

Our Ref: 01.01.01.01-5971U
UKOP Doc Ref:1338041



Offshore Petroleum Regulator
for Environment & Decommissioning

SERICA ENERGY CHINOOK LIMITED
H1 BUILDING
HILL OF RUBISLAW
ANDERSON DRIVE
ABERDEEN
AB15 6BY

Registered No.: SC335305

Date: 18th April 2024

Department for Energy Security &
Net Zero

AB1 Building
Crimon Place
Aberdeen
AB10 1BJ

Tel [REDACTED]
Fax [REDACTED]

www.gov.uk/desnz
opred@energysecurity.gov.uk

Dear Sir / Madam

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

A screening direction for the project detailed in your application, reference PR/2441/0 (Version 3), dated 18th April 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**

BELINDA

PR/2441/0 (Version 3)

Whereas SERICA ENERGY CHINOOK LIMITED has made an application dated 18th April 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, PCON/6883/0 (version 2)

Effective Date: 18th April 2024

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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

This screening direction shall be valid from 18 April 2024.

2 Production level(s)

The holder of the screening direction shall ensure that the level(s) of production do not exceed the level(s) detailed in the application for the screening direction, and in the application for consent relating to the approval for the getting of petroleum issued under the relevant production licence Model Clause.

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, using the appropriate Environmental Emissions Monitoring System (EEMS) reporting forms.

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:

N/A

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

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 the project

- Drilling of a production well
- Installation of a 5km long 8 inch production pipeline
- Installation of a 5km long 3 inch gas lift pipeline
- Installation of a 7km long service umbilical
- Installation of a piled valve skid
- Installation of tie in spools and jumpers at the Belinda well and GEEBB manifold at Triton
- Deposit of protective materials on the seabed
- Ten years of production of oil and gas at the forecast levels detailed in application PR/2441/0 (version 3) .

Description of the project

This project has not been the subject of a previous ES or Screening Direction



application.

The Belinda BE01 well will be drilled using a semi-submersible rig which is intended to be anchored in place on location. The well is intended to be drilled in five sections with both water based and oil based muds. Logging while drilling will be used to evaluate the reservoir section. Following completion the well will be cleaned up and a well test (not extended) will be performed. The well will then be suspended in preparation for the tie in-to the new pipeline system. Subsea tieback is expected within one to two months of completion.

The new 8 production pipeline will be laid in a single trench, along with the new 3 gas lift pipeline, which will be mechanically backfilled with seabed sediment (for protection and insulation benefit); the new production pipeline will transport Belinda hydrocarbons to the GEEBB manifold at the Triton FPSO, where these will be processed before onward transport. The new service umbilical (providing control, power, hydraulic lines and chemicals (methanol, wax inhibitor, scale inhibitor and corrosion inhibitor) will be laid in a separate trench, this will also be mechanically backfilled.

Protective material (rock, mattresses, grout bags) will be used at various locations, for e.g. (but not limited to, as final locations will be determined at final design and installation), at trench transitions, crossings, spot locations along pipeline and umbilical routes (to mitigate against upheaval buckling), etc and temporary deposits (e.g. sandbags) may also be used to support lay operations.

The operations are expected to result in production oil and gas for a ten year period which fall below the threshold requiring an EIA. The environmental impacts of this production via the Triton FPSO are considered in the Screening Direction.

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 Belinda Field is located in the Central North Sea in Block 21/30f approximately 171 km from Peterhead and 85km from the UK/Norway Median line. The water depth is approximately 95m. The well will be drilled 5km SE of the Triton FPSO to which it will later produce. A control umbilical will be run from the existing Evelyn Well which is 7km to the West.

Sediments comprise primarily of sand, with areas of muddy sand, slightly gravelly sand and gravelly sand. The EUNIS habitat classification records the underlying habitat in the area, including along the pipeline and umbilical routes, as Deep Circalittoral Sand. Two habitat types were identified at Belinda, Deep Circalittoral Sand and Deep Circalittoral Mixed Sediment.

Seabed surveys in the Belinda and wider area have reported no indication of Annex I



or other sensitive habitats or species present, including the presence of *A. islandica* aggregations (e.g. Gardline 2016a, b, Fugro 2021a, b), with only individuals observed.

Seabird oil spill vulnerability for Block 21/30 and the adjacent Blocks is low year-round.

White-sided dolphin, Harbour porpoise, Minke whale and White beaked dolphin have been observed in moderate densities in the area between the months of February and October. Grey and harbour seals are not frequently sighted within the area due to the distance of the development from the shore.

Belinda, including the well and tie-backs to Triton FPSO (the pipelines) and Evelyn (the umbilical), are not located within a designated protected area. The closest site is the East of Gannet and Montrose Fields Nature Conservation Marine Protected Area (NCMPA), approximately 6km away to the NE.

The development lies within ICES rectangle 43F0 within which is reported spawning and nursery grounds of several commercially important species. Fishing activity in the area is low.

Belinda is located within an area of mature oil and gas development. The closest installation to the Belinda field is the Triton FPSO (ca. 5km away), the Gannet A platform is the next closest at ca. 16km away.

There are no operational or under construction wind farm developments in the Belinda area, the closest of these being a pre-planning wind area (Campion Wind), located 38km away.

The nearest submarine cable is the North Sea Link Interconnector, located at least 29 km away. There is also an out of use power line cable which runs through Block 21/30, however this is not located in the Belinda project location.

Belinda is not located near any designated protected wreck site.

MoD Interests have not been noted for Block 21/30 in which Belinda is located.

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 drilling of the well and installation of pipelines will result in disturbance of the seabed. A total of 0.27 square kilometres will be disturbed though this is considered to be temporary in nature and will recover.

Discharges of cuttings (including cuttings treated by a Rotomill process, if used) and cement will also affect the seabed. Cement slurry may be discharged though this is not expected to exceed the footprint of the cuttings. Discharges of this nature are not expected to have any significant effect on deterioration in water quality or any significant impact on benthos or fish populations. These discharges are not expected to result in a significant effect on the marine environment.

Chemicals will be used in the drilling and pipeline operations and whilst the specific selection has not been made at this stage chemicals will be selected and used in such a manner to minimise the environmental harm.

A 500m safety zone will be in place while the rig is on location and once development activities are completed, a new 500m safety zone will be in place to encompass the well and valve skid. Consequently, any potential risk to fishing or other vessels is considered unlikely.

The piling into place of the Belinda valve skid represents the main noise disturbance. However, the operation to install these four piles will take in total eight hours which is a short duration. It is considered that there is a very low potential for significant disturbance of marine mammals or fish from the installation of the template piles.

Atmospheric emissions from the drilling of the well and installation of the subsea infrastructure have been considered alongside the emissions associated with the production of the hydrocarbons via the Triton FPSO. The total emissions associated with the Belinda development, which are 44,300tCO₂eq, would annually represent a maximum of 0.01% of the 2022 UK emissions, or 0.4% of UKCS production emissions.

There impact on protected areas is likely to be negligible given the distance and receptors present.

Cumulative impacts have been considered and deemed to be minor.

Transboundary impacts are not expected as Belinda and Triton are 85km from the UK and Norway boundary line.

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.