

## SERIOUS INCIDENT

<b>Aircraft Type and Registration:</b>	Cessna 182Q, G-BRRK	
<b>No &amp; Type of Engines:</b>	1 Continental Motors Corp O-470-U piston engine	
<b>Year of Manufacture:</b>	1977 (Serial no: 182-66160)	
<b>Date &amp; Time (UTC):</b>	24 August 2022 at 1006 hrs	
<b>Location:</b>	Finmere Microlight Site, Buckinghamshire	
<b>Type of Flight:</b>	Private	
<b>Persons on Board:</b>	Crew - 1	Passengers - 1
<b>Injuries:</b>	Crew - None	Passengers - None
<b>Nature of Damage:</b>	None	
<b>Commander's Licence:</b>	Private Pilot's Licence	
<b>Commander's Age:</b>	63 years	
<b>Commander's Flying Experience:</b>	545 hours (of which 212 were on type) Last 90 days - 7 hours Last 28 days - 5 hours	
<b>Information Source:</b>	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot	

### Summary

The aircraft flew an approach to Runway 28 at Finmere aerodrome lower than required to keep a safe distance above road traffic passing the runway threshold. The right main landing gear contacted the top of an articulated vehicle and the pilot elected to go around. The aircraft made an emergency call on 121.5 MHz and continued to Elstree aerodrome without further incident. Although there are no regulatory requirements for unlicensed aerodromes, the owner of Finmere aerodrome has stated her intention to increase awareness of the large volume of vehicles on the road for pilots unfamiliar with the aerodrome.

### History of the flight

The aircraft departed Elstree aerodrome with the intention of flying to Finmere aerodrome with one passenger on board. The departure and enroute segments of the flight were uneventful and the aircraft joined a left-hand circuit for Runway 28 at Finmere as planned. The pilot stated he was familiar with Finmere having flown there several times previously and he was aware of a road which passes perpendicular and close to the end of Runway 28.

As the aircraft turned on to final at approximately 1.5 miles from the threshold, the pilot recalled visually confirming there was no traffic on the road. As the aircraft approached, the pilot noticed a vehicle turning on to the road from the right in his peripheral vision. He stated that at this time he was focused on his landing point on the runway. He described hearing

a 'bang' as the aircraft passed over the road and the passenger saw an articulated vehicle pass underneath them. The pilot and passenger both suspected the right main landing gear had contacted the vehicle, although the flying characteristics of the aircraft did not change.

The pilot opted to go around in order to assess if the aircraft had sustained any damage. The pilot and passenger were not able to visually identify any structural damage to the landing gear. As Finmere does not have an ATC service, the pilot called the Distress and Diversion Cell (D&D) on the emergency frequency 121.5 MHz. He declared an emergency and requested assistance from the D&D Cell to obtain a visual assessment of the right landing gear prior to landing.

The pilot was informed by the D&D controller that the aircraft could be inspected by ground personnel at Oxford Airport or Elstree aerodrome. He opted to return to Elstree aerodrome where he flew a low pass before ATC and a ground operations vehicle confirmed they could not see any damage to the aircraft's landing gear. The aircraft landed without further incident.

The driver of the articulated vehicle informed the AAIB of the event and provided photographs of tyre marks on the top of the articulated vehicle. A maintenance inspection after the event revealed no damage to the aircraft.

### **Aerodrome information**

Finmere Aerodrome is an unlicensed aerodrome located 11 nm west of Milton Keynes. It has one asphalt runway, 10/28, which is 701 m long. The end of Runway 28 is 35 m from the road (Figure 1). Finmere requires pilots to request permission before visiting.

The owner of the aerodrome stated that pilots on a "normal approach path" to Runway 28 should have sufficient height to pass over any vehicles using the road and there have been no previous incidents or near misses reported. She stated that when granting permission in future, she intended to inform pilots unfamiliar with the aerodrome about the high volume of articulated vehicles on the road.

### **Unlicensed aerodromes**

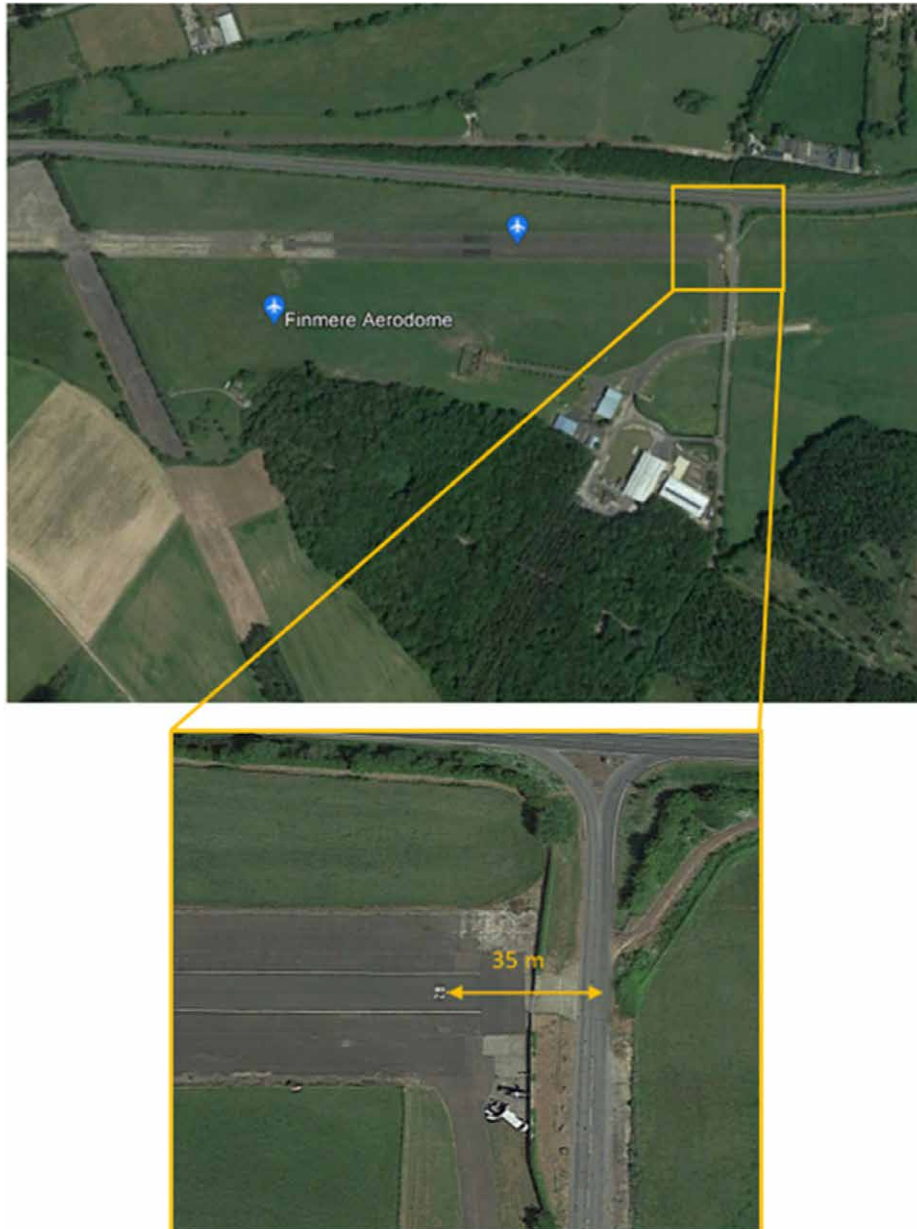
Unlicensed aerodromes are not subject to oversight from the CAA. CAP 793 – '*Safe Operating Practices at Unlicensed Aerodromes*' provides guidance on operating an unlicensed aerodrome, although its contents are not mandatory.

*'[T]he pilot-in-command shall be responsible for the safety of the aircraft'* as stated in the retained Regulation (EU) No 965/2012<sup>1</sup>. The pilot-in-command is also responsible for *'the initiation, continuation, termination or diversion of a flight in the interest of safety'*.

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#### **Footnote**

<sup>1</sup> EU965/2012 NCO.GEN.105 <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2012/965/annex/VII> [accessed on 4 November 2022].



**Figure 1**

Distance from Runway 28 markings to public road

## Conclusion

The aircraft approached the aerodrome over a road lower than necessary to maintain a safe distance from traffic using the road, resulting in the right aircraft wheel contacting the top of an articulated vehicle as it passed beneath the aircraft.