UK Commercial Property Auction Data Report

H1 2026 review including Q2 analysis

The Acuitus cPad report reviews activity in the UK commercial real estate auction market. The report is produced by Acuitus Research and is powered by analysis of the long-running cPad data series. These reports provide a comprehensive analysis of key performance metrics, sale trends across asset types, the geographical preferences of investors, and movements in yields.

This H1 2026 review covers the second quarter of 2026 and cumulative first-half performance. The latest sales data has been provided by The Essential Information Group. It is a subset of commercial property auction sales and focuses solely on investment-grade assets and income-producing property with development potential.

£205m
Q2 2026 sales / 398 lots

£444.2m
H1 2026 sales / 794 lots (record high)

76.7%
Q2 2026 sales rate

H1 2026 generates all-time sales high

The second quarter of 2026 generated total sales of £205m through the sale of 398 lots. This was 55% above the long-run average for Q2 sales and has only been bettered by the £206.3m achieved in Q2 2024.

This brought turnover for the first six months of 2026 to £444.2m across 794 lots – the highest H1 total on record, ahead of £425.6m in H1 2025 and £423.3m in H1 2024.

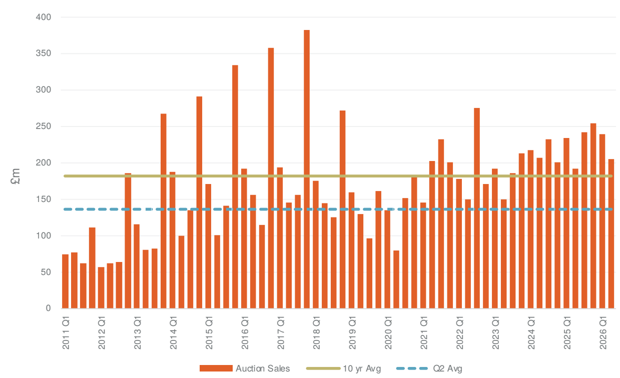
This exceptional performance continues the momentum of the UK commercial property auction sector which built throughout last year.

Sales rates ease and buyer preferences change

Sales rates eased back during Q2 falling to 76.7% from 81.6% in Q1 and moving below both the post-pandemic average of 83.8% and the long-run average of 80.9%.

Average lot sizes also fell to £515,000 from £604,000 in Q1, with the number of smaller lots selling on course to set a new record – a pattern that may reflect a changing buyer base as investors move away from smaller, residential-style investments.

Quarterly sales volume £m 2011–2026 Q2



Source: Acuitus Research

Business park
Welwyn Garden City
Sold for £1.895m

Offices
London, W1
Sold for £5.25m+

Leisure

Coventry
Sold for £2.1m

Sector analysis

Retail: activity remains muted
Retail assets accounted for 51.6% of second-quarter sales, equivalent to £105.8m, up from a 48.5% share in Q1 even though the amount of retail sales fell slightly quarter-on-quarter (from £116.0m). Retail's larger share of a smaller overall pool points to continued but subdued activity in the sector rather than any resurgence in demand.

Retail is likely to remain the largest sector by value through the second half of this year. Even though household budgets are likely to stay under pressure, wider retail sales volumes have proved more resilient than consumer sentiment would suggest. Well-located retail parks and parades – the format most commonly sold through auction – have continued to see the tightest vacancy of any retail subsector. We expect this segment to keep outperforming into year-end.

Alternatives: lower volumes
The clearest sector trend in the second quarter was the lower volume of alternative asset sales. Leisure fell to 7.7% of activity (£15.8m), down from 17.4% (£41.7m) in Q1. This reversed the trend of the last two years during which alternatives typically represented 20-25% of quarterly sales. However, the latest pattern of leisure sales more likely reflects the particular mix of stock that came to auction in Q2 rather than any underlying shift in investor demand for the sector.

Leisure operators continue to face higher energy, labour and business rates costs, only partly offset by the government's new business rates relief for pubs, clubs and live music venues. One major positive for the sector this year has been the fine weather which has bolstered the tourism business and eating out. There has been a consistent supply of these assets particularly when they occupy a large footprint and have good roadside access. We would not be surprised to see leisure rebound later in the year or into 2027 as more of this stock reaches the market.

Offices and industrial: a broad-based upturn
The office and industrial sectors were the main beneficiaries of the Q2 shift away from alternatives. Office activity rose to 17.7% of sales (£36.3m) from 14.2% in Q1, while industrial rose to 14.2% (£29.1m) from 9.7%. The improvement in office activity may be a sign that investor confidence in the sector is returning in locations where there is a lack of good secondary stock and good transport connections.

The gap between prime and secondary office pricing has widened with secondary and out-of-town stock repricing well behind prime – which aligns exactly with the segment of the sector most commonly transacted at auction. This dynamic should keep supporting activity and positive yield movement in the sector.

Demand for industrial assets also remains resilient with occupiers increasingly willing to take on older, second-hand space, supporting continued demand for the smaller industrial lots that come to auction.

Geographic spread

The lure of London
Greater London accounted for 31.7% of second-quarter turnover, equivalent to £65.1m, down from a 35.0% share in Q1. Taken across the first half as a whole, however, London still accounted for 33.5% of sales (£148.8m) across 162 lots, broadly in line with its recent share of the market.

Yields

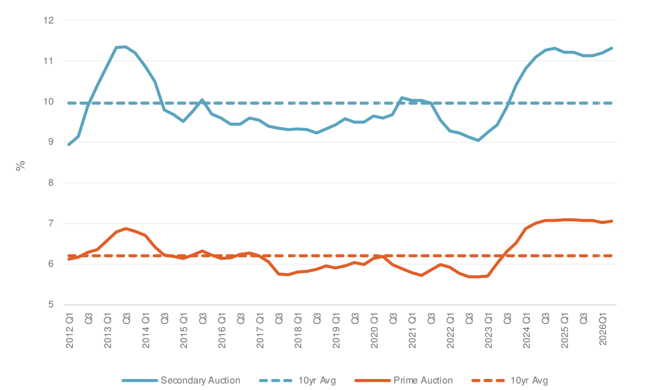
Yield movements were more muted than the shifts seen in sales volume. The cPad All-Property Average spot yields eased marginally to 8.63% from 8.65% in Q1. Rolling average yields (RAY+) were little changed, with the cPad All-Property Average RAY at 8.89%, against 8.89% in Q1, continuing a period of broad stability that has now lasted well over a year.

The office sector saw the most significant movement, with the cPad Office spot yields falling to 7.49% from 8.27% and the rolling average cPad Office yield falling sharply to 9.53% from 10.88% – perhaps evidence of renewed investor appetite for the sector.

The cPad All-Property Prime (lower-quartile) yield remained comparatively tight and little changed, at 7.17% spot and 7.06% RAY, while the cPad All-Property Secondary (upper-quartile) yield softened slightly to 11.31% spot.

Geographically, London yields hardened again, with the cPad Greater London spot yields moving in to 6.15% from 7.31% in Q1, while the cPad Rest of the UK yields moved out to 9.96% from 9.36%, widening the gap between the capital and the regions.

Prime and Secondary auction yields 2012–2026 Q2



Source: Acuitus Research

Trade counter

Portsmouth
Sold for £1.65m

Yield by sector – RAY+

Sector	2026 Q2	2026 Q1	2025 Q2	10-year average
All-Property	8.89	8.89	8.87	7.98
Retail	8.94	8.93	8.90	8.16
Office	9.53	10.88	11.36	9.15
Industrial	8.74	8.09	7.53	7.54
Leisure	8.49	7.94	7.84	7.53

Source: Acuitus cPad EIG

By location – RAY+

Location	2026 Q2	2026 Q1	2025 Q2	10-year average
London	7.13	7.34	6.25	5.79
Rest of UK	9.79	9.73	9.91	8.74

Source: Acuitus cPad EIG

Prime and Secondary – RAY+

Category	2026 Q2	2026 Q1	2025 Q2	10-year average
Prime	7.06	7.03	7.10	6.21
Secondary	11.20	11.20	11.22	9.92

Source: Acuitus cPad EIG

Yield by sector – Spot*

Sector	2026 Q2	2026 Q1	2025 Q2
All-Property	8.63	8.65	8.64
Retail	8.62	8.69	8.55
Office	7.49	8.27	12.88
Industrial	9.34	9.21	6.73
Leisure	9.25	9.00	7.05

Source: Acuitus cPad EIG

By location – Spot*

Location	2026 Q2	2026 Q1	2025 Q2
London	6.15	7.31	6.98
Rest of UK	9.96	9.36	9.73

Source: Acuitus cPad EIG

Prime and Secondary – Spot*

Category	2026 Q2	2026 Q1	2025 Q2
Prime	7.17	6.96	7.04
Secondary	11.31	10.99	11.29

Source: Acuitus cPad EIG

*Spot yield – the yield calculated for the current quarter.
+RAY – Rolling Average Yield. An average of the last four quarters.

Offices
Bournemouth
Sold for £2.6m+

Retail parade
Bristol
Sold for £1.05m

For further information on this research or to discuss auction strategy, please contact:

Richard Auterac
Chairman & Auctioneer

+44 (0)7836 742 833
richard.auterac@acuitus.co.uk

Acuitus
14 St Christopher's Place
London W1U 1NH

+44 (0)20 7034 4850
info@acuitus.co.uk
acuitus.co.uk