

Our Ref: 01.01.01.01-7292U
UKOP Doc Ref:1459047



Offshore Petroleum Regulator
for Environment
& Decommissioning

NET ZERO NORTH SEA STORAGE LIMITED
CHERTSEY ROAD
SUNBURY ON THAMES
MIDDLESEX
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Registered No.: 12473084

Date: 11th September 2026

Department for Energy Security &
Net Zero

AB1 Building
Crimon Place
Aberdeen
AB10 1BJ

Tel [REDACTED]

Fax

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**

**NEP – Phase 1, Noble Intrepid DRILLING OTHER WELL C43/21- EM01 planned
well**

A screening direction for the project detailed in your application, reference DR/2665/0 (Version 3), dated 10th September 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.

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**

**NEP – Phase 1, Noble Intrepid DRILLING OTHER WELL C43/21- EM01 planned
well**

DR/2665/0 (Version 3)

Whereas NET ZERO NORTH SEA STORAGE LIMITED has made an application dated 10th September 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 applications WONS/18998/0/IDA/1, WONS/19029/0/C/1 Version 1 and WONS/19030/0/WT/1 Version.

Effective Date: 11th September 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 11 September 2026 until 31 December 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

3 Nature of stabilisation or protection materials

Contingency Barite Rig Stabilisation Material

As a contingency measure, barite may be injected beneath one spudcan to ensure rig stability. The maximum deposit volume is 430 m3

4 Location of stabilisation or protection materials

Barite Rig Stabilisation Material

54 Degrees 12 Minutes 03.701 Seconds North

01 Degrees 06 Minutes 52.830 Seconds East

ED50

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:

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 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

With regard to the C43/21 well:

- Drilling of the following sections from the Noble Intrepid jack-up drilling rig:
 - 36" section with water-based mud (WBM)
 - 17.5" section using WBM
 - 12.25" section using low toxicity oil-based mud (LTOBM)
 - 8.5" sections using LTOBM
 - Contingency mechanical side-track from the 17.5" with WBM or 12.25" or the 8.5" section with LTOBM
 - All LTOBM cuttings will be skipped and shipped to shore
 - WBM cuttings will be discharged on site
 - Well cementing operations
 - Well completion operations and wellbore clean-up
 - Injectivity test using brine
 - A vertical seismic survey will be undertaken

Barite may be injected under one of the rig's spudcans to stabilise it

Description of the project

This project comprises the drilling, completion, clean-up and testing of the C43/21 carbon dioxide storage monitoring well within carbon storage licence area CS001. The well forms part of Phase 1 of the Northern Endurance Partnership Expansion project and will be drilled from the Noble Intrepid jack-up drilling rig in the Southern North Sea.

As a contingency, up to approximately 460 m³ of barite slurry may be injected into compartments beneath the starboard spudcan if full seabed penetration is not achieved. The barite is expected to hard-pack beneath the spudcan and remain in situ following departure of the rig, with degradation occurring over time. The barite products proposed for use are classified as PLONOR

WBM will be used for drilling the 36" and 17.5" sections. WBM cuttings will be discharged into the marine environment. LTOBM will be used for the drilling all other well sections. LTOBM cuttings will be returned to the jack-up rig topside and will be skipped and shipped to shore for disposal. Casings will be cemented and conductor cementing will require cement to be pumped to the seabed. The well will be completed and cleaned up. Following drilling, an injectivity test will be undertaken. Up to 10,000 barrels of filtered, inhibited potassium chloride brine will be injected into the well over a period of 24 hours, within an overall period of approximately 48 hours. The brine will remain downhole and will not be discharged to the marine environment. No hydrocarbons will be produced and no flaring will be undertaken.

A permanent guide base and a high-pressure wellhead will be installed and remain on the seabed. The well will be protected by a temporary abandonment cap and a fishing protection structure. Dredging is required to create a stable base for well head protection structure and subsea basket placement will also be required during operations.

As part of the project a Vertical Seismic Survey will be undertaken.

It is estimated that the activities will take up to 77 days and be completed by 31st December 2026 to account for operational delays.

It is not considered to be likely that the project will be affected by natural disasters. 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 proposed well is located in UKCS Block 43/21, approximately 78 kilometres (km) from the UK coastline, and 109 km from the UK/Netherlands Median Line, in a depth of approximately 58 metres (m).

Site specific surveys confirmed that surficial seabed sediments are of rippled sand with shell fragments. The wave height in the area ranges from 1.5 to 2.1 m. Wind strengths are generally between Beaufort scale 1 - 6 (1 - 11 m/s) in the summer months with a greater proportion of strong to gale force winds of force 7 - 12 (14 - 32 m/s) in winter.

Site surveys indicated that the benthic macrofaunal community in the survey area indicated the most frequently noted taxa were Annelida, Anthropoda, Mollusca and Echinodermata. The survey found that the macrofaunal communities across the survey area can be considered typical of the wider area

The project is located within the Southern North Sea Special Area of Conservation (SAC), which is designated for harbour porpoise.

Low to high densities of harbour porpoise have been identified throughout the year. Cetaceans found in the area in low to moderate densities include long-finned pilot whale, minke whale and white-beaked dolphin.

The project area is 78 km offshore and grey and harbour seals may be encountered in low numbers.

Seabird sensitivity in the project area ranges from low to extremely high throughout the year.

The project area lies within fishing designated ICES rectangle 37F1 and the proposed operations will coincide with fish spawning and nursery activity for a number of species.

The project aligns with the East Offshore Marine Plans and aligns with its policies and objectives.

The project area is primarily used for shellfish and demersal fishing. Fishing effort in the area is considered low.

There are several oil and gas facilities nearby, all over 10 km away.

The nearest marine cable is 29 km away of the project area (Viking Link Interconnector).

The nearest wind development area to the proposed operations is the Hornsea Project Four located approximately 7 km to the southwest.

The proposed project is located within CCS license area CS001.

There is no known areas of military activity within the vicinity of the proposed operations.

There are 10 wrecks within 10 km of the project area, 8 of which are classified as non-dangerous and 2 are unclassified. There are no historically significant wrecks within 40 km of the project area.

Shipping density in the area is considered moderate.

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.

All proposed drilling activities will take place within a temporary 500 m safety zone established around the drilling rig. Following the departure of the rig, a permanent 500 m safety zone is proposed around the well location to protect the permanent guide base, high-pressure wellhead, temporary abandonment cap and fishing protection structure and to reduce the risk of interaction with fishing gear and other sea users. The 500m will also have the benefit of preventing fishing gear interacting with the cement patio and barite deposit.

Discharge of offshore chemicals associated with the proposed activities have been assessed as not likely to have a significant impact on the environment. Chemicals associated with LTOBM sections will be skipped and shipped to shore for disposal and not discharged offshore.

WBM cuttings generated during drilling operations will be discharged to the marine environment and settle in close proximity of the well. LTOBM cuttings from the other sections will be returned to the jack-up rig and will be skipped and shipped to shore for disposal.

Up to approximately 407 tonnes of WBM drill cuttings, including the contingency section, may be discharged to the marine environment. The discharge plume released from the WBM cuttings is expected to settle quickly out of the water column and any dissolved contaminants will disperse quickly. This could result in the smothering and mortality of benthic fauna which will result in some short-term temporary impacts. However, benthic communities are expected to re colonise the



area impacted by WBM cuttings over time. Therefore, the impacts from seabed disturbance from this discharge are considered to not be significant.

Seabed impacts as a consequence of cement and cuttings discharge, spud cans and temporary equipment are deemed to be negligible when compared to the proportion of similar habitat un-affected in the wider area. Moreover, given that recovery of the seabed and the associated benthic communities are likely to begin once drilling has been completed, the environmental impact of the discharged cuttings, within the impacted area, can be considered insignificant.

The impacts arising from the placement of infrastructure, barite injection under the spud cans and cement patio formation are deemed to be sufficiently small in comparison to the available habitat in the wider area such that they will not be significant.

The VSP will be undertaken in accordance with the JNCC guidelines for minimising the risk of injury and disturbance to marine mammals from geophysical surveys. Measures will include marine mammal observation and, where required, passive acoustic monitoring, a 30-minute pre-shooting search of the 500 m mitigation zone, delay of source activation where marine mammals are detected within that zone and a soft start before each scheduled use of the airguns.

Noise generated from the project activities will not be significant, and it is concluded that the project is not expected to have a significant impact on the site in relation to the cetaceans in the area and their supporting habitats and prey given the measures put in place to undertake the vertical seismic survey. Noise arising from other sources generated during the proposed activities are not considered to be significant.

There is a low probability of hydrocarbons being encountered during the drilling as the drilling targets a brine bearing formation that is not capable of unassisted flow. It is considered that the control measures in place and the low probability of the proposed operations carried out as planned are not likely to have a significant effect on the environment.

Atmospheric emissions directly attributable to the planned activities are expected to rapidly disperse and are not likely to have a significant impact.

Transboundary impacts have been assessed and are not expected to be significant. The nearest boundary (UK/Netherlands Median Line) is located approximately 109 km of the area of operations.

The cumulative impact arising from the proposed operations of the C43/21 well have been shown to not be significant.

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