

Crossing the Thames Estuary

Second Edition

Updates

Update No 4

Item 1 – Fisherman’s Gat

UKHO notice to mariners no 2723 of 2015 prompts a minor revision to the illustrations in the text of Fisherman’s Gat. This affects the images on pages 19, 24, 25 and 38.

The change on each illustration is the same: delete the yellow spherical special buoy (*Fl(5)Y.20s*) close to the Fisherman’s Gat No 1 starboard hand buoy. The deleted special mark had no navigational significance for us so no other change is necessary.

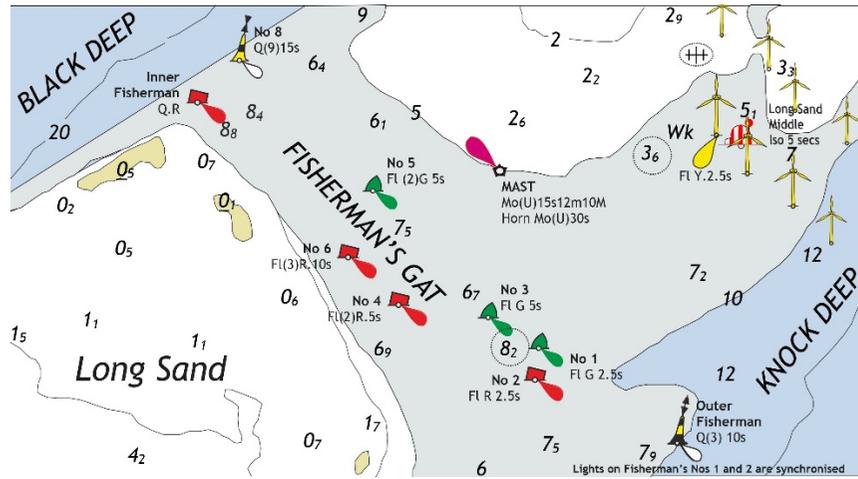
Replacement images are attached overleaf. These also include the changes to the light characteristics of the Foulger’s Gat safe water buoys notified in Update No 2.

Item 2 – Routes passing the Kentish Flats Wind Farm

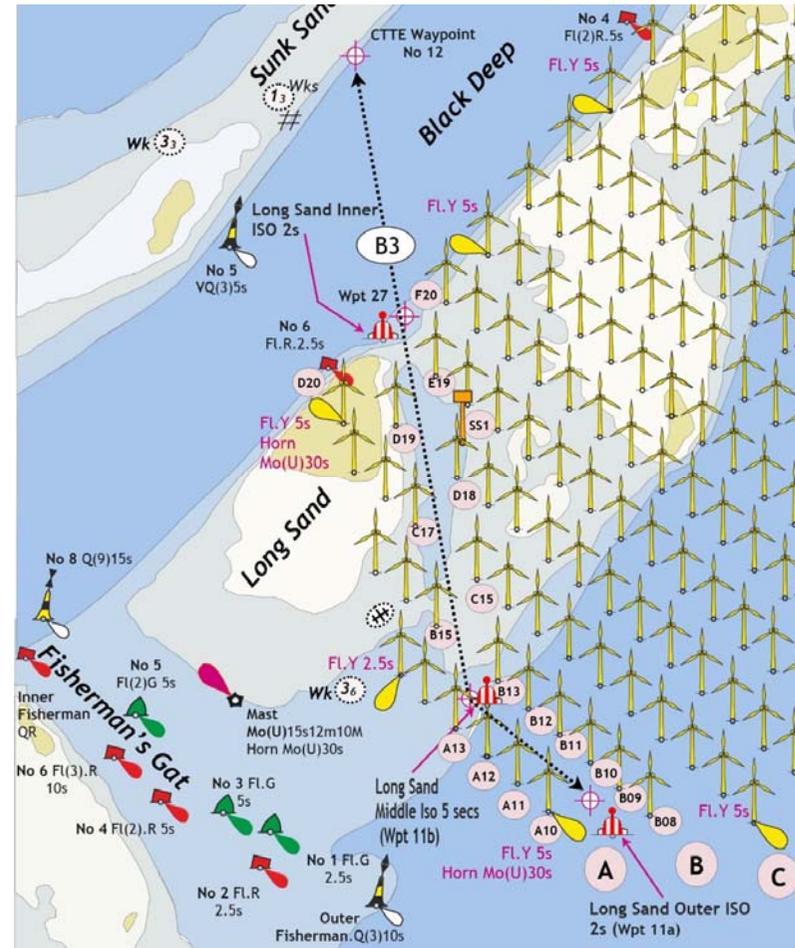
Work has started on building the extension to the Kentish Flats Wind Farm. This involves adding turbines to the south and west side and at least for the duration of the building, the work to the west will make the Routes to and from the Swale ill-advised without deviation. The problem affects Sector F7 which passes close along the west side of the Wind Farm where erection of new turbines is now taking place. It remains unclear whether this sector will be viable after the extension work but for the meantime a deviation is required.

The deviation will affect all routes to and from the Swale whether they use the West Swin or Barrow Deep channels (Routes 33 to 39). There is no obviously attractive alternative given the general shallowness of the Kentish Flats but choosing the right state of tide and with consciousness of the soundings, the best alternative during these works is probably to use a rhumb line between Red Sand Towers (CTTE waypoint no 45 – connecting with the SW Barrow for the West Swin route or the Barrow No 10 for the Barrow Deep route) and Columbine Spit starboard hand buoy (51°23’85N 001°00’02E). This rhumb line of 4.99nm at 355°/175°(T) does take you over some shoal ground including the Middle and Red Sands. Avoid the *Wk 1₆* just south of the Red Sand Towers. Given that heading north, you would probably be wanting to take the start of the ebb from Red Sand Towers and tracking south you would be heading in towards the Swale on the second half of the flood, this route certainly should be passable at the right state of the tide for all but deep draught yachts. The only alternative is to use the Four Fathom Channel to the Spile.

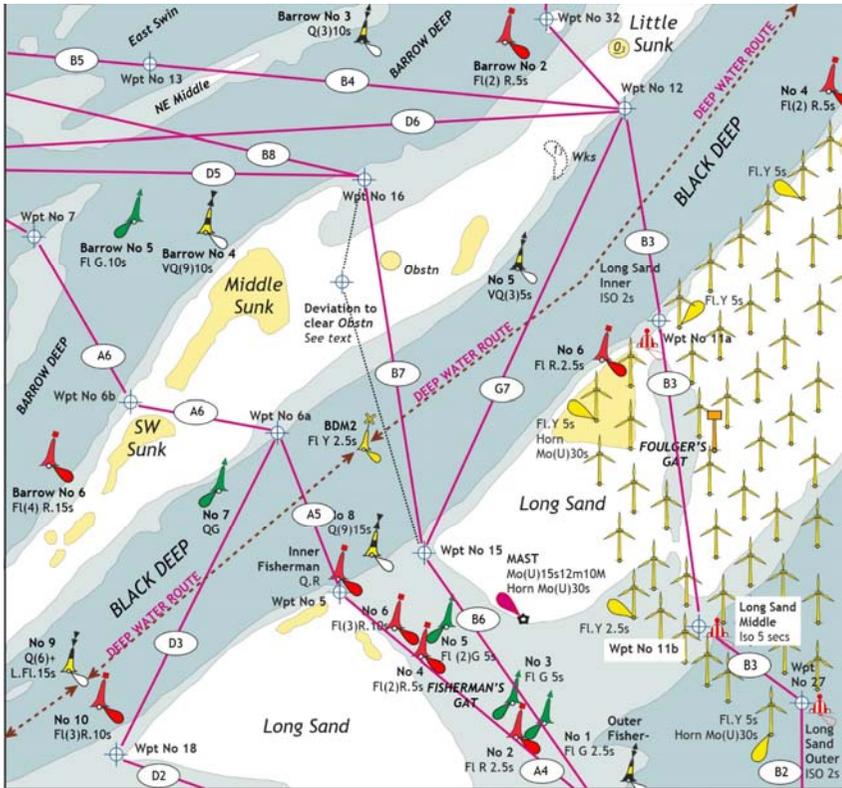
Once the construction work is complete, it will be possible to consider whether the original routing is viable and a further update will be published.



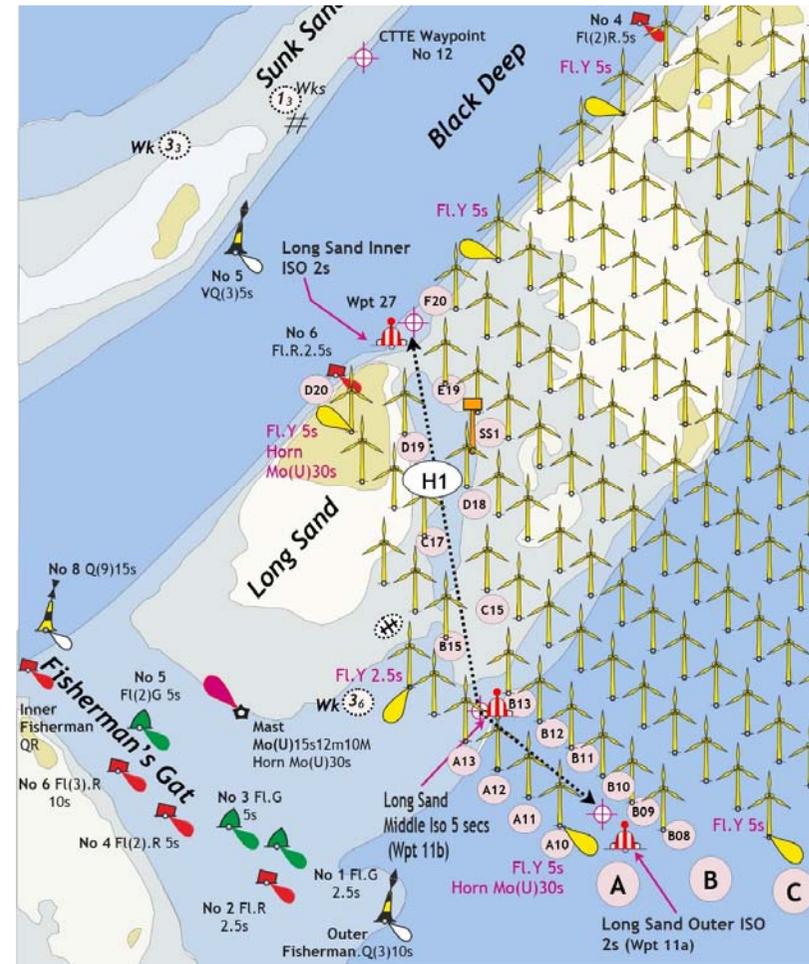
Fisherman's Gat (buoyage as at May 2015)



The route through Foulger's Gat



The three Sunk Sand crossing points



Transiting Foulger's Gat using Sector H1