



NAME REDACTED

OBJECT

Submission ID: 211805

Organisation: N/A	Key issues: <i>Social impacts, Visual impacts, design and landscaping, Land use compatibility (surrounding land uses), Traffic, Other issues</i>
Location: New South Wales 2118	
Attachment: N/A	

Submission date: 11/5/2024 4:03:49 PM

Although I am not a resident of the Southern Highlands, I wish to submit my strong opposition to the proposed plastic recycling plant. This is an issue very close to my heart as my parents live in Moss Vale and my wife and I spend a significant amount of time there. I can readily attest to the anxiety and uncertainty this ill conceived application has caused to my parents, the Moss Vale community and the greater Southern Highlands region.

By way of background, my parents worked tirelessly as professionals in Sydney for the duration of their working life to secure their retirement in the Highlands, whilst also making generous provision for their children to continue to live and work in Sydney. Twenty years ago they purchased a property in the township and undertook a significant renovation with a view to moving down permanently upon retirement. My mother's connection to the area is longstanding, having spent many happy childhood holidays in the district with relatives. She was delighted to later acquire a small patch of paradise and looked forward to a peaceful well deserved retirement in beautiful surrounds, keeping honey bees and tending to her cottage garden. She could not have conceived what lay ahead.

Having thoroughly researched the proposal, it is unfathomable to me that Moss Vale with its pristine riparian farmland is being seriously considered as an appropriate location for this blight. Beaconsfield Road is simply too close to existing residences as well as residential developments earmarked for the future, schools, childcare facilities and the commercial centre. The Wingecarribee River and other waterways will be contaminated by microplastic particulate matter, posing a broader threat to Sydney's drinking water supply. Living in such close proximity to this factory will not only be hazardous, but frankly soul destroying. The obvious health impacts have rightly been raised and discussed at length, leaving no doubt as to the risks involved, but what of the collective mental health of the Moss Vale community? As someone who works with youth, my concerns in this regard are particularly for the younger folk of the area as they navigate life with all its challenges, with the additional unnecessary burden of a toxic industry on their doorstep. It is a fundamental human right to live safely and to feel safe.

While the majority understand the importance of recycling in the overall stewardship of the land and enthusiastically support it, the recycling of plastic is a very different issue. A plant of this nature should not be labelled as light industrial. It is by its nature a heavy industry and so contravenes the specifications set down for that area, specifically SHIP. Any process which seeks to break nonbiodegradable matter down under excessive and prolonged high temperatures, accompanied by the emission of unfiltered toxic byproducts into the atmosphere, is clearly a heavy industry. Furthermore, apart from the obvious aesthetic negatives, plastic recycling is a relatively new process with many unknowns. To any reasonable person there are simply too many elements of the process which are as yet unquantifiable and this is unsettling. Why should the population of Moss Vale be the guinea pig for this questionable experiment (and I use the word experiment advisedly).

Sadly my parents' quality of life has already been seriously impaired as they grapple with an uncertain future. My mother likens it to living under the Sword of Damocles. Their granddaughter is asthmatic and has always enjoyed visiting her grandparents in the country, availing herself of brief respite from the pollution of the city. Her visits are now under a cloud. Obviously her wellbeing is paramount and my parents are not willing to risk her health. Should they be deprived of family time because of the blatant self interest of others? I have to say I was hugely disappointed to hear a spokesperson for Plasrefine condescendingly suggest that residents who have respiratory issues should just stay indoors. I won't even dignify this outrageous statement with a



comment. I commend the Member for Goulburn offering to assist the applicant to identify a more suitable site, but was disheartened by his cavalier response that he likes Moss Vale . There has been a concerning lack of good faith and transparency in Plasrefine's dealings with the community, leading to feelings of marginalisation and distrust.

It's also my understanding that this company has been

Sadly of course it all comes down to money. Our incumbent State government clearly cares little for the regional areas of NSW and continues to put profit above the best interests of the people it is supposed to represent. I look forward to making my voice heard at the next election.

Finally I would urge the Commission to err on the side of caution and work with Plasrefine to identify a more suitable site. I sincerely believe it would be foolish to approve this application in the face of such strident opposition. If approved, a huge can of worms will be unleashed, with serious consequences both short and long term, for which we are totally unprepared. I see many similarities to the tragedies of asbestosis and silicosis. No amount of money is worth the destruction of the environment and the suffering of the people.

Thank you.
