

Our Ref: 01.01.01.01-5865U
UKOP Doc Ref:1332013



Offshore Petroleum Regulator
for Environment & Decommissioning

TAQA BRATANI LIMITED
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Registered No.: 05975475

Date: 15th March 2024

Department for Energy Security &
Net Zero

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Aberdeen
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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 PL3132 repair**

I refer to your amended application dated 6th March 2024, reference PL/2430/1 (Version 2).

It has been determined that the proposed changes to the project is not likely to result in a significant effect on the environment, and therefore an environmental impact assessment is not required.

A screening direction is therefore issued for the changes to the project. An amended schedule of conditions, comments, and main reasons for the decision on the amended application, 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

Signature valid

Digitally signed by Department for Energy
Security and Net Zero
Date: 2024.03.15 15:43:38 GMT
Reason: On behalf of the Secretary of State
Location: Offshore Petroleum Regulator for
Environment and Decommissioning



**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 PL3132 repair

PL/2430/1 (Version 2)

Whereas TAQA BRATANI LIMITED has made an application dated 6th March 2024, 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/4737.

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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 31 October 2023 until 31 July 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

Grout bags deposits

68 tonnes of grout contained within 1000 kilogramme capacity bags. (The number of bags deposited should be the minimum required to provide the necessary protection, and any surplus bags must be returned to land).

2 tonnes of grout contained within 25 kilogramme capacity bags. (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

6 concrete mattresses, each measuring 6 metres x 3 metres. (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

As detailed 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:

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]

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 assessment undertaken 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 change to the Project

PL/2430/1 - This variation is for date extension and summary of installation items currently wet stored which will be recovered during a summer campaign due to the project being cancelled part way through operations.

Summary of the project

Installation of the replacement tie-in spool piece (two 12 m sections) which will reconnect PL3132 to the blind flange at the Eider end of the pipeline.

Grout bags will be installed along length of spool piece

Excavation may be required for installation of spool piece.

Repair of two sections of the PL3132 pipeline

Installation of clamps to repair pipeline sections

Deposition of grout bags, concrete mattresses and dredging will be required



Description of the project

The initial project is the second stage of repairs to the Otter water injection pipeline (PL3132). The first stage involved the removal of a section of the water injection pipeline tie-in spool and the installation of blind flange on the Eider end of PL3132. The second phase (PL/2430/0) was due to involve the installation of the replacement tie-in spool piece (two 12 m sections) which was due reconnect PL3132 to the blind flange at the Eider end of the pipeline and the repair of two sections of the PL3132 pipeline. This direction (PL/2430/1) was for the date extension as the operations were cancelled part way through however some subsea equipment remained subsea which will be collected as part of a summer campaign.

The installation of the replacement tie-in spool piece was due to involve the removal of the blind flange and the installation of the two-replacement spool-piece sections which will have an isolation valve fitted. Dredging may be required for installation (up to 2 m³). Grout bags will be installed for protection and support. A leak test will be performed thereafter. This will take place within the Eider 500 m exclusion zone.

The repair of pipeline PL3132 will involve the installation of two clamp assemblies. Dredging will be required to install the equipment (up to 88 m³). Grout bags will be installed for protection and support. Concrete mattresses will be placed on the seabed to provide a laydown area for the clamps. These mattresses will be reused to provide pipeline protection once clamp installation is complete. Grout bags will be installed for pipeline support. Operations will occur 2 km from the Eider platform and not within a 500 m exclusion zone. The combined duration of all activities is expected to be 16 days.

The permanent seabed deposits of grout bags and mattresses will impact an area of 0.0001796 km². The installation of the clamps will impact an area of 0.0000085 km².

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

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 project is located in block 211/16. It is 119 km to the northeast of UK shorelines and 32 km from the UK-Norway median line in a water depth of 158 m.



The seabed in the Eider area comprises muddy sand or slightly gravelly muddy sand. The EUNIS classification of the benthos is ' *Circalittoral muddy sand* ' (A5.26), ' *Polychaete-rich deep Venus community in offshore mixed sediments* ' (A5.451), and ' *Capitella capitata and Thyasira spp. in organically-enriched offshore circalittoral mud and sandy mud* ' (A5.374). There are no Annex I habitats identified in the proposed project area. It is noted that there were depressions observed on the seabed during a survey, which may indicate the presence of the Annex I habitat ' *Submarine structures made by leaking gases* '. However, methane derived authigenic carbonates (MDAC) were not identified during surveys.

The following benthic Priority Marine Features (PMFs) have been identified in the proposed project area: Ocean quahog and *Lophelia pertusa* (cold water coral reefs). However, *Lophelia pertusa* was found on man-made subsea structures only. There are no protected sites within 40km of the Eider area.

The following PMF fish species have been identified in the project area: blue whiting, cod, herring, ling, mackerel, Norway pout, saithe, spurdog (as spiny dogfish) and whiting. The project area is primarily used for demersal fishing and the fishing effort in the area is considered to be low.

The project is within the Scottish National Marine Plan area.

Five species of cetaceans have been spotted in waters around the Eider area: Atlantic white-sided dolphin, harbour porpoise, killer whale, minke whale and white-beaked dolphin. Grey and harbour seals may be encountered in the area; however, are not expected to be found in significant densities.

Seabird sensitivity to oil pollution ranges from low to high within the vicinity of the area of operations.

Shipping density in the proposed project area is considered to be very low. There are several oil and gas fields nearby. There are no submarine cables within 40 km of the project or aquaculture sites. There are no nearby Ministry of Defence practice areas or operational renewable energy sites, nor any under construction in the vicinity.

There are 22 wrecks within 40 km of the proposed project area. The closest wreck is located 10 km southwest of the proposed operations.

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 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 operations will result in a combined impact area of 0.00044 km² of the seabed. Contributors to this are dredging operations, placement of infrastructure and placement of protection materials. The project area is not in a protected site nor have Annex I habitats been identified in the area. Five individuals of ocean quahog were identified in the area during a survey. Given the low numbers of ocean quahog in the area, lack of Annex I habitats, no benthic spawners at the times of proposed operations (October to March) and low footprint of the proposed project activities (0.00044 km²) no significant impacts on the seabed and benthos are expected.

Atmospheric emissions involve the combustion of fuels for the operation of vessels for a combined duration of 16 days (2 days for one vessels and 14 days for another). The emissions estimated contribute 0.004% of the total atmospheric emissions associated with UK offshore activities in a year. The impacts arising from combustion of fuels on air quality and climate change are not considered significant given the small mass of emissions, short duration of proposed operations and distance from land of proposed operations.

The operations will be undertaken within and out of a 500 m exclusion zone. The activities are expected to last a maximum of 16 days which will exclude fishing vessels for works occurring outside the 500m zone, unauthorised access to vessels within the 500 m zone already prohibits fishing vessels. Given the short duration, impacts with other sea users are expected to be minimal and not significant.

The operations do not involve any impulsive noise generation and are not located in protected area. Cetacean abundance is low to moderate for two species. Therefore, any impacts arising from underwater noise are not expected to be significant.

The operations involve the repairs of a pipeline that does not contain hydrocarbons. The main risk of accidental release of hydrocarbons is from a loss of diesel inventory from a vessel. The assessment showed that there is no potential for a significant effect from the loss of diesel from a vessel. The pipeline repair involves the use and discharge of small amounts of chemicals which has been risk assessed and the impacts determined to be negligible.

Cumulative impacts resulting from the operations are not expected given the distance from shore, location, scale and duration of operations. No transboundary impacts are expected due to operations taking place 32 km from the UK/Norway median line, duration and scope of operations.

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:

N/A