

ST FRANCIS FIELDS – YEAR 1



A brief report on what has happened in 2020 to help the Parish Council and St Francis Fields Ltd plan ahead for the future use of the site.

I have numbered the fields on the maps (at the end) for the sake of clarity.

It goes without saying that the pandemic has had a major effect on progress, and will continue to have an effect for some time to come.

Pete Sargent

OVERVIEW

The weather over the past few months has highlighted that there are areas of the site which have a drainage problem and some of these problems are impacting our neighbours. This will need to be addressed in 2021.

Parking space is also going to be a major issue with any future changes of use and will need to be carefully considered.

BUNGALOWS

The refurbishment of the bungalows took longer than anticipated for reasons both practical and bureaucratic, but they are now both tenanted and the tenants seem pretty happy. There have been the usual teething problems which were to be expected. Both bungalows are experiencing some problems with damp which will need to be dealt with once the weather dries up. Both units also require a shed.

STABLES

The stables lease runs until June 2022 and includes areas 1-5 (see map). Due to the wet weather, they have also been using areas 6 & 7 since September for an additional rental. If the courtyard area is to be expanded into a 'hub' then the stables will either need to be relocated or done away with. Our tenant should be kept on board of likely plans so that she can plan ahead.

COURTYARD

The buildings around the courtyard are ripe for converting into workshops or storage spaces. They are not really suitable for offices. One space will also require converting into toilets. We have had interest in turning the Oast into a 'pop-up' pub from a local brewery, but until social distancing is a thing of the past this is not likely to happen.

OLD CATTERY

The prefabricated units have been sold and taken away. The unit that is left has asbestos in the roof and so will need a specialist company to remove, prior to being demolished.

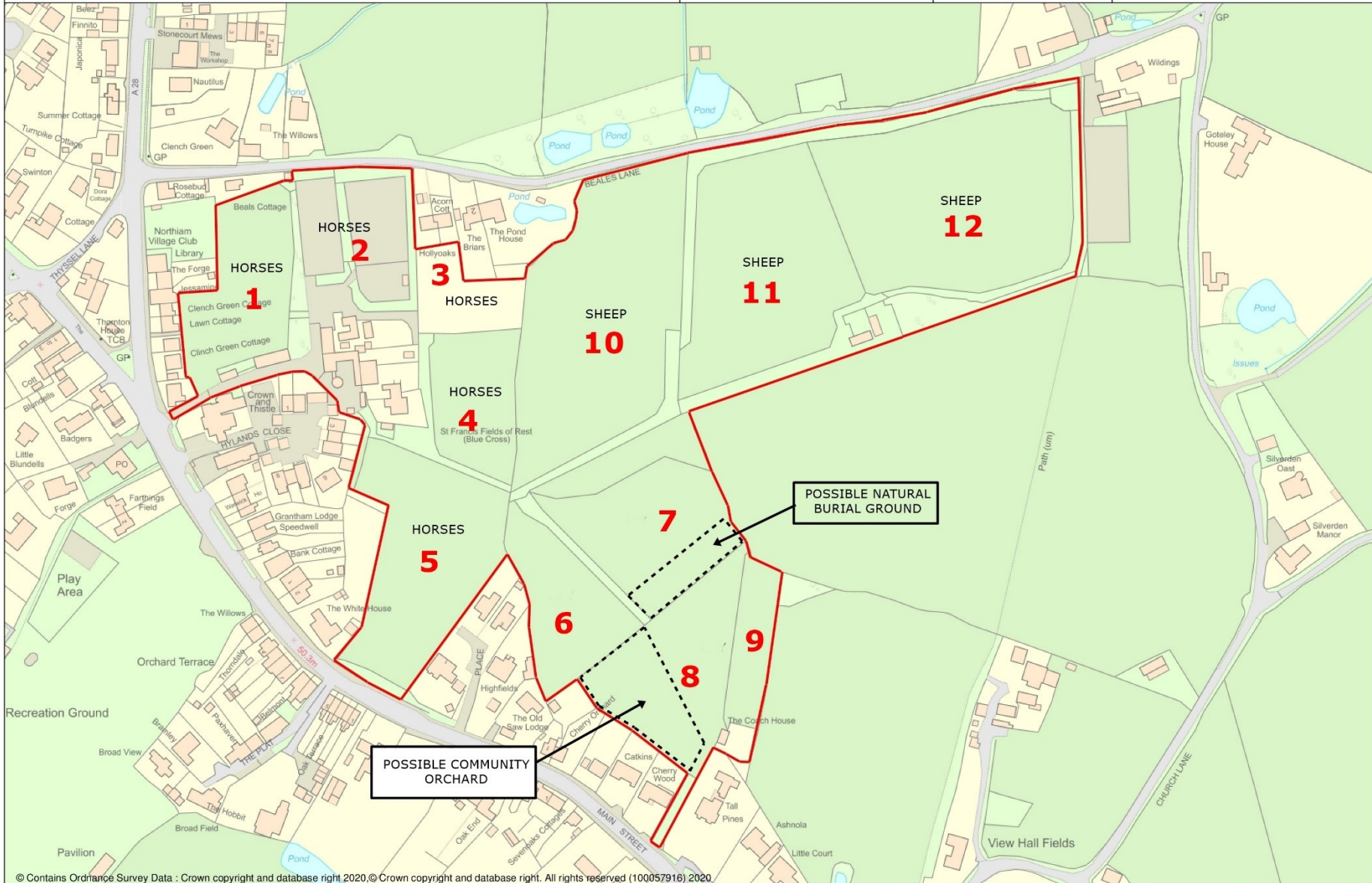
BLOCK BUILT CABIN

Currently used as tea room cum store, with one half being used as an office of sorts for the yeomanry volunteers. It is poorly built and could be removed in due course.

FIELDS & OUTSIDE AREAS (see maps)

1. This paddock is at the lowest point of the site and has almost no drainage. We have installed a ditch to prevent flooding neighbouring properties which seems to be working. There are rank patches of grass which seem to indicate old soakaways. It is not suitable for building on. If the stables were relocated then the barn could be removed and the area used for parking.
2. The smaller sand-school has been refurbished by the tenant and is in regular use. The larger sand-school needs much more work to make it viable and so could be considered as a suitable site for housing if access from Beales Lane was granted.
3. This field cannot be built on (legal conditions). It has a slope towards the housing on Beales Lane, but to date we have had no complaints of flooding.
4. A large sloping field that is in reasonable condition considering the wet weather. The roadway beside it is a different story and will require levelling and hardcore in the Spring.
5. The 'Doctor's Field' part of which could be built on if we can come to an agreement with the builder who owns the only access. Initial approaches have been made and he is interested in being involved. This field slopes towards the new estate behind the pub and floods several of the properties when it rains hard. This will need solving in 2021.
6. Slightly sloping field which has some standing water, but is in reasonable condition. We took a hay crop off it in the summer and since then it has been used for occasional horse grazing.

7. Flat field which again produced a hay crop and was then used for occasional horse grazing. It does not drain very well and currently has standing pools of water. If part of this is to become a natural burial ground it will need some kind of drainage system installing
8. South facing sloping field that is taking shape to become the community orchard, wild flower meadow and maybe a cider orchard. The access from Main Street to be opened up for pedestrians this year.
9. Small field with shelter – Ideas welcome.
10. Currently grazed by sheep (licence runs until March 2021 for fields 10-14). This field appears to have had drainage installed at some point which flows out to Beales Lane and then under the road to the ponds.
11. Grazed by sheep. With the addition of a line of fencing the circular 'ride' could be completed which would be of benefit to both pedestrians and horse riders.
12. Grazed by sheep. The buildings are currently used by Mr Pratt in exchange for two days labour per month. The lower end of the 'ride' towards the Wildings gate gets very boggy in wet weather. This gateway should also be opened up for pedestrian access this Spring.
13. Grazed by sheep. There is a corral and hard standing at the gateway which used to have timber horse shelters on it, so could be a possible site for stable relocation. There is also a timber field shelter in the NW corner by the woodland, which is currently overgrown but could be bought back into use. The field drains into the woodland.
14. Grazed by sheep. There is a corral and timber horse shelter behind the woodland that surrounds the ponds. The only access to this field is via field 13. The field drains into the woodland.



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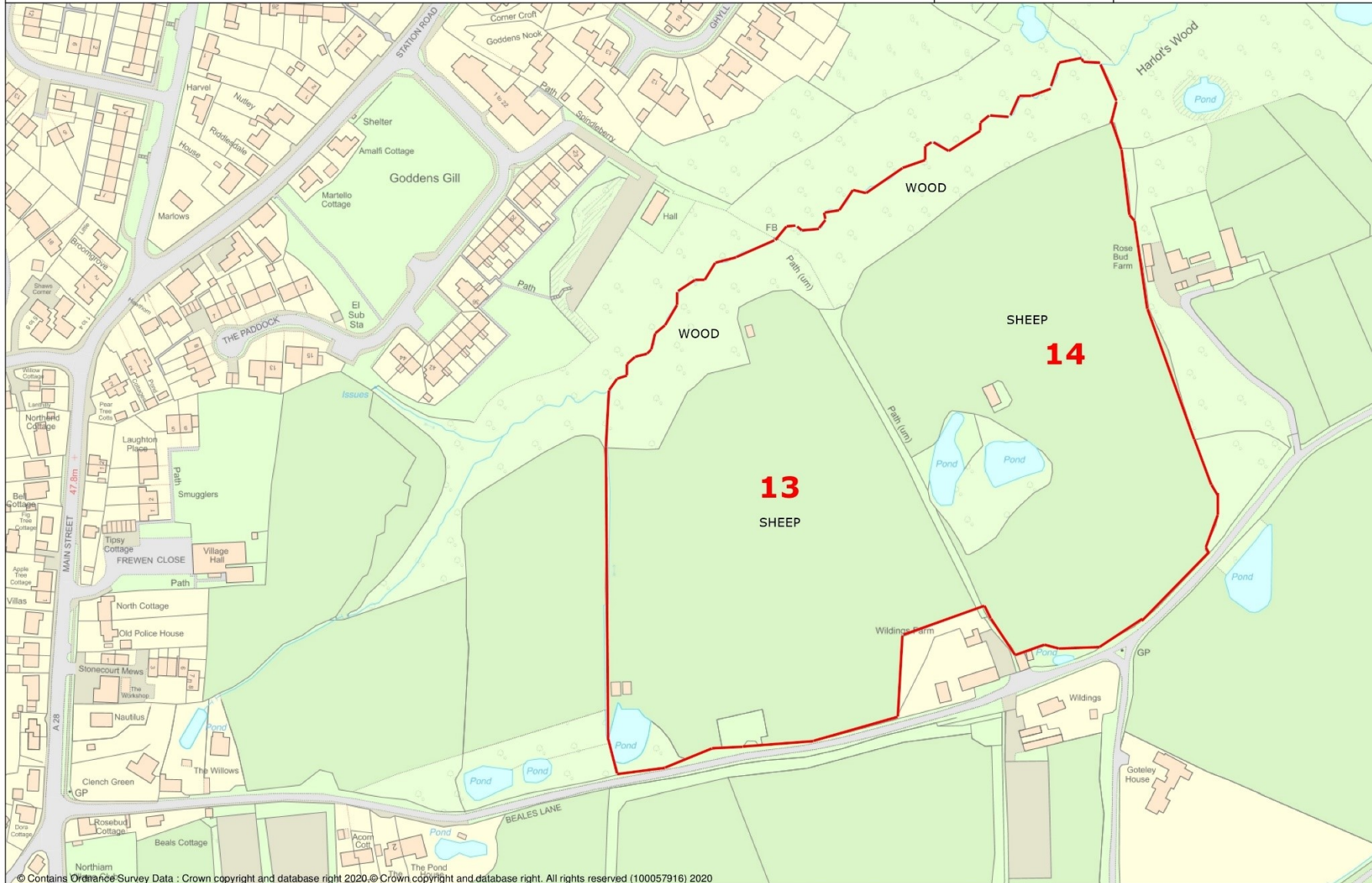
MAP TO SHOW ST FRANCIS FIELDS NORTH OF BEALES LANE

Northiam CP

USAGE & IDEAS AS OF JANUARY 2021

Author: Pete

Date: 22/07/2020



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