

RAF COLTISHALL

Conservation Area Designation



Adopted 2010

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Foreword

RAF Coltishall closed as an operational air base in the Autumn of 2006. Up to that point it had been one of the longest commissioned airfields in the United Kingdom. It got its name through the common practice of the Royal Air Force (RAF) to name its airfields after the closest railway station. Coltishall village itself is approximately 1½ miles distant. Most of the present site is located within Scottow Parish in North Norfolk District, although parts of the associated housing for the base lie in Broadland District.

RAF Coltishall is a name that resonates with pride in RAF history, with some notable and famous connections, not least with Squadron Leader Douglas Bader and the connection with the Free Polish Air Force, which for a period in the Second World War made the station its headquarters. Up to 1991 it played an important role during the Cold War. Afterwards aircraft flew from Coltishall in the Gulf conflicts. It has also been an important 'Air Sea' Rescue Base.

The following appraisal has been undertaken in accordance with North Norfolk District Council's resolution to investigate Conservation Area Designation passed in the spring of 2009. It has also been prepared in the context of wider community interest and the need to recognise the history and legacy the RAF has left at the former base.

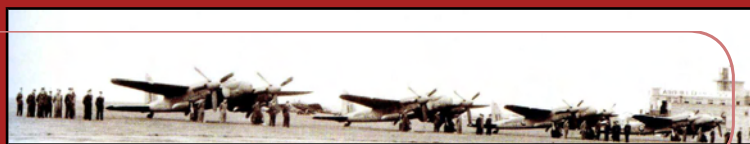
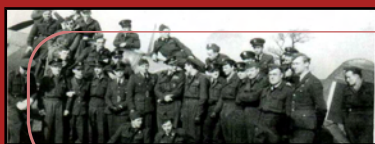
May 2010 marks the 70th Anniversary of the arrival of the first combat aircraft (Hawker Hurricanes) at the airfield. 2010 is also the 70th Anniversary of the Battle of Britain. The designation of a Conservation Area at the former RAF Coltishall would seem to be a fitting commemoration, not just in terms of the national significance, or the role of the station in RAF history but also in respect of the very special historic and social significance of the site for local people.

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Conservation, Design and Landscape Manager
North Norfolk District Council
May 2010



The Hawker Hurricane

RAF Coltishall Conservation Area Designation
PART 1: CHARACTER ANALYSIS





1.0 Summary

1.1 Key Characteristics

- The only Battle of Britain station in the UK to have remained in continuous use as an operational fighter station.
- Buildings and structures of architectural and historic interest
- Scheduled Ancient Monument Blast Walls and 'Spitfire Pens'.
- Large scale buildings of clearly defined groups and development ages.
- High quality landscape design and balanced mix of hard and soft grain.
- Imposing and striking views throughout and across the base
- Unique military graffiti in Hangars.
- The relationship between buildings and RAF hierarchy and social structure.
- The historical importance of RAF Coltishall's impact on events and conflicts throughout its operational use.

1.2 Key Issues

- Retention and management of green spaces.
- Need for the siting and design of new or replacement development to reflect the historic context and prevailing character of the site and for careful consideration to be given to the demolition of any buildings.
- The removal of airfield buildings and hard surfaces for material reclamation.
- Condition of vacant buildings and related risks of vandalism and theft.
- Subdivision of site ownership and need to ensure cohesive site management.
- Inappropriate alterations to existing buildings and structures.
- Alterations to hard and soft landscaping.
- Need to adopt a list of Buildings of Local Interest.
- Need to carefully consider the role of woodland and trees in the landscape and the setting of the site.
- Need to protect the setting of the key features such as the water tower and the control tower.



2.0 Background

Sites of military aviation have left us with a unique glimpse 'back in-time' to ages of fast changing technology, innovation and global conflicts. As such RAF Coltishall serves as a historical footprint and a model by which this country's military and in particular airforce history can be tracked and followed.

RAF Coltishall was in military use from 1939-2006. During this time the base saw dramatic expansion, changes in layout, functionality and even changes in nationality of personnel.

The station motto was *Aggressive in Defence*. The station crest is a stone tower surmounted by a mailed fist grasping three bind bolts (arrows), which symbolised a position of strength in defence of the homeland, indicative of the defensive/aggressive spirit with which pilots from Coltishall engaged the enemy. Indeed the station motto epitomises the traditional fighting spirit of the RAF - Aggressive in the defence of liberty.



The Station Crest





2.1 Location

The former RAF Coltishall (Norfolk), is located approximately 20 km (12 miles) northeast of the city of Norwich and 2.2 km (1½ mile) to the north-west of the village of Coltishall and also 20 kms (12 miles) from the coast. The bulk of the base lies within the parish of Scottow. It currently occupies an area of some 260 hectares (642 acres). The site straddles the boundaries of North Norfolk and Broadland District Councils. (See Appendices Map 5: Location)

2.2 Topography

The base lies within a distinct rural setting, between the confluence of the River Bure and Stakebridge Beck, with the flying field occupying a flat broad plateau and the domestic buildings occupying gently rising ground to the north of the site. Land use is mostly arable, interspersed with some patches of woodland and isolated trees that remain from hedgerows that have been removed. The skyline tends to be prominent due to large expanses of uninterrupted landscape.

2.3 Geology

Geological maps show that the site is underlain by Norwich and Red Crag deposits comprising mainly silts and sands. Borehole records show a succession of strata from surface including clay (0-1m), sands and gravel (1-10m) and weathered chalk. The Red Crag deposits and chalk are classified as a Major Aquifer, and the site is therefore of high sensitivity with respect to groundwater. It is considered likely that groundwater within the site's underlying sands and gravels may be in continuity with the River Bure.



The runway extensions under construction 1957



3.0 Planning Context

North Norfolk District Council and Broadland District Council are the two Local Planning Authorities primarily responsible for planning decisions effecting the site of the former RAF Coltishall. As such they have jointly produced this report and brought forward a proposal for the designation of a Conservation Area. Each Authority will need to formally designate the Conservation Area should it be decided to do so following consultation.

The power of Local Planning Authorities to designate Conservation Areas was introduced in the Civic Amenities Act, 1967. Current legislation is provided in Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990:

In the Act “every Local Planning Authority shall:-

A) From time to time determine which parts of their area are areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character and appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance, and

B) Designate those areas as conservation areas”.

Any designation of Conservation Area at the former RAF Coltishall would provide a further context for the consideration of applications for development in conjunction with the relevant development plan policies of North Norfolk District Council and Broadland District Council (as contained in their respective Local Development Framework documents and any Supplementary Planning Documents).

Also relevant are national policy guidance as contained in Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning and the Historic Environment.

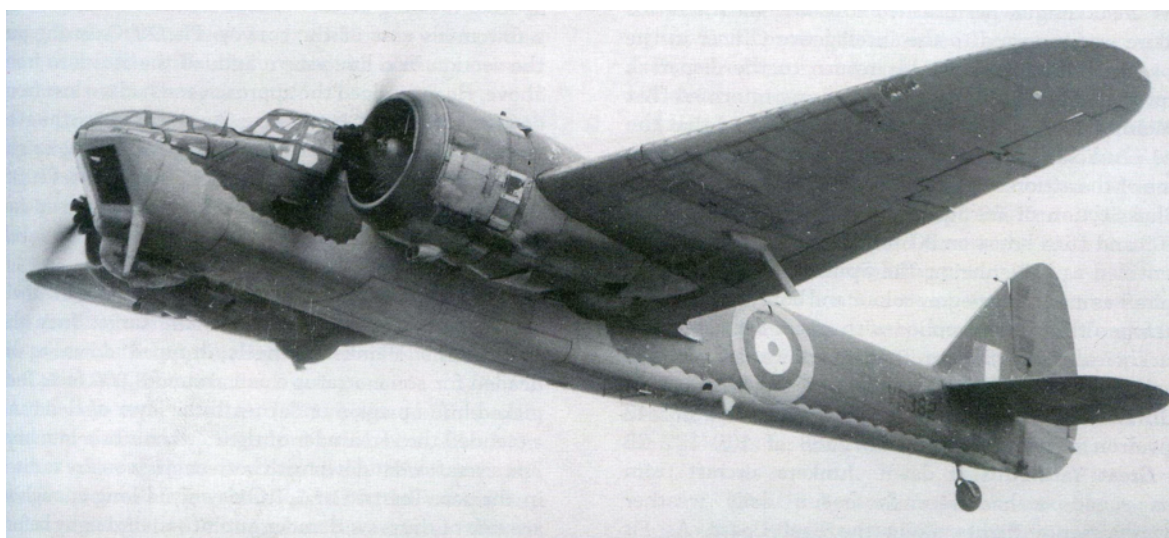
3.1 Conservation Area Designation

Designation of a Conservation Area helps to manage change effectively by understanding the significance of historic buildings, streets and spaces. Assessment and recognition of historic areas is an important part of the planning process. Building works and alterations in Conservation Areas are subject to extra planning controls which ensure that development proposals conserve the distinctive character of areas designated for their special buildings and historic interest.

Including property in a Conservation Area has a positive effect on character and tends to sustain property values due to the extra protection from insensitive development.



Designation as a Conservation Area does not mean that the area will necessarily be preserved exactly as it stands at the time of its designation. However, where new development is proposed, the District Councils will pay special attention to the design of new buildings and extensions to existing buildings. A high standard of design will always be expected, with a particular regard to scale, proportions, roofs, materials, colours, doors, windows and location to ensure that any new development maintains the existing character of the site and its surrounds.



Bristol Blenheim deployed from Coltishall



68 Squadron at Coltishall 1942.



4.0 Site History/Development

In late 1938 it was announced that a new aerodrome was to be built in the parish of Scottow, although it later took the name of the larger village of Coltishall. This was due to the practice at the time of the RAF to name airfields after the nearest railway station. Construction work began in February 1939 and the airfield was originally designed as a standard bomber station with five 'C-type' hangars and a large flying field. In May 1940, with its relative proximity to the coast and the growing threat of a Nazi invasion, it was re-designated a fighter station.

Importantly, the base represents the only Battle of Britain airfield in the United Kingdom to have remained in continuous use as an operational fighter station. It remains the only RAF station to represent the complete development of the RAF since 1940 and right up to and beyond the post- Cold War era.

Through the years RAF Coltishall has been associated with some of the RAF's most well-known Second World War fighters, including the Hurricane, Spitfire, Beaufighter, Defiant, Mosquito and Typhoon. Amongst the many airmen who served at the base during the war were some of RAF's most famous fighter pilots, including Max Aitken, Douglas Bader, John 'Cat Eyes' Cunningham, 'Johnnie' Johnson, Adolph 'Sailor' Malan, and Bob Standford-Tuck. In later decades other famous aircraft such as the Lightning and more recently the Jaguar flew from RAF Coltishall.

In the Second World War, given its proximity to the North Sea, attacks against enemy shipping were an important theme in the station's operations. Random hit and run raids against enemy targets on the continent were also a feature of RAF Coltishall's wartime undertakings. This closeness to the European mainland also brought unwelcome attention from Nazi bombers, and there were numerous attacks on the airfield especially during the early years of the war. One of the consequences of these attacks was the loss of one of the partly built hangars.

The war also brought growing casualties and a section of a small remote cemetery on a un-named lane to the north of the airfield was acquired, (later marked with a Commonwealth War Graves Commission Cross of Sacrifice). During the war many RAF units were manned by Polish pilots and for a short time in 1945-46 RAF Coltishall was home to the RAF's Polish squadrons. Up until 1991 the base found itself in the front line of the Cold War with Lightnings and Jaguars amongst the fighter aircraft assigned to RAF Coltishall. From the 1950's to 1990's the station also hosted an Air/Sea Rescue facility and two Squadrons of Hunters.

In July 2004, the Secretary of State for Defence announced to the House of Commons that RAF Coltishall would close by the end of 2006.



4.1 RAF Coltishall Timeline

| DATE | EVENT |
|------|--|
| 1939 | Construction began at the Scottow Aerodrome site, officially re-named Coltishall shortly after construction. |
| 1940 | Shortly before completion the station was handed to 12 Group Fighter Command. |
| 1940 | First combat aircraft arrive. 14th May |
| 1940 | First recorded enemy aircraft shot down during the Battle of Britain. It fell to Sgt F N Robertson of 66 Squadron, Coltishall. |
| 1942 | Coltishall was a launch platform for attacks on German battleships during the 'Channel Dash'. |
| 1942 | The 346th FS of the USAAF formed at Coltishall. |
| 1943 | His Majesty King George presents 5 (ASR) Flight with their Squadron Badge. The only time in the Service's history that a RAF squadron has been presented with a new badge by a Reigning Monarch. |
| 1945 | Coltishall was handed over to 133 Wing of the Free Polish Air Force. The only time that an operational airfield in the UK has been handed over to a foreign country. |
| 1945 | The last enemy aircraft to be shot down over the UK off Cromer by a Mosquito of 125 Squadron Coltishall. |
| 1946 | Coltishall handed back to 12 Group Fighter Command. |
| 1959 | First Lightning delivered to the base. |
| 1973 | The arrival of the last remaining airworthy Avro Lancaster from RAF Waddington. |
| 1974 | The Jaguar era began. |
| 1977 | The third and last operational UK Jaguar Squadron arrived. |
| 1979 | The Westland Sea King replaced the Whirlwinds which had been in residence since mid 1956. |
| 1982 | 202 Squadron deployed to South Atlantic to provide cover for Falkland islands. |
| 1990 | Jaguars from Coltishall were used in the Gulf War. |



| DATE | EVENT |
|------|---|
| 2004 | The MOD announced that Coltishall was to close by the end 2006. |
| 2005 | Saw the disbandment of 16 and 54 Squadron. |
| 2006 | Saw the end of operational flying, 30th November the station was closed marked by a parade and fly past. |
| 2009 | Ministry of Justice take temporary control, Work begins on the conversion of 'H' Blocks to Prison. |
| 2010 | 70th Anniversary of the Battle of Britain. Possible Designation of RAF Coltishall as a Conservation Area. |

HISTORICAL TIMELINE



5.0 Spatial Analysis

The base broadly comprises the built-up Married Quarters and associated technical/infrastructure area, the airfield and the storage area on the eastern side of the airfield.

The main base administration/accommodation area contains a large collection of buildings varying in form, mass, height and appearance. Furthermore, there are large areas of hard-standing and car parking, extensive open grass areas used as sports pitches and smaller pockets of amenity open space.

The vegetation cover within the site is concentrated within the north-west of the site and consists of mature tree lined avenues, tree groups, individual trees and amenity shrub areas, the majority of which are set within areas of closely mown grass. This results in a 'campus style' landscape character typical of many RAF bases.

5.1 Airfield Buildings and Layout

The architecture of RAF Coltishall is in general characterised by simplicity in detailing and consistency in the use of materials. Within the base there are distinctive groups of buildings which portray a similar scale and density as well as visual connections. The layout, groupings and landscaping of buildings are all significant features of the airfield.

The airfield was built to 1930s permanent airfields standards. In keeping with the local area most of the buildings in the residential areas were faced in yellow brick with tiled or flat roofs. The more important buildings such as the station headquarters, the officers' and sergeants' messes and the guardroom were built with restrained neo-Georgian proportions. In the technical area most of the buildings were constructed from reinforced concrete. The station water tower, that might have been left as a tank mounted on a steel tower, was encased in an elegant Art Deco style concrete tower with lodges to either side. Many of the buildings in this area have flat roofs with deep parapets that could be filled with sand to give further protection from incendiary bombs. In common with other Watch Offices or Control Towers built before the 2nd World War are constructed in concrete with 14-inch (35.5cm) walls. In the meantime the airfield's bomb stores were located remotely on the east side of the flying field and comprised two standard groups of six bomb stores and associated fusing buildings.

In considering the layout of an airfield an 'architect' needed to consider the necessity of dispersing buildings to guard against bombing, set against the loss of operational efficiency if buildings were placed too far apart. The wide roads and spaces between buildings were laid out around several axes centred on the Watch Office or Control Tower. To the north-west of the tower three hangars are laid out in a gentle arc. Behind the hangars were many technical buildings, including the parachute store,



armoury, stores and motor sport section. There is a distinct axis running from the Watch Office to the main gate, this axis includes all the stations central activities, the hospital and protected gas decontamination centre, the protected operations room and adjacent to it the station headquarters. Another axis running from the Watch Office to the north-west passes through the centre of the imposing station Water Tower and the Airmens' Institute. One further axis was used to mark out the officer's housing estate, this passes through the centre of the Officer's Mess and roughly northwards along Barnby Road. A further small group of buildings were constructed on the old Scottow Road, comprising on the south side of the road the station telephone exchange and on the opposite side an arc of houses for married personnel.

The residential area (particularly the officer's housing and officer's mess complex) is exceptionally well designed and well laid out, and because it has been in single ownership until now it has not suffered from unsympathetic alterations.

During the post-war period the airfield was modified on a number of occasions to accommodate the deployment of new aircraft and weapons system. One of the key requirements for the new jet aircraft was an asphalt runway; this was laid approximately south-west to north-east, with quick reaction platforms at either end. Aircraft servicing platforms were also added in front of the hangars and the control tower updated in preparation for new fighter jets.

5.2 Key Views and Vistas

Due to the defensive and inward looking nature of the site views towards and from the perimeter are restricted to just glimpses. However internally the clearly defined base layout and building groups create a number of striking vistas, glimpses and panoramas across the airfield.

The following views are identified as making a significant contribution to the base's special character. These key views are identified in appendix 1 Map 2:

- Views along the 1930s Officers housing estate, Barnby Road.
- Important vista view down the principal road running north-south from the entrance gate to Hanger 3.
- Glimpse views of the Control Tower from between Hangars.
- Panoramas of the whole site can be gained from either end of the runway and from the southern boundary and from the hangars across the runway.
- Key focal points and prominent features features from all over the site are the Control Tower and Water Tower.



6.0 The Issues

Of the hundreds of military aviation sites that were in use in the period up to 1945, comparatively few survive in a recognisable form. For this reason RAF Coltishall is a rare example. Throughout the country many sites have now passed into commercial use and those that remain in military use have been adapted to new purposes. In the case of RAF Coltishall, the adaption of existing buildings and the construction of new buildings may be necessary to ensure the future viability of the site. Finding the right balance between change and conservation requires clear definition of the site's special interest, as well as a good partnership between the owners and the various statutory agencies or private interests concerned.

However, the Council recognises that some degree of change is inevitable to allow the most important buildings and structures to continue in a viable use. Experience has shown that with careful consideration most airfield buildings can be adapted to new uses without harm to their essential character. This is already evident on the site with the reuse of the 'H Blocks' in the new prison scheme.

However, aviation sites can be particularly vulnerable to change and inappropriate demolitions. The majority of the buildings on the base were built for strictly functional purposes, without great attention for architectural expression or long-term durability. Therefore many of the structures that were in place in 1939 have already been altered or demolished.

In heritage terms the following threats can be discerned:-

- Demolition of key structures and buildings.
- The removal of airfield buildings and hard surfaces for material reclamation.
- Vacant buildings and vandalism/theft.
- The subdivision of site ownership, which could lead to an unco-ordinated management and maintenance regime.
- Inappropriate new development, including alterations to existing buildings and structures with the loss of important memorabilia.
- Alterations to hard and soft landscaping, unstructured and inappropriate planting.

6.1 Site Condition

As with many disused airfields maintenance has been reduced considerably over the last few years. Many buildings are also vacant. Structurally however most buildings are in reasonable condition. The buildings by nature are substantial in size, scale, footprint and offer substantial potential for re-use.



7.0 Character Areas

The former RAF Coltishall and surrounding 'base development' can be categorised into three distinct areas, (See appendices Map 4: Character Areas)

- Character Area 1: Married Quarters and Associated Infrastructure
- Character Area 2: Base Administration, Technical and Accommodation Area
- Character Area 3: The Airfield

Character Area 1: Married Quarters and Associated Infrastructure

The Married Quarters area comprises some 377 houses, a church, a school, shops and a pub, all of which has been sold to the private sector. The school, which lies immediately outside the operational boundary is now run as a Pupil Referral Unit. This area also contains a wide range of buildings varying in scale, volume and height. This character area contains a good and varied collection of trees. These are predominantly placed along the internal road network as avenues, groups and special specimens. As outlined above, the trees create an attractive 'campus style' landscape character and help to create a strong integration between the built areas of the base and the surrounding landscape.

The range of tree species is wide and varied including, Oak, Horse Chestnut, Silver Birch, Maple, Ash, Cherry, Rowan and Beech. Generally, trees are well maintained and in good condition.

Character Area 2: Base Administration and Accommodation Area

The base administration and accommodation area occupies land to the north-west of the runway. The area comprises a mixture of 1940/50s style brick buildings (some of which are camouflaged) and later 1960 and 70s housing which in itself is of little architectural interest but still forms an integrated part of the development of the base and its associated infrastructure .

The area is approached from the road via a gatehouse, which lies at the top of a central access road that runs straight down at a right angle to the runway area. The majority of former single person living accommodation is located to the right of this road occupying the south western corner of the base, the main living accommodation are split into three tiers; other ranks, junior ranks and senior ranks (officer's were billeted off-site in the Officers' Mess).

The Other Ranks accommodation was provided in the main by 7 'H' Block units, which are now converted in the new prison re-development. Each unit originally housed approximately 48 people.

There are four more modern style units two of which are located against the perimeter and two located centrally which are of a more modular design.



Immediately behind the gatehouse is a large two storey building that used to house the Senior Ranks. The building includes large internal spaces that were formally the ball room and games room. Amongst this group of buildings is the former Sergeants' Mess and the Womens' Quarters (WAAFS)

The rest of the area includes sports pitches and other base facilities including a gymnasium, disused swimming pool and two very fortified Cold War command and control buildings which are 50% subterranean and disguised from air observation by earth and grass banking. This area also consists of a collection of ordnance storage buildings and wide access roads, enclosed within grass bunds and set within sweeps of closely mown grass. Vegetation is sparse and limited to the hedgerow enclosing the eastern boundary of the site.

The Officers Mess is an important low-rise building located to the west of the site. Constructed in the neo-Georgian style this building is proposed for 'Local Listing'. This area also includes the four major hangars, three of which have important and significant historic squadron markings.

Character Area 3: The Airfield

Due to its function, the large expanse of airfield was kept free of trees and tall vegetation and, as a result of regular mowing was very open in character as it is today. The runway itself, is a large concrete expanse running along a North East to South West axis. It is in excess of 7,000 feet (2134 metres) in length by about 100 feet (30 metres) wide at each end of the runway and stretches to the very edge of the base. However, on parts of the eastern edge scrub areas have formed and some of the grass areas have been allowed to grow longer, resulting in a richer 'sward'.

This area includes the designated Scheduled Ancient Monument Blast Walls and Spitfire Pens. Other structures of significance include the Control Tower and horse shoe of 4 large aircraft hangars with ancillary engineering workshops and stores.

In addition, groups of broad-leafed woodland lie adjacent to the northern section of the runway and create important elements of enclosure. This area with its unique buildings and interrelationship of spaces can be considered to be of high architectural and historic interest.



8.0 Environment and Landscape

Ecology

There are no designated sites of nature conservation importance within the area being considered for Conservation Area status.

Great Crested Newts are present on the site within the emergency water supply which consists of fenced off concrete ponds. This species is protected against intentional or reckless killing or injuring under the Wildlife & Countryside Act (1981).

Bats are also thought to be present in some of the buildings and are known to be roosting within the Sergeants Mess.

A bird survey was carried out in 2003 and identified a wide range of common species using the site, including wood peckers and other rare species.

Ground Conditions

Geological maps show that the site is underlain by Norwich Red Crag deposits comprising mainly silts and sands. The groundwater from the Red Crag and Chalk deposits are classified as a Major Aquifer and is therefore identified as being of high sensitivity. It is considered likely that groundwater within the sites underlying sands and gravels may be in continuity with the River Bure.

The site is potentially impacted by contamination relating to activities where fuels or oils may have entered the ground. Other, more localised, areas of contamination associated with current and historical processes may also exist.

Flood Risk

The Environment Agency analysis confirms that no part of RAF Coltishall is considered to be at risk from flooding.

Tree Preservation

In 2007 North Norfolk District Council placed a Tree Preservation Order on most of the trees within the former operational area of RAF Coltishall on the basis that this is a more or less unique and intact example of structured planting. Indeed the landscape style and design can be seen as being specific to the RAF. The approach to landscape in the 1930s was very much centred on the 'suburban landscape aesthetic' of the 'Garden Town' and this is exhibited in fine example at Coltishall.



9.0 Monitoring and Review

As recommended by English Heritage, all Conservation Areas should be reviewed every five years from the date of formal designation. A review should include the following:

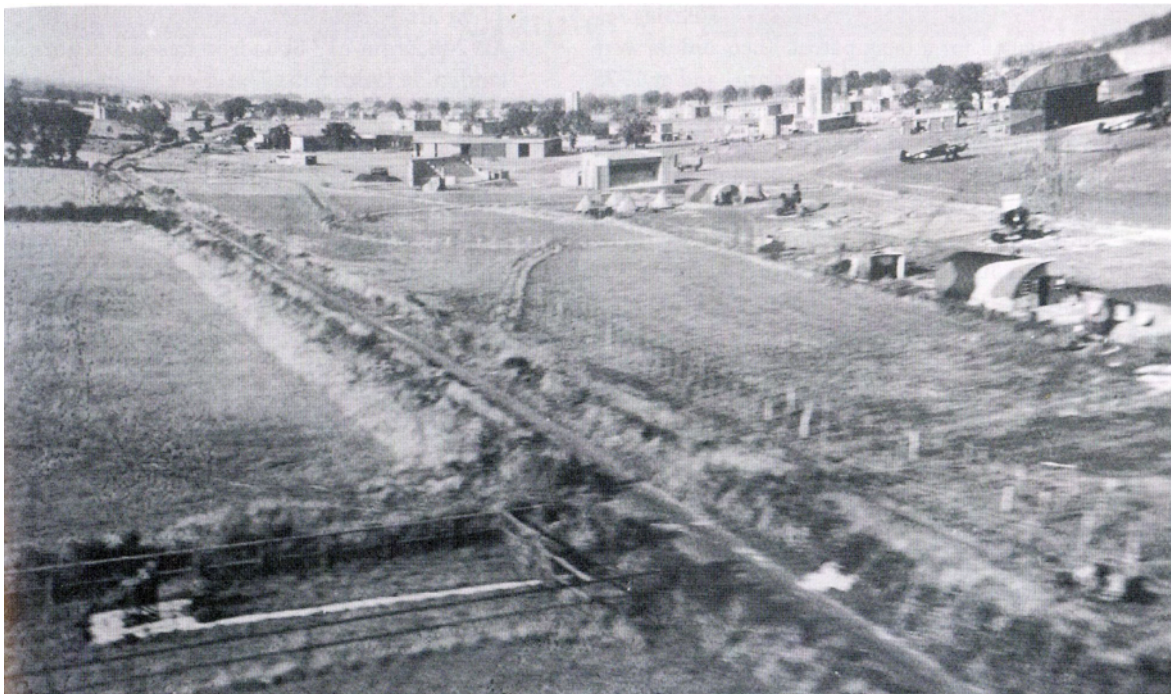
- A survey of the Conservation Area including a full photographic survey to aid possible enforcement action.
- An assessment of the recommendations of the document and whether they have been acted upon.
- The identification of any new issues which need to be addressed.
- The production of a short report detailing the findings of the survey and itemising necessary action.
- Publicity and advertising.

Any review should be carried out by the local community under the guidance of a heritage consultant or North Norfolk District Council. This would enable the local community to become more involved with the process and raise awareness of the issues in particular the problems associated with enforcement.



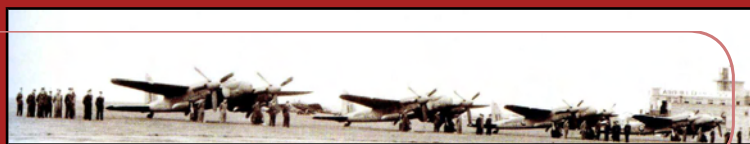
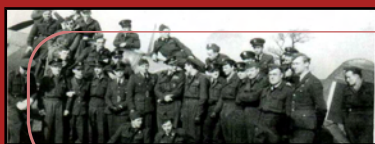
10.0 Engagement and Support

Maintaining the special character of a Conservation Area ultimately will be dependent on the support of the site owner, local residents and other interests. Regular monitoring and effective enforcement of planning controls by the constituent Local Planning Authorities will be needed to ensure the management proposals which follow are effectively delivered.



Low Level view of the base in the 1940s showing early development. In the distance the Water Tower proposed for Local Listing is clearly visible.

RAF Coltishall Conservation Area Designation
PART 2: MANAGEMENT PROPOSALS





1.0 Conservation Area Boundary

It proposed that the Conservation Area boundary encompasses the entire historic airbase boundary including the residential housing to the north-east and the prison redevelopment, as well as the airfield itself. The cemetery just to the north of the airfield has also be included. (See appendix, Map 2 for boundary plan).

Conservation Area status gives additional protection from unsympathetic development and this includes:-

- The demolition of certain buildings, walls, fences and structures require the submission of a formal application to the Local Planning Authority for Conservation Area Consent.
- The range of 'Permitted Development Rights' is more limited within Conservation Areas. Planning applications can be required for large extensions, satellite dishes, dormer windows and outbuildings (which would not ordinarily be necessary). Applications for Advertisement Consent will also be required.
- Planning permission is required to change the exterior appearance of buildings (with either stone, artificial stone, timber, plastic or tiles).
- Owners are required to give 6 weeks notice in writing of any intention to cut down, lop or top any tree with a trunk over 75mm in diameter.

Further controls can be considered by the Local Planning Authority if deemed appropriate and reasonable (through, 'Article 4 Directions').



The Ministry of Defence chose to hold all its historic piston engine aircraft at RAF Coltishall therefore creating the 'Battle of Britain Memorial Flight' unit.



2.0 Management Recommendations

2.1 New Development

The character of the former RAF Coltishall is derived from its open layout of buildings, the consistent use of materials and the generous provision of trees and grassed areas. RAF Coltishall was designed on the principle of dispersal in order to minimise exposure to concentrated bombing. The site's coherent groups of buildings with their clearly defined character is a desirable feature which should be retained. As well as this the scale and density of the original development and the visual connections between the original buildings should be respected. The spaces between buildings are also vital elements in forming character and setting.

Any new development if complying with policy, would have to respect these features and be of good design quality in order to preserve or enhance the area.

Interiors

The majority of airfield buildings have functional interiors that can sustain some degree of change without damage to their architectural or historic significance. It is recognised that these interiors will need to be adapted from time to time in response to new or changed uses. However, the demolition of structural elements such as solid partition walls or staircases should be avoided, unless its essential for ongoing use of the building.

Care should be taken to retain any original plasterwork, joinery, tiling and decorative features such as skirtings, architraves, picture rails, dados, doors and fireplaces. Evidence of previous uses such as murals and historic graffiti which can be seen in the hangars on the base should be retained 'in situ' where possible and at the very least be properly recorded. In some cases original service installations that reflect an intrinsic part of the buildings original function are of interest and should be considered for retention by a responsible owner.

2.2 Protection of Buildings and Structures

Currently the base has no Listed Buildings or Building of Local Interest. This leaves structures of architectural or historic merit at risk from unsympathetic alterations which could have an adverse impact on their character or appearance. Conservation Area status would give some additional protection.

Should a Conservation Area be designated, where deemed appropriate the Council would consider the introduction of further controls to protect buildings and structures of architectural or historic interest (Article 4 Directions).



Indeed Planning Policy Statement 5 makes provision for local authorities to draw up lists of locally important buildings which make a valuable contribution to the local scene or local history, but which do not merit national listing. These will be given additional protection; (however they will not enjoy the full protection of statutory listing).

The following buildings/structures are proposed to be Locally Listed:

- Hangars 1,2,3 and 4: These hangars are standard 'Air Ministry Type C Protected' structures. They have concrete lower walls with glazed panels above and were originally clad in asbestos sheeting. The hangars include squadron badges and Hangar 1 includes various examples of military graffiti.
- Watch Office (Control Tower): Standard Air Ministry 2328/39 design constructed from 14inch thick reinforced concrete walls. Post-war modifications include the meteorological section and a briefing room, an extension to the front of the structure and the Visual Control Room on the roof.
- Station Water Tower.
- The Officers' Mess: Fine neo-Georgian style building is typical of the care taken over the design of permanent RAF airfields during the late 1930s. Traces of wartime camouflage can still be seen on its walls.
- The Sergeants' Mess: Contemporary with the Officers' Mess, entrance porch with Art Deco influence.

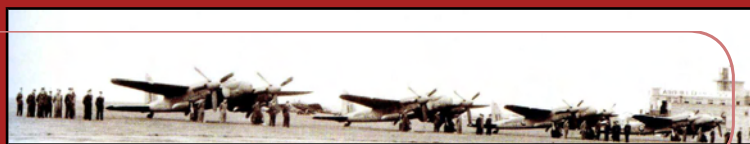
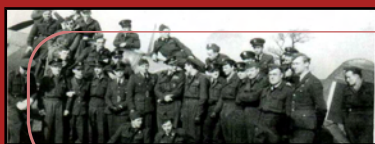
2.3 Landscaping

The original landscape character of RAF Coltishall could easily be eroded by piecemeal changes, such as ill-considered addition of lighting, signage, service pipes, sub-stations, fencing or even planting. It is therefore desirable, particularly in designated Conservation Areas, to maintain a consistent and sensitive approach to all elements of the landscape. Prior consultation with the Council is key to ensure works are carefully designed and respect is given to the prevailing character of the base.

Another possible threat could be sub-division of space within the site. At present the buildings are located in an open-plan layout with a clear interrelationship of space between buildings and structures. The subdivision of former RAF buildings and spaces into separate curtilages marked by walls and fencing could seriously erode the open nature of the site.

RAF Coltishall Conservation Area Designation

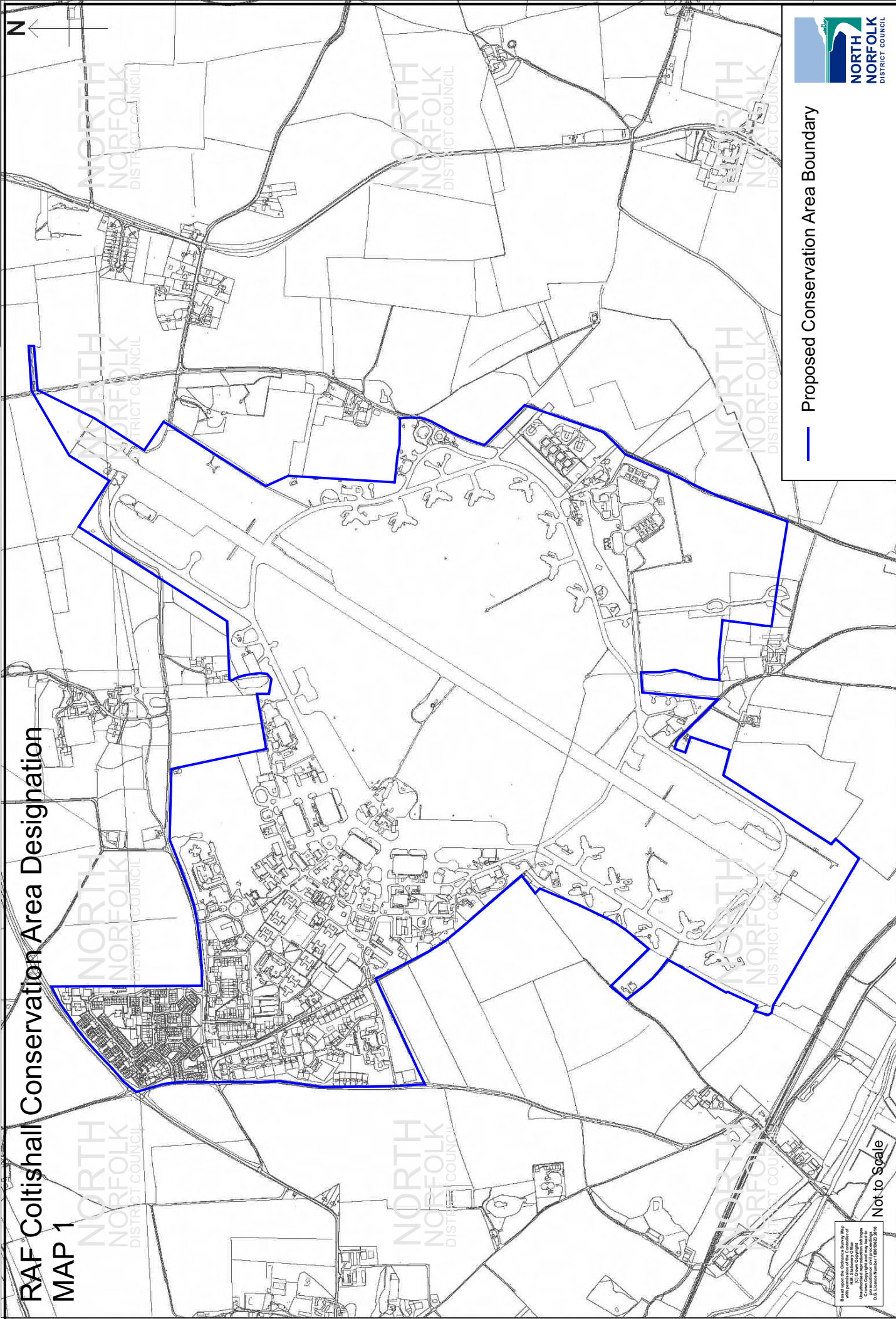
APPENDICES





Map 1: Proposed Conservation Area Boundary

RAF Coltishall Conservation Area Designation MAP 1



— Proposed Conservation Area Boundary

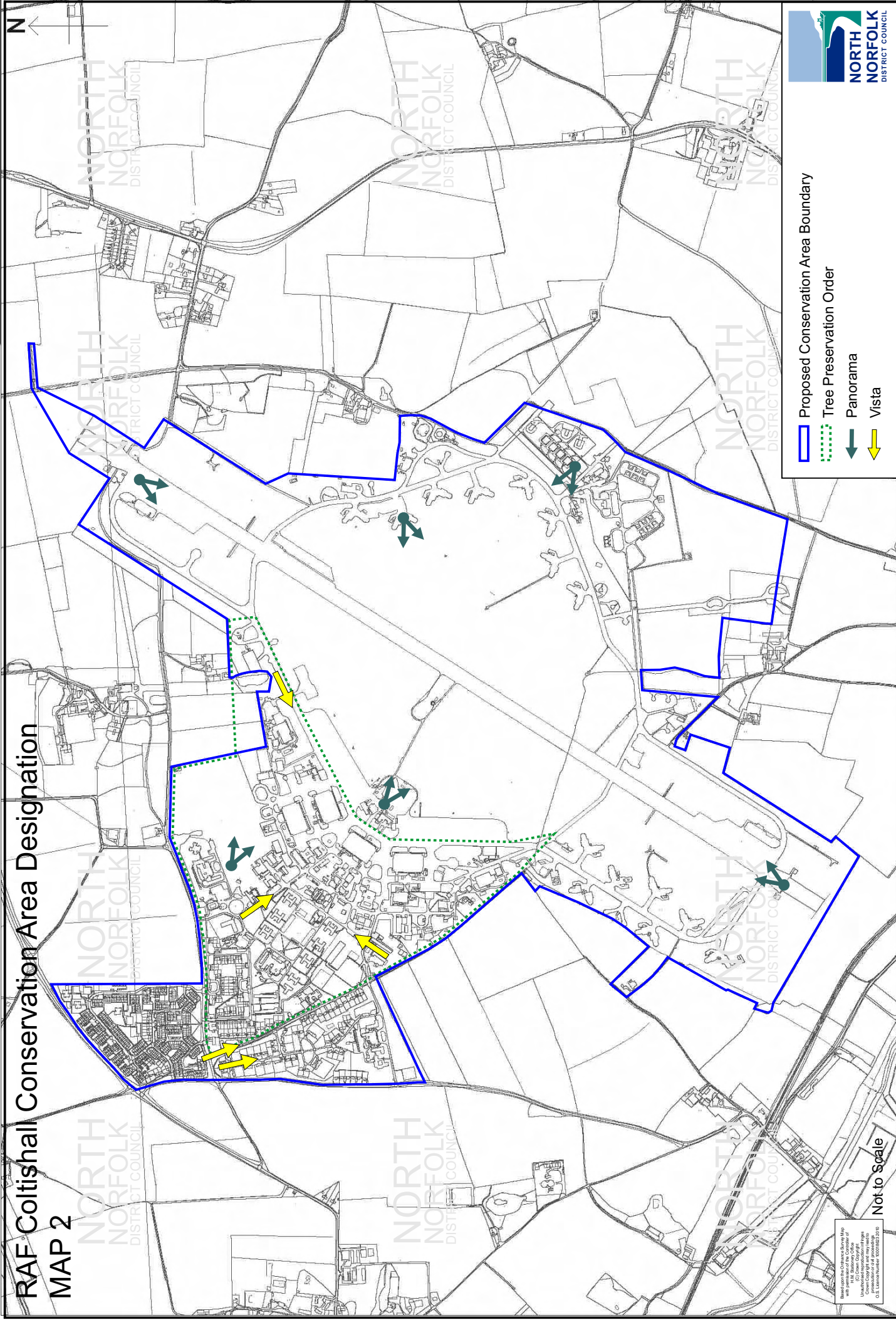
Area shown is for information only. It is not a guarantee of the Council's intention to designate the area as a Conservation Area. The Council reserves the right to alter the boundary at any time. O.S. Licence Number: 100018233 3510

Not to Scale



Map 2: Key Views

RAF Coltishall Conservation Area Designation MAP 2



- ▬ Proposed Conservation Area Boundary
- ⋯ Tree Preservation Order
- ➡ Panorama
- ➡ Vista

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Map 3: Heritage Features

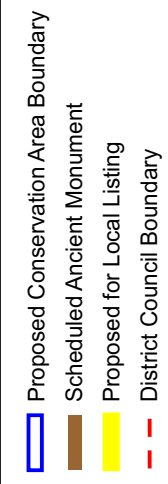
RAF Coltishall Conservation Area Designation
MAP 3

Legend:

- Proposed Conservation Area Boundary (Blue line)
- Scheduled Ancient Monument (Brown line)
- Proposed for Local Listing (Yellow fill)
- District Council Boundary (Red dashed line)

Not to Scale

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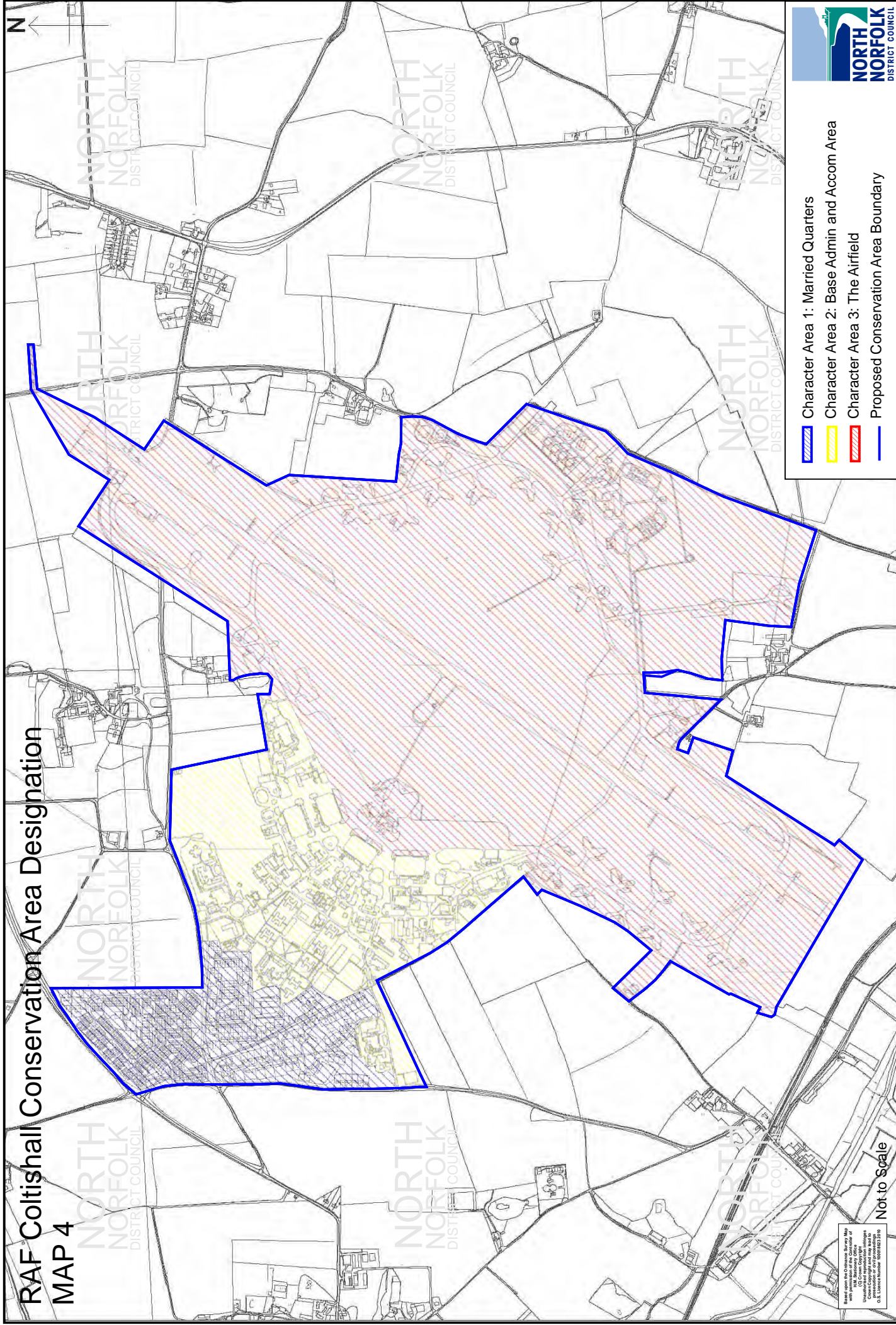


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Map 4: Character Areas

RAF Coltishall Conservation Area Designation MAP 4



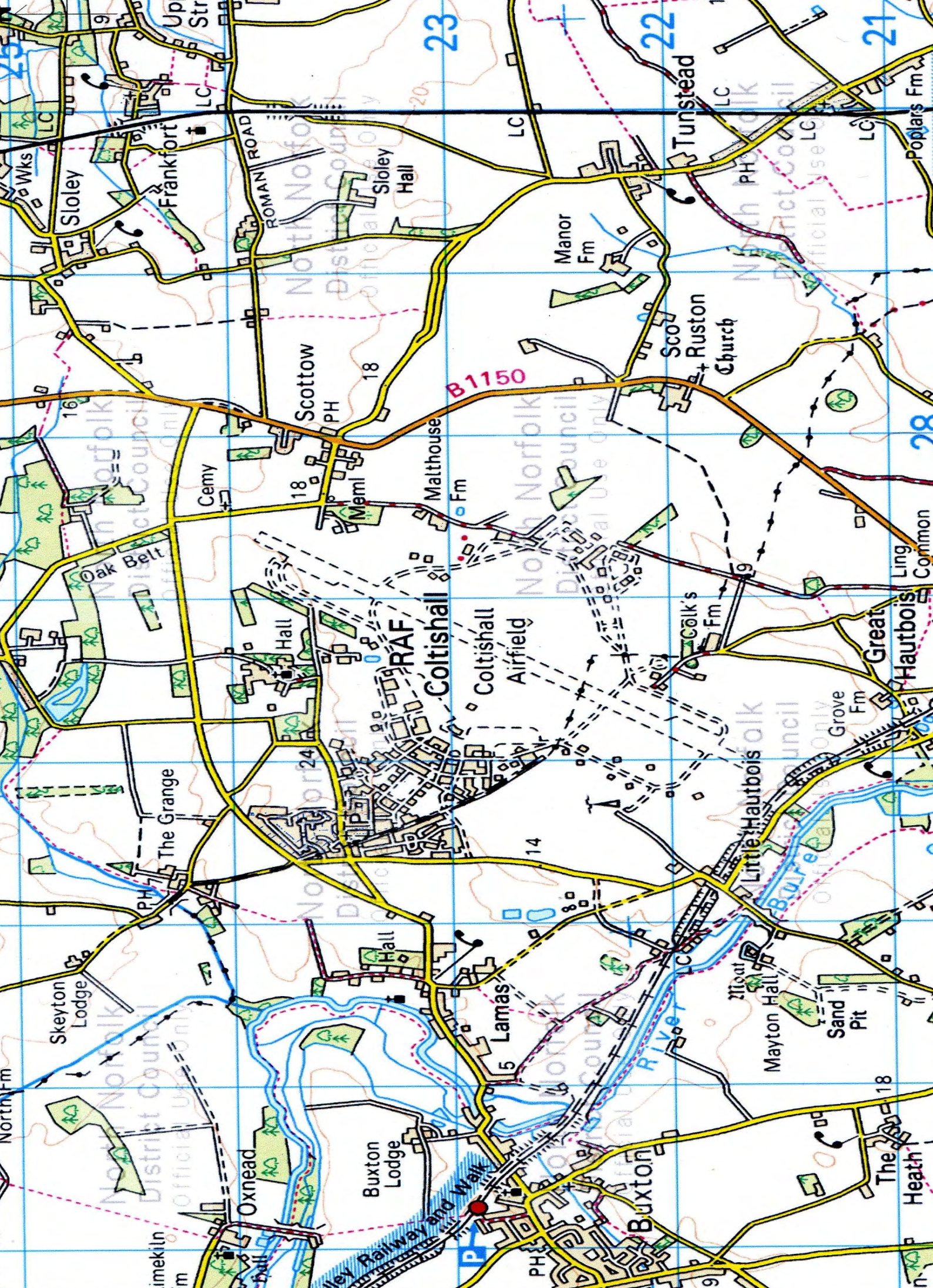
- Character Area 1: Married Quarters
- Character Area 2: Base Admin and Accom Area
- Character Area 3: The Airfield
- Proposed Conservation Area Boundary

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Map 5: Location





Coltishall Aircraft

During RAF Coltishall's sixty six years of operation, some forty different aircraft were used during various points in history, these included:-

Resident Squadron aircraft

- Hawker Hurricane
- Supermarine Spitfire
- Bell P-39 Airacobra I
- Supermarine Walrus
- Westland Whirlwind I
- Westland Lysander III
- Bristol Blenheim IVf
- Hawker Typhoon Ia
- Avro Anson
- Hawker Tempest V
- de Havilland Mosquito NF30 & NF36
- P-51 Mustang III
- Gloster Meteor NF11
- de Havilland Vampire NF10
- de Havilland Venom NF2
- Hawker Hunter F6
- English Electric Canberra PR9
- Gloster Javelin FAW9(R)
- English Electric Lightning
- SEPECAT Jaguar

Non-resident aircraft

Operated by Detachments from other squadrons

- Bristol Beaufighter If (604 Sqn AuxAF Det)
- Douglas A-20 Havoc I (93 Sqn Det)
- Bristol Beaufort I (22 Sqn Det)
- Boulton Paul Defiant I (151 Sqn Det)

SAR Air/Sea Rescue squadron detachments

- Sycamore HR14
- Westland Wessex HAR2
- Westland Whirlwind
- Westland Sea King HAR3



Operated by the Royal Navy Fleet Air Arm

- Albacore I (841 NAS)
- Fairey Swordfish (841 NAS)
- de Havilland Sea Hornet NF21 (809 NAS)
- Fairey Gannet AEW3 (849 NAS)

Battle of Britain Memorial Flight

As home to the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight, a sole Avro Lancaster bomber operated out of Coltishall post war.



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