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

### **BHP Billiton**

#### **DOUGLAS WEST FIELD DEVELOPMENT**

Pursuant to Regulation 5(8) of the above Regulations, the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry gives notice that she is content that the requirements of the above Regulations have been satisfied. Pursuant to Licence P710, consent has been granted to BHP Billiton for the getting of petroleum and the construction of installations, in relation to the development of the Douglas West field in accordance with the environmental statement. The consent for the Douglas West field took effect from 06/11/02 and shall last until 31/12/11.

#### **Background**

BHP Billiton intend to drill a single well to develop the Douglas West field in Liverpool Bay. Given the sensitive location of the operations, both from the point of view of the natural environment and the recreational and economic activities of the area, DTI required that an Environmental Statement be prepared in support of the application.

#### **Sensitivities**

The detailed Environmental Statement described the project, existing environment and potential impacts on the environment arising from the development. A thorough impact assessment was undertaken.

The Development of the Douglas West field consists of drilling a single well from the existing Douglas platform. The oil will be processed at Douglas and exported by offtake tankers via an existing oil storage installation. The well will be drilled using water based mud with all cuttings discharged straight to sea.

On the Liverpool Bay coastline there are many sensitive sites with conservation interest including SPA's and SAC's as well as sites of lower, but still important, classifications. The assessment of the Liverpool Bay operations identified an oil spill as the only source of impact likely to affect these sites. However the risk assessment for this ES and previous documentation indicated that a large oil spill was highly unlikely given the nature of the operations

#### **Recommendation**

Overall the environmental statement is satisfactory and adequately assesses the potential environmental impacts of the proposed development. It is recommend that consent is given to the project.