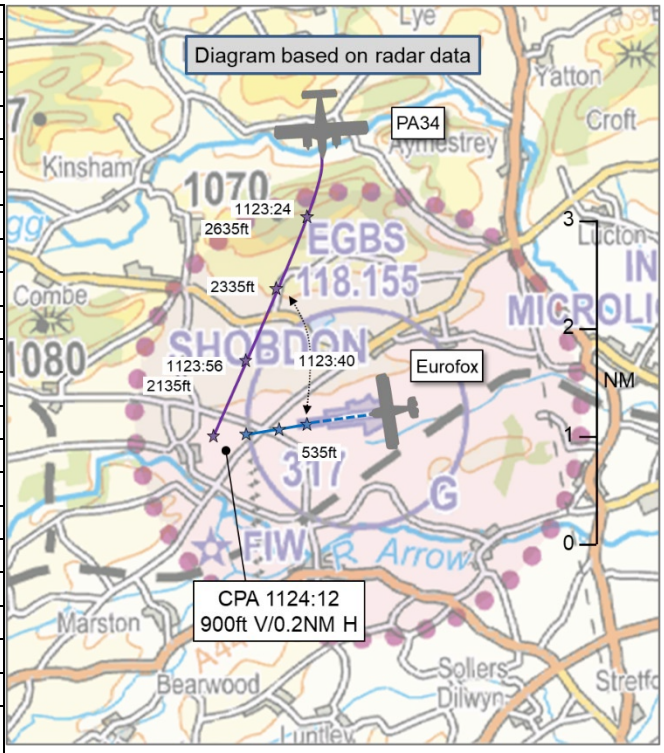
AIRPROX REPORT No 2025157

Date: 27 Jul 2025 Time: 1124Z Position: 5214N 00254W Location: Shobdon

PART A: SUMMARY OF INFORMATION REPORTED TO UKAB

Recorded	Aircraft 1	Aircraft 2
Aircraft	Eurofox	PA34
Operator	Civ FW	Civ FW
Airspace	Shobdon ATZ	Shobdon ATZ
Class	G	G
Rules	VFR	VFR
Service	AGCS	AGCS
Provider	Shobdon Radio	Shobdon Radio
Altitude/FL	935ft	1835ft
Transponder	A, C, S	A, C, S
Reported		
Colours	Red	Red, white
Lighting	Landing	Strobes, nav, ldg
Conditions	VMC	VMC
Visibility	5-10km	>10km
Altitude/FL	800ft (climbing)	1800ft
Altimeter	QNH (1018hPa)	QFE
Heading	~260°	'*south*'
Speed	70kt	125kt
ACAS/TAS	Not fitted	Not fitted
	Separation at CPA	
Reported	100-150ft V /<0.25NM H	Not seen
Recorded	900ft V/0.2NM H	



THE EUROFOX PILOT reports that they had been on a normal departure from RW26 at Shobdon, climbing out to circuit height with the intention to depart the ATZ to the east via the downwind leg. At approximately 800ft, a twin-engined aircraft was observed crossing right-to-left over the nose and descending. The climb was stopped but the closest point of conflict had already passed. No Traffic Information was passed prior to or after departure. Later investigation led to the understanding that the PA34 had reported inbound from the north and was advised there was no traffic to affect a crosswind join. Shobdon procedures require such traffic to maintain at least 1500ft QFE until south of the runway centreline (with a reminder passed by ATSU and readback required). [The Eurofox pilot opines that] this was patently not adhered to. Had accurate Traffic Information been passed with the above reminder and had the [pilot of the] inbound aircraft opted for a standard overhead join, then this confliction would not have occurred.

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

THE PA34 PILOT reports that they were on a post maintenance flight from [departure airfield] to Shobdon with the [operating] pilot (8034 hours) and 3 other high time PPLs. They made contact with Shobdon about 7NM out as they had started the descent from approximately 4000ft, deadside, to join crosswind at about 2000ft. [The reporting pilot stated that] this was their normal approach at Shobdon. The standard calls from the aircraft Captain as they are crosswind are "*clear left, clear centre*" then the P2 will scan and report "*clear right*". THIS IS THEIR NORMAL PROCEDURE AT ALL AIRFIELDS [reporter's use of capitals]. They then turn and descend downwind (from 1500ft to just above normal circuit height of 1200ft) and call their position. All [on board] heard a pilot call "*clearing towards Ledbury*". That call was heard as they were about to join downwind. No one saw any other aircraft in the vicinity.

THE SHOBDON AIR/GROUND OPERATOR reports that on Sunday 27th July 2025 Shobdon Radio had been providing a service to aircraft operating in the ATZ. The Airprox Board [notified] Shobdon Airfield that a report had been submitted to them relating to an Airprox between a Eurofox and a PA34,

and that the aircraft had passed each other about 100ft-200ft apart. [Shobdon] informed the Airprox team that no report had been made to them by either pilot. The audio recordings of the transmissions made on 118.155MHz were reviewed several times by the AGCS personnel on duty and the Airfield Manager.[…] There was no report of an Airprox by either pilot. […].

A summary review of the time stamped audio recordings are as follows:

At 1119 the PA34 pilot made a call and reported north of the airfield.

At 1120:35 the Eurofox pilot reported approaching holding point A2 to depart.

At 1121:05[1] the PA34 pilot reported crosswind to join. At that time the PA34 was about 2000ft above the airfield.

It must be noted that [according to the records held by Shobdon] the Eurofox did not get airborne until 1123, two minutes after the PA34 had passed overhead [they believe]. The time difference between when the Eurofox pilot had called for departure at holding point A2 and when the PA34 called crosswind to join was 30sec. It must be noted that holding point A2 is the intermediary point before reaching holding point A1. Furthermore, at the time when the Eurofox pilot had called to depart and when the PA34 reported crosswind to join, the AGCS personnel on duty had both aircraft in sight. [The AGO opines that] there was no conflict […] between the aircraft, and as such no Traffic Information was passed. As there was no direct report to Shobdon Airfield of an Airprox by the person who [filed the report] with the Airprox Board, a request was made by Shobdon Airfield Manager for both pilots to provide reports to facilitate the investigation. […]. The PA34 pilot reported that they had been at about 1800ft to join crosswind. This is consistent with the altitude of 2000ft estimated by the AGCS personnel when the PA34 had been crosswind to join. [An open-source aircraft tracking tool] showed the PA34 at the time before crossing overhead at 2200ft. [That tracking tool] is not certified for providing back up data, however it corroborated that the PA34 had been about 2000ft overhead. The Eurofox pilot reported that they had been at 800ft when the PA34 passed them [by] about 100ft to 200ft in their statement. […].

CONCLUSION

[…]. The AGCS personnel had both aircraft in sight and there was no conflict (visual separation in the vicinity of the aerodrome). The PA34 pilot did not mention that there was any conflict in their report. There was no report on the radio by any pilot that there was a conflict. […].

Factual Background

The weather at Birmingham Airport was recorded as follows:

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METAR EGBB 271120Z 33011KT CAVOK 18/09 Q1018=
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[1] CPA via radar recorded at 1124:12

Analysis and Investigation

UKAB Secretariat

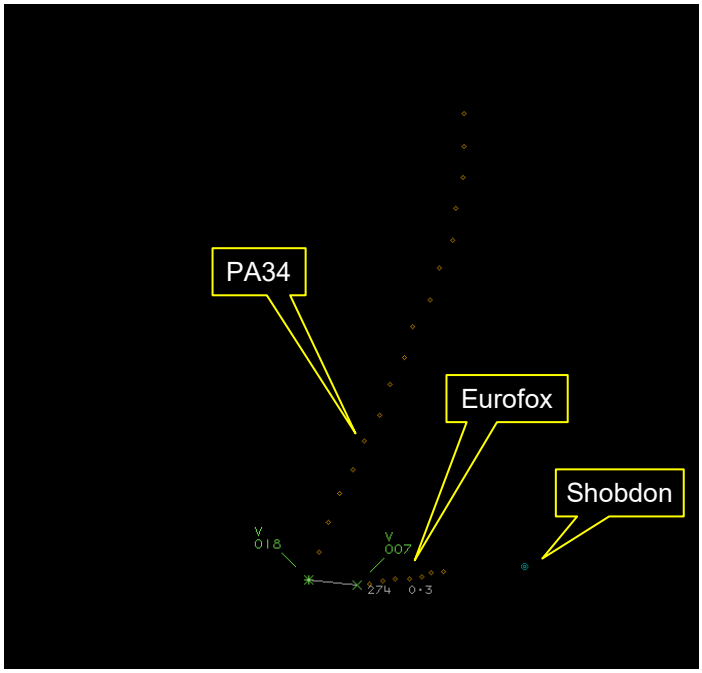

Figure 1: Radar snapshot taken at 1124:10

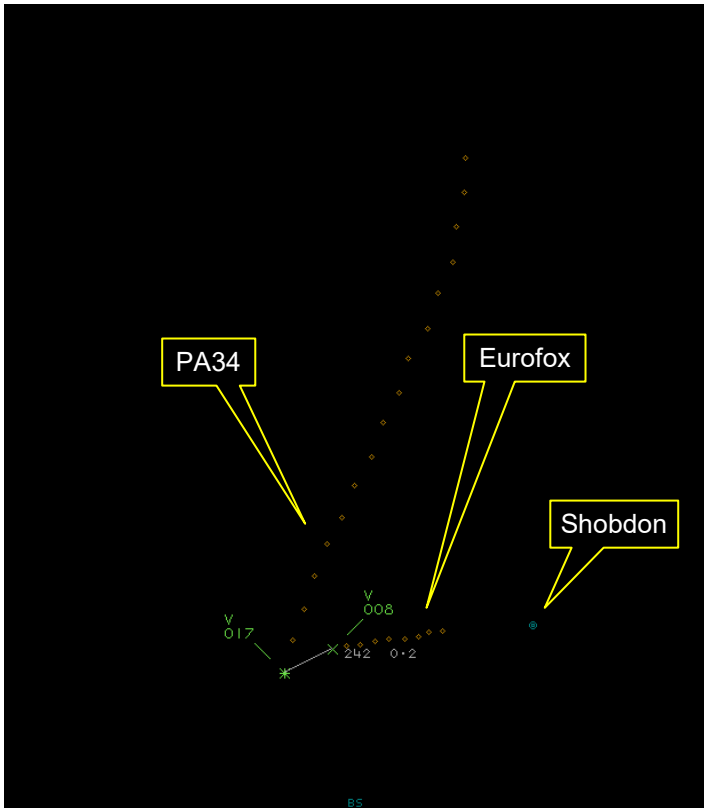

Figure 2: Radar snapshot taken at 1124:14

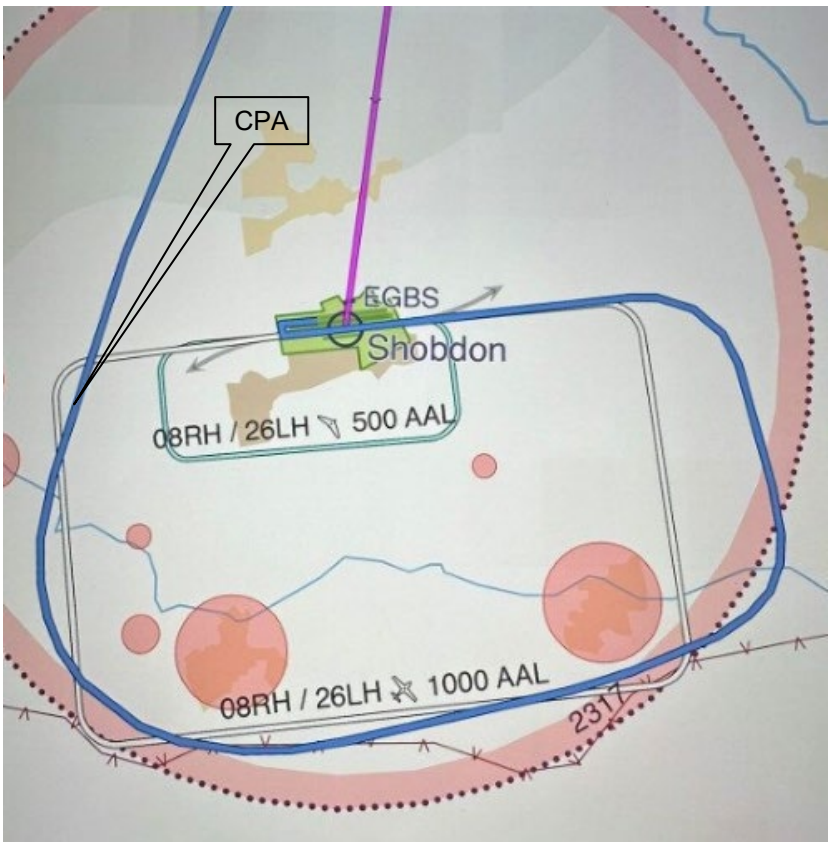

Figure 3: Snapshot taken from PA34 pilot-provided GPS track file (in blue).

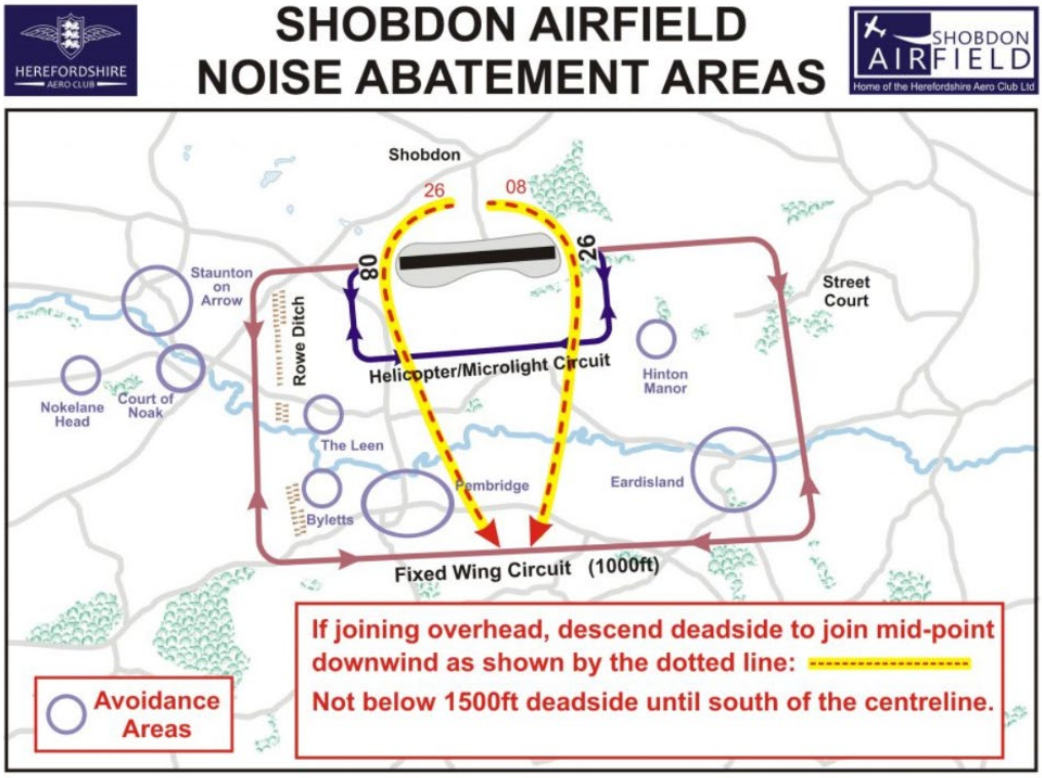

Figure 4:Overhead joining procedure taken from the Shobdon website - Standard overhead join, not below 1500ft QFE dead side due to gliding, descend to circuit height of 1000ft QFE once south of the runway.

4 WARNINGS

a. Visiting pilots are warned of intensive gliding on the north side of the aerodrome. Aircraft joining overhead should not descend below 1500 FT QFE dead side due gliding. Descend to circuit height when south of runway centre-line.

Figure 5: Extract from the UK AIP entry for Shobdon

Extract from the Shobdon AFIS manual:

2.3 Joining and circuit procedures

Aircraft intending to join overhead must be cautioned not to descend below 1500ft QFE deadside to avoid conflict with gliders (when active) and for noise abatement considerations. Recommended RT to pilots planning to join overhead is:

"(A/C callsign) Roger, reminder not below height 1500ft deadside due gliding/noise abatement [as appropriate], report overhead".

Further descent to standard circuit height is available when south of the runway centreline.

A limited recording and transcript of the event was received from Shobdon Airfield Ops (with times referenced from 00.00 – times in brackets are calculated utilising the **1120:35** call referenced in the above report from the A/G Operator:

00.01 (1118:53) [PA34 c/s] Initial contact not heard but A/G operator calls [PA34 c/s] '*stand by'*.

[UKAB Secretariat comment – at 1118:53 the PA34 was shown on radar to be 11.6NM north of Shobdon at 125kt/FL031(3230ft amsl)].

00.25 (1119:17) A/G operator contacts PA34 pilot '*Shobdon Radio pass your message'.*

Response from PA34 pilot not heard.

00.37 (1119:29) A/G operator '[PA34 c/s] *Roger RW in use 26LH standing QFE 1016'.*

Response from PA34 pilot not heard.

00.50 (1119:42) A/G Operator '*Yep'.*

01.08 – 01.24 (1120:00-1120:16) Uninvolved aircraft broken comms.

01.43 (1120:35) [Eurofox c/s] called, '*approaching A2 Holding Point ready to position for 27 correction 26N grass for departure'.*

01:49 (1120:41) A/G operator responded *'[Eurofox c/s] nothing to affect 26N grass surface wind 250/less than 5'.*

01.55 (1120:47) Eurofox pilot responded '[PA34 c/s] *Lining up 26N grass'.*

[A/G Operator reported Eurofox airborne at 1123].

[Radar data shows CPA between Eurofox and PA34 at 1124:12].

02:10 (1121:02) Uninvolved aircraft comms.

02.20 (1121:12) [PA34 c/s] (sounded like) *'…crosswind to join'.*

02.23 (1121:15) A/G responded '[PA34 c/s] *nothing known to affect'.*

Response from PA34 pilot not heard.

02.38 (1121:30) A/G Operator '*surface wind light and variable'.*

02.39 (1121:31) Tape transcript ends.

Both aircraft were tracked on radar and identified through Mode S data. Figures 1 and 2 straddle the CPA of 1124:12. The Eurofox and PA34 do not appear simultaneously on other ADS-B tracking tools. The PA34 can be seen to join towards the crosswind leg at an altitude of 1835ft (~1520ft AGL/QFE); the circuit altitude to be flown at Shobdon is 1000ft above airfield level (317ft) i.e. 1317ft. The Shobdon website and UK AIP entry (Figures 4 and 5 above) offer direction for those joining overhead; there is no advice for pilots making any other chosen join. Figure 5 is taken from the Shobdon AFIS manual and, again, refers only to aircraft aiming to join through the overhead.

The recorded radar data, used for the production of the diagram at page 1, clearly shows the PA34 crossing the Eurofox's nose once the Eurofox was airborne. There is a discrepancy between the recorded radar data and time stamped RTF recordings from Shobdon which could be explained by an inaccurate time reference on either of those systems.

The Eurofox and PA34 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] An aircraft operated on or in the vicinity of an aerodrome shall conform with or avoid the pattern of traffic formed by other aircraft in operation.[3]

Summary

An Airprox was reported when a Eurofox and a PA34 flew into proximity at Shobdon at 1124Z on Sunday 27th July 2025. Both pilots were operating under VFR in VMC and in receipt of an Air/Ground Communication Service from Shobdon.

PART B: SUMMARY OF THE BOARD'S DISCUSSIONS

Information available consisted of reports from both pilots, radar photographs/video recordings and a report from the Air/Ground Operator involved. 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.

Members firstly discussed the actions of the 2 pilots involved, noting that the Eurofox pilot had been in the process of executing a normal departure from RW26, making appropriate calls on approaching the holding point and on signalling their intention to depart before then lining up and departing, aiming to climb out to circuit height with the intention of departing the ATZ to the east via the downwind leg. They report having heard no calls regarding the aircraft that they had then seen crossing their flight path (**CF2**) as they had approached approximately 800ft altitude and, being concerned by its proximity (**CF3**), had levelled at that point whilst recognising that the closest point of approach (CPA) had already passed. Members noted that they had reported the miss-distance with the PA34 to have been accurate with respect to horizontal distance but significantly different to the radar-measured altitude difference and postulated that the nose-up climbing attitude and startle factor may have contributed to that assessment. When reviewing the actions of the PA34 pilot, members noted that they had made calls to join from a distance outside the ATZ to the north and had aimed to join deadside above 1500ft and descend downwind to circuit height in accordance with local procedures. The Board recognised that radio calls made from a distance had not been clearly heard or assimilated by those at the airfield due to equipment issues acknowledged by the Air/Ground Operator and this had potentially led to the lack of more specific situational awareness for both the PA34 and for the Eurofox pilots (**CF1**). Board members noted that neither aircraft had been equipped with electronic conspicuity (EC) equipment and that this had denied the pilots an important option for increased situational awareness. Members stressed once again that, when the Department for Transport and CAA declare an operating standard

[2] (UK) SERA.3205 Proximity.
[3] (UK) SERA.3225 Operation on and in the Vicinity of an Aerodrome.

for EC, pilots are strongly advised to invest in equipment that meets that standard to afford themselves an additional source of information on the proximity of other aircraft.

Turning to the actions of the Shobdon Air/Ground Operator, the Board felt that they had been aware of the inbound track of the PA34 and of the ground movement of the Eurofox and had made and responded to calls appropriately. In reviewing the available information for those operating to and from Shobdon, members noted that there were significant references to aircraft joining through the overhead but no guidance for those joining in other ways. The Board felt that the Air/Ground Operator, in their awareness of poor radio performance at the time, could have reinforced the message in the Shobdon AFIS manual which states that:

> Aircraft intending to join overhead must be cautioned not to descend below 1500ft QFE deadside to avoid conflict with gliders (when active) and for noise abatement considerations. Recommended RT to pilots planning to join overhead is: *"(A/C callsign) Roger, reminder not below height 1500ft deadside due gliding/noise abatement [as appropriate], report overhead"*.

They opined that such reinforcement may have helped to raise the awareness of both pilots of the activity of the other aircraft.

In concluding the discussion, members noted that the poor radio quality had been a key factor in this event which, when coupled with a lack of EC equipment, had led to a situation based on generic understanding of the positions of the two aircraft. When considering the risk, members agreed that normal safety standards and parameters had pertained and there had been no risk of collision. The Board recorded the event as risk category E with members agreeing the following contributory factors:

CF1: Both pilots had only generic situational awareness of the presence of the other aircraft.

CF2: The Eurofox pilot had achieved a late sighting of the inbound PA34.

CF3: The Eurofox pilot had been concerned by the proximity of the PA34.

PART C: ASSESSMENT OF CONTRIBUTORY FACTORS AND RISK

Contributory Factors:

CF	Factor	Description	ECCAIRS Amplification	UKAB Amplification
	Flight Elements			
	• Situational Awareness of the Conflicting Aircraft and Action			
1	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			
2	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
3	Human Factors	• Perception of Visual Information	Events involving flight crew incorrectly perceiving a situation visually and then taking the wrong course of action or path of movement	Pilot was concerned by the proximity of the other aircraft

Degree of Risk: E.

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:

Ground Elements:

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

Situational Awareness of the Confliction and Action were assessed as **not used** because the Air/Ground Operator did not influence the Airprox.

Flight Elements:

Situational Awareness of the Conflicting Aircraft and Action were assessed as **partially effective** because both pilots had only generic situational awareness of the presence of the other aircraft.