

Our Ref: 01.01.01.01-4371U  
UKOP Doc Ref:1211506



Offshore Petroleum Regulator  
for Environment & Decommissioning

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

Date: 23rd June 2022

Department for Business, Energy  
& Industrial Strategy

AB1 Building  
Crimon Place  
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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  
GOLDENEYE DECOMMISSIONING**

I refer to your amended application dated 23rd June 2022, reference PL/2228/2 (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](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**

**GOLDENEYE DECOMMISSIONING**

**PL/2228/2 (Version 1)**

Whereas SHELL U.K. LIMITED has made an application dated 23rd 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, PA/3736, PA/3954, PA/4032 and PA/4198.

Effective Date: 23rd 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 9 February 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](mailto:bst@beis.gov.uk)

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

#### Rock deposits

842 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).

#### Concrete mattress deposits

Two 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).

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

Within an area as described in the direction 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:

N/A

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]



## **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.

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

Deposit of protective mattresses and rock associated with the decommissioning of the following Goldeneye pipelines and umbilical: PI1978, PL1979 and PLU2033 as follows:

PL1978 - One concrete mattress (6x3x0.15m) and up to 398 tonnes of rock on the pipeline.

PL1979 - One concrete mattress (6x3x0.15m) and up to 226 tonnes of rock on the pipeline.

PLU2033 - Up to 218 tonnes of rock on the umbilical.

Note: PL/2228/2 is an administrative variation only, to allow addition of the OGA consent references. No changes to the project.





### Description of project

Sections of the above pipelines and umbilical will be removed under the authority of a separate marine licence. However, the deposit of the above rock and mattresses are the subject of this direction.

The mattresses are existing in the Goldeneye location and will be relocated to the cut PL1978 and PL1979 pipeline ends. Rock will be deposited by fall pipe from a vessel. The project will be supported by two construction vessels and a survey vessel. Project activities are scheduled to occur between February 2022 and December 2022.

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

There is not likely to be any significant impact of the project on population and human health.

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

Any wastes associated with the project will be handled appropriately and no significant impacts are anticipated.

### **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 project location lies within a seaward licenced area within Quad/Block 14/29, which has been licenced for the exploration and extraction of hydrocarbons. The project is located approximately 120 kilometres (km) northeast from the Northeast Scotland coastline and 100km west from the UK/Norwegian median line, in an area where water depth is approximately 120 metres (m). The predominant current in the location is dominated by the Atlantic flows moving southwards, with offshoot currents moving east and a northward outflow via the Norwegian Trough.

The project location is not within any protected areas, with the closest, Turbot Bank (MPA) being approximately 63 km to the southwest. This site is designated for the conservation of sand eel.

Site-specific surveys identified the seabed as having a sediment as consisting of comprised poorly sorted silty sand with slightly varied amounts of sand and silt. The most observed benthic fauna included sea pens. Occasional hermit crabs were also sighted. Numerous burrows were observed, and the area is considered to comprise elements of the OSPAR habitat 'sea pens and burrowing megafauna communities'.

The project works and timing will take place at a time when a number of fish species



may be found to using the area as spawning, juvenile or nursery locations. Sightings of cetaceans are most common during the months of May to October. Seals are not expected to be seen at the remote location. Seabird oil sensitivity is medium to low during the proposed period of operations. The project area is used for demersal, pelagic and shellfish fishing, but with a relatively low historical effort. Shipping intensity at the project location is moderate. The surrounding area comprises other oil and gas infrastructure within 2km, with no telecommunications cables, marine aggregate sites, military exercise areas or renewable energy locations in proximity.

Given the location of the project, the areas identified at paragraphs 2(c)(i), (ii), (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 project were assessed, with focus on the predominant impacts resulting from physical presence from the vessels, atmospheric emissions from vessel use and seabed disturbance from deposit of protective materials.

The project vessels have the potential to cause interference to other users of the sea, namely fishermen and vessel traffic, however they will be primarily located in the Goldeneye safety zone. Their presence within the safety zone means only authorised vessels would be allowed within the 500 m radius of the Goldeneye location, therefore excluding other users of the sea. Given the relatively low importance of the fishing area, the moderate vessel traffic, and that the project is a temporary activity - the impact is deemed insignificant.

The area of seabed disturbance resulting from placement of protective materials is 0.018 km<sup>2</sup>. The main receptor impacted by seabed disturbance will be the benthic communities. Physical disturbance can cause mortality or displacement of benthic species in the impacted zone. The benthic communities in the area are dominated by infaunal, deposit feeding species which are likely to be less affected than surface epifauna. Therefore, the impact on benthic communities will not be significant.

No offshore chemicals will be used and discharged during the project activities.

Emissions to air will occur from combustion plant used on the vessels. The quantity of carbon dioxide equivalent from the vessels amounts to 0.031% of the 2018 total CO<sub>2</sub>e emissions from offshore oil and gas activity. The impact of the vessel emissions will be mitigated by optimising vessel efficiency and hence minimising fuel use. The environmental effects from emissions to air are not expected to have a significant impact on the environment.

There are no expected transboundary impacts because of the project.

There is no possibility of a release of reservoir hydrocarbons associated with the



project. The release of diesel fuel from the project vessels is considered a low risk due to the controls in place. If diesel is released to the marine environment, it is a non-persistent hydrocarbon and will rapidly disperse and evaporate. In the event of a diesel release the vessels would respond in accordance with their shipboard oil pollution emergency plan (SOPEP). There is no major environmental incident potential associated with the project.

Taking all the above determinations into account, the Secretary of State has concluded that the project is not likely to have a significant impact on the environment.

## **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.