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Consents given under the Petroleum Act 1998 and Reviews under the Assessment of Environmental Effects Regulations 1999

BBL Company (v.o.f)

Balgzand to Bacton Pipeline - Gas Interconnector

Pursuant to Regulation 5(8) of the above Regulations, the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry gives notice that he is content that the requirements of the above Regulations have been satisfied in respect of specific phases of the project. Pursuant to Licence P2225, consent has been granted to BBL Company (v.o.f) for the construction of specific installations, in relation to the Balgzand to Bacton Gas Interconnector Pipeline, in accordance with the environmental statement, received on the 19 May 2004. The consent for the Pipeline Works Authorisation took effect from 8 March 2006.

Background

On the 19 May 2004 an Environmental Statement was submitted for the Balgzand to Bacton Pipeline (BBL), which covered the entire project and was designed to satisfy the requirements of both Dutch & UK regulators. The BBL project consists of laying a 36" concrete coated pipeline of approximately 235 Km length from a compressor station near Balgzand in Holland across the north Sea, arriving at Bacton Gas Terminal in North Norfolk, UK. Additional survey work undertaken by BBL in September 2005, confirmed the presence of Sabellaria spinulosa, a potential Annex 1 Habitat under the Habitats Directive. It has therefore been agreed to consent the pipeline in discrete sections and this consent relates to the "near-shore" section from low water mark out to 3.5Km only. Concerns in relation to this section were raised with regard to the hydrotest waters for commissioning purposes, water quality issues, loss/displacement of fisheries. Following further consultation on these issues, we are content these issues have been satisfactorily addressed.

Recommendation

The environmental statement is satisfactory and adequately assesses the potential environmental impacts of the "near-shore section" of the proposed development. We are satisfied

that the "near-shore section" of the project will not result in a significant impact on the receiving environment, including any sites protected under the Habitats Regulations and it is therefore recommend that consent is given for the "nearshore section" of the project.

Webmaster: [Danny Stocker](#)

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