

Our Ref: 01.01.01.01-5055U
UKOP Doc Ref:1211300



Offshore Petroleum Regulator
for Environment & Decommissioning

CNOOC PETROLEUM EUROPE LIMITED
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Registered No.: 01051137

Date: 22nd June 2022

Department for Business, Energy
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Crimon Place
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bst@beis.gov.uk

Dear Sir / Madam

**THE OFFSHORE OIL AND GAS EXPLORATION, PRODUCTION, UNLOADING
AND STORAGE (ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT) REGULATIONS
2020
PIPELINE PL4567**

I refer to your amended application dated 20th June 2022, reference PL/2233/1 (Version 1).

It has been determined that the proposed changes to the project is not likely to result in a significant effect on the environment, and therefore an environmental impact assessment is not required.

A screening direction is therefore issued for the changes to the project. An amended schedule of conditions, comments, and main reasons for the decision on the amended application, 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**

PIPELINE PL4567

PL/2233/1 (Version 1)

Whereas CNOOC PETROLEUM EUROPE LIMITED has made an application dated 20th June 2022, 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 applications PWA/3666, PWA/3738, PWA/3862 , PWA/3870 and PWA/4255.

Effective Date: 22nd June 2022



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 20 April 2022 until 31 December 2022.

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

3 Nature of stabilisation or protection materials

Rock deposits

136,583.4 tonnes of clean, inert rock material, containing minimal fines, (The quantity of rock deposited should be the minimum required to provide the necessary stabilisation or protection, and any surplus rock must be returned to land).

Grout bags deposits

67.5 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

156 concrete mattresses, each measuring 6 metres x 3 metres x 150 centimetres, and 66 concrete mattresses each measuring 6 metres x 3 metres x 300 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 an area bounded by the coordinates as specified within the application.

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 Monitoring

The results of any pre or post-placement surveys carried out to confirm the necessity for the deposits covered by the screening direction and/or to confirm the accurate positioning of the stabilisation or protection materials, should be forwarded to the Department following completion of the surveys

8 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.

9 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.

10 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.



11 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).

12 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:

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, 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 Assessment 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

The post screening direction amendment (ref PL/2233/1) relates to a change to the project for which a screening direction was previously issued.

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

This project (PL/2233/1) is the installation of an additional 10 mattresses to stabilise the new water injection pipeline (PL6008) at the Scott UQ platform.

The project for which a screening direction was previously issued (PL/2233/0) was:

Disconnection of failed Scott water injection pipeline (PL4567) and installation of a replacement new 10" pipeline replacement(PL6008)(4.05km in length)

Disconnection of a failed Telford water injection pipeline (PL2757) and replacement with a new 8" water injection pipeline (PL6010) (11.99km in length) and jumper (PL6009)

Disconnection of a failed Telford umbilical (PLU1284) and replacement of a new umbilical (PLU6011) (2.35km in length)

Permanent deposits of rock (136,583.4t), 212 concrete mattresses and 2700 grout bags

Temporary deposit of ancillary equipment

Description of the Project

The previous screening direction related to issues with upheaval buckling and pipeline communication failures, with the installation of 2 new water injection pipelines and a new umbilical, to be laid within the Scott and Telford field areas. Six vessels will be working within the area and should take up to 45 days to complete the work scope between April and December 2022. Both Scott and Telford fields are tied back to the Scott Platform (UKCS block 15/22). The proposed project will be conducted within and outwith the 500m safety zones associated with both fields.

As upheaval buckling has been observed in the water injection pipelines, an analysis was undertaken to assess the stability issue. The analysis of the backfill soil within the area shows that the soil will not provide adequate protection (download) to mitigate against upheaval buckling. Options to remediate the situation are listed as follows:

The chosen option to mitigate against the risk of upheaval bucking due to the soft soil conditions is to trench and bury the pipelines.

The new rigid Scott 10" water injection pipeline will be trenched by ploughing, such that the top of the pipeline will be at least 0.6m below the seabed. The trench will be backfilled with rock to aid with upheaval bucking protection. All rock deposits will sit within the trench and will therefore not cause a rock berm. The existing spools will be disconnected and recovered to shore.

The new rigid Telford water injection pipeline will trenched by ploughing with the top



of the pipeline approx. 0.6m below the seabed. The trench will be backfilled with rock to aid with upheaval buckling protection.

The new Telford umbilical will be surface laid with rockdumped along the majority of its length to 0.5m above the seabed to protect against fishing interaction.

The existing pipelines and umbilical that are being replaced are close to live infrastructure and will be left in-situ until decommissioning activities commence.

At pipeline crossings, the pipelines will be surface laid withmattresses and groutbags used as required. Rock will be deposited using a fall pipe and an ROV camera to ensure accurate placement and to minimise seabed disturbance. The permanent seabed deposits will impact an area of 0.187 km².

Temporary seabed depositsincluding clump weights, gravel bags, anchors and marker buoys are part of the project but these will be recovered at the end of the project. Themaximum area impacted by these deposits is 0.000187km².

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

No cumulative impacts are expected to occur with any other existing or approved projects, as a result of the change to operations. 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. The project is not at risk from natural disasters given its location in UK offshorewaters.

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 project is located approximately 140 km northeast of the Scottish coastline with the Scott field located 77km southwest and Telford field located 76km southwest of the UK/Norway boundaryline.The fieldsare located in the Central North Sea (CNS)where the water depth is approximately 142m.

Offshore tidal current speeds are in the region of 0.01-1m/s, with the residual current approx. 0.01m/s. Wave heights range from 2.11 -2.4 m, which is typical of this area of the CNS. Site-specific surveys identified thesediment in the area comprising mud, sandy mud and slightly gravelly sandy mud. Numerous pockmarks have been



observed within the area, which are thought to be related to the prevailing bottom currents. There has been no evidence of submarine structures made by leaking gases, which also suggest that the pockmarks were relict and there is no evidence of the Annex I habitat 'submarine structures made by leaking gases'.

Benthic fauna identified by the site surveys was moderately diverse, dominated by burrowing anemone and polychaete. The survey area epifauna was sparse comprising seapens, hermit crabs and squat lobsters. The presence of seapen burrowing megafauna was also observed. Seapens can indicate the presence of the OSPAR habitat 'Seapens and burrowing megafauna communities'. Observations of seapens was occasional however burrow densities were common, and therefore it was determined that the habitat 'seapen and burrowing megafauna communities' is present within the area. The Priority Marine Feature (PMF) ocean quahog has been observed at moderate densities and it is also likely to be present within the area.

The project is not located in any protected areas. The closest protected area is the Scanner Pockmark SAC located 42 km to the east which is designated for the Annex I habitat 'submarine structure made by leaking gases'. The closest NCMFA is 64 km at Central Fladen which is designated for the protection of 'burrowed mud, including seapens and burrowing megafauna'.

There are 7 wrecks listed by Historic Environmental Scotland within 10 km of the proposed project. These are: Angela (6 km northwest), Esora (6 km northeast), Vertrauen (7 km southwest), an unknown wreck (8 km southwest), Monarch Service (9 km southwest), G-Azne (9 km southwest) and another unknown wreck (10 km southwest).

There are no submarine cables in the vicinity of operations and the project is not

located within an area of military activity. The closest renewable energy site is Buchan Deep Hywind, which is 123 km to the southwest of the project. The closest sector marine plan is the NE7 site located 37 km west of the project area.

The project will take place during spawning and nursery seasons for Norway lobster, Norway pout and cod, and within the nursery season for anglerfish, blue whiting, European hake, herring, ling, mackerel, sandeel, spotted ray, spurdog, sprat, and whiting. The area is described as a low fishing area and fishing effort is predominantly focussed on pelagic species, however shellfish and demersal fishing is also undertaken. Landings in 2020 from ICES 45F0 represented approx. 1.6% of the UKCS total, whilst the fishing effort (days spent fishing within 45F0) contributed 0.69% of the overall fishing effort in the UKCS.

Harbour Porpoise, Atlantic white-sided dolphin, minke whale and white beaked dolphin frequent the area in moderate to high densities. Grey and harbour seals feed in offshore waters, but as both fields are approx 140 km from the shore, it is concluded that it is unlikely that the seals will use the area in large numbers. Survey maps show the presence of grey and harbour seals within the Scott and Telford field as 0-1 seals per 25 km².



Seabird sensitivity ranges from extremely high to low for the period in which the project works are planned.

The project is located in an area of considerable oil and gas development, with an estimated 9 vessel transits per day within a 10 nm radius of the project area. The vessels are less than 100m in length which suggest low levels of international shipping activity.

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 on the environment from the activities associated with the project were

assessed, including impacts arising from atmospheric emissions, seabed disturbance and physical presence. Other than the matters considered further below, there is not likely to be any significant impact of the project on population and human health.

Power generation on board the vessels will generate atmospheric emissions which are expected to result in a short-term deterioration in air quality in the immediate area. This localised effect is expected to be temporary given the meteorological conditions at the offshore location, which are expected to result in rapid dispersion of emissions. The installation activities are expected to take up to 45 days which represents a contribution of <0.0214% to the total mass of CO₂ generated from UK offshore activities in 2018. The impacts arising from atmospheric emissions on local air quality and climate are not considered to be significant.

The pipelines will be trenched and a disturbance corridor of 10m has been chosen as a worst case with rock deposit assumed the entire length of pipeline. Mattresses will be used at pipeline crossings and grout bags used to aid in preventing upheaval buckling. Total seabed disturbance from the installation activities including trenching and deposits is estimated to impact a total area of 0.187 km². This is likely to result in displacement or mortality of sedentary organisms along with resuspension of sediment. Seapens are sensitive to seabed disturbance, however, although there is the potential for individuals to be impacted, there are not expected to be any effects at the population level. Ocean quahogs have a higher sensitivity to increased siltation, and there is the potential for a localised loss of habitat with the proposed project. There is not expected to be any effects at the population level. Epifauna within the area are understood to be habituated to sediment transport processes, and are less susceptible to increased sedimentation.



The introduction of hard strata within a soft, muddy, sandy habitat will result in a change in seabed type. It is expected that recolonisation will occur over time by epifaunal or encrusting animals.

The trenching methodology selected will not create a rock berm and the potential impacts will not extend to any protected sites. Whilst there may be mortality of some individuals, seabed disturbance from the proposed project is not considered likely to have a significant impact.

The installation activities will take place within and outside of the existing 500 m radius safety zones. Within the 500m safety zone, access to unauthorised vessels is prohibited and this prevents access to fishing and shipping vessels. The rest of the laying and trenching will extend beyond these existing safety zones, and the Developer will undertake notification of and communications with other marine users of the vessels' presence.

The physical presence of the vessel is not considered likely to have a significant impact.

The proposed project will generate underwater noise through vessel engine use, which is anticipated to have a negligible impact.

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

Decision

Taking the above considerations into account, the Secretary of State has concluded that the change to 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.