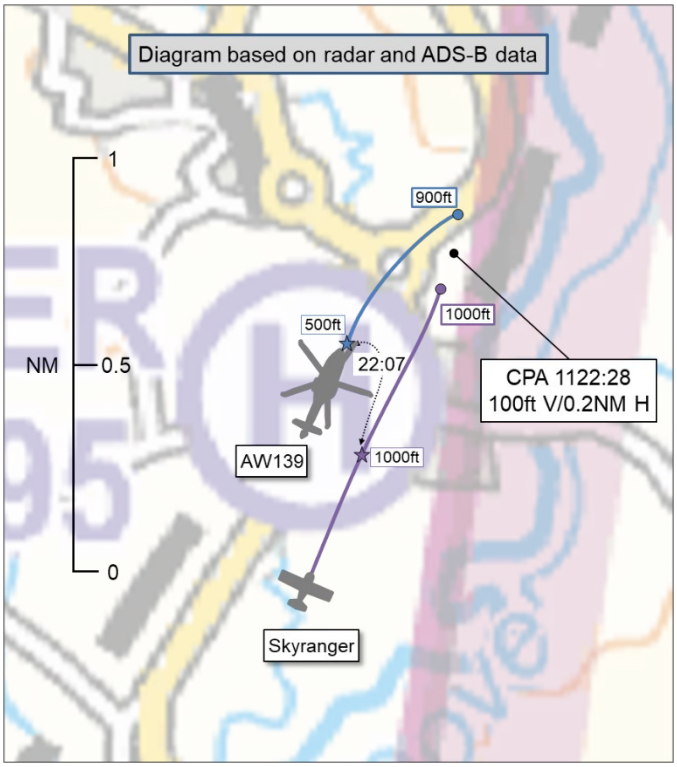
AIRPROX REPORT No 2025222

Date: 16 Oct 2025 Time: 1122Z Position: 5257N 00150W Location: NE of Rocester

PART A: SUMMARY OF INFORMATION REPORTED TO UKAB

Recorded	Aircraft 1	Aircraft 2
Aircraft	AW139	Skyranger
Operator	Civ Helo	Civ FW
Airspace	London FIR	London FIR
Class	G	G
Rules	VFR	VFR
Service	None	Listening Out
Provider	N/A	Otherton Traffic
Altitude	900ft	1000ft
Transponder	A, C[1]	A, C
Reported		
Colours	White	White, yellow
Lighting	Stbs, anti-coll, nav	None
Conditions	VMC	VMC
Visibility	>10km	>10km
Altitude/FL	900ft	1100ft
Altimeter	QNH (1028hPa)	QNH
Heading	020°	010°
Speed	80kt	65kt
ACAS/TAS	TCAS II	SafeSky
Alert	None	Information
Separation at CPA		
Reported	100ft V/0.25NM H	400ft V/0.75NM H
Recorded	100ft V/0.2NM H	



THE AW139 PILOT reports that, during the climb-out from their HLS at Rocester, they reached their climb speed and raised the gear. The PF called for the after take-off checks and started a right turn passing 800ft. [The PF] checked over their right shoulder and noted a white fixed-wing aircraft very close in and above in the 5 o'clock position. [The PF] took avoiding action, stopping the climb and turning left away from the conflicting traffic. [The PF] kept the other aircraft visual and, once confident no risk of collision was present, they continued the climb without further incident. The PM noted there was no visual display of the aircraft until after the avoiding action and a yellow circle with +100ft was displayed. There was no accompanying audio. The Airprox was then reported to East Midlands with further details to be provided on the ground.

The pilot further noted that the TCAS II system did not activate a visual alert or audio until after they had manoeuvred to avoid the traffic. It then displayed as a yellow advisory without the expected *"Traffic, Traffic"* audio accompanying the advisory. They spoke with the East Midlands Radar [controller who mentioned they] observed the squawk of the conflicting traffic disappearing intermittently, prior to it flying over the HLS the pilot lifted from. In their opinion, this was the likely reason they had no information from the TCAS II system prior to the Airprox.

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

THE SKYRANGER PILOT reports that they departed [departure point] on a local flight to the northeast. At around 1122 they were approaching Rocester at 65kt on a heading of approximately 010° at 1100ft on the local QNH when they were alerted on their [traffic App] display to a helicopter that had just lifted from [a nearby site]. The helicopter initially was heading north, but then commenced a turn to the right while climbing. It crossed their flightpath around 400ft below them at around 0.75NM range. They had

[1] The AW139 pilot reported Modes A,C and S in use, however, Mode S remained undetected until 1123:07, after the Airprox.

the helicopter in sight the whole time with a low risk of collision. The helicopter [pilot] continued the right-hand turn to depart the area on a south-westerly heading, passing down their right side.

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

Factual Background

The weather at East Midlands Airport was recorded as follows:

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METAR EGNX 161120Z VRB02KT 9999 FEW021 BKN031 14/09 Q1029
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Analysis and Investigation

UKAB Secretariat

An analysis of the NATS radar replay was undertaken and both aircraft were positively identified from their track positions using Modes A and C. The AW139 first became visible at 1122:07 at 100ft on 1013hPa, which equated to 500ft AMSL and approximately 200ft AGL. The position was ahead of and to the north of the Skyranger. The AW139 was seen to depart initially to the north-northeast in approximately the same direction of the Skyranger.

The AW139 was detectable on a single radar head only at low level and the detection rate was slow, therefore, the positioning of the two aircraft appeared to be irregular.

Further analysis of third-party tracking software was undertaken and the AW139 was seen departing to the south-southwest using ADS-B data sources (Figure 1).

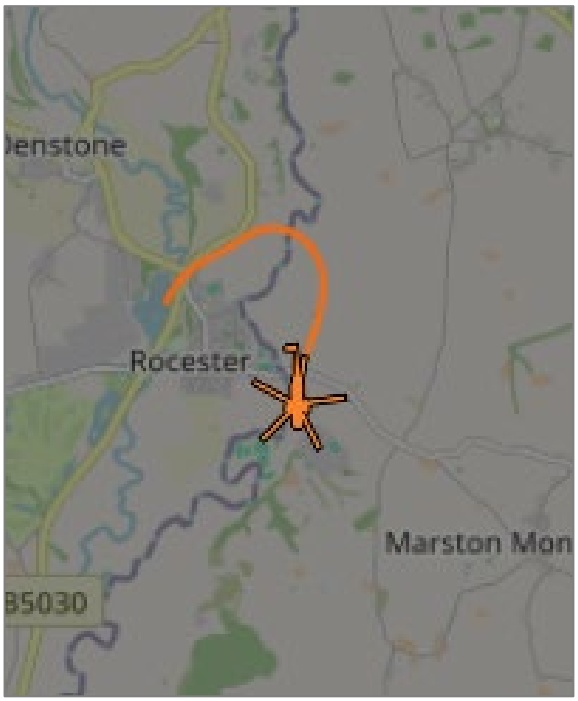


Figure 1 - depiction of the AW139's departure (post CPA position).

The Skyranger pilot provided the GPS navigation data file from their aircraft and a comparison was made utilising the ADS-B track of the AW139 and the radar data. The overall data provided a smoother track, and slightly different relative positioning of the aircraft, to that of the radar tracks (Figure 2).

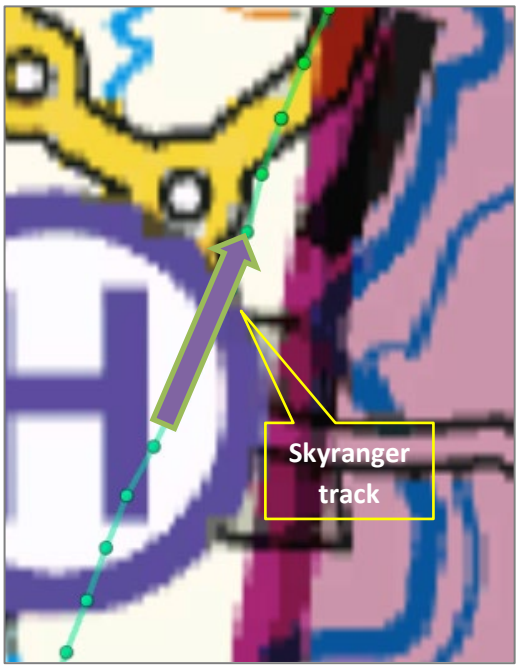


Figure 2 – Skyranger track from its GPS data.

CPA was assessed to have occurred at 1122:28, calculated by interpolation of all data sources, with 100ft vertical and 0.2NM lateral separation.

The AW139 and Skyranger 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 AW139 pilot was required to give way to the Skyranger.[3] 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.[4]

Summary

An Airprox was reported when an AW139 and a Skyranger flew into proximity northeast of Rocester at 1122Z on Thursday 16th October 2025. The AW139 pilot was operating under VFR in VMC not in receipt of a FIS, and the Skyranger pilot was operating under VFR in VMC and listening out on the Otherton Traffic frequency.

PART B: SUMMARY OF THE BOARD'S DISCUSSIONS

Information available consisted of reports from both pilots, radar photographs/video recordings and GPS track data for the Skyranger. 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 AW139 pilot, and noted that the pilot had been lifting the helicopter from an HLS and, at that time, was neither in receipt of a FIS nor had been alerted to proximate traffic from their electronic conspicuity device. Members discussed whether an opportunity had existed for the pilot to have been in receipt of a FIS sooner than they had, and noted that realistically this may have been possible between approximately 500ft–700ft AGL but, as the helicopter had only been at 600ft AGL (900ft AMSL) when the Airprox had occurred, this had not been a viable option for a timely notification. The Board noted that both factors, lack of R/T and EC equipment notifications, had been due to the AW139 having been at low level and that the pilot had first seen the Skyranger in their 5 o'clock position as they had scanned for traffic prior to initiating a right turn. Members agreed,

[2] (UK) SERA.3205 Proximity.
[3] (UK) SERA.3210 Right-of-way (c)(2) Converging.
[4] (UK) SERA.3225 Operation on and in the Vicinity of an Aerodrome.

therefore, that the AW139 pilot had had no situational awareness of the presence of the Skyranger until initiating their turn (**CF2**), and that this had resulted in a late sighting of the Skyranger by the AW139 pilot (**CF3**).

Turning their attention to the actions of the Skyranger pilot, the Board noted that the pilot's flight tracking software application had assisted the pilot's situational awareness, having enabled them to have visually acquired the AW139 as it had been lifting out of an HLS. The Board noted that this particular HLS was known to be busy, and members wondered why the Skyranger pilot had not planned to avoid over-flying the site at such a low altitude. The Board discussed the predictability of departure direction from helicopter sites and noted that, while giving wider lateral separation may be useful, greater vertical separation would effectively avoid departures in any direction. Members agreed that helicopter sites should be planned for, as any other airfield, and that the pilot of the Skyranger had not effectively planned to avoid the HLS by a sufficient margin (**CF1**).

In finalising their discussion the Board noted that the AW139 pilot had planned to stop their climb to prevent confliction with the Skyranger behind them, and had monitored it pass safely before proceeding. The Board also agreed that the Skyranger pilot had seen the AW139 in good time and had been able to monitor it yet, nonetheless, had planned to pass close to its departure point. Members agreed, therefore, that although safety had been degraded, there had been no risk of collision. As such, the Board assigned Risk Category C to this event.

PART C: ASSESSMENT OF CONTRIBUTORY FACTORS AND RISK

Contributory Factors:

	2025222			
CF	**Factor**	**Description**	**ECCAIRS Amplification**	**UKAB Amplification**
	Flight Elements			
	• Tactical Planning and Execution			
1	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			
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
	• See and Avoid			
3	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

Degree of Risk: C.

Safety Barrier Assessment[5]

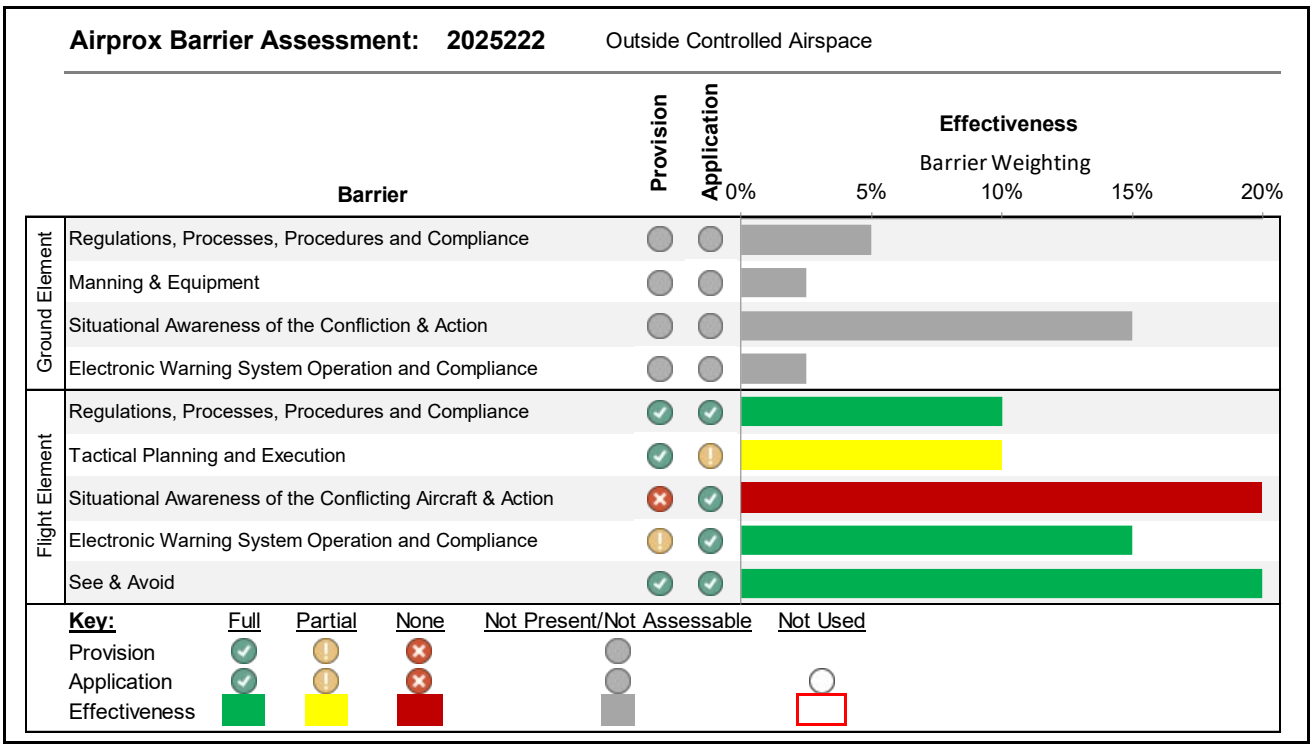
In assessing the effectiveness of the safety barriers associated with this incident, the Board concluded that the key factors had been that:

Flight Elements:

Tactical Planning and Execution was assessed as **partially effective** because the pilot of the Skyranger had not allowed sufficient vertical or lateral separation in the vicinity of a helicopter landing site.

Situational Awareness of the Conflicting Aircraft and Action were assessed as **ineffective** because the pilot of the AW139 had no situational awareness of the presence of the Skyranger.

[5] 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: 2025222
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