

Record of Decisions

Amendment to Boundary of Occombe Farm and Scadson Woods Local Nature Reserve

Decision Taker

Cabinet on 20 October 2026

Decision

That the amendment to the Occombe Farm and Scadson Woods Local Nature Reserve boundary, as set out in Appendix 2 to the submitted report, be approved with any necessary declaration and associated requirements being made.

Reason for the Decision

The Council sold the land at Occombe Farm in July 2026 and committed to use reasonable efforts to secure re-designation of the Local Nature Reserve (LNR) regarding the land sold, in order to meet the expectation that the land forming LNR should be under the control of the party who designated it. The proposed amendment to the boundary reflects the change in ownership and has been informed by an independent ecological assessment and consultation with Natural England. The majority of the LNR will remain in place and will continue to be managed for wildlife, education and recreation.

Implementation

This decision may be implemented on 2 November 2026 unless the call-in procedure is triggered (as set out in the Standing Orders in relation to Overview and Scrutiny).

Information

Torbay Council sold Occombe Farm and associated land in July 2026 – this land forms part of the Occombe Farm and Scadson Woods Local Nature Reserve (LNR). It is understood that the designation as a Local Nature Reserve was originally sought in order for the previous Torbay Coast and Countryside Trust to more easily access grant funding. There is an expectation that the land forming Local Nature Reserves needs to be under control of the party who designated it as such. Therefore, it was proposed to amend the boundary of the LNR. The amendment reflects the change in land ownership for which the new owner intends to invest in the farm site, supporting regeneration, tourism and economic activity.

At the meeting, Councillor Chris Lewis proposed and Councillor David Thomas seconded a motion that was agreed unanimously by the Cabinet, as set out above.

Alternative Options considered and rejected at the time of the decision

The alternative option would be for Occombe Farm to remain designated as an LNR. If the LNR designation were to remain, agreement would need to be reached with the landowner and the land would need to be managed as a LNR alongside the new landowners' aspirations for the site.

Is this a Key Decision?

No

Does the call-in procedure apply?

Yes

Declarations of interest (including details of any relevant dispensations issued by the Standards Committee)

None

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23 October 2026

Signed: _____ Date: _____
Leader of Torbay Council on behalf of the Cabinet