

## Appendix vii.

### Reasons on home location of loft rather than alternative site such as an allotment.

#### Context

I have been racing pigeons in West Cumbria as a hobby since 1973. I previously flew my pigeons from land behind Wilson's Butchers in the High Street, Egremont but this was terminated upon death of landowner and subsequent decisions of the executors this year (2025). Approx. 250 pigeons are kept for the purposes of the hobby with sales and purchases of birds between other fanciers being incidental to this past-time.

#### Control & Security

24/7 Security: The loft is under constant surveillance, dramatically reducing the risk of theft, vandalism, or interference. Allotments are often isolated and targeted.

Biosecurity: Complete control of who comes near the birds. On an allotment, other plot holders, visitors, or dogs may pass by uninvited significantly increasing the risk of introducing disease from other people's birds or visitors that are common on allotment sites.

#### Convenience & Management

Constant Access : I can tend to my birds at any time of day or night, which is crucial for training, breeding, late returns from races, and administering medication.

Training Flexibility: I can exercise the birds at optimal times, reacting to weather windows and hawks.

Stress Reduction for Birds : The birds live in a consistent, quiet(er) environment. An allotment can have unpredictable noises, people, and predators that stress the colony which could encourage sickness.

#### Veterinary Inspection

I race my pigeons across the Channel from France which under EU regulations agreed with DEFRA requires an annual veterinary attestation.

By obtaining this attestation the vet is confirming that they have visited my loft and have carried out a visual assessment of the birds for the purpose of detection of signs of the occurrence of notifiable and reportable diseases.