Fell into the path back into Cottesmore and on your right is Rogers Lane leading to the RAF Station (soon to be an army base). The Village Cemetery can be found up the lane which also contains graves of RAF servicemen. The lane was named in the 1880s after a travellers' camp set up there.

The construction of Royal Air Force Cottesmore began in 1935 and opened on 11 March 1938. Some of the first night bombing trials took place from Cottesmore in late 1938. On 9 September 1943, the US HQ Troop Carrier Command took control of Cottesmore which became known as USAF Station 489. During the World War II, RAF Cottesmore was bombed - mainly at night. Victory in Europe was declared on 8 May 1945 and the Americans departed for home on 11 May. The last aircraft to be based at the RAF station was the Harrier.

Moving on past Hall Close to Colin Eassons Garage and petrol station on your right. Prior to 1976 this was the location of Cottesmore Tractor Motors. Turning right into Mill Lane on your right are the remains of the outbuildings of Cottesmore Hall (5) (The outbuilding is grade II listed with thatched and pantile roof and some of the cottage but previously two of 18th Century with a Collyweston slate roof, this is an Exton Estate property.

Continuing down Catterplot Lane you will see on your left Little Cottage, No 8 Catterplot Lane (9). This cottage was previously known as ‘Hope Cottage’. The current owners have a date plaque for the cottage from 1725. Opposite Little Cottage were two thatched cottages, but these have been demolished and the area is now St. Nicholas Court. The village Bakery once housed the Lambing Yard run by Mr. Glover. Just past the tithe barn on the left hand side is the entrance to the Old Rectory, now called Catterplot House. Next door is the Old Brew House – this was believed to have been the brewery at one point and then the wash house for the old Rectory.

No 7 Catterplot Lane

Moving down a little further you will come to the back gate of the Church. To the right is an area known as the Campbhor Dyke. This is part of a stream which runs through the village (now underground) through to Greetham.

No 8 Catterplot Lane

It was on the site where St Nicholas Court is now that Ron Barker and Colin Eassons started up their commercial vehicles repair workshops. The supermarket, Eassons Garage, can be found further up Main Street.

As you approach Main Street on your left is the Hub office for the Church. Originally this was the site for 5 cottages. On the opposite side of the road at 41 Main Street, you will see the Chip Shop and Restaurant. Earlier these premises led to the Clatterpot Lane, so called because of the clattering of pots at the Bakery, the site of which you will come across at the end of the lane where it meets Main Street.

No 9 Clatterpot Lane

On your right is the Shop and Post Office. On the land adjacent to the Post Office, excavations in 1998 revealed several finds indicating a Boundary Ditch from the Iron Age, plus Roman and Late Saxon activity. The village baker previously occupied this site. A little further up and again on the opposite side of the road is (No.35 Main Street) the old Post Office. Next door is the Old Smithy (number 33 Main street) which was previously the village blacksmith shop.

Ahead of you is No. 32 Main street (Church House Farm). This was formerly part of a farm owned by the Fountains. For this reason next door, No 32a is known as ‘Sunshine Corner’. It was on the site where Colin Easons Garage, The Tithe Barn B&B, Cottesmore Stores/Post Office plus two residents.

By this cottage there used to be a small cottage called Pump Cottage, Villagers came here for their water – the pump was called “Issac’s Pump”.

Further along on the right-hand side is Fir Tree Farmhouse, 16 Main Street. This is a thatched house grade II listed from the 17th-18th Century. The outbuildings included a milk parlour and pig sties. Next is Home Farm. This is a house from the 18th Century, extended in the early 20th Century with a 20th Century tile roof and is grade II listed. This was a former farm though it ceased to be an active farm 30 years ago. The farmyard and field (Now the Spinney) were developed around 15 years ago.

If you continue to follow the road exiting Cottesmore you will approach the house where the motor camp built in the 1960s. This was on the site of the old school known as the Central School now Wenton Close – named after the now lost medieval hamlet of Wenton. This is where there were ex army Nissan huts. It was around this area in 1996 that artefacts from about 700 BC were found. These are known as the “Cottesmore Hoard” and can be seen at the Rutland Museum, Oakham.

Turn back towards Cottesmore once more. On your left hand side is The Thatch, 5 Main Street. This is a grade II listed 18th Century thatched cottage. Mr H D Smith (HD), headmaster of the school lived here in the 1930s. He also lived at Ivy Cottage next door. It was here that a Mrs Challoner ran the ‘Scottish Tea Gardens’. Further down on the right you come to The Limes, 15 Main Street. This is an 18th Century cottage with pantile roof and is grade II listed. The man in charge of the ironstone horses (the horses used in the quarrying in the surrounding area) lived here. Next door is 17 Main Street. This is another grade II listed cottage of 1755. It has a Collyweston slate roof with stone coped gables. These are the oldest examples of terraced houses in the village. There is an overdooor stone tablet carved with ‘John Abbey, 1775’ at the rear of the property.

Cross over road to the car park at The Sun and you are now where you began the walk. We hope that you enjoyed the walk. Please visit us again.

Our website is www.rutnet.co.uk/gp/location/doctype.asp?id=14 For further information on the listed buildings see English Heritage www.english-heritage.org.uk/professional/process/national-historic-list-for-england/
The walk starts in front of The Sun Inn public house in Main Street. The Sun Inn (1) is a grade II listed building with a thatched roof and dates from around the 17th/18th Century. It is believed that there was a Malt House, at the rear of the premises. In the kitchen of The Sun there used to be a pump, this was one of the few sources of water in the village prior to mains water arriving in the 1950s.

On the corner of Main Street and the Leas is Holly Cottage, No. 27 Main Street. This Grade II listed cottage dates from the 18th Century and has a Cotswold stone roof. To the rear is a full length outshoot with catslide Cotswold slate roof. The Blinds of Blands Couches used to live happily here. Turn right up the Leas (previously known as School Lane and before that Hacks Lane). It is understood that at the back of the Leas is the site of a medieval ‘Shrunken Village’. Continuing up the Leas, past Gainsborough Court, (built on the site of what was Eyle’s Farm), and on your right you will come to No. 5 The Leas, The Old School House. Behind this was the old brick built school – just one room initially, but later another added on. There was an outside toilet.

At the top of the lane leading to the field you can see two existing Glebe cottages. In the gardens of No. 21 The Leas a Neolithic polished stone axe was found. Further along the Leas is April Cottage (23 The Leas). At one time this was used for the weekly visit of the Doctor.

No. 12 The Leas, The Leas House, formerly the Old House, one of the oldest buildings in Cottesmore. This is a house of 1710 with 19th Century alterations, formerly 3 cottages,. It has a Welsh slate roof and over the porch is a stone tablet with "Thomas Jackson 1710".

Granny Ireland ran a sweet shop now demolished in front of Fox Cottage (27 The Leas). At the back there used to be a stableing. Next-door is Fountain’s Cottage – this was the home of a carpenter who made coffins.

As you exit the Leas and on the opposite side of the road is St. Nicholas’ Church (a grade II* listed building). The church has stood for 800 years in the centre of Cottesmore and a church on the site is mentioned in the Domesday Book. There seems little doubt that a church stood in the present site long before the earliest portion of the building as it now stands. Within the church grounds the war memorial is also listed. Take some time to look around inside. The connection with the military in this village is very evident.

Patrons of the church have included Henry IV, Henry VII and Charles II. An old village custom involved selling wives outside the church

On the corner of the Leas is 45 Main Street, (Cob Cottage). This is a grade II listed thatched cottage built in the 18th Century. It was once two cottages. In the 1930s the cottage was used as a surgery for a weekly visiting Doctor. Villagers used to pay sixpence a week into the “Sick & Divided Club” that is you received payment when you were sick and any surplus “divided” out at Christmas. Next door is ‘Dicks Cottage’, 47 Main Street, named after Dick Stafford, a farm labourer, also a grade II listed thatched cottage from the 19th Century. At one time this used to be three cottages.

On other side of the road is the new Rectory built in 1970s. Next we come to 42 Main Street. This was formerly a pair of cottages built in the mid 19th Century and designed by Henry Roberts as architect to the Society for Improving the Conditions of the Labouring Classes. He was a pioneer in the field of working-class housing and his designs were published by the Society for landowners and others to use.

The Anchorage (46 Main street) has a stream running through the garden from the Camphor Dyke. This was reputedly the site of a former public house called Fox and Hounds. Until the early 1900s the village possessed a stream, the Rundle, running the length of the street. Bit by bit it was piped and buried under ground. No 53 Main Street is a Grade II listed thatched cottage from the 17th/early 18th Century. Next door, No. 55 Main Street (The Faulklands) used to be 3 cottages and is a grade II listed 18th Century thatch cottage. One of the village’s Faulkner families, used to live in one, hence its name. In the front is a small cottage which used to be an old wash house. (a small brick built ‘lean to’ rather than ‘cottage’). There are only two cottages now, the one by the road and the middle one have been joined. 59 Main Street is an other Grade II listed thatched cottage from the 18th Century. (visible through the garden of No. 55).

Manor Farm is the only remaining farm in the village. At one time there were seven. Adjacent is a pair of semi-detached houses Honeypot Cottage is two thatched cottages from the 18th Century; grade II listed. Through the side gate was the area once known as ‘Tap Yard’ where villagers could come for their water. It was also here that one of the five air raid shelters was located. There was also a windmill on Mill Lane.

Continue along Main Street, round the right-hand bend up to the junction of the Exton Road. There you will see to your right the front elevation of Cottesmore Grange (3).

The Grange is a house of 1811 and mid 19th century, grade II listed, with a slate roof. In the grounds of Cottesmore Grange there was a site of a leper hospital – St. Giles circa 1266 but no remains exist. In the 10th century, Cottesmore gained fame as the home of Richard Westbrook Baker, the Exton Estate manager, who became High Sheriff in 1842 and was renowned for his service to agriculture and his efforts to improve the conditions of farm labourers. He, acting as agent for Lord Gainsborough, originated the Small Allotment System in 1830. The well known Rutland Plough was his invention.

Further along the Exton Road used to be Cottesmore House. The house was struck by lightning in the 1950s and was burnt to the ground and sadly no remains exist. It was a former residence of the Noel family, the Earl of Gainsborough. Tom Noel started the Cottesmore Hunt in 1732 and the village became famous in hunting circles. Turn back to Main Street at the Old Police House (now 21 Toll Bar, The Sycamores)

The next few houses are known as Toll Bar (4) back towards the heart of Cottesmore. A single storey toll cottage stood on the site of 11 and 12 Toll Bar, being demolished in the 1930s. Mrs. McCrow was the last occupant and it is said that hunting folk on returning to the village would jump over into the adjoining field to avoid paying the toll. Children walking from Greetham going to school in Cottesmore were convinced she was a witch and would walk miles round the toll to avoid crossing her path.

Toll Bar 4

Sticky End 2

The diagram is credited to Chris Allard.