

Otley Lido

Tour Guide

Use the QR code below



www.otleylido.com/home/tour

Introduction

Welcome to your electronic tour guide from Friends of Otley Lido (FoOL)

This guide is designed to enhance the experience of your guided or unguided tour.

You shall be guided along the route and are provided with electronic versions of the photos in addition to the photos on the stations

Please follow the instructions in the guide and be sure to note both the physical and electronic warnings about areas that are higher risk which may not be suitable for everyone.

If you need any help with this guide or the tour please ask one of the FoOL team

Your tour:

You shall be undertaking two anti-clockwise circuits:

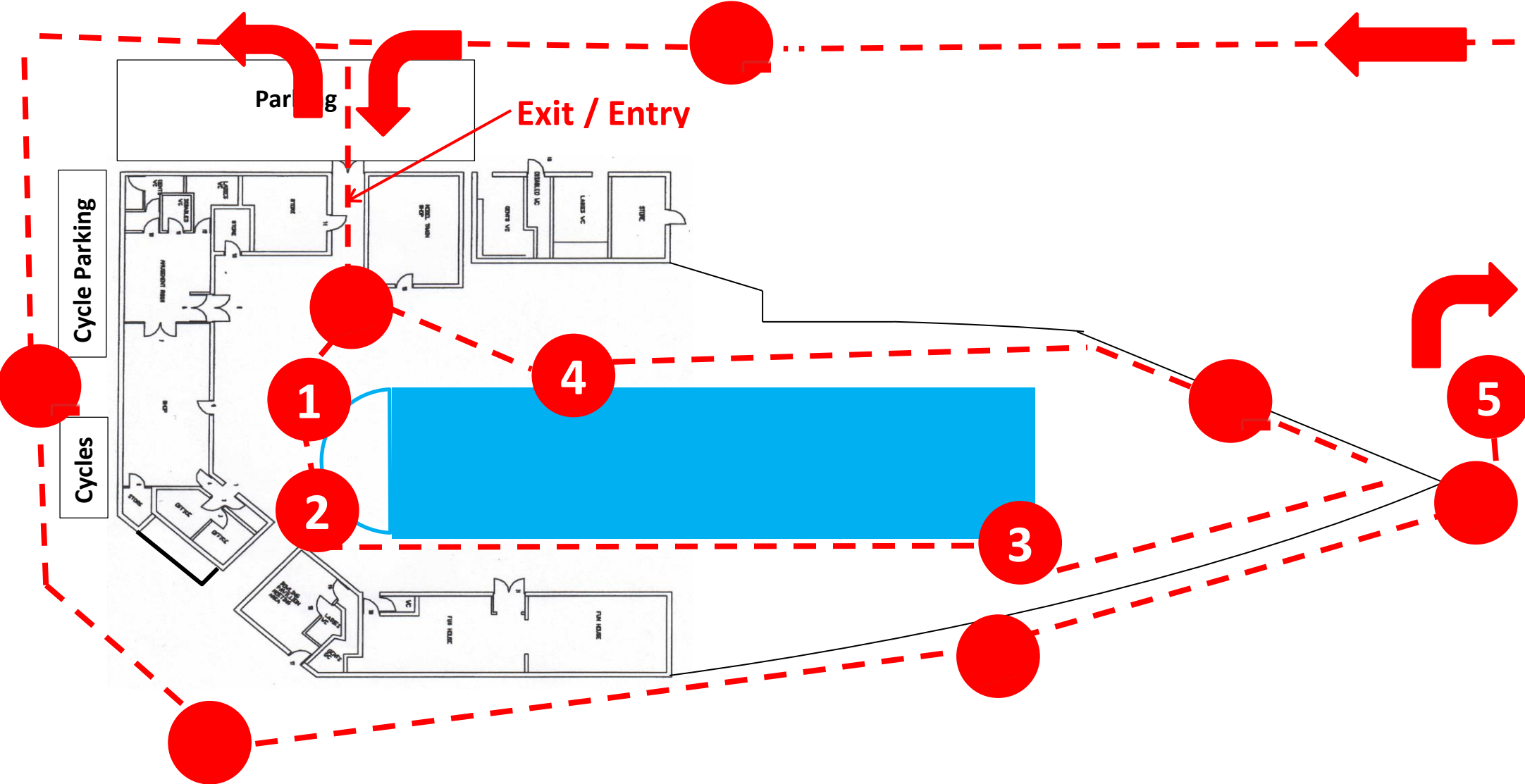
- The first on the lido site
- The second around the site in Wharfemeadows Park

It includes both main stations (numbered 1 to 6) and 'mini' stations which are not numbered but shall be obvious! The stations use a mix of posts and blue noticeboards plus pre-existing objects such as fencing, gates, etc.

The photos on the stations generally replicate the views you would have been able to see from that vantage point in the past.

The route is as follows:

Otley Lido – Tour Route



Station 1 – Semi-circular Pool

Welcome to the Otley Lido!

The tour starts in the semi-circular pool with its iconic fountain – one of the most prominent places for people to take pictures when visiting the lido and also one of the fondest memories. However, both were a later addition to the pool.

The baths opened in 1924 at the same time as Wharfemeadows Park. It sadly closed in 1993 when a fault with the pumping system proved terminal. The site had also grown tired and was in need of renovation. Coupled with the national trend for people desiring indoor heated swimming pools closure was inevitable.

Other than the opening date of the pool in 1924 there are very few dates that have been confirmed. However, one of those is circa. 1930 for the opening of the café in what is now the playground area. Prior to that there was a hut selling drinks and ices.

It's incredible to think that for nearly 70 years the lido was synonymous with the park. It is only the current generation in the last 30 years who have experienced the park without a lido. FoOL think it is about time this changed and the park and lido are again united! There has been a resurgence in outdoor swimming in the last decade – with many lidos which closed in the 1990s re-opening – and we believe it is time Otley joined the party!



Stephenson

Bathing Pool, Wharfemeadows, Otley.

Otley



SWIMMING POOL, WHARFE MEADOWS PARK, OTLEY









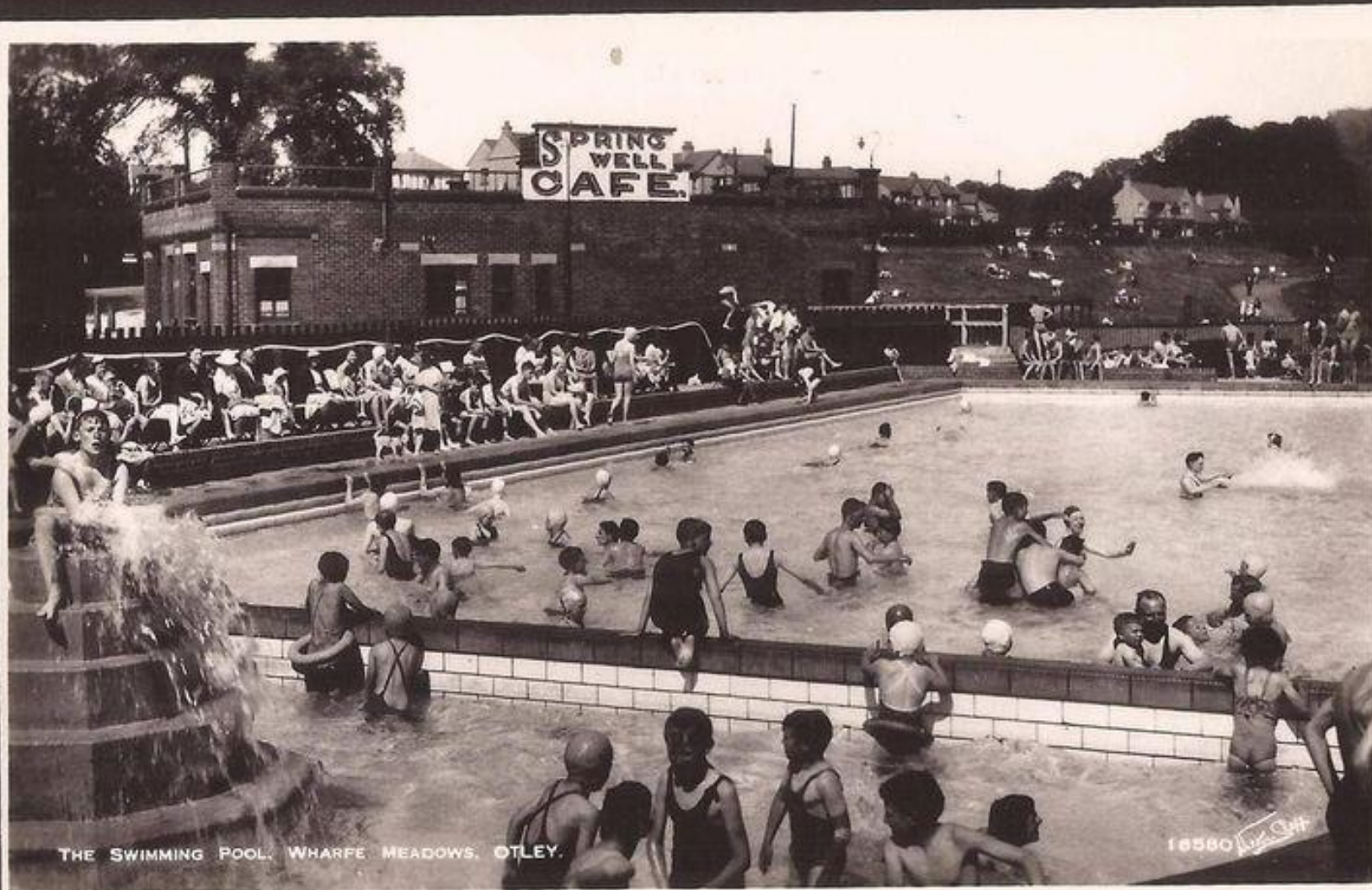
Station 2 – Semi-circular Pool (Passageway)

The photos on this station show the popularity of the pool over the years. This is evidenced not only by the number of people in the pool but also by the expansion of the site. Originally, the site was fenced at the edge of the culvert. This was subsequently bridged to expand the site and provide more space.

The three large windows in the toilet block were as unmistakable in these photos as they are today!

As you walk to the next station ponder this...the existing pool is 100 x 40ft (approximately 30m x 12m). A replacement 'standard' 25m pool would leave another 60m² of space on the site plus a similar amount again from the area of the semi-circular pool.

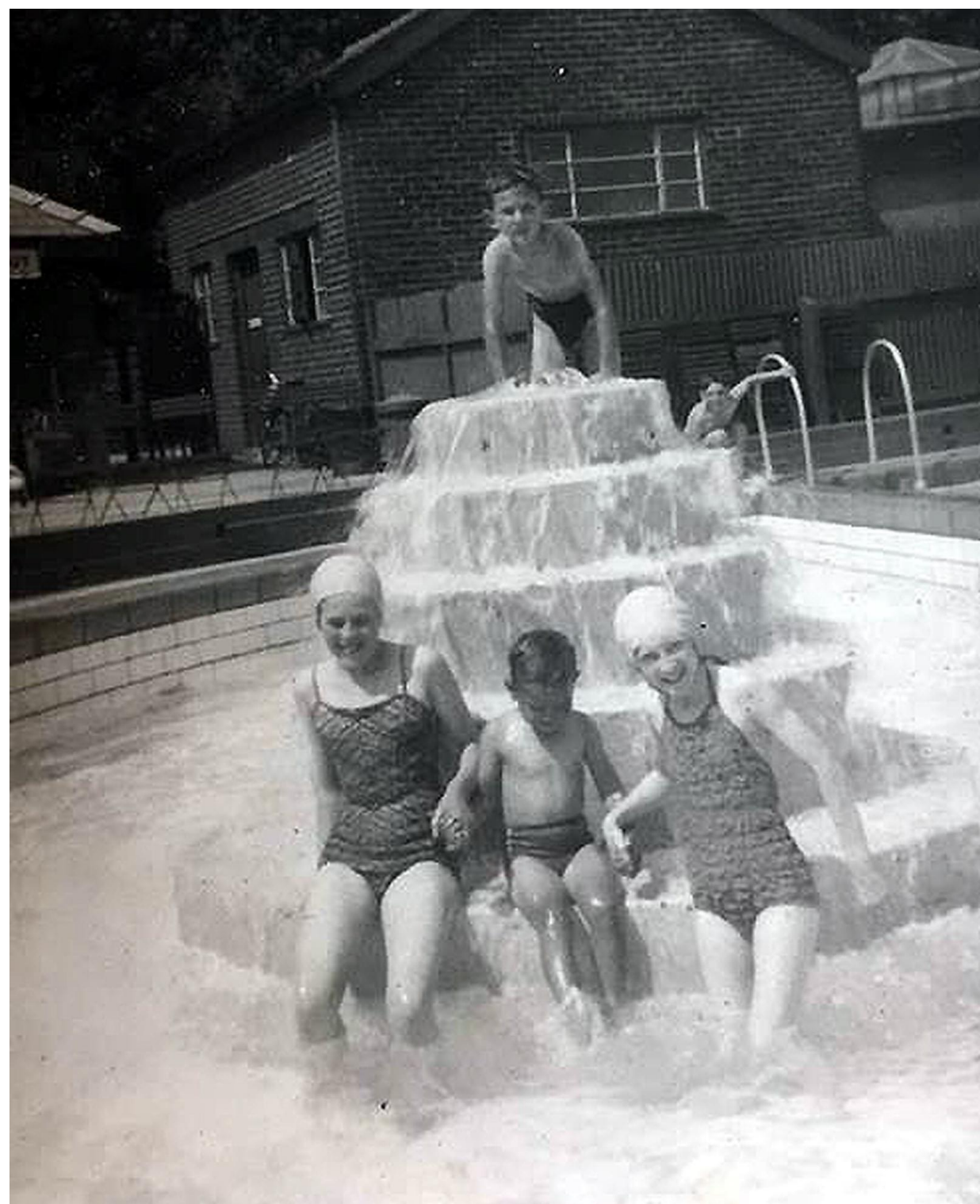




THE SWIMMING POOL, WHARFE MEADOWS, OTLEY.

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L. G. H.







Station 3 – Corner of the Pool

We have been able to unearth the corner of the pool with the help of the colour photo. In order to uncover the corner we had to remove several layers. Firstly, the plant growth followed by the soil. At this point we became a little concerned and confused by not finding what we expected. However, it soon became apparent that what we had found was part of the former crazy golf course! A kerbstone, concrete, rubble and finally the holy grail...the mosaic tiles on the corner of the pool!





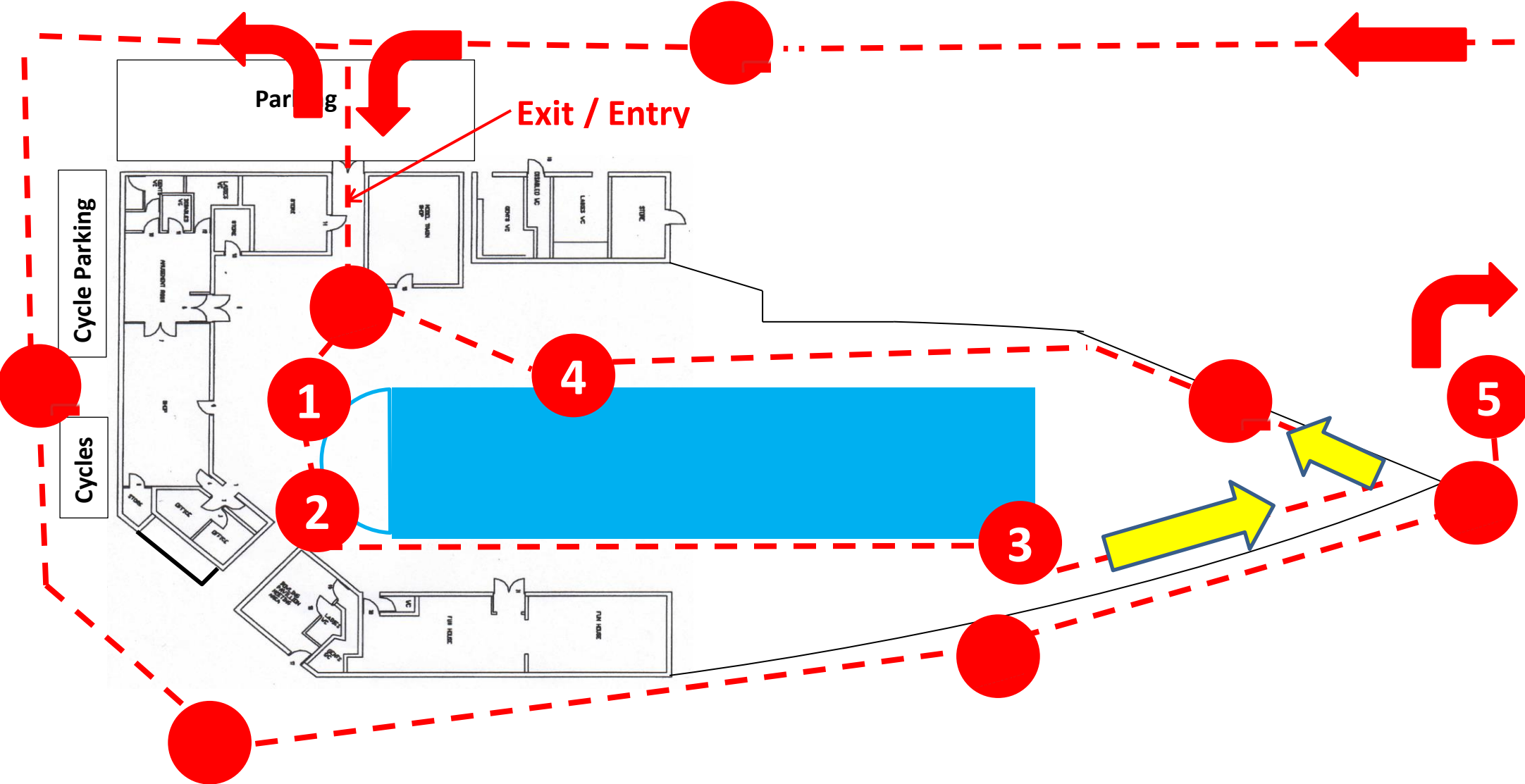


WARNING:

**YOU ARE ABOUT TO ENTER A HIGHER RISK
AREA WITH UNEVEN SURFACES.**

**IF YOU HAVE CONCERNS ABOUT THIS PLEASE
TURN AROUND AND RE-TRACE YOUR STEPS
TO GO TO THE OTHER SIDE OF THE POOL**

Otley Lido – Tour Route



Mini Station – Heras Fencing

The wall was recently pulled down over safety concerns and so this provides a rare glimpse from this vantage point of the slipway below, the weir and across the river to Garnett's Wharfe – the site of the former Garnett's Mill.





BATHING POOL, WHARF MEADOWS, OTLEY.

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Station 4 – North Side of Pool

Mind your feet! If you look down you can see the pool tiles are still in place and in pretty good condition!

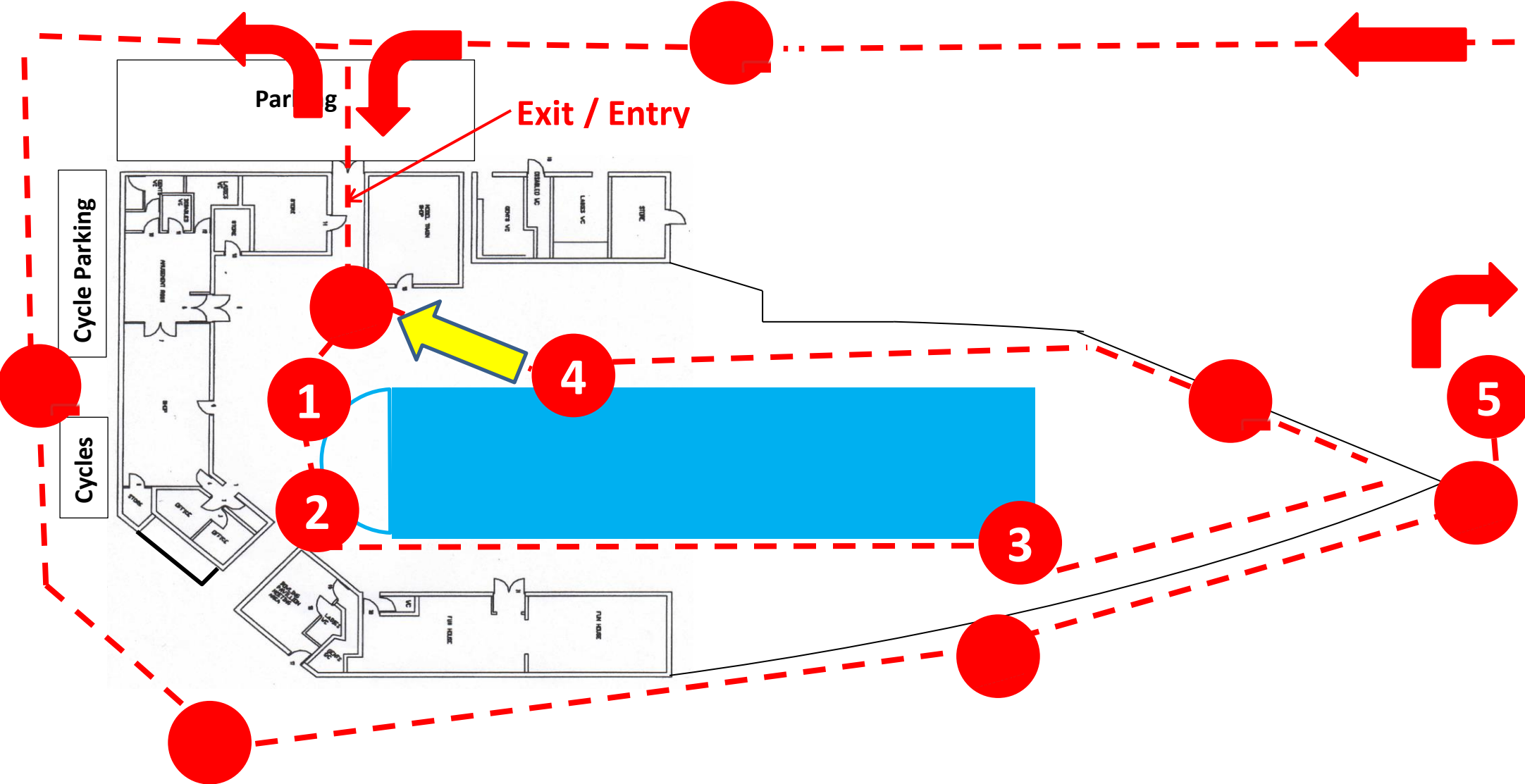
Looking across the river you can see Buon Apps restaurant on the site of the former Garnett's Mill. The restaurant is renowned for its views over the riverside. FoOL would contend that the views from the site could rival – and even exceed those! – with the amazing riverside frontage on the site!







Otley Lido – Tour Route



Bonus Station – View of the Culvert

We uncovered this especially for the tour! It is a great way to understand and locate the culvert on the site.

Mini Station – Bridge Over Culvert / Trench on Bridge Avenue

You can see from the old photos that originally the lido was contained within the culvert with a fence keeping users safe. Over the years the site expanded by bridging the culvert so the buildings now span it.

From this vantage point it becomes easy to understand why any new build could add significant costs to the project in light of the facts the foundations of the building are intertwined with the culvert walls. Removing the existing buildings could be painstaking otherwise there is a risk of damaging the culvert and it requiring major works to reinstate it.

Any new build project would also require the culvert to be bridged again and the location of utilities, etc. may be constrained by the culvert. As such, one of the major attractions of a new build project may be constrained by being unable to have full flexibility of design as a result of the culvert.

Clearly, the culvert represents a major challenge on the site and is a key factor in looking at repurposing the existing buildings.

Members of the FoOL committee and an engineer advising us have been through the entirety of the culvert. We have not carried out rigorous surveys yet but visually it is in good condition with – at most - only minor remedial work likely to be required.



BATHING POOL, WHARF MEADOWS, OTLEY.

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Mini Station – Wharfemeadows Bowling Club (WBC)

The green is about 100 years old and the club is 93 years old. Early minutes from club meetings go back to 1932 and are housed in Otley museum. One quote contained in them mentions a complaint that uniformed soldiers were walking across the green and using it as footpath and the matter should be taken up (no railings were around the green at the time as can be seen in the photos).

The first photo show the WBC clubhouse (some may say hut at that time!) was actually in front of Bridge Avenue.

FoOL is in regular contact with the bowls club in respect of the site and there is a guarantee that WBC shall continue to have its 'home' within the lido site. As a key stakeholder on the lido site FoOL is consulting with WBC over future plans and provision for the club.



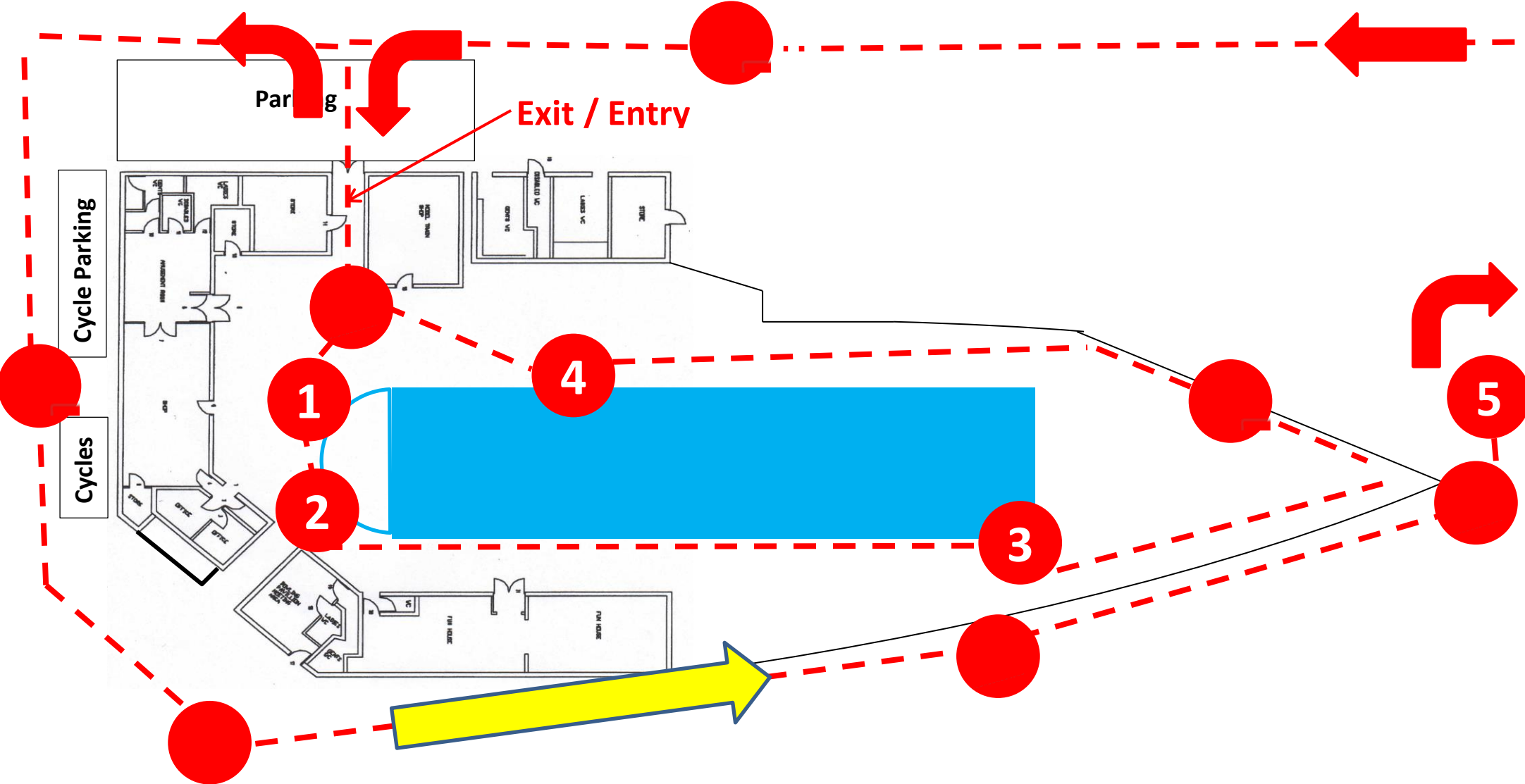


Stephenson

Bowling Green, Wharfemeadows, Otley.

Otley

Otley Lido – Tour Route



Par

Exit / Entry

Cycle Parking

Cycles

1

2

4

3

5

Mini Station – Riverside Footpath & FoOL Hoarding

Weirs integrated with mills are increasingly being “valued as part of our industrial heritage”. The weir in Otley was originally built for Garnett’s Paper Mill which closed in 2005 and which stretched back almost 300 years. Garnetts provided paper to Sinclairs – ‘Makers of British Stationery since 1837 in Otley’.

Water, of varied qualities, is used for several purposes in the manufacture of pulp and paper: as a vehicle for transporting the constituents of paper in the paper machines; as process water for cooking wood chips to make pulp; as a medium for heat transfer; and for washing the pulpwood, the woodpulp, and machines.

In 2017 building began on the Garnetts Mill Hydro Electric Project and it became fully operational in 2018 with the installation of twin SPAANS Archimedes Screw Turbines. These power the equivalent of 290 average UK homes. Fish passes were included to promote upstream migration to allow fish (e.g. salmon) to spawn upstream. Previously, the weir had being virtually impassable.

During the Boxing Day floods in 2015 the wall collapsed under the pressure of water. FoOL – with support from Otley Town Council and Otley Business Improvement District – installed the hoarding as a way to secure the site.

It was originally painted in Tour de Yorkshire colours to commemorate the event passing through the town in 2016 before being repainted and information and advertising panels being installed.

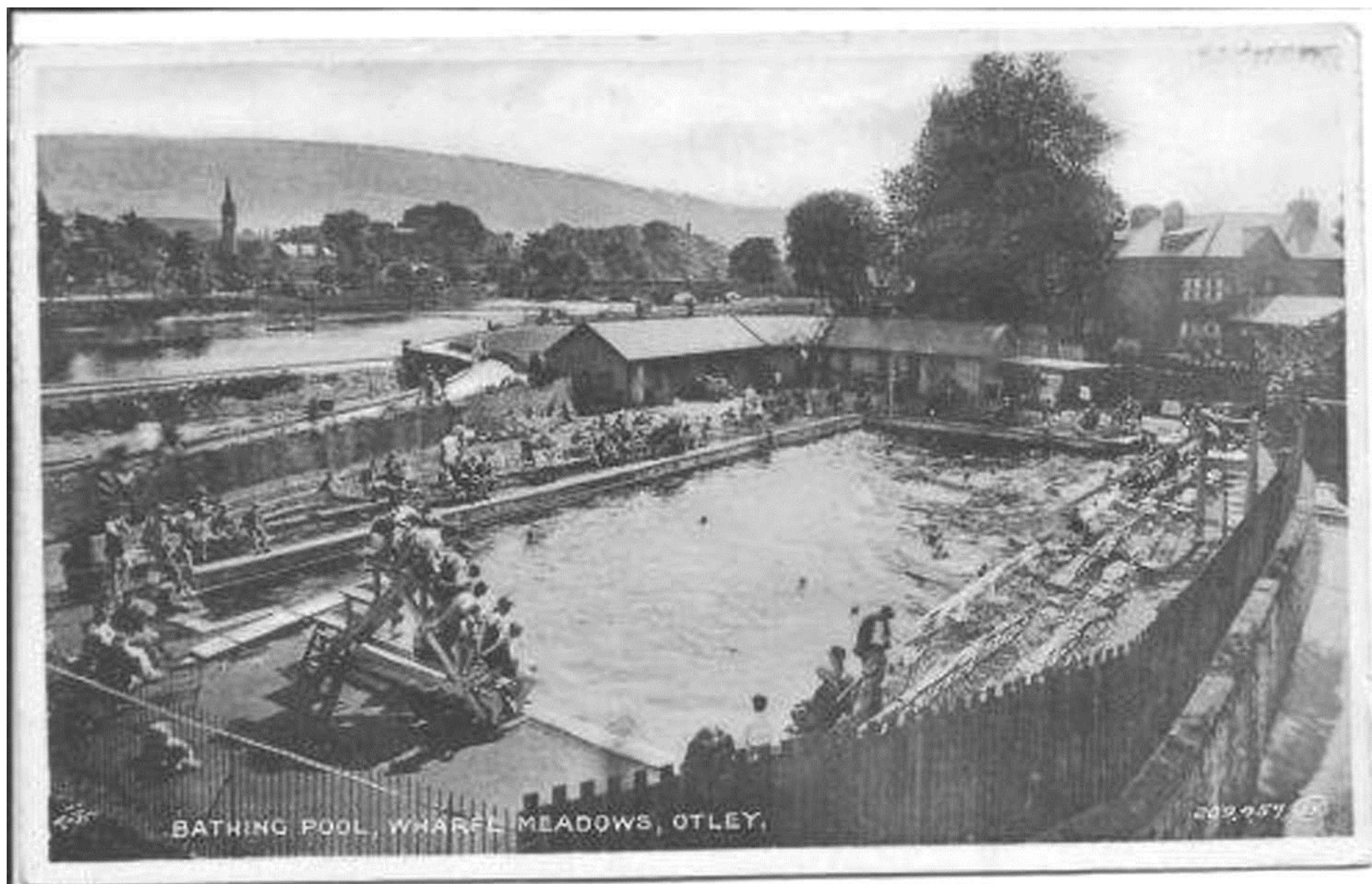


Wharfe Meadows, Dint

Mini Station – Bridge Over the Slipway

The wall on the lido site has recently been pulled down due to concerns over its safety. As a result, the bridge provides a wonderful viewing point onto both the site and the path of the culvert.

Health and safety concerns over the years has resulted in the bridge handrails now being steel instead of the previous wooden designs. In recent times fencing has been added to nearly all the riverside areas from the bridge to just beyond the playground.



BATHING POOL, WHARF MEADOWS, OTLEY.

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OTLEY

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BOWERY ROAD.

Station 5 – Wharfemeadows Park (Playground)

See the riverside fencing

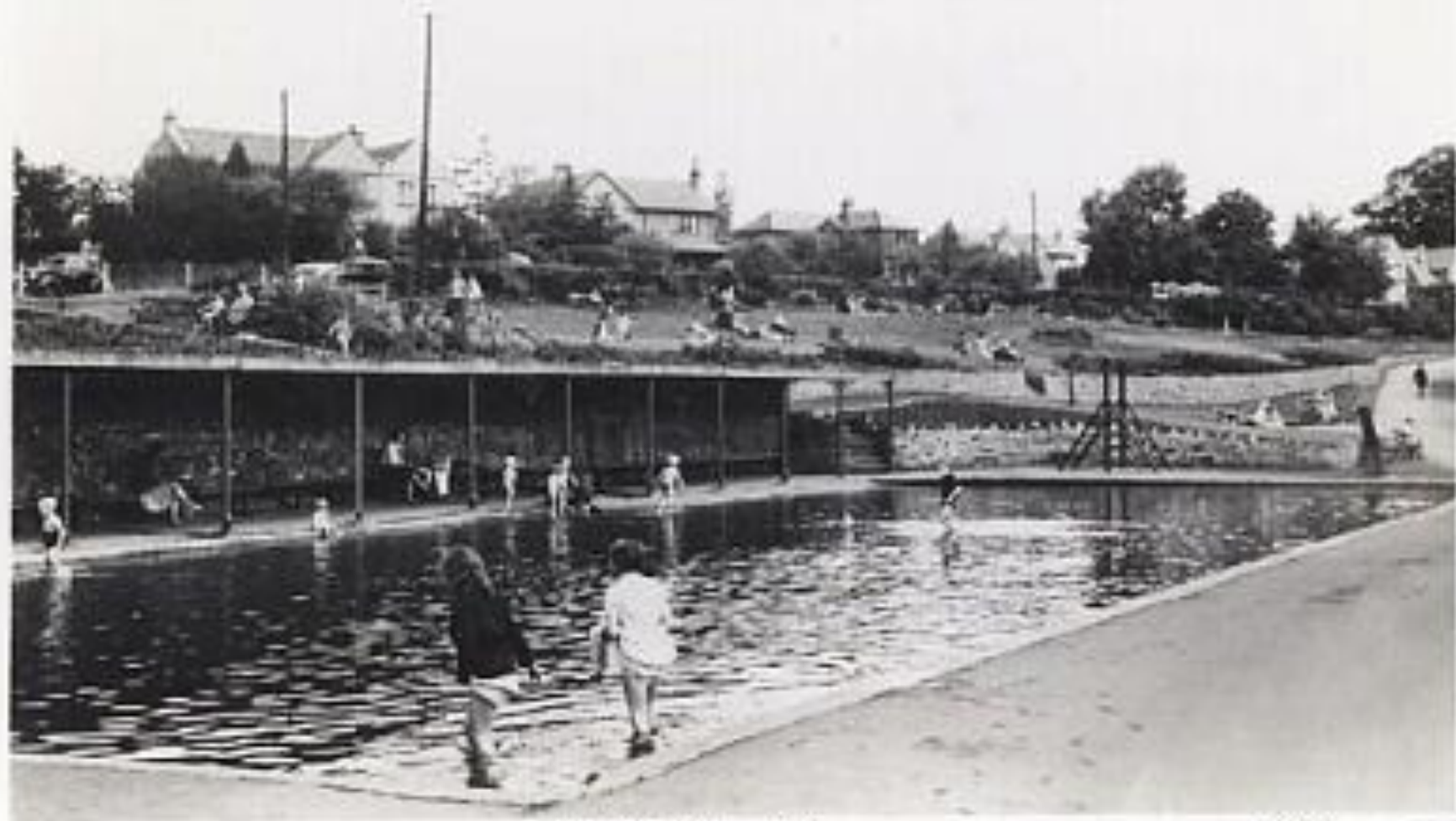
Until the last two or three decades the focal point of the playground areas wasn't the slides, roundabout and climbing frames but paddling pools. Arguably the most iconic of those was the pool of the 1980s and 1990s shaped in the outline of a figure of eight and featuring two hippos! Unfortunately, we do not currently have any photographs of that period clearly showing the hippos. If you have any please do contact us as we would love to see them!

The playground is also a great place to understand the propensity for the River Wharfe to rise and fall – it being one of the fastest and falling rivers in Europe. In the Boxing Day floods of 2015 nearly all the playground equipment in the lower play area was under water apart from the very top of the swings. It should therefore not come as much of a surprise to find that the area is in Flood Zone 3 (the highest rating).

Prince Henry's Grammar School has a rich history dating back to the early 17th Century. However, it moved to the current site on Farnley Lane in 1927. It boasts a number of notable alumni including many sporting stars including Olympic silver medallist Lizzie Deignan (nee Armitstead) and perhaps most famously former rugby player – and World Cup winner - Mike Tindall who is now, of course, a member of the Royal Family after his marriage to Zara Phillips (as she was at the time).



WHARFE MEADOWS OTLEY



OLY. 23.

PADDLING POOL, OTLEY.

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D.L.T. 24.

WHARFSIDE PARK, OTLEY.

George
1900



WHARFEDALE—THE CHILDRENS' CORNER AND OPEN-AIR BATHS, "WHARFE MEADOWS," OTLEY.

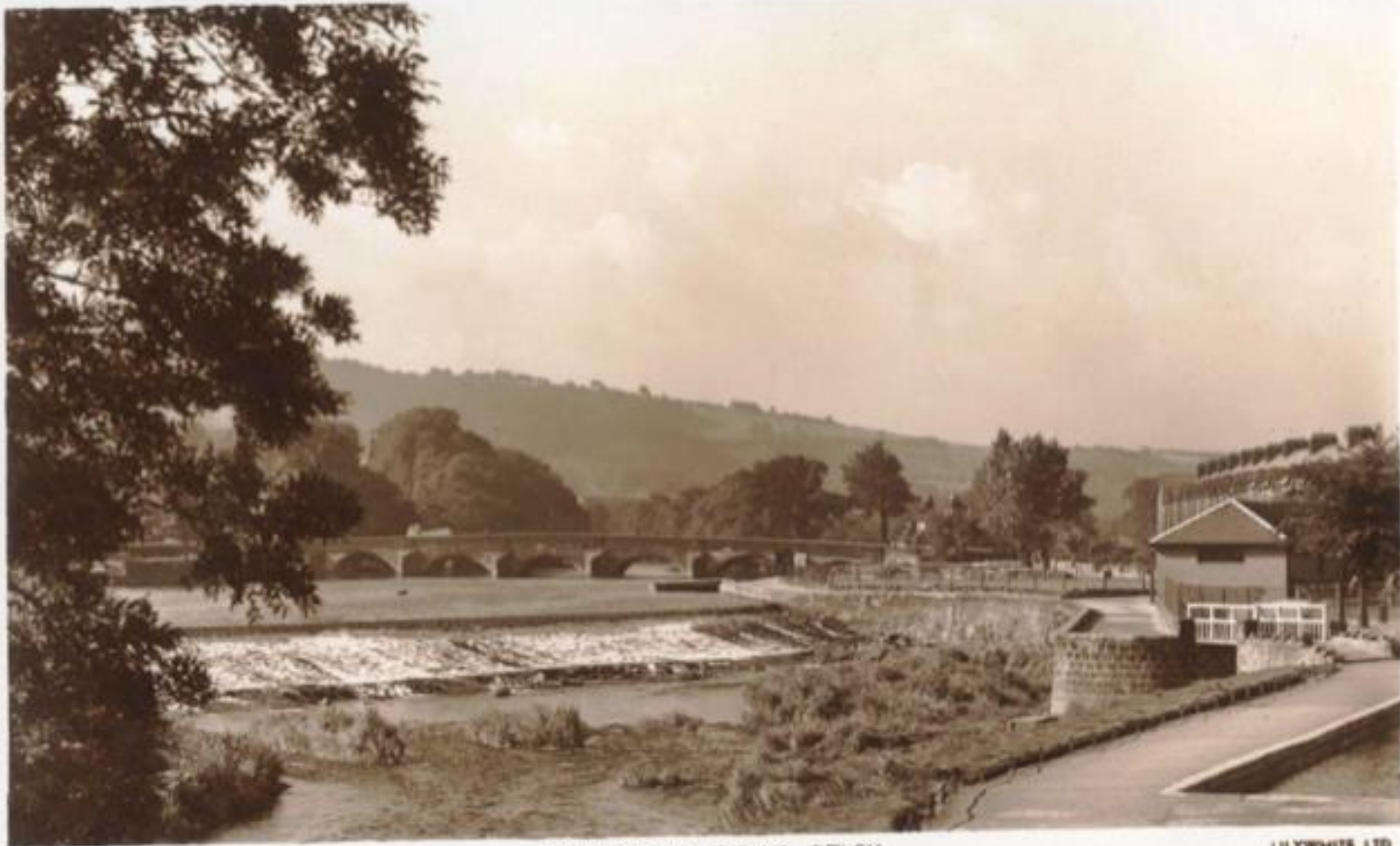
674 *W. G. R. C.*



PADDLING POOL, WHARFE MEADOWS PARK, OTLEY.







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OLY 27

WHARFE MEADOWS, OTLEY

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BRIGHOUSE

DIRECTIONS TO STATION 6:

Continue walking along the riverside and up the short hill.

At the top of the hill follow the path round to the left.

Look for the post and bright blue board!

Station 6 – Wharfemeadows Park (Upper Path)

You may be wondering why we have brought you to the top of park!? Well if the magnificent views and rich history of photos taken from this vantage point are not enough for you then we have a further reason!

As mentioned at the start of the tour, the lido was synonymous with Wharfemeadows Park for 70 years. FoOL would like that to be the case again. We view the lido as part of the park, riverside and town. Our project aims to recognise the lido's place within the riverside.

Our project aims to bring together the diverse range of park users whether they be skateboarders, roller skaters, young children on balance bikes, tricycles or bicycles, runners or more mature people taking a scenic walk. We want everyone to feel involved in our community project!



WHARFEDALE—THE KIDDIES' POOL, "WHARFE MEADOWS," OTLEY.

688 *W. G. P. Giff*



WHARFEDALE—THE CHILDRENS' CORNER AND OPEN-AIR BATHS, "WHARFE MEADOWS," OTLEY.

674 *W. G. R. C.*





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SWIMMING POOL, OTLEY.

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WHARFE MEADOWS PARK, OTLEY.

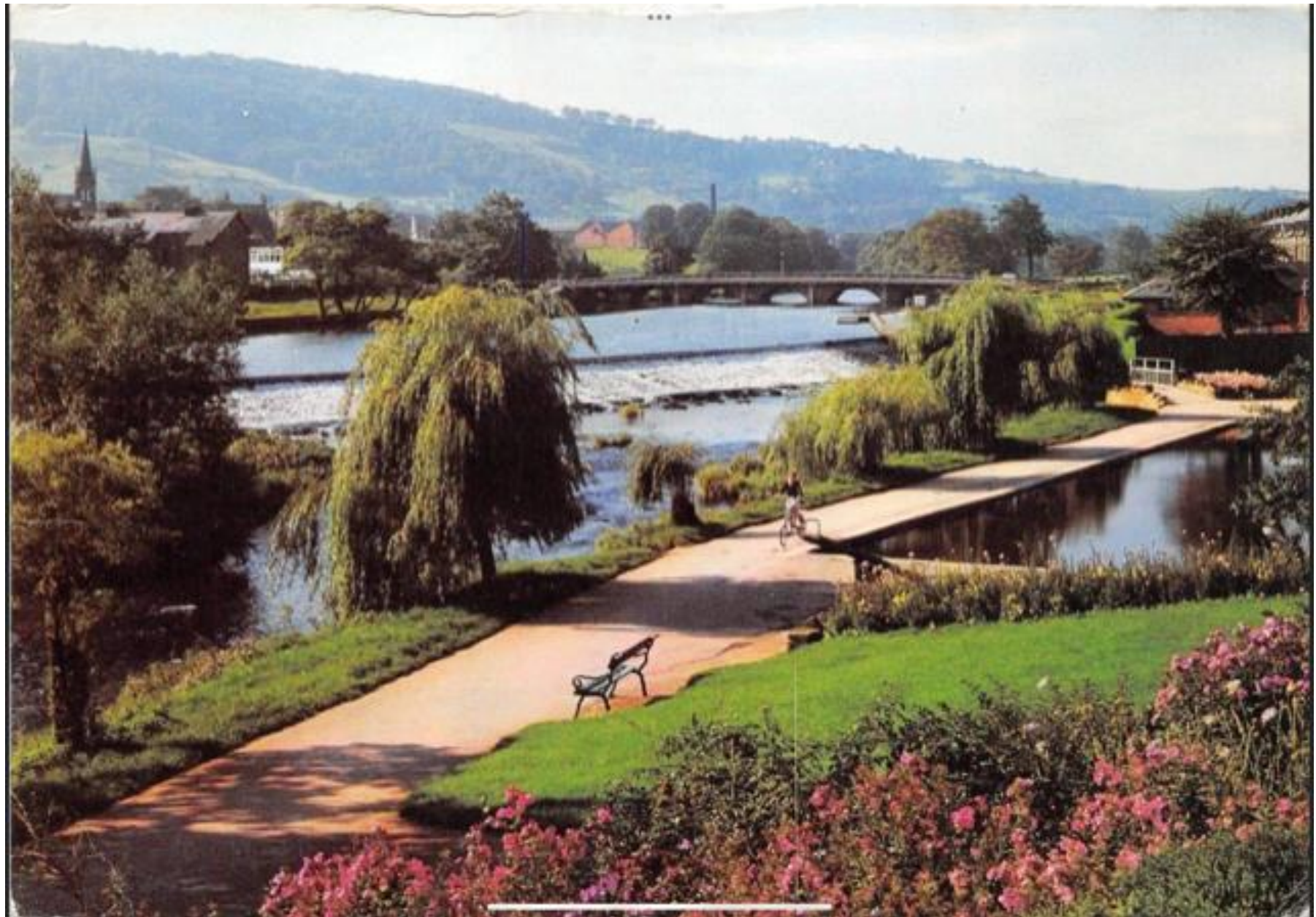


Otley, Wharfemeadows Park c1960 Ref: O49022



WHARFE MEADOWS PARK, OTLEY

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DIRECTIONS TO NEXT MINI STATION:

Continue walking along the path which drops down to the café.

Continue onto the roadside footpath and look for the gate on the left just before the first lido building.

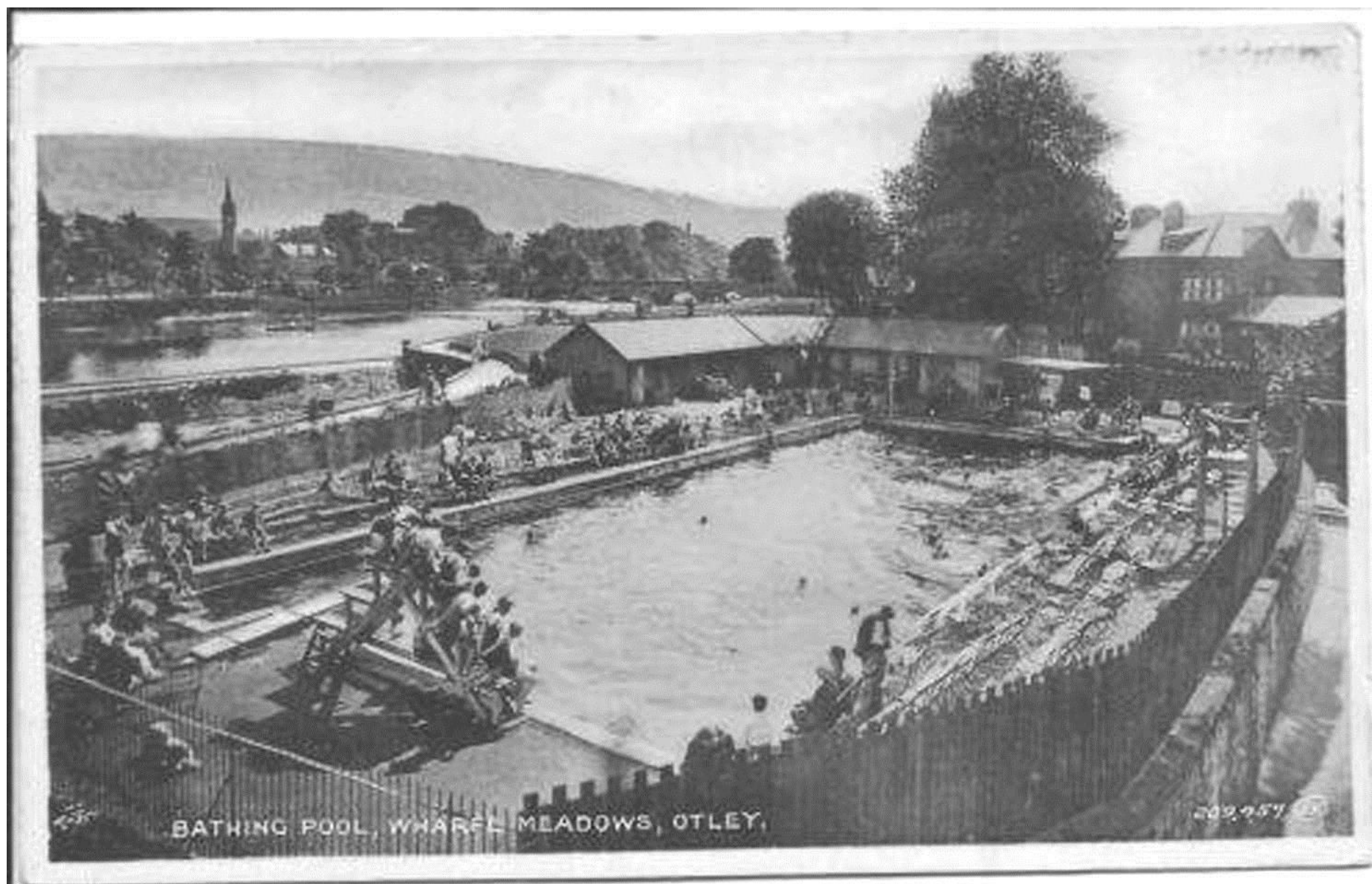
Mini Station – Farnley Lane (Slipway / Culvert)

Your final chance to appreciate the engineering complexities on the site posed by the culvert!

Before the Flood Alleviation Scheme was introduced in 2021 the area where you are currently standing would be under water during flood conditions.

If you listen carefully you can hear the sound of Hol Beck! The stream runs from the other side of Farnley Lane and then the under the road Lane in two large pipes – roughly in line with the gents toilets - before emptying into the culvert. Even in summer small amounts of water can be seen running down the slipway as a result.

Note the magnificent stone lintels above both the Gentlemen's and Ladies toilets – we would hope to retain these in any future development either in situ or being repurposed and incorporated into any new construction.



BATHING POOL, WHARF MEADOWS, OTLEY.

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Wharfe Meadows, Otley.





1911

Wharfemeadows, Otley.

1911

Please re-enter the site using the same gate as you used to exit.

Tour Finish

Your tour has now finished! We hope you enjoyed yourself!

Please take the opportunity to view our photo exhibition and memories – these range across the 69 years the lido was open.

You can also read about FoOL's plans to bring the site back into community use and we shall be happy to answer any questions you may have

Thank you for your visit! Please leave us feedback in the box and also tell Heritage Open Days what you thought of your visit – details are on the posters by the site exit.