



**Craig Whittaker MP**

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### **Firearms Consultation (.50 Calibre)**

Thank you for contacting me about the firearms consultation.

The proposals laid out in the Government consultation on offensive and dangerous weapons are that two types of firearm (.50 calibre and certain rapid firing rifles) be removed from the general licensing arrangements to the stricter provisions of section 5 of the Firearms Act 1968. This provision prohibits the ownership, other than as authorised by the Secretary of State or the Scottish Ministers, of more dangerous, non-civilian firearms such as handguns and automatic rifles. The consultation sets out legislative measures to reduce violent crime, responding to recent rises in police-recorded firearm offences.

The Government has said that its reason for proposing to prohibit the ownership of .50 calibre rifles of a type developed for use by the military for 'materiel destruction' is that it considers that the potential range and penetration of these weapons are such that they would be a significant risk if they were to fall into the wrong hands. It follows, in the Government's view, that they no longer be allowed for civilian use.

Similarly, it is also proposing to prohibit ownership of rapid firing rifles, as the rate of fire with these weapons is significantly greater than a conventional bolt-action rifle. As the intention of the Firearms Act is to prohibit civilian ownership of semi-automatic firearms and reduce the threat such weapons pose, the Government also believes it appropriate to subject such rifles to the controls of section 5 of the Firearms Act 1968.

I understand that you have strong objections to such proposals, which is why I would encourage you to contribute to the consultation to make your opinions heard.

Thank you again for taking the time to contact me.

Kind regards,

Craig Whittaker MP