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

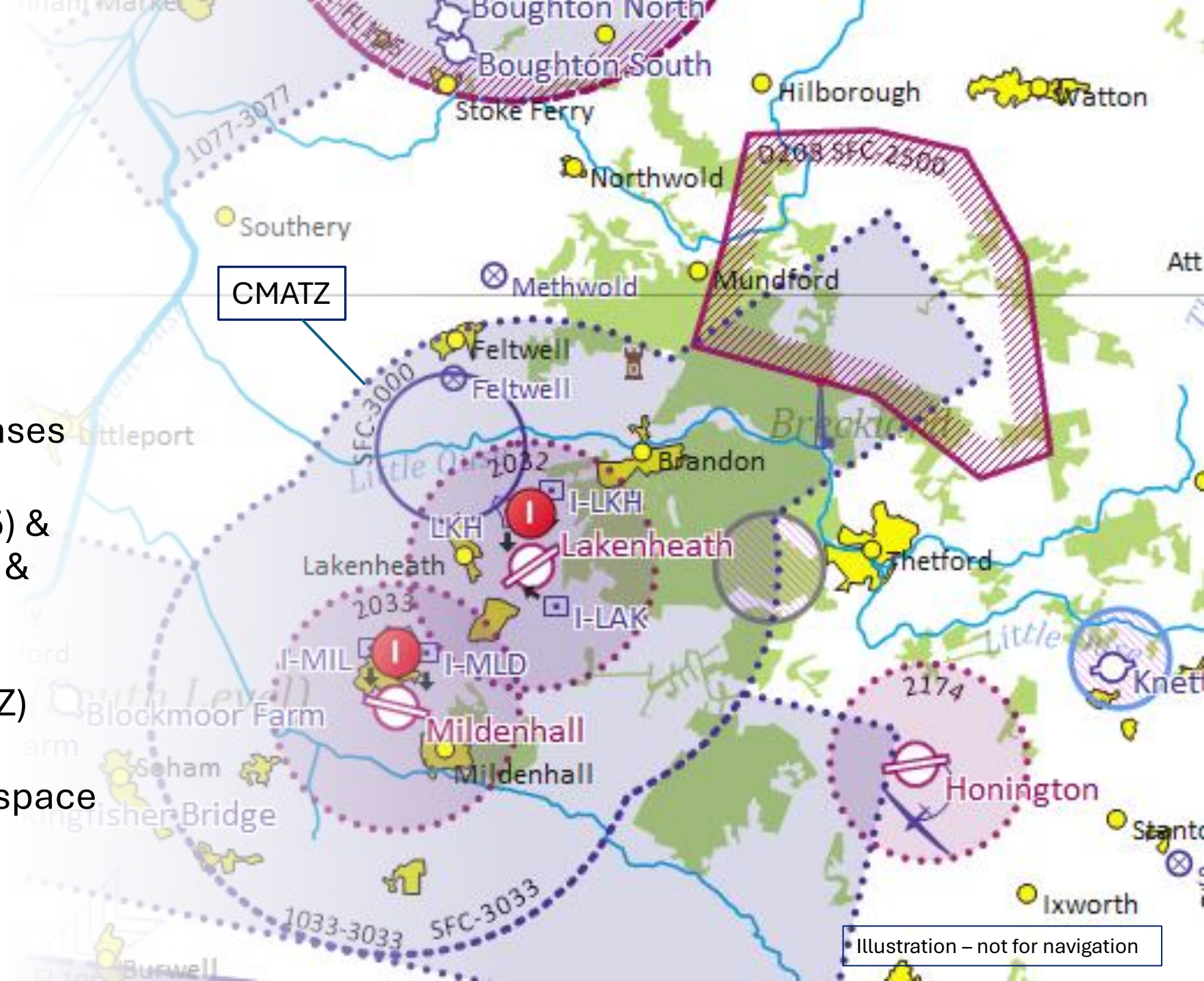
Lakenheath & Mildenhall - overview

Two very active USAF bases

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

Combined MATZ (CMATZ)

Surrounding class G airspace



Images - USAF

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

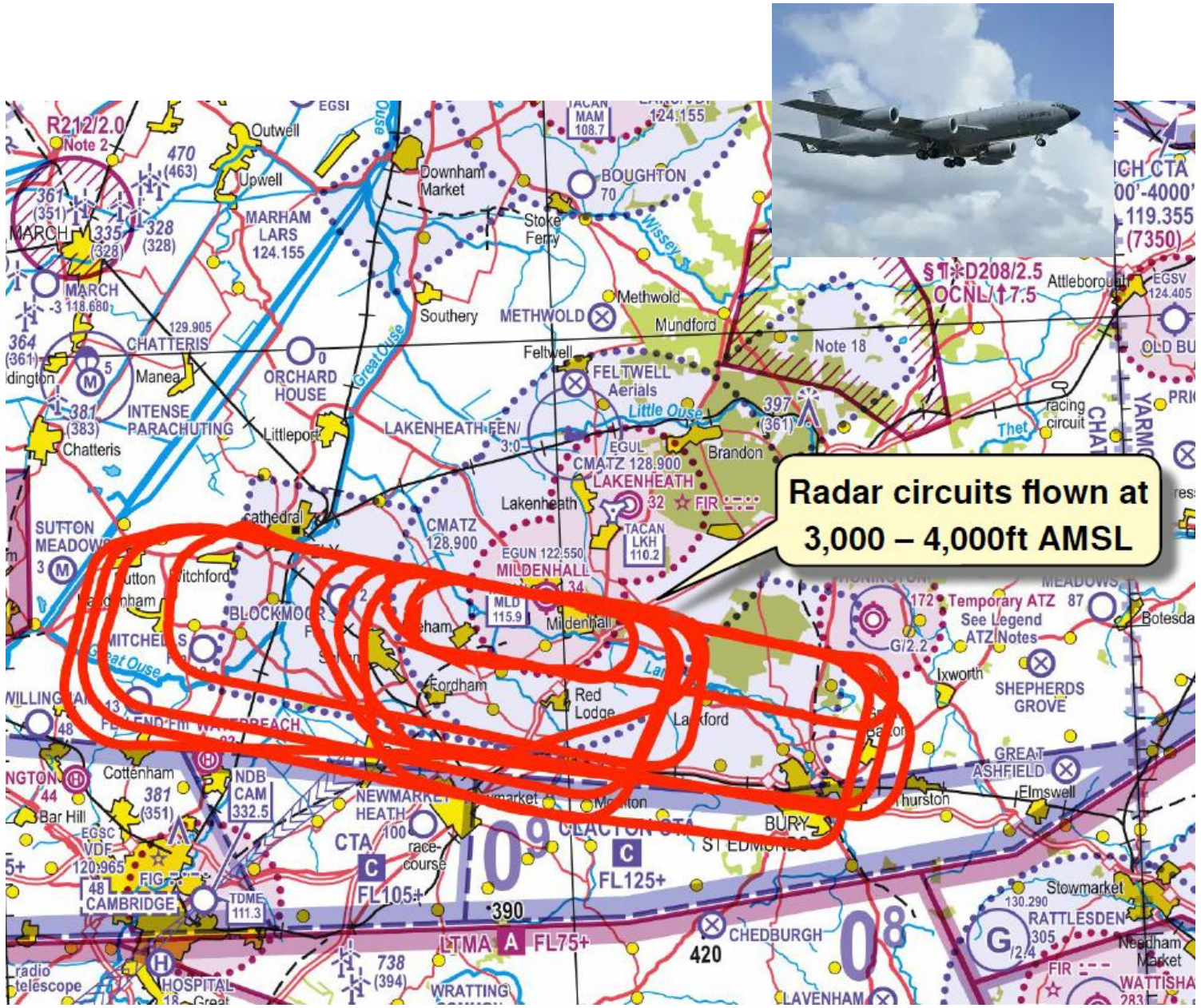


Illustration – not for navigation

Mildenhall - holds

- Airline sized aircraft
- Holds are routinely used
- The holds are outside the CMATZ

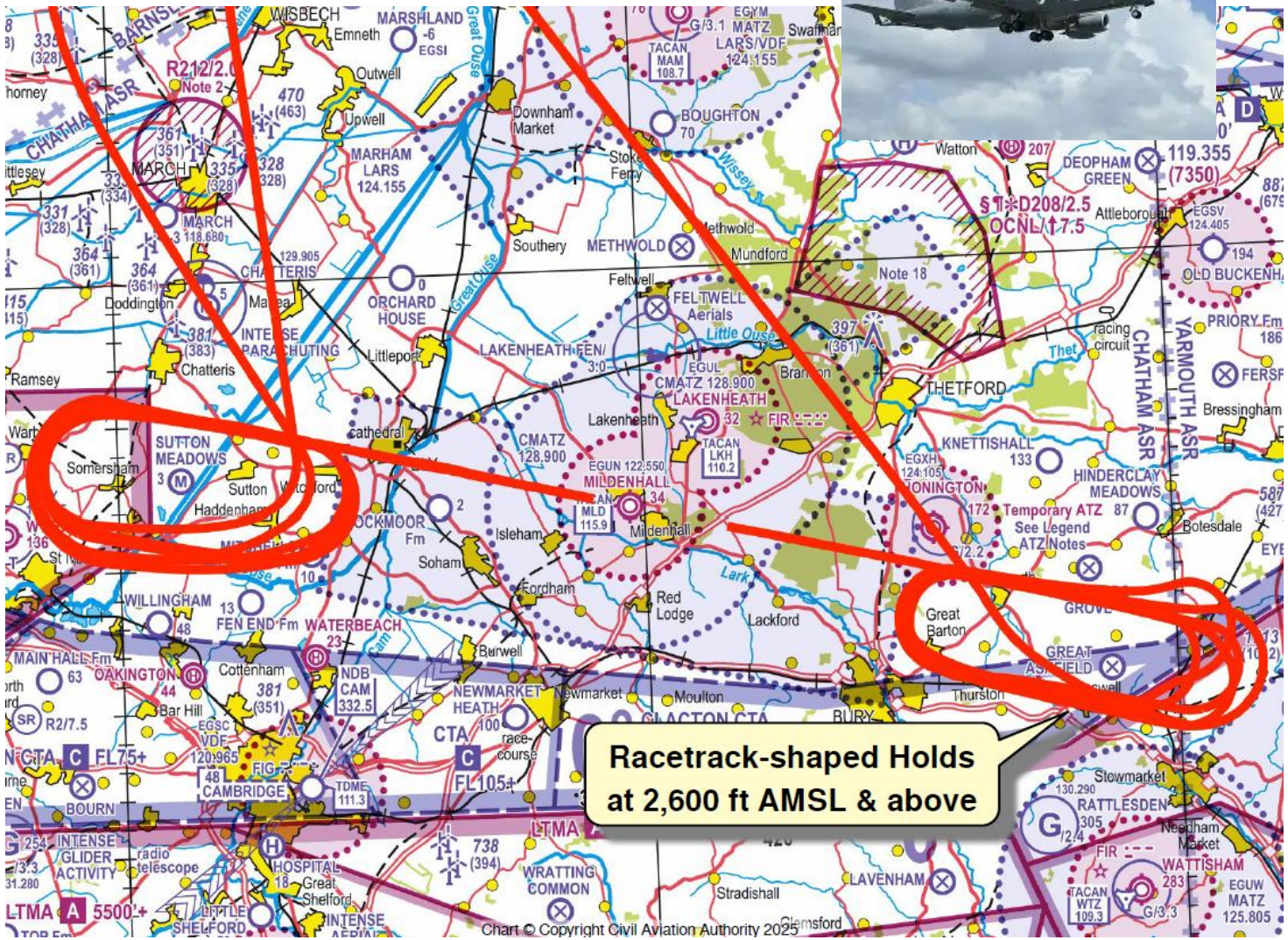


Illustration – not for navigation

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.

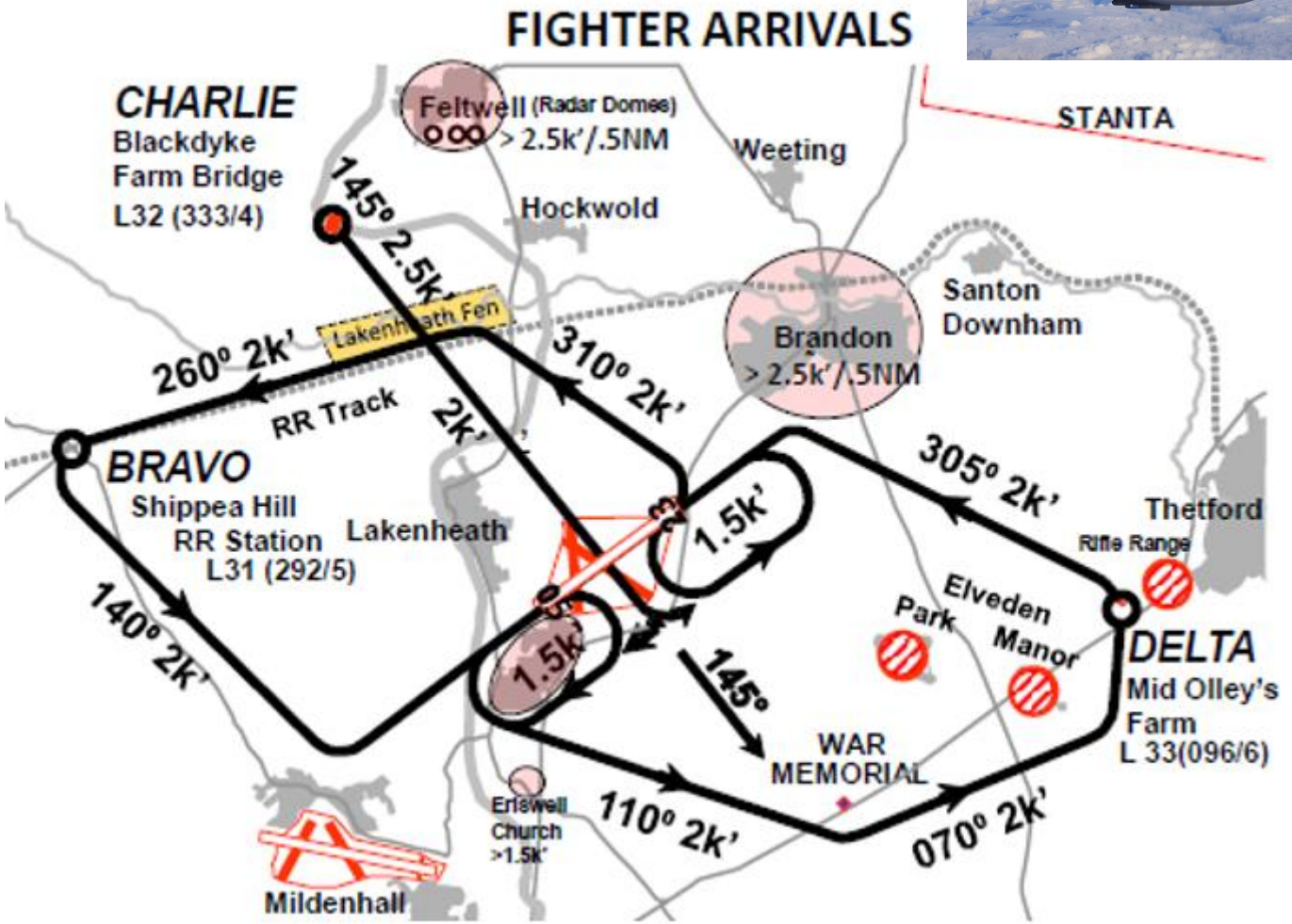


Illustration – not for navigation

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
- overview

- **R**adar **Ap**proach **Con**trol
- Serves both airfields
- Radar and radio (UHF and VHF)
- No ADS-B capability
- Monitors FLARM *where possible* (non-assured)

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)

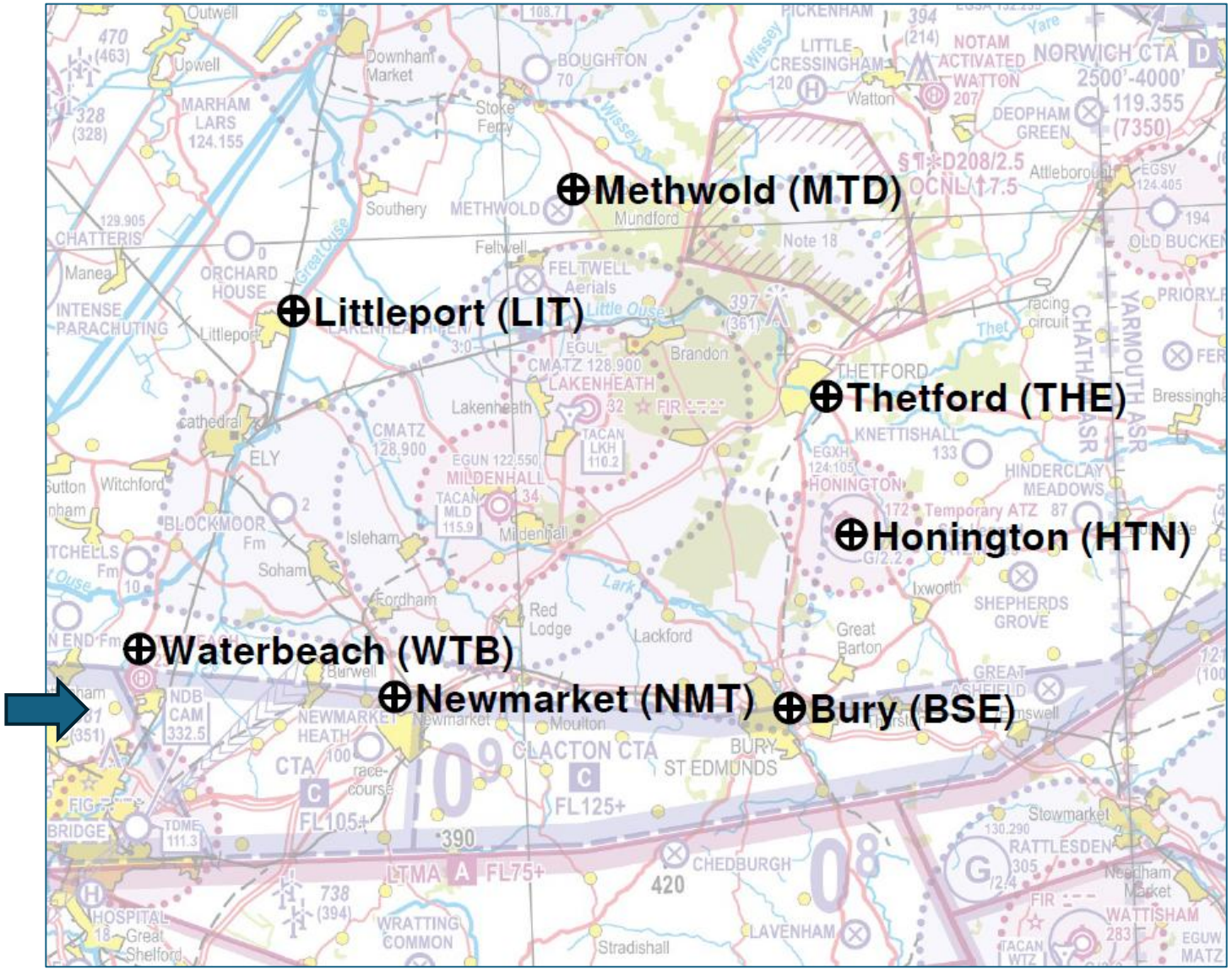
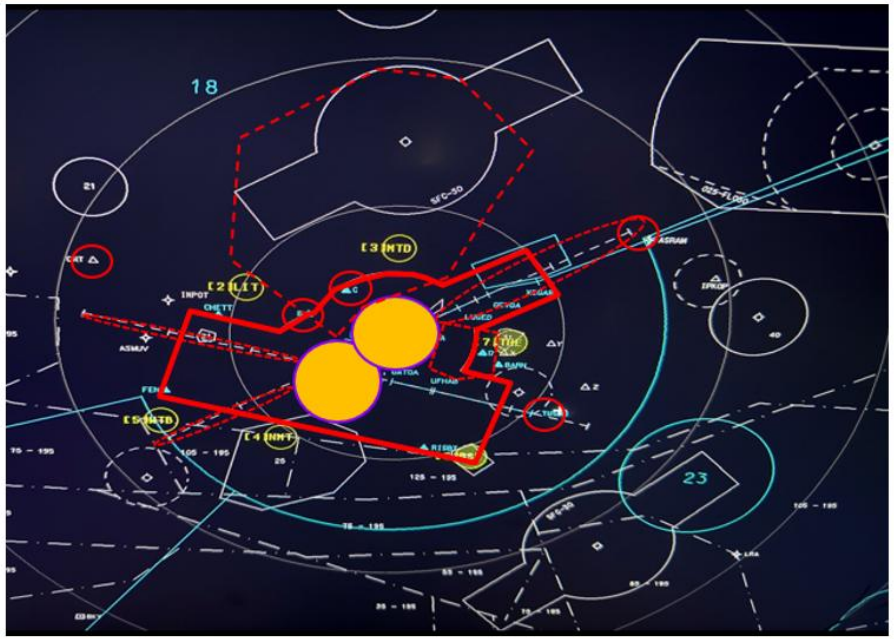


Illustration – not for navigation

RAPCON recognised BGA TPs - their perspective

British Gliding Association Turn Points

- WTB – Waterbeach
- NMT – Newmarket
- BSE – Bury St. Edmunds
- HTN – RAF Honington
- THE – Thetford
- MTD – Methwold
- LIT – Littleport



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)

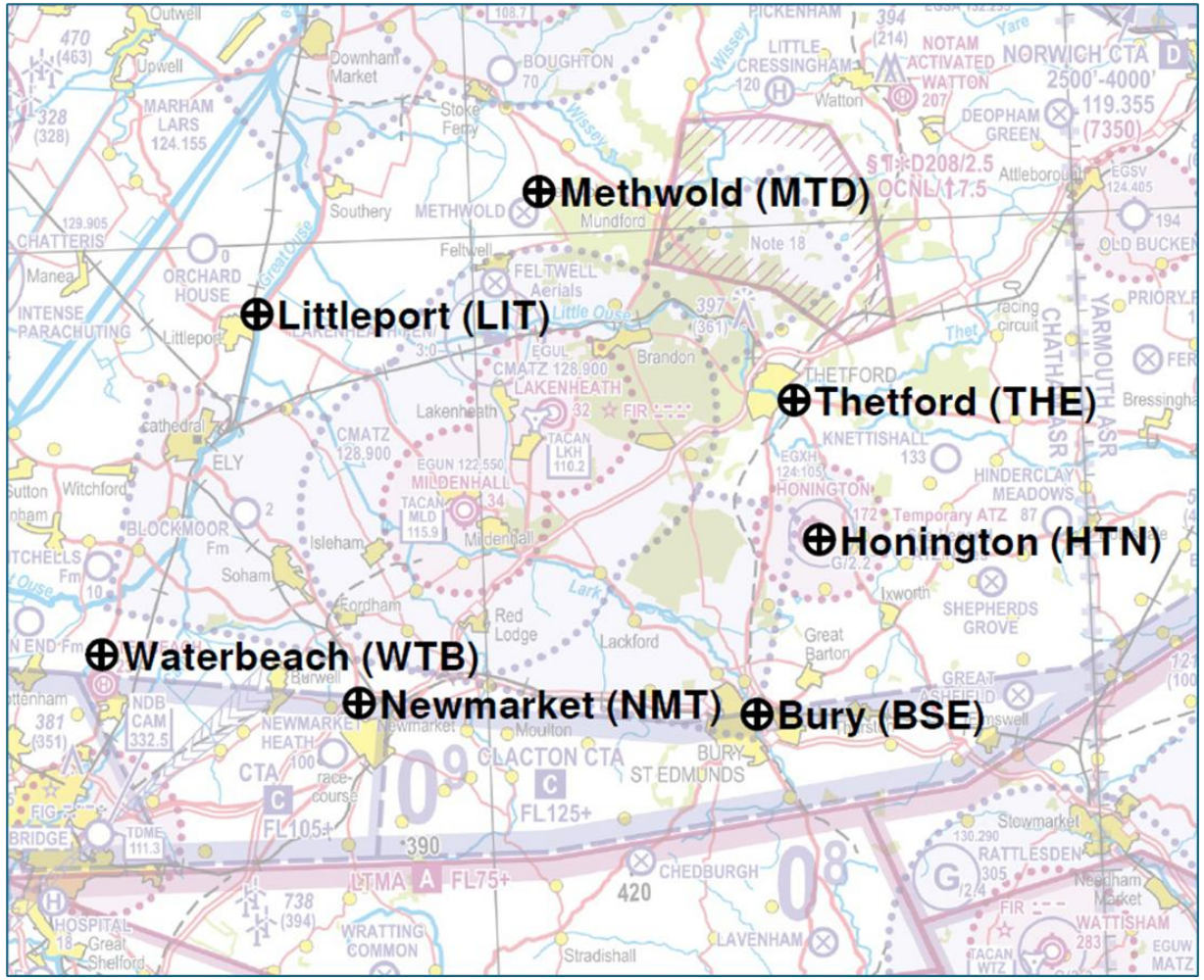
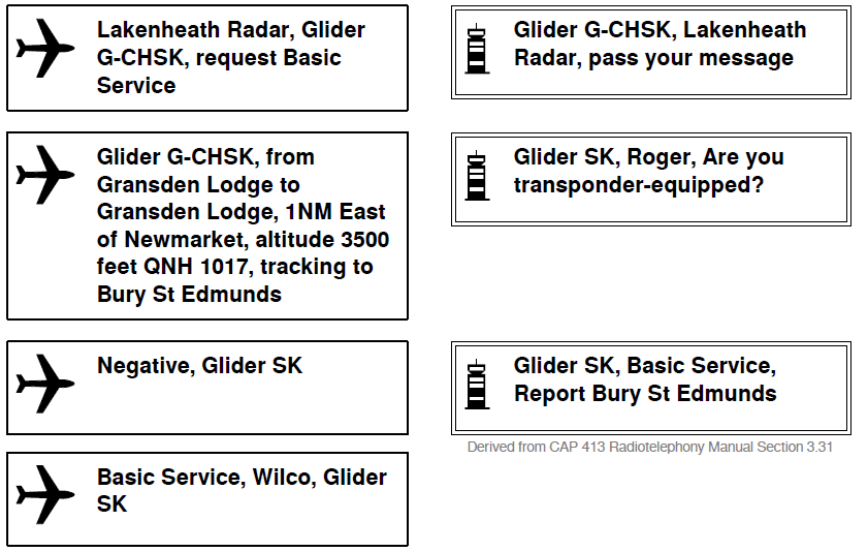


Illustration – not for navigation

Suggested RT procedure
(CAP413 compliant)



Derived from CAP 413 Radiotelephony Manual Section 3.31

Important note: the response you get from RAPCON may not be aligned with CAP413.
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