



Offshore Petroleum Regulator
for Environment & Decommissioning



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Apache North Sea Limited

Bacchus Production Increase

Environmental Statement Summary

To: Jonathan Ward

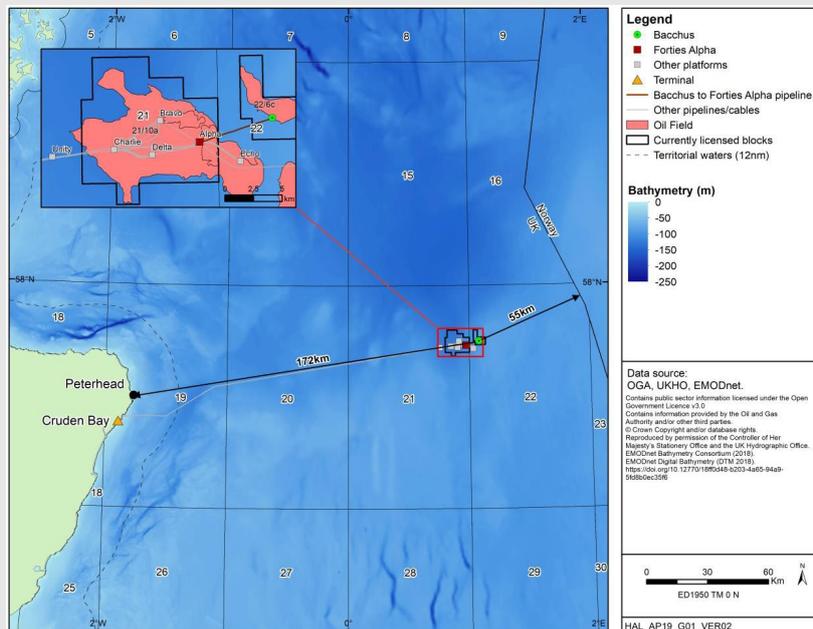
From: Carrie Shaw

Date: 12th November 2020

ES Title:	Bacchus Production Increase
Developer:	Apache North Sea Limited
Consultants:	Apache North Sea Limited
OGA Field Group:	CNS
ES Report No:	D/4256/2020
ES Submission Date:	15 July 2020
Block No:	22/6
Development Type:	Production Increase

Project Description

The Bacchus Field is located in Block 22/6c. Bacchus is located 172 km from the nearest UK landfall (Peterhead) and 55 km from the UK/Norwegian median line. The water depth is approximately 89 m.





The development of the Bacchus field will consist of a single well (Bacchus south) to be tied-back via a pipeline system, consisting of a 100 m flexible production line, and a 160 m umbilical, to the existing Bacchus manifold. Fluids will be transported from the Bacchus manifold through the existing Bacchus production pipeline to the Forties Alpha platform (Block 21/10) for processing. The anticipated life of the project is twelve years.

Production forecasts indicate the Bacchus South infill well production will exceed that already consented beyond the incremental threshold of 500 tonnes of oil per day. An Environmental Statement (ES) was therefore required under the Offshore Pipelines (Assessment of Environmental Effects) Regulations 1999 (as amended).

Key Environmental Impacts

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

- Physical presence and disturbance
- Discharges to sea
- Underwater noise
- Atmospheric emissions; and
- Accidental events

Key Environmental Sensitivities

The ES identified the following environmental sensitivities:

- Fish: The area overlaps with spawning grounds of cod, lemon sole, mackerel, Norway pout and sandeel. The area also supports nursery areas several species including cod, hake, ling, herring, mackerel, Norway pout, Nephrops, plaice, sprat, spotted ray, Spurdog, anglerfish and whiting.
- Seabirds: Seabird sensitivity in Blocks 21/10 and 22/6 and neighbouring blocks is low, for those months with data, with the exception of a small number of adjacent block-months, which are scored as medium. The development is 172 km from the nearest UK Coast and is therefore remote from coastal water bird sites and seabird breeding colonies, and beyond the mean foraging range of most seabird species during the breeding season.
- Protected habitats: The coasts of north-east Scotland have a variety of important habitats and species protected under international, national and local designations; however, these are at least 160 km from the Bacchus Field. These sites have year round importance. The closest Natura 2000 site is the Scanner Pockmark SAC, which is located 58 km to the north of Bacchus. The nearest MPAs are the East of Gannet and Montrose Fields, located 33 km to the south, and the Norwegian Boundary Sediment Plain, located 44 km to the east.
- Protected species: Harbour porpoise are frequently sighted throughout the central North Sea area. White-beaked dolphins, although generally less abundant, are also sighted in the area throughout the year, and low numbers of Atlantic white-sided



dolphins have been recorded in the area. During summer months, minke whales are widely distributed throughout the central and northern North Sea. The Moray Firth and the coast of eastern Scotland has the only resident population of bottlenose dolphins in the North Sea; however, this is primarily a coastal species and thus unlikely to be present frequently in the Bacchus and Forties area. Harbour and grey seals may occur in the area, but in low numbers.

- Other users of the sea: There is a very low to low shipping density in the Bacchus area throughout the year, although moderate levels occur within the nearby Forties Field. Fishing effort is low throughout the year, with no well-defined seasonal pattern. Other energy infrastructure (~2.7 km), cables (~3.5 km) and military training areas (~35 km) are all some distance from the Bacchus Field.
- In-combination, cumulative and transboundary effects: No significant in-combination, cumulative or transboundary effects are anticipated as a result of the proposals.

Consultation

The Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC), Marine Scotland Science (MSS), The Northern Lighthouse board (NLB), Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA), and the Ministry of Defence (MoD), were consulted on the proposals. All the consultees submitted responses and none of the consultees had objections. The ES was also subject to public notice: No representations were received.

Further Information

Further information was requested from Apache North Sea Limited on 14th September 2020 and 6th October 2020. Information addressing these comments was received on 21st September 2020 and 12th October 2020. The further information was considered and it was determined that this did not change the potential environmental impacts, or the assessment of significance described in the Environmental Statement. It was therefore concluded that this information did not engage regulation 10(2) requirements for further public notice.

Key Mitigation Measures (including environmental or monitoring conditions)

No significant adverse impacts were identified that would warrant specific mitigation measures or monitoring conditions. All of the proposed activities will be undertaken in line with the mitigation measures and commitments detailed in the ES, conditions attached to existing environmental approvals and best industry practice.

Decision

Following its review of the ES and the comments received from consultees, OPRED is satisfied that this 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 user of the sea. In respect of the potential environmental impacts, the ES confirmed:

- Physical presence and disturbance: Disturbance from the positioning of a mobile rig and installation of the pipelines, jumpers, spools and related protection materials, will result in some temporary physical disturbance to the seabed. The nature and inferred general resilience of the seabed, habitat and species, leads to the conclusion that effects at the seabed would not be significant. Benthic species sensitive to the



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physical presence of the rig and vessels are either not present or are in low abundance. Interactions with other users of the area are considered to be short lived during drilling operations and negligible throughout the life of the field. It is therefore concluded that there will be no significant effects on the surrounding environment.

- Discharges to Sea: Drilling (including well clean-up) and rig discharges from the proposed Bacchus South well are predicted to be localised and of relatively short duration. There will be a minor increase in production chemical usage, and discharge, and the produced water discharged. It is therefore concluded that this will not result in significant effects on the surrounding environment.
- Underwater noise: Considering the characteristics of all the relevant noise sources, the evidence for limited potential of short-term behavioural disturbance among the most sensitive receptors (harbour porpoise), the open nature of the habitat, the generally low densities of marine mammals, diving birds and fishing activity, it is concluded that noise from the proposed activities will not result in significant effects on the surrounding environment.
- Atmospheric Emissions: The emissions from the drilling operations are expected to represent a very small percentage of UK emissions. During production operations, the Bacchus gas will be used as a fuel gas. This will minimise any additional flaring due to the production increase. It is concluded that there will be no significant effects on the surrounding environment.
- Accidental Events: Apache will have in place a range of response and mitigation measures to address the risks of accidental events, including an appropriate Oil Pollution Emergency Plan (OPEP). Considering this, the likelihood of an accidental event is low. It is therefore concluded that there will be no significant effects on the surrounding environment.

Noting the above, and that the consultees did not raise any objections to the proposals, and no representations were received in response to the public notice, OPRED is satisfied that there are no grounds for objecting to the proposals and that the ES should be approved. On behalf of the Secretary of State, OPRED has therefore given its agreement to the grant of the necessary consents by the OGA.

Jonathan Ward

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Jonathan Ward
BEIS OPRED

.....12 November 2020.....
Date