

Rotherham Town Centre: Quarterly Vacancy Survey

September 2020 – April 2022

The Rotherham Local Plan Sites and Policies document defines Rotherham town centre boundary and Primary and Secondary Shopping Frontages.

The last formal report only provides data up to January 2019, for completeness this report includes the quarterly data from April 2019 to April 2022.

Due to staff vacancy and other work priorities, a quarterly survey was not carried out in January 2020. Subsequently, quarterly surveys were not carried out in April 2020 and January 2021 as a result of national COVID-19 restrictions.

A significant change in the figures in the town centre is noted between July 2020 and September 2020 following a review of survey data recording to take into account a number of additional factors:

1. In September 2020, the Use Class Order¹ changed significantly with the introduction of Class E which includes the former Classes A1, A2, A3, B1 and some D1/D2 uses. All uses have now been reclassified to reflect the changes in the Use Classes Order.
2. The total units in the survey remain, excluding derelict buildings; vacant units that are earmarked for redevelopment; and buildings that have been demolished. The number of units in the town centre has reduced, as units gradually become vacant and unavailable in preparation for significant regeneration projects such as those at: Corporation Street, Riverside Precinct, Domine Lane and Main Street. It is particularly worth noting the following:
 - The demolition of Riverside Precinct and Forge Island, accounts for 17,092 sqm.
 - Units 8, 10, 14, 16 and 18 Corporation Street are earmarked for redevelopment, and account for 205.1 sqm.
 - Units at Main Street have been vacated and earmarked for part refurbishment and part redevelopment to enable residential development above and Domine Lane
 - Units at Eastwood Lane, Rain Building and former Charter Arms pub have been vacated and earmarked for demolition / refurbishment as part of the Rotherham Market redevelopment

Since July 2020, 21 units and 3,028 sqm of floorspace has been lost to demolition. Most of this has taken place outside the Primary and Secondary Shopping Frontages, although 2 units (totalling 1,727sqm) have been lost in the Secondary Shopping Frontage in April 2021.

	Jul-20	Sep-20	Apr-21	Jul-21	Oct-21	Jan-22	Apr-22
Units Demolished	4	8	4	-	5	-	-
Units to be Redeveloped*	9	14	12	13	13	13	13
Units to be Refurbished	0	10	10	7	7	5	5
Units to be Demolished	7	1	1	1	2	2	2
Eastwood Lane Units to be demolished or refurbished	0	6	6	6	6	6	6

*The units to be redeveloped include those that are currently demolished or vacant that are earmarked for redevelopment (excluding Eastwood Lane)

3. Amber Lounge on Ship Hill has been discounted in Sep 2020 as it was unclear if the business has permanently closed or closed due to COVID-19 restriction. The data has now been backdated to count the unit as an active unit: 1039.5 sqm.

¹ <https://lichfields.uk/media/6158/guide-to-the-use-classes-order-in-england.pdf>

April 2019 – January 2021

*New Use Class from September 2020

		Apr 2019		Jul 2019		Sept 2019		Jan 2020
		No./sqm	%	No./sqm	%	No./sqm	%	
Whole Town Centre	Total Units	293	-	293	-	292	-	Survey was not undertaken due to staff vacancy and other work priorities.
	Total Units Vacant	67	22.9	75	25.6	72	24.7	
	Total Floorspace (sqm)	64,192	-	64,192	-	64,152	-	
	Total Floorspace Vacant (sqm)	13,809	21.5	14,478	22.6	13,715	21.4	
	Units Demolished	0		0		0		
	Total Floorspace Demolished (sqm)	-		-		-		
	Derelict	5		5		5		
Primary Shopping Frontage	Total Units	132	-	132	-	132	-	
	Total Units Vacant	21	15.9	22	16.7	24	18.2	
	Total Floorspace (sqm)	35,811	-	35,811	-	35,811	-	
	Total Floorspace Vacant (sqm)	5,374	0.2	5,589	15.6	5,837	16.3	
Secondary Shopping Frontage	Total Units	107	-	107	-	107	-	
	Total Units Vacant	34	0.3	41	38.3	35	32.7	
	Total Floorspace (sqm)	17,670	-	17,670	-	17,670	-	
	Total Floorspace Vacant (sqm)	5,587	0.3	6,042	34.2	4,962	28.1	

		Apr 2020	Jul 2020		Sept 2020*		Jan 2021
			No./sqm	%	No./sqm	%	
Whole Town Centre	Total Units	Survey was not undertaken due to Covid-19 restrictions	282	-	271	-	Survey was not undertaken due to Covid-19 restrictions
	Total Units Vacant		78	27.7	72	26.6	
	Total Floorspace (sqm)		63,524	-	60,994	-	
	Total Floorspace Vacant (sqm)		15,321	24.1	14,096	23.1	
	Units Demolished		4		8		
	Total Floorspace Demolished (sqm)		418	0.01	492	0.8	
	Derelict		5		5		
Primary Shopping Frontage	Total Units	132	-	131	-		
	Total Units Vacant	23	17.4	28	22.0		
	Total Floorspace (sqm)	35,811	-	35,437	-		
	Total Floorspace Vacant (sqm)	5,841	16.3	6,553	18.5		
Secondary Shopping Frontage	Total Units	105		103	-		
	Total Units Vacant	40	38.1	34	33.0		
	Total Floorspace (sqm)	17,456		17,438	-		
	Total Floorspace Vacant (sqm)	5,657	32.4	5,454	31.3		

April 2021 – January 2022

		Apr 2021		Jul 2021		Oct 2021		Jan 2022	
		No./sqm	%	No./sqm	%	No./sqm	%	No./sqm	%
Whole Town Centre	Total Units	271	-	274	-	274	-	274	-
	Total Units Vacant	78	28.8	79	28.8	74	27.0	77	28.1
	Total Floorspace (sqm)	61,041	-	61,126	-	61,126	-	60,443	-
	Total Floorspace Vacant (sqm)	15,290	25.0	15,450	25.3	14,910	26.0	15,955	26.4
	Total Units Demolished	4		-		5		-	
	Total Floorspace Demolished (sqm)	1,913	3.1	-		205	0.3	-	
	Derelict	5		5		5		5	
Primary Shopping Frontage	Total Units	131	-	131	-	131	-	131	-
	Total Units Vacant	31	24.2	31	24.2	30	22.9	30	22.9
	Total Floorspace (sqm)	35,437	-	35,437	-	35,437	-	35,437	-
	Total Floorspace Vacant (sqm)	6,940	19.6	5,679	16.0	5,590	15.8	5,752	16.2
Secondary Shopping Frontage	Total Units	102	-	102	-	102	-	103	-
	Total Units Vacant	34	33.3	33	32.4	31	30.4	32	31.1
	Total Floorspace (sqm)	15,758	-	15,758	-	15,758	-	15,123	-
	Total Floorspace Vacant (sqm)	4,429	28.1	4,369	27.7	4,188	26.6	4,971	32.9
	Total Units Demolished	2		-		-		-	
	Total Floorspace Demolished (sqm)	1,727	11.0	-		-		-	

Indoor market survey from RIDO (April 2022)

		Lower Ground Floor	Upper Ground Floor	Total Units
Indoor market	Non-food Commodities	35	18	53
	Fresh Food	6	2	8
	Cooked Food	2	1	3
	Vacant	16	-	16
	Total Units	59	21	80

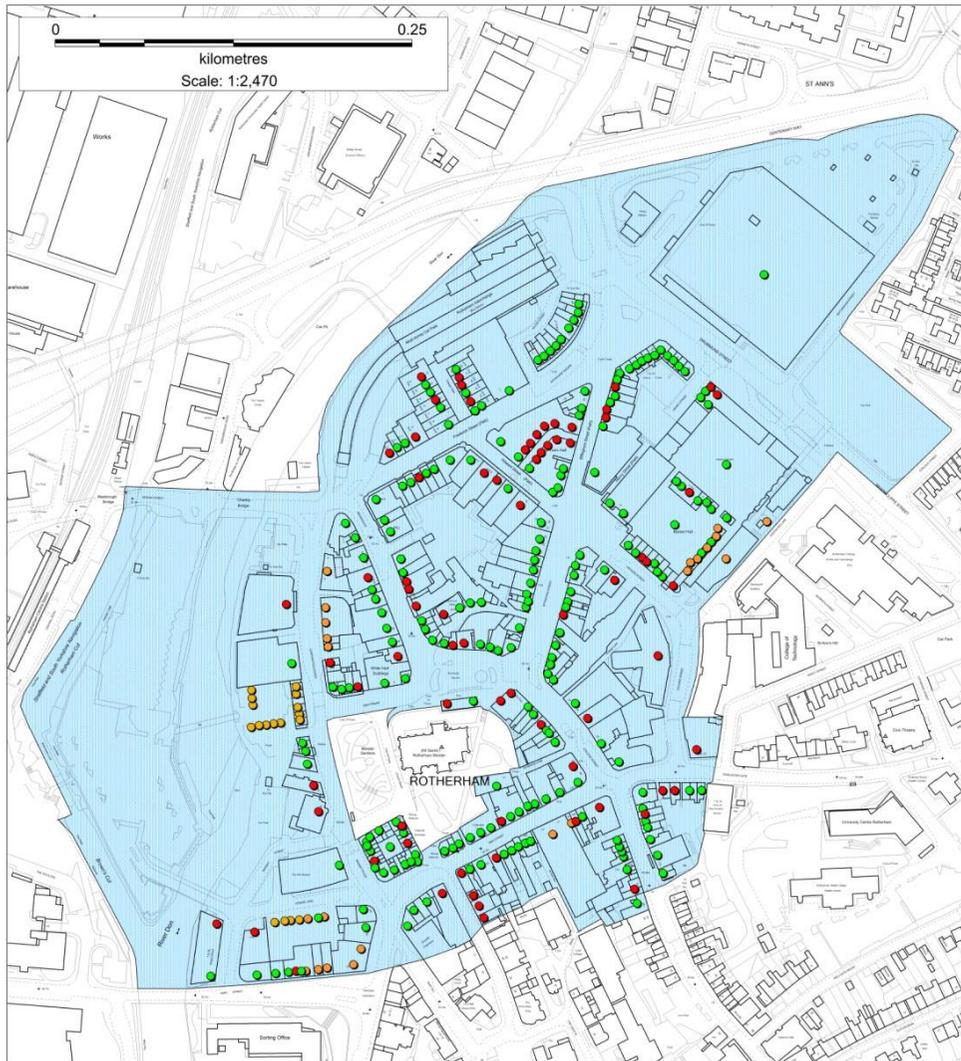
April 2022 (Latest Town Centre Survey)

		Apr 2022		Summary
		No./sqm	%	
Whole town centre	Total Units	274	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are 274 units which cover some 60,443 sqm of floorspace. Presently there are 73 vacant units (15,132 sqm), which amount to 26.6% of total units or 25.1% of total floorspace.
	Total Units Vacant	73	26.6	
	Total Floorspace (sqm)	60,443	-	
	Total Floorspace Vacant (sqm)	15,132	25.1	
	Derelict	5		
Primary shopping frontage	Total Units	131	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are 131 units, amounting to 35,437 sqm floorspace. There are currently 29 vacant units (5,644 sqm), which amount to 22.1% of units or 16% of floorspace within the Primary Shopping Frontage. The Rain Building and former Charter Arms pub at Eastwood Lane are boarded up in preparation for demolition as part of the Rotherham Market redevelopment. Demolition has now commenced.
	Total Units Vacant	29	22.1	
	Total Floorspace (sqm)	35,437	-	
	Total Floorspace Vacant (sqm)	5,644	16.0	
Secondary shopping frontage	Total Units	103	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are 103 units, amounting to 15,123 sqm. There are 30 vacant units (4,722 sqm), which amount to 29.1% of units or 31.2% of floorspace within the Secondary Shopping Frontage.
	Total Units Vacant	30	29.1	
	Total Floorspace (sqm)	15,123	-	
	Total Floorspace Vacant (sqm)	4,722	31.2	

- As part of the refurbishment of units on Main Street, the floorspaces of each unit have been revised to reflect the changes that have occurred following refurbishment.
- The unit numbering and floorspaces of Imperial Buildings has been reviewed. The courtyard at Imperial Buildings (including Units 3 and 10) are now functioning as an event venue, the units account for a total of 79.6 sqm.
- Units 7, 11 and 17 Eastwood Lane are still in active use while the former Charter Arms pub (374 sqm) is currently being demolished.
- The Rain Building is due to be demolished as part of the Rotherham Market redevelopment, it accounts for 714 sqm. The **Citizen Advice Service** is currently operating via phone, webchat and video chat until a new office space is provided (expected January 2023).

Since July 2020, 21 units and 3,028 sqm of floorspace has been lost to demolition. The latest vacancy figure in April 2022 is 26.6% with 25.1% of floorspace being vacant; this is the lowest level since the COVID-19 pandemic began but remains significantly high. The vacancy rate has not fully recovered to its pre-COVID rate and it is still above the vacancy rate required for a healthy and competitive town centre² comparing to the average vacancy rate nationally (14.1%) and regionally (15.4%).

² [Fewer empty shops but uncertainty ahead: BRC - Local Data Company Vacancy Monitor, Q1 2022](#)



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- Town Centre Properties**
- Occupied
 - Vacant
 - Derelict/to be redeveloped
- Rotherham Town Centre Retail Area