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NEO, Jersey, Serica eye first oil from Buchan Horst project by end-2026

NEO Energy has taken another significant step forward on its newly renamed Buchan Horst development, in blocks 20/5a and 21/1a in the UK Central North Sea, by submitting a formal environmental statement (ES) to regulators.

The UK Offshore Petroleum Regulator for Environment & Decommissioning published the ES on Monday (22 January), with the documentation confirming that NEO, Jersey Oil & Gas and soon-to-join partner Serica Energy are targeting first oil from the project in the fourth quarter of 2026.

Submission of the ES represents another sign of momentum for what was previously referred to as the Buchan redevelopment project after NEO in November agreed to acquire from Dana Petroleum the Western Isles FPSO for use in the scheme.

NEO does not tend to talk too much in public about its plans, but has referred to its desire to see the Buchan Horst development “delivered in a short timeframe”.

Under the project schedule outlined in the ES, NEO says it expects drilling of the development’s seven wells to start in the second quarter of next year and run through to the fourth quarter of 2026, while subsea installation, FPSO hook-up and commissioning are targeted to take place between the second and fourth quarters of 2026.

Modification work on the Western Isles FPSO, which is still on station producing for Dana, but is slated to come off location within months, is expected to start in the fourth quarter of this year. This modification work will include making the Sevan-design vessel “electrification ready” for when supply is available, the ES confirmed.

Buchan Horst is located around 115 km northeast of the Scottish coast. In its previous guise as just Buchan, the field was on stream between 1981 and 2017 when then-operator Repsol Resources ceased production after the Buchan Alpha floating production unit reached the end of its certified life. *(Continued on page 2)*