



NAME REDACTED	OBJECT	Submission ID: 218496
Organisation: N/A	Key issues: <i>Land use compatibility (surrounding land uses), Traffic, Other issues</i>	
Location: New South Wales 2575		
Attachment: N/A		

Submission date: 11/25/2024 4:43:07 PM

To Whom It May Concern,

*I strongly oppose the proposal to construct a plastics refinery in the Southern Highlands. This project poses severe environmental risks that make it entirely unsuitable for this rural and ecologically sensitive region.*

*It astounds me that a proposal to build a petrochemical refinery (æplastics recycling<sup>2</sup>) in the southern highlands is even being considered.*

**\*\* Environmental Sensitivity and Ecosystem Impacts \*\***

*The Southern Highlands is a region of environmental importance. A plastics refinery would lead to air, water pollution and soil contamination. Noise pollution would further harm nocturnal species and disrupt ecological balance. The introduction of heavy industry into such a pristine environment threatens irreversible environmental damage.*

**Environmental Contamination**

*Plastics refineries are major contributors to microplastics pollution, which could devastate the region's natural resources (ref 1):*

- Water Pollution: Microplastics can contaminate rivers and aquifers, vital for agriculture, drinking water, and wildlife.*
- Soil Degradation: Contaminated soils would harm agricultural productivity, a cornerstone of the local economy.*
- Bioaccumulation: Microplastics could enter the food chain, affecting wildlife and human health, with long-term consequences that are poorly understood.*

**\*\* Air and Water Pollution \*\***

*Refineries emit harmful pollutants such as volatile organic compounds (VOCs), and hazardous byproducts. These would degrade air quality, harm public health, and contribute to climate change. Additionally, refinery wastewater, containing toxic chemicals, could leach into water systems, endangering the pristine nature of the highlands ground water.*

**Incompatibility with Regional Identity and Economy**

*The Southern Highlands relies on agriculture, eco-tourism, and small-scale industries. A plastics refinery would be incompatible with this regional identity:*

- Tourism: Industrial facilities would detract from the area's natural beauty, discouraging visitors and undermining the tourism industry.*
- Agriculture: Pollution could harm crops, livestock, and soil, threatening farmers' livelihoods.*
- Community Well-being: The project risks altering the social and cultural fabric of this rural area, creating conflict and division.*



**\*\* Cumulative Environmental Impacts \*\***

*The Southern Highlands is particularly vulnerable to cumulative environmental effects. Even small pollution events could have outsized consequences in this sensitive environment. Allowing this refinery could pave the way for further industrialization, exacerbating environmental degradation over time.*

**\*\* Conclusion \*\***

*A plastics refinery is entirely inappropriate for the Southern Highlands. It poses severe risks to its environment, economy, and community while threatening the region's ecological balance and sustainable livelihoods. I urge decision-makers to prioritise the long-term health of the Southern Highlands and reject this proposal. Instead, consider sustainable, eco-friendly development options that align with the area's values and protect its natural beauty for future generations.*

*Thank you for considering this objection.*

*Ref 1: Risk assessment of microplastic exposure: A case study near a refinery factory at the central coast of Vietnam <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0025326X23010718>*

---