

SERIOUS INCIDENT

Aircraft Type and Registration:	Pierre Robin DR400/180R Remorqueur, G-ELUN	
No & Type of Engines:	1 Lycoming O-360-A3A piston engine	
Year of Manufacture:	1975 (Serial no: 1102)	
Date & Time (UTC):	3 July 2016 at 1115 hrs	
Location:	Warton Aerodrome, Lancashire	
Type of Flight:	Private	
Persons on Board:	Crew - 1	Passengers - 1
Injuries:	Crew - None	Passengers - None
Nature of Damage:	None	
Commander's Licence:	Private Pilot's Licence	
Commander's Age:	61 years	
Commander's Flying Experience:	224 hours (of which 136 were on type) Last 90 days - 10 hours Last 28 days - 4 hours	
Information Source:	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot	

Synopsis

Following a cross-country flight, the pilot of G-ELUN misidentified Warton Aerodrome for Blackpool Airport and conducted an approach and landing at Warton, before being instructed to go-around and reposition to Blackpool.

History of the flight

The pilot was flying from Fishburn Airfield, County Durham, to Blackpool Airport; his first flight into Blackpool. On arriving in the Blackpool area, from the north-east, the pilot reported east abeam Blackpool High Tower where he was instructed to orbit due to other traffic. He entered an orbit just north of Inskip disused airfield, before being instructed to continue for a right base join for Runway 28 at Blackpool. The Blackpool circuit was active with at least two other aircraft at the time.

On exiting the orbit, he identified an airfield and positioned to land at it while looking for traffic which he believed would be on the downwind leg in the circuit. The pilot had incorrectly identified Warton, instead of Blackpool, and made an approach to Warton's Runway 25.

The Warton radar controller had noticed the aircraft track across an area of restricted airspace, just north of Warton, and advised Warton Tower of an unknown contact that may be approaching the airfield. The Tower controller shone a red Aldis lamp at the aircraft and varied the runway light settings in an attempt to make contact with the pilot, without success.

As the aircraft touched down, Blackpool ATC instructed it to go-around and the pilot converted his landing to a touch-and-go. He then repositioned to land at Blackpool, without further incident.

Comment

Although the Warton Approach was unable to communicate with the pilot of G-ELUN, the radar controller was able to monitor the aircraft's progress and alert the Warton Tower controller of its presence. This demonstrated the value of the radar service at Warton in providing an additional safety barrier.

This is not the first aircraft to misidentify Warton for Blackpool. In early 2016, the operator of Warton Aerodrome produced a video to assist pilots in the correct identification of the two airfields. It can be located at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CQC7JnwdY84&feature=youtu.be#>