

23 saltdean neighbourhood

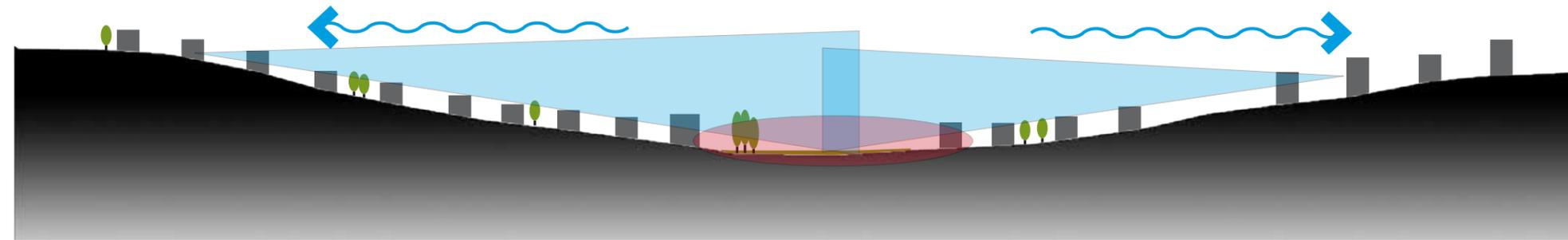
context



topography & microclimate

Saltdean sits in a valley, creating the feeling of visual and physical separation. Key views tend to be across the valley overlooking the central park and out over surrounding countryside, rather than out to sea.

The sides of the valley are exposed to prevailing salt laden winds while the valley floor is sheltered. Deciduous trees tend to be stunted and bent over in exposed areas whilst further up the valley along the central avenue the tree planting is tall and unaffected by prevailing winds.



key stages of historic development

Saltdean is a purpose built coastal outer suburb of Brighton & Hove. It lies over a gently sloping valley offering open views from one side of the valley to the other as well as views out towards the South Downs. Many of the homes are orientated to take advantage of the views over the park at the centre of Saltdean rather than views out towards the sea. At the bottom of the valley the visual envelope becomes more enclosed with glimpses up the valley sides to where the development abruptly meets the surrounding countryside.

Saltdean is believed to be named after the salt-spray that covered the grass after storms. By the mid-eighteenth century there was very little within the Saltdean Valley apart from a few agricultural buildings; many of which are still standing. A row of coastguard cottages were built to look out for smugglers, who could access the beach easily through the Saltdean Gap.

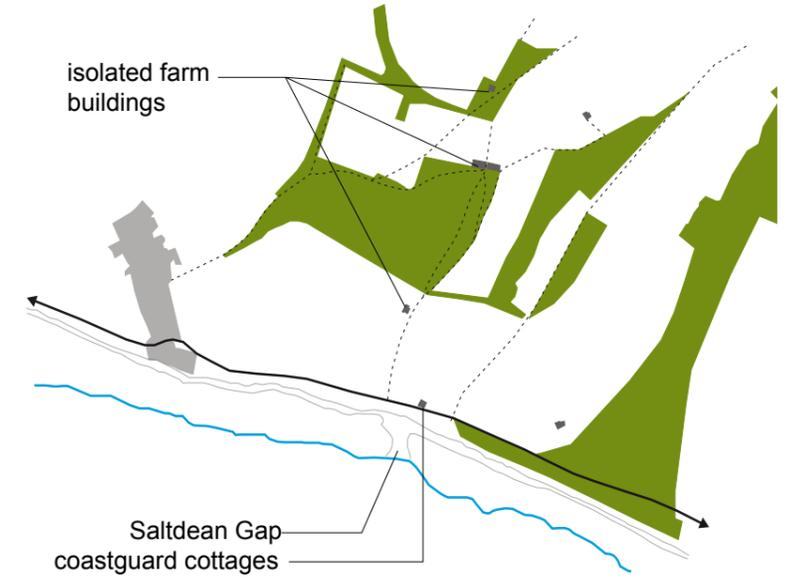
The Saltdean Estate Company was established in 1924 by Charles Neville and miles of new roads were pegged out and designed around a central park named the Saltdean Oval, in which the Saltdean Lido was later built. These roads were constructed in chalk quarried from surrounding chalk pits and moved to the site via a small railway along Saltdean Vale.

By the Second World War much of the Mount Estate and the area around Saltdean Oval was complete. However plots continued to be sold off until the 1970s.

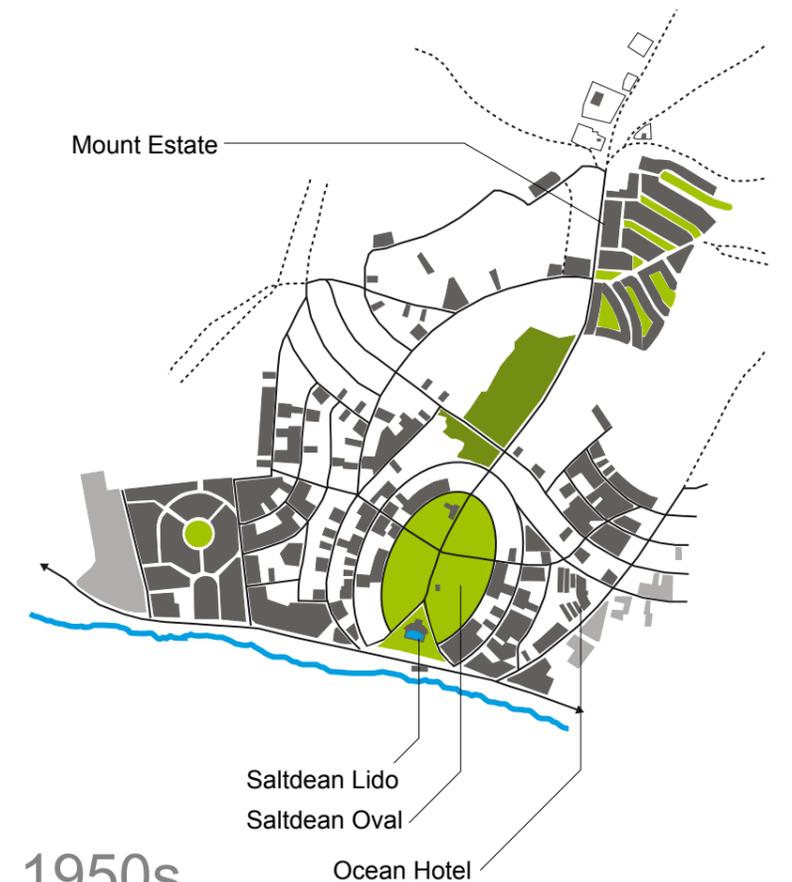
typology

Saltdean neighbourhood may be classified as a downland settlement with 20th century residential suburb. Predominantly low rise, low density housing with mixed building styles lacking unifying features and with limited local services.

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



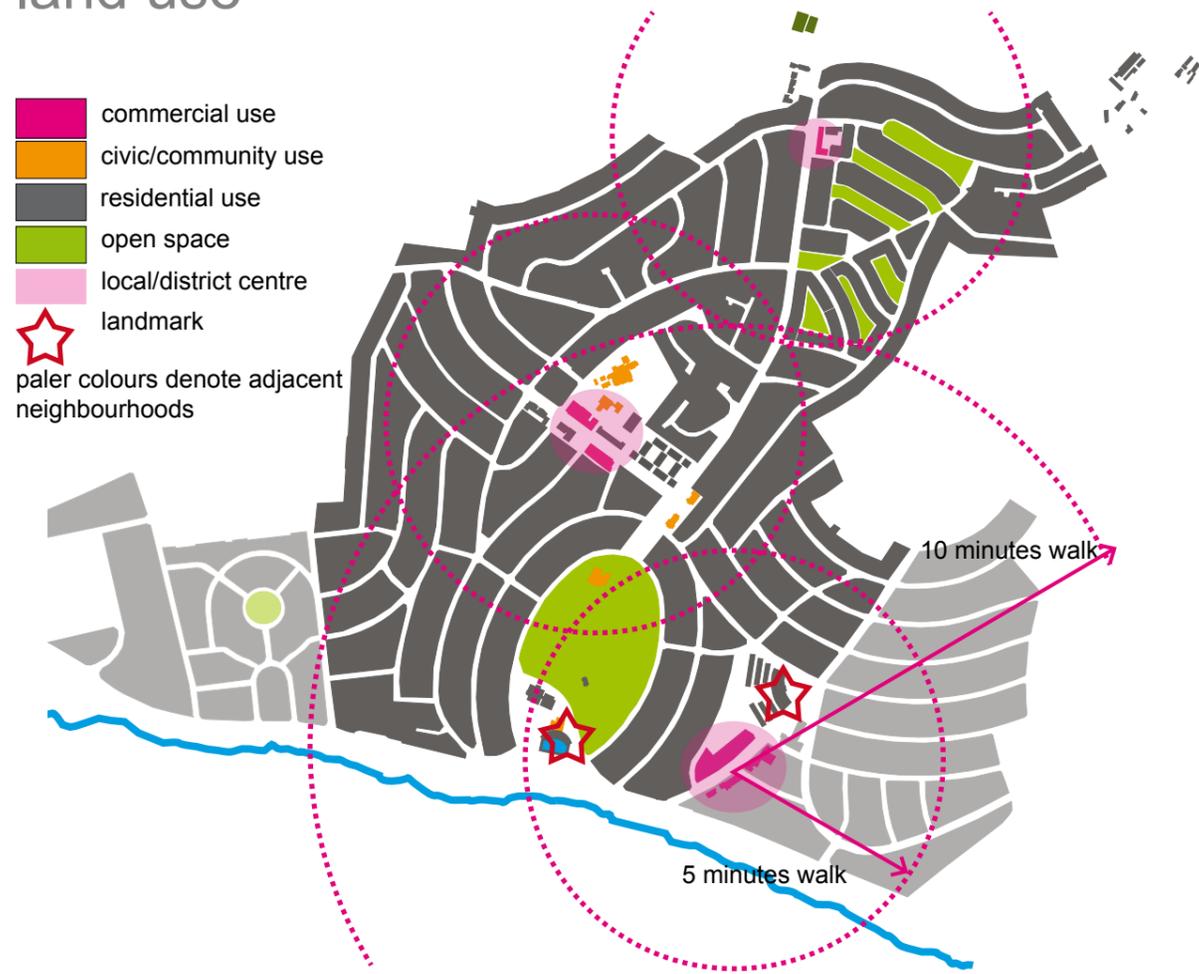
1865-70



1950s

23 saltdean neighbourhood

key characteristics
land use



movement



Examples of 1930s architecture (above and below)



Saldean seafront



Remnants of old farm buildings



Predominant low rise development



Local shops and bus stop

• **Land use:** The predominant land use in Saltdean is housing. There are also associated local commercial and community uses. The former Ocean Hotel is being converted and redeveloped as housing, with some community space. Most of the neighbourhood is within 5 minutes walk of local shops.

• **Scale and density:** Low density, low rise development of 15 dwellings per hectare lies within the valley of Saltdean. Predominately one to two storey detached homes sit within their own gardens arranged around a road pattern that follows the natural contours.

• **Movement:** The remote location, and low density that can only support three bus services, means that Saltdean is poorly connected to the city centre, making the car the most popular form of transport by far.

Saltdean sits beside the A259 coastal road. A wide main avenue leads off the main road into the neighbourhood. There is the expectation that this route will link the Oval to a similar place of importance, but it changes abruptly to a track. All routes are arranged off this main avenue. The street pattern although curvilinear, does allow good pedestrian and vehicular permeability with a choice of routes and very little cul-de-sac development.

Development is suburban in type with broad roads, grass verges and pavements bordered by low walls creating streets of an intimate human scale. There is very little traffic during the day, although the A259 does become busy during peak periods.

The A259 does create both a visual and physical barrier between the neighbourhood and the cliff top and sea. Pedestrian access is by subway which is both poorly directed and uninviting.

• **Socio-economic characteristics:** Saltdean's historic development has meant that plots have been gradually sold off for private development on a piecemeal basis. There is very little in the way of social or privately rented housing available within the neighbourhood. This, along with its location away from the city centre, means that the local population is predominately mature affluent couples owning their homes (see appendix 3). The atmosphere is of a quiet coastal suburb.

• **Architecture:** The neighbourhood is dominated by bungalows dating from the 1920s to the 1950s with some later infill development. There are remnants of older flint farm buildings, including two listed barns, and some good examples of 1930s architecture,

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open space

-  amenity grassland
-  hard edge
-  woodland



character areas



Tree-lined avenue



Community focus



Green open space in The Oval



Backdrop of the Downs



above: Saltdean Oval character area



below: Mount Estate character area

including Saltdean Lido and the Ocean Hotel, both of which are listed.

• **Open space:** The neighbourhood's topography allows for views across the valley to Saltdean Oval and out to the surrounding countryside.

Saltdean Oval provides a central focus for the neighbourhood. It accommodates both passive and active recreation as well as a children's nursery, a pub and the 1930s Saltdean Lido. The road infrastructure has been altered around the Lido to accommodate more parking resulting in a poor pedestrian gateway into the park and to the beach.

Although there are good links to surrounding countryside, the Oval is the only substantial green open space within the neighbourhood. There is little tree planting within the park and it is maintained as amenity grassland and is therefore low in biodiversity value. The beach offers local residents access to another habitat as well as space for active and passive recreation.

There is very little mature planting around the edges of the settlement to help development blend into its surroundings, creating a hard edge between settlement

and countryside.

The urban environment is characterised by suburban streets with mown grass verges and sporadic tree planting. The lack of tree planting on the higher sides of the valley can make the local microclimate exposed in the winter and offers no shade during the summer.

• **Character areas:** Saltdean can be divided into two character areas:

1. Saltdean Oval: a very low density suburban residential area in a shallow valley between the Downs and the sea, developed between the 1920s and 1950s. Mainly detached bungalows and two storey houses in wide streets with grass verges that follow the contours, radiating out from the central green space. Unified scale and street pattern but mixed architectural styles with some community and commercial uses.

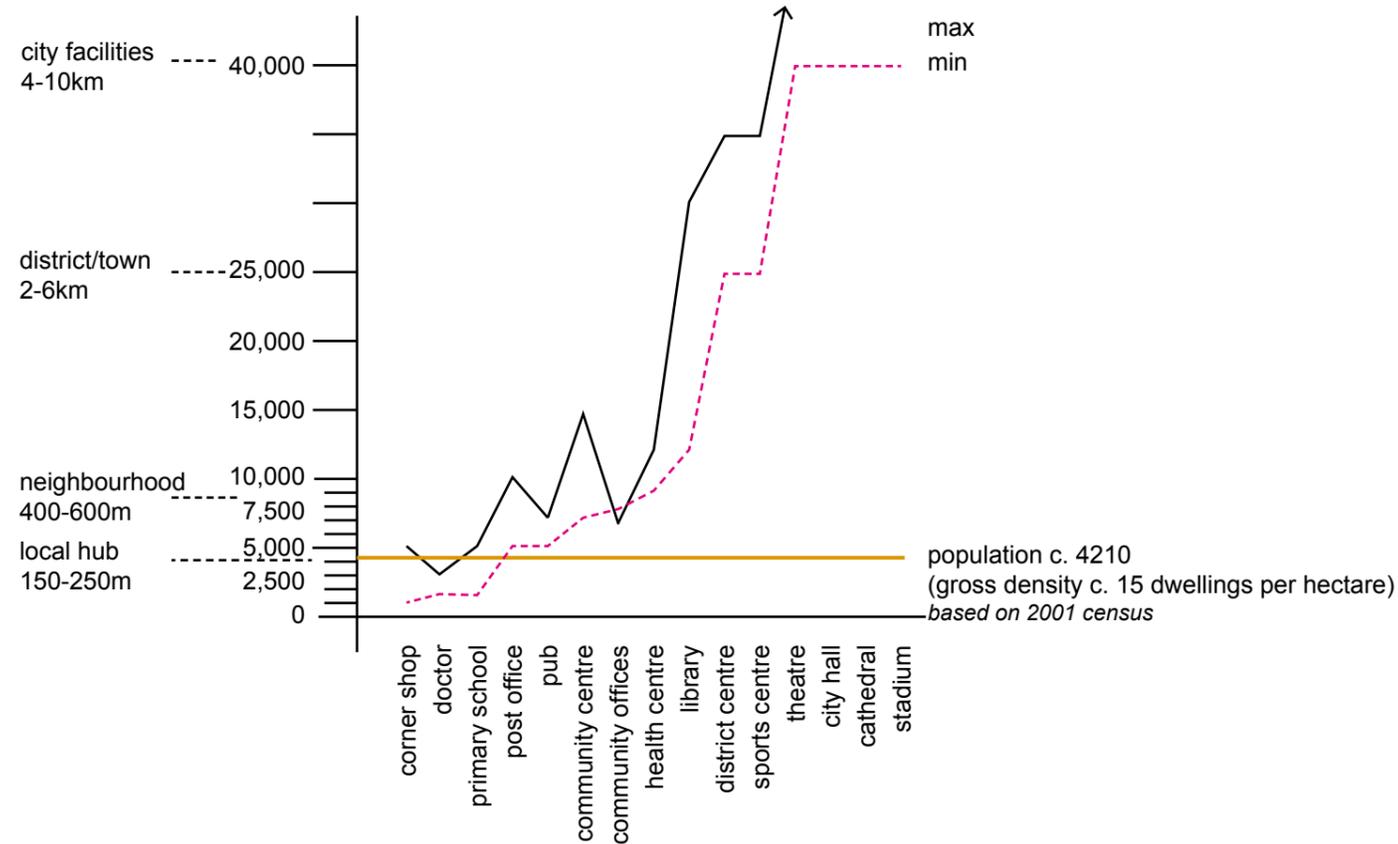
2. Mount Estate: a very low density and low rise residential estate on high ground on the edge of the Downs developed in the 1930s. Detached and semi detached properties arranged around long green spaces.

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appendix 1: population & density

Population numbers able to support community facilities.

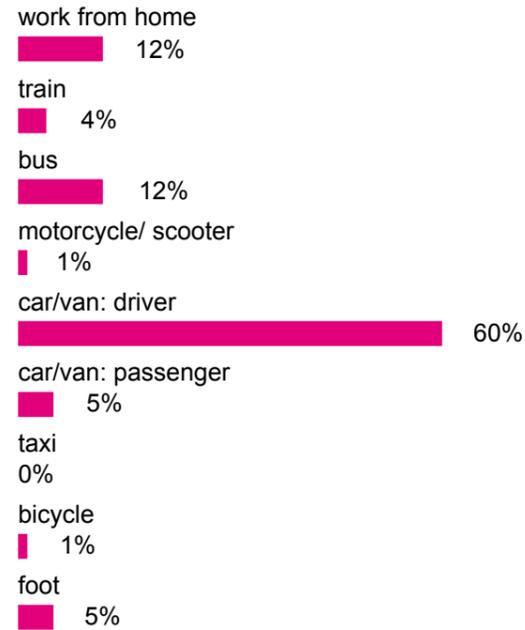
Source: Towards an Urban Renaissance, 2002



appendix 2: travel to work

Statistics illustrating methods of travel to work.

Source: City Stats, Census 2001

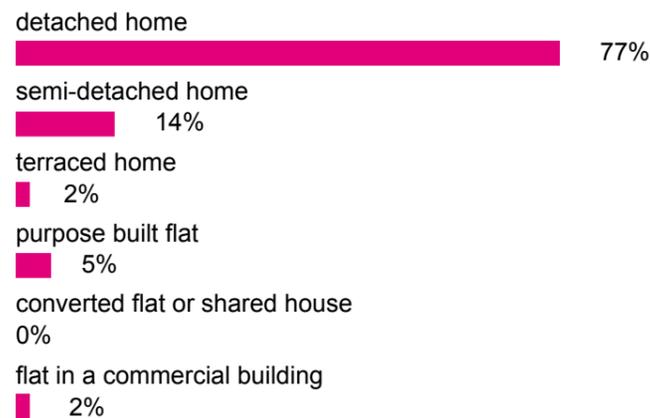


The information from the 2001 census and the Acorn profiles were based on the best fit of the smallest enumeration districts. This was obtained from Citystats website, which is now www.bhlis.org

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

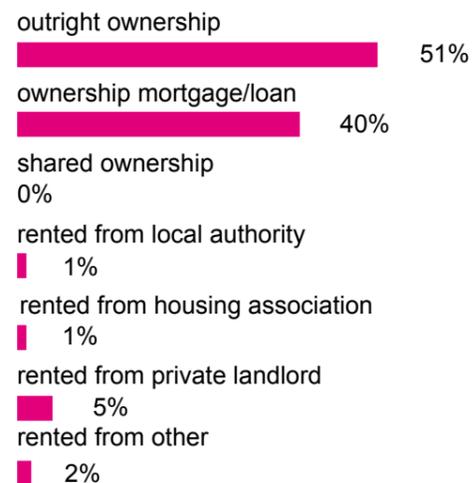
appendix 3: social mix accommodation types

Source: City Stats, Census 2001



tenure types

Source: City Stats, Census 2001



demographic types

Source: City Stats, Acorn data

