Instruction booklet for La Motte du Caire Gliding field (LF0431)

Update 21/04/2025

Table of contents

1. Introduction and general information

The platform of La Motte Du Caire is located in the southern Alps, about 10 Km at the North-East of Sisteron aerodrome (LFNS) and 15 Km south of Gap-Tallard aerodrome (LFNA).
The gliding activity is centered on the exclusive use of a winch as sole launching mean.

The Aera allocated to launches and landings is a non-paved, 1100m long strip which has some particular characteristics detailed later.
The take-off and landing aera is oriented North-South and has a slope of 2% climbing when facing the North.

Two paved strips at each end of the field allow safer launches and avoid rocks projections during launches.

When towing your glider towards the launch aera, it is strongly recommended to monitor the field frequency to be able to move away in case of a launch or landing.
Furthermore, we ask all pilots and crew to hold the wing on the outside facing wing during towing with your car or golf carts.

The frequency used for launches and landings is 122,650 Mhz. During the launch procedure we impose radio silence which has to be thoroughly maintained.
French is the only language used for communications with the winch.
Franch or English can be used on the frequency 122,650 outside of launching procedures, but particular attention has to be taken not to overload this frequency with personal communications, to avoid interference with the launching procedures that gliders in the air may not hear.

When the pilot gets out of the immediate surrounding of the field (descending aera and traffic pattern) or is above the altitude of 1500m (5000 ft), we have the flight frequency 129,800 Mhz for air-to-air communications.

The winch cables are made of a synthetic material “Dyneema” which requests specific care. In particular it is strictly forbidden to walk or drive with any means of transportation on the cables (bikes, car, golf carts or even by foot), their resistance and wear being significantly impacted.

Due to the very specific environment and topology of the airfield, before each first flight of the year as a pilot in command or safety pilot, a check flight with an instructor from the C.V.V.M.C. is mandatory.

Procedures detailed in this booklet are an integral part of the Club de Vol à Voile de La Motte Du Caire (C.V.V.M.C.) code of conduct, and we ask every pilot and crew to adhere to it.

2. Winch launches

2.1. Radio procedure

The radio procedure is relatively simple and is made to have an inherently good resilience level. However, it is asked to every pilot to follow as best as possible the phraseology in order to avoid mistakes.
Communications with the winch are done exclusively in French.

During the flight preparation, a radio check can be done with the starter or the winch
Pilot : Treuil de XX pour essai radio
Winch : XX le treuil te reçoit 5/5
Pilot : 5/5

Once fully ready, wings level, to take up slack in the cable
Pilot : Treuil de XX tu peux tendre le câble
Winch : Je tends le câble et silence radio

When the cable is tight and BEFORE THE GLIDERS STARTS ROLLING FORWARD
Pilot : Tendu et prêt
The launch starts immediately without any other break in the procedure.
If the glider jumps the blocks (when launching facing South), stop immediately the launch procedure by saying “HALTE STOP, HALTE STOP, HALTE STOP”. Release the cable, push the glider back and start again.

At the end of the launch, the winch driver announces the end of the launch with the following message
Winch : Fin de treuillée
The glider has to return to a normal pitch and the cable releases automatically.
In case the cable doesn’t release in the next seconds after normal flight attitude is re-gained, and in any case after the release, pull on the release handle as a safety precaution.

Heading corrections are told by the winch driver as follows
Towards the East
Winch : Corrige Blachère

Towards the West
Winch : Corrige Route

Speed corrections are asked by the pilot as follows
Faster : Plus vite
Slower : Lentement

Important note: if the glider speed increases during the launch, TO NOT PULL ON THE STICK to slow down. Contrarily, push forward slightly to ease the tension on the cable and say “Lentement”.

At any time and by anyone, in case the launch procedure needs to be stopped:
“HATLE STOP, HALTE STOP, HALTE STOP”

2.2. Particularities of North facing launches, « Mistral » conditions.

The North wind is in reality very North-West in the valley of La Motte. As such, the launches have to be done with a CONSTANT CORRECTION towards the west (“route” side) in order for the parachute not to land in the river after the end of the launch. A constant bank of 10 to 15° to the left is necessary for the whole duration of the launch.

2.3. Cable failure practice

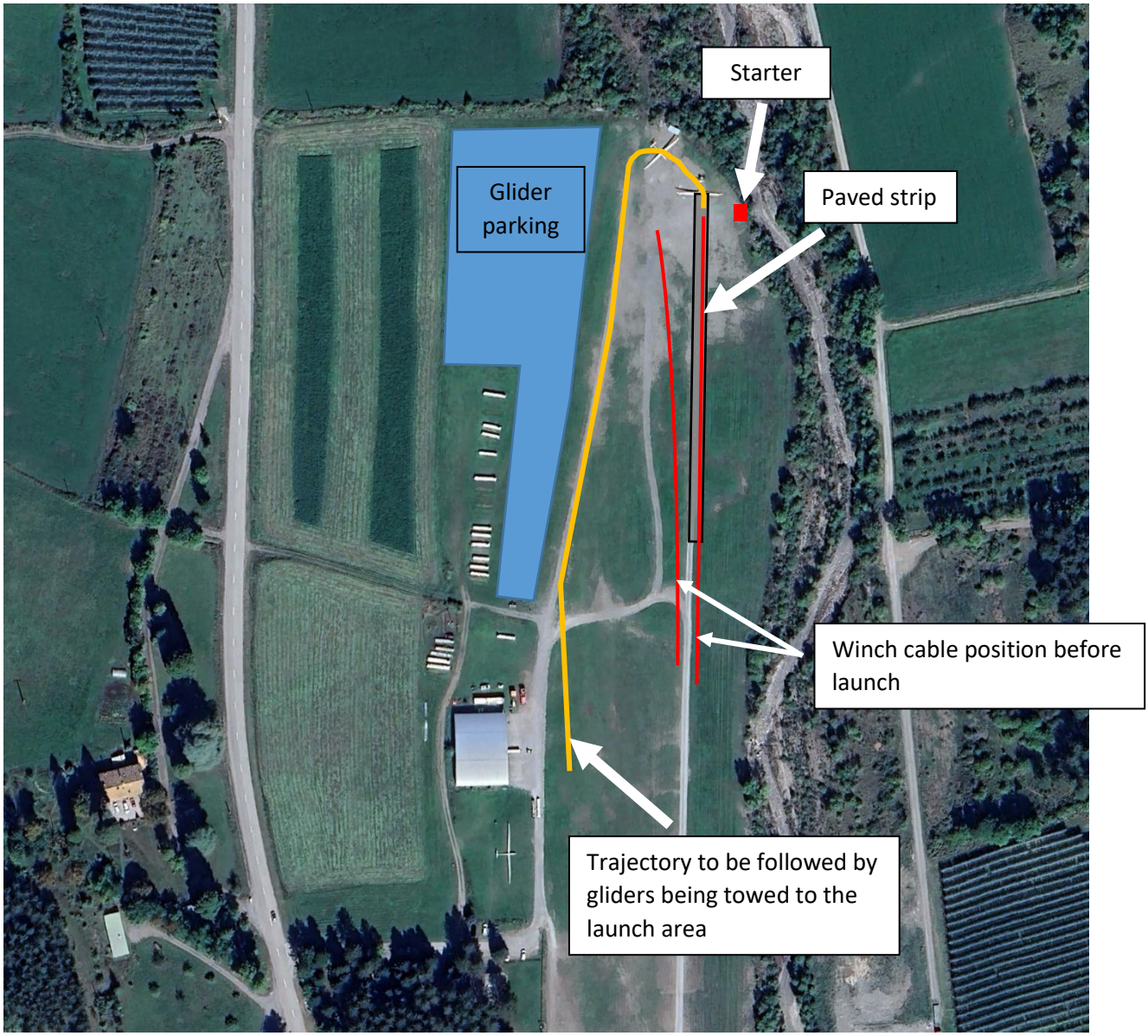
Training for cable failures are done only after agreement with the winch driver, and at his initiative by quickly reducing the power.

3. South wind situations

3.1. Ground movement and tow trajectories

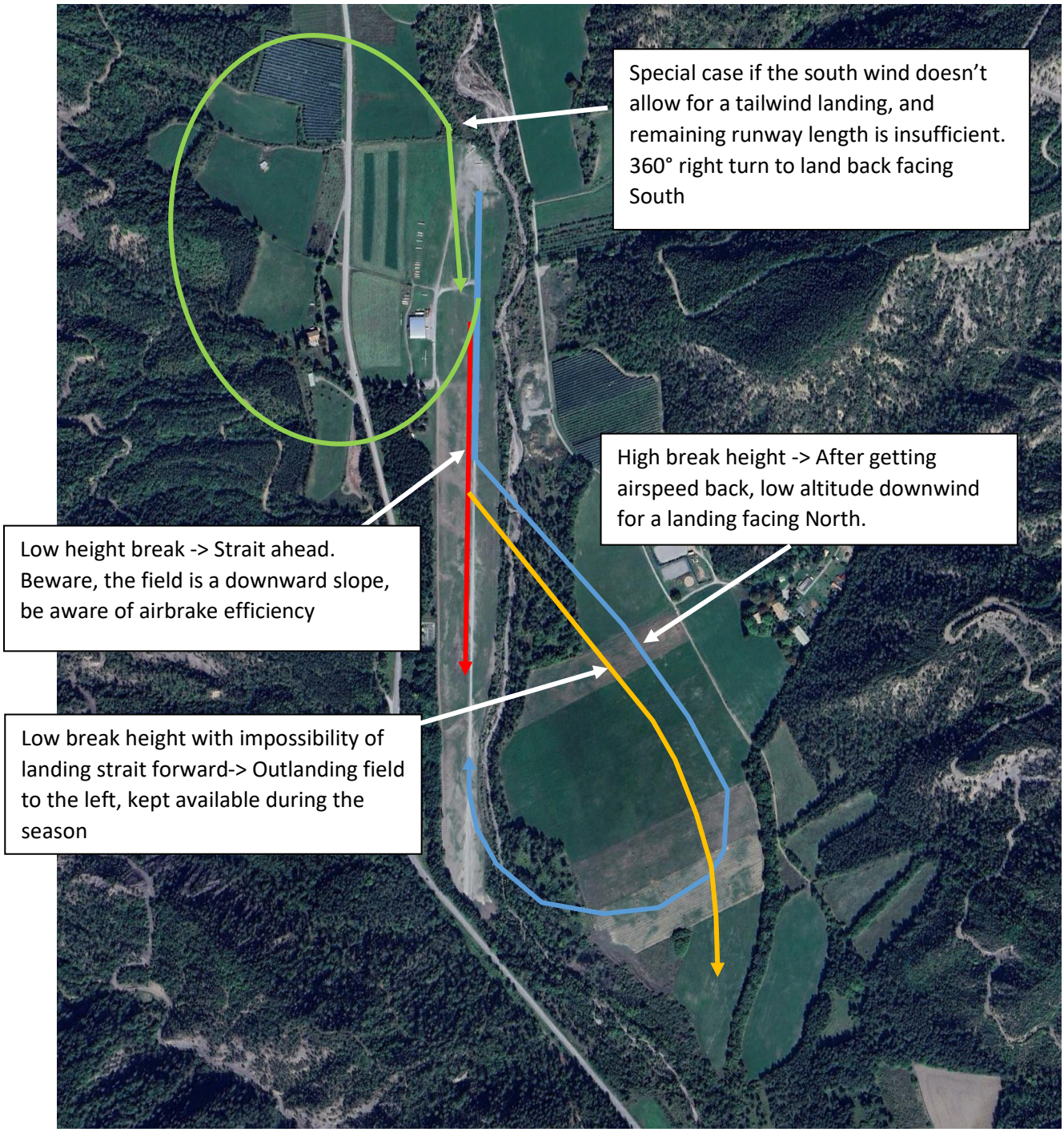
With « brise » situations, we ask all pilots and their crew to move the gliders by following the gravel road, and to leave enough space between the wingtip of the gliders in the waiting area and the ones about to take-off.
Particular attention has to be taken about open class gliders which usually take more space for ground movement and take-off.

Be aware NEVER to cross from the queue to the starter position in order to avoid going in front of a glider about to be launched and stepping on winch cables which are on the ground.



3.2. Safety manoeuvres in case of a cable failure

Manoeuvers are given as an indication. Every situation is different, glider performance, airbrake effectiveness, or other parameters can make an option either preferable or impossible.
Every pilot on command remains the sole responsible of his trajectory and his own safety. In any case, first recover an appropriate airspeed, then release the cable, and only then chose an option.

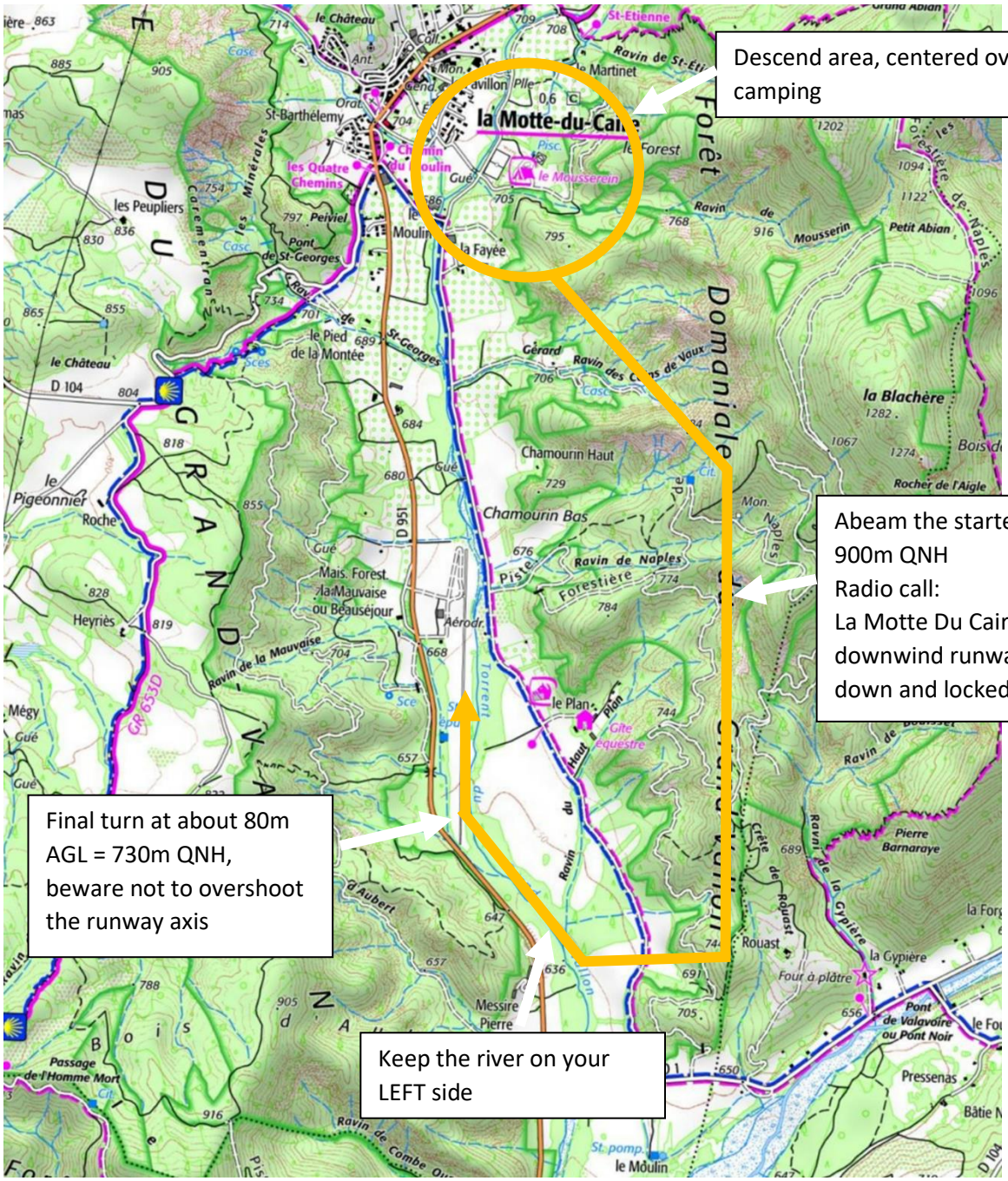


3.3. Approch and landing

3.3.1. Low South wind

3.3.3.1 Approch and landing

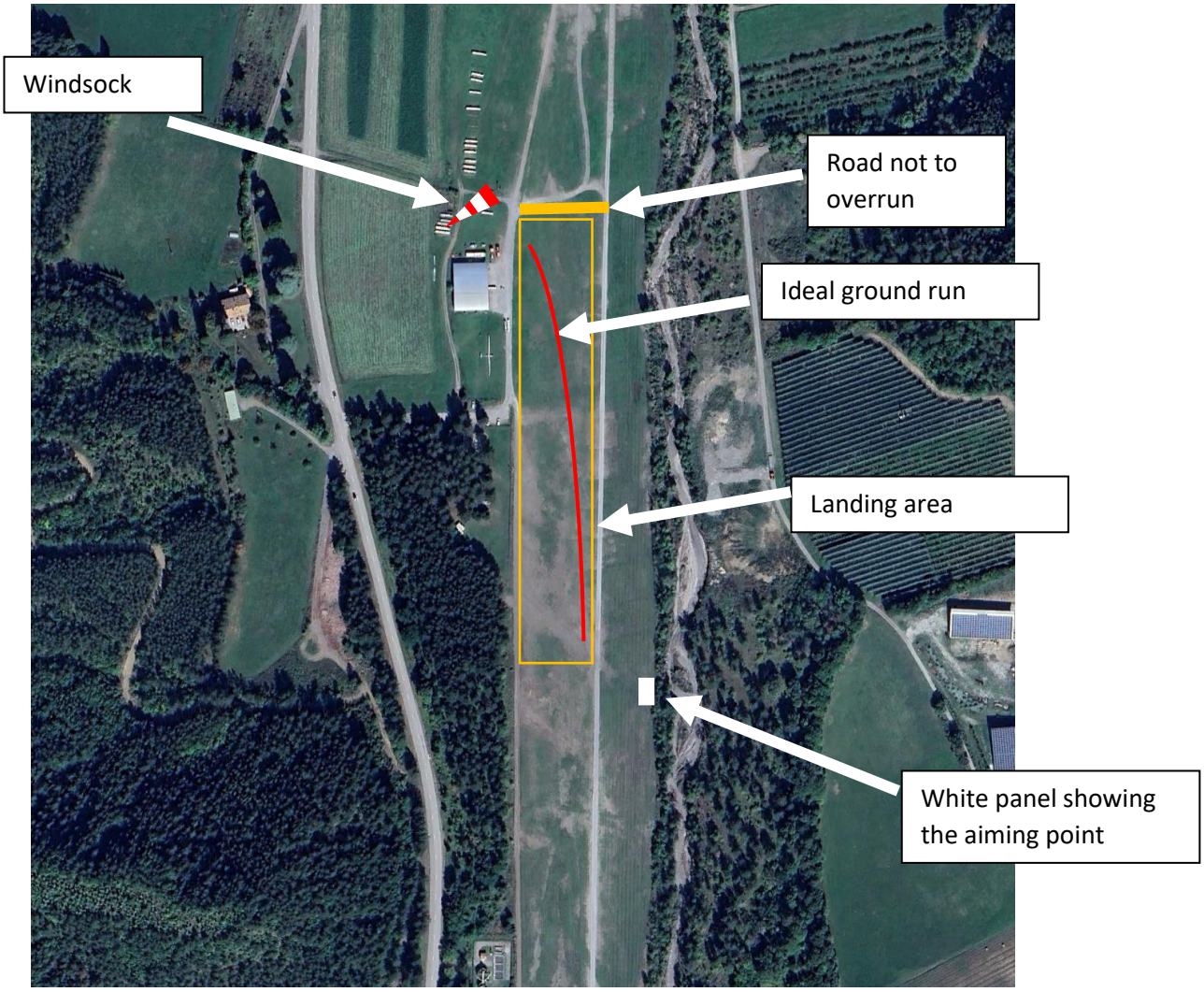
The platform being at the bottom of a relatively narrow valley, it is mandatory to follow a procedure adapted to the environment.
The landing area being uphill, arrivals are preferred on that direction with a south wind speed of up to 10 Kts



3.3.3.2 Use of the field on the ground

The landing area is limited on one side by a white panel on the right side of the field, and on the other side by the gravel road abeam the windsock. This road creates a bump that shall not be overrun during landing.

ONLY when speed is under control, turn slightly to the left to vacate as much as practicable the landing area, and tow the glider out by using a car or one of the golf carts.

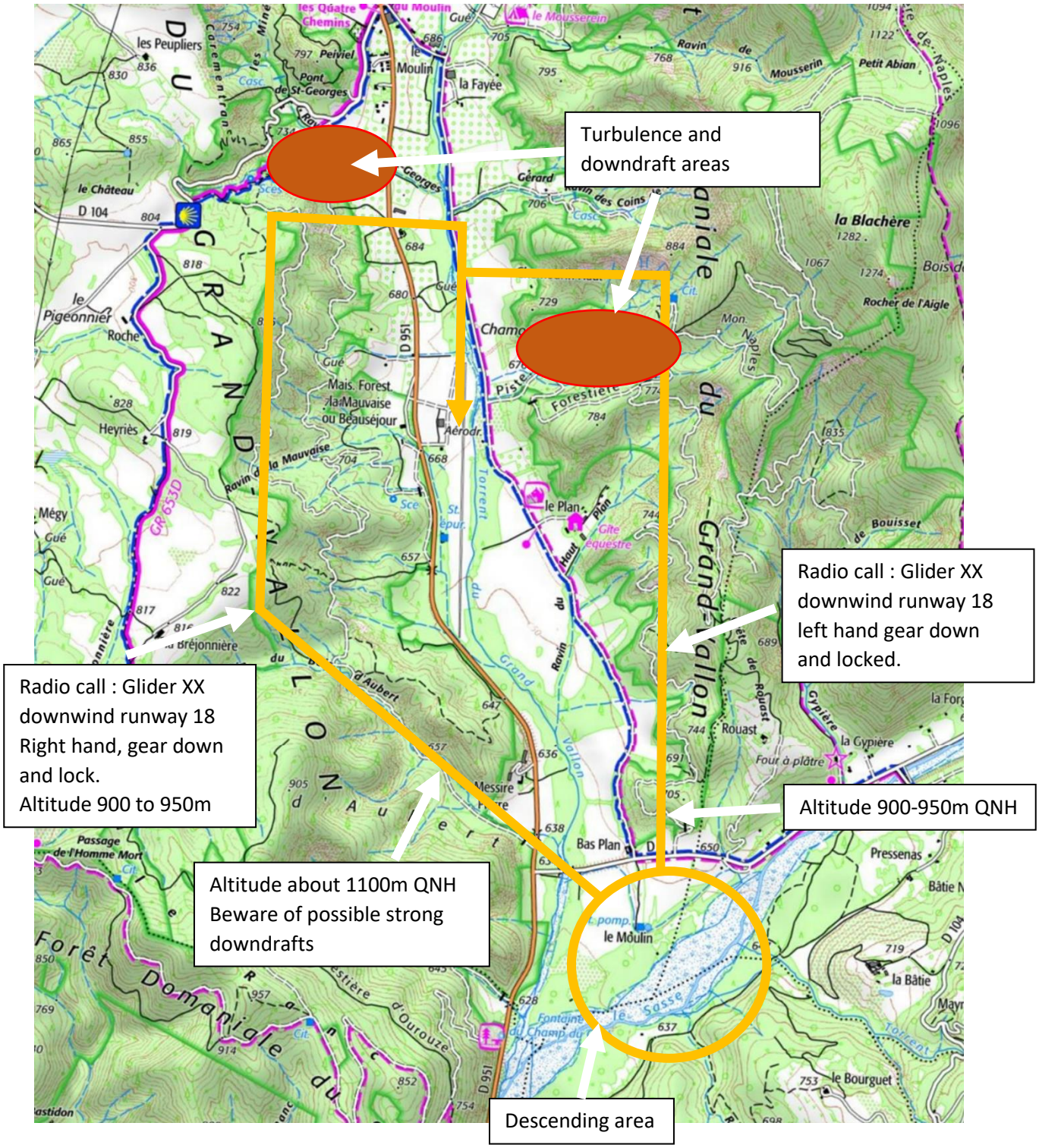


3.3.2. South wind situation

3.3.3.3 Approach and landing

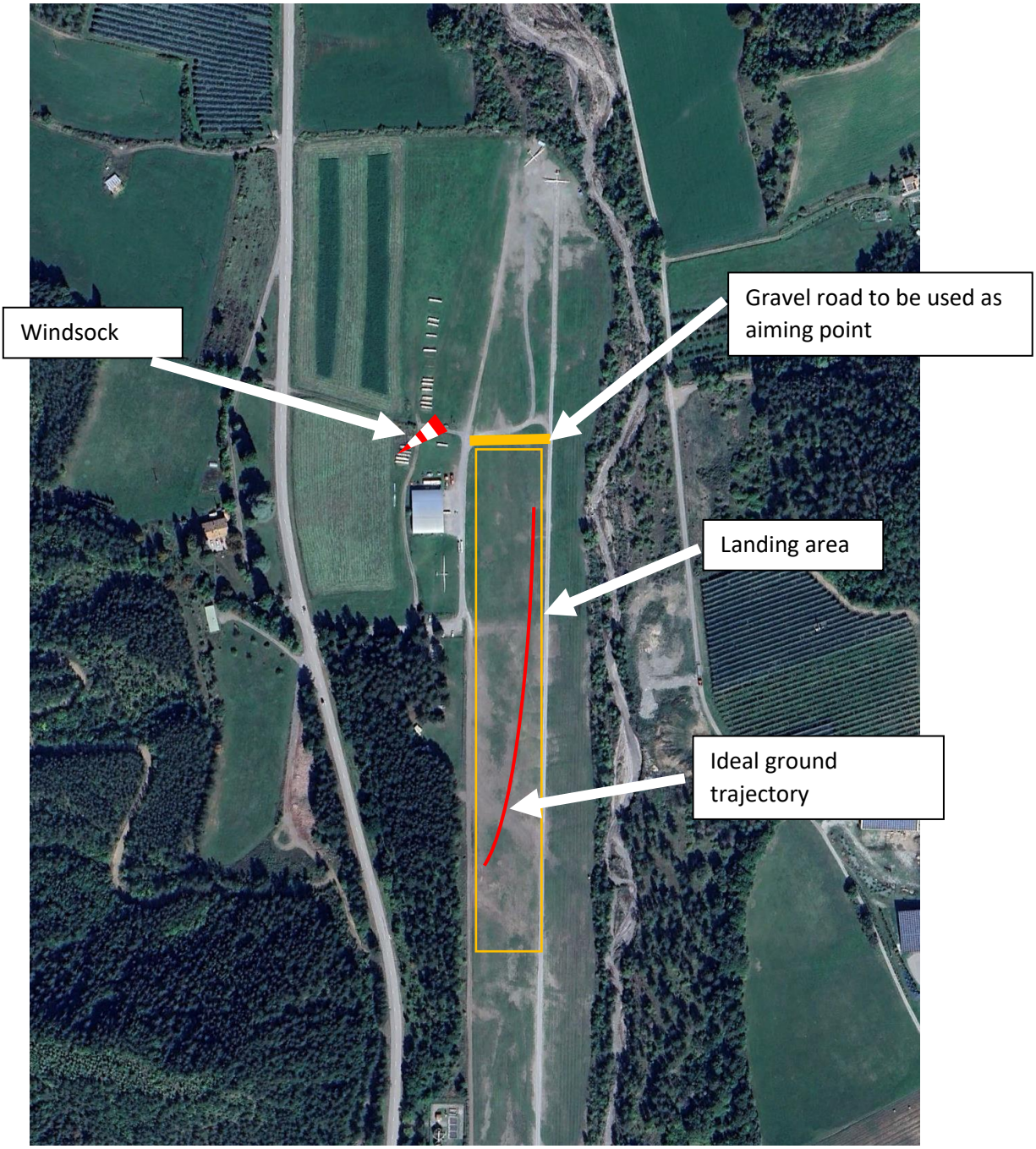
This configuration is to be used when wind speed is over 10 Kts.

The right hand downwind is prefered due to topography at the East side of the field.



3.3.3.4 Use of the field on the ground

Use the gravel road abeam the windsock as aiming point for the approach.
After touchdown and ONLY when speed is under control, turn slightly to the right to vacate the landing area, move your glider out of the runway as soon as possible with the golf carts.



4. North wind situation “Mistral”

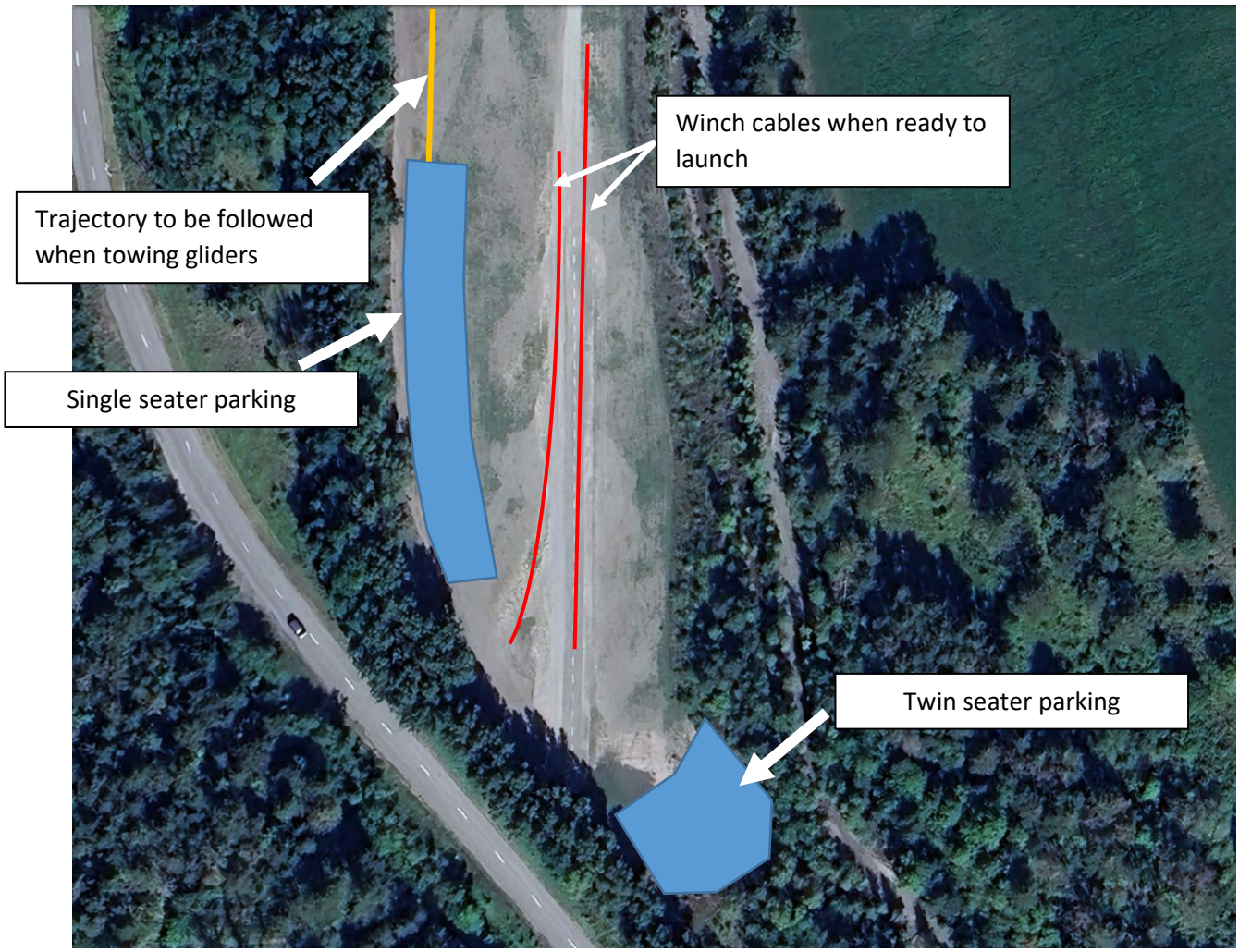
4.1. Ground movement on the ground and parking before launch.

With North wind situation « Mistral”, gliders have to join the start point by following the west side of the field, the crew at the wingtip walks as close as possible from the west boundary of the field to leave as much space as possible for launches and landings.

It is strongly recommended to monitor the frequency to be aware of launches or landings.

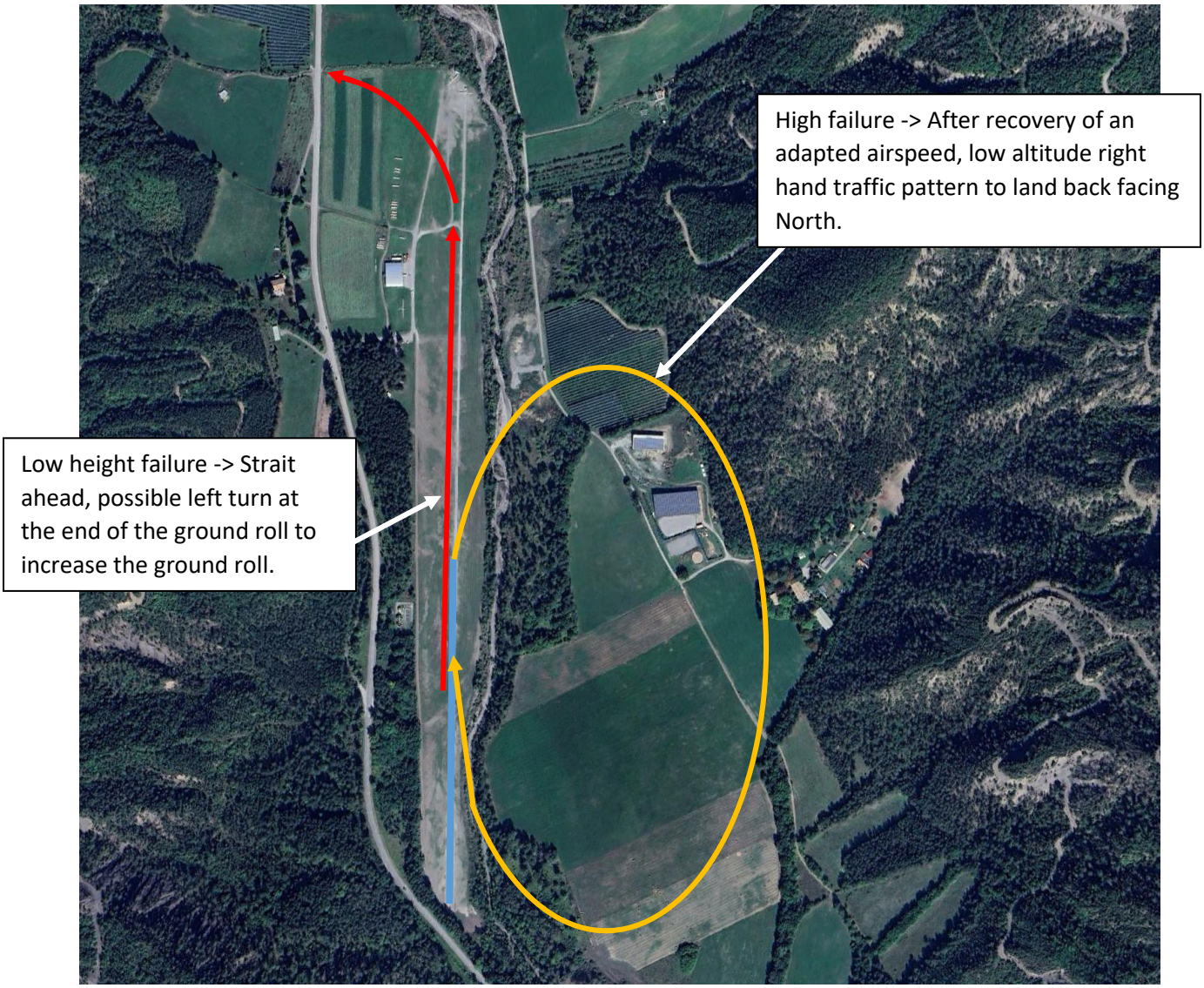
When a launch or landing is in progress, pilots and crew towing their gliders towards the launch area have to stop while turning the glider to give as much space as possible on the runway

The glider queue is at the west side of the paved strip for single seaters, and at the east side for twin seaters, as much as possible.
Beware not to cross between the two parking areas in ordrer not to cross in front of a glider during the launch procedure or to damage the winch cables.



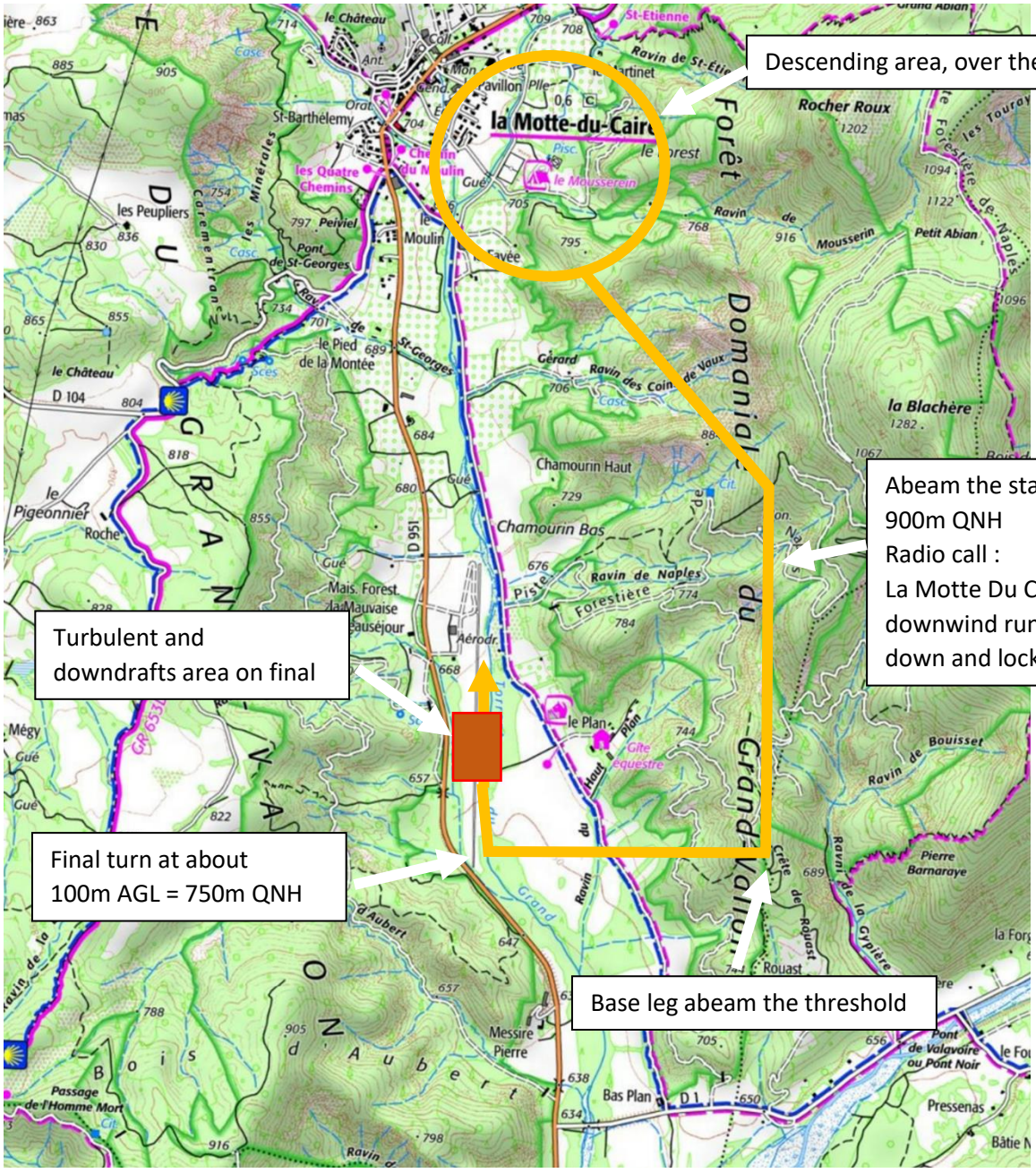
4.2. Safety manoeuvers in case of cable failure

The landing area being uphill in this direction, the forward landing option is possible up to a higher breaking point. Beware of your glider performance and airbrakes effectiveness.



4.3. Approach

Beware, this approach can be very turbulent. Take a much higher than normal glide path and speed.



4.4. Use of the field on the ground

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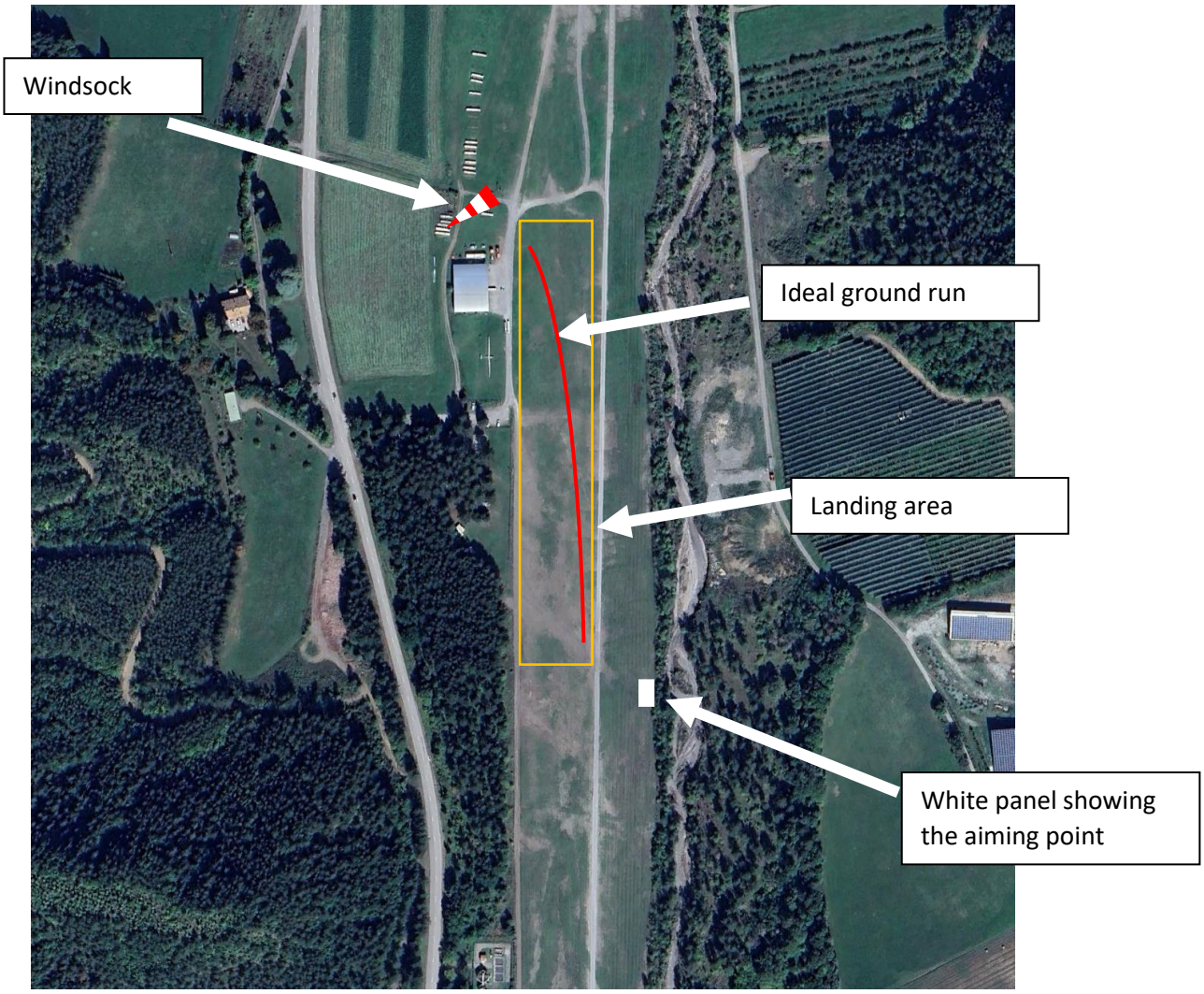
ONLY when speed is under control, turn slightly to the left to vacate as much as practicable the landing area, and tow the glider out by using a car or one of the golf carts.



Good flights to everyone, in safety!