



CURRENT STATUS OF KEY EMPTY/DERELICT BUSINESS PROPERTIES IN OTLEY

OVERVIEW

Although Otley is a successful market town relative to others of a similar size and nature, it contains a number of unused and semi-derelict problem buildings in addition to a limited number of empty/available shops which blight the townscape and impact investment. We need our buildings occupied.

Otley Business Improvement District (BID) is working with Katie White MP (Leeds North West) on developing proposals for changes to the law which could help force these buildings to be repaired, developed or occupied as current legislation is inadequate to support Local Authorities in enforcing this. We will provide updates on progress when these are available.

Compiled on 28 September 2025 and updated since, including a number of problem sites now deleted having been resolved, the following properties were identified as impacting the outlook and well-being of the town. The locations fall into the following categories:

- Empty/derelict properties with sufficient/active planning consents in place
- Empty/derelict properties with planning/development in progress
- Empty/derelict properties dormant i.e. no current plans to restore or develop

A. EMPTY/DERELICT PROPERTIES NOT REQUIRING FURTHER PLANNING CONSENTS

1. Former Fulton's supermarket, 1-9 Market Place, Otley LS21 3AQ

Owner:

As of early December 2025 the ownership of the building has changed. Details remain confidential but Otley BID has been in contact with the new owner on a regular basis.

Current Status:

This landmark building has been empty since 2022 after Jack Fulton's closed following its takeover by Poundland. Poundland took over the lease as the tenant, but failed to undertake maintenance and let the building fall into significant disrepair. Now in new ownership.

Current legislation provides planning authorities like Leeds City Council with little scope to enforce repairs on the scale required to bring the building back into being capable of beneficial occupation.



As occupied by Madeley decorating supplies



August 2025

Desired Outcome:

Otley BID would like to see this landmark building returned to satisfactory condition, so that this becomes an attractive centrepiece for the Market Place and the town as whole. The building could provide either a retail/commercial function as well as possible domestic accommodation upstairs. This could be a catalyst for the renovation of other properties around the Market Place.

Otley BID is aware that a number of parties have expressed an interest in letting the building, the owner has one preferred and discussions are ongoing.

Recommended Actions:

The building changed ownership in early December and Otley BID has been in regular contact with the new owner offering practical assistance towards the building's renovation.

Otley BID to:

- continue to liaise with the buildings' owners to assist in the speedy return of the building to full use
- collaborate with local MP, Katie White, on the possible use of new legislative powers.

2. Former Summer Cross Pub, Pool Road, Otley LS21 1HT

Owner:

Springfield Healthcare, Fusion Court, Garforth, Leeds LS25 2GH ([link](#), email: info@springfieldhealthcare.com, tel: 0113 5376742)

Current Status:

This unlisted former public house is located in an attractive gateway location to the east of the town, lying in the Conservation Area. It was bought and immediately closed by Westward Care, a nursing home operator, in 2007.

A planning application (08/06122/FU) for a change of use of former Public House involving alterations and 3 storey extension to residential care home was approved in 2009. However, this consent was never fully progressed apart from boarding-up, demolishing some single storey extensions and erecting a metal fence round the site. The property has not been maintained at all and has fallen into dereliction. Unfortunately, Leeds City Council took the following view around the fulfilment of the consent's requirements: *"The issue is they have lawfully implemented a planning permission, albeit many years ago. Planning permission was granted for the conversion of the former Summer Cross pub and extensions to form a 46-bed care home; following consideration by Plans Panel the approval was issued on 10/07/2009. Conditions were discharged on 11/06/2012 and I understand that some works of 'commencement' have been carried out to secure the permission. As such, they have made a lawful commencement of the planning permission."*

The site was subsequently sold on to a different care home operator, Springfield, who submitted a new planning application in 2022 for a much larger scheme (a 66 bed care home with bistro). Unsurprisingly, this was rejected by Leeds City Council in 2024 on the grounds of overdevelopment and building size amongst other things. Given the sensitive location of this building, Otley BID is concerned that unrealistic planning applications may be getting submitted whilst the building continues to deteriorate to the point of requiring demolition.



circa 2007



August 2025

**Desired Outcome:**

Given its prominent location, Otley BID wishes to see this unlisted Conservation Area building brought back into beneficial occupation as a community, commercial or residential use which does not negatively impact local businesses and residents through excessive additional parking.

Recommended Actions:

Otley BID to liaise with:

- Springfield Care on whether they have any revised plans for the building;
- local ward councillors and LCC Planning to establish whether there are any grounds to have the existing planning consent withdrawn on the grounds of no meaningful commencement;
- Katie White MP on use of new *Levelling Up and Regeneration Act (2023)* to progress this.

3. Former Taylor's Shoes, 3 Beech Hill, Westgate, Otley LS21 3AT

Owner:

Ian Crook % Dean Gray, Gray Architects, Little Kelk Farm, Driffield (tel: 07851 681269).

Current Status:

This building is listed by Historic England ([1135276](#)) and has been empty since around 2010 following its closure as a shop. It is in a poor state with its frontage partially boarded-up in March 2025 after window glass shattered onto the footpath and road. The rear windows are falling out.

Previous Planning and Listed Building consents were approved in 2015 and lapsed in 2018. The owner now has fresh Planning and Listed Building consents (23/04911/FU and 23/06561/LI) which were approved on 9 December 2024 for 2 shops and a flat above. There are some practical challenges in implementing these as the front stone façade is bowing out and the narrow pavement is unsuitable for scaffolding due to its proximity to the traffic lights. Therefore, the stonework is likely to need taking down from the inside, possibly needing the roof supporting or removing which is expensive and hazardous.



Desired Outcome:

Given its sensitive and prominent location, Otley BID would like to see this landmark building repaired and brought back into beneficial occupation for commercial and residential purposes.

Recommended Actions:

Otley BID to liaise with the owners, local ward councillors, LCC Planning and Highways to identify practical and low impact solutions to the safe restoration of this building, for example through temporary road closures or diversions at non-peak periods.

4. Former Yeoman Public House, Gay Lane, Otley LS21 3BB

Owner:

Tate Fuel Oils Ltd, Gay Lane, Otley, LS21 3BB email: sales@tateoil.co.uk

Agent:

MAS Design Consultants Ltd, 1 Oxford Road, Guiseley, Leeds LS20 9AX



Current Status:

The pub has been empty and boarded-up since its closure and purchase by the adjoining Tate Fuel Oils in 2009. It is located within the Conservation Area in a prominent gateway location at the junction of Leeds Road/Gay Lane/East Chevin Road whose deteriorating state leads to regular criticism by residents.

The building had a consent granted in 2017 (17/00529/FU) for conversion to two houses and several flats, but the consent was not progressed and lapsed. A second application for a change of use into six flats (23/04667/FU) was granted in February 2025 for conversion of the building into 6 apartments and remains current, but there has been no material progress towards implementing this. However, a further planning application was made in September 2025 for the installation of new windows and solar panels as a non-material amendment to 23/04667/FU.

Desired Outcome:

Given its prominent location and approved planning consent, Otley BID would like to see this landmark building brought back into productive use for residential purposes as soon as possible.

Recommended Actions:

Otley BID to liaise with the owners to discuss their development plans.

5. Former Great Wall Chinese Restaurant, 56 Boroughgate, Otley LS21 3AE

Owner:

Hinchcliffes, 87a New Road Side, Horsforth, Leeds LS18 4QD

Agent: FSS, 8 Raglan Street, Harrogate, HG1 1LE. Tel: 01423 501211

Current Status:

Following its closure as a Chinese takeaway, this building was sold and planning and listed building applications (23/05858/FU and 23/05863/LI) submitted for converting this building into three two-bedroom apartments. These were approved in September 2024 but the property freehold is now up for sale again via a Harrogate agent, FSS, for £425,000 freehold (see [Boroughgate, Otley](#)).



Desired Outcome:

Given its prominent location, Otley BID would like to see the planning consent for this building exercised and the building brought back into productive use for residential purposes as soon as possible.

Recommended Actions:

Otley BID to keep a watching brief and liaise with the owners and agents as needed to offer support where needed.

6. Former Barclays Bank, 2 Manor Square, Otley LS21 3AY

Owner:

As of 22 January 2026 the building has been acquired by Christopher Little & Co, 75 Bondgate, Otley LS21 3AB 01943 851090.

Current Status:

The ground floor will be used by the financial advisors for their own use.

For background, this property is a prominent building located at key road junction in the town which formerly housed the Royal White Horse Hotel for many years and is Grade II-listed by English Heritage ([1200352](#)). The ground floor of the building was occupied by Barclays Bank and has stood empty since Barclays left in 2018 (and exercised their break clause in 2020).

Whilst the external appearance does not appear too run-down, it is understood that the ground floor is now in poor repair with concerns about asbestos, drainage and damp. A number of surveys (structural, drainage and asbestos) have been conducted by the new owner. The upper part of the building is composed of flats under different ownership and which are in full occupation and understood to be in good repair. The building has parking, but also a covenant against selling alcohol.



August 2025

Desired Outcome:

Given its sensitive and prominent location, Otley BID is delighted to see progress towards this landmark building being repaired and brought back into beneficial occupation with a commercial use to complement the positive businesses around it. It is now in competent ownership.

Recommended Actions:

Otley BID to continue to support the new purchaser as and when required.



B. EMPTY/DERELICT PROPERTIES WITH PLANNING/DEVELOPMENT IN PROGRESS

1. Former Otley Civic Centre, 4-8 Cross Green, Otley LS21 1AL

Owner:

Nirmal Sekhon Group, Dawsons House, Owlcotes Lane, Pudsey LS28 6PY ([website](#), tel: 01274 744462 email: info@sekhongroup.co.uk)

Current Status:

This landmark building was originally the Mechanics Institute and is Grade II listed by English Heritage ([1200204](#)). It was subsequently gifted to Otley UDC and taken over by Leeds City Council following local government reorganisation.

It subsequently became Otley's Civic Centre where it accommodated Otley Town Council offices, Otley Museum and archive, a lecture hall, snooker room, stage, large hall and six offices, venue for amateur theatre, beer festival etc. The building was vacated by Otley Town Council in 2010 and was then left empty and unmaintained for a number of years by Leeds City Council. The property was finally sold in 2020 to private owners.

No work was undertaken for two years, but in 2022 Sekhon submitted a planning application for the development of 35 flats which was rejected by Leeds City Council on the grounds of overdevelopment and inadequate parking provision. A subsequent planning application was submitted for 28 flats and was again rejected on similar grounds, leading the owner to claim that a conversion into fewer units would not be economic. The owners have not maintained the building's exterior (notably the roof and windows), leading to its condition deteriorating into a very poor state which now endangers its integrity as a building. The building has been on Save Britain's 'Heritage's Buildings at Risk' register for several years ([link](#)).

The Council's Building Control has required emergency scaffolding to be installed and this has been present for a prolonged period after an incident of masonry falling onto the street below in December 2022. The scaffolding and associated road closures have caused significant inconvenience and visual blight for local businesses and residents. Around half of the roof slates were removed in February 2025 leaving the building's interior open to weather and progress on replacing roof trusses and reroofing has been extremely slow. There are numerous broken windows which have led to an infestation of pigeons.

Otley BID is concerned that the necessary actions have not been undertaken in time and that the building may have become unsafe and face demolition. In addition, there appears to be little likelihood of a realistic planning application being submitted which will halt the building's decline.



2020



August 2025

Desired Outcome:

Given its sensitive and prominent location, Otley BID would like to see this landmark building repaired and brought back into beneficial occupation use as a community, commercial or residential use which does not negatively impact local businesses and residents through excessive additional parking.

Recommended Actions:

Otley BID to liaise with local ward councillors and the local MP with a view to agreeing an urgent action plan with the owners to safeguard the integrity of the building and safety of the local community.

In the event of a failure to agree this, we would advocate that Leeds City Council uses powers under S.47 of the *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act (1990)* to protect this listed building. This 'gives an appropriate authority *Compulsory Purchase powers to acquire a Listed Building in need of repairs within the authorisation of the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport*'. The process is to serve a Repair Notice under S.48 of that Act 2 months before getting the Secretary of State to authorise a Compulsory Purchase Order. It is worth noting that S.50 (1) allows 'minimum compensation when a building has been deliberately left for the purpose of justifying its demolition', which may be the case here.

Former Council Buildings and Depot, North Parade, Otley

Owner:

Tariq Nazir, Chevin Service Station, Gay Lane, Otley, LS21 1BR.

Agent: not known

Current Status:

The former Board buildings (in part formerly known as Transmission House) and depot to the rear form a block of 0.35 acres/0.14 hectares on the west side of North Parade, between the Courthouse and the North Parade (Licks) Car Park and lie within the Otley Conservation Area.

This is an important site which has its own policy (MU4) within Otley Town Council's Neighbourhood Plan which states: *"Development proposals for the former Board Buildings . . . that include housing; and/or offices; and/or the re-housing of the Otley Museum, together with associated parking, will be supported subject to:*

- a. Preservation or enhancement of the character or appearance of the Otley Conservation Area within which the site is located.*
- b. Compliance with Policy BE9 of this plan.*
- c. Preservation of the special architectural or historic interest of the buildings on site, and adjacent buildings, that make a significant positive contribution to the distinctiveness and character of the area, which in respect of non-listed buildings must be assessed in accordance with a balanced judgement having regard to the scale of harm and significance of the building.*
- d. Proposals must also demonstrate consideration has been given to future expansion of Otley Courthouse on adjacent land to the west."*

The Depot site is not covered by this policy, although it is planned to include these as part of the refresh of the Otley Neighbourhood Plan.

Leeds City Council sold the Board buildings and depot at auction in January 2025 for £1.2m to a private developer. The developer has engaged an architect who has developed plans for housing within the board buildings (but not yet for the depot) and a planning application is expected imminently.





Desired Outcome:

Given its prominent location, Otley BID would like to see this landmark building brought back into beneficial occupation for residential purposes as soon as possible.

Recommended Actions:

Otley BID and Otley Town Council to liaise with the owners to discuss their development plans.



2. Outstanding Development Plot, Ashfield Works, Otley LS21 3AT

Owner:

Churchill Living Ltd., Churchill House, Parkside, Ringwood, Hants BH24 3SG. Email: churchill@devcomms.co.uk

Current Status:

A planning application (25/04310/FU) has been submitted to develop the remaining development plot into retirement living accommodation for older people comprising 29 retirement apartments and a detached cottage. This diverges from the original planning brief which foresaw this being a commercial employment site.

The application is current and was objected to by Otley Town Council on the grounds of its size, quality relative to the Conservation Area, insufficient car parking, lack of a cycle/footpath between Manor Garth Park and the proposed pedestrian crossing on Westgate, and lack of affordable units.

Desired Outcome:

Given its prominent location, Otley BID would like to see a planning application submitted which aligns with the previous planning brief for employment use and other conditions.

Recommended Actions:

Otley BID to keep a watching brief on the progress of the planning application and liaise with Ward Councillors as appropriate.

C. EMPTY/DERELICT PROPERTIES WITH NO CURRENT PLANS TO RESTORE OR DEVELOP

1. Stirling House, 39-41 Kirkgate, Otley LS21 3HN

Owner:
unknown

Current Status:

37 and 39 Kirkgate are Grade II-listed by Historic England ([1300830](#)). 39-41 is comprised of the ground floor former Bargain Booze off-licence, current Antalya barbers and the former *Wharfedale Observer* newspaper offices above. These offices have been empty for several decades.

The site was offered for sale by Eddisons Commercial Agents and sold by their Pugh Auction division during 2024 to an unknown owner, who immediately boarded up the windows. The building was again listed for auction in early 2025 with a guide price of £795,000 but then withdrawn. It is understood that there may be some structural issues with a common party wall with the adjacent property, the former Lloyds (then Cohens) Pharmacy. No planning applications have been submitted.



Desired Outcome:

Given its prominent location, Otley BID would like to see these landmark buildings repaired and brought back into productive use for commercial and residential purposes as soon as possible.

Recommended Actions:

Otley BID to liaise with Pugh Auctions, LCC Land Registry and Otley Town Council to identify the owners and discuss whether they have any development plans and its possible links to the Victoria Works site behind it.

2. Former Victoria Printworks, between Kirkgate and Westgate

Owner:

This is believed to be Norwood Homes.

Current Status:

These works lie behind Kirkgate and are accessed via a gated snicket between the Red Lion and Bargain Booze. This site was planned for development as part of a wider 'Ashfield Works' scheme by Norwood Homes following the sale of Ashfield Works for which Leeds City Council prepared an outline brief. Despite planning consents being granted for the site north of Westgate and significant construction occurring on this site, no such planning applications have been made for the south of Westgate for reasons unknown. The site has its own policy (MU3 - Westgate Development Requirements and Aspirations) within the Otley Neighbourhood Plan which states:

"To be supported, development at Westgate, as identified on The Neighbourhood Plan Map, must be undertaken in accordance with the following requirements:

- a. Provision of additional pedestrian routes to the town centre.*
- b. Preservation or enhancement of the character or appearance of the Otley Conservation Area within which the site is located, including compliance with Policy BE9 and the preservation and restoration of the traditionally surfaced Church Lane footpath.*
- c. Preservation of the special architectural or historic interest of the setting of adjacent listed buildings.*
- d. Preservation of the special architectural or historic interest of the buildings on site that make a significant positive contribution to the distinctiveness and character of the area, (notably the entrance buildings to Victoria Works), which in respect of non-listed buildings, must be assessed in accordance with a balanced judgement having regard to the scale of harm and the significance of the building.*
- e. The carrying out of a comprehensive traffic impact assessment of the development (including for the Westgate Ashfield Works Site if developed jointly – ref Policy MU2).*
- f. The carrying out of an appropriate level of archaeological and architectural recording and agreement as to appropriate resultant action, prior to the commencement of any work on site.*
- g. Addressing the requirements of the Ashfield Works Planning and Development Brief Proposals must also demonstrate consideration has been given to the viability of indoor market use and to providing suitable premises for the re-housing of Otley Museum as part of the overall mixed-use development of the site."*



Desired Outcome:

Given that this site constitutes the largest brownfield site in the centre of town, Otley BID would like to see plans for this site to be brought forward for the productive use of the site for commercial or residential purposes. It would be helpful if this site is developed alongside 39-41 Kirkgate and Victoria Yard.

Recommended Actions:

Otley BID to:

- liaise with LCC Land Registry and Otley Town Council to confirm the owners.
- liaise with the owners, ward councillors and LCC Planning around opportunities to bring forward plans to develop the site.



3. Old Commercial Buildings in Victoria Yard, off Kirkgate

Owner: Garry Armitage, a resident of Victoria Yard.

Current Status:

There are a few old buildings behind Efes Restaurant which lie on the left-hand side of Victoria Yard opposite the terraced houses known as 21 - 27 Kirkgate) and adjacent to the Victoria Works. These are adjacent to the Victoria Works and could be developed as part of that and also Stirling House (6. above). It is understood that there may be subterranean rooms that may be linked to the old market.

A planning application (20/02987/FU) was submitted in 2020 for the conversion of an existing building to form one residential dwelling which was approved in June 2021 subject to several conditions. A further application was submitted in May 2024 to discharge the conditions (24/02621/COND), but in July it was found that only three of the four associated conditions had been successfully discharged. It is understood that discussions with planners did not result in the owner wishing to progress development further and that he may be considering selling the site.

Desired Outcome:

Although the site is not visible from the road, given its central location Otley BID would like to see these buildings brought back into productive use for commercial or residential purposes as soon as possible.

Recommended Actions:

Otley BID to liaise with the owner, ward councillors and LCC Planning around opportunities to revive plans to develop the site, particularly if this can be linked to development of the adjacent Victoria Works and 39-41 Kirkgate sites.

4. Otley Cemetery Chapel Buildings and Caretaker's House

Owner:

Leeds City Council Asset Management Unit (0113 2224444). The site is operationally managed by LCC's Cemeteries and Crematoria: tel: 0113 3788196, email: bereavementservices@leeds.gov.uk



Current Status:

These buildings are located within the Conservation Area in a prominent gateway location opposite the beautiful park in front of Grosvenor Terrace. The chapel buildings have been closed and boarded up for many years, whilst the caretaker's cottage was occupied until c. 2023 when it was boarded up and since neglected. LCC Asset Management and Regeneration advised on 16/10/25 'the Lodge at Otley Cemetery is surplus to requirements and to dispose on the open market by auction'. The auction was due 24th February 2026, guide price £185,000 plus.

Desired Outcome:

Given its prominent location and lying opposite to the derelict Summer Cross, Otley BID would like to see all these landmark buildings brought back into beneficial occupation either for employment (Chapel and other buildings) or residential purposes (cottage) as soon as possible.

Recommended Actions:

Otley BID continues to enquire to LCC about the result of the auction, so far without response.

5. Land to North-West of Wharfebank Mills, Old Ilkley Road, Otley LS21

Owner:

TBC

Current Status:

There is a sizable triangle of land between recent commercial developments at Otley Mills, Old Ilkley Road and the river Wharfe which is not formally developed and could be used as much-needed employment land.



Desired Outcome:

Given its prominent location, Otley BID would like to see this site brought into beneficial occupation for commercial purposes.

Recommended Actions:

Otley BID to liaise with LCC Land Registry, Otley Town Council and Wharfebank Mills to identify the owners and discuss whether they have any development plans.

6. Former Tate's Engineering Works, Crow Lane and 19 Crow Lane, Otley LS21

Owner:

Tate Fuel Oils, Gay Lane, Otley (03300 552889 email: sales@tateoil.co.uk).

Current Status:

The former Tate's engineering works on Crow Lane have been out of use for many years and are not maintained. This site could be a valuable addition to an otherwise attractive heritage location. The 17th century cottage known as 19 Crow Lane was Grade II-listed by Historic England in 1974, but has not been occupied or maintained for many years. The facade is bowed at the front and does not have a complete roof which has left its condition. Its condition contrasts poorly with the adjacent cottage at number 21 which is also Grade II-listed ([1200218](#)) and is occupied and maintained.



Desired Outcome:

Otley BID would like to see the former engineering works developed in a manner sympathetic to the adjacent listed properties for either residential or employment use and the cottage restored in a sympathetic manner aligned to its heritage listing and made available for residential occupation.

Recommended Actions:

Otley BID to liaise with the owners to discuss opportunities to bring both properties back into productive use.

Report updated as at 11th March 2026

Compiled by:

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