

Valkyrie Field Development 49/16 ES Web Comments

ES Title: Valkyrie Development in Block 49/16
Operator: ConocoPhillips (U.K.) Limited
ES Report No: D/1947/2003
ES Date: September 2003
Block Nos: 49/16
Development Type: Gas Field Development

Synopsis:

The project involves the development of the Valkyrie Field in Block 49/16. The proposed development will consist of drilling a single extended reach well into the Valkyrie reservoir from the existing Vampire platform. The well is planned to be drilled during February/March 2004 with first production during the third quarter of 2004. Field life is expected to be approximately three years.

The well will be drilled and completed using a jack-up rig positioned alongside the Vampire platform. There may be a requirement for rig stabilisation, in which case up to 3000 tonnes of rock will be dumped. The well will be drilled using water-based mud (WBM) and approximately 2,256 tonnes of cuttings will be produced and discharged along with the mud at the drilling location. Once drilling is completed a well clean-up will be undertaken during which an estimated 3.43 million m³ of gas plus some condensate will be flared over a period of 36 hours.

The ES includes an option selection process and presents a case for the development. One of the primary drivers appears to be the potential issues arising from developing a tie-back that would impact upon a sandbank.

Evidence of an extensive consultation process is presented and any comments or concerns arising from this process are clearly addressed within the ES.

A detailed risk assessment has been undertaken and the following significant risks are addressed within the ES:

- Rig stabilisation,
- Discharge of WBM and cuttings to the seabed,
- Well clean-up,
- Blow-out of gas and condensate,
- Spillages of fuel,
- Large collision with gross loss of fuel.

Of those risks identified, of particular concern were the discharge of water-based mud:

The discharge of water-based mud may impact the nearby sandbanks. However, the results of drill cuttings modelling undertaken specifically for environmental impact assessment, suggests that the discharge of water-based mud from the drill site will not significantly impact on the sandbank.

Mitigation measures are in place to ensure that impacts are kept to a minimum and details of the management systems in place were presented.

Both CEFAS and the JNCC have reviewed the ES and neither consultee had substantial comments.

Recommendation

Based on the information presented in the environmental statement, it is recommended that project consent should be given.