



NAME REDACTED

OBJECT

Submission ID: 216755

Organisation: N/A	Key issues: Social impacts, Visual impacts, design and landscaping, Land use compatibility (surrounding land uses), Other issues
Location: New South Wales 2577	
Attachment: N/A	

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I am incredibly concerned that this proposal has been recommended to go ahead at this particular site, and I implore the IPC to make the right decision and stop it. My main concerns are fourfold.

1) Environmental concerns - The proposed site is located directly next to streams that feed into the Wingecarribee river, and on to the Warragamba Dam, which supplies Sydney and Goulburn's drinking water. There is significant potential for there to be microplastics and PFAS contained in run off from the site. While we don't yet know enough about the impact of microplastics, what we know so far is cause for concern (see, e.g. <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC9920460/>). In terms of PFAS, there is significant evidence that these have negative impacts on human health and the environment (see e.g. <https://www.pfas.gov.au/about-pfas/affects>). If these get into the water supply, it would be incredibly hard to remedy. You only have to look to what has just happened in the Blue Mountains and the closure of the Medlow Dam due to elevated levels of PFAS chemicals. I am also concerned about potential air pollution, particularly as it seems that the claims GHD are making about how they will prevent this seem ridiculous. This includes a claim that they will stop operating every time the doors open - it is hard to see how the facility would be operationally or commercially viable if this is the case?

2) Land use compatibility - The proposed site is only 2 km from Moss Vale's town centre - which is being reinvigorated with a number of new cafes, bars and restaurants. I was particularly shocked to learn that the site is only 200 m from someone's house and 500 m from a daycare. The site's location so close to the town centre will massively impact businesses, residents and tourism. Other microplastic facilities in Australia, such as the one in Parkes, has a buffer zone of at least 7 km. I also understand that the intention of the Southern Highlands Innovation park, which is meant to be for biotech, research and light industries. Not for heavy industry such as Plasrefine. Plasrefine will likely destroy the useability of this area for other industries, which will in turn impact employment and business in the Southern Highlands.

3) Safety - While I understand the application indicates Plasrefine is not in a bush fire zone, this does not appear to be correct, and more recent mapping from the RFS indicates that it is, in fact, in a bush fire zone. Given recent significant bushfire events in NSW (such as those during the summer of 2019) it is shocking to think a facility such as this would be approved to be built in a bush fire zone, particularly one so close to people's homes and a town centre! There is a history of such facilities catching fire (see, for example <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2020-11-13/fire-at-kilburn-plastics-factory-causes-million-dollar-damage/12880014>, <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2023-03-25/epa-fires-keysborough-pollution-plastic-nurdles/102139584>) which can release toxic fumes into the air, and exacerbate the run off of microplastics and dangerous chemicals. A further concern is that, if the facility did catch fire, Moss Vale does not have a permanently staffed fire station. This poses an incredible risk of the fire spreading, endangering the entire Moss Vale community, and surrounding areas.

4) Community impacts - The community is almost entirely united in the message that this is not the right site. The community does not support it. The council does not support it. Our parliamentary members at the federal and state level do not support it. There are plenty of other sites that could be used, that are much further away from the social and commercial town centre of Moss Vale, from people's homes, and other essential services such as daycares and schools.



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The options the IPC have seem are to “ 1) approve the proposal ” which will have a long-term, irreversible impact, and destroy many people’s livelihoods and lives in the Southern Highlands, or 2) decline the proposal - which will only have a minor, short-term impact on GHD while they find another, more appropriate, site. NSW is a large state “ there are plenty of other options that will not carry these devastating impacts.

I implore the IPC to do the right thing and listen to mine, and the rest of the community’s, valid concerns.
