


Botany Mill Community Liaison Group

Date & Time	8 th April 2025, 5:30pm – 7:25pm
Location	Botany Mill
Attendees	Peter Fagan (PF), Lynda Newnam (LN), John Viselli (JV), Gerry O'Connell (GO), Kerri Baldwin (KB), Karen Jones (KJ), Jun Wu (JW)
Invitees	Bronwyn Englaro – RCC, Cr Bill Burst, Cr Noel D'Souza, Cr Danny Said
Apologies	Office of Michael Daley, Charles Abela (CA)
Meeting purpose	To liaise with community members on topics relating to the operation of Botany Paper Mill

#	Item	Notes/Action	Leader
1	Welcome and Apologies		Karen Jones
2	Actions from previous meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider inviting South Ward councillors as well as other RCC representatives to next CLG meeting. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Invited all South Ward Councillors and Bronwyn Englaro from RCC, as well as the office of Michael Daley to this CLG meeting as well as a site tour. Michael Daley declined invitation, but others did not respond at all. KJ to continue to contact Anil from RCC to invite the RCC Sustainability team to a Mill tour. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Have made contact with Anil from RCC and continue to invite him and his team to tour the mill. 	Karen Jones
3	Mill Projects Update	<p>No capital works projects currently underway.</p> <p>Solid waste improvement project – no change since last meeting, project is currently with Opal Corporate for review as costs have increased significantly since the CAPEX was approved.</p> <p>As part of our Net Zero roadmap a boiler burner management system upgrade project has been approved. The aim of this project is to improve the efficiencies of the boilers and will therefore reduce natural gas usage and greenhouse gas emissions. It will also allow for future use of different gases (eg hydrogen).</p> <p>Botany Mill is also investigating whether there are better ways to use the biogas we generate from our water treatment plant, and also how we can generate more of it by increasing the capacity of our water treatment plant to allow the treatment of all effluent on site.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - LN suggested applying for Keep Australia Beautiful awards for energy improvement projects. 	Karen Jones
4	Overview of main site issues	<p>In 2024, the team at B9 achieved a new production record of 445,844 tonnes, surpassing the previous record of 436,609 tonnes set in 2023. This is a significant milestone for our team.</p> <p>The first quarter of 2025 has been challenging. Significant unplanned downtime events during this period have resulted in production volume being 4,400 tonnes behind budget. Despite this, our full-year outlook remains optimistic, with a target to produce 445,000 tonnes for 2025.</p> <p>Market conditions remain volatile, primarily driven by consumer confidence and the uncertainty associated with the global economy. Our focus continues to be on growing domestic volumes while developing new products for emerging markets.</p> <p>Annual major maintenance shut planned for end June for approximately five days. Opal will send out notification to local residents prior to the shut. The plan consists mainly of significant</p>	Kerri Baldwin

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		<p>maintenance jobs, as opposed to upgrades. This includes changing some large machine rolls, re-lining the pulper (replacement of stainless steel sections) that get worn from abrasion, and forming section ceramic replacements.</p> <p>The site recently started Enterprise Bargaining Agreement (EBA) negotiations with operators. The current EBA expires 30th June. It is progressing well so far.</p> <p>As a follow up from the fire incident in October last year, the mill currently has restricted waste paper stock levels in the waste paper yard as an interim fire mitigation measure. Opal has engaged a fire consultant to review waste paper storage and fire mitigation measures and suggest improvements. This requirement has also been added onto our EPA licence.</p>																
5	Contacts Review	<p>Community Contacts & Complaints (27/11/2024 – 07/04/2025)</p> <table><tr><th>Category</th><th>To EPA</th><th>Mill Hotline</th></tr><tr><td>Odour</td><td>7</td><td>0</td></tr><tr><td>Noise</td><td>0</td><td>0</td></tr><tr><td>Other</td><td>0</td><td>0</td></tr><tr><td>Total</td><td>7</td><td>0</td></tr></table> <p>The EPA has received 7 odour complaints since the last meeting. One in February, two in March and four last week on Thursday, Saturday and Sunday (first week of April).</p> <p>The complaint in February was for a strong sulfur/oil fuel odour in McCauley Street. The EPA were calling all industrial sites in the area to find the odour source. The Shift Manager could not find any odours of this nature from our site.</p> <p>The two complaints in March were from Moorina Ave. The first was for a “horrific and disgusting odour” at 8pm at night. However, the wind direction all day was between North and East, so away from the residential area. The second was for a fire smell and smoke. Backburning was occurring near the NSW golf course at the time.</p> <p>Of the four complaints last week, three were from Partanna Ave and one from Moorina Ave, all describing an “extremely unpleasant odour” or “foul smell that is consistent with the Opal Paper Mill”. There were no unusual events occurring at the mill at the time.</p> <p>JV asked if odour could be coming from the Industrial units behind Moorina Ave. KJ answered that it is possible, but we haven’t noticed any odours originating from this site when doing our investigations.</p> <p>JV and GO said there are three kindergartens in Partanna and Moorina Ave and they don’t complain about odour. GO said his daughter that has moved back in 6 months ago has not complained about it. JV and GO also have not had anyone talk to them about odour issues.</p> <p>There has been significant social media and Randwick Council activity referencing the Mill since the NSW EPA released their Energy from Waste options paper as part of its review of the Energy from Waste framework for the NSW Government. This includes proposing changes to the exception relating to powering industrial processes on site. Opal has not instigated this review, did not know that the EPA were proposing these changes, nor has Opal re-opened its proposal for an Energy from Waste facility on site.</p> <p>GO commented that a local resident had told him recently that the mill was going to build an incinerator again, so there is the perception in the community that Opal has a current proposal for an energy from waste plant.</p>	Category	To EPA	Mill Hotline	Odour	7	0	Noise	0	0	Other	0	0	Total	7	0	Karen Jones
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6	Odour Strategy Update	<p>Odour sampling and testing of site process emission sources was conducted during December, with some conflicting results.</p> <p>Exhaust samples were taken for both chemical analysis (concentration of odourous compounds such as sulfur gases and Volatile Organic Compounds), and for odour analysis (concentration and description as determined by a panel of odour assessors).</p>	Karen Jones															

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concentrations of odourous compounds decreased by at least 50% compared with sampling in 2021 Odour concentration increased by three times compared with 2021. <p>Next steps are to determine why there is conflicting results for odour testing.</p> <p>The site is also continuing to work on improving former exhaust flowrates to increase dispersion of the wet paper odours and is currently trialling an alternative biocide.</p> <p>LN asked where community members can find information on this. Are newsletters available on the Opal website?</p> <p>As per LN's suggestion at the last meeting, RCC south ward councilors were invited to this meeting and a tour prior, but did not respond to the invitation.</p>	
7	<i>Parking Issue</i>	<p>As per Peters presentation.</p> <p>Action – KJ and KB to discuss with Opal to determine if Opal can provide any parking spaces for caravans/boats/vehicles (perhaps for a fee). Any suggestions for other businesses that have space in the area that can also do this?</p>	Peter Fagan
8	<i>General Business</i>	<p><u>Clean Up Australia Day</u></p> <p>What does a shopping trolley, clothes airer, coffee table and car wing mirror all have in common? They are all items collected by 12 volunteers from our Botany Mill on Clean Up Australia Day!</p> <p>For the ninth consecutive year, team members from Opal's Botany Mill rolled up their sleeves to help clean Purcell Park, collecting enough rubbish to fill 10 bags and removing a number of large items.</p> <p>Clean Up Australia Day has been the nation's largest community-based environmental event for more than 30 years. Our Botany Mill team is proud to help support their local community.</p>  <p>This has been published on the Opal LinkedIn page.</p> <p><u>Sponsorship</u></p> <p>Opal is a Silver sponsor of the La Perouse Junior Rugby League Football Club for 2025, and continues to sponsor the Bondi Lions Club, with attendance for 10 local special needs children and their carers to attend the Lions World Festival of Magic show and funding for medical</p>	Karen Jones

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		<p>equipment for local children and the paediatric eye clinic at the Sydney Children's hospital in Randwick.</p> <p><u>General Business</u></p> <p>LN has added Bunnerong Creek to Streamwatch as per suggestion from KJ.</p>	
9	Conclusion	Next meeting – July/August 2025	
	Actions	<p>Next meeting will discuss the Community Liaison Group Charter – KJ to send out the CLG members for review.</p> <p>KJ and KB to discuss with Opal to determine if Opal can provide any parking spaces for caravans/boats/vehicles (for a fee). Any suggestions for other businesses that have space in the area that can also do this?</p> <p>KJ to look at whether any Keep Australia Beautiful awards are relevant for energy improvement projects the mill is currently working on.</p> <p>KJ to check whether work Opal is doing on Odour investigations and reductions is available for community members to find?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In addition to the newsletters delivered to the local residents, CLG meeting minutes are available on the Opal website, which give details on this information. https://opalan.com/divisions/opal-paper-and-recycling/opal-paper-recycling-botany-mill/ 	