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

### **Caledonia EU Ltd**

#### **Hunter Field Development 44/23a-H**

**Background** The proposed 44/23a-H well is located in the southern North Sea in a water depth of 34 m, 163 km east-north-east from Flamborough Head. The proposed Hunter development will involve a single subsea well tied back via an 8" flexible pipeline and umbilical to the existing Murdoch K subsea template, 8.15 km south-south-west. Produced fluids will be exported via existing infrastructure to the Murdoch Platform.

The drilling will start in September 2005 and is expected to last 60 days. The well will be tested during which flaring will occur for between 12 and 24 hours with an expected volume of flared gas of 60 to 70 MMscf/day. Pipelay operations are expected to take 22 days to complete, with a further 19 days allowed for Diving Support Vessel operations.

The well will be drilled horizontally and completed using a jack-up rig.

Caledonia currently proposes to use WBM to drill the majority of the 44/23a-H well with 806 tonnes of cuttings and 1832 tonnes of WBM drilling muds to be discharged from the well. However, LTOBM is being considered as a contingency, in the 12.25 inch and 8.5 inch hole sections. If LTOBM is used in these hole sections, full cuttings and mud containment will be carried out and shipped to shore for processing and disposal.

As the whole of the proposed Hunter Field Development lies within the draft boundary of the UKCS sector of the Dogger Bank candidate SAC, JNCC advised that a screening for an appropriate assessment be carried out.

#### **Sensitivities**

The original environmental statement identified a range of potential environmental hazards and outlines proposed

mitigation measures, including:

- Physical presence
- Seabed disturbance
- Noise and vibration
- Atmospheric emissions
- Marine discharges
- Loss of containment
- Solid Waste
- Cumulative impacts
- Transboundary impacts

Mitigation measures are in place to ensure that impacts are kept to a minimum.

### **Recommendation**

The screening for an appropriate assessment was carried out by the DTI, the results of which concluded that the development was unlikely to result in any significant environmental impacts from the development.

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

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