

Safe Shared Airspace - **Lakenheath & Mildenhall**

This is a self-briefing for sailplane pilots.

The charts included here are illustrative only. Please refer to the current chart and instrument procedures for detail.

Published March 2026

Lakenheath & Mildenhall - overview

Two very active USAF bases

Mix of fast jets (F15, F35) & transport (KC135, C130 & CV22 rotary) + visitors

Combined MATZ (CMATZ)

Surrounding class G airspace

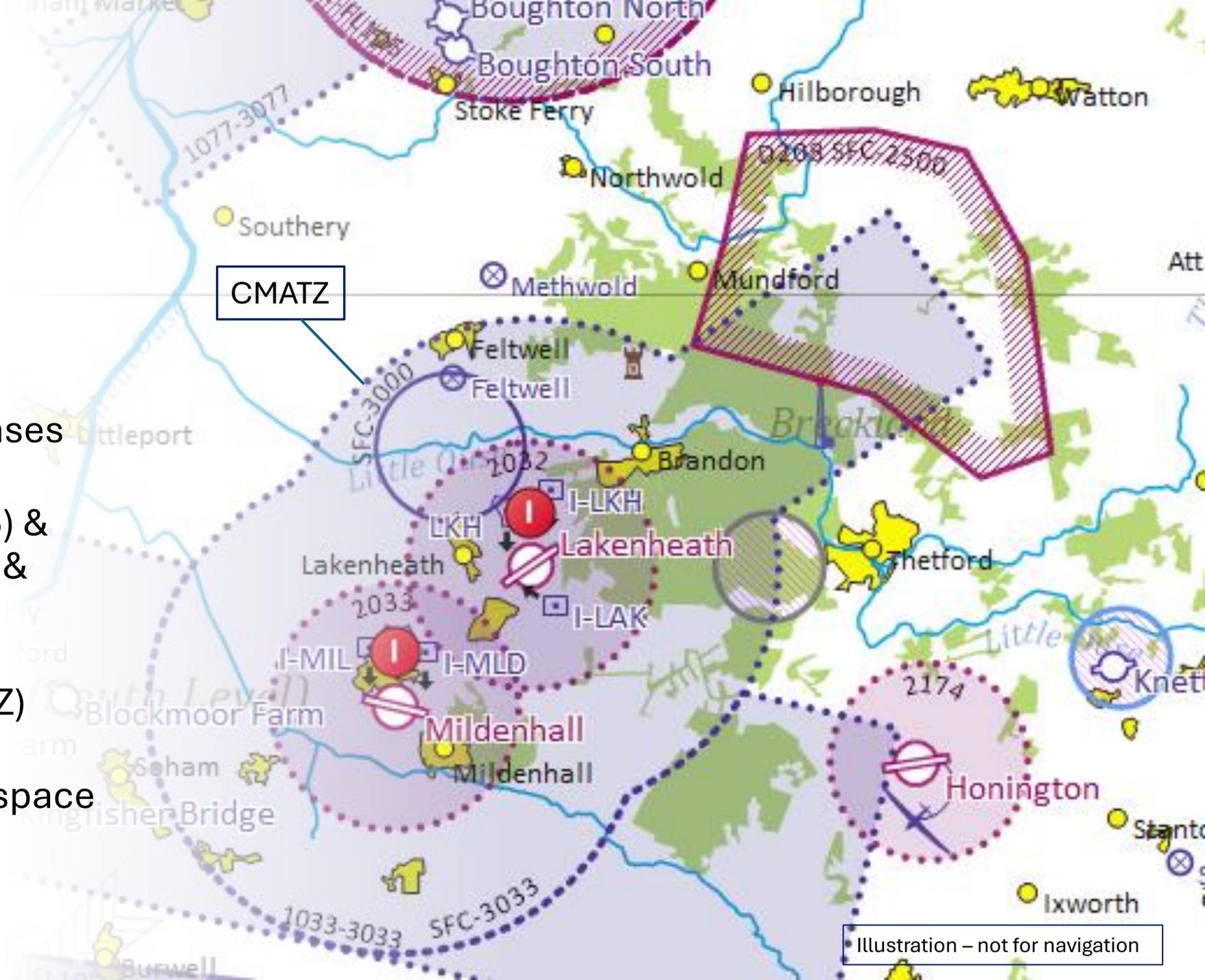


Illustration – not for navigation



Big picture

Expect Lakenheath/Mildenhall traffic in this area

The fat green arrow shows the routine arrival direction for multiple fast jets at around 3000'

The thin arrows depict the approaches. NB the approaches and associated procedures extend beyond the CMATZ.

Please read on for important detail.



Illustration – not for navigation

Mildenhall - radar circuits



Airline sized aircraft



Radar circuits are standard procedure



Circuits outside the CMATZ. NB 14-mile approach

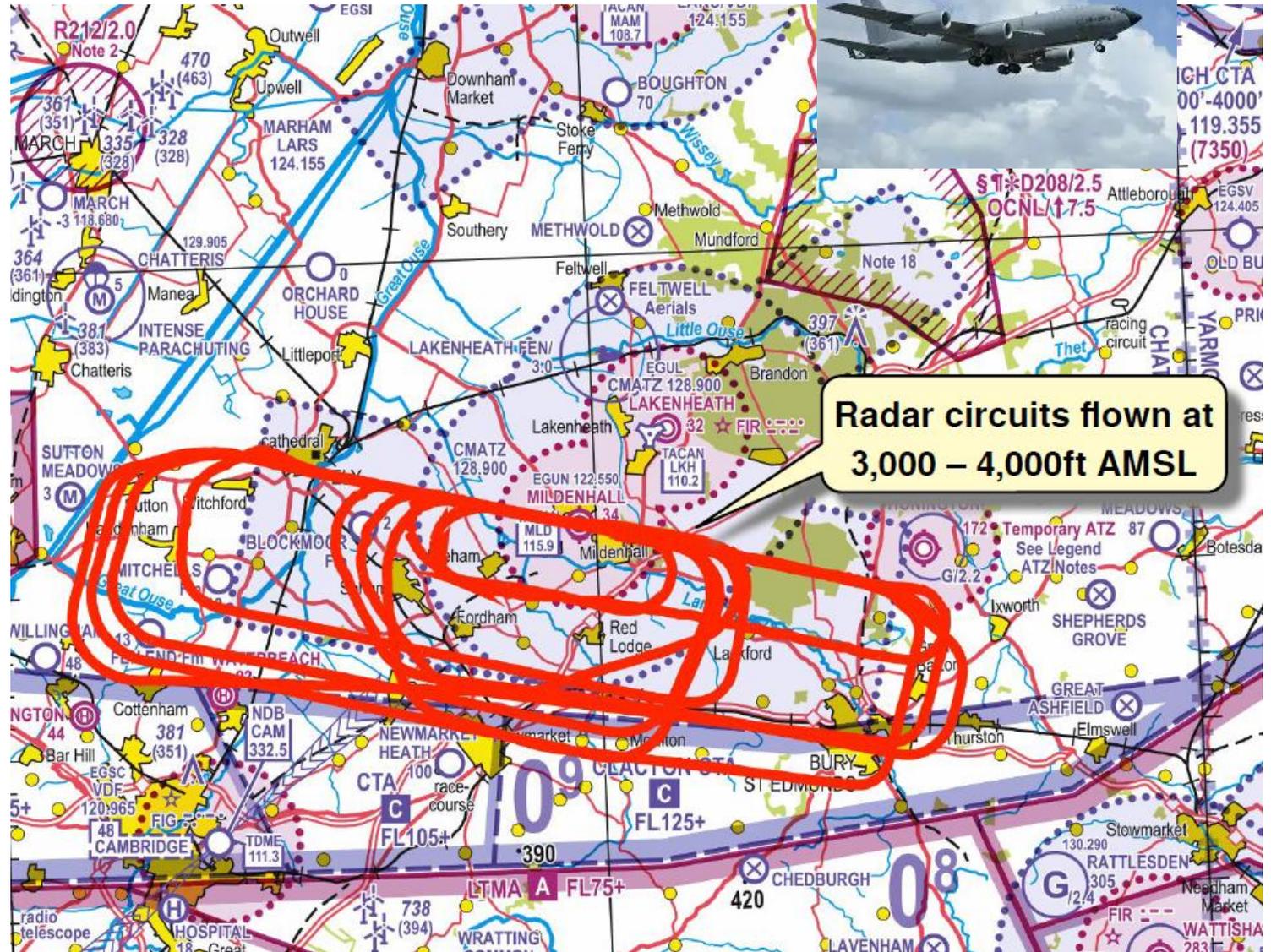


Illustration – not for navigation

Mildenhall - holds



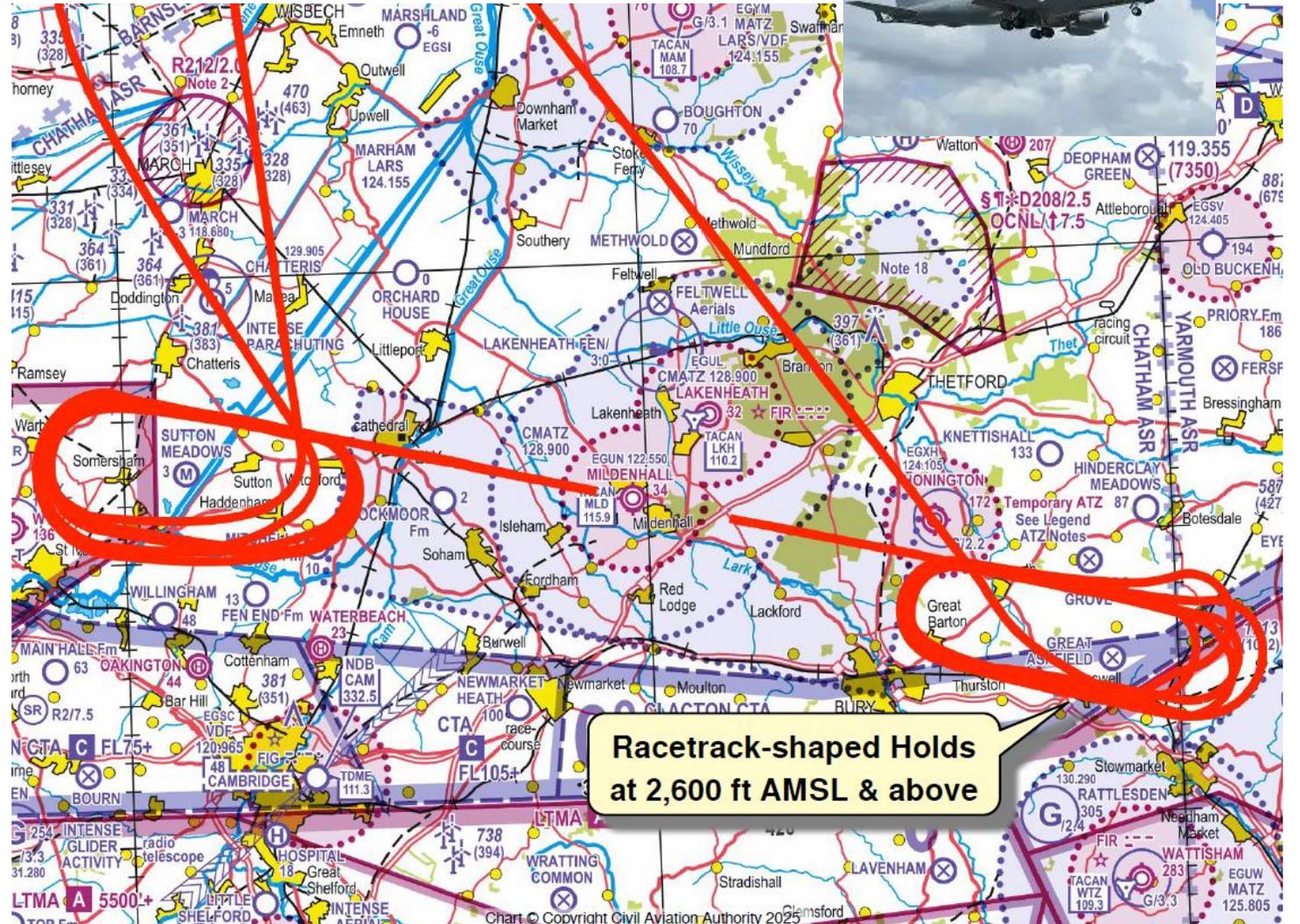
Airline sized
aircraft



Holds are
routinely used



The holds are
outside the
CMATZ



**Racetrack-shaped Holds
at 2,600 ft AMSL & above**

Mildenhall

- other



C130 and CV22
transiting to/from
training



Routinely leave/
join the CMATZ to
the east



Operating at
2000' outside the
CMATZ.



Lakenheath - arrivals



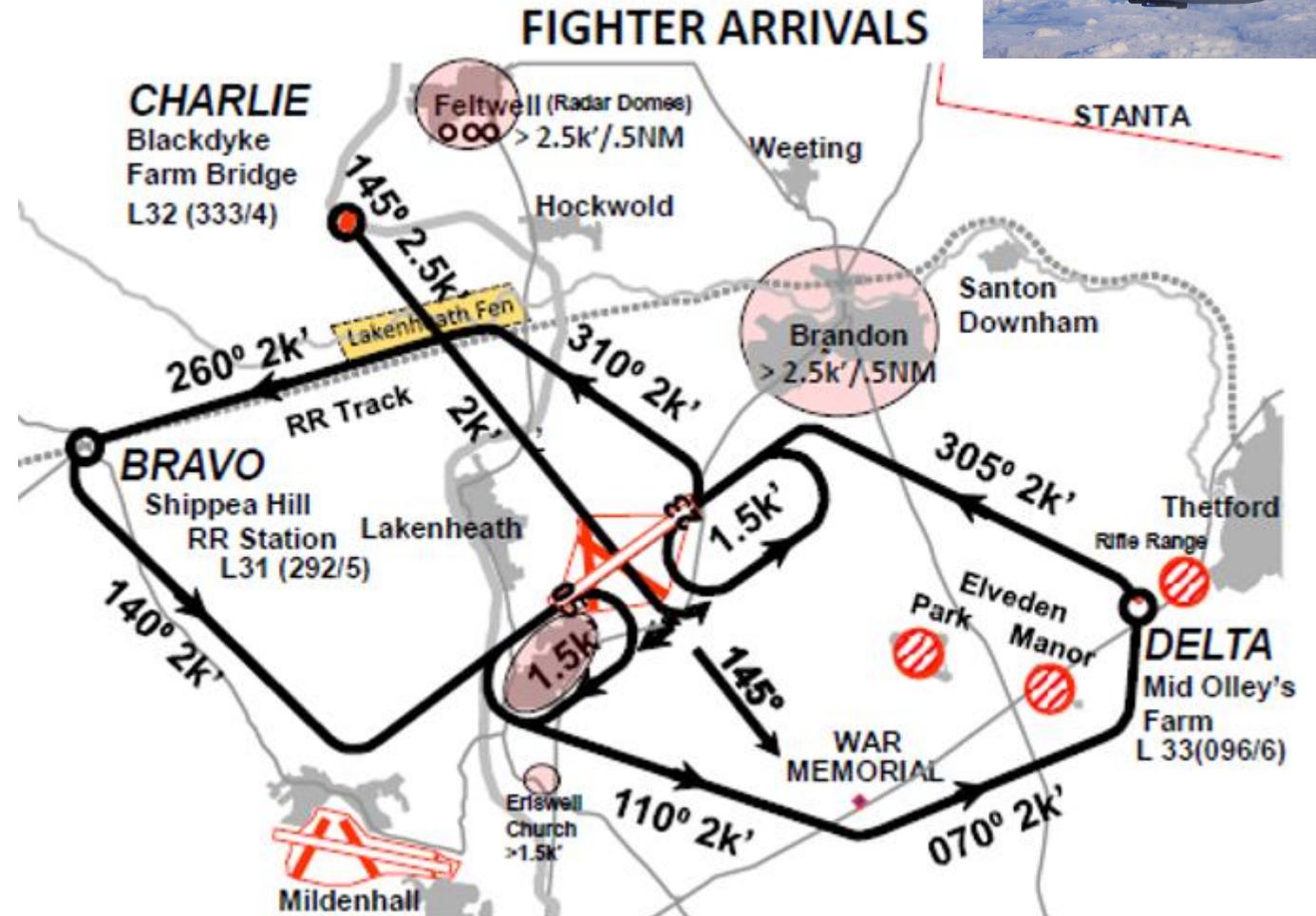
Multiple aircraft joining mostly from the north



Random entries into the circuit



Descents and circuits outside the CMATZ.



Lakenheath - glide circuits!



F35 practice engine failure – at anytime



Overhead from 10,000' to surface



One 360 degree turn to final approach



Illustration – not for navigation

RAPCON

- detail

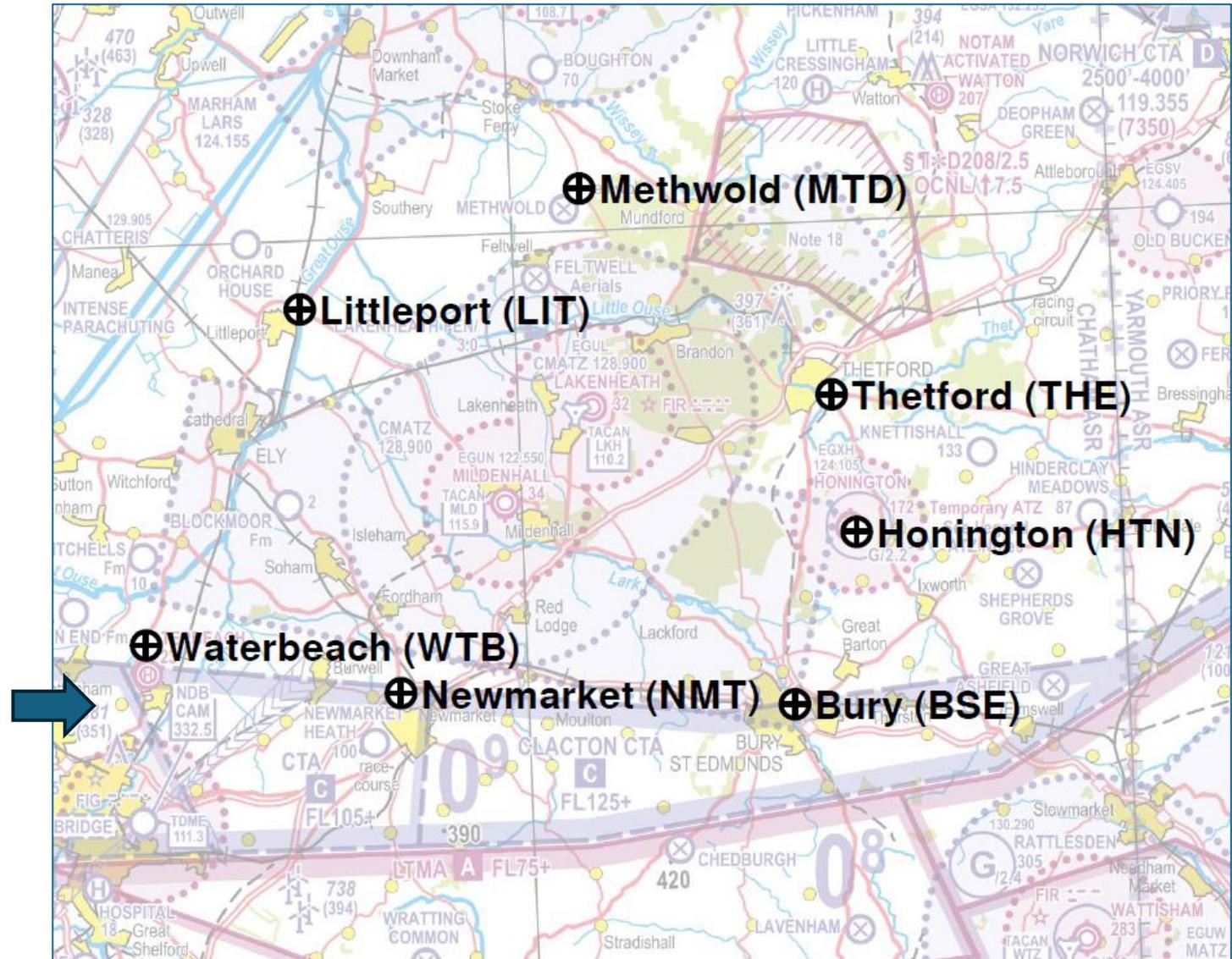
Cannot reliably detect gliders on radar – unless using a transponder

Keen to communicate – even with pilots who are nervous of using the radio!

Will vector around a glider **where known** (i.e. glider with transponder and/or radio)

Will recognise the BGA TPs in the image (right) for position reports

Where possible monitor FLARM traffic (non-assured)



How you can help to maintain safe shared airspace

Plan ahead & manage the risk by remaining clear of known airspace hazards. The extended approaches to both airfields are probably the greatest hazard.

If you do not make contact by radio close to the CMATZ, you will become a hazard - **so please stay clear.**

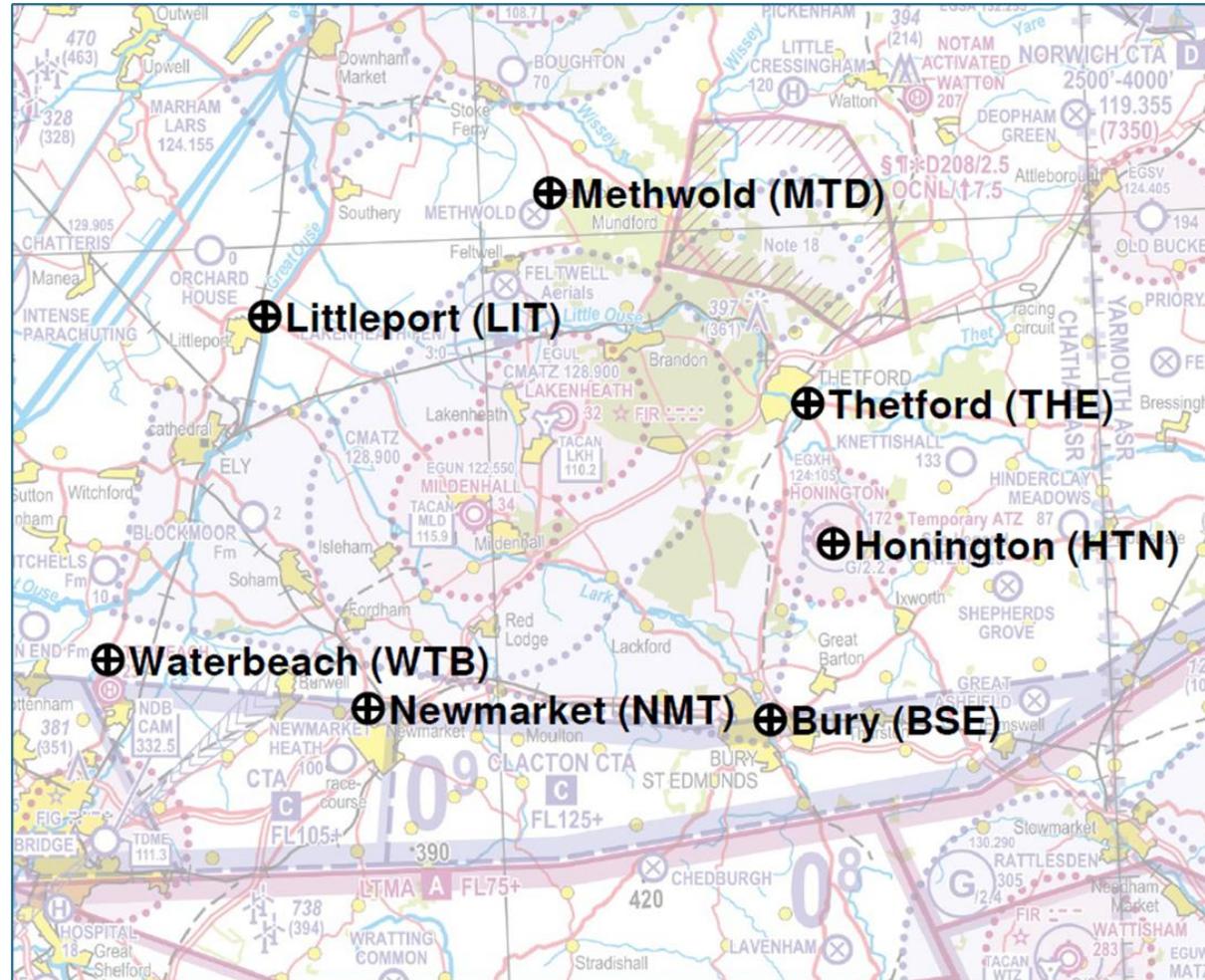
If you *need* to fly close to the CMATZ, please:

- ensure your transponder is operating (if equipped)
- call Lakenheath Radar on 128.900
- use the known reporting points (next two slides) – do not use other landmarks as they may not be known

Do not assume a quiet frequency means no traffic. Your radio will not be receiving the military UHF radio traffic.



Reporting points (known by RAPCON)



Suggested RT procedure

(CAP413 compliant)



Lakenheath Radar, Glider G-CHSK, request Basic Service



Glider G-CHSK, Lakenheath Radar, pass your message



Glider G-CHSK, from Gransden Lodge to Gransden Lodge, 1NM East of Newmarket, altitude 3500 feet QNH 1017, tracking to Bury St Edmunds



Glider SK, Roger, Are you transponder-equipped?



Negative, Glider SK



Glider SK, Basic Service, Report Bury St Edmunds



Basic Service, Wilco, Glider SK

Derived from CAP 413 Radiotelephony Manual Section 3.31

Please speak slowly and clearly.
You will need to listen carefully.

More information

[Airprox report 2025056 - JS1 / KC135](#)

[Military Aeronautical Information Publication \(AIP\)](#)

[BGA maintaining safe airspace guidance](#)