

Report title: Disposal of Occombe Farm and Land laying North of Preston Down Road, Paignton

Report to:	Cabinet
Date:	9th June 2026
Lead Cabinet Member:	Cllr Chris Lewis, Cabinet Member for Place Development and Economic Growth
Email:	chris.lewis@torbay.gov.uk
Lead Director:	Malcolm Coe, Director of Finance
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Wards affected:	Preston and Cockington with Chelston

1. Summary of Report:

- 1.1. This report recommends the freehold disposal of the Council's freehold interest of Occombe Farm and land laying North of Preston Down Road, Paignton, extending to approximately 36.16 hectares (shown edged red in Appendix 1), to Greendale SPV 1 Limited (Greendale) for a sum in excess of Market Value, as determined by an independent Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyor's compliant valuation of the site.
- 1.2. The disposal will see Greendale reopen Occombe Farm and bring forward a proposal to redevelop the site to offer a range of leisure and retail facilities to the community, as well as develop part of the site into a glamping holiday destination. Greendale intends to inject considerable capital investment into the site over a multi-year period which will create new jobs for local residents.
- 1.3. The proposal aligns with the Council's Asset Management Strategy, which identifies surplus assets and seeks to dispose of them where appropriate to generate capital receipts, reduce liabilities, and stimulate economic development.

2. Recommendations and Proposed Decision:

2.1 That the Director of Finance in consultation with Cabinet Member for Place Development and Economic Growth be authorised to dispose of the Council's freehold interest of Occombe Farm and land lying north of Preston Down Road Paignton, (as set out in Appendix 1), to Greendale SPV 1 Limited for a sum in excess of Market Value (as set out in exempt Appendix 2 to the submitted report) and agree and finalise the detailed transfer process and terms based on estates and legal advice, which will include overage provisions.

3. Reasons for Recommendations/Proposed Decision:

3.1 The proposal to dispose of this asset to Greendale SPV 1 Limited will generate a capital receipt for the Council and will provide the following additional benefits:

- Support the growth of a Devon based business providing jobs and income to local residents.
- Reduce the Council's ongoing holding and maintenance liabilities associated with the site.
- Bring forward development of the site that has been closed since December 2025, following the demise of Torbay Coast and Countryside Trust ('The Trust').
- Generate a significant capital receipt in excess of Market Value which will facilitate the fulfilment of other appropriate medium-term projects.
- Will lessen the burden placed on SWISCo to maintain farmland and a wooded area that is protected under a Special Site of Scientific Interest designation.

3.2 Greendale's vision is to promote the sale of locally sourced produce including beef and fish and to sell these in the reopened farm shop and café at Occombe Farm. This sustainable model promotes healthy lifestyle, boosting local economy, and reducing carbon emissions. Additionally, the aim is to re-introduce the indoor play area, which was previously enjoyed by visitors to the site, ensuring the local community retain elements of the experience they have enjoyed under the previous ownership.

3.3 The vision will also see the wider land and buildings developed to include indoor sports courts, which will also provide new health and sports facilities promoting wellness within the community. Further, Greendale's long-term vision subject to planning, is to develop the wider land to create a glamping holiday retreat. This will attract tourism to the area, boosting local businesses, and help create jobs for local residents.

4. Background and Context:

4.1 Torbay Council Strategic Asset Management Plan sets out the Council's approach to the strategic management of its assets, how it will support service delivery, provide the Council

with income and how it will fulfil its mission to support, enable and empower its residents, our communities and our partnerships, to promote growth and place shaping within Torbay.

- 4.2 A identified principle of Strategic Asset Management Plan is at regular intervals to review all non-operational and surplus assets to identify opportunities to create or increase revenue income, provide investment opportunities or deliver capital receipts to stimulate development, growth and reinvestment.
- 4.3 The site was previously operated by the Trust under a long-term lease held from the Council. However, The Trust went into administration in December 2025, and the site was handed back to the Council. To keep the site secure, the Council has needed to deploy an on-site permanent external security firm throughout 2026, to protect the site whilst a long-term decision was made on the future use. The on-going holding costs of the vacant asset is and continues to be significant.
- 4.4 To facilitate the decision on future use and options for the site the Council's Asset team obtained an independent valuation undertaken by Stags Professional Services, producing a Market Value. This valuation formed the basis for negotiation with Greendale, following their interest becoming known. Negotiations crystalised and resulted in the submission of an unconditional offer above Market Value.

5. Alternative Options Considered:

- 5.1 SWISCo had approached the Council for part of the site for use as a depot for their fleet and operations in this part of Torbay. This option did not include the whole site and left the Council needing to seek a leasehold disposal of the remaining site. Splitting the site into multiple components would lessen the total capital value.
- 5.2 Retaining the asset in its current vacant state would result in increasing holding costs and liabilities.
- 5.3 Marketing the site and inviting other offers such as speculative or conditional offers would introduce risk, delay, and uncertainty.
- 5.4 Retain the site and market the opportunity on a leasehold basis. Whilst this option would provide a revenue, it was considered unlikely a lease of the whole site in its entirety to one operator would be secured. Even if that was a possibility, any incoming tenant would look to the Council to provide a significant lease incentive. More likely, the site would become multi-let and management intensive. Consequently, the Council would need to retain responsibility for the holding costs along with dealing with management issues such as securing boundaries and site security for any void units and the wider demise. This would come with an additional ongoing financial burden.

6. Contribution to Council Priorities:

- 6.1 The Council is not under any obligation to dispose of any given asset. However, the Council's ongoing management and cost of holding vacant assets is significant. Disposing of this asset will reduce this liability and generate a capital receipt.

7. Consultation and Engagement:

- 7.1 There has been no formal consultation or engagement undertaken in terms of the proposed disposal of the site.

8. Implications:

Financial Implications:

The Council's Asset Management Strategy states that the Council will 'always seek to maximise the full market receipt for their assets whether by way of freehold disposal or leasehold interest'. The independently appointed valuation established that Greendale's offer is above market value.

Legal Implications:

There are no legal implications anticipated with this disposal. Disposing of this asset will need to be documented, along with the preparation of legal packs to support a sale. This disposal will be dealt with by the Council's in-house Legal Team where capacity allows, otherwise it will be outsourced.

An overage clause has also been agreed that would be triggered should any part of the site be sold in the future for residential development.

Corporate Parenting/Children and Young People:

No impacts are anticipated with the disposal of this land. The land is currently unused and does not provide any service to children or young people. Greendale's proposal includes leisure facilities that improve health and wellbeing to the community.

Associated Risks, Risk Tolerance Level and Mitigations:

A summary of key risks associated with the recommendations in this report are:

1. Financial Risk – mitigated through maximising capital revenue above market value.
2. Missed Development Opportunity – monitored through legal practices such as an overage clause.

The risks of not approving the recommendations, include failure to obtain a capital receipt preventing regeneration strategies across Torbay, and a risk of retaining liability for the site in respect of land management and maintenance. Overall risk exposure is assessed as acceptable within the Council's risk tolerance appetite.

Full risks are set out below:

Risk	Risk score before mitigations (likelihood x impact)	Mitigations	Risk Score after mitigations (likelihood x impact)	Risk tolerance
Undervaluation	12	Independent valuation	4	By appointing an independent valuation, we have expert guidance on open market value.
Loss of future revenue	9	Overage clause and restrictive covenants	2	The Overage clause means that should a change of use planning application by lodged in the future, the Council do not miss out on lost revenue.
Social Value	9	Careful consideration of Greendale's proposal with community in mind	4	Greendale's proposal is community focussed and maintains many of the elements the community enjoyed at Occombe Farm previously.

Contributions to tackling climate change or achieving carbon neutrality:

Greendale propose to use their partnership with its sister company Waterdance Ltd, to source food for the farm shop and café via locally sourced, sustainable methods. This means food is travelling less distance from source, reducing transport and pollution. Greendale also plan to plant trees in a later phase of development as part of their glamping holiday park.

Social Value Considerations:

The development will include leisure facilities for the local community and create approx. 100 – 200 new jobs for residents.

Procurement Implications:

There are no significant procurement implications as this is an off-market transaction agreed above Market Value.

Other Implications:

There are no significant additional implications as all development will be outside of Council remit.

9. Equalities Impact Assessment:

Protected characteristics under the Equality Act and groups with increased vulnerability	Data and insight	Equality considerations (including any adverse impacts)	Mitigation activities	Responsible department and timeframe for implementing mitigation activities
Age	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 18% of Torbay residents are aged under 18 years old. 55% of Torbay residents are aged between 18 to 64 years old. 27% of Torbay residents are aged 65 and older. 	No adverse impacts are expected as the space is currently unused.	Not applicable	Not applicable
Carers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At the time of the 2021 census there were 14,900 unpaid carers in Torbay. 5,185 of these carers provided 50 hours or more of care. 	No adverse impacts are expected as the space is currently unused.	Not applicable	Not applicable
Care experienced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As of January 2026, there were 277 former care experienced young people aged 18-24 in Torbay. 	No adverse impacts are expected as the space is currently unused.	Not applicable	Not applicable

Protected characteristics under the Equality Act and groups with increased vulnerability	Data and insight	Equality considerations (including any adverse impacts)	Mitigation activities	Responsible department and timeframe for implementing mitigation activities
Disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the 2021 Census, 23.9% of Torbay residents answered that their day-to-day activities were limited a little or a lot by a physical or mental health condition or illness. 	No adverse impacts are expected as the space is currently unused.	Not applicable	Not applicable
Gender reassignment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the 2021 Census, 0.4% of Torbay's community answered that their gender identity was not the same as their sex registered at birth. 	No adverse impacts are expected as the space is currently unused.	Not applicable	Not applicable
Marriage and civil partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Of those Torbay residents aged 16 and over at the time of 2021 Census, 44.2% of people were married or in a registered civil partnership. 	No adverse impacts are expected as the space is currently unused.	Not applicable	Not applicable
Pregnancy and maternity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Between 2013 and 2024, the rate of live births (as a proportion of females aged 15 to 44) has been slightly but significantly higher in 	No adverse impacts are expected as the space is currently unused.	Not applicable	Not applicable

Protected characteristics under the Equality Act and groups with increased vulnerability	Data and insight	Equality considerations (including any adverse impacts)	Mitigation activities	Responsible department and timeframe for implementing mitigation activities
	<p>Torbay (average of 56.0 per 1,000) than the Southwest (53.4) and broadly in line with England (56.3).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For the period 2022 to 2024, rates in Torbay (44.6) have been significantly below England (50.0). 			
Race	<p>In the 2021 Census, 96.1% of Torbay residents described their ethnicity as the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.6% as Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh 0.3% as Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African 1.5% as being of Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups 96.1% as White 0.4% described their ethnicity another way. 	No adverse impacts are expected as the space is currently unused.	Not applicable	Not applicable

Protected characteristics under the Equality Act and groups with increased vulnerability	Data and insight	Equality considerations (including any adverse impacts)	Mitigation activities	Responsible department and timeframe for implementing mitigation activities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Black, Asian and minoritised ethnic communities are more likely to live in areas of Torbay classified as being amongst the 20% most deprived areas in England. 			
Religion and belief	<p>The 2021 Census showed that the residents in Torbay identify their religion and/or belief as the following;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 48.5% are Christian 0.4% are Buddhist 0.2% are Hindu 0.6% are Muslim Less than 0.1% are Sikh 0.1% are Jewish 0.7% have another religion 43.2% have no religion 6.3% did not answer 	No adverse impacts are expected as the space is currently unused.	Not applicable	Not applicable
Sex	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 51.3% of Torbay's population are female. 	No adverse impacts are expected as the space is currently unused.	Not applicable	Not applicable

Protected characteristics under the Equality Act and groups with increased vulnerability	Data and insight	Equality considerations (including any adverse impacts)	Mitigation activities	Responsible department and timeframe for implementing mitigation activities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 48.7% of Torbay's population are male. 			
Sexual orientation	<p>In the 2021 Census, residents described their sexuality as follows;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 89% as Straight or Heterosexual 1.7% as Gay or Lesbian 1.1% as Bisexual 0.1% as Pansexual 0.1% described their sexuality another way 7.4% of people didn't answer the question 	No adverse impacts are expected as the space is currently unused.	Not applicable	Not applicable
Armed Forces Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In 2021, 3.8% of residents in England reported that they had previously served in the UK armed forces. In Torbay, 5.9% of the population have previously served in the UK armed forces. 	No adverse impacts are expected as the space is currently unused.	Not applicable	Not applicable

Protected characteristics under the Equality Act and groups with increased vulnerability	Data and insight	Equality considerations (including any adverse impacts)	Mitigation activities	Responsible department and timeframe for implementing mitigation activities
<i>Additional considerations:</i>				
Socio-economic impacts (Including impacts on child poverty and deprivation)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Torbay is ranked as the 39th most deprived upper tier local authority in England in the Index of Multiple Deprivation 2025. 	Potential to improve community engagement. Long term use will be employment related, creating new jobs within the locality.	Not applicable	Not applicable
Public Health impacts (Including impacts on the general health of the population of Torbay)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For the five-year period 2020 to 2024, data shows there is a 6-year life expectancy gap between males who live in Torbay's least and most deprived areas and, a 3-year gap for females. 	Development will introduce new public health facilities and also provide additional employment.	Not applicable	Not applicable
Human Rights impacts		No adverse impacts are expected as the space is currently unused.	Not applicable	Not applicable
Child Friendly		No adverse impacts are expected as the space is currently unused.	Not applicable	Not applicable

10. Cumulative Council Impact:

None

11. Cumulative Community Impact:

None

12. Monitoring and Evaluation:

No monitoring is required as recommendation is a freehold disposal

Appendices:

1. Site Plan – EM4408
2. Valuation Note (Exempt)

Background Documents:

None

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