

Langness Lighthouse

Light Established

1880

Engineer

David & Thomas Stevenson

Position

Latitude 54° 03.3'N

Longitude 04° 37.4'W

Character

Flashing (2) White every 30 secs

Elevation

23 metres

Nominal Range

12 miles

Structure

White tower 19 metres high. There are 77 steps to the top of the tower.

History

The name Langness means Long Point. On 1 January 1868, Trinity House stated that they were aware that application for a light on Langness had arisen from time to time in consequence of wrecks which had taken place there - the arguments used in its favour were that the point projected seaward of the coastline nearly two miles and that rapid tides ran in its vicinity. It was not contended, however, that these tides were irregular or varied in their direction so that they constituted a greater danger to Mariners than in any other parts of the Irish Sea, where tides were known to run with even greater velocity and required proportionate care from navigators. However, one of the chief grounds urged was the inefficiency of the Calf Lights due to their tendency to be enveloped in fog.

In such weather conditions they were therefore insufficient to warn vessels of their proximity to Langness (being 8 miles distant). Representations for a light on Langness were made to Trinity House on 16 February 1869, 10 February 1873, 26 August 1874, and 12 January 1877 - all without success. On 26 August 1874, they were informed also that experiments had been carried out using the red sector of the Chicken Rock Light and that the experiments had proved the red sector to be unsatisfactory. Trinity House replied by stating that even without assistance of the red sector there was no need for a light at Langness.

However, in October 1877, the Commissioners sent to the Board of Trade a statement received from Mr McMeikan, Agent of the Shipwrecked Mariners Society of Castletown, giving details of disasters in the immediate neighbourhood of Langness and his considered opinion "that even the costly and magnificent structure on the Chicken Rock had not been sufficient protection against the dangers of Langness to passing ships in poor weather". The Board of Trade forwarded the statement to Trinity House who, on 5 December 1877, stated that "the utilization of sound as a resource in navigation has made such substantial progress that it appears to them to be a legitimate question whether that might not be applied at Langness with advantage. If this were done, the necessity for some sort of dwelling and staff of men at a point remote from any spot where occasional labour could be commanded promptly would offer such facilities for the exhibition of the light. If the Board of Trade are willing to incur the expense of one and distinctive character can be found for it, this Board will not bold sanction to the combination".

Consequently, sanction was requested from Trinity House to the establishment of a Light and Fog Signal on 31 January 1878, and given on 14 February 1878. The Board of Trade sanction was received on 21 February 1878.

Mr Stevenson's proposals were for a tower 50 feet in height, an engine house for the fog signal, dwelling houses for 3 keepers, outhouses including coal cellars, oil cellars, workshop, etc, garden ground amounting to approximately 1½ acres enclosed with stone wall, all at an estimated cost of £38,350. The character of the light was to be flashing white giving a flash every 5 seconds for which it was hoped to be able to utilise the holotrope prepared for the auxiliary light at Chickens. The fog signal was to be a horn or siren giving blasts of 8 seconds' duration with intervals of silence of 22 seconds.

Mr Matheson was appointed Inspector of Works on 18 June 1879 with pay at rate of 10/6d per day with 10/- per week for lodging and travelling expenses.

Tenders were accepted for:-

Erection of Lighthouse, Fog Signal	
Building and dwelling houses (Messrs Morrison & Son, Edinburgh)	£3,979:7:7
Lantern (Messrs Milne & Son)	£ 621:10:
Machine (Messrs James Dove & Co)	?

The lighthouse tower was completed ahead of schedule and the light was first exhibited on Wednesday, December 1880. Many changes have occurred since then.

Fog Signal was discontinued in 1987.

The Station was automated in 1996.