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Ardenholm, Holmend
Moffat Dumfries and Galloway.
DG10 JY

THE SOLWAY FEDERATION OF RACING PIGEON SOCIETIES

September 29, 2010

Area Planning Manage, Dumfries and Galloway Council
Planning and Building Standards
Council Offices
Dryfe Road, Lockerbie.
DG11 2AS

Dear Sir or Madam:

I write to you today in my capacity as President of the Solway Federation of Racing Pigeon Societies representing some 160 members and 127 pigeon lofts throughout the Solway area. My members race their pigeons each weekend from April to September each year with up to 2500 pigeons released to return to their lofts in our area. During the close season my members constantly release their pigeons for training and recreation around their home lofts.

In addition I sit on the council of the Scottish Homing Union which body controls pigeon racing in Scotland. Pigeons racing back into Ayrshire, Central Scotland and Lanarkshire cross the Scottish border over a small expanse of ground roughly between Gretna and Langholm. As can be seen large numbers of racing pigeons are criss crossing our area in particular during the summer months.

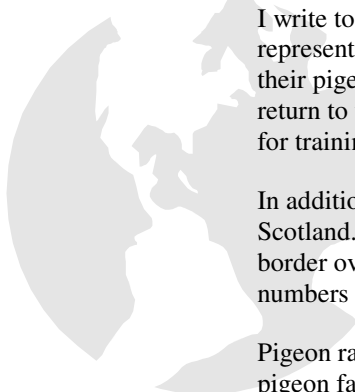
Pigeon racing in southern Scotland is a pursuit which has been followed by generations of local pigeon fanciers for over 100 years and is widely followed by local communities. Our members contribute to the local economy wherever possible by buying pigeon requisites, food and fuel locally.

The sport of pigeon racing is always placed in difficulty by the recent expansion in the numbers of birds of prey principally peregrine falcons. These birds which are protected by law cause enormous losses to the pigeon racing stock. Pigeons which have cost their owners substantial sums frequently fall victim to the predation of these falcons.

If the predation by wild falcons is not serious enough for us we now learn that a planning application will shortly come before your committee for the establishment of a peregrine falcon breeding centre at Westwater near Langholm(planning application number 10/P/4/0352)I understand that part of the application is to allow the falcons to hack out in which case they will obviously cause absolute mayhem to racing pigeons and cause many long term pigeon fanciers to leave the sport which they love.

After all who wants to breed and carefully nurture racing pigeons to see them fall prey to peregrine falcons. The natural incidence of birds of prey we can accept and live with but the establishment of a peregrine falcon breeding centre which might release a further 300 predators to catch and eat our pigeons is a step too far.

I request that you bring this letter to the immediate attention of the councillors comprising the Planning Committee indicating the utter opposition of The Solway Federation of Racing Pigeon . . .



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Societies to the planning application for the establishment of a Falcon Breeding Centre at Westwater, Langholm.

If you require any further explanation of the position of my Federation I can be contacted at the above address.

Sincerely

Walter Swanston
President