

Our Ref: 01.01.01.01-5284U  
UKOP Doc Ref:1224835



Offshore Petroleum Regulator  
for Environment & Decommissioning

TOTALENERGIES E&P UK LIMITED  
18TH FLOOR  
10 UPPER BANK STREET  
CANARY WHARF  
LONDON  
E14 5BF

Registered No.: 00811900

Date: 9th September 2022

Department for Business, Energy  
& Industrial Strategy

AB1 Building  
Crimon Place  
Aberdeen  
AB10 1BJ

Tel [REDACTED]

Fax [REDACTED]

[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**

**Span rectification works on pipeline PL2424**

A screening direction for the project detailed in your application, reference PL/2288/0 (Version 1), dated 11th August 2022 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**

**Span rectification works on pipeline PL2424**

**PL/2288/0 (Version 1)**

Whereas TOTALENERGIES E&P UK LIMITED has made an application dated 11th August 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 agreement to the Oil and Gas Authority to the grant of consent for the project as detailed in the application PA/4247.

Effective Date: 9th September 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 10 September 2022 until 31 October 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

3100 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).

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

As per 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 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:

Please refer to the e-mail sent to you on 09/09/2022 from the Department regarding suggested improvements for future applications.

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 [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 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**

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**

Free span rectification works, using rock protection along three sections of the Dunbar diaphasic pipeline (PL2424) comprising a total of 3,100 tonnes of 1-3 grade rock

### **Description of project**

PL2424 is a surface laid 16" in 18" diaphasic production pipeline running between the Dunbar Platform and the North Alwyn Bravo (NAB) Platform in the central North Sea (CNS). Operations will be conducted from a Construction Support vessel (CSV). Operations are expected to last for approximately 5 days.

The primary objective is to rectify free spans at three locations along PL2424 with 3,100 tonnes of grade 1-3 rock, to address potential hazards to other sea users and



provide a safe overtrawlable rock berm profile with a 1:5 gradient. A fall pipe vessel with mounted underwater camera will be used to accurately place the rock along the free spanning sections of pipeline and a post installation survey will be conducted to verify the deposit location and profile of the rock berm

No cumulative interactions are foreseen with any other existing or approved projects. There is no risk to human health from the works to rectify free spans by depositing the protective materials on the seabed. There is no credible potential for a major accident or disaster to affect this project.

The project is not at risk from natural disasters given its location in UK offshore waters.

### **Location of the Project**

Having regard, in particular, to the matters identified in Schedule 5 2(a) to (c) of the Regulations, the environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected by the project has been considered as follows:

The project area is in the United Kingdom continental shelf (UKCS) in the Central North Sea (CNS), Block 3/9 and is approximately 133km to the east of the Scottish coastline (Shetland) and 15km to the west of the United Kingdom (UK)/Norway median line. Water depth in the area is 145m.

The seabed in the vicinity of the operations is expected to comprise deep circalittoral sand, consisting of fine sands or non-cohesive muddy sands. Environmental surveys undertaken determined that the sediment distribution in the Dunbar area comprised poorly sorted, very fine sand to coarse silt.

Epifaunal animals recorded during surveys of the Dunbar area include the seastar *Astropecten irregularis*, the squat lobster (Galatheidae), urchins (Echinoidea) and one anemone ( *Metridium senile* ). Sea pens are a component of the Scottish Priority Marine Feature (PMF) and Sea pens ( *Pennatula phosphorea* and *Virgularia mirabilis* ) were observed in low numbers. However, are not considered representative of the OSPAR listed 'threatened and declining habitat' 'seapens and burrowing megafauna communities'.

With regard to the infaunal community (animals living in the seabed sediments) in the Dunbar area surveys recorded annelids, crustaceans, molluscs and echinoderms.

Environmental surveys identified that the habitat is characterised by motile epifaunal community comprising sea urchins (Echinoidea), sea stars (Asteroidea) and hermit crabs (Paguroidea) and occasional squat lobsters (Galatheidae). Sedentary epifauna included anemones (Actinaria) and cup corals (Hexacorallia) and an infaunal community of brittle stars (Ophiuroidea), tube worms (Polychaeta) and tusk shells (Scaphopoda).

'Deep circalittoral mixed sediment' was found at two locations in the area, one





approximately 1.2 km south of Alwyn and one approximately 6 km to the east. This biotope complex was characterised by encrusting sponges (Porifera), bryozoans (Bryozoa), hydroids (Hydroida), cup corals and anemones, in addition to a sparse motile epifauna including hermit crabs and squat lobsters.

No habitats of conservation importance were recorded during the survey.

Operations are not located within a designated conservation area and there is no evidence of the presence of Annex 1 habits as defined in the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC).

The operation falls out with recognised fish spawning periods but falls within the nursery period for several species of fish, including cod, sandeel, whiting, saithe, haddock, Norway pout, anglerfish, blue whiting, European hake, herring, ling, mackerel and spurdog, many of which are considered priority marine species in Scotland.

The most observed marine mammal species in the project area during the operational period (September to October) are Harbour porpoise.

The Seabird Oil Sensitivity Index (SOSI) indicates that seabird sensitivity is low during the operational period (September to October). Seabird sensitivity is expected to be low in the surrounding blocks.

The project area is in a location where fishing effort is low throughout the year.

The project area is within an area of low shipping density.

There are a number of other oil and gas developments in the surrounding area. No aggregate dredging, disposal sites, planned offshore renewable energy developments or recreational sailing routes have been identified within 40km of the worksite. A wreck is identified which is located 14km to the southwest of the Dunbar platform, but given the distance is unlikely to be impacted by the proposed operation.

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 impacts on the environment from the activities associated with the project were assessed, with particular focus on the predominant impacts resulting from the physical presence of the vessel and installed 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.



3,100 tonnes rock aggregate (Grade 1-3) (split over 3 locations) will be placed on the seabed using a fall-pipe vessel to allow an overtrawlable rock berm with a 1:5 gradient to be created over the pipeline.

The operation is likely to result in a worst-case seabed footprint of 0.00225 km<sup>2</sup> from the permanent deposits. These deposits will be contained within the boundaries of the pipeline corridor. The addition of these new deposits is likely to present a localised impact within the operational area and is unlikely to have a significant impact to the already developed area of subsea infrastructure and deposits.

The physical presence of the CSV and any associated noise levels and/or any resulting emissions associated with the proposed operation are unlikely to constitute a significant risk to the environment.

There are no expected transboundary impacts and no significant cumulative or in combination impacts have been identified given the other known approved projects in the wider area.

## **2) Decision.**

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.

## **3) 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