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

Freya Appraisal Well

The Freya Appraisal well is located approximately 40Km West of Shetland in block 206/10 in the Atlantic Margin, in water depths of approximately 150m. The nearest international boundary is the UK/Faroes Median line, which lies just approximately 100Km to the west. The anticipated hydrocarbon reserve from Freya is heavy oil.

Faroe Petroleum intend to drill a single deviated appraisal well using semi submersible anchored jack-up rig, with drilling being undertaken over a 41 day period, including clean-up and contingent well testing. The well, which is scheduled for August/September 2007, will be drilled using seawater and bentonite sweeps for the top two sections (36" & 17.5") with either water based muds (WBM) or low toxicity oil based mud (LTOBM) being used for the 8.5" section. 474 tonnes of cuttings will be generated from the top two sections, with 171 tonnes of cuttings discharged to sea surface if WBM is used. Should LTOBM be used for the 8.5" section then the 171 tonnes of cuttings will be contained and shipped to shore for treatment and/or disposal. If the well is required to be tested then the well will be flared for a maximum of 36 hrs with a maximum of 461 tonnes of oil and 30.2 tonnes of gas flared, resulting in 1,800 tonnes of CO² generated from the well cleanup and testing. It is likely that the well will be suspended with a view to returning at a future date to sidetrack the well and complete as a horizontal production well. If the well does not encounter movable oil, the well will be plugged and abandoned.

The ES identified the following potential areas of impact arising from the drilling of the proposed appraisal well which required further consideration:- Drilling discharges, noise generation, oil & chemical spills, physical presence and cumulative & transboundary impacts. However these were considered further and it was concluded that whilst there would be some temporary moderate environmental impact in the direct vicinity of the well and anchor chains, this was unlikely to result in any significant adverse, long term

impacts.

Habitat Issues/ Sensitivities

Patches of cobbles and gravelly sediment lie within the anchor spread of the proposed well. However further consultation with JNCC confirmed that they did not believe that due to the nature and extent of cobble area that this was likely to be designated as a "stony reef" under Annex 1 of the Habitats Directive.

Conclusions

Following consultation, we are satisfied that the project is unlikely to have a significant environmental impact and, in particular, that it will not have a significant adverse effect on the marine environment in general or on any protected sites or species covered by the "Habitats Regulations".

Recommendation

It is recommended that well consent be given for the Freya appraisal well.

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