

Submission to public hearing on Plasrefine Monday 28th to the Independent Planning Commission.

SPEAKER POSITION 21 @11.49

Give a thank you to Council and IPC

My name is Rose Figtree, and I have lived in the Highlands for 38 years and stand here today as a very concerned Grand mother who has raised her children in the Highlands as well as operated businesses here for 25 years. We have children and grand children settled in Moss Vale NEAR the proposed site of the Plasrefine application where our security of a healthy living environment is being threatened by an industry that has many known dangers associated with it and huge gaps in technology that makes

RECYCLING PLASTIC MORE OF A PROBLEM THAN A SOLUTION TO THE MONOLITHIC PROBLEM OF PLASTIC WASTE AND THE UBIQUITOUS POLLUTION IT CAUSES.

Excerpt from Beyond Plastic in their report ‘**Chemical Recycling – A Dangerous Deception in the USA:**

- ‘– *“Chemical recycling generates a tremendous amount of hazardous waste. Four of the 11 facilities are registered with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency as generators of hazardous waste (Regenyx, Alterra, Braven, PureCycle). Two of the companies — Exxon and Eastman — have their chemical recycling processes embedded on a larger facility that is classified as a large generator of hazardous waste, but neither provide*

numbers specific to their chemical recycling processes. Five facilities are not listed as hazardous waste generators even though they produce significant quantities of hazardous waste.”

- THIS MAKES NO SENSE AND NEITHER DOES THE PLASREFINE EIS and it will make even less sense when in operation with no oversight to their management. It will not be possible to police the site satisfactorily and those adversely effected will just be just voices in the wind.

Why this recommendation has been made without in depth study to the plastic recycling industry is beyond any comprehension. The recycling industry has been exposed for the useless and toxic industry that it is. It will not address the exponential growth in plastic usage and any talk of ‘recycling’ this toxic product polluting the world is just virtue signaling – window dressing to make ‘recycling’ an acceptable industry that fits in with the popular idea of the ‘circular economy’. It’s rubbish – Plastic recycling is not the answer and certainly not an answer in our beautiful Highlands so close to residential areas.

I know this is about objections to Plasrefine application but as the application has been inexplicably ‘recommended for approval by the DPHI I am drawn to point out that the toxicity of plastic recycling has generated the passionate interest of many International NGO’s focused on bringing awareness to the hazards of both Plastic manufacture and plastic recycling to educate and advocate to a world being poisoned by this

industry where the level of plastic pollution outstrips any other form of environmental damage. Since 1980 plastic consumption has grown 300% in the USA and reports are that recycling plastic encourages the continued use of a product that needs to be eradicated from the world.

We must move consumption away from plastics to fully biodegradable products if the world is ever going to clean up this disaster.

It should not be up to us citizens here to explain the stupidity of this application that is threatening to destroy the high livability index of this region that is also part of the Sydney water catchment.

It is difficult to understand how the Dept. of Planning Housing and Infrastructure (DHPI) has decided to recommend approval given all the community opposition to date and the stated problems with the industry that it threatens on the population of the Highlands and the negative environmental impacts it will have.

Just by looking at its proposed water usage and toxic waste water discharge alone should have been enough to dismiss this project out of hand. Let alone the industrial carriageway job that our inadequate residential roads will have to bear.

We are all aware of the problem of overuse of plastics today and the health dangers associated with toxic leaching and micro plastics entering the food chain and the human blood system.

The answer though is NOT TO RECYCLE as this only makes the problem worse with the second generation plastics from recycling are even more toxic than the 1st generation products. On BEYOND PLASTICS site that is available to any interested person to discover the false myths around the plastic recycling industry. There are more toxins in 2nd generation plastics that have been proven to be unstable and unsuitable for any use involving food, drink or human contact as the resin is unstable and leaches the toxins. The heating process that increase the toxicity and stability of the resins and is part and parcel of the recycling process.

RECYCLING PLASTIC SERVES NO PURPOSE IN THE WASTE MANAGEMENT OF PLASTIC.

Organisations such as Beyond Plastics, Green Peace, PlasChem have enormous amounts of data on the dangers of this industry and it is not for me to stand here and try to educate and bring reason to our regulators who should be on top of the hazards of this industry and not wasting everyone's time and public money with this proposal that will be forever a toxic emitting hell hole for all in the region for a long long time.

The Plasrefine scoping EIS is totally inadequate as it does not reveal the problems facing the industry and is full of nice sounding generalizations that are just not transparent enough or informative enough for such a major decision of 'recommendation' to be made. It neither discusses the risks or the processes of the facility that involve vast uses of water, chemicals and energy.

The plastic recycling industry is in its infancy and fraught with problems. There is a stretch of land with chemical plants in Louisiana along the Mississippi river in the USA that has adopted the name of 'Cancer Alley' - chemical plants are hazardous and of course the applicants will paint a perfect picture of compliance, control and concern but who is going to police this and who will ensure the plant's safety to the region after the plant is operational? This must be stopped now for the legacy it brings to our area will be nothing but disastrous for future generations. .

It is beyond understanding as to how the many major concerns that have been pointed out to the DPHI by concerned politicians, residents and other companies and organizations have all been overlooked and dismissed in favour of a recommendation. This is insanity in its extreme.

OUR REGULATORS ARE SUPPOSED TO BE ON
OUR SIDE PROTECTING US AND OUR
ENVIRONMENT.

The table must be turned around and another serious
look at the dire outcome to the region this project will
bring.

Surely to any reasonable person this application for a
toxic industry to be located on such an inappropriate site
so close to residential communities and within the
Sydney Water catchment should be trashed immediately
and no more public money and time put into its
consideration.

**NO WHERE IS THE RIGHT SITE. WE MUST
HAVE GOVERNMENT DEVELOP POLICIES TO
LIMIT PLASTIC IMPORTS, EDUCATE THE
PUBLIC TO LIMIT USE OF PLASTIC
PRODUCTS AND WORK TOWARDS A WORLD
BEYOND PLASTIC.**

THANK YOU.