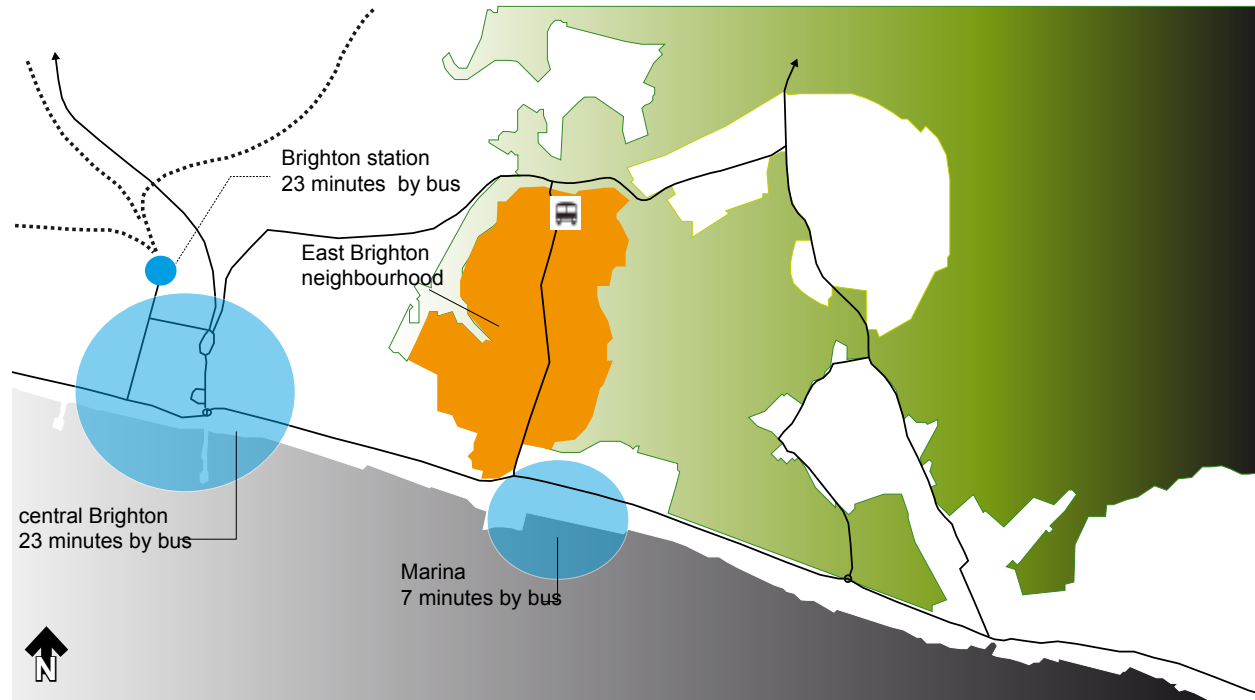


5 east brighton neighbourhood

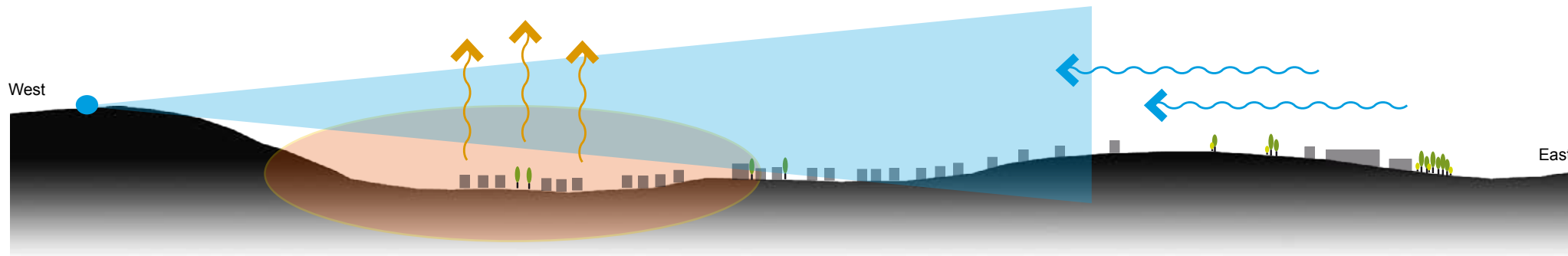
context



topography and microclimate

The topography has greatly influenced the development of East Brighton. Essentially the earliest development was along the flatter ground along the coast. Over time development has spread up along the valley floor of Whitehawk Bottom. The result is a slice of Brighton running from the coast up into downland that runs through a number of different periods of development. However it has the sense of belonging within one neighbourhood due to the settlement sitting within the bowl to the east of Race Hill. Sheepcote Valley provides a focus to the east. Both are visually connected to the sea.

Much of the development sits along the valley floor sheltered from prevailing winds. However due to very little surrounding tree planting and scarce street planting within the area, northerly winds tend to blow down over the ridge of Race Hill and along the valley floor making the long linear streets a little windswept. Similarly in summer, with little shade and much of the development sheltered from prevailing winds, the valley heats up.

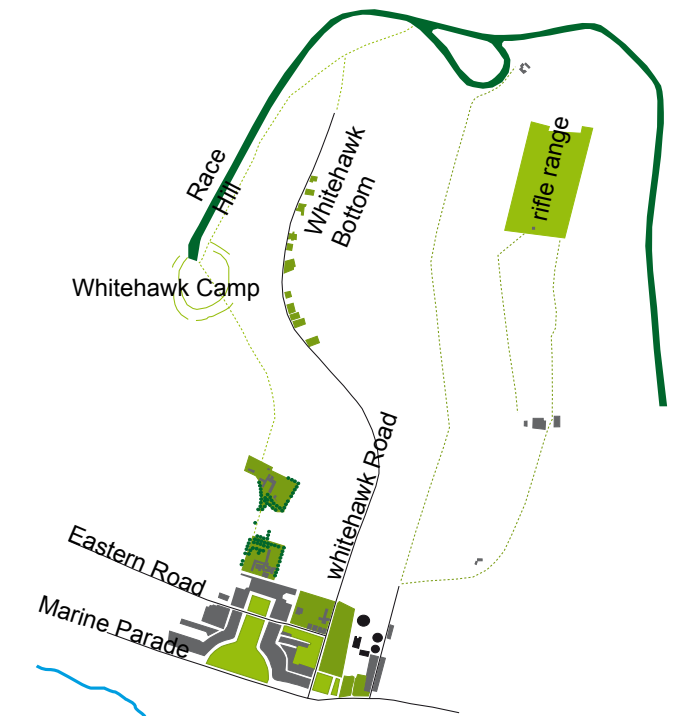


key stages of historic development

East Brighton neighbourhood is contained by downland ridges which are recommended for inclusion in the proposed national park. It sits within two dry valleys that run down towards the sea, with most of the development located along Whitehawk Bottom and its valley sides. A distinctive feature is the abrupt edge of the neighbourhood along the western side.

Little of Whitehawk Bottom or Sheepcote Valley was inhabited until the early 1930s, except for a few farm buildings, piggeries and allotments. The estates of Whitehawk and Manor Farm were laid out in response to the large slum clearances in the 1930s in the Carlton Hill, Upper Bedford Street and Upper Russell Street areas.

Much of the Whitehawk estate was rebuilt in the late 1970s including Whitehawk Way, the main spine road through the estate. This replaced the much older route of Whitehawk Road which had been the eastern boundary of Brighton.



1865-75

typology

East Brighton neighbourhood may be classified as an urban post-war housing estate incorporating remnants of 19th century development. A mix of building type, quality and density range. Poor urban environment with limited access to quality open space and local services. Weak architectural cohesion.

Refer to the introduction and summary for more information on landscape character types.



1950's
35

5 east brighton neighbourhood

key characteristics
land use



movement



Different housing types and densities



Self-build housing



Chalk grassland of Sheepcote

• **Land use:** Predominantly social housing, with private housing to the east and the south of the area. The neighbourhood has a local commercial centre, an industrial area as well as schools and other community uses.

• **Scale and density:** Local housing is accommodated within a range of different building types from low density suburban bungalows to higher density Victorian terraces and twentieth century high rise, resulting in a high gross density of 39 dwellings per hectare across the neighbourhood (see appendix 1). The wide variety of building types, layout and scale help reinforce a lack of visual and physical continuity. The neighbourhood feels disjointed in character.

• **Architecture:** There are a range of building types across the neighbourhood; however it is dominated by two storey housing of varying architectural quality and state of repair. To the north of Kemp Town there are a number of Victorian terraces that have become popular with those starting out and are well looked after. Very little of the original garden suburb of Whitehawk exists. Most has been replaced with a variety of social housing typologies, some in need of

area improvement. The former French Convalescence Home, built in 1897, is located at the seaward edge of the neighbourhood. This building has now been converted into flats.

• **Movement:** Located at the edge of the city and within its own valley, the neighbourhood is both visually and physically contained. Within the neighbourhood itself the changes in street pattern, which can be easily identified from the figure ground drawings, have direct bearing on the pedestrian and vehicular permeability. The car and the bus are the most frequent form of transport to access places of work. The seafront sustainable transport corridor lies directly to the south of the area. The street layout also has a direct relationship to the quality of the urban environment. Blank facades facing onto streets, and the consequent lack of surveillance, impact on the perceived pedestrian safety. They also reduce legibility through a lack of points of reference.

• **Socio-economic characteristics:** Originally built to house those displaced by slum clearance within the centre of Brighton, East Brighton has a high

Whitehawk Broadway shopping parade



5 east brighton neighbourhood

open space



proportion of social housing and low levels of home ownership.

- **Open Space:** The neighbourhood has good access to a variety of green open space. Sitting within two dry valleys it is surrounded by chalk grassland, and regenerating scrub, much of it within a Local Nature Reserve. The profile of Sheepcote Valley has changed greatly over time. Part of it was once the city's main waste landfill site, which has been gradually filled in to create a number of raised terraces. Now vegetated, it has developed local nature conservation value on what is a large expanse of contaminated land. As well as the neighbourhood being within proximity to open downland it is also close to the sea. However it is difficult to access due to the poor pedestrian environments created by the highway infrastructure built to access the Marina. There are good views of the sea from various locations within the neighbourhood.

East Brighton Park was laid out in 1925 to provide football and cricket pitches, tennis courts and ornamental gardens. Some planting remains, but the quality of the park has been eroded over the years.

Within the residential areas there is little open space. What does exist are remnants of the

character areas



garden suburb. Buildings turn their back on the streets, and the green spaces fall short of their potential, being generally unattractive and under-used. The new housing layouts have a large amount of road infrastructure which, along with only limited tree planting and high boundary fences and walls, creates a visually harsh urban environment.

- **Character areas:** Within the neighbourhood there are 4 distinct character areas defined by land ownership, block size, scale and density, and architectural age and style.:

1. Bristol Gardens: a mixed use and mixed character area comprising mainly Victorian terraces, retail development and a redundant gasworks.

2. Wilson Avenue: low density residential area, post-war one and two storey houses rising up the slope.

3. Whitehawk Valley: predominantly post-war residential development with an overall low density, much still rented from the local authority. Built on the valley floor but rising to the north. Mainly two storey houses but with high rise blocks of flats.

4. Sheepcote: a large green space of chalk grassland of significant amenity, recreational and ecological value.



Views and glimpses of the sea



Bristol Gardens character area



Wilson Avenue character area



Whitehawk Valley character area



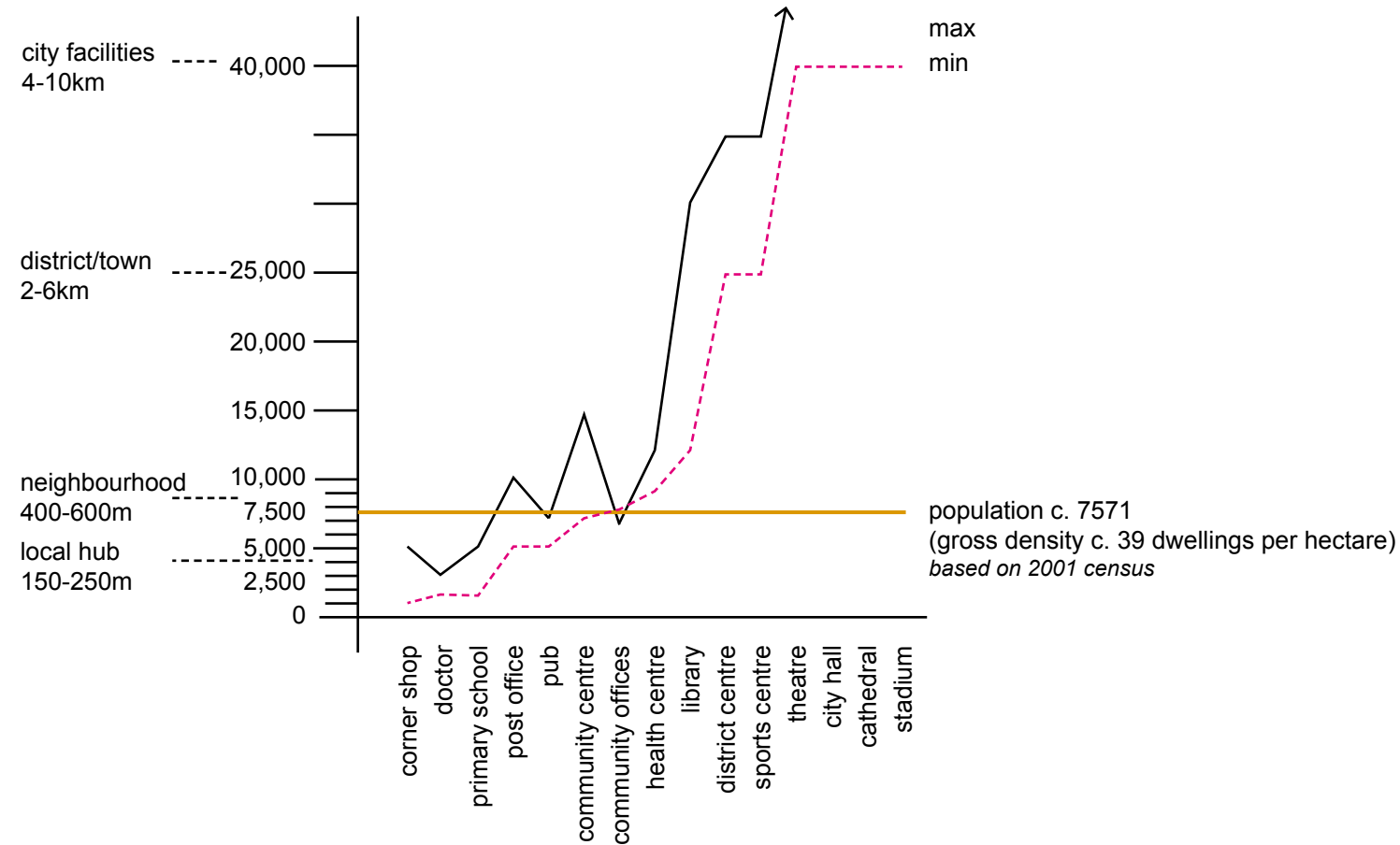
Sheepcote character area

5 east brighton neighbourhood

appendix 1: population & density

Population numbers able to support community facilities.

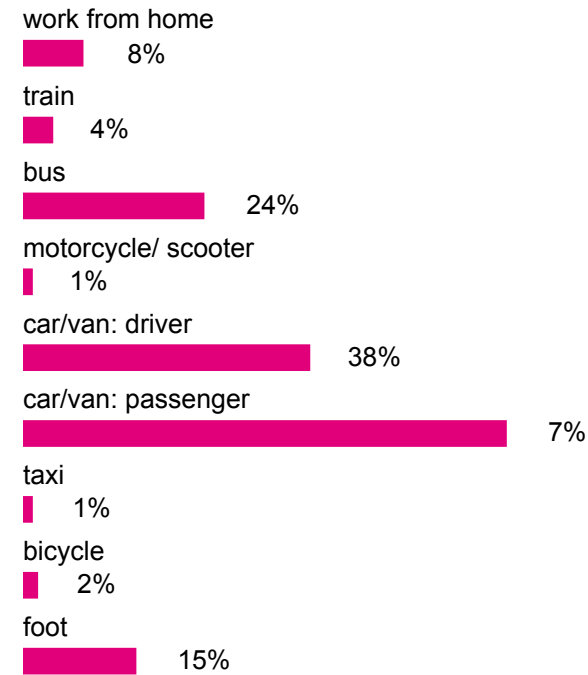
Source: Towards an Urban Renaissance, 2002



appendix 2: travel to work

Statistics illustrating methods of travel to work.

Source: City Stats, Census 2001

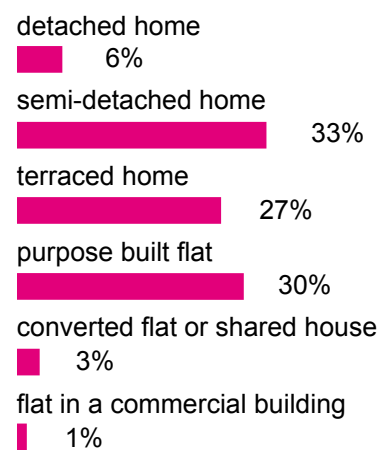


The information from the 2001 census and the Acorn profiles were based on the best fit of the smallest enumeration districts. This was obtained from Citystats website, which is now www.bhlis.org

See pages 8 and 11 for city-wide comparisons and more information

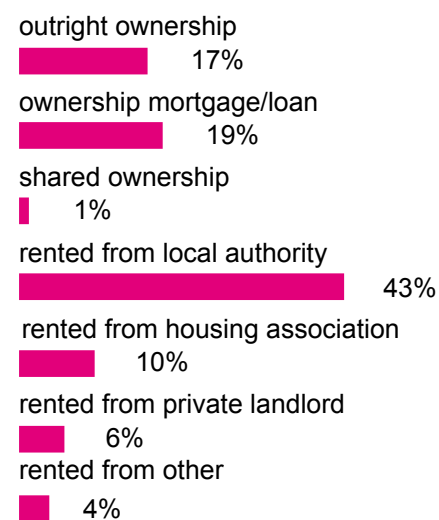
appendix 3: social mix accommodation types

Source: City Stats, Census 2001



tenure types

Source: City Stats, Census 2001



demographic types

Source: City Stats, Acorn data

Clockwise, from the top:

