

THE VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL  
APPEAL BY LEGAL & GENERAL (STRATEGIC LAND) LTD (REF CAS-02641-  
G8G7M5) BUSINESS PARK AND CHANGE OF USE TO COUNTRY PARK  
LAND AT MODEL FARM, PORT ROAD, RHOOSE, CF62 3BT

**Note of case management conference held on 13 January 2026**

**Venue - Teams**

**Introduction**

1. The inquiry into the above appeal was adjourned on 1 April 2025 to enable consultation on further information for the environmental statement to take place before evidence on the substantive considerations was heard. Given the length of the adjournment, this case management conference was arranged to consider, amongst other matters, the availability of documents and updates to evidence, and to consider the ongoing management of the case to ensure that the inquiry would be dealt with in an efficient manner. It was led by myself as the appointed Inspector. No-one indicated that they wished to speak in Welsh.
2. Participants on behalf of the parties were as follows:

Appellant:

- Ms Morag Ellis KC (ME), Counsel.

The Local Planning Authority (LPA), The Vale of Glamorgan Council:

- Mrs Annabel Graham Paul (AGP), Counsel
- Ms Sarah Feist (SF), Principal Planner, The Vale of Glamorgan Council.

Vale Communities Unite (VCU):

- Mr Gethin Thomas (GT), Counsel.

Mrs Meryl Wilkins (MW), party claiming an interest in the appeal site

Other individuals associated with the Appellant, the LPA, and VCU (the main parties) were in attendance.

**Dates and venue for the inquiry**

3. Following the adjournment, the inquiry had been scheduled to sit on 24-27 and 31 March 2026, with site visits to take place on an additional day. A request had been received on behalf of ME (Counsel for the Appellant) to use the first day of the resumed inquiry for site visits, as she had another commitment on 24 March. ME explained that her other commitment was actually on 25 March, but that Mr Emyr Jones would represent the

Appellant on that day, and no adjustments were sought to the usual order for the inquiry timetable.

4. VCU had raised the question of whether proceeding with the inquiry during the campaign period ahead of the Senedd elections would be contrary to election guidance. I referred to the response sent by PEDW, which explained that: the inquiry is scheduled to resume prior to the pre-election period, and that it is expected that most of the sessions will have taken place by then; the dates for the inquiry have been known for some time, and postponement at this late stage would be likely to result in further significant delay; and that it was not intended to postpone the inquiry because of the Senedd elections. GT advised that he was content with the position.
5. In the light of the above discussion, the dates for resumption of the inquiry were confirmed as 24-27 and 31 March 2026.
6. The venue for the inquiry will be the Cosmeston Room, Civic Offices, Holton Road, Barry, CF63 4RU. ME asked if parking spaces could be made available for the 24 March: the LPA will liaise with the main parties on this matter.

#### **Claim of an interest in the appeal site**

7. On the opening day of the inquiry, Mrs Wilkins had indicated that she may be an owner of land at the appeal site. That is not consistent with the ownership certificates submitted with the application and the appeal. There had been correspondence on this matter from the Appellant and MW during the adjournment, but no agreed position has been reached. The Appellant maintains that it owns the relevant title to the appeal site, and MW claims that she has an ownership interest in the land.
8. The Appellant's solicitors (Gowling WLG) had written to MW requesting details of her claimed ownership by 18 April 2025, but no response had been received by 19 April. ME intended to submit a note appended to her closing submissions addressing this matter. She argued that MW had had the opportunity to respond on the question of ownership, there was no prejudice to her position, and the inquiry should continue as intended. The Appellant would submit the plans which relate to the title deeds attached to its email of 30 April 2025 to PEDW.
9. MW explained that she had instructed a solicitor to write to Gowling WLG on the question of ownership. This had not been done, but she had written herself on 10 August 2025, maintaining her claim to ownership, and asserted at the conference that she has documents supporting her claim. Certified copies of these documents were to be submitted to PEDW by 16 January 2026. She considered that Legal & General should withdraw the appeal, and objects to the proposal on other grounds.
10. It is clear that MW is aware of the appeal proposal, and, in that respect, I explained that I did not consider that her position was prejudiced. For the LPA, AGP took the view that there was no prejudice, even if procedural

errors had occurred, and, for VCU, GT considered that there was no impediment to the inquiry proceeding.

11. The main parties were requested to submit any comments on documents received from MW by 23 January 2026. ME agreed to submit her note on the ownership claim by that date if possible, or no later than 24 March 2026.
12. On the basis of the information available at the time, I advised that there was no reason for the resumption of the inquiry not to proceed on 24 March, and that the question of ownership may be a matter which MW could pursue separately from the appeal process.

### **Participation in the inquiry**

13. The Appellant had previously indicated that it was not intended to call witnesses in respect of three of its statements of evidence unless the Inspector had questions for them. I had advised that it is likely that there would be questions, and ME stated that witnesses would be called in respect of each of the statements already submitted. An additional witness would be called in respect of climate change. Accordingly, the Appellant is expected to be represented by:

- Ms Morag Ellis KC, Counsel
- Mr Emyr Jones, Counsel
- Mr David Archibald, Director, RPS Transport – traffic & transport
- Mr Tim Oliver, Technical Director (Ecology), RPS - ecology
- Mr Darren Parker, Operations Director, RPS – planning
- Mr Seth Price, Technical Director, RPS – built heritage
- Mr Mark Wilson, Principal Landscape Architect, RPS – landscape & visual effects
- Mr Chris J Sutton, Sutton Consulting Ltd – economic development.
- Mr Andrew Tasker (AT), RPS – climate change
- Representative of Gowling WLG – planning obligations.

The scope of AT's evidence is to be based on the environmental statement.

14. AGP advised that, as the LPA had no objection and was neutral in respect of the proposal, it was not intended to call any witnesses in respect of the planning merits. It would, though, participate in the sessions on possible conditions and planning obligations, and would be represented throughout the inquiry. The LPA agreed that a representative would be available to speak to a statement on planning policy. It is expected to be represented by:

- Mrs Annabel Graham Paul, Counsel
- Representative/s of the LPA – planning policy, possible conditions, planning obligations.

15. VCU is expected to be represented by:

- Mr Gethin Thomas, Counsel
- Ms E Williams, Ecologist, Coal Spoil Fungi - ecology

- Mr P Gibbs, Chair, Vale Communities Unite – other matters
- Ms S Ring, Partner, Goodenough Ring Solicitors – planning obligations, conditions.

GT acknowledged that the scope of cross-examination of the Appellant's witnesses (other than Ms Williams) should take account of the scope of Mr Gibbs' evidence.

16. Mrs Wilkins wished to speak at the inquiry, and it was thought that Mr Dennis Clarke, a local resident, also wished to appear.

### **Consultation on further information for the environmental statement**

17. Consultation on further information for the environmental statement had taken place during the adjournment. VCU was concerned that all responses may not have been circulated. This matter needs to be checked. GT advised that VCU had no objection to the scope of the environmental statement, and would address concerns about the substance of the content in presenting its case.

### **Core documents**

18. SF explained that preparation of a core documents library was in hand. A draft list had been sent to the Appellant and VCU, with comments requested by 19 January 2026. It was intended that the core documents library would be operational by 30 January 2026. Additional documents would be able to be added during the inquiry.

### **Planning obligations**

19. The conference will consider the current position on the preparation of planning obligations in the light of the discussion on the opening day of the inquiry. Further discussions on planning obligations had taken place with the LPA. A revised draft is expected to be submitted ahead of the resumption of the inquiry.

### **Possible conditions**

20. Possible conditions are to be reviewed, and a revised schedule is expected to be submitted ahead of the resumption of the inquiry.

### **Updates to evidence**

21. Given the length of the adjournment, updates to evidence may be appropriate where circumstances have changed. The Appellant intends to submit a statement from Mr Tasker, and probably an update to its ecology evidence. VCU would probably submit updates to its evidence.

## **Other procedural matters**

- 22.SF advised that the venue has no facility for streaming or remote participation.
- 23.ME reserved the Appellant's position concerning costs in connection with the land ownership point raised by MW (above, paras 7-12). MW's attention was drawn to the possibility of a costs application by the Appellant. At present there are no intentions by the LPA or VCU to make a costs application.
- 24.The following arrangements were made for document submission:
- By 16 January 2026 – certified copies of documents concerning the land interest claim from Mrs Wilkins.
  - By 19 January 2026 – any comments by the Appellant and VCU on the core documents list (to be made to the LPA).
  - By 23 January 2026 – comments by the main parties on any documents submitted by Mrs Wilkins in support of her claim of an interest in the appeal site.
  - By 30 January - core documents library operational.
  - By 24 February (4 week before the inquiry resumes) – updates to evidence.
  - By 10 March (2 weeks beforehand) – time estimates, possible conditions, final draft of planning obligations, any costs applications.
  - By 17 March (1 week beforehand) – any rebuttals to updates, site visit suggestions, any costs application responses

*Richard Clegg*

INSPECTOR

19 January 2026