

Exploration Well 11/24 ES Web Comments

ES Title: **Exploration Well 11/24**
Operator: **Talisman**
ES Report No: **W/469/1998**
ES Date: **January 1999**
Block Nos: **11/24**

Background:

An ES was submitted for the drilling of an exploration well 11/24 by Talisman Energy in December 1998 with consent to drill granted in March 1999. In the event, Talisman failed to drill the well partly due to low oil price but also because at the time they did not have full operatorship of the Block. Talisman have now obtained full operatorship of the block and plan to start drilling in the first quarter of 2000, with the well to be spudded by 15th March at the latest – prior to the expiry of the current consent.

Drilling:

The proposed drilling period now extends from January to July 2000; the most likely period during which drilling will take place is March to June.

Environmental Sensitivities and Impacts:

The well is planned to be drilled earlier (January –July) than stated in the original ES (April-August). There is no change as far as environmental sensitivities or the impacts associated with the drilling of the well.

Consultees:

JNCC

JNCC submitted a letter outlining the position re the Habitats Directive. Additionally 7 points were communicated to Talisman by SNH – Timing, cetaceans, use of sandbags, atmospheric, well testing, standby vessel and drilling mud. The single most important issue, as confirmed by SNH is with regard to the timing of the project. SNH are very keen that the drilling starts as soon as possible to minimise the impacts on the internationally important breeding seabirds in the area. Talisman has responded to this matter by stating that they plan to drill by early March 2000 at the latest.

FRS

FRS has no objections.

Recommendation:

Based on the information presented within the ES and the addendum it is recommended that approval should be given.