

From Dinah & John Davies

MODEL FARM, A BELOVED, PRECIOUS JEWEL.

- Model Farm has a range of wildflower meadows, established habitats, fields and mature woodland, a whole ecosystem in jeopardy.
- Its extensive, beautiful and much loved wildflower meadows attract precious and alarmingly declining pollinators, on which human survival depends. The farm has been increasing the floral variety, ensuring ongoing, extended seasonal benefits for pollinators and wildlife. The family are committed to continuing evolution and improvements for the sake of nature.
- It is rich in biodiversity, including species like skylarks, yellowhammer and bats on the protection red list. There is also an extremely rare fungus on the farm. More and more birds in Wales are struggling, their song heard much less often; those on Model Farm must be saved.
- It has food crops of barley and wheat which are now more important than ever: with the shortages in supply and rise in food prices which have hit the poor hardest, the Vale and Wales must be more not less self-sufficient.
- The farm's Wild Wales Seeds business creates beauty and helps the environment not only locally, through new wildflower fields and oases and a communal field nearby, but in other parts of Britain, with gardens and larger projects. Instead of it being destroyed, the council would do well to make good use of the seeds for many more lovely oases of nature in the Vale, including on the council's verges, as already occurs in other, environmentally aware, areas. WWS' ongoing and ever increasing value to nature deserves greater recognition.
- Model Farm is loved not only in the Vale but in different corners of the world. Supportive letters from Italy (citing the farm as a jewel and a model for all Europe to follow) and U.S.A have been published in the local press. It is indeed a jewel of the Vale, a jewel of Wales, of which we can all be proud.

- The Vale of Glamorgan council has rightly declared nature and environment emergencies, since when the crises have only deepened. Wales is ranked among the worst countries worldwide for species decline. Decision-makers must act accordingly, prioritising the environment and nature over corporate profiteering. To do otherwise will be a terrible betrayal of nature, and if those responsible for the Vale destroy rather than save wildlife, what hope is there for the planet? A local case, but a deeply important one: as Model Farm dies, so the planet dies.

- A commendable progressive tenant (not rich landowning) family with 2 [REDACTED] girls, who have been helping the local community and charities, will be made homeless. The Welsh Senedd/parliament has made a commitment to protect tenant farmers and should certainly apply it to Model Farm!

LEGAL & GENERAL'S DAMAGING, DESTRUCTIVE AND COSTLY PLANS

- Legal & General's plans for a business park are not only irresponsible but clearly unviable, projected in an independent report to make a huge loss- even greater by latest estimate than originally stated. The cost, and of new road infrastructure too, will be borne by ordinary people not L&G.

- Similar industrial and business parks in the area have been a costly failure, with lack of uptake, empty lots. There has been a general significant decline in take up of industrial space. This is a speculative development with no investors interested, no demand from the airport, and no future prospects. These plans will also fail, both at public expense and with needless environmental destruction.

- It is not clear what the true aims of these loss-making plans are. There may well be an ulterior motive that L&G can bring into effect once it has destroyed Model Farm, and the damage irreversible when the truth becomes apparent.

- The cement industry is among the worst for CO2. L&G are presenting to the Vale a Pandora's box which, once opened, will release all sorts of horror and carnage- an irreversible catastrophe.

- Eyesore brown sites should be developed first, not beautiful countryside and nature destroyed.

- There are unfilled vacancies throughout Wales and UK; there is no need for new pie in the sky jobs in a dud park, rather a demand for workers in existing jobs. The cost of living not mass unemployment is the problem. Times have changed greatly, even since L&G's plans were submitted- and in favour of keeping Model Farm.

- L&G's assets (as per Wikipedia for 2023) are worth £522 billion. Yet it is being let off due payments of millions, at public expense.

- L&G is a London-based corporation intending to pillage lovely Welsh countryside for its own, its executives' and shareholders' profits of which local workers will not receive a remotely fair share. Wildlife and little children are to be made homeless, sacrificed for its greed.

- L&G is a cold, ruthless money-making machine. It cannot be trusted to work for the local and common good. It exaggerating benefits of its destructive plans and "mitigation" measures.

- An ecology report provided for decision-making vastly underestimated the species, flora and fauna, environmental and natural resources of Model Farm; it was not independent of L&G as it should have been but substantially misleading and invalid.

- Concrete, some hedges and bat boxes are simply no decent substitute for fields, wildflowers, trees and woodland. Where for the mammals, the woodland birds, the various species whose homes are lost?

- The "mitigation" measures take time: many of the species made homeless and deeply stressed will be dead before they are put into effect.

- The measures will involve labour, transport and materials causing damage to the environment and adding to the problem of global warming.
- The plans will cause greatly increased traffic congestion to an already problematic traffic flow situation round Rhoose. This will increase global warming too.
- The plans will cause sewage overflow, with nowhere for it but to cause damage locally and into the sea too. Dŵr Cymru/ Welsh water have expressed concerns about the lack of sewage capacity and have admitted to illegally discharging untreated sewage. Southerndown with its glorious stretch of coast has now lost its blue flag status. The council has stated its concern over the quality of local sea and beaches; L&G's plans will make things much worse.
- The park will increase risk of flooding, already a worsening problem, with nearby Grade 2 listed buildings likely to be affected.
- Barry council within the Vale has opposed the plans and the Woodland Trust has raised objections too.
- Iolo Williams, Wales' respected and best known naturalist, also opposes the plans and supports Model Farm.
- There is a mass of local opposition to the plans, with thousands selflessly committed to a vital and worthy cause being deeply upset. For years one frail elderly woman has spent all she can on EuroMillions tickets in the desperate hope of being able to pay off L&G. Any new decision maker should take into account local residents' wishes and the stress endured by many, including frail and elderly people, those with heart problems or affected by strokes, the ongoing effects on mental health, the huge further damage that will be caused if the plans go ahead.

CONCLUSION

The council planning committee voted in March 2023 against L&G's planning application. The council's extraordinary failure to provide a necessary reply to L&G's appeal begs the question as to whether there was unscrupulous sabotage from within!

For the sake of future generations, we firmly believe that with due integrity and responsibility the proper democratic decision reflecting public opinion, the benefits of the farm and the various problems with the planning application should be upheld!