THANET FISHERMEN'S ASSOCIATION.
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CT11 8AJ.

28.04.19

Thanet Extension Offshore Windfarm. Planning Inspectorate-Application by Vattenfall Wind Power Ltd for an Order Granting Development Consent.

ISH 8 Hearing Action Points. Thanet Fishermen's Association representation regarding impact level scoring.

Dear Planning Inspectorate,

During the ISH6 and ISH8 hearings, Thanet Fishermen's Association (TFA) raised the point that they did not agree with all of the impact levels in Table 9.14, Summary of predicted impacts of Thanet Extension Environmental Statement Volume 2 Chapter 9 Commercial Fisheries and felt that some of these should be raised. Specifically, the magnitude and sensitivity impact on UK potters and UK Drift and Static Netters.

UK Potters.

It is our understanding that all impacts have been measured on a fleet basis, and we appreciate the assessment cannot be based upon individual vessels, however, the TFA fleet is the fleet that most consistently fishes within and transits through, both the TOW and proposed TE boundaries, and on that basis we consider that this is the most representative fishing fleet considered in the assessment. In relation to TOW and the Thanet Extension, the TFA fleet is made up of vessels from Ramsgate, Margate, Broadstairs, Whitstable and Queenborough a total of 36 vessels, the same fleet noted as being represented in the TFA Statement of Common Ground. Within this group of 36 is a core group of 23 Thanet based vessels, one in Margate, one in Broadstairs and 20 based in Ramsgate. These core 23 are the Thanet vessels that use the TOW and TE areas the most, though additional vessels from Whitstable and Queenborough, and some visiting vessels, do fish within the proposed TE boundary but to a lesser extent.

TFA Lobster/ Crab Potters.

Within the core fleet (23 vessels) there are three main Lobster/Crab potters operating from Ramsgate [redacted] as well as some vessels who work small numbers of pots along the shore and on individual wrecks or small pieces of rough ground, including some small areas around TOW and inside/outside the TE RLB. The vast majority, in the region of 90% of the Lobster/Crab pots worked from the Thanet ports are from the three main vessels.

For clarity, the vessel [redacted] is a replacement for the owners' previous vessel [redacted]. The [redacted] unit has been transferred from the old to the new vessel but the [redacted] remains a potter and the skipper fishes the same areas as previously.

TFA Lobster/Crab potting grounds.

There are also three main Lobster/Crab potting grounds, the Drill Stones just North East of TOW, the Rocks just North West of TOW and the Thanet shoreline. The [redacted] works to the North East of TOW, the [redacted] to the North West of TOW, with additional pots along the shoreline and in small spots, and the [redacted] works mainly along the shoreline. Both the [redacted] and the [redacted] have worked the same Lobster/Crab grounds for over 25 years. These three key potting areas are shown at figure 9.3 in the Environmental Statement, Volume 2, Chapter 9. The three Lobster/Crab potting vessels listed all have [redacted] devices.

Each vessel is working the maximum number of pots they can within their own area, and the maximum number of pots the ground can support. There are no additional Lobster/Crab potting grounds within this area that are not being exploited.

TFA Lobster/ Crab Potter [redacted] chart Data Figure 1.

The [redacted] screenshot, figure 1, below shows all three Lobster/Crab potters in the three areas they work. While the [redacted], we have retained the anonymity of the other vessels in this document. For this purpose, we have referred to the additional Lobster Crab Potters as LP 2 and LP 3. We have used the month of July in 2017 to continue with the data has already been used in the Commercial Fisheries Technical Report annex 9-1. It is accepted that LP2 also works Whelk pots and LP3 also shoots nets, but the individual screenshots for each individual vessel, figures 2,3 and 4, for the same month below show the intensity of fishing in consistent areas.

Figure 1. Crab/Lobster potting vessels [redacted], LP2 and LP3 in July 2017.

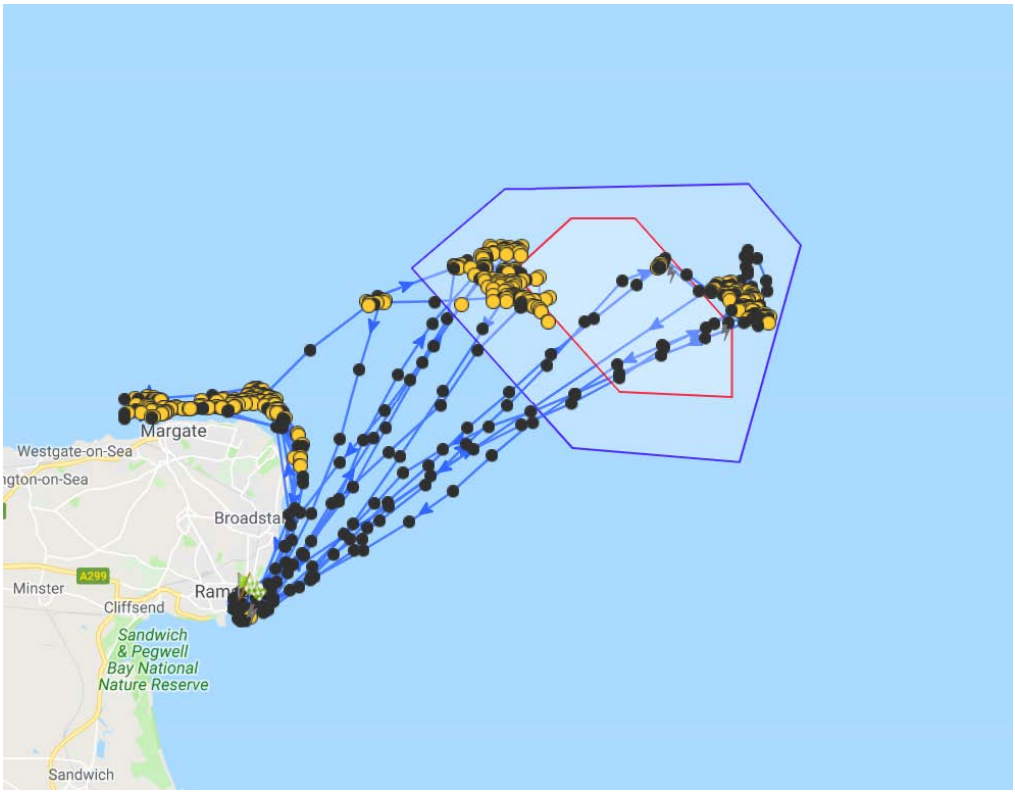


Figure 2. Lobster/ Crab Potting vessel [redacted] July 2017.

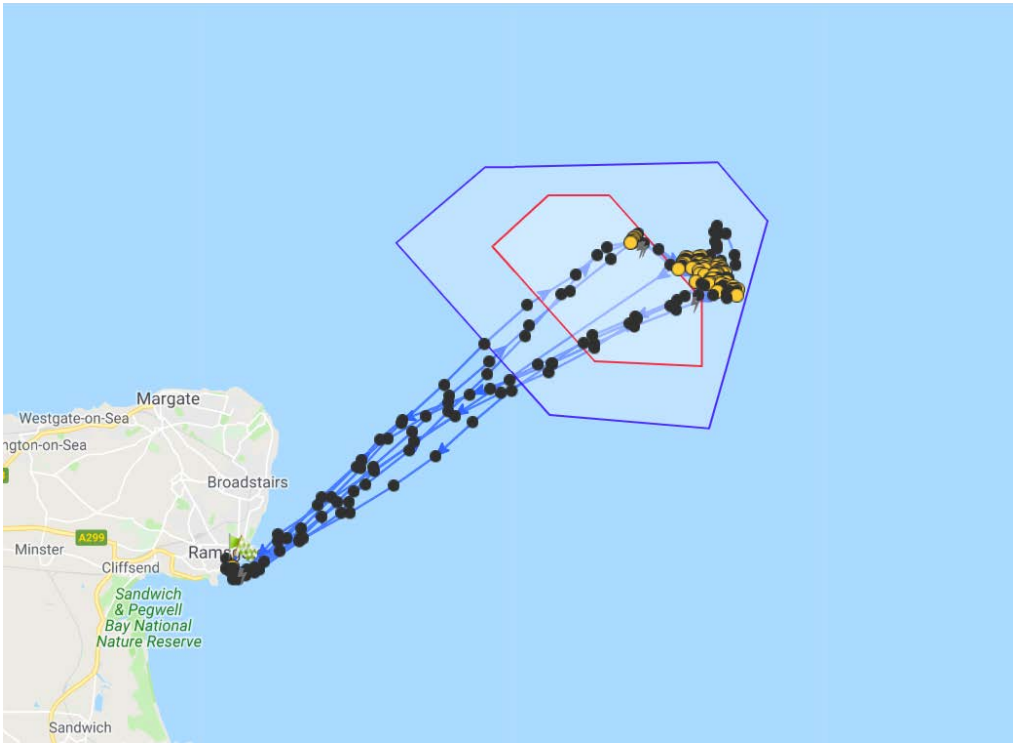


Figure 3. Lobster/Crab/ Whelk Potting vessel LP2 July 2017.

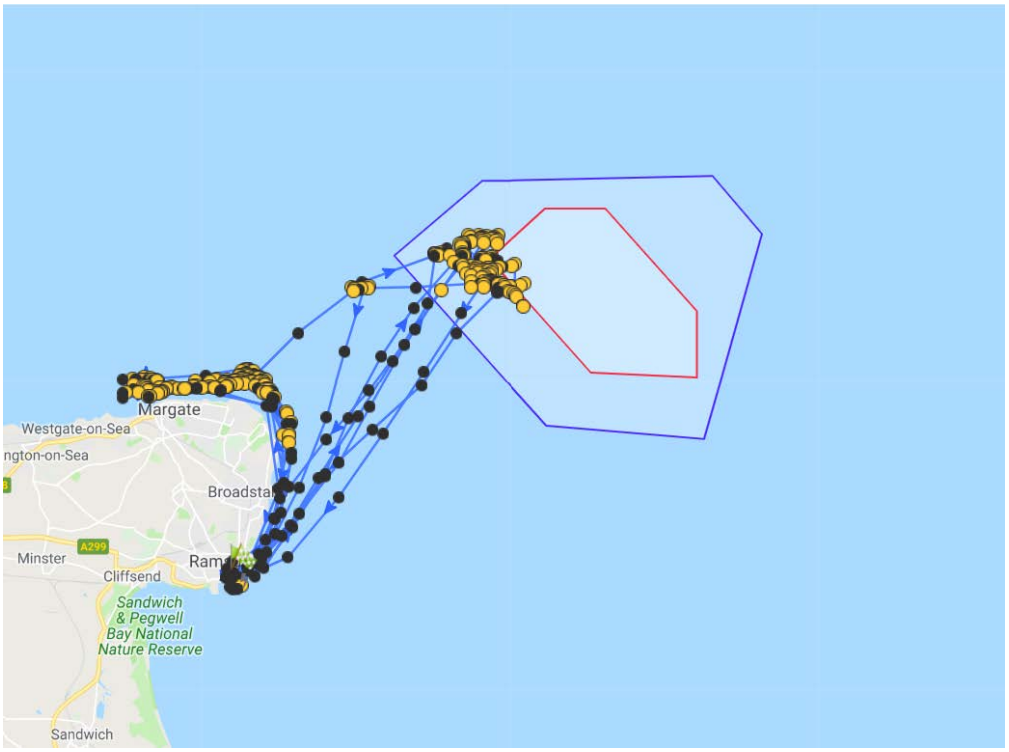
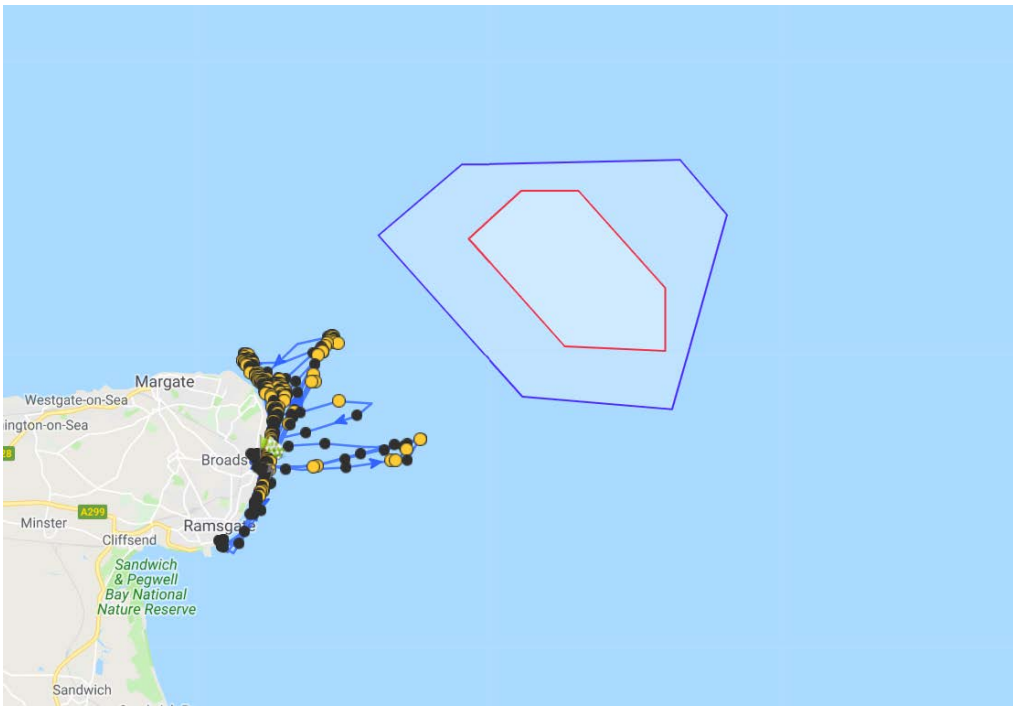


Figure 4. Lobster/ Crab Potting vessel LP3 July 2017.



TFA Lobster/ Crab Potter [redacted] chart Data Figures 2, 3 and 4.

Figure 2 shows that all of the ground potted by [redacted] is within the RLB. Figure 3 shows that over half of ground potted by the LP2 is within the original RLB, though it is accepted that this has been reduced somewhat with the implementation of the SEZ. Figure 4 shows that none of the ground potted by LP3 is within the RLB but also represents the vast majority of Lobster/Crab potting ground remaining when the TE proposed area is removed. In addition, Figures 3 and 4, and the shoreline areas marked with yellow dots, represent the alternative potting ground for [redacted] and LP2 during construction once the site is fully closed. Large numbers of displaced pots being added to the inshore ground will clearly adversely affect the LP3, and other small vessels, already working there.

Figures 3 and 4, along the shoreline, also show the majority of alternative potting ground available to these vessels during O&M when the potters can only partially return to the site.

The latest indicative layout, Annex A to Appendix 3 of deadline 4b submission figure 12.1a SEZ, shows that both potting areas within the RLB will have monopiles placed within them. This means that when the potters return after construction, they will not be able to return the same numbers of pots to the ground due to the footprint of a monopile and safety zone, an approximate loss of 9000 square meters per monopile (based upon a 50m safety zone). Until a definitive monopile position is clear, it is hard to estimate how many pots will be displaced but these will either be added to the pots along the shoreline, and to the smaller areas, or will no longer be worked at all.

As previously mentioned, we are aware that potters have been measured on a fleet basis and that both Lobster and Whelk potting are within this assessment of impact, and we have tried to make an allowance for that in considering how the potters have been assessed. Two of the smaller vessels from Ramsgate work Lobster and Whelk pots on the export cable route but are not fitted with [redacted], they will also be displaced during cable laying operations. TFA currently has 4 main Whelk potting vessels, though in 2017 there were three, within the core 23 vessels, working from Ramsgate. TFA recently suggested that Lobster potters and Whelk potters be split, as the Whelk potters have more flexibility, but this is apparently not possible at this stage.

TFA Whelk Potters.

The three Whelk potters in 2017, WP1 (WP1 is the same vessel as LP2), WP2 and WP3 did have [redacted] fitted and for balance the tracks for the WP2 and WP3 are shown below in figures 5 & 6. These two figures do show that the Whelk potters have more flexibility than the Lobster and Crab potters. WP3 in particular, works long ranges for a 10-meter vessel. WP2 suffered breakdowns with her gear tag reader so shows far less yellow dot shooting marks than she should. WP2 can also be seen potting across the proposed export cable route.

Figure 5. WP2 Whelk Potting July 2017.

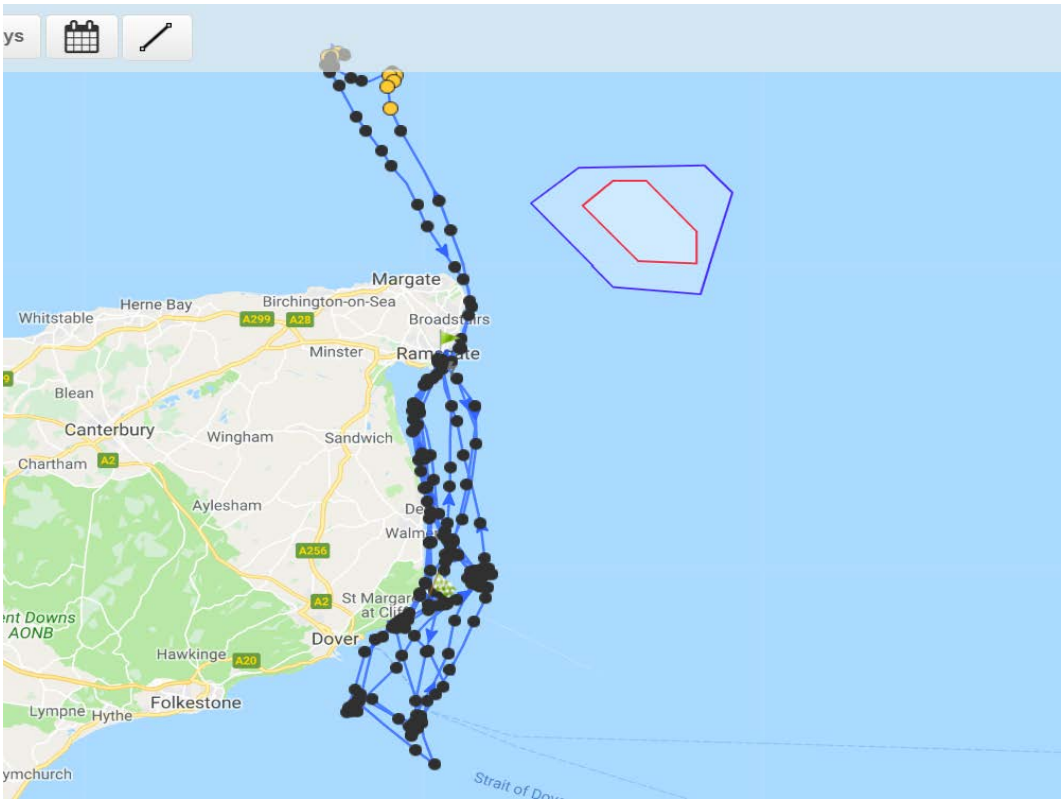
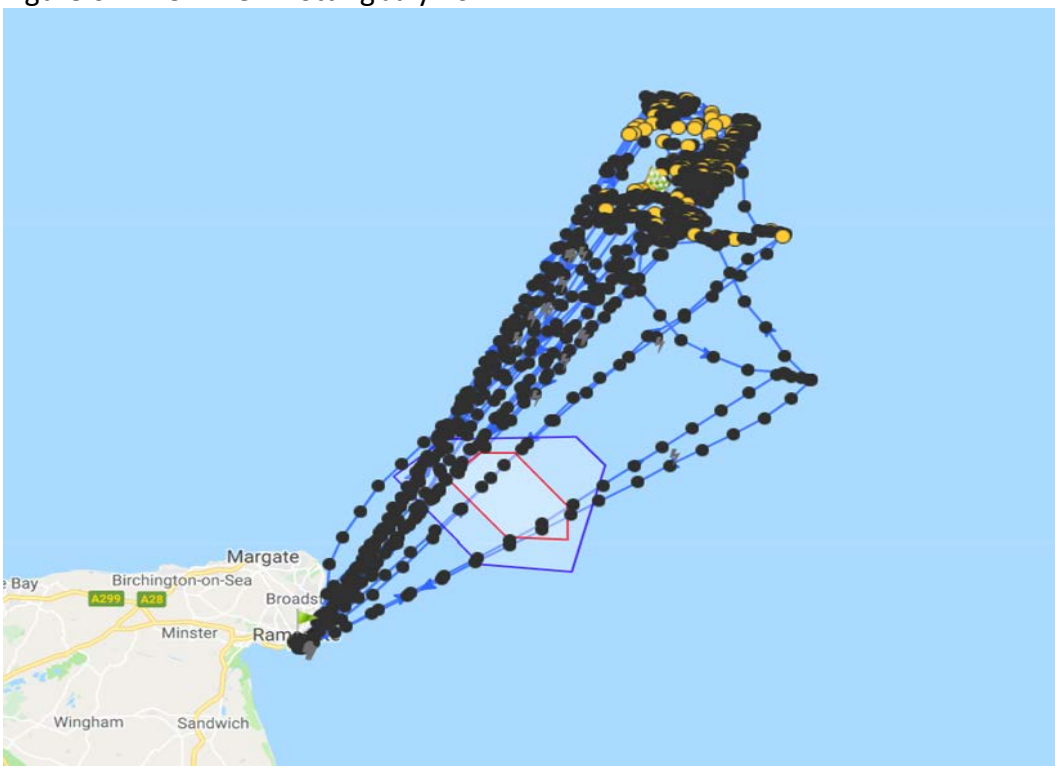


Figure 6. WP3 Whelk Potting July 2017



Construction mitigation.

It was mentioned that the Fishermen will have access and will be able to fish within the TE area during construction. TFA appreciates this is mitigation, and the vessels will continue to work as long as they can, however, having been through multiple windfarm construction phases it is unfortunately unrealistic to envisage a construction process where construction vessels systematically work around the site, only operating in one area until it is finished. In reality there will be multiple vessels working in different parts of the site at various stages, undertaking different parts of construction. The combination of pot and gear markers and additional vessels in the construction area will undoubtedly mean that Fishing vessels will have to remove fishing gear not long after construction begins. In addition, the noise and activity during construction is likely to have an impact on the fishing close by so it is debatable how long fishing could continue and still be commercially viable once construction starts.

ES Impact Significance conclusions for UK Potters.

In the Environmental statement, volume 2 chapter 9, the impact levels for UK potters are stated in the following table:

Construction	**Receptor Sensitivity**	**Magnitude of Effect**	**Impact Significance**
UK Potters	Medium	Low	Minor Adverse
O&M			
UK Potters	Medium	Low	Minor Adverse

Receptor Sensitivity.

Within the same Environmental Statement, table 9.6, the definition of medium sensitivity is:

- '*Some spatial adaptability due to extent of operational range and/ or ability to deploy an alternative gear type. Moderate spatial tolerance due to dependence upon a limited number of fishing grounds. Limited recoverability with some ability to mitigate loss of fishing area by operating in alternative areas.'*

TFA does not believe this definition represents the sensitivity impact on the TFA fleet of potting vessels. The Lobster/ Crab potting vessels shown in figures 1 to 4, undertake the vast majority of the Lobster/Crab potting which will be impacted by the proposed TE project. During the 2016 Thanet Extension Geophysical survey, the Lobster/ Crab pots were removed from within the RLB to allow the survey vessels to work unhindered. LP2 redistributed some of her pots along the shore line, impacting LP3 directly and brought the balance of her pots ashore. The [redacted] brought some pots ashore and shot the remainder inside the TOW site, un-baited, whilst waiting for the survey to be completed. This was due to a lack of alternative Lobster/Crab

potting ground. This process will be repeated during the construction period. TFA believes the sensitivity level should be elevated to the status of **Very High**. The definition of Very High Sensitivity being:

- *Very low spatial adaptability due to limited operational range and ability to deploy only one gear type. Very limited spatial tolerance due to dependence upon a single ground. Very low recoverability due to inability to mitigate loss of fishing area by operating in alternative areas.*

TFA accepts that the potters can return during O&M and the impact is then reduced, and has been further reduced by the implementation of the SEZ and accepts a level of **Medium** Sensitivity for the fleet, however, it must be noted that as an individual vessel, the [redacted] in particular will face an impact above the medium level described.

Magnitude of Effect.

Within the Environmental Statement, table 9.7, the definition of **Low** Magnitude is:

- *'A minor proportion of total annual landings weights/ values derived from fishing within Thanet Extension and/ or the change is temporary but recovery within a reasonable timescale is not possible.'*

TFA would first point out we believe there is a typing error in table 9.7 as the paragraph contradicts itself. In anticipation that in the last sentence the word 'not' should be removed, TFA does not agree with the potters being given a **Low** Magnitude level. On the basis that the [redacted] derives 100% of her earnings from within the RLB, LP2 derives approximately 50% of her earnings from within the RLB and the LP3 will be directly impacted by the other vessels looking for ground to work, TFA maintains that the Magnitude level should be increased to **High** during construction.

The definition of high magnitude being;

- *A high proportion of total annual landings weights/ values derived from fishing within Thanet Extension and/ or the change may be permanent.*

Part of the change described above will be permanent, as the footprints of each monopile cannot be returned to the potters.

During O&M, TFA does not agree with the conclusion of **Low** for Magnitude of effect and believe this should be raised to **Medium**, with the definition of Medium being:

- *A moderate proportion of total annual landings weights/ values derived from fishing within Thanet Extension and/ or the change is temporary but recovery within a reasonable timescale is not possible.*

In conclusion, TFA accepts that there is some flexibility with the Whelk potters to use other ground during and after construction, but there is no flexibility for the Lobster and Crab Potters and for such a small combined fleet of potters the impacts on them as a group will be significant. TFA maintains that such a significant impact on 3 of its 7 potters must see the sensitivity and magnitude levels raised to reflect the overall impact on TFA Potters. TFA would ask that the levels for UK Potters are raised to those in the table below:

Construction	**Receptor Sensitivity**	**Magnitude of Effect**	**Impact Significance**
UK Potters	Very High	High	Major
O&M			
UK Potters	Medium	Medium	Moderate

UK Drift and Static Netters, the TFA Fleet.

As with UK Potters, the static and drift netting fleet that works consistently in and around the TOW and TE boundaries is the TFA fleet. The core group of 23 Thanet based vessels has 15 vessels that use bottom drift and static nets to varying degrees. Within these 15 netting vessels are a core group of 7 main bottom drifters, 6 of which are fitted with [redacted], who derive a high percentage of their earnings from bottom drifting. The bottom drifting method relies upon fleets of lightly constructed multi monofilament nets being shot across the tide, allowing the tide to then drift them across clean areas of seabed. These areas of drift ground are discovered over years of trial and error and are returned to year on year, dependent on how they are fishing. Some drifts are used every year while others may go in cycles.

Bottom Drift and static net grounds.

The Thanet Fishing vessels use drift and static grounds in a variety of areas within their range, to the North and South of the Thanet harbours. Among others, there are bottom drift grounds to the North, North East and South East of TOW. The drift grounds to the North and North East of TOW begin outside the RLB, where the drift vessels shoot their nets. The gear then travels with the tide, into the RLB, where the gear is hauled. The bottom drift grounds South East of TOW begin within the RLB and the nets drift Southerly. Some fleets being hauled within the RLB and some crossing the RLB and being hauled outside the proposed extension boundary.

[redacted] data for Drift and static netters Figures 7 to 9.

[redacted] data collection began in April 2017, which saw less bottom drifting occur in the areas North and North East of TOW than the previous year. Had [redacted] been fitted in 2016 the chart below, figure 7, would like quite different and would show more intense drifting to the North, crossing into the RLB. The drifts South East of TOW have remained consistent.

Figure 7 below shows the 6 of the main 7 drift net vessels that are fitted with [redacted]. The drifts to the North East and South East of TOW are shown, marked by two clear groups of compact yellow dots. The yellow dots to the South West and West of TOW are static nets. The Lobster/Crab potters and Whelk potters are not shown on Figure 7. This chart demonstrates the range and spread of the netters, drift and static, with [redacted] in May 2017. TFA accepts that there are some netters in the fleet that are not represented by [redacted], and these vessels fish both inside and outside the RLB but are less consistent. When the [redacted] project was conceived, funding was available for a maximum of fifteen vessels and TFA chose its most consistent vessels with a spread of methods. During the project we have usually had information from 12 at any one time. Despite this, the [redacted] data gives a good indication of how these vessels use the TOW and proposed TE sites and the importance of these areas of ground to the finely balanced fleet.

Figure 7. TFA drift/ Static netting vessels May 2017.

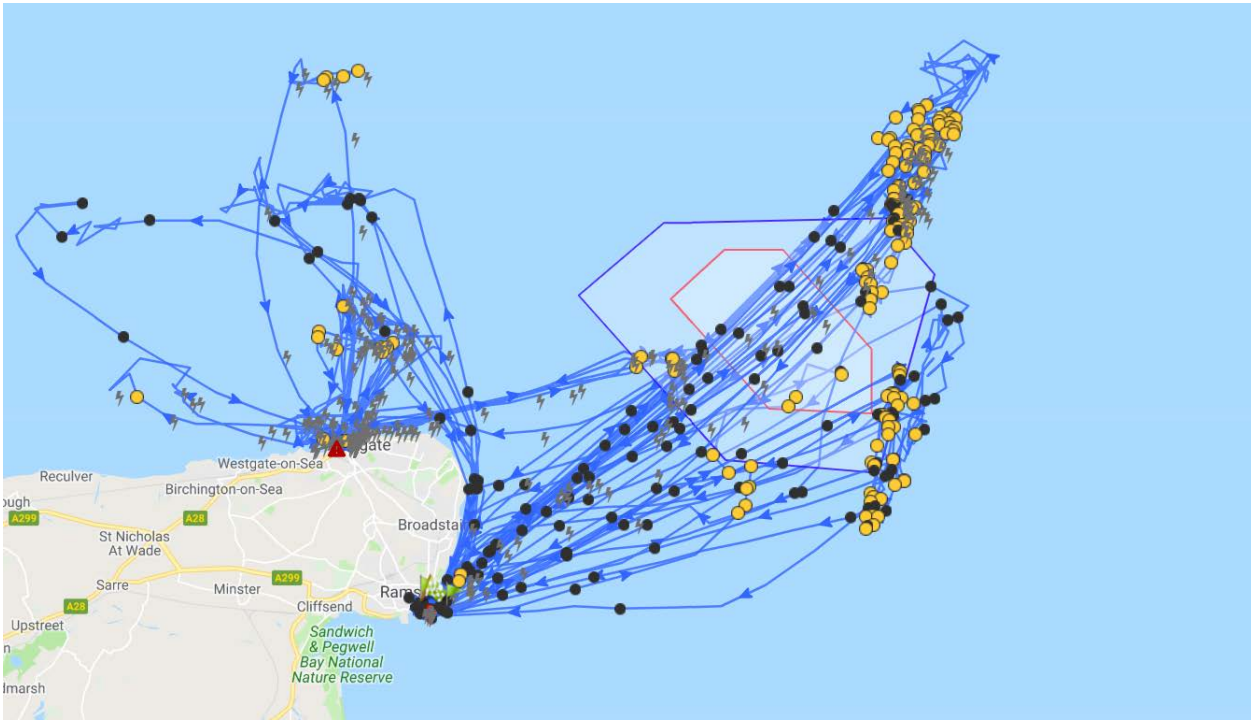


Figure 8. TFA Drift/Static Netting vessels June 2017.

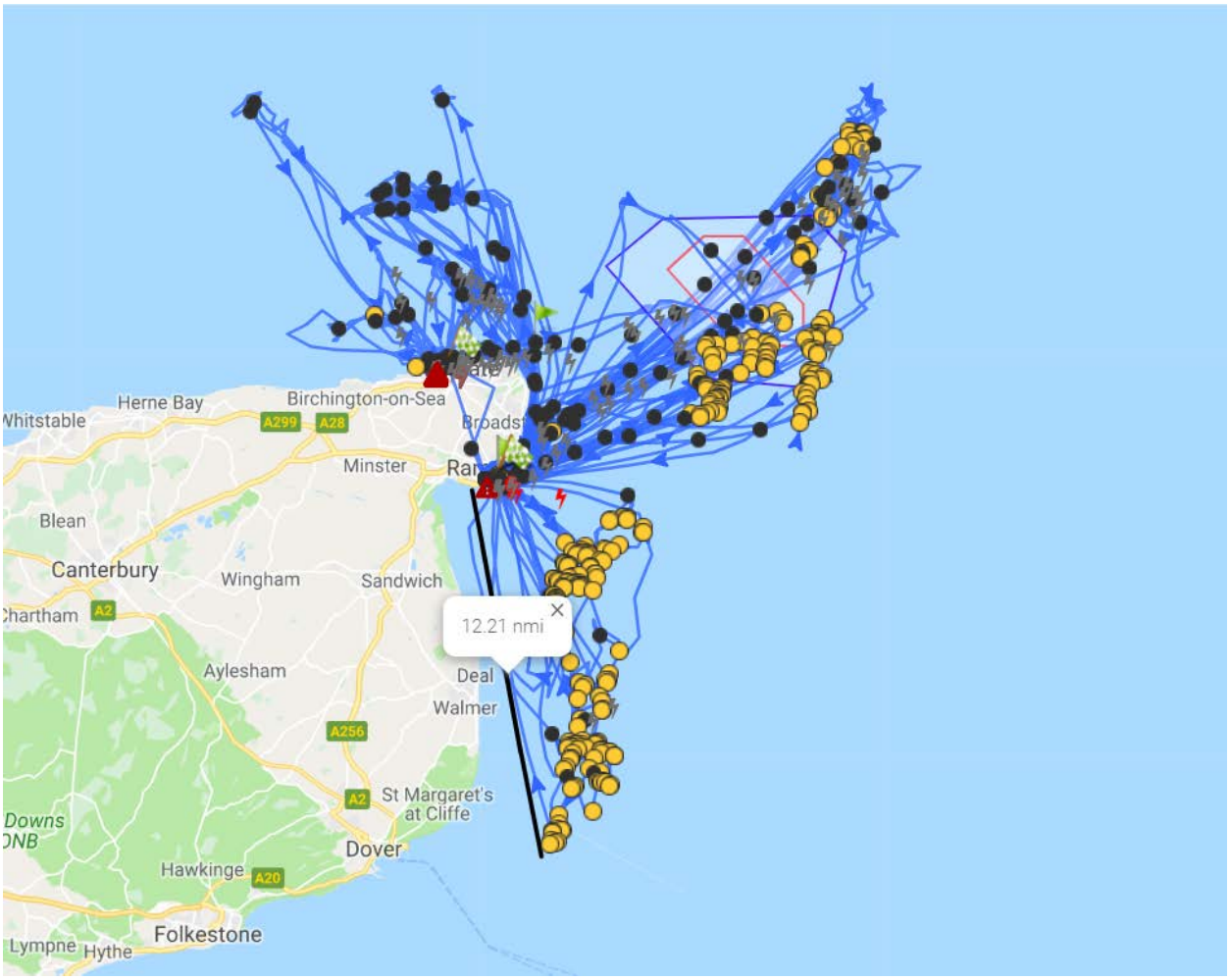


Figure 8 above shows the same 6 Netting vessels in June 2017. The drifts remain in use to the North East and South East of TOW and more static netting is occurring to the South of TOW, still within the RLB. Additional static and drift netting is taking place South of Ramsgate, reaching as far as Dover, and to the North in the Thames Estuary. As this chart shows, while TFA has maintained its vessels work grounds within 25 miles of the harbour, they use the grounds closest to home more frequently as indicated by the vessel furthest South approximately 12 miles from Ramsgate where she is based.

Figure 9. Bottom Drift vessel Defiant June 2017.

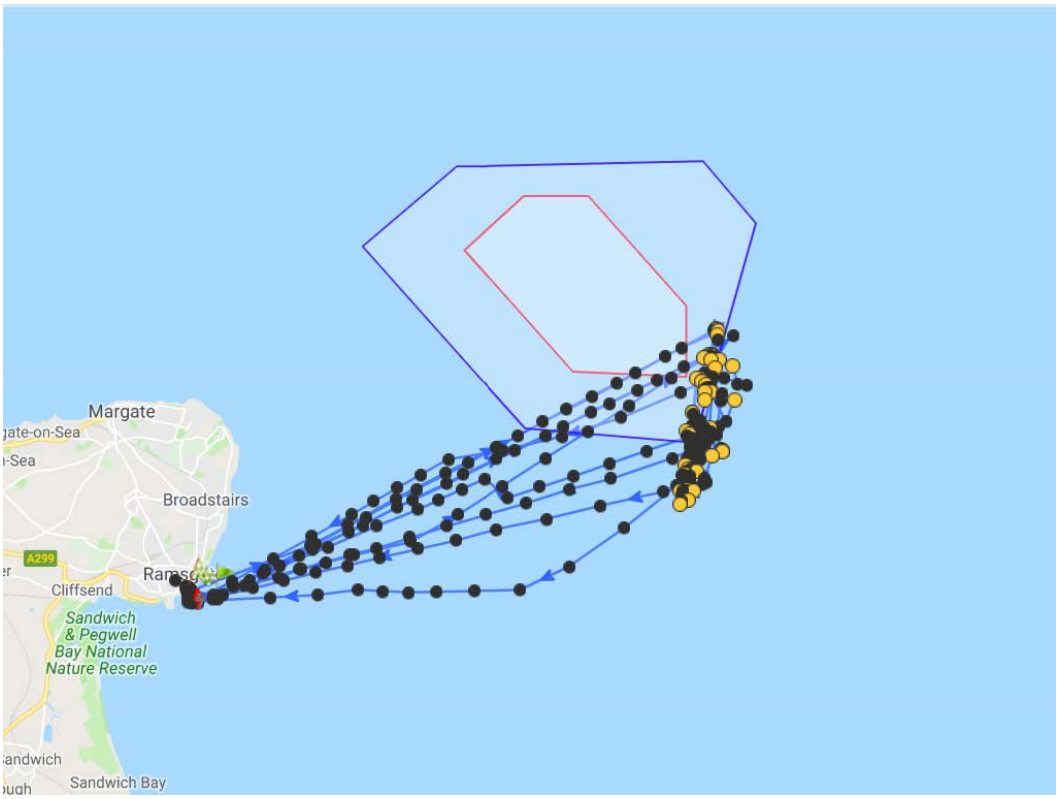


Figure 9 above shows the Drift ground used by Fishing vessel Defiant during June 2017, as discussed at ISH 6. The Defiant consistently fishes these drifts and her [redacted] tracks for the year 2017 show her in and around the same area. Approximately 90% of her annual earnings come from this area. The indicative layout prior to the SEZ showed monopiles in the Northern, North Eastern and South Eastern drifts. Since the introduction of the SEZ, the revised indicative monopile layout now shows an increased number of monopiles in all three drift areas.

ES Impact Significance conclusions for UK Drift and Static netters.

In the Environmental statement, volume 2 chapter 9, the impact levels for UK Drift and Static Netters are stated in the following table:

Construction	Receptor Sensitivity	Magnitude of Effect	Impact Significance
UK Drift & Static Netters	Medium	Low	Minor Adverse
O&M			
UK Drift & Static Netters	Medium	Low Static Nets Medium Drift Nets	Minor Adverse Static Minor Adverse Drift Nets general Moderate Adverse Drift Nets some individuals

Receptor Sensitivity.

Within the same Environmental Statement, table 9.6, the definition of medium sensitivity is:

- *'Some spatial adaptability due to extent of operational range and/ or ability to deploy an alternative gear type. Moderate spatial tolerance due to dependence upon a limited number of fishing grounds. Limited recoverability with some ability to mitigate loss of fishing area by operating in alternative areas.'*

As a fleet, we agree with the Receptor Sensitivity being placed at **Medium** for both Construction and O&M.

Magnitude of Effect.

Within the Environmental Statement, table 9.7, the definition of Low Magnitude is:

- *'A minor proportion of total annual landings weights/ values derived from fishing within Thanet Extension and/ or the change is temporary but recovery within a reasonable timescale is not possible.'*

TFA does not agree with the Magnitude of this effect for construction being stated as **Low.** While the revised SEZ positions have relieved some of the static netting ground to the West, they have increased the impact on the drifting ground, in particular the South East drifts which will now be completely lost for construction and O&M. As TFA has always maintained, the loss of bottom drift grounds is one of our largest concerns and the reason the bottom drift surveys within the FLCP are of such importance. With such a small fleet of netting vessels, the complete removal of the drift ground of one of those vessels, plus the partial removal of drift ground to

the others, has an impact on the entire fleet. For the construction period, as a fleet, we consider the magnitude level, though we may not fully agree with the definition, should be raised to **Medium** for both drift and static netting.

- *A moderate proportion of total annual landings weights/ values derived from fishing within Thanet Extension and/ or the change is temporary but recovery within a reasonable timescale is not possible.*

We maintain that the Impact Significance levels should be raised to **moderate** for construction and recognize Major adverse effects on some individuals for construction and O&M.

In conclusion, TFA considers the table levels of impact for UK Drift and Static Netters should be revised as below.

Construction	***Receptor Sensitivity***	***Magnitude of Effect***	***Impact Significance***
UK Drift & Static Netters	Medium	Medium	Moderate Major adverse Drift Nets some individuals
O&M			
UK Drift & Static Netters	Medium	Low Static Nets Medium Drift Nets	Minor Adverse Static Minor Adverse Drift Nets general Major Adverse Drift Nets some individuals

While TFA has maintained the anonymity of the majority of the vessels on [redacted], as we area ware this document will need to be in the public domain, we would be happy to share the names of the individual vessels to the Planning Inspectorate if required.

Yours Sincerely,

TFA Chairman: Peter John Nichols
TFA Secretary: Thomas H Brown MBE
TFA Treasurer: Merlin W Jackson