

Dear Friends,

We are writing with an urgent message.

As mentioned in our previous newsletter last month, and as you may have seen on social media, there is great concern about a planning application for two shooting ranges close to Samye Ling Buddhist Monastery in Eskdalemuir valley.

The deadline for objections is 18<sup>th</sup> March, and so far it does not look like anyone within planning is listening to the concerns. We therefore need as many of you as possible to voice your objections and concerns if we are to make a difference.

This is how you can help, it is simple and easy:

We are including some information below which you can copy and paste as you see fit. It contains contact details of who to send your letter to, as well as Reasons for Concern. At the bottom of the letter you will also find a link to a Petition.

We are asking everyone to please send a letter to planning, and to copy in the councillors below or bcc the rest. They should all be included.

If you have already sent an objection, Thank you.

But if you did not copy in the councillors in your email, please send an email to the councillors and MSP's below now. It is important they are alerted to the situation, and time is of the essence.

We need as many people as possible to raise their (friendly) voices to make sure that those within the council and all the area's representatives will listen and take action.

Thank you for your support.

### **Contact Details:**

To make a planning objection email [planningrepresentations@dumgal.gov.uk](mailto:planningrepresentations@dumgal.gov.uk)  
CC the emails below

[David.Suttie@dumgal.gov.uk](mailto:David.Suttie@dumgal.gov.uk)

[chiefexecutive@dumgal.gov.uk](mailto:chiefexecutive@dumgal.gov.uk)

[Chris.McTeir@dumgal.gov.uk](mailto:Chris.McTeir@dumgal.gov.uk)

[Joan.McAlpine.msp@parliament.scot](mailto:Joan.McAlpine.msp@parliament.scot)

[oliver.mundell.msp@parliament.scot](mailto:oliver.mundell.msp@parliament.scot)

[chief.planner@gov.scot](mailto:chief.planner@gov.scot)

[planningrepresentations@dumgal.gov.uk](mailto:planningrepresentations@dumgal.gov.uk)

**Names and emails of Councillors and MSP's**

[ronnie.tait@dumgal.gov.uk](mailto:ronnie.tait@dumgal.gov.uk)

[archie.dryburgh@dumgal.gov.uk](mailto:archie.dryburgh@dumgal.gov.uk)

[Karen.Carruthers3@dumgal.gov.uk](mailto:Karen.Carruthers3@dumgal.gov.uk)

[Joan.McAlpine.msp@parliament.scot](mailto:Joan.McAlpine.msp@parliament.scot)

[oliver.mundell.msp@parliament.scot](mailto:oliver.mundell.msp@parliament.scot)

[colin.smyth.msp@parliament.scot](mailto:colin.smyth.msp@parliament.scot)

[michelle.ballantyne.msp@parliament.scot](mailto:michelle.ballantyne.msp@parliament.scot)

[emma.harper.msp@parliament.scot](mailto:emma.harper.msp@parliament.scot)

[brian.whittle.msp@parliament.scot](mailto:brian.whittle.msp@parliament.scot)

[claudia.beamish.msp@parliament.scot](mailto:claudia.beamish.msp@parliament.scot)

[paul.wheelhouse.msp@parliament.scot](mailto:paul.wheelhouse.msp@parliament.scot)

## **SUGGESTED REASONS FOR CONCERNS AND OBJECTIONS**

Preferably start with a personal line about your own connection to Samye Ling. You may wish to point out some or all of the following, copy and paste as you wish.

The Human Rights Commission states: “Every natural or legal person is entitled to the peaceful enjoyment of his possessions.” E.g. their home and garden.

Noise levels are substantial and are impacting negatively on local residents, their children and pets/livestock. This can be hours of constant gunfire and the sound of a metal gong being hit by gunshots from a 2km range.

The ranges are not a community recreation, sporting facility or tourist attraction. They cater for an extremely niche section of society, those who are licensed to shoot high calibre rifles and those who can afford to do so. The ranges will lessen access to recreational and sporting opportunities as it will restrict the use of the hills for walking, biking, horse riding and the like.

The ranges are incompatible with the existing businesses in the area and are having a negative effect on the local economy.

The ranges are detrimental to and incompatible with, the character and amenity of the area and local landscape. Eskdalemuir is a wild and peaceful place, teeming with wildlife. It is characterised by forestry and farming, by its historical and archaeological features – the Iron Age hill forts and stone circles (one of the highest concentrations in the country). Planning policy states that developments should protect and/or enhance the character, appearance and setting of the region’s rich historic environment principally by ensuring they are sympathetic to nearby buildings, sites and features, integrate well and complement the surrounding area.

They should respect, protect and/or enhance the region's rich landscape character, and scenic qualities. The developments are unsympathetic to the character, appearance and setting of Eskdalemuir. They do not respect, protect or enhance the landscape character or scenic quality of Eskdalemuir, which is home to a creative community of artists, writers and musicians.

Eskdalemuir valley is home to a large, peaceful Buddhist community of lay people alongside the Monks and Nuns of the Tibetan Buddhist Centre of Kagyu Samye Ling. Samye Ling is one of the most visited tourist attractions in Scotland, with people coming from all over the world to visit, to attend retreats and to learn meditation and mindfulness. Many veterans and people with mental ill health also come to Samye Ling, to seek help and live a quieter life whilst convalescing. Local businesses and accommodation providers cater to those seeking a peaceful stay. Therefore the development proposals are shown to conflict with nearby land uses.

A shooting range would never be allowed next to a cathedral or church.

The many small businesses in the area offer accommodation and holistic therapies to cater to the Buddhist and visiting communities, which also include walkers, cyclists and those who appreciate the peace and unspoilt nature of the valley. It conflicts with and will adversely affect their businesses.

Both developments have been built and run without planning permission.

Ask that the applications be treated as a "major developments" on the grounds of their size, and mention the application does not cover the full scale or size of the proposed range.

The two duck ponds, built recently by Clerkhill Farm to facilitate duck shooting are not included in the application and should be.

Development proposals should minimise the need for travel by car and encourage active and other more sustainable forms of travel whilst avoiding or mitigating any adverse impact on the transport network or road safety. Visitors to the range are coming from all over the UK and abroad, therefore are not using sustainable transport. Furthermore, the roads around Eskdalemuir are already in poor condition, are narrow and are used by many heavy vehicles transporting timber.

As for Development sustainability, the RSPB acknowledges driven game shooting as environmentally damaging and unsustainable furthermore it says that it contributes to the illegal killing of birds of prey. Millions of non native pheasants are released each year and lead ammunition contributes to ecological emergency.

[https://www.rspb.org.uk/our-work/our-positions-and-casework/our-positions/gamebird-review/gamebird-shooting-impacts/?fbclid=IwAR05-GmJ2GKP0EI671s3nEIFNjdzMWYxISI8ClbrYOkChukDTsFVL\\_GBz7M](https://www.rspb.org.uk/our-work/our-positions-and-casework/our-positions/gamebird-review/gamebird-shooting-impacts/?fbclid=IwAR05-GmJ2GKP0EI671s3nEIFNjdzMWYxISI8ClbrYOkChukDTsFVL_GBz7M)

Scottish Land Rights and Responsibilities which stresses the need for landowners to be transparent in the use and management of land, making information publicly available, clear and contain relevant detail. That there should be greater collaboration and community engagement in decisions about land. Good stewardship also means being aware that decisions

about land can have an impact on many people's lives, including but not exclusive to those of the owner of the land or tenant. That they should consider the public good as well as the good of themselves.

[https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-land-rights-responsibilities-statement/?fbclid=IwAR36YE6rgaROIIEJ1INKB09bNDz7iP1H2Jqb1fH5I17gr5RG\\_qncELupruc](https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-land-rights-responsibilities-statement/?fbclid=IwAR36YE6rgaROIIEJ1INKB09bNDz7iP1H2Jqb1fH5I17gr5RG_qncELupruc)

The objection from Mindfulness Association on the planning portal describes this well (login to read)

[https://eaccess.dumgal.gov.uk/online-applications/files/0E7DFF40E21E03E36C11270822107962/pdf/20\\_0630\\_FUL-1\\_Garwald\\_Holm\\_Cottage\\_Eskdalemuir\\_-\\_Objection-1048595.pdf?fbclid=IwAR3aDnjWjWDmFgeVicbFVHFEBZuJS-U4xm\\_PbhbADrQ9-yrWRrDw-76Z78I](https://eaccess.dumgal.gov.uk/online-applications/files/0E7DFF40E21E03E36C11270822107962/pdf/20_0630_FUL-1_Garwald_Holm_Cottage_Eskdalemuir_-_Objection-1048595.pdf?fbclid=IwAR3aDnjWjWDmFgeVicbFVHFEBZuJS-U4xm_PbhbADrQ9-yrWRrDw-76Z78I)

The local development plans state that:

*Development proposals should be compatible with the character and amenity of the area and should not conflict with nearby land uses. Noise will be a material consideration as will environmental pollution to water or soil. That developments should protect and/or enhance the character, appearance and setting of the region's rich historic environment principally by ensuring they are sympathetic to nearby buildings, sites and features, integrate well and complement the surrounding area. They should respect, protect and/or enhance the region's rich landscape character, and scenic qualities. Development proposals should minimise the need for travel by car and encourage active and other more sustainable forms of travel whilst avoiding or mitigating any adverse impact on the transport network or road safety. Should promote sustainable development. Should maintain or enhance water quality.*

## **LINK TO THE PETITION**

If you haven't done so already, please sign the petition here:

[https://www.change.org/p/elaine-murray-leader-of-dumfries-and-galloway-council-stop-high-velocity-shooting-ranges-becoming-established-in-eskdalemuir?recruiter=12821981&utm\\_source=share\\_petition&utm\\_medium=facebook&utm\\_campaign=share\\_petition&utm\\_term=G%3ESearch%3ESAP%3EUK%3EBrand%3EAll-Match\\_Types&recruited\\_by\\_id=b1bd3070-9f07-0130-7d54-3c764e04a19b&utm\\_content=fht-27654870-en-gb%3A6](https://www.change.org/p/elaine-murray-leader-of-dumfries-and-galloway-council-stop-high-velocity-shooting-ranges-becoming-established-in-eskdalemuir?recruiter=12821981&utm_source=share_petition&utm_medium=facebook&utm_campaign=share_petition&utm_term=G%3ESearch%3ESAP%3EUK%3EBrand%3EAll-Match_Types&recruited_by_id=b1bd3070-9f07-0130-7d54-3c764e04a19b&utm_content=fht-27654870-en-gb%3A6)