



NAME REDACTED

OBJECT

Submission ID: 218258

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

Submission date: 11/25/2024 1:45:58 PM

I object to the proposed plastics recycling facility, PlasRefine, in Moss Vale NSW for the following reasons:

Environmental and health impacts

I am deeply concerned with the potential harmful environmental impacts of the proposed PlasRefine facility. The microplastics created and chemicals released through the process will pollute the air and the local waterways which lead to Sydney's water supply via the Warragamba dam. Furthermore, I am concerned about air pollution, traffic congestion and dangerous conditions on our roads caused by the heavy volume of trucks passing in and out of the facility. Fires producing toxic fumes are a common occurrence in these facilities and our region is hugely under-resourced to deal with a fire of this size. When the bushfires of 2019/2020 came to nearby Bundanoon (approximately 16km from Moss Vale) our house filled with smoke within minutes. I am terrified of the impact a fire at the PlasRefine facility would have on residents across the Southern Highlands.

A simple google search into the impacts of plastic recycling facilities on air and water quality yields evidence from across the world of poor health outcomes for both the workers in these facilities and residents of these towns. In the very week that the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure released their approval for the facility, the National Health and Medical Research Council of Australia released draft guidelines on limits for four types of "forever chemicals" in drinking water. The new proposed limits are much lower than those in the previous guidelines, which were released in 2018. (<https://www.abc.net.au/news/health/2024-10-21/new-safe-pfas-drinking-water-guidelines/104497226>)

On page 6 of their assessment report the DPPI states

Overall, the Department considers that the proposal adequately addresses the identified social impacts and the development would be unlikely to significantly impact the local community.

I refute this statement and do not believe they have adequately considered the significant health and environmental concerns that a facility like this imposes on the local community and more broadly, to those drinking the water supplied from Warragamba dam.

Proximity to the local community

The environmental concerns briefly outlined above would be concerning regardless of the location of such a facility, however, the fact that this facility is proposed at such close proximity to a thriving and growing town is absurd. The site sits at around 200m from the nearest home and less than a kilometre from the nearest childcare centre. There are multiple other schools, childcare centres and a nursing home in the town of Moss Vale.

We are a community that embraces the outdoors. Unlike many of our city cousins, residents of Moss Vale have the luxury of green space and garden out their back doors. It is common for the residents of Moss Vale to own chickens, collecting their eggs to eat, and to grow fruit and vegetables in their gardens. There are vibrant outdoor sporting clubs, for example, soccer, touch football, league tag and tennis. Children ride their bikes in the street and many walk to school. The air pollution created by this facility could jeopardise the very reason people choose to live in this town - for a healthy lifestyle that is deeply rooted in being active and outdoors. The suggestion by GHD that people living near the site would be able to manage their exposure to air quality



impacts, through minimising time spent outdoors is offensive and shows a complete lack of understanding of the local community.

Not a solution to the plastic problem

While I acknowledge the need to address the issue of ever increasing plastic waste in this country, I do not believe this facility is part of the solution. Firstly, because it is not the right site. A facility like this should be built well away from residential areas, productive farmland and waterways. Secondly, and more importantly, all levels of government should be focussing their efforts on reducing the plastic waste generated in the first place. Recycling does not give an infinite life to plastic products and eventually the plastic will be sent to landfill. Plastic recycling is ignoring the source of the issue with a bandaid response. It is time for the state and federal governments to take significant action to require manufacturers, supermarkets and retail outlets to reduce the amount of plastic being pushed out to consumers.
