

Our Ref: 01.01.01.01-5718U
UKOP Doc Ref:1294174



Offshore Petroleum Regulator
for Environment & Decommissioning

CNOOC PETROLEUM EUROPE LIMITED
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Registered No.: 01051137

Date: 4th September 2023

Department for Energy Security &
Net Zero

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Crimon Place
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OPRED@energysecurity.gov.uk

Dear Sir / Madam

**THE OFFSHORE OIL AND GAS EXPLORATION, PRODUCTION, UNLOADING
AND STORAGE (ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT) REGULATIONS
2020
PIPELINE PL1282**

A screening direction for the project detailed in your application, reference PL/2399/0 (Version 2), dated 30th August 2023 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 OPRED@energysecurity.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 PL1282

PL/2399/0 (Version 2)

Whereas CNOOC PETROLEUM EUROPE LIMITED has made an application dated 30th August 2023, 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, PWA/4194.

Effective Date: 4th September 2023



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 4 September 2023 until 31 December 2024.

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: OPRED@energysecurity.gov.uk

3 Nature of stabilisation or protection materials

Steel Protection Structures

1 steel gooseneck protection structure, measuring 4.9m x 2.9m x 3.6m

1 steel PLEM protection structures, measuring 17m x 14.5m x 7m

Telford Replacement Jumpers

Jumper no.1, measuring 0.0127m x 9m

Jumper no.2, measuring 0.0127m x 8m

Grout bags deposits

216 tonnes of grout bags contained within 25 kilogramme capacity biodegradable bags (8640 bags in number) (The number of bags deposited should be the minimum required to provide the necessary protection, and any surplus bags must be returned to land).

Concrete mattress deposits

36 concrete mattresses, each measuring 6 metres x 3 metres x 300 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 bounded by the coordinates as specified 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

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:

OPRED@energysecurity.gov.uk

or

Offshore Petroleum Regulator for Environment & Decommissioning
Department for Energy Security & Net Zero
AB1 Building
Crimon Place
Aberdeen
AB10 1BJ

Tel [REDACTED]
Fax



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 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:

The Scott pipeline protection project scope of works is to undertake works between pipeline PL823 and PL1282. This is to provide dropped object and trawler protection over the gas export subsea isolation valve (SSIV) within the PLEM structure, and over the gooseneck spool section at the PLEM (Pipeline End Manifold) structure. This involves depositing two permanent steel protection structures and the potential replacement of jumpers, as well as temporary deposits. The works will include the following:

Installation of a steel gooseneck protection structure (4.9m x 2.9m x 3.6m) for the spool section outboard of the PLEM structure;

Installation of a steel structure to protect the subsea isolation valve (SSIV) within the Pipeline End Manifold (PLEM) measuring 17m x 14.5m x 7m, on the PL823 pipeline;

The use of 36 concrete mattresses at exposed areas of the gas export pipeline (within the existing 500m exclusion zone). 2 mattresses will be outside of the 500m zone, and locator beacons will be used to plot the location of the 4 corners of each mattress, which will be recorded on as built drawings;

The use of 8640 x 25Kg biodegradable hessian grout bags to protect the pipeline;



Jumper inspection and replacement on the PL1282 line to Telford. Jumper lengths are 8m and 9m respectively.

Description of project

Gas flow on the 10" gas export pipeline (PL823) between the Scott Drilling and Processing Platform (D&P) and the Scottish Area Gas Evacuation pipeline (SAGE) will be reversed, to enable import gas to be used at the Scott platform. The work will be undertaken between pipeline numbers PL823 and PL1282. A jumper inspection and replacement project will also be undertaken following a leak that was discovered on the corrosion inhibitor line to Telford.

The estimated duration of the protection structure workscope is 4 days, with the potential for the jumper investigation and replacement activities at Telford expected to last 1 day. The proposed projects will be undertaken within and outside of the 500m exclusion zones at the Scott and Telford infrastructure.

Gooseneck and PLEM protection structures

A gooseneck spool section which is currently in place, requires protection, and a steel frame structure will be provided over the spool section. A similar protection frame will be used to protect the SSIV within the PLEM structures. The diver support vessel (DSV) crane will lift the structures from the vessel and will rest these on pre laid concrete mattresses, before the divers (with the aid of rigging) move the structures into place. The concrete mattresses will then be moved to their final positions.

Grout Bags and Mattresses

Grout bags will be lowered into place from the DSV using either ROVs and /or divers. The bags will be used to protect the pipeline at exposed areas of the gas export/import line within the 500m zone. Mattresses will also be used as a resting point for the steel protection structures, and for exposed areas of the pipeline.

The project will use one DSV, with no other vessels required. The permanent seabed disturbance as a result of the installation activities will impact an area of 0.0013 km².

No cumulative interactions are foreseen with any other existing or approved projects. There is no risk to human health from the works to install the pipelines or depositing the protective materials 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 appropriately and no significant impacts are anticipated. The project is not at risk from natural disasters given its location in UK offshore waters.

Other than the matters considered further below, there is not likely to be any significant impact from the project on population and human health.



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:

The Scott platform is located in the central North Sea, approximately 72km from the UK/Norwegian median line and 142 km from the Scottish mainland. Samples taken from within the Scott area are represented by homogenous fine material (silt and clay or mud) with low but variable proportions of sand and minimal coarse material. Sample locations around the site were classified as 'circalittoral fine mud'.

Mean water depth is approximately 140 m at the platform area and the wave height ranges from 2.11 - 2.4m. Numerous strings of pockmarks were observed which were interpreted to be relict, likely originating from gas seep features. There was no evidence of the Annex I leaking gases or submarine structures made by leaking gases during any survey of the area.

A survey of the area showed that the area had a moderately diverse macrofaunal community, dominated by burrowing anemone and polychaete. Two clusters of macrofaunal communities were noted with the difference in each thought to be attributed to the slight variations in sediment type across the survey area. The epifauna within the area is sparse, comprising sea pens, mobile crustaceans such as hermit crab and squat lobsters. The data also shows the presence of burrowing megafauna, with the slender sea pen observed. Sea pen density was low, but using the SACFOR scale, sea pen density was measured as 'frequent'. Burrowing megafauna was also observed however the potential presence is thought to be low using the OSPAR definition. Juvenile ocean quahog were also observed in low densities.

Minke whale, white-beaked dolphin, Atlantic white-sided dolphin and harbour porpoise have all been recorded in the vicinity of the Scott area. Densities of the species are categorised as low to moderate, with the exception of the harbour porpoise and white beaked dolphin which are observed in high density from May to September. Grey and harbour seals may be encountered but due to the distance from shore, it is unlikely that the area is visited regularly or in high numbers. Density maps show the presence of grey and harbour seals in the area of the platform as 0-1 individuals per 25Km².

Seabird oil sensitivity in the vicinity of the Scott field is low to extremely high throughout the year, peaking in January, September and October.

The Scott platform is not situated within any conservation areas, with the nearest area of conservation interest being the Scanner Pockmark SAC which lies 37km to the east. This site is designating for the Annex I habitat 'submarine structures made by leaking gases'. The nearest NCMFA is the Central Fladen NCMFA which is 64km to the north, which is designed for the protection of burrowed mud including sea pens and burrowing megafauna.

The Scott field lies within fishing designated ICES rectangle 45F0, however the majority of the project work scope lies within existing 500m exclusion zones, where fishing vessels are already excluded. The proposed operations will coincide with fish spawning and/or nursery activity for a number of species. The proposed project is primarily used for demersal fishing and shellfish, with fishing effort in the area



accounting for only 1.46% of overall UKCS fishing effort, and 0.88% of overall UKCS value. It is not anticipated that the proposed laying of the new infrastructure will have a significant impact on the fishing industry in the area.

The location of the proposed activity is not within a MoD practice and exercise area and there are no military restrictions. There are three wrecks within the area of the project, but none are wrecks designated under the Protection of Military Remains or are of Historical Importance. There are no wind farms close to the area, with the Acorn (CCS) project located 36km to the southwest of the Scott and Telford project area. The Sectoral Marine Plan 2020 identifies an option area referred to as NE7 (for offshore wind), which is 82km west of the Block 15/21. The closest telecommunications cable (CNS fibre optic telecommunications cable) is located 57km to the south of the project area. It is not anticipated that the operations at Scott and Telford fields will have a significant impact on either the wrecks, cables or CCS areas.

Given the location of the project, it is not likely that the areas identified at paragraphs 2(c)(i), (iii), (iv), (vi), (vii) or (viii) 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. 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 project operations will be undertaken within and outside the currently established 500m exclusion zones. The DSV will be in location for a maximum of 5 days and due to the low fishing effort in the area, it is not thought that the presence of the DSV will impact on fishing in the area. It is also understood from the vessel traffic survey data, that there are approx. 9 vessel transits per day and the presence of the DSV should not impact on shipping in the area. The DSV will meet with the relevant guidance regarding lighting, and notifications to the other users of the sea. It is therefore concluded that there should be no likely significant effects in terms of physical presence from the project.

Seabed disturbance will occur from the permanent placement of the steel protection structures, grout bags and mattresses. The seabed will be compacted within the footprint of the deposits, and may result in the loss of benthic habitat. The deposits also represent the introduction of a new hard substrata into the area, with the natural habitat and communities lost. Burrowed mud habitats show a medium sensitivity to abrasion/penetration which may be caused by the project activities. Sea pen have been shown to re-anchor themselves after disturbance and can be resilient. Ocean Quahog are sensitive to increased siltation and can bury into the sediment when disturbed as long as their inhalant siphon is not damaged. Ocean quahog have a short life span and a high reproduction rate, and given the small area of seabed affected (0.0013km²), it is not thought that the project activities will impact on the



population of the species. Given the above, it is expected that the benthic communities will regenerate in the area over time. It is anticipated that the new infrastructure will create a new habitat for benthic organisms, such as epifauna or encrusting animals.

Noise generated from the project activities will not be significant, and it is concluded that the project is not expected to have a likely significant effect on the site in relation to harbour porpoise and the supporting habitats and prey.

There are no expected transboundary effects from the project proposal. The nearest boundary (UK/Norwegian median) is located approximately 72 km from the proposed project location. It is not considered likely that any planned operational discharge (chemicals) will be detectable at this distance from the project locations.

Consideration has been given to the accidental release of hydrocarbon from the DSV. The assessment concluded that a loss of diesel will quickly evaporate (due to the light ends) and the low asphaltene content should reduce the persistence in the marine environment. The DSV has a shipboard oil pollution emergency plan which details suitable mitigation in place to prevent such an occurrence.

The proposed operation will utilise one DSV, and atmospheric emissions have been assessed from the diesel used for this vessel, and the time spent on location. The total atmospheric emissions from the vessels undertaking the project work, accounts for 0.0015% of the total UKCS (oil and gas exploration and production) CO₂(e) emissions (using 2021 as a baseline). The emissions may result in a deterioration of the local air quality, but due to the relatively short duration of the work, and that the exposed conditions in the area will rapidly disperse the emissions, it is not anticipated that there will be a significant impact.

It is considered that the proposed activities are not likely to have a significant impact on other offshore activities or other users of the sea and no cumulative impacts are expected to occur.

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

Not applicable