AIRPROX REPORT No 2013031

Date/Time: 6 May 2013 1138Z (Bank Holiday

Monday)

5150N 00109W Position:

(4nm SE Weston-on-the-Green)

Oxford AIAA (Class: G) Airspace:

> Reporting Ac Reported Ac

ASH 25 Beech Baron *Type*:

Civ Club Civ Pte Operator. 3500ft

Alt/FL: 3550ft QNH(NK) NK

> VMC CLBC VMC CLBC

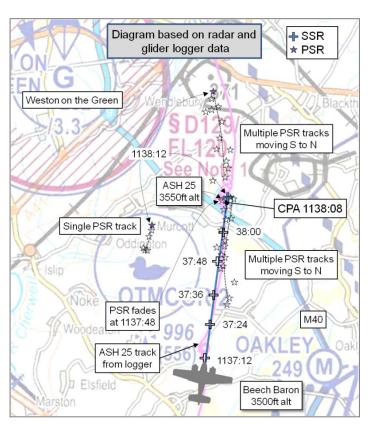
Weather. Visibility: 15km > 10km

Reported Separation:

0ft V/50m H Not Seen

Recorded Separation:

NK



PART A: SUMMARY OF INFORMATION REPORTED TO UKAB

THE ASH 25 PILOT reports conducting a cross country flight with a passenger, routeing Lasham, Bicester, Ely, Membury and Lasham. He was operating under VFR in VMC without an ATS; the radio was selected off. The white glider was not fitted with navigation or strobe lights or an SSR transponder. The glider was fitted with FLARM. On the 'run in to Bicester' he was circling L at 55kt, to climb in a thermal, when he heard and saw a twin-engine piston ac pass very close in front of him, travelling from S to N, roughly between him and Weston On The Green. He noted that the other ac was close enough for him to see the registration markings on the fuselage clearly and that, at a first sighting of 50m, there was insufficient time to take any avoiding action. He stated that this incident served as a reminder for him to 'pay more attention to keeping a good look out'.

He assessed the risk of collision as 'High'.

THE BEECH BARON PILOT reports that he was transiting from an overseas A/D to Turweston, operating under VFR in VMC. The white ac had the red beacon selected on, as was the SSR transponder with Modes A, C and S. He was not in receipt of an ATS. He was not aware that he had been involved in an Airprox until notified a week after the event. He stated that, at the Airprox reported position, he had been flying straight and level on an approximately N'ly heading at about 165kt. He was aware of 'a very great deal of glider activity from Lasham all the way to Turweston' and thought his track had taken him about 3nm to the E of Weston-on-the-Green.

[UKAB Note(1): The Brize Norton and Benson weather was recorded as follows: METAR EGVN 061150Z 22004KT 9999 FEW040 SCT250 19/08 Q1020 BLU NOSIG METAR EGUB 061150Z AUTO 18005KT 9999 // NCD 19/08 Q1020]

[UKAB Note(2): Edition 39 of the UK '1/2 mil' chart states:

'BIRD SANCTUARIES are shown with name/effective altitude (in thousands of feet). Pilots are requested to avoid these portions of airspace during the periods detailed in the UK AIP ENR 5-6'

The UK AIP ENR 5-6 (Bird Migration And Areas With Sensitive Fauna), Section 3 (Bird Sanctuaries), paragraph 3.2 states:

'Pilots are specifically requested to avoid the Bird Sanctuaries listed below, especially during any stated breeding season.'

Identification and Name Lateral Limits	Upper Limit (ft) Lower Limit (ft)	Remarks
Otmoor A circle 1 nm radius centred on 514918N 0011038W.	2000 ft ALT SFC	Pilots are requested to avoid the area throughout the year.

]

PART B: SUMMARY OF THE BOARD'S DISCUSSIONS

Information available included reports from the pilots of both ac, a glider log file and radar photographs/video recordings.

Both pilots were operating under VFR in class G airspace and were equally responsible to 'see and avoid'. The glider pilot had right of way. The weather conditions were suitable for VFR flight and afforded both pilots the opportunity to see the other ac in time to avoid.

Noting that there were no really good options in this area, Members discussed the planning factors relevant to the Beech Baron pilot's transit. If available, the use of an ATS may have afforded him more specific SA on the glider traffic. His routeing took him through the 'pinch point' between Weston on the Green, Bicester (both areas of intense glider activity) and Benson whereas a route to the E of Benson would have avoided the 'pinch point' and kept him clear of the Oxford AIAA. Finally, cruising at a relatively high airspeed reduces the time available to 'see and avoid' much slower aircraft. Members also opined that the ASH 25 pilot may have been better served by selecting the radio on and establishing an ATS when in an area of high activity, such as within the Oxford AIAA. A pilot Member observed that the Bird Sanctuary at Otmoor reduced an already narrow corridor still further but that it had a vertical limit of 2000ft. Pilot Members further opined that pilots with limited experience and/or currency occasionally planned their flights in a '2D' manner, routing around airspace, avoids and warnings, and that it behoved all pilots to 'think 3D', especially when planning to transit through constrained areas.

The Board next considered the Cause and Risk and determined that neither pilot had been able to 'see and avoid'; the Beech pilot did not witness the Airprox and the ASH 25 pilot saw the Beech too late to take avoiding action. Considering the ASH 25 pilot heard as well as saw the Beech, and was able to see its identification letters, the Board concluded that separation was reduced to the bare minimum and that the ac had avoided collision by providence alone. As such, there were no safety barriers remaining.

PART C: ASSESSMENT OF CAUSE AND RISK

<u>Cause:</u> A non-sighting by the Beech Baron pilot and effectively a non-sighting by the

ASH 25 pilot.

Degree of Risk: A.

ERC Score: 500.