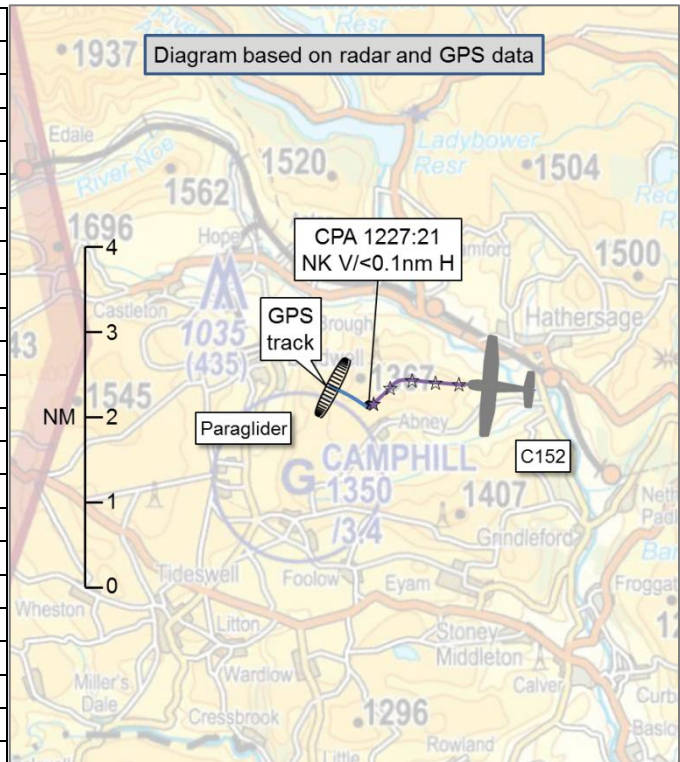


AIRPROX REPORT No 2015036

Date: 7 Apr 2015 Time: 1227Z Position: 5319N 00142W Location: 1nm SE Bradwell Edge

PART A: SUMMARY OF INFORMATION REPORTED TO UKAB

Recorded	Aircraft 1	Aircraft 2
Aircraft	Paraglider	Cessna 152
Operator	Civ Pte	Civ Pte
Airspace	London FIR	London FIR
Class	G	G
Rules	VFR	VFR
Service	None	Basic
Provider	N/A	Manchester
Altitude/FL	1100ft	NK
Transponder	N/A	A (no Mode C)
Reported		
Colours	Green	White
Lighting	Nil	Beacon
Conditions	VMC	VMC
Visibility	NK	>10km
Altitude/FL	~2000ft	~3200ft
Altimeter	QNH (NK hPa)	NK
Heading	130°	NK
Speed	20kt	90kt
ACAS/TAS	Not fitted	Not fitted
Separation		
Reported	10ft V/50ft H	N/A
Recorded	NK/<0.1nm H	



THE PARAGLIDER PILOT reports having launched from Bradwell Edge. There were a number of pilots on the hill waiting to launch but he was flying alone. He recalled one other paraglider in the sky who was higher and further west, who may have witnessed the Airprox. At approximately 1330 local, the paraglider pilot had climbed over the site to 3000ft and was on glide heading southeast. He saw a white, high-wing, single-piston-engine aircraft coming from the northeast, appearing in his vision from the left, which flew straight across his path at 90° to his downwind glide heading, approximately 10ft above and within 50ft in front. Its wings were straight and level, so he assumed the other pilot had not seen him; no evasive action was undertaken. At the time of the Airprox, he was 'in 2 decision zones'; looking for the next thermal and also being aware of needing to look for landing options. The pilot stated that he reported the incident to the BHPA and to the safety officer at Derbyshire Soaring Club on the same day. The pilot noted that he was a member of the British Hang Gliding and Paragliding Association and was rated to Pilot standard, which qualified him as understanding Air Law, and airspace, and being insured to fly cross-country.

He assessed the risk of collision as 'High'.

THE C152 PILOT reports he was not aware of a close encounter with a Paraglider, and was only made aware of the issue when the Airprox was reported to him by phone on Monday 20th April 2015. His initial routing to Barton was to route via Glossop; however, this was denied while he was over the Peak District, west of Sheffield approaching Castleton, and so he turned south/southwest to route around Manchester's Class D airspace to approach Barton via the Low-Level Route. The pilot commented that it was most likely he came into close proximity with the Paraglider at this time, although he was not aware of this at the time. He was aware of Camp Hill gliding site to the south of his position, but Bradwell Edge Paragliding Site was not marked on the aeronautical chart (CAA ICAO 1:500,000, 2015 edition). He maintained a good look out for gliders while proceeding south.

Factual Background

The weather at Manchester was recorded as follows:

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METAR EGCC 071220Z 26005KT 9999 FEW004 13/10 Q1037 NOSIG
METAR EGCC 071250Z 28006KT 220V310 9999 FEW023 14/10 Q1036 NOSIG
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Analysis and Investigation

CAA ATSI

The C152 pilot was in receipt of a Basic Service but had not yet been identified by Manchester Radar and the ATSU could provide no further information on the event.

At 1227:16, a brief primary contact could be seen on the area radar recording in the vicinity of Bradwell Edge, 0.2nm south-southwest of the C152 (Figure 1). This was possibly the paraglider; however, this could not be definitively determined.



Figure 1: MRT at 1227:16

UKAB Secretariat

The paraglider 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 hazard¹. If the incident geometry was converging then the C152 pilot was required to give way to the paraglider².

Comments

BHPA

The paraglider pilot was on the cross-country part of their flight so the location of the launch site is immaterial as they could have arrived at the location of the actual incident from a number of different places. Both pilots were operating under VFR in Class G airspace and so had equal responsibilities for collision avoidance. With no engine, and the speed differential between the aircraft, the options available to the paraglider pilot were limited. If the paraglider pilot had had sufficient time they could have instigated a high-banked turn to present more surface area to the C152 pilot in the hope that the C152 pilot gained visual contact. It is hoped that the C152 pilot was aware of the published limitations of the service that they were receiving from Manchester and that they weren't placing an undue or inappropriate reliance upon it.

¹ SERA.3205 Proximity.

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

Summary

An Airprox was reported when a paraglider and a Cessna 152 flew into proximity at 1227 on Tuesday 7th April 2015. Both pilots were operating under VFR in VMC in the Class G airspace of the London FIR. The paraglider pilot was not in receipt of an Air Traffic Service, and the Cessna 152 pilot was in receipt of a Basic Service from Manchester.

PART B: SUMMARY OF THE BOARD'S DISCUSSIONS

Information available consisted of reports from the pilots of both aircraft, radar photographs/video recordings and a report from the appropriate ATC authority.

The Board quickly agreed that this conflict of flight paths had been caused by a non-sighting by the C152 pilot, and an effective non-sighting by the paraglider pilot, in that he had seen the C152 too late to take avoiding action. Members agreed that there was little mitigation available over and above 'see-and-avoid' but felt that an awareness of paraglider launch sites would have been advantageous; in much the same way that notation of glider sites on VFR charts was advantageous. Their rationale was that, notwithstanding the BHPA comment regarding cross-country flight, the paraglider was in fact operating in close proximity to its launch area (as highlighted on the Derbyshire Flying Centre website and noted by the paraglider pilot), the depiction of which could have alerted the C152 pilot to the high likelihood of encountering paragliders concentrated near to this launch area as opposed to generally within Class G airspace. The Board recalled that it had made previous recommendations to this effect to the BHPA as a result of Airprox 2014047 and 2013148, (that the BHPA consider producing a catalogue of paraglider launch sites, including usage under given wind conditions), but that the recommendations had been rejected: the BHPA does not consider it wise to make planning assessments based on site location or wind direction - they are of the opinion that micro-climate factors render such assessments dangerous because they could cause powered pilots to have a false expectation of where hang and paragliders might be. In their opinion other aviators should simply expect to see hang and paragliders in any location irrespective of wind direction.

Turning to the risk, members agreed that the paraglider pilot had not seen the C152 until it had flown into his field of view. They also noted that the C152 pilot had not seen the paraglider at all. They therefore considered that chance had played a major part in events. Although the C152 pilot had not given a range estimation (because he had not seen the paraglider), and despite the fact that there was no reliable radar recording of the two aircraft to establish separation, the Board was content that the paraglider pilot's report indicated an extremely close encounter during which the situation had only just stopped short of collision.

PART C: ASSESSMENT OF CAUSE AND RISK

Cause: A non-sighting by the C152 pilot and effectively a non-sighting by the paraglider pilot.

Degree of Risk: A.