



NAME REDACTED

OBJECT

Submission ID: 217880

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

Submission date: 11/24/2024 10:14:03 PM

Submission to Reject the Proposed Plastic Recycling Refinery in Moss Vale

To: NSW Government

I am writing as a very concerned local resident with a family history in the Southern Highlands dating back to the 1950's. I formally oppose the proposed development of a plastic recycling refinery in Moss Vale. There are numerous critical concerns regarding the location, environmental, social, and health risks of the project. Below are the key points supporting my objection:

1. Proximity to Residential Areas and Sensitive Institutions

The proposed site is approximately 200 metres from residential areas and only 50 metres from the Australian BioResources (ABR) facility, a world-class research centre breeding mice critical to medical research. This proximity poses severe risks:

Fire Hazards: Recycling facilities are prone to devastating fires. Fires in such facilities can reach temperatures of ~1000°C, releasing hazardous toxins and necessitating evacuations.

Health Risks: Toxic fumes from fires or filtration failures can cause respiratory illnesses, cancer, and other serious health issues, especially for vulnerable people within the population.

Impact on Research: Noise and vibration from operations may disrupt the breeding cycles of research animals at ABR, compromising critical medical advancements.

2. Impact on Schools and Childcare Centres

Several schools and childcare centres are located within a two km radius. A fire or explosion at the refinery would place children and staff at risk from exposure to toxic air pollution.

3. Traffic and Road Safety Concerns

The refinery will generate significant heavy and light vehicular traffic:

Heavy Vehicle Traffic: Increased heavy vehicles will cause noise, vibration, air pollution, and heightened risk of accidents and road degradation. Wildlife fatalities and potential introduction of invasive weeds from other regions are also concerns.

Light Vehicle Traffic: Increased traffic from workers entering and exiting the site will exacerbate dust, noise, and road safety concerns in the area.

4. Environmental Risks

Air Pollution: The facility's ventilation system could fail, releasing volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and other hazardous toxins, harming local air quality.

Water Pollution: With streams feeding into the Wingecarribee River only 10 metres from the proposed site, microplastics and contaminated runoff pose a threat to Sydney and Goulburn's drinking water supply. Failure of water filtration systems could have devastating long-term consequences.



Biodiversity Loss: The project would destroy habitats for endangered species, including the microbat, southern myotis, and large bent-winged bat. It would also disrupt riparian zones and platypus habitats, potentially undermining recent conservation efforts.

5. Incompatibility with the Southern Highlands Innovation Park (SHIP)

The SHIP precinct is intended for biotech, agri-research, and light industry. Placing a high-risk, heavy industrial facility within this area contradicts the precinct's goals and threatens its ability to attract innovative, sustainable businesses.

6. Inadequate Local Fire Services

Moss Vale's fire station is unmanned and voluntary, with only one truck available. The Highlands as a whole has limited fire resources. Fires at similar facilities have required over 80 firefighters and 15+ pump trucks, often necessitating days to fully extinguish. This raises severe concerns about the local area's ability to respond to such disasters.

7. Economic and Psychological Impacts

Tourism and Property Devaluation: Moss Vale and nearby Berrima are renowned for their agritourism and heritage. The development could deter visitors, impacting local businesses. The large-scale industrial nature of the facility will also devalue nearby properties, causing stress and mental health issues for residents.

Negative Perception: Proximity to a plastic refinery could discourage future investments and developments in the region.

8. Sustainability Concerns

Plastic recycling is a short-term solution: plastics can only be recycled 2-3 times, after which they still end up in landfills. A better approach would focus on reducing plastic production and packaging altogether, addressing the root cause of the plastic waste crisis.

9. Human Rights Considerations

The recent Human Rights (Healthy Environment) Amendment Bill highlights the right to a clean and sustainable environment. Approving this refinery violates this principle, exposing residents to unacceptable environmental and health risks.

10. Post-Closure Responsibility

Should the refinery close, there is no clear guarantee that the site will be remediated. Taxpayers could bear the burden of cleanup costs, compounding the long-term impacts of this development.

Conclusion

This proposal poses unacceptably high risks to the environment, public health, safety, and the local economy. The location is unsuitable for such a high-risk industrial facility, and the long-term environmental and social costs outweigh any potential benefits.

We urge the NSW Government to reject this proposal and prioritise sustainable, low-risk alternatives to address plastic waste, focusing on reduction rather than recycling as a long-term solution.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
