

Our Ref: 01.01.01.01-6142U
UKOP Doc Ref:1342461



Offshore Petroleum Regulator
for Environment & Decommissioning

CHRYSAOR NORTH SEA LIMITED
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Registered No.: 00958880

Date: 15th May 2024

Department for Energy Security &
Net Zero

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Dear Sir / Madam

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

SEYMOUR, Paul B. Loyd, Jnr DRILLING PRODUCER WELL 22/05b- 15

A screening direction for the project detailed in your application, reference DR/2466/0 (Version 3), dated 10th May 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

[REDACTED]



**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**

SEYMOUR, Paul B. Loyd, Jnr DRILLING PRODUCER WELL 22/05b- 15

DR/2466/0 (Version 3)

Whereas CHRYSAOR NORTH SEA LIMITED has made an application dated 10th May 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 WONS/16228/0/GS/1 Version 1.

Effective Date: 15th May 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

The screening direction shall be valid from 16 May 2024 until 10 May 2025.

2 Commencement and completion of the project

The holder of the screening direction must notify the Department for Energy Security & Net Zero (hereinafter called the 'Department') of commencement and completion of the project within two days:

- a) of commencement of the project and
- b) of completion of the project.

Notification should be sent by email to the Environmental Management Team Mailbox: OPRED@energysecurity.gov.uk

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, extended well test emissions or flaring and venting emissions relating to a well test, using the appropriate Environmental Emissions Monitoring System (EEMS) reporting forms. In the case of atmospheric emissions relating to drilling projects undertaken from a fixed installation, they should be included in the annual EEMS reporting forms for the fixed installation.

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





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 project

Drilling of the new Development well NW Seymour 22/05b-P which will be side-tracked from the existing 22/05b-15w well, with operations taking place from the Paul B Loyd Junior (PBLJ) semi-submersible drilling rig stationed at the NW Seymour field. The works will consented NSTA WONS consent WONS/16228/0/GS/1 Version 1.

Description of project

The development well will be drilled as a side-track from the existing 22/05b-15w well from the Paul B Loyd Junior (PBLJ) semi-submersible mobile drilling rig with drilling operations expected to last 102 days. The PBLJ will utilise an 8 anchor mooring system with chain lengths of between 600 - 1370 metres.

The well will be completed as a Development (Producer) well and will replace the



existing 22/05b-15w well due to poor production performance. A slot recovery procedure will initially take place within the existing well bore wherein a mechanical plug will be set within the production packer tailpipe, the upper completion will be cut above the packer and removed. The annulus will be displaced to kill weight inhibited seawater.

After slot recovery the new well will be drilled through a milled window in the 9 5/8 inch casing above the packer. The well will be drilled in 3 sections: 9.5 inch, 8.5 inch and 6.5inch sections with a total length of 968 m, creating a total cuttings weight of 75,095 kg. A contingency has been assessed wherein a sidetrack or re-drill may be required. This contingency accounts for a sidetrack of the full lengths of the 9.5-, 8.5- and 6.5-inch sections, it also includes a re-drill of the top-hole section to 12.25 inch (should the casing integrity been compromised) and installation of new production casing. The contingency scenarios cumulatively would create 305,429 kg of cuttings over a total length of 2,273 m.

All sections of the well will be drilled with Low Toxicity Oil Based Mud (LTOBM) and all cuttings and mud returns will be skipped and shipped to shore for disposal with no discharge to sea. Following drilling operations, the wellbore will be cleaned of drilling mud and fluids with the displaced fluids either being skipped and shipped to shore or discharged to sea if they meet appropriate criteria for hydrocarbon concentration. Following clean up, the well will commence production and will flow directly to the Armada platform.

The risk of a major accident such as a well blowout has been assessed. The Developer has control measures in place to reduce the risk of a major accident occurring and the probability of such an event occurring is very low.

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 NW Seymour field is in Block 22/05 in the Central North Sea approximately 222 km east of the Scottish coastline and approximately 2 km west of the UK/Norwegian median line in a water depth of approximately 89 m. The project is in an area characterised by muddy sand. The wave height in the NW Seymour area ranges from 2.1-2.4 m.

Site specific surveys indicate that sediments in the area consist predominantly of circalittoral muddy sand characterised by a wide range of polychaetes, bivalves such as *Abra alba* and *Nucula nitidosa*, and echinoderms. Seabed photography showed that visible sedentary epifauna and mobile megafauna are generally sparse across the area. The most frequently observed epifauna included the sea pen *Pennatula phosphorea*, heart urchins *Spatangus* spp., hermit crabs *Paguridae* and starfish (*Asteroidea*, including *Asterias rubens*). Despite the presence of frequent sea pens, burrows suggestive of burrowing megafauna were rare meaning the site is not



considered representative of the OSPAR threatened habitats 'Seapens and burrowing megafauna'. The bivalve Ocean quahog (*Artica islandica*) is known to be present in this region of the North Sea and whilst survey data did not identify any aggregations it is possible that individuals will be present in the vicinity of the drilling operations. However, there is not a risk that the operation could cause a significant impact on the distribution of ocean quahogs in the area.

No evidence of sub tidal reefs or submarine structures were found in the vicinity of NW Seymour. The area was assessed for stony reef habitat, however the assessment concluded low potential for reef therefore no areas were considered representative of Annex I Habitat.

The nearest protected area is the Norwegian Boundary sediment plain NCMPA which is 5 km from NW Seymour, the next closest is the Scanner Pockmark SAC which is 62 km NW of Seymour. It is unlikely that the project will have any effect on protected sites.

Fish spawning and nursery activity will occur in the area, which may coincide with the drilling operations. Notable species which are also PMFs are anglerfish, blue whiting, cod, herring, ling, mackerel, sandeels, spurdog and whiting. With regard to marine mammals Atlantic white-sided dolphin, bottlenose dolphin, harbour porpoise, minke whale, Risso's dolphin and white-beaked dolphin have been recorded in the vicinity of the NW Seymour area. Densities of these species range from high to low throughout the year. Seals are not expected to be seen at the remote location. Seabird sensitivity in Block 22/05 is medium from January to March and low throughout the rest of the year, with the exception of November and December for when there is no available data.

The project area is primarily used for demersal fishing and the effort in the area is relatively low compared to other areas of the North Sea.

The NW Seymour field is in an area of major oil and gas developments and infrastructure and there are several oil and gas fields nearby. There are no Ministry of Defence (MoD) restrictions or active military training sites within Block 22/05. The closest wreck is located approximately 5 km southwest of the proposed operations and is not expected to be affected by the drilling operations. All wrecks within 40 km are classed as non-dangerous. There are no scheduled monument war graves, Historic Marine Protected Areas or other wrecks located within the vicinity of the NAA.

There are three active Telecom cables within 40 km of the proposed operations, the closest is the Tampnet cable approximately 23 km to the southwest. In addition there are no operational or planned renewable energy developments within 100 km of the drilling operations or aggregate extraction or dumping sites and shipping activity is relatively low for the North Sea.

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 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 drilling project is a side-track from an existing well and as such there are no cuttings from the re-entry section. Cuttings will be generated from the drilled sections and these will contain LTOBM and these will be skipped and shipped to shore. There will be no cuttings discharged to sea and there are no seabed impacts expected due to cuttings discharge.

Discharge of offshore chemicals associated with the re-entry of the well, cementing and completion operations have been assessed as not likely to have a significant effect on the environment. The wellbore clean-up operations may result in the discharge of wastewater containing residual hydrocarbons from the LTOBM. This discharge has been assessed and is not considered to have a likely significant effect on the environment due to the low concentrations discharged.

The mooring system of the semi-submersible drilling unit (PBJL) will result in the disturbance of seabed sediments through the placement of anchors and the settling of the mooring chain on the seabed. The mooring system will include an 8 anchor spread, with each anchor disturbing an area of 3.1 m radius. The mooring chain will disturb a corridor 2 metres wide, the length of this disturbance corridor is proportional to the amount of chain in contact with the seabed. The length of chain in contact with the seabed varies from mooring to mooring but in total the seabed disturbance from the (PBJL) mooring system is 15,502 m².

There is already a 500 m radius safety zone around NW Seymour excluding unauthorised access of vessels and prohibiting access to fishing vessels. The field has been developed for several years and the locations of the NW Seymour installations are well known to other marine users and marked on the appropriate navigational charts. The mooring anchors will be located outside of the 500 m safety zone however an ERRV will be on station throughout the drilling operation and will offer navigational mitigation. As a result, the drilling operation is not expected to represent a significant navigational risk and there will not be a significant impact on shipping, fishing operations or other users of the sea.

Although the area in vicinity of the well is indicated as potentially supporting fish spawning and nursery activity at certain times of the year, the relative proportion of the potential spawning and nursery areas present in the region that will be affected

by the drilling activity will be small and not significant.

There are no expected transboundary effects from the drilling operations at the NW Seymour. The nearest boundary (UK/Norwegian median) is located approximately 2 km west of the operations. It is not considered likely that any planned operational discharge of chemicals will be detectable at this distance from the well location.

Although not a planned activity, a worst-case major accident scenario resulting from a potential well blow-out was modelled and assessed. Although the consequences of an oil spill can be severe, the probability of a large oil spill from the proposed operations is low. Therefore, it is considered that the control measures in place to prevent loss of well control minimise the risk of an oil spill which could have a significant impact and the proposed operations carried out as planned are not likely to have a significant effect on the environment.

The atmospheric emissions will occur from the generation of power onboard the PBLJ as well as from the operation of associated vessels and helicopters used as part of the proposed operations. In total the proposed operations will generate approximately 27,039 tonnes of CO₂ and give rise to a GWP of approximately 27,834 tonnes of Carbon Dioxide equivalent (CO₂e) when other greenhouse gases are included. Using 2022 as a baseline the proposed operations will contribute to 0.135% of the total atmospheric emissions associated with UK offshore activities in a year when other greenhouse gases are also included. Atmospheric emissions associated with the power generation will rapidly disperse in the exposed environment at Seymour and are not likely to have a significant impact on any sensitive receptor.

Drilling operations will be conducted from within the existing NW Seymour 22/05b-15w well, therefore there is no increase in the infrastructure footprint.

There are no known wrecks located in the vicinity of the proposed development well location. The project is in the vicinity of other oil and gas developments, but there are no expected cumulative or in-combination impacts with other oil and gas activities. Cumulative impacts have been assessed as not likely to have a significant effect on the environment.

It is also not considered to be likely that the project will be affected by natural disasters.

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