OMFC PORT MEADOW RC 'PATCH' LAYOUT GUIDE

Introduction

The BMFA Handbook Chapter 11 provides advice regarding RC model flying site layouts. Based upon that advice, the following suggested layout diagrams for the OMFC Patch at Figures 1 – 4 have been modified for the special circumstances at Port Meadow: ie (i) no a car park; (ii) public footpaths; (iii) uninvolved people or animals to approaching from any direction. Figure 5 shows the BMFA's recommended circuit pattern. Note that other model flying activity might be taking place elsewhere on the Meadow; those flyers not using the Patch are requested not to deliberately fly within an estimated 100m while it is in use. Nonetheless, it is always wise to keep a lookout for wayward models. For estimation, 100m is approximately the length of a full-size football pitch, or two-thirds of the distance from the Patch to the river.

Aim

The aim of this guide is to provide advice for flyers regarding Patch layout for an RC flying session. The diagrams are not prescriptive; indeed, it is impossible to cater for all circumstances. Rather, flyers are encouraged to consider the situation on the day – informed by the BMFA 'SWEETS' checks.

'Dead Airspace' and 'Avoid' Areas (see Diagrams)

The purpose of the 'Dead Airspace' area is mainly to protect the pits area and its occupants, and flying is not normally permitted within it. Short test glides that remain below head-height may be carried out within the Dead Airspace provided other Patch users are content. Ideally, the pits should be approached from within the Dead Airspace area, but this is often not possible, and members of the public might approach from anywhere – so flyers must be vigilant. Models should not routinely be flown the areas marked 'Avoid' in the diagrams (ie behind the extended flight line); if a model is inadvertently flown into an 'Avoid' area (for example overshooting the final approach path from the circuit base leg), it should be flown back into the circuit pattern area in a safe and unhurried manner.

The Circuit Pattern

The recommended circuit pattern is outlined in the BMFA's 'A Flying Start' manual at Module 13. The size and shape of the circuit pattern will vary: for example, to stay within sight, small models need to be kept closer to the Patch than larger ones, while faster models may benefit from an 'oval' pattern.

Gliders

Particular care must be taken when integrating powered gliders and 'traditional' RC sport models into the same circuit. Gliders' performance characteristics usually lead to slower flight, steeper climbs and shallower approaches. RC pure gliders may only be operated from the Patch when it is not being used for RC power flying; otherwise, they should remain 100m clear.

Key Points for Setting Up the Patch

a. Carry out the BMFA SWEETS Checks

b. Identify particular hazards such as other flying activity, cattle location, other recreational activity

c. Based upon the wind direction and sun position, choose the most appropriate flightline (mark it if possible)

d. Identify the pits area, behind the flightline and ideally away from footpaths

e. Identify the 'dead airspace'. Use physical markers (eg prominent trees, buildings etc) if available

Suggested Patch Layout Diagrams

Fig 1. Patch Layout One: (South Westerly or North Easterly Wind; Sun in S and SE)

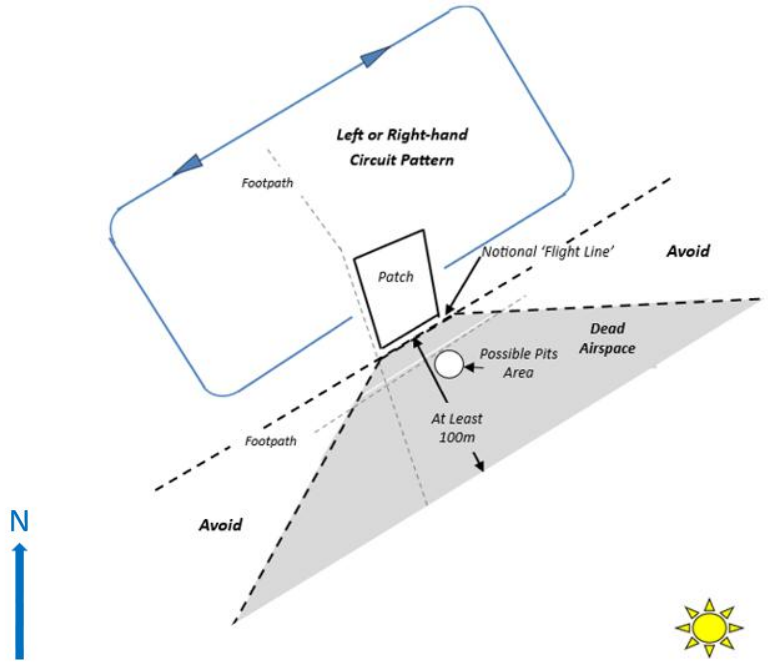

Fig 2. Patch Layout 2: (South Westerly or North Easterly Wind; Sun in W and NW)

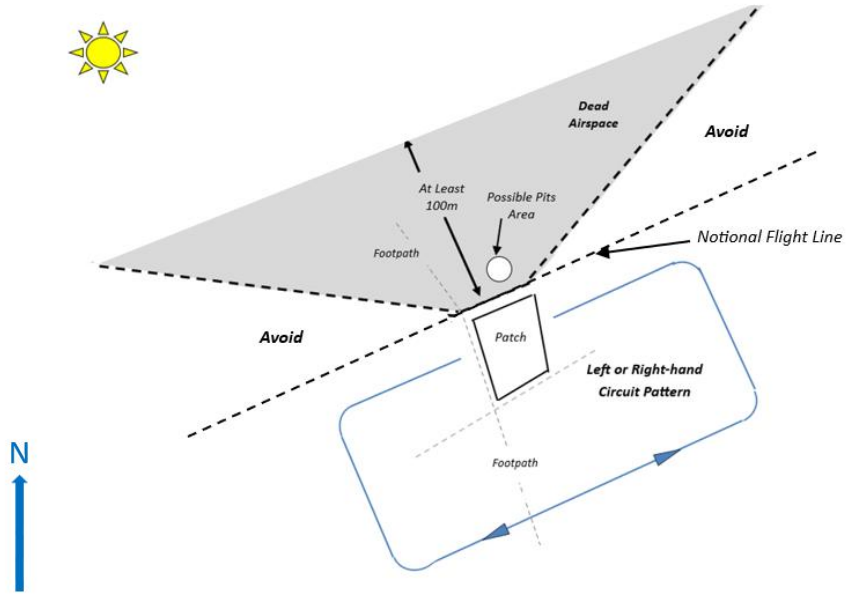

Fig 3. Patch Layout 3: (South Easterly or North Westerly Wind; Sun SW to NW)

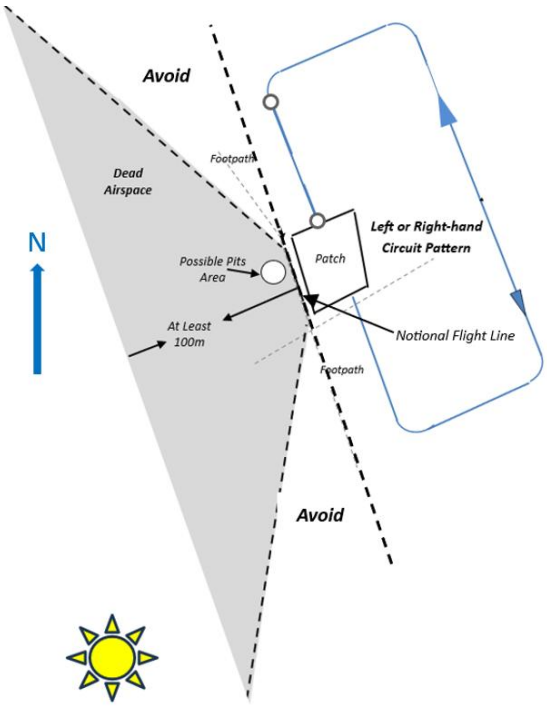

Fig 4. Patch Site Layout 4 (Northerly or Southerly Wind; Sun to NE to SE)

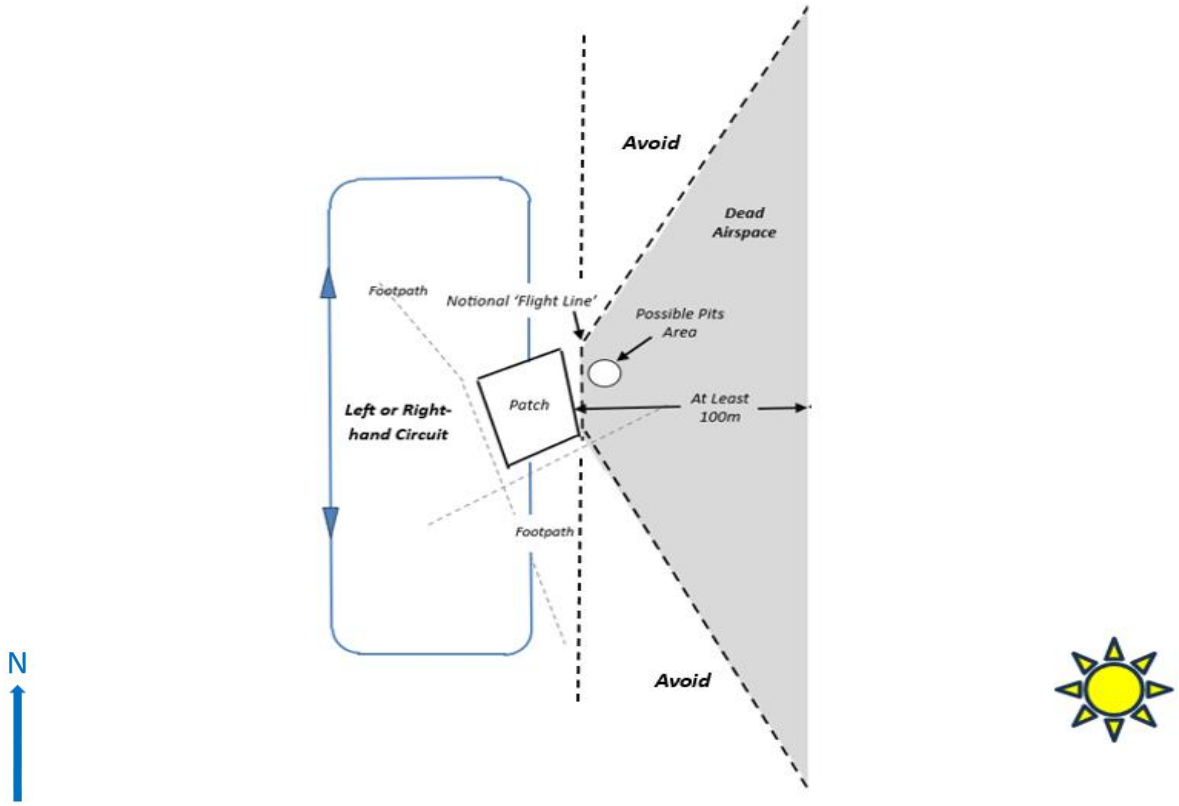

Fig 5. BMFA Recommended Circuit Pattern ('A Flying Start' Module 13)