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OBJECT

Submission ID: 218415

Organisation: N/A	Key issues: <i>Social impacts, Land use compatibility (surrounding land uses), Traffic, Other issues</i>
Location: New South Wales 2576	
Attachment: N/A	

Submission date: 11/25/2024 4:00:06 PM

24 November, 2024

Dear Members of the IPC,

I object to the Plasrefine project on a multitude of grounds but am going to focus this submission on the potential costs to the local economy. I am confident you will read many expert submissions addressing the health, environment and social dangers of this proposal. I hold a BEc from NSWU and have founded and run successful business™ over a 30 plus year career.

In recent years the Southern Highlands has successfully reoriented it™s economy to attract visitors. Day trippers, weekend getaways, weddings and nature holidays. Without the Sydney-siders, we™d have no pub in this town; the little villages and towns in the Highlands flourish because of Sydney. Summed up Marty Downs, owner of the Bundanoon Hotel and the Royal Hotel Bowral.1 It has done this by taking advantage of it™s unique natural beauty; it™s small scale food and wine culture; and it™s burgeoning health and spa services. The continuing success and growth of an economy thus oriented relies on both it™s actual and perceived values. These values are of equal importance. Business™ depend on perceived value to attract visitors and it™s actual values to persuade them to return. The Plasrefine development will damage both.

Even if Plasrefine posed no actual threat to the health and environment of the region, and I by no means concede this is the case, it™s mere presence will damage the perceived value of the area and threaten the livelihoods of the many locals who depend on visitor reliant business™ that have sprung up post-COVID. Many of these business™ are still in their early years and vulnerable to market disruptions. If these business™ falter southern Moss Vale will once again be condemned to the empty shops and deteriorating buildings that are a feature of so many regional towns.

Worse still will be the effect of the actual destruction of local values via the air pollution of micro plastics (MPs). As Marfella et al have demonstrated: æMPs have been found in drinking water and air, also in a form bound to fine, inhalable particulate matter with an aerodynamic diameter of 2.5 µm or less (PM2.5) and transported long distances by wind.2. It will only take one air pollution warning on a particularly bad day and a news report to destroy the careful brand building over years of effort.

For the first time in decades the population of fulltime residents has increased at a faster rate than the holiday residents. æSince COVID, there are much more full-time residents than holiday homes,2 says Bowral Real Estate agent Bradley Cocks. This demographic change is critical to bring in the workforce to staff the growing business™ taking root. However, growing concerns that MPs are the new asbestos and that by siting an industrial facility whose chief by-product is MPs3 will rapidly reverse this achievement. How can we attract young families to an area when æPlastic shredding is frequently used in mechanical recycling facilities and emits airborne particulates that have not been extensively examined in current scientific literature. Our findings suggest that such operations could expose workers to airborne MPs/NPs, in some scenarios to concentrations well over 1,000,000 particles/cm3™. [3]

Exacerbating all of the above will be the cluster effect. Unpopular business™ look for areas that already have similar unpopular facilities located within them. Knowing that it becomes harder for local governments to deny permission to industries if similar facilities already exist. If Plasrefine proceeds it is very unlikely it will be the last unhealthy, polluting facility to force it™s way into this clean, green, natural community.



The potential damage caused by the Plasrefine proposal proceeding is particularly galling when local authorities including the local state MP, Ms Wendy Tuckerman, have offered to find a more appropriate site within the larger regional area. Most local residents understand and support the values of recycling, as I do, but cannot understand the necessity for siting such a facility adjacent to schools, residences and critical local tourist business™ against the express wishes of the local residents when less damaging alternatives are available.

Regards

Michael Sloan



1. *AFR, The Rich List region that™s become Sydney™s Hamptons, 21/11/24.*
2. *Microplastics and Nanoplastics in Atheromas and Cardiovascular Events*

Raffaele Marfella, Francesco Prattichizzo, Celestino Sardu, Gianluca Fulgenzi, Laura Graciotti, Tatiana Spadoni, Nunzia D™Onofrio, and Giuseppe Paolisso Published March 6, 2024

N Engl J Med 2024; VOL. 390 NO. 10

3. *Swinerton, S., Su, J. & Tsai, C.S.J. The emission and physicochemical properties of airborne microplastics and nanoplastics generated during the mechanical recycling of plastic via shredding. Sci Rep 14, 24755 (2024). <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-024-73775-0>*
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