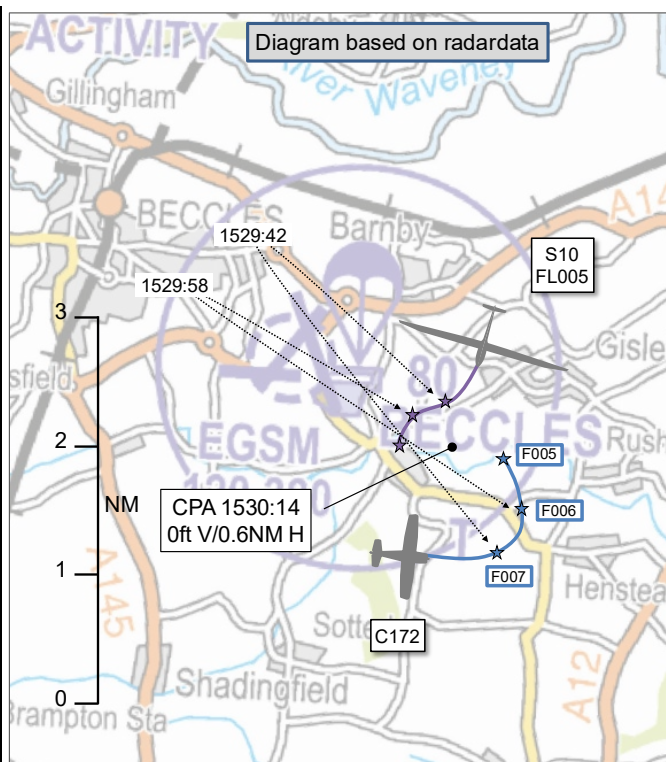


AIRPROX REPORT No 2026080

Date: 21 May 2026 Time: 1530Z Position: 5225N 00138E Location: IVO Beccles

PART A: SUMMARY OF INFORMATION REPORTED TO UKAB

Recorded	Aircraft 1	Aircraft 2
Aircraft	C172	S10 motor-glider
Operator	Civ FW	Civ FW
Airspace	London FIR	London FIR
Class	G	G
Rules	VFR	VFR
Service	AGCS	Basic
Provider	Beccles	London Information
Altitude/FL	FL005	FL005
Transponder	A, C, S	A, C, S
ADS-B	Not Observed	Not Observed
Reported		
Colours	White/Blue	White
Lighting	Strobes, Landing	LED canopy flash
Conditions	VMC	VMC
Visibility	>10km	5-10km
Altitude/FL	850ft	900ft
Altimeter	QFE	QNH
Heading	340°	260°
Speed	85kt	NK
ACAS/TAS	Not fitted	FLARM, PilotAware
Alert	N/A	Information
Separation at CPA		
Reported	NR	Not Seen
Recorded	0ft V/0.6NM H	



THE C172 PILOT reports that they were on a training flight of circuits. The student turned onto base when the Instructor noticed a glider, same altitude, on the inside of their aircraft, in a left-hand orbit approximately 0.5NM away. They called Beccles Radio [and asked] if they knew of any other aircraft, they said 'no'. They observed to see if the glider would continue its left-hand orbit, at which point avoiding action would have been taken. The glider then continued to the south. By then it was no longer a threat so they continued on with the landing.

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

THE S10 PILOT reports that, provided that they are remembering correctly and not confusing this event with another flight – as it occurred some time ago and they had flown frequently since – they closely monitored the Beccles runway and its vicinity for aircraft movement, circuit traffic, take-offs, and landings. They had [an EC device] butterfly display and a SkyDemon screen display and received information both visually and aurally. They were surprised to receive a traffic alert, but unable to visually acquire the aircraft. Consequently, they followed the instrument screen and initiated a left turn for collision avoidance. Later that evening in the clubhouse, they reflected on the incident, still puzzled by their inability to spot the traffic. Their workload at the time was exceptionally high; they were in a low-gliding scenario, maintaining communications on 124.600MHz, looking up the Beccles Radio frequency, preparing for an engine restart, and simultaneously planning an unpowered landing in the event of an engine failure.

BECCLES AERODROME reports that as Beccles Aerodrome provides an Air Ground Communication Service, audio or radar recordings were not available.

Factual Background

The weather at Norwich was recorded as follows:

METAR EGSN 211520Z 23008KT 190V260 9999 FEW036 23/13 Q1025=

Analysis and Investigation

NATS Investigation

The UK Airprox Board notified NATS Safety Investigations of a pilot reported Airprox between [S10 C/S], receiving a Basic Service from London FIS, and [C172 C/S] in the Beccles airfield circuit. The confliction was not reported on frequency.

Information available to the investigation included:

- UK Airprox Board Notification
- Pilot report from the C172 pilot.

The pilot of [C/S] a Stemme S10 Motor Glider, called onto the London FIS frequency at 1306 (all times UTC). The pilot was instructed to squawk 1177, the FIS conspicuity code, and was issued with a Basic Service. The Cessna 172 was performing circuit training at Beccles, in communication with Beccles Radio.

Beccles Airfield was an unlicensed airfield operating with an Air Ground Radio position. The airfield was within Class G airspace, however the 1:500,000 Southern England VFR chart depicted Beccles as a civil airfield with parachuting activity (Figure 1).

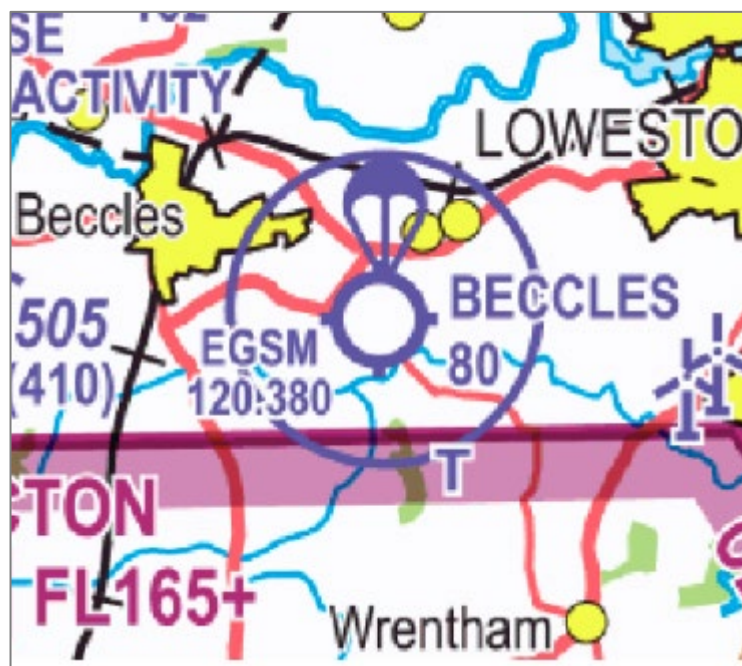


Figure 1

The London FISO advised the pilot of [the S10] that Beccles was active with paratropping, which was acknowledged by the pilot.

As [the C172] (displayed as V) turned in the traffic circuit at Beccles, The S10 (FIS) was positioned between [the C172] and Beccles (Figure 2).

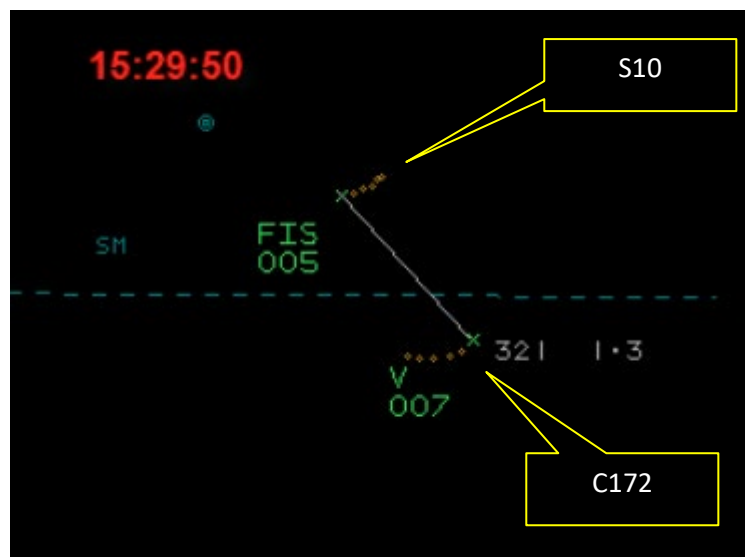


Figure 2

The closest point of approach between [the two aircraft] occurred at 1530:12, measured as 0.6NM and 0ft (Figure 3). There were no separation requirements within Class G airspace.



Figure 3

London FIS was a non-radar position and therefore the proximity of [the S10] to Beccles airfield and the potential conflict with [the C172] was not apparent to the London FISO.

The pilot of [the C172] subsequently reported the event as an Airprox to the UK Airprox Board. The pilot of [the C172] noted that no avoiding action was taken as the 'other aircraft turned away'.

UKAB Secretariat

The NATS radar replay was reviewed and both aircraft could be seen and identified through Mode S data. Neither aircraft could be observed by reference to ADS-B data sources.

The C172 and S10 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 head-on or nearly so then both pilots were required to turn to the right.² An aircraft

¹ (UK) SERA.3205 Proximity.

² (UK) SERA.3210 Right-of-way (c)(1) Approaching head-on.

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

AOPA

When considering whether to go flying, pre-flight preparation [and] planning is one of the key aspects to ensure a safe flight, knowing the route to be flown and mitigating against potential problems. Whilst having essential information in advance would be ideal, when having difficulties in obtaining a frequency, for example, then pilots could request such information from London FIS, allowing pilots the freedom to maintain lookout whilst awaiting an answer. Regular communication when flying close to airfields improves everyone's situational awareness, as does the effective use of electronic conspicuity which, in this case, was able to attract the pilot's attention but could not assist in visual acquisition of the other aircraft.

BGA

The Stemme S10 motorglider is a sophisticated and somewhat complex aircraft with excellent gliding performance coming from long wings and a fully retractable propeller. At the time of the incident, the pilot was restarting the engine having failed to sustain soaring flight on a rather difficult day. In such circumstances, it is normal to assume the engine will not start and to have a landing option available. The pilot here selected Beccles as a backup.

Several factors combined to create the incident that was reported. Taking a Basic Service from London Information was better than nothing, but several superior options were available in the general area. Once operations came close to Beccles, a call on the airfield frequency should have been made much earlier, particularly as notification of the parachute dropping that appears on the VFR chart had been given by London Information.

Allowing the aircraft to cross the approach centreline as the restart was attempted served to place the Stemme in conflict with the C172, though it did keep it away from the drop zone funnel. Positioning further east or on the deadside would have avoided the conflict and allowed a (radio notified) approach given the low headwind and high glide performance.

The electronic conspicuity equipment in the Stemme did its job, presumably generating a bearingless alert of the Mode S transmissions from the C172. This might not have assisted the pilot in acquiring the C172 during the high workload phase of the engine restart, though the C172 pilot had already acquired the Stemme visually.

The Air Ground [Communication] Service at Beccles did what it could, but installation of a Flight Information Display would have improved their situational awareness of traffic in the vicinity.

Summary

An Airprox was reported when a C172 and an S10 flew into proximity in the vicinity of Beccles at 1530Z on Thursday 21st May 2026. The C172 pilot was operating under VFR in VMC in receipt of an ACGS from Beccles Radio, and the S10 pilot was operating under VFR in VMC in receipt of a Basic Service from London Information.

PART B: SUMMARY OF THE BOARD'S DISCUSSIONS

Information available consisted of reports from both pilots, radar photographs and a report from the appropriate operating authority. 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.

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

The Board first looked at the actions of the C172 pilot. They had been flying in the Beccles visual circuit and had not been expecting to see an aircraft crossing ahead of them on base leg. The Board noted that the S10 pilot had not called on the Beccles frequency and the C172 had not been fitted with any form of CWS, and members therefore agreed that the pilot had not received any prior situational awareness about the position of the S10 (**CF7**). Fortunately, the C172 instructor had seen the S10 with enough time to assess the situation and, although they had been concerned by the unexpected aircraft in the circuit (**CF10**) when they had seen the S10 turn away, assessed that they could safely continue with their approach.

The Board then considered the actions of the S10 pilot. The pilot had reported that they had been in a high-workload environment where they had been losing height, had been trying to start their engine and that they had not been able to find the frequency on which to call Beccles. Members opined that the problems with this flight had started much earlier, in the pre-flight planning phase, when the pilot had not thought to equip themselves with the means with which to identify important information such as frequencies (**CF6**). Members commended the pilot for having agreed a FIS but thought that because London Information would not have been able to monitor the aircraft on radar, the S10 pilot might have been better served calling Norwich ATC for a LARS as they would have been more likely to have advised the pilot that they had been heading towards Beccles. That being said, members further noted that, had the S10 pilot considered their actions earlier, they could have asked London Information for the Beccles frequency, and they could have called Beccles some miles away, before they had entered the visual circuit (**CF3**) which would have warned other pilots on the frequency that the glider had been in the vicinity. Members thought that, as the aircraft had lost height, the pilot had probably become fixated on remaining within landing distance of the runway at Beccles, but that this had resulted in late decision-making (**CF4**) which had resulted in them flying through the visual circuit without informing Beccles of their intentions (**CF5**) and in front of the C172 which had been established in the visual circuit (**CF2**). Fortunately, the CWS on the S10 had alerted to the C172 (**CF8**) and, although the S10 pilot had looked for the conflicting aircraft without success (**CF9**), the pilot had then made an alteration to their flightpath in order to keep clear. Members thought that, although the weather on the day had made for difficult soaring conditions, this whole situation had been as a result of a lack of prior planning by the S10 pilot who, despite having been warned that Beccles had been active with parachuting, had not appeared to have anticipated that Beccles might have had visual circuit traffic, and members thought that they had been fortunate that there had not been parachutists in the air at the time of the incident.

The Board briefly looked at the actions of the London Information FISO. They had been providing a Basic Service and had not been required to monitor the aircraft (**CF1**). They had already informed the S10 pilot that Beccles had been active with parachuting but would not have been aware of the proximity of the aircraft to the Beccles visual circuit. The Board felt that there had been little else that the London FISO could have done to have assisted matters.

When determining the risk of the Airprox, members considered the reports from both pilots together with the radar replay screenshots. They noted that, although the S10 pilot had not been visual with the C172, they had taken action to turn away from the contact on their CWS. Furthermore, the C172 pilot had maintained continuous visual contact with the glider, had observed it turning away from the base leg, and had sufficient time to recognise the situation and implement avoiding action if required. The Board therefore agreed that, whilst safety had been degraded, there had been no risk of collision; Risk Category C.

PART C: ASSESSMENT OF CONTRIBUTORY FACTORS AND RISK

Contributory Factors:

	2026080			
CF	Factor	Description	ECCAIRS Amplification	UKAB Amplification
	Ground Elements			
	• Situational Awareness and Action			
1	Contextual	• ANS Flight Information Provision	Provision of ANS flight information	The ATCO/FISO was not required to monitor the flight under a Basic Service
	Flight Elements			
	• Regulations, Processes, Procedures and Compliance			
2	Human Factors	• Use of policy/Procedures	Events involving the use of the relevant policy or procedures by flight crew	Regulations and/or procedures not complied with
	• Tactical Planning and Execution			
3	Human Factors	• Accuracy of Communication	Events involving flight crew using inaccurate communication - wrong or incomplete information provided	Ineffective communication of intentions
4	Human Factors	• Late Decision/Plan	Events involving flight crew making a decision too late to meet the needs of the situation	
5	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
6	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			
7	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			
8	Contextual	• Other warning system operation	An event involving a genuine warning from an airborne system other than TCAS.	
	• See and Avoid			
9	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
10	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 used** because the London FISO was not required to monitor the aircraft and therefore had no information on the exact position of the S10.

Flight Elements:

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

Regulations, Processes, Procedures and Compliance were assessed as **ineffective** because the S10 pilot flew through the Beccles visual circuit without communicating their intentions.

Tactical Planning and Execution was assessed as **ineffective** because the S10 pilot had not communicated their intentions to Beccles and had not conformed with, or avoided, the pattern of traffic in the visual circuit at Beccles.

Situational Awareness of the Conflicting Aircraft and Action were assessed as **ineffective** because the C172 pilot had no prior knowledge that the S10 would cross through the Beccles circuit, until they became visual with the aircraft.

