



LINDEN BRAY

OBJECT

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I am writing to strongly oppose the proposed development of a PlasRefine Centre near Moss Vale. As a local high school student who cares deeply about the environment, our town, and the well-being of the animals and people living here, I believe this facility would do more harm than good for our community.

First and foremost, the environmental impact of such a facility is deeply concerning. Plastic refining and recycling centers are notorious for emitting toxic gases and pollutants, which can harm air quality. Moss Vale is known for its clean, fresh environment, and the introduction of a facility like this risks ruining that. Toxic air pollutants, such as dioxins and volatile organic compounds, can increase health risks for nearby residents, including respiratory illnesses and other chronic conditions. Our small, close-knit community doesn't deserve to be subjected to these risks.

Moreover, this facility could lead to significant water pollution. Plastic refining processes often involve the discharge of microplastics and chemical byproducts into local waterways. These pollutants would be devastating to the Wingecarribee River and surrounding creeks, which are not just vital water sources but also homes to diverse aquatic ecosystems. The long-term damage to water quality would have ripple effects on wildlife, farming, and even recreational activities in the area.

Speaking of wildlife, Moss Vale and the Southern Highlands are home to many native animals, including endangered species like the spotted-tailed quoll and certain types of frogs and birds. The noise, light, and chemical pollution from the facility could disrupt their habitats and lead to population declines. Once lost, these species cannot be replaced. Allowing this facility to operate here shows a lack of respect for the natural heritage of our area.

From a social perspective, the facility poses challenges too. Moss Vale has a small-town charm that residents and visitors value. A plastic refinery does not fit with the image or values of our community. Instead of contributing to our town, it risks making Moss Vale less attractive for residents and tourists alike. The increase in heavy traffic from trucks delivering materials to and from the facility would also bring noise and safety issues, particularly on roads that are not designed for industrial use.

Finally, we should consider sustainable alternatives. While recycling is important, the focus should be on reducing plastic production altogether and finding innovative ways to repurpose waste without harmful refining processes. Moss Vale could lead by example, advocating for truly green initiatives instead of relying on an outdated, polluting system like plastic refining.

In conclusion, the PlasRefine Centre would harm the environment, threaten local wildlife, damage our town's character, and jeopardize the health of our community. As young people, we are taught to protect our planet and think about the future. Approving this development would go against everything we are striving to achieve in creating a sustainable and healthy world for generations to come. I urge the Commission to reject this proposal and consider the long-term consequences for Moss Vale and its people.