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

BG plc

Maria and May Development 16/29a and 16/29c

Background

BG plan a two well development of the Maria field with a contingent third well and their tieback via a manifold and a 12", ~12km, trenched and buried/or rock dumped pipeline to the Armada platform. The pipeline will be fabricated using corrosion resistant steel and the worst case amount of rock that would be used is 35,000 tonnes. Should sufficient reserves be found, BG also plan to develop a well in 16/29c an additional 6km to the north and tie back via the Maria subsea manifold. The drilling locations of the Maria and block 16/29c wells lie about 9km and 3km from the Norwegian median line respectively. The expected hydrocarbons are oil and gas.

BG has secured the Sedco 704 with drilling scheduled to take place between July and November 2006.

The well will be drilled using WBM and OBM, with 394 tonnes of WBM and 2104 tonnes of WBM cuttings to be discharged. OBM cuttings will be contained and shipped to shore for processing although BG may decide to treat them by Rotomill so they meet the criteria for marine discharge.

Sensitivities

The environmental statement identifies a range of potential environmental hazards and outlines proposed mitigation measures, including:

- Flaring
- Discharge of drilling mud, completion fluid and hydrotest fluid
- Discharge of drilled cuttings
- Seabed disturbance
- Noise disturbance
- Conservation areas

- Interactions with other sea users
- Transboundary impacts
- Cumulative impacts

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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