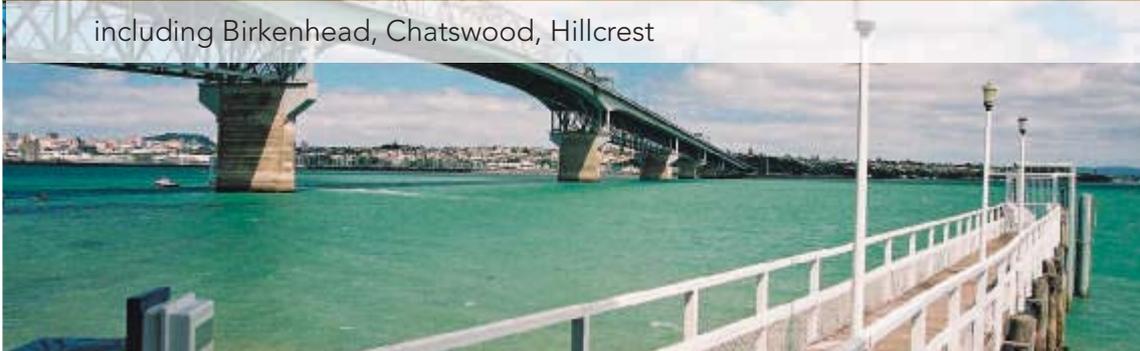


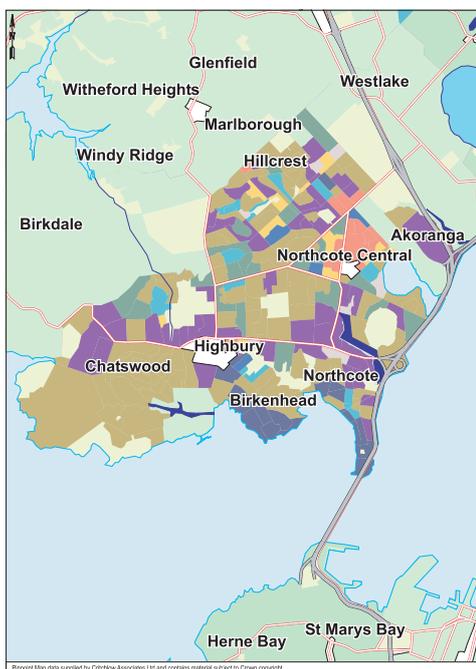
# Northcote ★★★★★

North

including Birkenhead, Chatswood, Hillcrest



Northcote and Birkenhead boast the best of both worlds: the bush and beaches and relaxed family living of the North Shore, with the shortest-possible commute to Auckland city's CBD (or, better still, a ferry ride from Birkenhead). This is an old, established area, but the mix of villas, cottages, apartments and contemporary palatial homes is anything but dull. The area's most visible landmark is the pretty-in-pink Chelsea Sugar Refinery (built from a million hand-made bricks in 1883) whose park-like setting is a popular spot for walks and picnics. The varied contours of the land and ample nature reserves, coupled with the city skyline, harbour and bridge, mean that many homes have spectacular views. In fact, the area has many of the same benefits as higher-profile Devonport (and an infinitely easier commute by car) with rather more reasonable house prices.



For colour key, see page 230

## Population Profile

Population	34,425
% Aged Under 15 Years	17.89
% Aged Over 65 Years	11.47
% European	60.24
% Maori	7.91
% Pacific Peoples	4.00
% Asian	21.11

## Who Lives There?

Northcote Pt and Birkenhead Pt buyers love old homes. There's been a migration from the southern shores; people looking for more affordable character villas with ferry access to the CBD. Northcote College's academic status is an added attraction for families with teens. There is a lot of trading up – it's not unusual for families to move several times as their lifestyle, budget, tastes and aspirations change.

Families like Northcote central for its good schooling, while Birkenhead central's apartments are popular with commuting executives. Chatswood's large homes on good-sized sections attract families, including Asian buyers.

### Typical Homes

Historic cottages that were built for Chelsea Sugar Refinery workers are still dotted around the suburb. The original brick cottages built for the shift managers on the road down to the refinery can be leased.

Character homes define Northcote Pt and Birkenhead Pt, which were established in the late 1880s. Near the centre of Birkenhead there are a number of apartment buildings.

Chatswood estate was developed as an executive subdivision in the early 1970s/80s, with modern homes on big sections. Northcote central and Hillcrest have styles ranging from renovated ex-state houses, townhouses and older weatherboard homes. The best of the more modern homes are in the Onepoto Basin area of Northcote and along Sylvan Ave.

### Amenities

#### Schools ★★★

There are at least eight primary schools in this high decile neighbourhood, two intermediates and three secondary schools. Willow Park School is one of the largest primaries here with a roll close to 600 and has a history of positive ERO reports.

Local co-ed secondary schools Birkenhead College and Northcote College both have high profiles, with sporting, cultural and academic

achievements. Northcote's acclaimed jazz band regularly wins regional awards. The decile two Maori-Katorika (Catholic) Hato Petera College is also in the area. Auckland University of Technology's Akoranga campus is in Northcote. For a full list, see page 270.

#### Shops ★★★

Birkenhead Pt has a scattering of boutique shops and cafés while Birkenhead central is a mix of street-front and mall with plenty of undercover parking.

Northcote has a busy shopping centre with the Shore's largest range of Asian food stores and an impressive food hall. The Fox Outlet Centre's 50 shops are off Akoranga Dr.

#### Leisure ★★★★★

The historic Northcote Point Walk encompasses old villas, coastline and spectacular views. The Harbourside Art Trail through Birkenhead and Northcote visits artists' studios and workshops.

The Chelsea Sugar Refinery grounds are a beautiful spot for a picnic. Here, 36.7ha of surrounding land and lakes has recently been secured in public ownership a decade after the concept of creating a large park on the Uruamo headland in Birkenhead was first mooted. Birkenhead has numerous bush reserves, including Kauri Glen Reserve near Little Shoal Bay. For youngsters there's



rock climbing at the Birkenhead Leisure Centre and a skate park next door. In Akoranga Rd, there's the Takapuna Athletic & Harrier Club and the YMCA.

Art house movies feature at the iconic Bridgeway cinema at Northcote Pt. When the curtain comes down film buffs can retire to The Engine Room across the road to compare notes. The Eight-Point-Two in Birkenhead is also well regarded for its cuisine.

## Real Estate

### Trends

City-siders priced out of the likes of Herne Bay, Ponsonby and Westmere as well as Remuera and Orakei are crossing the bridge in steady numbers as much for the value for money as for the appeal of peninsular living.

Generally Northcote Pt and Birkenhead Pt are perceived as being 'on a par' with each other although there's the inevitable parochialism among locals. Birkenhead Pt holds the record for a \$3million sale. Homes on either peninsula with good views and land for indoor/outdoor flow (rather than steep sites) fetch \$2million+. Apartments in Birkenhead start in the early \$300,000s. Homes within Birkenhead and Northcote proper start in the early \$600,000s.

Chatswood's executive homes range from \$600,000 to \$1million for those with city views. Hillcrest, on the ridge, is often a step-up for those who have been living on the flat in Northcote. A quality townhouse here will be priced in the mid \$500,000s. Elevated homes with views and desirable features such as an extra bedroom or a double garage are fetching in the high \$600,000s.

### Best Streets

Clarence Rd Queen Street and parts of Princes Street on Northcote Point; Tizard Street, Wanganella Street and Palmerston Road on Birkenhead Point; Puawai Street in Northcote; seaward Onetaunga in Chatswood; Mountbatten Ave and Lynngate Place in Hillcrest.

### At a Glance...

#### House Prices

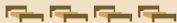
##### Apartments or terrace houses

Price \$500,000 - \$750,000

##### House

Bedrooms 

Price \$600,000 - \$850,000

Bedrooms 

Price \$850,000 - \$1,000,000

With sea views \$1,200,000+

(add \$100,000 for a Chatswood house with sea views)

##### Executive Onepoto basin house

Price \$1,100,000 - \$1,400,000

##### Clifftop historic house on the Points

Price \$2,200,000 - \$3,000,000+

#### Average Rents

##### House

Bedrooms 

Price \$510/wk

Bedrooms 

Price \$600/wk

#### Travel Times

CBD peak 20 min  
off peak 7 - 10 min

Northern Motorway 5 min

Airport 40 - 45 min

North Shore Hospital 10 - 15 min

Glenfield Shopping Centre 10 min

For buses and car poolers, peak-hour priority lanes cut the driving time into the city considerably. Northcote Pt's big plus is the sole traffic light allowing traffic to flow into Onewa Rd for the straight run over the harbour bridge. There are bus services throughout Birkenhead and Beach Haven. City-bound ferries go from Birkenhead and Northcote wharves.