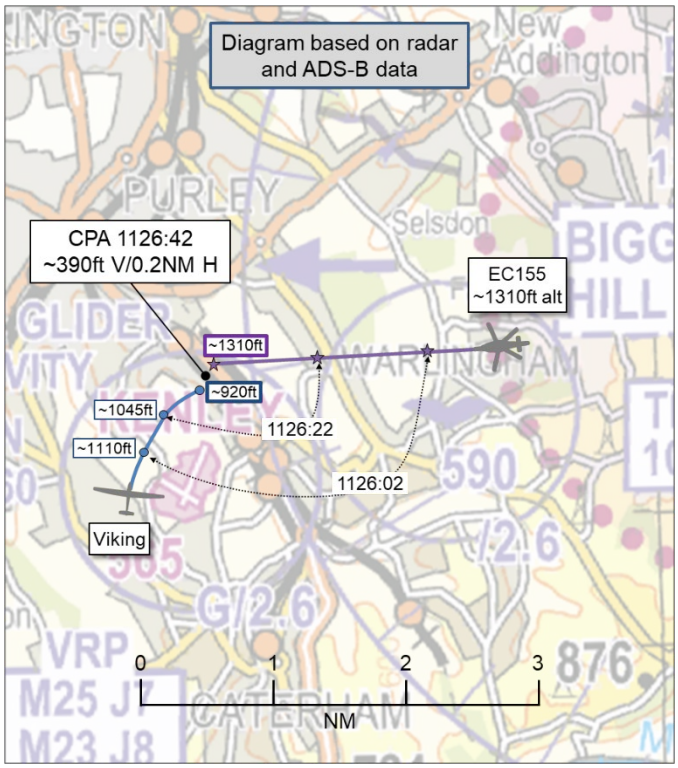
AIRPROX REPORT No 2025208

Date: 19 Sep 2025 Time: 1127Z Position: 5119N 00005W Location: ivo Kenley Airfield

PART A: SUMMARY OF INFORMATION REPORTED TO UKAB

Recorded	Aircraft 1	Aircraft 2
Aircraft	Viking	EC155
Operator	HQ Air (Trg)	Civ Comm
Airspace	London FIR	London
Class	G	G
Rules	VFR	VFR
Service	AGCS (Mil)	Basic
Provider	Kenley Radio	Biggin Hill
Altitude/FL	920ft	1310ft
Transponder	Not fitted	A, C, S
Reported		
Colours	White/orange tips	Black
Lighting	NR	Anti-colls, nav
Conditions	VMC	VMC
Visibility	>10km	>10km
Altitude	500ft AGL	NK
Altimeter	QFE (1016hPa)	QNH
Heading	110°	NK
Speed	60kt	NK
ACAS/TAS	FLARM/SkyEcho[1]	TAS
Alert	None	Unknown
	Separation at CPA	
Reported	150ft V/800m H	Not seen
Recorded	~390ft V/0.2NM H	



THE VIKING PILOT reports that they turned on to base leg at approximately 500ft and selected the approach attitude. Upon reaching the approach attitude they noticed a large black helicopter in their 11 o'clock and 100ft above them. They altered their course to cut in towards the airfield and, a few seconds later, the helicopter altered course away from them by 10°.

They further noted that there was no indication from [the electronic conspicuity device fitted to the glider], nor did their passenger, in the front, point out the aircraft. [Secondary EC] to provide ADS-B Out was also fitted.

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

THE EC155 PILOT reports that they did not see the other aircraft and were on a Basic Service with Biggin Hill.

They further reported that they had been helping the pilot/owner with local knowledge of flying in the UK. The pilot/owner flew the previous evening and noticed a slight burning smell on their return to Biggin. The aircraft was inspected on the morning of the 19th and a "test" flight seemed prudent before they flew the owner later on in the day. They were onboard for the brief flight and, as they were not allowed to fly the circuit at Biggin, they flew a fairly normal route of north of Kenley and return. Neither occupant noticed a glider operating out of Kenley, and it was only by looking on flight radar later, after Biggin ATC informed them, they noticed the track of the glider.

THE KENLEY AIR/GROUND OPERATOR reports that, at 1126, an incident occurred which was not observed [by them], the Duty Supervisor, at the time but was subsequently reported by the pilot after

[1] The pilot reported that the SkyEcho fitted to the Viking glider was operated as 'ADS-B out' only i.e. the pilot was not exploiting the information received.

landing. The incident was not visible from their position due to the orientation of the caravan, which was facing towards the active runway. Additionally, the aircraft involved was on base leg, an area that was obscured by trees, preventing direct observation. An Air/Ground [Communication] Service was being provided to [the pilot of the Viking] at the time. [The EC155 pilot] did not call on frequency. However, details of the aircraft and its departure aerodrome were confirmed later using FlightRadar24. Within an hour of the occurrence, they spoke with the Air Traffic Control assistant at Biggin Hill Airport. During this discussion, they advised that [pilots of] aircraft in contact with them were being made aware that Kenley was active. They advised the pilot involved to report the event by DASOR.

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

THE BIGGIN HILL CONTROLLER reports that, as the [Airprox] was not raised to Biggin Hill ATC at the time of the occurrence, they had no significant recollection of the day. They were confident that the aircraft receiving a service from Biggin Approach would have been informed of activity at Kenley in line with procedure, however, specific Traffic Information would not have been passed as gliders operating at Kenley do not appear on the ATM.

The report was made without reference to RT/ATM recordings.

Factual Background

The weather at Biggin Hill was recorded as follows:

```
METAR EGKB 191120Z 16010KT CAVOK ///// Q1018
```

Analysis and Investigation

Biggin Hill Airport

Details of investigation:

At 1120, the [pilot of the EC155] requested start for a VFR flight to Kenley. [The aircraft] departed to the west and [the pilot was] provided with a Basic Service and advised that Kenley glider site was active. The [EC155] routed to 1NM north of Kenley, then made a right turn towards the north to return to Biggin Hill.

The EC155 pilot was contacted and responded with their report (see above).

Findings and Observation:

The helicopter [pilot] was on a Basic Service with Biggin Tower. The Tower and Approach were combined and [the controller] provided information that Kenley was active, with the helicopter operating VFR in Class G airspace. See and Avoid [rules applied].

No actions were raised as a result of this investigation.

CAA ATSI

The Biggin Hill controller passed the appropriate warning of glider activity at Kenley and the see and avoid barrier appears to have worked. ATSI had nothing further to add to the Biggin Hill report.

UKAB Secretariat

Analysis of the NATS radar replay was undertaken and the EC155 was positively identified using Mode S data while the glider was identified by its flightpath and was seen displayed as a primary track only (Figure 1).

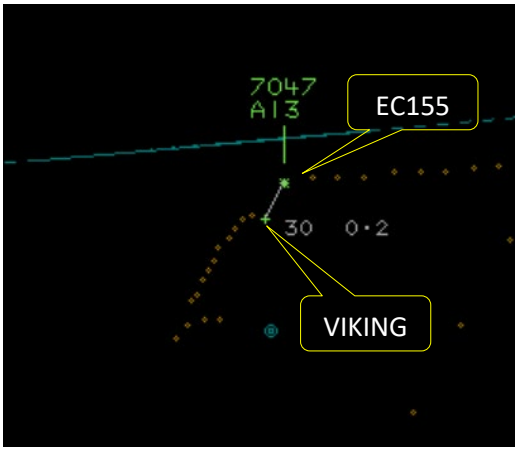


Figure 1 - Time 1126:42

Further analysis was undertaken of third-party tracking sources and the EC155 was not visible using ADS-B sources but was seen utilising MLAT sources, while the Viking was visible using ADS-B data (Figure 2).

Figure 2 - Time ~1126:40

CPA was assessed to have occurred at 1126:42 with 0.2NM lateral and approximately 390ft vertical separation by use of combined radar and interpolated ADS-B data.

The Viking and EC155 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]

Comments

HQ Air Command

The Airprox occurred in Class G airspace as the Viking [pilot] had turned base leg at RAF Kenley and was in receipt of an Air/Ground [Communication] Service from Kenley Radio. The EC155 [pilot] was in receipt of a Basic Service from Biggin Hill and was operating to the west of Biggin Hill on a

[2] (UK) SERA.3205 Proximity. MAA RA 2307 paragraphs 1 and 2.
[3] (UK) SERA.3225 Operation on and in the Vicinity of an Aerodrome. MAA RA 2307 paragraph 17.

test flight. Having been informed of the gliding activity at RAF Kenley, the EC155 [pilot] planned to route to the north of the airfield. Both aircraft were carrying forms of electronic conspicuity (EC) [equipment] but unfortunately the systems are not compatible and neither pilot received an alert. In this case, 'See and Avoid' was effective as the Viking pilot became visual with the EC155 and increased separation by turning to the right. The EC155 pilot was unaware of the Viking throughout the event.

While RAF Kenley does not have an ATZ, it is listed in the 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. The site uses high-tensile-strength winch-launch cables up to a height of 1700ft (2265ft AMSL) and has a dedicated VHF radio channel. If the EC155 had the facility to call Kenley on a secondary radio, this may have helped to coordinate activity and allay the concerns of the Viking pilot.

AOPA

It is disappointing that two forms of electronic conspicuity do not alert each other, and effective lookout saved the day in this busy airspace.

Summary

An Airprox was reported when a Viking and an EC155 flew into proximity in the vicinity of Kenley Airfield at 1127Z on Friday 19th September 2025. The Viking pilot was operating under VFR in VMC in receipt of an AGCS(Mil) from Kenley Radio, and the EC155 pilot was operating under VFR in VMC in receipt of a Basic Service from Biggin Hill.

PART B: SUMMARY OF THE BOARD'S DISCUSSIONS

Information available consisted of reports from both pilots, radar photographs/video recordings, reports from the air traffic controller and air/ground operator 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.

The Board first looked at the actions of the Viking glider pilot and noted that, although the aircraft had been equipped with a transponder and the type of additional electronic conspicuity (EC) equipment typically fitted to a glider, including ADS-B 'Out' functionality, the equipment had not detected the EC155. Members agreed that the Viking's EC device would not have detected any emissions from the EC155 (irrespective of the lack of display for ADS-B 'In' contacts as the EC155 had not been emitting an ADS-B signal) and had therefore not been compatible with that of the EC155 (**CF4**). The Board further observed that, as there had been no transmissions from the EC155 on the Kenley frequency, the Viking pilot had been unaware of the helicopter's presence. Members agreed that the Viking pilot had, therefore, had no situational awareness of the presence of the EC155 (**CF3**), leaving only the 'See and Avoid' barrier to mitigate the risk of collision. The Board agreed that the pilot had visually acquired the helicopter when they had turned onto a base-leg and, having been concerned by the proximity of the EC155 (**CF7**), had tightened their turn towards Kenley on sighting it.

The Board then considered the actions of the EC155 pilot and noted that the flight was being conducted as a check flight following concerns raised the previous day. Members initially expressed concern that the pilot had elected to carry out these checks away from the departure airfield. However, it was subsequently recognised that the pilot had been unable to remain in the immediate area of Biggin Hill aerodrome due to the prevailing noise-abatement procedures, and had, therefore, had limited options regarding where the checks could be reasonably conducted. Members agreed that, in general, the area of operation had been appropriate for this type of flight, although the noise abatement departure routeing tended to take aircraft closer to Kenley than would have been preferred. The Board considered that, despite having been aware that Kenley had been active, the pilot had flown too close to the glider site and members agreed that the EC155 pilot had entered promulgated and active airspace (**CF1**) and, in doing so, had not avoided the established traffic pattern at Kenley (**CF2**) either laterally or vertically. The Board noted that the EC155's TAS had not detected the presence of the Viking glider as they had approached Kenley, and members agreed that the EC155's EC device had not alerted as would have

been expected (**CF5**). The Board also discussed that the pilot and passenger had, nonetheless, been visually scanning for glider traffic in the vicinity, and members agreed that the EC155 pilot had only had generic situational awareness of glider activity in the area (**CF3**) as provided by the Biggin controller on departure. The Board considered it unfortunate that the EC155 pilot had not seen the Viking glider (**CF6**).

In drawing their discussions to a close, the Board noted that the Viking pilot had been concerned by the proximity of the EC155 which had routed close to Kenley and had not been detected by their EC equipment. The Board felt that, with no situational awareness of the approaching EC155, the Viking pilot had likely experienced a degree of startle on sighting it and had consequently tightened their turn towards their landing site. Members agreed that, although safety had been degraded, there had been no risk of collision. Accordingly, the Board assigned a Risk Category C to this event.

PART C: ASSESSMENT OF CONTRIBUTORY FACTORS AND RISK

Contributory Factors:

	2025208			
CF	**Factor**	**Description**	**ECCAIRS Amplification**	**UKAB Amplification**
	Flight Elements			
	• Tactical Planning and Execution			
1	Human Factors	• Aircraft Navigation	An event involving navigation of the aircraft.	Flew through promulgated and active airspace, e.g. Glider Site
2	Human Factors	• Monitoring of Environment	Events involving flight crew not to appropriately monitoring the environment	Did not avoid/conform with the pattern of traffic already formed
	• Situational Awareness of the Conflicting Aircraft and Action			
3	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			
4	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
5	Human Factors	• Response to Warning System	An event involving the incorrect response of flight crew following the operation of an aircraft warning system	CWS misinterpreted, not optimally actioned or CWS alert expected but none reported
	• 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
7	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: C.

Safety Barrier Assessment[4]

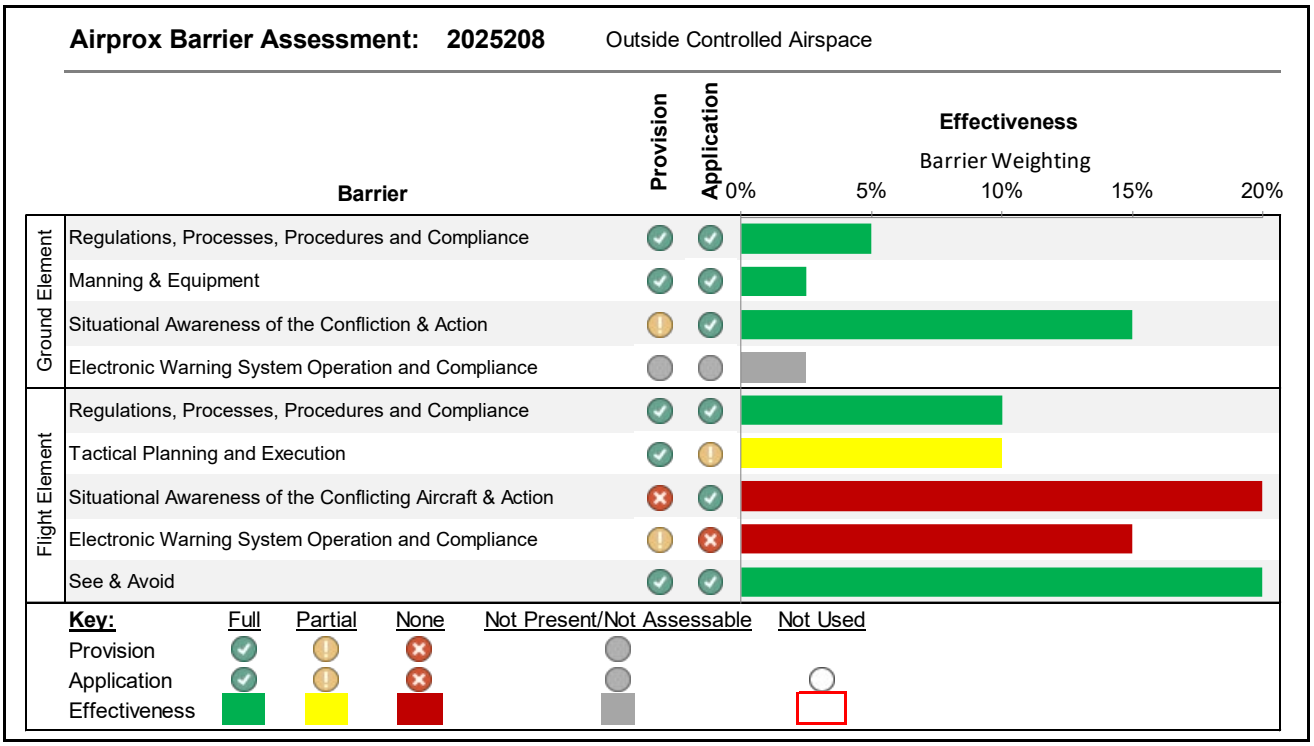
In assessing the effectiveness of the safety barriers associated with this incident, the Board concluded that the key factors had been that:

Flight Elements:

Tactical Planning and Execution was assessed as **partially effective** because the EC155 pilot did not avoid the pattern of traffic formed by the Viking at Kenley gliding site.

Situational Awareness of the Conflicting Aircraft and Action were assessed as **ineffective** because the Viking pilot had no situational awareness of the presence of the EC155, and the EC155 pilot had only generic situational awareness of glider activity at Kenley.

Electronic Warning System Operation and Compliance were assessed as **ineffective** because the electronic conspicuity equipment fitted in the Viking was not compatible with that of the EC155, and the EC155's electronic conspicuity device had not detected the Viking as expected.



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