



Department for
Business, Energy
& Industrial Strategy

Premier Oil UK Limited

Laverda Field Development
Environmental Statement Summary

To: Jonathan Ward
From: Nicola Abrams
Date: 08 July 2019

ES Title:	Laverda Field Development Environmental Statement
Developer:	Premier Oil UK Limited
Consultants:	Genesis Oil and Gas Consultants Ltd.
OGA Field Group:	Central North Sea
ES Report No:	D/4230/2018
ES Submission Date:	December 2018
Block No:	28/04a and 28/09
Development Type:	Oil and Gas Development

Project Description

The Laverda field is located in Block 28/09 in the central North Sea, approximately 136 kilometres (km) southeast of the nearest UK coastline at Aberdeen, approximately 106 km from the UK/Norway median line and in a water depth of approximately 85 metres (m).

Premier Oil UK Limited (Premier) proposes to develop the Laverda field using a single production well and an 8" production flowline and 3" gas lift flowline tied-back to the existing Catcher FPSO, which already serves the Catcher, Burgman and Varadero fields. The new 2.4 km flowline system will be installed on the seabed and protected with rock.

First oil is scheduled for Q1 2021, with anticipated peak production of approximately 600 tonnes of oil per day and 39,000 m³ of gas per day in 2021. As oil production will exceed the 500 tonnes per day EIA Directive production threshold, an Environmental Statement (ES) was required under the Offshore Petroleum Production and Pipelines (Assessment of Environmental Effects) Regulations 1999 (as amended).

Key Environmental Impacts

The ES identified and discussed the following as having the potential to result in an environmental impact:

- Physical Presence;
- Seabed disturbance;
- Discharges to sea;
- Atmospheric emissions;
- Underwater Noise; and
- Accidental events

Key Environmental Sensitivities

The ES identified the following environmental sensitivities:

- Seabed features. The project is located within an area comprising offshore circalittoral sand with infaunal communities typical of the moderate to low energy deep-water soft sediments of the CNS. The placement of the drilling rig and introduction of rock protection for the pipeline have the potential to impact features of potential conservation interest. However, the seabed features are widespread in the area and pipeline route optimisation has been conducted to minimise adverse effects. Impacts are therefore considered to be medium and not significant.
- Fish: The area is a recognised spawning area for cod, lemon sole, Norway pout, mackerel and sandeels, and a nursery area for haddock, Norway pout and sandeels. However, the spawning and nursery areas are extensive and any potential impact would be localised and temporary. The proposals are therefore unlikely to have any significant impact on these species.
- Seabirds: Seabird sensitivity in the vicinity of the Laverda field is considered low throughout the year but is high in adjacent Blocks 28/14 and 28/15 in September and very high in those Blocks in October. It is considered that sufficient mitigation measures are in place to prevent accidental spills that could have a significant impact on seabirds, and Premier will have an approved Oil Pollution Emergency Plan (OPEP) in place before offshore operations are undertaken.
- Protected habitats: The Laverda field and pipeline is not located within any protected site. The nearest designated site is the East of Gannet and Montrose Fields NCMPA which is located approximately 34 km from the Laverda location.
- Protected species: Harbour porpoise, white-beaked dolphin, Atlantic white-sided dolphin and minke whale have all been recorded in the vicinity of the Laverda field. The main sources of noise will be from vessel use, including pipelay, and drilling operations and any impacts would be localised and short-term. It is concluded that the proposals are unlikely to result in significant disturbance.
- Other users of the sea: The project is located within ICES rectangles 42F0. Fishing effort in the area is low and the majority of the effort is demersal trawling. Shipping density in the area is moderate. Appropriate navigational controls will be put in place and it is not anticipated that the proposed operations will have any significant impact on other users of the sea.
- Heritage interests: There are three charted shipwrecks and possibly an additional wreck in the vicinity of the project, the nearest being 4.4 km away. It is not anticipated that the operations will impact on any wreck or potential wreck sites.
- In-combination, cumulative and transboundary effects: No significant in-combination, cumulative or transboundary effects are anticipated.

Key Mitigation Measures (including environmental or monitoring conditions)

All activities will be undertaken in line with commitments detailed in the ES and best industry practice.

Consultation

Comments were sought from Marine Scotland (MS), the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC), the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA), and the Ministry of Defence (MOD). There were no objections to the proposals, but it was requested that standard environmental and navigational conditions should be included in the relevant subsidiary approvals.

The Environmental Statement was also subject to Public Notice, but no comments were received.

Further Information

Premier was requested to clarify a number of issues raised by the consultees or during the OPRED review. Premier provided the requested information on 15 April 2019 and there are no outstanding issues.

Determination

Following review of the ES, the responses received from consultees and the additional information provided by Premier, OPRED is satisfied that the project will not have a significant adverse impact on the receiving environment or the living resources it supports, or on any protected habitats or species or other users of the sea.

Recommendation

OPRED is content that there are no grounds for objections to the proposals and agrees to the OGA granting the necessary consent for the proposed development. This agreement is not subject to the inclusion of any specific environmental conditions.

Jonathan Ward

08/07/2019

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Jonathan Ward
Director, Environmental Operations
BEIS OPRED

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Date