

AIRPROX REPORT No 2010008

Date/Time: 20 Feb 1320 (Saturday)

Position: 5350N 00110W (~1nm
NE of Church Fenton -
elev 29ft)

Airspace: Church Fenton ATZ (Class: G)

Reporter: Church Fenton ATC

Type: 1st Ac Grob Tutor II 2nd Ac Untraced Paramotor

Operator: HQ Air (Trg) Civ Pte

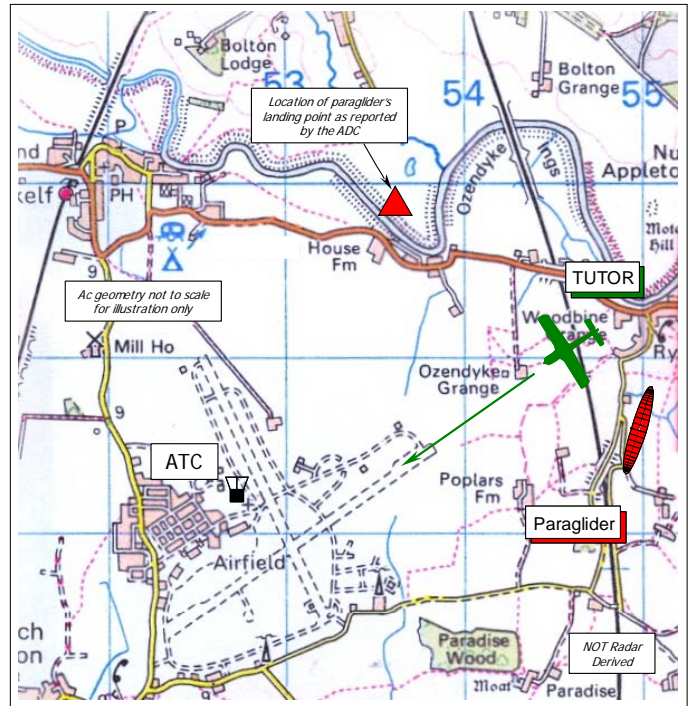
Alt/FL: 500ft NR
QFE (995mb)

Weather: VMC CLOC NR

Visibility: >10km NR

Reported Separation:
100ft V/NK H NR

Recorded Separation:
Not recorded



CONTROLLER REPORTED

PART A: SUMMARY OF INFORMATION REPORTED TO UKAB

THE CHURCH FENTON AERODROME CONTROLLER (ADC) reports that he was both the ADC and ATCO i/c at the time of the Airprox, which occurred at 1320UTC.

The Grob Tutor pilot called for a visual recovery to RW24 RHC and was passed the airfield details including the cct state, which at the time was clear. When the Grob Tutor pilot called 'high Initials' he looked out and could see no other ac in the vicinity so stated that the cct was clear. The Tutor pilot then called on the Break to land. It was at this point that he spotted a paraglider [subsequently believed to be a paramotor (powered paraglider)] to the E of the RW24 threshold and transmitted a warning to the Tutor pilot. When the Tutor pilot called Final he gave a clearance to land on the runway and broadcast another warning to the pilot that there was a paraglider, at that point, close to short Final. The Grob Tutor pilot reported that he was not visual with the paraglider and initiated a go-around.

Once the Grob was re-established downwind the pilot requested an update on the paraglider, which was about 1nm out crossing the final approach at an estimated height of 500ft. The Grob pilot saw the paramotor, confirmed its height and positioned himself to land keeping well clear of it.

The bright orange paramotor was seen to make an approach and landing at approximately OS GRID 536 398. The nearest buildings to that area are named on the OS Map as a Farm House just adjacent to the B1223 road.

Nothing was seen on radar by the Approach controller - the radar head is situated at Linton-on-Ouse – and on this Saturday afternoon with minimal manning no personnel could be released to drive to the location and attempt to obtain the paramotor pilot's details. The civilian Police were contacted but they were unable to assist and the MoD Police, unfortunately, had no units in the area able to assist.

THE GROB TUTOR 115E PILOT reports he was returning to Church Fenton under VFR and flying in the visual cct to RW24 RHC at 500ft QFE (995mb), whilst in communication with Fenton TOWER on 234.1MHz.

At the start of a finals turn for a full stop landing at 80kt, Tower reported a paraglider in the vicinity of the final approach area. Checking inside the R turn he saw nothing and so initiated a level go-around at 500ft QFE. A paramotor was then seen at a height of about 400ft and he estimated the minimum vertical separation as 100ft; the minimum horizontal separation was not known and he assessed the Risk as 'low'.

His ac has a white colour-scheme and the wing tip HISLs were on. A squawk of A7000 was selected with Mode C; elementary Mode S is fitted.

UKAB Note (1): RAC LATCC (Mil) undertook extensive tracing action but was unable to identify the reported pilot flying what was perceived by the Grob pilot to be a paramotor. Enquiries with the owner of the Farm House and adjacent farmland revealed that he knew nothing of the event as he was out that day; the paramotor pilot seemed to have used his land without his permission. Eleven other aviation facilities in the vicinity and the BHPA were contacted in an effort to identify the reported pilot to no avail. Therefore, the identity of the reported paramotor pilot remains unknown.

UKAB Note (2): The UK AIP at ENR 2-2-2-1 promulgates the Church Fenton ATZ as a circle radius 2nm centred on the longest notified runway 06/24, extending from the surface to 2000ft above the aerodrome elevation of 29ft amsl and active on Saturdays from 0700-2359.

UKAB Note (3): The Church Fenton weather was: RW24 RHC; CC BLU; Surface wind 240°/3kt; Visibility 20km Nil Wx; FEW at 4000ft; QFE 995mb.

HQ AIR BM SAFETY MANAGEMENT reports that the Grob was recovering to Church Fenton for a visual recovery to RW24 RHC and at the time of incident was within the confines of the ATZ. On initial contact with TWR the controller passed airfield information and reported the cct state as clear, having no other ac on frequency within the ATZ at the time. At 1320:44, the Grob pilot reported *"..on the break to land"*. TWR responded *"[C/S] roger caution, looks like there's a paraglider just to the east of the threshold.. unknown height"*. At 1321:01, the Grob pilot reported finals, full stop, whereupon TWR reiterated TI on the paramotor, *"..caution, there's a paraglider just crossing short finals this time"*. TWR called the traffic again because there was no earlier acknowledgment of the TI passed and at 1321:11, the Grob pilot reported *"going around"*. Another Grob Tutor pilot was cleared for departure before the subject Grob pilot enquired, *"..can you still see him [the paramotor]?"*. At 1321:35 TWR responded *"Affirm, looks like he's actually about on finals passing through 5 hundred feet this time"*, to which the Grob pilot reported visual at 1321:41, *"Yeah I've got him, visual now thanks"*. Once the Grob pilot was happy with the position of the other aircraft, reported at 1321:44 to be inside the finals point at the same height - 500ft, he called final and was cleared to land at 1322:15.

The Grob came into conflict with an unknown paramotor within the Church Fenton ATZ. The paramotor pilot was not in contact with the ATZ controlling authority and had not advised his intentions prior to flight.

The incident occurred over a weekend within the published hours of activity. The controller was commended not only for spotting the conflict beforehand but passing timely and accurate TI, which assisted the Grob pilot to avoid an unexpected situation with a paramotor, which is very hard to see.

HQ AIR (TRG) comments that it was unfortunate the paramotor pilot could not be traced as it cannot be determined whether he/she was aware of their proximity to the Tutor or visual circuit at Church Fenton. Having spotted the paramotor the ADC provided a good service to the Tutor pilot thereby reducing the risk of an actual collision.

PART B: SUMMARY OF THE BOARD'S DISCUSSIONS

Information available included a report from the Grob Tutor pilot, radar video recordings and reports from the controller involved and the appropriate ATC authority.

It was unfortunate that the paramotor pilot could not be traced since, in the absence of a report from him, the Board recognised that the details of this Airprox were far from complete. Whilst it was feasible the paramotor pilot might have got into difficulty whilst airborne and had to make an emergency landing, Members believed it would have been wise to have contacted Church Fenton ATC afterwards to advise them what had occurred. A radio failure was feasible, but that would not absolve the paramotor pilot from compliance with the Rules of the Air. However, that was all conjecture; the ATZ should be a known traffic environment with all ac operating within it either pre-notified to the ADC or in communication with TOWER on the RT. It was plain to the Board that the paramotor pilot had not contacted the ADC to allow entry into the ATZ beforehand, or called TOWER on RT to obtain permission from the controller, which is contrary to Rule 45 of the Rules of the Air. This Airprox was a reminder to all pilots of what can occur with an unannounced intrusion into the ATZ, and more significantly, through the cct and final approach area where it might least be expected. Members agreed unanimously that in the absence of any known extenuating circumstance the Cause of this Airprox was that, contrary to Rule 45 of the Rules of the Air, the Paramotor pilot entered the Church Fenton ATZ without permission, resulting in a conflict with the Grob Tutor on final.

The Board noted that despite the ADC's prompt warnings, the Grob Tutor pilot was unable to acquire the paramotor visually when he turned onto final from his first cct and so he wisely elected to initiate a go-around, thereby resolving the conflict. The Board commended the ADC for his alertness, which had clearly been instrumental in preventing a more serious close quarter's situation between the Grob and the paramotor in the final approach area. As might be expected, the paramotor was not shown on radar recordings and so the exact geometry - and in particular the minimum horizontal separation as the Grob executed the go-around - could not be ascertained. However, the Board were satisfied that, prompted by the ADC's warning, the Tutor's go-around had effectively removed any risk of a collision.

PART C: ASSESSMENT OF CAUSE AND RISK

Cause: Contrary to Rule 45 of the Rules of the Air, the Paramotor pilot entered the Church Fenton ATZ without permission, resulting in a conflict with the Grob Tutor on final.

Degree of Risk: C.