

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 03 August 2026 00:12
To: Planning
Subject: *await address*Application DC/26/1056 relating to the retrospective shepherd's hut at Kerves Farm Cottage - Objection Letter
Attachments: 001. Objection_DC_26_1056_Kerves_Farm_Cottage.pdf; Appendix_1_Kerves_Farm_Cottage_Chronology_and_Site_Context.pdf; Appendix_1c_ Annotated Site Layout.pdf
Categories: Comments Received

Dear Sir/Madam,

Please find attached **Part 1 of 2** of our objection to application **DC/26/1056** relating to the retrospective shepherd's hut at Kerves Farm Cottage.

This email contains:

- Objection Letter
- Appendix 1 – Chronology and Site Context
- Appendix 1a – Annotated Site Layout

A second email containing the supporting evidence appendices will follow immediately.

We respectfully request that all documents are uploaded to the public planning file and taken into account when determining the application.

Given that many of the amenity impacts identified in our objection relate to the relationship between the shepherd's hut and Kerves Farmhouse, including overlooking, privacy, lighting and guest activity, we would be pleased to facilitate a site visit from our property should the Case Officer consider this helpful when assessing the application.

Please confirm safe receipt of both emails.

Yours faithfully,

[REDACTED]

Objection to Application DC/26/1056

Kerves Farm Cottage, Kerves Lane, Horsham RH13 6RJ

Application reference	DC/26/1056
Site	Kerves Farm Cottage, Kerves Lane, Horsham RH13 6RJ
Proposal	Retrospective shepherd's hut for short-term holiday letting
Objectors	

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: Objection to application DC/26/1056 - retrospective shepherd's hut for short-term holiday letting at Kerves Farm Cottage, Kerves Lane, Horsham

We write to object to application DC/26/1056, which seeks retrospective planning permission for the siting and use of a shepherd's hut for short-term holiday letting purposes at Kerves Farm Cottage, Kerves Lane, Horsham. The application form confirms that the use had commenced prior to submission.

We ask the Council to assess the proposal by reference to its actual operational effects on our home, our bedrooms, our garden, our swimming pool and associated outdoor amenity areas, as well as the countryside setting, nearby Ancient Woodland, drainage infrastructure, parking and access.

Key objection: we object because this is not simply a small domestic structure. It is an already operating commercial holiday-let use in a sensitive rural-residential location. The main impacts on us arise from the close relationship with our bedrooms, private garden areas and swimming pool; the elevated hut, platform and seating area; the turnover of short-term guests; and the absence of adequate ecological, lighting, drainage and access information.

We consider that this application should be refused because it causes material planning harm and conflicts with the adopted Horsham District Planning Framework ("HDPF"), in particular Policies 11, 24, 26, 31, 32, 33, 39, 40 and 41.

The claimed tourism benefit of a single holiday unit should not outweigh the site-specific harm arising from the siting and operation of the development in this particular location.

Policy Summary

We consider that the proposal conflicts with the following policies of the Horsham District Planning Framework:

- Policy 11 (Tourism and Cultural Facilities) because the limited tourism benefit does not outweigh the harm to our residential amenity, countryside character and environmental interests.
- Policy 24 (Environmental Protection) because the proposal introduces noise, lighting, guest activity, servicing and drainage impacts which affect neighbouring occupiers and the rural environment.
- Policy 26 (Countryside Protection) because the proposal introduces commercial visitor accommodation, parking demand, lighting and guest activity into a countryside location outside the built-up area boundary.
- Policy 31 (Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity) because insufficient information has been provided to demonstrate that the operation of the holiday-let use would not adversely affect nearby Ancient Woodland and associated habitats.
- Policies 32 and 33 (Quality of Development and Development Principles) because the proposal results in overlooking, loss of privacy, guest activity, lighting and disturbance affecting our home, our garden and our associated amenity areas.
- Policy 39 (Infrastructure Provision) because insufficient evidence has been provided to demonstrate adequate foul drainage capacity and infrastructure provision.
- Policies 40 and 41 (Sustainable Transport and Parking) because the proposal relies on private vehicle access in a rural location and introduces additional parking and vehicle activity.

1. Site Context, Planning History and Current Residential Relationship

We live at Kerves Farmhouse and have lived there since 2017. The site forms part of the wider historic Kerves Farm complex, including Kerves Farm Cottage, Kerves Barn and associated equestrian land and buildings. The Supporting Statement refers to former commercial livery use and dressage or training activity.

Based on our experience of the site since 2017, that description is disputed and should not be relied upon to justify further commercialisation of the site.

The planning history indicates that the equestrian facilities were controlled in association with residential use. Condition 4 of DC/11/1176 restricted the sand school to use solely in connection with Kerves Barn as a dwelling and not for commercial purposes, as a riding establishment or for competitions. Condition 14 of SQ/122/98 is understood to have required the stables to be used in association with residential use.

The current application is not an application to continue an established lawful commercial livery, training or tourism operation. It is a retrospective application for commercial short-term holiday accommodation in a sensitive rural-residential setting. We ask the Council to determine the proposal on its own planning merits, taking account of the current relationship between neighbouring properties, the enforcement context and the cumulative operational effects of the use.

2. Retrospective Application and Actual Impacts

The application is retrospective. The Council is not being asked to assess a hypothetical development, but an existing holiday-let use that can be considered by reference to its actual effects on the ground.

In our experience, the relevant impacts include guest arrivals and departures, vehicle movements, parking, external lighting, noise, disturbance from dogs, overlooking, loss of privacy, outdoor seating, drainage and servicing. The applicant should not be placed in a more favourable position because the development has already taken place.

3. Commercial Holiday Accommodation, Not Incidental Domestic Use

The application is not for an ancillary domestic structure. It is for commercial short-term holiday accommodation. The Supporting Statement confirms that the hut is intended to be marketed for seasonal short-term stays through platforms such as Airbnb.

Holiday-let use is materially different from ordinary residential occupation. It introduces guest turnover, arrivals and departures, outdoor sitting, lighting, waste, cleaning, servicing and vehicle movements. The Airbnb listing and reviews indicate use over an extended period and support our view that this is an ongoing commercial use rather than an occasional incidental use.

4. Countryside Protection and Built-Up Area Boundary

The site lies outside the defined built-up area boundary and is within the countryside for planning purposes. Policy 26 seeks to protect the rural character and undeveloped nature of the countryside from inappropriate development.

The key issue is not whether rural tourism is supported in principle, but whether this particular holiday-let use is acceptable in this specific location. In our view, the proposal introduces commercial visitor accommodation, guest turnover, vehicle movements, lighting and servicing demands into a sensitive rural-residential site.

5. Harm to Our Residential Amenity, Overlooking and Privacy

Policy 33 requires development to avoid unacceptable harm to the amenity of occupiers and users of nearby property and land. Policy 32 similarly requires development to respond to its context and protect existing amenity.

The Supporting Statement asserts that there is “no overlooking” of neighbouring properties and that existing buildings provide sufficient screening. We dispute that assertion.

The south elevation includes a window and raised platform entrance that face towards our home at Kerves Farmhouse, including our bedroom windows, private garden areas, swimming pool, hot tub, patio and associated outdoor amenity space. Appendix 3 contains photographic evidence showing the relationship between the south elevation, raised entrance and our property.

The harm to us arises not only from the physical presence of the hut but from its use as short-term holiday accommodation. The turnover of different guests creates a materially greater perception of overlooking and loss of privacy than would arise from ordinary occupation by a single household.

The associated seating area, guest activity, parking and use of nearby outdoor spaces allow for direct and perceived overlooking of our private amenity areas. The concern is therefore the cumulative effect of the south elevation window, elevated platform, close residential relationship, external amenity space and commercial holiday-let use.

5a. Planning Inspectorate Decisions

Planning Inspectorate decisions consistently demonstrate that overlooking, loss of privacy and the intensified activity associated with holiday accommodation are material planning considerations. The assessment is not limited to the physical dimensions of a development, but extends to the relationship with neighbouring residential property, the position of windows, the use of external amenity areas, separation distances and the pattern of occupation associated with short-term holiday accommodation.

In Appeal Ref. APP/H2733/W/22/3310165 (Filey), the Inspector dismissed an appeal for five shepherd hut holiday homes. The Inspector found that the proposed bedroom windows would directly face neighbouring patio areas and rear-facing windows and that the comings and goings of occupiers would intensify activity on the site. Whilst recognising tourism benefits, the Inspector concluded that the resulting overlooking and loss of privacy would unacceptably harm neighbouring occupiers and that those benefits did not outweigh the identified harm.

A similar principle was applied in Appeal Ref. APP/H2733/W/21/3268768 (The Old Hall, Snainton), involving shepherd huts used for holiday accommodation. In that case, the Inspector considered visitor parking, vehicle movements, external seating areas, raised verandas, visitor activity and the use of outdoor amenity space. The Inspector concluded that holiday accommodation would not be used in the same way as normal residential occupation and found that associated activity, noise and disturbance would be greater than ordinary residential use and harmful to neighbouring living conditions.

Further support is found in Appeal Ref. APP/J1860/W/21/3272466 (Hillbrook House, Malvern), where the Inspector dismissed a proposal for holiday-let accommodation because future occupiers would have visibility into a neighbouring private garden. The Inspector found that, notwithstanding existing separation and some screening, the overlooking would be unacceptably intrusive and harmful to residential amenity.

Those principles are directly relevant here. The south elevation window of the shepherd's hut directly faces towards our home, including bedroom windows, private garden areas, swimming pool, hot tub, patio and other outdoor amenity space. Appendix 3 contains photographic evidence demonstrating the actual relationship between the proposed shepherd's hut and Kerves Farmhouse.

The impact does not arise solely from the south elevation window. The shepherd's hut occupies an elevated position and includes a platform and external seating area. The short-term holiday use introduces a continual turnover of visitors, vehicle movements, arrivals and departures, outdoor activity and use of external amenity areas. These impacts must be considered cumulatively rather than in isolation.

The Council should therefore assess the actual relationship between the shepherd's hut and our property, together with the effects of the proposed holiday-let use, rather than relying solely upon the assertions contained within the Supporting Statement. Accordingly, the proposal gives rise to material planning harm through direct and perceived overlooking, loss of privacy and intensified activity, contrary to Policies 32 and 33 of the HDPF.

6. Noise, Lighting and Guest Activity

The Supporting Statement understates the operational effects of short-term holiday accommodation. Holiday accommodation creates a changing pattern of occupation involving arrivals, departures, vehicle movements, conversations, external sitting, lighting, noise and other activity.

External lighting and guest activity affect our enjoyment of our home and garden and also have the potential to affect the rural character of the area. The existing photographic evidence shows night-time illumination of the hut visible from our bedrooms. In the absence of a lighting assessment addressing hours of use, direction, intensity and mitigation, the Council cannot reasonably conclude that the proposal avoids material harm.

7. Ancient Woodland and Biodiversity

The proposal is located in close proximity to an area identified by Horsham District Council as Ancient Woodland. Ancient Woodland is an irreplaceable habitat and is afforded the highest level of protection under national and local planning policy.

Whilst the application focuses primarily on the physical siting of the shepherd's hut, insufficient consideration has been given to the wider effects of the associated holiday accommodation use. These effects extend beyond the footprint of the hut itself and include external seating areas, guest parking, vehicular movements, pedestrian access routes, dog walking, lighting, recreational use of adjoining land and the general pattern of occupation associated with short-term holiday accommodation.

Horsham District Council has previously recognised, in refusing application DC/24/1959 (Furnace Lakes), that the impacts arising from the “future pressure associated with the proposed recreational usage” of shepherd’s hut accommodation are material planning considerations where development is located in proximity to Ancient Woodland. In that case, the Council’s concerns extended beyond the physical footprint of the development and included the effects of visitor occupation and recreational activity on an irreplaceable habitat.

A further relevant comparison can be drawn with DC/21/2424 (Valewood Farmhouse), where Horsham District Council’s Arboricultural Officer and the Woodland Trust raised concerns regarding the indirect impacts of holiday accommodation located close to Ancient Woodland. These concerns included disturbance, increased activity, light pollution, habitat degradation and “domestication of the site”, together with wider woodland-degrading effects associated with a change of use.

Similar considerations arise in the present case. The proposed development includes guest accommodation, external amenity space, parking areas, access routes and associated visitor activity in close proximity to the Ancient Woodland. Vehicle movements, guest activity, pedestrian routes, external seating areas, lighting and the presence of dogs have the potential to increase disturbance, noise, light spill and recreational pressure in proximity to the woodland edge. The submitted plans and supporting information provide no assessment of these activities or their cumulative effects on the adjacent habitat.

Unlike other recently considered holiday accommodation and shepherd’s hut applications within Horsham District, no ecological assessment, arboricultural assessment, lighting strategy or other specialist evidence has been provided to demonstrate that these effects have been properly assessed or mitigated. The application therefore fails to demonstrate that the operation of the holiday accommodation would not adversely affect the adjacent Ancient Woodland and its ecological value.

8. Environmental Protection

Policy 24 is engaged because the proposal gives rise to potential environmental impacts through noise, lighting, increased activity, servicing demands and wastewater generation. Those impacts are material in a retrospective application because the Council must assess the development as it is operating, not simply as described in the Supporting Statement.

The proposal introduces commercial activity into a sensitive countryside location. In combination with its proximity to Ancient Woodland and the wider rural environment, the increased activity, lighting and servicing requirements raise legitimate concerns regarding environmental quality, rural tranquillity and potential disturbance to wildlife.

9. Drainage, Wastewater and Infrastructure Capacity

The application provides insufficient information regarding foul drainage and servicing arrangements. The shepherd’s hut contains a shower, wash basin and WC and therefore generates foul wastewater associated with commercial holiday accommodation.

It is understood that the hut has been connected to an existing private Klargester treatment system that historically served residential properties within the Kerves Farm complex. The application does not provide a drainage assessment, confirmation of available treatment capacity, evidence of consent from parties with an interest in the shared system, details of maintenance arrangements or evidence that the infrastructure was designed to accommodate an additional commercial holiday-let use.

In the absence of evidence demonstrating that the private drainage system has sufficient capacity to accommodate a commercial holiday-let use, the proposal has not demonstrated compliance with Policy 39.

10. Access, Transport and Parking

The proposal depends almost entirely upon private vehicle access. Kerves Lane is a narrow rural lane with no footway, limited pedestrian refuge and no street lighting. Visitors accessing nearby public rights of way are required to walk along the carriageway. The route is further constrained in places by vegetation and is likely to be particularly difficult during darkness, ice, flooding or other adverse weather conditions.

A useful comparison can be drawn with application DC/23/1335 (New Barn Farm), where Horsham District Council refused holiday accommodation despite public rights of way being relatively close to the site because visitors could not safely access them on foot owing to the lack of pedestrian footways and lighting. Similar considerations arise here. The application contains no assessment of how guests would safely access nearby public rights of way or recreational routes without reliance on private vehicles.

The material planning harm is not limited to the number of marked spaces. It includes the effect of guest vehicles, arrivals, departures, door-closing, unloading, manoeuvring and associated pedestrian movements on our residential amenity and the rural lane environment.

11. Permanence, Mobility and Operational Development

The Supporting Statement places weight on the fact that the shepherd's hut has wheels and is said to be easily relocatable. The planning issue is not simply whether the hut could theoretically be moved, but its actual operational reality.

A structure may be physically capable of movement while still functioning as an established planning feature on the land, particularly where it is used for visitor accommodation and supported by access, parking, external seating, lighting, drainage, services or a base. The Council should assess the real-world effect of the development and its operational consequences.

12. Cumulative Intensification

This application should not be viewed in isolation. Taken together with the wider site history, enforcement context and recent activity, the proposal contributes to ongoing intensification and commercialisation of a sensitive rural-residential site. The cumulative effects include guest activity, parking, vehicle movements, outdoor recreation, lighting, drainage demand and ecological pressure.

13. Planning Balance

The claimed tourism benefits are limited. Against those benefits, the Council should weigh:

- material harm to our residential amenity;
- direct and perceived overlooking of our bedrooms, garden areas, swimming pool and hot tub;
- increased activity, noise, lighting and disturbance from short-term guests;
- impacts upon countryside character and the rural-residential setting;
- failure to assess impacts on nearby Ancient Woodland;
- absence of ecological, arboricultural and lighting assessment;
- insufficient information regarding drainage and servicing;
- concerns regarding access, parking and pedestrian safety;
- cumulative intensification of the site;
- the retrospective nature of the application.

For the reasons set out above, we consider that the proposal conflicts with the development plan when read as a whole and results in material planning harm that is not outweighed by the limited tourism benefits claimed.

14. Request for Refusal

For the reasons set out above, we respectfully request that application DC/26/1056 be refused.

If the Council is not minded to refuse the application outright, we respectfully request that the matter be referred to Planning Committee. If the Council is nevertheless minded to grant permission, any permission should be subject to strict, precise and enforceable conditions controlling holiday-let use, maximum occupancy, maximum length of stays, arrival and departure times, guest parking location, external lighting, outdoor seating, noise, dogs and pets, waste collection, foul drainage, protection of our residential amenity, and protection of biodiversity and nearby Ancient Woodland.

However, our primary position is that the identified harms are not capable of being dismissed as minor or incidental. The proper planning outcome is refusal.

Yours faithfully,



Appendix and Evidence Schedule

The objection should be read together with the evidence appendices.

- Appendix 1a: Chronology and planning / enforcement history.

- 1b: Site layout and relationship between Kerves Farm Cottage, Kerves Barn and Kerves Farmhouse.
- [REDACTED]
- Appendix 2: Installation and construction evidence.
- Appendix 3: Photographs - swimming pool, hot tub and private amenity spaces.
- Appendix 3a: Bedrooms - line of sight into rear facing bedrooms.
- Appendix 4: Guest parking & Night-time light intrusion evidence.
- Appendix 5: Ancient Woodland mapping.
- Appendix 6: Drainage / Klargester evidence.
- Appendix 7: Historic parking allocation / SQ/122/98 plan.
- Appendix 8: Kerves Lane pedestrian access, nearest footpath and highway photographs.
- Appendix 9: Airbnb listing and reviews showing operation of the holiday-let use.

Appendix 1

Chronology and Site Context

Objection to DC/26/1056 – Kerves Farm Cottage, Kerves Lane, Horsham

1a. Chronology

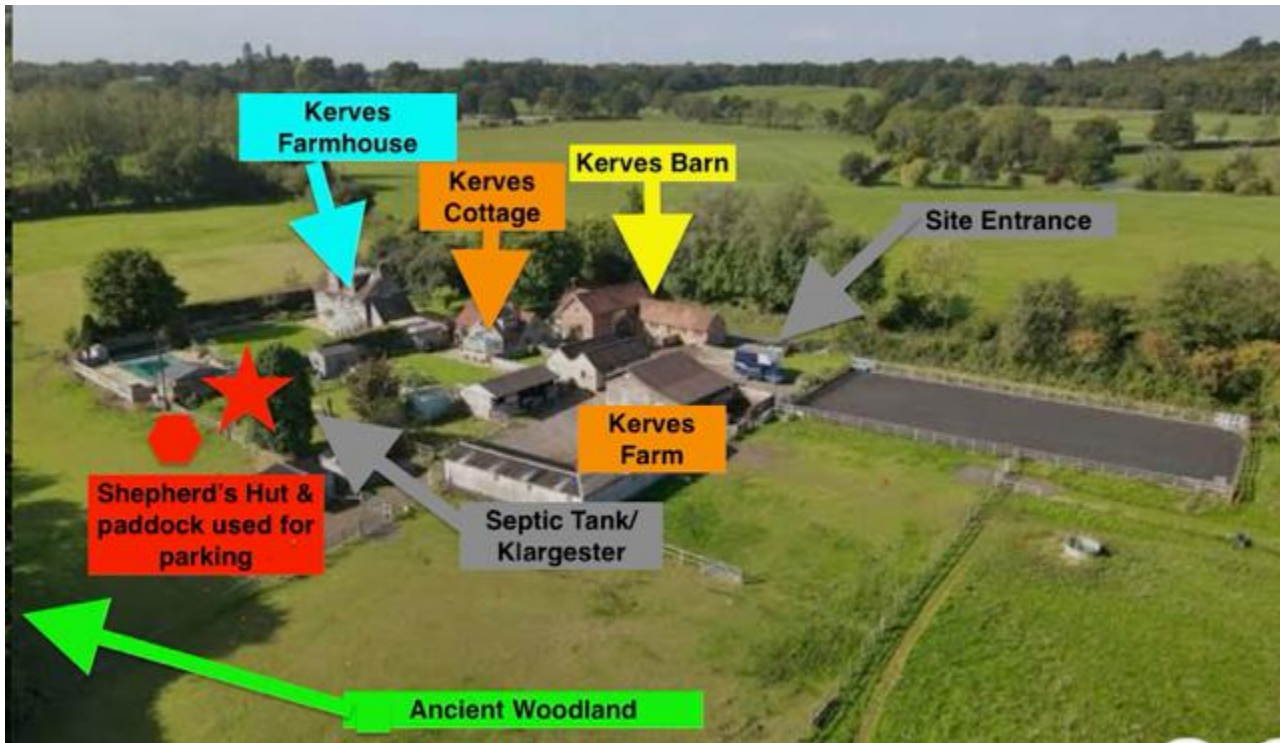
This appendix summarises the planning and site history relevant to the retrospective shepherd's hut application at Kerves Farm Cottage and the wider Kerves Farm complex.

Date	Reference	Planning / Site Note
2013	DC/13/1328	Permission granted for conversion of the garage into living accommodation, together with single-storey and two-storey extensions, including dormers.
2015	—	Kerves Farm Cottage was converted and extended to provide a separate dwelling.
July 2017	—	Kerves Farmhouse was sold to our family. This marks the end of the earlier single-family ownership.
January 2025	—	Kerves Barn was sold. By this point, the wider complex was no longer in unified family ownership.
March 2025	—	Kerves Farm and Kerves Farm Cottage were sold to present owner.
6 March 2026	EN/26/0084	Alleged change of use of land involving the stationing of a shepherd's hut for use as a holiday let.
March 2026	EN/26/0087	Alleged laying of hardstanding used for parking horse lorries and commercial vehicles in connection with holiday lets, and extension of the access / driveway without planning permission. Pending consideration.
June 2026	EN/26/0210	Alleged breach of condition 4 of DC/11/1176 and condition 14 of SQ/122/98, relating to use of the sand school and stables. DC application submitted.
June 2026	EN/26/0219	Alleged use of horsebox as residential accommodation. Pending consideration.
July 2026	DC/26/1012	Construction of dormers in rear roof elevation. Lawful Development Certificate – Proposed.
July 2026	DC/26/1056	Siting of a shepherd's hut to the rear for short-term letting purposes. Retrospective application.

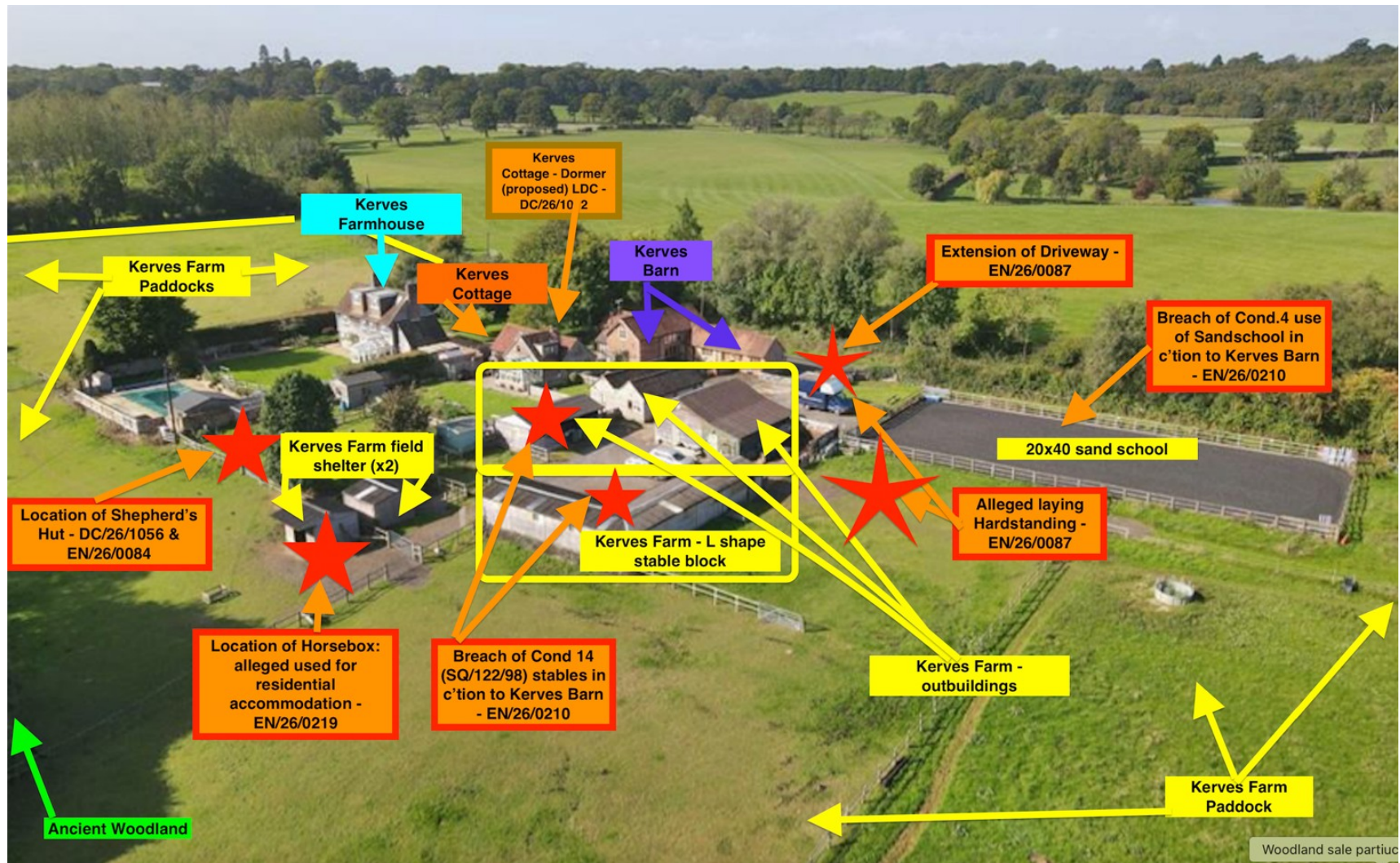
Note: the chronology is intended to identify the main planning and enforcement matters relevant to the Council's assessment of the current retrospective holiday-let application. It should be read together with the main objection letter and the photographic appendices.

1b. Site Context and Annotated Site Plan

The marked-up site image (taken from the Sales Particulars at the time when Kerves Cottage was sold) should be used to understand the wider relationship between Kerves Farm Cottage, Kerves Farmhouse, Kerves Barn, the shepherd's hut, guest parking and the surrounding land.



Site Layout – detailed site layout with reference to recent planning matters across the site.



Previous Site Layout before sale (approx 2024)



Spring 2026:.



**Note - Source of 2026 photos: Aerial photographs reproduced from Bachellor Monkhouse estate agent marketing particulars of Kerves Farmhouse*

