

Our Ref: 01.01.01.01-4876U
UKOP Doc Ref:1169945



Offshore Petroleum Regulator
for Environment & Decommissioning

PERENCO UK LIMITED
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Registered No.: 04653066

Date: 8th November 2021

Department for Business, Energy
& Industrial Strategy

AB1 Building
Crimon Place
Aberdeen
AB10 1BJ

Tel [REDACTED]

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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
WOLLASTON WELL 42/28a-8**

A screening direction for the project detailed in your application, reference DR/2185/0 (Version 2), dated 13th October 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**

WOLLASTON WELL 42/28a-8

DR/2185/0 (Version 2)

Whereas PERENCO UK LIMITED has made an application dated 13th October 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 WONS/13616/GS/1.

Effective Date: 8th November 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 8 November 2021 until 31 January 2022.

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.

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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:

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 [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.

Summary of the Project

- Drilling a sidetrack to the existing 42/28a-8 well.

Description of the Project

The drilling of the sidetrack will be undertaken if it is not possible to successfully complete open hole clean out or reach target depth via well intervention due to well conditions on the existing 42/28a-8 well by the jack up rig Noble Sam Hartley and may take approximately 20 days to complete.

The side-track well will be drilled from the 6 inch section of the original bore. The side-track section will consist of a 6 inch diameter of approximately 900m in length. The side-track will be drilled using water based mud, which will be treated and discharged at the well location, a production well test will be undertaken. Drilling is planned to begin in November 2021, and the screening direction covers the period November 2021 to Jan 2022 to allow time for the original well intervention operations to be attempted.

The project is not likely to significantly impact population, human health, or the environment. Discharge to sea will not be toxic or bioaccumulating. Chemicals are



selected on that basis and discharge of water-based mud derived drill cuttings are benign. Emissions to air will rapidly disperse and be kept to a minimum to reduce contribution to climate change. The risk of a major accident from a well blowout has been modelled and assessed and control measures put in place to reduce its probability to very low. It is not considered likely that the project will be affected by natural disasters.

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 Wollaston subsea well is located in UKCS Block 42/28 in the southern North Sea, approximately 35 kilometres (km) east of the nearest UK landfall, at Flamborough Head on the East Riding of Yorkshire coastline, and 152 km to the west of the UK/Netherlands transboundary line.

The water depth at the Wollaston well location is approximately 54.9 metres. The residual surface current in the vicinity of the Wollaston well tends to be in a southerly to south-easterly direction, Annual mean significant wave height in this area of the southern North Sea varies between 1.2 and 1.8 metres. The Wollaston area is predominantly comprised of sand, with megaripples orientated east to west and up to 0.4 m in height.

The main biotypes in the area are Deep circalittoral coarse sediment and Deep circalittoral sand, which supports polychaetes, amphipods, bivalves and echinoderms. The macrofaunal community was identified as relatively diverse across the area and is considered typical for the habitat.

The Wollaston subsea well is located 3 km from an area which has the potential to contain Annex I Bedrock Reef habitat, however, biogenic reef habitat such as *Sabellaria spinulosa* reef is not prevalent in the region surrounding the Wollaston location and a recent survey did not find any areas representing a reef habitat.

There are a number of designated sites in proximity of the drilling location; the closest being the Southern North Sea Special Area of Conservation (SAC) designated for Harbour porpoise, 2km east, and the Holderness Offshore MCZ, designated for seabed habitats, ocean quahog and a geological feature, 19km southwest. The well location is also adjacent to a number of Special Protection Areas (SPA) designated for the protection of birds which host breeding colonies and falls within the foraging areas of several seabird species

The Wollaston well is located in International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) rectangle 37F0 where fishing effort is moderate and predominantly focussed on demersal species, dominated by traps and dredges, with some trawling activity. Fish spawning and nursery activity will occur in the area which will coincide with drilling operations.



Harbour porpoise, minke whale, white beaked dolphin and white-sided dolphin have been sighted in the area albeit in low numbers. Notably, only harbour porpoise and white-beaked dolphin have been sighted in ICES Rectangle 37F0 during the proposed window of operations. Seals may be encountered infrequently due to the remote location. Seabird sensitivity varies from high to low during the period of operations.

There is a number of other oil and gas infrastructure in the surrounding area. The project location is within a military practice area and danger area. There are no licenced aggregate extraction locations, or any renewable energy infrastructure projects in the vicinity. Shipping density in the area is high.

Given the location of the project, the areas identified at paragraphs 2(c)(i), (iii), (iv),(vi), (vii) and (viii) of Schedule 5 are not likely to 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 to the environment from the activities associated with the change to the project were assessed, with particular focus on the predominant impacts resulting from atmospheric emissions, noise, seabed disturbance, physical presence, planned discharges and accidental spills.

Emissions to air are possible from combustion plant used temporarily on the rig and vessels and production well testing. The discharge of emissions to atmosphere will not have a detrimental effect to local air quality over the long-term, nor will it inhibit the ability to reach wider climate change goals. The environmental effects from emissions to air are not expected to have a significant impact on the environment.

Noise generated from the drilling rig and support vessels would not result in injury or significant disturbance to fish or marine mammals and the impacts are considered to be not significant.

Seabed disturbance from the jack up spud cans, anchors and anchor chain laydown will cause disturbance over small area which will be short term in duration and recovery of the seabed will start immediately following the cessation of drilling operations, therefore these impacts considered not significant.

The drilling operation has the potential to cause interference to other users of the sea, however the rig and support vessels will be located in an extant safety zone for the well. Therefore, no additional impact is foreseen, and any impact from physical presence of the rig is deemed not significant. Support vessels will be on site continually to monitor for vessel traffic and provide alerts.

Discharge of chemicals and hydrocarbons associated with the WBM and associated drill cuttings to sea has been assessed as having no likely significant direct or indirect



long-term effect. The use and discharge of the chemicals have been risk assessed and modelled in accordance with other regulatory requirements and is not expected to have a significant impact on the environment.

Consideration has been given to the potential effects of an accidental spill and a worst-case major accident scenario resulting from a potential well blow-out was assessed. The Developer has control measures in place to reduce the risk of a major accident occurring, including an emergency response plan. Given the condensate type, offshore location, high rates of evaporation and low likelihood of such an event no significant impact is likely to occur from such an event.

There are no expected transboundary impacts as a result of the project, and no cumulative impacts have been identified given the other known existing and approved projects in the wider area.

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:

Not applicable.