Project' in ES Volume I (Document Ref. 6.2) and the area within which the physical works are to occur are denoted by the hatched area on the Works Plan (Document Ref. 4.3).
- 1.4.6 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.
- 1.4.7 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 Environmental Statement

1.5.1 The Applicant has notified the Secretary of State in writing under Regulation 8(1)(b) of the EIA Regulations that it intends to provide an ES in respect of the Proposed Project. The Proposed Project is 'EIA development' for the purposes of the EIA Regulations and an 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 Preliminary Environmental Information (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. The PEI Report was published for consultation in May 2022 and the consultation period ended on 17th June 2022;
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 (refer **Appendix 1A** of this ES [**Application Document Reference 6.4.1 – EIA Scoping Report**] of this ES) 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 [Application Document Reference 6.4.2 – PINS Scoping**

Opinion] of this ES. The matters raised by PINS have been reviewed and are being taken into consideration in the relevant technical assessments for the Application in accordance with Regulation 14(3)(a) of the EIA Regulations. Further details on the EIA Scoping Opinion are set out in **Chapter 6: Environmental Impact Assessment Methodology [Application Document Reference 6.2.6 – ES Chapter 6]** of this ES.

The PEI Report

- 1.5.7 A PEI Report was prepared to satisfy the requirements of Regulation 12 of the EIA Regulations. In accordance with Regulation 12(2)(b), the PEI Report presented *“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)”*.
- 1.5.8 PINS Advice Note Seven: Environmental Impact Assessment Process, Preliminary Environmental Information and Environmental Statements (PINS, 2020) notes *“A good PEI document is one that enables consultees (both specialists and non-specialist) to understand the likely environmental effects of the Proposed Development and helps to inform their consultation response on the Proposed Development during the pre-application stage.”*
- 1.5.9 In order to enable consultees to understand the likely environmental effects of the Proposed Project, the PEI Report presented preliminary findings of the environmental assessments undertaken at the time of writing. This allowed 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.
- 1.5.10 The PEI Report was published for consultation in May 2022 and the consultation period ended on 17th June 2022. Consultation responses have been reviewed (refer to **Chapter 5: Consultation [Application Document Reference 6.2.5- ES Chapter 5]** of this ES) and have informed the preparation of this ES.

Consultation

- 1.5.11 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.
- 1.5.12 The 2008 Act requires applications for development consent to undertake formal (statutory) pre-application consultation on their proposals. There are a number of requirements as to how this consultation must be undertaken that are set out in the 2008 Act and related regulations:

- Section 42 of the 2008 Act requires the applicant to consult with ‘prescribed persons’, which includes certain consultation bodies such as the Environment Agency and Natural England, relevant statutory undertakers, relevant local authorities, those with an interest in the land, as well as those who may be affected by the Proposed Project;
- Section 47 of the 2008 Act requires the applicant to consult with the local community on the development. Prior to this, the applicant must agree a Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC) with the relevant local authorities. The SoCC must set out the proposed community consultation and, once agreed with the relevant local authorities, a SoCC Notice must be published in local newspapers circulating within the vicinity of the land in question providing details of how the SoCC can be inspected. The consultation must then be carried out in accordance with the final SoCC;
- Section 48 of the 2008 Act places a duty on the applicant to publicise the proposed application in the ‘prescribed manner’ in a national newspaper, The London Gazette and a local newspaper circulating within the vicinity of the land in question; and
- Section 49 places a duty on the applicant to take account of any relevant responses received to the consultation and publicity that is required by Sections 42, 47 and 48.

1.5.13 The Applicant informally consulted Slough Borough Council and PINS prior to the submission of the EIA Scoping Report.

1.5.14 The Applicant undertook formal Section 42 and Section 47 consultation which commenced at the same time as the publication of the PEI Report in May 2022 and ended on 17th June 2022. The Section 48 publicity was carried out at the same time.

1.5.15 The issues that have been raised through consultation and how these have been considered and addressed within the design evolution of the Proposed Project and the EIA is set out where relevant within each of the topic chapters in this ES.

1.5.16 The pre-application consultation undertaken by the Applicant is documented within the **Consultation Report [Application Document Reference 5.1- Consultation Report]**.

1.5.17 Details of the approach to consultation is presented in **ES Chapter 5: Consultation** of this ES [**Application Document Reference 6.2.5 – ES Chapter 5**].

The Environmental Statement

1.5.18 This ES has been prepared to satisfy the requirements of Regulation 14(1) of the EIA Regulations. The information to be included in an ES is set out in Regulation 14(2) and Table 1.1 identifies where this information can be found within this ES.

Table 1.1 Location of information required by Regulation 14(2) within this ES [Application Document Reference 6.2]

Specified Information	<i>Where information is provided (within this Environmental Statement [Application Document Reference 6.2] unless otherwise stated)</i>
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 ES Volume 2 and ES Volume 3.
b) <i>A description of the likely significant effects of the proposed development on the environment</i>	ES 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>	ES 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 account the effects of the development on the environment</i>	ES Volume 1 Chapter 3: Alternatives
e) <i>A non-technical summary of the information referred to in subparagraphs (a) to (d)</i>	Non-Technical Summary (standalone document included with ES)

- f) *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*
- Baseline conditions relevant to each assessment are described in ES Volume 1 chapters 7 – 12, ‘Baseline Conditions’ sections.
- Assessment methods are described in ES 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 ES Volume 1 Chapters 7 – 12, ‘Limitations or Difficulties’ sections.

Note: In relation to the ES Structure and Volumes referenced in Table 1.1:
ES Volume 1 (Environmental Statement), this volume, is **Application Document Reference 6.2**
ES Volume 2 (Figures) is **Application Document Reference 6.3**; and
ES Volume 3 (Appendices) is **Application Document Reference 6.4**.

1.5.19 PINS Advice Note Seven: Environmental Impact Assessment: Process, Preliminary Environmental Information and Environmental Statements (PINS, 2020) notes: “A good ES is one that:

- provides a clear description of the Proposed Development through all phases of the development consistent with the DCO in terms of construction, operation and decommissioning phases;
- clearly explains the processes followed to develop the ES including the established scope or the assessment;
- explains the reasonable alternatives considered and the reasons for the chosen option taking into account the effects of the Proposed Development on the environment;
- details the forecasting methods for the assessment and the limitations (as relevant);
- assesses in an open and robust way the assessment of likely significant effects explaining where results are uncertain;
- provides sufficient details of the measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and where possible offset any significant adverse effects, the likely efficacy of such measures and how they are secured;

- details the need for any ongoing monitoring or remediation; and
- demonstrates that the information is sufficient to enable a reasoned conclusion to be reached.”

1.5.20 In order to enable consultees to understand the likely environmental effects of the Proposed Project, this ES **[Application Document Reference 6.2]** presents the findings of the environmental assessments undertaken. The Applicant has sought the views of consultees on the information contained within the PEI Report, and there was a consultation period within the process up to submission of the DCO application for both the EIA and the project design to have regard to comments received.

1.5.21 The information presented in this ES describes the results and findings of the environmental assessment work undertaken based upon the information available. The various assessments have been completed in the ES, with those assessments undertaken in relation to the Consented Development (where a comprehensive EIA was undertaken) subsequently built upon for the purpose of this ES **[Application Document Reference 6.2]**. It is considered that this ES presents the full environmental assessment information.

1.6 Structure of this ES

1.6.1 The format of this ES **[Application Document Reference 6.2]** covers the assessment topics agreed through the EIA Scoping process.

1.6.2 ES Volume 1 of this ES (this volume) **[Application Document Reference 6.2]** 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 ES Volume 2 [**Application Document Reference 6.3**] and ES Volume 3 [**Application Document Reference 6.4**] of the ES comprise the figures and technical appendices (respectively) that accompany each chapter of ES Volume 1 [**Application Document Reference 6.2**].
- 1.6.4 A separate standalone document has also been prepared to provide a non-technical summary (NTS) of this ES [**Application Document Reference 6.1**].

1.7 Statement of Competence

- 1.7.1 A statement of the relevant expertise and qualifications of each of the contributors to this ES is required by Regulation 14(4) of the EIA Regulations and is provided in ES **Appendix 1C** of this ES [**Application Document Reference 6.4.3-Statement of Competence**].

1.8 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.