

Notes for Visiting Pilots

May 2018

N.B. These notes do not include details of the Winter Operations in force while the grass areas are wet. If you visit during one of these periods, we will supply additional information and briefing.

Flying Procedures at Shobdon

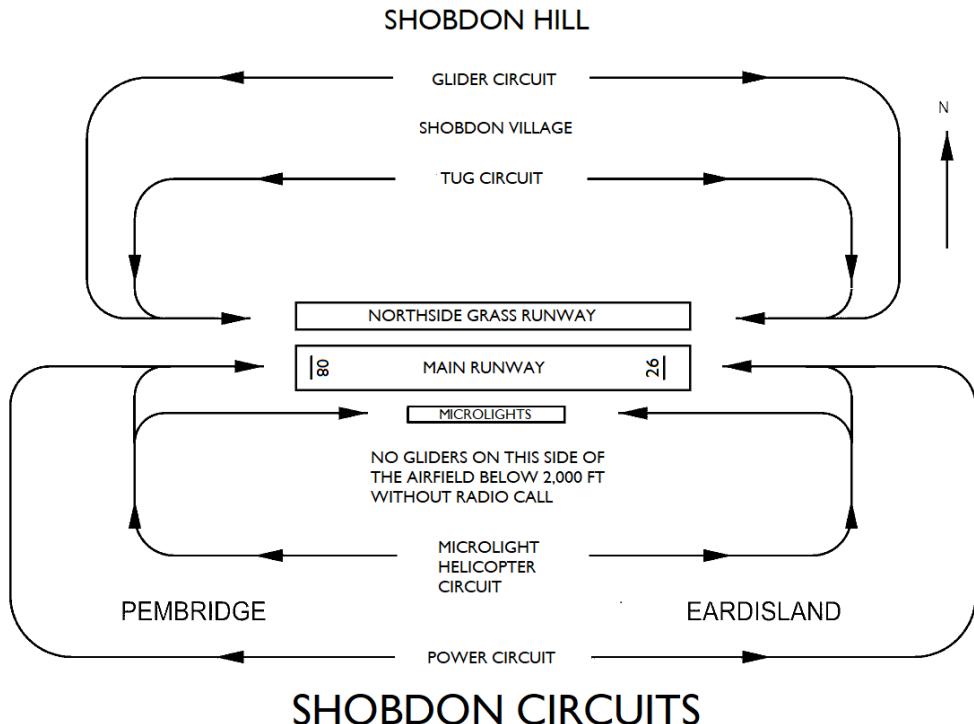
I. General arrangements and circuits

Shobdon is a CAA licensed airfield where, besides light aircraft activities, there are Microlights, Helicopters, Gliders AND Parachuting. Rules 40, 41 and 45 of the Air Navigation Order Rules of the Air apply, as being relevant to a licensed airfield with an ATZ – the contents of these rules are all explained in this document.

- 1.1 Powered aircraft are required to circuit south of the Airfield. Gliders and tugs are required to circuit to the North of the site. This means that when operating on Runway 26, gliders will be on a Right-hand circuit and, on Runway 08, a Left-hand circuit.
- 1.2 Visiting powered aircraft unfamiliar with Shobdon may descend to the North of the airfield to around 1000 ft QFE before crossing overhead to the circuit on the South. Therefore, if you are to the North of the airfield between 1000 and 2000 ft, watch out particularly for descending powered aircraft.
- 1.3 The normal circuits are shown on the map below. Stay clear of the powered aircraft circuit below 1500ft QFE when local soaring. If you are local soaring below 2000 ft in the ATZ to the south of the runway, remain on the Shobdon frequency 118.155 and inform the tower (Shobdon Information) of your position. If you are returning to the airfield from the South and may need to descend below 2000 ft before crossing the extended runway centre line, call Shobdon Information with your intentions in good time. Remember to keep a good lookout; the visibility from inside many power aircraft is limited.

A normal circuit pattern is mandatory and a dim view is taken of unorthodox approaches, which may lead to confusion with other airfield users. Be aware that powered aircraft and helicopters may land on the north side grass strip after following the power circuit or after doing a straight-in approach.

Aerobatics within the airfield ATZ or racing finishes are prohibited unless clearance has been obtained from Shobdon Information.



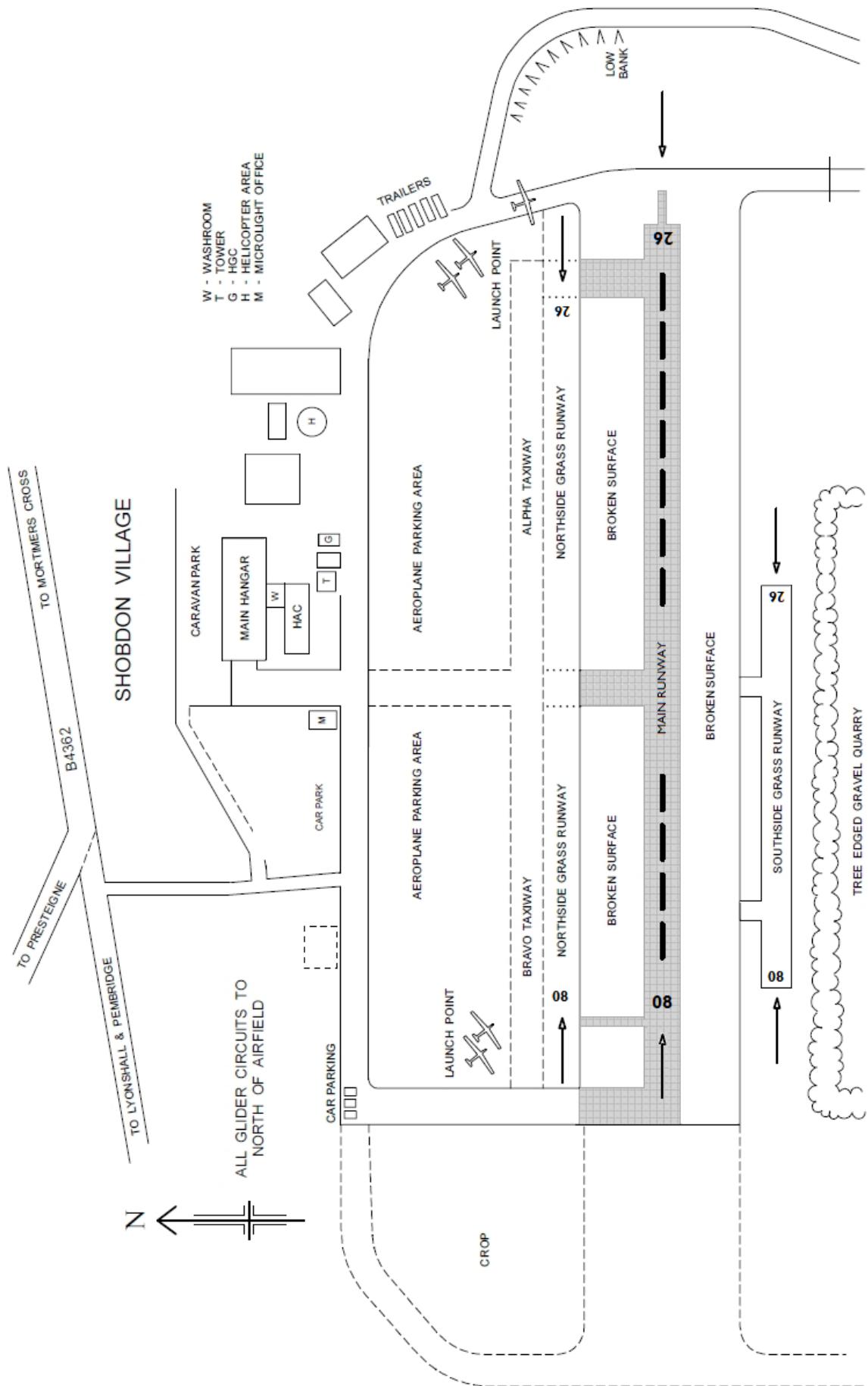


Figure - 2

2. Ground handling and Launching

HGC is a small club and we do not have a large number of people to help with ground handling and launching. Please do your share of the work at the launch point before and after your flight. If you are unsure about what to do, please ask a local member.

On Runway 26 the launch point is set up on the tarmac close to the trailer park, to the east of the end of the taxiway and north of the grass runway. When a glider is ready to launch, it should be moved by hand or towed with the buggy to the launch point, as shown on Fig. 2.

On Runway 08, the launch point is set up on the western end of the area marked 'Aeroplane Park' on Fig. 2 and to the north of the Bravo taxiway. Tugs and Gliders are parked to the North of the Bravo taxiway.

When possible, launch off the grass runway. However, if the ground is soft, if it is a long wingspan glider, or if there is a significant amount of parked or manoeuvring aircraft close to the runway, it may be safer to launch off the main runway. Either the tug or the glider pilot may request this and their decision is final. The choice of runway must be made clear to the tug pilot and to the ground crew before the launch is started.

The launch procedure at either end is similar. The tow rope is attached to the tug. A crew prepares to push the glider onto the runway, taking the Litebox signaling device, a signalling bat and, if at all possible, a handheld radio with them (frequency 118.155). When the glider pilot is ready, the wing tip holder attaches the rope to the glider. The wing tip holder goes to the tug side of the glider, holds the wings level, and holds the rope taut so that it cannot be overrun by the glider. Wait until the tug gets clearance from Shobdon Information and starts to taxi forward onto the active runway. On 26, push the glider along the tarmac strip until abeam the required runway. On 08, a light glider may be pushed across the grass and the taxiway onto the runway; a larger glider can be pushed along the tarmac beside the fence, taking great care not to catch the wings on the fence or the marker boards.

When on the runway, stop and turn the glider through 90°. Take the tail dolly off if this wasn't done previously. The crew member with the bat and radio should meantime monitor the tug and rope position and keep a good lookout behind and be ready to signal 'stop' if necessary.

When all the ground crew are clear, check that it is all clear above and behind and give the 'take-up slack' signal to the tug by swinging the launch bat under-arm and press up slack on the Litebox. As the rope comes tight, swing the bat over-arm for the 'all out' signal and press all out on the Litebox. If a 'stop' signal is needed, hold the bat high and still, shout STOP then press stop on Litebox and call for a stop (frequency 118.155). The pilot should immediately release.

All radio calls for launching are made by the tug pilot. A member of the ground crew should take the launch point hand-held, to listen to any relevant calls. The ground crew should vacate the runway quickly as soon as the glider is airborne in order to make the runway available to other aircraft.

When the tug returns and drops the rope, the rope should be recovered as soon as possible to avoid any other aircraft getting caught up in it. The crew can recover it without making a radio call provided that they do so immediately while the tug is still on the runway. If the recovery is delayed, a radio call should be made to Shobdon Information to request access to the runway.

High-visibility clothing should be worn at all times when accessing the runway. High-vis vests are available if your own clothing is not a suitable colour – please use them for your own safety and to preserve good relations with the airfield management.

3. Landing Areas

- 3.1 On Runway 26 – Normally on North side grass runway, marked on the map Fig 2, and clearing to the left. During winter, avoid landing within the first 50 metres since it is likely to be waterlogged and not capable of supporting traffic. If the grass is congested, landings may be made on runway 26 Main, but only after contacting Shobdon Information (frequency 118.155) (see R.T. procedure). If landing on the main runway clear to the right.

The Eastern edge of the airfield is bounded by a perimeter road and a 4 ft. high fence. **NEVER** approach **LOW** on Runway 26; turbulence and/or heavy sink are not uncommon, especially in North West winds. The grass runway is amply long enough.

- 3.2 On Runway 08 - Normally on North side grass and clearing to the right. Landings may be made on runway 08 Main, but only after contacting Shobdon Information (frequency 118.155). If landing on the main runway clear to the left.

Hangar/trailer flights - May land on the same area of the grass runway normally used when operating on 26, provided that Shobdon Information has been informed, but be aware that power aircraft may be crossing from the main runway to the aircraft parking area.

- 3.3 General - Power traffic also uses both these runways; there is always following traffic, so **do not stop in the middle of either runway**. Taxi off onto the rough ground between the two runways.

Larger span gliders (20 metres+) will generally prefer to use the main runway due to the narrowness of the North side grass strip.

The Western end of the landing strips is bounded with a wire fence which has RED conspicuity markers attached. The area between the western boundary of the old airfield and this fence may contain debris and should not be used except in emergency.

4. Powered aircraft taxi areas

These are marked on Fig 2. Both taxiways are adjacent to the grass runway, running continuously along the full length of the airfield. For runway 26, it is the 'Alpha' taxiway and for Runway 08 it is the 'Bravo' taxiway. Landings on the grass runway are therefore potentially in close proximity to taxiing aircraft; if there is any doubt about the safety of this for any reason, it is perfectly acceptable to land on the main runway (after a radio call). The exit (at point Charlie) from the main runway to the aeroplane parking areas or the taxiway is half-way along the airfield. Although gliders will normally have stopped by this point, it is important to watch carefully for any powered aircraft failing to check before they cross the grass runway.

5. Motor Gliders

Motorgliders flying engine off are treated as gliders i.e. other gliders have no priority over them. However motorgliders being flown as powered aircraft are to obey the rules for powered aircraft i.e. fly the powered circuit and give way to gliding traffic.

6. Radio

Shobdon powered aircraft operate on a frequency of **118.155**.

Gliders are required to call downwind to Shobdon Information on this frequency.
Normal calls (operating on 26) would be:

High key "Glider xxx downwind for 26 Northside grass" or "downwind for 26 Main"

If requested to do so **and only if you are not too busy with your circuit and approach**, also call:

Base leg "Glider xxx base leg"

Approach "Glider xxx final"

Cars towing or retrieving gliders are also required to request permission to use the taxiways or to cross the grass runway in either direction when retrieving a glider.

Normal calls would be:

Towing gliders from the hangar or trailers/rigging area to the launch point:

"Shobdon Information, Rover and glider combination/car and glider xxx combination, at the hangar/ trailers, request tow out to the glider launch point."

Crossing grass runway to retrieve glider after landing and returning across grass runway with glider:

"Shobdon Information, Rover to cross North grass"

Accessing the runways on foot other than to collect the rope should also be preceded by a radio call.

In all radio calls, do not worry if you forget the correct words to use. Simply make your call as clear as you can to explain what you are doing or want to do; aim to keep calls as brief as you can.

7. Airfield Access

Cars are permitted on the North side peri-track but care must be taken because power aircraft, which have priority, may be crossing between the hangars/pumps and the grass. When helicopter refueling with Avgas is taking place, the fuel line may be laid across the peri-track and you must not drive across it under any circumstances. Normally a warning board will be placed on the track.

The glider trailer park is at the East end of airfield and gliders may be rigged on the trailer or on the grass area opposite, but note that this part of the perimeter track may have a high volume of farm vehicle traffic. Visiting trailers may also be parked on the north side of the peritrack to the west of the weather station towards the west end of the airfield, but please check first with HGC before using this area. Please also remove **all** equipment and rubbish when leaving, as failure to keep the area clean will result in loss of permission from the landowner to use it.

When operating on 08, gliders may be towed from the trailer park, after permission from Shobdon Information, to the 08 launch point via the Alpha and Bravo taxiways. Only the HGC buggy may be left at the launch point, all cars must be removed to the north side of the peritrack.

Access to and from the launch point 08 by car or on foot is via the Northside peri-track. As a powered aircraft may occasionally take a 'wrong turn', always keep a good look-out for taxiing aircraft.

Retrieving gliders off the runway is normally done by the HGC buggy (or occasionally a Landrover). Please do not use your own car without checking with a member of HGC.

8. Military Activity

There is some military low-level flying especially midweek. **KEEP A GOOD LOOKOUT AT ALL TIMES.** Occasionally the airfield will be used as a target, but normally with the prior permission of the airfield manager. A general warning may be broadcast on the airfield frequency (118.155) but do not expect warning transmissions on 130.1 MHz.

9. Controlled Airspace and Wave flying

There are no significant airspace constraints of concern when thermal or ridge soaring. However, when flying in wave, you may be high enough to need to pay attention to the local airspace.

Gliders are not generally permitted in airways. Airways N862 and N864 run overhead and to the west of Shobdon, with a base of FL145. The base reduces significantly to the north and south. Note carefully where the base of the airway steps down. Please use an up to date chart to check the airspace and make sure that you are clear about the boundaries. Current charts may be bought at the Aero Club reception desk.

Even experienced pilots may inadvertently stray into controlled airspace if not paying sufficient attention. Allow an extra generous altitude margin when achieving a high rate of climb. When the wind is strong be careful that you are not drifted downwind into an airway.

There is a BGA letter of agreement that lists the procedure by which part of N862 airway can be opened for access by gliders. See "Riles gliding areas" on this page:

<http://www.gliding.co.uk/bgainfo/airspace/loas.htm>. This page also lists the procedure to open gliding areas above FL195 to the west of N864. We have a set of paperwork to assist in managing the use of these areas; please ask for further information if you are interested.

10. Cloud Flying

Cloud flying should only be done in the Shobdon ATZ after informing Shobdon Information (frequency 118.155). If the tower is not manned, announce your intentions on the same frequency, preceding your call with "Shobdon Traffic".

11. Airfield Rules

There will be changes in the procedures at Shobdon from time to time and particularly in winter if the airfield is wet. The duty Flight Information Service Officer (FISO) sometimes does a short briefing for visiting groups, in addition to any briefing provided by HGC.

Remember there are other users of the airfield with differing requirements and always pay attention to guidance and instructions provided by HGC or by the staff manning the tower. This airfield can be busy, especially during the weekend, and the flying activities may be considerably more intense and varied than you are likely to experience at other sites, so be prepared to **THINK AHEAD** of all the eventualities **BEFORE FLYING** and do ask the duty instructor if you are unsure of anything.

Ample good fields are available if a rope-break should necessitate an outlanding. If an abbreviated circuit should be necessary, then aim to keep the whole manoeuvre clear of all powered traffic. **THINK** about this before flying rather than when it happens, you may not have sufficient thinking time available at a few hundred feet. Downwind landings are high risk and on an active airfield are potentially dangerous.

12. Outlanding

Remember to have with you the Aero Club telephone number (01568 708369) and leave your contact details with the person you speak to, which can be passed on to the gliding club. Alternatively, phone the HGC launch point phone (07732 181342) or the mobile number of a fellow pilot, who should also let the gliding club know of your whereabouts.

13. Payment

After flying please complete a payment slip with details of your flight time and tow height, add your remittance, place in an envelope and post through the slot of the payment box in the gliding club cabin. Please also remember to pay for trailer parking and temporary membership. See the notice board just inside the portacabin door for full details.

14. Facilities

Daily weather reports and NOTAMS are posted on the notice board in the Aero Club office which is situated at the West end of the main building.

The canteen opens at 9 a.m. - see the general notice board for closing time. The bar may be open on Thursday to Saturday evenings and evening meals may be available by arrangement.

15. HGC policy for visiting tugs

HGC welcomes visitors either individually or in groups. We appreciate that an extra tug can improve the launch rate when there are several gliders to launch and provides backup in case of technical problems with the HGC tug. Therefore groups of visitors are welcome to bring a tug to Shobdon provided it is operated in a way which does not adversely impact the finances of HGC. The aerotow fees paid to HGC include an element which contributes towards the landing fees paid for the use of the airfield by the tug. If the whole aerotow fee paid to HGC is passed on to another organisation (for example to another gliding club) then HGC does not receive any contribution towards the landing fee. HGC needs to maximise the use of its own tug or else HGC will need to raise revenue to pay the landing fees by other means. This could be done by increasing the cost of membership or by HGC retaining part of each aerotow fee. We feel it is better value for visitors to keep our charges low and to maximise use of the HGC tug. Therefore we ask that visiting tugs are operated as follows:

When the HGC tug is ready and available and there isn't a queue of gliders waiting for a launch the HGC tug will do all the aerotows.

A visiting tug is encouraged to aerotow when any of the following occurs:

- There is more than one glider ready and wanting a launch
- There is one glider ready and wanting a launch and the HGC tug is launching a previous glider
- The HGC tug is unavailable for some reason (for example it is not yet on line, it needs fuel, the pilot needs a break, or it is unserviceable)

We hope visiting pilots will understand the reason for this guidance and abide by it.

Should HGC incur any additional cost due to the operation of a visiting tug, HGC reserves the right to pass the cost on to the operator of the visiting tug.

Visiting tug pilots are to obtain an airfield briefing from the duty Flight Information Service Officer (FISO) or Herefordshire Aero Club CFI, in addition to any briefing provided by HGC.

We hope that this information is informative and constructive and assists with your enjoyment of the facilities. If from your own experiences, you feel that further information needs to be included for visitors, please do not hesitate to contact the CFI Herefordshire Gliding Club.