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OBJECT

Submission ID: 218278

Organisation: N/A	Key issues: Social impacts, Traffic, Other issues
Location: New South Wales 2577	
Attachment: N/A	

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Moss Vale,

NSW 2577

24 November 2024

The Office of the Independent Planning Commission NSW,

Suite 15:02,

135 King Street,

Sydney NSW 2001

Attn: The Commissioners - Moss Vale Plastics Recycling Facility (SSD-9409987) " Plasrefine

Dear Commissioners

I write to object in the strongest terms to the prospective approval of this State Significant Development project by yourselves. I am very, very worried by the risks that Plasrefine will produce long lasting pollution of the air and water in the local area, and will engender traffic chaos during the construction phase. I believe that Plasrefine will irrevocably change the nature of local community for the worse, putting off young families from choosing to settle here. In my view the possible economic and strategic benefits must not be put ahead of the foreseeable risk of lasting harm. I am also mindful of the fact that there is very limited legal scope for an application to review or appeal should you three Commissioners decide that Plasrefine in Moss Vale merits your approval.

If you three Commissioners do decide that the Plasrefine benefits outweigh the reasonably foreseeable damage and that it should proceed, then the residents of Moss Vale, Berrima, Burradoo and surrounding areas will have to live with the detrimental impact and damage for the foreseeable future. The intangible strategic benefits will be diluted over the population of NSW, but the tangible and foreseeable damage and loss will primarily be borne by the locals in the impacted area.

In the Review, Professor Ryan appears to base her recommendation in support of Plasrefine approval by heavy reliance on the development and implementation of a range of impact management plans, which she groups as a Social Impact Management Plan (SIMP). The responsible body for the development and implementation of the SIMP is Plasrefine. So, both the prospective source of negative social impact and damage and the respective mitigation or remediation are the responsibility solely of Plasrefine. In my view this is a hackneyed and ineffective approach where responsibility for remediation of damage is delegated to the negligent party, to carry out at its own choice and with woefully inadequate regulation.

Professor Ryan in her Independent Expert Review refers twice in her letter of recommendation to section 11.4 of the 2023 Social Impact Assessment (SIA). In this section, "Recommended Monitoring Plan " Community Consultation", the responsibilities for monitoring and reporting are entirely assigned to the good offices of Plasrefine. There is no mention of independent auditing, regulation or enforcement. Likewise, in section 11.5



of the 2023 SIA “Suggested refinements “ monitoring and management” the monitoring responsibility is allocated to Plasrefine without corresponding accountability for management to reduce impacts and risks of these occurring.

Professor Ryan’s recommendation does rely on other analogous developments where the self-regulation approach, in which game keeper and prospective poacher are the same, is a successful one. It appears that Professor Ryan has merely reviewed the documents submitted through the DPHI and concluded that they are satisfactory. Would you say that the depth of expertise or value for money of her recommendation passes the “pub test”?

I couldn’t find in the document pack independent technical expert reviews of the potential impact of Plasrefine in the areas of residual noise, air pollution or water pollution. This apparent omission causes me great concern. In the SSD Assessment Report from the DPHI I do note the following points:

Table 5 on page 33 shows how important air quality, noise and water pollution rate as issues for the local community.

On pages 56 and 57 the solutions proposed by the DPHI to air, water and micro plastics pollution are delegated to Plasrefine through the mechanism of preparing a plan and self-regulation without any sanctions for non-conformance. For example Plasrefine are expected to keep doors shut when not in use to reduce air pollution as a recommended condition of approval. Seriously “ can we rely on the gamekeeper doing an effective job in making the poacher do this?

Elsewhere in the Report, there are references to consultation by Plasrefine with the DPHI but no mention that Plasrefine will suffer any penalties if it does not perform its self-regulation of its own plans or if its operation produces unacceptable levels of air, noise or water pollution. The Report states that Plasrefine may discharge up to 12.5 kLitres of water, possibly containing the “forever chemicals” into the sewage system every day. This prospect fills me with foreboding.

The Recommended Development Consent was depressing to read. In Part C “Environmental Management and Reporting” there is the same reliance on self-regulation assigned to Plasrefine in “Reporting and Auditing” C.10 “ C.14. In my judgement, the conditions and time intervals specified for the “Independent Audit” in C.15 are inadequate to monitor the risk and consequential damage to the community from long-lasting air, water microplastics and noise pollution.

To conclude, please Dear Commissioners do not approve the Plasrefine application. The conditions the DPHI recommends are quite inadequate to prevent, minimise, or offset adverse environmental and social impacts. The foreseeable risks of long-lasting damage far outweigh the economic and strategic benefits which the DPHI hopes to achieve.

Yours sincerely

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