

Submission Cover Sheet

Fingerboards Mineral Sands Project Inquiry and Advisory
Committee - EES

212

Request to be heard?: No - but please email me a copy of the
Timetable and any Directions

Full Name: Helen Ellett

Organisation:

Affected property:

Attachment 1: mine_submission.

Attachment 2:

Attachment 3:

Comments: see attached submission

25th October 2020

Dear Inquiry and Advisory Committee Members

I am writing as a concerned resident of East Gippsland who is strongly against the proposed mine at Glenaladale and I write in relation to the EES process for the Fingerboards mineral sands mine. I have lived in East Gippsland for the past 9 years but have been visiting the area for about 30 years as I have family who have lived here for that time. I am a small business owner of GJ Gardner Homes and our business prides ourselves on providing work for local trades as well as giving back to the community through donating a percentage of each build to a not for profit organisation so I have a great care and concern for the community I live in. I have always loved the area for it's environmental beauty. Before living here we often went camping and exploring near the area where the proposed mine is to be and it greatly disturbs me to think that this beautiful area will be affected by this mine. I have spent some time reading the EES statement and while reading this it has raised a lot of concerns about the effects this mine will have on the local community and the environment. Some of the things that concern me include:

There is radioactive material contained in the dust coming from the mine. It is my understanding that below the ground these undisturbed substances do not pose a risk, however they do when they are excavated and crushed the generated dust which people, animals could breathe in, it could cause a health risk. This dust and residue could also go into the waterways affecting local farms with animals, vegetable growing, fish, turtles and other aquatic animals in the water.

A lot of the information in the EES sounds ambiguous and unsubstantiated. The research they have conducted seems quite limited and biased as not a wide enough time frame or area has been researched. For example we would not know the real danger to animal and human health as this has not been tested in the study. I would like to see this researched further before it is allowed to happen to a point where we can't go back and people and animals are put at risk.

It makes me very sad to see how close the mine is to where families live, farm and work. I know some of the families who live out at Glenaladale and I know they are extremely worried about this mine for their livelihood, their health and the health of their families. It is my understanding that there is a risk of lung disease from respirable Silica, this is unfair for the Government to force this on these people who have lived here for generations. The number of houses affected by living close by seems to be under reported by the report and they say that the community is in agreeance to this mine, I know for a fact there are a lot of people who live close by who are not in agreeance and are scared and worried about their families future and health.

They are saying that there will be an increase of employment. That may be the case for the short term, however mining companies come and go and don't have sustainable income for people unlike the agricultural industry which is a more long term option for people for employment. There is no guarantee that the mine will employ local people for the mine if they don't have the skills to work in the mine they will go further afield to get people to work there. It will be detrimental to the tourist industry which much of East Gippsland relies on. Covid has shown the affect it has had on Tourism and the mine will deter people coming to the area for fear of the health affects it may have on them. Places like the Den of Nargan and Dargo will lose people visiting which is such a shame and saddens me as I love going to these places myself and will be reluctant to go there while the mine is operating for my on fears of health and safety from the dust as well as it won't be a lovely drive anymore as I will be passing trucks hearing the horrible noise from the mine so it will definitely deter

me from going to some of my favourite places to unwind from a long week at work- as well as the health risks.

I enjoy purchasing freshly grown vegetables from the Lindenow farms. I quite regularly purchase my vegetables from local markets to ensure I am helping the local economy and the vegetables last longer and are fresher than the supermarket ones. Unfortunately vegetables with dust from the mine will not be my preference and contaminated water, I may not be able to purchase their vegetables for fear of contamination to myself and my family. This makes me angry and sad that I won't be able to help out my friends and local growers to help them with their livelihoods who have been here so much longer than this mine who will be here for 5 minutes compared to these beautiful hard working families who produce these wonderful vegetables. So the mine may bring jobs but jobs will potentially be lost in the vegetable industry as there may not be a market for their produce. It stinks actually!!

Water is such a valuable and important resource. We are so lucky in Australia to have beautiful rivers to get our water from which is fresh to drink, well not anymore once this mine contaminates them. Water to irrigate the crops comes from the Mitchell river. With the mine being on the other side and having run offs into the Mitchell River, contamination is a risk to the crops, fishing, agriculture, the health of the river and creatures who live in the river and the Gippsland Lakes including an important Ramsar-listed Wetland. It once again makes me angry and sad that the Government are more concerned about making a dollar than protecting this valuable resource for all to use and enjoy. Shame on you.

The tailings dam is also a concern of mine. It will be 90 hectares in size being quite unsightly sitting there with waste and flocculants which are chemicals used to treat the tailings, with the potential of water run off if it rains and has a risk of leaching into the Perry and Mitchell Rivers. I would be concerned about the harm on the aquatic life and the quality of the water if this occurs.

While we are on water the amount of water which will be used for the mine, it says over 3 billion litres of water will be used annually for up to 15 years for processing and the controlling of the dust. If we go through a drought during this time which is likely due to the weather cycle it is a major concern.

It is very sad and disappointing that the removal of trees and habitat would occur. For a person to build a new home they need to request through a planning permit to remove even one native tree, it doesn't make sense they are allowed to remove over 700 mature trees without anyone caring. I assume they will need to re instate vegetation but will they who knows, mining companies rarely restore and rehabilitate and how could they possibly make it like before when so much of the soil-mineral sands will be removed, it will never be the same place. To grow those trees to that size would take such a long time most of us will never see them again in our life time.

I am very angry that this company thinks they can just pay off people to get their land and think that this is acceptable. Its not about money it is about this land being in these people's family for generations. They do not want the mine infrastructure running through their properties devaluing their land- pipelines, bore pumps, roadworks, easements, rail sidings and vegetation removed. It is bad enough that having a mine close by will de value the land let along all these other things on their land.

I trust you will take into consideration the points I have raised. I have spent some time looking into the EES report, however it only appears to show some of the issues that will occur with this mine and very one sided, there doesn't seem to be enough information or research or extensive study

gone into this and it appears to be all about Governments making money rather than caring about our environment and peoples health and lives. Truly a sad state of affairs. When people start to get Cancer then the money will need to be spent on the medical bills.

I thank you for reading and hope you will consider my points made when looking through this process

Thank you

Helen Ellett