

Site Code 2.086

OS Grid Ref: SZ 006 812 (Map 195)

GPS: N50:37:786 W1:59:491

Farmed by:	Mr Alan Helfer (01929) 425121 Knitson House	Wind Direction	S-SSW (180° to 230°) Best: SSW (200°)
Nearest Phone:	In Swanage	Height AMSL	650ft (213m)
		Top to Bottom	330ft (108m)
Casualty Units:	Poole General Hospital	Pilot Grades	HG Club Pilot + 10hrs PG Club Pilot Site briefing advisable

IMPORTANT SITE FEE PAYABLE

Notes by Alastair Florence

General Site Info Knitson takes virtually identical wind directions and conditions to White Horse.

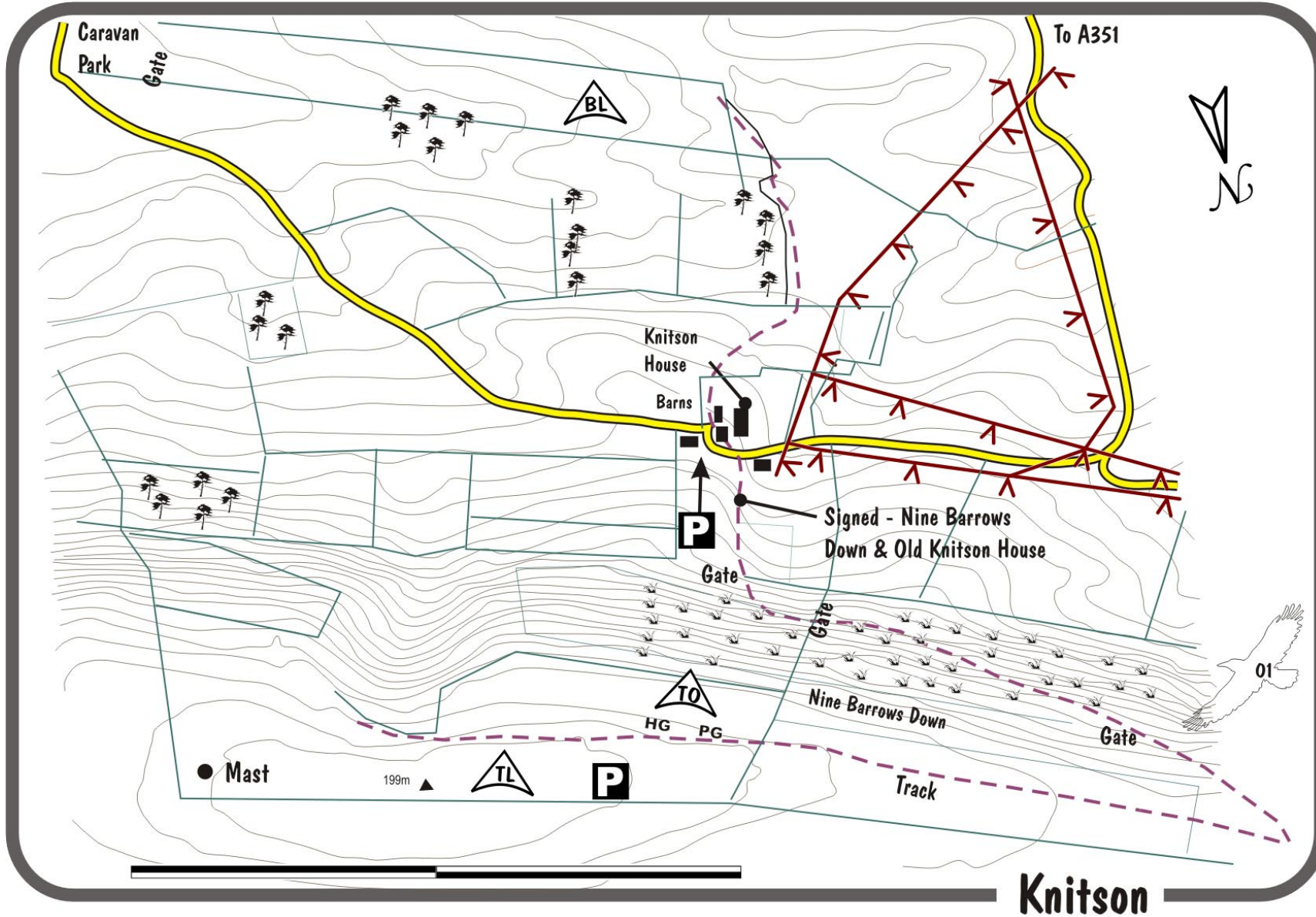
The site is rarely flown, due partly perhaps to its lack of XC potential and possibly to seeming to have gained a reputation as a poor/scary site. White Horse is undoubtedly a better and safer site, particularly for low airtime pilots (i.e. if you are travelling to fly from outside the local area White Horse would probably be first choice) however if you fancy a change of scene or are in the area there is some good and un-crowded flying to be had here with potential for exciting and challenging ridge runs.

It is even more rare for hang-gliders to visit these days, with the vehicle access to the top (cows permitting) and the bottom landing well suited to modern gliders it may well be worth a visit though.

I have experienced days when I have sat on Ballard in a light SE wind waiting for the sea breeze to boost the wind speed - the opposite effect normally happens and the sea breeze completely kills the wind. In this situation go to Knitson. You will often find a perfectly flyable SSW-SW wind here in these conditions.

If at Kimmeridge on a sunny day with the wind South a bit and just enough speed to scratch give up and try Knitson,. You will often find that although the wind is still fairly light here the extra distance in land makes the site thermic, providing some good flying.

The site can be excitingly thermic with a mosaic of fields out in front although climbs rarely reach more than 1000ft without committing to going over the back.



Knitson

Directions From Wareham take the A351 through Corfe and head for Swanage. Drive through Harmans Cross. You will pass a BP garage (St Michaels) on your left, then down into a dip over the railway bridge and as you climb out of the dip, take a left turn up a narrow lane. Follow the lane up toward the hill (this is Knitson ridge in front of you now) and you will come to a Y junction. Fork right and shortly you will come to sharp right hand bend followed by a sharp left with farm buildings either side of the road. This is Knitson farm.

As you approach the left hand bend you will see a cow mural painted on the barn wall. Pull in on the right here and call at the Helpers bungalow or try the milking shed. The Helpers are very friendly but do not like people driving fast on the lanes approaching the farm or up the track onto the hill. As well as walkers and cyclists the Helpers themselves are keen horse riders and will get upset if you endanger their kids - please drive considerately.

Access Assuming you have found one of the Helpers they will give you directions up the hill. Failing this as you approached the right hand bend on your way into the farm yard turn sharp left past the old stone farm house and drive straight ahead up the bumpy track. At the first gate take the left fork and head up the hill closing gates as you go unless they are already open. Drive right to the top. The track is steep, it has a lot of loose flints on it and a few bumps. Don't try and drive a Ferrari up it or you will be sorry. An average car can make it if its not to wet and a 4x4 will without problems. On reaching the top of the hill, bear right onto the top of the ridge and follow the footpath/track back eastward until you come to a locked gate. Park by the fence here.

Parking As described but beware - if there are cows in this field you may want park in the chalk pit at the bottom of the hill. The reason being that the cows here have been trained to destroy cars to a better standard than the Longleat drive-through monkeys. Once you are airborne they will surround your car lick it and bite bits off it (I'm not joking). The same applies to windsocks lunch bags etc.

Hazards Cows (see above). The site can be turbulent at random in all conditions particularly when thermic.

Slope landing is limited due to some gorse cover but this is less of a problem than a few years ago due to recent scrub clearance.

The ridge is a rounded spine back with trees behind - getting blown back would be unpleasant and not good for the nerves or health.

Launching You may launch in the field east of the parking area, (the one with tumuli in it). This is OK and a good idea if the mad cows are loose. If the cows are not intimidating you, launch in front of the parking area or anywhere west on the ridge. On a lighter day you will not find much lift until you fly out from launch over the gorse line.

Top Landing In lighter winds land anywhere on top of the ridge, the grass slope in front of the parking area or field to the east.

In stronger winds be careful!

There can be strong venturi over the top of the ridge so check penetration before getting in a situation where you can be blown back into rotor over the ridge back. If struggling, loose height out in front and come in low. The wind then has a nasty habit of picking you up again as your feet touch the ground then dumping and dragging you, but don't worry - the cow pats make a good pilot/ground lubricant and the stains will give a lasting reminder of your day here.

Bottom Landing Ask the Helpers about a bottom landing as the fields are often cropped or occupied by some of the mad cows, sheep or horses.

Warning:- Bottom landing is normally fine, but there are several changes of ground gradient and tree lines which can cause rotor near the ground. Be prepared to PLF.

Site Fee Prudent to offer Mr Helfer £1 for use of the track.

Ridge Runs, XC XC is limited by Bournemouth airspace and Poole Harbour. If it blows up strong run for Studland and catch the bus back to Ulwell gap then walk back up rather than attempt top land.

The ridge can be run toward Corfe or Ballard with a variety of gaps and height variations. If conditions are right you could in theory get to Ringstead from here (beware danger area in between) with a lot of luck and some imagination.

Flying Generally The small bowl to the east can provide a trigger point but beware venturi in stronger conditions and rotor off the spurs if the wind is off a bit. East of the bowl the hill is stepped. Good lift can be found in front here but watch being blown back into Giants Grave.

To the west of take off, the hill drops slightly to the point where the track reaches the top of the hill, just west is a gully providing the most consistent trigger point on the whole hill.

A great site for some fun flying with some beautiful views, plus its a way of getting to see a bit what its like flying to Swanage from Bell without the hassle of staying up for the first 30 odd km!

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