

Cormorant Alpha Conductor Guide Frames & Alwyn Riser Decommissioning Programmes



September 2026 – Consultation Draft

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DOCUMENT CONTROL

Approvals

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Distribution List

Name	Company
Robert Willison	Offshore Petroleum Regulator for Environment and Decommissioning (OPRED)

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HOLDS

Holds	Description
HOLD 1	TAQA to provide consultation comments to OPRED
HOLD 2	TAQA to provide section 29 holders letters of support to OPRED.

ABBREVIATIONS

Abbreviation	Explanation
AWMP	Active Waste Management Plan
CA	Comparative Assessment
CGBS	Concrete Gravity Base Structure
CO ₂	Carbon dioxide
CoP	Cessation of Production
DP	Decommissioning Programme
EA	Environmental Appraisal
EUNIS	European Nature Information System
GMS	Global Marine Systems Limited
ICES	International Council for the Exploration of the Sea
LAT	Lowest Astronomical Tide
NFFO	National Federation of Fishermen's Organisations
NIFPO	Northern Ireland Fish Producers' Organisation
NNS	Northern North Sea
NORM	Naturally Occurring Radioactive Material
NSTA	North Sea Transition Authority
OEUK	Offshore Energies UK
OPEX	Operational Expenditure
OPRED	Offshore Petroleum Regulator for Environment and Decommissioning
OSPAR	Oslo Paris Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic
PL	Pipeline (as in pipeline number)
PMF	Priority Marine Feature
SAC	Special Area of Conservation
TAQA	TAQA Bratani Limited
THC	Total Hydrocarbon Content
UK	United Kingdom
UKCS	United Kingdom Continental Shelf
UKOOA	United Kingdom Offshore Operators Association
WBS	Work Breakdown Structure

1 Executive Summary

1.1 Combined Decommissioning Programmes

This document contains two Decommissioning Programmes (DP) for installations and subsea pipelines associated with Cormorant Alpha platform.

There is a separate Decommissioning Programme for each set of associated notices served under Section 29 of the Petroleum Act 1998. The Decommissioning Programmes are for:

1. Cormorant Alpha Conductor Guide Frames (Table 2-1).
2. Alwyn Riser at Cormorant Alpha (Table 2-2).

1.2 Requirement for Decommissioning Programmes

1.2.1 Installations

In accordance with the Petroleum Act 1998, as amended, TAQA, as operator of the Cormorant Alpha installations, and on behalf of the Section 29 Notice Holders (see [Table 1-2](#)) is applying to the Offshore Petroleum Regulator for Environment and Decommissioning (OPRED) to obtain approval to decommission the Cormorant Alpha Conductor Guides Frames as detailed in [Section 2.1](#) of this document. (See also [Section 8](#) – Section 29 Holders' Letters of Support).

1.2.2 Pipelines

In accordance with the Petroleum Act 1998, as amended, TAQA Bratani, as operator of the Cormorant Alpha installations, and on behalf of the Section 29 Notice Holders (see [Table 1-4](#)) is applying to OPRED to obtain approval for decommissioning the Alwyn Riser sections as detailed in [Section 2.2](#) of this document. (See also [Section 8](#) – Section 29 Holders' Letters of Support).

In conjunction with stakeholder and regulatory consultation, these Decommissioning Programmes are submitted in compliance with national regulations and international obligations and OPRED guidelines [\[1\]](#).

The estimated schedule outlined for the decommissioning project spans a three-year period that commences in 2027.

1.3 Introduction

Cormorant Alpha is a fixed installation with a concrete gravity-based structure (CGBS) located in the South Cormorant field in the East of Shetland basin of the Northern North Sea. The Cormorant Alpha installation is in UKCS block 211/26a in 150m water depth. The Cormorant Alpha Installation consists of a four-leg concrete gravity base structure, weighing 294,655Te with a steel box girder Module Support Frame supporting two levels of modules, with a total topsides weight of 25,546.45Te. For a graphical representation of the platform in its entirety, please see [Figure 1-1](#). The CGBS sub-structure is a candidate for derogation under OSPAR decision 98/3. If derogation to leave the CGBS in place is granted this will be subject to a separate Decommissioning Programme, to be submitted at a later stage, in line with TAQA's wider northern North Sea decommissioning plans.

Cormorant Alpha ceased production in 2024. The Cormorant Alpha Topsides DP was approved in 2022 [\[2\]](#). The third-party Alwyn Field ties back to the installation and a separate DP will be submitted at a later date by Neo Next+. The boundary between the Decommissioning Programmes contained in this document and the future Alwyn Field DP is the riser base tie in flange at the base of Cormorant Alpha.

The Cormorant Alpha Conductor Guide Frames (3 off) and Alwyn Riser covered by these Decommissioning Programmes have a combined weight of ≈ 495.2 Te. The Alwyn Riser and Conductor Guide Frames will for the most part be removed following Cormorant Alpha topsides removals. Prior to topsides removals, as an enabler for removal works, the upper ~ 20 m of Alwyn Riser will be severed and removed to EL-3m. The remaining length including upper vertical section within conductor slot 18, horizontal cell top section and vertical cell wall section shall be disconnected and removed in ~ 30 m lengths. The Conductor Guide Frames will also be removed once the topsides and preceding sections of riser/conductor have been removed. The Conductor Guide Frames will be cut free from the platform legs, as close as reasonably practicable.

Both Conductor Guide Frames and Alwyn Riser sections may be temporarily wet stored prior to their subsequent recovery to shore within a two-year window. The potential wet storage locations will be out with the Cormorant Alpha drill cuttings pile boundary and will not overlap any environmental sensitivities in the area.

Whilst impacts of potential cuttings disturbance will be captured in this DP and associated Environmental Appraisal (EA), the decommissioning solution for the cuttings pile is out of scope for this DP and will be included in the future CGBS DP. Further information on the impacts of potential drill cuttings disturbance can be found in [Section 4](#) of this document and in the Cormorant Alpha Conductor Guide and Alwyn Riser EA [\[3\]](#).

Following public, stakeholder and regulatory consultation, these Decommissioning Programmes are submitted without derogation and in full compliance with OPRED [\[1\]](#) and Offshore Energies UK (OEUK) Guidelines [\[4\]](#). The Decommissioning Programmes explain the principles of the decommissioning activities and are supported by an Environmental Appraisal [\[3\]](#).

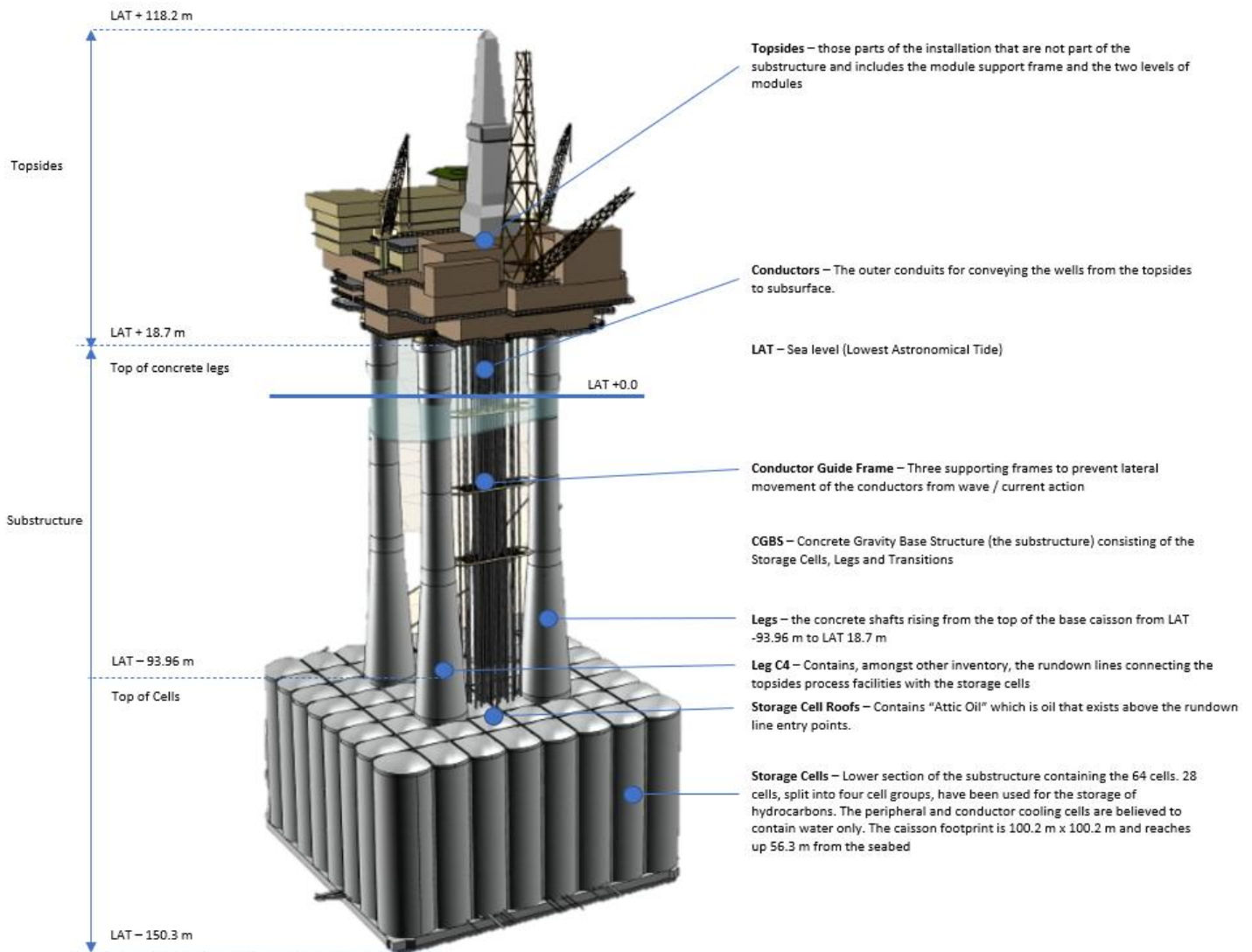


Figure 1-1: Cormorant Alpha Platform Overview

1.4 Overview of Facilities Being Decommissioned

1.4.1 Installations – Conductor Guide Frames

Table 1-1 Installations Being Decommissioned			
Field(s)	Cormorant Alpha	Production Type	Oil / Gas
Water Depth	150 m	UKCS Block	211/26a
Distance to Median	41 km	Distance to UK Coastline	104 km NE from Unst
Installations			
Number		Type	
3		Conductor Guide Frame: 166, 127 & 101t	

Installations Section 29 Notice Holders		
Table 1-2 Installations Section 29 Notice Holders		
Company	Registration Number	Equity Interest (%)
S29 Notice: 12.04.06.06/110C for Cormorant Alpha Platform Installations (Conductor Guide Frames)		
TAQA Bratani Limited	05975475	100
A/S Norske Shell	914 807 077	0
Amoco (U.K.) Exploration Company, LLC	SF000790	0
Apache Beryl I Limited	FC005975	0
Britoil Limited	SC077750	0
NEO NEXT+ Energy (UKCS) Limited	02669936	0
NEO NEXT+ Energy Natural Resources Limited	13018823	0
CNR International (U.K.) Limited	00813187	0
Chrysaor Production (U.K.) Limited	00524868	0
ConocoPhillips Skandinavia AS	918 110 127	0
Dana Petroleum (E&P) Limited	02294746	0
EnQuest Heather Limited	02748866	0
Enterprise Oil Norge Limited	01682049	0
Enterprise Oil U.K. Limited	02290358	0
Esso Exploration and Production UK Limited	00207426	0
ExxonMobil Exploration and Production Norway AS	914 048 990	0
Fairfield Betula Limited	04465204	0
Fairfield Fagus Limited	05461823	0
NEO NEXT+ Energy E&P North Sea UK Limited	03682299	0

Installations Section 29 Notice Holders

Table 1-2 Installations Section 29 Notice Holders

Company	Registration Number	Equity Interest (%)
MCX Dunlin (UK) Limited	06451712	0
MCX Osprey (UK) Limited	06451720	0
Harbour Energy Facilities Limited	08824520	0
Ithaca SP E&P Limited	01504603	0
Shell U.K. Limited	00140141	0
Equinor UK Limited	01285743	0
Equinor ASA	923609016	0
Harbour Energy Norge AS	985224323	0

1.4.2 Pipelines – Alwyn Riser

Table 1-3: Pipeline Being Decommissioned

Number of pipelines (Details given in Table 2-2)	1 (Riser Sections Only)
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Table 1-4: Pipelines Section 29 Notice Holders

S29 Notice: 12.04.06.05-132U for PL1526 (Alwyn Riser)

Company	Reg Number	Equity Interest (%)
A/S Norske Shell	914 807 077	0.2269748
Amoco (U.K) Exploration Company, LLC	0543827	1.3466768
Britoil Limited	SC077750	7.2901545
Chrysaor Production (U.K.) Limited	00524868	1.6308759
CNR International (U.K.) Limited	00813187	12.8998627
Conocophillips Skandinavia AS	918 110 127	0.2742714
Dana Petroleum (E&P) Limited	02294746	0.6420021
Enterprise Oil Norge Limited	01682049	0.0236381
Enterprise Oil U.K. Limited	02290358	2.1964520
Fairfield Betula Limited	04465204	0.0000000
Fairfield Fagus Limited	05461823	0.0000000
MCX Dunlin (UK) Limited	06451712	1.5170193
MCS Osprey (UK) Limited	06451720	0.7814948
NEO NEXT+ Energy (UKCS) Limited	02669936	1.9886789
NEO NEXT+ Energy Natural Resources Limited	13018823	26.8085457
Shell U.K. Limited	00140141	25.1959262
TAQA Bratani Limited	05975475	16.0000000

Table 1-4: Pipelines Section 29 Notice Holders

S29 Notice: 12.04.06.05-132U for
PL1526 (Alwyn Riser)

Company	Reg Number	Equity Interest (%)
Harbour Energy Facilities Limited	08824520	1.1774268

1.5 Summary of Proposed Decommissioning Programmes

The selected decommissioning options for the Cormorant Alpha infrastructure are shown in [Table 1-5](#) below.

Table 1-5: Summary of Decommissioning Programme	
Proposed Decommissioning Solution	Reason For Selection
1. Installations	
Conductor Guide Frames <i>Full Removal:</i> The Conductor Guide Frames on Cormorant Alpha will be removed as part of the topsides decommissioning scope. Once topsides and conductors have removed, the guides will be cut free from the platform legs, as close as practicable. The removed Conductor Guide Frames will be transported to shore for reuse, recycling or appropriate treatment and disposal. The Conductor Guide Frames may be temporarily wet stored prior to their subsequent recovery to shore within a two-year window. The potential wet storage locations will be out with the Cormorant Alpha drill cuttings pile boundary and will not overlap any environmental sensitivities in the area.	Removal of the Conductor Guide Frames complies with OSPAR Decision 98/3 and regulatory requirements.
2. Pipelines	
Rigid Riser <i>Full Removal:</i> The Alwyn Riser will be removed as part of the wider topsides decommissioning scope. The upper ~20m will be severed and removed to EL-3m ahead of / to facilitate topsides removals. The remaining length including; upper vertical section within caisson 18, horizontal cell top section and vertical cell wall section shall be disconnected and removed in ~30m lengths. The riser will be returned to shore for reuse, recycling or appropriate treatment and disposal. The riser sections may be temporarily wet stored prior to their subsequent recovery to shore within a two-year window. The potential wet storage locations will be out with the Cormorant Alpha drill cuttings pile boundary and will not overlap any environmental sensitivities in the area.	Removal of the Alwyn Riser complies with OSPAR Decision 98/3 and regulatory requirements.
3. Drill Cuttings	
No drill cuttings piles are being decommissioned within the scope of this DP. However, due to the proximity of the Alwyn Riser removal activities to the Cormorant Alpha platform cuttings pile, potential disturbance to drill cuttings has been assessed. Further information on drill cuttings disturbance can be found in the Cormorant Alpha Conductor Guide Frames and Alwyn Riser EA [3].	

4. Interdependencies

Separate decommissioning programmes have been/will be submitted for the Cormorant Alpha Topside Decommissioning and Cormorant Alpha substructure respectively.

Cormorant Alpha served as the entry point to the Brent System and as such was the hub for this area of the East Shetland Basin. Third party fields who utilised the Brent System transportation service via the Cormorant Alpha facilities include Hudson, Brent Charlie & Alwyn North. This is in addition to the TAQA operated Tern and Cormorant North area fields. Of these only one (Alwyn North) is expected to still be in production at the time of Cormorant Alpha's cessation of production.

The Alwyn North Operator has been engaged, and alternative export routes have been identified and has been implemented prior to Cormorant Alpha CoP. Therefore, the removal of the Alwyn Riser at Cormorant Alpha will not strand any upstream reserves.

1.6 Field Location Including Field Layout and Adjacent Facilities

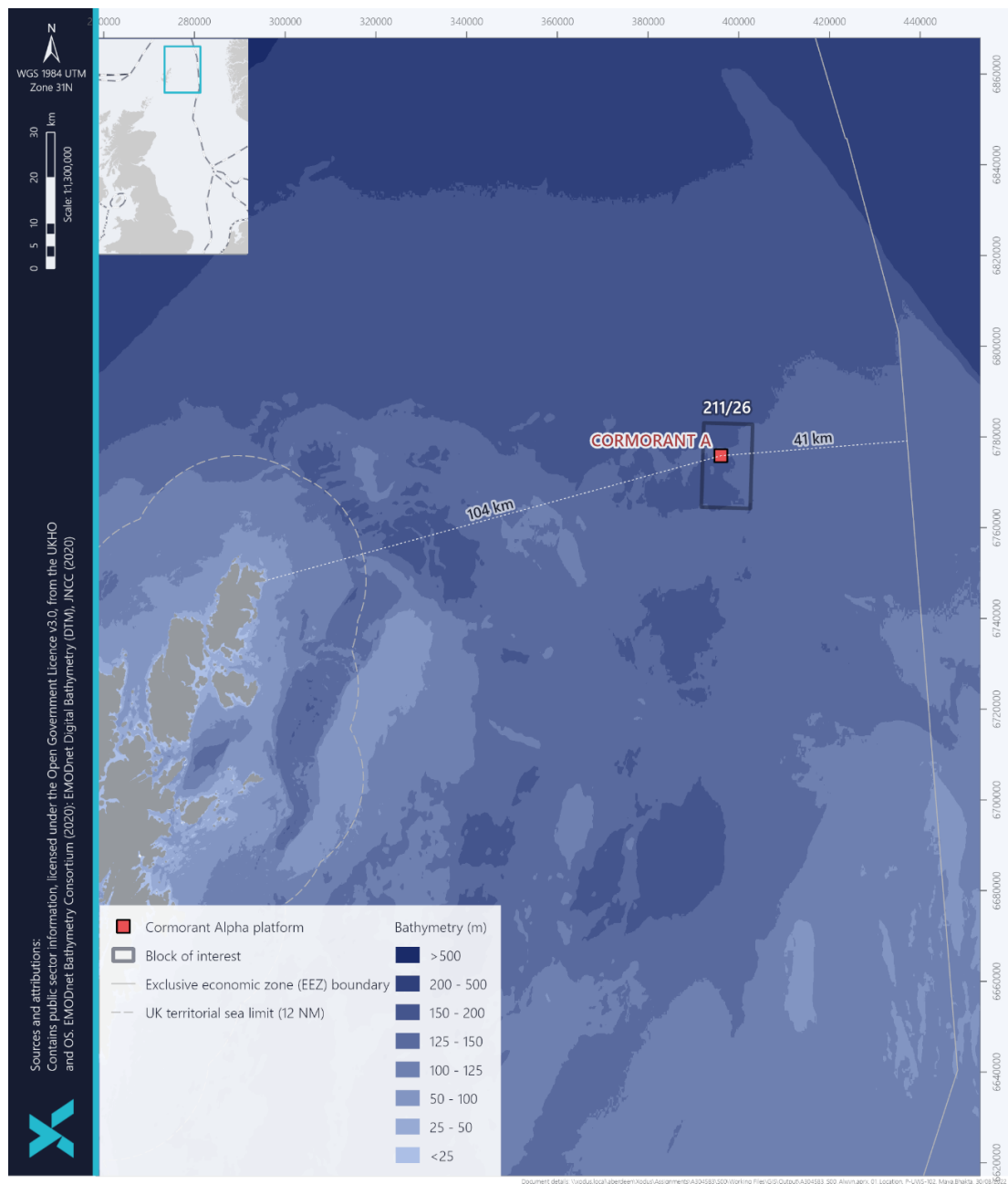


Figure 1-2: Cormorant Alpha Field Location in UKCS

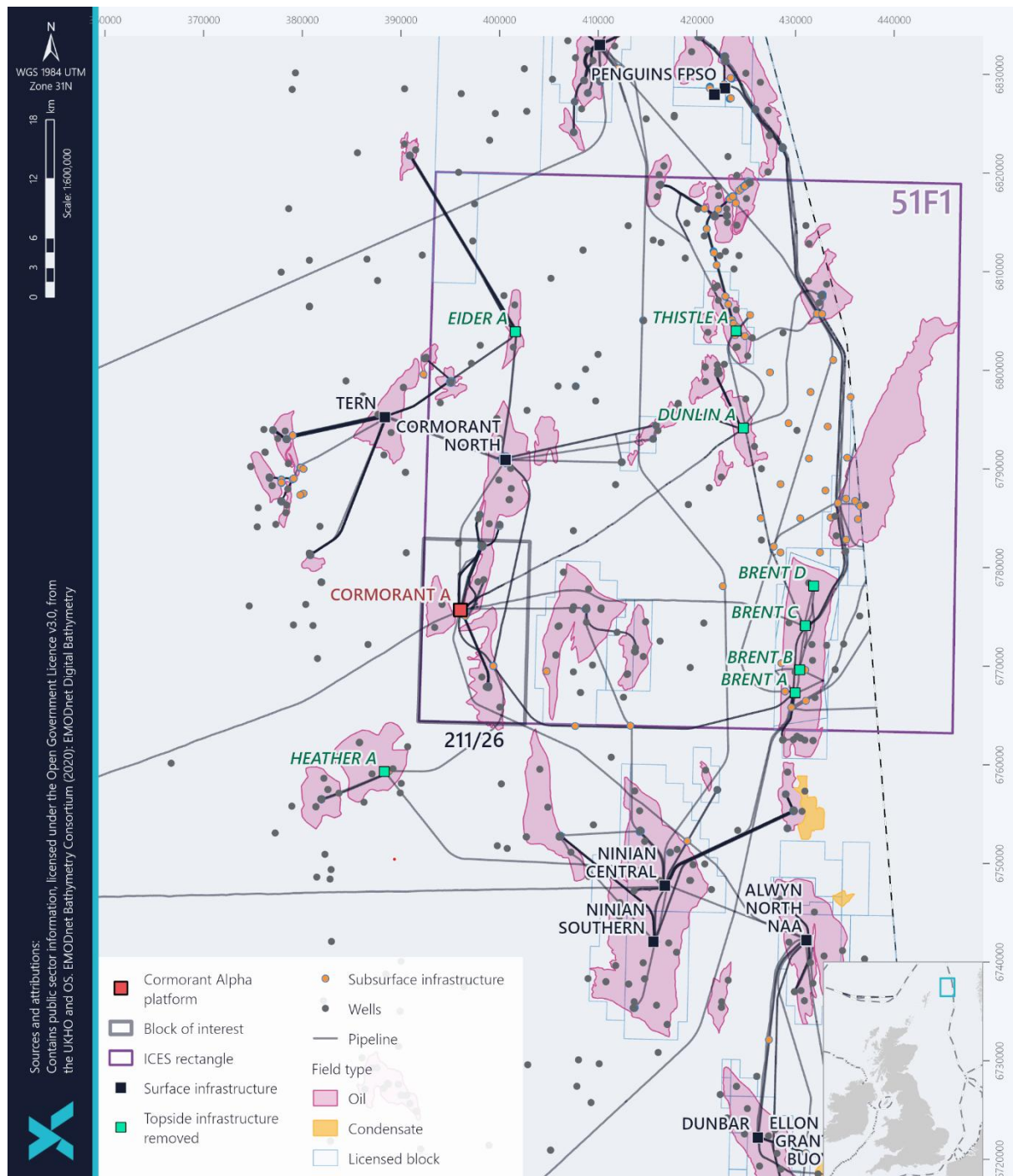


Figure 1-3: Cormorant Alpha Adjacent Facilities

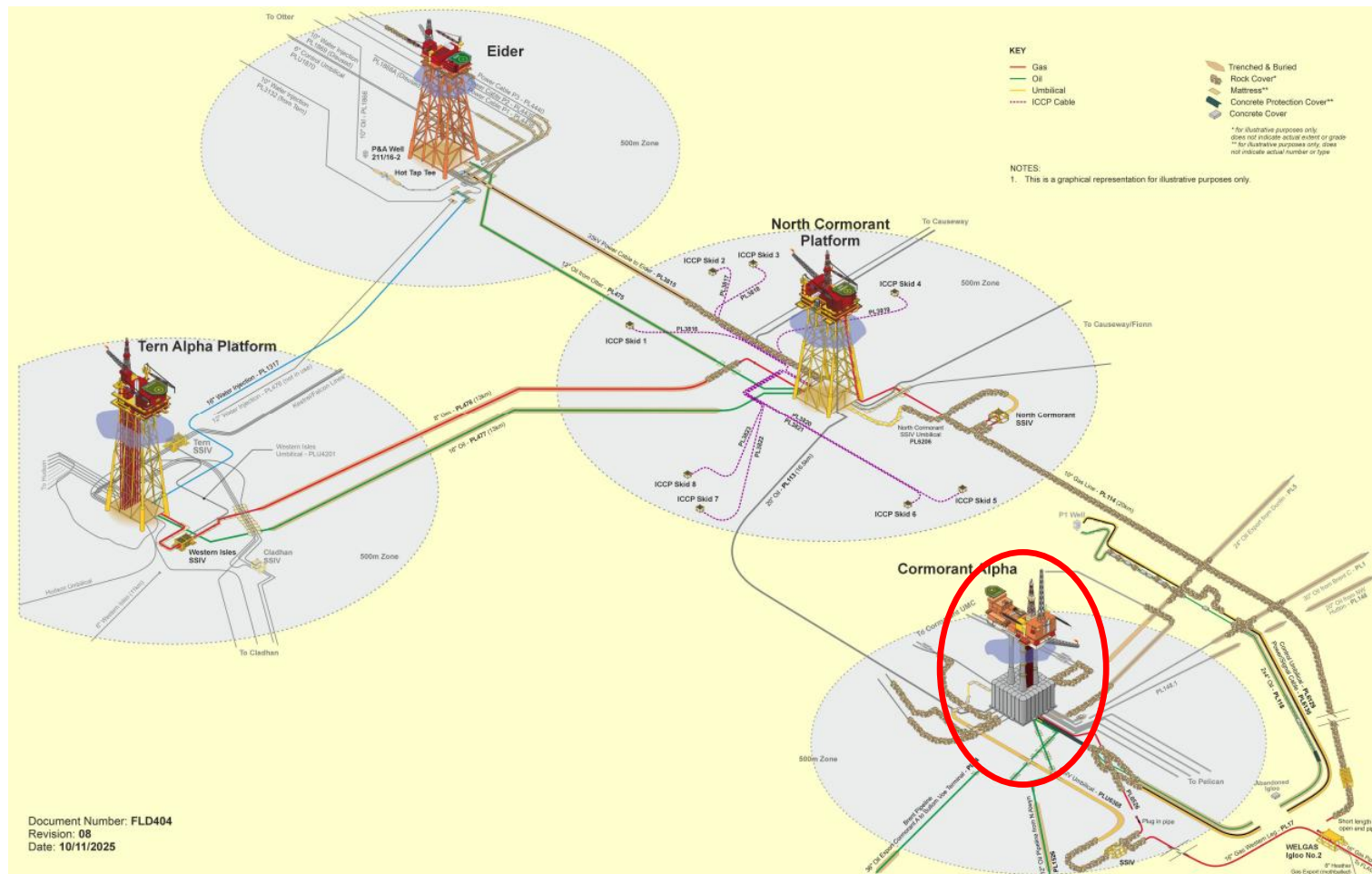


Figure 1-4: TAQA NNS Platform 500m Zones & Pipeline Systems (Scope of this DP highlighted in red)

Table 1-6: Adjacent Facilities						
Operator	Name	Type	Distance/ Direction from Alpha	Cormorant	Information	Status
EnQuest Limited	Heather A	Platform	17 km South southwest		Oil and Gas Development	Topsides Removed
TAQA Bratani Limited	North Cormorant	Platform	15 km North northeast		Oil and Gas Development	Non-Operational
CNR International (U.K.) Limited	Ninian Central	Platform	34 km South southeast		Oil and Gas Development	Operational
TAQA Bratani Limited	Tern	Platform	20 km North northwest		Oil and Gas Development	Non-Operational
CNR International (U.K.) Limited	Ninian Southern	Platform	38 km South southeast		Oil and Gas Development	Operational
Shell U.K. Limited	Brent A	Platform	34 km East southeast		Oil and Gas Development	Topsides removed
Shell U.K. Limited	Brent B	Platform	34 km East southeast		Oil and Gas Development	Topsides removed
Shell U.K. Limited	Brent C	Platform	34 km East southeast		Oil and Gas Development	Topsides removed
Shell U.K. Limited	Brent D	Platform	35 km East southeast		Oil and Gas Development	Topsides removed
TAQA Bratani Limited	Eider A	Platform	28 km North northeast		Oil and Gas Development	Topsides removed
Dunlin Management Limited	Dunlin A	Platform	33 km East northeast		Oil and Gas Development	Topsides removed
EnQuest Limited	Thistle A	Platform	39 km East northeast		Oil and Gas Development	Operational

Impacts of Decommissioning Proposals

The base of the incoming risers on Cormorant Alpha served as the entry points into the Brent System, with the Cormorant Alpha Platform and connection to Brent Pipeline to SVT all jointly owned by TAQA and its JV Partners.

Flushing of the Alwyn Riser and relevant upstream infrastructure will have been completed prior to the removal of the Alwyn Riser at Cormorant Alpha.

1.7 Industrial Implications

TAQA will leverage the existing Cormorant Alpha topsides decommissioning contract and procurement strategy, on behalf of the Section 29 Notice Holders. TAQA has, and will continue to:

- Publish Cormorant Alpha decommissioning project information, including the high-level project schedule, on the TAQA decommissioning [website](#):
- In the event of further contract awards for Cormorant Alpha decommissioning, TAQA will publish project information and contact details on the NSTA (North Sea Transition Authority) Pathfinder [website](#):
- Engage with the NSTA and the decommissioning supply chain on any future issues relating to the Cormorant Alpha Conductor Guides and Alwyn Riser Decommissioning Programmes and schedule.
- Use the FPAL database as the primary source for establishing tender lists for any future contracts and purchases with a value of £250,000 or more.

2 Description of Items to be Decommissioned

2.1 Installations - Conductor Guide Frames

The Cormorant Alpha Guide Frames are located on the South face of the platform between legs C3 and C4. Further key information regarding the Conductor Guide Frames is presented in [Table 2-1](#), [Figure 2-1](#) and [Figure 2-2](#)

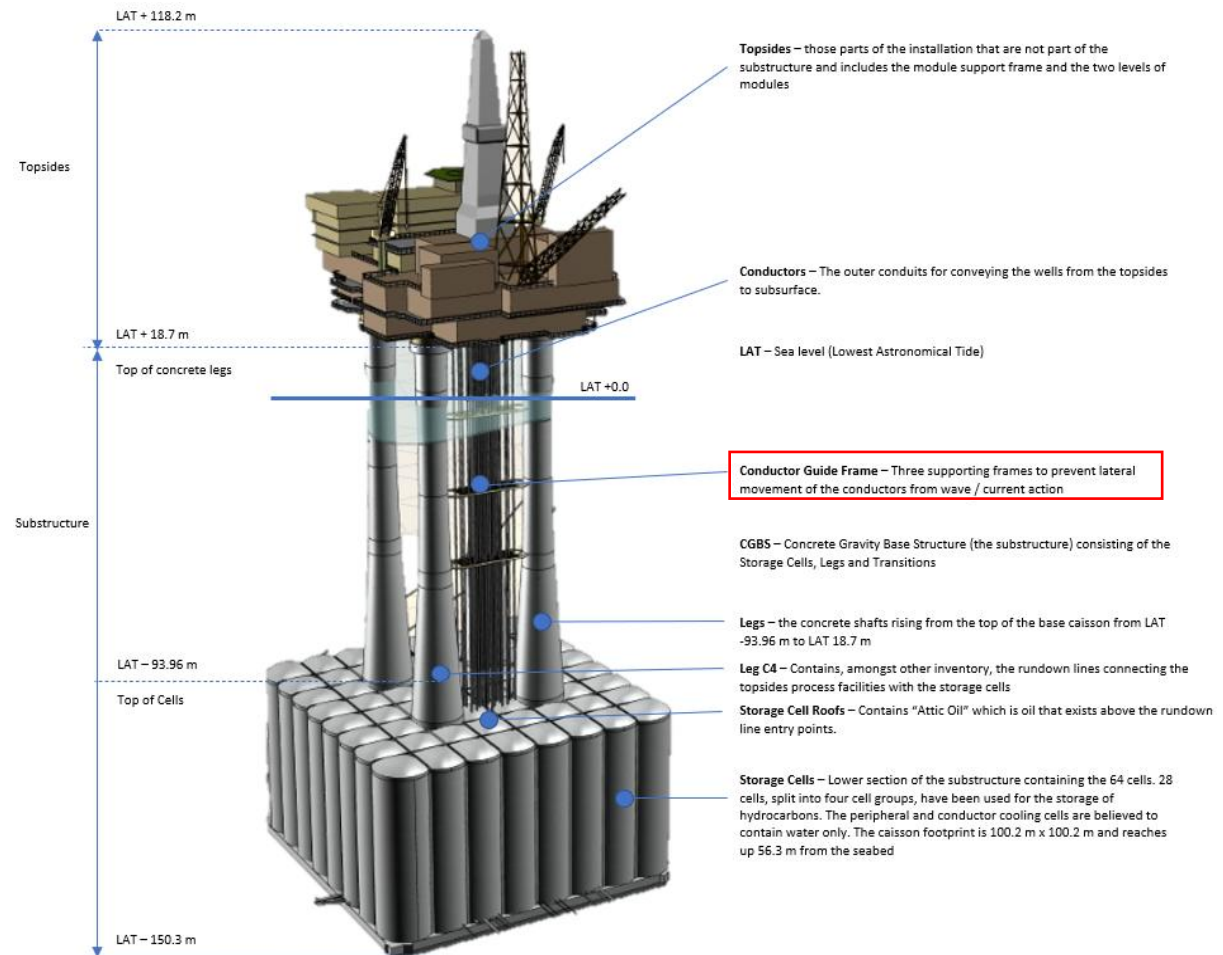


Figure 2-1 Cormorant Alpha Platform

Table 2-1: Installations					
Item	No.	Size (m) [LxWxH]	Weight (Te)	Location	
Cormorant Alpha Conductor Guide Frame	3	(EL -5.3) 24.9 x 9.9 x 3.9	(EL -5.3) 166	WGS84 Decimal	61.1026° N 01.0729° E
		(EL -28.3) 24.9 x 9.9 x 3.9	(EL -28.3) 127	WGS84	61° 06.16'N
		(EL -58.3)	(EL -58.3)	Decimal	01° 04.37'E
		21.8 x 9.9 x 3.9	101	Minute	

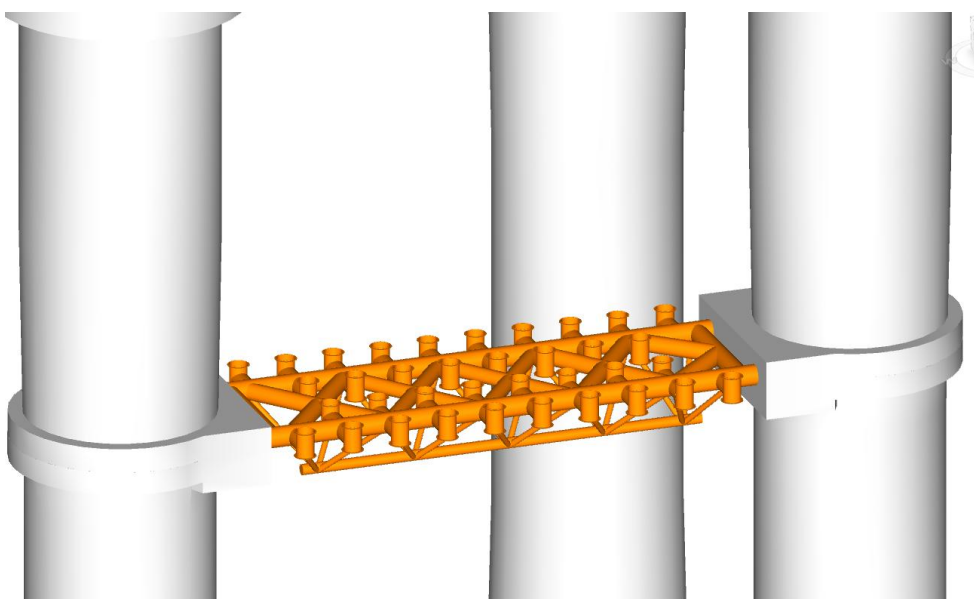


Figure 2-2: Typical Conductor Guide Frame

2.2 Pipelines – Alwyn Riser

The route of the Alwyn Riser at Cormorant Alpha is illustrated in Figure 2-3 and summarised as follows:

- Vertically down from EL+19.983m to EL-89.375m, inside a 30" nominal diameter caisson within conductor slot 18.
 - Via two connecting spools between EL-89.375m and EL- 92.810m.
- Diagonally across the cell tops inside a 30" nominal diameter protective caisson and over the cell edge between EL- 92.810m and EL-94.886m.
- Vertically down the cell wall down from EL-94.886m to EL- 150.300m

Key information regarding the Alwyn Riser is presented in [Table 2-2](#).

Description	Pipeline Number	Diameter	Length (km)	Description of Component Parts	Product Conveyed	From – To	Burial Status	Pipeline Status	Current Contents
Production Riser	PL1526	12"	0.312	Steel	Hydrocarbons	Cormorant Alpha Topsides Cut Point (EL- 3.0m) to Riser Base Tie-in Flange (EL- 150.3m)	N/A	Out of use	Treated sea water

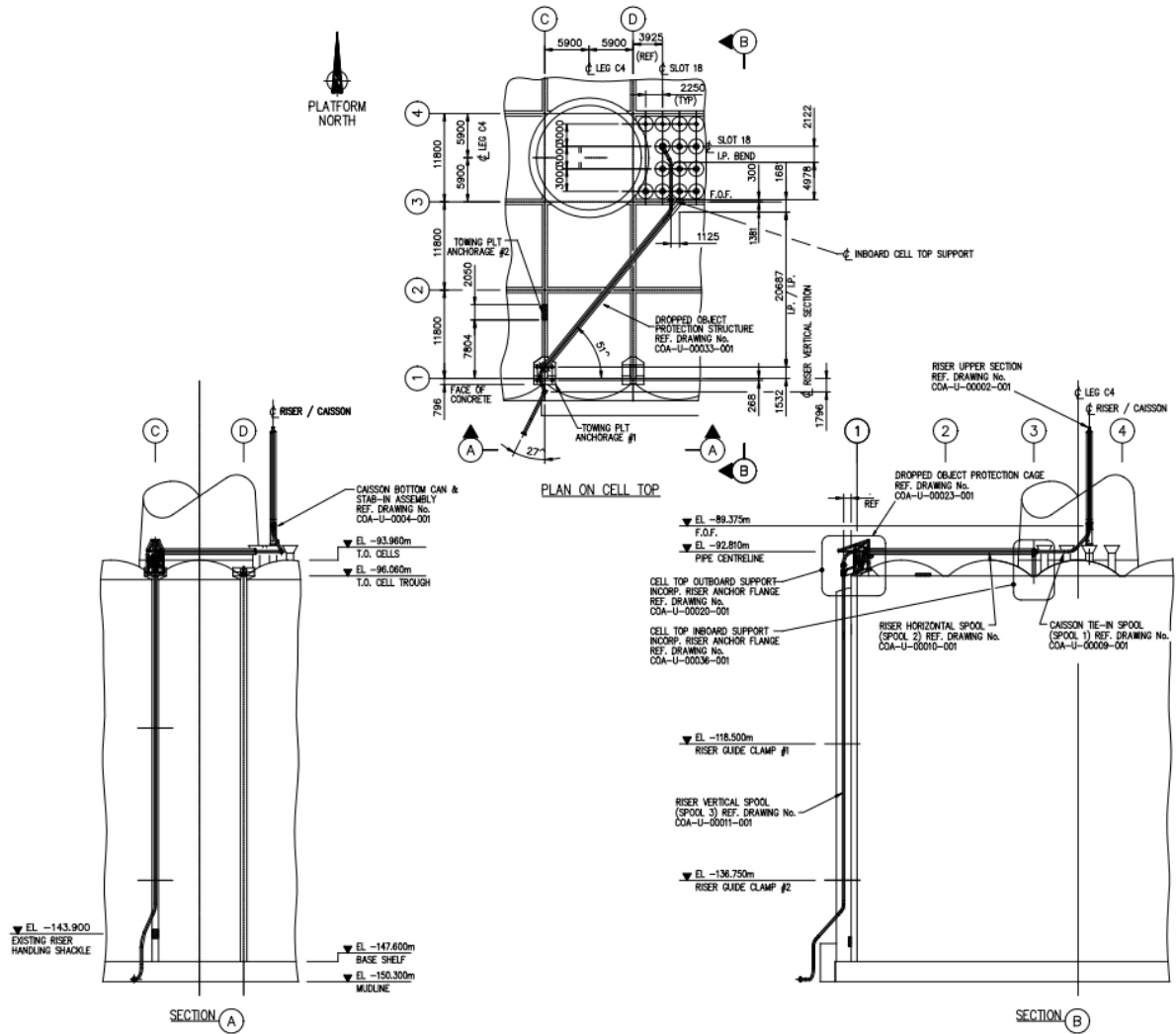


Figure 2-3 - Alwyn Riser General Arrangement at Cormorant Alpha CGBS

2.3 Drill Cuttings

No drill cuttings piles are being decommissioned within the scope of this DP.

There is a cuttings pile associated with Cormorant Alpha platform located on top of the Cormorant Alpha CGBS storage cells at the southeast corner, and, to a limited extent, the seabed at the south side of the platform. The maximum depth of this pile is approximately 10 m above the cell top. The pile spills over to the seabed in the area where the Alwyn Riser reaches the seabed at the base of the CGBS and on the seabed the pile is found to be relatively shallow. The Cormorant Alpha cuttings pile is estimated to cover an area of 12,210 m² with a pile volume of approximately 9,278 m³ which is also categorised as a “medium cuttings pile” [\[5\]](#).

Any potential disturbance of the Cormorant Alpha platform cuttings pile will be solely due to the removal of the Alwyn Riser. Cuttings that are disturbed on top of the Cormorant Alpha CGBS, or in the surrounding area, are likely to resettle within the area already contaminated by cuttings.

The Cormorant Alpha platform CGBS and cuttings pile will be subject to a future separate DP. This future DP will address the impacts of Cormorant Alpha CGBS decommissioning activities on the Cormorant Alpha cuttings pile.

Further information on the impacts of potential drill cuttings disturbance can be found in [Section 4](#) of this document and in the Cormorant Alpha Conductor Guide Frames and Alwyn Riser EA [\[3\]](#).

2.4 Inventory Estimates

The approximate amounts of materials that make-up the Alwyn Riser and Cormorant Alpha Conductor Guide Frames have been evaluated. These estimates will be refined during detailed engineering and the quantities of materials coming ashore will be tracked through the dismantling phase of the project to confirm overall quantities and the proportions that go to reuse, recycle and disposal.

A summary of the material inventories for the Cormorant Alpha Conductor Guide Frames and the Alwyn Riser and is presented in Table 2-3, Table 2-4, Figure 2-4 and Figure 2-5.

Table 2-3: Installations Inventory (Conductor Guide Frames)		
Material	Weight (Te)	% of Total
Ferrous metals (all grades)	394	100
Non-ferrous metals (aluminium alloys)	0	0
Concrete	0	0
Total	394	100

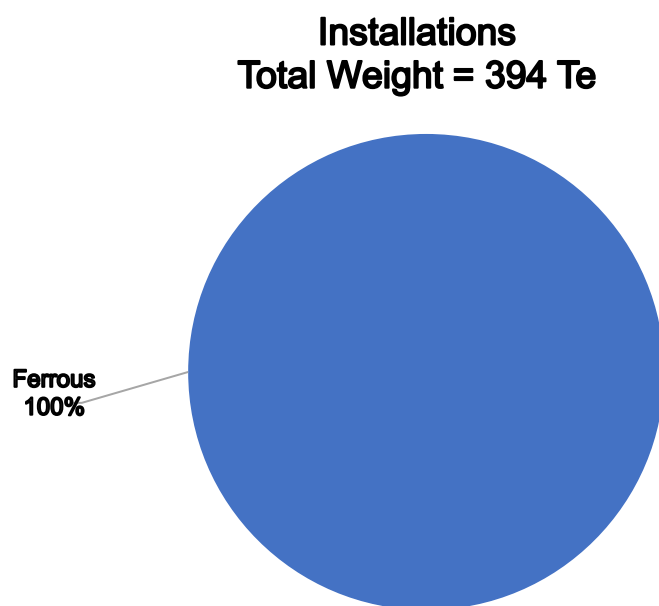


Figure 2-4 - Installations Inventory

Table 2-4: Pipelines and Stabilisation Materials Inventory (Alwyn Riser)		
Material	Weight (Te)	% of Total
Ferrous metals (all grades)	98.8	98
Non-ferrous metals (copper, aluminium alloys)	2.0	2
Plastics	0.5	<1
Concrete (mattresses, grout bags, grouted support)	-	-
Hazardous Residues/ Naturally Occurring Radioactive Material (NORM)	0	0
Other (Sandbags)	-	-
Total	101.3	100

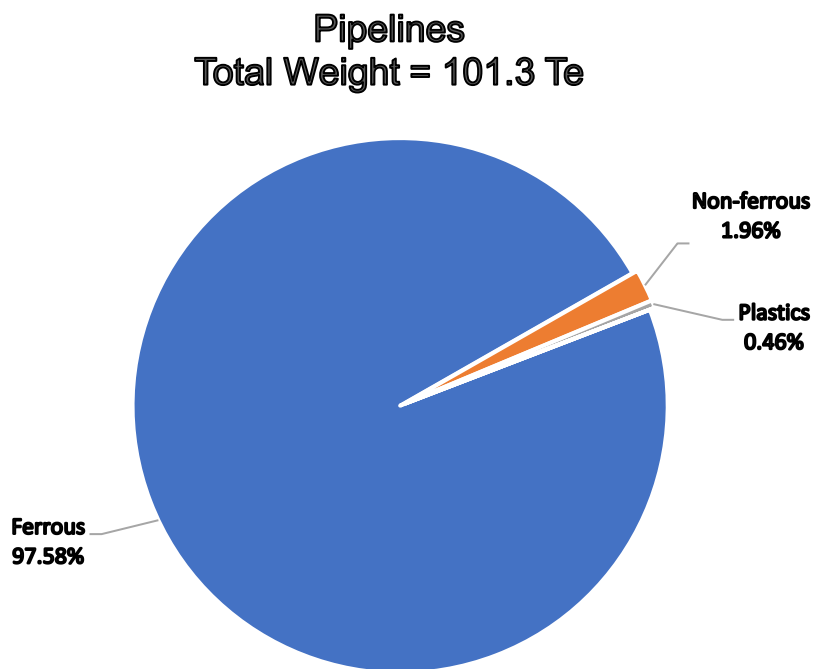


Figure 2-5: Pipelines & Stabilisation Materials Inventory

3 Removal and Disposal Methods

TQA will implement an Active Waste Management Plan to identify and quantify available disposal options for waste materials resulting from Cormorant Alpha Topsides Decommissioning. This will include materials resulting from the Conductor Guide Frames and Alwyn Riser decommissioning. The plan will detail the disposal route for recovered structures and equipment, and their materials and contents.

Recovered infrastructure will be returned to shore for dismantling and sorting before being transferred to suitably licenced waste facilities. It is the intent that, where possible, materials and equipment will be re-used or recycled. Materials management options will take account of the waste hierarchy, with reduction in volume of waste being the preferred option. OPRED will be advised once waste contractors have been selected.

3.1 Installation - Conductor Guide Frames Decommissioning Overview

The options considered for the disposal of the Conductor Guide Frames and the selected disposal route are listed in [Table 3-1](#).

Table 3-1: Installations			
Installation / Feature	No.	Option	Disposal Route
Conductor Guide Frames	3	Full recovery	Return to shore for reuse or recycling or other waste treatment as appropriate.

3.1.1 Comparative Assessment Method:

A Comparative Assessment has not been carried out for the Conductor Guide Frames covered by this DP. The Conductor Guide Frames are being fully removed, recovered, and returned to shore for recycling and disposal, a CA is not required.

Removal does not prejudice or compromise the feasible decommissioning options for the remaining substructure.

3.2 Pipelines - Alwyn Riser Decommissioning Overview

Table 3-2: Pipeline or Pipeline Group Decommissioning Options Considered			
Pipeline or Group	Condition of Line / Group	Whole or Part of Pipeline / Group	Decommissioning Options Considered
Group 11: PL1526.	Rigid riser	Whole group	Full removal ¹

Note:

1. Full removal selected during scoping phase

3.2.1 Comparative Assessment Method:

A Comparative Assessment has not been carried out for the rigid riser covered by this DP. The rigid riser is being fully removed, recovered, and returned to shore for recycling and disposal as appropriate, a CA is not required.

3.3 Waste Streams

Table 3-3: Waste Stream Management Methods	
Waste Stream	Removal and Disposal Method
Bulk Liquids	Spools and risers have been flushed to facilitate decommissioning scopes using the Cormorant Alpha topsides facilities. Any discharges offshore were managed, and risk assessed under the existing permitting regime. Any effluent shipped to shore will be treated and disposed of according to relevant regulations and guidance.
Carbon Steel	Carbon steel will be recycled
Hazardous Material / NORM	Hazardous materials, including any NORM, will be recovered to shore and disposed of under appropriate permits and in accordance with relevant regulations and guidance.
Other Non-Hazardous (Including Marine Growth),	Non-ferrous metals – principally material from sacrificial anodes will be recycled. Marine Growth – some marine growth may be removed offshore to allow cutting and lifting activities; the remainder will be taken ashore for recycling/disposal under appropriate permits.
Onshore Dismantling Sites	Appropriate licenced sites will be selected for onshore dismantling, recycling, and disposal. TAQA will ensure that the removal contractor has a proven track record and waste stream management throughout the deconstruction process. TAQA will carry out audits on disposal yards to provide assurance that they are compliant with legislation. Once an onshore dismantling site has been selected OPRED will be advised.

Table 3-4: Inventory Disposition			
Waste Stream	Total Inventory Tonnage	Planned Tonnage to Shore	Planned Left <i>in situ</i>
Alwyn Riser	≈101.3	≈ 101.3 Te	0 Te
Cormorant Alpha Conductor Guide Frames	≈394 Te	≈394 Te	0 Te

Recovered material will be landed ashore between 2027 and 2029. It is not possible to fully define the available recycling and waste disposal sites and treatment options, which will be determined through a competitive tendering process. Therefore, the following is a summary of the general waste disposal strategy. Percentages shown relate to the weight of material which is expected to be recovered to shore.

On removal and where practical, TAQA will ensure the principles of the waste hierarchy will be met in the handling of materials from the Alwyn Riser and Conductor Guide Frame decommissioning to maximize the quantities of reused and recycled material.

Preventing waste is the most preferred option. This will be achieved through reducing consumption and using resources efficiently. TAQA will comply with the Duty of Care requirements under the UK Waste Regulations and The Environmental Protection (Duty of Care) (Scotland) Regulations 2014. The project will follow industry good practice at all stages of reuse, recycling, and disposal.

The project will target options at the top of the waste hierarchy. Based on the current materials breakdown, TAQA aims to recycle around 95 % of the waste generated from these programmes. The possibility for the recovered material to be contaminated by, hydrocarbons, paints, etc. may limit the recovered material that can be successfully recycled.

Waste management activities will be conducted in full compliance with all relevant legislation and regulatory controls. Disposal to landfill will be the option of last resort when there are no other options and the environmental disadvantages of alternatives to landfill outweigh any benefits. For example, alternatives to landfill may involve additional transportation mileage or additional waste treatment, emission, or discharge impacts.

TAQA recognises that there will be large quantities of material returned to shore for recycling or disposal. Regardless of the ultimate destination there will be sufficient notice provided to ensure that there is suitable capacity for processing landed material, taking cognisance of destination handling capacity and availability, and to allow all applicable regulatory bodies, stakeholders, and contractors to be engaged appropriately.

4 Environmental Appraisal Overview

The Environmental Appraisal process considered the potential for significant environmental effects as a result of interactions between the proposed decommissioning activities and sensitive environmental receptors. It has been prepared in accordance with BEIS Decommissioning Guidelines [1], and Decom North Sea EA Guidelines [6].

The environmental sensitivities around the Cormorant Alpha platform are summarised in Table 4-1 and are based on surveys undertaken in the vicinity of Cormorant Alpha Platform between 2020 and 2024. The impacts of decommissioning operations on these sensitivities are listed in Table 4.2. Further details can be found in the supporting Cormorant Alpha Conductor Guide Frames and Alwyn Riser EA [3]. The environmental assessment has not identified any significant residual environmental effects as a result of activities described within these Decommissioning Programmes. The rationale behind the assessments that there are no significant impacts are presented in [3]. However, TAQA is committed to the schedule of environmental management measures set out in the EA to further reduce the potential for environmental effects. These management measures are summarised in Table 4.2.

4.1 Environmental Sensitivities (Summary)

Table 4-1: Environmental Sensitivities	
Environmental Receptor	Main Features
Conservation interests	There are no Nature Conservation Marine Protected areas (NCMPAs), Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) or Special Protection Areas (SPAs) within 40 km of the Cormorant Alpha platform. The closest protected site is the Pobie Bank Reef SAC, approximately 63 km southwest of the Cormorant Alpha platform. The seabed in the vicinity of the Cormorant Alpha platform is located within a wider area of 'subtidal sand and gravels', a seabed type designated as a PMF in Scottish waters, which supports fish populations. The following fish species are listed as PMFs: blue whiting, cod, herring, ling, mackerel, Norway pout, saithe, spurdog and whiting. Cod are also listed on the OSPAR List of Threatened and/or Declining Species. Free-swimming megafauna is limited to only a few species, being mainly dominated by members of the order Gadiformes. Numerous small seabed depressions were recorded within 250 m of, and in the northeast to southeast region, of the Cormorant Alpha platform. However, no features characteristic to large pockmarks were identified and ground-truthing did not identify MDAC within the depressions. Ocean quahog are listed on the OSPAR list of threatened and/or declining species and habitats and are designated as a PMF. Two individuals were recorded within the Cormorant Alpha survey area at stations CA_EBS_02 and CA_EBS_05, located 200 m southeast and 200 m southwest of the platform respectively, however they were not observed in aggregations. The habitat 'Seapen and burrowing megafauna communities' is also on the OSPAR list of threatened and/or declining habitats and species and is a PMF. Surveys identified evidence of this habitat within the Cormorant Alpha survey area. The density of small burrows was recorded as 'occasional' on the SACFOR scale across the two transects sampled around the Cormorant Alpha platform

	(CA_EBS_08 and CA_EBS_10; between 200 m and 500 m from the Cormorant Alpha platform).
Seabed	In the Cormorant Alpha survey area, water depth ranges from 149 mLAT to the west and 153 mLAT to the east. In the south, the mean wave height ranges from 2.11 - 2.40 m whilst in the north it ranges from 2.41 - 3.00 m. Wave energy at the seabed ranges between 'low' (less than 0.21 N/m²) and 'moderate' (0.21 - 1.2 N/m²) for most of the NNS region, increasing to 'high' (more than 12 N/m²) close to shore. The annual mean wave height in the wider area ranges from 2.71-3.00 m and the annual mean wave power ranges from 36.1 - 42.0 kW/m. Sediment analysis across the wider Cormorant Alpha survey area indicated a heterogenous mixture of sediment across sampling stations, composed primarily of sand, with small contributions of fines and gravel. Sands dominated the stations within the Cormorant Alpha survey area, ranging from 74.7% - 89.9% of the sediment composition. The mean particle size ranged from 0.16 mm to 0.34 mm. Under the European Nature Information System (EUNIS) habitat classification, the most widespread seabed type around the wider Cormorant Alpha area is MD52: "Atlantic offshore circalittoral sand" which represents offshore (deep) circalittoral habitats with fine sands or non-cohesive muddy sands. This habitat type falls within the broad habitat Priority Marine Feature (PMF) "offshore sands and gravels". There is one cuttings pile that lies on top of the CGBS and spills onto seabed surrounding the Cormorant Alpha platform. The core sediments from the Cormorant Alpha cuttings pile were typically dominated by "cohesive silty sand" (80% of the cores analysed) throughout and were almost exclusively dominated by the fines fraction. The mean particle size was 0.04 mm and the cores closest to the pile centre exhibited distinctive layers of 'dark greyish olive' drilling material and 'pale brown' layers which are usually associated with chemical additives. Total hydrocarbon content (THC) concentrations in the surface sediments sampled from around the Cormorant Alpha platform ranged from 26 mg kg⁻¹ to 7,580 mg kg⁻¹ with a mean of 561 mg kg⁻¹. THC levels were elevated above the UKOOA 95th percentile for the Northern North Sea (NNS; 20.32 mg kg⁻¹) at 90% of the stations sampled. Higher levels were found close to the Cormorant Alpha platform where most of the stations within 190 m exceeded the Oslo Paris Convention 50 mg kg⁻¹ limit. Levels of THC were found to decrease with distance from the platform. There is one cuttings pile located at the Cormorant Alpha platform. The cuttings pile lies mainly on top of the CGBS cell top but also overflows onto the seabed. The Cormorant Alpha cuttings pile is estimated to cover an area of 12,210 m² with a pile volume of approximately 9,278 m³ which is categorised as a "medium cuttings pile". Within the cuttings pile, THC levels ranged between 63,800 mg kg⁻¹ to 427,000 mg kg⁻¹. All core sections recorded over 1,000 times the OSPAR (2006) 50 mg kg⁻¹ threshold. Stations on the seabed, beyond the physical pile boundary, continued to show elevated THC levels above the 50 mg kg⁻¹, on surface layers only.

Fish	International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) rectangle 51F1 represents a spawning ground for Norway pout, whiting, haddock, saithe and cod. Spawning areas for most species are not fixed and may vary annually, and mapped distributions represent the widest known extent rather than precise boundaries. Cod is the only species with a high-intensity spawning ground in ICES rectangle 51F1, while all other species exhibit low or undetermined spawning intensity. Haddock, saithe, Norway pout and cod produce pelagic eggs, whereas herring are benthic spawners but are not reported to spawn within ICES rectangle 51F1 where the Cormorant Alpha platform is located. ICES rectangle 51F1 also represents a potential nursery ground for blue whiting, European hake, haddock, herring, ling, mackerel, Norway pout, spurdog and whiting. Blue whiting is the only species with a high-intensity nursery ground in the area, while all other species occur at lower nursery intensity.
Fisheries	The Cormorant Alpha platform is located in ICES rectangle 51F1. This region is primarily targeted for demersal species with a negligible contribution from pelagic and shell fisheries. Fishing effort is dominated by demersal trawl fishing gears. Total annual fishery landings by weight and value are considered broadly comparable to other high performing ICES rectangles.
Marine Mammals	White-sided dolphin, harbour porpoise, white beaked dolphin and minke whale have been recorded in the wider Cormorant Alpha area. Minke whales are frequently recorded as seasonal visitors. Grey seal and harbour seal densities are low in the wider Cormorant Alpha area, densities are predicted to be between 0 and 1 per 25 km² for both species.
Birds	In the NNS the most numerous seabird species present are likely to be northern fulmar, black-legged kittiwake and common guillemot. Seabird oil sensitivity in Block 211/26 is considered low (score of 5) throughout the year. Oil sensitivity is considered medium (score of 4) across multiple adjacent blocks in September through to December.
Onshore Communities	The Cormorant Alpha platform is located approximately 104 km from the northeast coast of Shetland. Due to this distance, no impacts to onshore conservation sites are expected from the Conductor Guide Frames and Alwyn Riser decommissioning activities. Waste generated during decommissioning will be brought to shore and will be managed under the project Active Waste Management Plan (AWMP) using approved waste contractors and in liaison with the relevant Regulators, in line with TAQA's Waste Management Strategy and the Waste Hierarchy. Preventing waste is ultimately the best option, achieved through reducing consumption and using resources more efficiently. However, this is followed by re-use and recycling of goods. If all re-use opportunities have been taken by TAQA, the next preferable option is for recycling of materials. Should NORM be encountered associated with the materials brought to shore, TAQA will ensure the disposal site is suitably licenced to accept the waste arising from the decommissioning of the subsea infrastructure. All waste will be managed in compliance with relevant waste legislation by a licenced and/or permitted waste management

	contractor. The selected contractor will be assessed for competence through due diligence and duty of care assurance activities.
Other Users of the Sea	The Cormorant Alpha platform is located in a well-developed area for oil and gas extraction. The closest surface infrastructure is North Cormorant platform, located 15 km North northeast of the Cormorant Alpha platform. There are 23 wrecks within 40 km of the Cormorant Alpha platform, with the closest wreck located approximately 8 km west southwest of the Cormorant Alpha platform. There are no known interactions between the adjacent facilities and the proposed Conductor Guide Frames and Alwyn Riser decommissioning activities. There are no planned or operational renewable energy sites, cables or pipelines or designated military practice and exercise areas within 40 km of the Cormorant Alpha platform.
Atmosphere	The cumulative emissions generated by the activities associated with the decommissioning of the Conductor Guide Frames and Alwyn Riser are small relative to lifetime emissions. Estimated CO₂ emissions from the selected decommissioning options are 2,213 Te, equating to approximately 0.018% of total UKCS emissions (2025). Most of these emissions are related to vessel use (1,699Te CO₂) and onshore recycling of materials (476 Te CO₂).

4.2 Potential Environmental Impacts and their Management

A review of potentially significant environmental and social interactions has been completed and, considering the mitigation measures that will be built into the project activities, there is expected to be no significant impact on receptors from the Alwyn Riser and Conductor Guide Frames decommissioning activities. Further information and justification statements can be found in the Conductor Guide Frames and Alwyn Riser Environmental Appraisal [3].

Given the remote offshore location of the Cormorant Alpha platform, there is no potential for the Conductor Guide Frames and Alwyn Riser decommissioning activities to impact any European or nationally designated protected sites. The EA has considered the Scottish National Marine Plan adopted by the Scottish Government to help ensure sustainable development of the marine area. TAQA considers that the proposed decommissioning activities are in alignment with its objectives and policies.

Notwithstanding, Table 4.2 details the potential environmental impacts and the management and mitigation measures that will be put in place to further reduce potential environmental impacts.

Table 4.2: Environmental Impacts and Management

Activity	Main Impacts	Management
Vessel activities and removal to shore	Contribution to local air quality, UK cumulative emissions and global warming. Estimated carbon dioxide equivalent (CO₂e) emissions from the selected decommissioning options are 2,213 Te CO₂e equating to approximately 0.018% of total UKCS emissions (2025). Vessel activity associated with the decommissioning activities represents the largest CO₂e contribution (1,699 Te). A significant proportion also originates from onshore recycling of materials (476 Te).	• The following mitigation measures are proposed to further minimise impacts from vessel activities: • Each vessel will have a SEEMP which contains information of minimising fuel consumptions e.g., economical speeds when operationally appropriate. • Green dynamic positioning or economical speeds when operationally appropriate. • Developing the decommissioning plan, which includes the possibility of combining the Cormorant Alpha Conductor Guide Frames and Alwyn Riser decommissioning activities with other decommissioning projects, to minimise the number of vessel deployments, mobilisations and demobilisations. • Streamlining of activities through planning to reduce the time required for vessels will be required for these activities and will support the drive to reduce emissions.

Table 4.2: Environmental Impacts and Management

Activity	Main Impacts	Management
Cutting and removal of Cormorant Alpha Conductor Guide Frames and Alwyn Riser	Seabed disturbance impacts due to the Removal of the Alwyn Riser at the Tie-in Flange. Potential temporary wet storage of the Conductor Guide Frames and Alwyn Riser Localised disturbance of cuttings pile. Temporary impacts of removal activities: Total direct impact: 0.0056 km² Total indirect impact*: 0.011 km² *Note that the footprint indirect impact from sediment mobilisation represents double the direct impact area.	- The following mitigation measures are proposed to further minimise impacts from decommissioning the Conductor Guide Frames and Alwyn Riser: - It is envisaged that all vessels undertaking the decommissioning and removal works will be dynamically positioned vessels. As a result, there will be no impact to the seabed due to anchoring. - All activities which may lead to seabed disturbance will be planned, managed, and implemented in such a way that disturbance is minimised. - If wet storage is required, the storage location will be positioned outside of the cuttings pile contamination threshold boundary, within the Cormorant Alpha 500 m zone and avoiding existing infrastructure. - Activities will be appropriately assessed and permitted under a Marine Licence. - A debris survey will be undertaken at the completion of the decommissioning activities. Any debris identified as a result of oil and gas activities will be recovered from the seabed where possible. - Clear seabed verification will ensure there is no residual risk to other sea users. Non-intrusive verification techniques will be considered in the first instance and in agreement with OPRED and fishing bodies. - Minimal disturbance of cuttings pile through the choice of decommissioning technology to avoid unnecessary spread of contamination. Further information on drill cuttings disturbance can be found in [3], Section 6.4

5 Interested Party Consultations

TAQA consulted a wide range of interested parties during the decommissioning planning stages, and compilation of the Decommissioning Programme. These are summarised as:

Table 5-1: Summary of Stakeholder Comments		
Statutory Consultees		
Who	Comment	Response
Scottish Fisherman's Federation (SFF)		
National Federation of Fisherman's Organisations (NFFO)		
Northern Irish Fish Producers Organisation (NIFPO)		
Global Marine Services (GMS)		
North Sea Transition Authority (NSTA)		
Other Stakeholders		
Who	Comment	Response
Public		

6 Programme Management

6.1 Project Management and Verification

TAQA, on behalf of the Section 29 Notice Holders, has appointed a project management team to manage the planning and execution of this decommissioning programme. The team will ensure that decommissioning is conducted in accordance with TAQA health, environmental and safety management principles, and relevant legislation. TAQA's management principles will govern operational controls, hazard identification and risk management. The work will be coordinated with due regard to interfaces with other operators' oil and gas assets and with other users of the sea.

TAQA will control and manage the progress of all permits, licences, authorisations, notices, consents, and consultations required. Any significant changes to the decommissioning programmes will be discussed and agreed with OPRED.

6.2 Post-decommissioning Debris Clearance and Verification

This DP covers removal of the Cormorant Alpha Conductor Guide Frames and Alwyn Riser. Upon completion of this scope, an as-left survey will be carried out.

Following the wider Cormorant Alpha Topsides decommissioning, subject to a separate DP [\[2\]](#), TAQA will carry out post decommissioning debris surveys and seabed verification, centred around the sites of the Cormorant Alpha Platform. Clear seabed verification will be carried out after decommissioning to ensure there is no residual risk to other sea users. A post-decommissioning site survey will be carried out within a 500 m radius of Cormorant Alpha. Non-intrusive techniques will be considered in the first instance to identify any remaining debris or seabed obstructions. It is then TAQA's intention that if present these would be recovered/removed ensuring no oilfield-related debris that could interfere with future fishing operations remain.

If the above cannot be achieved and potential debris or obstructions do remain then mitigations would be discussed with OPRED and fishing representative bodies. Following consultation with OPRED, the use of trawl sweeps or other intrusive means could in this instance, be deployed to provide seabed clearance verification.

Following verification, TAQA will issue a statement of clearance to all relevant governmental departments and non-governmental organisations.

The post-decommissioning survey results will be notified to the UK Fisheries Offshore Oil and Gas Legacy Trust Fund Ltd to allow appropriate modification to the FishSAFE system, and to the United Kingdom Hydrographic Office to allow appropriate modification of Admiralty charts and notices to mariners.

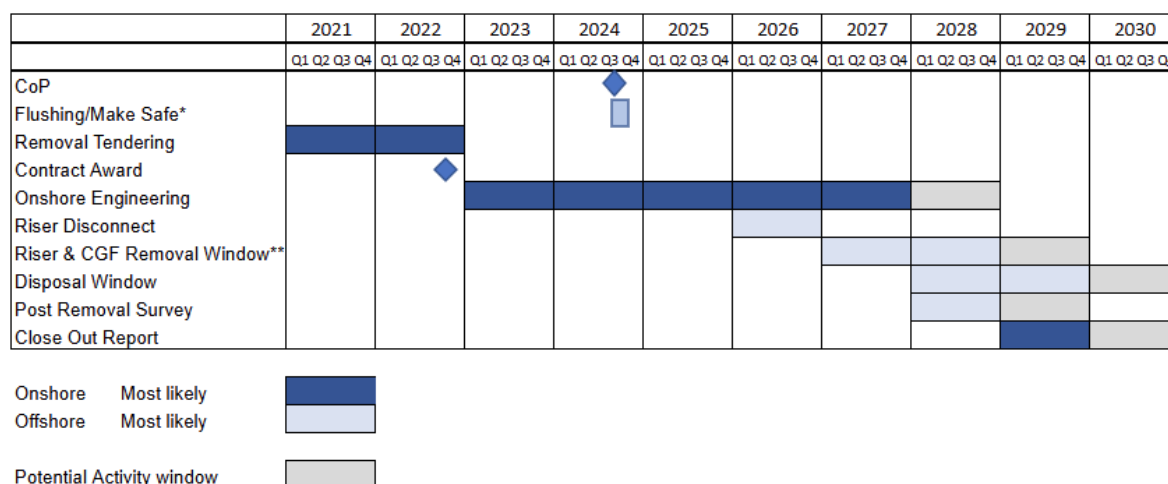
6.3 Schedule

The main milestones in the Cormorant Alpha Conductor Guide Frames and Alwyn Riser decommissioning process were, or are anticipated to be:

- Cessation of production: Q3 2024
- Riser disconnect & topsides piping removal Q2-Q3 2026
- Riser & Conductor Guide Frame removal Q2 2027 -Q3 2029
- Post Removal Survey Q4 2028-Q4 2029

The upper section of the Alwyn Riser will be removed in 2026 as part of the Cormorant Alpha topsides removal preparations. The remaining section of Alwyn Riser and the Cormorant Alpha Conductor Guide Frames shall be removed between 2027 and 2028 as part of the main Cormorant Alpha topsides removal campaign.

The riser sections and Conductor Guide Frames may be temporarily wet stored prior to their subsequent recovery to shore within a two year window. This will either be performed as part of the main removal campaign or as part of a dedicated recovery campaign.



*Flushing and make safe completed as part of wider Topsides scope.

**Includes the potential Alwyn Riser and CGF wet storage window (2027 - 2029).

Figure 6-1: Decommissioning Schedule

6.4 Costs

An overall cost estimate following Oil and Gas UK (OGUK) Guidelines on Decommissioning Cost Estimation (Issue 3, September 2013) [7] will be provided to OPRED in confidence.

Table 6-1: Provisional Decommissioning Costs	
Item	Estimated Cost (£MM)
WBS 1 – Operator Project Management	Provided to OPRED in confidence
WBS 2 – Post CoP OPEX	
WBS 3 – Well Abandonment	
WBS 4 – Facilities & Pipelines Permanent Isolation & Cleaning	
WBS 5 – Topsides Preparation	
WBS 6 – Topsides Removal	
WBS 7 – Substructure Removal	
WBS 8 – Onshore Recycling	
WBS 9 – Subsea Infrastructure	
WBS 10 – Site Remediation	
WBS 11 – Monitoring	

6.5 Close Out

A close out report will be submitted to OPRED and posted on the TAQA decommissioning website detailing any variations from the Decommissioning Programme within twelve months of the completion of the offshore decommissioning scopes and disposal, including debris removal, verification of seabed clearance (where applicable) and the first post-decommissioning environmental survey.

6.6 Post Decommissioning Monitoring and Evaluation

This DP covers removal of the removal of the Cormorant Alpha Conductor Guide Frames and Alwyn Riser. Post decommissioning surveys will be limited to as-left surveys of the immediate area around any remaining sub-structure connections/supports and at any potential wet storage areas as appropriate. These as left survey results will be included in the close out report.

Following the wider Cormorant Alpha decommissioning (subject to a separate future DP) TAQA will carry out a post-decommissioning environmental seabed survey, centred around the Cormorant Alpha platform.

A copy of the survey results will be forwarded to OPRED. After the survey results have been sent to OPRED and reviewed, a post decommissioning survey regime will be agreed between TAQA and OPRED taking account of the findings of previous surveys, and a risk-based approach to the frequency and scope of subsequent surveys.

6.7 Management of Residual Liability

Any equipment that is left in place will remain the responsibility of the Cormorant Alpha installations S29 notice holders.

TAQA recognises that the parties to the decommissioning programmes covered by this document will continue to retain residual liability for any infrastructure left in place after decommissioning.

TAQA will engage with OPRED on all future legacy and liability matters and requirements relating to the infrastructure left in place.

7 Supporting Documents

- [1] Guidance Notes Decommissioning of Offshore Oil and Gas Installations and Pipelines, BEIS, November 2018
- [2] Cormorant Alpha Topsides Decommissioning Programme, TB-COADEC01-X-AD-0002-000, TAQA, 31 January 2022
- [3] Cormorant Alpha Conductor Guide Frames and Alwyn Riser EA, 77IFS-249225-H99-0001, Xodus Group, 17 April 2026.
- [4] OEUK Well Decommissioning Guidelines, Issue 7 November 2022
- [5] Guidance document for characterisation of offshore drill cuttings piles, NorOG (NORSK olje & gass), 2016
- [6] Decom North Sea, Environmental Appraisal Guidelines, 2017
- [7] OGUK 2013. Oil and Gas UK Guidelines on Decommissioning Cost Estimation (Issue 3, September 2013)

8 Section 29 Holders' Letters of Support

Letters of Support will be obtained from the Section 29 Holders on final approval of the Decommissioning Programme, in advance of CoP and full Field decommissioning, and will be provided within this section of the Programme.

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