

NWIFCA Quarterly Meeting

21st March 2014: 11.00 a.m.

**AGENDA
ITEM NO.
12**

WIND FARMS IN DISTRICT AND FLOWW

Purpose of Report:

1. To provide members with an overview of offshore wind farm activities in the NWIFCA District.
2. To inform members of the work of the Fisheries Liaison with Offshore Wind and Wet Renewables Group (FLOWW).

Recommendation:

That the report be received.

Background:

The Irish Sea and more specifically the NWIFCA District contains a large number of wind farms and the cabling and other structures associated with this type of project. A map of these wind farms can be found at Annex A. Officers have a watching brief on the activities related to wind farms in the District and make representations to developers and regulators at appropriate times during planning and construction. The NWIFCA is also involved in FLOWW meetings.

Operational wind farms and under construction:

Wind Farm	Owners	Number of Turbines	Area	Grid Connection Point	Generating From / Completed
Barrow	Dong & Centrica	30 (90mw)	10 km ²	Heysham	March 2006 / June 2006
Walney 1 & 2	Dong & SSE	102 (367mw)	74 km ²	Heysham & Cleveleys	July 2011 / April 2014
Burbo Bank	Dong	25 (90mw)	10 km ²	Wallasey	July 2007 / October 2007
Ormonde	Vattenfall	20 (150mw)	20 km ²	Heysham	August 2011 / Feb 2012
West of Duddon Sands	Scottish Power & Dong	108 (289mw)	67 km ²	Heysham	Jan 2014 / Late 2014 (UNDER CONSTRUCTION)

Wind farms in planning:

Burbo Bank Extension (Max 69 turbines)

The Planning Inspectorate examination process will close on 26th March. They will then produce a report and recommendations (within 3 months) and then the Secretary of State will make the decision whether to accept this plan (within a further 3 months).

The Burbo Bank Extension lies within English waters and within the NWIFCA district, to the west of the current Burbo Bank Wind Farm. However, landfall and the grid connection point is in Wales. The wind farm and cabling also lie within the Liverpool Bay SPA. Of particular concern is the disturbance of Red Throated Divers, although this is addressed in the wind farm's Environmental Statement.

Fishing activities that have been identified to occur in the wind farm area are beam and trawl fisheries for mixed demersal species and gillnetting for rays. Additionally, over the cable route is also gillnetting for bass. However, this activity has been categorised as low level in the Environmental Statement.

Walney Extension (Max 207 turbines)

The Planning Inspectorate is currently undertaking a series of hearings for this project. The NWIFCA have completed a Statement of Common Ground with Dong Energy and this was submitted along with a letter of response. NWIFCA have submitted further information about the cockle fishery on Middleton Sands (the cable landfall site) to the Planning Inspectorate at their request. The examination for this project will close on 12th May 2014.

This wind farm lies outside of the NWIFCA boundary however, the cable route is within. The cable route runs through the Morecambe Bay EMS and close to the Lune Deep part of the Shell Flat and Lune Deep cSAC.

Fishing activity identified as occurring in the vicinity of the cable route includes otter trawling for demersal whitefish, potting, gillnetting for bass and drift netting for Salmon. Additionally at Middleton Sands the cable route runs across a cockle bed. As detailed above communication between Dong, the Planning Inspectorate and NWIFCA has focused on this fishery.

Further information on all projects in the planning stage can be found on the Planning Inspectorate website: <http://infrastructure.planningportal.gov.uk/>.

The Fisheries Liaison with Offshore Wind and Wet Renewables Group (FLOWW)

FLOWW was set up in 2002 to foster good relations between the fishing and offshore renewable energy sectors and encourage co-existence of the industries. Its members include representatives from the fishing industry and developers as well as government bodies (such as NWIFCA) and The Crown Estate. Currently The Crown Estate chairs the group and also provides secretariat services. Meetings take place three times a year, and usually a NWIFCA Officer dials into these meetings.

Most recently FLOWW has been working to revise their document "Best Practice Guidance for Offshore Renewables Developments: Recommendations for Fisheries Liaison" which was re-published in Jan 2014. This guidance is for both the fishing industry and developers and deals with wind turbines, wave and tidal energy generation (although not tidal barrages).

The document covers all aspects of an offshore renewable energy project and provides advice for planning, construction, operation and decommissioning. This advice focuses mainly on the facilitation of communication between the fishing industry and developers. It advocates for contact to be made early in the planning process and sets out roles and responsibilities for Company Fishing Liaison Officers and Fishing Industry Representatives.

The guidance also discusses co-existence planning and mitigation. It stresses that when co-existence is not possible or there are significant residual impacts then mitigation in the form of projects to enhance stocks, improve fishing vessels, enhance profit margins or develop new fishing activities should be set in place. The guidance states that the first priority of mitigation should be to allow fishing to continue and that direct financial recompense should be a last resort.

The guidance recognises that the development of guiding principles for the calculation and distribution of compensation is required (although FLOWW cannot provide proscriptive advice). These types of issues will be address by FLOWW in the coming year.

Further information about FLOWW including a full copy of “Best Practice Guidance for Offshore Renewables Developments: Recommendations for Fisheries Liaison” can be found at <http://www.thecrownestate.co.uk/energy-infrastructure/offshore-wind-energy/working-with-us/floww/>.

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11th March 2014