

ROCK CHANNEL SAILING DIRECTIONS 2014

OUTWARD FROM LIVERPOOL

Based on survey on foot along the shoreline,
at edge of water, 30 March 2014, with height of tide 0.3 m
Magnetic variation for 2014 in this location is approx 3° W.

Oliver L. Shaw
18th April 2014

Although I normally navigate the Rock Channel by GPS, I have the benefit of a chartplotter visible from the helm. Not all boats have that luxury, and indeed a number of highly venerated skippers with exceptionally well appointed boats prefer to have the chartplotter below, at the navigation station, rather than visible to the helmsman. In any case, even when using GPS one should always have a visual backup immediately available, just in case.

These Sailing Directions are based on a survey that I did along the edge of the tide at Low Water on the above date, and I believe the route to be a good one, but in the event when we left the Mersey we went north rather than west and so used the Crosby and Queen's Channels rather than the Rock Channel, so I have not yet had the opportunity to validate it by water. **Use it therefore with due caution, and watch the depth sounder.**

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It would appear that the route is safe for a height of tide of at least 0.3 m plus your draught, plus whatever clearance you want beneath the keel; **for most of us at LSC it would therefore seem to be safe for a height of tide of 3.0 m or greater.**

As an alternative rule of thumb, it should be safe if you enter (on the ebb) not too long after half tide. (Mean tide level is approx 5.0 m, so that still gives you 2 m latitude.) **Be aware that a local Notice to Mariners restricts the Windcats using it to just 1 hour either side of HW.**

Outward from the Mersey:

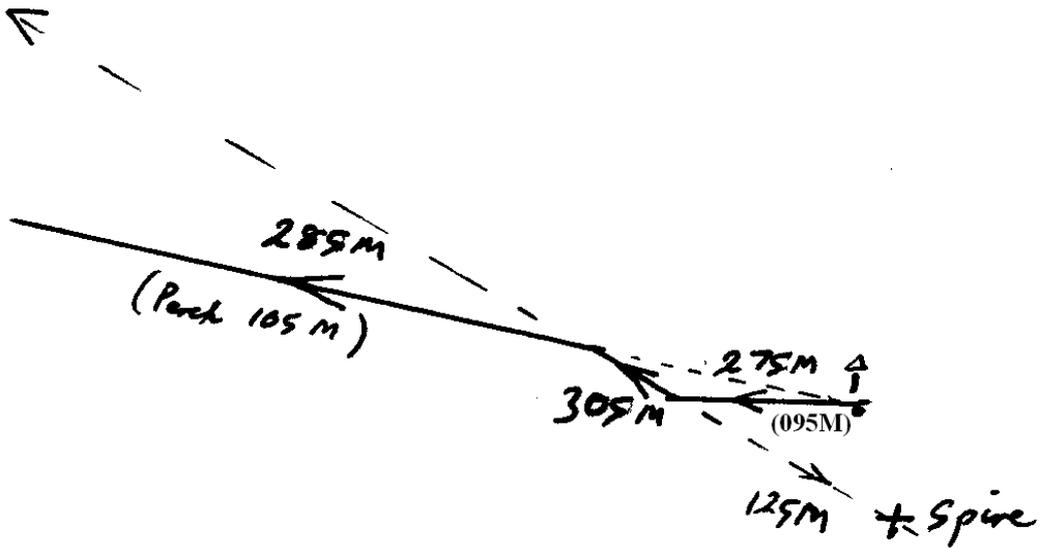
- Shortly before Brazil Buoy turn west, and skirt the lit beacon (2 F. G. (vert.)) on the northern end of Perch Rock as close as you dare. That does not mean clearing it by only inches, but a few yards is ample; 50 yards is probably rather too much. **Note that there is no marker for the starboard side of the channel, and at this point it is narrow!**
- **Leave this beacon on bearing 275M**, and periodically check that the back bearing remains 095M
- **Ignore the subsequent beacons on your port hand; they are all well ashore !!**
- Continue until the back bearing of the prominent church spire in New Brighton is 125M. **Turn onto 305M**, which will line up with a point slightly right of centre of the main group of wind turbines, as distinct from the group of 10 on the left of your field of view and the group of just 2 to the right of your field of view. This will put the church spire exactly astern of you; effectively you keep on the straight line between that point in the wind farm ahead of you and the church spire astern.
- Continue until the back bearing of the original perch is 105M, then **turn to port onto 285M**, thus putting the perch dead astern. This appears to take you out of the channel clear of the North Bank and south of the wind farm. Provided you watch your depth it does not greatly matter if you leave this turn a little late.

Pilotage sketch:



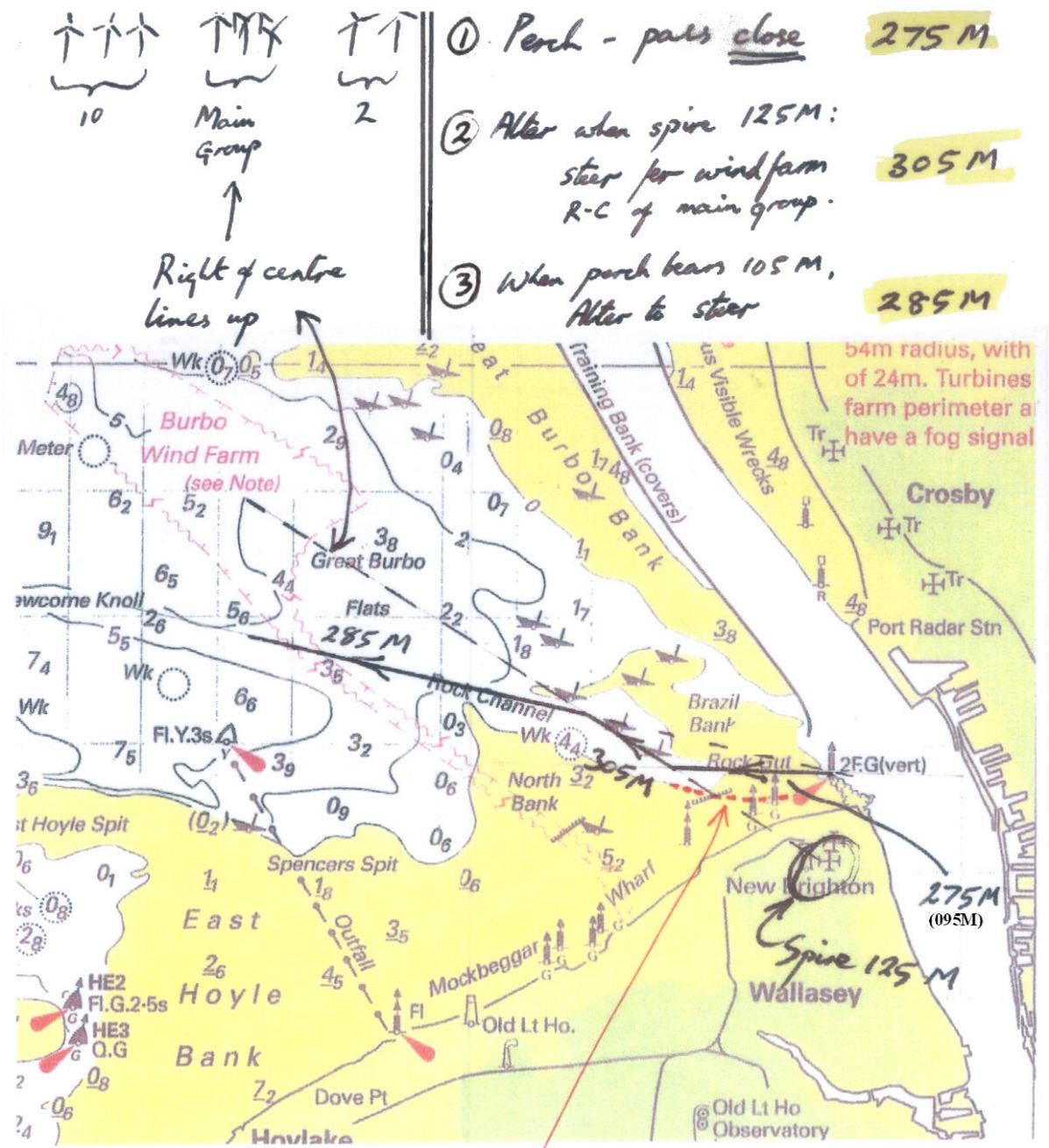
↑
Right of centre
lines up

To R.C of main group of wind turbines



Full chart:

Note that the channel and the banks may not be in quite the positions shown on the chart !!!



Shoreline at 0.3 m height of tide.
30 March 2014

Surface water (at least) along full length of channel.