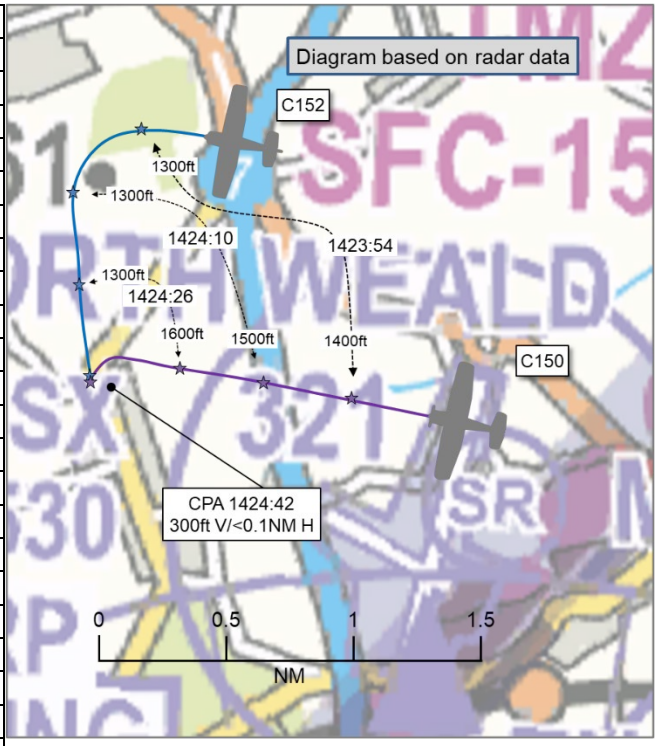
AIRPROX REPORT No 2026028

Date: 22 Mar 2026 Time: 1425Z Position: 5143N 00007E Location: 1NM west of North Weald

PART A: SUMMARY OF INFORMATION REPORTED TO UKAB

Recorded	Aircraft 1	Aircraft 2
Aircraft	C152	C150
Operator	Civ FW	Civ FW
Airspace	London FIR	London FIR
Class	G	G
Rules	VFR	VFR
Service	AGCS	AGCS
Provider	N Weald Radio	N Weald Radio
Altitude/FL	1200ft	1500ft
Transponder	A, C, S	A, C, S
Reported		
Colours	White, blue	White
Lighting	Ldg	*'Normal'*
Conditions	VMC	VMC
Visibility	5-10km	>10km
Altitude/FL	1200ft	1450ft
Altimeter	QNH (1015hPa)	QNH (1015hPa)
Heading	180°	280°
Speed	90kt	80kt
ACAS/TAS	Not fitted	Not fitted[1]
Alert	N/A	None
	Separation at CPA	
Reported	~200ft V/*'very close'* H	~100ft-200ft V/~1NM H
Recorded	300ft V/<0.1NM H	



THE C152 PILOT reports that, at approximately 1430 local time, they had been acting as PIC conducting circuit training with one student on board. While established on the downwind leg at the published circuit altitude of 1200ft, another aircraft [C150] joined the circuit on the crosswind leg at approximately 1400ft. The aircraft subsequently passed above [C152] and then descended ahead of them to approximately 1100ft, positioning itself in front within the circuit pattern. Upon observing the aircraft descending ahead and reducing vertical separation, the PIC [of C152] took control from the student. They reduced speed to increase spacing and maintained visual separation while remaining within the circuit pattern at circuit altitude. The circuit profile was continued with spacing adjustments. A go-around was carried out during the subsequent approach, after which the aircraft repositioned within the circuit and landed normally on the following circuit.

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

THE C150 PILOT reports that as they had been joining the pattern on crosswind they were visual with the circuit traffic. As they were about to turn downwind they noticed a C152 joining downwind from the northwest. Probably about 1NM or less horizontally and 100ft-200ft below their aircraft. After seeing this traffic [the C150 pilot] climbed to about 1400ft and was keeping good lookout but could not see the conflicting traffic any longer. From [branded ADS-B tracking tool] replay they can see that the other aircraft was positioned behind theirs so this is consistent with [the C150 pilot] not being able to see the conflicting traffic any longer. From that point onward the flight, from their viewpoint, proceeded normally to landing. From [branded ADS-B tracking tool] replay they could see that the other aircraft followed

[1] Pilot reports reference to ADS-B; they note that this is assumed as their flight was subsequently reviewed on an ADS-B tracking tool. That tool is capable of tracking via MLAT. This airframe did not show as an ADS-B return on any of the systems available to the UKAB Secretariat.

them very close behind and eventually had to go-around. They do not recall hearing anything on the radio about this proximity incident.

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

THE NORTH WEALD AIR/GROUND OPERATOR reports that the [event] was not witnessed by themself in this instance. The circuit was busy with many aircraft returning to the field, both from the east and the west. A Jet Provost was holding to the west awaiting a clear circuit to return, as was an SR22. The only note the AGO had for that day was that it was busy and that the instructor from [the C152] telephoned the tower later that afternoon to confirm that the C150 had 'cut into them' from the east whilst they had been downwind. The circuit was very busy and the [North Weald Radio frequency] was continually filled with RT, so [the pilots of] all aircraft on frequency should have had a good insight into the amount of traffic local to North Weald.

Factual Background

The weather at Stansted airport was recorded as follows:

```
METAR EGSS 221420Z AUTO 06004KT 020V130 9999 NCD 12/04 Q1016=
```

Analysis and Investigation

UKAB Secretariat

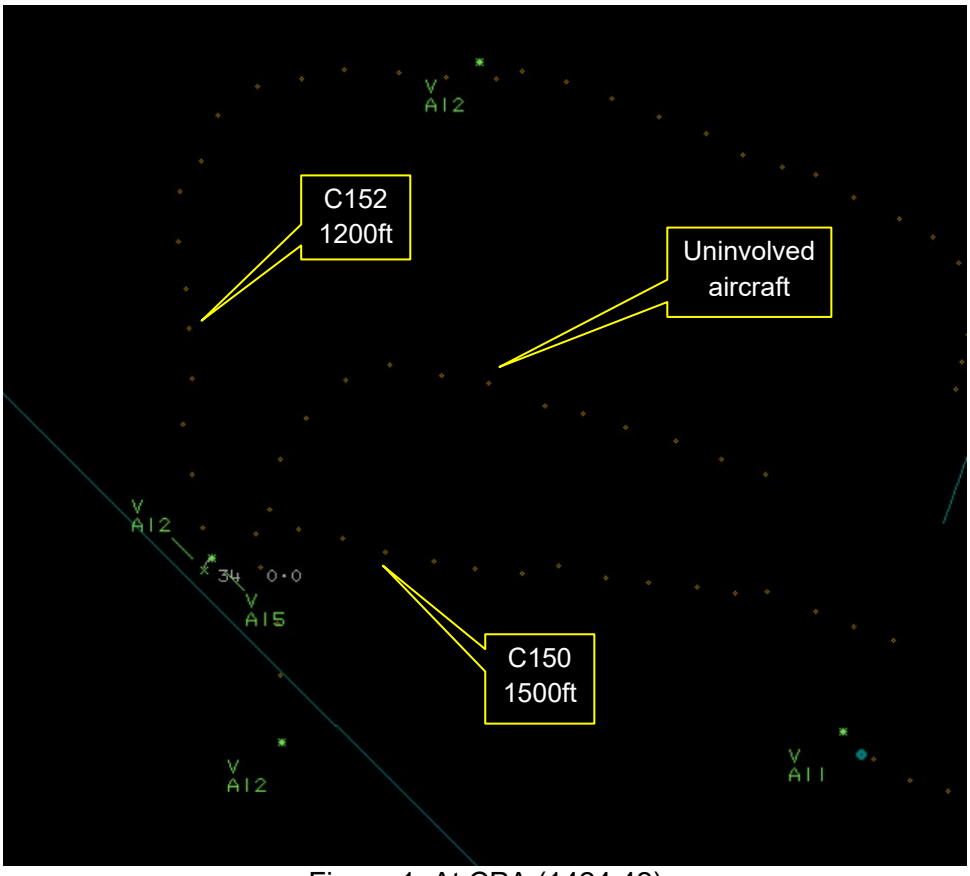


Figure 1: At CPA (1424:42)

Both aircraft were tracked by radar and identified via Mode S data.

The C152 and C150 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

[2] (UK) SERA.3205 Proximity.

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 C152 and a C150 flew into proximity at North Weald at 1425Z on Sunday 22nd March 2026. Both pilots were operating under VFR in VMC in receipt of an Air/Ground Communication Service from North Weald Radio.

PART B: SUMMARY OF THE BOARD'S DISCUSSIONS

Information available consisted of reports from both pilots, radar photographs/video recordings, GPS data, a report from the 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.

Members firstly considered the actions of the C152 pilot, noting that they had been acting as PIC and conducting circuit training with a student pilot. They had not carried an electronic conspicuity unit and had gained only generic situational awareness of the presence of the joining C150 (**CF3**) and seen it approaching from their left-hand side. Members noted that the C152 pilot had watched the C150 pass overhead and turn in front of above them, and wondered why the pilot had not requested information from the C150 pilot as to their plan for integration (**CF2**), as they had been concerned by its proximity (**CF5**) and had themselves manoeuvred their aircraft to remain clear.

Moving on to the role played by the C150 pilot, the Board noted that the aircraft had not been fitted with EC equipment and that the pilot had developed inaccurate situational awareness of the progression of the C152, believing it to have been joining from a downwind position (**CF3**) and had assumed that they had had sufficient space to turn ahead of it. Members felt that this had been an incorrect judgement on the part of the C150 pilot and that they had consequently not conformed with the pattern of traffic as established by the C152 (**CF1**) and, ultimately, flown close enough to cause its pilot concern (**CF4**).

In reviewing the contribution from the North Weald Air/Ground operator, members noted that they had not witnessed the event but had received a message from the C152 pilot that the other aircraft had 'cut in front of them'. Members recognised that this report had been received very late in the preparation of this case and wished to remind all that reporting as soon as possible, including making RT calls of such events at the time, helped the UKAB to create a more thorough picture of the event.

The Board recognised that the circuit at North Weald is of an irregular shape[4] and has the potential to confuse those joining from different points, and wondered if the airfield operator had considered making clearer reference in published materials to the utility of the substantial motorway junction to the north-northeast and, where possible, advise pilots intending to join crosswind for RW02 to route via that point to aid integration.

In concluding their discussion, it was noted that neither aircraft had been fitted with an additional EC device, and the Board wished to emphasise that, had compatible devices been fitted, both pilots may have received a timely alert to the proximity of the other aircraft and the encounter may have unfolded in a more benign manner. As it was, safety margins had been eroded, with some members believing that a risk of collision had remained but, overall, the Board believed that it had been the avoiding action taken by the pilot of the C152 that had increased separation and had ensured that no risk of collision had existed. Therefore, the Board assigned Risk Category C to this event.

[3] (UK) SERA.3225 Operation on and in the Vicinity of an Aerodrome.
[4] https://www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk/app/uploads/2024/03/Visual-clues-for-the-North-Weald-circuit.pdf

PART C: ASSESSMENT OF CONTRIBUTORY FACTORS AND RISK

Contributory Factors:

	2026028			
CF	**Factor**	**Description**	**ECCAIRS Amplification**	**UKAB Amplification**
	Flight Elements			
	• Tactical Planning and Execution			
1	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			
2	Human Factors	• Lack of Communication	Events involving flight crew that did not communicate enough - not enough communication	Pilot did not request additional information
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
	• See and Avoid			
4	Human Factors	• Incorrect Action Selection	Events involving flight crew performing or choosing the wrong course of action	Pilot flew close enough to cause concern
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 Assessment[5]

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

Ground Elements:

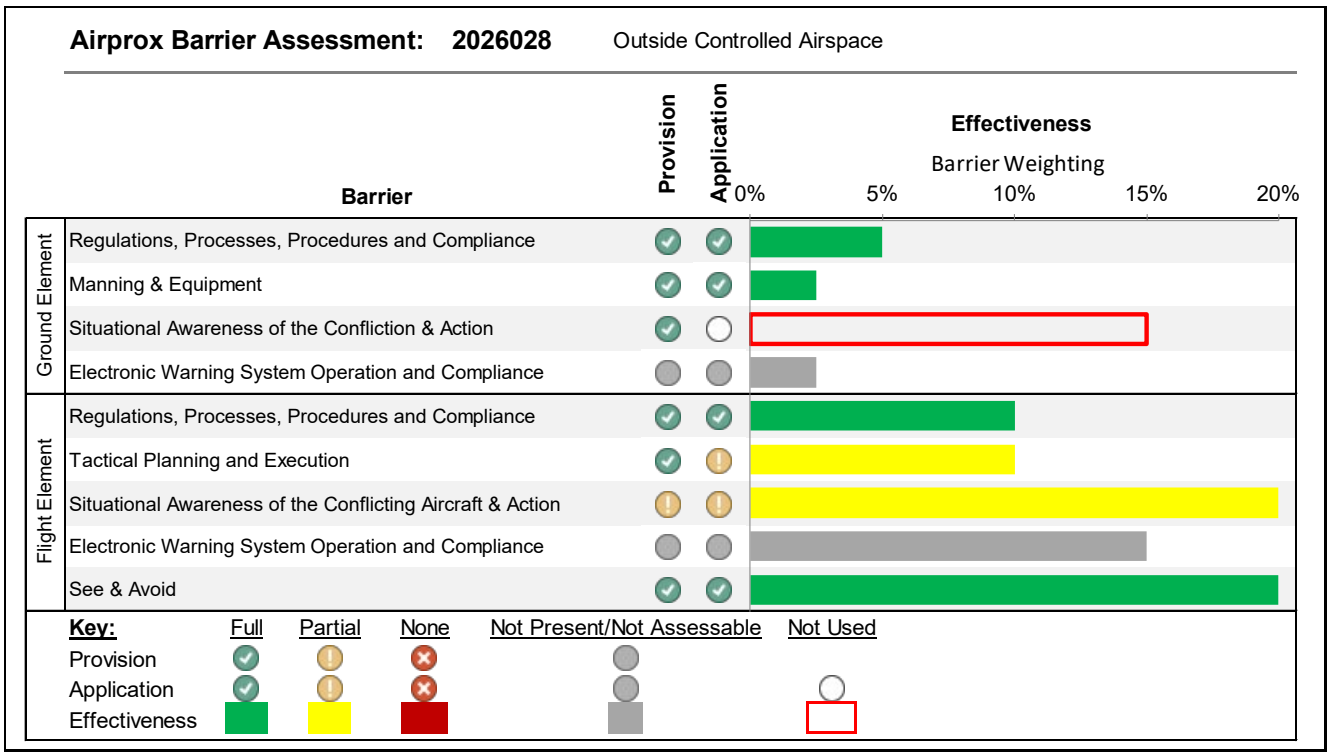
Situational Awareness of the Confliction and Action was assessed as **not used** as the Air/Ground Operator did not influence the Airprox.

Flight Elements:

Tactical Planning and Execution was assessed as **partially effective** because the C150 pilot did not conform with the pattern of traffic as established by the C152.

Situational Awareness of the Conflicting Aircraft and Action were assessed as **partially effective** because the C152 pilot had only generic situational awareness of the proximity of the C150, and the C150 pilot had developed inaccurate situational awareness of the intentions of the C152 pilot.

[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: 2026028
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