

The enforcement notice nobody mentioned.

A 2011 enforcement notice — unresolved, not on the portal, invisible to standard search — surfaced by solicitor at exchange. Deal renegotiated £35,000 downward.

Site: Rural smallholding, North Yorkshire (LS29 area) · Anonymised

Report type: Pre-Listing Planning History — Estate Agent Sample

Prepared: April 2026 · Illustrative case based on real enforcement data patterns

KEY FINDING

Unresolved enforcement notice from 2011 — erected structures without consent — not indexed on public portal — invisible to every standard search tool.

This is a sample report produced by Planning Decoder / Sierra21 Software Studio. The scenario is fictionalised but representative of real cases we encounter. All planning data references are drawn from real UK planning records. This report does not constitute legal or planning advice.

48hrs

Standard turnaround

207

UK councils reachable

£149–£249

Fixed fee

White-label

Available for partner firms

The instruction

A rural smallholding with a farmhouse, two stone barns, and approximately 6 acres of paddock land in the Wharfe Valley. Marketed at £785,000. Offers received within three weeks. Solicitors instructed. Exchange expected within eight weeks of listing.

What the agent knew at valuation

The farmhouse had full planning consent. One barn had been converted under permitted development. The vendor confirmed no outstanding planning issues. The agent had no reason to look further.

! CRITICAL RISK — IDENTIFIED AT SOLICITOR STAGE

An enforcement notice was served by North Yorkshire Council in August 2011 in respect of the erection of a timber storage structure and hardstanding to the rear of the property without planning consent (ref EN/2011/0847). The notice required cessation of use and removal of the structure within 90 days. The structure remains. The enforcement notice was never complied with and never discharged. It runs with the land.

PLANNING DECODER INTELLIGENCE

This enforcement notice does not appear on the North Yorkshire planning portal public search.

- North Yorkshire merged six district councils in April 2023. Legacy enforcement records from Harrogate Borough Council — where this notice was served — were not fully migrated.
- Standard portal searches query the new North Yorkshire Council system only. The 2011 notice sits in the legacy Harrogate database — reachable only via direct council records requests.
- We access enforcement history via direct council data pulls, not portal searches. This notice was retrieved in the pre-listing check within 24 hours.

What happened at exchange

The buyer's solicitor identified the enforcement notice during pre-exchange searches. The buyer's surveyor confirmed the structure referenced in the notice remains in place. The buyer requested a £35,000 reduction in asking price plus an indemnity insurance policy at vendor's cost. The vendor accepted. The agent's commission was calculated on the reduced figure.

What a pre-listing check would have found

Source	Method	Outcome
North Yorkshire Council (current)	Standard portal search	No enforcement records found — legacy data gap from 2023 merger
Harrogate Borough Council (legacy)	Direct council records request	EN/2011/0847 retrieved. Enforcement notice served August 2011. Not complied with.
Land Registry title (YK123456)	Full title analysis	No restrictions noted in Charges Register. Enforcement notice not noted on title.

Planning portal cluster (LS29)	Full postcode cluster extraction	14 applications retrieved. Permitted development barn conversion confirmed. No subsequent consent for the storage structure.
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The enforcement notice in full

Reference: EN/2011/0847 · Harrogate Borough Council · Served: 12 August 2011

Property	Smallholding, Wharfe Valley, LS29 area (address anonymised)
Breach alleged	Erection of a timber storage structure (approx 8m x 5m) and associated hardcore hardstanding to the rear of the property without planning permission
Steps required	1. Cease use of the structure. 2. Remove the structure and all associated materials from the land. 3. Restore the land to its former condition.
Compliance period	90 days from date of service (i.e. by 10 November 2011)
Status at listing	NOT COMPLIED WITH. Structure present. Notice unresolved. Runs with the land.
Portal visibility	NOT INDEXED on North Yorkshire Council portal. Retrievable only via direct legacy Harrogate BC records request.

What this means for your practice

i Vendor expectation management

The vendor knew about the structure and presumably knew it had no consent. A pre-listing check gives you the conversation before the buyer's solicitor has it — at your valuation meeting, not at exchange.

i Commission protection

This deal completed at £750,000. Commission was calculated on the reduced figure. A pre-listing check costs £149–£249. The enforcement notice cost the vendor £35,000 and cost the agent a proportional reduction on a commission they'd already earned.

i Instruction pitch

An agent who walks into a rural valuation and says "we run a pre-listing planning intelligence check on every rural instruction — here's what it covers and why it matters" is a different proposition from every other agent in the room.

i Risk profile

An unresolved enforcement notice that runs with the land is a material fact. An agent who was aware of the structure and did not investigate its planning status faces a different conversation with a dissatisfied buyer than one who commissioned a formal check.

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