

# Telarah



*Telarah station in 2014 (no copyright restrictions)*

Telarah, located 194.740km north of Central, is the first station on the North Coast Line.

The location opened on 14th of August 1911 as part of the first (southern section) of the line to Dungog. Originally known as West Maitland Marshalling Yard, it was renamed to Telarah on the 15<sup>th</sup> of April 1922. The name is taken from an adjacent property named Telarah House.



*Two uncredited shots of the original station, probably taken in the 1980s*

Telarah is a suburb in the City of Maitland and is today largely a dormitory suburb of the greater Newcastle area, as of the 2021 census 2,318 people lived in the suburb.

The location was originally named Homeville although this fell out of use in the 1950s and was never applied to the railway precinct.

The North Coast Line commences as a single line to the north of the station.

To the south of the station the remnants of the old goods yards remain in place and are sometimes used for storage of rolling stock, the location is still used for passing trains.



*Telarah in 1992, the yards were still busy at this time (Eric Gunning)*

The larger area of the railway precinct includes the removed Telarah Meat Works Siding and the also removed Electricity Commission Siding that served Walka Power Station, the Meat Works Siding is now a housing subdivision.

In 1905 it was proposed to build trucking yards at the location and the Railway Commissioners approved the commencement of work. By 1912 the local Mayor was agitating for an additional siding to service the Campbell's Hill saleyards, the Commissioners were reticent to install the siding, stating that any trucking facilities should be placed within the existing site and that a loop siding capable of holding 20 stock vans would not be considered. The trucking yards were eventually opened on the 10<sup>th</sup> of April 1916.

In 1913 usage of the yards was ramped up and the area became a major transshipment yard – in May of that year the Taree to Newcastle passenger train was timetabled to stop and around 350 mail bags were removed from the train in a period of 24 minutes, it being noted that 5 minutes were lost due to a delay in the arrival of the train.

The new station was opened (as Telarah) on the 30<sup>th</sup> of June 1926 and comprised a 131 metre long single sided platform with a booking office and waiting room, although as early as July 1921 it was already being referred to under the new name of Telarah. At that time all trains except for the two night trains were stopping. There is no indication of what the original station and platform looked like, though it was very likely only a simple affair and a description in 1914 notes that there was little other than a staging platform attached to the signal box. In late 1914 the yards were interlocked but no loop existed and Electric Staff working was introduced.

The yards continued to expand with the introduction of a cattle race and yard crane in 1926, a new signal box in 1937 (and provision of electric lighting on the station at the same time), a new lamp room in 1945 separate to the station building at the down end of the yard (probably in April when a central interlocked loop was laid), a new crossing loop in 1947 and finally, in January 1956, the triangle connection to the Main North Line. The yards continued to be busy up to and past CTC installation.

The old station was demolished and replaced with a new, modern (and somewhat spartan) construction although parts of the signal box were saved by an enthusiast.

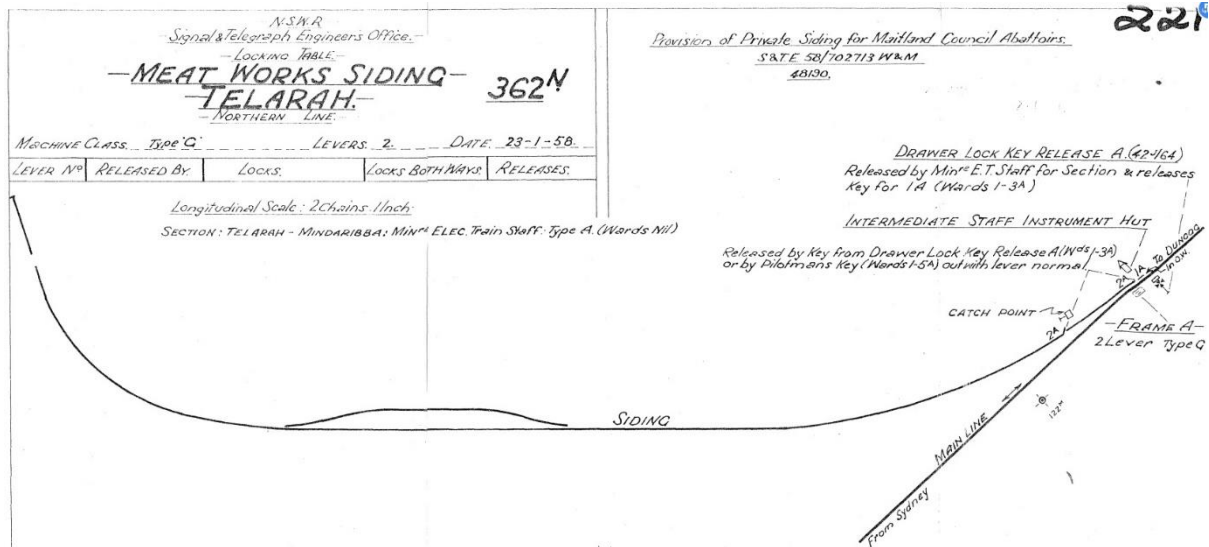
Today the station sees twenty trains each way per day between the Newcastle Interchange and Dungog and is no longer serviced by the North Coast trains with passengers on the route needing to join at Maitland.

At the 194.787km mark a 66 chain siding that serviced the Walka Power Station was open between 1954 and 1965, it was controlled by an intermediate Electric Staff. The formation can still be seen. And some tracks still exist in the area of the power station although the major part of the formation is heavily overgrown with vegetation.



*1958 aerial photo of the power station, the siding can be seen looping to the left.*

Just to the north of the station at 196.461km once existed the private siding that serviced the Maitland Council Abattoir, it was located on the down side of the line and was fairly short at 38 chains in length, it was fitted with an Intermediate Electric Staff instrument. The siding opened on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of January 1958 and closed on the 25<sup>th</sup> of August 1986 – no trace remains as housing developments cover the area.



The diagram for the one time siding

(Lance Lyon, November 2022)

<https://www.northcoastline.net/>