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Offshore Petroleum Regulator
for Environment & Decommissioning

PETROFAC FACILITIES MANAGEMENT LIMITED
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Registered No.: SC075047

Date: 5th July 2021

Department for Business, Energy
& Industrial Strategy

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Dear Sir / Madam

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

**Evelyn, Stena Don DRILLING PRODUCER WELL 21/30f-E21/30f-EV01 planned
well**

A screening direction for the project detailed in your application, reference DR/2137/0 (Version 3), dated 2nd July 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**

**Evelyn, Stena Don DRILLING PRODUCER WELL 21/30f-E21/30f-EV01 planned
well**

DR/2137/0 (Version 3)

Whereas PETROFAC FACILITIES MANAGEMENT LIMITED has made an application dated 2nd July 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: 5th July 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

The screening direction shall be valid from 5 July 2021 until 31 December 2021.

2 Commencement and completion of the project

The holder of the screening direction must notify the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (hereinafter called the 'Department') of commencement and completion of the project within two days:

- a) of commencement of the project and
- b) of completion of the project.

Notification should be sent by email to the Environmental Management Team Mailbox: bst@beis.gov.uk

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, extended well test emissions or flaring and venting emissions relating to a well test, using the appropriate Environmental Emissions Monitoring System (EEMS) reporting forms. In the case of atmospheric emissions relating to drilling projects undertaken from a fixed installation, they should be included in the annual EEMS reporting forms for the fixed installation.

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.

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]
Fax



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. This document 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 the 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

Drilling of 36" section and 17.5" reservoir section using Water Based Mud (WBM).

Drilling of 12.25" pilot hole, 12.25" development, and 9.5" reservoir section using Low Toxicity Oil Based Mud (LTOBM).

Well bore clean up, well testing and suspension.

Description of the Project

This project is the drilling of the 21/30f-EV01 development well using the Stena Don, semi-submersible Mobile Offshore Drilling Unit (MODU). The project was the subject of an Environmental Statement (D/4250/2020), approved by the Department in February 2021. Operations are expected to take 80 days. The well sections will be



drilled with a combination of WBM and LTOBM with the WBM cuttings discharged to sea and the LTOBM cuttings shipped to shore for recycling/disposal. The length of the reservoir section will be defined using logging while drilling (LWD). On completion of the drilling operations the well will be cleaned up and displaced to brine. Following completion operations, the well be tested and a maximum of 1,965 tonnes (1,814 tonnes of oil and 151 tonnes of gas) of reservoir hydrocarbons will be flared over a total period of 45 hours with variable flow during this period. The well will then be suspended with a minimum of two mechanical barriers in preparation for the tie-back to the Triton production pipelines in the near future. A wellhead and xmas tree will also placed on the well. In the event that the well is unsuccessful, the well will be plugged and abandoned in line with Oil and Gas UK guidelines.

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

It is not considered to be likely that the project will be affected by natural disasters. The risk of a major accident such as a well blowout has been assessed. 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.

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 proposed drilling project is located in the Evelyn field in the Central North Sea (CNS), in UKCS Block 21/30f, approximately 165 km east from the Scottish coastline and 92 km from the UK/Norway Median Line, in a depth of approximately 92 metres (m).

Surveys in the Evelyn field area observed the seabed across the survey area was largely homogeneous. The main sediment type observed was muddy sand/sandy mud, with varying proportions of shell fragments. This sediment type has been classified as the European Nature Information System (EUNIS) biotope complex 'Deep circalittoral sand'. The survey identified there was also the potential for the 'Offshore subtidal sands and gravels' habitat, which is a PMF, to occur across the survey area. Muddy sand is included as a characteristic feature of this PMF habitat, which is noted to be the most common subtidal habitat around the coast of the British Isles and widely represented within the MPA network.

Areas of fluid seeps, which have characteristics likely to produce Annex I "submarine structures made by leaking gases", are situated to the north and south of the Evelyn Development area in Block 21/30, approximately 4.5 km north and 7.2 km south of the nearest point of the Triton FPSO and proposed Evelyn well location, respectively.



This habitat comprises rocks, pavements and pillars made of carbonate cement. Such cement is mostly made by microbial oxidation of methane and is commonly known as Methane-Derived Authigenic Carbonate (MDAC). However, no indicators of pockmarks, such as MDAC or sulphur oxidising bacterium e.g. *Beggiatoa* sp., were observed within the depressions suggesting no evidence of ongoing gas seepage across the survey area. Therefore, it is unlikely that this Annex I habitat occurs in the Evelyn Development area.

Epibenthic fauna was sparse across the survey area. Dominant taxa included the phosphorescent sea pen *Pennatula phosphorea*, starfish *Asterias rubens* and *Astropecten irregularis*, hermit crabs *Paguridae* and anemones *Hormathiidae*. Examination of photographic data highlighted the presence of phosphorescent sea pens *P. phosphorea* and numerous burrows, which are associated with the OSPAR habitat 'Sea pen and burrowing megafauna communities'. The sea pens *P. phosphorea* were classified as 'frequent' and the burrows as 'common' across all transects. Therefore, the habitat 'Sea pen and burrowing megafauna communities' can be considered to be present within the vicinity of the operations. Additionally, a total of 174 ocean quahog *Arctica islandica* juveniles were recorded within the survey area. However, no adult specimens were recorded at any station or along any transect within the video data.

No other Annex I habitats or Annex II species, PMFs, OSPAR threatened and/or declining habitats or species were observed in the Evelyn Rig Site survey area.

The project is located 12 km from the East of Gannet and Montrose Fields NC Marine Protected Area (MPA) designated the presence of "Offshore deep sea muds" habitats, ocean quahog *Arctica islandica* aggregations and the sands and gravels as their supporting habitat. All other offshore conservation areas are more than 76 km away.

Low to Moderate densities of Atlantic white sided dolphin, common dolphin, harbour porpoise, Minke whale and white-beaked dolphin have been recorded in the area. Grey and harbour seals may be encountered from time to time in the area.

Seabird sensitivity is low throughout the year within block 21/30 and the surrounding blocks.

The proposed operations will coincide with fish spawning and/or nursery activity for a number of species.

The project area is located in ICES rectangle 43F0 primarily used for demersal fishing with fishing activity considered to be low.

The closest oil and gas installation is the Triton which is 7 km northeast of the project area. There are eight wrecks within 20 km of the proposed operations, the closest being 11 km away. There are no renewable energy projects, no subsea cables and there is no military activity within the vicinity of the proposed operations. Shipping density in the area is low. The project is in the National Marine Plan Area for



Scotland.

Given the location of the project, it is not likely that the areas identified at paragraphs 2(c)(i), (iii), (iv), (vi), (vii) 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 on the environment from the activities associated with the project were assessed, including impacts arising from atmospheric emissions, seabed disturbance, physical presence, planned discharges and accidental spills.

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

Once on site, there will be a temporary 500 m exclusion zone around the Stena Don MODU excluding unauthorised access of vessels and prohibiting access to fishing vessels. The presence of the MODU is therefore not considered to have a significant impact on other users of the sea. Thereafter there will be a permanent 500 m exclusion zone around the Evelyn well.

Atmospheric emissions will be generated from the Stena Don MODU and associated operational vessels during the drilling operations. It is expected that the locally elevated concentrations will be short lived and will not be detectable within a short distance of the rig due to the dispersive nature of the exposed offshore environment.

The anchoring of the Stena Don MODU has the potential to cause disturbance to the seabed and benthic communities. The Stena Spey semi-submersible MODU will be held in position by an 8-anchor mooring covering a seabed area of approximately 0.0803 km². There will also be disturbance of the seabed from the wellhead placement. Given the small area of impact, the temporary nature of the impacts and the conditions at the proposed Evelyn well area (silty fine to medium sand with shell fragments and a mean residual current of 0.01 m/s) recovery is expected to be moderate in comparison to shallower water and silty areas, however, quicker than coarser sediment areas. The Annex I habitats 'sea pen and burrowing megafauna communities', 'and the PMF habitat 'Offshore subtidal sands and gravels' were potentially identified within the Evelyn survey area. Further analysis of these habitats determined that the burrow density did not meet the 'frequent' criteria for abundance. Impact to the existing habitats within the area will be localised and limited to a relatively small area compared with the wider expanse of surrounding seabed which is expected to be of a similar character. Additionally, ocean quahog juveniles were recorded within the macrofaunal survey area. However, no adult specimens were recorded at any station or along any transect within the video data. Therefore, the environmental effects of the well operations on these features are not considered to be significant.



The operations coincide with the spawning periods for lemon sole, mackerel, Norway lobster and sandeels, of which both sandeel and Norway lobster are benthic spawners. The sediment conditions at the proposed Evelyn well area align with those that possibly support Norway lobster, however, spawning grounds are part of larger regions within the North Sea, therefore, with consideration of the localised area of impact, Norway lobster are not considered to be significantly impacted. The sediment area around the proposed Evelyn well is unlikely to provide suitable areas for sandeel spawning and therefore sandeels are not expected to be significantly impacted.

No significant cumulative or transboundary effects are expected as a result of the drilling operation of this well.

WBM cuttings will be discharged during the proposed operations. However, in consideration to the low toxicity of the WBM chemical package, the small quantity of cuttings discharged in comparison to North Sea drilling operations, WBM cuttings discharges are not considered to present a significant impact.

LTOBM cuttings will be generated during the proposed drilling operations. All LTOBM and cuttings will be skipped and shipped to shore for onshore disposal, therefore will not present a risk to the marine environment.

Discharge of offshore chemicals associated with the drilling of the well, cementing and completion operations have been assessed as not likely to have a significant effect on the environment. Offshore chemicals associated with LTOBM will be returned to shore for treatment and disposal.

The wellbore clean-up operations may result in the discharge of wastewater containing residual base oil from the LTOBM. This discharge has been assessed and is not considered to have a likely significant effect on the environment.

Although not a planned activity, a worst-case major accident scenario resulting from a potential well blow-out (oil) was modelled and assessed. The likelihood of a major release of hydrocarbons occurring during the proposed drilling operations is considered to be extremely low. Therefore, it is considered that the control measures in place to prevent loss of well control minimise the risk of an oil spill which could have a significant impact and the proposed operations carried out as planned are not likely to have a significant effect on the environment.

The drilling operations are in accordance with the National Marine Plan area for Scotland objectives and policies. It is considered that the drilling of the Evelyn well is not likely to have a significant impact on other offshore activities or other users of the sea 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

The following are features of the project or measures envisaged that the developer has proposed to avoid or prevent what might otherwise have been significant adverse effects on the environment:

N/A