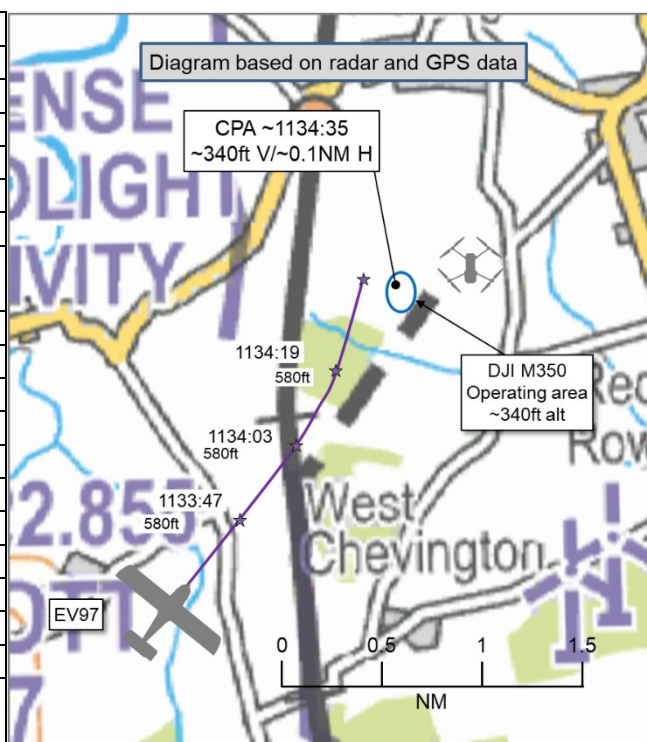


AIRPROX REPORT No 2026042

Date: 10 Apr 2026 Time: ~1135Z Position: 5517N 00138W Location: 1NM South of Acklington

PART A: SUMMARY OF INFORMATION REPORTED TO UKAB

Recorded	Aircraft 1	Aircraft 2
Aircraft	DJI M350	EV97
Operator	Civ UAS (Spec.Cat.)	Civ FW
Airspace	Scottish FIR	Scottish FIR
Class	G	G
Rules	VLOS	VFR
Service	None	Listening Out
Provider	N/A	Eshott and LL Common
Altitude/FL	~340ft	680ft
Transponder	Not fitted	A, C, S
Reported		
Colours	Black, grey	Silver
Lighting	Strobe, nav	Nil
Conditions	VMC	VMC
Visibility	>10km	>10km
Altitude/FL	261ft AGL	550ft-600ft AGL
Altimeter	N/A	QNH (1016hPa)
Heading	135°	015°
Speed	24kt	85kt
ACAS/TAS	Other	PilotAware and ADS-B In/Out
Alert	Alert	None
Separation at CPA		
Reported	300ft V/200ft H	Not seen
Recorded	~340ft V/~0.1NM H	



THE DJI M350 PILOT reports that they had been carrying out a survey via UA on behalf of the MOJ (Ministry of Justice) over HMP Northumberland. They had full exemption to fly in that airspace and the prison team was aware. This had been a flight [the aircraft operator] had done monthly for the last 2 years. Shortly after the flight had begun they had heard an aircraft approaching, so were scanning the sky to find it when the “aircraft approaching” warning went off on their controller. They paused the mission and used the onboard system to pinpoint the aircraft, which was 3000ft away and closing, [an assessment was made that] it would pass overhead, so they immediately reduced the altitude of the UA to give a wide margin whilst [the aircraft] went past. The same plane then came back through the area 3 more times, at very low altitudes, below 500ft [they believed]. The operator noted that in the 2 years they have been doing this survey, they have been aware of the airfield at Eshott, and have often seen aircraft in the area, but they have always been at least 2km away, and always much higher in the sky. The route and altitude taken by the aircraft was out of the ordinary.

The pilot assessed the risk of collision as ‘Low’.

THE EV97 PILOT reports that on Friday 10th April 2026, they departed Eshott at 1130Z on a low-level, fun flight operating in Northumberland and the Scottish Borders in the block 500ft-1000ft AGL with dynamic routeing. The flight was flown on the Newcastle QNH of 1016hPa in good VMC though it was very thermic in places. During planning, no UAS NOTAMs were seen in the potential operating area. As they had been aiming to operate in LFA12 on a weekday, they monitored the low-level common frequency of 130.490MHz and [would] interact as required. They [aimed to] monitor Newcastle on a listening squawk for SA when south of Eshott and get a service when crossing/close to CAS – this is impractical when operating in north Northumberland at low-level as it is generally beyond radio line of sight. During the flight, no UAS was seen via ADS-B displayed on SkyDemon (external underside aerials connected to [branded EC equipment] give good coverage). [The EV97] also transmits ADS-B

out (SIL-0). On 14th April, they were notified by e-mail of an Airprox report. The lat/long appears to place it at the western edge of HM Prison Acklington and about 2.5NM east of [the] busy Eshott airfield base. The EV97 pilot's GPS track shows them to have been a few hundred metres west of the prison over an area of flat, open farm fields - the terrain there is around 140ft AMSL. Reviewing their gpx file, at the estimated CPA, their GPS derived altitude was reported at 729ft/222m so would estimate that they had been around 550-600ft AGL at the reported Airprox position (a couple of hundred metres east of their GPS track). During this phase of flight, they had been at a steady height and heading (NNE). Whilst they are confident that they had been above 500ft AGL, this area of open fields is used by local flight schools and private pilots for PFL training and they themselves go below 500ft in this area for PFL currency training iaw ORS4-1496. They are cognisant with the risks posed by UAS operating up to 400ft from their departure point elevation, risks outlined in the excellent Airprox Insight 'Drone dilemma' article published in the July '25 issue. In sum, whilst the UAS operator may have understandably been concerned by a low-level light aircraft at an apparently similar level, [the EV97 pilot] would hope that iaw LOS drone standard practice they would have seen their relatively slow, 85kt approach over flat terrain and descended until they had safely passed. [The EV97 pilot notes that] they do accept that the Rotax powered Eurostar is quiet and that may have resulted in a late sighting.

Factual Background

The weather at Newcastle Airport was recorded as follows:

METAR EGNT 101120Z 26010KT 230V290 9999 FEW040 09/01 Q1016=

Analysis and Investigation

UKAB Secretariat

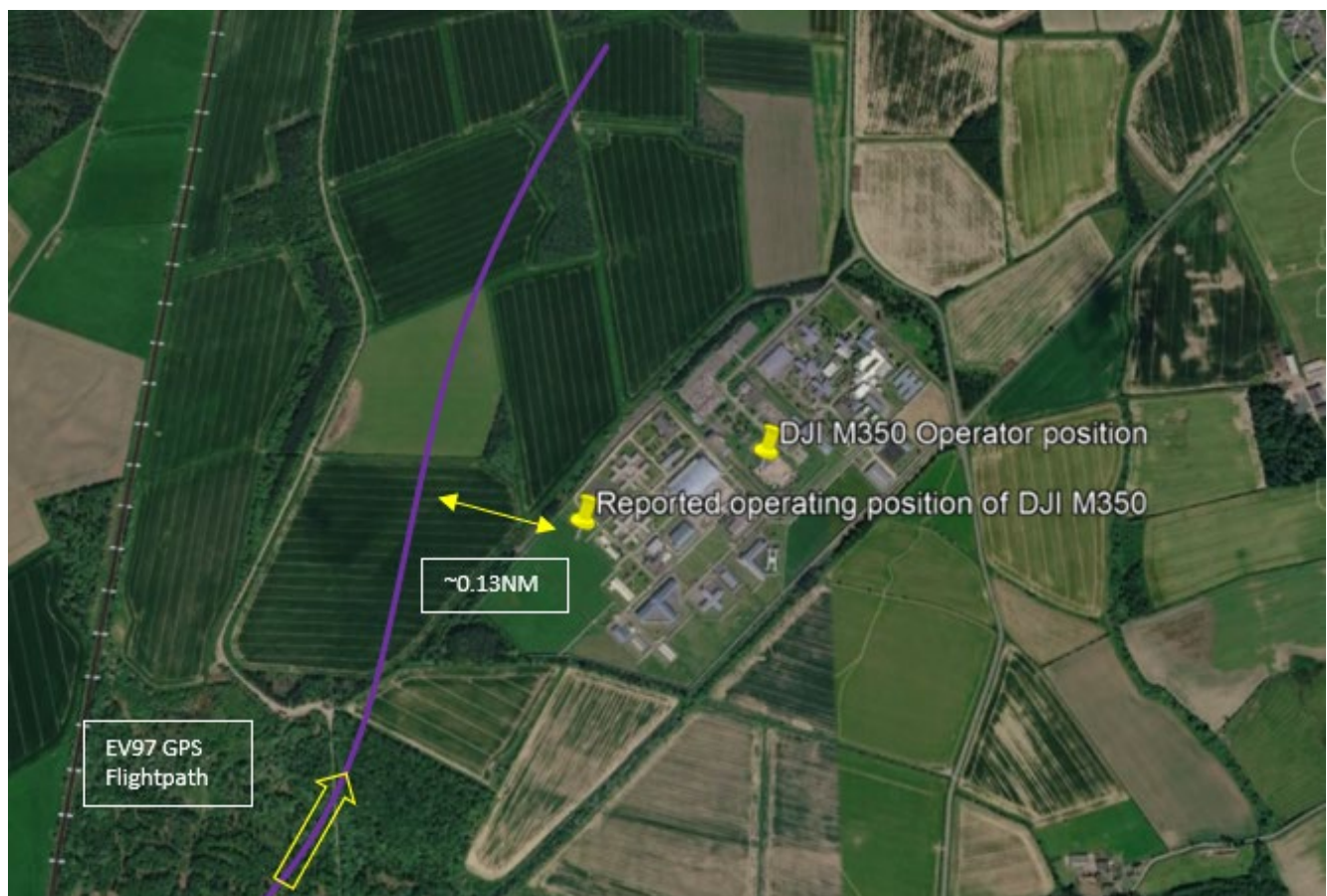


Figure 1: Relative positions of EV97 flightpath, DJI M350 and its operator

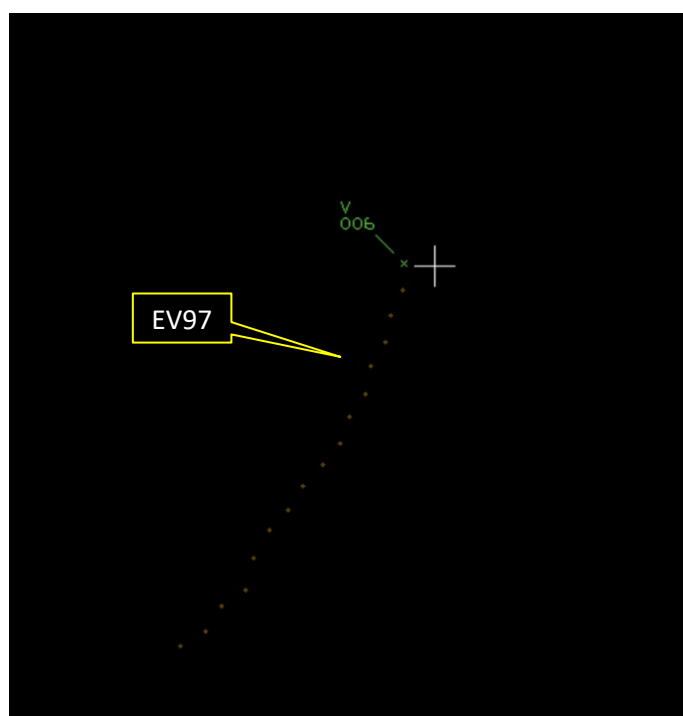


Figure 2: At reported CPA (1134:35). DJI M350 did not show on radar

The DJI M350 and EV97 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 During the flight, the remote pilot shall keep the unmanned aircraft in VLOS and maintain a thorough visual scan of the airspace surrounding the unmanned aircraft in order to avoid any risk of collision with any manned aircraft. The remote pilot shall discontinue the flight if the operation poses a risk to other aircraft, people, animals, environment or property.²

Summary

An Airprox was reported when a DJI M350 and an EV97 flew into proximity 1NM south of Acklington at approximately 1135Z on Friday 10th April 2026. The DJI M350 operator was operating under VLOS rules in VMC and not in receipt of a Flight Information Service. The EV97 pilot was operating under VFR in VMC and had been monitoring the Eshott Air/Ground radio frequency and the Low-Level Common frequency (130.490MHz).

PART B: SUMMARY OF THE BOARD'S DISCUSSIONS

Information available consisted of reports from both pilots, radar photographs/video recordings and GPS track data. 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 discussed this event from a holistic perspective. They noted that the DJI M350 pilot had been operating their aircraft within the Specific Category in accordance with the operational authorisation granted by the CAA. They had maintained Visual Line of Sight (VLOS) with their drone and ensured its altitude had remained below 400ft AGL. The pilot had heard an aircraft and was subsequently alerted to the presence of the EV97 via their controlling unit (**CF4**) and, having been concerned by its relative position (**CF2**), had immediately lowered their aircraft. On visually acquiring the EV97, they estimated it to have passed at a range of 200ft laterally from their aircraft and approximately 300ft above it. Board members felt that the pilot had planned and executed their flight, including the traffic avoidance manoeuvre, in a 'text-book fashion'.

¹ (UK) SERA.3205 Proximity.

² Assimilated Regulation (EU) 2019/947- UAS.SPEC.060 Responsibilities of the remote pilot (3)(b)

The Board noted that the EV97 pilot had elected to perform a low-level flight under a 'free-nav' concept, had checked NOTAMs for their planned operating area and had monitored the Low-Level Common frequency (130.490MHz) for general awareness when clear of their departure airfield. They had been equipped with an electronic conspicuity suite able to recognise and display most of the commonly available systems currently favoured by GA and military users in this area. It had been unfortunate that the DJI M350 had not displayed an active signal and this had meant that the EV97 pilot had received no electronic emissions from it (**CF3**). With a lack of ATS involvement and no NOTAM of the DJI M350 operation necessary, this had left the EV97 pilot with no situational awareness of its presence (**CF1**) and they had not visually acquired it (**CF5**) as they had eased passed its operating area.

Concluding their discussion, members appreciated that both pilots had acted in accordance with the rules and regulations in place. Members were satisfied that both pilots had planned their flights fully and that the actions taken by the DJI pilot had ensured that the separation between the aircraft had remained adequate and that there had been no risk of collision. The Board assigned Risk Category E to this event and members agreed on the following contributory factors:

- CF1.** The EV97 pilot had gained no situational awareness of the presence of the DJI M350.
- CF2.** The DJI M350 pilot had become concerned by the proximity of the EV97.
- CF3.** The electronic conspicuity equipment carried by the EV97 had not registered any electronic emissions from the DJI M350.
- CF4.** The DJI M350 pilot had received an aircraft approaching alert on their controlling unit.
- CF5.** The EV97 pilot had not visually acquired the DJI M350.

PART C: ASSESSMENT OF CONTRIBUTORY FACTORS AND RISK

Contributory Factors:

	2026042			
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
2	Human Factors	• Unnecessary Action	Events involving flight crew performing an action that was not required	Pilot was concerned by the proximity of the other aircraft
	• 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	Contextual	• Other warning system operation	An event involving a genuine warning from an airborne system other than TCAS.	
	• See and Avoid			
5	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

Degree of Risk: E.

Safety Barrier Assessment³

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

Flight Elements:

Situational Awareness of the Conflicting Aircraft and Action were assessed as **ineffective** because the EV97 pilot had gained no situational awareness of the presence of the DJI M350.

Airprox Barrier Assessment: 2026042			Outside Controlled Airspace					
		Provision	Application	Effectiveness				
Barrier				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								

³ The UK Airprox Board scheme for assessing the Availability, Functionality and Effectiveness of safety barriers can be found on the [UKAB Website](#).