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

Shell UK

GANNET G FIELD

Pursuant to Regulation 5(8) of the above Regulations, the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry gives notice that, being content that the requirements of the above Regulations have been satisfied, he has, pursuant to Licence P13, granted a consent to Shell (UK) Exploration and Production Limited. to the getting of petroleum and the construction of installations in relation to the development of the Gannet G field. The consent for the Gannet G field took effect from 01/01/00 and shall last until 31/12/06.

Background

The Gannet oil fields are located in the central North Sea, some 80 km to the east of Aberdeen. The ES refers to one development well and one contingency well, subsequently allowed as two wells.

The Environmental Statement identified three impacts considered by Shell to be of minor and local significance: discharge of cuttings from sidetrack drilling onto an existing cuttings pile; trenching associated with the laying of a 5.2 km flowline, gas line and umbilical; and rockdumping onto the pipeline. The discharges of synthetic base mud (SBM) contaminated cuttings onto the existing cuttings pile is likely to increase the time taken for the pile to be recolonised by seabed organisms. This effect will be minimised through judicious use of SBMs. Pipe trenching - was also considered significant because of the relatively large area affected (approximately 50,000 m²). However, any detrimental impact is likely to be short term with recovery occurring relatively rapidly and recolonisation of the affected zone within 1 year. The entire length of the pipeline will be covered by rock to protect against upheaval buckling. Although recolonisation of the zone will occur, it is likely to be by a different assemblage of organisms. However, the total area affected will be small.

Recommendation

Overall, the ES is satisfactory and adequately assesses the potential environmental impacts of the proposed development. Recommend that consent for the development is given.