

Communications

In August 1939, the RAF, in anticipation of war, set up a mobile communications unit to contact Wittering who were responsible for air defence in North Norfolk. This mobile unit was based outside Fakenham but the radio communications were unreliable and so the unit was moved to the aerodrome at West Rayham where a landline was installed.

FAR West Raynham had a Watch Office although it is debatable if there was any communication with the aircraft. Eventually this Watch Office was upgraded to a Control Tower probably when the runways were laid down in 1943. This remained in use until 1948 when a Bomber Airfield type control tower was built.

West Raynham's satellite at Massingham opened in 1940. Just a stones throw away this grass field had no infrastructure and all facilities were supplied by West Raynham and it could be said that both aerodromes operated as one except that circuits overlapped; we know that Massingham had a control tower in 1941 so this was able to control this dangerous anomaly.

West Raynham's Other satellite at Tattersett had paved runways from the start, it was situated on the other side of the Wensum valley. It had a control tower of the type suitable for its class of aerodrome; within 3 months of its opening in May 1943 it had become an independent station to be known as Sculthorpe and the control tower remained in use until 1948 when a new one similar to the one at West Raynham was built,

Sculthorpe tower is no more apart from bits preserved in the Heritage Centre. Aircraft movements on the airfield are now controlled by RAF Marham, such is today's technology!!

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