

# Point Thomson Gas Cycling Project

**Visual Impact** 

March 19, 2003

The Point Thomson Development will require the installation of facilities at three primary locations: West Well Pad, East Well Pad, and Central Facilities and Well Pad. Given the low relief and treeless landscape the facilities located on the pad may be visible from some distance away depending on weather conditions. Preliminary 3D Computer Aided Drawings depicting the visibility of the facilities at the East Pad viewed from ANWR and the Central Pad viewed from the water have been developed and are attached.

### West and East Well Pads

At the West and East Well Pads, permanent facilities will include well head shelters, pipelines, methanol tank and a manifold building. The tallest of these buildings will be about 35 feet high. In addition to the permanent facilities, there will be temporary facilities which support drilling activities during the drilling phase of the operation which is intended to be the first few years., These temporary drilling support facilities include items such as the drill rig, storage buildings, a fuel gas treatment building, well test flare and drilling tubulars. The rig will be about 160 feet tall and the storage/support buildings as well as stacks of tubulars will range in height from 25 to 30 feet above the gravel pad. A profile of the East Well Pad Facilities is given in Figure 1 – the West Pad is similar. The exterior color scheme for the well pad facilities will be similar to other North Slope installations.

Under clear conditions during daylight hours, the facilities at the West and East Well Pads could be visible from more than a mile. During nighttime hours, lighting on the rig and lighting in critical activity areas will be visible from distances greater than during daylight hours, as will the test flare when it is used on an intermittent basis during drilling. The visibility of well pad facilities will be significantly reduced when drilling is completed and the rig and support buildings are removed.

### **Central Facilities and Well Pad**

In the Well Pad area on the central pad, there will be permanent and temporary facilities similar to those described above for the West and East Well Pads, and their visibility will be similar.

Adjacent to the well area will be the Central Processing Facility, Personnel Camps, Utilities, and Storage Tanks. The Processing Facility, Camps and

## Visual Impact of the Point Thomson Gas Cycling Project

Utilities are composed primarily of modular buildings installed on pile foundations and connected by pipe racks with elevated walkways. These modular buildings will be similar in size to those of the Endicott Development, with the tallest being about 100 feet. In addition, facilities will include a flare stack that will be about 100 feet tall, a process heater stack that will be about 190 feet tall, and a communications tower which may be up to 300 feet tall, making it the tallest structure on the pad. As indicated in the profile of the Central Facilities and Well Pad (Figure 2), a portion of the Camp facility is temporary, and is expected to be removed after construction of the permanent facilities and drilling is completed. The exterior color scheme for the Central Processing Facilities and Camps will be similar to other North Slope installations.

Under clear conditions during daylight hours, the facilities at the Central Facilities and Well Pad could be visible from several miles, appearing as line of buildings, with the communications tower and the drilling rig as the tallest structures. Under certain weather conditions, plumes of water vapor may be visible coming from the gas turbine and heater exhaust stacks. During nighttime hours, lighting on the rig, the safety beacon on the communications tower, and lighting in personnel access areas could be visible from distances greater than during daylight hours. Under abnormal operating conditions, the facility flare may be in use for short term periods of time, and could be visible from a distance further than the facility normal lighting. The brightness of the flare, when burning at full capacity, will be similar to that of existing flares at Prudhoe Bay Flow Station 1 and Gathering Center 1.

### Visual Impact as Viewed from Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR)

The Point Thomson Development is located west of ANWR. When viewed from a vantage point at the northwest boundary of ANWR, the East Well Pad facilities, being the nearest, would be the most visible, appearing as a line of low buildings with the drilling rig as the tallest structure. During drilling, well testing may require intermittent use of a small flare immediately adjacent to the pad, which could be visible at night. Once the drilling of wells has been completed, the drilling rig will be removed along with the buildings that support drilling, leaving only the production manifold building and the eight to ten wellhead shelters visible.



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