

Prior Approval for the change of use of a former agricultural unit known as Barn (B) and land within its curtilage to a dwelling house and associated operational development at Potters Barn Cruttenden Farm, Brook Street, Woodchurch, TN26 3SR

October 2025

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1. Introduction

This statement sets out how the development complies with the provisions set out in the GPDO under Class Q and how the development is acceptable with regards to transport and highways impacts, noise impacts, natural light, contamination risks, flooding risks and how the siting and location of the building is not otherwise impractical or undesirable.

This Planning Statement should be read in conjunction with the application forms, plans, and other supporting material.

Proposal

I am writing to submit an application for determination as to whether Prior Approval will be required from the Local Planning Authority for the Change of Use and Conversion of a former agricultural barn into a single dwellinghouse.

This application is submitted in accordance with Class Q.2(1) and Class Q.2(2) of The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended).

This supporting statement provides a written description of the proposed development. The application is comprised of:

- 1 x Planning Application Form
- 1 x Structural Engineers report
- 1 x Contamination report
- 1 x Flood map (from EA)
- Various plans

Drawings

- Site location and block plans
- Existing plans and elevations
- Proposed plans and elevations

Structural Soundness

- Structural Engineers report

Payment to cover the statutory application fee

Ecology

I understand my responsibilities set out within the relevant legislation.

The land being disturbed equates to less than 0.01ha. A rapid assessment test shows that it is highly unlikely that amphibians would be disturbed. However I will take extra precautions as follows:

- Before works commence (and during the reptile active season of April to October inclusive), grass within the working area will be cut to 15cm under sunny conditions; another cut will be completed to ground level two days later.
- Disturbance of any high quality habitat (including potential hibernation habitat) will be avoided.
- The duration of ground works will be kept as short as possible.
- I will backfill trenches and other excavations before nightfall, or leave a ramp to allow newts to easily exit.
- Raise stored material (that might act as temporary resting places) off the ground.

A bat roost survey carried out by KB ecology did not identify any activity, however as a neighbouring building has a small number of bats, I will construct bat boxes as shown on the plans as a precaution.

1. Site and Surroundings and usage

Prior Approval is required in relation to whether the 'location' or 'siting' of the buildings makes it impractical or undesirable for use as dwelling houses.

'Location' and 'siting' specifically refer to the existing building's location within the site and its siting with regard to association with the surrounding uses (which are all residential) to which this building is adequately suited to be occupied as dwelling.

The building is easily accessible via an existing driveway from the main road, as to be practically sited.

The dwelling would not result in the loss of any trees or other constraints that would make its siting otherwise undesirable.

The site is bounded by mature hedgerows and trees to the East; overlooks a farm courtyard to the North; a house to the North and scrubland to the South.

The site lies to the Southwest of Woodchurch and is situated 431 m from the edge of the main built-up area of the village which is accessed via public footpaths. The nearest bus stop is 321 m to the West or 541m to the East, however the bus service provider will stop at the end of the entrance to the site, if requested to do so. The village shop is situated 942m to the north and is accessible via well-defined public footpaths which are used daily by the current residents and neighbours.

This application supersedes a previous application for Class MA permitted development (**NOT/2024/0833 and subsequent appeal (APP/E2205/W/24/3355619)**) The subsequent decisions showed that the LPA and Planning Inspectorate accepted that the barn had been used for business purposes but that the usage was unlawful and therefore Article 3(5)(b) of the GPDO does not apply if, in the case of permission granted in connection with an existing use, that use is unlawful. Both decisions stated that only the

Authorised use should be taken into consideration for permitted development applications.

Despite my disagreement with both decisions, (because the evidence provided constituted absolute proof of business use for a period of more than 12 years on a continuous basis), it seems that the correct course of action is to submit a class Q application as the **authorised** use of the barn has always been agricultural.

However it should be pointed out that Class Q is only available for agricultural buildings that are no longer part of an established agricultural unit if they have not been used for any other purpose.

As has been shown in previous applications the barn has been used for business purposes but those purposes were likely unlawful. It has therefore been used for other purposes (albeit unlawfully).

This would normally mean that class Q permitted development is not available. However in this case because the LPA and Planning Inspectorate insist that only authorised usage is relevant when making planning decisions and that the usage as a business was likely unlawful - the use as a business should be discounted.

This means that whilst the barn was being used for business purposes its authorised use continued to be agricultural. Suggesting that the barn had been used for business purposes would contradict the previous decision made in relation to the barn's usage. Therefore, the only logical conclusion is that the Barn is no longer part of an agricultural unit and has not been used for any other **authorised** purpose, although it was illegally used for business purposes.

The site consists of 2 barns a demolished farm house and a "cottage", the original farmhouse was demolished by 1906, however various deeds over time describe owners as farmers and the barns were owned separately from the cottage and demolished farmhouse, as part of a different and larger parcel of farming land from 1958 to 1966, this land is still known as Cruttenden Farm at land registry (title number K272719). The barn was therefore used for agricultural purposes until at least 1966.

All historic deeds are available on request going back to 1720 but are particularly delicate and cannot be physically included in this submission. I would ask that if the LPA wants to see this evidence that it requests it and it can be delivered in person to the LPA offices for inspection.

The following chronology of ownership was produced by the Woodchurch Historical Society after completing extensive research about the farm. As above the source material is available on request.

Summary of ownership and extracts from the deeds showing usage as an agricultural unit.

1819 possible date of construction for the present day "cottage" at Cruttenden

1823 Thomas Fullagar took out a loan and used Cruttenden as security

1834 A lease mentions former tenures, naming the George family and others suggesting Cruttenden had been on this site prior to Thomas Fullagar.

1836 Thomas Fullagar, as a result of not being able to pay back the loan, was forced to sell the farm by public auction. Richard Cloute bought it for £800

1841 Richard Cloute dies leaving the farm to his wife Martha

1848 Matha Cloute dies, the property goes to Thomas her younger son

1866 Thomas dies and the farm is passed to Thomas Martin Cloute his son

1871 Thomas Martin dies, the property now goes to Gundreda, his wife

1872 Gundreda sells the property to Sarah, her mother-in-law, widow of Thomas



1875 Sarah dies and bequeathed the estate to her youngest brother Henry Hassel Bright

1893 Henry dies intestate and Margaret his wife becomes the new owner

1896 Albert Watts buys land (known as Castle lands) neighbouring Cruttenden Farm from the trustees and widow of George E Castle for £325

1900 Margaret dies and the house goes to her 5 daughters who sell it on the 19th June 1900 by auction, **livestock** and furniture was also sold

1900 Bought by Albert Watts (lived at Place Farm in the village) The combined estate of Castle lands and Cruttenden Farm was in the region of 34 acres. Albert rented the farm to several farmers. Issac Watts Boothroyd in the 1901 census, Agnes Chasmar in the 1911 census and Albert Martin in the 1921 census

1913 Albert Watts dies, trustees left to manage the farm

1915 Charles Watts, Albert's son, acquired Cruttenden from his mother Jane.

1930 Albert Martin is still renting the farm but when he presumably retires and sells his farm stock, agricultural implements and surplus household furniture, Charles Watts sells Cruttenden to Ella Maria Ansty

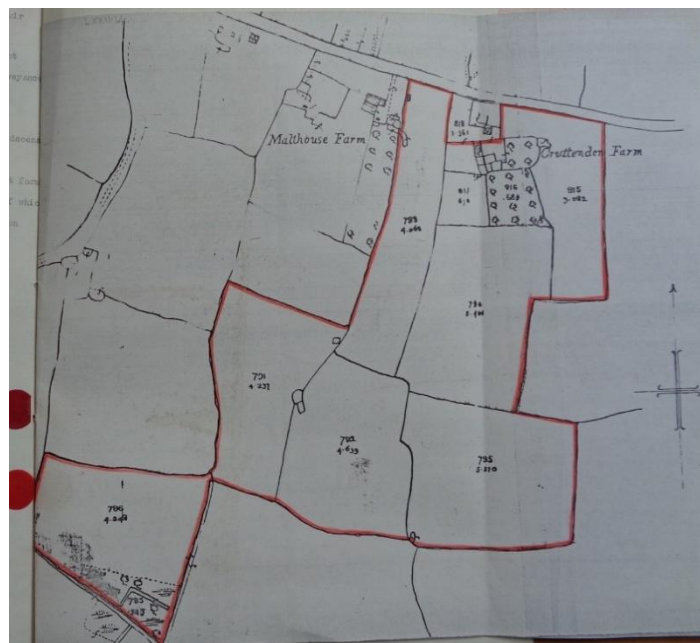
1936 Ella gifted Cruttenden to her daughter Sibyl

1939 Sybil sells the property to Percy Orpin, **farmer** of Halackenden for £1,250

1948 Ernest James (who had previously lived at Dene Park, Home Farm, Tonbridge), borrowed £2,500 to purchase the farm. Cruttenden was renamed Dene Court perhaps out of fondness of his former associations with Dene Park.

1958 Ernest sold just the house to his son Raymond Douglas for £3,500. So Cruttenden House was separated from the barns and land. But the farm land and barns remained in Ernest's name.

1965 Ernest died, estate goes to his widow Elsie and son Raymond. They sell the barns and farm to Arthur William Harman for £1,700



1966 Arthur William Harman now acquires Cruttenden House (no longer called Dene Court) for £6,200 . The house and lands were reunited once more.

1966 The lands surrounding the house sold to **farmers** John Alfred and Violet Weller, including Castle lands, reducing the remaining farm barns and house to 3 acres in size and drawing its modern day boundary line.

1969 Purchased by Mr Johnston who ran a pottery from the barn

1976 Sold to John and Lynn Terrey. They ran a secretarial support service and later a computer servicing and sales business from the barn.

2022 Cruttenden purchased by Paul and Michelle Williams

There is further evidence of Cruttenden being used for agricultural purposes as follows.

In 1900 Cruttenden farm was auctioned and purchased as a working agricultural unit which can be evidenced by the Auction House's advertisement below.

KENT.—WOODCHURCH, four miles from Hamstreet Railway Station and seven miles from the market town of Ashford.

VALUABLE FREEHOLD PROPERTIES, comprising the excellent Pasture Farm known as "Cruttenden," having a pleasantly situated brick-built Residence and Farm Buildings; the Padams and Clark Wood Land, near the same, formerly part of Malt House Farm, containing together about 29 acres; and a modern brick and tile-built Eight-roomed House, with Wheelwright's Shop in the village, which the Administratrix of Mr. Henry Hassell Bright, deceased, has favoured

MESSRS. HATCH & WATERMAN

With instructions **TO SELL BY AUCTION**, at the Saracen's Head Hotel, Ashford, on **TUESDAY, JUNE 19TH, 1900**, at Three o'clock, in three lots.

Lot 1—17a. 0r. 9p. of excellent **PASTURE LAND** in several enclosures, with substantially-erected brick-built **RESIDENCE**, pleasantly and conveniently situated at Brookstreet, adjoining the main road from Woodchurch to Tenterden, known as "Cruttenden," containing parlour, living-room, wash-house, pantry, larder, cellar (used as a dairy), and five bedrooms, approached by two staircases; paved back yard, two w.c.'s, wood lodge, granary, barn, waggon and cart lodges, four bullock lodges and yards, stabling for three horses, three chicken-houses, double piggery, and cottage. There is a never-failing well and pump of good water, a kitchen garden stocked with fruit trees, and an orchard of nearly three-quarters of an acre in the rear, forming a very desirable residential property. In the occupation of the late owner.

Possession will be given on the 11th day of October next.

Please see annexe 1 for evidence of its **illegal** usage between the 1960's through to 2021

Transport and Highway Impacts of the Proposed Development

The agricultural buildings have an existing access via an established driveway onto the public highway and can be reached easily via an existing driveway into the Site. The scheme proposes 2no. parking spaces for the dwelling. The

proposal for residential over agricultural use would not give rise to any adverse or intensified transport impacts or highways concerns.

Noise Impacts of the Development

The location and positioning of the building is set away and adequately separated from any other buildings, as such, it will not create the potential for any significant or adverse noise concerns, nor will it be affected by surrounding operations that occur.

Contamination Risks on the Site

The site has no known history of previous uses that might have resulted in any contamination risks of the land nor are there any more recent activities that would have resulted in contamination.

Flooding Risks on the Site

The site is within **flood zone 1, which is a site of low probability of flooding. Please see accompanying flood map and statement from environment agency.**

External Appearance and Design

The external appearance of the building will be changed to facilitate its conversion, as part of this proposal to enhance its appearance and so that it assimilates well with the existing buildings functional forms and appearance and to make a positive contribution to its rural surroundings as illustrated on the enclosed drawings.

The alterations to the building will include the following:

- Existing clad External walls will be re-clad using black cladding to match the existing in appearance.
- The roofing will be retained as a Kent peg clay tiled roof.
- All new windows and doors will be black wood effect powder coated aluminium that are indistinguishable visually from real wood. To match in appearance recently converted barn next door.

Planning Legislation: The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (Updated in 2024) (GPDO)

Q. Development consisting of—

(a) a change of use of—

(i) a building that is part of an established agricultural unit and any land within that building's curtilage, or

(ii) a former agricultural building that was (but is no longer) part of an established agricultural unit and any land within that building's curtilage, to a use falling within Class C3 (dwellinghouses) of Schedule 1 to the Use Classes Order,

(b) development referred to in sub-paragraph (a) together with the extension of the building referred to in sub-paragraph (a), or

(c) development referred to in sub-paragraph (a) together with building operations reasonably necessary to convert the building referred to in sub-paragraph (a) to a use falling within Class C3 (dwellinghouses) of that Schedule or to extend that building.

Relevant Condition

Development is not permitted where since ceasing to be part of an established agricultural unit, the site has been used for any non-agricultural purpose

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2. Heritage status

It should be noted that as per section 6.19 of the attached heritage statement the barn is "not considered to have sufficient interest or significance to warrant statutory listing, or status as a Non-Designated Heritage Assets".

The barn is part of a defunct farmyard that belonged to Cruttenden Farmhouse (a grade II listed building). However, the barn is not listed curtilage due to its positioning, with a farm track separating the farmyard from Cruttenden Farmhouse; its use not being ancillary to the farmhouse at the date of listing in 1979 and its ownership has not been consistent since before 1979 (the date of listing). There was a period of 8 years from 1958 to 1966 when the farmhouse ownership was different from that of the barn. As a result, the barn now sits on a separate legal title to that of the farmhouse.

A heritage statement detailing the listed nature of the site and the farmhouse's history is included in the planning application.

3. Conclusion

In accordance with Schedule 2, Part 3, Class Q of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended), it is

accepted that the buildings have the structural strength to take the loading of the works associated with the residential use proposed; and that the overall level of works needed would amount to operations reasonably necessary to convert the buildings.

Furthermore, it is considered the building has been in use as a Class (E) illegally for 48 years, it does not form part of a site of special scientific interest; a listed building or its curtilage; a scheduled monument; a safety hazard area; a military explosives storage area; an area of outstanding natural beauty; an area specified by the Secretary of State for the purposes of section 41(3) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981; the Broads; a National Park; a World Heritage Site; and the site is not occupied under an agricultural tenancy.

There are no transport and highways impacts; there is sufficient natural light for all future occupiers; its noise impacts would be acceptable; its contamination or flood risk impacts subject to mitigation are acceptable; the buildings location or siting does not make it otherwise impractical or undesirable; and the design and external appearance is acceptable. In light of the above, it is requested that Prior Approval is Granted.

Annexe 1

The following evidence was submitted to the council as evidence that the barn had been used for business purposes.

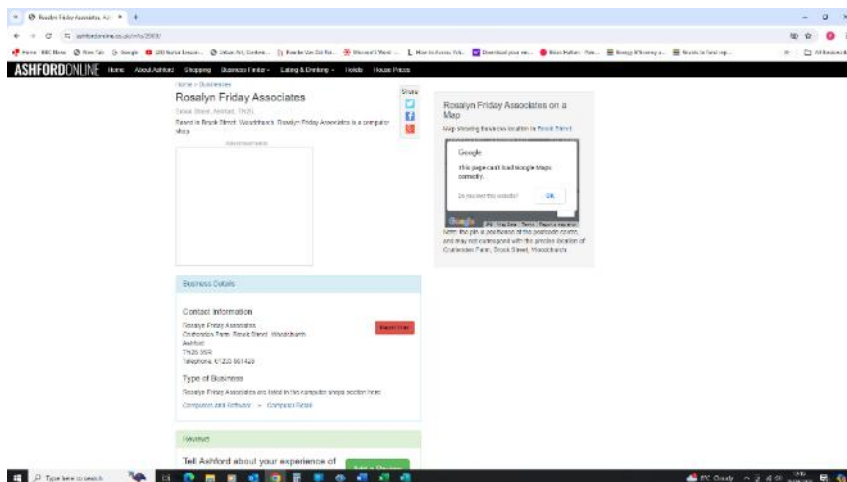
The building has been used for various activities over time including agricultural up to the 1960s; storage for a pottery business until 1976, and a computer sales and repair business named Roslyn Friday Associates from 1980 until November 2022, when the computers stored in the barn were placed in a museum or sold. It is therefore considered that the building falls legally into the category of Class E by way of its continuous usage as a business over the last 48 years however that usage was not authorised.



The contents of the business premises in November 2022

This picture shows that there were numerous computers relating to the business stored in the barn. In fact, there was over 60 computers in total along with floppy disk drives, printers and monitors. These were primarily used for spare parts when repairing customers old machines. This is not anecdotal evidence as the building can be viewed to see that the picture represents the actual barn. It is not reasonable to assume that such a large amount of equipment would be for domestic purposes. That aligned with the proof of the computer business below should have been enough to concede that the barn had been used for business purposes.

The business is still advertised on the Ashford Online website here <https://www.ashfordonline.co.uk/info/2909/>



A screen print of the advert listing for Roslyn Friday Associates.

- Woodchurch village life museum has a display of pottery that was made on site in the 1960s
- I have unsolicited testimony from the previous owner's relatives confirming that the computer business was run from the barn
- The computer company is listed on the Ashford online website as a business
- Photograph from November 2022 showing the barn being used to store the computer business assets
- Many of the computers stored in the barn (and evidenced by photographs) date from the mid 1970's (some of the first apple computers) making them highly collectible and valuable.

- Text messages confirming that the computers were to be collected in August 2022 and November 2024.

- (workshop, or office), this can infer that the use has been lawful under the principle of continuity.

Evidence of business usage over time.

Woodchurch village life museum has a display of pottery that was made on site in the 1960s, proving the site was used for commercial purposes.

▼ Pottery created at Cruttenden in the 1970s by Ronald Johnstone, now on display at the Woodchurch Village Life Museum



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There is only one property named Cruttenden in Woodchurch. The display in the Woodchurch museum is therefore evidence that the barn was used as a pottery. The image above is taken from an article detailing the ownership of the site by The Woodchurch Historical Society. The book can be provided on request.

Unsolicited testimony from the previous owner's relatives confirming that the computer business was run from the barn and that the computers that were stored in the barn were sold at a commercial value.

From an email to the previous owners (deceased) daughter querying the name of the business that was run from the barn.

Hi Paul

As far as I know he sold the computers to collectors rather than a museum.

Thanks for keeping in touch Paul, it's lovely to hear how you're getting on.

Becca

On 14 Jun 2024, at 07:35, [REDACTED] wrote:

Hi Becca

Just checking that you received the letter I sent and photo?

I thought you might like to know that Cruttenden featured in the latest Woodchurch Ancestry Group book. It managed to secure 16 pages and we found deeds going back to 1682 I can send you some photo copies if you would like to see it?

We also discovered a flagstone courtyard to the rear of the smaller barn which I am going to bring back to life - I have attached a photo.

Do you know which museum Adam sent some of the computers that were stored in the smaller barn?

Regards

Paul Williams

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, May 25, 2024 12:09 PM
To: 'beccabaker@me.com' [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Cruttenden Farm

Hi Becca

I have received a letter from Santander addressed to you as Executor at Cruttenden. Can I just check that your address remains the same 80 Tuffnells way, Harpenden, AL5 3HG?

Regards

Paul Williams

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, January 14, 2024 3:03 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Cruttenden Farm

Hi Paul

Thank you.

No, Alpha was the company Dad worked for the last few years before he retired, as a graphic designer. He would have kept the sign because he designed the logo and was proud of it. I would be happy to tell Lin anything I can to help with her book, please feel free to pass on my email

address. Her husband Rowan used to take Dad shopping in the last few months of him living there, when his poor eyesight meant he could no longer drive. I don't know him, but he was very kind to my dad.

All I know is that the barn was used as a pottery by the Johnstons, whom we bought the house from in 1976. We used to find lots of broken pottery in amongst the gravel on the drive and had large collections as children.

My parents' company was called Rosalyn Friday as it was originally set up as a secretarial support service by my mum Lyn and her mother Rosa, who lived in the mobile home in the orchard. Then when my dad set up on his own as an Apple Mac sales and servicing company he used the company name for that, and that's when he was using the annexe as an office.

Prior to that the annexe was the home of my paternal grandparents, from around 1978 when it was converted until my grandmother died in 1986.

I look forward to seeing more photos later in the year, and to reading Lin's book! Cruttenden is very special to us all, thank you for taking care of it.

Becca

From [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, January 14, 2024 10:37 AM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Cruttenden Farm

Hi Becca

So sorry to hear about your Dad, he was an interesting man and I enjoyed speaking with him on the phone, he was very helpful.

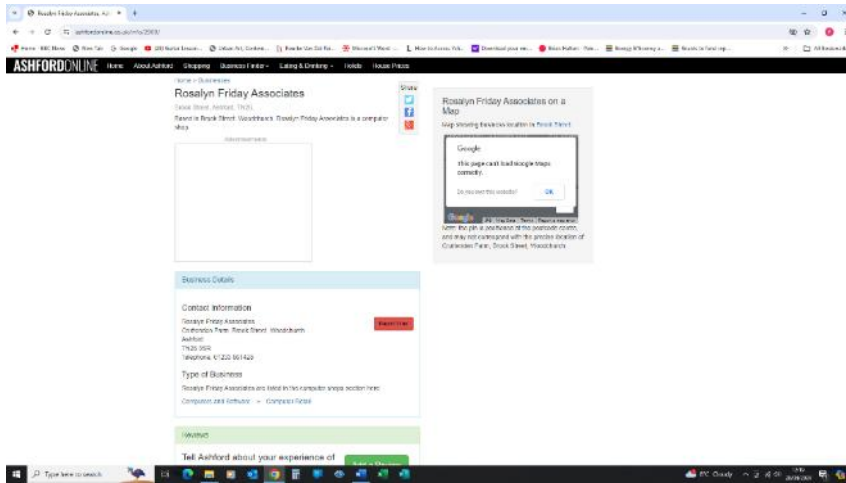
Thanks for the confirmation on the business usage, that should help us with the council. I will send more photos once its finished inside and out.

Was your Dad's computer repair business called Alpha? The attached signage was on the Annexe. I ask because Lin Crew over the road is going to write a short book on Cruttenden's history for the Woodchurch Historic Society

Regards

Paul Williams

The computer company is listed on the Ashford online website as a business before I purchased the site.



Photograph from November 2022 showing the barn being used to store the computer business assets



The computers stored in the barn (and evidenced by photograph above) date from the mid 1970's (some of the first apple computers) making them highly collectible and valuable.

Text messages confirming that the computers had been sold for commercial gain and were to be collected between August and November 2022.

11:50

94%



A

Adam Crutte...



Friday, 5 Aug 2022 • 09:31

Good morning Paul and Michelle, Adam Seeley here. Hope you're well.

Guy who bought apple equipment from ebay said he could collect the rest this afternoon.

He'll probably arrive around 2ish.

I should make it a little bit after that.

Will that be ok?

Many thanks, Adam

09:31

Yes that's fine Adam

Great. Thanks.
Will you be on site today?
So I can let him know what to expect when he arrives.



Yes, I am here today.



RCS message



16:21

89%

Adam Crutte...

Monday, 3 Oct 2022 • 16:57

Hi Paul, hope you're both well. Sorry not to have been in touch sooner, work has been ridiculously busy and haven't had a window to sorry anything out.

Current project should be done in a couple of weeks and I'll finally have time to finish the last clearance bits, really sorry it's taken so long,

Hope you've been making good progress with the property, and will get in touch again in a fortnight or so.

Thanks for your patience once again.

All the best, Adam

No worries Adam agreed November at the start so have not expected

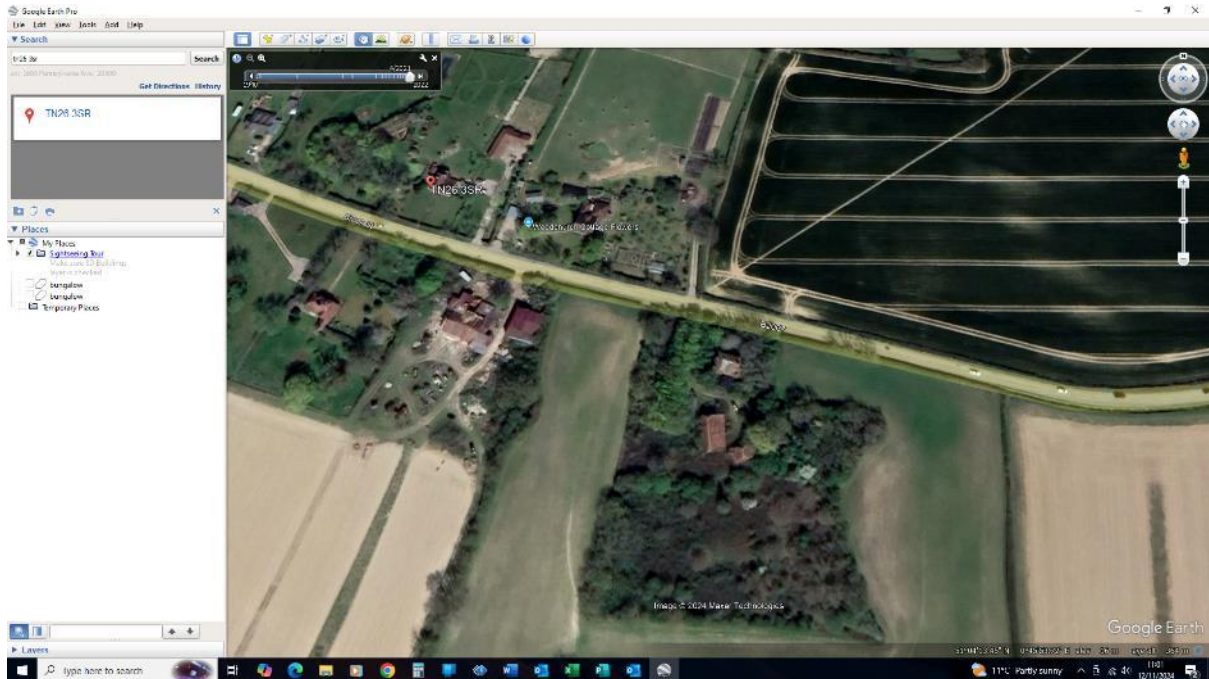


RCS message

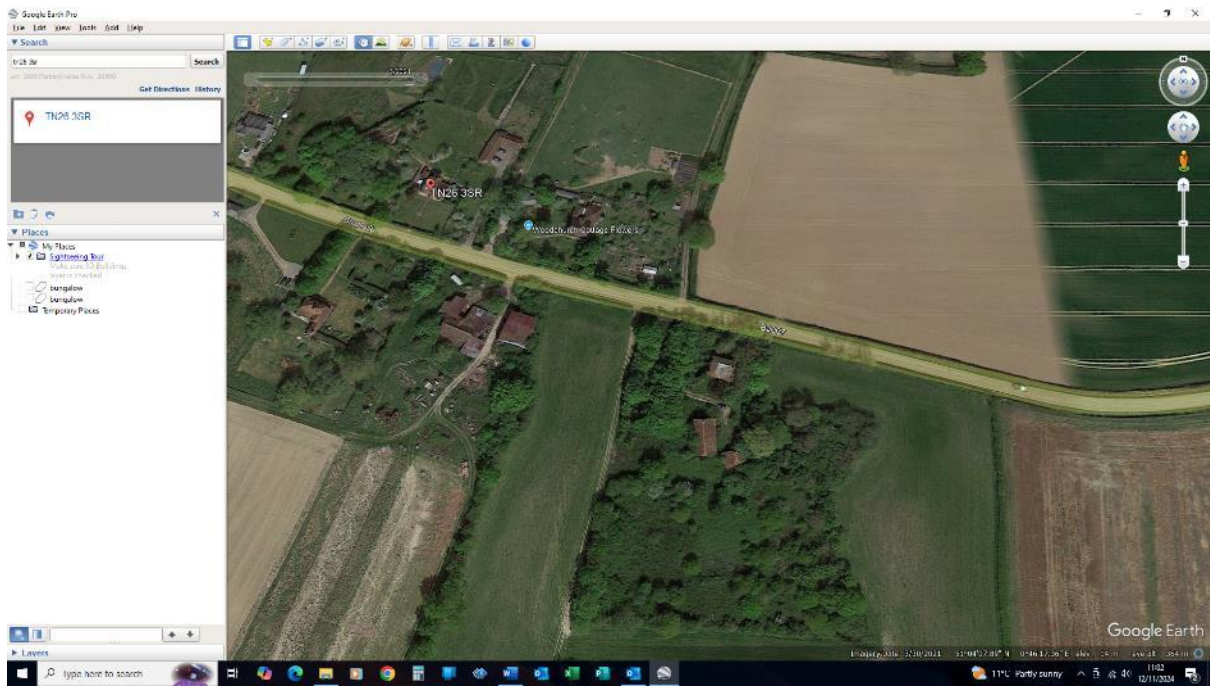


Google earth images showing cars visiting the premises over time, before I purchased the site in July 2022. This shows constant use by vehicles as far back as December 1990

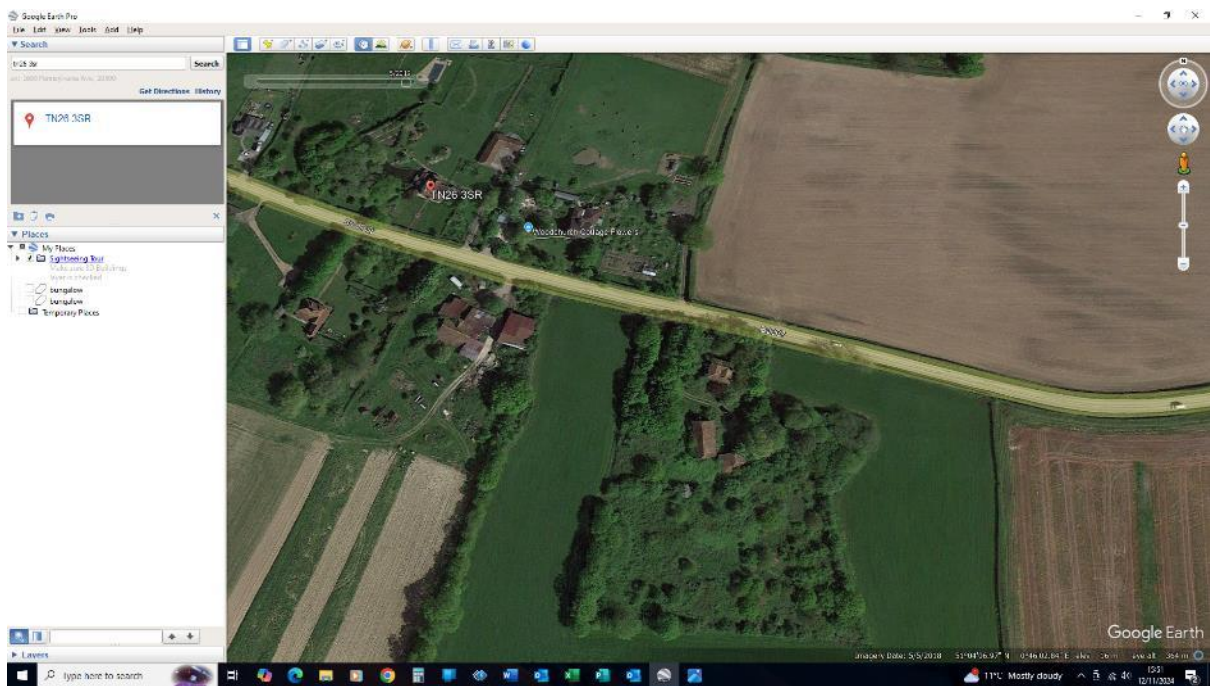
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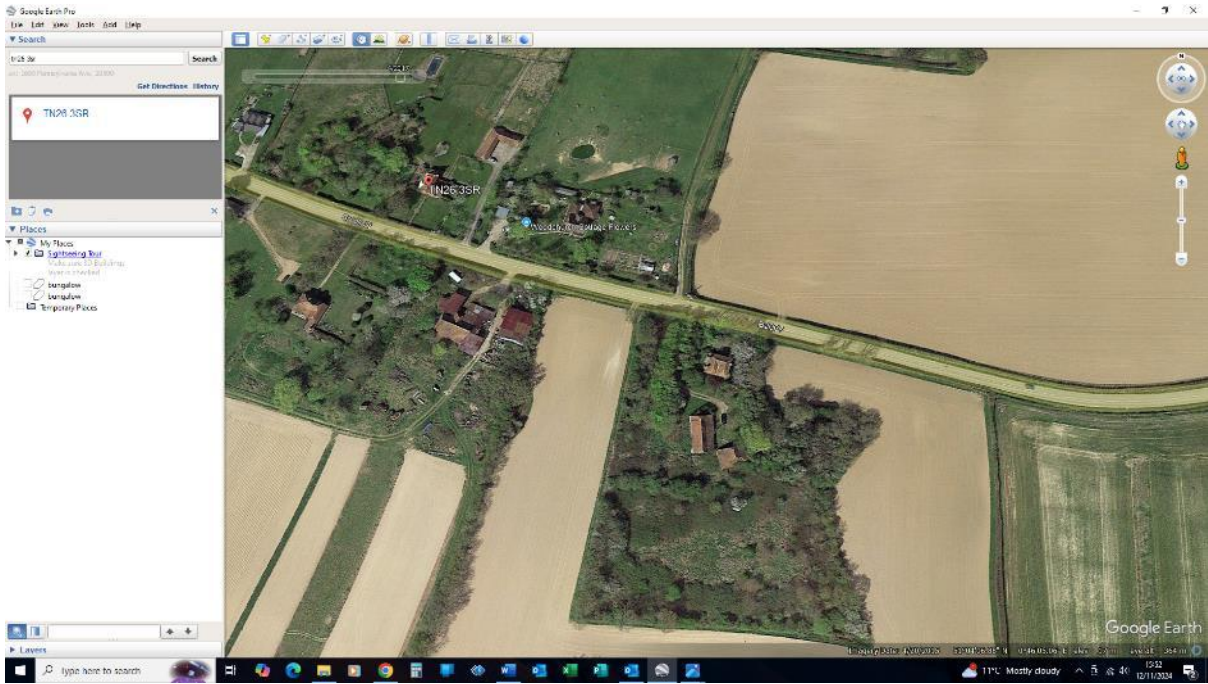
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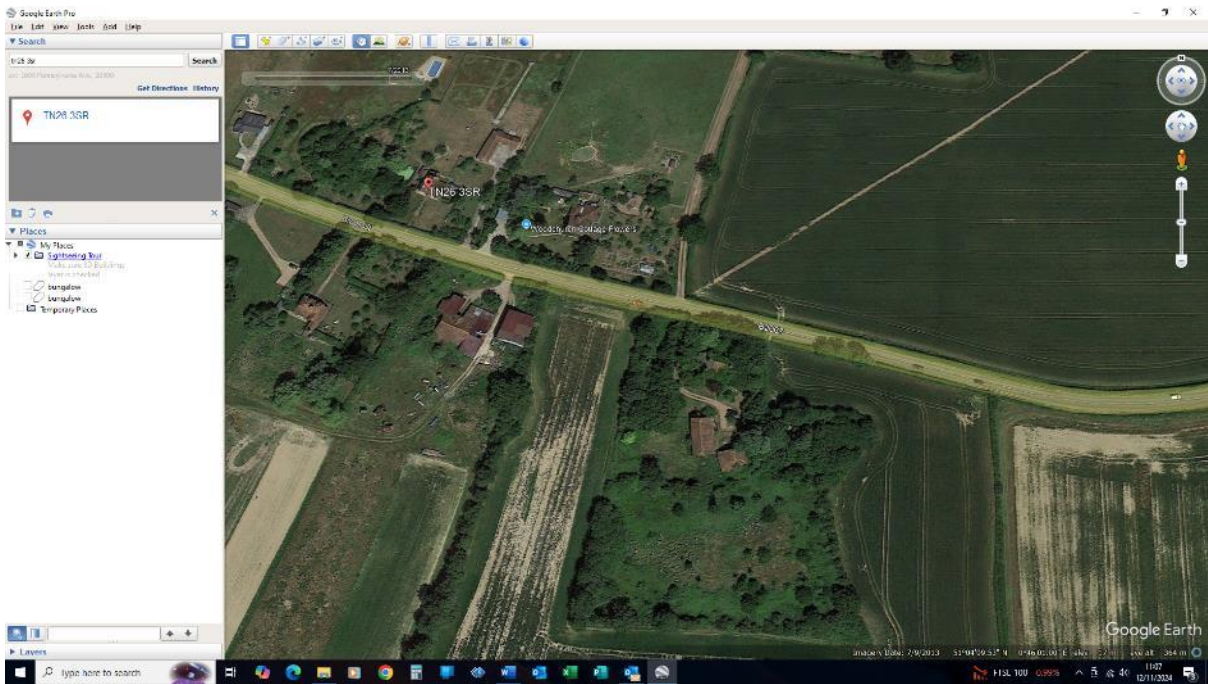
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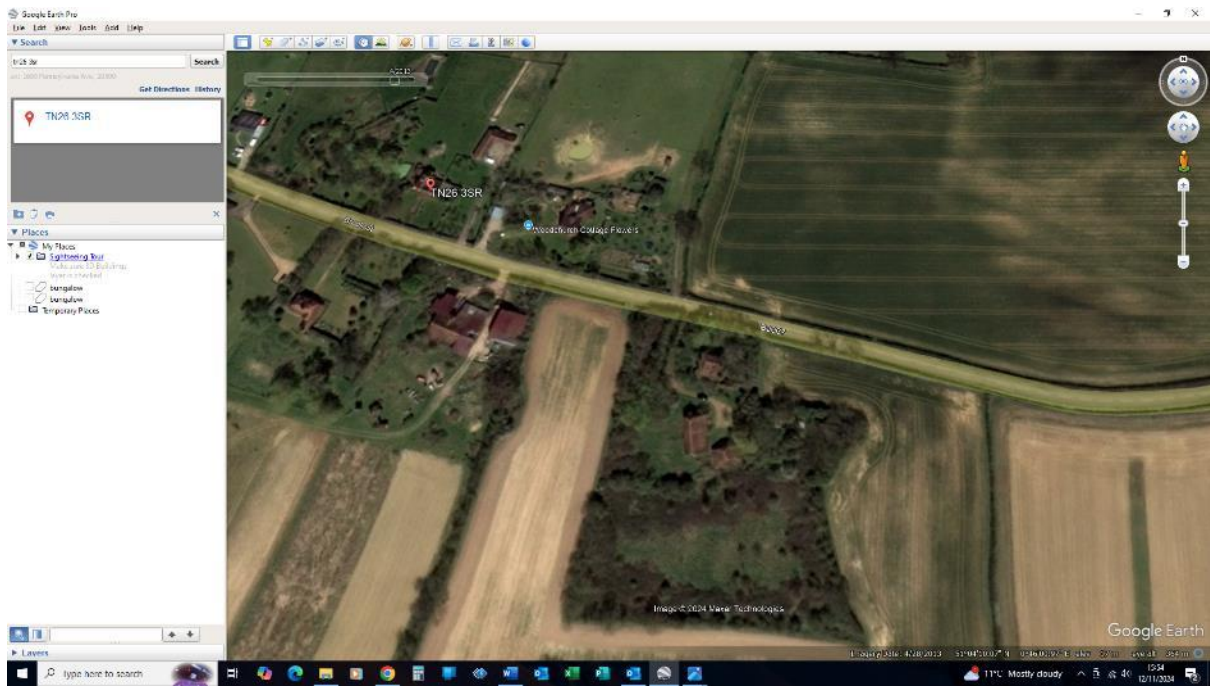
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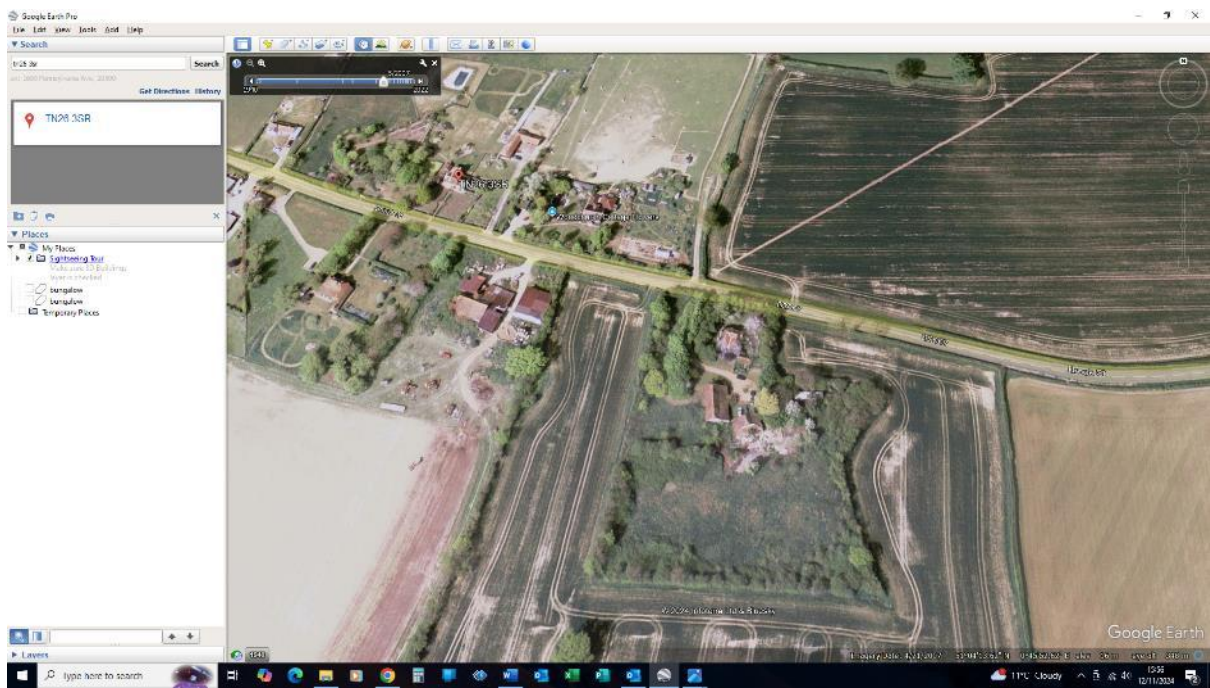
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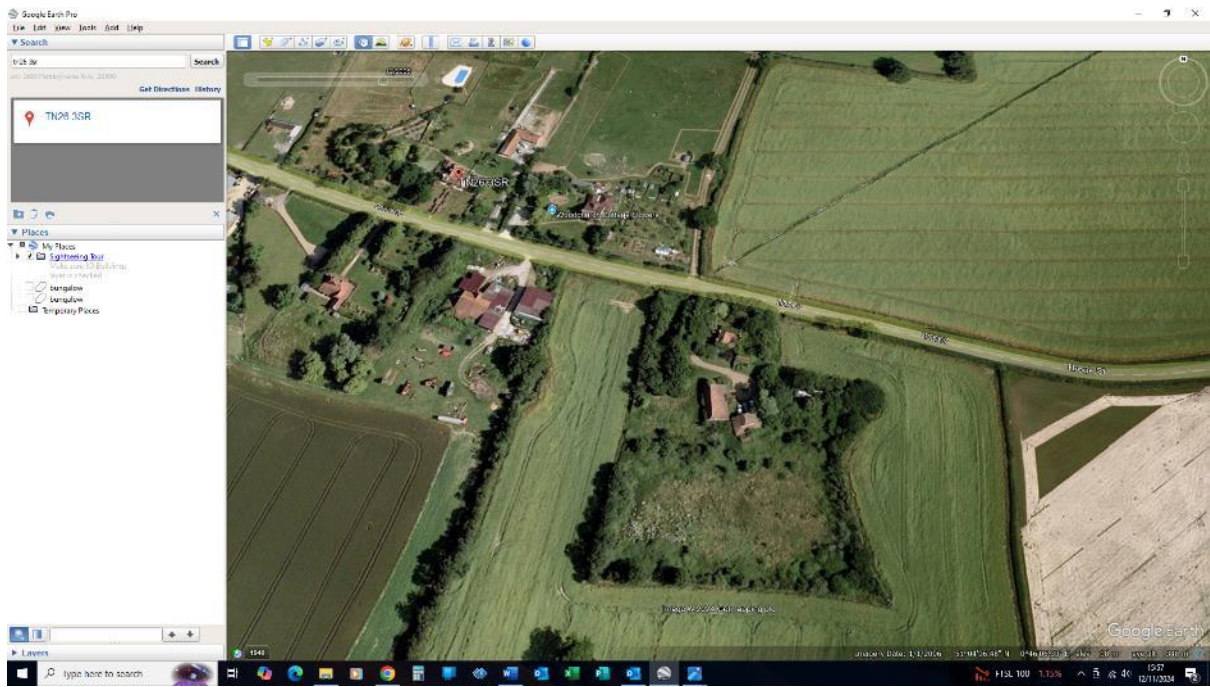
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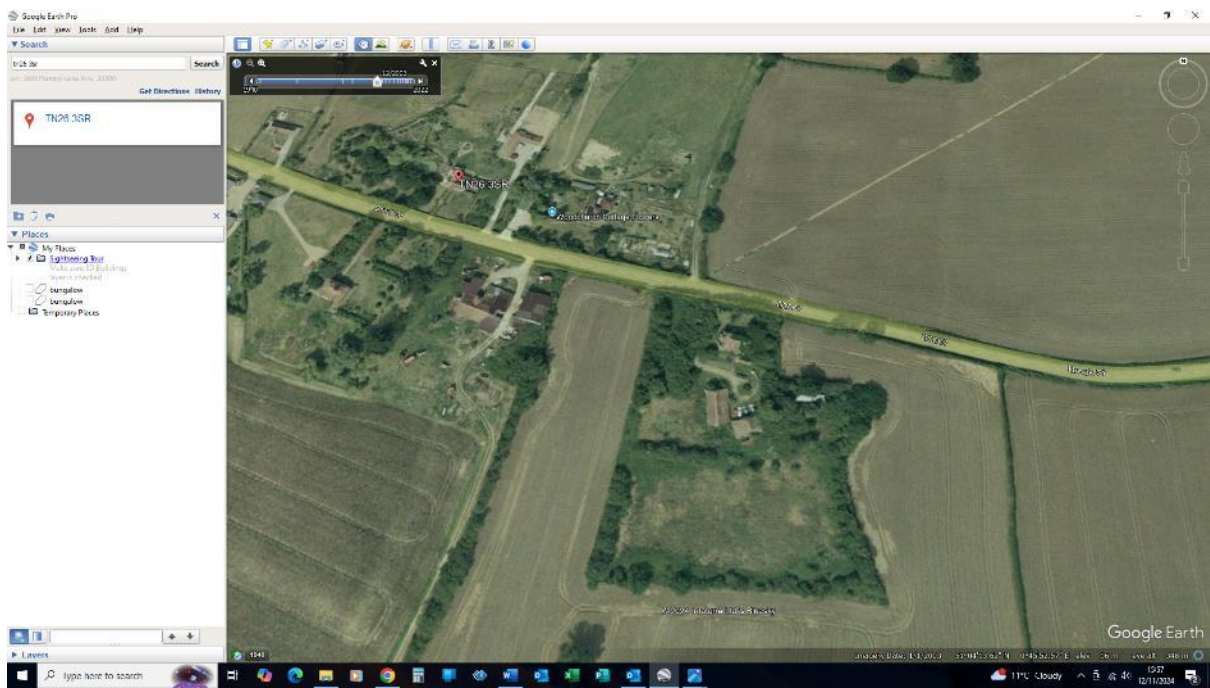
May 2007



December 2006



December 2003



December 1990

