InpBridge — User Guide

Interim Utility for Migrating iSBEMie 5.6.a Input Files To 5.7.a

InpBridge v0.6.0a1

1. What is InpBridge?

InpBridge is a small Windows desktop utility that helps BER assessors migrate existing SBEMie v5.6.a projects to the v5.7.a by transforming the shape of the inp runs the SEAI iSBEMie engines against the converted file.

It is an interim tool until 3rd-party approved software interfaces to SBEMie implement the relevant changes for the EPBD recast requirements and get reapproved. It is not a substitute for the approved SEAI iSBEMie interface. The assessor remains fully responsible for the accuracy and integrity of the submitted .inp file and the resulting Building Energy Rating.

2. Installation

InpBridge ships as a Windows installer (Inno Setup) and installs per-user — no administrator rights are required. Double-click the installer and follow the wizard.

InpBridge does not bundle the SEAI iSBEMie engines. You need iSBEMie v5.7.a installed separately on the same PC. Instructions for installing iSBEMie_v5.7.a. can be found in Section 4.2 of iSBEMie version 5.7.a – Basics User guide. InpBridge points at that installation at runtime, so any iSBEMie update you apply, will later be picked up automatically without re-installing InpBridge.

Because this is an unsigned build, Windows SmartScreen will display a "Windows protected your PC" warning the first time you launch the installer or the application. Click "More info" and then "Run anyway" to continue. This warning will disappear in a later release once the build is code-signed.

2.1. Choose additional tasks

On the Select Additional Tasks page, leave "Create a desktop icon" ticked if you want a shortcut on your desktop, then click Next.

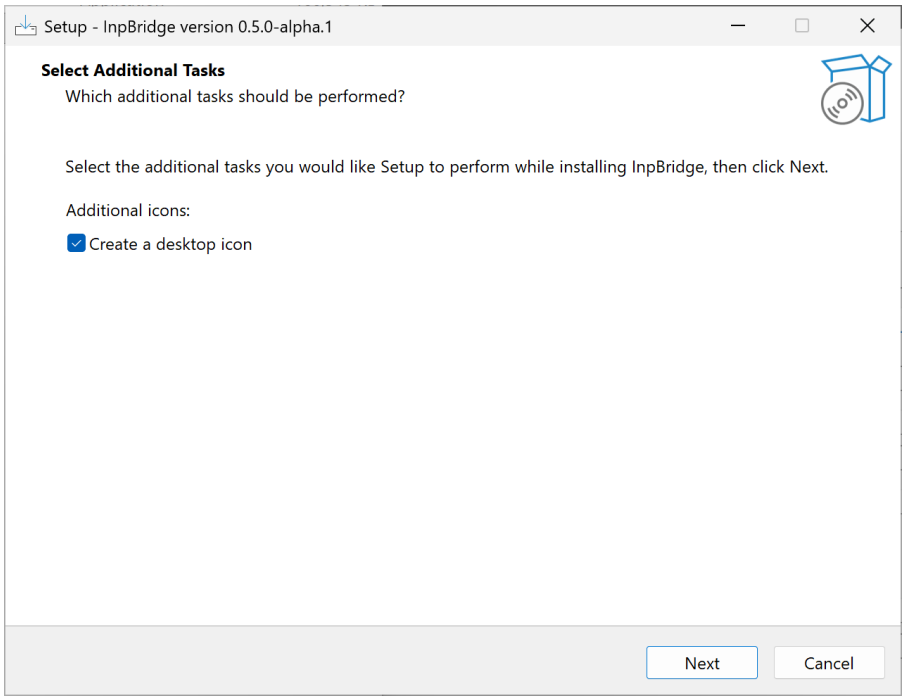

Figure 1: Installer: Select Additional Tasks

2.2. Confirm and Installation

The Ready to Install page summarises your choices. Click Install to begin copying files.

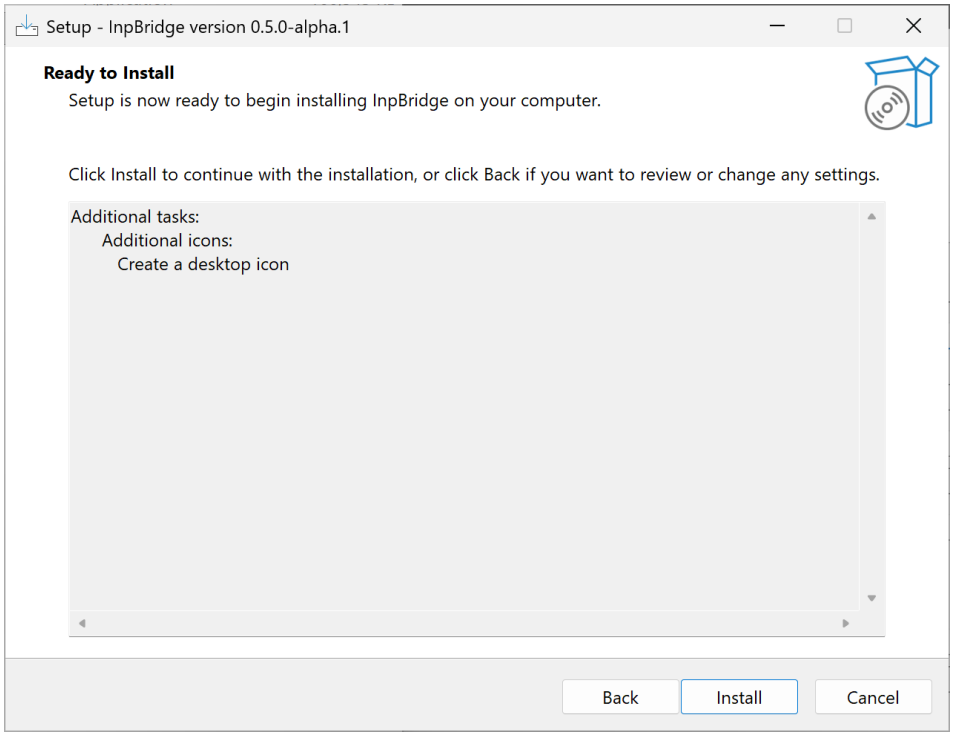

Figure 2: Installer: Ready to Install

A progress bar shows the application files being extracted. This typically takes only a few seconds — InpBridge itself is a small package.

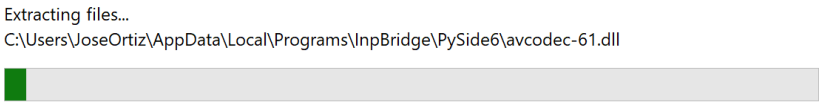

Figure 3: Installer: Extracting files

2.3. Finish and launch

Leave "Launch InpBridge" ticked and click Finish to open the application.

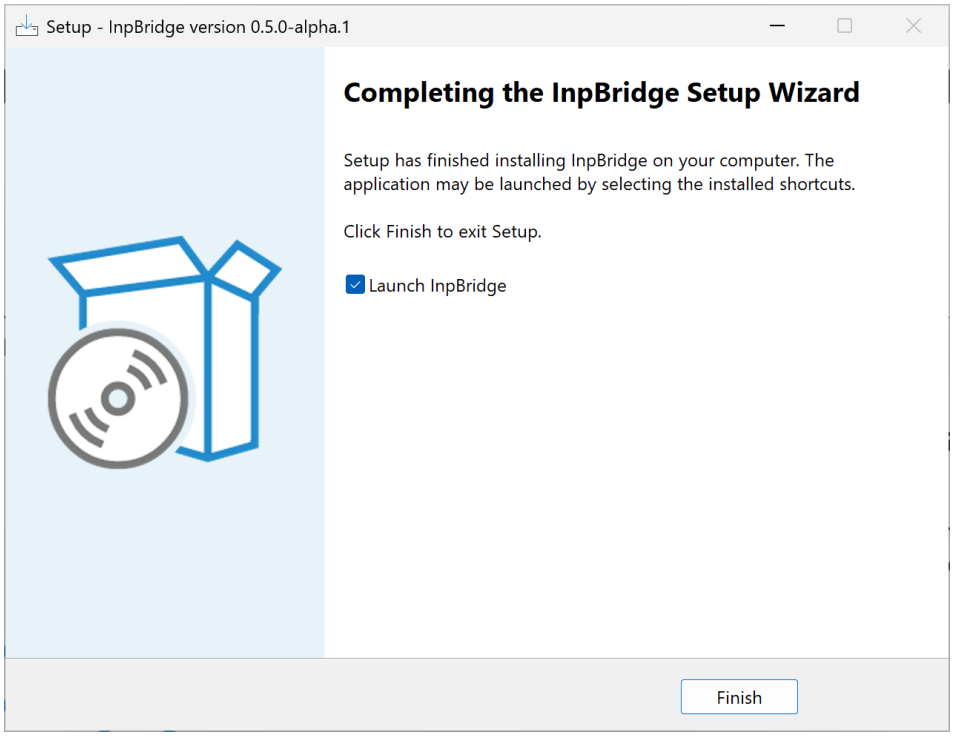

Figure 4: Installer: Setup complete

3. The main window at a glance

On launch, InpBridge displays an interim-tool notice — read it and click Acknowledge to enable the main window. The window is organised top-to-bottom as a five-section workflow: select the iSBEMie installation, pick the input file, fill in the EPBD-recast parameters, attest, then click "Convert and run analysis". The Output panel at the bottom shows progress as the analysis runs.

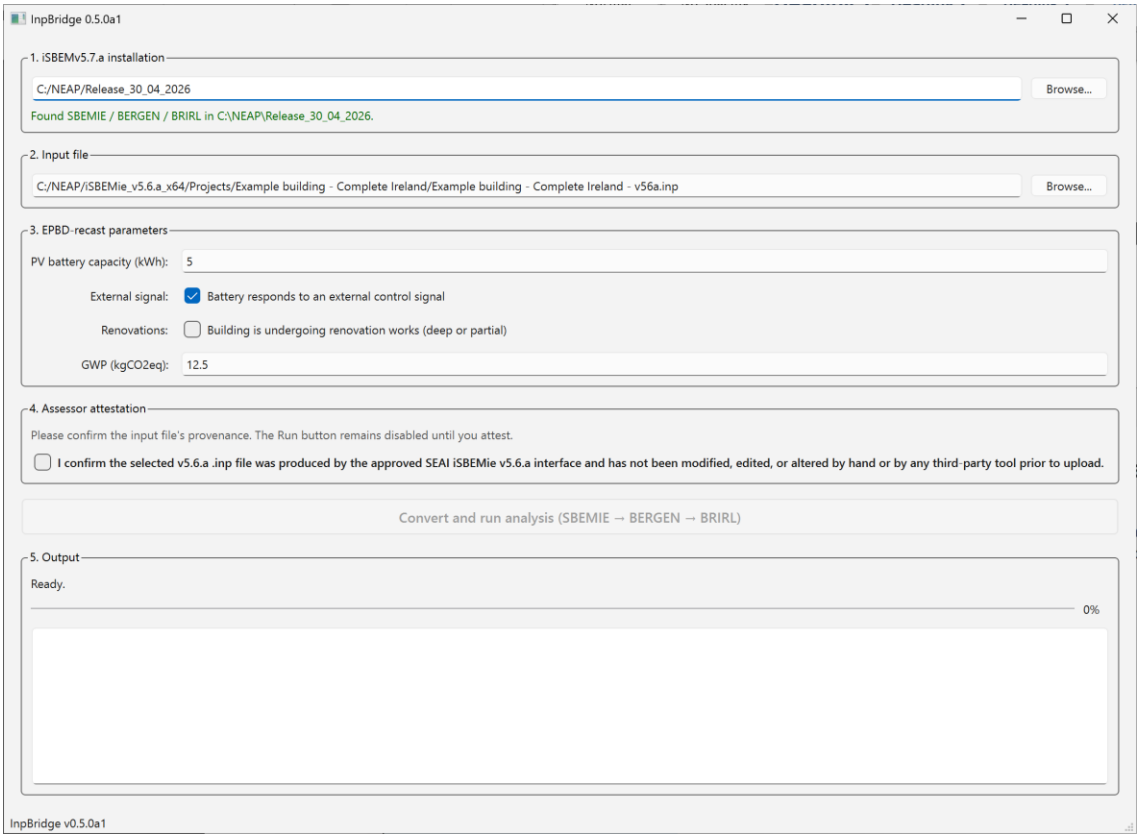

Figure 5: Main window with the form filled in (the Run button stays disabled until you attest)

4. Step-by-step

4.1. Section 1 — iSBEMv5.7.a installation

Click Browse… and point InpBridge at the folder where SEAI's iSBEMie v5.7.a is installed on this PC. Click Browse… and pick the folder — typically something like C:\NEAP\iSBEMie_v5.7.a. When InpBridge confirms the engines are present, a green "Found SBEMIE / BERGEN / BRIRL" line appears beneath the field. The path is remembered between sessions, so you only need to set this once unless SEAI publishes a new build and it is installed in a different folder.

4.2. Section 2 — Select the input file

Click Browse... and pick the v5.6.a .inp file produced by the 3rd-party approved interface used to model this building. This file can be typically found in the 3rd-party approved interface folders. There may be a number on different inp files present but only the one without a suffixed should be selected. The screenshots below show how to navigate from the third-party interfaces to the results folders for IES-VE and DesignBuilder.

IES-VE

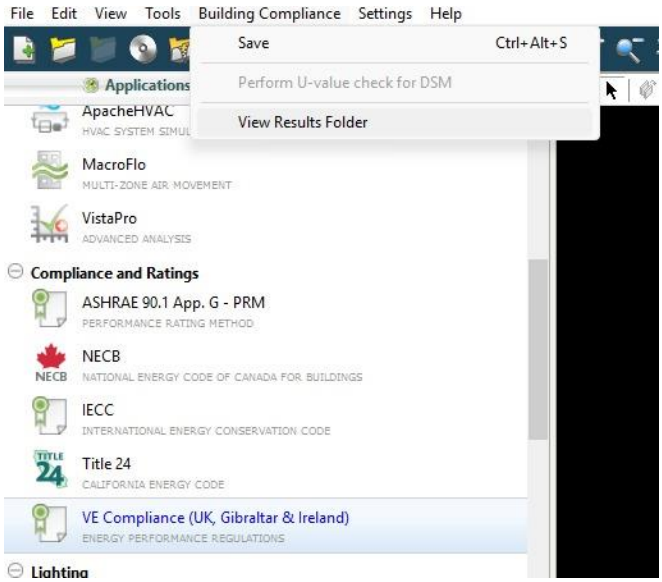

Figure 6: Open the SBEM folder

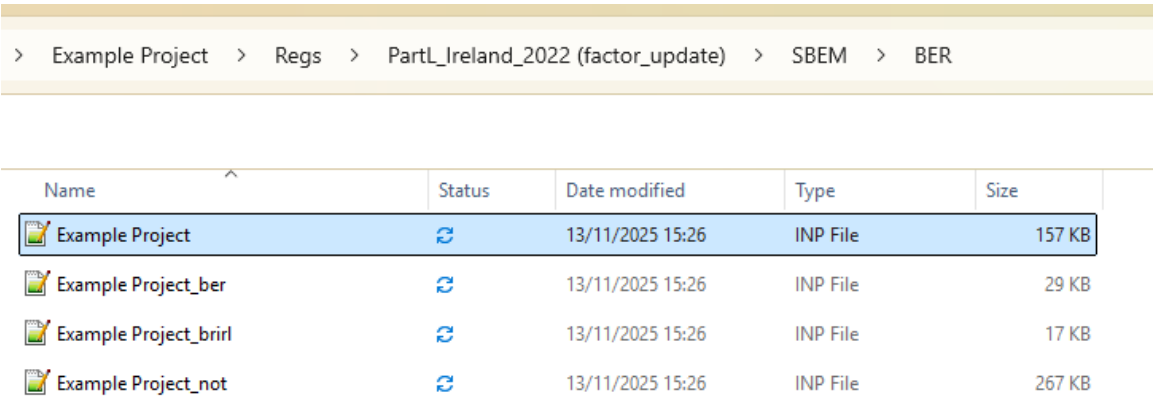

Figure 7: Locate the SBEM inp file

DesignBuilder

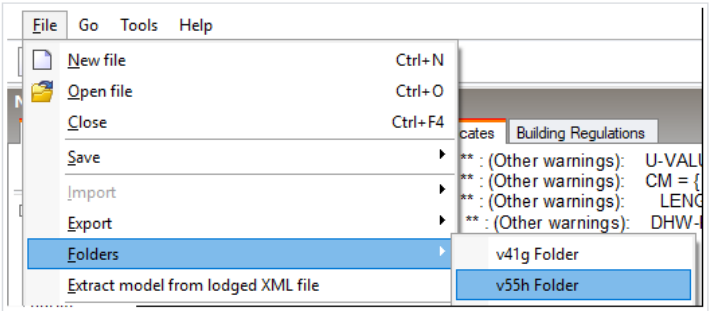

Figure 8: Open the SBEM folder

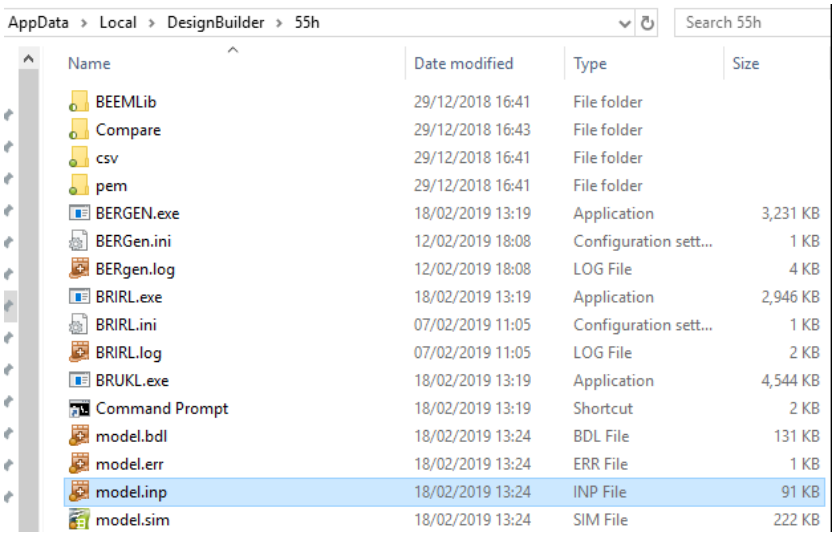

Figure 9: Locate the SBEM inp file

The full path appears in the read-only field. InpBridge will write a v5.7.a copy alongside it (suffixed _v57a.inp) and run the analysis on that converted file — your original .inp is left untouched.

4.3. Section 3 — EPBD-recast parameters

These are the four new fields introduced by the v5.7.a release to satisfy the EPBD recast. Leave any field blank to keep the value already present in the .inp file.

- **PV battery capacity (kWh):** Capacity of any on-site PV battery storage attached to this building. Enter a plain decimal number (e.g. 5.0).
- **External signal:** Tick if the building has the capacity to react to external signals
- **Renovations:** Tick if the building is one which has been, or is being, renovated.
- **GWP (kgCO_2eq):** Life-cycle Global Warming Potential reported for the building. Enter a plain decimal number (e.g. 12.5).

Further guidance on these items can be found in the SBEM documentation

In addition to the four new inputs above, the building type “*Residential Institutions - Hospitals and Care Homes*” has been split into “*Residential Institutions - Hospitals*” and “*Residential Institutions - Care Homes*” for SBEMie 5.7a. For 5.6a inp files with a Residential Institutions - Hospitals and Care Homes building type, users will be prompt upon Clicking "Convert and run analysis” to define a new building type in line with the new building types in SBEMie 5.7a.

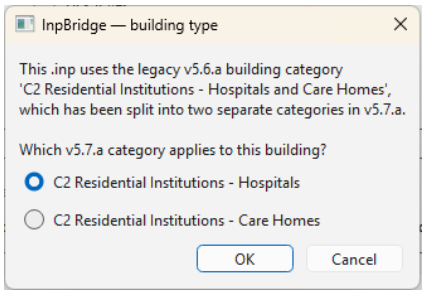

Figure 10: Building Type Selector for Residential Institutions - Hospitals and Care Homes

4.4. Section 4 — Assessor attestation

The "Convert and run analysis" button stays disabled until you tick the attestation checkbox confirming that the selected v5.6.a .inp file came from the approved interface and has not been edited by hand or by any third-party tool. The tick is required for every run and clears automatically whenever you choose a different .inp file, so each assessment is attested individually.

Do not tick this box for files that have been manually altered — the resulting BER will not be valid.

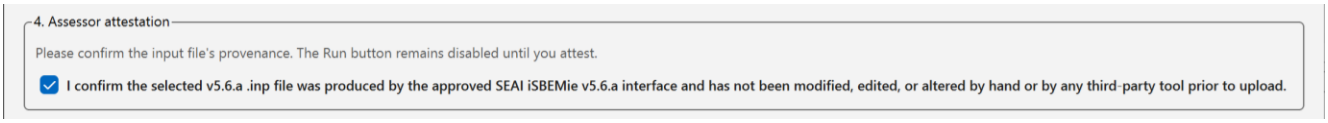

Figure 11: Run button enabled once the attestation is ticked

4.5. Run the pipeline

Click "Convert and run analysis (SBEMIE → BERGEN → BRIRL)". InpBridge will:

1. Patch the input file to v5.7.a header and interface version.
2. Insert or update the EPBD-recast markers from the values you entered.
3. Save the patched file alongside the original (suffixed _v57a.inp).
4. Run the SEAI engines from your iSBEMie v5.7.a folder against the converted file, in sequence.

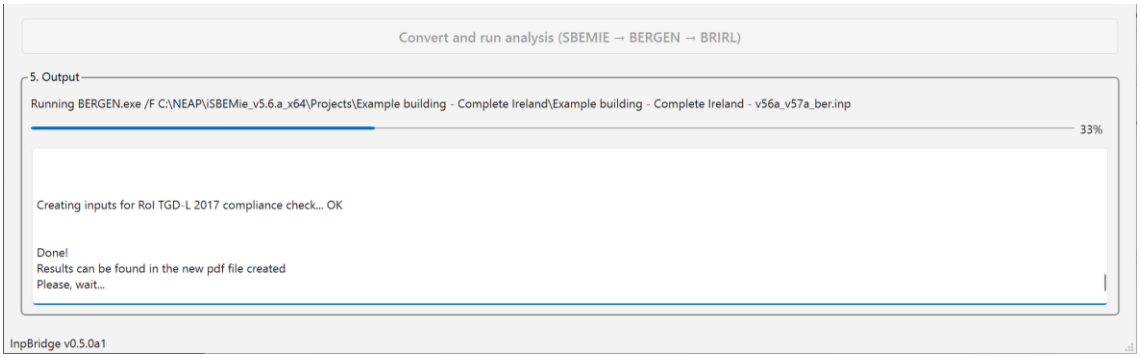

Figure 12: Pipeline running, log streaming in the Output panel

5. Reading the Output panel

Section 5 of the window streams progress messages and a percentage bar while the engines run. When the pipeline finishes, a confirmation dialog appears ("SBEMIE / BERGEN / BRIRL pipeline completed.") and the log shows what each engine produced.

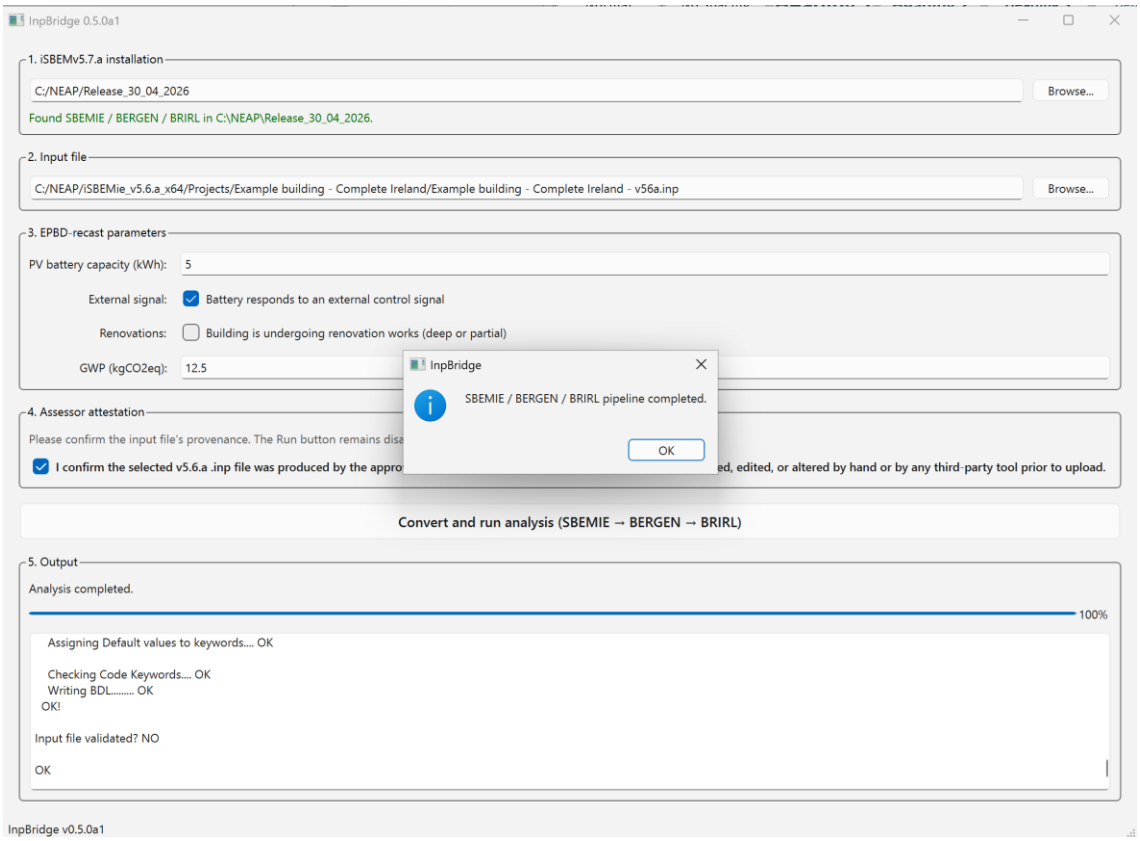

Figure 13: Pipeline completed dialog over the streaming log

All outputs land next to the original .inp file in the project folder. The patched v5.7.a input file is saved as <name>_v57a.inp; the BER PDF and the supporting result files generated by the engines follow alongside.

6. Troubleshooting

- **Run button stays greyed out —** Make sure section 1 shows the green "Found SBEMIE / BERGEN / BRIRL" message, you have selected an input file in section 2, and you have ticked the assessor attestation in section 4.
- **"File already declares v5.7.a" warning —** InpBridge re-applies the EPBD-recast upserts to a file that already self-reports as v5.7.a only after you confirm. Existing values are preserved; missing markers are inserted.
- **Engines folder not recognised —** Section 1 must point directly at the folder where iSBEMie v5.7.a is installed (e.g. C:\NEAP\Release_30_04_2026), not a parent folder. The status line will list whichever engines are missing if you pick the wrong folder.
- **Pipeline fails partway through —** Open the Output log in section 5 — the engine's own error message is shown verbatim. The patched .inp file is preserved next to the original so you can inspect it or re-run later.
- **Numeric field rejected —** Use a plain decimal number (e.g. 12.5). Do not include units or thousand separators.
- **SmartScreen blocks the installer or the app —** Click "More info" then "Run anyway". This will stop happening once a future build is code-signed.