



NOTICE TO MARINERS NO. 2/16

**Upper Severn Estuary – Passage Planning.
Refer to British Admiralty chart no. 1166**

Identification of the Bull Channel and the use of leading marks to avoid rocks and sandbanks in the vicinity of 51° 42'N 2° 30'W

Attention is drawn to a number of difficulties experienced by the some vessels, notably small craft, in the above area.

The person in charge of the navigation of the vessel must understand the purpose of certain navigation marks and correctly interpret the information provided on the official chart. A failure to appreciate the significance of tide times and heights may lead to a vessel grounding in the above area. This is likely to result in vessel damage and the need for rescue services to attend.

Mariners are reminded that a marked channel exists by which the dangers of the Black Rock and sandbanks further to the west may be avoided. However, proper planning should be undertaken to ensure that adequate depths of water will be encountered at all stages of the vessel's passage taking into account the significant rise in river bed level (datum change) throughout the estuary.

The Fishinghouse leading marks/lights will, when in line, indicate the track to be followed through the channel known as the 'Bull' channel. Vessels are advised NOT to deviate to the west of the channel unless absolutely sure of their ability to accurately determine their position in fast-flowing water and with sufficient depths of water over the rocks and sandbanks.

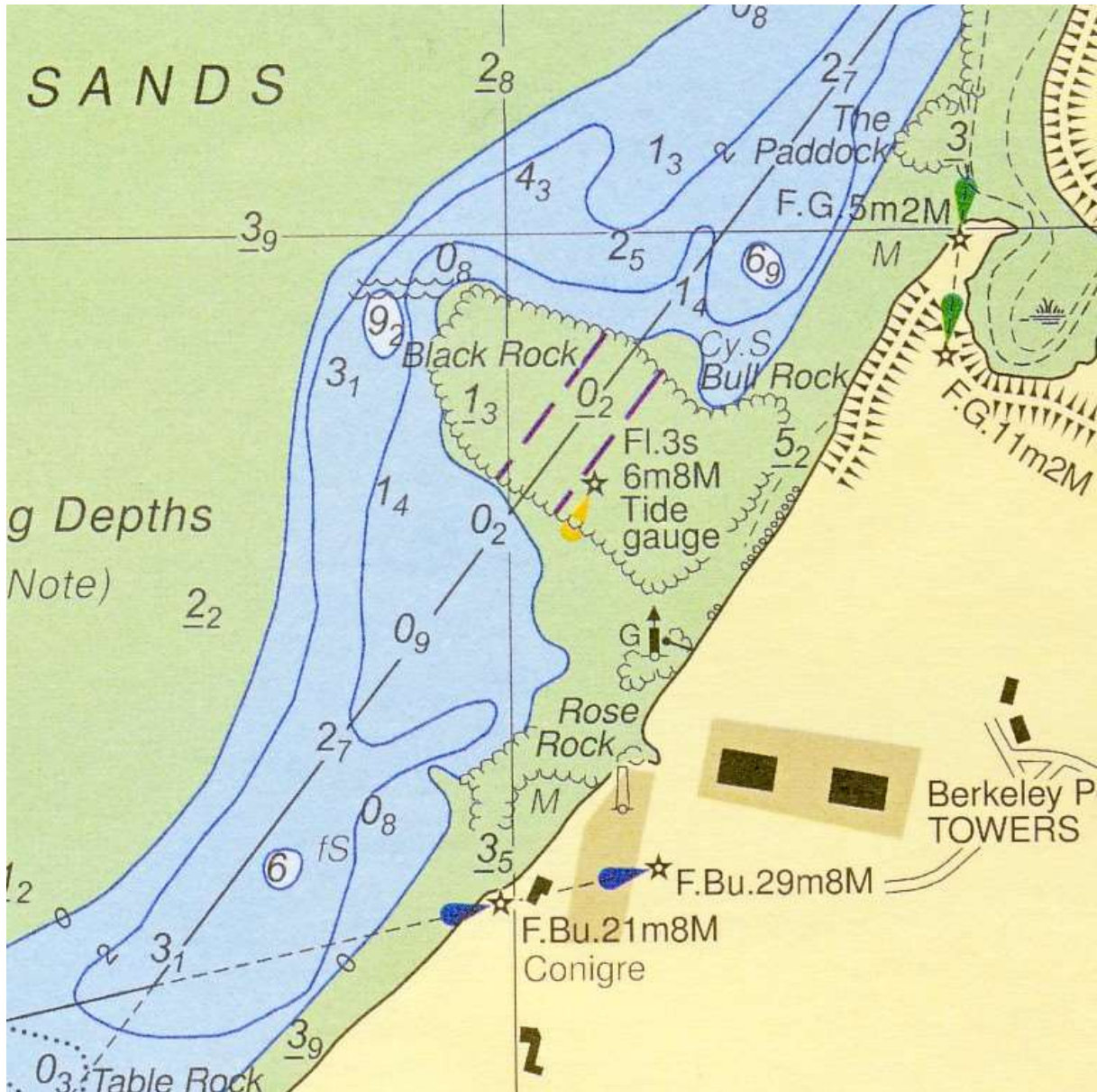
The channel is highlighted with magenta lines on the current edition of the official chart, an extract of which is reproduced below to assist in identification of the area in question. All vessels must carry an up-to-date edition of the full chart.

A beacon (the 'Bull' beacon) is positioned at the eastern edge of the channel and carries a tide gauge. The tide gauge provides an indication of the depth of water on Sharpness Dock cill.

We welcome enquires from mariners who may require clarification or further information.

All Notices to Mariners and a range of other information relevant to passage planning and safe navigation is published on the Trustees' website www.gloucesterharbourtrustees.org.uk

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Owners, Agents and Charterers should ensure that the contents of this Notice are made known to the Masters or persons in charge of their vessels or craft.

M Johnson
Harbourmaster/Marine Officer

12 May 2016.