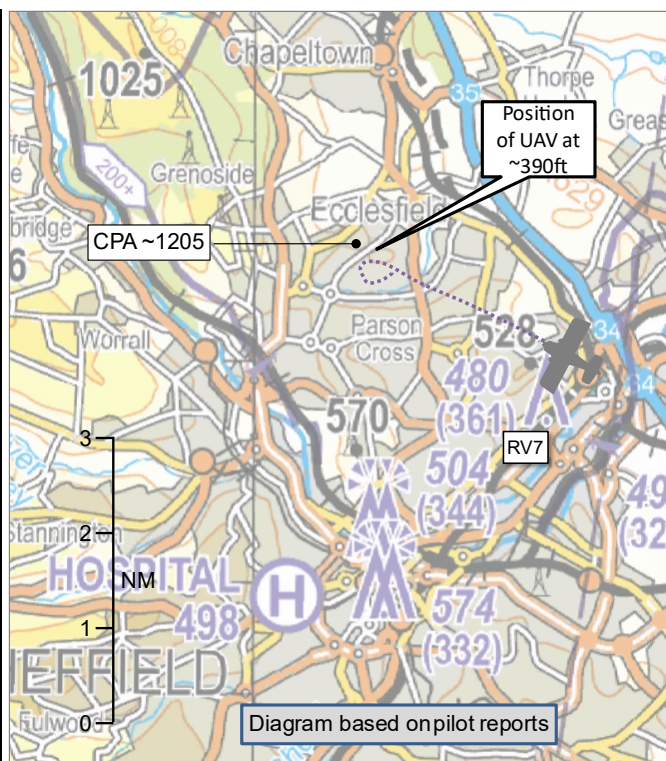


AIRPROX REPORT No 2026030

Date: 26 Mar 2026 Time: ~1205Z Position: 5325N 00128W Location: Sheffield

PART A: SUMMARY OF INFORMATION REPORTED TO UKAB

Recorded	Aircraft 1	Aircraft 2
Aircraft	DJI Matrice 4e	RV7
Operator	Civ UAS	Civ FW
Airspace	London FIR	London FIR
Class	G	G
Rules	VLOS	NK
Service	None	Unknown
Provider	N/A	N/A
Altitude/FL	NK	NK
Transponder	Not fitted	NK
Reported		
Colours	Grey	Maroon
Lighting	Nav lights, strobe	NR
Conditions	NK	NR
Visibility	>10km	NR
Altitude/FL	<120m (~390ft)	NR
Altimeter	AGL	NK
Heading	NK	NR
Speed	0kt	NR
ACAS/TAS	Not fitted	Unknown
Separation at CPA		
Reported	<100ft V/400m H	NR
Recorded	NK	



THE DJI MATRICE OPERATOR reports that, whilst capturing [an event] at 100m AGL, a light aircraft came in from a southeasterly direction and orbited [a house] emitting pink smoke. It was believed the aircraft was below the drone's altitude at times and below 500ft AGL. As soon as they saw the low altitude of the aircraft, they analysed the path and waited for it to be heading away and descended to 30m AGL. The light aircraft was flying low, erratic orbits and simple aerobatics, so it was safer to descend than remain at altitude. The aircraft flew several orbits then departed in a southeasterly direction. They were operating the drone in the Open Category and maintained VLOS with the drone at all times and used visual separation and the camera on the drone to maintain separation. Had the aircraft been on a collision course, they would have stopped the motors of the drone. NOTAMs were checked 5min before their take-off at 1155, of which there were none. As they had been made aware of a flypast at 1200 by another drone pilot they remained below 400ft. They noted that they monitored ADS-B during the flight. However, at no time did the aircraft appear on ADS-B, nor did they receive an alert of a nearby aircraft on the built-in DJI ADS-B alerting system. They opined that they were not made aware that the aircraft would fly below 400ft and, as they considered the area a congested area (built-up housing estate), it was understood that the pilot would not fly below 1000ft. However, they had made allowances for the potential for the other pilot to fly down to 500ft, by not exceeding 320ft. At all times they gave way to the aircraft and descended as soon as safe to do so. Visual contact was maintained with both the aircraft and the drone at all times.

The pilot assessed the risk of collision as 'Medium'.

THE RV7 PILOT did not respond to requests to provide a report.

Factual Background

The weather at Leeds Bradford was recorded as follows:

METAR EGNM 261150Z 29010KT 9999 FEW036 06/M03 Q1021=

Analysis and Investigation

UKAB Secretariat

An analysis of the NATS radar replay was undertaken but neither the DJI Matrice, nor the RV7 could be seen. Further analysis of ADS-B data sources was undertaken, but these also held no record of either aircraft. The DJI operator provided a GPS log file showing their position and altitude during the flight and this was used to compile the diagram at the top of the report. The UAV operator also provided third party video footage identifying the RV7 but, despite repeated requests for the pilot to provide a report, no report was received.

The DJI Matrice operator and RV7 pilots shared an equal responsibility for collision avoidance and not to operate in such proximity to other aircraft as to create a collision hazard.¹ During the flight, the remote pilot shall keep the unmanned aircraft in VLOS and maintain a thorough visual scan of the airspace surrounding the unmanned aircraft in order to avoid any risk of collision with any manned aircraft. The remote pilot shall discontinue the flight if the operation poses a risk to other aircraft, people, animals, environment or property.²

Summary

An Airprox was reported when a DJI Matrice and an RV7 flew into proximity over Sheffield at approximately 1205Z on Thursday 26th March 2026. The DJI Operator was operating under VLOS not in receipt of an ATS and the RV7 pilot did not submit a report.

PART B: SUMMARY OF THE BOARD'S DISCUSSIONS

Information available consisted of a report from the drone operator and GPS track data for the flight of the drone. Relevant contributory factors mentioned during the Board's discussions are highlighted within the text in bold, with the numbers referring to the Contributory Factors table displayed in Part C.

The Board first discussed the actions of the DJI Matrice operator. Members noted that the DJI Matrice was a large drone, but at the time of the Airprox had been operated under the Open Category and the operator had elected to remain below 400ft and, for this reason, no NOTAM had been required for the drone activity. The Board was pleased to hear that the operator had spent time beforehand checking NOTAMs for other air activity but, unfortunately, the RV7's flypast had not been notified (**CF1**) and so the operator had only generic information on the flypast gleaned from word-of-mouth from another drone operator (**CF3**). Members commended the operator's planning in electing to keep the drone below their 400ft ceiling in order to deconflict from a potential low flight by the RV7. However, some members thought that it would perhaps have been more prudent to not have flown the drone until after the flypast had completed (**CF2**). The Board noted that the DJI detection system would have detected any aircraft emitting ADS-B but, unfortunately, the RV7 had not been emitting such data and so had not provided an alert (**CF4**). Once the drone operator had become visual with the RV7, they had been concerned that the other aircraft had been below the height of their drone (**CF5**). Members noted that it was notoriously difficult to assess the height of an aircraft from the ground, however, they commended the drone operator for their actions in maintaining position and then descending once clear and thus averting a much more dangerous situation.

Turning to the actions of the RV7 pilot, members expressed their disappointment that the pilot had chosen not to participate in the Airprox process. Without their perspective it was not known whether the pilot had received any information about the drone operations, or indeed had seen it, although members acknowledged that seeing a drone from the air against the ground backdrop was known to be particularly difficult. Members discussed the flypast activity and highlighted that it was possible that the pilot had received a CAA exemption to fly lower than 1000ft for the event, however, they thought that the pilot would have been wise to have submitted a NOTAM on this occasion to warn other airspace users of the unusual air activity over a built-up area (**CF1**). Members noted that the aircraft had

¹ (UK) SERA.3205 Proximity.

² Assimilated Regulation (EU) 2019/947- UAS.OPEN.060 Responsibilities of the remote pilot (2)(b)

appeared to not have had a working transponder, or any EC equipment, to alert other airspace users to its presence. They urged the pilot to rectify this, noting that when performing high energy manoeuvres, the time available to spot a threat was very much reduced and collision warning systems were invaluable for aiding the air picture; fortunately, on this occasion, the drone operator had taken action to avert the risk of a collision.

When determining the risk, the Board had only the drone operator's report to consider. However, they noted that despite the lack of detailed prior information, the drone operator had seen the RV7 and taken steps to remain clear. Some members considered this to be normal operations in Class G airspace, however, others countered that the high energy manoeuvres by the RV7 pilot reduced their ability to take any avoiding action, and thought that, whilst there had been no risk of collision due to the drone operator's actions, safety had been degraded. The latter view prevailed and the Board assigned a risk category C.

PART C: ASSESSMENT OF CONTRIBUTORY FACTORS AND RISK

Contributory Factors:

	2026030			
CF	Factor	Description	ECCAIRS Amplification	UKAB Amplification
	Flight Elements			
	• Tactical Planning and Execution			
1	Organisational	• Flight Planning Information Sources	An event involving incorrect flight planning sources during the preparation for a flight.	
2	Human Factors	• Insufficient Decision/Plan	Events involving flight crew not making a sufficiently detailed decision or plan to meet the needs of the situation	Inadequate plan adaption
	• Situational Awareness of the Conflicting Aircraft and Action			
3	Contextual	• Situational Awareness and Sensory Events	Events involving a flight crew's awareness and perception of situations	Pilot had no, late, inaccurate or only generic, Situational Awareness
	• Electronic Warning System Operation and Compliance			
4	Technical	• ACAS/TCAS System Failure	An event involving the system which provides information to determine aircraft position and is primarily independent of ground installations	Incompatible CWS equipment
	• See and Avoid			
5	Human Factors	• Perception of Visual Information	Events involving flight crew incorrectly perceiving a situation visually and then taking the wrong course of action or path of movement	Pilot was concerned by the proximity of the other aircraft

Degree of Risk: C.

Safety Barrier Assessment³

In assessing the effectiveness of the safety barriers associated with this incident, the Board concluded that the key factors had been that:

Flight Elements:

Tactical Planning and Execution was assessed as **partially effective** because there was no published information on the flypast, but also because the drone operator had information from word-of-mouth about the flypast and had assumed it would be above their planned altitude.

Situational Awareness of the Conflicting Aircraft and Action were assessed as **partially effective** because the drone operator did not have specific information on the RV7.

³ The UK Airprox Board scheme for assessing the Availability, Functionality and Effectiveness of safety barriers can be found on the [UKAB Website](#).

Electronic Warning System Operation and Compliance were assessed as **ineffective** because the ADS-B warning system on the DJI Matrice could not detect the RV7.

Airprox Barrier Assessment: 2026030		Outside Controlled Airspace							
		Provision	Application	Effectiveness					
				Barrier Weighting					
				0%	5%	10%	15%	20%	
Ground Element	Regulations, Processes, Procedures and Compliance	●	●						
	Manning & Equipment	●	●						
	Situational Awareness of the Conflication & Action	●	●						
	Electronic Warning System Operation and Compliance	●	●						
Flight Element	Regulations, Processes, Procedures and Compliance	✓	✓						
	Tactical Planning and Execution	✓	!						
	Situational Awareness of the Conflicting Aircraft & Action	!	✓						
	Electronic Warning System Operation and Compliance	✗	✓						
	See & Avoid	✓	✓						
Key:		Full	Partial	None	Not Present/Not Assessable		Not Used		
Provision		✓	!	✗	●				
Application		✓	!	✗	●		○		
Effectiveness		■	■	■	■		□		