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OBJECT

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I have been living in Moss Vale (MV) for 3.5 years and I firmly believe that not only is Plasrefines proposed site not the right one for their recycling facility, but I also believe strongly that this is not the right time for a plastic recycling facility to be built.

Why have I come to this conclusion?

Firstly, it seems to me that putting a facility such as this in the middle of the designated SH Innovation Precinct (or SHIP for short) in MV would be beyond foolish. Sensitive scientific research and a 24/7 noisy industrial recycling facility with several hundred truck movements a day, would make totally incompatible bedfellows. Plasrefines arrival would mean the death knell of the SHIP dream instead of a modern research group we would have what amounts to a dinosaur, a white elephant, in our midst.

The consensus of much of the scientific community is that plastic recycling in Australia is lagging behind that of other developed countries. In fact current plastic recycling is considered by many to be a mature industry. What does this mean?

That it is past its prime, and that in all probability, new ideas, with new energy, new enthusiasm and above all new science are champing at the bit to take its place. In the years taken to build a plasrefine facility (if it is allowed to go ahead) who knows what new possibilities will emerge.

For example, a group of scientists at the University of Wollongong have published a peer reviewed paper discussing their success in developing biodegradable plastic! It sounds impossible, but they have proven that it can be done because they have done it!

You can bet your bottom dollar that this has been picked up by research groups around the world who will not rest until it becomes a realizable option.

In the meantime, imagine if PR had gone ahead and built the proposed facility, with its chemical laden wastewater, and its legacy of countless millions of microparticles finding their way into our waterways, our watercatchments, our water supplies, our crops, our bodies and those of our animals, resulting in, for example, the death of our treasured platypus habitats, just a short distance away, the as yet largely unknown negative effects on our health, the health and development of our children, and so on!

It does not bear thinking of.

For the cruel joke is that plastic recycling, as it is currently carried out, does not remove one iota, not one nanoparticle, of plastic from our world. Instead, plastic is broken down into ever smaller particles, microparticles, which we cannot smell, taste or see free to do their damndest to life as we know it.

So if the plasrefine project is allowed to go ahead, to work 24/7 to produce these microparticles with their as yet not fully understood negative effects on the planet, and if, after say 10 years or so, maybe even less, plastic recycling can take a giant leap, a paradigm shift, so that total plastic can in fact be reduced rather than processed into ever smaller particles. What would be likely to happen to the hypothetically established plasrefine facility?



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Well, it would remain, pumping out its microplastics with their legacy of destruction, gradually declining into a dismal ghost to scare small children at bedtime. How much better would it be to take the bold step of not allowing the facility to be built in the first place.
