

Our Ref: 01.01.01.01-6101U
UKOP Doc Ref:1333878



Offshore Petroleum Regulator
for Environment & Decommissioning

BP EXPLORATION OPERATING COMPANY LIMITED
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Registered No.: 00305943

Date: 26th March 2024

Department for Energy Security &
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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**

Scheihallion Central Drill Centre EFL installation

A screening direction for the project detailed in your application, reference PL/2459/0 (Version 4), dated 25th March 2024 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**

Scheihallion Central Drill Centre EFL installation

PL/2459/0 (Version 4)

Whereas BP EXPLORATION OPERATING COMPANY LIMITED has made an application dated 25th 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/5017.

Effective Date: 26th March 2024

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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 1 April 2024 until 31 March 2025.

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

7.4 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).

4 Location of pipeline and stabilisation or protection materials

Within an area bounded by the coordinates as listed in the SAT

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 further 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 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 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

- i) The Installation of 2 electrical flying leads (EFLs) from Controls Distribution Assembly (CDA) C24 to Well WW06
- ii) The installation of 2 EFL leads from CDA C24 to well WW16
- iii) Permanent deposits equating to 296 25kg grout bags
- iv) Associated temporary deposits for installation methods.

Description of the Project

The project involves two new electrical flying leads (EFL's) of 150 m each (PLU6454 and PL6455) for well WW06 and two new electrical flying leads (EFL's) of 220 m



each (PLU6456 and PL6457) for well WW16. 25kg Grout bags will be deployed for stabilisation material consisting of the following PLU6454 - 60 grout bags, PLU6455 - 60 grout bags, PLU6456 - 88 grout bags, PLU6457 - 88 grout bags. All operations will occur within the existing drill centre 500 m zone and are included in the Pipeline Works Authorisation (PWA).

The Normand Subsea construction vessel will be utilised for operations with an estimated 2 days for completion for Schiehallion Central drill centre. The temporary disturbance of the seabed from the pipeline activities is 80.55 m² with a permanent disturbance of 33.3 m². This equates to a total seabed impact of 0.00011385 km² within the Faroe Shetland sponge belt. There is no risk to human health from the works to install the EFL's 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.

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 proposed project is located in the Schiehallion field, West of Shetland (WoS), in UKCS Block 204/25 and block 204/20, approximately 112 kilometers (km) to the west of the Shetland Islands, and 35 km to the east of the UK-Faroes median line, in a depth of approximately 358 metres (m).

The area in the vicinity of Schiehallion field is characterised as the European Nature Information System (EUNIS) habitat "Deep circalittoral mixed sediments (A5.45)". The sediments present across the Schiehallion area consist of gravelly muddy sand, muddy sandy gravel and muddy gravel. 'Offshore subtidal sand and gravels' and 'Deep sea sponge aggregations' are Priority Marine Features (PMFs) in the Schiehallion area. Site surveys showed low resemblance to rocky reefs, a constituent habitat of Annex I 'Reefs'. The mean significant wave height in the area is 1-3m with a winter average of 6m. Current speeds in the area are between 0.26 m s⁻¹ and 0.5 m s⁻¹ during spring peak flow, and during neap peak flow are between 0.11 m s⁻¹ and 0.25 m s⁻¹.

The fauna observed across the survey area are regularly observed within the North East Atlantic area. The worksite lies within the Faroe-Shetland Sponge Belt NCMFA. Site surveys were conducted in 2022 which recorded low density of sponges in the area. No live Ocean Quahog were identified at any survey station.

Minke whale, long finned pilot whale, white beaked dolphin, harbour porpoise, killer whales, and Risso's dolphins occur in the area at low densities, with Atlantic white-sided dolphins occurring at low to moderate densities. Harbour and grey seals



are unlikely to occur in the area.

Seabird vulnerability in Block 204/25 and block 204/20 is generally low to medium throughout the year, with the exception of January and November when it is very high.

The proposed operations will coincide with fish spawning and/or nursery activity for a number of species.

There are a number of different seabed users which are active in the region. The nearest marine cable is 10.5 km away. No aggregate dredging and disposal sites, sites of marine archaeological interests, planned offshore renewable energy developments or recreational sailing routes have been identified within 40km of the operation. There is a number of wrecks within a 20km radius with the closest being 2km away. Fishing effort in the area is low.

Shipping density in the area is very low. The project is in the National Marine Plan Area for Scotland.

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

There is a 500 m radius safety zone around the Schiehallion Central Drill Centre excluding unauthorised access of vessels and prohibiting access to fishing vessels. No additional impacts to fisheries are identified. No likely significant effects in terms of physical presence from the project are expected.

Seabed disturbance will occur from the surface laying of EFL's, temporary disturbance from installation equipment and the introduction of the protection materials. The disturbance of the seabed will result in the smothering and mortality of benthic fauna which will result in some short-term temporary impacts. None of the disturbance events are expected to cause significant impact to benthic receptors with a large area of similar seabed in the project area.

The most risk is from direct impact resulting from the installation of infrastructure on the seabed with some smothering. It is expected that the benthic communities will regenerate in the area over time. The total area impacted from the direct operations



will result in a temporary impact of 80.55 m² with a permanent disturbance of 33.3 m².

The area of permanent impact from the operations constitutes 0.00011385 km² of the Faroe-Shetland Sponge Belt NCMPA. The cumulative impact of the operations is therefore considered "negligible" as this operation represents a small increase in the total area of anthropogenetic disturbance to the NCMPA. Given the extent of habitat disturbance at Schiehallion in relation to the size of the NCMPA and the distance between Schiehallion Central and other activities, it is not expected that this will have a significant cumulative impact on the integrity of the designated features or the conservation objectives of the NCMPA.

Fish, marine mammals and benthic species (which may be PMFs, Annex II species and EPSs) are not considered to be significantly impacted. Underwater noise from routine EFL installation operations is considered to have a negligible impact on marine mammals and fish species as the majority of noise is of low frequency.

There are no expected transboundary effects from the operations. The nearest boundary (Faroes median line) is located approximately 35km of the operations.

Discharge of offshore chemicals associated with the tie in operations have been assessed as not likely to have a significant effect on the environment.

The main risk of accidental release of hydrocarbons is resulting from a loss of diesel inventory from a vessel with the probability of a diesel spill from a vessel involved in the project is very low, with numerous mitigation measures and procedures in place. It is concluded that an accidental release of a hydrocarbon during the project is not considered to have the potential to cause a major environmental incident (MEI).

The proposed operation will utilise a single vessel, and atmospheric emissions have been assessed from the diesel used for each vessel, and the time spent on location. The total atmospheric emissions from the vessels undertaking the project work, accounts for 0.0004% of the total UKCS CO₂ emissions. The emissions may result in a deterioration of the local air quality, but due to the 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.

The project is in accordance with the National Marine Plan for Scotland's objectives and policies.

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

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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