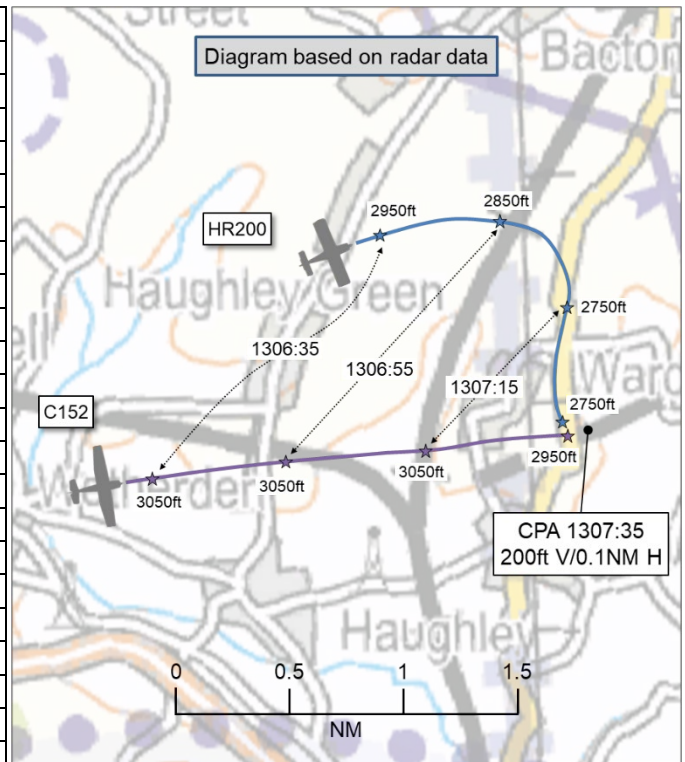


AIRPROX REPORT No 2026001

Date: 04 Jan 2026 Time: 1308Z Position: 5214N 00100E Location: 2.5NM N Stowmarket

PART A: SUMMARY OF INFORMATION REPORTED TO UKAB

Recorded	Aircraft 1	Aircraft 2
Aircraft	HR200	C152
Operator	Civ FW	Civ FW
Airspace	London FIR	London FIR
Class	G	G
Rules	VFR	VFR
Service	Listening Out	Listening Out
Provider	Wattisham Appr.	Wattisham Appr.
Altitude/FL	2750ft	2950ft
Transponder	A, C, S	A, C, S+
Reported		
Colours	White, blue	White
Lighting	Strobes, landing	Beacon
Conditions	VMC	VMC
Visibility	>10km	>10km
Altitude/FL	2800ft	2800ft
Altimeter	NR	NK
Heading	150°	NR
Speed	85kt	106kt
ACAS/TAS	Not fitted	Not fitted
Separation at CPA		
Reported	250ft V/200m H	15ft V/150m H
Recorded	200ft V/0.1NM H	



THE HR200 PILOT reports that this was a routine training flight. A navigation exercise had been conducted, followed by some general handling. [The pilot of the HR200 had] tuned their radio to Wattisham Approach (which seemed to be closed). They had just asked their student to turn onto heading in preparation for tracking to the CLN VOR. The sky was abnormally clear, literally zero cloud. The other aircraft appeared straight out of the sun. [The pilot of the HR200 commented that it was a] late sighting. The instant that they saw the aircraft, it was passing away.

THE C152 PILOT reports that this flight was their first solo navigation flight, with three legs, heading to Framlingham Castle. The plan was to maintain 2400ft. They had already done this flight with their instructor. Five nautical miles before reaching Wattisham, they radioed to request MATZ penetration. They got no response so they listened out on the frequency and decided to climb to 3000ft as the MATZ stub was on their planned path. By the time they reached Wattisham, they were straight-and-level at 3000ft. At that point, they were just focusing on maintaining their altitude and navigating to their turning point. They only saw the other aeroplane when it was very close (150m) closing on them from ~260-270° [approximately 9 o'clock]. They had no time to do anything and, as soon as they sighted it, they noticed the pilot was looking at them and was pulling the stick and banking their aeroplane to get out of their path. The sighting lasted less than 1sec and, from the angle, they believe [the other aircraft] was slightly lower (possibly 15ft). The entire situation (from sighting the aeroplane to it flying behind them at a right-angle) lasted less than 1-2sec and they did not have time to do anything. They just continued their flight and assumed that the other pilot was manoeuvring or possibly doing aerobatics. The rest of the flight was uneventful.

The pilot assessed the risk of collision as 'Medium'.

Factual Background

The entry for Wattisham in the UK AIP (ENR 2.2) provides the following information:

Name Lateral limits Vertical limits Class of Airspace	Unit Providing Service	Callsign Language Hours of Service Conditions of Use	Channel/Frequency(MHz) Purpose	Remarks
WATTISHAM ATZ A circle, 2.5 NM radius, centred at 520737N 0005719E on longest notified runway (05/23) Upper limit: 2000 FT AGL Lower limit: SFC Class: G	WATTISHAM	WATTISHAM APPROACH English H24	125.800 ATC	Elevation: 283 FT AMSL. Hours of applicability for Rule 11 - See Column 3 Hours of Service.

The weather at Wattisham was recorded as follows:

METAR EGUW 041320Z AUTO 30012KT 9999 NCD 01/M07 Q1011

Analysis and Investigation

UKAB Secretariat

An analysis of the NATS radar replay was undertaken and both aircraft could be positively identified from Mode S data (Figure 1). The aircraft were depicted as flying at Flight Levels. A suitable conversion was used to determine their altitudes. The C152, but not the HR200 was observed by reference to ADS-B data sources. The diagram was constructed and the separation at CPA determined from the radar data.

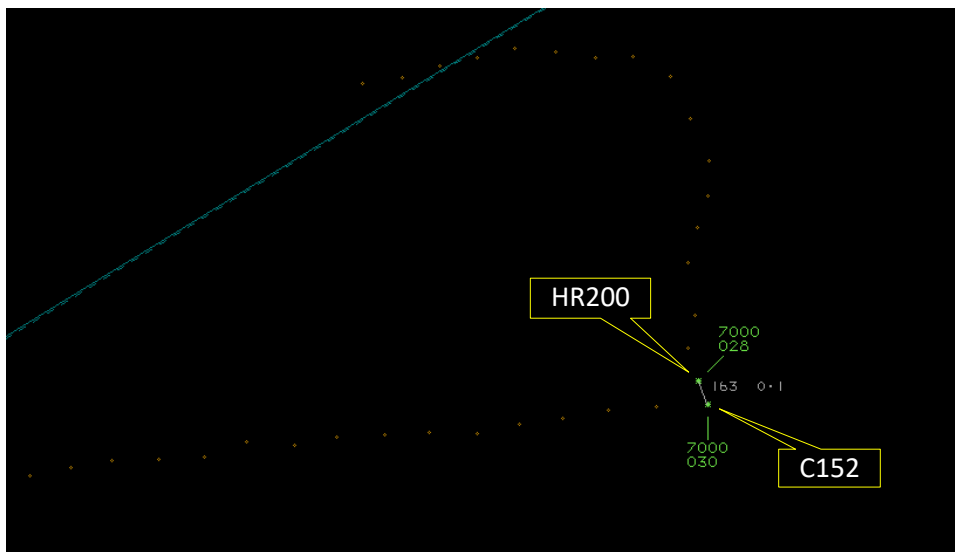


Figure 1 – CPA at 1307:35

The HR200 and C152 pilots shared an equal responsibility for collision avoidance and not to operate in such proximity to other aircraft as to create a collision hazard.¹ If the incident geometry is considered as converging then the HR200 pilot was required to give way to the C152.²

¹ (UK) SERA.3205 Proximity.

² (UK) SERA.3210 Right-of-way (c)(2) Converging.

Summary

An Airprox was reported when an HR200 and a C152 flew into proximity 2.5NM north of Stowmarket at 1308Z on Sunday 4th January 2026. Both pilots were operating under VFR in VMC, and listening out on the Wattisham Approach frequency.

PART B: SUMMARY OF THE BOARD'S DISCUSSIONS

Information available consisted of reports from both pilots and radar photographs/video recordings. Relevant contributory factors mentioned during the Board's discussions are highlighted within the text in bold, with the numbers referring to the Contributory Factors table displayed in Part C.

The Board first considered the actions of the pilot of the HR200, and members noted that they had been engaged on a 'general-handling' exercise with their student. It was noted that they had not been in receipt of a FIS and that their aircraft had not been fitted with an additional EC device. Members wished to emphasise that it had, therefore, been imperative to have maintained a very thorough lookout. It was suggested that, before the HR200 pilot had commenced their right turn to the south, an effective lookout may have revealed the presence of the C152. However, the pilot of the HR200 had reported that the C152 had "*appeared straight out of the sun*", and members agreed that their view to the south had been impaired by the low sun (**CF4**). Members noted that the pilot of the HR200 had not sighted the C152 until it had been too late for them to have taken any avoiding action, and agreed that that effectively constituted a non-sighting (**CF3**).

Members turned their attention to the actions of the pilot of the C152. It was appreciated that they had had very limited flight experience and that, perhaps, a high proportion of their attention had been focussed on simply flying the aircraft and attending to the navigation of their planned route. Nevertheless, members pointed out that a thorough and effective lookout had been of utmost importance. It was agreed by members that the pilot of the C152 had not sighted the HR200 until the moment of CPA, effectively a non-sighting (**CF3**).

The matter of the lack of response on the Wattisham Approach frequency to the radio calls made by the C152 pilot was next considered. An Advisor to the Board commented that, as part of a wide-ranging review of the UK AIP, the promulgation of the 'hours of service' for Military ATZs is being reviewed. Members noted that there had been gliding activity in the Wattisham ATZ that day. However, one member explained that the glider launch-control operative did not possess the licence privileges to have transmitted a response which may have been construed to have been an ATC instruction or an instruction issued by an AFISO.

Returning to the matter in hand, members wished to strongly encourage the fitment of additional EC devices to aircraft, particularly to those operated by flying schools. It was suggested that, had both aircraft been fitted with a compatible EC device, a timely alert to the presence of the other aircraft may have provided each pilot with sufficient situational awareness of its approach to have avoided such close proximity.

Members were keen to emphasise that several safety barriers had either not been present, or had not been effective, in this scenario. It was noted that neither pilot had been in receipt of an ATS, although both pilots had tuned their radios to the same frequency for the purpose of 'listening-out'. Members suggested that the engagement of a ground element may have assisted matters greatly. It was agreed that it had been prudent for the pilots of both aircraft to have requested a suitable surveillance-based service which may have enabled them to have built situational awareness of nearby traffic (**CF1**). A member with flight experience at the location in question suggested that a LARS could have been sought, notwithstanding that they had been somewhat near the limit of radar cover of the nearest LARS provider (Norwich).

Summarising their thoughts, members agreed that neither pilot had had situational awareness of the presence of the other aircraft until it had been visually acquired (**CF2**). It was also agreed that neither pilot had sighted the other aircraft in time to have taken any avoiding action. Members concluded that there had been a risk of collision (**CF5**) and assigned Risk Category B to this event.

PART C: ASSESSMENT OF CONTRIBUTORY FACTORS AND RISK**Contributory Factors:**

2026001				
CF	Factor	Description	ECCAIRS Amplification	UKAB Amplification
Flight Elements				
• Tactical Planning and Execution				
1	Human Factors	• Communications by Flight Crew with ANS	An event related to the communications between the flight crew and the air navigation service.	Pilot did not request appropriate ATS service or communicate with appropriate provider
• Situational Awareness of the Conflicting Aircraft and Action				
2	Contextual	• Situational Awareness and Sensory Events	Events involving a flight crew's awareness and perception of situations	Pilot had no, late, inaccurate or only generic, Situational Awareness
• See and Avoid				
3	Human Factors	• Monitoring of Other Aircraft	Events involving flight crew not fully monitoring another aircraft	Non-sighting or effectively a non-sighting by one or both pilots
4	Contextual	• Visual Impairment	Events involving impairment due to an inability to see properly	
• Outcome Events				
5	Contextual	• Near Airborne Collision with Aircraft	An event involving a near collision by an aircraft with an aircraft, balloon, dirigible or other piloted air vehicles	

Degree of Risk: B.

Safety Barrier Assessment³

In assessing the effectiveness of the safety barriers associated with this incident, the Board concluded that the key factors had been that:

Flight Elements:

Tactical Planning and Execution was assessed as **partially effective** because it may have been prudent for each pilot to have been in receipt of a surveillance-based air traffic service.

Situational Awareness of the Conflicting Aircraft and Action were assessed as **ineffective** because neither pilot had situational awareness of the other aircraft until visually acquired.

See and Avoid were assessed as **ineffective** because neither pilot had sighted the other aircraft in time to have taken avoiding action.

³ The UK Airprox Board scheme for assessing the Availability, Functionality and Effectiveness of safety barriers can be found on the [UKAB Website](#).

Airprox Barrier Assessment: 2026001		Outside Controlled Airspace		Effectiveness				
Barrier		Provision	Application	Barrier Weighting				
				0%	5%	10%	15%	20%
Ground Element	Regulations, Processes, Procedures and Compliance	○	○					
	Manning & Equipment	○	○					
	Situational Awareness of the Conflicition & Action	○	○					
	Electronic Warning System Operation and Compliance	○	○					
Flight Element	Regulations, Processes, Procedures and Compliance	✔	✔					
	Tactical Planning and Execution	✔	⚠					
	Situational Awareness of the Conflicting Aircraft & Action	✘	✔					
	Electronic Warning System Operation and Compliance	○	○					
	See & Avoid	✘	✘					
Key:		<u>Full</u>	<u>Partial</u>	<u>None</u>	<u>Not Present/Not Assessable</u>	<u>Not Used</u>		
Provision	✔	⚠	✘	○				
Application	✔	⚠	✘	○				
Effectiveness								