

Woodlawn Eco-Precinct Community Liaison Committee Meeting Minutes

Date	Wednesday 27 November 2024	Time	5:00pm to 7.00pm
Coordinator	Greg Hosking, Community and Stakeholder Engagement Manager, Woodlawn Eco Precinct	Location	Woodlawn Conference Room 619 Collector Road, Tarago

Committee List ✓

Name	Present	Name	Present
Justin Houghton (JH - Veolia)	✓	Dr Samantha Johnson (SJ - Community Rep)	✓
Cr Keith Smith (KS - GMC Councillor)	✓	Lois Wake (LW - TADPAI)	✓
Fiona Jeffery (FJ - Community Rep)	✓	Cr John Preston (JP - QPRC Councillor)	

Visitors List ✓

Name	Present	Name	Present
Scott Martin (SM - GMC Director Planning & Environment) - Invited Visitor		Kathryn Whitfield (KW - Veolia ARC Project Director)	✓
Raymond Choy (RC - Veolia Environment Manager)		Skye McParland (SM Head of Communications and Public Policy Veolia Australia and New Zealand)	✓
Carmen Loecherer (CL - GM NSW Resource Recovery)		Jamie Seaton (JS - CLC Facilitator)	✓
Greg Hosking (GH - Veolia Stakeholder and Engagement Manager)	✓		

Minutes

1	Introduction and welcome
<p>The Facilitator opened the meeting at 17:10pm with a welcome and introduction of newly elected Goulburn Mulwaree Council Cr Keith Smith.</p> <p><u>Acknowledgement of Country</u></p> <p>Facilitator gave Acknowledgement of Country and welcomed CLC members to the meeting.</p>	
2	Apologies
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cr John Preston – QPRC Councillor• Scott Martin - GMC Director Planning & Environment• Raymond Choy - Veolia Environment Manager• Carmen Loecherer - GM NSW Resource Recovery	
3	Actions from previous meeting
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1) ACTION: Veolia to inform the CLC and the Council when alerts for mods are coming – GH has developed a process for this and Veolia will adopt it to provide alerts (closed).2) ACTION: CLC Facilitator to remove inappropriate questions in future – no inappropriate questions identified this week. It will be a responsibility of JS going forward (closed).3) ACTION: Veolia to re-introduce the dam level projection lines into presentations – agreed and adopted by Veolia (closed).4) ACTION: Veolia has made a commitment to provide responses to questions in 2 weeks. However, Veolia will advise the CLC if they can't meet the 2 week commitment (closed).5) ACTION: GH to investigate and nominate community Q&A interface options - existing website form will be used, drop down list will be built in, and Veolia must ensure questions are answered. GH to organise this and trial it before the next meeting (open).	
4	Commercial agreement disclosure
<p>Facilitator (JS) disclosed to CLC members he is contracted via a new commercial agreement between Social Aspect Consulting Pty Ltd and Veolia Environmental Services (Australia) Pty Ltd. This agreement replaces the previous commercial agreement whereby the Facilitator was sub-contracted to the role via Element Environment Pty Ltd.</p>	
5	Eco-Precinct Operational Update
<p><u>Operations presentation</u></p> <p>Positive results and good news</p> <p>Presentation was delivered by Veolia and positive results this quarter were identified:</p>	

- Regulators – Managers, board representatives from NSW EPA, and representatives from DPHI attended site at the invitation of Veolia. EPA visits related to facilitating the transfer of compliance responsibilities from EPA Wollongong office to EPA Queanbeyan office.
- Odour management - gas capture increased and there was an improvement in the average rainfall pattern which assisted operations
- Water management – 3/4 of temporary storage tanks are built and operating now. The 4th is anticipated to be operating by the end of the year
- Waste management – tonnages for the bioreactor were within the licence limits for the previous licence period (6th September 2024).

SJ asked if Tarago obtained any community grants. JH noted that in this grant round, the Trust received 1 grant application from the Tarago Mens shed which was successful. However previous grant rounds had a high number of Tarago applications.

Presentation format

Veolia has adopted the traffic light concept (i.e. green indicating going well, orange indicating area of focus, red indicating attention required for the presentation in this and subsequent CLC meetings.

Operations performance

JH provided an operations update to the CLC. The presentation detailed that the Veolia Mulwaree Trust (VMT) had awarded 19 grants of \$173,000 and 54 donations of \$72,000 to the local community. With over \$14.8 million to 1,950 projects total to date.

JH outlined the gas extraction improvements around the boundary of the bioreactor rockwall have been completed and gas capture has been improved.

JH outlined that 3 of the 4 temporary tanks have been completed and the 4th is expected before the end of the year. JH stated that all tonnages have been reported and are within licence limits.

Leachate treatment plant is running at maximum capacity achieving optimum leachate treatment rates. JH noted that 4l/s is the maximum production from the plant and that is also what the licence limit has been set at. The team is doing a great job because running at full capacity does not allow for any downtime or incidents but they are still achieving the targets. Veolia is attempting to increase treatment capacity to ensure long-term viability of the capacity.

Water management

JH informed the CLC that all dams are below freeboard, work is still being conducted to ensure water stays below freeboard. It would need 180mm of rain 2-3 days to push ED1 back above the freeboard.

ED3N will continue to reduce as it has no other inputs - other than large rainfall events.

ED3SS will continue to reduce as it has no other fall no inputs - other than large rainfall events.

ED3S stormwater will reach freeboard with 30mm but will flow into ED1 if it reaches overflow (0.5m above freeboard)

Coffer Dam#1 continuing to fall due to evaporation, which is great news as it is currently taking the 350,000L/day of treated leachate

Coffer Dam#2 is below freeboard.

JH stated that unless there are large rainfall events freeboard shouldn't be reached again this summer.

KS asked if water storages can be used for household purposes. JH advised that treated leachate cannot because even though it is treated it is classified as leachate and it is not at an acceptable treatment level for off-site use, and dam ED1 contains acidic water from the contaminated mine site and would require treatment before it can be used in any application. KS asked if it can be treated. JH responded that it can be treated and then used for irrigation, but again, a licence is required.

SJ asked if a site tour can be organised. Veolia advised that one can be organised anytime upon request. SJ asked if JS can determine who would like to attend and the preferred date. JS agreed (ACTION)

JH outlined the water management strategy. Permanent tank farm 1 approvals have been submitted to DPHI. Permanent Tank farm 1 is 54ML. We will require another 130ML to store treated leachate properly on site until we have other uses for the water.

Permanent Tank farm 2 is being planned and the investigations are underway to see if the area is appropriate before developing any reports and submissions for approval. JH showed the CLC where the different tank sites will be located.

JH mentioned that Veolia had met with the neighbouring property owner in relation to the RO irrigation (evaporation) system. The neighbour was concerned that any rainfall will drain directly to his property and if there was anything else we could do while we prove the technology. He was advised that Veolia can't irrigate unless the water meets all the limits but as a compromise it can reduce the size of the irrigation area so that any runoff remains on the Veolia site. Veolia can also reuse some of this water for operational purposes (Eg. in void and in leachate treatment plant) so it doesn't need to use bore water. JH stated that this was a good consultation outcome.

SJ asked if leachate water produced from the landfill is part of the RO process. JH confirmed that the leachate from the landfill is first treated in the treatment facility and that treated liquid would go through the RO process prior to any approved reuse.

CLC member asked what water source is being used at present, Veolia confirmed it is bore water. Veolia referred to the 'RO' process and clarified it as being reverse osmosis.

SJ stated that the response to submissions process is important because it shows people are being listened to, and suggested it should be reported in the Tarago Times. FJ stated that it could have happened earlier, to avoid issues at the start. KS suggested the reporting needs to be distributed more widely than the Tarago Times.

Bioenergy

JH informed the CLC that the Bioenergy team has met their KPI's for the year so far.

SJ asked if gas was collected is methane? JH confirmed it is and approximately 50% is methane.

SJ asked if engines capture it? JH confirmed they do, and any excess gas is flared.

FJ asked if the electricity transmission lines would have enough capacity to support outputs from an extra engine. JH confirmed there would be adequate capacity, however when new engines are put on the substation will need some upgrades.

CLC member asked how much energy is consumed by the plant compared to the amount exported to the grid. JH stated the plant doesn't use much power and it runs off black-power as all the energy produced by the engines is contracted to go into the grid.

Odour management

JH outlined that odour management has seen some improvement due to the void drying out. There were a couple of exceedances however as there were some emissions and sprinklers were used on the cover to keep it moist and avoid cracking.

JH explained that the EPA have approved the trial of a tarping system to be used on the tipping face to reduce emissions from this area. As this area is disturbed due to tipping it can emit gas. The tarp is expected to significantly improve this situation and it will be deployed around February.

SJ noticed that recently, less people have been complaining about odour.

FJ stated that she noticed odour a couple of times last week around 5:45am, sometimes it's worse at the top of the hill coming down into Tarago on Lumley Road than it is at the bottom of the hill.

JH stated that the recent warm weather has contributed to odour improvements and referred to the complained graph supporting the fact that the odour definitely improves over the summer months.

EPA Clean-up notice

JH explained that the EPA clean-up notice was issued as a result of the storage dams being above freeboard. JH advised that the EPA notice meant that Veolia could construct tank storage. There were 4 tanks planned. The first tank was operational by 15 November and tanks 2 and 3 were completed by the end of November 2024. 135 trucks transported 3.3 megalitres of liquid off-site, consistent with the directive issued by the EPA. The waste was transported from 20 October to 20 November to the Cleanaway facility in Homebush NSW.

SJ asked if Cleanaway direct it to landfill in containers. JH advised that the liquid is treated and discarded

trade waste.

FJ asked how much liquid is transported in each truck. JH advised that up to 25,000 litres is the quantity in each truck, and EPA insisted it had to be transported not wait for it to evaporate. There were 4 trucks in morning (9-11am) & 3 in afternoon (that left at approximately 16:45).

JH said that freeboard was reached in all dams by the 20th of November as required by the Notice. If Veolia did not achieve that date it would have been required to transport 350,000L off site per day until freeboard was reached.

JH explained that also if the freeboard is exceeded again, EPA requires 350,000 litres per day to be transported off-site via trucks, so tanks are the preferred option as the mid-term storage solution.

KS asked how thick the liquid is. JH stated that it is like tea in terms of consistency, and it has a high salinity level but most of the organics have been removed.

JH explained that Veolia is looking to have a temporary Reverse Osmosis plant approved as a part of the Notice. This will mean that the liquid can be filtered to a level where more treatment plants can accept it. Veolia would look to take this RO liquid to its Spring Farm treatment plant as it is closer than Homebush.

LW asked where Spring Farm is. JH replied that it is near Narellan, south of Sydney.

SJ asked JH to confirm the size of the new Reverse Osmosis plant. JH confirmed the size is similar to the proposed permanent reverse osmosis unit (4L/s) for the irrigation field, but it is a portable reverse osmosis unit which is not purpose built for the type of liquid handled on site, but Veolia will treat it to an acceptable level to take to the Spring Farm treatment facility.

FJ asked if the liquid was put into a tank after going through the unit. JH confirmed it is before being transported off site but explained the preference is to reach a point where it is used on-site.

SJ explained that transportation creates separate environmental issues, such as emissions. It therefore transfers the problem somewhere else. JH said Veolia agrees and storage on site would be a much better option until a permanent solution is implemented.

KS asked when the temporary reverse osmosis begins. JH stated that next week for testing only, if it is feasible and approved by EPA to operate.

FJ asked if the independent odour report is available yet. Veolia staff were unsure, so GH will take the question on notice and advise the CLC members. (ACTION)

JH stated that the new dam at MBT is built and leachate on the pad is gone. He informed the CLC about updates to Modifications specifically:

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE UPDATE

PA MODIFICATIONS & POST APPROVAL APPLICATIONS

APPROVAL	TYPE	DESCRIPTION	STATUS
MP 10_0012 AWT 06_0239	Modification	Modify the existing project approval for the Bioreactor and MBT to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construct an approximately 15 megalitre (ML) dam at the MBTF to hold leachate pumped from the existing approved leachate dam via a pipeline. Construct an approximately 100 ML dam at the Bioreactor to hold leachate pumped from the existing approved leachate dams via a pipeline. Changed to enclosed tanks following feedback about odour 	Revised submission ongoing
MP 10_0012 (Bioreactor)	Modification	Reverse Osmosis for beneficial reuse. High expenditure water treatment plant that will facilitate significantly improved treatment of treated leachate. Brine will report to the existing dams. Beneficial reuse of the drinking quality water for the water carts, irrigation to the onsite farm, washdown processes, operational processes onsite.	MOD report application with DPHI. Reducing increasing onsite reuse preference
MP 10_0012 (Bioreactor)	Modification	Remediation of old contaminated mine area. Remediate with material that is clean and guaranteed. Goal to prevent rainfall being contaminated in that area. High expenditure but requirement of site to remediate.	Earth moving to facilitate further soil analysis and ongoing investigations

6 ARC Presentation

'Meet the experts' event

KW explained that positive feedback was received in relation to the recent community engagement activities, although some people wanted results of technical studies which were unavailable. Main topics of interest were:

- Emissions, health and agriculture
- Water concerns which will be addressed in the next ARC community newsletter
- Timing of the report exhibition. The community indicated they do not want a report released over the Christmas break. Veolia is therefore aiming for it to be publicly available following the school holidays.

Between now and the Christmas break the team will continue to hold briefings with key community groups and engagement activities will continue in 2025. With a similar format to events held this year.

7 CLC Meeting Administration

Comment attribution in minutes

If there is a comment in the minutes that needs to be attributed to a person then include an attribution. It can skew record keeping if it is not attributable to people. GH explained he was protecting anonymity for committee members. Members agreed that comments will be attributed to a person but a full transcript of everything that is said at the meeting will not be needed. Members noted they accept the need to take public responsibility for their comments by joining the CLC as a community representative.

Member composition

FJ: When she started there were no women except her in the CLC and no female representatives had been present at a CLC meeting for the preceding 2 years. It is the opposite scenario now to what it was previously, and there is a need to have gender balance.

JH: Agrees about gender balance and wants the CLC to be representative. Veolia has had difficulty recruiting members to the CLC. Veolia reached out to the Tarago Sporting Association, Show Society, the local Public School, and also put an advert in the Tarago Times.

SJ: The notice should be an article in the Tarago Times, not an advert. Prefers not to make a request to the Show Society as they are quite busy.

FJ: The Show Society is fatigued and are relied on for a lot of other functions. Many of the town associations committee volunteers are fatigued as they volunteer for multiple groups

JH: Asked if someone on the CLC could write the Tarago Times article calling for new CLC members.

SJ: Volunteered to write the article (ACTION).

FJ: Noted that unless people are allowed to come along to the meeting they are unable to trial and see if it's something they feel comfortable undertaking, which then further limits opportunities for community representation.

Process for Government Agency representative attendance

FJ: I wish people could just turn up rather than having to be approved by the CLC for the next meeting, otherwise it's three months between meetings.

KS: My request to visit the last meeting was declined.

SJ: We need to be clear about the role of a liaison committee, which is the important role being fulfilled by each CLC member.

JS: I reviewed the CLC charter and conditions of approval for the facility and these are silent in respect to the process for inviting Government agency representatives.

FJ: The CLC members should have freedom to invite the EPA representatives as a safeguard.

SJ: Agree, however it is necessary to have clarity on who is attending and why they are coming.

KW: It is absolutely OK for the agency representatives to attend, but a process in the charter has to be updated.

FJ: The EPA representatives are permitted to come as per the facility's conditions of approval, so why is it a problem if they are invited to come?

JH: Veolia needs to know why they (regulators) are coming and to update the Agenda otherwise Veolia could be wasting their time, putting them in an uncomfortable position or make the CLC look disjointed.

SJ: My problem is trust and openness among the committee, it's an issue of identifying the purpose of the individuals attending and ensuring we are all on the same page.

SJ: Prefers that local people intending to be visitors or observers make a request to actually join the committee as a full-time members after a period or number of visits.

SM: Outlined that as members of the CLC, each person had made a commitment to the CLC and to sharing information with the local community, by allowing open meetings the commitment to the CLC is lessened. SM detailed that she believes the CLC should stay in a closed meeting format to ensure the integrity of the CLC is protected.

JS: Described the three processes for considering attendance requests and inviting applicants, as agreed by the CLC members:

1. Visitor – visitors are limited to a maximum of 5 individuals per CLC meeting, an email request must be submitted to the CLC Facilitator at least 2 weeks prior to the CLC meeting. The Facilitator will forward the visitor the meeting invitation and identify the visitor on the meeting agenda. The Facilitator will issue a copy of the CLC Charter to the visitor, and advice about behavioural expectations. The visitor will observe the meeting only. Visitors will be limited to attending one CLC meeting, if they wish to continue attending they must apply to join the CLC.
2. NSW Government Agency representatives: an email request outlining a reason for the attendance request must be submitted to the CLC Facilitator at least 2 weeks prior to the CLC meeting. The Facilitator will forward the Government representative the meeting invitation and identify the visitor on the meeting agenda. The Facilitator will issue a copy of the CLC Charter to the Government representative.
3. Prospective CLC member – an individual seeking to join the CLC must meet the selection criteria in the CLC Charter. The individual must submit an email request to the Facilitator. Upon receipt of the email, the Facilitator will issue a copy of the CLC Charter to the individual. The Facilitator will notify CLC members of the request and seek their approval for the individual to join the CLC. The Facilitator will notify the individual of the outcome.

Tom Martin request to join CLC

JS: Stated that he received an email request from Tom Martin to join the committee. Read the email to the CLC members for consideration.

JH: Tom made it clear in his email that he was here to oppose the Energy from waste facility (ARC). This is not what the CLC is for, it is to review and update on the current operations in order to engage with the community - it is not about the ARC.

SJ: Described the way she was invited to attend the CLC. Believes that being approached is a better process.

It was agreed that GH would contact Tom and discuss the CLC with him and then send an email informing the CLC about the discussion.

Request to change CLC to CCC

JS: CCCs are prescribed as a post-approval condition by NSW Government.

FJ: Stated one benefit of CCC is that it provides ready-made meeting guidelines and requirements.

GH: CCCs have a different arrangement for recruiting a Chairperson. The NSW DPHI appoints the Chairperson from an approved list of people.

JH asked if we could review the guidelines and maybe adopt some of the requirements as appropriate? Veolia staff agreed to consider the request and respond to members (ACTION).

Correspondence between Veolia and EPA

FJ requested a copy of the email sent from Veolia to the NSW EPA representatives, declining their request to attend the CLC meeting.

GH agreed to consider the request and respond to FJ (ACTION).

8 Vision for Woodlawn

JH provided the CLC with an outline of Veolia's vision for Woodlawn. This is the result of facilitated workshops and is aligned with Veolia's overall purpose and vision:

ECO-PRECINCT 20 YEAR VISION FOR WOODLAWN

We will shortly be releasing a community flyer to show what we've achieved in the past 20 years of Woodlawn and to highlight our key areas of focus for the next 20 years. These areas of future focus include:

- **Operational improvements:** We'll continue to develop and invest in technology to improve our operations. From gas collection and odour management, to waste treatment, energy efficiency and much more.
- **Water Treatment:** We'll continue to find solutions to manage and treat on-site water, and accelerate evaporation capacity.
- **Rehabilitation efforts:** We'll continue to depollute the land impacted from mining activities, undertake more remediation works, such as tree planting, stabilising soils and removing old mining infrastructure.
- **Energy from Waste:** We propose to build an Advanced Energy Recovery Centre to reduce waste to landfill.
- **Improving Biodiversity:** We will be looking at ways to enhance local biodiversity, monitoring the creek and local wildlife and creating ways to protect their habitats.
- **More renewable energy:** We'll investigate ways to expand the site's renewable wind and solar energy capacity, to supply more green energy to our operations and the grid.

The flyer is in the final stages of design and will be shared with the CLC and wider community in the next few weeks.



9 Community Q&As

Veolia staff stated that the questions received from the community are all quite reasonable Veolia will provide a response in the required timeframe.

FJ asked for a breakdown of chemicals that are dispersed into the air when methane from the bioreactor is flared. JH responded that the composition is approximately 50% methane, 40% carbon dioxide and 10% other gases. When heat is applied the chemical composition is changed and the output is mainly carbon dioxide and water. Veolia will provide a summary in written reply.

Veolia to provide a general breakdown of chemistry of landfill gas and outputs from engines/flare (ACTION)

10	AOB
<p><u>More regular CLC meetings</u></p> <p>CLC members indicated a preference for more regular meetings. One meeting every two months is preferred, apart from the end of year period where 3 months between meetings is preferred to avoid a meeting in January.</p> <p>JS to organise more regular meetings (ACTION)</p> <p><u>Next meeting</u></p> <p>Attendees agreed the next meeting would be Thursday 20 February 2025, held on-site at Woodlawn Eco Precinct.</p> <p><u>EPA Clean-up notice</u></p> <p>JH shared details of an impending NSW EPA clean-up notice for Veolia. It will relate to wind-blown litter being deposited at a property nearby the Eco Precinct. NSW EPA will issue Veolia with a deadline to ensure the litter is removed.</p> <p>Litter collection is currently underway in this area and Veolia regularly sends out patrols to pick up and windblown rubbish.</p> <p>FJ asked what measures are put in place to prevent this occurring again. JH responded that windblown litter occurs on extremely windy days and it picks up litter when material is being tipped from heavy vehicles. Three measures to be implemented are additional infrastructure (netting and cages) at the tipping face, high fencing around the top of the landfill in the direction of prevailing winds, and people manually collecting and removing the windblown litter.</p>	
11	Meeting Close
Meeting closed at 7:17pm.	

Action List

Item	Action	Assigned to
1	ACTION: GH to investigate and nominate community Q&A interface options - existing website form will be used, drop down list will be built in, and Veolia must ensure questions are answered. GH to organise this and trial it before next meeting.	GH (Veolia)
2	ACTION: CLC Facilitator to determine who would like to attend a site tour and the preferred date.	JS (CLC Facilitator)
3	ACTION: GH to determine if independent odour report is available yet,	GH (Veolia)

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	and advise CLC members.	
4	ACTION: SJ to write and place article in the Tarago Times, advertising for new CLC Members.	SJ (CLC Member)
5	ACTION: Veolia to consider request for changing CLC to CCC and respond to members.	JH/GH (Veolia)
6	ACTION: Veolia to consider request for a copy of the email sent from Veolia to the NSW EPA representatives, declining their request to attend the last CLC meeting.	GH (Veolia)
7	ACTION: CLC Facilitator to organise more regular CLC meetings	JS (CLC Facilitator)
8	ACTION: GH to contact Tom and discuss the CLC with him and then send an email informing the CLC about the discussion.	GH (Veolia)
9	ACTION: General breakdown of chemistry of landfill gas and outputs from engines/flare per annum.	JH(Veolia)