

Date: 17 November 2016



Your reference: Margate and Long Sands SCI; Final Suggested Management

Dr Will Wright
Kent and Essex IFCA
Paragon House
Albert Street
Ramsgate
Kent
CT11 9HD

Nobel House
Area 3A
17 Smith Square
London
SW1P 2AL

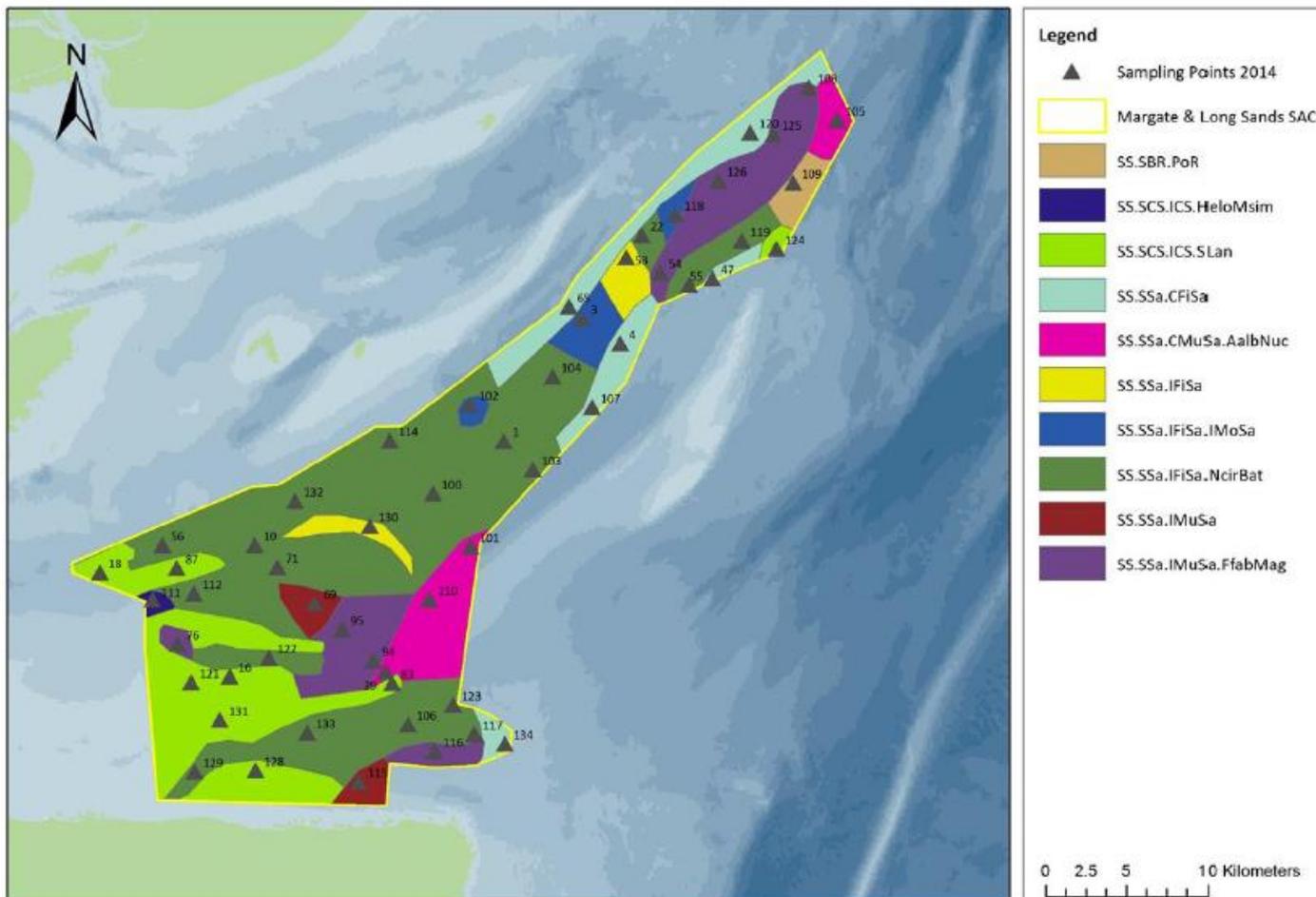
BY EMAIL ONLY

Dear Will

RE: Margate and Long Sands SCI; Kent and Essex IFCA's Final Suggested Management

Thank you for your email of 11 November 2016 requesting Natural England's formal advice on the IFCA's final proposed management for Margate and Long Sands Site of Conservation Importance (SCI). Please find below Natural England's formal advice on this.

Natural England's advice on biotope sensitivity

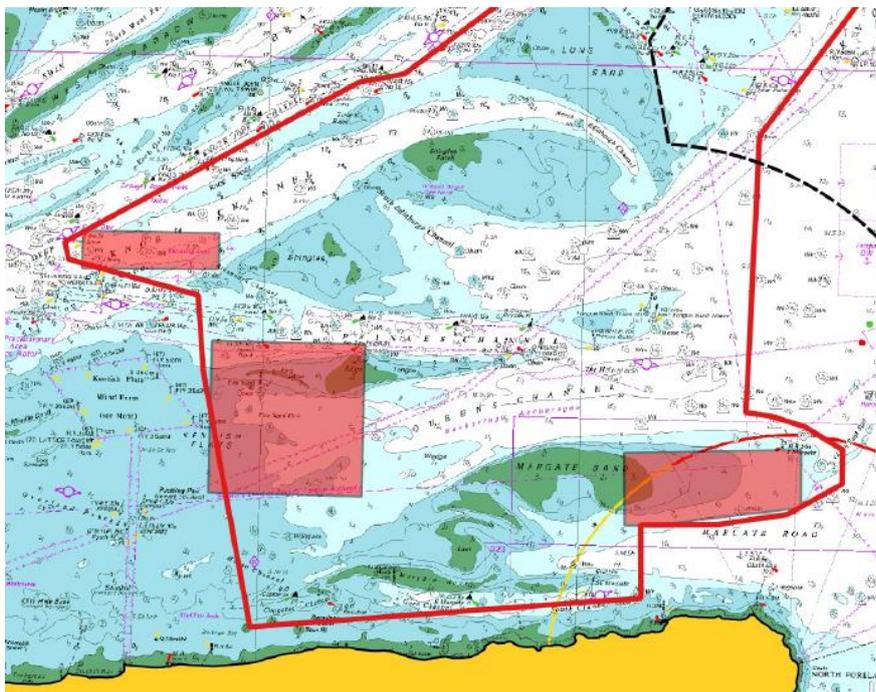


Natural England previously advised that, in the southern portion of the site, the two small patches of SS.SSa.IMuSa.FfabMag biotope (sampling station number 116 and 76) have the greatest species abundance.

Although *Sabellaria spinulosa* has been observed within the site it is generally in low abundance, however samples were dominated by other species and in particular *Lanice conchilega* which, where dominant, may lead to further sediment stabilisation and potentially an increase in the presence of *S. spinulosa*. Whilst *S. spinulosa* reef is not a designated feature of this site, the **species** is an important component of the communities and if left to establish it can attract other species into the area, resulting in overall increased species diversity and abundance.

We therefore advised that stations 16,18,121 and 131, where *L. conchilega* dominated, along with stations 76 and 116 are the most sensitive areas within the site, within the 6nm.

Kent and Essex IFCA Proposed management – Close portions of sensitive biotopes, focusing on most sensitive stations



Close areas in red boxes to all bottom towed fishing gear, protecting the most sensitive areas of the following biotopes, plus sections of other surrounding biotopes:

- SS.SCS.ICs.SLan – The dominance of *L. conchilega* may lead to further stabilisation of the sediment in these areas which could then also result in an increase of *S. spinulosa*
- SS.SSa.IMuSa.FfabMag – high species abundance and highest fraction of mud.

This proposed management encapsulates Natural England's original advice (outlined above) on the sensitive areas of habitats. It ensures full protection to areas of the site which have been identified to be the most stable and sensitive areas of the SCI (inside the 6nm, within the Kent and Essex IFCAs district).

Advice to the MMO on management outside 6nm in Margate and Long Sands SCI

We are pleased to see Kent and Essex IFCA's final proposal for management within the 6nm limit, however there are still some outstanding matters regarding the MMO's HRA and associated management options. Natural England still require further detail on how the MMO's proposed management outside the 6nm will be delivered, in order for us to agree with their conclusion of no adverse effect on integrity to the site.

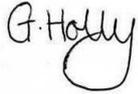
We hope to receive further information on this soon and look forward to working with the IFCA and the MMO going forward to implement appropriate management measures throughout the site.

Reviewing the proposed management measures

We greatly welcome the IFCA's planned annual review of site management, working alongside Natural England. We also welcome the IFCA's continued working with the MMO, particularly on their monitoring and control plan for the site. This is vital in order to respond rapidly and accordingly to any changes or new data in relation to fishing intensity or habitat distribution.

If you have any queries regarding the contents of this advice, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "G. Holly". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped 'y' at the end.

Giulietta Holly
Lead Marine Adviser
Giulietta.holly@naturalengland.org.uk
02080263183