

Submission Cover Sheet

Fingerboards Mineral Sands Project Inquiry and Advisory Committee - EES

121

Request to be heard?: No

Full Name: Janine Louise Laurence

Organisation:

Affected property: Fingerboards Mineral Sands Project East Gippsland

Attachment 1:

Attachment 2:

Attachment 3:

Comments: 22 October 2020 Dear Inquiry and Advisory Committee members, I am writing this submission about the EES for the Fingerboards mineral sands mine project. Although I do not reside permanently in East Gippsland, I regularly visit family members who live in Bairnsdale and I often holiday in the area. I strongly oppose the mine for the reasons outlined below. Kalbar Operations Pty Ltd is a new company with no experience operating a mine. Despite this it is proposing a massive open-cut mineral sands mine at the Fingerboards, 20km NW of Bairnsdale in East Gippsland. • 13 square kms on a plateau which is above the Mitchell River and the vegetable fields of the Mitchell River Valley is to be mined up to 45m deep. • Kalbar's geochemistry report lists a number of radioactive and cancer-causing substances that will be present in the dust generated. • The \$155m per year Mitchell River Valley vegetable industry that employs up to 2,000 people is as close as 500m downwind from the mine. • The Mitchell River, the source of water to irrigate those vegetables and make ice to transport them is 350m downwind (between the mine and the vegetable fields). • Kalbar needs over 3 billion litres of water annually for processing and dust suppression for 15 years. This indicates how much water is needed to control the dust which will potentially pose major human and animal health risks. • Kalbar's high need for water could lead to earlier and tighter restrictions on users reliant on water from the Mitchell River (such as the horticulture industry) and is likely to impact the health of the Gippsland Lakes from reduced fresh water. • There are concerns that jobs in tourism and agriculture are at risk from potential contamination of the river and crops. Based on irrigation data, if the 3 billion litres of water Kalbar requires annually was redirected to growing vegetables, 3 times more jobs could be created than Kalbar's proposal. These would be long-term sustainable jobs to grow food. According to National Farmers Federation statistics, every job created in agriculture leads to 4.2 indirect jobs. From Kalbar's website, 1 mining job leads to 1 indirect job. This proposed mine is considered to be in a highly inappropriate and dangerous location, threatening food crops, water, health and already reduced river flows as well as adversely affecting tourism and the associated jobs. I urge you to reject this proposed mine. Yours sincerely Janine Laurence ■
■ Eltham Vic 3095