



**NAME REDACTED**

**OBJECT**

Submission ID: 215123

Organisation: N/A	Key issues: <i>Social impacts, Land use compatibility (surrounding land uses), Traffic, Other issues</i>
Location: <i>Redacted</i>	
Attachment: N/A	

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*Census data (2016-2021) notes 614,144 people migrating to rural areas from capital cities. This shift represents 'almost triple' the rate of previous Census periods (source: Regional Australia Institute- Key Findings). These rates continued to increase since COVID-19. A National Population Plan is a 'critical policy action' to ensure adequate infrastructure and services meet growing demand. Plasrefine will damage the migration to the Southern Highlands due to health and environmental risks.*

*As per the 'Regionalisation Ambition 2023' the five pillars of the framework are:*

• *Jobs and skills*

• *Liveability*

• *Population*

• *Productivity and innovation*

• *Sustainability and resilience*

*Jobs and skills if the company has a legal entity in \*\*\*\*, it can directly hire from \*\*\*\*. The above pillar is to encourage a 'skilled workforce for the future' yet this has not been articulated or achieved. Similarly, there is already a crisis with early childhood places 'refer Facebook Just Ask' posts where families are lucky to get one day before starting school and the infrastructure to support the workforce is not available, only resulting in more pressure on the system. Strict governance needs to be in place and reports are that this company has not previously met the People and Culture obligations, employment laws etc. Credibility that they will adhere to governance has not been achieved.*

*Liveability one of the beautiful aspects of the community is its country feel and connection to community. The pristine valleys, habitats, flora and fauna are at risk. Wombat habitats, kangaroos etc, environmental risks and significant Aboriginal cultural connections to country will be impacted. The traffic impacts where there are limited entry points to the highway (noting Mittagong, Bowral and Moss Vale are accessed via a looped visitor one lane road), additional trucks and movement on the Hume Highway, pollution and existing infrastructure limits (ie pot holes fixed by Wingecarribee Council) make Plasrefine an unsustainable option for the Southern Highlands.*

*If the Moss Vale Plastics Recycling Facility (Plasrefine) was built the health and wellbeing and future of the community is at risk (as per research below). There are already areas at Eastern Creek for recycling where processing is established with protocols with access to road networks and established mitigations in place for any environmental damage. Plasrefine has no place in a country area due to the impact for the community living there, for their health and also the environment.*

*First Nations community*

*First Nations people need a safe and welcoming environment to live in and make up 3.5% of the Southern NSW community. Connection to country, access to waterways, cultural sites, cultural practices are vital for the community. Southern NSW acknowledges the Gundugurra, Ngambri, Ngarigo, Ngunnawal and Yuin Nations as the Traditional Custodians of the land. Significant trauma and past history has already eroded sacred sites,*



connections to country, access to significant waterways, habitats and the Aboriginal communities access to country to heal and connect. The Aboriginal communities unique and spiritual connection to the ecosystem and land is under threat. What engagement has Plasrefine had with the local Aboriginal Land Council? What community Elders have they engaged with? What Aboriginal Health Impact Statements have they co-designed and delivered? What needs assessments for Aboriginal communities have had stakeholder engagement and what change has been delivered? What track record for delivering Closing the Gap initiatives have been delivered? What level of 'Reconciliation Action Plans' have been developed by Plasrefine? Do they have the cultural engagement and support of the local Aboriginal community?

#### Population

With the cost of living crisis, Moss Vale and surrounding Southern Highlands suburbs provide an opportunity for people and future generations to thrive in a healthy community. It's a 1 ½ hour commute from Sydney and the other shift in population is to go North to the Central Coast, also 1 ½ hours from Sydney. Equitable distribution of populations ensures Governments can meet that demand of infrastructure and the Moss Vale Plasrefine risks to health and environment will lead to an uneven population distribution. Knowledge of health and environmental risks from Plasrefine will negatively impact on the population growth of the area that is heavily relied upon, including tourism. The Southern Highlands is a significant contributor to the NSW economy as a Destination of Southern NSW. If Plasrefine was commissioned, the Southern Highlands community is a significant risks of population and tourism loss. Plasrefine would not support the population growth of the area to ensure a healthy vibrant community.

Productivity and innovation new technology is available to recycle plastics, reduce polymers to chemical precursors that Plasrefine has not engaged in. How many research papers has Plasrefine delivered on innovation and safe ways to process? What Australian or World University affiliations does Plasrefine have to ensure innovate safe environment processes are delivered and be a demonstrated and credible market leader? National Plastics Plan - DCCEEW what contributions have they made and what affiliations do they have with the Plan? Do they for instance partner with leading Australian universities to test their processes? Are any Executives (in Australia) have University appointments in environmental sustainability? Do Plasrefine have any Executives that have published any research papers for plastics and review of literature of damage and risks involved, are they invited to World Conferences to showcase innovations to reduce plastic environmental damage (ie world market leader), do they have any new graduate programs where employees are provided with an opportunity to do a PhD on their business to build credibility in what they deliver? If not, then don't allow a non-research/ non-evidenced-based organisation into Moss Vale. The risks to too great.

Sustainability As per Water NSW it states 'Construction, industry and farming can have negative impacts on the health of our water system' to provide high quality raw water if not managed properly. Catchments - WaterNSW. Considering that Southern Highland waterways feed into the Shoalhaven catchment (one of 5 catchments for the Sydney Water Catchment) high risks of contamination for the entire Sydney water catchment water supply is a key consideration. Shoalhaven-Dam-Booklet-2023-LR.pdf states 'WaterNSW also protects the health of Sydney's drinking water catchment to ensure highest quality drinking water is consistently available'. It also states 'The Shoalhaven catchment is located in the Southern Highlands of New South Wales, and includes Tallowa Dam, Fitzroy Falls Reservoir and Bendeela Pondage. Tallowa Dam, which forms Lake Yarrunga, is on the junction of the Shoalhaven and the Kangaroo rivers with a catchment area of 5,750 square kilometres. The Fitzroy Falls storage is in the Wildes Meadow Creek catchment covering 31 square kilometres. The Wingecarribee River forms part of the greater Wollondilly River catchment. The upper catchment of the Wingecarribee River feeds Wingecarribee Reservoir and includes the environmentally significant Wingecarribee Swamp'. Also, 'When dam levels drop to 75 percent, water from the Shoalhaven Scheme can be fed into Upper Nepean dams and Warragamba Dam to top up the Sydney and Illawarra water supply systems'. Weirs around the Wingecarribee River would be at risk not only for the water supply but also the recreation aspects due to it's close proximity to Moss Vale Burradoo to Berima Weir Wingecarribee River. If



*Plasrefine goes ahead, you are putting all of NSW residents at considerable risks of contaminating the whole of the Sydney Water catchment area.*

*Determination of the pharmaceuticals-nano/microplastics in aquatic systems by analytical and instrumental methods - PubMed (2022) Pharmaceutical residues and nanoplastic and microplastic particles as emerging pollutants in the aquatic environment are a subject of increasing concern in terms of the effect on water sources and marine organisms'. The review shows. "The findings show that residues in organisms caused cell structure damage, inflammatory response, and nerve cell apoptosis.' It also states, "This study aimed to investigate the effect of microplastic particles in the human food chain and their impact on human health'. The article also cites knowledge gaps and that future research is needed to ascertain outcomes more accurately.*

*In August 2024, there are already examples within our water catchment areas where there was presence of perfluorooctane sulfonate (PFOS) and perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) in Medlow Dam. It was shut due to cancer linked "forever chemicals" The current investigation centres on the Blue Mountains area in the upper reaches of the Greater Sydney catchment where Sydney Water testing detected PFAS at levels below the Australian Drinking Water Guidelines in the Cascade water filtration plant supply,' WaterNSW shuts a Blue Mountains dam as a 'precautionary measure' after the discover of cancer-linked 'forever chemicals' | Sky News Australia*

#### *Population Health*

*Research Derivatives of Plastics as Potential Carcinogenic Factors: The Current State of Knowledge - PubMed (2022) states there is "a definite correlation between exposure to micro- and nanoplastic particles and the onset of several cancers'. Plasrefine could potentially cause onsets of several cancers due to community exposure and not enough governance or research in place for a local or state government level to ensure compliance. The small Local Health District (Southern NSW) for example at Bowral Hospital could not meet the demand. The Public Health Act 2010 and Regulation 2022 have requirements. Plasrefine has not got demonstrated governance and does not have a past track record of compliance which is transparent and evident. It should also note water supplies in regional NSW are monitored for microbiological and chemical quality through the NSW Health Drinking Water Monitoring Program. Plasrefine will also have a stack polluting the air, adding to greenhouse gases and releasing unknown and unmonitored amounts of potential carcinogenic pathogens into the air affecting not only current residents, future generations and unspecified areas of Sydney/south coast/rural areas etc. What engagement has Plasrefine progressed with NSW Health Population Health teams on the risks involved engaging in Southern NSW and potential risks?*

*NSW Health encourages regularly reporting of water quality information to their consumers. Water quality information is also published annually in the NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment Water's performance monitoring and benchmarking reports. What Plasrefine protocols for incidents are in place? Managing pathogen risks in drinking water: response protocol for water utilities and public health units and what consumer awareness campaigns of any contamination are established? The protocols with NSW Health have not been outlined NSW Health response protocol: for the management of physical and chemical quality and Plasrefine have not outlined the types of incidents that will be escalated and the multiple barriers in place and how to comply with NSW Health policy NSW Health Drinking Water Monitoring Program "The drinking water system must have, and continuously maintain, robust multiple barriers appropriate to the level of potential contamination facing the raw water supply' Drinking water in rural and regional NSW.*

*Do not allow Plasrefine to be setup in Moss Vale. There are too many risks associated with Plasrefine as per the above.*

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