

Main features

- Four Second World War hangars
- The control tower or watch office
- The perimeter track and the main runway
- The Art Deco water tower (inside HMP Bure)
- Two groups of Cold War blast walls to protect fighter aircraft on the ground
- Many other buildings from the Second World War onwards
- The accommodation area, now HMP Bure
- The married quarters, now Badersfield
- The Officers' Mess on Jaguar Drive

Other places to visit

- The military cemetery to the north of the airfield, near The Fairstead
- The memorial garden, on Filby Road near the school
- The Air Defence Radar Museum, Neatishead, and the Coltishall Rooms there
- The City of Norwich Aviation Museum

Where can I find out more?

- http://www.norfolk.gov.uk/Business/Raf_coltishall/index.htm
- www.heritage.norfolk.gov.uk
- <http://www.spiritofcoltishall.com/>

Heritage contact

Historic Environment Service
Union House, Gressenhall
Dereham, Norfolk NR20 4DR
Tel: 01362 869280
Email: heritage@norfolk.gov.uk

Access

Please note that access to the site is currently limited. Please check our websites for further information or enquire at the Guardroom at the site entrance (NR10 5AJ, off a minor road between Scottow and Lamas).



If you need this leaflet in an alternative format or language please contact us on 01362 860528 or 0344 800 8011 (textphone) and we will do our best to help.



Images: Cold War concrete blast walls, control tower, Hangar 1, station crest.

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Former RAF Coltishall Scottow Norfolk Heritage

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Welcome to one of Norfolk's most important historic airfields, now in the ownership and care of Norfolk County Council. Our plans are to develop the site with due regard to its heritage and in recognition of all those who served there. Our aim is for people who live and work there today and visitors to see, understand, appreciate and enjoy it.



The site is located on a plateau close to the confluence of the River Bure and two of its tributaries. There is a wealth of archaeological sites here, including prehistoric burial sites, an ancient field system and a Roman road and settlement. Historic maps show later features including a post-medieval hamlet known as Batley Green, Scottow, which was swept away by the construction of the airfield.

The Second World War

RAF Coltishall was originally built as an "Expansion Period" bomber base in 1939, but was changed to a fighter station in 1940. The main features of the airfield were four hangars, a control tower, a perimeter track with hardstandings for dispersed aircraft, bomb stores and, initially, a grass take-off and landing strip.

Between 1940 and 1945 the station was home for more than 80 fighter squadrons, including Polish and Czech units. A number of famous aces served here, including Douglas Bader, "Sailor" Malan and "Cats Eyes" Cunningham, flying Spitfires, Hurricanes, Beaufighters and P51 Mustangs.

By the end of the war Coltishall had destroyed 207 enemy aircraft, with 48 "probables" and more than 100 damaged.



The Cold War (1948–1991) and later

Coltishall became a front line fighter station in the first half of the Cold War. The runway was lengthened and strengthened to take jet powered interceptors and, occasionally, Vulcan bombers, two of which were stationed at Coltishall during periods of increased tension. Aircraft were protected on the ground by concrete blast walls, and new sheds were built to house air to air missiles.



Between 1964 and 1974, Coltishall became a training station for Lightning pilots. 1974 saw the arrival of Jaguars, which were deployed in the First Gulf War (1990-1) and Bosnian War (1993-4). In 2006 the station closed after 66 years of continuous service. It passed to the Ministry of Justice who converted part of the site into Her Majesty's Prison Bure in 2009. The former married quarters - 382 houses - became the new community of "Badersfield". The rest of the site was purchased by Norfolk County Council in December 2012.