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Offshore Petroleum Regulator  
for Environment & Decommissioning

SHELL U.K. LIMITED  
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LONDON  
SE1 7NA

Registered No.: 00140141

Date: 10th February 2021

Department for Business, Energy  
& Industrial Strategy

AB1 Building  
Crimon Place  
Aberdeen  
AB10 1BJ

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[www.gov.uk/beis](http://www.gov.uk/beis)  
[bst@beis.gov.uk](mailto:bst@beis.gov.uk)

Dear Sir / Madam

**THE OFFSHORE OIL AND GAS EXPLORATION, PRODUCTION, UNLOADING  
AND STORAGE (ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT) REGULATIONS  
2020  
LEMAN-BACTON MEG PIPELINE REPAIR - PIPELINE PL121**

A screening direction for the project detailed in your application, reference PL/2064/0 (Version 3), dated 10th February 2021 has been issued under regulation 6 of the above Regulations. The screening direction notice, and any relevant conditions and comments are attached. A copy of this screening direction will be forwarded to the application consultees, the Oil and Gas Authority and published on the gov.uk website.

If you have any queries in relation to this screening direction or the attachments, please do not hesitate to contact [REDACTED] on [REDACTED] or email the Environmental Management Team at [bst@beis.gov.uk](mailto:bst@beis.gov.uk).

Yours faithfully



**THE OFFSHORE OIL AND GAS EXPLORATION, PRODUCTION, UNLOADING  
AND STORAGE (ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT) REGULATIONS  
2020**

**SCREENING DIRECTION CONFIRMING THAT AN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT  
ASSESSMENT IS NOT REQUIRED**

**LEMAN-BACTON MEG PIPELINE REPAIR - PIPELINE PL121**

**PL/2064/0 (Version 3)**

Whereas SHELL U.K. LIMITED has made an application dated 10th February 2021, under The Offshore Oil and Gas Exploration, Production, Unloading and Storage (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2020, and whereas the Secretary of State has considered the application and is satisfied that the project is not likely to have a significant effect on the environment; in exercise of the powers available under regulation 6, the Secretary of State hereby directs that the application for consent in respect of the project need not be accompanied by an Environmental Impact Assessment, provided that the project is carried out as described in the application for the screening direction and in accordance with the conditions specified in the attached schedule.

In giving a screening direction under regulation 6 of the above Regulations, the Secretary of State accordingly gives his agreement to the Oil and Gas Authority to the grant of consent for the project as detailed in the application.

Effective Date: 10th February 2021



## **THE OFFSHORE OIL AND GAS EXPLORATION, PRODUCTION, UNLOADING AND STORAGE (ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT) REGULATIONS 2020**

### **SCHEDULE OF SCREENING DIRECTION CONDITIONS**

The grant of this screening direction is conditional upon the screening direction holder complying with the following conditions.

#### **1 Screening direction validity**

The screening direction shall be valid from 10 February 2021 until 31 March 2021.

#### **2 Commencement and completion of the project**

The holder of the screening direction must confirm the dates of commencement and completion of the project covered by the screening direction. Notification should be sent by email to the Environmental Management Team Mailbox: [bst@beis.gov.uk](mailto:bst@beis.gov.uk)

#### **3 Nature of stabilisation or protection materials**

Rock deposits

160 tonnes of clean, inert rock material, containing minimal fines, (The quantity of rock deposited should be the minimum required to provide the necessary stabilisation or protection, and any surplus rock must be returned to land).

Grout bags deposits

20 tonnes of grout contained within 25 kilogramme capacity biodegradable bags. (The number of bags deposited should be the minimum required to provide the necessary protection, and any surplus bags must be returned to land).

#### **4 Location of pipeline and stabilisation or protection materials**

LAT: 53d 01' 14.11" North

LONG: 01d 44' 45.08" East

Datum - WGS84

#### **5 Prevention of pollution**

The holder of the screening direction must ensure that appropriate measures are taken to minimise discharges, emissions and waste, in particular through the appropriate use of technology; and to ensure that necessary measures are taken to prevent incidents affecting the environment or, where they occur, to limit their



consequences in relation to the environment.

## **6 Inspections**

Should the Department consider it necessary or expedient for an inspector appointed by the Secretary of State to investigate whether the conditions of the screening direction are being complied with, the holder of the screening direction shall afford the inspector with such facilities and assistance as the inspector considers necessary to exercise the powers conferred by the regulations. The holder of the screening direction shall additionally ensure that copies (electronic or paper) of the screening direction and any other relevant documents are available for inspection by the inspector at:

- a) the premises of the holder of the screening direction; and
- b) the facilities undertaking the project covered by the screening direction.

## **7 Monitoring**

The results of any pre or post-placement surveys carried out to confirm the necessity for the deposits covered by the screening direction and/or to confirm the accurate positioning of the stabilisation or protection materials, should be forwarded to the Department following completion of the surveys

## **8 Check monitoring**

Should the Department consider it necessary or expedient to undertake an independent monitoring programme to assess the impact of the project covered by the screening direction, the screening direction holder shall afford the Department with such facilities and assistance as the Department considers necessary to undertake the work.

## **9 Atmospheric emissions returns**

Following completion of the project covered by the screening direction, the holder of the screening direction shall report all relevant atmospheric emissions, such as combustion emissions, using the appropriate Environmental Emissions Monitoring System (EEMS) reporting forms.

## **10 Deposit returns**

The holder of the screening direction shall submit a report to the Department following completion of the deposit covered by the screening direction, confirming the quantity of materials deposited and the estimated area of impact, using the appropriate Environmental Emissions Monitoring System (EEMS) reporting form. Where no deposits are made, a 'nil' return is required.

## **11 Unauthorised deposits**



Following completion of the project covered by the screening direction, the holder of the screening direction shall recover any materials accidentally or temporarily deposited on the seabed, such as debris, temporary containers, structures or deposits, or scientific instruments, and shall return the materials to land. If it is not possible to recover any of these deposits, full details of the materials remaining on the seabed must be reported to the Department in accordance with the requirements of Petroleum Operations Notice No.2 (PON2).

## **12 Screening direction variation**

In the event that the holder of the screening direction proposes changes to any of the particulars detailed in the application for a screening direction, the holder must notify the Department immediately and submit an application for a post screening direction amendment. The post screening direction must be in place prior to the amended proposals taking effect.



## COMMENTS ON THE APPLICATION FOR SCREENING DIRECTION

### Section 1

The attention of screening direction holders is drawn to the following provisions regarding The Offshore Oil and Gas Exploration, Production, Unloading and Storage (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2020.

1) You are deemed to have satisfied yourself that there are no barriers, legal or otherwise, to the carrying out of the project covered by the screening direction. The issue of a screening direction does not absolve the screening direction holder from obtaining such authorisations, consents etc that may be required under any other legislation.

2) The Department would draw your attention to the following comments:

No comments.

3) All communications relating to the screening direction should be addressed to:

#### **Out-of-hours emergency screening direction variations:**

Telephone Met Office out-of-hours service (0330 135 0010) and ask to be connected to the Department's On-call Response Officer (Offshore Environmental Inspectorate).

#### **Routine communications**

bst@beis.gov.uk

or

Offshore Petroleum Regulator for Environment & Decommissioning  
Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy  
AB1 Building  
Crimon Place  
Aberdeen  
AB10 1BJ

Tel [REDACTED]  
Fax



## **SCHEDULE OF SCREENING DIRECTION DECISION REASONS**

The Secretary of State has decided that, based on the information provided, the project is not likely to have a significant effect on the environment. The main reasons for this decision are:

### **1) Decision reasons**

#### **Characteristics of the project:**

Repair works on a pipeline carrying Mono Ethylene Glycol from Bacton to Leman Alpha platform are required. The works involve repairing the damaged pipeline by (a) replacing a 90 m section of the buried pipeline with three 30 m pipeline sections, (b) pressure testing the repair for integrity and carrying out visual observations to confirm the connections are fully sealed and adequate, and (c) placement of grout bags and loose rock will be used to protect the newly installed pipeline spools from seabed movement and impact from fishing gear. In addition, if the length or spools required is less than anticipated above, protection of an exposed area of the adjacent export pipeline which is 75 m seaward of the replacement works will also be carried out using any unused protective grout bags and rock from the main repair works. All works are expected to take 10 days to complete during February and March, using a work vessel and a guard vessel. The project is not at risk from natural disasters, or unplanned major accident scenarios.

No cumulative interactions are foreseen with any other existing or approved projects. The nearest oil and gas installation is less than 5 kilometres (km) from the pipeline location. The pipeline is sited on an area of seabed comprised of fine rippled sand. There is no risk to human health.

#### **Location of the project:**

The project is located 26 km east from the Norfolk coastline in England and 103 km west of the UK/Netherlands median line, in an area where water depth is approximately 19 m and the seabed type is characterised as circalittoral fine sand. The predominant current in the location south-easterly with wave heights of 2 to 2.5 m. The project location is within the Southern North Sea protected area, designated for the protection of harbour porpoise. Further, the location is within the Haisborough, Hammond and Winterton protected site, designated for the protection of sandbanks and reefs.

Site-specific surveys identified the seabed as comprising rippled sand with areas of rock cover on the existing pipeline. The survey results revealed a dense community of fauna in both sand and rock-introduced areas. Occasional aggregations of *Sabellaria spinulosa* were observed, however the densities at which they were noted and their presence within rock-introduced habitat meant that they would not be recognised as a protected reef-forming habitat aggregation. The majority of the recognised reef areas of the site are to the south west of the protected site boundary,



which is distant from the location of the works. The project works are located within the footprint of one of the sandbanks protected by the site boundary.

The project works and timing does not take place at any peak spawning or high intensity spawning periods for fish/shellfish. Sightings of harbour porpoise have not been recorded during the period for which the project works are planned. The project area is not within a commonly fished ground and fishing effort is historically very low. The surrounding area comprises many other oil and gas infrastructure, it is not within a military activity zone, and the closest renewable wind farm is located more than 30 km to the northwest.

### **Type and characteristics of the potential impact:**

Potential impacts to the environment from the activities associated with the project were assessed, with particular focus on the predominant impacts resulting from physical presence, underwater noise, atmospheric emissions, and seabed disturbance.

The physical presence of the two vessels involved with the 10-day work programme will not have an exclusion area attributed to them and would be able to move away from location in an emergency. The project is located in a very low-level fishing area and so the impact to other users of the sea is not expected to be significant.

The only possible sources of noise from the project works are those from the vessels. The generation of underwater sound is not likely to breach levels that would result in permanent threshold shift to harbour porpoise. Levels of temporary threshold shift is also unlikely to be experienced during this project, with any disturbance by the temporary use of vessels expected to be insignificant. Vessel use has been restricted as much as possible. There is no significant impact expected to cetaceans or pinnipeds nor the status/ objectives of the Southern North Sea protected site.

Atmospheric emissions are likely from the combustion plant on the two vessels involved in the replacement pipeline works. Work plans have been optimised through planning to reduce reliance on supply materials to one vessel rather than two. Emissions attributed to the project when compared to the offshore industry as a whole are less than 0.1%. The impact is not considered significant.

The grout bags used to protect and support the newly installed spools will be covered further by rock. Precision in placement of protective rock will be ensured visually by diver support. The affected seabed area has been calculate based on the rock covering a 20 m corridor along the pipeline with disturbed sediment fall-out contained within an additional 10 m corridor. The total area of seabed impacted will be 0.0027 square km. The main impacts expected are from smothering and change of habitat. Given the absence of epi-faunal and in-faunal benthic organisms in the location of the works, the impacts are expected not to be significant and recolonisation is likely. Given the transient nature of spawning sandeels and the very small area of seabed to be impacted by the works, the impact to spawning sandeels is not expected to be significant.





The sandbank system within the protected site is not expected to be compromised as the small area affected by introduction of hard substrate will not affect the sediment transport and development of the wider sandbank system. The seabed disturbance will affect 0.0004% of the Haisborough, Hammond and Winterton protected site. The conservation objectives of the site will not be compromised by the project, given the expected recovery from seabed disturbance.

There are no expected transboundary impacts as a result of the works, and no cumulative impacts have been identified given the other known approved projects in the wider area.

Taking all the above determinations into account, the Secretary of State has concluded that the project is not likely to have a significant impact on the environment.

## **2) Mitigation of significant effects**

The following are features of the project or measures envisaged that the developer has proposed to avoid or prevent what might otherwise have been significant adverse effects on the environment:

Not applicable.