

Port Meridian Project
Addendum 2 – Communications Cable
Comments On Environmental Statement

To: Sarah Pritchard
Pritchard

Signature: *Sarah*

From: Carol Newbigging

Date: 29 April 2010

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ES Title:	Port Meridian Project (Addendum 2)
Operator:	Port Meridian Energy Limited (PMEL)
Consultants:	RPS Energy
ES Report Nos:	D/4010/2008
ES Date:	December 2009
Block Nos:	From landfall on Barrow-on-Furness to block 110/7b
Development Type:	Fibre-optic communications cable (FOC)

Synopsis:

The original development proposal for Port Meridian comprised of two Submerged Turret Loading (STL) buoy unloading systems connected to a 36 inch gas pipeline system. The ES for the original development was signed off on the 15th June 2009. PMEL has decided to seek approval to permanently moor a Floating Storage and Regasification Unit (FSRU) at STL buoy 1 rather than use the deepwater port to host Shuttle and Regasification Vessels (SRVs). PMEL has submitted a separate Addendum Report (1) to address the environmental impacts from the installation of the STL Buoy.

Given the more permanent nature of the FSRU, PMEL intend to install a more permanent communication link between the land based facilities and the FSRU, in the form of a fibre-optic communications cable (FOC), which would run parallel to the export pipeline route. PMEL has submitted a separate Addendum Report to the MFA which addresses the environmental impacts from the installation of the FOC between the FSRU and landfall on the seaward side of Walney Island.

The FSRU will be located around 35km offshore of the coastline of Fylde, NW England and south-west of Barrow-in-Furness.

Disturbance to the seabed was assessed in the original Port Meridian Development ES and was not found to have a significant effect. Additional disturbance to the seabed will occur from the installation of the FOC. The vessels used for installation operations will be dynamically positioned vessels therefore no additional areas of seabed will be disturbed by anchors. After the MFA queried the need for a working corridor of 100m offshore to 130m nearshore, PMEL re-assessed the working corridor requirements for the FOC and pipeline and confirmed that the actual area disturbed by the proposed installation activities will now be less than anticipated in the Addendum i.e. 70-80m offshore to 40m nearshore.

The pipeline and umbilical will be laid on the seabed using reeled installation

techniques. The pipeline will be trenched and buried for on-bottom stability where concrete coating is not sufficient. Trenching is judged to be sufficient for providing adequate protection against trawl gear snagging both to the pipeline and the FOC. It has been proposed that the FOC will be trenched along its entire length.

Installation of the offshore pipeline and the 7km section of pipe (referred to as the spurline) connecting the Y-piece to PLEM2, is anticipated to be undertaken in summer 2012.

As a result of an environmental risk assessment there were the following potentially significant aspects identified and addressed within the ES:

- Physical presence
- Noise and vibration
- Atmospheric Emissions
- Marine Discharges
- Solid Waste
- Accidental spills

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

Recommendation: Based on the information in the Environmental Statement, it is recommended that project consent be given.

Consultees:

JNCC & Natural England:

No objections subject to the following conditions being placed on the project:

- The Port Meridian development adheres to the timings outlined in the Environmental Statement for the installation of the pipelines i.e the operations will occur within the summer months and the common scoter will not be present. If the project timings change from those indicated in the ES addendum then JNCC would advise DECC to undertake an Appropriate Assessment.
- As the STL mooring anchors will be installed using driven/grouted pile techniques, JNCC advise that a watch is conducted prior to piling commencing as advocated in the JNCC piling protocol.
- A vessel management plan should be agreed so that maintenance vessels are routed north and west of key scoter areas when the birds are present.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Concrete mattresses are only used where absolutely necessary.
<u>Marine and Coastguard Agency</u>	No objections. Have recommended the use of a dedicated guard vessel for this operation although they state it may be appropriate for PMEL to consider its use only where deemed practical, economical and improving safety both for the project and 3rd parties. MCA also state that it may be appropriate for some of the guard ship duties to be delegated to another vessel on site subject to operational requirements.
<u>Ministry of Defence</u>	No objections provided that the proposal does not deviate from the current submission.
<u>Marine & Fisheries Agency</u>	No objections.
<u>CEFAS Environmental</u>	No objections. Would like to emphasise the importance of keeping the working corridors as small as possible, including the distance between the pipeline and the FOC.
<u>CEFAS Chemicals</u>	No objections.
<u>Environment Agency</u>	No objections.
<u>Trinity House</u>	No objections. Have advised that consideration should be given to the use of a dedicated guard vessel to be provided by PMEL to protect both the operations themselves and shipping in the area whilst the cable laying is taking place. This would be in the area where the cable crosses the shipping routes to and from Heysham between the east of the Morecambe buoy and the south east of the southern corner of the Barrow Offshore Wind Farm.

Commitments made by PMEL

- If during detailed design it is decided that the FOC trench will be jetted, the project will review the various techniques/equipment available and base their selection upon the option that results in the least suspension of jetted sediment.
- Working corridors will be minimised.
- If possible, PMEL will commit to scheduling the installation of the nearshore FOC outside of the months of July to October in order to avoid the period when most adult salmon are moving from open sea to the estuaries.
- PMEL has timed installation of the offshore section of the gas pipeline and FOC to occur in the summer of 2012, which will coincide with a period when there are low numbers of common scoter within Liverpool Bay. If weather or other construction delays cause an unavoidable

ingress past September, installation activities in the area will not take place after October.