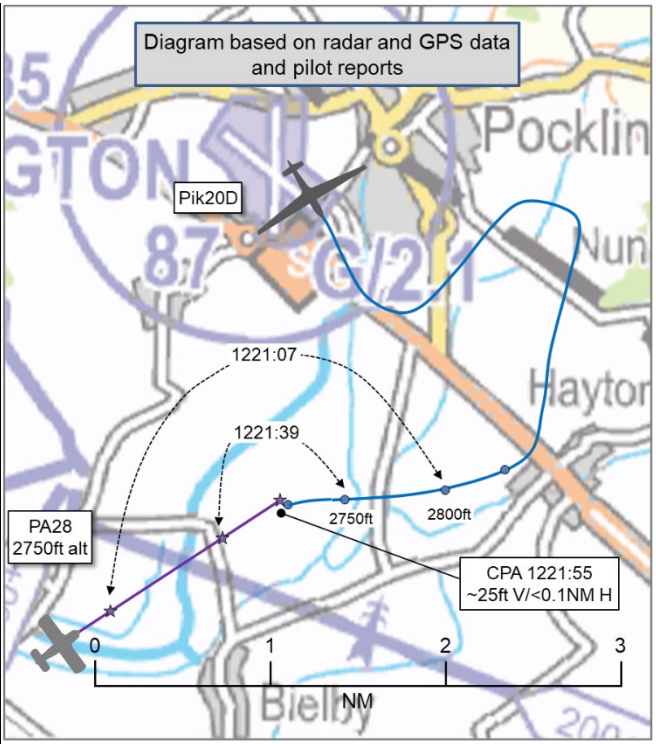
AIRPROX REPORT No 2025054

Date: 18 Apr 2025 Time: 1222Z Position: 5354N 00046W Location: 1.5NM south of Pocklington

PART A: SUMMARY OF INFORMATION REPORTED TO UKAB

Recorded	Aircraft 1	Aircraft 2
Aircraft	PiK20D	PA28
Operator	Civ Gld	Civ FW
Airspace	London FIR	London FIR
Class	G	G
Rules	VFR	VFR
Service	None	Establishing contact
Provider	N/A	H'side Approach
Altitude/FL	~2775ft	2750ft
Transponder	Not fitted	A, C, S
Reported		
Colours	White	White, yellow, blue
Lighting	None	Landing, taxi, nav, anti-colls, strobes, beacon
Conditions	VMC	VMC
Visibility	>10km	>10km
Altitude/FL	2700ft	3000ft
Altimeter	QFE (1011hPa)	QNH
Heading	270°	090°
Speed	55kt	100kt
ACAS/TAS	FLARM	Not fitted
Alert	Information	N/A
Separation at CPA		
Reported	<10ft V/100m H	NR
Recorded	~25ft V/<0.1NM H	



THE PIK20D PILOT reports that they had launched by aerotow from Wolds Gliding Club, Pocklington Airfield at 1216 and had released from tow at 3000ft QFE [near] Hayton village [crossing the] A1079 [and had] flown due west. The tow plane was circling just north of their track at a similar height (as they had to manage engine temperature before starting their descent back to the airfield). The Pik20D pilot reports that their [EC equipment] alarmed [and the pilot] had initially thought it had been the tow plane [but] had then seen a low-wing single-engine [aircraft] with headlight at the same height. [They report that] they had made a steep left turn to avoid it.

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

THE PA28 INSTRUCTOR PILOT reports that after a thorough briefing they sent [the student pilot] on their first solo navigation flight – a routine navigation triangle which they had flown the week previously [whilst] dual. [The student] is an excellent student who demonstrates high levels of situational awareness and workload management. They came back and reported to the instructor pilot that they had seen a glider.

THE PA28 STUDENT PILOT reports that at the time of the incident they had [been in receipt of] a Basic Service from Humberside Radar and a squawk code [they recall]. Whilst on heading, tracking to Driffield from Selby, to the right of an area of common glider activity and at the altitude given to Humberside, a glider came across the front of their aircraft from their left, slightly above them. The student pilot reports that they had not been informed by Humberside of the glider or other glider activity. Upon seeing the glider the student pilot turned left in order to stay clear of the glider as they were also was going to their left. [The student pilot reports that] they had been at a distance that they would deem not to be dangerous as they had taken appropriate action to avoid any danger. They had then seen that other

gliders were active in the area but were not anywhere near close to them and the student pilot had continued tracking towards Driffield with no further issues.

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

THE HUMBERSIDE APS CONTROLLER reports that they had received notification of an Airprox incident on Tuesday 6th May of a reported Airprox on 18th April 2025. […]. They have no recollection of the incident and nothing was reported from the aircraft at the time. The incident [apparently] involved a PA28 which had been on frequency and a glider which was not on frequency. The information from the Airprox Board states that the event had occurred approximately 1-2NM south of Pocklington town which is adjacent to Pocklington airfield and glider site.

Factual Background

The weather at Humberside Airport was recorded as follows:

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METAR EGNJ 181220Z 09015KT 9999 SCT027 15/05 Q1011=
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Analysis and Investigation

Humberside Unit Investigation

APS ATCO - Shift start time 0900 - Day 4 of a 6 day shift cycle Time since last break - 7min.

The PA28 departed […] via Selby routeing Driffield, Brough, Selby and back into […]. The initial leg had followed a track (assuming no navigational error) that passed just 2NM to the south of Pocklington airfield, a well-publicised and very active glider site. This is a regular cross-country route flown by PPL students. There had been a number of intermittent primary contacts manoeuvring in proximity to Pocklington airfield throughout that time period, indicative that gliding activity had been taking place. The APS ATCO had been steadily busy, scanning and planning for IFR and VFR traffic with a diverse mix of aircraft transmissions and internal liaison calls with ADI.

Event timeline

1216 The PA28 (squawking 7000) had been approximately 3NM northeast of Selby tracking towards Driffield.

1216-1216:40 [Exchanges with aircraft not involved in the subject Airprox].

1217:27-1218:09 Liaison call with ADI.

1218:10-1221:20 [Exchanges with RFFS and aircraft not involved in the subject Airprox].

1221:30 PA28 pilot called for a service, identifying themselves as a student pilot.

1221:37 ATCO acknowledged the student status, allocated a squawk of 4271 and stated "*pass your message*".

[1221:55] Reported time of the Airprox (PA28 had been adjacent to suspected glider contacts).

1222:11 PA28 pilot completed passing their message.

The route information passed indicated that a contact squawking 7000 was possibly the aircraft concerned adjacent to Pocklington airfield.

Figure 1: Image taken at 1222:12

1222:12 Mouse cursor was moved over the 7000 squawk, revealing briefly the Mode 'S' data block and callsign.

The aircraft was already in amongst primary returns. The squawk was then highlighted in blue indicating that the ATCO was then aware of the PA28's identity and position.

1222:18 ATCO applied the service – "[PA28 C/S], *Basic service, Humberside QNH 1011*".

1222:24 PA28 pilot read back the QNH and type of service.

The PA28 was close to the initial clump of primary contacts. There had been a further potential glider contact to the east, however, this was manoeuvring to the south of the PA28's projected track and presented no immediate risk of collision at that point.

1222:30-1225:46 [Other exchanges post-Airprox event].

A retrospective SARMS and ECCAIRS report were filed by the controller. As the event was not reported at the time there was no recollection of any pertinent information by the ATCO concerned and no entry made in the APS log book.

Investigation

Incident investigated via Veristore recording. As part of the investigation a review of SARMS, ECCAIRS, FPS and the APS log book was undertaken.

Conclusion

Most light aircraft departing […] call Humberside LARS either passing Selby or just after to request a service enroute. In this instance, the student pilot had travelled approximately 11NM from Selby prior to making initial contact with Humberside LARS. An earlier call by the PA28 pilot would have facilitated the timely passing of a generic warning of airspace (glider) activity. This may not have prevented an Airprox but may have served to remind the student pilot to keep a good lookout at a point prior to encountering other gliders. At the point the student pilot had made their initial RT contact with Humberside they were already in amongst the suspected glider contacts visible on radar. Local glider sites active within 40NM (including Pocklington) are listed in MATS Pt2, Sect 1, 1.11.5.

The ATCO highlighted the PA28 on screen after applying local knowledge to the route information and interrogating the Mode 'S' data block. At that point, one or more primary contacts were partially masked by the PA28's own return and label. The Humberside ATCO had been working through the identification process methodically, there may have been an element of expectation bias that the student [pilot] would already be aware of Pocklington activity due to the proximity of the planned route. However, no warning of glider activity in the immediate vicinity was passed. The ATCO would also have been prioritising their scan for IFR aircraft on frequency at this point.

At 1223:55, the PA28 had passed in close proximity to another possible glider contact, however, at that point, the ATCO was engaged in passing Traffic Information to aircraft under a Traffic Service adjacent to Hibaldstow and initiating vectors to an aircraft in the radar pattern. Humberside endeavours to provide timely traffic or airspace warnings under a Basic Service especially due to the sheer volume of low-hours, inexperienced PPLs and students operating from a plethora of local airfields. However, this is subject to controller workload, scan and other priorities i.e. IFR traffic under a Radar Service, therefore this information cannot be relied on and is no substitute for a good lookout.

Basic Service

A Basic Service is an ATS provided for the purpose of giving advice and information useful for the safe and efficient conduct of flights. This may include weather information, changes of serviceability of facilities, conditions at aerodromes, general airspace activity information, and any other information likely to affect safety. The avoidance of other traffic is solely the pilot's responsibility. Basic Service relies on the pilot avoiding other traffic, unaided by controllers/FISOs. It is essential that a pilot receiving this ATS remains alert to the fact that, unlike a Traffic Service and a Deconfliction Service, the provider of a Basic Service is not required to monitor the flight.

NB: Not all gliders paint on radar at any given time, therefore Humberside adopts a generic warning approach under a Basic Service i.e. "Pocklington is active, multiple contacts in the vicinity".

Prior to this Airprox, the ATCO had been actively passing pertinent airspace activity warnings to other traffic transiting under a Basic Service.

After highlighting the on-screen labels, no further information was passed on potential glider activity nor was the PA28 pilot asked if they were aware the site was active to elicit confirmation that they were aware of the activity or keeping a good lookout.

Duty of Care

A crucial element of duty of care is achieved through controllers/FISOs making all reasonable endeavours to provide the level of ATS that a pilot requests. Due to the nature of the unknown traffic environment, it is inevitable that there will be occasions when controllers are unable to meet in full the ATS definitions that a pilot expects, (i.e. due to limited surveillance capability, workload, or traffic density). On this occasion, the ATCO did not pass generic airspace/glider information linked into the application of a Basic Service. However, the reported time for the Airprox indicates that it happened whilst the initial call and identification phase was taking place.

The late call requesting a service by the PA28 pilot operating VFR and already in amongst glider activity during the identification process meant that an early opportunity to provide a timely warning was lost and the PA28 pilot flew into confliction with a glider in a known area of intense gliding activity whilst in the process of requesting a service. Under a Basic Service, the avoidance of other traffic is solely the pilot's responsibility, however, the omission of pertinent airspace activity during the identification process would have been a useful reminder.

Recommendations

De-briefing the ATCO on the following:

The ATCO had been actively passing generic information to other aircraft under a Basic Service on pertinent airspace and aircraft activity during this time period in accordance with local practice, although [the pilots of] these aircraft had called in good time to allow this to take place.

No generic activity warning was passed at any point to the PA28 pilot despite the late call.

For consideration:

Was expectation bias a factor as this local airspace activity is well known? Did the partial masking and mingling of the possible glider returns lead the ATCO to believe the return was associated with the PA28? Was their thought process elsewhere – with IFR traffic considerations?

The initial passing of Traffic Information could have been achieved by the use of:

a. "Traffic believed to be you, has glider activity in your immediate vicinity".

or

b. Linked to the identification process i.e. "[PA28 C/S], BS, QNH 1011, Pocklington is active, multiple gliders in your immediate vicinity".

Standards Bulletin

Remind ATCOs to pass pertinent airspace activity as soon as possible on initial contact noting points a. & b. above.

UKAB Secretariat

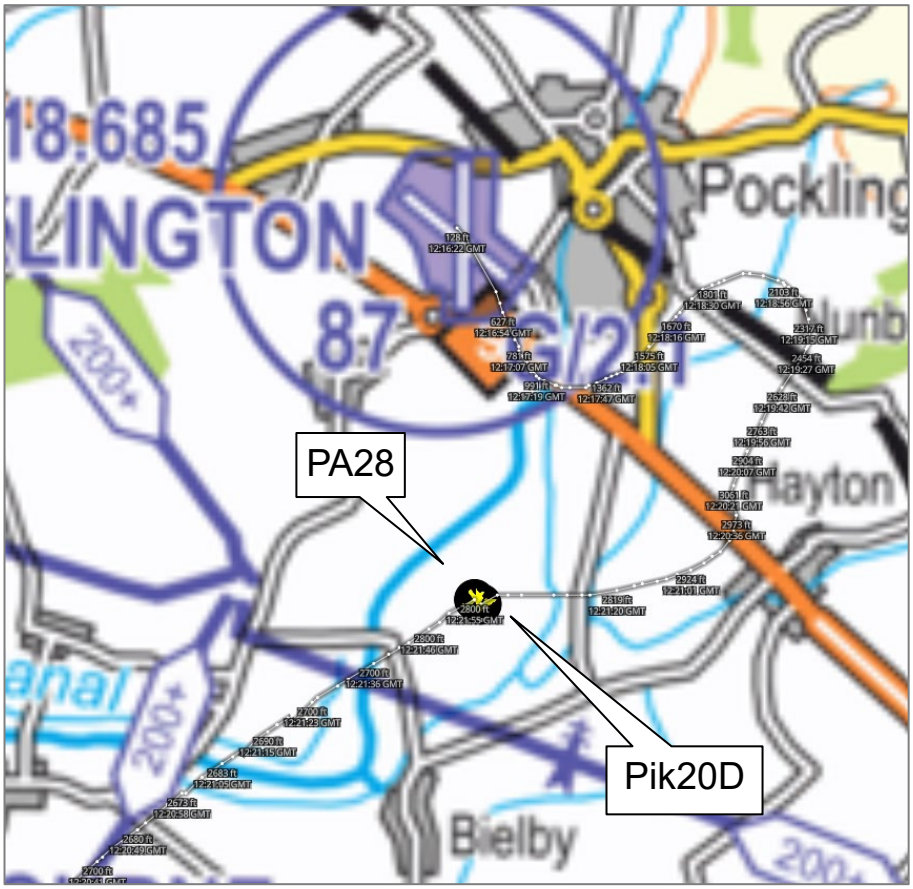

Figure 2: Taken from the CAA's Airspace Analyser Tool at 1221:55 and measured at ~0.04NM H separation. PA28 at 2800ft (SPS)/051°/97kt/0fpm ROC/D. Pik20D 2825ft(SPS)/208°/31kt/474fpm ROD

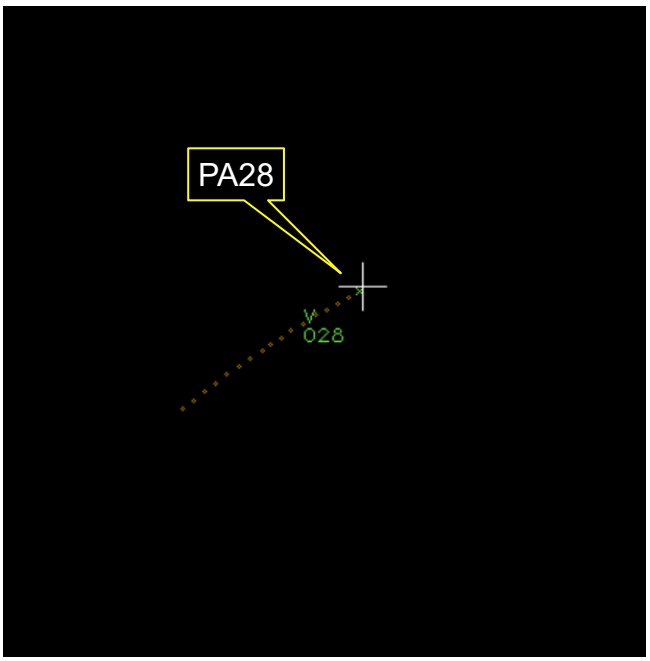

Figure 3: At CPA - 1221:55. The white cross shows the position of the reported CPA. The Pik20D did not show on radar.

The Pik20D and PA28 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 head-on or nearly so then both pilots were required to turn to the right.[2] If the incident geometry is considered as converging then the PA28 pilot was required to give way to the PiK20D.[3]

Comments

AOPA

Whilst flying cross-country it must be emphasised to obtain the most appropriate ATS, on a Basic Service the controller is not required to monitor flight progress or provide navigational warnings, however, on a Traffic Service more information can be passed which could have assisted in this case. When flying close to a glider site it improves everyone's situational awareness and hopefully [prevents] a mid-air collision if a timely radio call is made to the site using the frequency listed in the AIP.

BGA

Pocklington is one of approximately 80 permanent glider launch sites in the United Kingdom listed in UK AIP ENR 5.5 and labelled on the CAA 1:500,000 and 1:250,000 charts with a "G" symbol, as shown on the chart segment in Part A. A greater density of gliders may be expected nearby at any time during daylight hours, and at any altitude up to cloudbase. Like many gliding sites, Pocklington has a dedicated VHF radio channel, notified on VFR charts and in AIP ENR 5.5, and monitored by gliders flying in the area. If transiting nearby, a brief broadcast call on this channel using "Unattended Aerodrome" phraseology (CAP 413 Ed 23 §4.162 et seq) could help avoid conflicts and increase everyone's situational awareness. However, absent use of radio to aid deconfliction and with no interoperable Electronic Conspicuity between the glider and PA28, see-and-avoid was the only operating MAC safety barrier in this incident. The difficulties of sighting another aircraft approaching head-on with little relative motion are well-known, and may have contributed to the late sighting by the glider pilot.

[1] (UK) SERA.3205 Proximity.
[2] (UK) SERA.3210 Right-of-way (c)(1) Approaching head-on.
[3] (UK) SERA.3210 Right-of-way (c)(2) Converging.

Summary

An Airprox was reported when a Pik20D and a PA28 flew into proximity 1.5NM south of Pocklington at 1222Z on Friday 18th April 2025. The Pik20D pilot was operating under VFR in VMC and had not been in receipt of a Flight Information Service, and the PA28 pilot was operating under VFR in VMC in the process of establishing a Basic Service from Humberside Approach.

PART B: SUMMARY OF THE BOARD'S DISCUSSIONS

Information available consisted of reports from both pilots, radar photographs/video recordings, ADS-B-derived track data. reports from the air traffic controllers involved and reports from the appropriate operating authorities. 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.

Board members firstly discussed the actions of the PiK20D pilot, noting the stage of flight and the nearby presence of the tow aircraft. They noted that the PiK20D utilised a common glider electronic conspicuity unit but opined that the TAS alert received by the pilot had not come from the PA28 but more likely from another nearby aircraft as the equipment carried had been unable to register any electronic emissions from the PA28 (**CF3**). As the PiK20D pilot had not held a FRTOL, they had not been able to utilise an Air Traffic Service and that, combined with the lack of EC warnings, had denied the pilot any situational awareness of the presence of the PA28 (**CF2**). Members felt it fortunate that the TAS alert had caused the PiK20D pilot to focus their lookout in the right direction at the right time, but agreed that they had achieved a late sighting of the PA28 (**CF4**) which had enabled them to take a hard turn to avoid it.

Members secondly considered the actions of the PA28 pilot, acknowledging that this had been a first solo flight and that, in all likelihood, the student would have been working to the limit of their capacity at the time. The Board questioned the decision to have planned such a flight in an area of known traffic density and had, once again, stressed the value of the carriage and use of EC equipment on training aircraft. They accepted that the pilot had initiated contact with Humberside for an Air Traffic Service and suggested that initiating that call earlier (**CF1**) would have probably allowed time for the flow of Traffic Information between controller and pilot to aid in building the pilot's situational awareness. As it had happened, the PA28 pilot had had no EC and no Air Traffic Service and had had only generic situational awareness of gliding activity in the area (**CF2**). Members noted that the PA28 pilot reports having seen the glider only as it had flown across their path and slightly above their own altitude, with members determining this to have been an effective non-sighting (**CF5**).

The Board briefly discussed the role of the Humberside controller. They noted that, although the PA28 pilot had initiated contact and had been given a squawk, there had been no formal identification and no service agreed at the point of CPA. Members recalled that, in similar situations, controllers have been able to offer a generic warning of traffic in the area even if positive identification and service contract have not been established, but recognised that that was not necessarily valid in this case.

Concluding their discussion, members turned their attention to the determination of the risk of collision. They noted that the Pik20D pilot had seen the PA28 only at a late stage and the PA28 pilot had not seen the PiK20D until at or around CPA; that, tied to the limited situational awareness as described above, led members to conclude that safety margins had been reduced much below the norm and the Board was in agreement that there had been a risk of collision (**CF6**), assigning a Risk Category B to this event.

PART C: ASSESSMENT OF CONTRIBUTORY FACTORS AND RISK

Contributory Factors:

	2025054			
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
	• Electronic Warning System Operation and Compliance			
3	Technical	• ACAS/TCAS System Failure	An event involving the system which provides information to determine aircraft position and is primarily independent of ground installations	Incompatible CWS equipment
	• See and Avoid			
4	Human Factors	• Identification/ Recognition	Events involving flight crew not fully identifying or recognising the reality of a situation	Late sighting by one or both pilots
5	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
	• Outcome Events			
6	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 Assessment[4]

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 the PA28 pilot could have elected to call Humberside before approaching the known area of intense gliding activity.

Situational Awareness of the Conflicting Aircraft and Action were assessed as **ineffective** because the PiK20D pilot had no situational awareness of the presence of the PA28 and the PA28 pilot had only generic situational awareness of glider activity in the area.

Electronic Warning System Operation and Compliance were assessed as **ineffective** because the equipment carried by the PiK20D had been unable to register any electronic emissions from the PA28.

See and Avoid were assessed as **partially effective** because the PiK20D pilot had achieved only a late sighting of the PA28 and the PA28 pilot had not seen the Pik20D until at or around CPA.

[4] 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: 2025054 Outside Controlled Airspace