



Briefing for visiting glider pilots



Welcome to Aston Down airfield. At Cotswold Gliding Club we like to be visited by other glider pilots. Whether you drop by inadvertently or come with rather more purpose we hope you'll enjoy your stay.

We are lucky to own a large airfield with two hard runways and very few hazards. The following pages are taken directly from the club operations manual and set out the basic way in which flying at the airfield is conducted in terms of landing areas and circuits. I am pleased to say that we don't have many rules, and what few we do have can be summarised by the injunction to '*fly sensibly*'. If you are unsure about any aspect of club operations, ask any club instructor.

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CFI Cotswold Gliding Club
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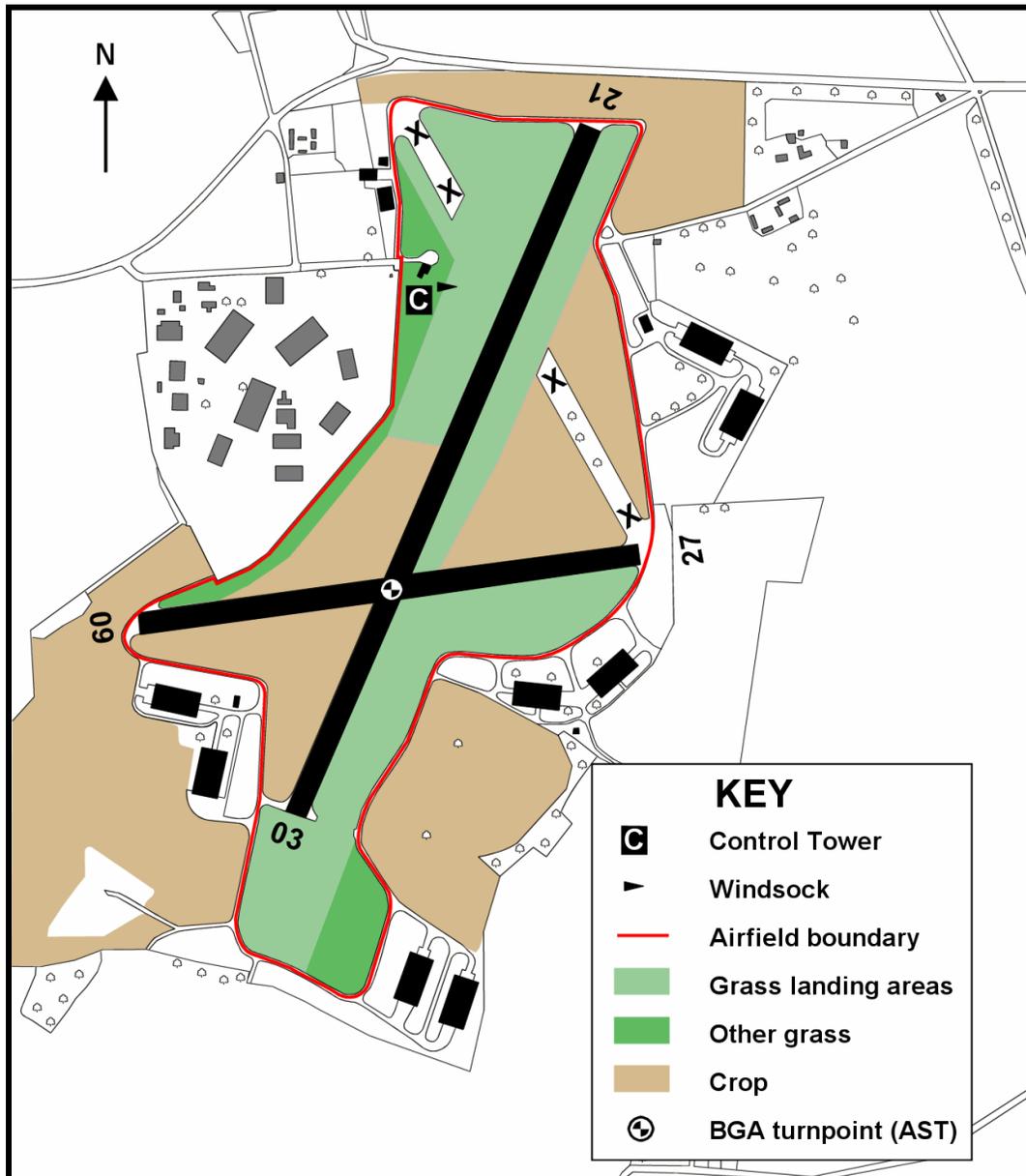
1 Flying from Aston Down

1.1 Permission to fly

All solo pilots are expected to seek permission to fly from the Duty Instructor.

1.2 Landing areas

Aston Down is a big airfield, having large amounts of landable area. - See map below. In addition to the grass areas, if necessary, the runways (shown in black) may be used for landing.



It is not advisable to cross the runway edges on a ground run.

1.3 Local airspace

All pilots are responsible for consulting the latest aeronautical chart and NOTAMs (available from www.ais.org.uk) for airspace information.

For guidance only, airspace within the vicinity includes:

- Kemble (EGPB) an active GA and fast jet airfield, approximately 4nm from Aston Down. Kemble has hard runways and an ATZ radius of 2nm. The field elevation of Kemble is 433 feet AMSL (Aston Down 600 feet AMSL). Kemble's ground/air frequency is 118.9Mhz.
- South Cerney – a parachute drop zone to the east of Cirencester (Brize Norton on 119.0MHz can be contacted to check whether South Cerney is active, but the default status is active).
- Bristol and Gloucester Gliding Club at Nympsfield, and Staverton to the west.
- Brize Norton and Lyneham.
- Bristol/Cardiff airspace

Club pilots intending to leave gliding range of Aston Down must carry a current air chart and familiarise themselves with Special User Airspace on their intended route.

NOTAMS are available through the club computer in the briefing room; pilots wishing to fly away from Aston Down must brief themselves for the day of their flight.

1.4 Launch master system

The club uses the launch master system. Once a pilot accepts a cable or towrope it is assumed he/she is entirely ready for launch. The launch will proceed without any further signals from the pilot. Pilots do not need to signal 'take up slack' or 'all out'. If the pilot wishes to stop the launch, he/she must **release the cable**.

1.5 Calling downwind

Pilots with radio should, if possible, monitor 129.975mHz when nearing the circuit, and if it is convenient for them to do so, make a call to 'Aston Down traffic' to indicate their presence, circuit direction and intended landing area when entering the downwind leg. **Configuring radios and making calls must not be at the expense of airmanship, lookout or good control of the glider.**

1.6 Competition finishes

During periods when winch launching is active, pilots must not 'beat up' the airfield at low level or fly other exhibitionist manoeuvres inside the circuit. At other times the pilot should call on the local frequency to signify his/her intentions to local traffic. In any case the BGA guidance on competition finishes will apply at all times, allowing for a descending approach path only, until within the boundary of the airfield.

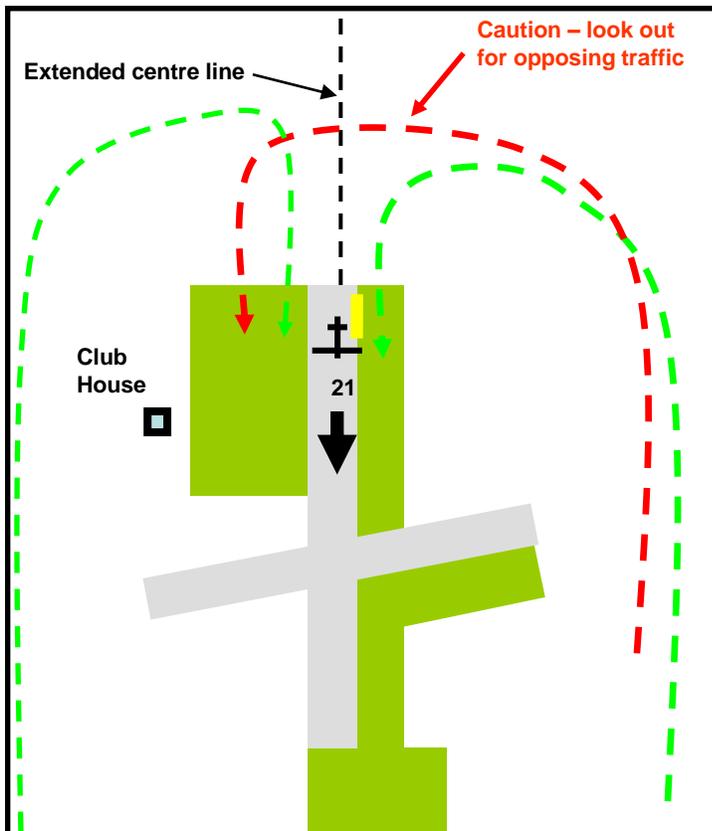
On no account whatsoever is an approach to be made which passes low over vehicles, buildings or people outside the airfield perimeter.

1.7 Circuit notes

1.7.1 Runway 21

Both left and right-hand circuits are acceptable from this runway. If aerotowing is in operation the Duty Instructor may set a preferred circuit direction, normally to the right (west) – the tug will be landing on the left.

Flying from this end, pilots should avoid crossing the extended centre line of the runway, e.g. landing on the right after a left-hand circuit. Where this is a necessity due to landing area congestion, a good lookout is critical.

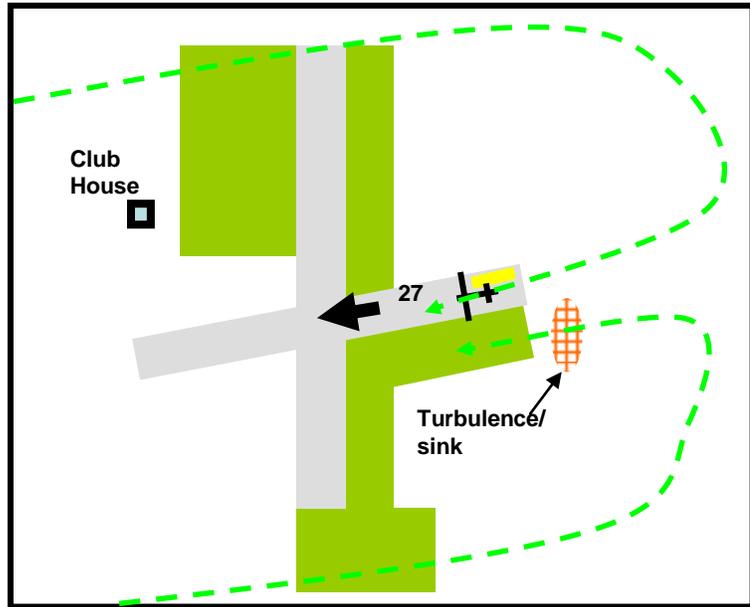


Pilots should also aim to touch down well into the landing area, normally abeam or beyond the bus. It is always possible that there will be high-side vehicles on the perimeter track and approach paths should have sufficient height to clear them.

1.7.2 Runway 27

The Duty Instructor will set a preferred circuit direction. Left hand circuits are generally the preferred direction from this runway. However, right-hand circuits are acceptable unless aerotowing is in operation, so pilots must keep a good look out for opposing traffic.

Pilots should be aware that in strong winds turbulence from the hangars often generates something of a “clutching hand” effect just above the boundary fence. It is also often the case that the launch point is moved to this runway in stronger winds. Due to the profile of the runway and the ground at the West end, there is often a strong wind gradient on the approach.



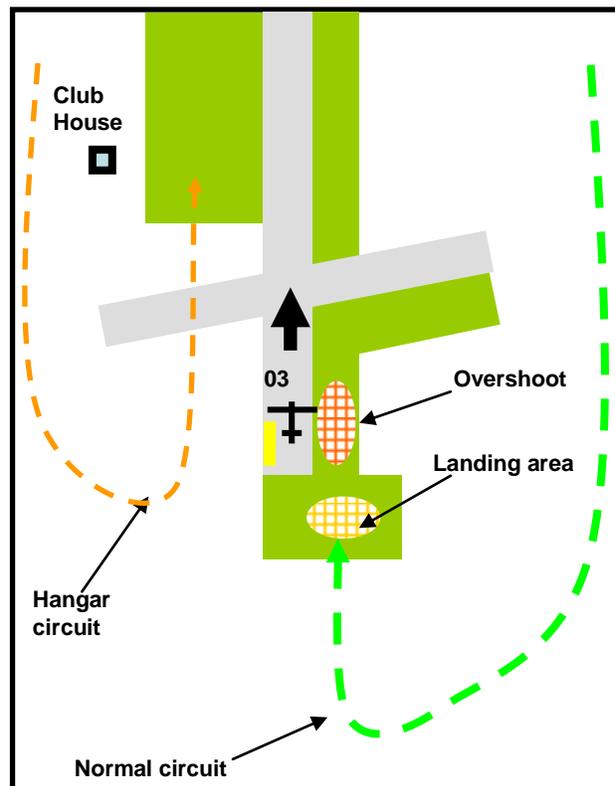
If the landing area to the left of the runway is congested, over-flying the launch point and landing on the runway is acceptable.

1.7.3 Runway 03

The Duty Instructor will set a preferred circuit direction. If aero tow is operational the preferred direction is right hand (to the East).

The normal landing area is in the **field to the South of the runway**, with the grass adjacent the runway being treated as an overshoot and tug landing area.

Pilots and launch personnel should be aware that gliders may do left hand circuits to land long, adjacent the club house. This is particularly true towards the end of the day.

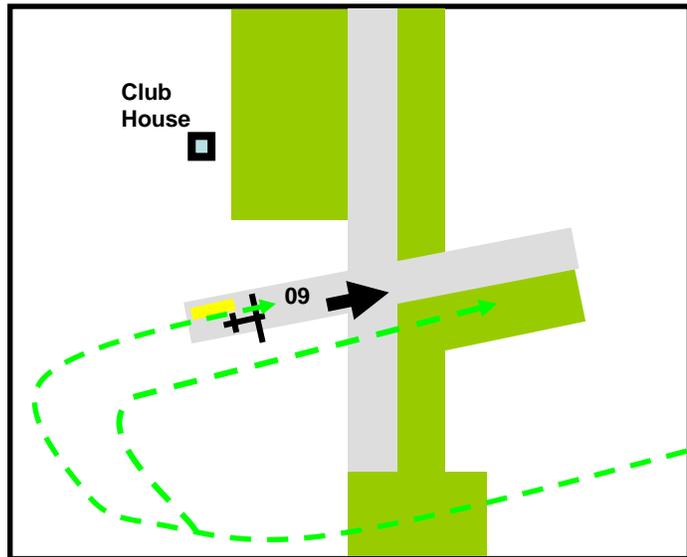


1.7.4 Runway 09

The duty Instructor will set a preferred circuit direction. Operating in this direction, landings are made on the runway. This can often involve overflying the launch line. If the runway is congested, the grass on the far side of the main runway is an option. The number of aircraft that may operate will be limited and the number set by the Duty Instructor. Private gliders on soaring flights should land elsewhere on the airfield.

It is important that the ground crew clear aircraft from the runway as quickly as possible.

Aerotow and winch operations cannot be combined on this runway – it's one or the other, or in batches of launches with the cables withdrawn to the winch during aerotowing, at the discretion of the Duty Instructor.



1.8 Motor-glidern and self-launchers

Winch launching and aerotow take priority over motor-glider and self-launcher movements. Motor gliders and self-launchers should time their departures so as to minimise the disruption of the winch launch operation, typically by launching after the second cable, having complete all checks before pulling on line.

The pilot in charge of a motor-glider or other powered aircraft is responsible for ensuring the runway ahead is clear before taking off. Care is need when taking off from runway 03 where only a relatively short length of runway is visible. Particular care is need to ensure the runway is clear when there are no winch operations, e.g. if taking off early in the morning before the first winch launch there is the risk that the runway will be being used to tow gliders to the launch point.

Safety point:

Pilots intending to taxi or tow out a glider outside normal airfield operating times must satisfy themselves that the route they intend to take is safe before they start to move. This is vitally important if Runway 03 is the chosen departure point.

1.9 Fitness to fly

All pilots are responsible for ensuring they are fit to fly. I'M SAFE provides a useful mnemonic:

- **Illness:** if you're ill or 'under the weather' don't fly. You'll feel worse in the air.
- **Medication:** many drugs, either prescribed, 'over the counter' or illicit will make you unfit to fly. Make sure your doctor knows you are a pilot. And don't do drugs.
- **Stress:** if you are suffering from stress it may impair your flying.

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- **Alcohol:** leave at least 8 hours between consuming even small quantities of alcohol and flying. The limit is (breath) 9µg/100ml or (blood) 20mg/100ml - this is a **quarter of the equivalent drink drive limits** and is, effectively, a zero tolerance limit.
- **Fatigue:** do not fly if you're tired or have not had enough sleep.
- **Eating & hydration:** make sure you have had enough to eat and drink before your flight, and if planning a long flight, take adequate food and drink. Dehydration is a significant risk on long flights and can significantly impair judgement.

2 Towing gliders to the launch point

Safety points:

Gliders must not be towed across winch cables.

The airfield is operational once the first winch cables are drawn out.

It must always be considered as active.

The routes from the hangar/clubhouse to the launch points are as follows:

2.1 To runway 21 (North end)

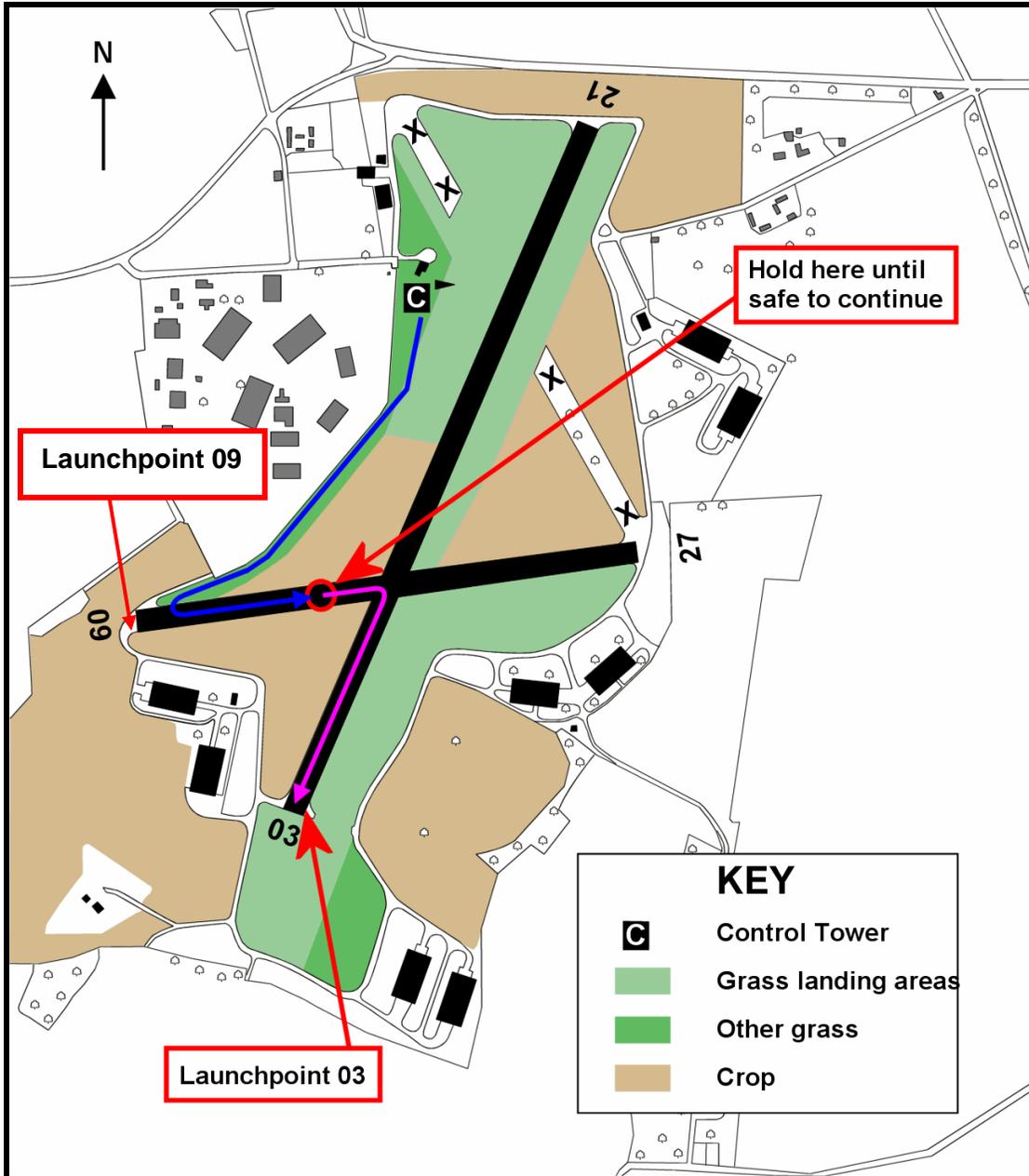
Gliders may be towed directly across the landing area to the launch point. Keep a good look out for gliders on approach.

2.2 To runway 03 (South end) and runway 09 (West end)

Once the first cables have been pulled out, access to the south end is via the track alongside the west boundary fence and the cross runway. The procedure is as follows (see diagram below):

1. Follow the track past the T hangers and along the boundary fence to the west end of the cross runway. **If the launch point is on 09 you will arrive there.**
2. If the launch point is on 03, continue up the cross runway,
3. **Hold at least 100 yards from the runway crossing** until you are sure both cables have been used. You can contact the bus on 07810 091404 or radio '*Aston Down*' on 129.975 to obtain the exact status of the cables.
4. If there is to be a long delay between launches it is permitted to cross the cable, **but only after obtaining permission from the launch point.** The launch master must confirm that there are no imminent cable or power movements, and warn the winch, before giving permission
5. Once the cables are clear (2nd launch almost complete) proceed to the main runway and turn right.

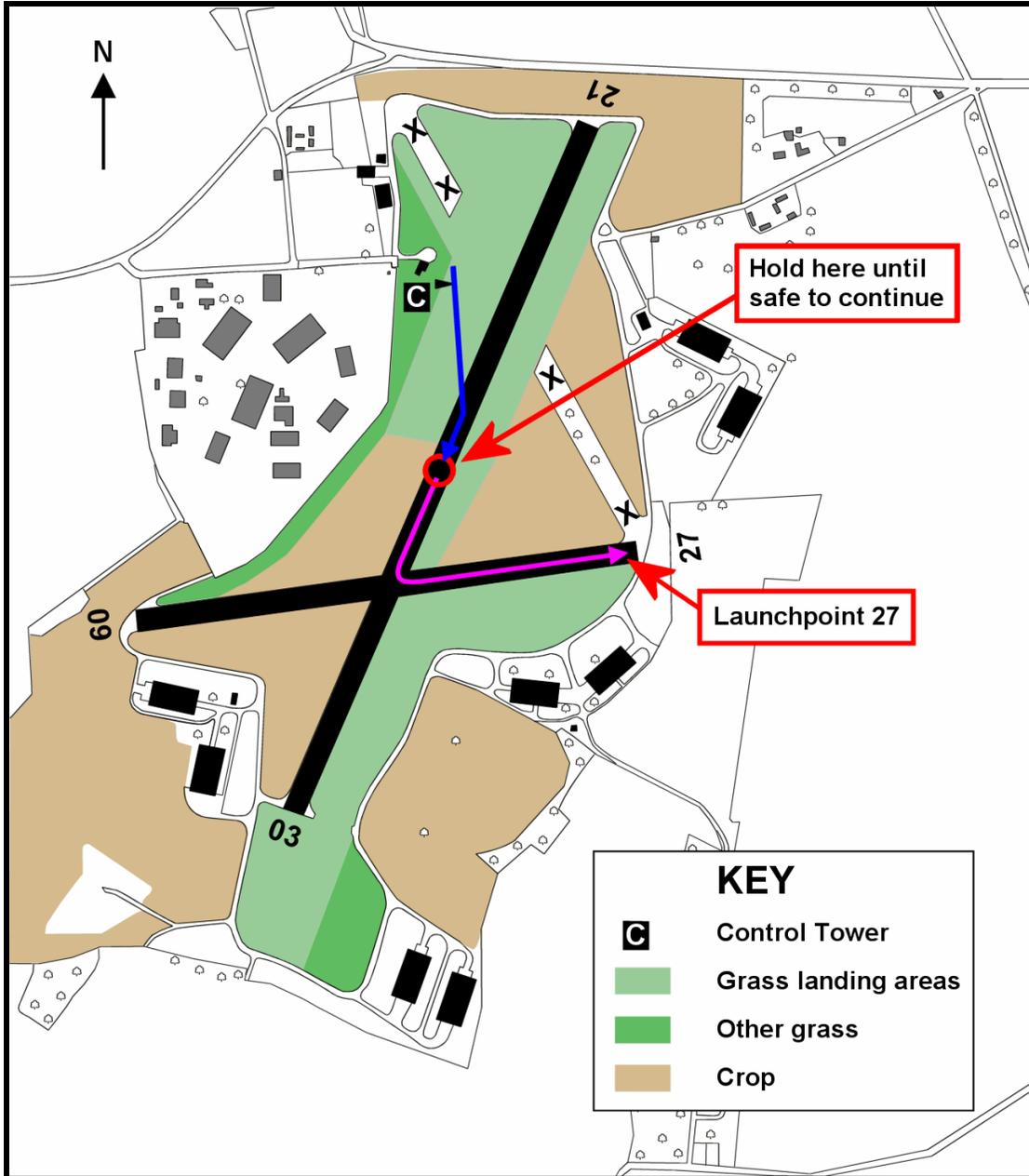
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Tow out routes to launch points 09 and 03

2.3 To runway 27

1. Proceed down the main runway to a point at least 100 yards short of the junction with the cross runway.
2. Hold at this point until both cables have been used or you have **permission from the launchpoint** to cross the cable(s).
3. Once the second cable is clear, continue onto the cross runway if it is safe to do so.



3. Incident reporting

Any accident/incident involving damage to a glider or injury to a person must be reported to the CFI, the club Safety Officer and then to the BGA on an Accident Report form.

For all other safety related incidents the club operates a Confidential Incident Reporting System. Members are strongly encouraged to report any incident where they feel safety was compromised or there was an increased risk of injury.

A report can be made in one of three ways:

1. Filling in an Incident Confidential Safety Incident Report Form (see below) and posting it in the bus safe or office letterbox (this can be done completely anonymously). Blank forms are available on the bus (grey box downstairs in briefing area) and in the Safety folder on the Yahoo group.

CONFIDENTIAL SAFETY INCIDENT REPORT FORM	
<small>Please use this form to report any safety related incidents, no matter how minor, including any of the following: real launch failures, unintended cable movements, cable dropped outside peri-track, runway incursions (by vehicles or pedestrians), air misses.</small>	
Your Name <small>(Optional – anonymous reports are OK)</small>	
Day & Date of Incident	
DETAILS OF WHAT HAPPENED <small>(Please give as much information as possible, e.g. weather, conditions, wind strength, runway in use, launch number, glider, as appropriate)</small>	
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION / CONTRIBUTING FACTORS	
<small>When complete, place this form in a payment envelope and post in the bus safe or office letter box (or, if using the electronic version, email to safety@cotswoldgliding.co.uk). (Pat, please forward to Tim Barnes)</small>	

1. Sending an email to safety@cotswold.co.uk
2. Using the on-line form from the members' page of the club website cotswoldgliding.co.uk