ISS GLOBAL / INCIDENT INVESTIGATION · REVISED EDITION

Security response at RAF Lakenheath

The shelter alert, the end of the response and what remains unverified

REPORTING / REVIEW WINDOW

Incident on 13 November 2026. Reporting through 11:28 GMT on 14 November 2026.

ISSUE DATE

2026-11-14

Sky News says it saw the alert instructing RAF Lakenheath personnel to shelter in place. The Ministry of Defence said the immediate situation had been resolved and that UK and US counterparts were working to establish what happened. The US Air Force described the drone activity as suspected and reported no impact on personnel, aircraft or infrastructure.

This edition incorporates late-Friday reporting published after the first edition's 20:42 GMT cutoff and the sources reviewed on Saturday morning. [2] [12] [13] [14] [15] [16] [17]

Read the original 13 November edition

01 / EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

What happened and its threat significance

COUNTRY

United Kingdom

WHERE

RAF Lakenheath, Suffolk, England. The RAF station hosts US Air Force personnel. [1] [2]

WHEN

Friday evening, 13 November 2026. This edition reviews reporting through Saturday morning. [12] [13] [15] [16]

What happened

US Air Force security personnel responded to suspected unauthorised drone activity. Sky News says it saw the shelter alert. The US Air Force said no personnel, aircraft or infrastructure were affected. [12] [13]

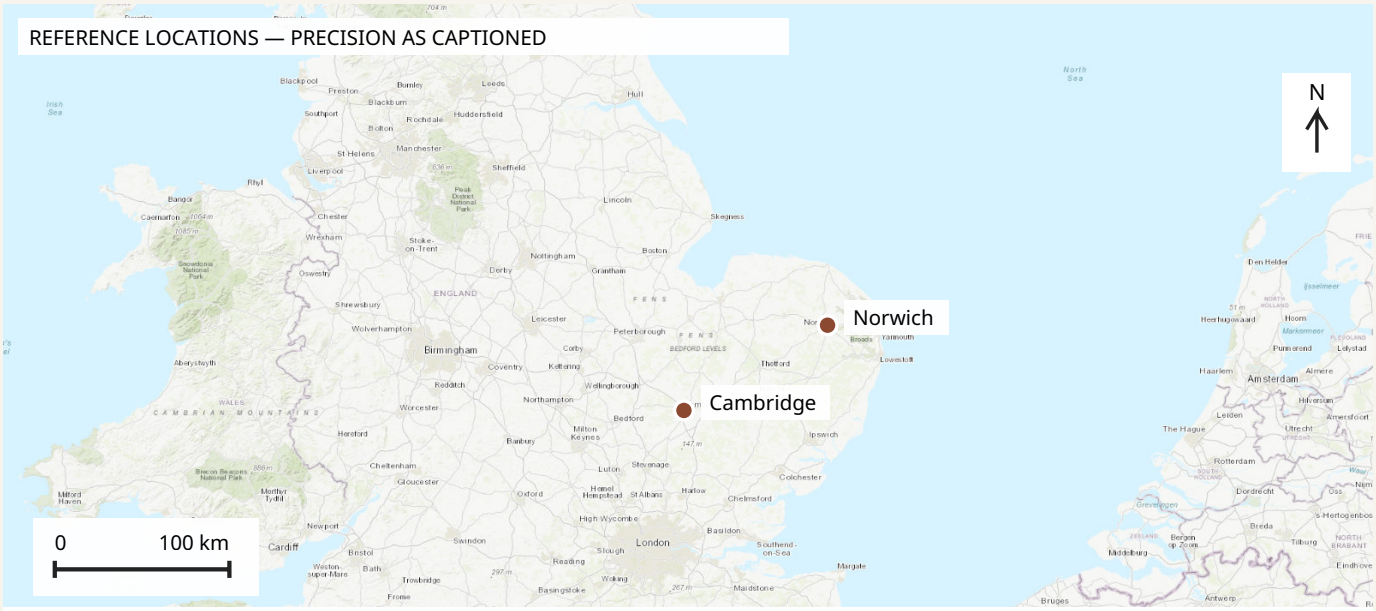
Threat significance

The shelter alert establishes a protective action distinct from the US military's assessment of physical impact. The UK Ministry of Defence said the immediate situation had been resolved and that work with US counterparts to establish the facts was continuing. [12] [13] [14]

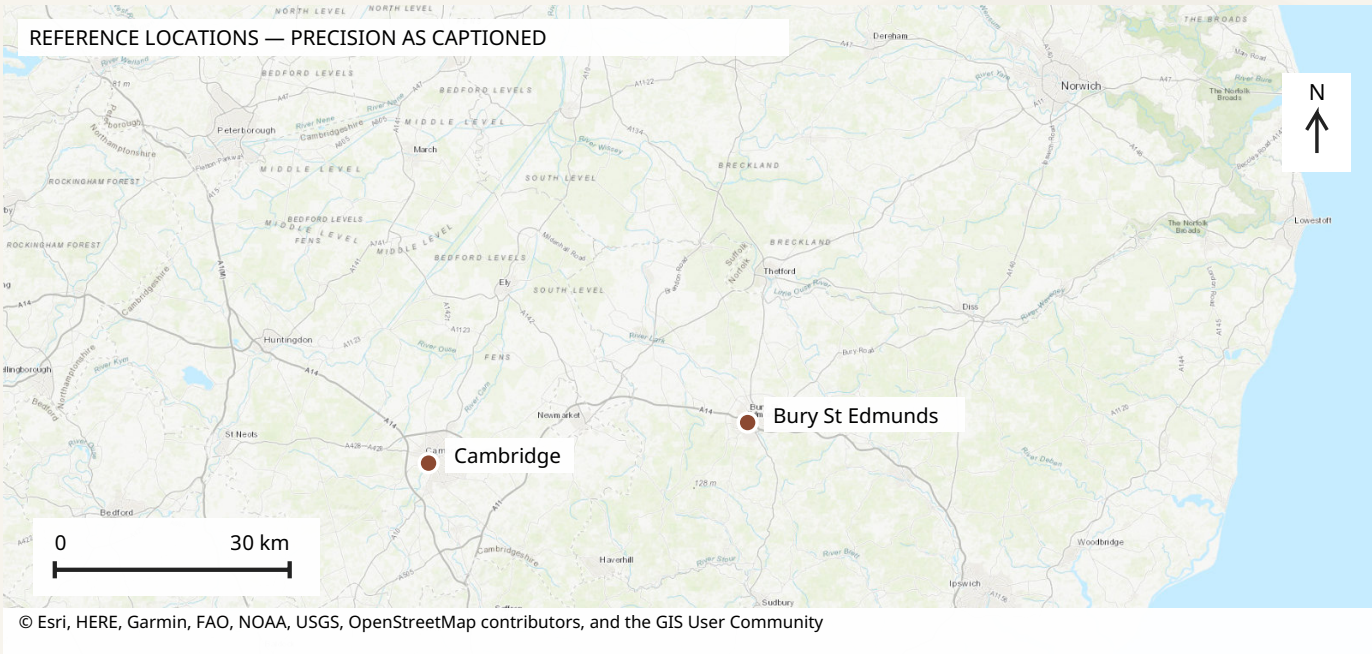
> EXECUTIVE JUDGEMENT
>
> Record a confirmed security response to suspected drone activity. Attribute the shelter alert to Sky News's review of the message and the status of the response to the Ministry of Defence. [12] [13] [14]

02 / LOCATION ATLAS

RAF Lakenheath in its regional setting



Map 1. Eastern England, with Cambridge and Norwich for orientation. Basemap © Esri and listed contributors. [8] [9] [11]



Map 2. Civilian settlements for local context. The reported incident location is described in the text. Basemap © Esri and listed contributors. [8] [10] [11]

Contemporary reporting places the response at RAF Lakenheath in Suffolk. Neither map plots an observation point or a flight path. [1] [2]

03 / REVISION SUMMARY

What changed after the first edition

FINDING	CHANGE IN THE EVIDENCE
Shelter order	The first edition relied on a secondary report citing Sky News. Sky News's own report says its journalist saw a copy of the alert. That strengthens the evidence that the instruction was issued. The alert copy was not available for this review. [1] [12]
Immediate response ended	The first edition had Nick Timothy MP's account. The Ministry of Defence subsequently gave its own statement that the situation was resolved and that it was working with US counterparts to establish what happened. [1] [13] [14] [18]
Saturday coverage revisited Friday's event	Anadolu relayed reports of alarms near Lakenheath and Feltwell. The Kyiv Independent drew on AP for the Ministry's account. Their 14 November publication dates do not change the incident date. [15] [16]
Drone identification remains unverified	The observatory classified drone presence as confirmed. The official wording it cites describes reports and suspected activity. The sources reviewed provide no official identification finding, recovery or attribution. [12] [13] [17] [18]

The principal changes concern the shelter instruction and the status of the response. Continued fact-finding leaves the cause open. [12] [13] [14]

04 / CHRONOLOGY

Event time and publication time

DATE AND TIME (GMT)	WHAT HAPPENED OR WAS PUBLISHED
9–12 Nov · context	Enhanced protection and separate Mildenhall aircraft movements were reported. Parliament discussed UK military-site security. Flying restrictions around Lakenheath were listed before the alert. [3] [4] [5] [6]
13 Nov · evening	US Air Force security personnel responded. Sky News later reported seeing the shelter alert. No independently verified event time or shelter duration was available. [12] [13]
13 Nov · 20:28 and 20:33	Initial timestamps for The Sun and AP. Both carried the US military account. The Sun’s rolling article also covered the shelter alert and the MP’s statement. [1] [2]
13 Nov · 20:45 to 22:31	Additional coverage included Reuters, Sky News and The Guardian. The War Zone’s 22:05 GMT update explicitly carried the UK Ministry of Defence statement. Reuters and AP carried it in updated versions. [2] [12] [13] [14] [18]
14 Nov · by 11:28	New publications and a tracker entry revisited Friday’s event. Reports of alarms elsewhere and the tracker’s classification were assessed against the official wording. [15] [16] [17]

Publisher timestamps identify the reporting sequence. Rolling stories can add a statement after first publication. Their timestamps cannot establish the start or end of the response. [1] [2] [13] [18]

05 / EVIDENCE AUDIT

What the public record supports

CLAIM	ASSESSMENT AT THE CUTOFF
US Air Force response at RAF Lakenheath	Confirmed by the US military and acknowledged by the UK Ministry of Defence. Outlets repeating these statements share the same institutional evidence. [2] [12] [13] [14] [18]
A shelter alert was issued	Strongly supported by Sky News's account of seeing the alert. Recipient coverage, actual compliance, duration and time of the all-clear remain undocumented. [12]
Impact and resolution	The US Air Force reported no personnel, aircraft or infrastructure affected. The Ministry confirmed immediate resolution and ongoing joint fact-finding. The MP's public-risk assurance remains attributed to him. [12] [13] [14]
Feltwell alarms and a potential wider incident	Anadolu's account depends on the Daily Mail's reporting. It gives conflicting local and GMT times. No exact alarm time is adopted. Hearing an alarm cannot establish a drone presence or a separate incursion. [15] [18]
Drone presence, operator and motive	Suspected. The public record reviewed contains no released identification finding, attributed operator, recovered drone or verified evidence of a payload. The tracker label does not supply a new official finding. [12] [13] [17] [18]

06 / THREAT ASSESSMENT

Regional security and attribution

Earlier measures and aircraft movements

The changes in protection and aircraft movements at Mildenhall preceded the Friday response. Reuters attributed the reported Iran-related threat in the earlier Mildenhall coverage to The Wall Street Journal. The Ministry's Friday statement gave no attribution for Lakenheath. The available evidence does not establish a common cause. [3] [4] [5] [6] [13]

What an alarm can establish

An authenticated recording could establish that a warning was audible in a particular place and time. It would take separate evidence to determine what triggered it. Sky News's review of the shelter alert supports the protective action. Neither the alert nor the accounts of alarms identify the suspected object. [12] [15] [18]

Historical comparison

In a separate November 2024 case near Newmarket, the UK Airprox Board identified an aircraft perceived as a drone by a police helicopter crew as an F-15. That finding concerns one historical encounter. It shows why a sighting and an identification merit separate records. [7]

07 / INVESTIGATIVE PRIORITIES

What would change the assessment?

OPEN QUESTION	EVIDENCE THAT WOULD RESOLVE IT
Was there a drone?	An official identification with a stated basis, or authenticated material that establishes the object type. [7] [12] [13] [17]
What was the scope of the alert?	A releasable copy and a dated all-clear record would establish the order's scope, start and duration. [12] [14]
Were other bases affected?	Separately attributable statements or verified records for each site. A report of an alarm alone does not establish a second drone incident. [15] [18]

For Dfuze, retain one Lakenheath event with distinct records for the response, reported shelter instruction, immediate resolution and subsequent fact-finding. Keep the reported Feltwell alarms and the earlier Mildenhall activity as contextual references pending evidence linking them to the event. [4] [12] [13] [15]

Image provenance

Reuters published photographs credited to Chris Radburn and dated 13 November. They document the base exterior in the reporting period. They do not verify an airborne object or the shelter alert. The photographs remain linked through the source register. AP and The War Zone illustrate their articles with file imagery. [2] [13] [18]

SOURCE REGISTER

Sources 01–07

Source families and access limits are recorded below. Repetition of a statement is not independent proof.

01 Air raid siren rings out over RAF base as US Air Force responds to suspected unauthorised drone activity

The Sun · 13 Nov 2026, 20:28 GMT, rounded

Family: USAF spokesperson, Sky News relay and MP statement · Rolling report reviewed. Carries the military wording, attributes shelter reporting to Sky News and relays Nick Timothy's statement. No original alert reviewed.

https://www.thesun.co.uk/news/41020020/air-raid-siren-raf-base-us-air-force-drone/

02 Drone activity over US base in Britain prompts security response, US military says

Associated Press · 13 Nov 2026, 20:33 GMT initial wire timestamp

Family: US military and UK Ministry of Defence via AP · Initial wire and updated AP text reviewed. The updated version includes the UK Ministry of Defence response. Its exact update time was unavailable.

https://apnews.com/article/40644fc3f0d12f57d5c1f429d8d1d1e8

03 Security Levels At U.S. Bases In England Raised Without Explanation (Updated)

The War Zone · 9 Nov 2026

Family: US official via specialist reporting · Article reviewed. Background on security measures before the nominated incident.

https://www.twz.com/air/security-levels-at-u-s-bases-in-england-raised-without-explanation

04 Britain says its bases are safe after US refuelling planes evacuated

Reuters · 10 Nov 2026

Family: UK government remarks and reported threat via Reuters · Dispatch summary reviewed. Iran-related account attributed to The Wall Street Journal and concerns earlier events.

https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/us-aircraft-evacuated-second-uk-base-due-iran-threat-wsj-reports-2026-11-10/

05 United Kingdom Military Installations

UK Parliament / **Hansard** · 12 Nov 2026

Family: Primary parliamentary transcript · Ministerial discussion of base protection and UK–US engagement. Predates the incident.

https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2026-11-12/debates/0573e903-bd37-4461-b7d4-96648694c09f/CommonsChamber

06 The Air Navigation (Restriction of Flying) (RAF Lakenheath, Norfolk) (Emergency) Regulations 2026

legislation.gov.uk · Listed 10 Nov 2026

Family: Official statutory instrument catalogue · Official title and listing reviewed. The instrument's title uses Norfolk. Contemporary coverage places the nominated event in Suffolk.

https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2026/1176/contents/made

07 Airprox Report No 2024294

UK Airprox Board · 2025 report on 22 Nov 2024 event

Family: Primary aviation safety investigation · Historical comparison. Findings concern the encounter documented in this report.

https://www.airproxboard.org.uk/uploadedFiles/Content/Standard_content/Airprox_report_files/2024/Airprox%20Report%202024294.pdf

SOURCE REGISTER

Sources 08–13

Source families and access limits are recorded below. Repetition of a statement is not independent proof.

08 Cambridge, Cambridgeshire, England

University of North Texas Digital Library · Accessed 13 Nov 2026

Family: Geographic reference · Cambridge city reference and GeoNames cross-reference.

https://digital.library.unt.edu/explore/locations/p08838/

09 Norwich

GeoNames · Accessed 13 Nov 2026

Family: Geographic reference · Norwich city reference.

https://www.geonames.org/2641181/norwich.html

10 Bury St Edmunds

GeoNames · Accessed 13 Nov 2026

Family: Geographic reference · Bury St Edmunds town reference.

https://www.geonames.org/2654186

11 World Topographic Map

Esri · Accessed 13 Nov 2026

Family: Basemap provider · Static map exports. Provider and contributor credits shown on the maps.

https://services.arcgisonline.com/ArcGIS/rest/services/World_Topo_Map/MapServer

12 US military responds to suspected unauthorised drone activity at UK air base

Sky News / **Deborah Haynes** · 13 Nov 2026, 21:23 GMT displayed

Family: Journalist review of alert copy; USAF statement and MP account · Article reviewed. Sky News describes the alert it saw. The underlying alert copy and distribution metadata were unavailable for independent review.

https://news.sky.com/story/us-military-responds-to-suspected-unauthorised-drone-activity-at-uk-air-base-13611986

13 US Air Force responds to suspected drone activity over UK airbase

Reuters · 13 Nov 2026, 20:47 GMT initial timestamp

Family: USAF and UK Ministry of Defence statements via Reuters · Updated text reviewed. The page labels the initial timestamp and carries an email response from the Ministry. The update time was unavailable. Contemporary editorial photographs are separately credited.

https://www.reuters.com/world/uk/us-military-responds-suspected-drone-activity-raf-lakenheath-base-uk-sky-news-2026-11-13/

SOURCE REGISTER

Sources 14–18

Source families and access limits are recorded below. Repetition of a statement is not independent proof.

14 US Air Force responds to suspected drone activity at RAF Lakenheath

The Guardian / **Nadeem Badshah** · 13 Nov 2026, 21:01 GMT first published; 22:31 GMT displayed

Family: USAF and UK Ministry of Defence statements; MP account · Article reviewed. Publisher times converted from EST. The Ministry statement confirms resolution of the immediate situation and continued UK–US fact-finding.

https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2026/nov/13/us-air-force-responds-to-suspected-drone-activity-at-raf-lakenheath

15 Sirens sound at UK air bases over suspected drone activity: Report

Anadolu Agency / **Merve Aydogan** · 14 Nov 2026, publisher date

Family: Daily Mail reporting and Axios relay of US European Command · Article reviewed. Relays accounts of alarms near Lakenheath and Feltwell. Its local and GMT times conflict. No independent evidence of a drone at Feltwell is provided.

https://m.aa.com.tr/en/world/sirens-sound-at-uk-air-bases-over-suspected-drone-activity-report/4124827

16 US Air Force responds to suspected drone activity at military base in UK

The Kyiv Independent / **Tamara Nowakowsky** · 14 Nov 2026, publisher date

Family: Associated Press relay and background reporting · Article reviewed. Repeats the UK Ministry of Defence account via AP. Publisher time zone not established. The accompanying photograph was taken in September.

https://kyivindependent.com/us-air-force-responds-to-suspected-drone-activity-at-military-base-in-uk/

17 Drones over RAF Lakenheath in Suffolk

European Observatory of Drone Incidents · Status dated 14 Nov 2026

Family: Secondary incident tracker · Record and methodology reviewed. Labels drone presence confirmed. The displayed citations refer to officials responding to reports or to suspected activity. The label is a secondary classification.

https://droneobservatory.eu/en/EODI-2026-00821

18 Suspected Drones Over RAF Lakenheath Just Triggered Security Response: U.S. Air Force (Updated)

The War Zone / **Howard Altman** · 13 Nov 2026, 20:45 GMT; Ministry update 22:05 GMT

Family: Direct press enquiries to USAF and Ministry of Defence; social relay · Article reviewed. Times converted from EST. The incident response is confirmed for Lakenheath and claims of alarms elsewhere are derived from social media. Its aerial photograph is from 2014.

https://www.twz.com/air/suspected-drones-over-raf-lakenheath-just-triggered-security-response-u-s-air-force