

Our Ref: 01.01.01.01-5385U
UKOP Doc Ref:1237924



Offshore Petroleum Regulator
for Environment & Decommissioning

PERENCO UK LIMITED
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LONDON
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Registered No.: 04653066

Date: 17th November 2022

Department for Business, Energy
& Industrial Strategy

AB1 Building
Crimon Place
Aberdeen
AB10 1BJ

Tel [REDACTED]

Fax

www.gov.uk/beis
bst@beis.gov.uk

Dear Sir / Madam

**THE OFFSHORE OIL AND GAS EXPLORATION, PRODUCTION, UNLOADING
AND STORAGE (ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT) REGULATIONS
2020
PIPELINE PL22**

A screening direction for the project detailed in your application, reference PL/2327/0 (Version 2), dated 14th November 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**

PIPELINE PL22

PL/2327/0 (Version 2)

Whereas PERENCO UK LIMITED has made an application dated 14th November 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/4328.

Effective Date: 17th November 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 17 November 2022 until 31 October 2023.

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

52,348 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 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 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

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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

This provides a summary of the assessments undertaken by OPRED (Offshore Petroleum Regulator for Environment and Decommissioning) 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 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 in Schedule 5 1(a) to (g) of the Regulations, the characteristics of the project include the following:

This screening direction (ref: PL/2327) relates to a 2022 pipeline remediation campaign involving the placement of deposits (rock) on the seabed to secure and support degrading rock berms supporting PL/22.

Summary of project

The deposit of 52,348 tonnes of rock on gas pipeline PL/22 at two locations under PA/4328

Description of project

The PL22 gas pipeline connects the Inde 23A platform to the Lemn 27B platform in the southern North Sea, traversing UKCS blocks 49/23a-c, 49/27a-c, and 49/28c. It



conveys gas from several fields produced at Inde platform and exported to Lemn platform. At its closest point the PL22 pipeline is located approximately 54 kilometres (km) north-east from Bacton on the Norfolk coast and 32 km west of the UK / Netherlands median line and is routinely inspected to monitor the development of exposures and freespans with remediation work on the pipeline identified and undertaken as necessary.

Perenco plans to carryout the placement of up to 52,348 tonnes of rock by dynamically positioned vessel (deployed from a fall pipe with ROV and acoustic positioning) to secure existing rock berms subject to scour at 2 locations on pipeline PL22. Location 1 rock berm was installed in 2010. Location 2 rock berm was installed prior to 2003 and is situated in two Special Areas of Conservation (SACs). The earliest commencement date of operations is 18th November 2022 and the latest completion date is 31st October 2023.

Scour correction is essential to ensure pipeline integrity, prevent failure through berm collapse and protect the safety of other users of the sea. Fishing vessels are particularly vulnerable to snagging hazards such as these. Remediation is proposed by filling in the scour bowl at a 1 in 5 slope, at or below seabed level to allow sand migration to continue across the berm and pipeline and minimise the risk of berm collapse.

No significant cumulative or in combination impacts are expected to occur between this project and other existing projects.

It is not considered to be likely that the project will be affected by natural disasters, or unplanned major accident scenarios and there is no risk to population or human health.

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 PL22 pipeline connects the Inde 23A platform to the Lemn 27B platform in the southern North Sea. Two locations have been identified for remediation, one outside any sites designated for conservation interest, the second location is within the North Norfolk Sandbanks and Saturn Reef SAC and the Southern North Sea SAC.

At its closest point the PL22 pipeline is located approximately 31 km west of the UK / Netherlands median line and 53km from the UK mainland. The water depth in the vicinity of the deposit areas vary between 27 and 40 m and the seabed sediments are sublittoral coarse sediment, sand, mud and mixed sediments. The faunal communities found in the area are those typically associated with sublittoral coarse sediment, sand, and mixed sediments, supporting various biotopes such as polychaetes, amphipods, bivalves and echinoderms.



One of the two deposit locations, location 2, is within the Southern North Sea SAC, designated for harbour porpoise and within the North Norfolk Sandbanks and Saturn Reef (NNS) Special Area of Conservation (SAC), designated for sub-tidal sandbank slightly covered by seawater at all times and Sabellaria spinulosa reef features. The project is 19km between the closest deposit location and Haisborough Hammond and Winterton (HHW) SAC which is designated for the protection of Annex I sandbank and reef. Sabellaria spinulosa reef is potentially present within the vicinity of pipeline deposit location 2. Recent surveys indicated a number of areas of good confidence level for Sabellaria but none overlap with the proposed project area.

Harbour porpoise and white-beaked dolphin have been sighted in the area. Surveys indicate a moderate cetacean presence during the potential operational period. Spawning for herring, lemon sole, mackerel, plaice, sandeels, nephrops and sprat may coincide with the project works. The project area is not within a commonly fished ground and fishing effort is historically very low. Seabird sensitivity in the area is low to very high during the period of operations.

Oil and gas activity in the vicinity of the project is high and the project area of the Southern North Sea (SNS) have extensive oil and gas infrastructure. The closest operational offshore wind farm, East Anglia North Tranche One West (Norfolk Vanguard West), located approximately 14km to the southwest which has been submitted for decision. The pipeline does not cross licensed offshore dredging, dumping or aggregate areas and crosses one telecoms cable with no charted or protected wrecks near it. Due to the proximity of key ports around the Norfolk and Lincolnshire coasts, the density of shipping traffic is high in the southern North Sea but low to medium at the project location itself. There are no Royal Air Force Practice and Exercise Areas (PEXA) in the vicinity.

Given the location of the project, it is not likely that 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 Schedule 5 paragraph 3 of 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 physical presence of a vessel on location and seabed disturbance.

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 physical presence of the single vessel involved will not have an exclusion area, however the vessel will be subject to navigational provisions and able to move away in an emergency.

The project is in a very low-level fishing area and so the impact to other users of the sea is not expected to be significant. The rock deployment vessel is likely to cross the



Greater Wash SPA when transiting to and from port. Common scoter and red throated diver can be vulnerable to disturbance particularly during the overwintering period, but it will be restricted to existing navigational routes with control measures in place to reduce noise and disturbance with no likely significant effect on the site.

The project has the potential to deposit 52,348 tonnes of rock at two locations on the pipeline. This will cause seabed disturbance and loss of soft sediment habitat in an area of up to 14,611m² along the pipeline corridor. This is a conservative estimate as it assumes that all the deposit material will be used including contingency amounts. This is a relatively small area compared to the wider southern North Sea with similar soft sediment habitat. The placement of the deposits could have a permanent impact on the local sediment faunal communities, potentially smothering any flora and fauna directly beneath it.

The deposit of 27,690 te of rock at location 2 on PL22 is in an existing area of scour. This will result in a localised loss of Annex I sandbank in the North Norfolk Sandbanks and Saturn Reef SAC. A low-profile rock berm is proposed, at sufficient low angled profile to unimpede natural processes, enabling sand to continue to migrate over the berm and pipeline while protecting the berm and pipeline from collapse. The project is near an area of good confidence Sabellaria but does not directly overlap it. The impact area equates to 0.0002% of this SAC or 0.009km². The deposit also equates to a loss of 0.009km² of the SNS SAC or 0.00002% of this site. Operations may result in temporary re-suspension of sediments; however, species have adapted to a naturally dynamic marine environment in the SNS. The impact is localised, and the deposits are not expected to significantly impact either SAC from associated loss or disturbance.

The short-term nature and low levels of noise associated with the operations are not likely to have a significant impact on harbour porpoise. Given the above, the proposed placement of deposits is not likely to significantly impact harbour porpoise the qualifying feature of the SNS SAC.

It is considered that the proposed operations to stabilise rock berms at two locations on PL22 in order to remove snag hazard and prevent failure of the gas pipeline at the specified locations is not likely to have a significant impact. There will be no impact cumulatively with other activities and no transboundary impacts are expected to occur. The proposal aligns with the policies in the East Offshore National Marine Plan.

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.

2) Mitigation of significant effects

The following are features of the project or measures envisaged that the developer

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has proposed to avoid or prevent what might otherwise have been significant adverse effects on the environment:

Not applicable for the proposed activities.