



30 September, 2019

Secretary General
Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport
Leeson Lane
Dublin 2
D02 TR60

For the attention of: Mr Lawrence Kilbane, Nautical Surveyor

**Re: Application for Consent under Section 5 of the Continental Shelf Act, 1968 –
Safety of Navigation**

I refer to this Department's letter dated 29th November, 2018 (copy enclosed) in connection with the decommissioning of the Kinsale area and Seven Heads gasfield facilities, located in the Celtic Sea, off the County Cork coast and onshore at Inch, Co. Cork.

The Operator of the gasfields, PSE Kinsale Energy Limited (PSE KE), has submitted a second application to the Minister for Communications, Climate Action and Environment for the decommissioning of certain facilities in the **Kinsale area gasfield**. This application covers the removal of the Kinsale Alpha and Kinsale Bravo platform sub-structures (jackets) and all associated works which are scheduled to be undertaken in 2021 (further details of the application are enclosed at **Appendix 1**). The application has been accompanied by an Environmental Impact Assessment Report and an Appropriate Assessment Screening Report (these reports cover the environmental impacts of the entire decommissioning of the gasfields and associated facilities).

In April, 2019, the Minister consented to the plugging and abandoning of wells and the removal of the two platform topside structures. A further application is expected to be submitted by PSE KE in due course which will encompass the decommissioning of all remaining structures in the gasfields, namely the pipelines and umbilicals¹.

Consent has been sought to alter and remove certain facilities from a designated area under Section 5(2) of the Continental Shelf Act, 1968, as amended (which requires the

¹ **Umbilical** refers in the oil and gas industry to the hydraulic/electric connections used offshore between the subsea equipment and platforms units enabling the control of these from an onshore location.

consent of the Minister for Communications, Climate Action and Environment to construct, alter or improve any structure or works in or remove any object or material from a designated area).

As previously referred to in our correspondence dated 29th November, 2018, during the course of various transfers of Departmental name and delegation of Ministerial functions throughout recent years certain requirements under Section 5 of the Continental Shelf Act, 1968 have not been appropriately delegated to the Minister of Transport, Tourism and Sport. This will be rectified by a provision in the Minerals Development Act, 2017, which has not yet commenced.

In the meantime, the assessment of the current application to decommission the platform jackets (legs) is underway with a public consultation having recently being carried out. The views of the Minister of Transport, Tourism and Sport are hereby sought with regard to the proposal, insofar as it relates to the safety of navigation of vessels , to alter and remove certain facilities from a designated area under Section 5(2) of the Continental Shelf Act, 1968, as amended.

Should you require any further details please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,



Noel Regan

Assistant Principal

Petroleum Affairs Division Policy and Regulation