



DEBORAH WRIGLEY

OBJECT

Submission ID: 215103

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 2534	
Attachment: N/A	

Submission date: 11/17/2024 8:35:43 PM

I am writing to express my strong objection to the proposed establishment of the Plasrefine Soft Plastics Recycling Facility at 74-76 Beaconsfield Road, Moss Vale.

As a 62-year-old resident of Werri Beach, NSW, and previous to that I was a resident of Bowral. I frequently return to visit the Southern Highlands for its natural beauty and tranquillity, therefore I have significant concerns regarding the potential environmental, health, and community impacts of this project.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS:

The proposed Plasrefine facility is located within the Wingecarribee catchment area, a vital part of Sydney's water supply system. Water from the Wingecarribee Reservoir flows into the Wingecarribee River, then into the Wollondilly River, and ultimately reaches Lake Burragorang, the primary reservoir for Sydney's drinking water via Warragamba Dam.

This interconnected system means any contamination in the Wingecarribee catchment could severely affect water quality for downstream communities, including Gerringong, the Illawarra, and Shellharbour regions.

Adding to the importance of this location is the Shoalhaven Scheme, a dual-purpose water supply and hydroelectric power system that supplements water supplies to Sydney and surrounding areas during drought conditions. This scheme supports regions like the Illawarra, including Wollongong, the Southern Highlands communities of Bowral and Mittagong, and towns in the Shoalhaven area such as Nowra. The facility's placement near streams connected to these critical water systems presents a serious risk.

The proposed development is alarmingly close to two riparian zones—sensitive ecosystems that play a critical role in filtering water, preventing erosion, and supporting biodiversity. A soft plastics recycling facility of this scale generates significant risks of chemical leachates and microplastics entering these waterways. These pollutants can disrupt aquatic ecosystems, harm wildlife, and bioaccumulate in the food chain, ultimately posing health risks to humans.

Given the proposed Plasrefine location, the facility could compromise the water supply for millions of people, jeopardizing ecosystems and endangering human health. The stakes are too high to allow a project with such a significant contamination risk to proceed so close to these critical water sources and riparian zones.

HEALTH IMPLICATIONS:

As a breast cancer survivor currently undergoing low-dose chemotherapy, I am acutely aware of the importance of clean water for health and recovery. Studies have shown that exposure to environmental pollutants can adversely affect cancer recovery and overall health, particularly in individuals over 50. The introduction of this soft plastics recycling facility raises concerns about potential chemical leachates and microplastics entering the water supply, posing additional health risks to vulnerable populations.

PROXIMITY TO RESIDENTIAL AREAS:

The proposed facility is located just over 200 meters from a residential area, raising concerns about land use, environmental impact, and traffic.



Australian zoning laws and environmental regulations re: the proximity of industrial facilities, including soft plastics recycling plants, to residential areas are in place to mitigate potential health, environmental, and amenity impacts on nearby communities, ensuring appropriate separation from sensitive land uses like residential areas. These separations include design of buffer zones and/or setback requirements. These are determined based on the nature of the industrial activity and its potential impacts, such as noise, emissions, and traffic.

The Plasrefine proposal has no buffer zone or setback design in place, yet it's located in close proximity to residential areas and sensitive sites like childcare centres and schools. Residents have expressed fears about potential health risks, environmental pollution, and safety hazards associated with the facility's operations.

The close proximity to homes and community spaces increases the risk of exposure to pollutants and noise, which will adversely affect the quality of life for residents.

OPERATOR EXPERIENCE:

Plasrefine Recycling Pty Ltd is a company that was recently registered in Australia for the purpose of building and operating the proposed facility at Moss Vale. The proposed operator of the facility, [REDACTED] has experience in waste management and logistics, however he has NO experience in operating a soft plastics recycling facility.

COMMUNITY OPPOSITION:

The Wingecarrabee Shire Council and residents have been fighting the proposal since it was first proposed in 2020. The community's concerns include potential environmental impacts, health risks, and the suitability of the location for such a facility. The strong opposition from the community highlights the need for careful consideration of the project's implications.

CONCLUSION:

In light of the environmental risks, potential health impacts, proximity to residential areas, and the operator's inexperience, I urge the relevant authorities to reconsider the approval of the Plasrefine Soft Plastics Recycling Facility at the proposed location.

Signed,

Deborah Wrigley
