



Offshore Petroleum Regulator
for Environment & Decommissioning

**The Offshore Oil and Gas Exploration, Production, Unloading and Storage
(Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2020**

**Regulation 14(3)
Secretary of State decision**

Tailwind Mistral Ltd

Evelyn Field Development

To: Jonathan Ward

Decision Recommendation: That you agree to the grant of consent by the Oil and Gas Authority (OGA). The Offshore Petroleum Regulator for Environment and Decommissioning (OPRED) on behalf of the Secretary of State has reviewed the Environmental Statement (ES), the consolidated further information and the comments received from consultees and is satisfied that this project will not have any significant adverse effects on the environment.

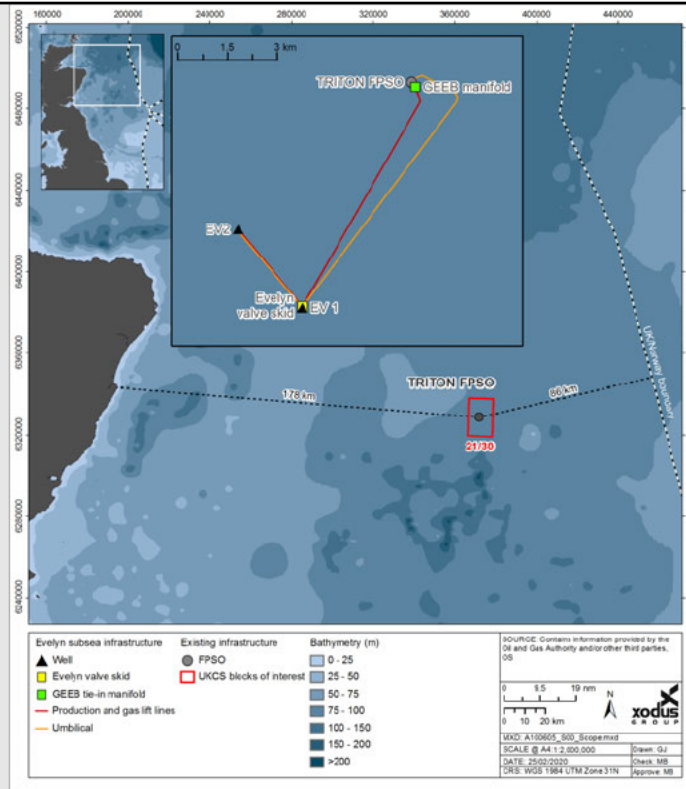
From: [REDACTED]
Environmental Manager
Offshore Petroleum Regulator for Environment and Decommissioning
For and on behalf of the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy

Date: 16 February 2021

ES Title:	Evelyn Field Development
Developer:	Tailwind Mistral Ltd
Consultants:	Xodus Group
OGA Field Group:	Central North Sea
ES Report No:	D/4250/2020
ES Submission Date:	05 March 2020
Block No:	21/30
Development Type:	Development of the Evelyn field

Project Description

The Evelyn Project will be a new phased oil and gas subsea development, located in the Central North Sea, approximately 178 km from Aberdeen and 86 km from the UK/Norway median line.



The first phase of the project will consist of one well drilled within the Evelyn field with a subsea tieback to the existing Triton floating production storage and offloading facility (FPSO). The subsea tieback will consist of a new 8" production line, a new 3" gas lift line and a new umbilical for control services. A new manifold will be installed within the Triton FPSO 500m safety zone to enable the comingling of fluids from the Evelyn pipeline and the existing Bittern pipeline. The comingled fluids will be transported onto the FPSO via new production jumpers and the existing Bittern P1 Riser. A valve skid will be installed in the Evelyn field, positioned close to the first Evelyn well, to control the flow of fluids and to enable a future second well to be comingled into the flowline. A decision on the Phase 2 well will be taken following review of the success of the first phase of production.

The current project schedule assumes development drilling in 2021, and the subsea tieback installation in 2022, with first oil expected Q4 2022.

Key Environmental Impacts

The ES identified and discussed the following as having the potential to cause an environmental impact:

- Seabed disturbance
- Discharges to sea
- Underwater noise
- Interaction with other sea users
- Atmospheric emissions; and
- Accidental events.



Key Environmental Sensitivities

The ES identified the following environmental sensitivities:

- **Fish:** The Evelyn Project is in an area of nursery grounds for anglerfish, blue whiting, cod, European hake, haddock, herring, ling, mackerel, Norway pout, plaice, sandeel, spurdog and whiting and is in proximity to a sprat nursery ground. The Project is also located within spawning grounds for cod, lemon sole, Norway pout and sandeel and in proximity to a mackerel spawning ground. Among the species listed above, the following are listed as Scottish Priority Marine Features (PMF): anglerfish, blue whiting, cod, herring, ling, mackerel, Norway pout, sandeels, spurdog, and whiting.
- **Seabirds:** Seabird sensitivity to oil pollution in Block 21/30 and surrounding Blocks is low throughout the year. The Project is located approximately 178 km from the nearest UK coast and is therefore remote from sensitive coastal seabird breeding areas. Combined with the low seabird sensitivities expected year-round within the vicinity of the Development, the risk to birds from routine operations is considered minimal.
- **Protected habitats:** The closest protected site to the Evelyn Project location is the East of Gannet and Montrose Fields Nature Conservation Marine Protected Area (NCMPA), located 10.5 km from the proposed Project location. This NCMPA protects “Offshore deep-sea muds” habitats and ocean quahog (*A. islandica*). The Project is near areas of fluid seeps with characteristics likely to form Annex I habitats including submarine structures made by leaking gases. These fluid seeps have been recorded in the north and south of Block 21/30, approximately 5 km north and 7 km south of the Project location, respectively. However, the surveys conducted in the vicinity of the Evelyn field did not provide evidence of their occurrence closer to the Project location. There are no other offshore protected sites located within proximity (<40 km away) of the Evelyn Project.
- **Protected species:** Harbour porpoise and white-beaked dolphin are the most widespread and frequently encountered marine mammal species in the CNS, occurring regularly throughout most of the year. Minke whales are regularly recorded as frequent seasonal visitors. Bottlenose dolphins and white-sided dolphins may also be commonly encountered in the Evelyn field.

As the proposed Evelyn Project is located approximately 178 km offshore, it is not likely that grey or harbour seals will use the area with any regularity or in great numbers. Estimated grey and harbour seal densities around the Evelyn Project location are between 0 and 1 animals per 25 km² for both species. All species of cetacean recorded within the proposed Project location are listed as European Protected Species (EPS). Of the species most frequently encountered in the area, harbour porpoise, minke whale, white-beaked dolphin and bottlenose dolphin are listed as PMFs in Scottish waters.

- **Other users of the sea:** The Project lies within the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) Rectangle 43F0. This Rectangle is predominantly targeted for demersal fish however, landings of pelagic fish in 2018 were high, dominating the landings weight that year. Haddock, herring and sandeel are the most frequently landed species in this area. The landings weight and value of demersal fish



Offshore Petroleum Regulator for Environment & Decommissioning

in ICES Rectangle 43F0 are considered moderate compared to other areas of the North Sea. Trawling is the most utilised fishing method in this area.

The UKCS Block 21/30 is considered an area of low shipping activity.

The Project is in an area of extensive oil and gas development. The Triton FPSO is associated with several existing subsurface structures. The Gannet A Platform is the next nearest surface infrastructure, located 18 km from the Evelyn Field.

There are no subsea cables in the vicinity of the Project location or in UKCS Block 21/30. Block 21/30 is not located within any known military practice or exercise areas.

- In-combination, cumulative and transboundary effects: No significant in-combination, cumulative or transboundary effects are anticipated as a result of the proposals.

Legislative Transitional Arrangements

A decision from the OGA on whether to grant consent for the project was pending on 31 December 2020 when the Offshore Oil and Gas Exploration, Production, Unloading and Storage (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2020 came into force. Regulations 4, 5 and 6 to 12 of the Offshore Petroleum Production and Pipe-lines (Assessment of Environmental Effects) Regulations 1999 therefore applied to the public notice, consultation and information gathering stages of this decision. A decision is now being made under regulation 14 of the 2020 Regulations (read in accordance with regulation 29 of the 2020 Regulations).

Statutory Consultation

The Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC), Marine Scotland Science (MSS), The Northern Lighthouse board (NLB), Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA), and the Ministry of Defence (MoD), were consulted on the proposals and all sent comments.

Further Information

Further information was requested from Tailwind Mistral Ltd on 14th May 2020, 10^h July 2020 and 21st July 2020. Documents containing responses to these comments were received on 29th June 2020, 16th July 2020 and 23rd July 2020. The further information, which also included some minor amendments to the proposals, was considered, and it was concluded that some of the further information engaged regulation 10(2) (1999 Regulations) requirements. The Operator was requested to submit a document consolidating the further information requested, which was submitted on 3rd August 2020.

Second consultation

The consolidated further information was subject to further consultation by the relevant statutory consultees. No representations against the proposals were received, and it was confirmed that all comments had been adequately addressed.

Public Notice

The ES and the application for consent was subject to Public Notice, which was published on 17th March 2020 and ended on 17th April 2020. The consolidated further information which



engaged regulation 10(2) (1999 Regulations) was subject to further public notice which was published on 4th August 2020 and ended on 4th September 2020. There were no public representations received.

Conclusion on the significant effects of the project on the environment

Following its review of the ES, the consolidated further information and the comments received from consultees, OPRED on behalf of the Secretary of State is satisfied that this project will not have any significant adverse effects on the environment. In respect of the potential environmental impacts, OPRED has concluded the following:

- **Seabed Disturbance:** The impacts from direct disturbance of the seabed are not expected to cause long-term degradation or impair the function and value of any of the benthic receptors in the Project location. Deposits will be kept to the minimum required for the operations and the activities will occur outside the spawning season for sandeels which may be in the area. The residual impacts are therefore minor and therefore considered to be not significant.
- **Discharges to Sea:** The predicted discharges to sea associated with the Project will be rapidly dissipated within the water column. During drilling, the impact footprint resulting from a cuttings thickness with the potential to bury benthic organisms is expected to be highly localised. The residual impacts are therefore minor and considered to be not significant.
- **Underwater Noise:** The underwater noise emissions due to the limited piling operations for the new manifold are low, therefore disturbance impacts to marine mammal species are considered negligible. The residual impacts are therefore considered to be not significant.
- **Interaction with other sea users:** The use of an existing exclusion zone at the Triton FPSO, the temporary exclusion zone around the drill centres, and the installation of fishing friendly subsea structures reduce the risk of snagging and limit the exclusion of other sea users from the area. As a result, the residual impact to other sea users from the Evelyn Project is minor and considered to be not significant.
- **Atmospheric Emissions:** There is expected to be no measurable impact on long-term function of the local or wider atmosphere, the residual impact is minor and considered to be not significant.
- **Accidental Events:** Tailwind will have in place a range of response and mitigation measures to address the risks of accidental events. All activities will be covered by appropriate Temporary Operations Oil Pollution Emergency Plan (TOOPEPS), Oil Pollution Emergency Plan (OPEPs) and Shipboard Oil Pollution Emergency Plans (SOPEPs).

The likelihood of such an event is remote, however the potential impacts on receptors, such as seabirds, from an accidental oil spill would be expected to cause a temporary change to the baseline conditions and given the comprehensive prevention and spill response measures that are in place, this change is not expected to persist in the long term. Therefore, impacts are moderate and considered to be not significant.



Conditions to the agreement of the grant of consent:

To limit the risk of interaction with sandeel spawning, drilling activities and subsea installation will not be undertaken within the spawning season (between November and February) for this species.

Features of the project or measures envisaged to avoid, prevent, reduce, or offset significant effects:

It can be concluded that there are no significant adverse impacts associated with the project and therefore there is no requirement for such measures to be undertaken.

Agreement Decision

Following the review of the ES, the comments received from the consultees and the further information provided and given that no representations were received in response to the public notice, OPRED on behalf of the Secretary of State concludes that the project will not have significant adverse effect on the environment and agrees to the grant of consent for the project by the Oil and Gas Authority.

Jonathan Ward

16/02/2021

.....
Jonathan Ward

.....
Date

Director, Environmental Operations

Offshore Petroleum Regulator for Environment and Decommissioning

For and on behalf of the Secretary of State for Business, Energy, and Industrial Strategy.