

**Hydrocarbon Resources Limited  
Rhyl Development  
Environmental Statement Summary**

<b>Title:</b>	Rhyl Development
<b>Operator:</b>	Hydrocarbon Resources Limited
<b>Consultants:</b>	RPS Energy HSE & Risk Management
<b>Report No:</b>	D/4122/2011
<b>Submission Date:</b>	August 2011
<b>Quad/Block No:</b>	113/27b
<b>Project Type:</b>	Single production subsea tie-back
<b>Reviewer:</b>	Dr Sarah Dacre
<b>Date:</b>	28 <sup>th</sup> March 2012

### **Project Description**

The Rhyl development will consist of a single production subsea well connecting to a manifold in Block 113/27b. The manifold will be tied-back to the North Morecambe Drilling and Production Platform (DPPA) via a 12.7km, 12" flexible export flowline and control umbilical. From the DPPA, gas from Rhyl will be exported onshore to the North Morecambe gas terminal via the existing export line. The Rhyl development will target gas with limited condensate. The highest gas and condensate production will be at 40 MMscf/d and 120Bbl/d respectively (monthly average) in the first year.

Commencement of works is planned between March 2012 and June 2012.

### **Key Environmental Sensitivities**

The EIA identified the following environmental sensitivities:

- Fish Stocks: The area is within spawning grounds for cod (January to April), whiting (February to June), sole (March to May), sprat (May to August) and *Nephrops* (all year round). Nursery grounds for plaice, herring and haddock are also located within the project area.
- Seabirds: Seabird vulnerability is high in March, April, September, November and December..
- Annex I Habitats: There was no evidence of Annex I Habitats in the vicinity of the proposed operations.
- Annex II Species: Harbour porpoise and grey seal are infrequently observed in the vicinity of the project area.
- Other Users of the Sea:
  - British Telecom-MT1 Groundle to Silecroft cable lies 130 metres to the south of the Rhyl well location at its closest approach.
  - The Rhyl development well lies 900m to the west of the Walney 2 offshore windfarm. The flowline and manifold are also in close proximity.

### **Key Potential Environmental Impacts**

The EIA identified the following potential impacts and related mitigation:

- **Physical interference:** With regard to fishing and shipping activity, appropriate mitigation measures will be put in place. e.g. 500m exclusion zone. Other measures include Kingfisher Bulletins, Notices to Mariners and liaison with fishermen. Impacts on fisheries and navigation are not considered to be significant.

Pipeline crossing agreements have been put in place with respect to the British Telecom-MT1 Groundle to Silecroft cable.

HRL and DONG Energy will undergo continuous engagement concerning their activities. Agreements were finalised between both parties in order that activities could be progressed with the minimum of interference.

- **Noise: Piling operations will have** a typical source level of 140dB re 1mPa@1m and is considered to be the most significant noise source associated with the project. Background noise levels (102dB) will be reached within a kilometre of the source. Due to the localised and temporary nature of the piling operations and low cetacean density at the time of operations, noise impacts are not considered to be significant.
- **Marine discharges:** All chemicals used for the pipeline commissioning and processing operations are selected by HRL on the basis of technical compatibility and environmental performance and the marine environment is sufficiently dynamic to facilitate rapid dispersion. A more detailed risk assessment of the the proposed chemical use and discharge relating to the operations will be undertaken in the subsequent applications for chemical permits.
- **Seabed disturbance and coastal processes:** The pipeline and manifold installation operations will directly impact the seabed, the most significant being through the trenching and backfill operations. The species composition of the benthic communities within the area have shown to be relatively resilient to the effects of sediment mobilisation and would recover rapidly from seabed disturbance.
- **Accidental events:** A number of control measures will be in place to minimise the risk of accidental events. HRL will develop Oil Spill Emergency Plans (OPEP) and Emergency Procedure Plans. OSIS modelling of the worse-case condensate and diesel spills have been undertaken and included in the EIA.
- **Cumulative impacts:** The proposed operations are located in the vicinity of the Walney and Walney Extension Offshore Windfarm. HRL and DONG Energy will undergo continuous engagement concerning their activities. Agreements were finalised between both parties and it is unlikely that the projects will have a significant effect in-combination with each other in terms of activity scheduling.
- **Transboundary Impacts:** No transboundary impacts are likely as a result of this project.

### Consultation

Comments were received from the Marine Management Organisation (MMO), Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (CEFAS), the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC), Natural England (NE), Environment Agency (EA), Marine Coastguard Agency (MCA), Trinity House and the Ministry of Defence (MOD).

There were no objections to the proposed development.

**Public Notice:** Public notice of the ES elicited representations from Walney (UK) Offshore Windfarms Limited (WOWL) and DONG Energy Walney Extension (UK) Limited (DEWE). Hydrocarbon Resources Limited, WOWL, DEWE and the Department corresponded throughout the ES process and representations from WOWL and DEWE were withdrawn. There were no sustainable environmental objections to the proposed development.

**Additional Information**

Hydrocarbon Resources Limited have been requested to provide any additional information in subsequent environmental approvals relating to the development.

**Conclusion**

On the basis of the information presented within the ES and the advice received from consultees, DECC OED is content that there are no environmental or navigational objections to approval of the ES.

**Recommendation**

**It is recommended that the ES should be approved.**

**Approved**

.....*Sarah Pritchard*.....

**Sarah Pritchard- Head of Environmental Operations**

**Date 30/03/2012**