

Ms Emma Barnet
Infrastructure and Industry Assessments
NSW Department of Planning and Environment
GPO Box 39 SYDNEY
NSW 2001

RE: SSD - 9409987
Moss Vale Plastics Recycling Facility Amendment

Dear Emma,

As a frequent visitor to the Southern Highlands and a concerned citizen, I wish to express my deep reservations and concerns regarding the proposed Plasrefine plastic recycling factory to be built in Moss Vale. This project, as currently planned, raises numerous issues that would have detrimental impacts on the local community and environment, and I believe it warrants a thorough re-examination.

1. **Impact on Tourism:** The Southern Highlands region, including Moss Vale, is known for its pristine natural beauty and its significant dependence on tourism. The construction and operation of an oversized factory complex, exceeding 15 meters in height and covering 8 acres, poses a significant threat to the visual aesthetics and tranquility of the area. It is disconcerting to learn that the proposed screening of the factory with plantings is inadequate and subject to rapid depletion due to the local rabbit population. This could potentially harm the scenic appeal of the region, discouraging visitors and negatively affecting tourism-related businesses.
2. **Unsuitable Location:** The proposed site is a cause for concern on multiple fronts. It is landlocked and situated within Sydney's drinking water catchment and a riparian zone, both of which seem to pale into insignificance in reports. This raises serious questions about the wisdom of placing a plastic recycling factory of this nature in such a sensitive and environmentally vital location. The area's unique ecosystems and its importance for the quality of Sydney's drinking water make it an unsuitable choice for a facility with potential environmental hazards, including the inevitable release of microplastics and other contaminants.
3. **Lack of Experience and Environmental Record:** The proponent's lack of experience in operating a facility of this nature is alarming. Furthermore, the proponent has a history of pollution-related fines from the Chinese Government, indicating a questionable environmental track record. This raises doubts about their ability to ensure the proper management of the facility according to Australian standards, (with which they would seem to be unfamiliar) and its impact on the local environment.
4. **Unproven Technology and Water Recycling:** The proposed technology has never been used elsewhere in Australia, and Plasrefine has been unable to secure a manufacturer's warranty for their pollution control measures. This raises concerns about the potential for technical failures and environmental risks. Additionally, the factory's reliance on roof water for operation and water recycling could lead to the concentration of chemicals and microplastics, posing a risk to the local ecosystem and water quality.
5. **Depletion of Local Water Supply:** Moss Vale and the Southern Highlands, like many other regions in Australia, is susceptible to droughts and bushfires. Plasrefine's exemption from water supply restrictions and its plan to operate 24/7 would inevitably exacerbate local water shortages during critical times. This poses risks to both residents and the environment.
6. **Local Sewer Works Capacity:** The disposal of contaminated sludge into local sewer works, which are already at capacity, is a cause for concern. This could lead to overflows, water contamination, and other issues that impact the local community. The Moss Vale treatment works is also ill-equipped to screen out the remaining micro plastics from the Plasrefine wastewater, as claimed. Research would suggest that this is virtually impossible due to the microscopic size of particles.

In conclusion, I am appalled and deeply concerned that such a toxic industry is being considered for a location so close to homes, businesses, and the esteemed Garvan Institute. The Southern Highlands is cherished for its natural beauty and reliance on tourism, and I implore you to reconsider the suitability of this project for the area.

I respectfully request that the community's concerns and the potential risks to the environment, tourism, and local residents are given the utmost consideration in the decision-making process. I believe it is essential to explore

alternative more appropriate locations and thoroughly assess the environmental, social, and economic impacts of the Plasrefine plastic recycling factory.

Thank you for your attention to these concerns, and I trust that you will make decisions that prioritize the well-being of Moss Vale and the Southern Highlands.

Kind regards,

