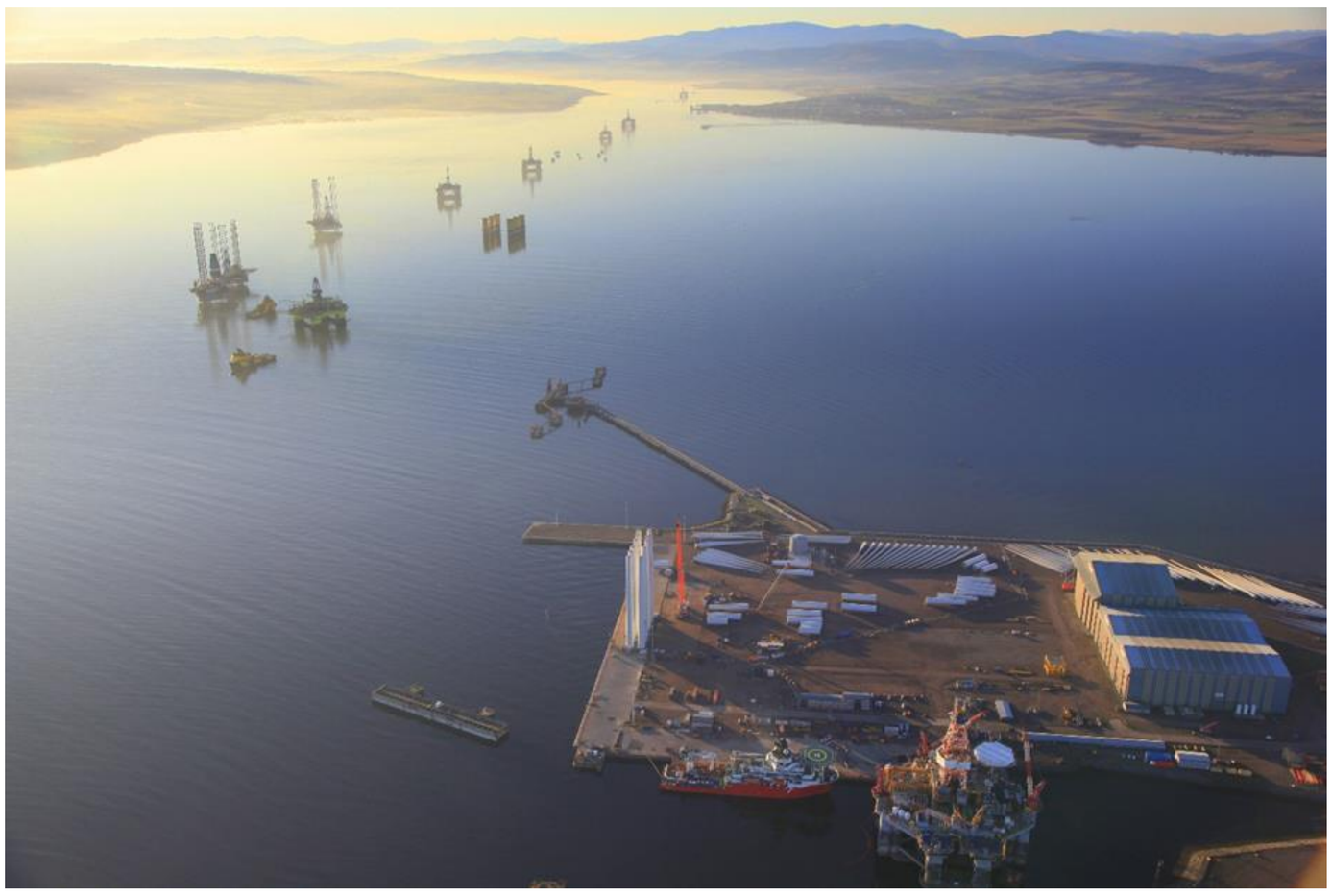
Vessel Movement/Navigation

Impacts of the proposed development upon navigation and vessel movement within the Cromarty Firth and the Inner Moray Firth will be incorporated into the assessment. Increased vessel movement has the potential to impact upon:

(i) cetaceans such as Bottlenose Dolphin;
(ii) navigational safety of other marine users;
(iii) vessel noise emissions;
(iv) water pollution from fuel contamination; and
(v) numbers of invasive marine species from ship ballast.

Categorising specific vessel types and numbers, will help inform a robust navigational mitigation plan for the duration of the construction phase, and help manage any long term impacts of operational vessel movement at Nigg.



Typical berthing arrangement of anchored and unanchored vessels in the central Cromarty Firth. These comprise mostly of underwater operations vessels, port support vessels (i.e. tugs, tender craft), offshore support and cargo vessel. In addition, many fishing vessels operate around the berthed platforms, and service the aquaculture farms at the southern reaches of the Firth.

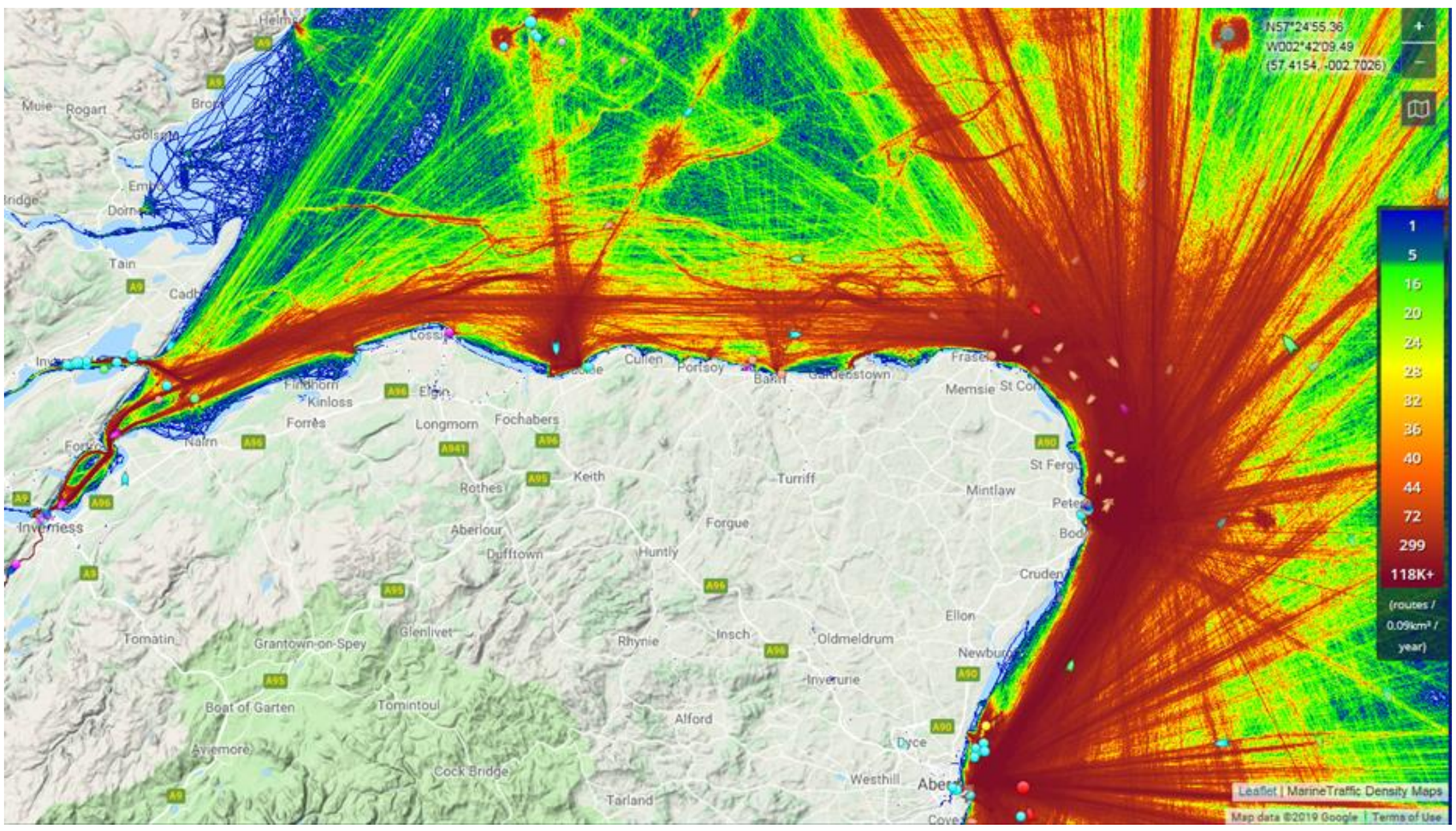


Figure 20: Route Density Maps record vessel movements from AIS Tracking, allowing baseline and predicted impacts to be assessed for the Cromarty Firth and Moray Firth.

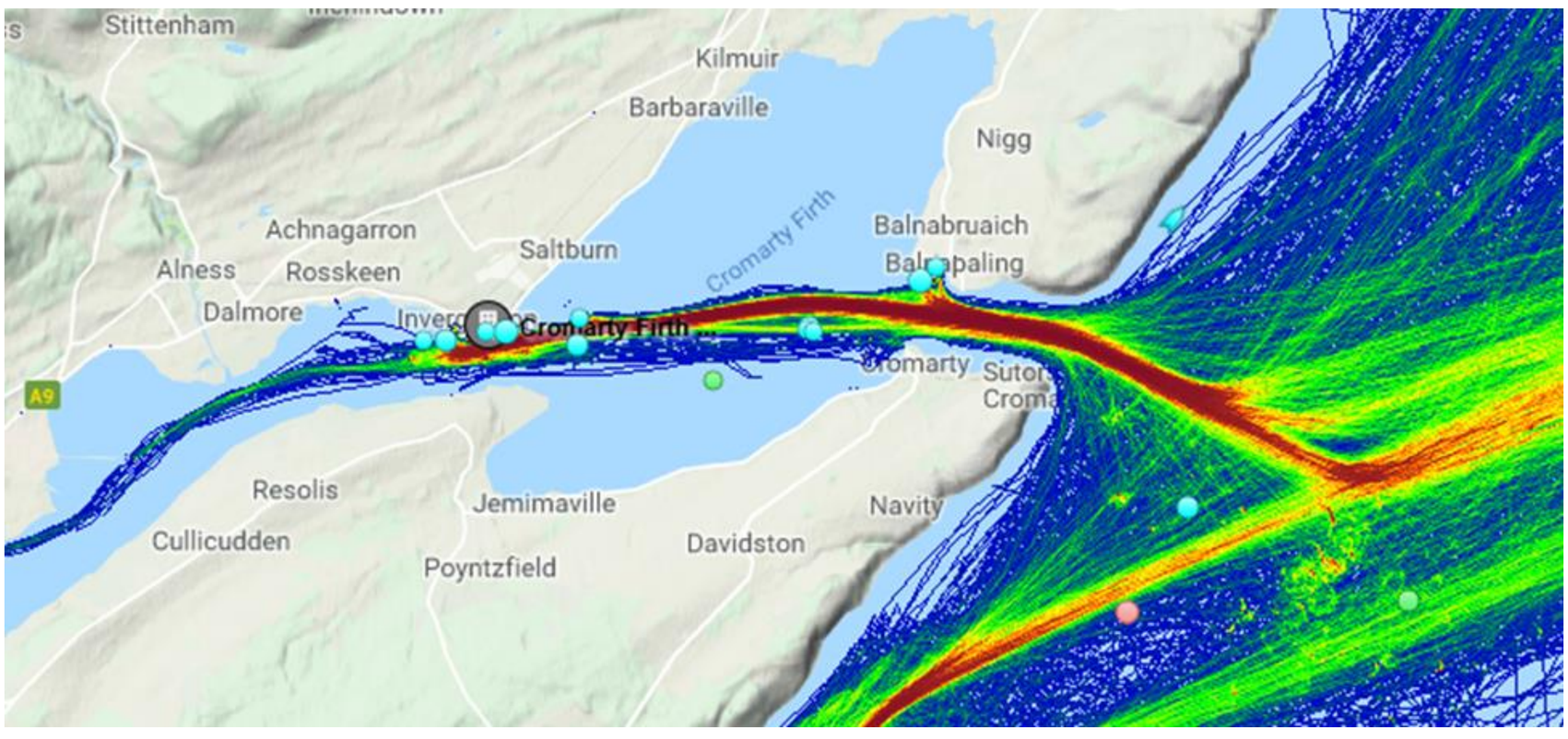


Figure 21: Route Density Map for the Cromarty Firth, Sutors area and Inner Moray Firth help establish typical patterns which can be applied to the proposed development