

Environmental Statement (ES) Summary and Sign-Off

Title:	Erskine Field Production Increase Environmental Statement
Operator:	Chevron North Sea Limited (Chevron)
Report No:	D/4185/2016
Submission Date:	February 2016
Block No:	23/26a and 23/26b
Development Type:	Field Production Increase
Reviewer:	Angela Flowers
Date:	March 2016

A) Project Description:

Chevron proposes to increase production from the Erskine Field as a result of efficiency improvement measures at the Erskine Production Module, the Erskine normally unmanned installation (NUI), and the Erskine Production Module located on the Lomond platform (operated by BG International Limited) which processes the gas and condensate for export via a 16" multiphase pipeline.

A revised production consent is required to the forecast increase in production. There is no change to the estimated end of field life, in 2024, or the development footprint with no additional wells being drilled or change to either the subsea or surface infrastructure. The estimated increase in production will result in levels that were achieved prior to the previous decline in production.

The Erskine Field extends across blocks 23/26a and 23/26b in the Central North Sea, 254 km east of the Scottish coastline and 21 km from the UK / Norway median line in a water depth of 90 m. The maximum estimated recovery of condensate is approximately 1,485 cubic metres per day during 2017 and 1,463 thousand cubic metres of gas per day during 2016, with a significant decline in production after 2018.

B) Key Environmental Impacts:

The EIA identified and discussed activities arising from the production increase which could give rise to potential adverse environmental impact:

- Atmospheric emissions – there is potential for an increase in the demand for power to support the production increase, but the anticipated level of the increase in fuel use and associated emissions is likely to be negligible. Venting is independent of production and no change is anticipated. Improvements in production up-time are likely to reduce flaring which occurs during production upsets or emergency shutdowns. Overall, there may therefore be a slight reduction in atmospheric emissions.
- Marine discharges – the processing of produced fluids results in a produced water discharge at the Lomond platform. However, plant stability and efficiency is likely to counter any increase in the volume of produced water and it is not anticipated that there will be any change to the current permitted oil discharge. There will also be no

change in the chemicals permitted for use or offshore discharge.

- Accidental marine spills - there is no change in the spill risk as a result of the production increase, and therefore change to the approved Erskine Oil Pollution Emergency Plan (OPEP).

C) Key Environmental Sensitivities:

The EIA identified the following environmental sensitivities in the Erskine Field area. It is noted that any likely adverse impacts arising from the production increase would be at the Lomond platform which is located 30 km away from the Erskine NUI, but the baseline is likely to be similar:

- Fish stocks: Herring and sandeel spawning grounds may be present in the area, with spawning and nursery periods between January and July. The area also may contain spawning grounds for cod, lemon sole, mackerel, Norway pout and plaice, and nursery grounds for anglerfish, blue whiting, cod, haddock, European hake, herring, ling, mackerel, Norway pout, plaice, sandeel, spotted ray, spurdog and whiting. However, the production increase is unlikely to have any adverse impact on any fish stocks.
- Seabirds: Species which are likely to be present include northern fulmar, kittiwakes and common guillemots, but the area is not of key importance for these species. High seabird numbers are found in January and November with moderate numbers in July, September, October and December. While there may be potential for an accidental spill which could have a significant adverse impact on sea birds, appropriate mitigation measures are in place and covered in the OPEP.
- Marine Mammals: Species observed in the area include harbour porpoise, minke whale and white beaked dolphin, but the area is not considered to be of significance with regard to their breeding, nursery, feeding or migration. The numbers of grey and harbour seals observed in the area are also very low. It is concluded that the production increase is unlikely to have any adverse impact on any marine mammals.
- Protected habitats: Burrowed mud is a priority marine habitat listed in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan, but there are no areas designated for conservation in the area, The East Gannet and Montrose Marine Protected Area is 28 km to the west, and the Fulmar Marine Conservation Zone is 47.5 km to the south. The production increase is unlikely to have any adverse impact on any protected site.
- Protected species: There is potential for benthic features of conservation interest to be present in the area, including ocean quahog, sea-pens and other burrowing megafauna associated with the mud habitat. However, the production increase is unlikely to have any adverse impact on any protected species.
- Other users of the sea: Demersal fishing includes haddock, lemon sole and plaice with fishing effort low throughout the year. The nearest oil and gas field, Shearwater, is located 7 km west of the Erskine Field. and there are other fields located within 30 km of the Erskine Field. There are no current or planned renewable offshore wind projects or military training areas, but there are 19 shipping lanes that pass within 20 km of the Erskine platform. It is concluded that the production increase is unlikely to have any adverse impact on any other users of the sea.

D) Consultation:

Comments were received from the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC), Marine Scotland (MS), the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) and the Ministry of Defence (MoD). The ES was also subject to public notice.

JNCC: Stated that an increase in production from the Erskine field was unlikely to have a significant adverse impact on the marine environment.

MS: MS noted that there was limited scope for any increase in adverse environmental impacts, and accept the conclusions of the ES.

MCA: Had no comments regarding the ES.

MoD: Had no comments.

Public Notice: No comments were received in response to the public notice.

E) Further Information:

No further information was requested from Chevron.

F) Conclusion:

Taking account of the comments received in response to the consultation, DECC OGED is satisfied that this project will not have a significant adverse impact on the receiving environment or the living resources it supports, or on any protected sites or species or other users of the sea.

G) Recommendation:

On the basis of the information presented within the ES and the advice received from consultees, DECC OGED is content that there are no environmental or navigational objections to approval of the proposals, and has advised the OGA that there are no objections to the grant of the relevant consents.

Approved:

pp...Sarah Pritchard..... Date...06/04/2016.....
Wendy Kennedy
Head of DECC, Offshore Oil & Gas Environment and Decommissioning Unit (OGED)