

Welcome

On behalf of Mr E Glendinning (the Applicant), thank you for taking the time to visit this online public exhibition.

This exhibition is in relation to proposals for partial use of agricultural land to accommodate a rifle range, facilities building and limited hardstanding infrastructure at land at Over Cassock, Langholm.

The Rifle Range has been operating here successfully and without concerns, since 2017. This application merely seeks consent for some additional facilities including a building and some hardstanding to assist in the use of the facility. The Rifle Range previously operated under a 28 day regulation which meant that it did not require planning consent but as part of the application for the additional facilities, the whole of the rifle range is being included. No changes to the hours of operation are proposed and the location of the rifle range remains the same. This proposal will purely provide additional amenity to the users of the site with no new impacts on the local community.

In light of the COVID-19 virus and the associated government guidance, the Applicant has launched this website to provide readily available information on the application and will also host a live, online consultation event where interested parties can ask questions and provide comments on the application.

A live online text chat facility will be available to use between 3pm and 7pm on Thursday the 3rd of March whereby members of the project team will answer any questions you may have regarding the proposals.

We appreciate this may be a new format of consultation for you and would like to thank you in advance for your cooperation. Your comments will help to inform and influence the final proposals ahead of formal submission to Dumfries and Galloway Council.

Please note that comments made in respect of this current consultation period, in advance of the planning application will not constitute formal representation to the future planning application. To make formal representation you will need to do so direct to the Local Planning Authority

The Proposal

Over Cassock Rifle Range has existed since 2017 operating as a farm diversification opportunity. The range is not currently operating whilst we bring the target systems up to competition standard. The land is used for grazing cattle and sheep when the rifle range is not operating. It therefore remains agricultural land and can readily revert to this use when not in operation.

The site is located to the north west of the B709, approximately 4.3 miles to the north of Eskdalemuir. A location plan is attached showing the site outlined in red, of which only a very small portion will contain any hardstanding infrastructure. The vast majority of the site will continue to be used as agricultural land. Access into the site will be from the existing entrance from the B709.

The rurally located site is a wholly suitable location for a rifle range. It faces North into the secluded head of the valley away from any habitation with the ground rising to form a natural barrier.



The estate perimeter

As mentioned, the range has been operating successfully since 2017, under the provisions of the 28 day rule, which meant that planning was not required as set out in Class 15 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Scotland) Order 1992.

The Applicant now proposes to upgrade the existing firing point with a permanent structure, and at the same time formalise the existing use of the land as a rifle range.

The initial drawings outline our approach to the development. To view these, please follow the links at the bottom of the page.

The shooting targets are distributed in a north-south pattern along the valley. For safety reasons these are located in target positions comprised of either earth ricochet traps or granulated rubber backstops. In these cases, the only change will involve replacement of the existing targets with new targets.

The shooting will take place from a fixed location located in the centre of the site, shooting in a north direction. Each participant will start by aiming at the closer targets first and will only progress to the further out targets once the Range Conducting Officer is satisfied that they are capable of hitting those targets. Consequently, the projectiles accumulate within the ricochet traps/backstops from where they will be routinely collected to be recycled.

Farm animals are cleared from the range prior to the range going live. As a target shooting club, no live quarry are ever shot at. Strict health and safety requirements are in place on site.

Request for Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Screening Opinion

The Applicant submitted an EIA screening request to the Council in September 2021. While this was not something which the Council had requested, the Applicant was keen to submit a comprehensive package of information to demonstrate that the proposals would not give rise to any significant environmental effects in respect of noise or on local wildlife or their habitats.

The Council confirmed on 17 01 2022 that having reviewed the submitted information, there would be no significant environmental effects caused by the proposals which would require submission of an EIA report.

The Existing Range

The range is located to the north west of the B709, approximately 4.3 miles to the north of Eskdalemuir.

The range has been operating successfully since 2017, under the provisions of the 28 day rule, which meant that planning was not required as set out in Class 15 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Scotland) Order 1992.

The range provides an important national training base for those representing the UK at various world championship competitions.

The range is operated by FCSA (UK), a Home Office Approved rifle club. The club uses the range once a month, normally on a Saturday. The range briefing is typically held at 0900 following which the range goes live and shooting commences. Firing is usually completed by 1600 at which point the range is closed and the range safety flags taken down.



Farm Diversification Upland hill farms, such as Over Cassock, have been under considerable pressure for many years. With the ongoing reform of the EU's Common Agricultural Policy and the UK's departure from the EU, farms are going to lose significant financial support and it has therefore never been so important for such farms to diversify. If these farms do not diversify to secure alternative forms of income, they will fail and families will move out of the area. The farmland would then be managed remotely and ranch farmed as bare land with the "farm base" many miles away. The buildings will no longer be required and are likely to become derelict and ruined. The loss of farming families would clearly have a knock on effect on local services and the very way in which land is managed. The Over Cassock farming operation is loss making and the establishment of the range could help subsidise the farming activity which may have to cease without it.

This type of use has the particular advantage of retaining most of the land concerned in agricultural condition capable of farming use out with the rifle range hours.

Events

This section forms part of the pre-application planning process and is your opportunity to find out more about the proposals.

The Applicant is preparing a planning application for partial use of agricultural land to accommodate a rifle range and facilities building at the site. A Proposal of Application Notice was submitted to Dumfries and Galloway Council on 18th May 2021 (Ref: P/21/0184/PAN).

We are keen to explain the proposal, hear comments from interested parties in relation to the application and answer any questions the public might have. The opportunities for you to input to this application are:

Attend the live online consultation Thursday the 3rd of March between 3pm and 7pm. See details below or submit your comments direct to the Planning Authority when the application is submitted.

The Applicant has launched this website to provide information and to host a live, online consultation event.

The event will take place on Thursday the 3rd of March 2022 between 3pm and 7pm . This provides an opportunity for everyone to review the proposals and submit their further comments, until the 25th of March 2022.

A live online text chat facility is available to use between 3pm and 7pm on Thursday the 3rd of March 2022 whereby members of the project team will answer any questions you may have regarding the proposals.

We would like to thank you for your input into this consultation. Your comments will help to inform and influence the final proposals ahead of formal submission to Dumfries and Galloway Council later in 2022

Please note that comments made in respect of this current consultation period, in advance of the planning application will not constitute formal representation to the future planning application. To make formal representation you will need to do so direct to the Local Planning Authority.

- How often will the range be in use and when?

Club shoots are normally one Saturday a month, competitions are also held at weekends in the summer months.

- How will I know it is safe for me to walk across the site?

Range flags are sited at gates and choke points on the range perimeter and at the firing point. When the range is in use the flags are raised. There are also warning signs around the perimeter of the estate informing people of the existence of the range and the purpose of the flags.

- How is the range operated and under what legislation?

FCSA (UK) is a Home Office approved club (CFP/10/1/7/4/1/2/1/2/3/364) and insures the range in full compliance with Home Office circular 031 / 2006
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/firearms>

- Are any firearms kept on site?

No firearms are stored on site.

- How many people will be shooting at once?

Maximum of 10

- How frequently are shots fired?

Approximately 1 per 30 seconds per person.

- What type of firearms are used?

Bolt action target rifles.

- Will users of the range be vetted before they can use it?

As part of the process of acquiring firearms licence all members are background checked, part of this application process involves a section 21 declaration. Any visitor to the range must sign a section 21 declaration and present ID (normally their firearms certificate) They must also have made contact with the club and arrange to visit, no one can just turn up and shoot.

- What are the Health & Safety procedures?

There is a RASP (Range Action Safety Plan) for the range along with our risk assessments and site maps. All of our members responsible for overseeing a shoot are fully qualified NRA Range Conducting Officers (RCO's)

Probationary members can only shoot under 1 to 1 supervision until they have passed the training course and satisfied the requirements of the Home Office / club's probationary period.

- How much traffic will this generate?

6-8 cars on a morning, with the same on an evening.

- How far does the noise travel?

The sound can only be heard at the nearest farm and only then if the sheep are quiet.

- How far do the projectiles travel?

The projectiles are captured by the ricochet traps sited around each target.

- What effects will this have on wildlife and livestock?

There has been no observed ill effects on any of the livestock or wildlife.

- How far is the range from the Samye Ling Tibetan Monastery?

The range is 4.3 miles away from the Monastery and faces directly away from it.

- What sound mitigation is being implemented?

There is acoustic cladding on the inner walls of the firing point and acoustic matting on the floor.

- Will Over Cassock Farm still operate?

Yes

- Why have you not undertaken an EIA?

We requested a screening opinion from Dumfries and Galloway Planning Department who have confirmed that one was not required.

- Why is this a major planning application?

Dumfries and Galloway Planning Department requested that the planning application comprised of the entire estate

- When will the works happen if consented?

The range will operate to generate the income to fund the construction of the new range building.

- When will the range be opened?

As soon as possible

- Will the range operate all year round?

Club shoots will run all year round however competitions will be held in the summer months when the weather may be better.

From us

- What happens to the fired projectiles?

All of the projectiles are captured withing the ricochet traps or backstops, these are cleaned regularly and metal sent for recycling.

- What are the projectiles made of?

The competition ammunition has projectiles made from CNC machined brass or copper. Jacketed ammunition is used at shorter distances and is also recycled.

- What competitions are going to be held there?

We host the King of 1 Mile in the UK, the King of 2 Miles in the UK and Why2k?

- What training is carried out?

We carry out training for the British Team for the .50cal World Championship, we also host the team selection events at our range.

- What distance is .50cal shot at?

The World Championship is shot at 1000yds, we have an electronic target system at that distance to allow the team and potential team members to train.

- Is the range at Over Cassock connected to the range at Clerkhill

Over Cassock is a completely separate operation run by a different organisation and has no connection to the proposed range at Clerkhill.

Contact

Thank you for your input and we hope you have found this website and consultation useful.

If you have any further comments or queries on the proposals, please contact us by completing the form below.

Please ensure all comments are submitted by the 25th of March 2022 to ensure they can be fully considered by the project team ahead of formal submission to Dumfries and Galloway Council.

Please note that comments made in respect of this current consultation period, in advance of the planning application will not constitute formal representation to the future planning application. To make formal representation you will need to do so direct to the Local Planning Authority.

Your Name

Your Email

Subject

Message

Submit

Should anyone wish to submit written comments, they should be sent to the following address:

Over Cassock Consultation

c/o Savills

Earn House, Broxden Business Park, Lamberkine Drive, Perth PH1 1RA

We will take comments into account that are received up to Friday 25th March.

Once the Planning Application is submitted, further comments will be able to be made to Dumfries and Galloway Council in the usual way.

We very much look forward to engaging with you on this consultation