1 INTRODUCTION

1.1.1 This Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Report has been prepared by RPS on behalf XLCC Limited (XLCC). The EIA Report sets out the findings of the EIA process and accompanies the application for consent for the construction and operation of the proposed High-Voltage Cable Manufacturing Facility at Hunterston Port (hereafter referred to as the 'Project').

1.1.2 The project site is located on part of the former Hunterston Coal Yard within the wider Hunterston Port and Resource Centre (Hunterston PARC), located on the coast of the West of Scotland, south of the settlement of Fairlie, and north of the EDF Hunterston Power Station. The project site centre point grid reference is approximately NS 20238 53343 and occupies a red line boundary area of approximately 50.7 hectares of land within the administrative area of North Ayrshire Council. Primary vehicular access to the site will be gained from the existing site access to the Hunterston Yard via Irvine Road (A78).

1.1.3 The location of the Project site is shown on Figure 1.1.

1.1.4 XLCC aim to construct a state-of-the-art high-voltage cable manufacturing facility at Hunterston Port. The factory will manufacture High Voltage (HV) cables for use in distributing renewable energy from a variety of sources.

1.1.5 At this time there are only four certified plants in Europe manufacturing HV cable of this type, with none located in the United Kingdom. XLCC anticipate a growing demand for specialist cables to serve the expanding renewable energy transmission/distribution needs of the UK.

1.1.6 Cable manufacturing facilities require immediate access to a deep-water port and a large skilled workforce, both of which are satisfied by the choice of location at Hunterston Port. In addition to the facility itself, the Project would include external infrastructure, access from the A78 road and drainage infrastructure.

1.1.7 A full description of the Project is provided in Chapter 2: Project Description of this EIA Report.

1.1.8 The key drivers for the selection of Hunterston and the iteration of the project design are discussed further in Chapter 3: Need and Alternatives.

Consenting Framework and Purpose of the EIA Report

Consenting Framework

1.1.9 The Project comprises the construction and operation of high-voltage cable manufacturing facility. Planning permission will be sought from North Ayrshire Council (NAC) under the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997.

Need for EIA

1.1.10 The legislative framework for the Environmental Impact Assessment Report (the report of the EIA process) is set by the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017 (S.I. 2017 No.102) (referred to hereafter as the EIA Regulations). The Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIA Report) will accompany an outline planning application to be submitted to NAC.

1.1.11 EIA is not required for all developments of this type. The EIA Regulations set out what constitutes EIA development and the subsequent requirements for EIA. The Project will fall under Schedule 2 relating to 'industrial estate development projects'.

1.1.12 Schedule 2 development requires EIA to be undertaken where a project is likely to have significant effects on the environment by virtue of factors such as its nature, size or location. Taking into

account the nature and scale of the development proposed, together with the location, EIA has been undertaken for the Project.

Purpose of EIA

1.1.13 EIA is a means of identifying and collating information to inform an assessment of the likely significant environmental effects of a project. This, in turn, can lead to the identification of measures to avoid or reduce such effects, which may inform the design process. Once the EIA process is complete, the findings are reported in an EIA Report in order to inform the relevant consenting authority and interested parties as part of the decision-making process.

Content of the EIA Report

1.1.14 This EIA Report has been prepared in accordance with the EIA Regulations. Although there is no statutory provision as to the form of an EIA Report, it must contain the information specified in Regulation 5(2), including any relevant information specified in Schedule 4 of the EIA Regulations. For the avoidance of doubt, the specified information within Regulation 5(2) and Schedule 4 is provided in Appendix 1.1 of this EIA Report.

1.1.15 The information supplied within this EIA Report is considered to be in accordance with the EIA Regulations.

Structure of the EIA Report

1.1.16 The EIA Report has been structured in order to allow relevant environmental information to be easily accessible. This volume of the EIA Report (Volume 1) includes the main text. The description of the Project is provided in Chapter 2. Information relating to the main alternatives considered during the evolution of the Project and the reasons for the choices made is found within Chapter 3. Chapter 4 outlines the approach and methodology adopted for the EIA. The remainder of Volume 1 contains topic by topic environmental information as shown in Table 1.1.

1.1.17 Figures and appendices to accompany the text of the EIA Report are provided separately in Volumes 2 and 3. Volume 3 includes specialist reports providing relevant background and technical information. A Non-Technical Summary (NTS) of the EIA Report is available as a separate summary document.

Table 1.1: Structure of the EIA Report

Structure of the EIA Report	
Volume 0: Non-Technical Summary	Summary of the EIA Report using non-technical terminology
Volume 1: Text	
	Glossary
Chapter 1	Introduction
Chapter 2	Project Description
Chapter 3	Need and Alternatives Considered
Chapter 4	Environmental Assessment Methodology
Chapter 5	Ecology and Nature Conservation
Chapter 6	Historic Environment
Chapter 7	Landscape and Visual Effects
Chapter 8	Hydrology and Flood Risk
Chapter 9	Hydrogeology, Geology and Ground Conditions
Chapter 10	Traffic and Transport
Chapter 11	Noise and Vibration

Structure of the EIA Report	
Chapter 12	Climate Change
Chapter 13	Air Quality
Chapter 14	Socio-Economics
Volume 2: Figures	
Including all figures and drawings to accompany the text.	
Volume 3: Appendices	
Including specialist reports forming technical appendices to the main text.	

The Applicant

1.1.18 XLCC is working to support the growing distribution and supply of renewable energy in the UK. XLCC will contribute to this expansion by supplying UK made High Voltage cable at the scale required to meeting climate goals.

The Assessment Team

1.1.19 The EIA process has been managed by RPS, taking into account information provided by the Applicant. RPS is a registrant of the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA) Quality Mark. All authors (with the exception of chapter 14) of this EIAR are senior members of RPS. Chapter 14 is written by BiGGAR Economics. A statement setting out how the authors have sufficient expertise to ensure the completeness and quality of the EIAR is provided in Appendix 1.2.

Further Information

1.1.20 This EIA Report has been submitted as part of a planning application for the proposed Hunterston Cable Manufacturing Facility. The application has been submitted to North Ayrshire Council (NAC) as the consenting authority. Details of the Project can be viewed here:

https://xlcc.co.uk/

1.1.21 The application, EIA Report and Non-Technical Summary can be viewed on the NAC website:

https://www.north-ayrshire.gov.uk/planning-and-building-standards/search-view-track-planning-applications.aspx

1.1.22 Further copies of the EIA Report can be obtained from the following address quoting project reference 12180:

RPS

20 Western Avenue

Milton Park

Abingdon

Oxfordshire

OX14 4SH

1.1.23 An electronic copy of the EIA Report on CD can be obtained for a cost of £10, and a paper copy can be obtained for an administration fee (price on application).

1.1.24 All comments on the EIA Report (and application) should be issued to NAC. At the current time, the NAC encourage representations to be made through the NAC website: