

## **Cornborough Site Guide**

**Wind Direction NW 300<sup>0</sup> round to 330<sup>0</sup>**

**Take Off Grid Reference: SS417288.**

**Site Officer:**

**Sam Jeyes 07875 247 389**

**Safety Officer:**

**Andy Brown 07803 618386**

**Suitability Pilot rating +50 hours**

**You must be comfortable with a committing launch (poor bottom and side landing), and comfortable that you can reliably fly away from the launch and along the coast.**

**PLEASE read the entire site guide before visiting.**

It is strongly advised that pilots fly with an experienced Cornborough Pilot and that they have gone through a thorough pre-flight briefing. Experienced NDHPC CP pilots may fly the site but it is strongly advised that they are with an experienced NDHPC Coach and have had a thorough pre-flight briefing. It is also recommended that any pilot who has not flown the site before, regardless of ratings seeks the advice of a local experienced Cornborough pilot before flying the site.

### **Overview**

Cornborough is an excellent launch spot for flying the coast run from Westward Ho! to Bucks Mills. It is NOT however a good site to loiter and/or soar in front of - so please don't just take off and soar the area immediately surrounding launch. (Woolacombe is much more suitable for this).

There is a busy commercial helicopter landing/refuelling site approximately 400 metres behind take off (yellow dot on map), and this is owned by the same landowners as the take-off site. Clearly it is important we do not linger in their potential flight path, both for the sake of safety and to maintain good relations. There is a further helipad approximately 3 kilometres along the coast run towards Bucks Mills at Portledge. Again, please don't linger near here and at both places keep a particular eye and ear open for helicopter traffic. Both of these helicopter sites have kindly agreed a procedure with us so that we can notify them we are flying and they can keep a particular watch out for us (see before flying section below).

The (different) landowner to the north east of takeoff has a wedding venue very near the cliff top, and is not keen on pilots hovering in front of this for any length of time (area marked in purple on map above) so PLEASE don't dwell here. It is ok to briefly work up height here before flying off on the coast run. This area is also on one of the regular helicopter departure routes, so of course this is another reason not to linger.

## Directions and Parking

### Access

Park at Merley road car park Westward Ho! (known locally as Haunted House car park - you will see why when you get there!). Walk along the coast path towards Bucks Mills, follow this for approx 500 metres, go through a gate on the footpath. DO NOT turn left up the faint path immediately after the gate. Continue on the main coast path for approx 20 metres until you reach a metal gate on your left with a triangular steep field behind it. This is the take off field. The land owner is happy for us to climb over the gate, but please be sensible, climb over one at a time, using the hinge side of the gate, and pass gliders over separately to minimise loading on the gate. If there are livestock in the field (a rare event), then rather than use this field use the small space below the coast path immediately opposite the gate - a very tight and very low launch with a small cliff in front and barbed wire behind - not for the faint hearted) The main take off is marked with a blue dot on the map below.

### Preflight procedure

In order to liaise with both helicopter sites it is **VERY IMPORTANT** we follow the procedure below.

If you are considering flying here start by looking on the **North Devon PgHg** Telegram group, or if not a north Devon member then look at South West Airspace Group Telegram. If one of the club contacts listed above has already contacted the helicopter sites they will post to this effect on both these groups. If there is no post from that day or the day before then no one has notified the helicopters. The club contact pilots listed below all have the relevant contact numbers, and if you ring one of them, they will notify the helicopters and post on the two telegram groups. IF there is already a post of notification, there is no need to ring. The reason for this arrangement is to try and avoid multiple pilots making multiple phone calls to the helicopters.

#### Club contacts.

Anthony Moore	07588 051478
Sam Jeyes	07875 247389
Chris Blanchard	07779 472084
Stuart Hall	07925 347209
Richard Osbourne	07967 343920.

### Flying the site.

This is a site with some particular peculiarities, hence you are advised to read the section below and it is strongly advised that pilots fly with an experienced Cornborough Pilot and that they have gone through a thorough pre-flight briefing.

The site is TIDAL. At high tide there is absolutely no bottom landing, so a strong suggestion is don't fly it at high tide! From about 2 hours after high tide there is bottom landing, until 2 hrs before the next high tide, although not much. In the area around take-off this bottom landing is very rocky and very

slippery, full of puddles of seawater – it's landable, but not nice and you will probably get a wet salty wing if you do land. At all times keep a landing option in range - if the tide is at all high, this means keep a top landing option as there is no side landing

Generally if the wind is on the hill, and there are one or two white horses, or sea gulls soaring without flapping, then the coast run is on. Be aware that this launch doesn't work well if the wind is significantly off the hill, as the cliffs at launch are so low that they generate little lift in these circumstances.

It is a site to use as a launch pad for a coast run. It is NOT a site for low airtime pilots to practice their soaring on. Please do not linger in the area marked in purple on the map, and please do not fly the northerly face marked in red - the land owner objects, and we are trying to establish good relationships with him as this area used to be a site (NB 2 local pilots do have permission to fly there and hope that in future they can expand this permission - just because you see others flying in this red zone, don't assume you can).

The take off is only about 100 ft above sea level (depending on the tide!), so an early climb is important. There is usually a small area immediately to the left of take off, which most pilots use for an initial climb before turning right (north east) to climb BRIEFLY in the purple area marked on the map. It is ok to climb here but don't linger more than a few minutes, and if you see lots of people at the wedding venue immediately behind (marked as ocean kave on the map) it's probably best not to use this area at all. Both of these climbing areas are very small, and will support at most 2 gliders. Both are easily visible from take off, so if you can see someone climbing on them both, don't launch, rather, wait until they have moved off down the coast (flying in a south west direction towards Bucks Mills).

Having made your first climb, move off onto the coast run - to keep the helicopter area clear and to allow the next pilot some space to climb. The cliffs are initially low -approximately 50 feet, but increase to nearer 100 feet after about 400 metres. One glider can climb here, but it is not big enough for 2, so if the space is occupied, don't go there or you will probably both go down.

After this the cliff disappears to almost nothing for a few hundred metres, (THE GAP) before rising again. This is the crux of a flight here. There is a sloping pebble beach landing if you bomb, so long as you have allowed 2 hours either side of high tide. Be aware that this is not a nice soft grassy slope, it is hard and somewhat precarious boulders, so landing with any down wind component is exciting!

If you make it across the gap then it is usually fairly straightforward to reach Bucks Mills and return. Remember after approx 3 km you pass a second heliport at Portledge. This is easy to spot from the air, it is behind some low red cliffs. It is quite easy to wait a few hundred metres either side of this area, so obviously if you see any activity then wait until it has cleared! There are a couple of headlands to push around which can be tricky, and there are bottom landings all the way with the same tidal provisos. Again there a couple of spots where there is really only enough ridge to support one glider at a time -

look ahead and behind and be considerate to other pilots to allow for these areas.

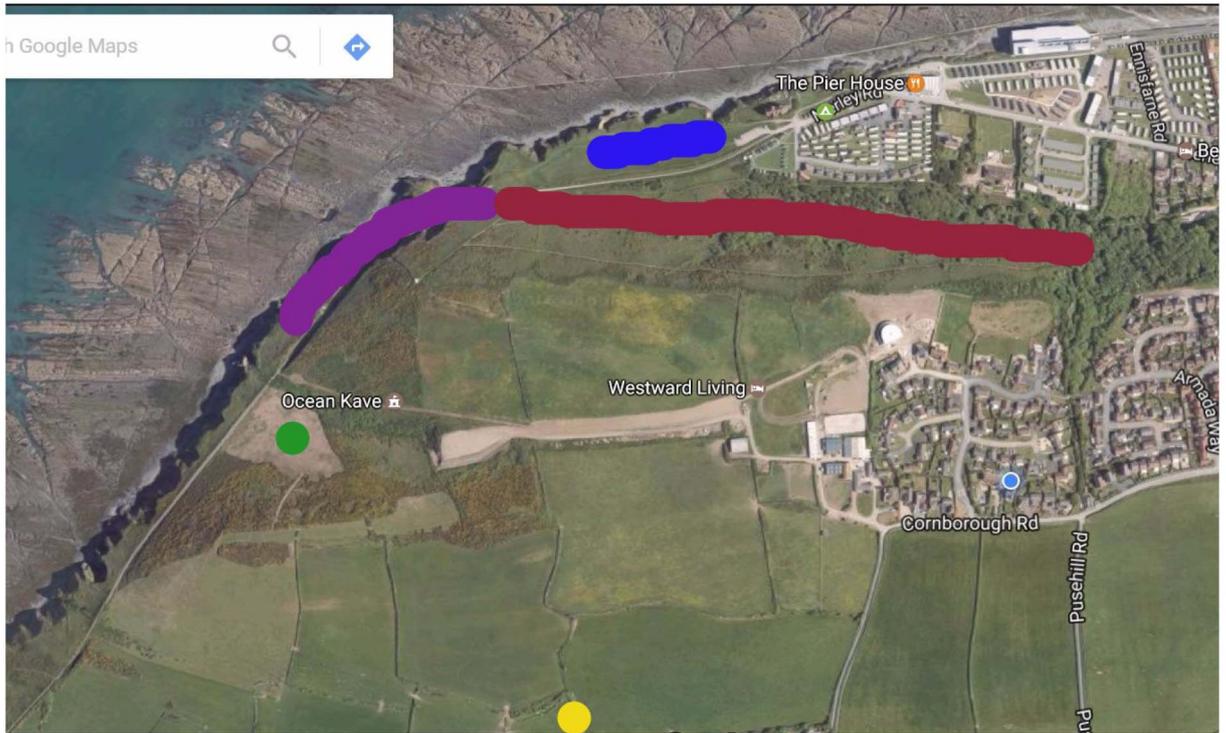
Further down the coast towards Bucks Mills the cliffs rise to almost 200 metres, and so long as the wind is right good height gains can be made. If conditions are right, it is possible to use sea thermals here to go off inland on a conventional cross country, but more normal is to fly to Bucks Mills and then return towards take off. Again in exceptional conditions it is possible to push further down the coast passing Clovelly and onto the North-facing coast to Hartland Point, but this is distinctly tricky and sketchy.

Returning is usually fairly straightforward, although re-crossing the gap can be tricky and committing. Fortunately there is good landing in the fields immediately behind the gap and often this is the wisest place to land. It is possible although tricky to side land in the steep take off field, or alternatively to land in the field adjacent to the car park (marked in yellow on the map). This field will be in rotor if there is any significant west in the wind, and there is no official permission to land there. It is also often busy with people children and dogs, so take care and be a good ambassador for us if you land here.

### **Other considerations**

There is an excellent pub on Merley road a few hundred metres from the car park for post flight analysis. Wesward Ho! is a good family beach, with a blue flag and good rock-pooling for little ones, a limited amount of shops for supplies.

If in doubt about anything in this site guide then please ask any of the above club contacts. Like all sites, we rely totally on the good will of landowners-so please be considerate at all times to landowners and public.



**Map key**

- Green dot            Take off
- Yellow dot        Heliport
- Purple area        Possible climb but please don't linger- see guide above
- Red area           Please don't fly here - it is permissible to fly past this below ridge height on the way to landing at Merley field – see guide above
- Blue area          Merley field, possible landing area, see guide above