

**ConocoPhillips (U.K.) Limited
Boulton Field Production Consent Increase
Environmental Statement Summary**

To: Sarah Pritchard

From: Inger Soderstrom

Date: 12/05/2009

ES Title:	Boulton Field Production Consent Increase
Operator:	ConocoPhillips (U.K.) Limited
Consultants:	Rudall Blanchard Associates Limited
Field Group (DECC):	Aberdeen
ES Report No:	D/4030/2008
ES Date:	January 2009
Block Nos:	44/21a
Development Type:	Increase in production

Project Description

The Boulton Field is located in Block 44/21a in the Southern North Sea, approximately 145 km north north east of Cromer on the Norfolk coastline. It is located just within the proposed southern boundary of the draft special area of conservation (dSAC) of the Dogger Bank, approximately 20Km south of the 20m contour (South West Patch).

The proposed project comprises of:

- The increase in gas production resulting from the drilling of the Boulton B4 well which will result in an increase in the current production consent by more than the 500,000 m3/d threshold. It is expected production will increase by 23 Bscf/year in 2009, decreasing to an additional 3 Bscf/y by 2017.
- The existing Boulton BM platform (normally unmanned satellite platform) has existing slots through which the well will be drilled and there is only a minimal requirement for new equipment to be added to accommodate the increased production, e.g. production chokes, venture flow meter, flowline & manifold isolation vales. The Boulton Platform is controlled remotely from the Murdoch platform and as a consequence of declining production from other fields tied back to Murdoch, no modifications are anticipated at Murdoch to accommodate the increase in production.

Key Environmental Sensitivities

The EIA identified the following environmental sensitivities:

- Fish spawning area for mackerel, herring, plaice, sole, sprat and nephrops, with peak periods between January to July
- Fish Nursery for sprat, nephrops and whiting
- Fishing activity is generally low, although moderate in the southern most part of the Dogger Bank.
- Seabird vulnerability is very high in March, May and from October to December and high in January, February and April and between July and September. Vulnerability is

moderate in June.

- Cetacean numbers are low compared to areas of the Northern North Sea, but densities are high in June and July for Harbour Porpoise.
- Area of moderate shipping density.
- The Boulton Platform & Murdoch complex lies within the boundary of the Dogger Bank dSAC

Key Potential Environmental Impacts

The following potential impacts and mitigation were discussed in the EIA:

- Physical Disturbance – The proposed new well which will give rise to the increase in production will be drilled from an existing slot on the Boulton platform and will utilise existing infrastructure to transmit the gas to the Murdoch complex and onto Theddlethorpe Gas Terminal. There will be no seabed disturbance during the production phase associated with the increased profile.
- Atmospheric emissions – there will be no increased power demand and therefore no increased atmospheric emissions at the Murdoch Complex as a result of the increased production, due to spare capacity as a result of decreasing production from other wells tied back to Murdoch, together with no requirement to compress the gas from the new well due to the higher pressure resulting in free flow.
- Marine discharges – No increase is anticipated in the corrosion inhibitor currently injected into the production manifold and there will continue to be no discharge of corrosion inhibitor or any water from the Boulton Platform or Murdoch Complex.

Public Consultation: No comments were received as a result of the public consultation.

Consultee(s):

The statutory consultees for this project were JNCC and CEFAS. The following comments were made:

JNCC: Considered the ES contained sufficient information to make an assessment of the likely impact of the proposed increase in production at Boulton and are content for DECC to grant approval of the ES. However as the project lies within the boundary of the Dogger Bank dSAC, JNCC advised the Department carry out a screening exercise prior to issuing any consent to satisfy ourselves that the proposals were unlikely to have a significant effect on the dSAC.

CEFAS: CEFAS commented that as no changes to chemical use have been described, it is unlikely that any significant environmental impacts will be caused by the use of chemicals as described in this environmental statement. CEFAS also confirmed that mackerel, plaice, sole, sprat and nephrops spawn in the area and that the block and/or vicinity is a nursery for whiting, sprat and nephrops. However there was no objection to the proposals.

Further Information: Clarification was sought from ConocoPhillips on several minor issues, to which ConocoPhillips responded on the 12 February 2009. The Department also undertook a screening exercise which concluded that the increased production from Boulton is unlikely to have a significant effect alone or in combination with other projects upon the integrity of the potential Natura 2000 site – Dogger Bank dSAC and on this basis an Appropriate Assessment was deemed not to be required.

Conclusion(s):

Following the consultation period and the screening exercise undertaken by the Department, DECC and its consultees are satisfied that the increase in production proposed is not likely to have a significant impact on the receiving environment, including any sites or species protected under the Habitats Regulations.

Recommendation(s):

On the basis of the information presented within the ES and advice from consultees it is recommended that approval is granted for the increase in production.

Signed:- *Sarah Pritchard*

Dated:- 19 May 2009

Sarah Pritchard

Head of Offshore Environmental Operations