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Consents given under the Petroleum Act 1998 and Reviews under the Assessment of Environmental Effects Regulations 1999

Newfield Petroleum UK Ltd

Grove Development

Pursuant to Regulation 5(8) of the above Regulations, the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry gives notice that he is content that the requirements of the above Regulations have been satisfied. Consent has been granted to Newfield Petroleum UK Ltd for the getting of gas and the construction of installations, in relation to the development of the Grove field in accordance with the environmental statement. The consent for the Development took effect from December 2005 and shall remain in force for a period of two years.

Background

The Grove Field development is situated in Block 49/10a in the southern North Sea (SNS) approximately 133 kilometres to the East of Great Yarmouth and 6 kilometres West of the UK/Dutch meridian line. The field was discovered by exploration well 49/10-1 in 1971 and successfully appraised by well 49/10-4 in 2004/2005. Testing has indicated commercial reserves of natural gas and it is proposed to develop the Grove field by the installation of a Normally Unmanned Installation (NUI).

The NUI platform structure will re-use the recently decommissioned Camelot CB platform. This will act as a hub for the area and be installed in the second quarter 2006. The existing topsides facilities will be removed and replaced with more efficient systems designed to be easily removable/reusable at decommissioning. Two existing exploration wells will be completed from the platform and a new development well will be drilled two kilometres to the west, tied-back through a six-inch subsea flowline. The three initial Grove wells are expected to produce at a combined maximum rate for two years, however, overall life expectancy of the field is approximately 10 - 15 years depending on well performance and production from surrounding fields.

The host facility will be the Markham complex, located in the

Dutch Sector, 13.8 kilometres to the North-West of Grove. Grove will be tied back to these facilities via a 10-inch carbon steel export pipeline delivering to a new riser platform, which will be bridge-linked to the J6-A platform. Three potential host platforms were identified but Markham was selected as it had the necessary blending capability for Grove gas production; it has capacity in the export line; and modified compression and control facilities, to accommodate low arrival pressures, can be installed in time for first gas in October 2006. In addition the pipeline route avoids interaction with potential Special Areas for Conservation (pSACs) in the southern North Sea.

On cessation of production the wells will be plugged and abandoned. The conductors will be cut approximately 2 - 3 meters below seabed level and all obstructions removed. Abandonment of the pipeline will be based on prevailing legislation at the time and in consultation with the regulatory authorities. It is expected that the NUI will be available for re-use or easily decommissioned.

Both CEFAS and the JNCC reviewed and commented on the ES and both are satisfied that there is unlikely to be any overall significant environmental impact arising from this development.

Recommendation

Overall the environmental statement is satisfactory and adequately assesses the potential environmental impacts of the proposed operation. It is recommended that consent is given to the project

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