

Our Ref: 01.01.01.01-5294U  
UKOP Doc Ref:1225687



Offshore Petroleum Regulator  
for Environment & Decommissioning

TOTALENERGIES E&P UK LIMITED  
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Registered No.: 00811900

Date: 15th September 2022

Department for Business, Energy  
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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  
SEAL PIPELINE PL1570  
ROCK DEPOSIT**

A screening direction for the project detailed in your application, reference PL/2291/0 (Version 2), dated 1st September 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**

**SEAL PIPELINE PL1570  
ROCK DEPOSIT**

**PL/2291/0 (Version 2)**

Whereas TOTALENERGIES E&P UK LIMITED has made an application dated 1st September 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/4236.

Effective Date: 15th 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 25 September 2022 until 30 November 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

1620 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**

Within an area bounded by the coordinates as described in 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 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:

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]



## **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.

Deposit of stabilising rock material to mitigate a free span on the Shearwater Elgin Area Line (SEAL) pipeline (PL1570) between Shearwater and Elgin Fields and Bacton onshore at a section of pipeline within Block 48/3.

### Description of project

The pipeline is a Gas export pipeline. It is approximately 474 km in length and is subject to annual inspections. The 2021 inspection identified an area of freespan that had developed significantly since the previous inspection in 2020 and was thus identified for remediation. Several options were considered for remediation and rock deposit was the option selected as the most appropriate option, with up to 1620 tonnes of rock to be used.

The placement of rock will be undertaken from a marine vessel using a fall pipe to accurately position the rock. It is expected that the deposit of rock will be undertaken in September 2022 although the direction is valid until the 30 November 2022 to allow for operational and weather delays. It is expected that activities will be completed within 5 days. The maximum area of impact will be 0.0018 km<sup>2</sup>

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

There is no risk to human health from the works to deposit the stabilising rock material on the seabed.

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

Any wastes associated with the project will be handled in accordance with a waste



management plan 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 area of the freespan is in the Southern North Sea approximately 105 km off the coast of East Yorkshire. Water depth in the area of operations is 37 m.

The proposed operations are located within an area of the SNS consisting of circalittoral and offshore circalittoral coarse sediment and offshore circalittoral sand, with variable amounts of shell fragments and occasional pebbles and cobbles.

The referenced survey results revealed the dominant habitat to be circalittoral fine sand. However, the area of exposed spanning pipeline was characterised as a circalittoral fouling faunal community.

The project works may take place during spawning periods for herring, lemon sole, sandeels, and lobster.

The main cetacean species that may occur in the vicinity of the proposed operational area are the harbour porpoise, Atlantic white-sided dolphin and the white-beaked dolphin, with most sightings occurring in the spring and summer months.

The project area is in a location where fishing effort is historically moderate.

There is a substantial amount of other oil and gas infrastructure in the surrounding area. There is also an operational wind farms near the project location and a further site close by which is under construction. The project location is not within a military activity zone.

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 physical presence of the 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.





The loose rock used to remedy the pipeline span, support the pipeline, and protect it from future erosion and fishing gear interaction will be placed under and on the pipeline using a fall-pipe from the vessel. Rock was chosen as the most appropriate material for the works given the urgency of the project and the availability and appropriateness of other alternatives.

The total area of seabed impacted will be 0.0018km<sup>2</sup>. The main impacts expected are from smothering and change of habitat. The proposed remediation works are not considered to pose any risk of significant effect on the Southern North Sea (SNS) SAC, impacting 0.0000049% of this SAC. The reason for the protected status of this area is due to the presence of harbour porpoise and given the type of operations and scope of activity impacts are not expected to be significant.

Additionally, considering the very small area of seabed to be impacted by the works, the impact to spawning fish species is not expected to be significant.

Atmospheric emissions are likely from the combustion plant on the vessels involved in the pipeline works. Given the short duration and nature of the operations the emission to the atmosphere are not considered to be significant.

The physical presence of the vessels involved with the work programme will not have an exclusion area attributed to them and would be able to move away from location in an emergency. Whilst the project is in an area of moderate fishing density the impact to other users of the sea is not expected to be significant.

There are no expected transboundary impacts as a result of the project, and the project only contributes insignificantly (0.0011%) to the cumulative impacts that have been identified within the SNS SAC given the other known existing and approved projects in the wider area.

Noise from vessel use will be of short duration and in an already busy shipping area. Consequently, there is no significant impact expected on harbour porpoise populations.

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.