



Westland Whirlwind Mk.I, P7056 'Pride of Yeovil'

Whirlwind Fighter Project

Spring Newsletter 2026

It has come to the WFP attention a number of claims have been made on various social media platforms stating that P7056 will fly. This is incorrect. While the airframe is built to the highest possible standards, the WFP are legally bound to not apply for a certificate of airworthiness.

This newsletter is focused on the completion of the build of P7056's tailplane and elevators. Much was achieved in November and December of 2025. This was publicised in a newsletter sent out early in February, 2026.

It had been the plan to perform a partial install of the complex tail of the aircraft before the re-opening of the Kent Battle of Britain Museum at Hawkinge – home of our Westland Whirlwind – which is in April 2026.

This date is just around the corner – and pressure of activity both in our workshop and at the Museum has necessitated us delaying this major event until mid-May.

More and detailed build news below...

You will find many images of the build, step-by-step, that Pete has to go through to make progress in building a reproduction Westland Whirlwind. Pete is good enough to send Team members very detailed updates – so these are what form the basis of these newsletters.

Once the skins go on – as they have to do – then all the expertise he applies to form the structure of the aircraft disappear from view. I wish to record this work and inform you, the members, as much as I can by sending out such detailed newsletters.

Communication with Members.

We are offering communication to members using WhatsApp – it's a one-way method of sending members who sign up some interim news from the Workshop. All these interim updates, and more, are featured in this newsletter below under Build News.

No-one misses out – all members receive all the updates – it's just that we offer more timely interim updates via WhatsApp.

Reply to me via email and I'll start the process to add you – but please send me your mobile number.

There are already other methods of reviewing our progress – Pete's YouTube channel, for instance:

<https://www.youtube.com/@whirlwindfp>

P7056 Club Night

We just held a successful Club Night via Zoom, on the 12th April, 2026. There is a recording of the meeting:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/rec/share/SOgDdWfArJJYgUKF-XznwMOWuX2Nf4D1N3ZN4iNenZYT2MRa8gGifIRMkhTou6.Zz0TQ3XG4aSdk6T5?startTime=1776019720000>

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During the meeting Pete gave us an update on his Trojan efforts in building the tailplane of our Whirlwind. The end is in sight for this phase of the build – the install is scheduled for mid-May – the weekend of the 9th onwards.

Build News:

Following on from the update sent out in February where we described Pete's progress at the workshop up to when he was building up the main tail planes and the hinge elements for the elevators. We will focus on the elevator work itself in this newsletter.

Elevators are designed with lift arms – they are cast items.



The casting required – parts for the elevator lift arms and outer hinges.

There has been quite a bit of internal discussion regarding how much lead weight is needed in the elevators forward of the hinge line to counterbalance the weight in the elevator



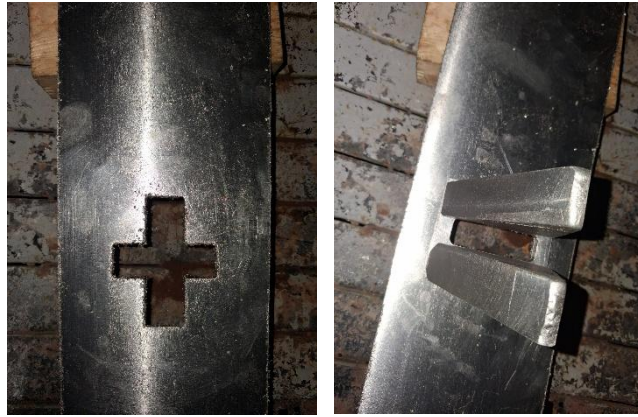
structure aft. Pete built up the outer hinges as solid castings to add structural weight.



The elevators have spars – Pete made these up; the plus-shaped cutout is the location of one of the hinges – those just previously cast.



Elevator spar with the outer hinge position CNC'd into location. Its hinge block is placed in position in a trial fit.



Elevator hinge pivot blocks being machined along with the built-in elevator hard stops.





Elevator spar lines up well with the tail plane when laid out. There are three hinge positions - here you can see a near and mid-location hinge.

Pete CNC'd the elevator nose ribs when he cut out the spars.

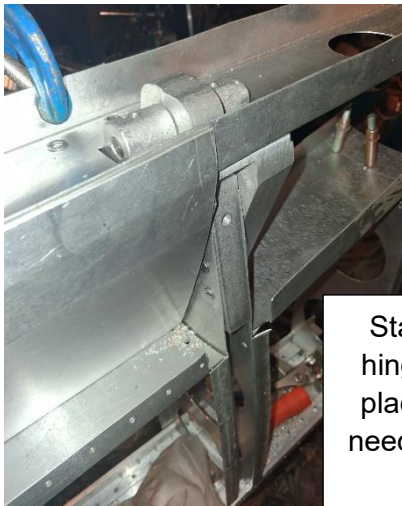


Very green fitting of the elevator spars and middle section of the nose skin torsion box i.e. nose component.



The elevator nose structure i.e. torsion box... all lining up.

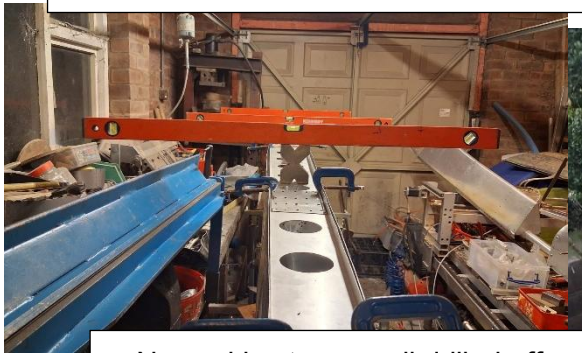




Starboard side split hinge block bolted in place – port side just needs assembling and fitting.



The spars now fully bolted to the centre casing. The outer hinge blocks are now fully fitted. Several hours spent adjusting the nose skins the ensure there is no twist in the elevator spar and it pivots freely. Considering how big and heavy it all is, without the main skins on it is very flexible. Skinning will become a priority to give the structure more rigidity.



Nose skins to spar all drilled off and cleco'd up – laid out next to the tail plane. Room is a little tight in the workshop.



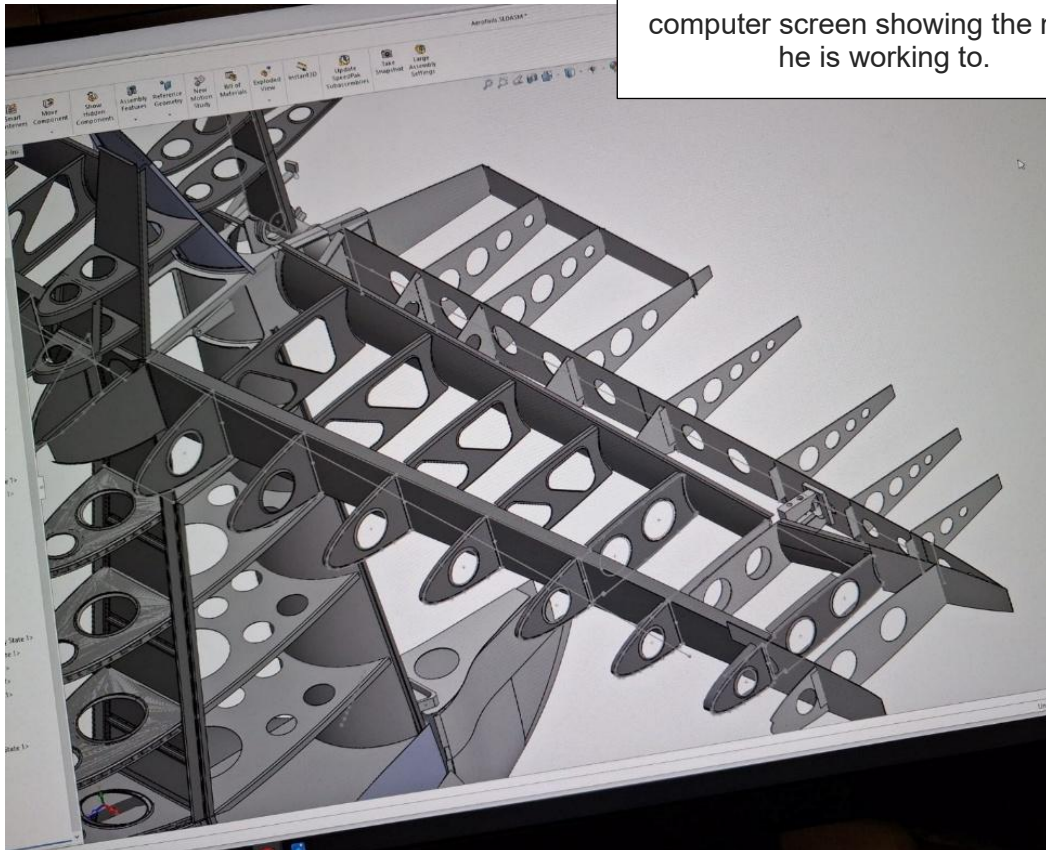
As for room – the tail plane fully laid out needs a workshop extension!



Next up - elevator angled nose skin extensions. Cut out on the CNC. Ready for forming.



More elevator components to manufacture! A view from Pete's computer screen showing the model he is working to.





CNC'ing the elevator tail ribs that run up to the trim tab spar. This thing eats aluminium!



Another sheet of ali gone. The rest of the elevator ribs and auxiliary spars. 14 ribs and spars in total.



Green-fitting the ribs and auxiliary spars. It's building up to be an impressive structure.



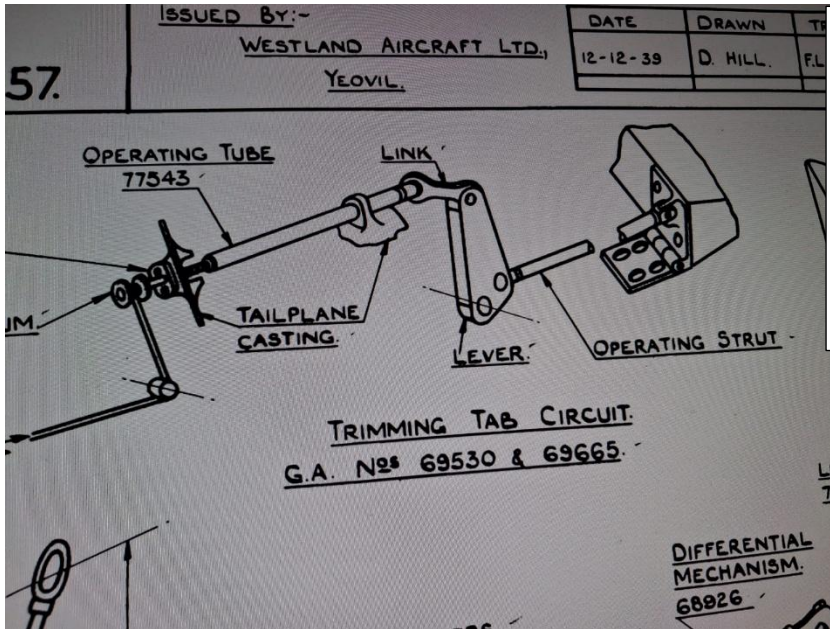
The elevator rear spars, that accommodate the trim tabs make an appearance...



The trim tabs themselves start to take shape. The port tab is fixed, the starboard trimmable by the pilot.

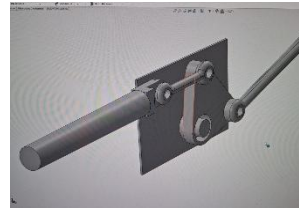
Again, we run into a lack of information. We presume there was a factory setting applied to the port tab after the pre delivery test flight by Westland. This would allow for the aircraft to be flown with a neutral position on the elevator control wheel, giving the pilot full range of positive and negative movement of the starboard controllable trimming tab.

The AP does not give any info into how it was adjusted and fixed. We are re-using the same system Westland used on the fixed aileron trimming tabs, a simple pivot, bolt and locking nut arrangement.



The only drawing we have that indicates how the trim tabs were operated. This all has to be manufactured if we are to continue to strive for accuracy.

The sketch and the lever, visualised in CAD. it is in reality a radius arm. This provides the flexible joint between the elevator and fixed skew gear and cable drum while maintaining the tab position set by the pilot.

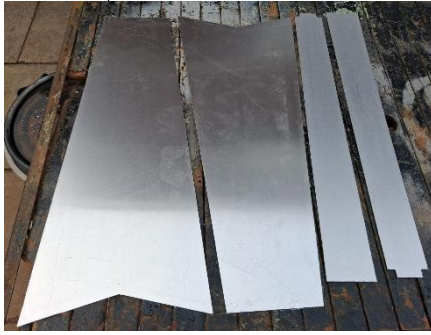


Elevator sub structure all drilled off, cleco'd and bolted up. The movement is quite impressive, three rotation points spread over 12 foot, with no drag.

You can see from the image the skew gear shaft from the cable drum, fit really well through the connecting casting and lines up well with the elevator end rib.



Trim tabs – here their shapes are cut out, formed and trial-fitted.



There's a fairly elaborate mechanism to manufacture and install for the trim tabs to operate. This is the starboard side.



A fully functional mechanism - just for a trim tab!



Back to the tail planes - they need skins – and the leading-edge skins have to be properly formed to fit correctly around the nose ribs.



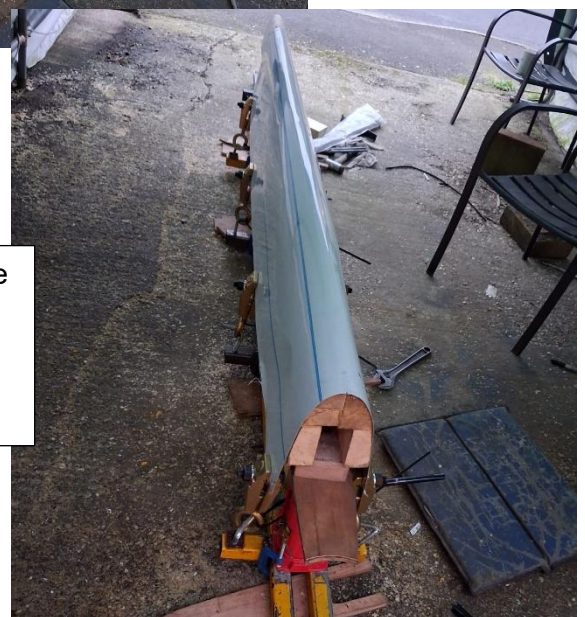
Form blocks for the leading-edge skins.



Stretch frame all welded and ready to go. Jacks fitted. Just to fit the anchor bolts and blocks, and away we go.



A great deal of pressure is required to stretch the skins around the frames. It was a difficult and time-consuming piece of work that took days to complete correctly, especially manufacturing the leading-edge former, and stretch frames.



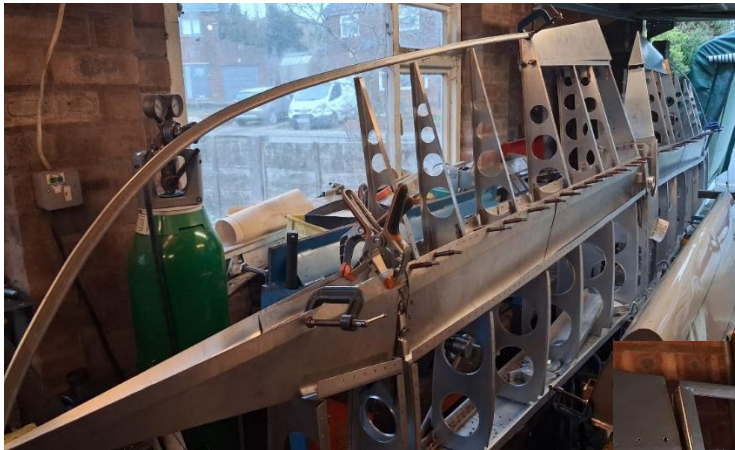
Leading edge trial fit to ribs - starting to look the part.



The trailing edge is held together by an asymmetric tube - which has to be formed at the workshop. The tube is formed in a roller box of Pete's making.



The tube thus formed in the roller box has also to have a curve formed to match the elevator profile! Here you can see the elements of the tailplane coming together as a trial fit takes place.



So – this series of images span from early January to early March this year. This newsletter is getting a to be a big document; so I will wrap this one up and start immediately on another that brings you all up to date with all the detail.

There will be one of Pete's short and sweet engineering videos in the next few days, too.

These are found here:

<http://www.youtube.com/@whirlwindfp>

Tailplane install date is settling pretty solidly on the weekend of 9th May.

More later... dear esteemed members!

Peter Lancaster
Membership Secretary
Whirlwind Fighter Project

21st April 2026