

# City Street Data Profile on Ethnicity, Economy and Migration

## Rookery Road, Birmingham

By Suzanne Hall, Julia King and Robin Finlay  
December 2015



This data emerges from an ESRC funded project on  
Super-diverse Streets:  
*Economies and spaces of urban migration in UK cities*  
(ES/L009560/1)

This project is hosted by LSE Cities in the Department of Sociology at the  
London School of Economics and Political Science.

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## Preface

### Phase 1, 'Super-diverse streets' data profiles, 2015

The 'Super-diverse streets' project is an ESRC-funded research exploration of the intersections between city streets, ethnic diversity and economic adaptations in the context of accelerated migration (ref: ES/L009560/1). The research is based on a comparative analysis across UK cities and aims to explore how urban retail economies and spaces are shaped by and shape migrant practices. The first phase of this project incorporates a qualitative survey conducted in 2015, and focuses on four 'super-diverse' high streets: Rookery Road (Birmingham); Stapleton Road (Bristol); Narborough Road (Leicester); and Cheetham Hill (Manchester). Each street was selected for its location in an ethnically diverse as well as comparatively deprived urban locale. Furthermore, Birmingham, Bristol, Leicester and Manchester are amongst the UK cities that have the highest percentage of 'country of birth' citizens from outside of the UK, after London. From this grounded perspective we trace emerging capacities as well as old and new inequalities. We also record the diversification of bodies, spaces and micro-economic networks in a world that is increasingly mobile and bordered. In total, the face-to-face surveys across four streets incorporate 910 units, 596 units include retail, service and civic activities of which 480 are retail units and 68 units were vacant. 351 proprietors were surveyed. The data incorporated in this report includes the core of our survey in both tabular and graphic form. The purpose is to provide an overview briefing of the survey data itself. Analytic perspectives of how and why migrant proprietors arrive on these specific streets, and how and why their shops both flourish and fail, are developed in further papers. Our aim in disseminating the comparative data sets for each of the four streets, is to provide detailed data to inform debates and policy around:

- the future of 'British' high streets;
- ethnic minority and/or migrant enterprise; and
- the role of historic and contemporary migrations in shaping cities and streets across the UK.

The Phase 1 survey of these four streets was conducted by Suzanne Hall, Robin Finlay and Julia King.

- To cite this report, or to use an image from it: Hall, Suzanne, King, Julia and Robin Finlay (2015) City Street Data Profile on Ethnicity, Economy and Migration: Rookery Road, Birmingham, an ESRC report, November 2015.

- To download companion reports, click on: [Stapleton Road](#) (Bristol); [Narborough Road](#) (Leicester); and [Cheetham Hill](#) (Manchester).

For further information on the Super-diverse Streets project please go to:

<https://lsecities.net/objects/research-projects/super-diverse-streets>

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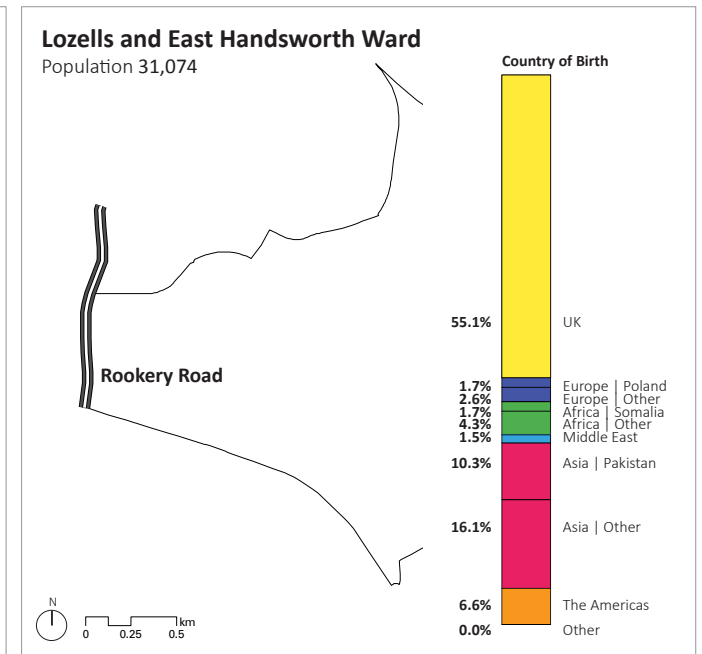
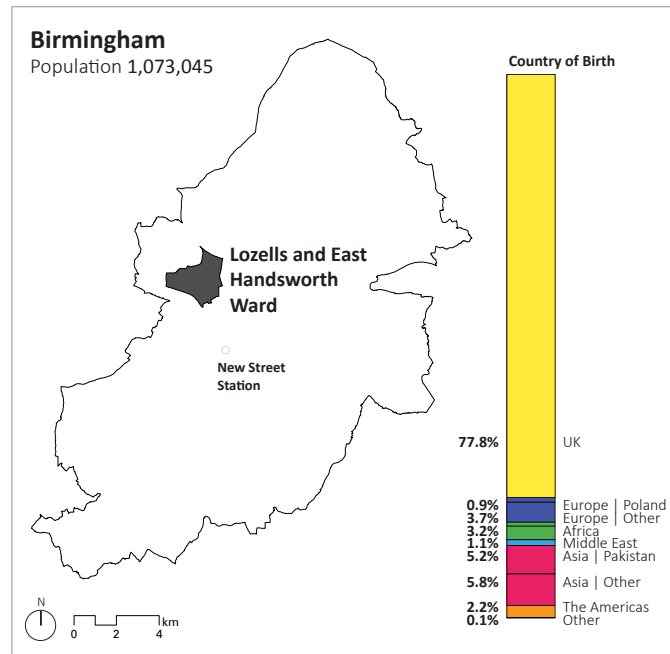
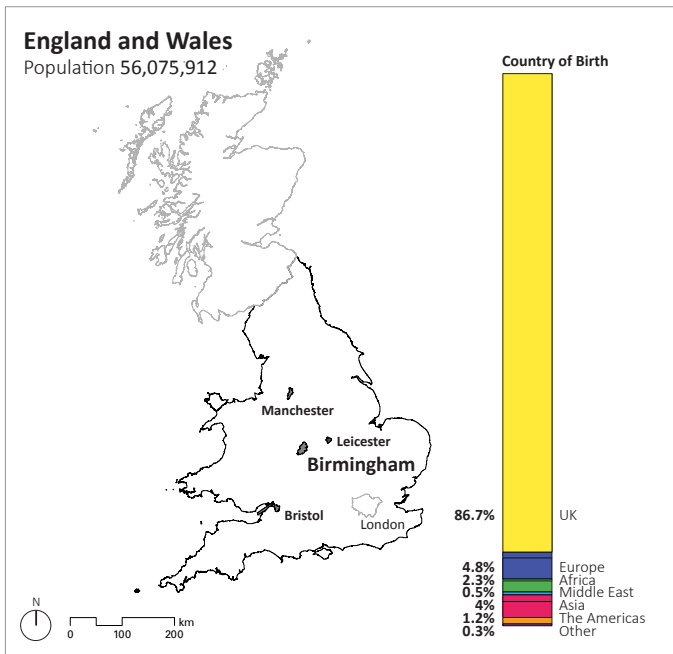
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## Introduction

Rookery Road is located to the north-west of Birmingham city centre, and falls within the Lozells and East Handsworth and Handsworth Wood Wards. Drawing on the latest national Census data from 2011, 22.2% of those living in Birmingham were born outside of the UK, and this figure increases to 44.9% for those living in the Lozells and East Handsworth Ward. Rookery Road is within areas that are ranked as amongst the 10% most deprived in England, according to the Index of Multiple Deprivation, 2015. Key points to highlight with respect to our survey of proprietors along Rookery Road are:

- Of the 348 units along the street, 102 are retail units, 27 are service units, 5 are civic units, with the remainder being largely made up of residential terraced-houses.
- While 15% of the non-residential units were vacant, 65% of proprietors have remained on the street for 6 years or more.
- 60% of 48 proprietors surveyed reported to have been in another area of employment before setting up shop.
- Food-related retail accounts for the most prominent activity on the street (29%).
- We recorded on average 3.4 jobs within respective non-residential units including retail, service and civic. Based on our average of jobs per unit, we estimate that there are approximately 456 jobs within the retail, service and civic units along the street.
- Using survey input from 66 proprietors, 60% of those employed are reportedly non-family members.
- There were 12 countries of birth represented among the 87 proprietors we surveyed. The highest representation of countries of birth amongst the proprietors include: UK (37%); India (21%) and Pakistan (11%).
- Long-established retailers on Rookery Road include Asians born in Kenya and India, as well as those born in the UK whose parents came to Birmingham from India in the 1960s, by invitation of the British government. In the last 10 years, the origins of proprietors on Rookery Road include India, Pakistan, Iraq and Kurdistan.
- 88% of proprietors speak more than one language, while 59% speak three languages or more.

# City Locale





# World to Street



# Street Survey

**Total units (excluding residential) - 157**

**Total surveyed - 87**

**Total vacant units - 23**

**Total retail - 102**

**Total services - 27**

**Total civic - 5**

**Countries of birth amongst proprietors – 12:**

Bangladesh, Cameroon, Ghana, India, Iraq, Jamaica, Kenya, Kurdistan, Pakistan, Poland, UK, Vietnam

Activities (excluding residential)		Employment Figures		Number of Languages Spoken		Duration (excluding residential)	
<b>Food</b>	29%	<b>Independent Retail</b>	86%	<b>More than 1</b>	88%	<b>5 years or less</b>	35%
<b>Miscellaneous</b>	25%	<b>Surveyed number of Jobs</b>	246				
<b>Commercial Services</b> (including health practitioners, accountants, solicitors)	20%	<b>Family</b>	40%*				
<b>Beauty</b>	14%	<b>Non-Family</b>	60%*	<b>3 - 4</b>	48%	<b>6 - 19 years</b>	33%
<b>Civic</b> (religious centre, community centre X2, fire station, school)	4%	<b>Average jobs per unit</b>	3.4	<b>5 +</b>	11%	<b>20 + years</b>	32%
<b>Clothing</b>	4%	<b>Estimated total number of Jobs</b>	456				
<b>Technology</b>	4%						
<b>Total</b>	100%						

**Tertiary education**

Not full survey data

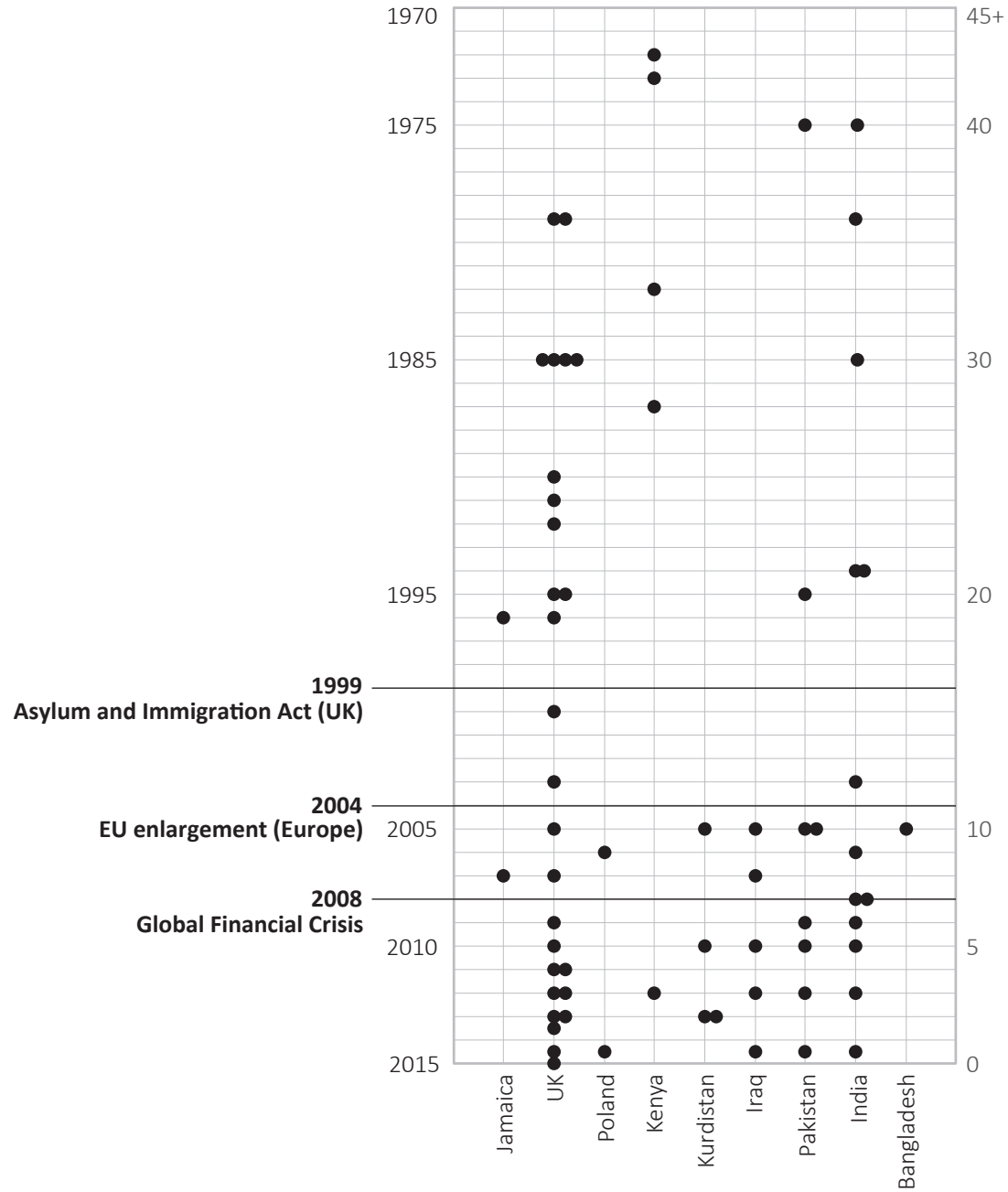
**Experience of other occupation**

60%: 48 proprietors surveyed responded to the question: 'What work did the proprietor do before trading in the shop?'

\*66 proprietors surveyed responded to the question: 'How many employees are family or non-family members?'

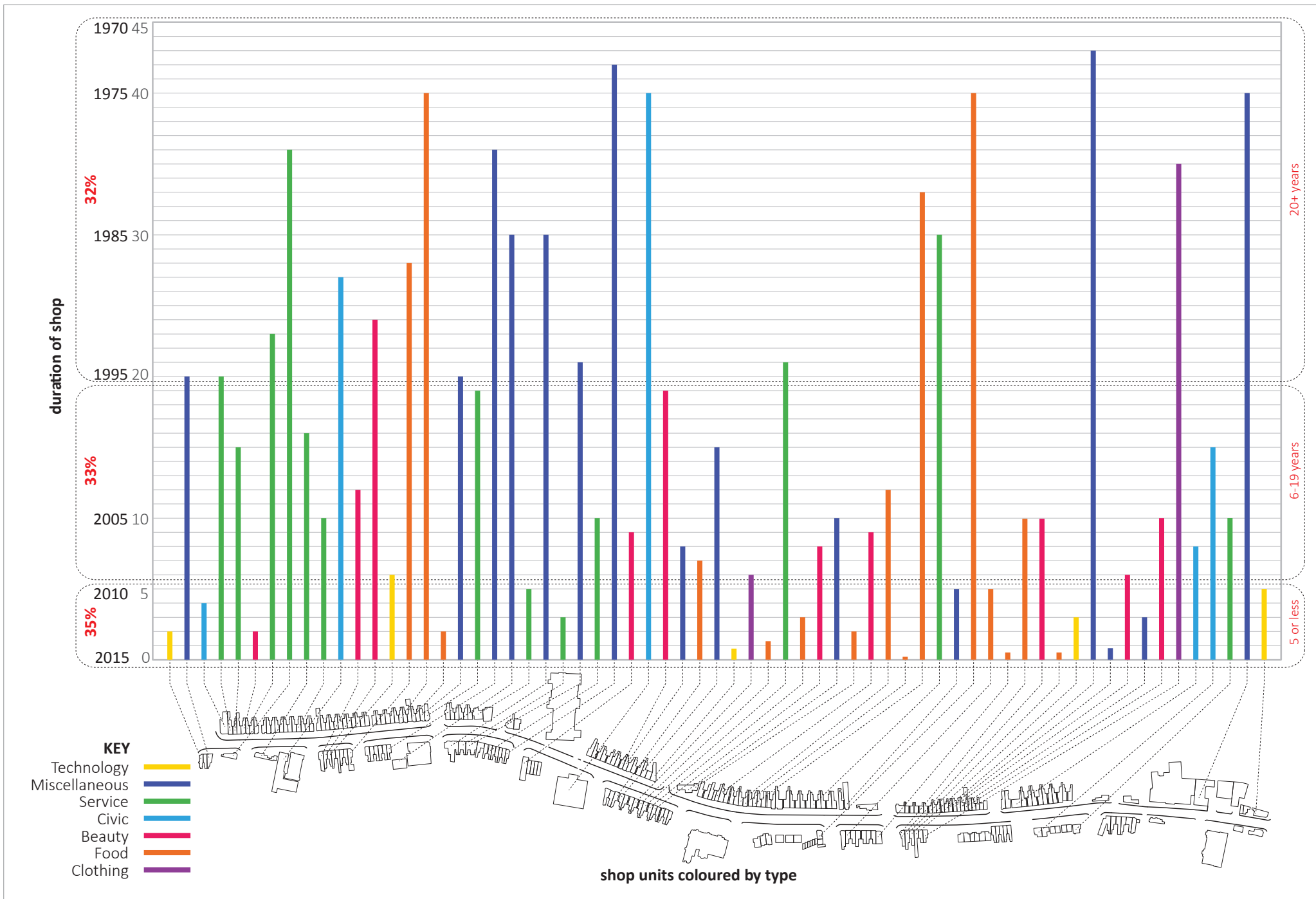
For our purposes, a proprietor incorporates the owner of a business including retail and services. We have also included civic services in calculations for employment figures, number of languages spoken, and duration.

# Histories of Arrival





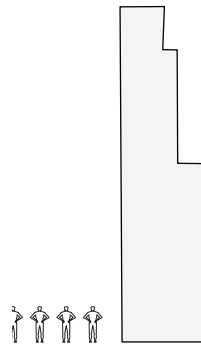
# Diverse Uses



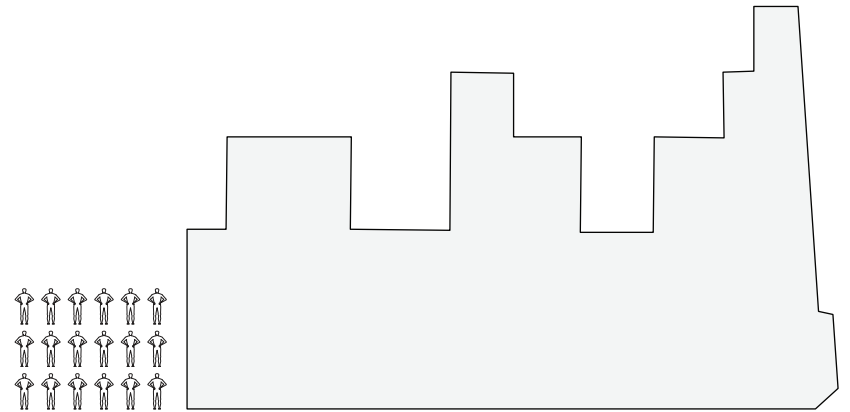
# Unit Variation and Value



**Smallest retail unit**  
front half of standard shop  
~ 10 sq m




**Typical retail unit**  
average rent: £500 / month \*  
~ 55 sq m



**Largest retail unit**  
convenience food store  
~ 390 sq m

0m 4m 10m 20m

 number of employees (for 'typical unit' based on average from survey data)

\* rental values drawn from fieldwork including interviews with estate agents and tenants



# Streetscape



Rookery Road, Birmingham (2015)