



SASKIA SHARP

OBJECT

Submission ID: 216771

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

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Submission Against the Proposed Development of the Moss Vale Plastics Recycling Facility

To Whom It May Concern,

As a resident of Moss Vale, I strongly object to the proposed development of the Moss Vale Plastics Recycling Facility. This proposal presents significant risks to public health, the environment, and the local community, while also disregarding proper transparency and planning principles. Furthermore, it is concerning that the local council has expressed opposition to this development. Below, I outline my concerns in detail.

1. Lack of Transparency and Adequate Detail

The proponents of this facility have failed to provide sufficient information about critical aspects of the project. Instead, they claim that greater detail will be provided only after approval a wholly unacceptable approach for a development of this scale. The community has been left without essential details on:

- Dust, noise, vibration, and light pollution impacts.*
- Traffic disruptions, including truck numbers, routes, and impacts on safety.*
- Smell and air quality from toxic emissions.*
- Wildlife impacts and risks to rural amenity.*
- Toxic residues potentially affecting livestock in surrounding high-value agricultural areas.*
- Process water outputs and how the facility will manage wastewater without overwhelming Moss Vale's already at-capacity sewage system.*

The rural nature of this area, combined with the 24-hour year-round operation of the proposed facility, makes such omissions particularly concerning.

2. Public Health Risks

Living near such facilities has been linked to long-term health impacts, including respiratory conditions, reproductive issues, skin disorders, and even cancers caused by exposure to chemicals in plastics. With the facility's proximity to residential areas (200 meters) and its location near schools, early childhood centres, and major population hubs in the Southern Highlands (including Bowral and Burradoo), the risk of health impacts is particularly alarming. The prevailing west and southwest winds further exacerbate the risk, potentially spreading harmful emissions, plastic dust, and fumes across the region.

3. Traffic and Infrastructure Concerns

The proposal significantly underestimates the traffic impacts of the facility:

- Heavy vehicles: Estimated 160-200 heavy vehicle truck movements daily, plus light vehicles, over three shifts in a 24-hour period.*



- *Cumulative impacts: Increased traffic will affect New Berrima and involve multiple unsafe level crossings. This has not been adequately addressed.*

- *Local road infrastructure: The road network is already strained and unsuitable for this level of activity. Furthermore, there is no transparency on how or where toxic sludge will be transported or disposed of.*

Additionally, Plasrefine has proposed moving the level crossing multiple times, with no meaningful consultation with the community or affected businesses in Douglas Road.

4. Environmental and Ecological Impacts

The proposed site is ecologically sensitive, containing:

- *Riparian land and waterways flowing directly into the Wingecarribee River, part of the Sydney drinking water catchment.*

- *Critical koala habitats and endangered ecological communities, including 9 Eucalyptus macarthurii trees slated for removal.*

The lack of detail about process water outputs, the discharge of potentially toxic wastewater, and the long-term risks to the water catchment highlight the potential for irreversible environmental damage.

5. Unsuitability of Site and Design

The scale and bulk of the proposed development are grossly inappropriate for this site, which lacks infrastructure and includes conservation zones. Key issues include:

- *An oversized structure spanning nearly eight acres and over five storeys high, dominating the landscape.*

- *22-meter-high exhaust stacks emitting potentially harmful pollutants, with no clear details provided about venting processes.*

- *Landscaping plans that rely on adjoining residential land rather than the facility's own boundaries.*

This proposal conflicts with local planning instruments, including the Local Development Control Plan, which identifies this site as a buffer zone not suitable for heavy industry.

6. Fire Risks and Emergency Preparedness

Waste facilities like this are highly prone to fires, and the Southern Highlands are inadequately equipped to manage such hazards. Key concerns include:

- *Only three firefighting tankers available in the region.*

- *Lack of HAZMAT resources within the Wingecarribee Shire Council area.*

- *No permanently manned fire stations.*

Given the increasing frequency of fires in waste facilities, these risks are unacceptable for a facility of this nature.

7. Inexperienced Operators and Lack of Accountability

Plasrefine Pty Ltd has no prior experience in plastics recycling. The company's Principal Technical Director, Mr. Lyu, has a history of environmental sanctions in China, raising serious doubts about the proponents' capability and ethical standing. The lack of transparency regarding the operators, their corporate history, and their processes such as the proposed use of 'essential oils' as a deodorizer further erodes public trust.

8. Social and Economic Impacts



This development will have far-reaching consequences for Moss Vale and surrounding areas, including:

- Negative impacts on property values, as few would choose to live near such a facility.*
- Mental health impacts on residents, including anxiety over health risks and the loss of rural amenity.*
- Potential disruption to the operations of nearby businesses, including the Garvan-operated Australian BioResources.*

9. Lack of Community Consultation

The lack of genuine community consultation is deeply troubling. For a project of this scope and significance, open and transparent engagement with all affected residents and businesses should have been a priority. Instead, Plasrefine has moved the goalposts multiple times, leaving the community frustrated and excluded from critical decisions.

10. Impact on the Southern Highlands Tourism Economy

The Southern Highlands is renowned as a premier tourism destination, celebrated for its unspoiled countryside, a Koala Habitat, cold-climate wineries, boutique shops, award-winning restaurants, and unique destination wedding venues. It serves as a weekend escape for visitors from Sydney and beyond, frequently featured in tourism articles and television programs. The presence of a large-scale industrial waste facility within Moss Vale would irreversibly damage this carefully cultivated reputation, deterring visitors and diminishing the region's appeal. The resulting downturn in tourism would have devastating economic consequences, leading to job losses across hospitality, retail, and event-based industries, which are integral to the local economy.

This development is entirely incompatible with the Southern Highlands' identity as a picturesque, tranquil region, and its approval would undermine decades of effort to position the area as one of New South Wales' top tourist destinations.

Conclusion

This proposal is fundamentally incompatible with Moss Vale's character, community needs, and environmental values. The facility poses unacceptable risks to public health, safety, and the Sydney water catchment, with insufficient safeguards in place to address these concerns.

Given the strong opposition from the local council, the community's clear concerns, and the glaring deficiencies in this proposal, I urge the relevant authorities to reject this development outright.
