

Change of use of land at Beech Ridge, The Bridleway, Brook Lane, Botley LDC/24/96924

For over 50 years I have lived in Brook Lane and the local vicinity. I use the bridleway approximately once a month. Sam Skinner did not live in the vicinity until 2018 when he purchased Tamella. His father, Garth Skinner, has lived at Springfield, which is next to Tamella, for approx 35 years.

Beech Ridge has NOT been used for storage for the last 10 years.

I have attached the layout plan of the area, and have noted thereon the track on Garth Skinners land between Tamella and Springfield. In the past I have seen vehicles with roofing materials use the track and place the materials on both sides of the track. I have attached prints from google earth for 02/04/12, ~~22/04/15~~, 22/09/14, 08/12/16 15/09/19, 05/06/20, 21/03/22 to show the extent of this. I appreciate that the prints are not very clear, but you can view them on the internet in clearer detail.

I have also attached google earth shots of Beech Ridge car park to reflect the change over time. 2 street view scenes April 2011, 22/09/14, 22/04/15, 06/05/20, 21/03/22. August 2016, September 19

Along the length of the bridleway there are a number of ad hoc "pulling in " spaces including the parking area at Beech Ridge. I have often parked there myself.

After Sam Skinner moved in 2018 was when changes started to happen in the bridleway. Loose/ waste materials (tiles) initially were placed all along the verge opposite Tamella. Then gradually Beech Ridge was opened up and cleared, and more goods stored. Beech Ridge is now used by Samuel Skinner for roofing , and his father and brother for their logging company.

I have read the witness statements and feel that the following questions should be asked.

1. Sam Skinner did not reside at Tamella until 2018. The land in question, Beech Ridge, cannot be seen from Garth Skinner's house. Why would you store valuable building materials in open woodland where you are unable to keep an eye on them, when Garth Skinner has a metal shed just a few metres away. At the very least if building materials had to be stored in the open, then surely the the better place would be within the confines of Garth's strawberry fields just yards away.
2. Why would you go to the trouble of clearing the shrubbery, brambles, trees, etc and bridging over the ditch to access Beech Ridge, when just a few metres away from the new entrance in the bridleway there is a cut-way that leads through to Cobbets Way. This cut-way (albeit with a very small amount of growth) has direct access from the bridleway, is wide enough to take a car as it was frequented by courting couples.
3. If the land was being used to store commercial goods, were the Council ever notified of this?
4. As a commercial site were Business Rates paid?

I have looked at the witness statements and must question how independent they are. Apart from Ian Stacey, Russell Vaughan, Damon Rafi, and Ross Sayers they are all Sam Skinners relatives or relatives partners.

Ian Stacey, Ross Sayers, and Rafi Damon have all been associated with the area for less than 10 years

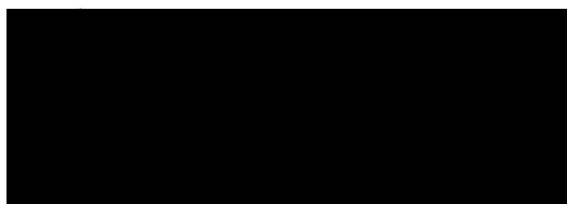
I appreciate that Sam Skinner has letters from suppliers that he has built up a trading relationship with over a number of years and this has proved to be I am sure a rewarding and lucrative relationship for both parties.

I used the bridleway recently and the following points stood out

1. The track on Garth Skinners land has been massively tidied up with only wood and logs now alongside. I could not see any roofing materials.
2. Beech Ridge car park has historically been higher than the surrounding ground as previous farmers had lorry loads of gravel tipped there to repair the bridleway and over time this gravel has gradually spread over the car park. I noticed the area alongside the ditch was even higher than the rest of the car park. Whilst some trees and shrubbery alongside the ditch had been cut down, the tree stumps and vegetation remains. Viewing from the bridleway the ditch is full to the top with water, no bridge can be seen, only 2 planks of wood traversing the ditch at a steepish angle. I could not see a vehicle being able to access from this side, particularly not a 7.5 ton lorry

I have attached the "letters of objections" from local residents to the previous application LDC/23/94813 ,who are all saying the same thing that the change of use started around 2019.

I feel that this application is disingenuous and is an attempt to flout the planning regulations.



Dear Claire,

11 APR 2023

Your letter regarding the Application

No. LDC/23/94813

I have lived in Broadbark for 25 years. It's only been in the last 3 years I've noticed materials being stacked and buildings going up around this Site and the noise this generates. I've always considered Botley as a greenbelt area and those Warehouses/Storage Units will ruin the ambience. Already we have Big lorries going to the pallette warehouse in Broadbark. The roads are not designed for this and will spoil what we've always known Botley to be proud of. There are enough Homes being built in this area as it is and it's already taking its toll on the roads.

So I hope as many others do that this Project doesn't happen.
Thank you for your communication



Douglas, Sarah

From: [REDACTED] >
Sent: 13 April 2023 11:53
To: Dinnage, Claire
Subject: Fwd: APPLICATION No LDC/23/94813

[REDACTED]

----- Forwarded message -----

[REDACTED] >
Date: Thu, Apr 13, 2023 at 11:50 AM
Subject: APPLICATION No LDC/23/94813
To: <claire.dinnage@easleigh.gov.uk>

Dear Ms Dinnage

In reference to the above, I would like to state that I am absolutely certain the land opposite Tamella has **not** been used as a storage facility for the past ten years. Vehicles have been parked on the left hand side of the bridleway opposite Garth Skinner's woodyard for many years but the wild land opposite Tamella has remained wild natural land until recently. I cannot be sure of exact dates but clearing of the undergrowth, shrubbery etc on that site, gravelling of the area and storage of pallets, portaloos etc all began much more recently than ten years. Since my property backs on to the bridleway and has rear access to it, I walk down there regularly and have noted with dismay the destruction of that area and the increasing encroachment of materials which make the whole area look more like an industrial estate than a bridleway / country path.

I know Garth Skinner and have employed Wes Skinner, who is a friend of my son, for tree works. I have no knowledge of the family's arrangements in terms of ownership of the land in question and am making no comment on the right of Sam Skinner to use that land although I think it is clear that I despair of the impact on the character of the bridleway; I am merely giving an honest answer to the question relating to usage of that area for the past ten years. Since moving here in August 1986, I have seen a number of changes to the bridleway but none so destructive of the environment as this.

Kind regards

Pam BenMardhia

[REDACTED]

Douglas, Sarah

From: [REDACTED] >
Sent: 10 April 2023 22:36
To: Dinnage, Claire
Subject: Application for Certificate of Lawfulness - LDC/23/94813 - Beech Ridge, The Bridleway, Brook Lane, SO30 2ER
Attachments: Jan 2018.JPG; Mar 20.jpg; Mar 21.jpg; Jan 22 Fire.jpg; Jan 22 Fire 2.jpg; Feb 22 Fire.jpg; Mar 22 - fire.jpg

Claire

Further to the above reference number, we would like to object to the recent application for a Certificate of Lawfulness of an Existing Use or Development for the site opposite 'Tamella'.

In the application, it is suggested that this site has been used in excess of 10 years. We do not believe this is the case. We moved into our property in 2017 and at this point, the area in question was a wooded area that had no signs of any development.

The trees were cleared around late 2019/early 2020. At this point, I was employed as a utility surveyor for SSE and surveyed the electricity line going alongside this site. One Sunday around this time, I heard chain saws, went to investigate and saw that the site was being cleared. I challenged this at the time as the trees being cut were too close to the electricity lines. I reported this to SSE so they would be aware of unauthorised works in the area. I also reported this to HCC at the time as I believed they were the land owners, not the current occupiers.

If I am not mistaken, the recent consultation between the Botley Parish Council and local residents on the development of the Local Plan earmarked this area as a part of the settlement gap. I believe this area was protected from any development?

In addition to the above since the site has been converted into a yard, the current occupiers have a habit of starting fires early in the morning. I attach photos of some of the fires from 2022. Since the yard was more built up over the past year, we can no longer see a fire but still see the smoke rising. This is a fairly frequent thing and in my opinion, consists of trade waste as the smoke is often thick, very dense and can be either black or white smoke. Some mornings, the smoke has been so dense, it travels across the fields, creating a hazard to the main road at Broad Oak.

I have attached several photos taken from our back garden over the years which show the area as trees and more recently after the trees were cleared, with evidence of fires being lit early in the morning. The site has been significantly developed over the course of the past year.

As stated above, I strongly object that this site has been in use as a commercial yard/storage facility for the period of time as stated by the applicant. If you require any further clarification or would like to discuss any of the above, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Kind regards

Dave Denby
16 Blossom Close
Botley
SO30 2FR
[REDACTED]

Springtime Cottage
Broad Oak
Botley
SO30 2EU

31st March 2023

Dear Ms Dinnage,

Re: Planning Application LDC/23/94813

I note the application for permitted development for land opposite Tamella, The Bridleway, Brook Lane, under Section 191 of the town & Country Planning Act.

I lived in the area for 10 years, and my recollection is that the area was an untended wooded area until 2-3 years ago, when it was cleared, hard standing installed, and has developed into a general storage and handing area under daily use.

It may well be the case that there was some use of the edge of the unmade track for parking of vehicles, etc, but the area in use has been expanded substantially in the last 2-3 years and there are now bright lights at night / early morning and regular bonfires, which was not the case before it was expanded in the last 2-3 years.

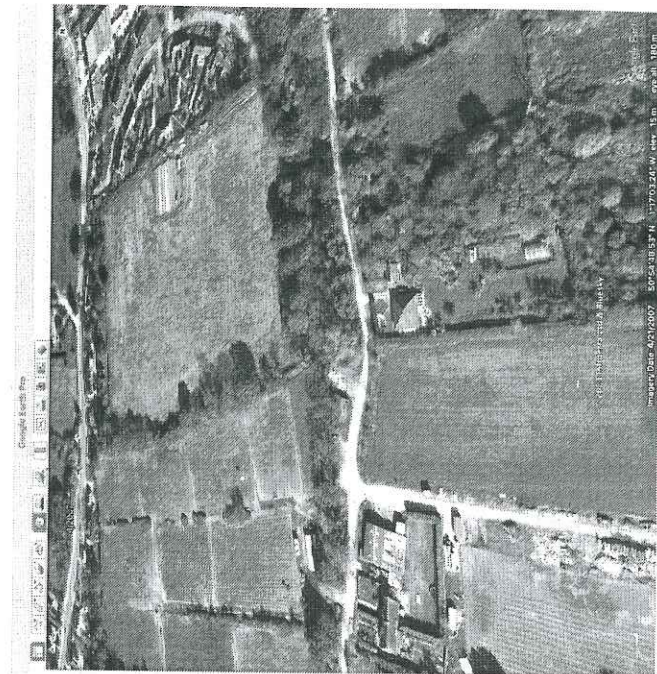
I have attached some screen shots from Google Earth Pro, which clearly show that between the first photo in Dec 1999 and Sept 2019 the area covered by this application was similar to the border in the adjacent part of the lane with untended trees, but these have started to be cleared in May 2020, and the area expanded and cleared in May 2022 which is the last photo available.

I am not qualified to judge whether this is within the regulations, but the photos show the actual status of the area within the last 10 years.

Google Earth Pro provides the facility to scroll back in time to show the aerial photos available for an area. This is a free to download and use program available for both PC & Apple MAC, and I would suggest that you or the planning department may wish to investigate its use for cases such as this.

Yours sincerely,

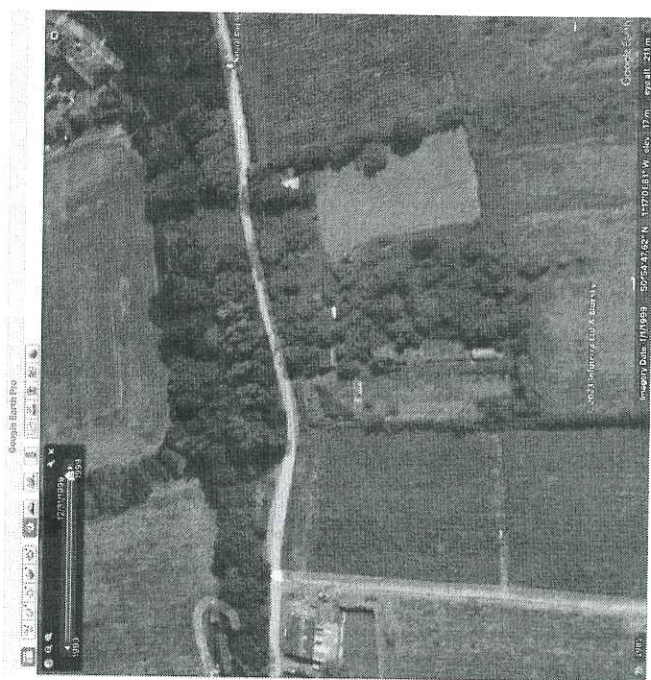
Nick Roe



View in 2007



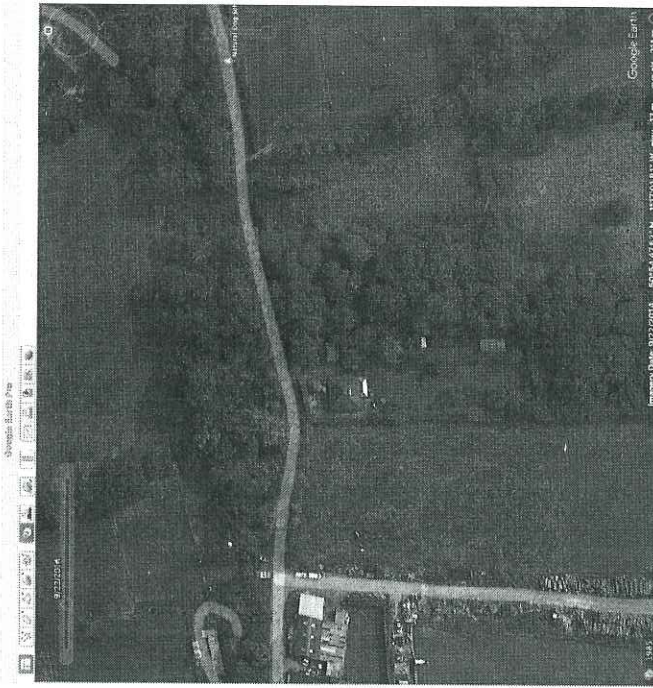
View in 2012



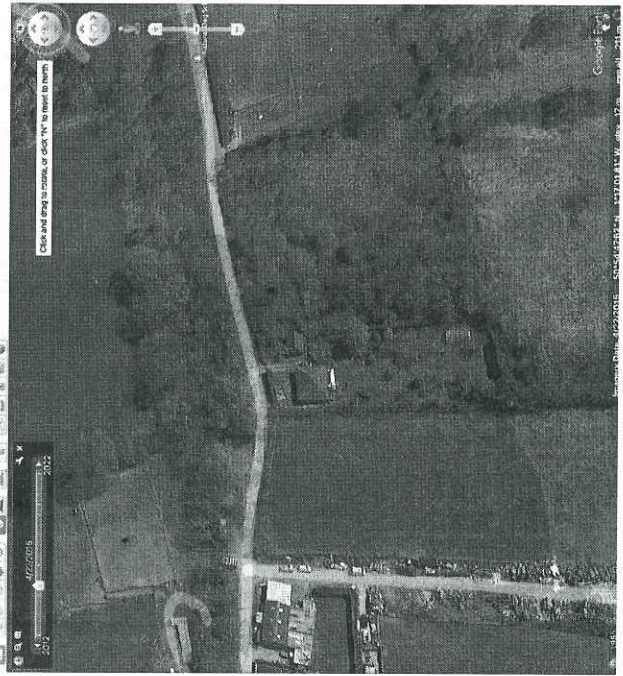
View in 1999



View in 2005



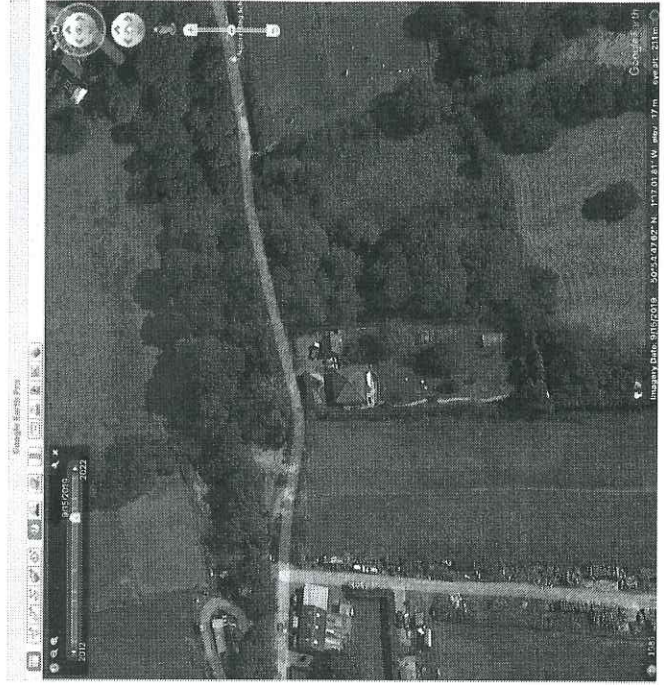
View in 2014



View in 2015



View in 2016



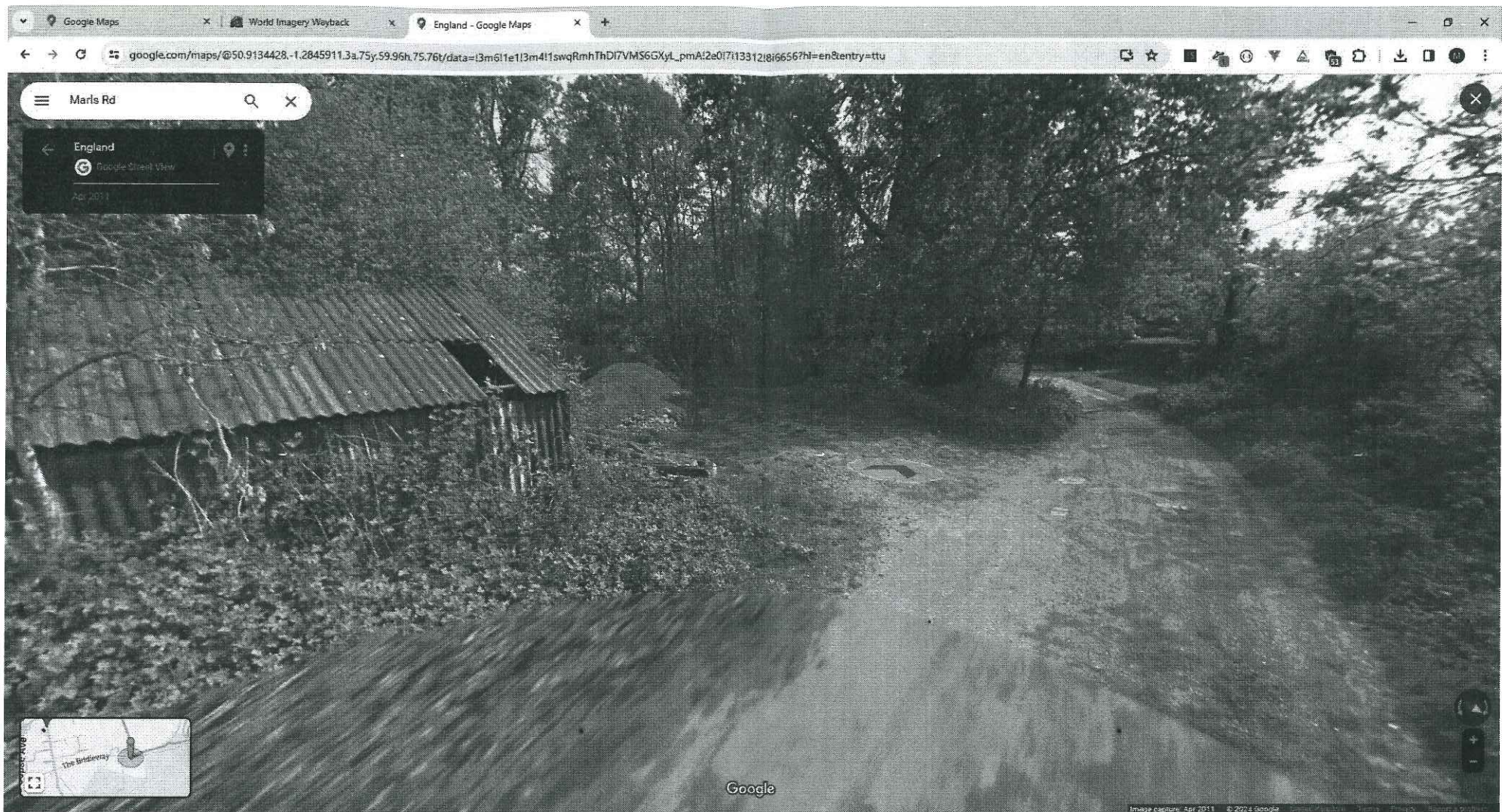
View in 2019



View in 2020



View in 2022



April 2011

Car Park & Tin shed



April 2011

Car Park



September 2014

Par Park



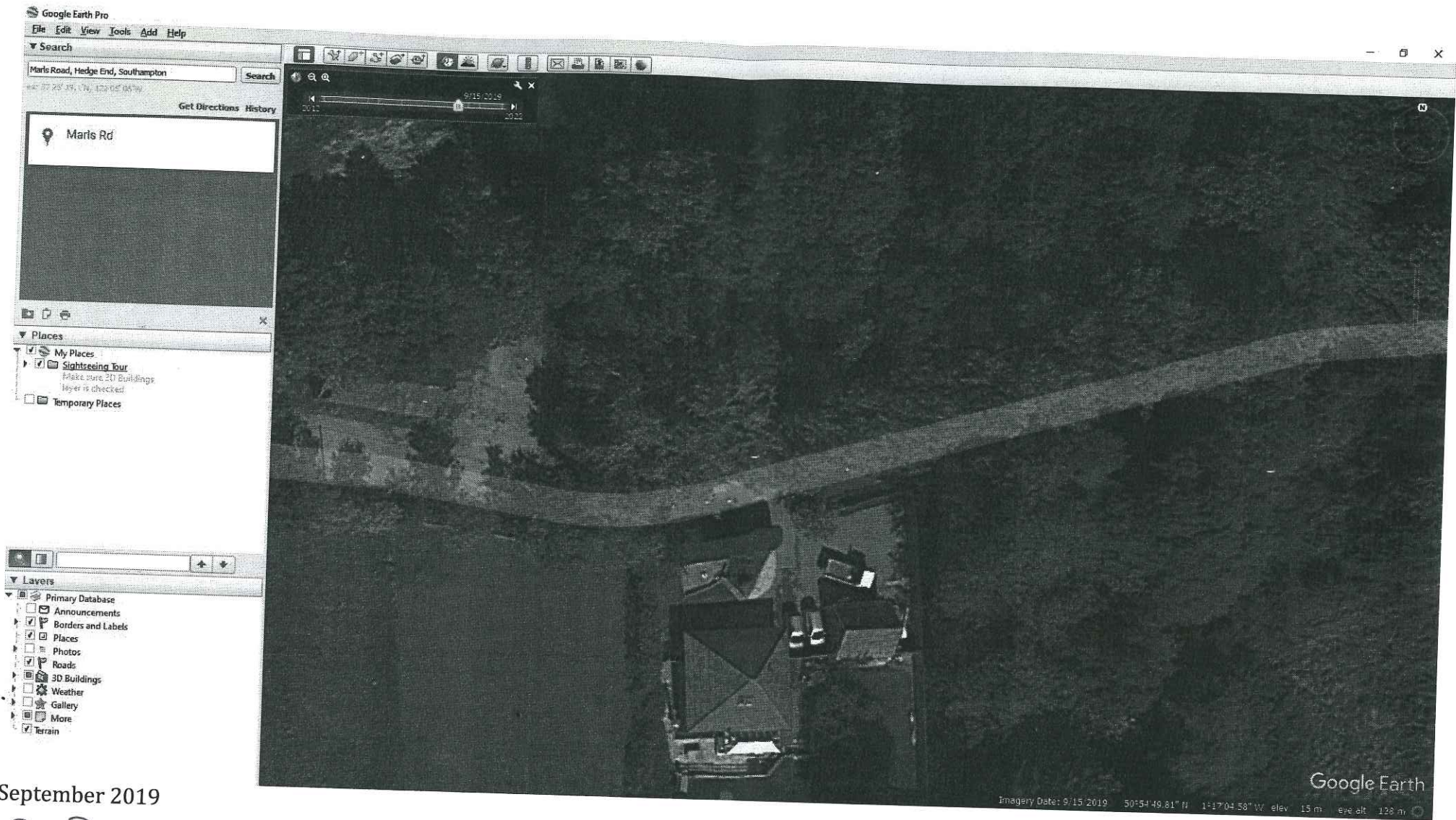
April 2015

Car Park



August 2016

Car Park



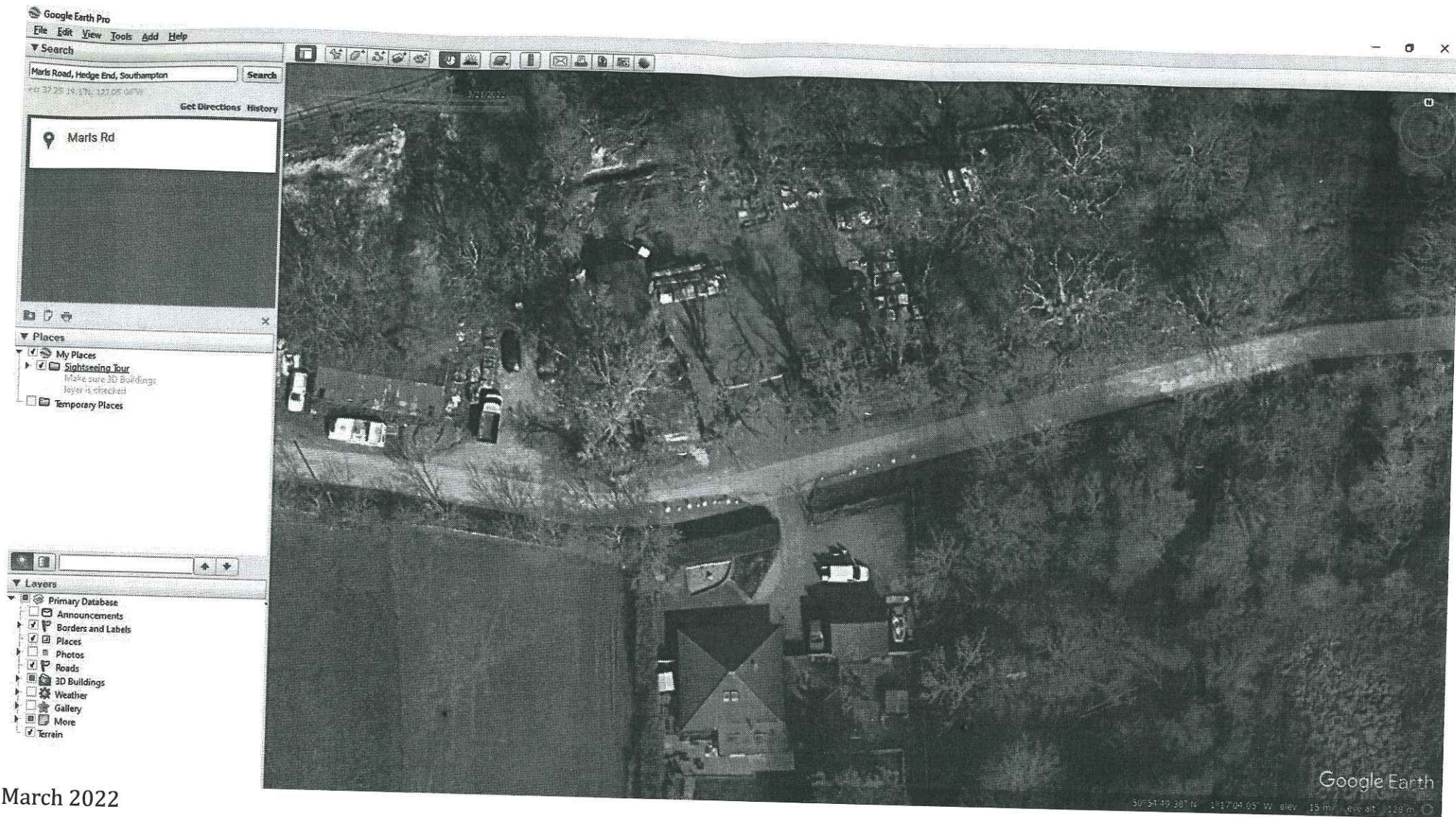
September 2019

Car Park



May 2020

Car Park



March 2022

Car Park



April 2012

Track



September 2014

Track



August 2016

Track



September 2019

Track



May 2020

Track



March 2022

Track

PSOURCE

Land North of Brook Lane, Botley

DRAWING

Site Plan

DRAWING NUMBER

260A_01

DATE

December 2023

SCALE

1:500 @A1



**Design
& Planning**

ARCHITECTURAL
SERVICES

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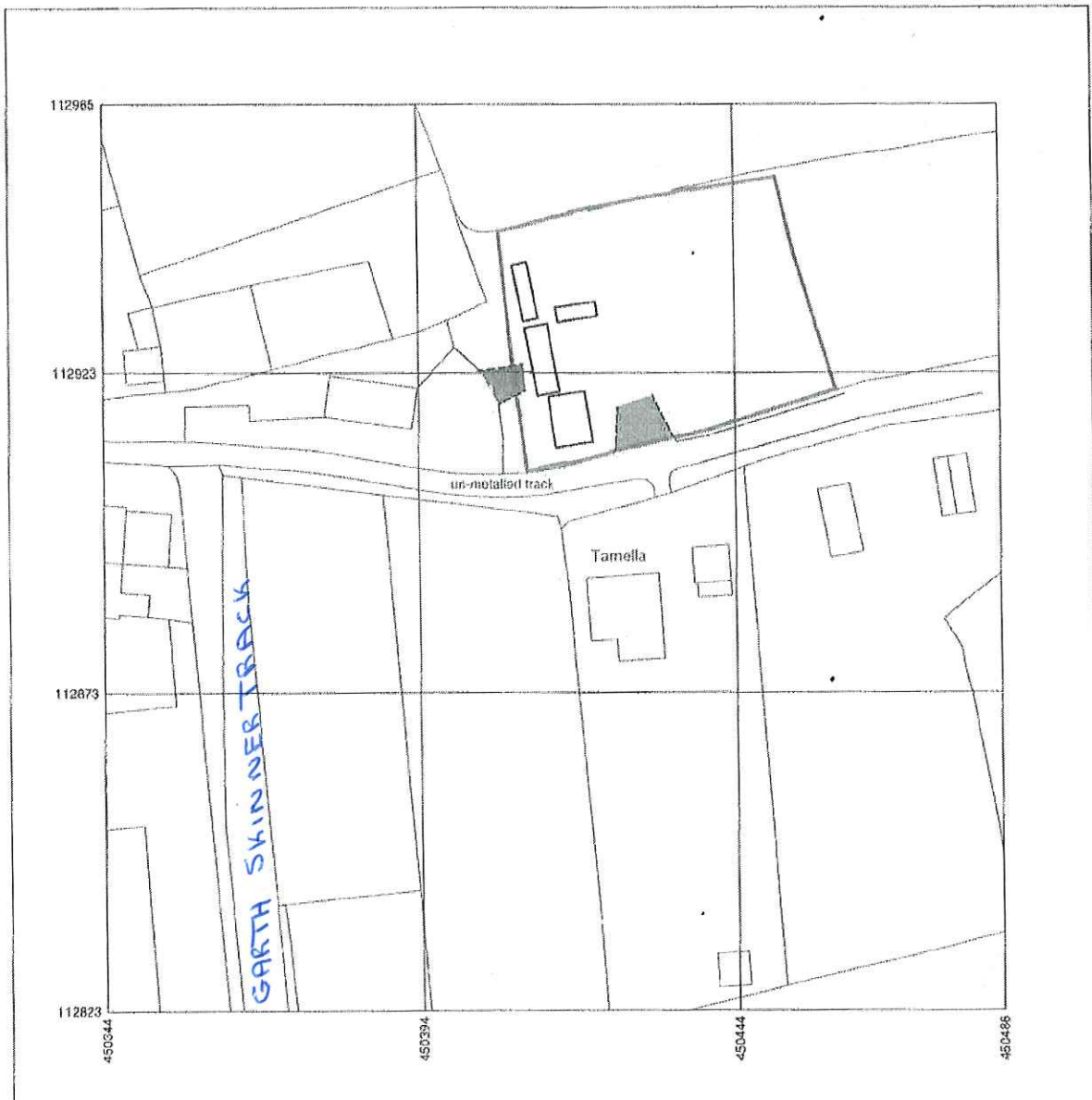
Woodview Studio

78 Filmore Road

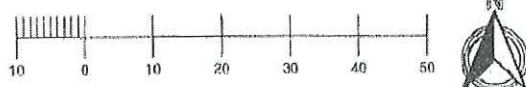
Albion

Hampshire

SO50 4LW



Produced on 06 December 2023 from the Ordnance Survey National Geographic Database and incorporating surveyed revision available at this date.
This map shows the area bounded by 450344 112823, 450486 112823, 450486 112965, 450344 112965, 450344 112823
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Site Plan 1:500

■ HISTORIC SITE ACCESS
■ CURRENT SITE ACCESS