



JUDY REIDY

OBJECT

Submission ID: 216242

Organisation: N/A	Key issues: <i>Social impacts, Land use compatibility (surrounding land uses), Traffic, Other issues</i>
Location: New South Wales 2575	
Attachment: Attached overleaf	

Submission date: 11/20/2024 3:56:57 PM

Thank you for the opportunity to make this submission.

I would like to commence with a simple question, ' why would anyone even begin to consider the Southern Highlands as a plausible site for a plastics recycling facility' ? It beggars belief ! The mere perception of this development will change the image of our area. The Southern Highlands is a tourism destination and agricultural hub, an area of open spaces, fresh air and clean water, free of pollution. It has scenic attractions and enviable natural wonders which bring people here from the cities and all over the state for a rural experience. The population of the Wingecarribee is steadily increasing, there are more and more young families moving to the area because they wish to escape the city and to bring up their families in a quieter, less polluted and healthier environment. The retailers, business owners, cellar door venues and those in the hospitality industry, the largest industry in the area, all depend on tourism and all are deeply worried that a giant plastics recycling facility in the midst of The Highlands, operating 24/7, with buildings 15m tall and emissions issuing from its stacks, would be a turn-off to tourism and thus would effect their livelihoods. This is also an agricultural area with beef and stud cattle enterprises, dairies, grapes for wine production and a growing equine industry, all requiring pollutant free air and clean water. My husband and I run a cattle breeding business in the area, the drinking water for our cattle comes from ground water pumped up to troughs via a bore, as well as some gravity fed from dams. Should microplastics and toxins seep into ground water or become airborne and settle into dams the water could become contaminated, pass into the animal and enter the food chain via the meat we eat. This is a risk we cannot take. Run off into Warragamba dam, and thus the Sydney water supply has been well covered in other submissions. Is this an environment in which to build the nation's biggest plastic recycling plant ? I think not, NOT THE RIGHT SITE ! There must be more suitable areas.

I have attended 2 days of meetings in Bowral and listened to the long list of submissions. The feeling of deep concern in the hall was palpable. People are extremely distressed, anxious, fearful and angry at the prospect of this development going ahead. I note that the DPH&I considers the proposal adequately addresses the identified social impacts of this project and that the local community would be unlikely to be impacted. The community obviously does not believe so. It is already impacted by the anxiety the prospect of it is causing. The psychologist who spoke on day 3 mentioned she sees the impact these emotions have on the mental health of the community. Just listen to the submissions and the emotion, the passion and utter despair in people's voices, some even saying they would feel compelled to forsake their family home and move from the area if the development went ahead, in which case no doubt their property values would be drastically reduced, if they could sell at all. These submissions are not just NIMBY-ism, they are genuine concerns and have been extremely well researched with a huge amount of time and effort put into reading the Impact study, the DPH&I report and other relevant material, pouring over the plans and consulting experts to support their objections. Not to mention spending their own funds.

According to an article by the global network Greenpeace and the International Pollutants Elimination Network, plastics contain more than 13,000 chemicals more than 3,200 of which are hazardous to human health including carcinogens, environmental pollutants and endocrine disruptors and when heated, as in the recycling process new toxic chemicals can

be generated, as an example it is known that when heated #PET 2 plastics produce Benzene, a recognised carcinogenic. These are seriously dangerous substances that are being dealt with, that can poison the circular



economy, our bodies and pollute air, water and food. People are really scared, for the health of their families, and themselves and of contamination of the environment and the waterways. THE RISKS ARE TOO HIGH..

Plasrefine has done nothing to allay the community's fears. In answer to questions recently put to their representative from GDH, his responses were preceded by phrases like don't believe possibility of, not expecting, possibility but not expected significantly to, as well as, we think fire possibility relatively low!! These are not reassuring remarks. Also worryingly, and importantly, this company has no previous experience or expertise in plastics recycling so cannot give us a genuine ironclad assurance or any proof that this process is completely safe. THE RISKS ARE TOO HIGH.

Plasrefine say that recycling will only take place in an enclosed environment and when the roller doors are shut. The world is not a perfect place and things don't always run to plan. With a proposal such as this the unforeseen can happen. There can be accidents, machinery breakdowns, technical failures, human error, catastrophic events etc. And we know the risks of fire ! Then when hazardous toxins escape, it is too late, the damage is done and is irredeemable. THE RISKS ARE TOO HIGH.

Has the DPH&I erred in its due diligence ? It is known that the proponents have no experience in plastics recycling, what about their processes and method of production, their technology and their equipment and machinery? Are there precedents, has this been tested elsewhere, is it known to work and is it foolproof ? We certainly don't want to be the canary in the coalmine !

Buffer Zones : In my research it would appear there is no other plastic recycling facility of this scale which is in such close proximity to residential homes and this has local residents extremely fearful. The trees Plasrefine say will be planted as mitigation, as has been previously mentioned, will take years to mature and cannot positively stop airborne spread of toxic emissions should they escape. A couple with a young child living just 800m from the site who were concerned about emissions were told they could limit their exposure by spending less time outdoors !! Preposterous !! and this is a matter of record. The closeness of these dwellings to a plastic recycling facility would surely negatively effect their value. Who would knowingly buy a property in this vicinity ?

Truck movements : have been addressed by others in great detail. Suffice it to say the movement of 50 trucks a day, that is 50 in and 50 out, 100 movements a day, which equates to more than 4 trucks in and 4 trucks out, 8 movements every hour at a minimum, over an 11 hour period, 7am to 6pm. That is, almost continually ! This must surely have an impact on the roads, noise levels, pollution and general congestion in the area. The roads that would be used are country roads not built to withstand heavy traffic. In addition there would be the 100 or so private vehicles of staff and employees coming and going each day to add to the mix. This can't but help to detract from and damage the local, once peaceful environment which is why people chose to live where they do..Has any consideration been given to the danger of children walking to and from school ?

Moss Vale and the surrounding towns and villages of the Southern Highlands comprised a happy, vibrant community, just now they are anxious and genuinely concerned. If this facility goes ahead the community will become distressed, unhappy, angry and fearful for their health, the health of their families, their livelihoods and for the spoiling of this amazing environment in which they chose to live.

Please open your hearts , listen to the people and reject this proposal which has so many in the community worried and afraid.

Thank you.

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