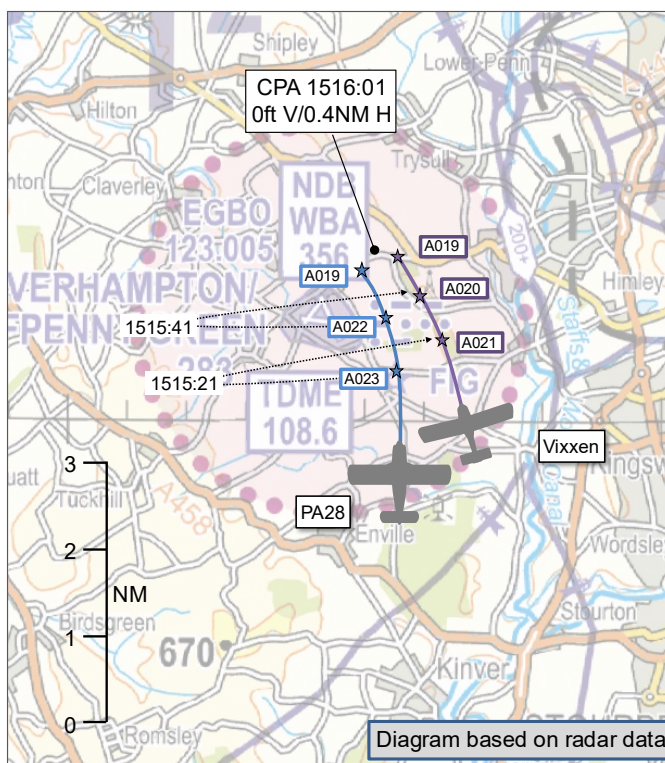


AIRPROX REPORT No 2025234

Date: 08 Nov 2025 Time: 1516Z Position: 5231N 00214W Location: Wolverhampton

PART A: SUMMARY OF INFORMATION REPORTED TO UKAB

Recorded	Aircraft 1	Aircraft 2
Aircraft	PA28	Vixxen
Operator	Civ FW	Civ FW
Airspace	Wolverhampton ATZ	Wolverhampton ATZ
Class	G	G
Rules	VFR	VFR
Service	AFIS	AFIS
Provider	Wolverhampton Info	Wolverhampton Info
Altitude/FL	1900ft	1900ft
Transponder	A, C, S	A, C, S
Reported		
Colours	Blue	Red
Lighting	Nav	Landing, Strobe, Nav, Anti-cols
Conditions	VMC	VMC
Visibility	>10km	>10km
Altitude/FL	2000ft	1900ft
Altimeter	QFE (1003hPa)	QFE
Heading	NW	340°
Speed	100kt	85kt
ACAS/TAS	TAS	PilotAware
Alert	None	None
Separation at CPA		
Reported	0ft V/200ft H	'slightly above'
Recorded	0ft V/0.4NM H	



THE PA28 PILOT reports that they joined Wolverhampton from the south, the radio was very busy with many aircraft joining around the same time. As the active runway was RW26, they flew overhead the field at 2000ft AGL onto the deadside of the circuit. Once on the deadside of the circuit, they looked right and noticed the Vixxen approximately 200ft off their right wing, co-altitude. As they spotted the Vixxen they heard the pilot call “C/S deadside descending” and, at this point, they realised that the Vixxen would bank towards them and put them at risk of a midair collision. At this point, they quickly called “[PA28 C/S] deadside descending” and proceeded to maintain airspeed (100kt) and put the aircraft in a descending turn away from the Vixxen in order to maintain separation. They assessed that the Vixxen was some sort of microlight aircraft and therefore assessed that their own aircraft (a PA28) would be faster, thus increasing the current separation. In hindsight, it would probably have been safer to climb out of the way of the Vixxen, but they think they were biased towards continuing with the current course of action (the overhead join). Furthermore, their assumption that the microlight aircraft would be slower was poor. The pilot noted that they assessed the following factors were contributory to the event:

1. They had just returned from an IFR flight from [redacted], they had flown the flight under instruments and had therefore picked up traffic services, making collision avoidance decisions based on those services. They had transitioned to VFR once in the local area, but this was only a few minutes before entering the Wolverhampton ATZ. They were therefore not as used to performing visual lookouts as they would have been if flying VFR for the entire flight.
2. Upon reaching the local area, the TAS unit in the aircraft picked up some traffic roughly co-altitude at 1 o'clock travelling opposite direction, they were so fixated on trying to acquire this traffic visually and made the necessary manoeuvres to avoid the traffic that they likely missed radio calls made by [the Vixxen pilot] which would have increased their situational awareness pertaining to that traffic joining overhead at the same time.

3. The generally busy radio at that time buried important calls (including the likely call made by the Vixxen pilot which would have alerted them to its presence). The chain of events that led up to this event could have been avoided or mitigated (in their opinion) if:

- a. They had recognised the busy traffic early and made the decision to hold south of the field for a few minutes to allow the traffic to calm down.
- b. They had not become fixated on electronic conspicuity traffic alerting, and instead remained focused on a good visual lookout and radio comms.
- c. They had climbed upon visually acquiring the Vixxen to avoid a collision, rather than dive with them to maintain separation with speed and turn radius.

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

THE VIXXEN PILOT reports that they were approaching the ATZ from the southeast at approximately 2000ft QFE. They heard the other pilot in question make their call when they were ready to re-join. Whilst looking out for other traffic, they spotted the PA28 aircraft joining in their 8 o'clock position [at] what looked like roughly 1-2NM away. Due to their current position, they were ahead of the other aircraft and slightly lower in height. As they were on the right and lower, they thought that they would have right of way based on VFR airway rules of the air, expecting the other traffic to turn right slightly and overtake on their right-hand-side. Instead, the other pilot decided to turn left and cut inside [the Vixxen] whilst descending. But, the pilot opined, it was quite possible that the other pilot didn't see them until it was quite late, whilst flying a low-wing aircraft descending to a very busy circuit pattern.

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

THE WOLVERHAMPTON AFISO reports that, on a very busy day, they recall the communications were as per the tape concerning [PA28 C/S] and [Vixxen C/S] in the overhead. The situation appeared to resolve itself satisfactorily with [the PA28] ahead of [the Vixxen] in the circuit and both aircraft landed safely.

Factual Background

The weather at Birmingham was recorded as follows:

METAR EGBB 081450Z 27004KT 9999 FEW023 BKN044 13/08 Q1013=

Analysis and Investigation

UKAB Secretariat

An analysis of the NATS radar replay was undertaken. Both aircraft could be seen and identified using Mode S data. Other data sources were also assessed and the PA28 could be seen using ADS-B data, whilst the Vixxen could only be seen using MLAT data. At 1513:27 both aircraft could be seen approaching Wolverhampton airfield from the south (Figure 1). The Vixxen was slightly ahead of the PA28 and indicating 2000ft, whilst the PA28 was indicating 2300ft.

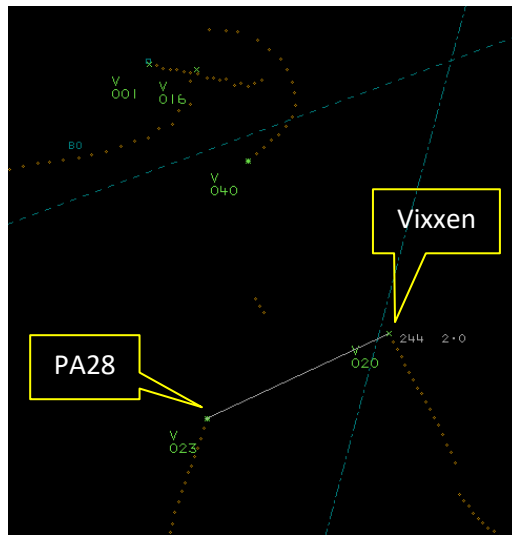


Figure 1 – 1513:27

Both aircraft continued to track towards the airfield (Figure 2) until, by 1515:28 (Figure 3), the aircraft were approximately 1NM from the airfield and 0.5NM apart, still with 300ft vertical separation. The two aircraft paralleled each other for some time (Figure 4), until CPA occurred at 1516:01, with both aircraft at the same level with 0.4NM lateral separation.

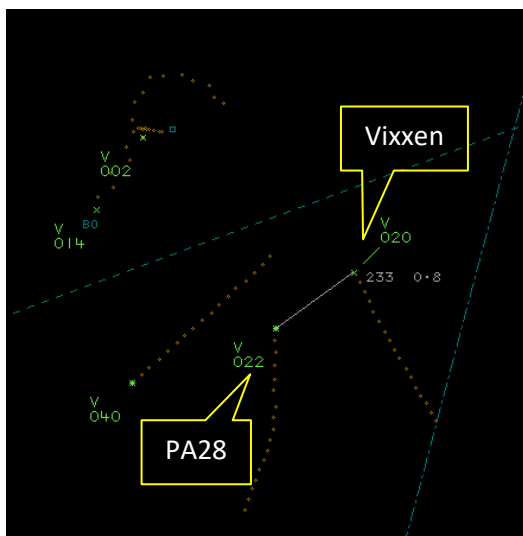


Figure 2 - 1514:41

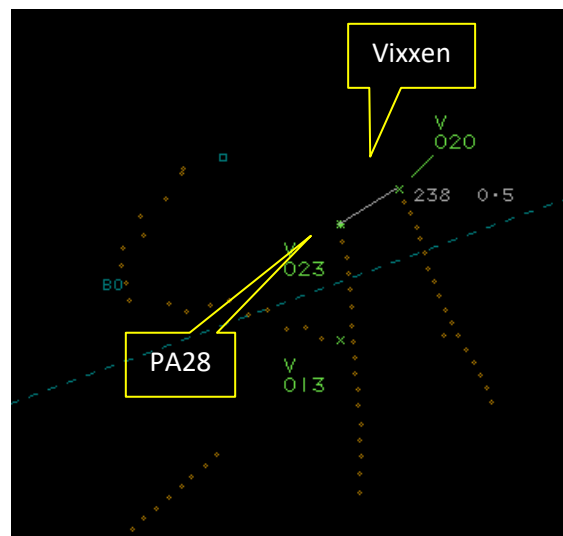


Figure 3 – 1515 :27

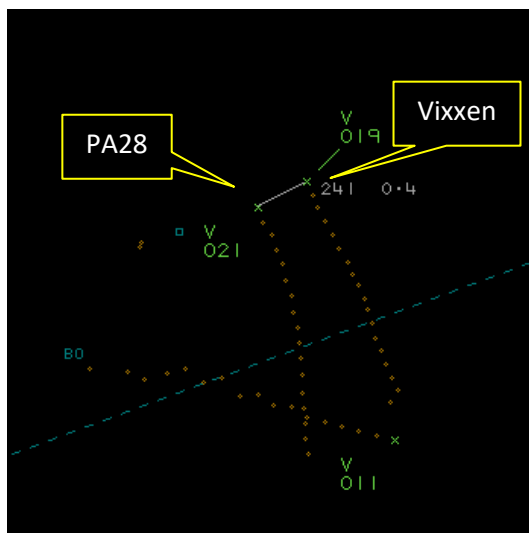


Figure 4 – 1515:51

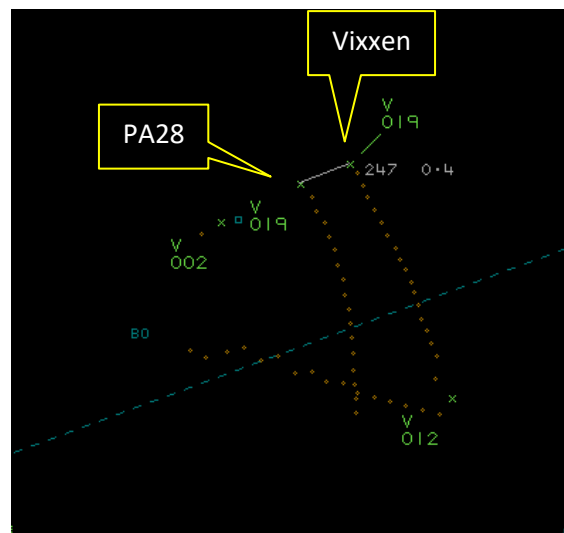


Figure 5 – CPA 1516:01

After CPA, the PA28 turned left and descended, as described by the pilot.

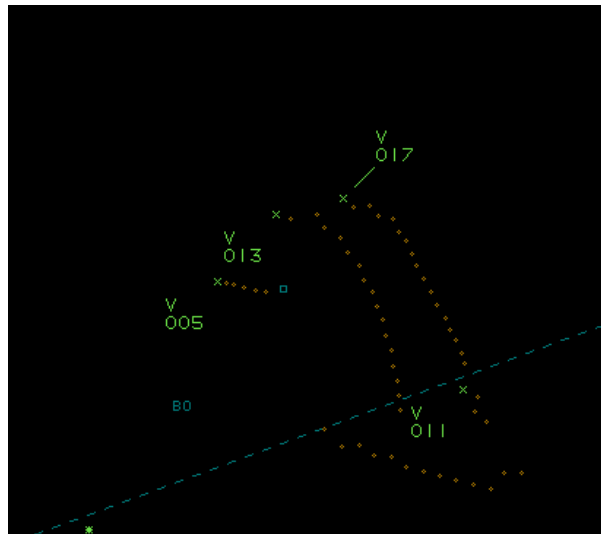


Figure 6 – 1516:09 (After CPA)

The PA28 and Vixxen 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 converging then the PA28 pilot was required to give way to the Vixxen.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 PA28 and a Vixxen flew into proximity at Wolverhampton airfield at 1516Z on Saturday 8th November 2025. Both pilots were operating under VFR in VMC and in receipt of an AFIS from the Wolverhampton AFISO.

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 AFISO 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.

The Board first looked at the actions of the PA28 pilot. Members noted that the pilot had provided a full and frank report, outlining what they thought they could have done differently, and members thanked the pilot for the report, noting that it provided an excellent learning opportunity for other pilots. Turning to the Airprox itself, members noted that the TAS on the PA28 had not been compatible with the EWS on the Vixxen (**CF3**) and so the PA28 pilot had not had any prior situational awareness about the Vixxen also joining from the south (**CF2**). Unaware that the Vixxen pilot had been visual with their aircraft for a while, the PA28 pilot had been concerned when they had suddenly seen it alongside them in the airfield overhead (**CF5**). Once they had become visual with the Vixxen, the PA28 pilot had made the decision to descend and join the circuit but, with hindsight and as noted by the pilot, members thought it may have been better to climb out of the way and conduct a rejoin (**CF1**), notwithstanding that, in fact, the Vixxen pilot had been visual with them and had been taking their own separation.

When looking at the actions of the Vixxen pilot, members commended them for their lookout and becoming visual with the PA28 early, despite it being behind them, and remaining visual with it as both

¹ (UK) SERA.3205 Proximity..

² (UK) SERA.3210 Right-of-way (c)(2) Converging.

³ (UK) SERA.3225 Operation on and in the Vicinity of an Aerodrome.

aircraft had approached the overhead. Members were sympathetic to the pilot’s dilemma of believing that they had right of way and that the PA28 pilot needed to give way to them, but wanting to remain predictable in case they inadvertently turned into the path of the PA28. Whilst some members opined that the pilot could have turned away to give themselves ample separation, others noted that, with 0.4NM lateral separation at their closest, many pilots would have assessed the separation as having been sufficient. The Board noted that they would have expected the EWS carried by the Vixxen to have alerted to the Mode C on the PA28, but that no such alert had been reported (**CF4**).

The Board briefly discussed the actions of the AFISO. The Wolverhampton RT had not been made available to the Board due to issues with its provided format, and the AFISO had not given much detail in their report as to whether they had been aware of the proximity of the two aircraft, although members noted that the AFISO may not have been able to see the Airprox in the overhead at 2000ft anyway. Without the RT, members felt that they could not assess the ground situational awareness barrier, but neither pilot had commented on a lack of information, so the Board thought that the AFISO had probably executed their duties appropriately.

When determining the risk, members considered the reports from both pilots and the AFISO together with the radar replay. Noting that the Vixxen pilot had been visual with the PA28 from an early stage, and throughout the encounter, and that, once visual, the PA28 pilot had taken action to resolve the confliction, members quickly agreed that there had not been a risk of collision; Risk Category C.

PART C: ASSESSMENT OF CONTRIBUTORY FACTORS AND RISK

Contributory Factors:

2025234				
CF	Factor	Description	ECCAIRS Amplification	UKAB Amplification
Flight Elements				
• Tactical Planning and Execution				
1	Human Factors	• Insufficient Decision/Plan	Events involving flight crew not making a sufficiently detailed decision or plan to meet the needs of the situation	Inadequate plan adaption
• 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
4	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				
5	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 Assessment⁴

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

Ground Elements:

Situational Awareness of the Confliction and Action were assessed as not assessable because the RT recording had not been made available to the Board and the AFISO’s report had not made it clear whether they had been aware of the proximity of the two aircraft at the time.

Flight Elements:

Tactical Planning and Execution was assessed as **partially effective** because the PA28 pilot could have elected to climb to keep clear of the joining Vixxen.

Situational Awareness of the Conflicting Aircraft and Action were assessed as **ineffective** because the PA28 pilot had not been aware of the Vixxen on approaching the airfield until they had become visual with it in close proximity.

Electronic Warning System Operation and Compliance were assessed as **ineffective** because the EWS in the Vixxen would have been expected to alert to the transponder on the PA28, but no such alert was reported. Additionally, the TAS on the PA28 could not detect the EWS on the Vixxen.

Airprox Barrier Assessment: 2025234		Outside Controlled Airspace		Effectiveness					
Barrier		Provision	Application	Barrier Weighting					
				0%	5%	10%	15%	20%	
Ground Element	Regulations, Processes, Procedures and Compliance	✓	✓	[Green bar to 5%]					
	Manning & Equipment	✓	✓	[Green bar to 2.5%]					
	Situational Awareness of the Confliction & Action	○	○	[Grey bar to 15%]					
	Electronic Warning System Operation and Compliance	○	○	[Grey bar to 5%]					
Flight Element	Regulations, Processes, Procedures and Compliance	✓	✓	[Green bar to 10%]					
	Tactical Planning and Execution	✓	⚠	[Yellow bar to 10%]					
	Situational Awareness of the Conflicting Aircraft & Action	✗	✓	[Red bar to 20%]					
	Electronic Warning System Operation and Compliance	✗	✗	[Red bar to 15%]					
	See & Avoid	✓	✓	[Green bar to 20%]					
Key:		Full	Partial	None	Not Present/Not Assessable	Not Used			
Provision	✓	⚠	✗	○					
Application	✓	⚠	✗	○					
Effectiveness	Green	Yellow	Red	Grey	Red box				

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