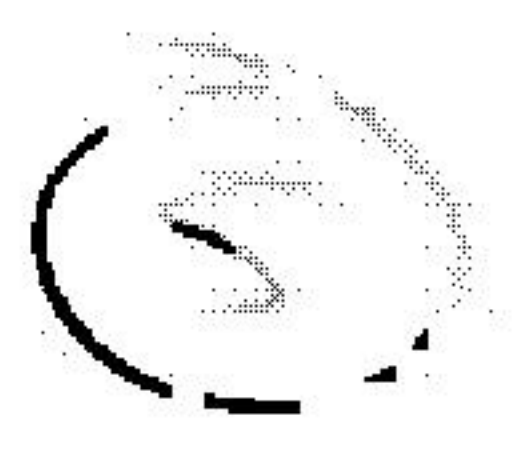




Angela Russell

Subject: FW: Cottage (Barries) at Rock Lodge Vineyard. Application No. DM/22/2889

[REDACTED]

Sent: 16 November 2022 16:56

To: Joseph Swift <Joseph.Swift@midsussex.gov.uk>

Subject: Re: Cottage (Barries) at Rock Lodge Vineyard. Application No. DM/22/2889

Dear Mr Swift,

Re: Cottage (Barries) at Rock Lodge Vineyard. Application No. DM/22/2889

Thank you for your email dated 11th November requesting further information in connection with the above.

I reply as the owner of Rock Lodge Vineyard, which consists of a small estate of some 30 acres. 24 acres is leased to Plumpton Agricultural College, which comprises two vineyards with associated headlands. The original lease commenced in the year 2000 and was last renewed in 2019 as a Farm Business Tenancy for a 15-year period and also includes two storage buildings and a small area of office space.

The major area of office space has been leased to BSW Building Services Limited since 1999 as their business premises. BSW are building services engineers providing a local contracting service to the county of Sussex.

The Vineyard Manager at Plumpton College has expressed the desire for some onsite accommodation on a number of occasions if this should become available. I purchased the domestic outbuilding - refer to above - in September 2021 and shortly afterwards (December 2021). I made this available as temporary accommodation for a vineyard worker.

The operation consists of some 20 acres of vines which require fairly continuous attendance with peak activities – winter and spring pruning and autumn harvesting when a considerable number of field workers are required. During the intervening periods spraying, repairs to the trellis system and other routine procedures are carried out. During peak periods approximately 10 workers are required. I understand several students are employed at these times. During the remainder of the year, I am told two to three workers are sufficient. I am not sure of any particular out of hours requirements but understand that the harvest can be carried out throughout daylight hours, including weekends. An onsite employee also lends some additional security since the various vineyard plant, including tractors, trailers and spraying equipment are vulnerable to theft and in fact the resident worker alerted the police to a possible theft quite recently on 29th August 2022, Crime No. 1477. This property has sight of the access driveway and entrance gates and can therefore observe arrivals and departures.

I would advise that there is no other dwelling on the vineyard site. A separate dwelling, Rock Lodge Cottage, was purchased last year by BSW Building Services. This is currently being refurbished as a five-bedroom house and will be available to rent in approximately six months' time. The only other dwelling in the locality is Quarry Manor (formally Rock Lodge) located on lower ground to the south of the vineyard property. This is a private house and garden owned and occupied by Mr Bruce Stewart and his family.

We trust the above will be useful.

Regards,

[REDACTED]