

## 1 & 2 Nursery Cottages

We would like to introduce ourselves to the community and are delighted to be settling here, planning to make this our home for years to come. We are a local couple, both born in neighbouring counties and currently living 6 miles away, with 4 young adults. We recently purchased 1 & 2 Nursery Cottages, Chithurst Lane, Trotton, with 7 acres of 'unloved' agricultural land, aiming to return it to a smallholding using regenerative agricultural principles – we've both kept livestock and or farmed previously.

Our plan is to return the land to its earlier state, with a mixed use – bringing pigs back to the land as well as introduce other animals - for example sheep, chickens, bees etc with natural hedges, shelter belts, with specimen trees, an orchard, and kitchen garden – all the makings of a self-sustaining property.

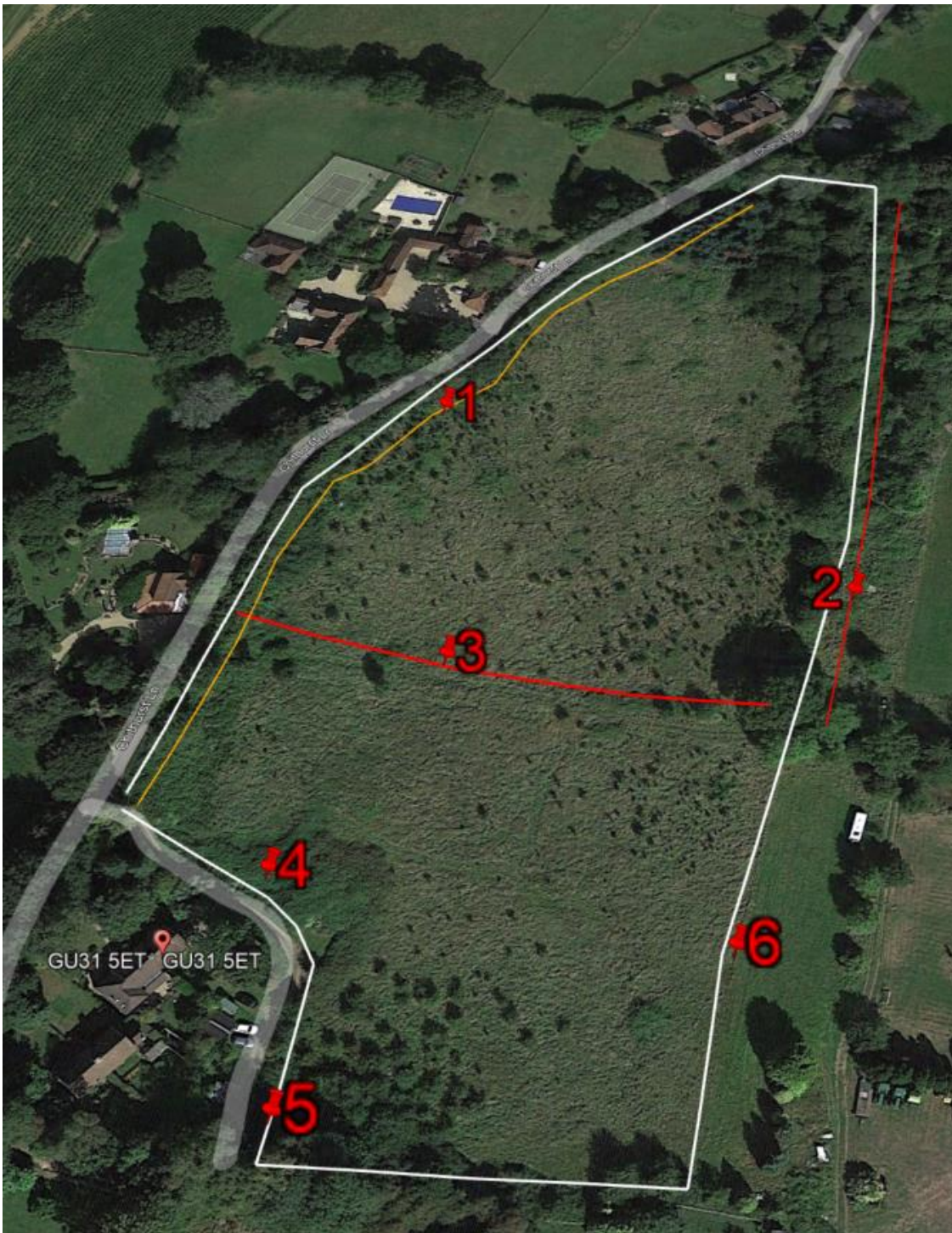
These tiny cottages have suffered decades of neglect – possibly not modified internally since the original build. With no heating, insulation or working kitchens or bathrooms. The exterior has suffered significant damage from general decay and poorly fitted upvc windows without Lintels. The single storey sections of the property need immediate attention as they are structurally unsafe. We are renovating the building as one house, to modern standards to create an adaptable dwelling for our future years.

Google earth for 2019 (image shown) shows the land well maintained and in reasonable order but the grounds have suffered from 5 years of neglect since then. There are several immediate problems that we are trying to resolve. The numbers below refer to the land map below:

1. SSEN have surveyed their overhead power lines and need to clear the trees/branches around the lines adjacent to the road and the overgrown coniferous trees. This will require either closing Chithurst Lane or clearing access across our land: we have offered the latter to save the community suffering a lengthy road closure.
2. The ditch is collapsed and totally silted up in places, damaged by fallen trees and unable to catch water runoff. This will be cleaned, and a bund created where required to strengthen it.
3. We are aware that there is a significant issue with rainwater pooling on Chithurst Lane. We intend to establish a drainage ditch along our access track and create a proper gully to drain the road.
4. The septic tank serving our property and the two adjacent cottages is in a poor state of repair, with raw sewerage pooling near the tank. This area needs to be cleared and the situation reviewed.
5. Self-seeded saplings and brush will be cleared for regenerative agriculture, mulching brush as the organic, nutrient-rich mulch decomposes into the topsoil, which creates higher-quality soil. The mulch also prevents regrowth and erosion from wind and rain.
6. The perimeter fencing is in disrepair and needs restoring. Creating connectivity with the introduction of circa 200 metres of native mixed hedging alongside.

The land has a significant toxic ragwort problem, which is a notifiable weed under the 1959 Weeds Act, which is spreading to adjacent fields. The land also has a significant amount of fallen stock fence, barbed wire, chicken wire strewn across it amongst other hazards and detritus that needs clearing (some more visible than others). During the perimeter fencing process we propose to clear this and introduce livestock to the bottom half of the property. In the meantime, the top half will be returned to grassland to create an orchard, vegetable patch and for animal welfare closer to the house.

An ecology surveyor has been over the land and surveyed including a protected species assessment for amongst other species newts, badgers, dormice, and invasive species – of which no evidence was found. An emergent bat survey is underway. The report found that the land held no value to the bats.



Our immediate plan is to apply for permission to replace the existing tumbledown garages and build a new drive on the uphill side of our building. We will shortly be applying for planning permission to renovate the cottages and make modest alterations to the fenestrations and replace the side porches to suit a new internal layout as one dwelling.

Please do make contact through Neil if you have any questions, we are looking forward to being part of the community and hope to meet many of you by helping at the village fete, if not before.

Kind regards,  
Sarah and Darryl

Some of the issues we are dealing with on the property and land.



