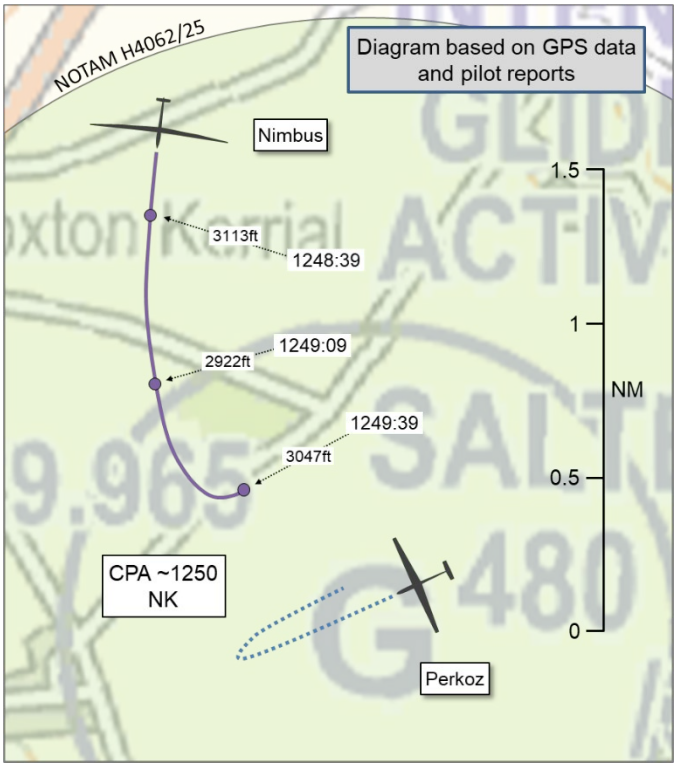
AIRPROX REPORT No 2025154

Date: 18 Jul 2025 Time: ~1250Z Position: 5249N 00042W Location: Saltby

PART A: SUMMARY OF INFORMATION REPORTED TO UKAB

Recorded	Aircraft 1	Aircraft 2
Aircraft	Perkoz	Nimbus
Operator	Civ Gld	Civ Gld
Airspace	London FIR	London FIR
Class	G	G
Rules	VFR	VFR
Service	Listening Out	None
Provider	Saltby Traffic	N/A
Altitude/FL	NK	3047ft
Transponder	Not fitted	Not fitted
Reported		
Colours	White	White
Lighting	None	None
Conditions	VMC	VMC
Visibility	>10km	>10km
Altitude/FL	2000ft	3500ft
Altimeter	QFE	QNH
Heading	070°	160°
Speed	130kt	70kt
ACAS/TAS	None[1]	FLARM
Alert	None	Information
Separation at CPA		
Reported	"*not seen*"	0ft V/0.5NM H
Recorded	NK	



THE SALTBY LAUNCH CONTROL COORDINATOR and operator of the Air/Ground radio reports that the pilot [of the Perkoz] was taking part in the Saltby Open Glider Aerobatic competition organised by British Aerobatics and hosted by Buckminster Gliding Club. It was the 4th flight of the competition and, prior to this flight, two incursions by cross-country glider pilots into the NOTAM'd area had been observed. On that basis, all pilots on the ground waiting their turn to fly were both observing the flying pilots and on the lookout for other potential conflicts. For this Airprox, several pilots on the ground noted the non-competing aircraft entering at speed from the east, travelling west [they recall]. It was not observed on any tracking platform and could not be contacted on the radio (Saltby, or cross-country gliding frequencies). The aircraft was caught on video at the closest point of approach (Figure 1) but only briefly as the camera operator was tasked with filming the aerobatic sequences to aid training and potential protests of the results.

The pilot [of the Perkoz] noted afterwards that they had observed another glider during their routine but assessed that no risk of collision had existed. Upon further investigation and debriefing, it was concluded that a different glider was observed (an ASW28) transiting north-south, to the west of the airfield outside the aerobatic box, but within the NOTAM'd area. In total, on this competition day, seven incursions were observed into the NOTAM'd area, but only one that had carried a risk of collision.

They assessed the risk of collision as 'High'.

[1] Reportedly, the Perkoz had been fitted with a FLARM device but it was not operational at the time of the Airprox.

Figure 1 – An image from a video taken by a witness on the ground. The Perkoz is shown at the bottom-left during an aerobatic manoeuvre. The Nimbus is shown at the top-right.

THE NIMBUS PILOT reports that they were on a soaring flight. They observed a glider (at a range of 2NM) manoeuvring and, believing it to have been thermalling, headed towards it. As they approached, they realised that it was performing aerobatics. By that time, it was significantly below their level so they climbed briefly in a thermal before continuing en-route without crossing the Saltby overhead.

The pilot assessed the risk of collision as 'None'.

Factual Background

Aeronautical Information Circular Y 054/2025 provides the following information:

2. Contest Activity

2.3. A contest NOTAM will specify a 2NM 'safety zone', usually up to 5000ft above aerodrome level (AAL) centred on the airfield. This is to allow for aircraft climbing into and exiting the aerobatic box and repositioning to compensate for wind or meteorological conditions. Non-participating pilots are strongly advised to avoid this area at all times, unless complying with agreed joining, departing or local procedures in force at the time of the contest or event.

2.5 Within the aerobatic box and around its boundaries aircraft will be manoeuvring at varying speeds, heights and g-loadings. Abrupt changes of direction, height and speed are the norm and pilots will not always be able to take avoiding action, nor comply with the Rules of the Air. A competition aircraft at full speed will transit the 1000 M aerobatic box in approximately 8 seconds and can climb from the base to the top of the box in under 20 seconds.

3. Safety

3.3 Pilots planning a flight to or from the host airfield should make contact with the airfield management on the telephone number published to establish local flying procedures and obtain PPR, even if this is not their normal practice.

3.4. Pilots transiting nearby should remain clear of the notified safety zone, taking into account the TAKE 2 code – remaining at least 2NM and 200ft clear of notified airspace. Early contact on the local ATC/AFIS/RADIO frequency announcing your intended transit route will help co-ordinate.

3.5. Pilots should not transit through the overhead of the host airfield during the contest or attempt an overhead join unless this has been notified and agreed with the supervising radio operator.

A NOTAM for aerobatics at Saltby:

H4062/25
Q) EGTT/QWBLW/IV/M/W/000/056/5250N00043W003
A) EGTT B) FROM: 25/07/18 08:00 TO: 25/07/20 18:00
E) AEROBATICS WI 2NM RADIUS OF 524947N 0004245W (SALTBY). STRICTLY PPR. FOR INFO 01476 860385. AR-2025-4069/01.

LOWER: SFC
UPPER: 5600FT AMSL
SCHEDULE: 0800-1800

The weather at RAF Barkston Heath was recorded as follows:

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METAR EGYE 181250Z 22008KT CAVOK 27/13 Q1012 RMK BLU
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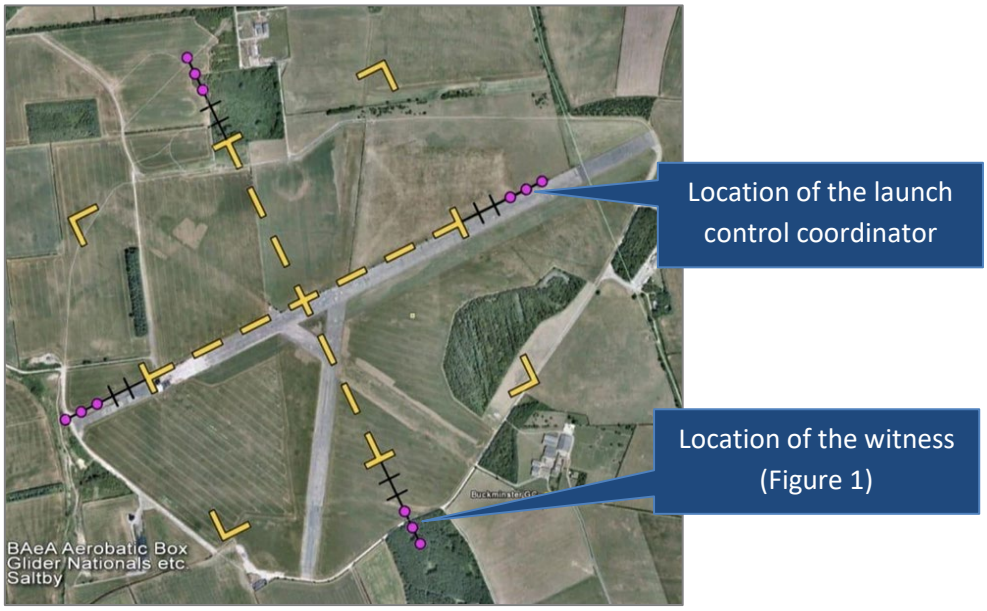


Figure 2 – the 'Aerobatics box' at Saltby

Analysis and Investigation

UKAB Secretariat

An analysis of the NATS radar replay was undertaken and neither aircraft was observed. The pilot of the Nimbus kindly supplied GPS track data for their flight.

It has been determined that the image shown in Figure 1 had captured a moment a few seconds after CPA when the Nimbus pilot had turned to the left to enter a thermal, and the Perkoz pilot had descended after having completed an Immelmann manoeuvre. The exact geometry of the Airprox encounter could not be verified. The diagram has been constructed with the track of the Perkoz shown as a dotted line to indicate a probable track. The exact moment of CPA and the separation between the aircraft could not be determined.

The Perkoz and Nimbus pilots shared an equal responsibility for collision avoidance and not to operate in such proximity to other aircraft as to create a collision hazard.[2] If the incident geometry is considered as converging then the aircraft that has the other on its right shall give way.[3]

Comments

BGA

This incident serves as a useful reminder of the importance of reading and assimilating NOTAMs for the intended operating area before flight. However, none of the non-competition pilots who flew into the NOTAM'd area were infringing controlled or regulated airspace by doing so.

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

Almost all cross-country glider pilots navigate with the aid of sophisticated, gliding-specific GNSS-based EFBs capable of displaying NOTAM'd airspace on a moving map and warning of its proximity. However, the lack of officially-published, precise machine-interpretable NOTAM data is a significant obstacle to displaying NOTAMs in the cockpit in this way.

If the TAS unit on board the Perkoz had been operating, then the compatible unit carried by the Nimbus could have given its pilot earlier warning that the Perkoz pilot was performing aerobatics, rather than thermalling.

Summary

An Airprox was reported when a Perkoz and a Nimbus flew into proximity at Saltby at approximately 1250Z on Friday 18th July 2025. Both pilots were operating under VFR in VMC, neither in receipt of a FIS.

PART B: SUMMARY OF THE BOARD'S DISCUSSIONS

Information available consisted of a report from the launch control coordinator, a report from the pilot of the Nimbus, GPS track data for the flight of the Nimbus 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 Perkoz. Members noted that they had sighted a glider (not the Nimbus) that had flown into the NOTAM'd competition area at Saltby, but they had not considered that a risk of collision had existed. Members agreed that the Perkoz pilot had not sighted the Nimbus at any stage (**CF6**) and had not had situational awareness of it (**CF4**). Therefore, it had not been possible for them to have provided their assessment of their proximity to it, nor of any associated risk of collision with it.

Turning to the actions of the launch control coordinator, members noted that they had observed seven incursions into the NOTAM'd area by pilots that day. It was understood that they had been positioned at the east end of the hard runway at Saltby and, therefore, would have had a good view of the Perkoz and of the Nimbus when it had approached from the north. Members pondered their assessment of the risk of collision of 'high'. It was appreciated that, perhaps understandably, they may have presumed that the Nimbus pilot had not been aware of the aerobatics competition and, therefore, they might not have anticipated the high-energy manoeuvres that the Perkoz pilot had been conducting. Consequently, the launch control coordinator may have been gravely concerned that the Nimbus pilot may have inadvertently manoeuvred into the path of the Perkoz. Some members therefore suggested that it may have been prudent to have transmitted to the Perkoz pilot a 'Stop, stop, stop' command (as the prescribed method to signal to a pilot to urgently cease their display).

Members next turned their attention to the actions of the pilot of the Nimbus. It was agreed that it may have been prudent for them to have transmitted their intentions on the Saltby Traffic frequency when first approaching the airfield (**CF1**) which may have given them an awareness of the aerobatics competition in progress. Members agreed that the EC device fitted to the Nimbus would not have been expected to have detected the Perkoz on account that a compatible device (as had been fitted to the Perkoz) had not been operated (**CF5**). As there had not been a common radio frequency in use between the pilots, it was therefore agreed that the pilot of the Nimbus had not had situational awareness of the Perkoz until it had been visually acquired (**CF4**). From analysis of the GPS data available for the flight of the Nimbus, members determined that the Nimbus pilot had completed four orbits (thermalling turns) before departing the area to the south and had remained within the NOTAM'd area for a little over 5min in total. It was agreed that the Nimbus pilot had not attended to their pre-flight briefing adequately to have been aware of the aerobatics competition (**CF3**) and had unintentionally flown through the active competition site that had been promulgated by NOTAM (**CF2**).

Members concluded their discussion and summarised their thoughts. It was appreciated that the pilot of the Nimbus had flown towards the Perkoz in a manner that, ordinarily, may have been regarded as perfectly normal for a glider pilot seeking lift and intending to 'share' a thermal. However, they had not

been aware of the gliding competition and may not have anticipated the rapid changes of direction and altitude of the Perkoz. Members highlighted that the NOTAM'd area itself had not been a barrier to pilots entering the competition area. Indeed, reportedly, there had been seven incursions into the NOTAM'd area that day. Members noted that the pilot of the Perkoz had not visually acquired the Nimbus but were satisfied that the Nimbus pilot had maintained sufficient visual contact with, and physical separation from, the Perkoz to have ensured that no risk of collision had existed. However, it was agreed that safety margins had been reduced and the Board assigned Risk Category C to this event.

PART C: ASSESSMENT OF CONTRIBUTORY FACTORS AND RISK

Contributory Factors:

	2025154			
CF	**Factor**	**Description**	**ECCAIRS Amplification**	**UKAB Amplification**
	Flight Elements			
	• Tactical Planning and Execution			
1	Human Factors	• Accuracy of Communication	Events involving flight crew using inaccurate communication - wrong or incomplete information provided	Ineffective communication of intentions
2	Human Factors	• Aircraft Navigation	An event involving navigation of the aircraft.	Flew through promulgated and active airspace, e.g. Glider Site
3	Human Factors	• Pre-flight briefing and flight preparation	An event involving incorrect, poor or insufficient pre-flight briefing	
	• Situational Awareness of the Conflicting Aircraft and Action			
4	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			
5	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			
6	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

Degree of Risk: C.

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:

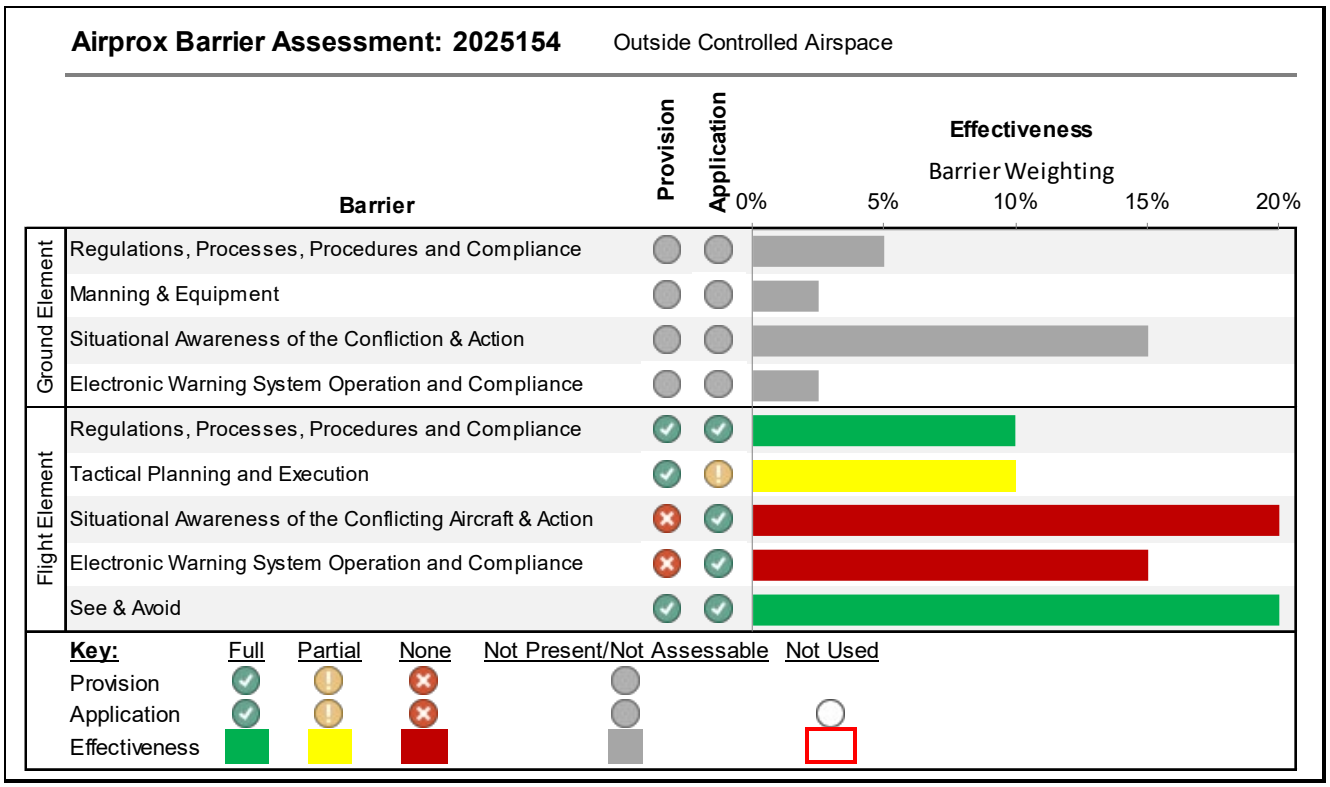
Flight Elements:

Tactical Planning and Execution was assessed as **partially effective** because it may have been prudent for the pilot of the Nimbus to have relayed their intentions on the Saltby Traffic frequency.

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

Electronic Warning System Operation and Compliance were assessed as **ineffective** because the EC device fitted to the Nimbus would not have been expected to have detected the presence of the Perkoz.

[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: 2025154
Outside Controlled Airspace
Barrier
Provision
Application
Effectiveness
Barrier Weighting
0%
5%
10%
15%
20%
Ground Element
Regulations, Processes, Procedures and Compliance
Manning & Equipment
Situational Awareness of the Confliction & 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:
Full
Partial
None
Not Present/Not Assessable
Not Used
Provision
Application
Effectiveness