

EMBARGO Wednesday 11 AM, November 5th, 2025



Southern Highlands Matters Launches Reject RePoly Community Campaign to Oppose Rebranded Plastics Plant Planning Appeal.

New court process strictly limits public input.

Significant fundraising urgently needed to meet legal costs.

Community campaign is launched across the region from the cinema and radio, to fences and bins and social media.

Bowral: November 5th, 2025. The Southern Highlands community is once again uniting to oppose a controversial plastics recycling facility proposed for Moss Vale under the community campaign “Reject RePoly”, launched today at the Empire Cinema in Bowral.

This project was previously defeated by the community after four years, under its former name, Plasrefine. Now rebranded as RePoly, the proponent has lodged an appeal in the NSW Land and Environment Court, seeking to overturn the Independent Planning Commission’s (IPC) refusal, which was handed down in January 2025.

The Legal Challenge

With the support of the incorporated community association, Southern Highland Matters (SHM), chairperson Ms Sam Wood has been recognised as one of only four legal respondents with standing in court to challenge the appeal.

“It’s the same project, under a different name, with the same risks to Sydney’s drinking water, public health, world-leading medical research and our Southern Highlands industries and way of life,” said Ms Wood, “We fought this before, and we won. Community opposition and expert evidence were so clear to the IPC. We shouldn’t have to fight this battle twice — but if that’s what it takes, we will.”

“RePoly may have a new logo, but it’s the same proposal the IPC rejected after thousands of community objections and a four-year opposition and detailed expert and technical inputs,” Ms Woods added.

The specific appeal process means that public input is highly restricted, as the arguments are legal, technical, and scientific, requiring expert witnesses and studies, presented by highly specialised lawyers and barristers, which are extremely expensive. However, it’s the only way to win in the legal environment that RePoly has decided to pursue.

Campaign Charter

Marking the campaign launch, SHM today publishes a new microsite – RejectRepoly.com.au – which includes, uniquely, a campaign charter: a public commitment by SMH to run a fact-based campaign that encourages residents to learn about risks and engage in debate to develop a broad-based, authentic, and informed opposition. “We aim to allow the community to learn, understand, ask questions and decide about the RePoly proposal through our campaign, and the legal defence they are funding. The Charter is a key document about what we believe, our values, how we will behave, be accountable, and act on the community’s behalf,” Ms Wood said. “It’s our promise: how neighbours treat each other, and part of what holds our Southern Highland community together.”

Our campaign promise:

Our campaign is grounded in truth, fairness and respect.

We commit to:

- *Presenting fact-based information*
- *Encouraging learning and open debate*
- *Representing community voices throughout the legal process*
- *Using every donation transparently and solely for legal and campaign outreach costs.*

Launching the Volunteer, Creative and Community Campaign

“While we know RePoly can, and will, outspend us, we have to make sure it’s the expert quality of the legal arguments we make that are compelling. That’s why our community campaign is essential to help residents understand the risks and the arguments we will be mounting on their behalf as we ask them urgently to fund us,” said Ms Woods.

Bringing together volunteers, supporters, creative talents, social media experts, and good old-fashioned shoe leather, the renewed campaign was launched in Bowral today as an urgent call to action, emphasising that the fight has to start again. With cut-through creative, the Reject RePoly campaign material has started to appear all over the Southern Highlands, moving outward from the epicentre of Moss Vale, and into Burradoo, Bowral and Mittagong – the centres most directly at risk from irreparable health and environmental risks. In the following months, residents will see and hear Reject RePoly across the Highlands. Village pop-ups and street stalls will enable face-to-face contact to complement social and media presence. Sydney, with the risks to its drinking water, will also be a focus.

Dr Peta Seaton AM, former local MP and Moss Vale farmer, joined Ms Wood to launch the campaign, stating, “Our community has always stepped up for a healthy environment. But many people believe the Moss Vale site - surrounded by residential areas, schools, childcare centres and within Sydney’s water catchment - is fundamentally unsuitable and inconsistent with safe planning principles.”

“All the campaign creative work has been developed by talented, local professionals donating their time, giving an insight into how deeply people oppose this untested development,” Dr Seaton added.

One social media spot, “Big Merino”, [LINK](#), alone garnered over 7,000 organic views in a single weekend. A unique cinema commercial, [LINK](#) specifically designed for the big screen, is another example of the local creative community’s passion for engaging others in understanding and calling for donations.

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Urgent Fundraising Needs

An initial GoFundMe ([LINK](#)) fundraising target of \$180,000 is about 65% achieved, with the average donation around \$205. Additionally, specialist donations for specific legal costs are being sought from individuals and entities familiar with the scale of expenses associated with this level of legal defence. To date, legal expenses incurred solely for court preparation have already accounted for a significant portion of the funds raised in the last few months.

"Fundraising right now is extremely urgent. We are grateful to the community members who have already made an average donation of \$208. But we need many hundreds of thousands more, by year's end, to guarantee the breadth and quality of the defence we can afford, and allow for preparation in advance of hearings next year, Ms Wood said.

Why This Matters: Water, Health and Research at Risk

If approved, RePoly would be Australia's largest plastics recycling and remanufacturing plant, operating 24/7 within the Sydney Water Catchment - a system supplying over five million people. The proposed site is situated directly on riparian waterways that feed into the Wingecarribee River and Warragamba Dam. The site is also within a high-risk bushfire zone with no local hazmat capacity, meaning in an emergency, specialist firefighting equipment must travel from its coastal base, adding hours to any emergency response. Research into the impact of micro- and nano-plastics on contamination is gaining momentum, with studies on breast milk and brain concentrations from degrading plastics in the environment already raising scientific concerns, let alone industrial processes where micro- and nano-plastics are an inevitable byproduct.

"This proposal risks the integrity of Sydney's drinking water and the health of millions. It's reckless, unnecessary and entirely at odds with NSW's own environmental safeguards."

"We're up against deep pockets and the profit motivation. Our only weapon is the truth, delivered by the best legal counsel possible, and the support of people who care about protecting the Southern Highlands environment, our residents' health, and Sydney's water," Ms Wood concluded.

Donations can be made via [GoFundMe](#): or by visiting Reject RePoly on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#)

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For more information, please contact:

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