![FUSE DAREBIN]

HISTORY ON HIGH

Queens Parade to
Separation Street

BACK TO NORTHCOTE
MAY 15th to 25th JUBILEE 1883-1933
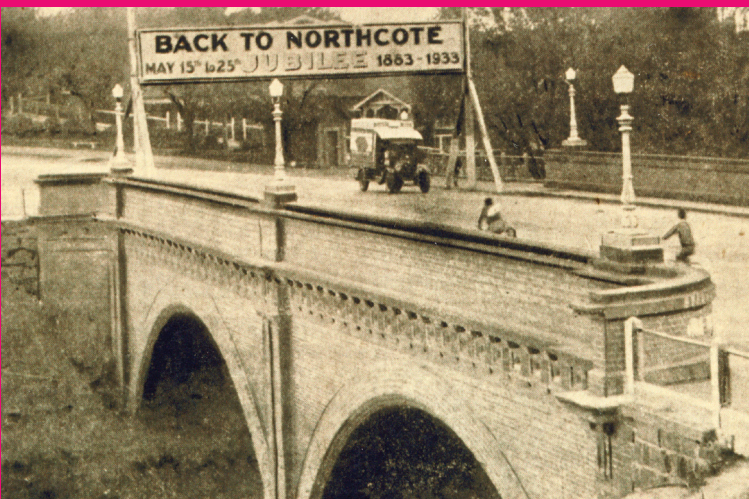
City of
DAREBIN

**Darebin
Arts**

History on High is a self-guided tour along High Street — Darebin's 'spine'. Each section of the tour provides a snapshot of Darebin's rich and diverse history, from its early white settlement to the thriving creative municipality it is today.

You can choose to visit all the sites in this guide in order, or do a few at a time, starting from any point on High Street.

This project has been produced for FUSE Darebin in collaboration with Darebin Libraries.
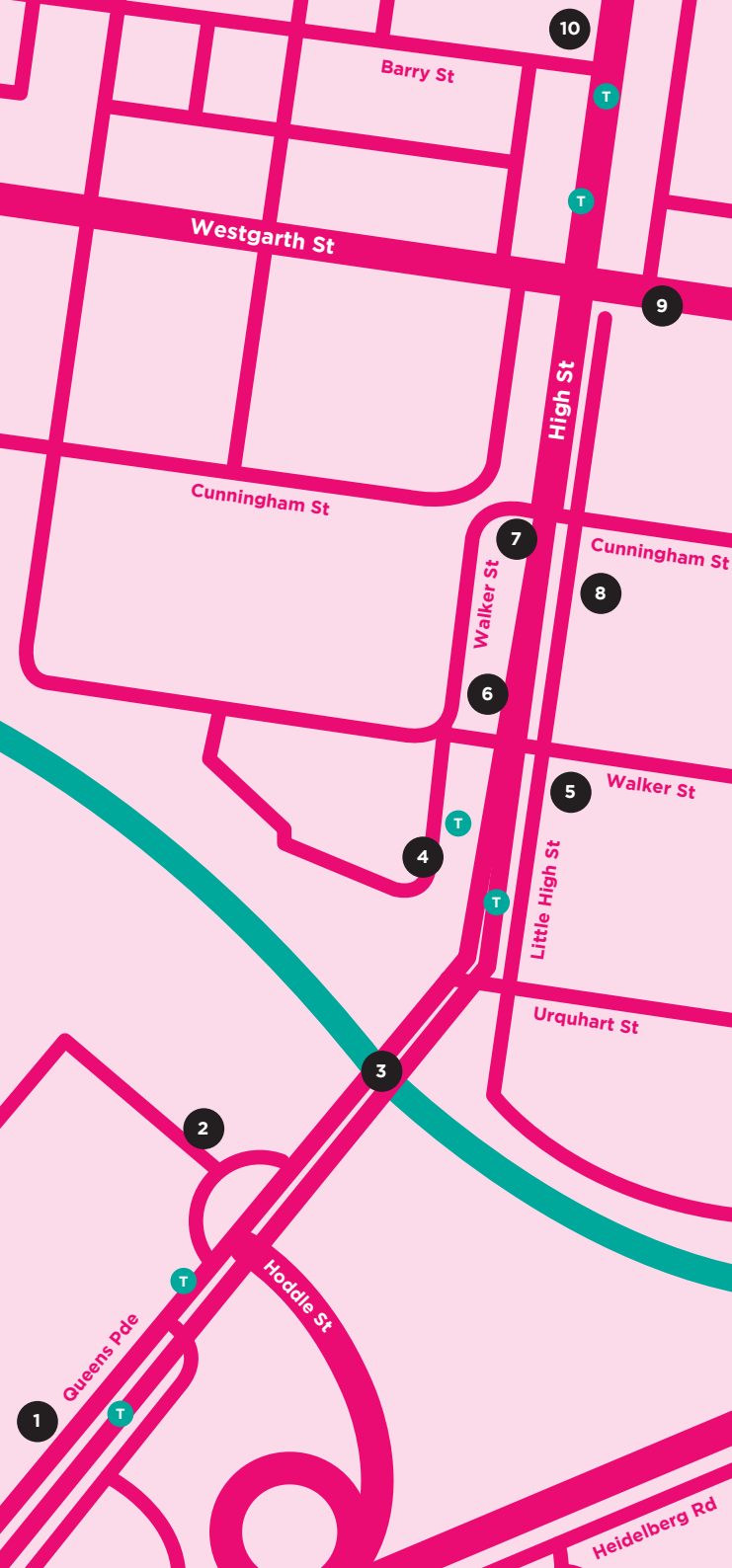
Former Northcote Arms Hotel
434 Queens Parade Clifton Hill

Up until at least the 1930s the City of Northcote held the view that Northcote started at the beginning of Queens Parade. The newly elected Mayor was frequently known to do a walking tour up his domain from Queens Parade to Dundas Street.

The Northcote Arms Hotel was built in 1853 and operated until about 1871. It never seems to have prospered financially and was frequently up for sale. So much so that a contemporary newspaper noted that the property 'was beginning to stink in the market.'

In its brief history it managed to be robbed by both bushrangers and escaped convicts. It was also known as the Egremont Hotel and maybe the Butcher's Arms Hotel. It cost £7,000 to build and was valued at £1,600 ten years later.
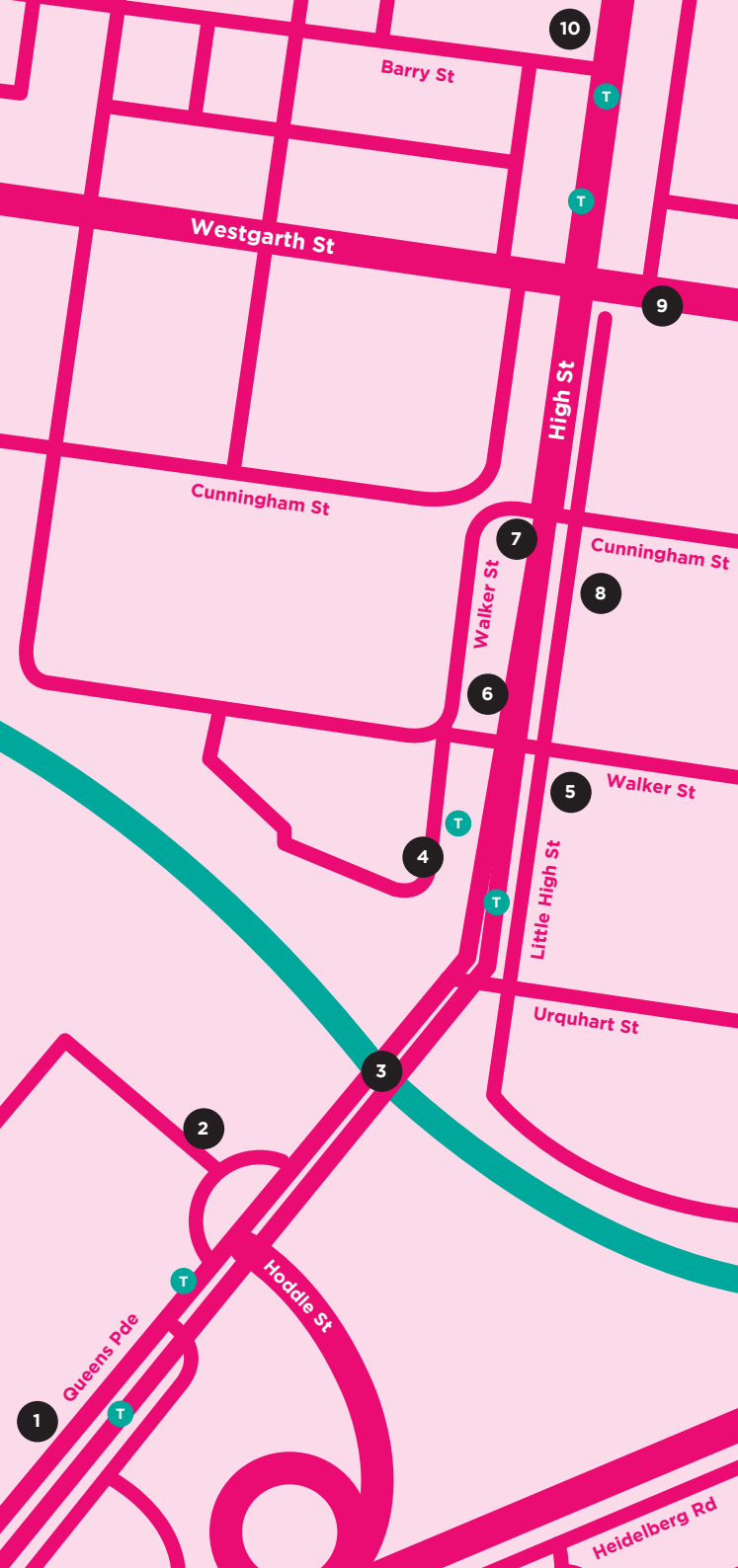
2

Terminus Hotel
(formerly Scotch Thistle Hotel)
492 Queens Parade Clifton Hill

Built in 1854 by John McLean, the Scotch Thistle has been in continuous operation ever since. A plaque on the wall shows the original name and date of the building. Although altered, if you look closely you can see the original bluestone construction of the building. Like the Northcote Arms Hotel the bluestone was dug straight out of the Merri Creek.

It changed its name to the Rosecrea Hotel in 1858 when Denis Bowes took over as the publican at the hotel, although there was already a Rosecrea Hotel on the opposite bank of the Merri Creek at the time. It became the Terminus Hotel in 1896.
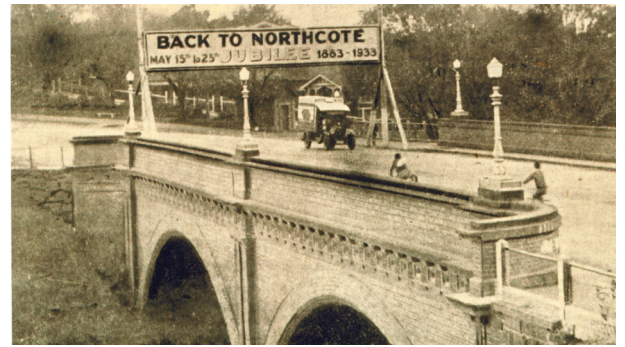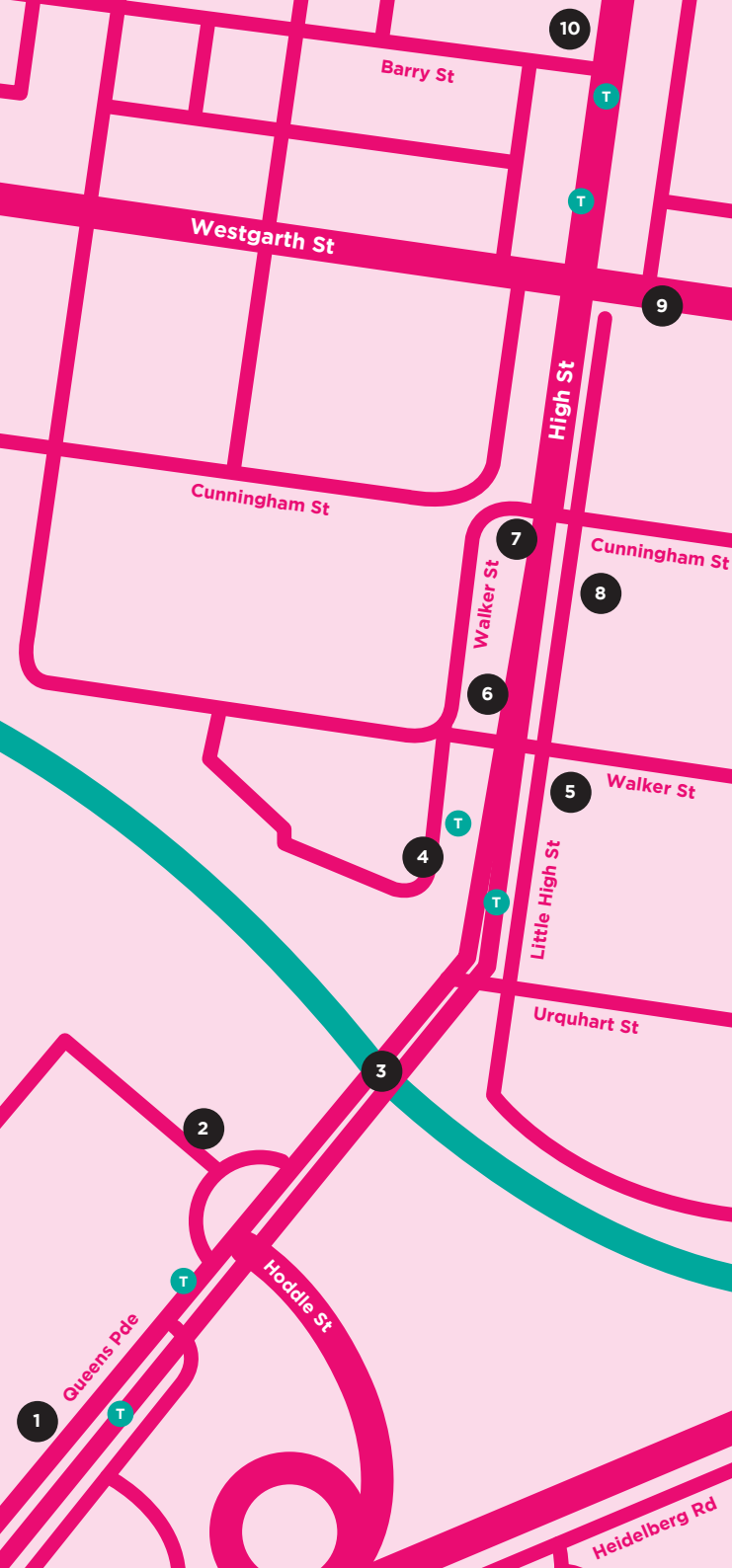
3

Merri Creek Bridge

Before the Merri Creek Bridge was built, this ford was considered a dangerous crossing and a number of people drowned whilst attempting to cross after heavy rains. The bridge was built in 1874.

It was the site of a daring robbery in 1938 when Mr Frederick Sherry drove his car from a Northcote bank towards his factory in Clifton Hill. He was run off the road on the Clifton Hill side of the bridge and gunned down by one of the two robbers, Selwyn Wallace and Herbert Jenner. Jenner fired the fatal shots. Both men served lengthy jail terms.

It was this robbery which was a trigger for the introduction of armoured cars for payroll deliveries.

You may be interested in the Merri Creek Shared Trail, please see QR code on the back of this brochure for a link to the website.
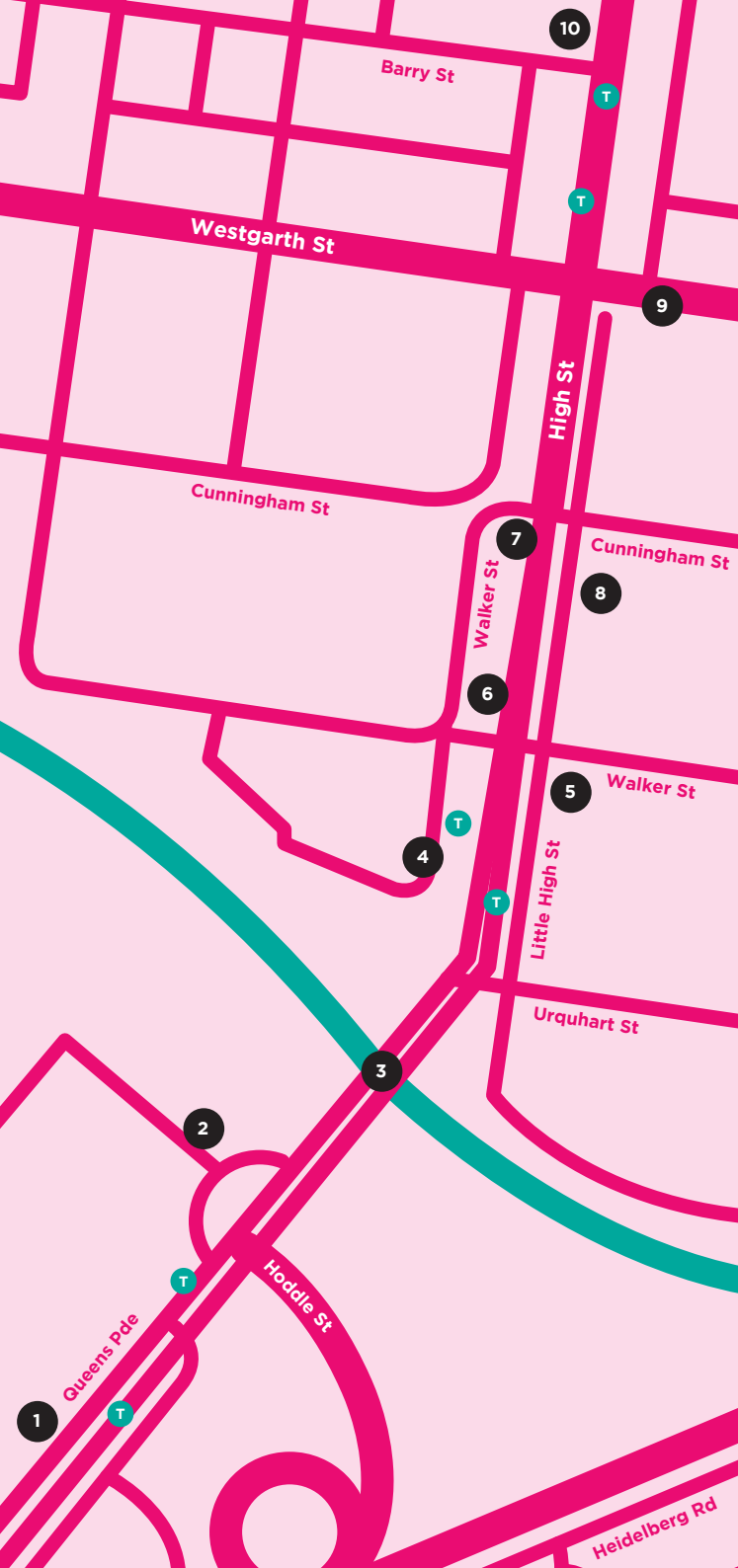
4

Site of former Bridge Hotel
1 High Street Northcote

The Bridge Hotel was built in 1871 and had its liquor license removed in 1921.

It became a café and later became the home of the Sansom family before being knocked down to build public housing flats in 1958.

There was another hotel nearby called the Rosecrea (not the Terminus) which was opposite All Saints Church.
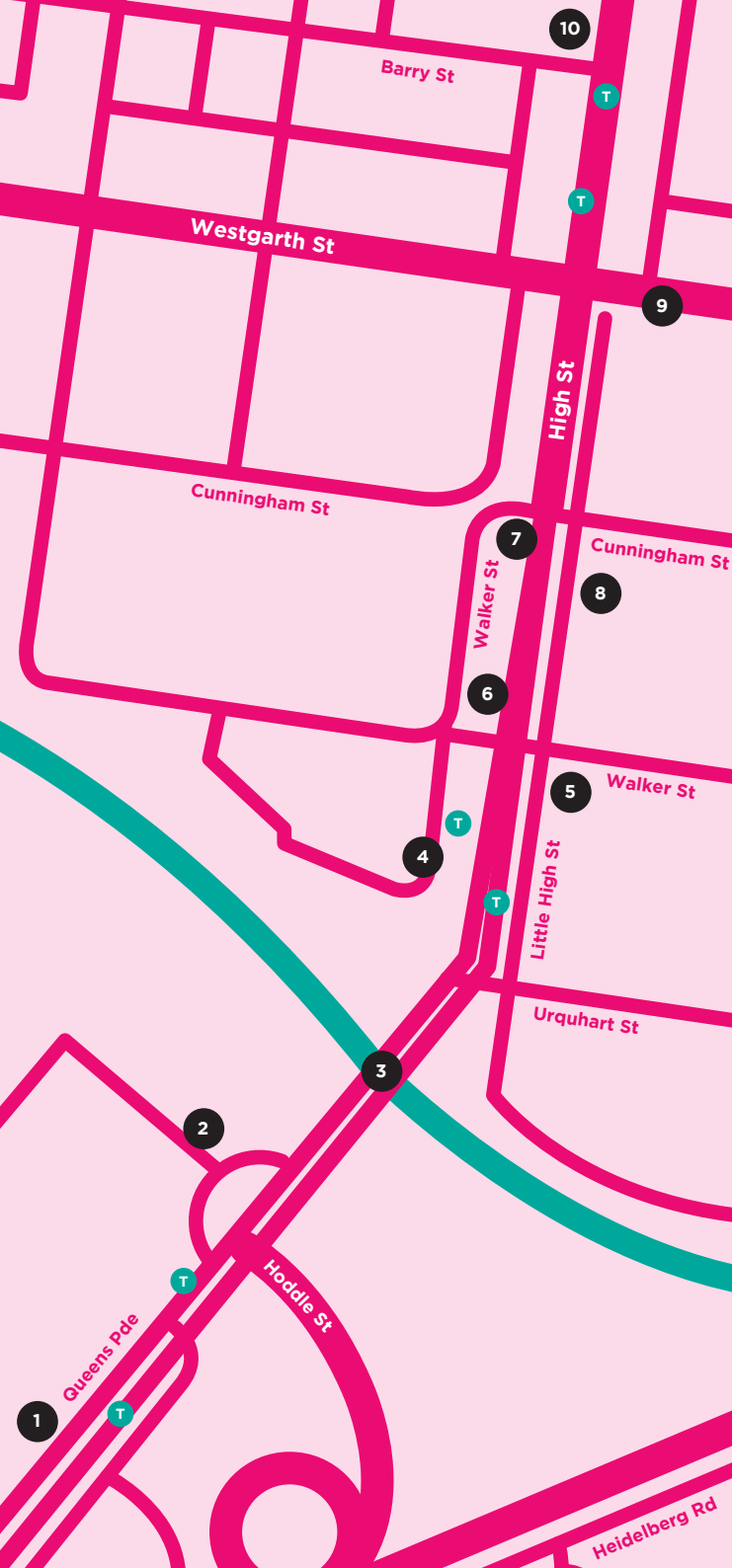
5

All Saints Church
14-16 High Street Northcote

The first moves to build an Anglican Church in Northcote ironically started with a committee based at the Peacock Hotel. Building was begun in 1859 and the church opened in August 1860.

One of the most well-known vicars was the Reverend Alfred Charles Kellaway who served here from 1901 until his death in 1930 in Northcote.
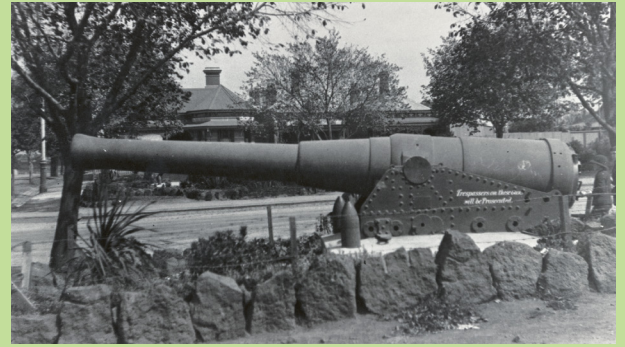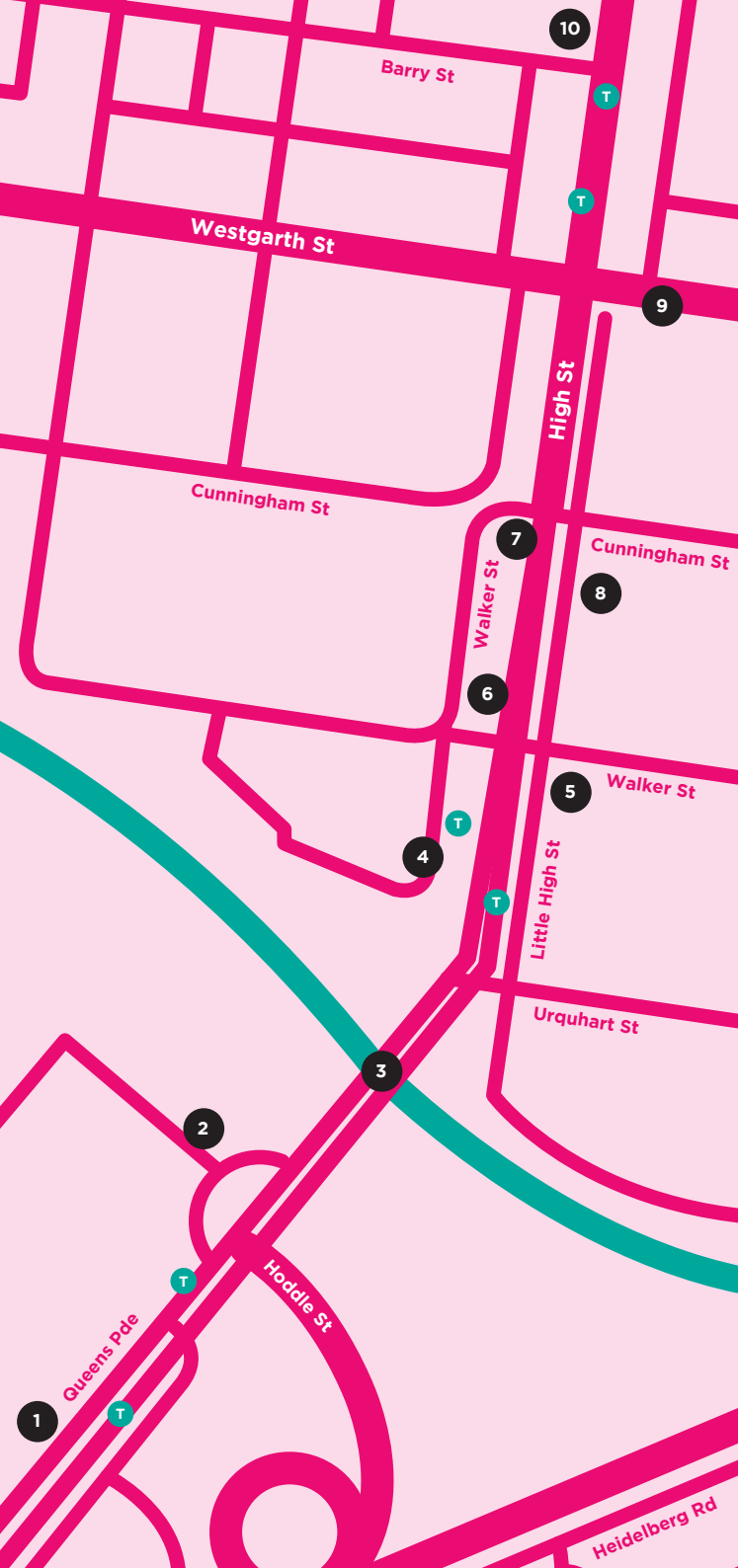
6

Northcote Cannons
High Street Northcote

The two cannons on High Street were built in 1884-5 in Northumberland, England. They weigh just over 12 tonnes (12,000kg) and could fire a 95kg shell nearly 7.5 kms.They were destined for the South Channel Fort in Port Phillip Bay but were deemed obsolete and removed in 1896.

The Northcote South Rate Payers Association were instrumental in getting them installed and also to face North Fitzroy. At one stage the Victorian Tourist Commission tried to get them shifted back to the Channel Fort but after a poll of its residents the Northcote Council, as it was known before the amalgamation refused to move them.
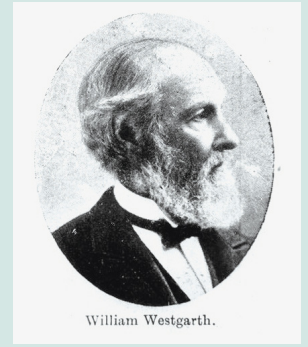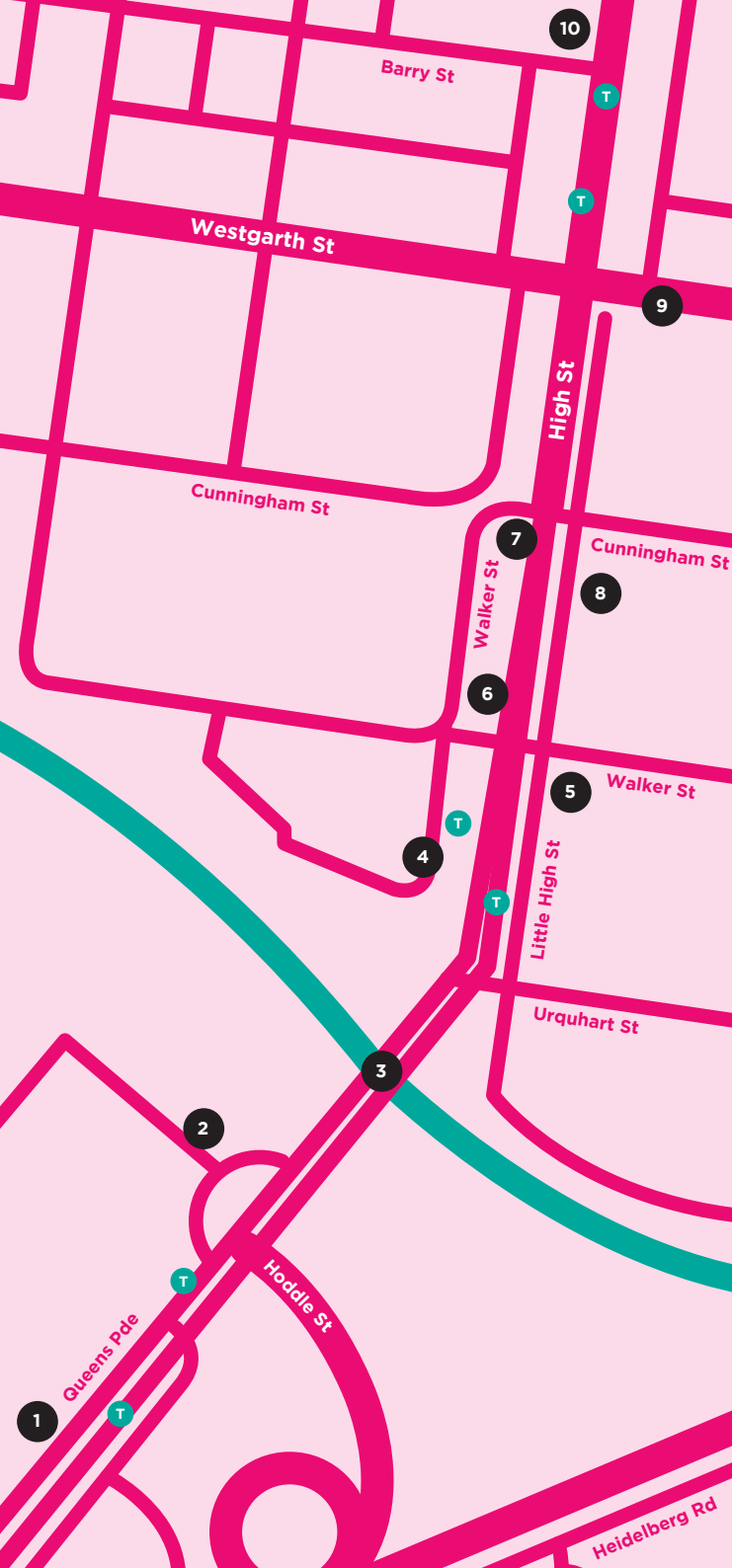
7

The Folly
Just up the hill from the cannons

Whilst Darebin Council was performing some undergrowth management on High Street in Westgarth this structure emerged during the late 1990s. It is located on the west side of High Street on the median strip between Walker and Cunningham Streets. It is made of bluestone boulders and earthenware drainage pipes and bonded with mortar. It is about 2 metres wide at the base and about 1.5 metres high. It appears that there may have been a small set of smallish boulders around the base. A small Buddha statue, placed within the central cavity, just appeared. This section may (or not) have been the location of a fountain. Decorative heads have been placed atop the pipes. The folly was originally located in Johnson Park in the 1930s.

Map

10

Barry St

T

Westgarth St

T

9

High St

Cunningham St

Cunningham St

7

Walker St

8

6

5 Walker St

T

4

Little High St

T

Urquhart St

3

2

T

Hoddle St

Queens Pde

1

T

Heidelberg Rd

8

Sutton's Tool and Gauge Factory
26-36 High Street Northcote

In the days when Australia still had a manufacturing base, the Sutton Tool and Gauge company started in 1917 in Plant Street. As it prospered it expanded and eventually in the early 1930s moved to High Street.

It became a shop fitters in the 1970s and was converted to units.

During the 1930s-50s it made plumbing equipment, electrical fittings and had a brass foundry.

William Westgarth.

9

Westgarth Street

Westgarth Street was named after Scottish merchant and politician William Westgarth who arrived in Melbourne in 1840. Impressed by the industrious nature of the German immigrants to South Australia he did much to encourage them to come to Melbourne. Many settled around German Lane (Separation Street) in Northcote. Ironically Westgarth probably never visited Northcote.
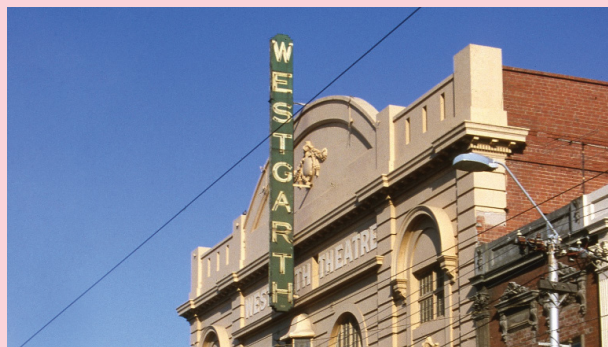
Westgarth Cinema
87 High Street Westgarth

Westgarth Cinema was built in 1921 and was known as the Westgarth Picture Theatre. It was officially opened on 20 October 1921. The builder was 26-year-old John Seccull of Barry Street, and at the time the theatre was the biggest project that the firm had undertaken. It was financed locally as well as being created by a local.

The cinema changed hands in the 1960s to Peter Yiannoudes and gave the Greek population of Northcote an opportunity to see films in their own language. Films in other languages were given a showing, too. A stage extension in the 1980s meant concerts could be held.

In 1987 Richmond's Valhalla Cinema moved to Westgarth when its lease ran out. It showed art-house, nostalgic, international and cult films. The Valhalla did not renew its lease in 1996 because of rising rental costs. In 2006, it was bought by Palace Cinemas.

Walk across the road towards the drinking fountain gifted to the City of Darebin.

11

Drinking Fountain
*Corner High Street and
Union Street Westgarth*

At the bottom of Rucker's Hill lies a drinking fountain donated to the City of Northcote in 1914 by Mayor Sam Dennis to celebrate it being proclaimed a City. The prominent Dennis family's contributions to Darebin saw Dennis Street and Dennis Railway station named after them. Two members of the family served as Northcote Mayors.

Noting that this stretch of the walk is a bit steep up Rucker's Hill to Northcote, you may consider taking the 86 tram (stops located along High Street) to the top of the hill.

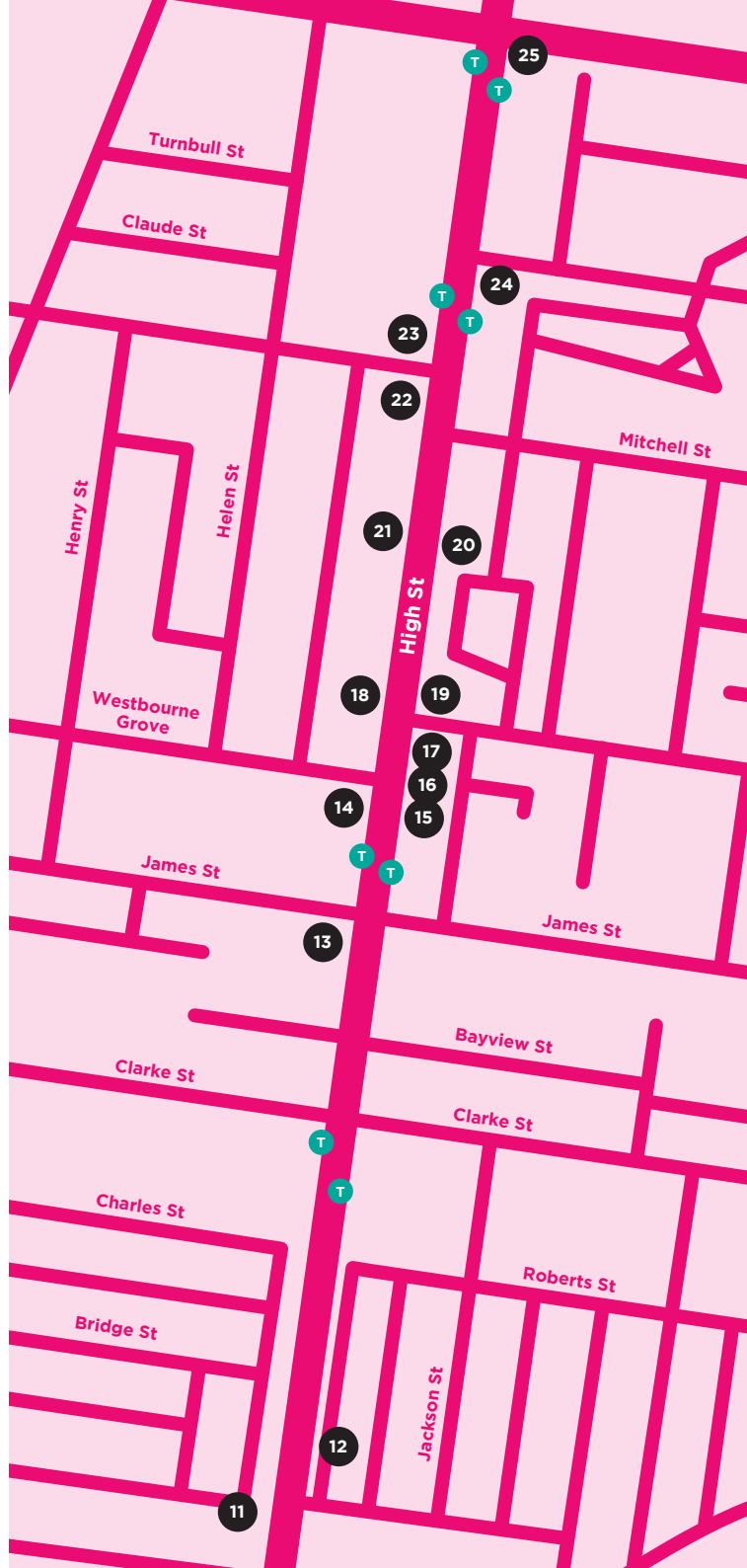**Look behind you for excellent views of the Melbourne skyline.**
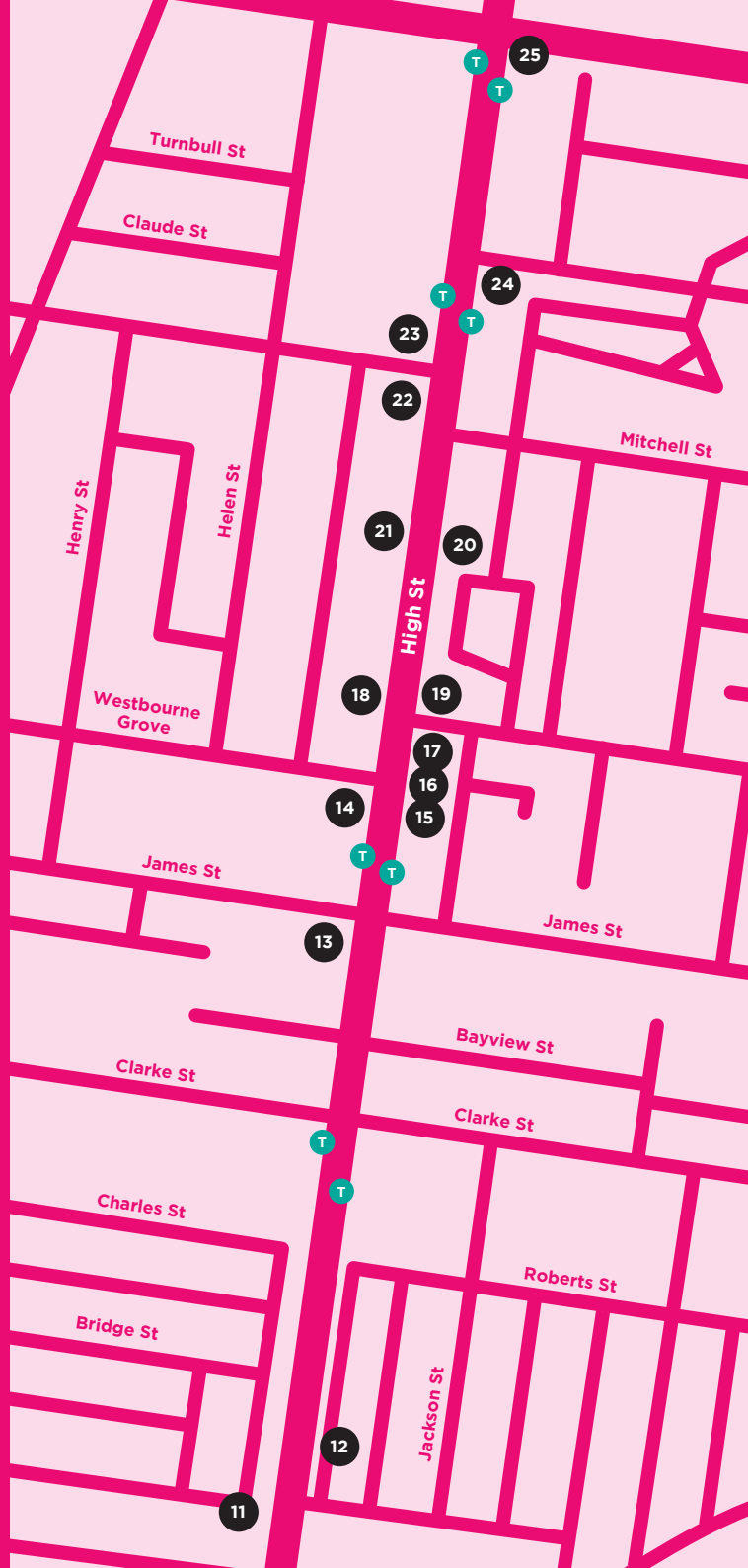
12

Rucker's Hill

The houses on the right-hand side of Rucker's Hill are amongst the oldest surviving houses in Northcote. Several of them have been demolished over the years to make room for apartments.

Between the 1860s and 1880s Owen Burgess operated a blacksmith shop from around this area.

13

Northcote Carnegie Library

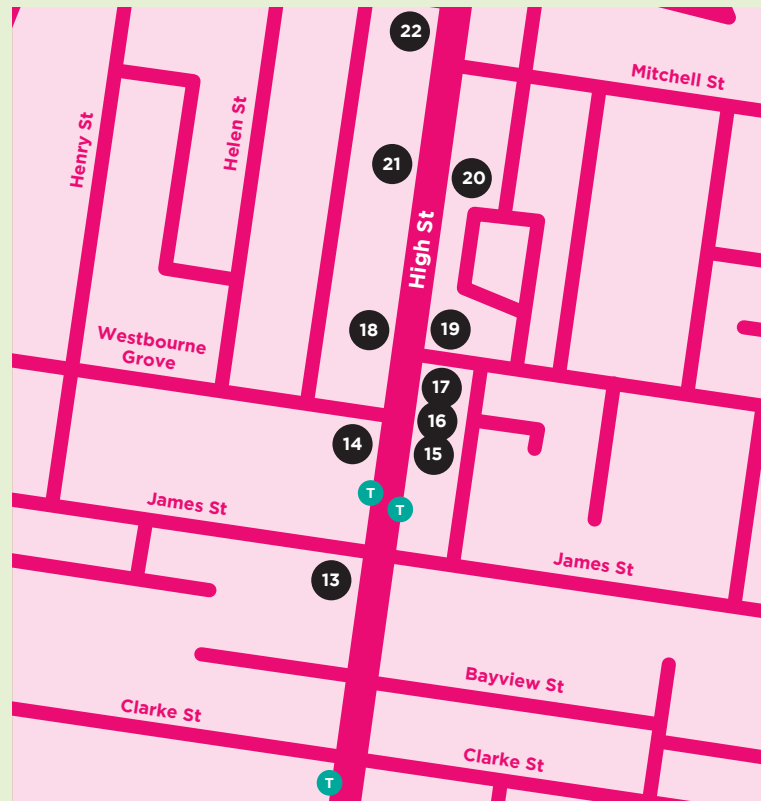*Corner James Street and
High Street Northcote*

The idea for a library in Northcote was first raised in the early 1880's. In 1883 the Northcote Council, as it was known before the amalgamation agreed to set aside a room in the new Northcote Town Hall. However, it was not until 1890 that a library was established. For a fee of 10 Shillings per annum the residents could access the 3,000 volumes held in the library, which was housed in the Town Surveys office.

The Secretary of the Library Committee a Mr R J Whalley decided to approach the Andrew Carnegie Foundation to build a new library. The foundation was established by steel magnate Andrew Carnegie to fund charitable works around the world. He was a strong supporter of public libraries.

A sum of £3,000 was given if certain conditions were met: that the library be free for the public, the foundation agree and approve the library plans and that Council agree to ongoing funding. A council meeting in 1907 accepted the conditions and pledged 200 pounds per annum.

The new Northcote Free Library opened on 21 August 1911 to a fanfare.

In July 1985 the Northcote Library in Separation Street opened a larger, modern premises and the Carnegie Library is now used for Council Offices.

14

Northcote Town Hall
189 High Street Northcote

Built on prime land known as James's Paddock, and later subdivided as the Bellevue Park Estate, Northcote Town Hall and Municipal Offices stand on the corner of High Street and Westbourne Grove. A syndicate of Northcote Councillors, (Bastings, Dennis, Wallis and Verso) secured the site in 1884 for the bargain price of £715, using their own money before passing the land onto Council. Council ran a competition to design the Town Hall. It was won by George Raymond Johnson, a renowned architect who specialised in designing Town Halls (six in total) including Collingwood and Fitzroy.

Northcote opened in 1911. The design is an example of the French Second Empire style commonly used in late 19th century Australian public buildings.

Northcote is frequently referred to in historical texts as the location of the last corroboree in the Northcote area, which is recorded as having occurred in 1865 in the vicinity of the site of the Northcote Town Hall.
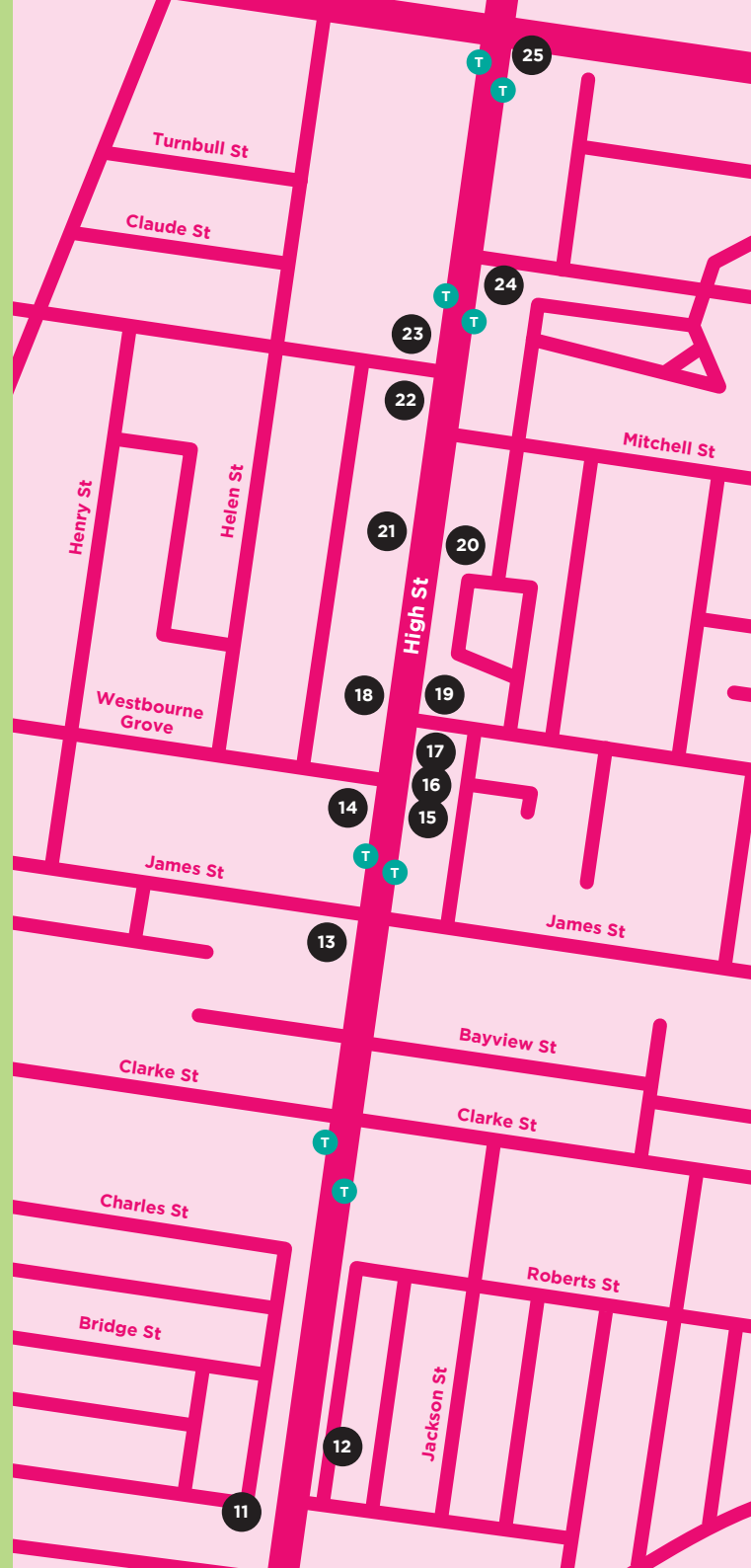
15

Shops and Houses
198 High Street Northcote

Now office buildings, this area was originally double-storey houses and shops. This photo from around 1890-1910 shows the view from the corner of Westbourne Grove (you can just see the corner of the Northcote Town Hall on the right).

16

Former Municipal Offices
202 High Street Northcote

Now a little cluster of three shops adjacent to the Peacock Hotel, in the 1880s this building was the centre of political life in Northcote. Publican and Northcote Mayor George Plant added this building to the hotel as a meeting place for the community.

The original Peacock Hotel was built in the same style with narrow sash windows and a bare brick façade.The hotel was rendered in the 1920s as part of a refurbishment.
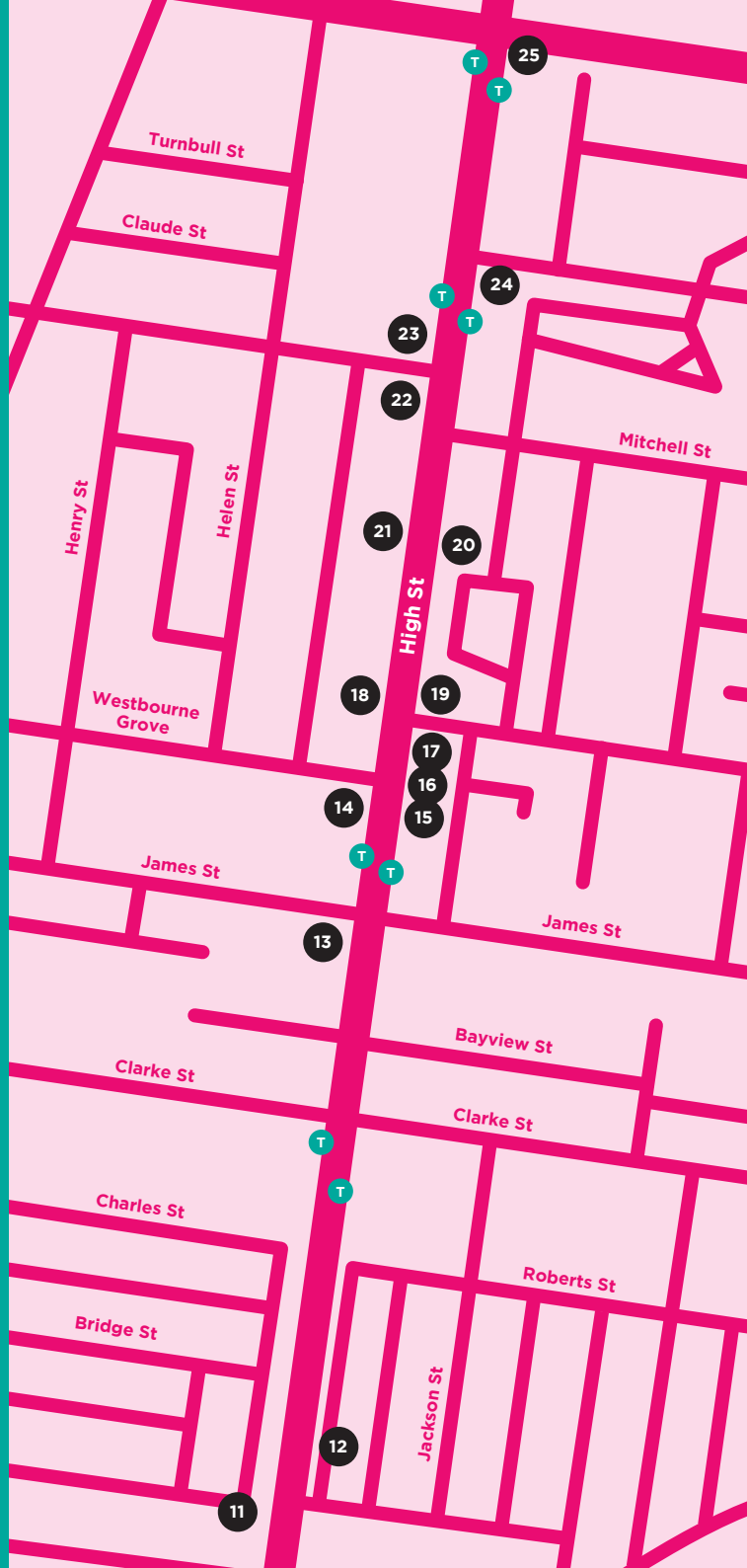
17

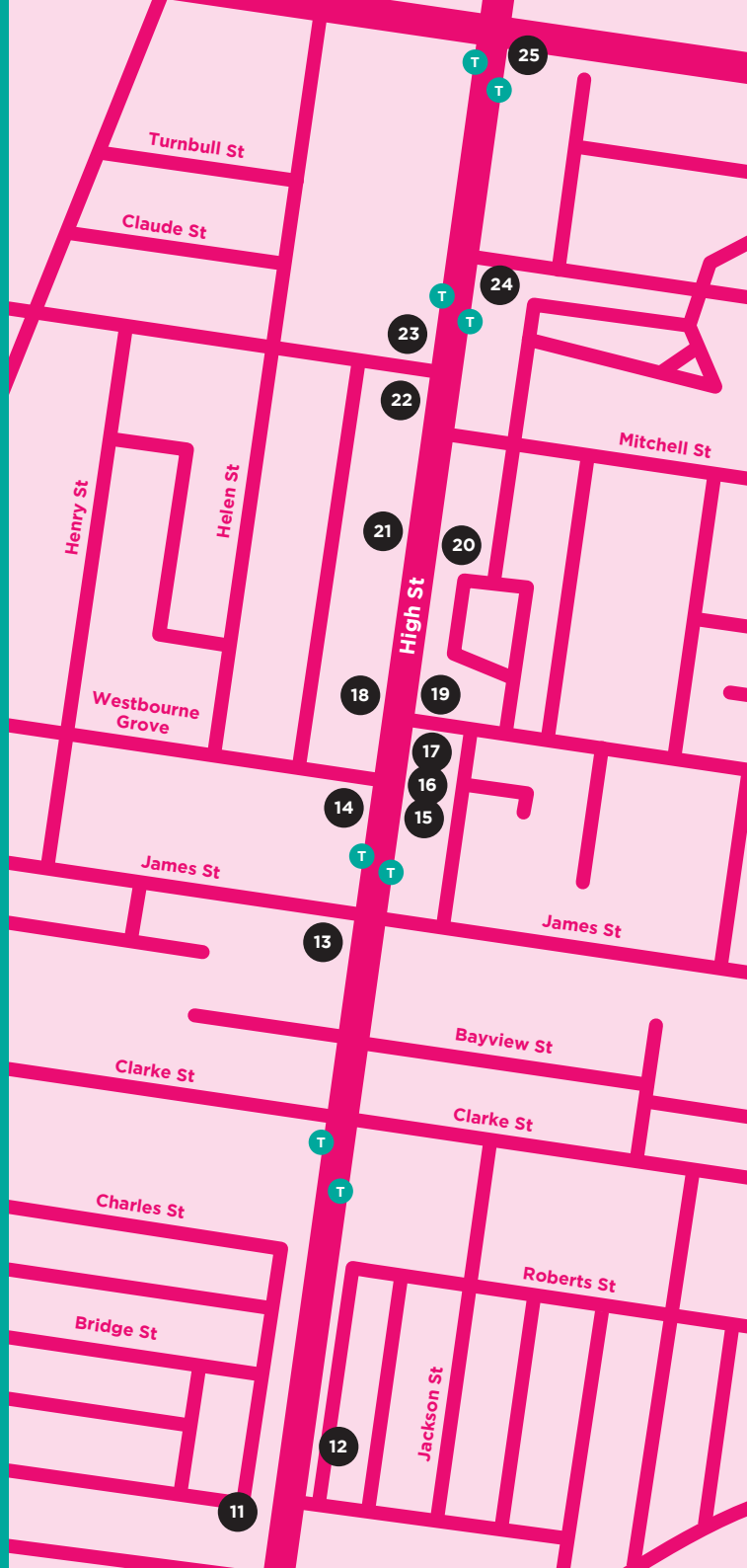## Peacock Hotel
210 High Street Northcote

On 7 September 1854 Horace William Bastings was granted a licence for the Peacock Hotel. Meanwhile, his brother Edwin was building a two storey bluestone general store across the road. The Bastings family were clearly entrepreneurial.

A number of the Peacock's publicans from the 1880s onwards were women. It was one of the few professions open to women where they could supervise men. The Licensing Board believed that women publicans had a calming influence on male drinkers and most of Darebin's hotels had a strong female presence. Some of our most notable publicans were women including Mary Kelly of the Carter's Arms Hotel and Miss Oliver and later Mary Cora Negri of the Rose, Thistle and Shamrock Hotel in Reservoir.

For more details regarding the early life of the Peacock Hotel www.heritage.darebinlibraries.vic.gov.au/article/650

Turnbull St

Claude St

Mitchell St

Henry St

Helen St

High St

Westbourne Grove

James St

James St

Clarke St

Clarke St

Bayview St

Charles St

Roberts St

Bridge St

Jackson St

11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25

18

Bastings General Store
213 High Street Northcote

Located nearly opposite the Peacock Hotel was Edwin Bastings' General Store. Bastings arrived with his family to Northcote in 1854. The Bastings family were quite likely relatives of another early Northcote family, the Shades (see stop 25).

Edwin was a key figure in Northcote's early development. He had the first general store, was the postmaster, first Shire President of Jika Jika, twice Mayor of Northcote and served on Council for 45 years.

Benjamin Johnson started a bakery in this building in 1891 and turned it into the fourth biggest bakery in the state. The building was demolished in 1962.
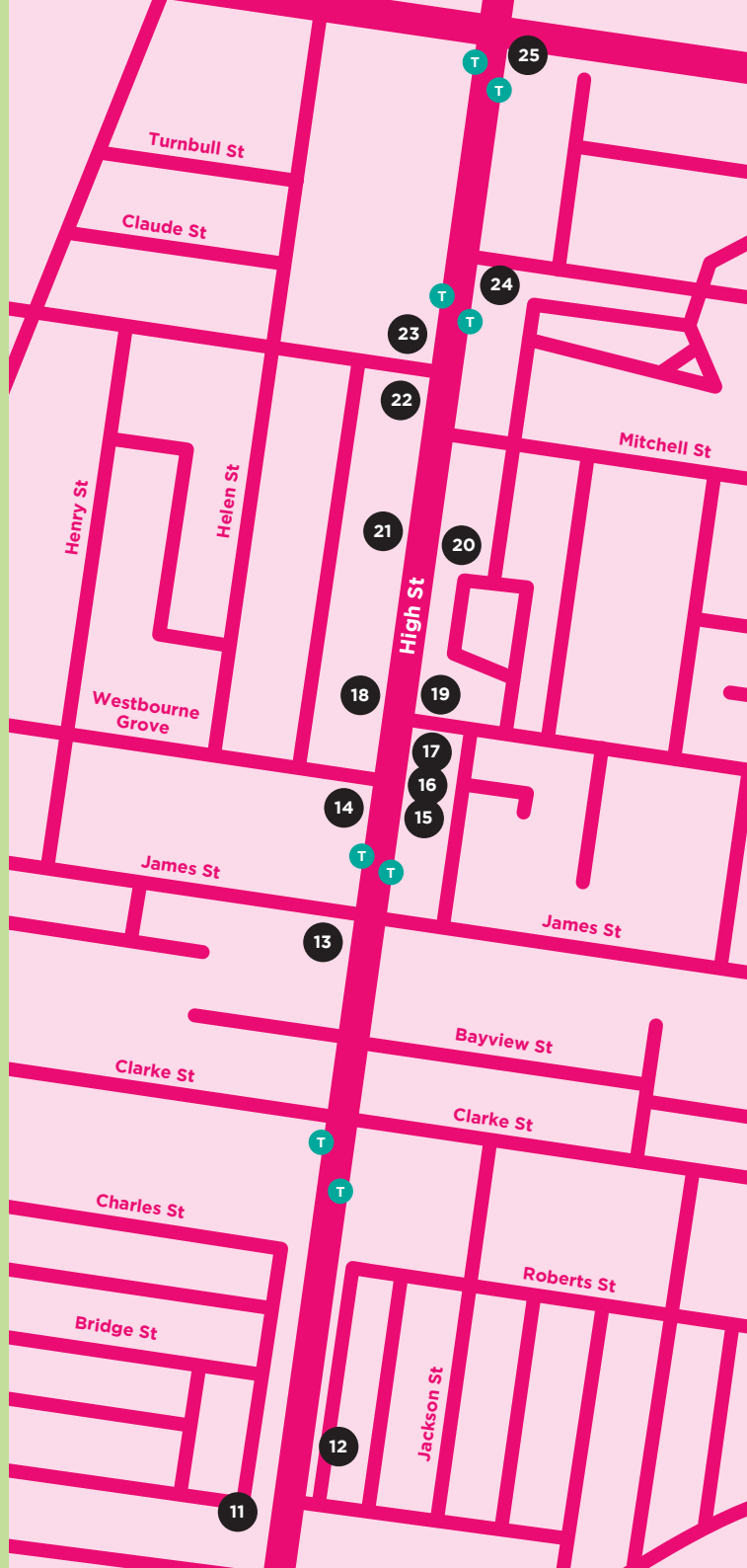
19

Northcote Theatre
216 High Street Northcote

Designed by prominent local architect Edward Twentyman Jnr., the Northcote Theatre was opened in June 1912. It is one of the earliest purpose built theatres in Victoria.

It had a stage for Vaudeville acts and, the first building in Northcote to be lit by electricity, it had its own generator.

In later years it became part of the Hoyts network of cinemas and was closed in 1960.

Now the Regal Ballroom, it is used as a wedding and event space.
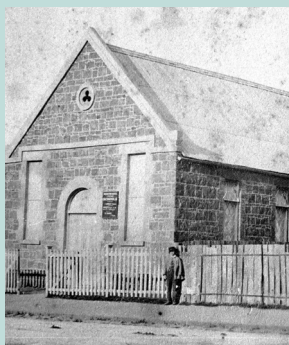
20

Wesleyan Chapel and Sunday School
248-250 High Street Northcote

The Wesley Ann started as a single bluestone building in 1854. The building served as both a school and the Wesleyan Methodist Church. In 1870 the congregation moved to the newly built church across the road. A second wing, added to the building in 1888, continued to serve as a school and meeting place.

Since the early 1900s it has served in a range of commercial enterprises including a drapers, furniture shop and now music and food venue.
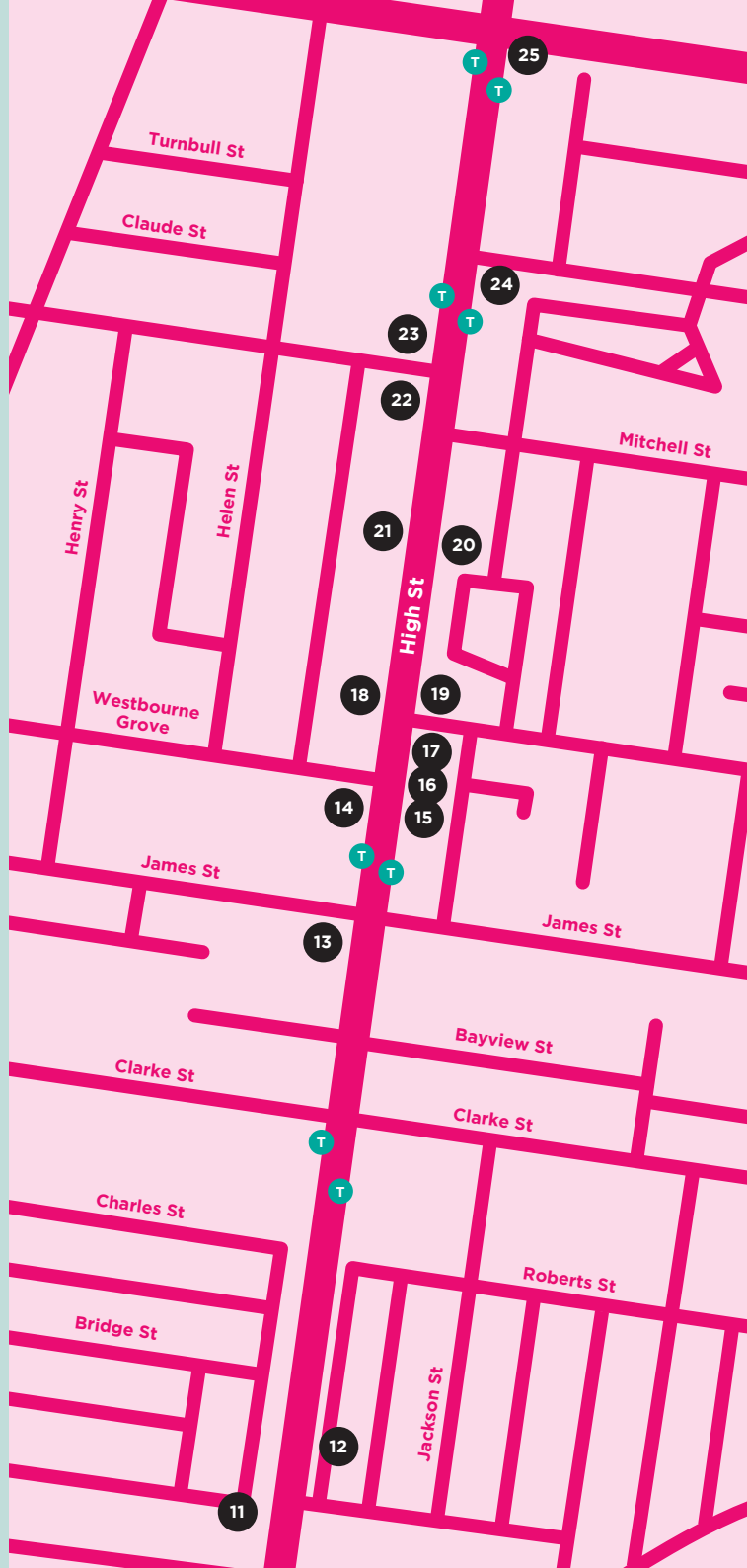
21

Wesley Methodist Church
249 High Street Northcote

This was the second Methodist Church in Northcote, built in 1869 and replacing the smaller church across the road. It cost £1,400 to construct and at the time the Methodists were the second biggest church denomination after the Anglicans. Note in this photo the small shingle roofed cottage to the right, one of Northcote's earliest buildings.

The spire was removed in the 1960s.

22

Universal Carriage Works
295-299 High Street Northcote

On the corner of Hawthorn Road opposite the Northcote Social Club once stood the Universal Carriage Works. Run by Edward Fellowes, this carriage manufacturer built and repaired carriages, sold wagons and carts and operated a general blacksmiths business. It later relocated to 520 High Street Thornbury after gaining a contract to construct ambulance wagons for the Australian Army.
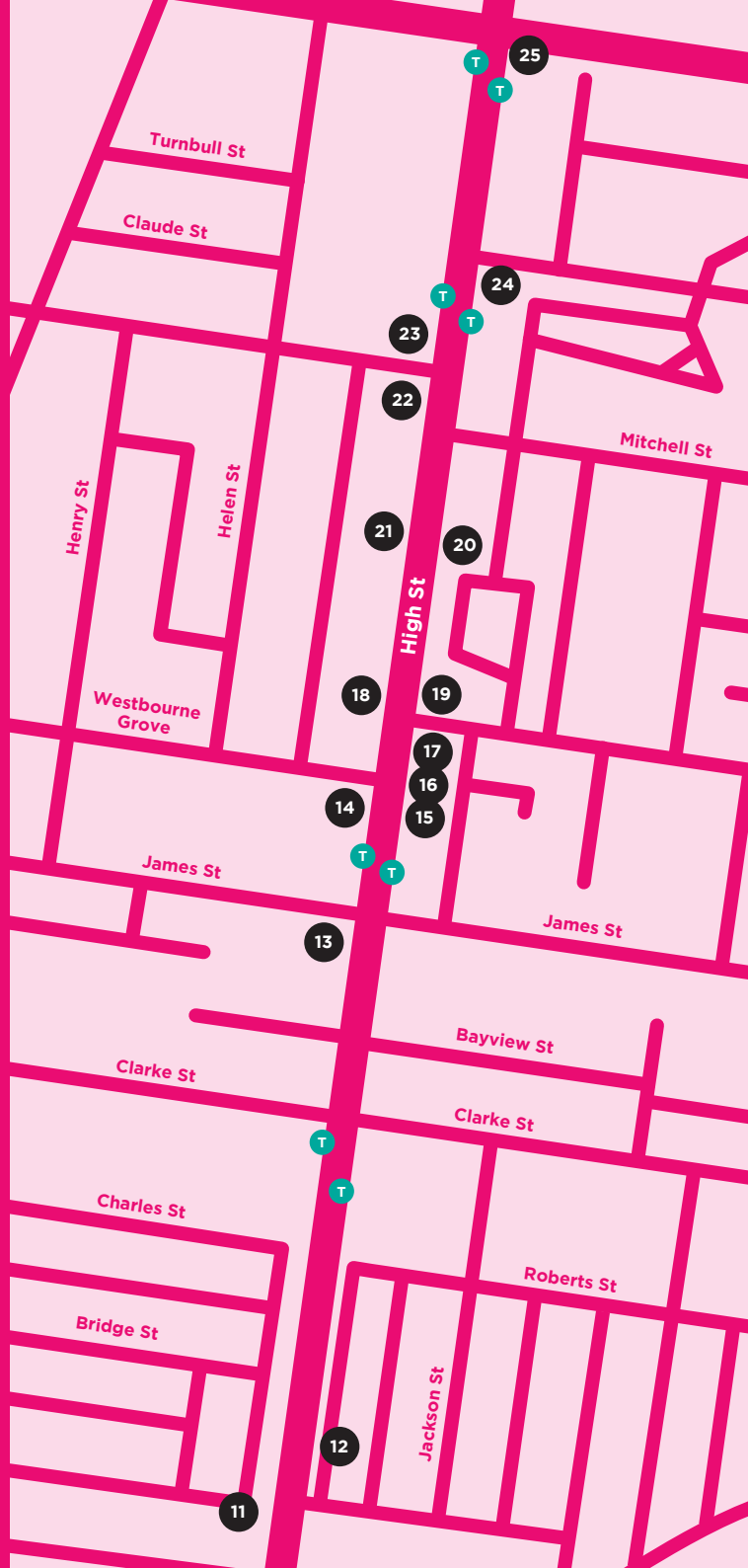
23

The Shannon

Now known as the Northcote Social Club
301 High Street, Northcote

The first hotel on this site was the Shannon Hotel, built in 1854. While not known, it was likely a timber building. It offered stabling, accommodation and even stock yards. In its early days its reputation as the resting place for teamsters and bullock drivers no doubt gave it an air of being a bit of a "rough" pub.

It was renamed the Commercial Hotel around 1877 but by 1890 was in such poor condition its value was a mere £3. It was rebuilt in 1891 and became the meeting place for the Progressive Political League. This later morphed into the Australian Labor Party.

Now the Northcote Social Club, its reputation as a hip, laid back venue with live bands and a spacious back deck with bar meals makes it a local favourite.
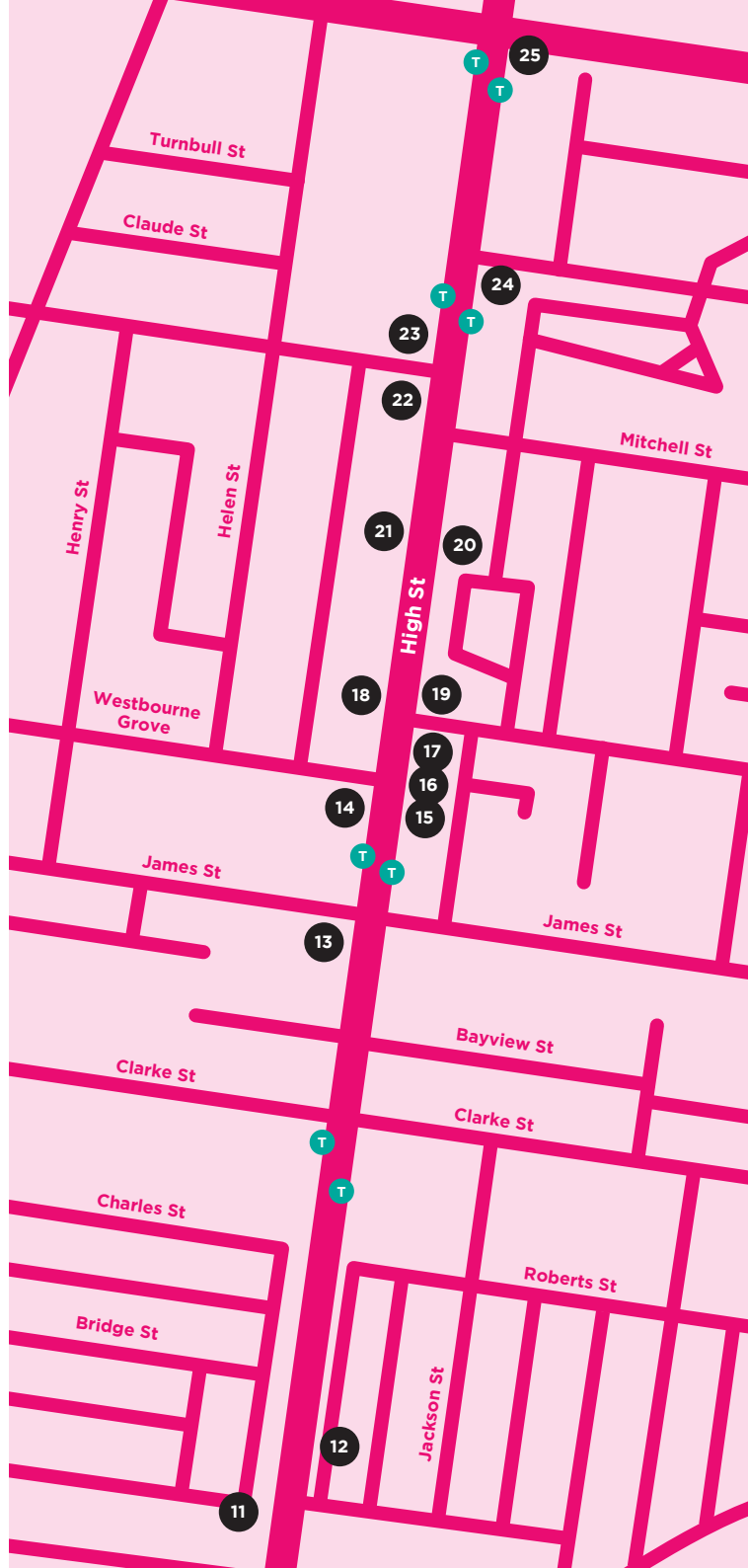
24

National Bank of Australasia
312 High Street Northcote

The first National Bank of Australasia in Northcote was a simple timber building standing on the same site as this substantial brick Italianate building. Dating from 1890 this was one of two nearly identical large banks built on the east side of High Street. The other bank was at number 342.

The bank at 312 High Street closed after a short time due to fear of bushrangers robbing it.
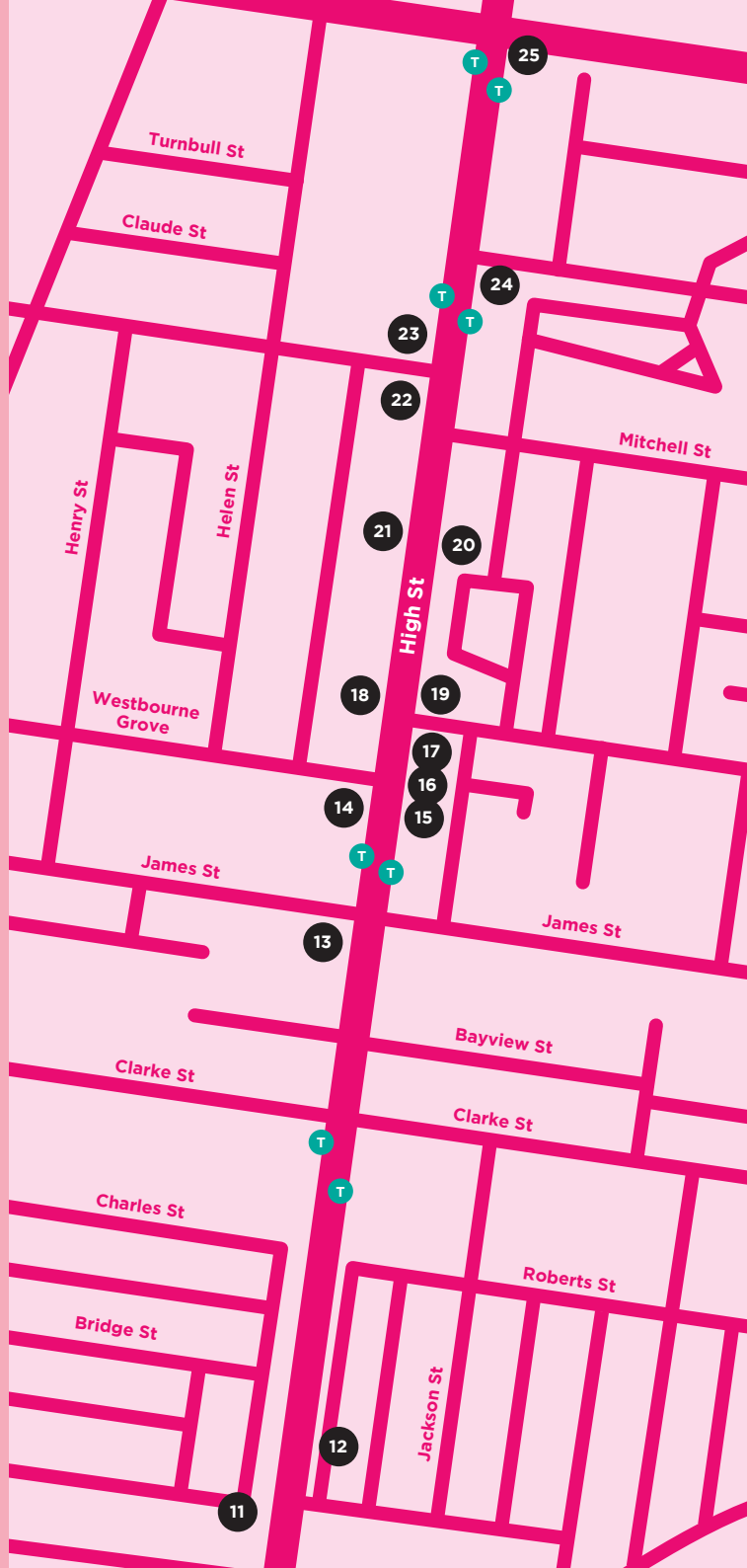
25

Shade's Ironmongery
358 High Street Northcote

Behind the façade of a bottle shop lurks one of Northcote's oldest buildings. Dating from the 1860s it started as the ironmongery of William Shade. The Shade family arrived in Northcote in the early 1840s and were amongst its first white settlers. William started operating from a tent at about 319 High Street before building his new shop. The building remained in the Shade family's hands into the early 1900s. It has been a wine shop, grocers, bootmakers, and in 2020 is a bottle shop.

Turnbull St

Claude St

Mitchell St

Henry St

Helen St

High St

Westbourne Grove

James St

James St

Bayview St

Clarke St

Clarke St

Charles St

Roberts St

Bridge St

Jackson St

11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25

Information has been sourced from Darebin Heritage, visit Darebin Libraries for an extensive range of heritage articles. Telephone: **1300 655 355 heritage.darebinlibraries.vic.gov.au**

If you come across any broken, raised or damaged footpaths, please contact Darebin Customer Service on 8470 8888 or use **www.snapsendsolve.com** to report.

More information

Public Transport: Route 86 Tram runs High Street to Plenty Road. www.ptv.vic.gov.au

Public Toilets: www.toiletmap.gov.au

You may also be interested in other Walking discoveries in your neighbourhood

CITY OF DAREBIN

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