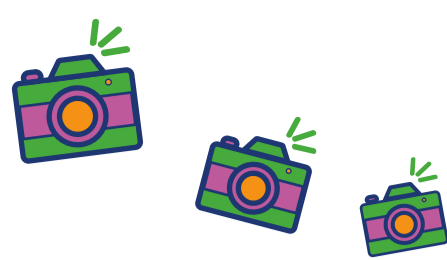


# A self-guided walk through Digbeth



This guided walk explores an often-forgotten corner of Birmingham, Digbeth, charting its transformation from open fields to being one of Britain's industrial powerhouses.

Once on the outskirts of a rural market town surrounded by orchards and water meadows, Digbeth developed into a slum in the 19th century with the highest population density the city has ever seen. Today the area is changing again as work gets underway for the new HS2 rail network.



MOLA Headland Infrastructure exploring Birmingham's heritage for HS2



Start your journey at St Bartholomew's Chapel, follow the map to explore the area's lesser-known historical delights.

## 1 St Bartholomew's Chapel

St Bartholomew's was built in 1749 as the chapel of ease for St-Martin-in-the-Bull Ring and could seat 1800 people. Heavily damaged by bombing in World War Two it was pulled down in 1943. The Clayton Hotel now stands on the site of the chapel.

## 2 Curzon Street Station

Built in 1838 it was the end of the London to Birmingham Railway and the Grand Junction Railway which ran to Liverpool. The station boasted the world's first railway café, but was eventually replaced by the bigger New Street in 1854.

## 3 Eagle and Tun

Built in 1900, this pub was the setting for UB40's chart topping single *Red, Red, Wine*. The band recorded in a nearby studio and visited the pub regularly.

## 4 Typhoo Tea Factory

The large building looming on the horizon to the right is the Typhoo tea factory built between the 1920s and 1960s. The original building was designed by Harry Weedon, famous for designing local Odeon cinemas. Look out for the characteristic zig-zag decorations.

## 5 Banana Warehouse

A) This dilapidated building was owned by the Geest family, built around 1850 it was used to store exotic fruit. The canopy was built over the canal so delicate cargo could be unloaded without spoiling in wet weather.

## Warwick Bar

B) In front of the warehouse is the Warwick Bar, a lock built to conserve the water of two canals and enable narrowboats to pass between the Digbeth Branch canal and the Warwick and Birmingham canal.

## 6 River Rea Aqueduct

The River Rea has long been used as a source of power for watermills rather than a transport route, it was straightened and narrowed through the city to increase its power. This aqueduct was designed to safely carry the canal over the river.

## 7 Heath Watermill

It's hard to imagine that most of this land was undeveloped water meadows in the Middle Ages, with a broad river winding through it. The Heath watermill was located here about; it was first mentioned in 1066.

## 8 Milk Street

This unusually straight section of Milk Street was a ropewalk, where long, straight strands of hemp were twisted together to form rope.

## 9 Digbeth High Street

Linking the market around St-Martin-in-the-Bull Ring and the village of Deritend this street formed one of the main entrances to the medieval town of Birmingham.

## 10 109-110 Digbeth

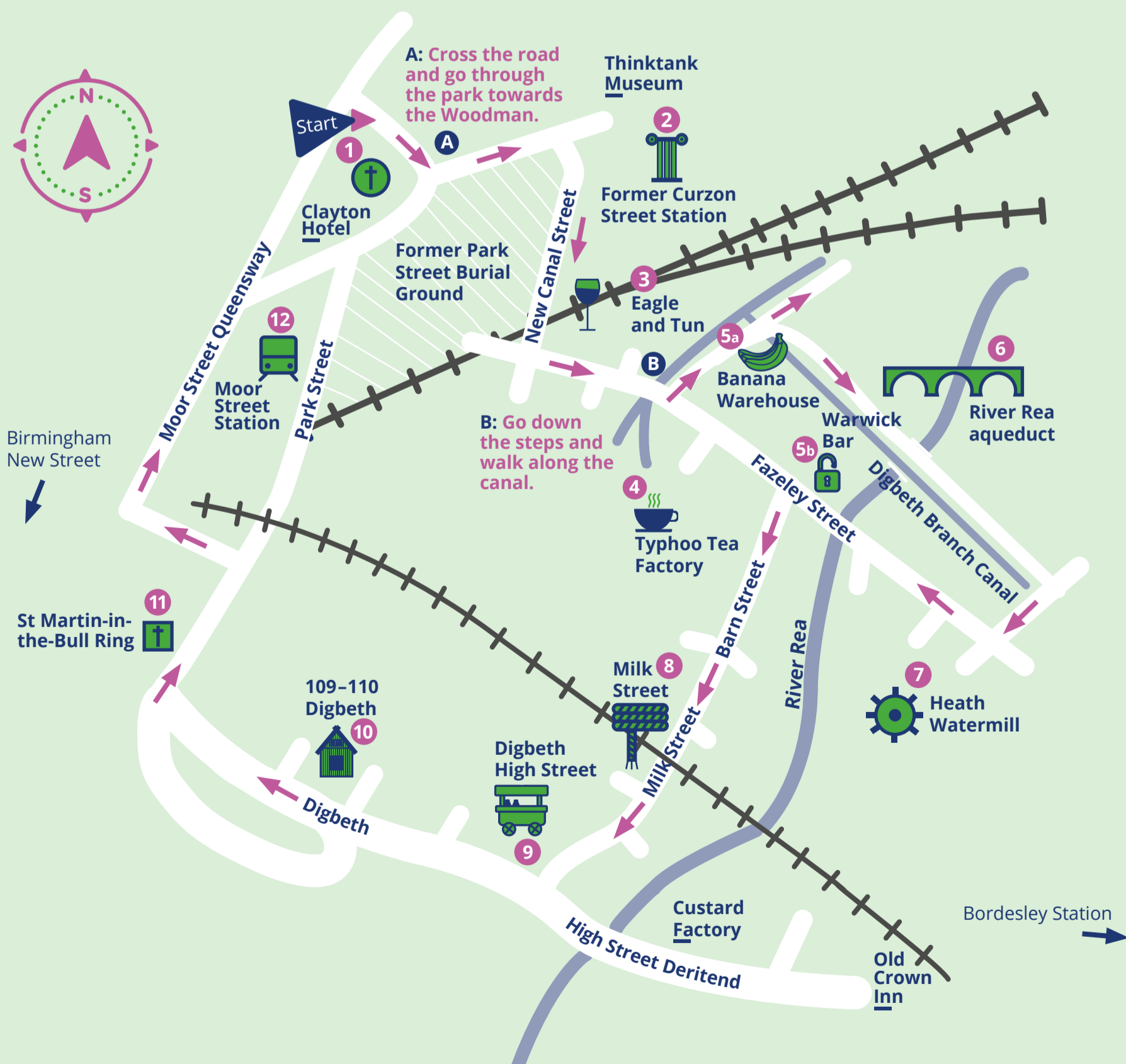
These narrow shopfronts are one of the few remaining imprints of medieval Birmingham, the property boundaries here follow burgage plots 100s of years old.

## 11 St Martin-in-the-Bull Ring

St Martin wasn't mentioned in the Domesday Book and the original church probably dates from the 13th century. The current church was rebuilt in the 1870s and is slightly bigger than its medieval predecessor.

## 12 Moor Street Station

Dating to 1911, Moor Street station was built by the Great Western Railway to ease congestion at Snow Hill, their primary passenger station in Birmingham.



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This walk was produced by MOLA Headland Infrastructure whose archaeologists are uncovering Digbeth's buried history at Park Street for HS2.

For the latest on the archaeological research visit [molaheadland.com/news](http://molaheadland.com/news)