



*The Sydney Station Stories article series looks at active railway stations around the Sydney region – their history, placement, design, precincts and current services.*

Step off a train at Clyde, should you be able to find reason, and you could be forgiven for feeling that the world has forgotten this little backwater station in the effective middle of everywhere. Clyde Station is surrounded by much higher profile locations and infrastructure on almost all sides, and it does have quite the railway history, but the station itself today gives the strong impression of time having stopped. For while there are no lack of trains passing through Clyde, and certainly several of them do stop, there are no longer many reasons for the station's being. In fact, at the 2021 census, only nine residents were identified as living in Clyde, this likely because the locality itself is almost entirely industrial, and those residential areas adjacent the station are technically in Granville. Of interest the locality photos for Clyde on Google maps show the railway station and nothing else!

The original station was opened in 1882 and named Rosehill Junction ahead of the opening of what would become the Carlingford line three years later, branching off on the Up or northern side of the original Sydney to Parramatta railway. This branch itself received a spur in 1888, in the form of the Sandown line. Both of these lines were privately owned and operated until June 1900. Meanwhile, the name of the mainline junction was changed to Clyde in 1883, then to Clyde Junction in 1901 and then back to Clyde in 1904 – all named for the Clyde River in Scotland.

During 1898, the Clyde Engineering Company was established in the existing Hudson Factory in Factory Street, Granville, adjacent Clyde

station. During 1937, the Smith and Waddingtons (later Commonwealth Engineering) Factory was established on the opposite side of Clyde station, while a third major firm, A E Goodwin, was established a little to the north-east, along Parramatta Road, albeit technically in Auburn. An impressive amount of steam, diesel and electric trains, locomotives, trams and rolling stock was built for the Australian rail industry by these three firms before all were gradually closed, taken over by other organisations or moved elsewhere during the between the late 1960s and 1989, when Comeng closed. And of course, Clyde Station was the commuter connection for these plants.

Additionally, rail yards were established by the NSW Government Railways on both sides of the by then four-track mainline, just east of Clyde Station. The Clyde marshalling yard on the north or Up side of the line is still in daily use in 2023 and is a key location for the movement of waste to Veolia's Crisps Creek facility near Tarago on the Canberra line and the railing of Boral cement from Berrima/Maldon to Newcastle and Grafton. Pacific National maintains a locomotive servicing facility in the yard. The yard on the south or Down side of the features, at its eastern end, the former Clyde Wagon Works, which has been redeveloped as the now UGL- managed Maintrain workshop servicing some of Sydney's EMU fleet. The old Clyde Down Yard was used for storing withdrawn rolling stock for many years before the site was redeveloped as the Auburn Maintenance Centre (also undertaking EMU maintenance) which opened in mid-2010, around the same time that the Sandown line was closing. However, the end of train manufacturing in the area took with it a sizeable percentage of the passengers using Clyde Station, and in more recent years – despite hosting six tracks and three island platforms – the station's main claim to fame was its ongoing role as the junction station for the Carlingford Line.



**Left (page 36):** The up end of the station buildings feature public toilets, although the facilities on platforms 1 and 2 are usually locked off these days – ever since the closure of the Carlingford line in 2020 took platform 1 out of use. Saturday 17 December 2022.

**Above:** The building on the now largely unused platform 1/2 island at Clyde, Saturday 17 December 2022. The former Waddingtons/Comeng factory was once in the direct background of this shot, while the A E Goodwin plant was also in that direction, albeit a little more distant, over on Parramatta Road.

**Below:** Waratah set B30 eases through platform 5 non-stop on Saturday 17 December 2022. Although there is a platform 6 hidden behind the white gated fence along the platform, it is not publicly accessible and is used only for shunting movements associated with the nearby Auburn Maintenance Centre. Clyde Engineering's Granville plant was previously situated in the right background of this view.



**Bottom:** Looking west along platforms 3 and 4, with the island for platforms 5 and 6 on the left and 1 and 2 on the right. Platforms 4 and 5 are the most commonly used by stopping services. Saturday 17 December 2022.

**Below and Right:** The 'old school' station entrance and footbridge has a few modern flourishes, notably the indicator displays and Opal readers, but for the most part this architecture is positively heritage. Both views from Saturday 17 December 2022.



**Right (page 39):** Clyde can be an interesting place to see the passing traffic in action. In addition to the Old Main Southern (via Fairfield), Main Western suburban services, intercity and a handful of long-distance passenger services (including the Wednesdays-only *Indian Pacific*) can be seen here. All freight services to and from the Blue Mountains line pass through here, as do a number of southern freight trains. This one is not so 'regular' – X54 and 42101 operating as train WL12, haul three four-car V Sets (V50, V41 and V17) through Clyde on 17 December 2022. The trio had been stranded west of the derailment damage inflicted between Lawson and Linden on 9 December, and were being transferred to Flemington Maintenance Centre for servicing and a return to operation. X54 was built at Clyde Engineering's Rosewater plant, but 42101 (another Clyde Engineering product) and the three V Sets (Comeng-built) were all built within a few minutes' walk of where this photograph was taken.





When that branch was closed on 4 January 2020 for conversion to light rail (as part of the larger Parramatta Light Rail project), this left only the small industrial area on the north side of the station and those Granville residents on the south side of the line for whom Clyde Station is marginally more convenient than Granville Station itself – which, it should be noted, is not even six hundred metres to the west, and the beneficiary of a far more frequent stopping rail service and better passenger facilities.

To visit Clyde today, you might be surprised at just how frozen in time it is. The buildings and infrastructure are largely ‘original’ to when the station was last seriously rebuilt in 1959. As it happens, Clyde was one of the last stations to use rollover wooden indicator boards. Many trains through the station pass non-stop, but despite its limited passenger use, a surprisingly high number of T1 (Western Line) and T4 (Parramatta/Leppington) services pause to pick up and drop off, and almost all of these use platforms 4 and 5. Since the Carlingford Line closure, platform 1 is no longer used and a portable barricade on the footbridge prevents anyone wandering over there (since the coincident platform 2 sees no regular stopping services). The Sandown line closed back in 2010 and had been a freight-only branch since 1991.

Although the Carlingford line trackage along platform 1 remains, it is used now only by the Mechanised Track Patrol Vehicles (MTPV1 and 2), which are based in a small depot off the branch, between Clyde Station and the nearby Duck River. The former Carlingford/Sandown line tracks beyond the depot, across Parramatta Road and on up through Rosehill to what is now Rosehill Gardens light rail stop have been lifted and most evidence of the former branch’s existence between Clyde and Rosehill Gardens has been removed.

Meanwhile, the track along Clyde’s platform 6 is also not used by passenger services but is a Down Relief line between Auburn and Granville and is used as a turn-back/shunting neck for trains entering or leaving the nearby Auburn Maintenance Centre.

It will not surprise readers to learn that there are no direct connecting bus services at Clyde Station itself, however, a number of bus routes work along nearby Parramatta Road and also along Clyde Street (south of the station), so with a bit of a stroll, connection is certainly doable. Although this all means that Clyde Station can be a little lonely for all the history and movement that has now bypassed it, it is still an interesting place to visit, if just to be reminded of how stations used to look and feel, and to watch the busy parade of trains (including long distance passenger and freight) whizzing by to and from points south and west.

Clyde is also one of a handful of regular metropolitan destinations (Rhodes and Hurstville being others) that are used as turn-backs for heritage train shuttles that operate out of Sydney Central during events such as the annual Transport Heritage Expo.

*With thanks to Ben Barnes and John Hoyle for their assistance.*

*Next: Kiama*

### Quick facts

Distance from Sydney Central	20.66 kilometres
Elevation	10 metres above sea level
Opened	1882
Platform lengths	Standard eight-car suburban
Departures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Up: 130 (weekday), 70 (weekend)</li> <li>• Down: 135 (weekday), 78 (weekend)</li> </ul>