

Our Ref: 01.01.01.01-4123U  
UKOP Doc Ref:1160713



Offshore Petroleum Regulator  
for Environment & Decommissioning

SHELL U.K. LIMITED  
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LONDON  
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Registered No.: 00140141

Date: 20th September 2021

Department for Business, Energy  
& Industrial Strategy

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Crimon Place  
Aberdeen  
AB10 1BJ

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Fax

[www.gov.uk/beis](http://www.gov.uk/beis)  
[bst@beis.gov.uk](mailto:bst@beis.gov.uk)

Dear Sir / Madam

**THE OFFSHORE OIL AND GAS EXPLORATION, PRODUCTION, UNLOADING  
AND STORAGE (ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT) REGULATIONS  
2020  
PIERCE GAS EXPORT  
PIPELINE PL4867**

A screening direction for the project detailed in your application, reference PL/2171/0 (Version 2), dated 16th September 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](mailto: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**

**PIERCE GAS EXPORT  
PIPELINE PL4867**

**PL/2171/0 (Version 2)**

Whereas SHELL U.K. LIMITED has made an application dated 16th September 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: 20th September 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 25 October 2021 until 31 December 2021.

#### **2 Commencement and completion of the project**

The holder of the screening direction must confirm the dates of commencement and completion of the project covered by the screening direction. Notification should be sent by email to the Environmental Management Team Mailbox: [bst@beis.gov.uk](mailto:bst@beis.gov.uk)

#### **3 Nature of stabilisation or protection materials**

Grout bags deposits

40 tonnes of grout contained within 25 kilogramme capacity biodegradable bags. (The number of bags deposited should be the minimum required to provide the necessary protection, and any surplus bags must be returned to land).

Concrete mattress deposits

30 concrete mattresses, each measuring 6 metres x 3 metres x 15 centimetres. (The number of mattresses deposited should be the minimum required to provide the necessary protection, and any surplus mattresses must be returned to land).

Concrete mattress deposits

6 concrete mattresses, each measuring 6 metres x 3 metres x 30 centimetres. (The number of mattresses deposited should be the minimum required to provide the necessary protection, and any surplus mattresses must be returned to land).

#### **4 Location of pipeline and stabilisation or protection materials**

Within 500m of the following coordinates:

Latitude: 57 Degrees 09 Minutes 38.88 Seconds North

Longitude: 02 Degrees 17 Minutes 35.13 Seconds East



## **5 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.

## **6 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.

## **7 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.

## **8 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.

## **9 Deposit returns**

The holder of the screening direction shall submit a report to the Department following completion of the deposit covered by the screening direction, confirming the quantity of materials deposited and the estimated area of impact, using the appropriate Environmental Emissions Monitoring System (EEMS) reporting form. Where no deposits are made, a 'nil' return is required.

## **10 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).

## **11 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.

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## 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:

#### **PL/2171/0**

Section 2.4.2.4 of the EAJ incorrectly states that additional rock deposits will be required for this project. At the time of next variation submission please correct this error.

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:

### **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. It summarises the information considered, the potential impacts and sets out the main reasons for the decision made.

### **Characteristics of the Project**

Having regard to the matters identified at paragraphs 1(a) to (g) of Schedule 5 to the Regulations, the characteristics of the project are as follows.

- Installation of the 10" gas export flexible riser, including connections to the installation and Sub-Sea Isolation Valve (SSIV)
- Deposit of the following materials - 36 x concrete mattresses and 40 x 1 tonne bags filled with small grout bags for dropped object protection, riser stability and scour protection of the SSIV gravity base structure

### Description of project

This project supplements works already undertaken under the Offshore Petroleum Production and Pipelines (Assessment of Environmental Effects) Regulations 1999 (as amended). The previous directions under which the works were authorised are PL/1944 and DEP/1943

The placement of the deposits authorised by this screening direction and as described above is undertaken from a marine vessel. The maximum area of impact within the Haewene Brim FPSO 500m safety zone is 688m<sup>2</sup>.

No cumulative interactions are foreseen with any other existing or approved projects.

There is no risk to human health from the works to install the gas export riser or deposited materials on the seabed.

There is no credible potential for a major accident or disaster to affect this project.

There will be no significant waste generated because of this project.

### **Location of the Project**





Having regard 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 Haewene Brim FPSO and associated Pierce field development is in UKCS Blocks 23/22a and 23/27a of the Central North Sea, approximately 260km east of Aberdeen and 2km west of the Norwegian median line. The water depth in the vicinity of the development varies between 78 to 86 metres. The prevailing winds in the area originate from the southwest and north-north-east

The seabed habitats within the project area are comprised of silty, muddy sand with shell fragments and a moderate portion of fines (silt and clay). The closest protected site is the East of Gannet and Montrose Field NCMPSA which is approximately 21 km west of Shearwater. This site is designated for offshore deep-sea muds and *A. islandica* aggregations (including sands and gravels as their supporting habitat). Occurrences of *A. islandica* have been found in the Pierce field area. There are no Special Protection Areas (SPAs), Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Sites of Community Importance (SCIs) or Marine Conservation Zones (MCZ) within 40 kilometres (km) of the project location.

Evidence of the OSPAR habitat 'sea pens and burrowing megafauna communities' has been identified within the project area however, further analysis determined that there were no prominent features and so would be unlikely to be classified as the OSPAR listed threatened and/or declining habitat 'Sea pens and burrowing megafauna communities'. Areas of Methane Derived Authigenic Carbonates (MDAC) have been identified in the Pierce field area but not in the vicinity of the project.

The project will be undertaken at a time when several fish species may be found to be spawning or using the area as nursery locations.

Seabird distribution and abundance in the area is generally low throughout the year, while November and December have higher density for wintering seabirds in general.

White beaked dolphin and Atlantic white-sided dolphin are present in the area in high numbers, while Harbour porpoises may be present in the area with a low density. Seals are not expected in any significant number around the area of the project due to the distance from shore.

The project area is in a well-developed area for oil and gas. The closest installation is the Lomond platform which is located approximately 15km north-west.

Shipping density in the area is classed as very low.

There are no subsea telecommunications cables, aggregate extraction areas, wrecks, military exercise areas, or existing or proposed renewable energy developments within the vicinity of the project.



Fishing activity within the area is very low to moderate (ICES rectangles 43F1 and 43F2). The project will take place adjacent to the Haewene Brim FPSO and so will not impact commercial fisheries.

Given the location of the project, the areas identified at paragraphs 2(c) (i), (iii), (iv), (vi), (vii) or (viii) of Schedule 5 have not been given regard with respect to 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 impacts on the environment from the activities associated with the project were assessed, with particular focus on the predominant impacts resulting from physical presence of the installed gas export riser and associated deposits and seabed disturbance resulting from the deposit of those materials.

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

The physical presence of the vessels undertaken the project works will be located close to the Haewene Brim FPSO location with its existing safety zone and no significant impact is expected.

The physical presence of the deposited rock, mattresses and grout bags will be mitigated by ensuring that a smooth profile is achieved and placement within the vicinity of the Haewene Brim 500m safety zone.

The Deposited materials will impact an area of 688m<sup>2</sup> and will lead to localised mortality of benthos and the project lies within the area immediately adjacent to the Haewene Brim FPSO so is heavily developed. There are no protected areas within the vicinity of the project and no significant impact is expected.

While vessel noise has the potential to impact marine mammals the limited project duration and the existing general vessel traffic in the area there is unlikely to be any significant behavioural disturbance to marine mammals.

A diesel release from vessels involved in the project is not considered to be capable of having significant impact due to the limited quantity of diesel onboard and the nature of the oil which would evaporate relatively quickly upon release.

There will be no interaction with any wrecks due to none being present in the vicinity of the project area.

While the project location is 2km from the Norwegian median line there will be no significant impact due to the limited quantity and localised nature of deposits. There are no known cumulative impacts with other projects in the area.

Taking all the above determinations into account, the Secretary of State has

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concluded that the project is not likely to have a significant impact on the environment.