

Our Ref: 01.01.01.01-6387U  
UKOP Doc Ref:1379341



Offshore Petroleum Regulator  
for Environment & Decommissioning

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Registered No.: 02748866

Date: 21st January 2025

Department for Energy Security &  
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[opred@energysecurity.gov.uk](mailto:opred@energysecurity.gov.uk)

Dear Sir / Madam

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

**MAGNUS, Magnus Platform, DRILLING PRODUCER WELL 211/12a-M63**

I refer to your amended application dated 17th January 2025, reference DR/2511/1 (Version 1).

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](mailto: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**

**MAGNUS, Magnus Platform, DRILLING PRODUCER WELL 211/12a-M63**

**DR/2511/1 (Version 1)**

Whereas ENQUEST HEATHER LIMITED has made an application dated 17th January 2025, 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/16890/0/GS/1.

Effective Date: 21st January 2025

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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 29 October 2024 until 31 March 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](mailto: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

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 the Change to the Project**

Extend the end date of the drilling operations to 31 March 2025 due to delays on a previous well.

### **Summary of the Project**

Drilling of a new production well 211/12a- B04 by side tracking the platform well M63 from the Magnus platform:

Donor well M63 will have the reservoir plugged and abandoned and prepared for side tracking by recovering the slot using seawater and Oil Based Mud (OBM)

The B04 well will be drilled as an 8 section with (OBM)

A contingency sidetrack

Well completion and handing over to production without a well test.





(WONS/16890/0/GS/1)

## **Description of the Project**

The Magnus platform is a drilling and production platform in the Northern North Sea with oil exported to Sullom Voe and gas exported via the FLAGGS pipeline via Brent A to the St Fergus gas terminal. Produced water is discharged to sea.

Well B04 will be a sidetracked well from the existing platform M63 within the 500m safety zone of the platform using OBM, which will be contained and shipped onshore. Operations are expected to take place between 29 October 2024 and 31 March 2025 and last a total of 67 days.

No significant cumulative impacts are expected to occur with any other existing or approved projects. There is not likely to be any significant impact of the project on population and human health. It is not considered likely that the project will be affected by natural disasters. No nuisances are foreseen from the project.

## **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 Magnus platform is in the Northern North Sea within the East Shetland Basin and is approximately 16 km from the UK/Norwegian median line and 142 km northeast of Shetland. The project is in the National Marine Plan Area for Scotland.

Sediments within the region of the platform comprise sand and slightly gravelly sand, with the sediment within the area classified as 'deep circalittoral sand'. Surveys of the area showed that the sediments comprise sand with occasional gravel and shell fragments. The Magnus platform is located within an area as potentially supporting Annex I stony reefs; however surveys have not identified stony reef habitats. There is no evidence within the area of Annex I submarine structures. Water depths across the area is around 185m and the average wave height ranges from 2.71m - 3m.

A survey of the area showed that the dominant groups around the platform area are worm species along with molluscs and polychaetes, with a stable homogenous community, typical of sandy sediments.

The Priority Marine Feature (PMF) 'offshore subtidal sands and gravels' have been recorded within the Magnus area. Subtidal sands and gravels are the preferred habitat of the ocean quahog. The species has been recovered in the area but in low numbers. Sea pens have been recorded in surveys, and an assessment was undertaken of the 'sea pen and burrowing megafauna communities' habitat as these are on the OSPAR list of threatened and/or declining species. Using the SACFOR scale, the density of sea pens was classified as occasional or rare, therefore it was concluded that such a community was not present within the area of the Magnus



platform. Hard and soft substrate sponges were also recorded within the area but were not found in sufficient densities to constitute a 'sponge dominated habitat' as defined by OSPAR.

Minke whale, long finned pilot whale, killer whale, bottlenose dolphin, Atlantic white-sided dolphin and harbour porpoise have all been recorded in the vicinity of the Magnus area. Densities of the species are categorised as low to moderate, except killer whales, which is high in June. Grey and harbour seals may be encountered, and density maps show the presence of grey and harbour seals in the project area as low.

The Magnus platform is not situated within any conservation areas, with the closest area of conservation interest being the Northeast Faroe Shetland Channel NCMPSA which lies 80km to the north west. This site is designated for deep sponge aggregations, offshore muds, subtidal sands and gravels and geological and geomorphological features. The Pobie Bank Reef SAC is located 115km to the south west and is designated due to the presence of Annex I habitats bedrock and stony reefs.

The Magnus platform lies within fishing designated ICES rectangle 52F1 and the proposed operations will coincide with nursery and/or spawning activity for a number of species. Fishing effort in the area is designated as of low importance, with demersal fishing dominating the species type. Seabird oil sensitivity in the vicinity of the Magnus platform is predominately low, with medium sensitivity in March, and high sensitivity in January, November and December.

There are 2 non dangerous wrecks within 40km of the Magnus platform and there are no known Historic Marine Protected Areas (HMPAs) within block 211/12. There are no offshore wind farms within the vicinity, with the closest offshore wind area the Bluemull Sound which is 160km from the project area. The Magnus platform is located within the Sectoral Marine Plan for Offshore Wind for Innovation and Targeted Oil and Gas Decarbonisation (INTOG) lease area NE-b. The closest Scotwind lease area is NE-1, which is located over 130 km south-east of Magnus. There are no telecommunication cables within 40km of the Magnus field, the closest cable being the CANTAT Faroese cable with is 55km to the north-east. There are no aquaculture sites or shellfish protected areas within the vicinity of the project area, the closest being 145km from the platform. There are no military restrictions within block 211/12.

It is not anticipated that the proposed project will have a significant impact on either the wrecks, windfarms or aquaculture sites.

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 from the change to the project on population and human health.

A 500m safety exclusion zone is already in place around the Magnus platform, which excludes unauthorised access of vessels and prohibits access to fishing vessels. Fishing within the area is of low importance to the fishing sector and shipping density is low. No additional impacts to other marine users are identified as part of the drilling of well B04. Therefore, there are no significant effects likely in terms of physical presence from the proposed project.

There will be no seabed disturbance as part of the project as the drill cuttings and mud will be skipped and shipped onshore. The project therefore does not present a disturbance risk to any of the benthic communities within the area.

The proposed drilling operation is being undertaken at the Magnus platform using existing power generation equipment. Atmospheric emissions are regulated under the platforms PPC and ETS Permits. Any increase in atmospheric emissions are expected to rapidly disperse and are not likely to have a significant impact.

The well is a production well, and an assessment has been included within the project proposal to assess as a worst case, a well blow out within the Magnus field, and the subsequent potential for a Major Environmental Incident (MEI). The assessment concluded that there is no potential for an MEI to occur, however procedures are in place to minimise the risk of a hydrocarbon release whether from a well blow out or diesel loading operation. The developer has suitable mitigation in place to prevent such an occurrence for either spill scenario.

The nearest boundary (UK/Norwegian median) is located approximately 17 km from the proposed well location. Drill cuttings and mud will not be discharged to the marine environment, and there are procedures in place to minimise the risk of an oil release should the scenario arise. Therefore, any transboundary effects should not be significant.

The proposed drilling operation is being undertaken at the Magnus platform using existing power generation equipment. Atmospheric emissions are regulated under the platforms PPC and ETS Permits. Any increase in atmospheric emissions are expected to rapidly disperse and are not likely to have a significant impact.

The drilling operations do not contradict any of the Scottish Marine Plan 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**

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