



NAME REDACTED

OBJECT

Submission ID: 216035

Organisation: N/A	Key issues: <i>Social impacts, Visual impacts, design and landscaping, Land use compatibility (surrounding land uses), Traffic, Other issues</i>
Location: <i>New South Wales 2577</i>	
Attachment: <i>Attached overleaf</i>	

Submission date: 11/20/2024 11:38:58 AM

See attached.

SUBMISSION

20 November 2024

PROPOSED PLASREFINE
PLASTICS RECYCLING
FACILITY, MOSS VALE

Please accept my submission regarding the proposed facility by Plasrefine at the Beaconsfield Road site in Moss Vale.

My objections and concerns for this project are too numerous to list fully here. Additionally many of these issues have been raised and well versed by countless other members of the community. This list is by no means exhaustive:

FIRE

The limits of our Southern Highlands Fire service - be it state or volunteer - have been explained fully in prior content. The response from Plasrefine that attempts to mitigate this very real threat is grossly inadequate. Agreeing to discuss the available resources and make a plan for an event with relevant agencies will do very little to change the simple fact that **there are not enough resources to address a serious fire event** in a timely manner and this is unlikely to change in the next decade. 4 trucks and 1 HAZMAT vehicle are grossly inadequate regardless of the planning. Assistance is a minimum of 45 minutes away. These concerns have not adequately been addressed by the proposal.

NOT THE RIGHT SITE

For reasons we can not understand this development has been classified "Other Manufacturing" not Heavy Industrial E5 as plastic recycling facilities generally are. This means the appropriate buffer and exclusion zones are not in place on such a small parcel in the heart of a regional town. It has been well documented and discussed just how close those schools, homes and care facilities are. Additional green-scaping and suggesting people "shelter indoors" to avoid the pollution are not adequate solutions.

Loss of farmland

Over the past 45 years Australia has lost over 15% of our pastoral farming land. As weather changes we will lose more, rapidly. Pushing our farmers further and further out is not the solution. Supply crisis experienced during Covid times illustrated to us the very real problem of having food production out of reach of its target consumer. This land in Moss Vale once polluted by the sheer volume of plastic recycling on site will never be able to return to useable farmland. Where will our children of the future grow their food?

Affect of microplastics on the surrounding farmland

As a local farm we have invested a lot of time and money in organic production on our farm. No spray, hand weeding, hand rock picking and absolutely no plastic tree guards, no plastic weed matting (we've used a hessian variety at great expense) and everything else we could possibly do to protect our soil from microplastics and toxins. Farming truffles is not simple and they are a fragile fungi that require significant biosecurity. This plastic recycling facility will result in unavoidable pollution to our site. We are not alone, there are many farmers in the same situation.

LOSS OF BIODIVERSITY, LOSS OF SPECIES

I could leave a tome of information here in defence of the Southern Highlands precious and unique environment. There are over 50 threatened or endangered native plant species and even more animal species in the area that are certified endangered. Most notably the local Koala population is now considered Australia's most significant population. Countless rare and unique flora and fauna deserve our best efforts to protect them from the threat of micro plastic, noise and water pollution.

We are heavily involved in the shire's Platypus study, planting habitat for Koalas, planting trees for the Glossy Black Cockatoo and yet approval is to be given in the next paddock over to this enormous facility with all the microplastics and toxins it will leach in to the environment?

AN INTERNATIONAL STUDY IN THE UK

Journal of Hazardous Materials Advances, Volume 10 May 2023

In 2023 an international team of scientists assessed the impact of plastic recycling facilities. Their results tell us the following, and let's assume all the appropriate filtering will be in place - a best case scenario as this facility was:

120,000 TONNES OF PLASTIC PER YEAR WILL POTENTIALLY MEAN

6-13% MICROPLASTICS RELEASED INTO THE LOCAL WATER

7200 - 15,600 TONNES PER YEAR

HIGH LEVELS OF MICROPLASTIC CONTENT IN THE ATMOSPHERE

61% WERE UNDER 10MICRONS

80% WERE UNDER 5 MICRONS

DIGESTIBLE BY SO MANY ORGANISMS AND HAVE BEEN LINKED TO ILLNESS IN HUMANS. PARTICLES WERE FOUND ACCUMULATING IN WORKERS LUNGS.

How does this fit into the agribusiness, agri-tourism and regional profile of Moss Vale? How does this fit into the Sydney Water Catchment area? As this study highlights mitigating this with the control of filtering is not adequate and will not be acceptable. Remember these are the highly filtered best case scenario figures.

WHAT WE DON'T KNOW

Much discussion at the meeting and in other submissions has been on what we do know - location, fire, pollution, other sites, noise, transport, heritage and culture, respect to country, social structure, proximity to sensitive businesses, flood zone. I am also wish to discuss that which we don't know.

We don't know how much noise pollution will actually be created, we can guess but we don't know. We don't know how much microplastic will leach into our drinking water supply, we won't know how much micro plastic will be breathed in by the children playing at the schools and day cares just across the road. We don't know, and here is the really big one, we don't know what effect thousands of tonnes of microplastic and toxins will have on the people, animals and environment of Moss Vale. Without enough of a buffer between the town and the facility, there will be no option but for people to be exposed - long term exposure.

3M is only just now being called to task for it's pollution of PFOS as our understanding of forever chemicals deepens. They've been aware for decades. Are we going to make the same mistake with microplastic and all the other toxins from this recycling facility? With a company that has no prior experience in this field?

So let's take a moment to consider to the true breadth of what we don't know and how the problems we do know could be better mitigated by better planning and a better location that will allow for more effective problem solving.

CLOSING

I did promise not to go on too long about things already covered by the multitude of other submissions, it's been difficult as there are so many blatant issues with this facility.

And of course the grand encompassing consideration is why when so many other countries are getting out of plastic recycling and looking for other solutions to stop the waste, why is Australia not?

I thank you for taking the time to consider my submission and your efforts as we negotiate this process.

NOT THE RIGHT SITE