

**ROYAL BOROUGH OF GREENWICH
CALL-IN NOTICE**

DECISION MAKER:

Cabinet	X
Cabinet Member	
Chief Officer	

DATE OF DECISION: 2nd December 2024

ITEM NO AND REPORT TITLE: **Asset Review – Further Outcomes**

DECISION TO BE CALLED IN: 1.1 to 1.4

REASON FOR CALL-IN:

We have been approached by the following community groups who are deeply concerned about the decision to dispose of the two assets outlined in this report:

- The **Woodlands Farms Trust**, regarding the disposal of the **Equestrian Centre** at 341 Shooters Hill, which is causing deep concern over the future of this adjacent site.
- The **Shrewsbury House Community Association**, regarding the disposal of **28 Mereworth Drive** which forms part of the site of Shrewsbury House, listed Grade 2 by Historic England.

As both disposals are covered by the same Decision, this call-in notice covers both.

Our reasons for this call-in are as follows:

1) Equestrian Centre

- The decision to approve in principle the disposal of the Equestrian Centre is being taken **without any prior public or community consultation**
- There is significant public interest in the disposal of this site and **significant public opposition** to this disposal as evidenced by (at the time of writing) 994 signatures on a petition <https://www.change.org/p/save-greenwich-equestrian-centre-stop-the-secret-sale-and-protect-our-community-space>
- As the adjacent Woodlands Farms Trust was not informed, much less consulted, of the Council’s intention to dispose of this site, it is clear that the **potential future impact on Woodlands Farm** has not been taken into account. The Woodlands Farms Trust is concerned that “the disposal of the site in this sensitive area risks loss of control of its future use. This could well work against the interest of preserving the surrounding environmental assets which would be degraded to the detriment of the health of borough residents and the future viability of Woodlands Farm” – and we believe these concerns need to be fully listened to, understood and considered before any decision is made.

- We are similarly aware that **other local stakeholders have not been consulted**, including the Friends of Oxleas Woods, and they should be given the opportunity to comment before any decision is made.
- We have seen **no evidence that a wide range of alternative uses, within continued Council ownership, has been fully explored** by the Council before proposing disposal – the decision appendix only refers to consideration for SEND use (which was rejected)
- And furthermore, without adequate consultation with the public **over potential future community uses** – including uses that may be enabled via Community Asset Transfer or by declaring the site an Asset of Community Value – it would be premature to delegate authority for the disposal of this site.

2) 28 Mereworth Drive/Green Garth

- Similarly, the decision to approve in principle the disposal of 28 Mereworth Drive/Green Garth is being taken **without any prior public or community consultation**
- There is **significant public interest in the future of this site**, as evidenced by (at the time of writing) 1,050 signatures on a petition supporting Shrewsbury House Community Centre's wish to take on its management in order to 1) create a community garden and an allotment space for their fork to plate café project, and 2) transform the building into additional space for community activities <https://www.change.org/p/support-shrewsbury-house-community-garden>
- The decision to approve the disposal **omitted key information** about the history of this site and RBG's engagement with Shrewsbury House Community Association (SHCA) which has tried to engage with RBG on their proposals
- **SHCA notes its concern over the proposed disposal** and in particular that "the listed area of Shrewsbury House including 28 Mereworth/Green Gareth is complex and requires sensitive management because it includes listed features which are carried across the entire site, some of which might be vulnerable in the event of a purely commercial disposal [and] this risk was not make clear to cabinet." We believe these concerns from SHCA need to be fully listened to, understood and considered before any decision is made.
- Similarly we are aware that **other local stakeholders have not been consulted**, including the Shrewsbury Park Residents Association (SPRA) and 10th Eltham Scouts, and they should be given the opportunity to comment before any decision is made.

ALTERNATIVE DECISION SOUGHT:

We are seeking the following alternative decisions:

- 1.1. To agree that any decision on the future of the **Equestrian Centre** at 341 Shooters Hill should be deferred until
 - A full public and community consultation is carried out over the future of the Equestrian Centre site
 - The Woodlands Farms Trust's concerns over the potential future impact on Woodlands Farm are fully listened to, understood and considered by the Council
 - Other local stakeholders, including the Friends of Oxleas Woods, are specifically consulted on their views over the future of the site.
 - The full range of potential community uses – including uses that may be enabled via Community Asset Transfer or by declaring the site an Asset of Community Value – are formally considered by the Council

- 1.2. To agree that any decision on the future of 28 Mereworth Drive/Green Garth should be deferred until:
- A full public and community consultation is carried out over the future of the 28 Mereworth Drive site
 - The Shrewsbury House Community Association (SHCA) has been specifically consulted on their proposals, supported by more than 1,000 local residents, for SHCA to take over management of the site – through any legal mechanisms available – to create a community garden and additional community space
 - Other local stakeholders, including the Shrewsbury Park Residents Association (SPRA) and 10th Eltham Scouts, are specifically consulted on their views over the future of the site.

Given the nature of this call-in we would also request that the Call-in Sub Committee **specifically invites** the Woodlands Farms Trust, Friends of Oxleas Woods, Shrewsbury House Community Association, Shrewsbury Park Residents Association and 10th Eltham Scouts to the Call-in meeting so they can comment on the ‘reasons for call-in’ and ‘alternative decision sought’ we have outlined above.

Thank you for your consideration.

Please indicate how you wish the decision to be considered:

Referred to -

Decision Maker

Overview & Scrutiny Call-In Sub-Committee

X

Name: (please print) Councillor Matt Hartley

Signature: *Matt Hartley*

Seconder: (please print) Councillor Roger Tester

Signature: *Roger Tester*

2nd December 2024

This form must be returned by post, email or hand delivery or fax to the Corporate Governance Manager (on behalf of the Chief Executive) **(020 8921 5134) by 5 pm on the day prior to the fifth working day after publication of the Record of Decisions.**