

Our Ref: 01.01.01.01-7028U  
UKOP Doc Ref:1440887



Offshore Petroleum Regulator  
for Environment  
& Decommissioning

LIVERPOOL BAY CCS LIMITED  
ENI HOUSE  
10 EBURY BRIDGE ROAD  
LONDON  
SW1W 8PZ

Registered No.: 13194018

Date: 25th March 2026

Department for Energy Security &  
Net Zero

AB1 Building  
Crimon Place  
Aberdeen  
AB10 1BJ

Tel [REDACTED]

Fax [REDACTED]

[www.gov.uk/desnz](http://www.gov.uk/desnz)  
[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  
HAMILTON NORTH, DRILLING C110/13a-NC**

A screening direction for the project detailed in your application, reference DR/2623/0 (Version 4), dated 24th March 2026 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](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**

**HAMILTON NORTH, DRILLING C110/13a-NC**

**DR/2623/0 (Version 4)**

Whereas LIVERPOOL BAY CCS LIMITED has made an application dated 24th March 2026, 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/18403/0/IDA/1 Version.

Effective Date: 25th March 2026

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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 March 2026 until 30 September 2026.

#### **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 Nature of stabilisation or protection materials**

Rock deposits

1,800 m<sup>3</sup> of clean, inert rock material, containing minimal fines, (The quantity of rock deposited should be the minimum required to provide the necessary stabilisation or protection, and any surplus rock must be returned to land).

#### **4 Location of stabilisation or protection materials**

As described 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 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, 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.

## **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 have no comments at this time.

3) All communications relating to the screening direction should be addressed to:

[opred@energysecurity.gov.uk](mailto: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 Assessment 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 the C110/13a-NC well for the purpose of a CO<sub>2</sub> monitoring well at the Hamilton North platform in the East Irish Sea, within UKCS Quad/Block 110/13b.
- The well will be drilled from the jack-up Mobile Offshore Drilling Unit (MoDU) Valaris 120, within the existing 500m safety zone for the Hamilton North platform.
- This represents the primary case in the application because the MoDU is already on location undertaking plug and abandonment (P&A) operations at the Hamilton North wells. The impacts of positioning the Valaris 120 have already been assessed under separate applications.
- In the event that the Valaris 120 cannot be utilised, the Valaris 248 jack up will be used. The additional seabed impacts arising from the use of the larger Valaris 248

jack up have been assessed as the worst-case scenario.

- In the event of excessive scour at the spud cans of either the Valaris 120 or the Valaris 248, the placement of 1,800m<sup>3</sup> of rock stabilisation material is included as a contingency operation.

The drilling stages are as follows:

- 26" top-hole section drilled riserless from the mudline with inhibited seawater and a 20" casing cemented into place

- a 16" section will drilled with water based mud (WBM) and a 13 3/8" casing then cemented in place

- Drilling of 12 1/4" section with Oil-Based Mud (OBM) and then cased with a 9 5/8" casing

- Drilling of 8 " section with OBM and a 7" liner installed. All OBM will be recovered back to the drilling rig and skipped and shipped to shore for disposal. There will be no discharge to the marine environment.

- The well will be displaced to base oil and two mechanical plugs will be set inside the 9 " casing for temporary suspension until completion is ready to be run.

- Explosives use is also included downhole as a contingency in the unlikely event of the drill pipe becoming stuck.

- The drilling activity is expected to last for approximately 26 days, with the project assessed for a total of 77 days to include contingency for operational and weather delays.

### **Description of the project**

As part of the HyNet Carbon Dioxide Transportation and Storage Project (subject to ES/2022/009), Liverpool Bay CCS Limited intends to drill the C110/13a-NC well as a CO<sub>2</sub> monitoring well at the Hamilton North platform which is situated within the East Irish Sea, as part of future Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS) operations.

The C110/13a-NC well is one of three proposed Hamilton North CCS wells, it is the only new well. The CCS drilling campaign at Hamilton North is planned to take place immediately following the current plug and abandonment (P&A) operations under WIA/1866. Three previously abandoned wells at the Hamilton North location will also be sidetracked and recompleted, two for CO<sub>2</sub> injection, one for a sentinel well in addition to the new well. Each of these wells will have a separate application and are not included as part of this assessment.

The proposed operations are due to take place between the 31st March 2026 and 30th September 2026. Drilling and completion at well C110/13a-NC is expected to



take 26 days, however including contingency for unexpected operational delays a period of up to 77 days has been assessed. Operations will be carried out using the Mobile Drilling Unit (MoDU) Valaris 120, which is currently on location at the Hamilton North platform undertaking P&A operations on the wells which are planned to be sidetracked.

To commence operations, the 26" top-hole section will be drilled riserless using inhibited seawater and then a 20" casing run. Following the completion of the top-hole section, the rest of the well will be drilled with each casing terminating at the mudline to avoid the subsea discharge of mud and cuttings. A 16" section will be drilled from 160m to 630m MD using a water-based mud (WBM). A 13 " casing will then be run and cemented in the well. This will isolate freshwater layers and weaker formations to allow for the use of oil-based mud (OBM) systems in the drilling of subsequent well sections. The mud system will be displaced from WBM to OBM. A 12 " section will be drilled to a depth of 1,620m MD and cased with a 9 " casing. Finally, an 8 " section will be drilled to the TD of 1,788m MD and a 7" liner installed. Upon completion, the OBM and cuttings will be skipped and shipped for onshore disposal, ensuring no discharge to the marine environment.

The application also includes contingency use of explosives downhole, below 300 m beneath the seabed, in the unlikely case that the drill pipe becomes stuck.

It has been concluded that there will be no cumulative impacts expected to occur with this project due to there being no discharge of OBM, the proposed mitigation and the short duration of the project.

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

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 the Liverpool Bay Area (LBA), within UKCS Block 110/13b in the East Irish Sea. The project is in an approximate water depth of 22m, lying 26.4km from the Merseyside coastline and 118.6km from the UK / Ireland median line. The project area is 2.2km from the Liverpool Bay Special Area of Protection (SPA) and 9.7km from the Fylde Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ). The Shell Flat and Lune Deep Special Area of Conservation (SAC), Sefton Coast SAC; Ribble and Alt Estuaries SPA are all within 25 km of the project area.

In the LBA the seabed sediments comprise mainly of circalittoral fine sand, deep circalittoral coarse sediment, and deep circalittoral sand. The dominant seabed sediments identified in the vicinity of the operation comprise of Deep circalittoral coarse sediment (A5.15). The annual mean significant wave height within the vicinity of the Hamilton North Platform ranges from 0.80m to 1.10m. Benthic surveys have shown a variety of sediment types and four dominant benthic communities in the LBA, predominantly consisting of annelids (e.g. bristle worm), molluscs (e.g. bivalves, gastropods) arthropods (e.g. sandhopper) and echinoderms (e.g. brittle star). One notable species was recorded in the vicinity, an individual Thumbnail crab (*Thia scutellata*) recognised as a nationally scarce marine species. No other Annex I habitats or Annex II species, OSPAR threatened and/or declining species and habitats or English or Wales habitats and species of principal importance were identified during recent habitat assessments.

In the Irish Sea resident demersal species include sandeel, blennies, gobies, wrasses and a wide range of flatfish. Pelagic species such as herring, mackerel, sprat, European anchovy, European sardine and garfish also inhabit the area.

The waters in the vicinity of the proposed operational area are of particular importance to seabirds. The density and distribution, and hence sensitivity, of seabirds varies throughout the year. During the pre-breeding and breeding seasons, generally between March and August, large numbers of seabirds congregate in coastal breeding colonies. The nearest SPA is the Liverpool Bay SPA, designated for various Annex I species, which is located 2.2km from the Hamilton North platform. The proposed operations have the potential to occur during the pre-breeding and breeding seasons (31st March to 30th September 2026) therefore aggregations of wintering red-throated diver, common scoter and little gull, along with cormorant and red-breasted merganser are likely to be present. The Seabird Oil Sensitivity Index score for Block 110/13 is extremely high from January to April and also November, very high in September, October and December, and low to medium from May to August.

Three cetacean species - bottlenose dolphin, harbour porpoise and white-beaked dolphin - have been recorded within block 110/13. Harbour porpoise and white-beaked dolphin may be present in low densities and bottlenose dolphin in low to moderate densities during the operational period. Grey and harbour seals are present in the wider area, but are not expected to be found in significant densities in the operational area.

Block 110/13 is identified as being an area of very high shipping density, and the specific operational area occurs within an area of high to low shipping density with both shipping and passenger vessels regularly passing through the area. However, the MoDU and operations will be within the Hamilton North platform 500m safety zone and will have mitigation measures in place.

The project is located within fishing designated ICES rectangle 36E6, and annual landings and value data suggests commercial fisheries within the area to be of low importance for demersal and pelagic fisheries, and of higher importance for shellfish



fisheries, when compared with the rest of the UKCS. However, it should be noted that the main shellfish fisheries are near-shore.

The nearest well and platform, excluding those owned or operated by Eni UK Ltd, are 21.7km north of the project area owned by Harbour Energy PLC, the closest active platform is South Morecambe DP3, owned by Spirit Energy which is 19.6km north. The nearest pipelines are a 3" chemical line from Calder to the Rivers Onshore Terminal, located 18.7km north of the project. There is a BT telecommunications cable 5.06km to the north, an aggregate site 0.5km to the northwest, and the closest wreck is Tower Base, located 3.7km south of the project area. The nearest renewable energy infrastructure is the active Burbo Bank Extension windfarm, located 17.4km southeast of the project area. The location of the proposed activity is not within a MoD practice and exercise area, and there are no military restrictions.

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 primary case is for the proposed operations to be carried out using the Valaris 120 jack-up MoDU vessel. The MoDU is already on location for the P&A operations, and there is an existing 500m safety exclusion zone in place for the Hamilton North platform which excludes unauthorised access of vessels and prohibits access to fishing vessels. No additional impacts to other marine users are identified as part of the drilling campaign.

An Emergency Response and Rescue Vessel (ERRV), the Esvagt Don Master, will be available if required throughout the proposed operations. The role of the ERRV is to ensure the safety of personnel working within the 500-metre safety zone and to monitor the movements of vessels in the vicinity of the rig. Although the operational location is within an area of high to low shipping density, the MoDU will be within the 500m safety zone and will have mitigation measures in place. Fishing activity within the operational area is low. All appropriate notifications to mariners will be made prior to the well drilling activities commencing. There are no navigational concerns in relation to the proposed location, and no objections were received from the navigational consultees.

The Valaris 120 will be retained on location following P&A operations under WIA/1866 and the impacts on the seabed for the positioning of the MoDU were permitted under the corresponding Marine Licence SAT, with an estimated worst

case disturbance area of 66,270m<sup>2</sup> including contingent rock placement for scour protection, assessed on the basis of the larger vessel Valaris 248, in case a vessel replacement is required. The developer has reiterated that best endeavours will be made to proceed with the primary case of retaining the Valaris 120 on location and therefore minimise the impact on the seabed.

Receptors of seabed disturbance include benthic communities which may be subject to displacement or mortality within the impacted area. However, the deposit of the spudcans, anchors and chains will be temporary and soft sediment benthic communities are typically resilient to disturbance and can recover quickly from short term impacts. *Sabellaria spinulosa* reefs and ocean quahog were not identified in the vicinity of the platform. These species could be impacted by direct sediment penetration by anchor chains and wires, but given their low density, the impacts are not likely to affect the population level.

Should there be the requirement to locate the contingent Valaris 248 MoDU to carry out the drilling work or deposit rock to remediate any scour, the proposed operations may also lead to an increase in turbidity through sediment resuspension, resulting in smothering of some sensitive benthic species. Sensitivity to smothering varies across taxa and communities: smaller sedentary species such as polychaete worms have short life cycles and recruitment from outside the disturbed area will be rapid; Echinodermata species are not sensitive to elevated suspended solids but have a medium sensitivity to smothering; and Ocean Quahog are sensitive to heavy siltation, although dense aggregations are not anticipated in the operational area. Demersal fish species will be temporarily displaced from a small area adjacent to the Hamilton North platform. Commercially and ecologically important fish species use spawning and/or nursery grounds in the areas, but it is not considered critical spawning habitat for these species.

The potential worst-case impact of the project will result from the requirement to locate and use the contingent Valaris 248 MoDU to carry out the drilling operations. The positioning of this rig and the movements of the associated support vessels have the potential to disturb seabirds. Work is scheduled to take place between April 2026 and September 2026 which coincides with the pre-breeding and breeding period of some bird species, some of which are sensitive to disturbances from vessel movement. The rig will be positioned 2.2km outside of the Liverpool Bay SPA. Gull and tern species are generally tolerant of vessel activity but red-throated diver and common scoter are known to be highly sensitive to disturbances from shipping traffic.

The presence of the rig itself alongside the Hamilton North platform is unlikely to result in a significant increase in disturbance to red-throated diver and common scoter as the rig will remain wholly within the 500m safety zone during operations, with modelling indicating that no red-throated diver and fewer than one common scoter individuals are likely to be impacted by the presence of the rig. The project will add an additional three vessel trips per week, which will use well established vessel routes whilst approaching the platform from the west, thus avoiding the SPA. The physical presence of vessels used in the proposed operation has the potential to temporarily displace common scoter and red-throated diver from 20km<sup>2</sup> (0.006%)



and 13km<sup>2</sup> (not within the SPA) of the SPA respectively. This disturbance area represents a minor fraction of the total SPA area such that impacts to qualifying features on a population level and shifts in species distribution are unlikely.

Discharge of offshore chemicals associated with the drilling of the well, cementing and suspension operations have been assessed as not likely to have a significant effect on the environment. The majority of chemicals used during the drilling and cementing operations, are PLONOR. Noise generated from the project activities will not be significant, and it is concluded that the project is not expected to have a likely significant effect on the site in relation to the cetaceans in the area and the supporting habitats and prey.

Worst-case atmospheric emissions will arise from the positioning of the Valaris 248 MoDU, ERRV, platform supply vessel, anchor positioning vessel and helicopters. Atmospheric emissions are estimated at 16,442 tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>e, equating to 0.014% of total UK territorial emissions in 2024 for the entire Hamilton North drilling campaign. Furthermore, the temporary nature of the emissions along with the offshore geographic location and winds within the offshore environment, means that the atmospheric emissions will be rapidly dispersed and are not likely to be detectable within a short distance from the shore. Therefore, while atmospheric emissions will make a cumulative contribution to global climate change, they are not considered to present a significant effect on the environment.

Transboundary impacts arising from operations are not expected due to their temporary and localised nature and the 118.6km distance from the UK / Ireland median line. The proposed operations are taking place within a developed area of Liverpool Bay, with various operational wells, eight offshore windfarms, pipelines, cables, aggregate sites, wrecks and military practice site within 40km. However, the operations are in accordance with the Northwest Inshore Marine Plan Area objectives and policies. An assessment of potential cumulative and in-combination effects has been made and it is considered that the drilling activities are not likely to have a significant impact on other offshore activities.

There is a negligible risk of unplanned releases at Hamilton North. Except for minimal lubricating oil, which is all contained within bunds, there are no liquid hydrocarbons stored at Hamilton North as it was a gas producer. Therefore, the likelihood of a hydrocarbon release and subsequent Major Environmental Incident (MEI) is expected to be extremely low. An unplanned instantaneous release of diesel from the Valaris 120 MoDU vessel has been assessed as part of the proposal, and the developer has mitigation and control measures in place to prevent such an event. Although not a planned activity, a worst-case major accident scenario resulting from well blowout was modelled and assessed. The assessment concluded that although there is a potential for an MEI to occur, the risk of such an event is low, as the developer has suitable mitigation in place to prevent such an occurrence. The probability of a well blowout from the proposed operations is low. The operations at Hamilton North are covered under the Liverpool Bay TOOPEP (Temporary Operations Oil Pollution Emergency Plan) (250040/0). The assessment of operations at the Hamilton North platform has been based on those modelled at Lennox, as a worst-case precaution,

as per the Liverpool Bay Asset TOOPEP (240036/1).

### **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