

TravelWatch- **ISLE OF MAN**

Arrey Troailt – Ellan Vannin



Representing and promoting the interests of Isle of Man Passengers

www.travelwatch-isleofman.org

15 April 2013

Dong Energy Walney Extension (UK) Ltd
33 Grosvenor Place,
London SW1X 7HY

Attention of Jodie Hall
by email to : JODHA@dongenergy.co.uk

Dear Sirs,

Proposed Walney Extension Offshore Wind Farm Environmental Statement Chapter 30 Socio Economics

We refer to our letter of 14 November 2012 in which TravelWatch expressed its objections on behalf of ferry passengers to your current proposals for the above wind farm development.

By chance, we have had sight of the above Chapter 30 document which you have supplied within the last few days to the Isle of Man Steam Packet Company. From them, we understand that you have not seen fit to issue this document to all relevant organisations on the Isle of Man who have made representations to you, and this is a matter of considerable concern, particularly as our position has been misinterpreted. It is our understanding that the Steam Packet Company intends to draw your attention to significant inaccuracies in Chapter 30.

Correction to Section 30.9.6.3

TravelWatch draws your attention to the following paragraph:

'Delays to passengers. Consultation feedback from TravelWatch suggests that approximately one third of passengers using the Steam Packet ferry travel without cars, and hence may be reliant on connections to public transport. For these passengers, delays may mean missed transport connections. However, there is already an element of uncertainty in transport times (the Steam Packet website highlights that the Heysham to Douglas route will take between 3 hours 15 minutes and 3 hours 45 minutes subject to tidal and weather conditions) meaning that passengers already have to plan journeys in the knowledge that timings could be variable to an extent.'

Your wording gives the impression, deliberately or otherwise, that the quoted variation in existing journey times prejudices connections by onward public transport. This is totally misleading, as the train times at Heysham are timetabled to cater for this variation. This is significant as there are no further train departures from Heysham Port after the one scheduled train (which also brings passengers to Heysham for the afternoon sailing to Douglas). In common with usual railway practice, trains are not held to wait for passengers on delayed sailings. If your intention was to emphasise 'uncertainty' in journey time for vehicle passengers, we would suggest in planning a 3 or 4 hour journey on say an English motorway, an uncertainty of only 30 minutes in journey time would be considered most fortunate!

For accuracy, and to avoid possible misinterpretation, we therefore formally request that you amend the paragraph to read:--

*'Delays to passengers. Consultation feedback from TravelWatch suggests that approximately one third of passengers using the Steam Packet ferry travel without cars, and hence may be reliant on connections to public transport. **Whilst there is an element of variation in existing transport times (the Steam Packet website highlights that the Heysham to Douglas route will take between 3 hours 15 minutes and 3 hours 45 minutes subject to tidal and weather conditions), the times of the one daily train at Heysham are timetabled to accommodate this. TravelWatch is concerned that any delays due to the impact of wind farms may mean missed transport connections.'***

Additional Information for Section 30.9.6.3

TravelWatch believes that Section 30.9.6.3 seriously understates our concerns regarding the possible adverse impacts on ferry passengers, and we formally request that the following is added to the Dong document:

'TravelWatch understands that if forecast adverse weather on Heysham route sailings were such that the Steam Packet's Master had safety concerns due to the proposed proliferation of wind farms, he might have to decide to either cancel completely or choose to divert to the south of the NE Potential Development Area (as suggested by Dong in Chapter 30). Such a diversion would take a minimum of 67 minutes each way at full service speed, and longer if the Master had to slow for comfort. In such a scenario, the Heysham train departure would be missed, and later sailings disrupted and potentially cancelled as there is little slack in the timetable (of two return crossings per 24 hours). Such a proposed diversion route, of one hour and 7 minutes minimum, would be unacceptable to the public, travelling for business or leisure, with the risk of delays and/or cancellations. Also, TravelWatch understands that the simulation exercise undertaken at Fleetwood Nautical College on 19 February 2013 resulted in vessels returning to Douglas and cancelling voyages. From this exercise, it is also understood that the Maritime and Coastguard Agency have advised Dong to amend and adapt their planning to ensure that this scenario is avoided.'

We request that you make the above correction and addition, that this letter is placed on record, and that you provide us with a prompt and considered response.

Furthermore we seek your assurance that we will be directly copied with any documentation that you produce which refers to this organisation or its expressed views.

Yours faithfully

Brendan O'Friel

Chairman
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copies to:
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also copied separately to:
IOM Department of Infrastructure
IOM Steam Packet Company
IOM Chamber of Commerce
Manx Hospitality Partnership