



CRAIG FELDICK

OBJECT

Submission ID: 211354

Organisation: <i>N/A</i>	Key issues: <i>Other issues</i>
Location: <i>New South Wales 2577</i>	
Attachment: <i>Attached overleaf</i>	

Submission date: 11/3/2024 4:14:56 PM

Hello, I was speaker # 46 on November 28th and did not leave a copy of my speaker notes with the IPC. Those notes are attached for inclusion in the case file for the Moss Vale Plastics Recycling Facility. Thank you, Craig Feldick

Independent Planning Commission Submission
Craig Feldick, Moss Vale Resident, Speaker # 46
28 November 2024

Good afternoon, and thank you for taking the time to listen to our community's many concerns with the Plasrefine Plastics Recycling Facility proposal.

The DPHI, which I'll shorten to Department - Its assessment report states, in part: Quote: The Department's assessment concludes the impacts of the development can be mitigated and/or managed to ensure an **acceptable** level of environmental performance..." Unquote.

I don't believe "an acceptable level of environmental performance" has been established based on what the scientific community know, and more importantly, are discovering, and yet to discover about the effects of microplastics and PFAS. And how to properly mitigate those effects. Government action isn't keeping up with science.

Particularly in the past two years, we're seeing many reports about how microplastics and PFAS are created and released during plastics recycling. Many types of single-use plastics are just not recyclable because of their composition. Plastic production uses a wide variety of different chemical compounds, many of which are known to possess hazardous properties, like PFOA – a chemical that falls under the umbrella of PFAS. It doesn't break

down easily and can stay in the environment and human body for a long time, which is why it's referred to as a "forever chemical". The International Agency for Research on Cancer, which is part of the World Health Organization, has classified PFOA as "carcinogenic to humans. This chemical is only one of over ten thousand different chemicals used in plastic production, most of which haven't even been studied to determine if they're detrimental to our health.

More studies are emerging showing the potential and actual release of microplastics and PFAS during the plastics recycling process. Interestingly, the Social Impact Assessment prepared by Ethos Urban for Plasrefine acknowledges this fact. I quote: "There is evidence that plastic processing facilities such as recycling plants can contribute to microplastic pollution. A study conducted by Guo and others demonstrated the prevalence of microplastic pollution caused by plastic bottle recycling facilities, which was being ejected into the local environment through wastewater." End quote.

This highlights perhaps the biggest concern our community has with the Plasrefine proposal – contamination of our environment.

The Department, in its assessment, identified the key issues with Plasrefine's application as: Social, Visual, Impacts on the ABR, and Operational traffic. Where are water and air qualities and their impacts on our health? How can these not be considered as a key issue?

Our community doesn't have the means to hire scientific experts to properly assess the exact dangers that we face, and that our future generations will face from microplastics and PFAS. We must rely on government to help us out here, and we believe government has let us down in recommending the plastics recycling facility be approved.

Our council commented that although microplastics are an emerging contaminant, currently there is no legislative requirement to manage the complete removal of microplastics in wastewater. They went on to say that any industrial-scale source for microplastics should be addressed **at the source** rather than at the treatment site.

The EPA raised concerns over microplastics in the wastewater and advised that further information was required to be able to assess the environmental impacts of the development.

And yet, the Department is recommending approval. Okay, there are conditions that Plasrefine must meet before the facility can operate. But the determination that those conditions are met lies with the Planning Secretary; in effect, bypassing the system intended with State Significant Development applications. You folks, or a new IPC won't be called together to make a determination on whether or not Plasrefine has met the conditions. One person – the Planning Secretary – will make these determinations.

We all want to be able to recycle plastic, but we want recycling done in a safe manner. What we don't see are reliable assurances from the scientific community and state and federal government that our community will **not** be harmed by placing a plastics recycling facility within a couple hundred meters from residents, next door to a vital scientific research facility, and within the Sydney water catchment area. Not **having** reliable, up-to-date, scientifically proven standards for recycling facilities **cannot** be an excuse to approve the Plasrefine application.

Clearly, this is not the right site. Thank you.