

Our Ref: 01.01.01.01-5303U
UKOP Doc Ref:1226736



Offshore Petroleum Regulator
for Environment & Decommissioning

REPSOL SINOPEC RESOURCES UK LIMITED
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Registered No.: 00825828

Date: 22nd September 2022

Department for Business, Energy
& Industrial Strategy

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Aberdeen
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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
CLAYMORE FIELD, WELL: 14/19-(C58) CAS**

A screening direction for the project detailed in your application, reference DR/2295/0 (Version 2), dated 16th 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.

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**

CLAYMORE FIELD, WELL: 14/19-(C58) CAS

DR/2295/0 (Version 2)

Whereas REPSOL SINOPEC RESOURCES UK LIMITED has made an application dated 16th 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, ref: WONS/14575.

Effective Date: 22nd 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 April 2023.

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:

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 provided below.

1) Decision reasons

The following provides a summary of the assessment 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 has 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, in the 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

- Drilling Claymore field development well: 14/19 (CAS).
- OGA (NSTA) consent application ref: WONS/14575
- Abandon C58 donor well with cement plug.
- Directionally drill side track above plug in 13-3/8" casing.
 - Drill three sections: 12.25", 8.5" and 6" using low toxicity oil-based mud (LTOBM).
 - Run and cement 9-5/8" casing and 7" and 4.25" production liners.
 - Run lower completion and production packer.
 - Suspend well and attach xmas tree.
 - Perforate and handover for production.

Description of the Project

This project is the drilling of the platform development well 14/19a-CAS in the Claymore field (OGA consent application ref: WONS/14575 from the platform's Alpha



drilling rig.

The CAS well is a single well targeting oil from donor well C58, to be recovered with water based mud (WBM) and abandoned with combined cement barrier, tubing recovered and a deviated side track drilled from the C58 13-3/8" casing. The well will be produced at the Claymore platform. It is estimated that drilling will take 145 days between 25th September 2022 and 30th April 2023.

The deviated well will be drilled in three sections 12.25", 8.5" and 6" with LTOBM contaminated cuttings skipped and shipped to shore and LTOBM recovered for re-use. A 9 5/8" casing (for the first section), 7" then 4.5" production liners (for the remaining sections) will be cemented in place. Well contents will be displaced to inhibited seawater, flushed to clean the well. Fluid returns to rig will be either skipped or shipped to shore or where visibly LTOBM free, discharged. The fluid may contain reservoir hydrocarbon, discharged where fluid analysis confirms less than 30 mg/l concentration. The lower completion run and production packer set in the 7" liner and safety valve set in the 9 5/8" casing. The well will be suspended and xmas tree installed. Deep set TCP guns will perforate the well using tracers for positioning and well handed for production.

There is not likely to be any significant impact from the project on population or human health. It is not considered to be likely that the project will be affected by natural disasters. No pollution or nuisances are foreseen from the project.

No cumulative impacts are expected to occur with any other existing or approved projects.

The risk of a major accident such as a well blowout has been assessed. The developer has control measures in place to reduce the risk of a major accident occurring and the probability of such an event occurring is very low.

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: -

Platform well 14/19-C58 is located approximately 130 km from the Scottish coastline and 102km west of the UK/ Norwegian median line. Water depth at the drilling location is 111 metres.

Winds predominate from the south, south-west and west ranging from 8 to 8.5m/s in summer to 12.5 to 13m/s in winter. The mean spring tidal range is between 0.25 and 0.5m and mean significant wave height 1.55 to 2.32m. The central North Sea (CNS) has weak surface currents with regional deeper current speeds of 0.1m/s and residual currents of 0.05 to 0.1 m/s.

Predictive seabed mapping indicates a low energy deep circalittoral mud, sandy mud



and muddy sand to be present. Survey results near Claymore consist of fine sediment with variability in sand content aligning with EUNIS classification 'deep circalittoral mud' and the field is on the north western edge of the Witch Ground Basin, muddy beds associated with pockmarks.

The benthic community associated with these sediments are dominated by polychaete worms and bivalve molluscs. Surveys confirm the presence of sea pens, sea anemones, crustaceans (Norwegian lobster) tubes, shrimp, crab, ling and anthozoans indicative of circalittoral fine mud communities and offshore circalittoral mixed sediments. Seapen and faunal burrows were observed from previous surveys confirming the biotope 'seapens and burrowing megafauna in circalittoral mud' to be present nearby.

There is no evidence of any Annex I habitats. Shallow depressions surveyed showed no evidence of methane derived authigenic carbonate and the nearest Special Area of Conservation (SAC) designated for pockmarks is the Scanner Pockmark 72km south east. The nearest Nature Conservation Marine Protected Area (NC MPA), Central Fladen NC MPA is designated for 'burrowed mud' (seapens and burrowing megafauna and tall seapen components and 'sub glacial tunnel valley' 43 km away. While not found near the platform, juvenile Ocean quahog, also OSPAR listed as threatened or declining and a PMF was found during nearby surveys and therefore potentially present. Seapen and faunal burrows were observed. There is the potential for the OSPAR listed 'seapen and burrowing megafauna communities' habitat to be present as well as the broad scale PMF habitat 'offshore deep-sea muds', 'offshore subtidal sands and gravels' and 'burrowed mud'.

The proposed operations coincide with spawning periods for lemon sole, Norway pout, sandeel whiting and cod (consistently returns to selected spawning areas). Sandeel spawn on sandy substrate and are less likely at Claymore. Shellfish include nephrops (Norwegian lobster) limited to muddy sediment with burrows observed. Several nursery species are present including anglerfish, blue whiting, cod, European hake, haddock, herring, ling, mackerel, Norway pout, Nephrops, sandeel, sprat, spotted ray, spurdog and whiting. Priority marine feature (PMF) species spawning/nursery include whiting, cod, Norway pout, blue whiting, ling, anglerfish, sandeels, herring, mackerel and spurdog (spiny dogfish).

Seabirds observed at the well location include northern fulmar, Manx shearwater, European storm petrel, northern gannet, Arctic/ great skua, black legged kittiwake, great black backed/ common, lesser black backed and herring gull, Arctic tern, common guillemot, razorbill, little auk and Atlantic puffin. Long term decline in some seabird species has been observed. Seabird sensitivity to accidental spill is low to high for the proposed drilling period in this location however it is 130km from shore.

Fin/ minke/ killer whales and bottlenose/ common/ white-beaked/ Atlantic white sided and Risso's dolphin have been sighted along with harbour porpoise. All cetaceans are 'species of national importance' (European protected species - Annex IV of the habitats directive and PMF). Harbour porpoise and bottlenose dolphin are Annex II listed. Sightings are low to very high for the proposed project period. Grey and



harbour seals (Annex II listed and PMF) are unlikely in significant numbers 130 km from shore. Seal density offshore at Claymore is low.

The project is in the National Marine Plan Area for Scotland. The CAS well is in International Council for the Exploration of the Seas (ICES) rectangle 45E9, an area targeted by trawl gears with most fish landed in September and the highest value and landings were shellfish compared to surrounding areas. Effort has fluctuated but overall fallen in the past five years, and low in a UK context. Pelagic and shell fish are less abundant and low in a UK context. Shellfish water protected areas and mariculture sites are located across coasts of Orkney and Shetland and north east Scotland.

Shipping levels are low. There are no military restrictions. The drilling is being done from Claymore platform in an existing 500m safety zone with the nearest oil and gas development 19km away. There are no marine cables, renewable energy, marine aggregates or wrecks.

Given the location of the project, it is not likely that the areas identified at paragraphs 2(c)(i), (iii), (iv), (vi), (vii) of Schedule 5 to the Regulations will 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, physical presence, planned discharges and accidental spills.

The discharge of chemicals used to recover the slot and drill the well, including drill fluids, cementing, completion and well clean-up operations have been assessed and are not considered to have a likely significant environmental impact. Water based mud for slot recovery is largely inert, when displaced to LTOBM interface fluids will be skipped and shipped. Cuttings containing LTOBM (chemical oil) will be separated, skipped and shipped with the LTOBM recovered for re-use. LTOBM in the final section may contain reservoir hydrocarbon, this mud skipped and shipped rather than recovered for re-use.

During normal cementing operations any discharge of cement mixture are limited to minor cement discharge at the seabed in securing the tophole section and residual volume from cleaning out mixing units after use, chemicals risk assessed with no likely significant environmental impact.

Fluids from cleaning the well and running the completions consist of filtered inhibited seawater containing residual base oil (LTOBM) and reservoir hydrocarbon. Initial fluids include clean up chemical and visibly oily LTOBM and reservoir hydrocarbon will be contained, skipped and shipped. Visibly clean LTOBM will be discharged along with flush fluids where reservoir hydrocarbon concentration is 30ppm or less.



Discharges have been assessed and are not considered to have a likely significant effect on the environment.

The closest marine protected area is 43 km from the project. Impacts from discharges on the potential for PMF and OSPAR listed habitat and associated benthic fauna will be localised. Recovery over a short time is expected due to dispersion, dilution, photo and biodegradation and oxidation. If ocean quahog is present, it can tolerate some disturbance. Although the proposed project coincides with fish spawning and nursery species, discharge is from the platform, localised and will recover over a short period. It can be concluded that the project will not have a significant effect on seabed habitat, benthic or fish species.

Operations covered by this permit will coincide with low to very high seabird sensitivity for Block 14/19. Mitigation is in place to ensure the risk of any release or discharge that could be harmful to seabirds is minimised. The project is not considered to have a significant impact on seabirds.

A range of whale and dolphin species have been sighted in block 14 with a high density of white beaked dolphin and harbour porpoise during part of the proposed drilling period. Other species may be present but not observed. All cetaceans are species of national importance, Annex IV European protected species and harbour porpoise is also Annex II listed under the Habitats Directive. Given the natural avoidance behaviour of cetaceans, it is not expected that these species would be significantly impacted by the project.

There will be no impact upon other users of the sea, the project is being undertaken from the Claymore platform in a statutory 500m safety exclusion zone. The safety zone excludes unauthorised access by vessels and prohibits access to fishing vessels.

There are no expected transboundary effects from the drilling operations from the project location. The nearest boundary (UK/Norway Median Line) is located approximately 102 km away. It is not considered likely that any planned discharge will be detectable at this distance from the drilling site.

Although not a planned activity, a worst-case major accident scenario resulting from a potential well blow-out was modelled and assessed. The probability of a large oil spill from the proposed operations is low. Therefore, it is considered that the control measures in place to prevent loss of well control, minimise the risk of an oil spill which could have a significant impact and the proposed operations carried out as planned are not likely to have a significant effect on the environment.

The drilling equipment is electrically driven on Claymore platform and not anticipated to significantly change the platforms operational emissions which are monitored controlled and mitigated remaining within permitted levels. It can therefore be concluded that any impacts from emissions from the project are not considered to be significant.



The drilling operations do not contradict any of the Scottish Marine Plan objectives and policies. It is considered that the drilling of the well is not likely to have a significant impact with other offshore activities or other users of the sea and no cumulative impacts are expected to occur.

2) 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.

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:

There are no significant adverse effects on the environment.