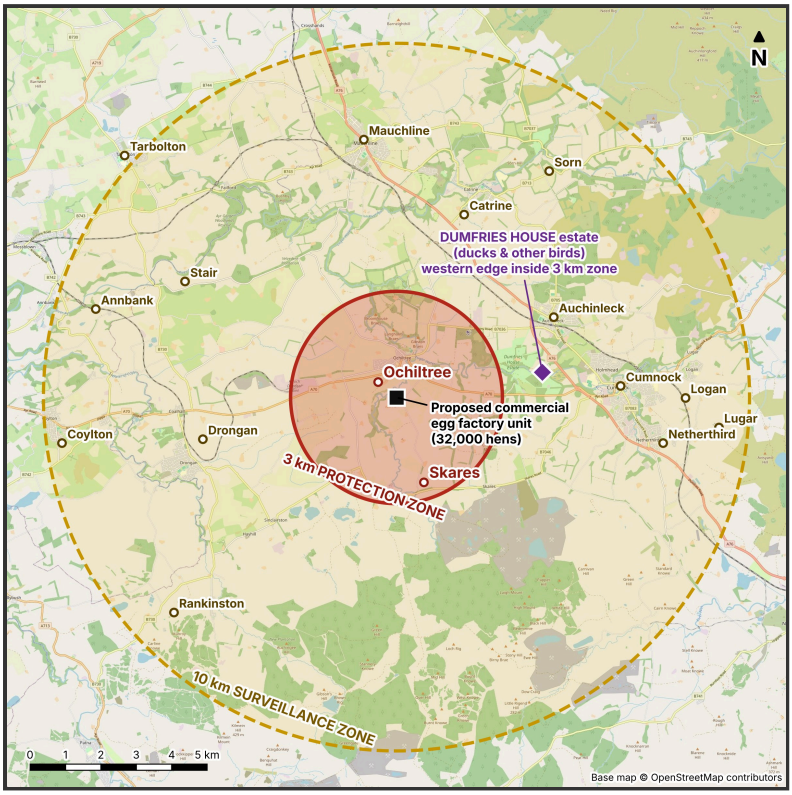
Bird flu biohazard: what a Protection Zone would mean for your farm

If H5N1 bird flu were confirmed at the proposed 32,000-hen commercial egg factory unit at Palmerston, Ochiltree (planning application 26/0511/PP)

ILLUSTRATIVE SCENARIO · 13 November 2026



Key

- Protection Zone: 3 km from the infected egg factory unit
- Surveillance Zone: 10 km from the infected egg factory unit
- Proposed commercial egg factory unit (site of the outbreak in this scenario)

What the Scottish Government's own documents say

When bird flu is confirmed, the Scottish Government's own declarations set a **3 km Protection Zone** and a **10 km Surveillance Zone** around the premises, as at Biggar on 2 November 2026 (AIV 2026/22). That is the Government's own measure of the area at highest biosecurity risk.

This commercial egg factory unit would be about 800 m from Ochiltree: the whole village is well inside that 3 km biohazard zone.

The zones apply once an outbreak is confirmed. There is no separate set-back rule for new units, which is why where this one goes matters now.

Is your farm inside the Protection Zone?

1. Find your land on the map. The red circle is 3 km from the proposed commercial egg factory unit.
2. If **any part** of your holding is inside the red circle, the **whole holding** counts as inside the zone.
3. All of **Ochiltree** and **Skares** are inside, so every keeper of hens, ducks or other birds there would be covered, including garden flocks.
4. Near the line? In a real outbreak, the official boundary is on the APHA Interactive Avian Influenza Disease Map and the Scottish Government declaration.

☣ A BIOHAZARD, not just "agricultural"

The applicant's Planning Statement calls this development "agricultural" **39 times**. Across all 25 application documents, **bird flu, avian influenza and bioaerosols are not mentioned once**, and biosecurity only 3 times.

- **Airborne biohazard:** roof fans vent bioaerosols (bacteria, fungi and endotoxins), Poultry Dust and ammonia, day and night.
- **Disease biohazard:** H5N1 bird flu is a notifiable disease. One confirmed case triggers emergency zones.
- **Waste biohazard:** roughly 1,800 tonnes of manure a year, dirty water and dead birds to store and remove.

Published evidence on human health

- A Dutch study of 2,426 adults in an intensive livestock area linked pneumonia with living **within 1 km of a poultry farm** (odds ratio 1.7 in one analysis; Freidl et al., *PLOS ONE* 2017).
- Ammonia from livestock farms was linked to **poorer lung function** in people living nearby (Borlée et al., 2017).
- The evidence is still developing, which is why a **biohazard and bioaerosol health assessment** should be required. None has been submitted.
- UKHSA rates the bird flu risk to the general public as very low; human cases come from close contact with infected birds or contaminated places.

Restrictions on farms in the 3 km Protection Zone

- **House your birds** or keep them apart from wild birds. Check them every day and report any sign of disease to APHA at once.
- **Keep records** of all poultry and captive birds, eggs, and everyone visiting. Expect an APHA vet visit or call to check your flock.
- **No moving poultry or other captive birds** on or off the holding without a licence.
- **No moving eggs** (hatching or table), poultry meat or carcases off the holding without a licence. Farm-gate egg sales stop.
- **No moving or spreading poultry litter, manure or slurry** without a licence.
- **Game birds must not be released.**
- **Dogs, cats and livestock** on holdings that keep poultry can only move off under licence. Dairy cows, sheep and goats kept for milk need an individual licence. Pets with no contact with poultry are exempt.
- **No bird shows, sales or gatherings.**
- **Clean and disinfect** vehicles, equipment and boots going on or off premises with birds.
- **How long:** at least 21 days after the infected egg factory unit has been cleaned and disinfected, then it becomes part of the Surveillance Zone. Usually a month or more in total, longer if there are further cases.

Farms with no poultry or captive birds can carry on as normal, unless they use poultry manure or move animals off a holding that keeps birds.

In the 10 km Surveillance Zone

- Poultry, captive birds, eggs, meat, carcases, litter and manure move only under general licence conditions.
- Game birds must not be released.
- Records, daily checks and biosecurity as the declaration sets out.
- Takes in Auchinleck, Catrine, Drongan, Cumnock, Stair, Mauchline, Sorn, Netherthird, Logan, Rankinston, Annbank, Lugar and Coylton.
- **Dumfries House** (about 4 km east); its western edge is in the 3 km zone.

The real thing: Biggar, November 2026
HPAI H5N1 was confirmed at a poultry premises near Biggar on 2 November 2026 (Scottish Government ref. AIV 2026/22). A 3 km Protection Zone and 10 km Surveillance Zone were declared the same day and are still shown on the APHA disease map. A Scotland-wide Avian Influenza Prevention Zone followed on 10 November 2026.

Game birds, estates and poultry businesses

- **Game birds count as poultry.** In both the 3 km and 10 km zones, game birds **must not be released** while the declaration stands, as at Biggar. Shoots relying on released pheasants or partridges could lose much of a season.
- Rearing pens, gamekeepers' birds and any captive ducks or waterfowl must be housed or kept apart from wild birds, with records and inspections.
- **Dumfries House estate:** its western edge is **inside the 3 km Protection Zone**, and the house itself, about 4 km east, is in the 10 km Surveillance Zone. Its ducks and other birds would come under Protection Zone rules, at one of Ayrshire's best-known heritage estates and visitor attractions.
- **Turkey farm at Knockshiffnock**, about 2 km from the egg factory unit and well inside the 3 km Protection Zone: no turkeys, eggs or carcases could leave without a licence.
- An outbreak in **November or December** would hit the Christmas turkey trade at its busiest time.
- If bird flu reached a commercial flock inside the zone, that flock would also face culling.

This is an illustrative scenario, not a forecast: it shows the zones that would be declared if bird flu were ever confirmed at the proposed commercial egg factory unit. Real zones are declared by the Scottish Government around the infected premises and can follow roads and boundaries; the legal rules are in each declaration. Restrictions summarised from the Scottish Government declaration for AIV 2026/22 (Biggar) and standard Scottish disease control zone measures. Distances approximate. Sources: gov.scot AIV 2026/22 (2 Nov 2026); gov.scot avian influenza outbreaks and AIPZ pages (10 Nov 2026); FarmingUK and Shooting UK (Nov 2026). Map © OpenStreetMap contributors.