



MORGAN AND MORECAMBE OFFSHORE WIND FARMS: TRANSMISSION ASSETS

Environmental Statement

Volume 3, Annex 3.15: White-clawed crayfish technical report



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Glossary

Term	Meaning
Environmental Impact Assessment	The process of identifying and assessing the significant effects likely to arise from a project. This requires consideration of the likely changes to the environment, where these arise as a consequence of a project, through comparison with the existing and projected future baseline conditions.
Environmental Statement	The document presenting the results of the Environmental Impact Assessment process.
Morgan and Morecambe Offshore Wind Farms: Transmission Assets	The offshore and onshore infrastructure connecting the Morgan Offshore Wind Project and the Morecambe Offshore Windfarm to the national grid. This includes the offshore export cables, landfall site, onshore export cables, onshore substations, 400 kV grid connection cables and associated grid connection infrastructure such as circuit breaker compounds. Also referred to in this report as the Transmission Assets, for ease of reading.
Study area	This is an area which is defined for each environmental topic which includes the Transmission Assets Order Limits as well as potential spatial and temporal considerations of the impacts on relevant receptors. The study area for each topic is intended to cover the area within which an impact can be reasonably expected.
Survey area	The area within which each survey has been undertaken. This may differ from the Study Area as a Survey Area will be based on species or survey-specific guidance on the extent of survey required, which may be limited by, for example, habitat conditions, or be defined in terms of buffer areas around an area of potential impact.
Transmission Assets	See Morgan and Morecambe Offshore Wind Farms: Transmission Assets (above).
Transmission Assets Order Limits	The area within which all components of the Transmission Assets will be located, including areas required on a temporary basis during construction and/or decommissioning (such as construction compounds).
Transmission Assets Order Limits: Onshore	The area within which all components of the Transmission Assets landward of Mean High Water Springs will be located, including areas required on a temporary basis during construction and/or decommissioning (such as construction compounds). Also referred to in this report as the Onshore Order Limits, for ease of reading.

Acronyms

Acronym	Meaning
Defra	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
eDNA	Electronic Deoxyribonucleic acid
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
ES	Environmental Statement

Acronym	Meaning
LERN	Lancashire Environmental Records Network
MAGIC	Multi Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside
WCC	White-Clawed Crayfish

Units

Unit	Description
km	Kilometre
m	Metre

1 White-clawed crayfish technical report

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1.1 This document forms Volume 3, Annex 3.15: White clawed crayfish technical report of the Environmental Statement (ES) prepared for the Morgan and Morecambe Offshore Wind Farms: Transmission Assets (referred to hereafter as ‘the Transmission Assets’). The ES presents the findings of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process for the Transmission Assets.

1.1.1.2 The purpose of this technical report is to present the results of the White-Clawed Crayfish (WCC) *Austropotamobius pallipes* site-specific surveys undertaken in April 2023 to inform Volume 3, Chapter 3: Onshore ecology and nature conservation of the ES.

1.2 Methodology

1.2.1 Study area

1.2.1.1 The study area is intended to cover the area within which an impact to WCC can be reasonably expected as a consequence of the Transmission Assets and describes the geographical extent subject to desk-based research.

1.2.1.2 The WCC study area comprises the Onshore Order Limits and a 2 km kilometre (km) buffer (referred to hereafter as ‘the study area’).

1.2.1.3 The location and geographic extent of the WCC study area is presented in **Figure 1.1** of this technical report.

1.2.2 Survey area

1.2.2.1 The survey area is defined as the area within which each survey has been undertaken and is based on species or survey-specific guidance on the extent of survey required. The area subject to WCC surveys (referred to hereafter as ‘the survey area’) is defined as a 150 metre (m) buffer around the Onshore Order Limits, as shown in **Figure 1.1**.

1.2.2.2 Adopting a survey area that is greater in extent than the Onshore Order Limits, ensures that the ES is accurately informed with data from within the Onshore Order Limits (i.e. that may be subject to direct impacts) and data from outside the Onshore Order Limits (i.e. that may be subject to indirect impacts).

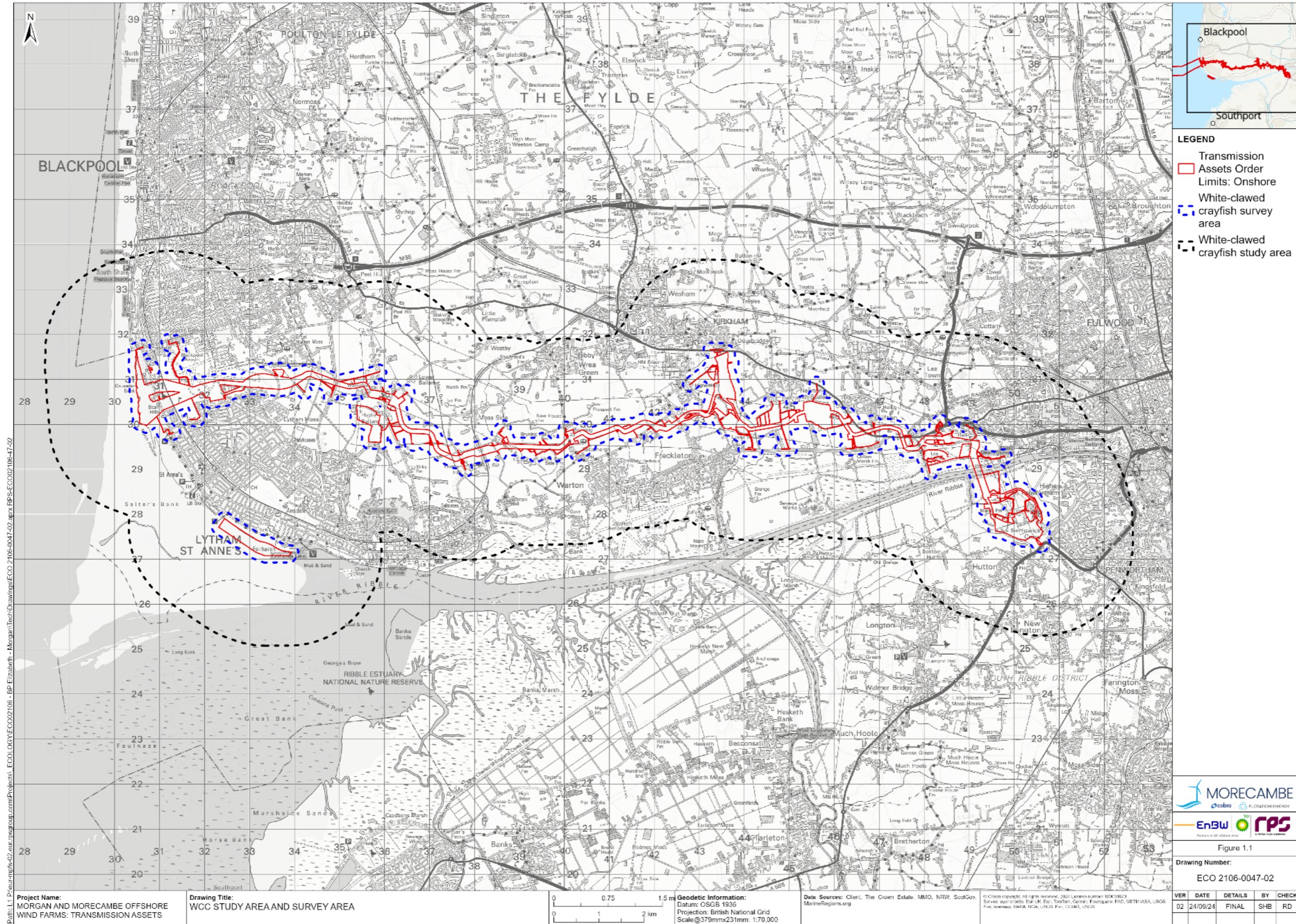


Figure 1.1: WCC study area and survey area

1.2.3 Relevant legislation

1.2.3.1 Two key pieces of legislation are relevant for WCC under English law: the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, as amended, and the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, as amended.

1.2.3.2 WCC are listed in Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. As such, under Section 9 of this Act it is an offence to:

- intentionally kill, injure or take WCC;
- possess or control any live or dead specimen or anything derived from WCC;
- intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct any structure or place used for shelter or protection by WCC; or
- intentionally or recklessly disturb WCC while occupying a structure or place which it uses for that purpose.

1.2.3.3 WCC are also listed under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006. As such, it is a species of principal importance (first identified as priority habitats and species in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan).

1.2.4 Consultation

1.2.4.1 In October 2022, the Applicants submitted an EIA Scoping Report to the Planning Inspectorate, which described the scope and methodology for the technical studies being undertaken to provide an assessment of any likely significant effects for the construction, operation and maintenance and decommissioning phases of the Transmission Assets.

1.2.4.2 The scope, methodology and findings of the WCC surveys, including those were discussed, and agreed with stakeholders via regular Onshore Ecology Expert Working Group meetings. Further detail regarding consultation undertaken with respect to onshore ecology can be found in Volume 3, Chapter 3: Onshore ecology and nature conservation of the ES.

1.3 Methodology

1.3.1 Overview

1.3.1.1 A combination of desk studies and field surveys were undertaken to ascertain the presence or likely absence of WCC within the study and survey areas.

1.3.1.2 The results of the desk study are presented in Volume 3, Annex 3.1: Onshore ecology desk study technical report of the ES.

1.3.2 Desktop study

1.3.2.1 Information with respect to WCC was collected from existing studies and datasets. These are summarised in **Table 1.1** below.

Table 1.1: Summary of key desktop sources

Title	Source	Year	Author
Lancashire Environmental Records Network (LERN).	LERN data share site.	2024	LERN
Multi Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC).	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra).	2024	Defra

1.3.3 Site specific surveys

- 1.3.3.1 Extended phase 1 habitat surveys have been undertaken from May 2022 to May 2024, which were used to identify habitats suitable for supporting WCC (e.g. freshwater waterbodies or watercourses) and the requirement for WCC surveys.
- 1.3.3.2 The white clawed-crayfish habitat assessments were undertaken in accordance with Guidance on Habitat for White-Clawed Crayfish (Peay, 2003).
- 1.3.3.3 For habitats identified as suitable for supporting WCC, electronic Deoxyribonucleic acid (eDNA) surveys were undertaken to determine presence/likely absence of WCC in the WCC survey area.
- 1.3.3.4 Only one area within the Onshore Order Limits was identified as suitable for supporting WCC and scoped in for WCC eDNA surveys, which was undertaken in April 2023 and comprised the following:
- water samples were collected within the WCC survey area, avoiding entering the water where possible during sample collection;
 - sampling was undertaken in an upstream direction to avoid the collection of ancient sediment that may contain historical DNA; and
 - sub-samples were taken every few metres along the watercourse to get a representative sample from the site.
- 1.3.3.5 Instructions on the eDNA survey kit were followed to ensure the samples were safely and effectively obtained, adhering to biosecurity measures.
- 1.3.3.6 The detailed methodology used for site-specific surveys, including WCC surveys are presented in Volume 3, Annex 3.2: Onshore ecology and nature conservation survey methodologies technical report of the ES.
- 1.3.3.7 The location of the area subject to WCC surveys is presented in **Figure 1.2** of this technical report.

Limitations

- 1.3.3.8 At the time of survey, there were no access constraints, and the surveys were conducted at appropriate times of the year and in suitable weather condition.

1.3.4 Results

- 1.3.4.1 As described in Volume 3, Annex 3.1: Onshore ecology desk study of the ES, no records of WCC were provided by LERN within the study area.
- 1.3.4.2 With regard to site-specific surveys, only one area within the survey area was identified as suitable for supporting WCC during the phase 1 habitat surveys.
- 1.3.4.3 This area of habitat was subject to eDNA surveys which subsequently returned negative results, confirming the likely absence of WCC within the survey area.
- 1.3.4.4 The location of the area subject to WCC eDNA surveys is presented in **Figure 1.2** of this technical report.

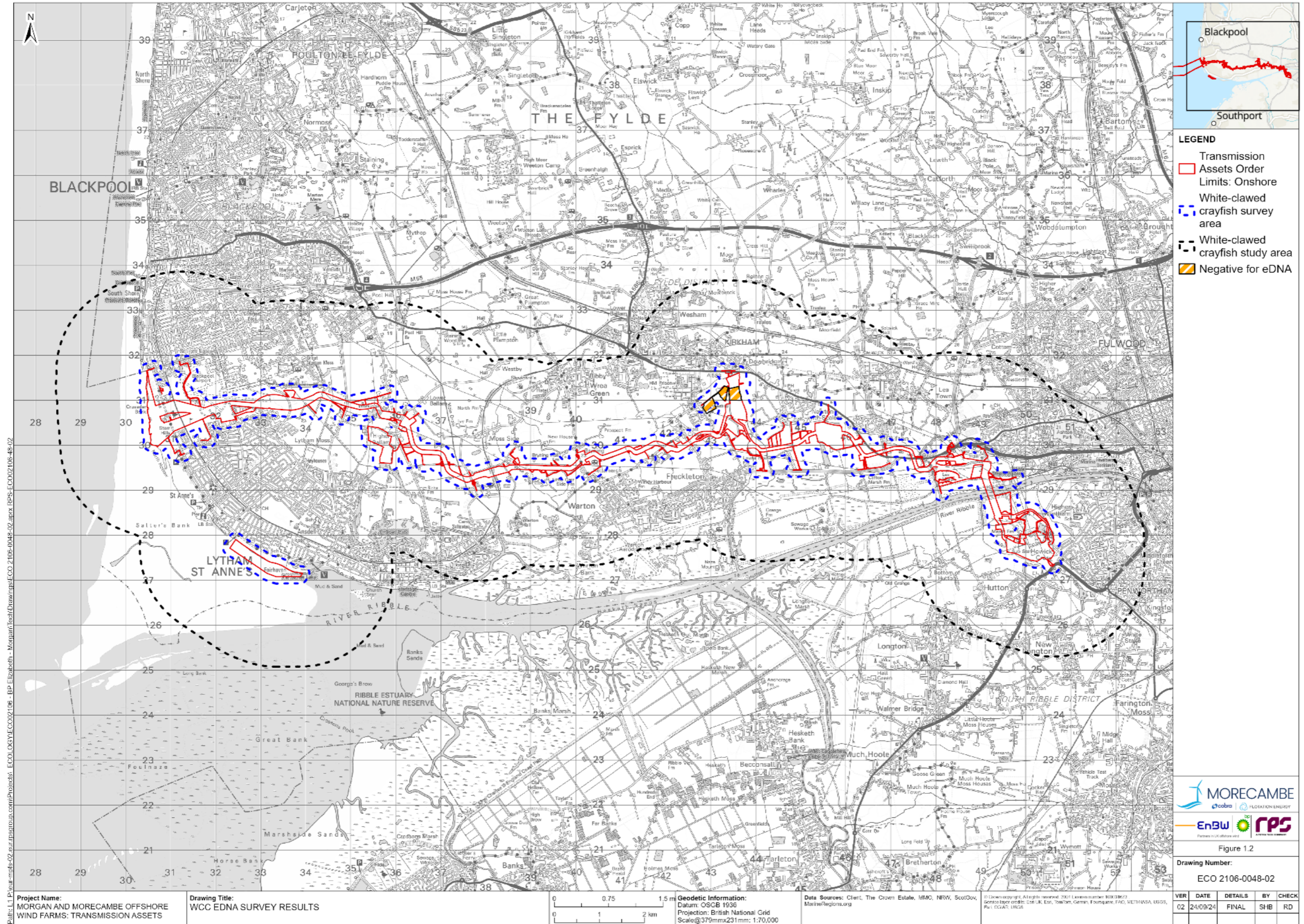


Figure 1.2: WCC eDNA survey results

1.4 Summary

- 1.4.1.1 This technical report presents the results of the WCC surveys undertaken in April 2023 to inform Volume 3, Chapter 3: Onshore ecology of the ES.
- 1.4.1.2 As described in Volume 3, Annex 3.1: Onshore ecology desk study of the ES, no records of WCC were provided by LERN within the study area.
- 1.4.1.3 Only one area within the Onshore Order Limits was identified as suitable for supporting WCC during the phase 1 habitat surveys, and scoped in for WCC eDNA surveys,
- 1.4.1.4 This area of habitat was subject to eDNA surveys in April 2023, which subsequently returned negative results, confirming the likely absence of WCC within the survey area.

1.5 References

Peay (2023) Guidance on Habitat for White-clawed Crayfish and its Restoration. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-habitat-for-white-clawed-crayfish> Accessed: September 2024