

27 Nov 2025
Ref: DM/25/2643

Planning Department
Mid Sussex District Council
Oaklands
Oaklands Road
Haywards Heath
West Sussex, RH16 1SS

F.A.O. Peter Davies peter.davies@midsussex.gov.uk

Dear Peter

APPLICATION DM/25/2643 FOR CERTIFICATE OF LAWFULNESS FOR AN EXISTING USE HOME FARM, LEWES ROAD, EAST GRINSTEAD RH19 3UN

Please find below a more detailed history of the use of the barns as part of the original dwellinghouse (Home Farm). I also append updated statements from the Farrar family to provide more specific dates; and the 'red line plan' produced to clarify the location of the rooms. I also include the microfiche records of the historic planning applications for the property (and barns) which provide additional evidence of the owners' intentions of using the barns as extension to their living accommodation.

The dates referred to in the accompanying statements are still not as precise as 'to the day' but you'll appreciate that the statement providers were very young at the time these rooms were converted. As I inferred in my previous response, the use of these rooms clearly commenced well over 10 years ago, so if the recollection is a few days or even months out, it should not undermine the case that this use was clearly established over 10 years ago.

Furthermore, the current state of the rooms, as you saw, show that there has been no reversion of use since the photos taken of Edward Farrar's children playing in the studio room in the 1990s. The situation has simply been that Edward's parents (Douglas and Mary Jo) grew old in the property, (his mother Mary Jo died in 2010 and his father Doug recently in 2024) and didn't need to use these rooms as frequently as before (or for any other purpose). The housekeeper confirms in her statement that the rooms have always formed part of the house which she attended up to her retirement in 2012; it is just the case that these rooms became more dormant.

History of the Rooms

Douglas and Mary Jo Farrar (Edward's Parents) purchased Home Farm from Barnard Farrar in 1957 and looked to extend the property.

The first barn (now containing the games room and former bedroom) was used to keep horses (not in traditional stabling, but in partitioned areas within the barn) and a planning application J/59/4872 for the conversion of stable to extend living accommodation was submitted and approved in October 1959. This barn was then converted in the early 1960s (finished in 1963) and was used *inter alia* by Edward's sister as a piano room (as corroborated by her Statement).

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The use of the second barn (now containing the Studio Room) started in 1970 after the swimming pool was built. The window and door facing the swimming pool are the same design and age as those within the pool house.

We note there was a planning permission J/71/9174 for 'use of agricultural building for non-agricultural storage purposes' in September 1971 but cannot be sure this relates to this barn (we have no records of the application documents). Nevertheless, it seems likely, as it is the case that the use of both barns (containing the Studio Room, Games Room and Former Bedroom) became much more pronounced in the later 1970s when the children were growing up, with the barns permanently being used as family accommodation in the period 1975-1979 for the purposes described on the red line plan and within the family's statements.

The pool house was fitted out with a kitchen area and toilet in 1970 after the swimming pool was installed. Part of this building includes the pump house associated with the swimming pool installation.

The coal shed connected to the link corridor stored coal used within the properties of Home Farm and Home Farm Cottage and nowhere else.

The children moved out of Home Farm by 1983 but the rooms were continued to be used as part of the house, with Mary Jo Farrar using the Studio room for keep fit classes and Doug using the former bedroom as an office.

The rooms have continued to be maintained as part of the house by the housekeeper until her retirement in 2024 and while infrequently used, as Doug and Mary Jo grew old, the rooms were not used for alternative purposes (unrelated to the main house).

Balance of Probability

As you know, a decision on a Lawful Development Certificate application should be made on the balance of probabilities. The information we have provided is considered commensurate with the need to show 'on balance of probability' that this use has occurred. (i.e. it is more likely than not that the rooms have been used in association with the main house for a period of time over 10 years ago and have continued to be maintained in association with the house and not used for any alternative use). Planning Records also show that permission was granted for use of the barns for non-agricultural uses.

It is also helpful to note the judgment *F W Gabbittas v SSE and Newham LBC* [1985] JPL 630, where it was held that the applicant's own evidence does not need to be corroborated by "independent" evidence in order to be accepted. If the local planning authority has no evidence of its own, or from others, to contradict or otherwise make the applicant's version of events less than probable, there is no good reason to refuse the application.

If you would like to discuss the information further, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

