

## Accident

<b>Aircraft Types and Registrations:</b>	1) Slingsby T.21B, WB 924 2) DJI Mini 2
<b>No &amp; Type of Engines:</b>	1) 0 engines 2) 4 electric motors
<b>Year of Manufacture:</b>	1) 1947 2) Unknown
<b>Date &amp; Time (UTC):</b>	7 October 2023 at 1657 hrs
<b>Location:</b>	Dunstable Airfield, Bedfordshire
<b>Type of Flight:</b>	1) Private 2) Private
<b>Persons on Board:</b>	1) Crew - 1                      Passengers - 1 2) Crew - 0                      Passengers - 0
<b>Injuries:</b>	1) Crew - None                  Passengers - None 2) Crew - N/A                  Passengers - N/A
<b>Nature of Damage:</b>	1) Superficial damage to the fabric surface of the leading edge of the glider's left wing. 2) The damage to the unmanned aircraft is unknown.
<b>Commander's Licence:</b>	1) BGA Gliding Certificate 2) Not known
<b>Commander's Age:</b>	1) 59 years 2) Not known
<b>Commander's Flying Experience:</b>	1) 864 hours (of which 3 were on type) Last 90 days - 14 hours Last 28 days - 8 hours 2) Unknown
<b>Information Source:</b>	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot and AAIB enquiries

## Synopsis

During the approach, the glider was struck by a small, unmanned aircraft (UA) that from the memory card recovered from the UA showed that it was intentionally flown close to the glider. The glider sustained superficial damage to the surface of the wing.

## History of the flight

On the approach to land at Dunstable Airfield, at approximately 100 ft agl, the pilot and passenger in WB 924 saw a small UA which several seconds later passed close to the head of the passenger and struck the leading edge of the left wing. The glider landed safely, and the damage was later assessed as "cosmetic". The glider pilot reported that the UA was flown from a ridge, east of the airfield.

The UA fell to the ground and was retrieved by two young individuals who shared the UA log and video footage with a witness. The log and video show that the UA was flown on the direct approach path of the glider, and the glider was in view of the camera on the UA. Figure 1 is an image taken from the UA video just prior to impact. The video also shows that the UA was being flown from a public car park located on Dunstable Downs and that the young operator was accompanied by two adults.



**Figure 1**

View from the UA camera just before impact (used with permission)

### **Operation of unmanned aircraft**

#### *UA involved in the accident*

From a photograph of the UA, taken by a witness after the accident (Figure 2), it was identified as a DJI Mini 2, which is equipped with a camera and weighs 249 g. The images supplied to the AAIB did not display an Operator ID, nor was an ID reported to the AAIB.



**Figure 2**

UA after the collision (used with permission)

### *Regulations and guidance*

A UA is classified as an aircraft and the Air Navigation Order Article 241 states:

*'A person must not recklessly or negligently cause or permit an aircraft to endanger any person property.'*

The Regulations for the operation of UAs are in UK Regulation (EU) 2019/947. The CAA have published guidance material in The Drone Code<sup>1</sup>. The Code states that for a UA below a weight of 250 g, and equipped with a camera, an Operator ID is required, which must be labelled on the UA. Operators must be 18 years or over to obtain an Operator ID. Younger pilots can still fly the UA under the supervision of their guardian or parent providing they register for an Operator ID.

### **Conclusion**

The midair collision occurred because the UA was intentionally flown on the approach path of the glider. Operation of the UA required an Operator ID, but the pilots were both too young to obtain one.

---

#### **Footnote**

<sup>1</sup> The Drone and Model Aircraft Code [The Drone and Model Aircraft Code | UK Civil Aviation Authority \(caa.co.uk\)](https://www.caa.co.uk/News-and-Information/Drone-and-Model-Aircraft-Code). [accessed March 2024].