

Hi Everyone,

My name is Graeme Hine of Hine vegetables.

Thank you for allowing me to speak today. The major activity of our company is the growing and processing / packing of vegetables for the domestic and export market.

My farm is located east from the proposed Kalbar Mineral Sands Mine. We employ 35 people to farm 650 acres and this financial year we have produced approximately 1,700000 (1.7 thousand tons of vegetables: Beans, broccoli, Brocolinni, Sweet corn, asparagus).

I am here today due to my concerns regarding the information submitted by Kalbar which is in some cases entirely incorrect and often entirely misleading.

**Today I will speak to you about the following issues.**

1/ Incorrect information regarding local area map of existing agricultural food production on Mitchell river flat land.

2/ Dust (particulate matter) contamination

3/ Water – supply sustainability and potential contamination

4/ Quality assurance of clean, green vegetables for domestic and export

5/ Viability of mine with 15 year lifespan

6/ Conclusion

# 1

Firstly – incorrect information

1/ the map detailing the Horticultural land under vegetable production is entirely incorrect. My farm is NOT on this map ... WHY???

The Fact that our farm which is the 5<sup>th</sup> largest bean and sweet corn growing farm in Eastern Australia for the summer period The fact that our farm is NOT on the Map, is absolutely disgraceful, unprofessional and misleading and brings under question all the information that has been used to assess the EES (Environmental Effects Statement) on vegetable growing/ food production in the Mitchell river area.

More incorrect information was used at the first EES meeting held at the Bairnsdale Sporting and Convention centre in August 2019. A slide showed beans growing with the Caption” beans growing in the Mitchell River from May to November” Again ABSOLUTELY INCORRECT. No beans are grown from May to November. Beans are grown seasonally in the Mitchell River area from December to May.

At this meeting the panel stated that they could manage the environmental Impacts, however when questioned by an audience member it became clear that NOT ONE PANEL MEMBER had actually physically visited the Proposed Mine site or the vegetable growing areas. How on Earth (In god’s name) can an EES report be considered correct when the area has not been physically visited? Again I refer to the Horticultural map that clearly is incorrect and doesn’t represent the large scale of Vegetable, dairy and Livestock production in current operation in the area... In conclusion a totally FLAWED report from start to finish.

## 2

### DUST

Dr Doris Blaesing made the ridiculous statement that due to the way Cauliflowers and Lettuces grow with the leaves wrapped around the /Lettuce Cauliflower head this would prevent the head from collecting dust particles. I have witnessed the damage done by dust and soot on my crops over the last 40 years from bushfire and dust storms.

Dr Doris Blaesing do also stated that this particulate matter could be easily removed by post-harvest washing of the cauliflowers.

Cauliflowers are not washed prior to marketing as application of water reduces their shelf life. There is also the long term impact of our farms soil quality with the constant dusting of heavy metal Dust /particulate from the mine.

DR Doris also states the use of wind breaks to reduce dust blowing off the mine. During the 2019 to 2020 drought it was an everyday sight to see dust blown of the country side and see that dust end up 20 miles away in the Gippsland Lakes. The dry pasture lands around Fernbank which has similar sandy soil quality of the land around the fingerboards was turned to dusty desert with visible banks of sand banked around fence lines to half metre high.

So how can we rely on Dr Doris and Kalbar and an EES report that is clearly based on wrong information? Are they liars or simply unaware of the relevant facts? Either way it is disgraceful.

During summer I run a lateral irrigator over light sandy soil similar to the fingerboards soil. The irrigator applies 10- 15 mm of water.

However as soon as it dries if the weather is hot and windy the dust blows off the paddocks.

## 2

Dust .....Continued

The majority of wind flow over our farm comes from a westerly direction, these westerly winds blow across the fingerboard area and then reach our farm.

These pictures show the damage these westerly Winds do to our sweetcorn crop resulting in the crop being unable to be harvested causing huge crop losses.

If these winds are laden with dust the damage will be even worse.

In 2008 the fires 40 miles away west of Dargo caused the Lindenow valley to be shrouded in smoke this caused huge losses to our and other local producers of cauliflower and lettuce with many crops destroyed.

Soot and smoke causes major discolouration to crops, no water washing can remove the soot. Dr Doris has no idea or is lying about washing dust of crops.

### 3 Water –availability, contamination, potential damage to river / lakes

I am hugely concerned about the increased supply of water from the Mitchell for the Kalbar Mine and the risk of contamination to the water of the Mitchell River.

Water, supply and cleanness is a very important factor of my business is a concern for me as a farmer but also as a resident of the East Gippsland community.

The Mitchell River supplies water to East Gippsland water to service an area of 21000 square kilometres through Lindenow, Bairnsdale, Paynesville, Nowa Nowa and Lakes entrance to supply household and drinking water to 35000 people.

With the already large demand on the Mitchell River for East Gippsland Water Domestic supply and Local agriculture ... Where will the water come from?? There is no water, there are already enough straws in the Mitchell River and I do not think it can cope with more.

The Mitchell River is also the life blood of the Gippsland Lakes system which is the backbone of the local tourism industry.

As a farmer I rely on good clean water to irrigate my crops and wash crops post-harvest, Beans, Corn, Broccoli and Baby Broccolini

***I did not read this part of my speech to the IAC panel as I was informed ( after I had written this speech) that Kalbar have at the last minute CHANGED THEIR PLAN and are no longer having a tailings dam.????? How can we allow a company to start a mine that keeps changing their plans?***

In 2007 the tailing dam from the Benambra Copper mine overflowed into the Tambo River. In the Benambra event the mine went broke and the DPI was left to fix the site and tailings dam at an estimated 7million dollars cost to the tax payer.

Water Continued....

There have been many incidents of tailing dam failure and subsequent contamination of river systems. In an area prone to varying rainfall and regular floods there is no question There is a high chance the Kalbar tailing dams will over flow and leak heavy metals and toxic waste into the Mitchell River and Lake wellington via the Perry river.

# 4

## Quality Assurance – Clean and green

I pride myself on providing clean, green produce to the domestic and export market.

Our farm has several Quality Assurance programs in place HACCP, Fresh care, HARPS, Zedex, which is a world-wide QA program and I need it when I export asparagus.

We get audited once a year and must have everything in place or we lose our certificate and

Our business complies with industry standards in regards MRL's which are the 'maximum residue level' permitted. We must not exceed these limits. We undertake regular testing of the water we use to irrigate and wash our crops and equipment to ensure it complies with rigorous standards.

Our soil, irrigation water and water used in the packing shed are tested regularly for contaminants such as E coli and heavy metals and chemical .There is no doubt that dust / particulate matter from this mine will become airborne and settle on the vegetables, the soil, the dams, the river .

I sell 200 ton of asparagus a year about 80 tons goes to export. If my asparagus is tested and found to have high levels of heavy metals or other contaminants my property will be black listed. Make no mistake about that. This could also result in a black listing of all Australian asparagus causing severe damage to our clean green produce image.

# 5

## Mine Viability

I also have trouble understanding the viability of this mine as Kalbar states that across the entire mining area there is an average concentration of 2.5 % Zircon. I can find no other mines in Australia that are mining Zircon in areas of such low concentration. How much ground has to be dug up to achieve Kalbar's expectation of trucking out 40 x20 ton trucks of Zircon per day. The figures don't add up.

The mine is expected to have a life span of 15 years. The farmers have been making the River flats productive, growing vegetables, beef and dairy for over 60 years and will continue for many years to come.

**Agriculture in this area has proved a sustainable productive industry, employing many hundreds if not thousands of people and feeding countless more..... not to mention the value adding.**



## Conclusion

In conclusion on behalf of myself, and many other farmers in the Mitchel river area, the 35000 that drink the Mitchell River water, the people who eat my vegetables here in Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane and overseas, this pristine food producing area is **NOT the place for a mineral sands mine.**

- **Not the RIGHT place for a mine**
- No water rights at this stage
- Where will the water come from????
- No right to start a mine when they have no water allocation
- All the water allocation from the Mitchell River has already been taken up,
- There is no spare allocation at all.
- Where will the water come from????
- All the aquifers are dropping in water level
- Kalbar has no right to tap into this water source when they are already dropping
- Kalbar has no right to start a mine when they have no water at all

If I went to the bank and asked for a loan to buy some land to grow vegetables, the first thing they would ask me is “how am I going to irrigate / water these crops. If I told them that I have no water, they would show me the door, they would say ‘see you later, come back when you have water’

..... Kalbar has NO WATER, How can they start a mine without water, **It is ridiculous!!!!!!**

# **THE KALBAR COMPAY**

**LOOKS LIKE ROSES**

**SMELLS LIKE ROSES**

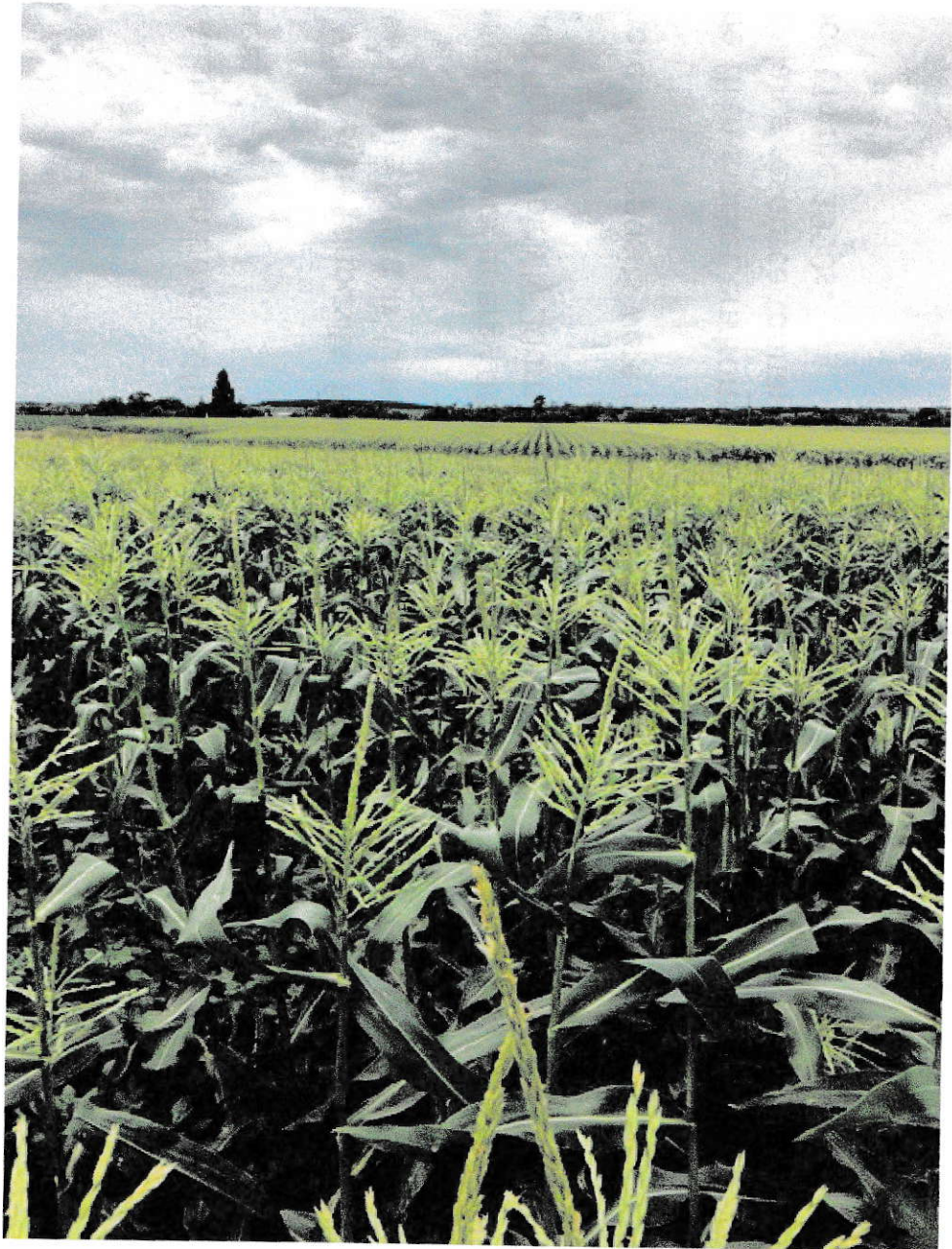
**READS LIKE ROSES**

**But they are nothing but a Blackberry bush**

**Full of liars and misleading information.**

Graeme Hine

Hine Vegetables



NICE CROP  
IN ROWS NO WIND  
DAMAGE



WIND  
DAMAGE

East Gippsland Water serves an area of 21,000 square kilometres in the far south east of Victoria, which boasts some of Australia's most diverse and spectacular scenery and a population of around 45,000 people.

Water services are provided to some 26,450 customers, with wastewater services also provided to around 22,490 of these.

East Gippsland Water's service area extends east from Lindenow, through to the region's capital Bairnsdale, the holiday hotspots of Paynesville and Lakes Entrance, and on to the Wilderness Coast and Mallacoota near the New South Wales border. It also serves customers as far north as Dinner Plain in the High Country of the Victorian Alps.

There are many different agencies that work together to manage water resources in Gippsland. Please [click here](#) to find out which organisation manages what in water.

SERVICING AN AREA OF

21000

Square Kilometres

WITH A POPULATION OF

45000

People

WATER SERVICES

26450

Customers

WASTE WATER SERVICES

22491

Customers