

Our Ref: 01.01.01.01-3716U
UKOP Doc Ref:1141130



Offshore Petroleum Regulator
for Environment & Decommissioning

EQUINOR UK LIMITED
1 KINGDOM STREET
LONDON
W2 6BD

Registered No.: 01285743

Date: 3rd June 2021

Department for Business, Energy
& Industrial Strategy

AB1 Building
Crimon Place
Aberdeen
AB10 1BJ

Tel [REDACTED]

Fax [REDACTED]

www.gov.uk/beis
bst@beis.gov.uk

Dear Sir / Madam

**THE OFFSHORE OIL AND GAS EXPLORATION, PRODUCTION, UNLOADING
AND STORAGE (ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT) REGULATIONS
2020
BARNACLE FIELD**

A screening direction for the project detailed in your application, reference PR/2119/0 (Version 1), dated 4th May 2021 has been issued under regulation 6 of the above Regulations. The screening direction notice, and any relevant conditions and comments are attached. A copy of this screening direction will be forwarded to the application consultees, the Oil and Gas Authority and published on the gov.uk website.

If you have any queries in relation to this screening direction or the attachments, please do not hesitate to contact [REDACTED] on [REDACTED] or email the Environmental Management Team at bst@beis.gov.uk.

Yours faithfully



**THE OFFSHORE OIL AND GAS EXPLORATION, PRODUCTION, UNLOADING
AND STORAGE (ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT) REGULATIONS
2020**

**SCREENING DIRECTION CONFIRMING THAT AN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT
ASSESSMENT IS NOT REQUIRED**

BARNACLE FIELD

PR/2119/0 (Version 1)

Whereas EQUINOR UK LIMITED has made an application dated 4th May 2021, under The Offshore Oil and Gas Exploration, Production, Unloading and Storage (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2020, and whereas the Secretary of State has considered the application and is satisfied that the project is not likely to have a significant effect on the environment; in exercise of the powers available under regulation 6, the Secretary of State hereby directs that the application for consent in respect of the project need not be accompanied by an Environmental Impact Assessment, provided that the project is carried out as described in the application for the screening direction and in accordance with the conditions specified in the attached schedule.

In giving a screening direction under regulation 6 of the above Regulations, the Secretary of State accordingly gives his agreement to the Oil and Gas Authority to the grant of consent for the project as detailed in the application.

Effective Date: 3rd June 2021



THE OFFSHORE OIL AND GAS EXPLORATION, PRODUCTION, UNLOADING AND STORAGE (ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT) REGULATIONS 2020

SCHEDULE OF SCREENING DIRECTION CONDITIONS

The grant of this screening direction is conditional upon the screening direction holder complying with the following conditions.

1 Screening direction validity

This screening direction shall be valid from 3 June 2021.

2 Change to production level(s)

The holder of the screening direction shall ensure that the change in the level(s) of production do not exceed the amended level(s) detailed in the application for the screening direction, and in the application for consent relating to the approval for the getting of petroleum issued under the relevant production licence Model Clause.

3 Prevention of pollution

The holder of the screening direction must ensure that appropriate measures are taken to minimise discharges, emissions and waste, in particular through the appropriate use of technology; and to ensure that necessary measures are taken to prevent incidents affecting the environment or, where they occur, to limit their consequences in relation to the environment.

4 Inspections

Should the Department consider it necessary or expedient for an inspector appointed by the Secretary of State to investigate whether the conditions of the screening direction are being complied with, the holder of the screening direction shall afford the inspector with such facilities and assistance as the inspector considers necessary to exercise the powers conferred by the regulations. The holder of the screening direction shall additionally ensure that copies (electronic or paper) of the screening direction and any other relevant documents are available for inspection by the inspector at:

- a) the premises of the holder of the screening direction; and
- b) the facilities undertaking the project covered by the screening direction.

5 Check monitoring

Should the Department consider it necessary or expedient to undertake an independent monitoring programme to assess the impact of the project covered by the screening direction, the screening direction holder shall afford the Department



with such facilities and assistance as the Department considers necessary to undertake the work.

6 Atmospheric emissions returns

Following completion of the project covered by the screening direction, the holder of the screening direction shall report all relevant atmospheric emissions, such as combustion emissions, using the appropriate Environmental Emissions Monitoring System (EEMS) reporting forms.

7 Unauthorised deposits

Following completion of the project covered by the screening direction, the holder of the screening direction shall recover any materials accidentally or temporarily deposited on the seabed, such as debris, temporary containers, structures or deposits, or scientific instruments, and shall return the materials to land. If it is not possible to recover any of these deposits, full details of the materials remaining on the seabed must be reported to the Department in accordance with the requirements of Petroleum Operations Notice No.2 (PON2).

8 Screening direction variation

In the event that the holder of the screening direction proposes changes to any of the particulars detailed in the application for a screening direction, the holder must notify the Department immediately and submit an application for a post screening direction amendment. The post screening direction must be in place prior to the amended proposals taking effect.



COMMENTS ON THE APPLICATION FOR SCREENING DIRECTION

Section 1

The attention of screening direction holders is drawn to the following provisions regarding The Offshore Oil and Gas Exploration, Production, Unloading and Storage (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2020.

1) You are deemed to have satisfied yourself that there are no barriers, legal or otherwise, to the carrying out of the project covered by the screening direction. The issue of a screening direction does not absolve the screening direction holder from obtaining such authorisations, consents etc that may be required under any other legislation.

2) The Department would draw your attention to the following comments:

The Department has no comments to make at this time.

3) All communications relating to the screening direction should be addressed to:

Out-of-hours emergency screening direction variations:

Telephone Met Office out-of-hours service (0330 135 0010) and ask to be connected to the Department's On-call Response Officer (Offshore Environmental Inspectorate).

Routine communications

bst@beis.gov.uk

or

Offshore Petroleum Regulator for Environment & Decommissioning
Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy
AB1 Building
Crimon Place
Aberdeen
AB10 1BJ

Tel [REDACTED]



SCHEDULE OF SCREENING DIRECTION DECISION REASONS

The Secretary of State has decided that, based on the information provided, the project is not likely to have a significant effect on the environment. The main reasons for this decision are:

1) Decision reasons

The following provides a summary of the assessments undertaken by OPRED to determine whether an Environmental Impact Assessment is required for this project, summarises the information considered, the potential impacts and sets out the main reasons for the decision made. In considering whether an Environmental Impact Assessment is required or not, the following have been taken into account:

- a) The information provided by the developer.
- b) The matters listed in Schedule 5 of The Offshore Oil and Gas Exploration, Production, Unloading and Storage (Environmental Impact Regulations 2020) (the Regulations).
- c) The results of any preliminary verifications or assessments of the effects on the environment of the project; and
- d) Any conditions that the Secretary of State may attach to the agreement to the grant of consent.

Characteristics of the Project

Having regard, in particular, to the matters identified at paragraphs 1(a) to (g) of Schedule 5 to the Regulations, the characteristics of the project include the following:

Summary of the project :

Increase in Oil and Gas Production from the Barnacle field.

Description of project :

This project consists of an increase in oil production of less than 500 tonnes/day and gas production of less than 500,000 cubic metres per day from the Barnacle field, due to a later water breakthrough and lower water cut than was originally forecast. The increase in production is proposed to be in the years 2021 and 2022, although production consent has been applied for from 2021 - 2025.



No cumulative impacts are expected to occur with any other existing or approved projects.

There is no change to the assessment of a major accident. The Developer has control measures in place to reduce the risk of a major accident occurring and the probability of such an event occurring is very low.

It is not considered to be likely that the project will be affected by natural disasters.

Other than the matters considered further below, there is not likely to be any significant impact of the project on population and human health.

Location of the Project

Having regard in particular to the matters identified at paragraphs 2(a) to (c) of Schedule 5 to the Regulations, the environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected by the project has been considered as follows:

The Barnacle field is in Block 211/29f and 221/30c in the northern North Sea (NNS) approximately 144 kilometres (km) from the east coast of Scotland and less than 1.5 km from the UK/Norway median line and is tied back to the Statfjord B platform where all processing and production takes place. The Barnacle field is in a water depth of approximately 149 metres (m). The predominant direction of the currents within the area is south to south easterly. Surface tidal currents are between 0.1 ms⁻¹ and 0.2 ms⁻¹.

The sediments around Barnacle are mostly sand, muddy sand gravelly sand, and slight gravelly sand.

Data from benthic surveys in Block 211/29 indicate that characteristic infaunal species associated with this region of the North Sea include the polychaetes *Myriochele spp.* and *Owenia fusiformis*, and *Thyasira spp.* The epifauna of the project area can be characterised by the hermit crab *Pagurus bernharus*, the crustacean *Crangon allmani*, the purple heart urchin *Spatangus purpureus* and the mollusc *Colus gracilis*.

The closest protected area in UK waters is Pobie Bank Reef Special area of Conservation (SAC) designated for the Annex I reef habitat, located 102 km from the Barnacle field. There are no biogenic reefs or other sensitive habitats protected under the EC Habitats Directive in the project area.

Seven cetacean species can be found in the vicinity of the Barnacle field, Atlantic white-sided dolphin, harbour porpoise, long-finned pilot whale, killer whale, minke whale, sperm whale and white beaked dolphin. These are found in high to low densities throughout the year.

Blocks 211/29f and 221/30c fall within International Council of the Sea (ICES) rectangle 51F1, and fishing in this area concentrates on demersal species. Fishing



activity is at its lowest in June and July. The period of greatest fishing activity in the vicinity of Barnacle is in April, September and October.

Fish spawning and nursery activity will occur in the area, which will coincide with the operations. Seabird vulnerability is low throughout the year.

Shipping density in the area is very low to low. The project location is not within a military activity zone, aggregate extraction location, or any renewable energy infrastructure projects and there is some other oil and gas activity within the area.

Given the location of the project, it is not likely that the areas identified at paragraphs 2(c)(i), (iii), (iv), (vi), (vii) or (viii) of Schedule 5 to the Regulations will be affected by the project.

Type and characteristics of the potential impact

In accordance with paragraph 3 of Schedule 5 to the Regulations, the likely significant effects of the project on the environment have been considered. Potential effects of the atmospheric emissions on the environment from the activities associated with the project were assessed. Other than the matters considered further below, there is not likely to be any significant impact of the project on population and human health.

There are no additional power requirements at the Staffjord B platform as a result of the increase in production.

The increase in production is due to a later water breakthrough and lower water cut than was originally forecast. There will be no produced water discharge to the marine environment in the UKCS resulting from the production operations as these discharges will occur from the Staffjord B platform in the NCS. No significant changes in impact are predicted. There are no additional chemicals required.

There are no expected transboundary effects from the increase in production.

It is considered that the increase in oil and gas production from the Barnacle field is not likely to have a significant impact on other offshore activities or other users of the sea, the seabed, marine life or cetacean species and no cumulative impacts are expected to occur.

Decision

Taking the above considerations into account, the Secretary of State has concluded that the project is not likely to have a significant impact on the environment and that an environmental impact assessment is not required.

2) Mitigation of significant effects

Not applicable.