

Submission Cover Sheet

Fingerboards Mineral Sands Project Inquiry and Advisory
Committee - EES

225

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

Full Name: Alan Maloney

Organisation:

Affected property: [REDACTED]

Attachment 1: SUBMISSION_3.do

Attachment 2:

Attachment 3:

Comments: See attached submission

Dear Inquiry and Advisory Committee Members,

I am writing this submission to comment upon the EES for the proposed Fingerboards Mineral Sands mine project by the Kalbar organisation at Glenaladale, close to Bairnsdale in East Gippsland.

My wife and I moved to East Gippsland from Western Australia approximately five years ago, with a view to escape the mining 'mantra' which exists in WA.

We are really concerned about the proposed Fingerboards project with regard to the health and well being of residents who own property where or near where the mining tenement is situated. Residents will be subjected to inappropriate noise and dust levels on a twenty four hour, seven day basis.

It is suggested the enquiries carried out by Kalbar do not reflect the true nature of these significant concerns. Kalbar do not admit there is a problem with the noise levels generated from mining and transport activities. Also, the information concerning dust imminence is flawed because measuring stations have been incorrectly stationed. They are in a 'wind shadow' where the predominant prevailing winds cannot be correctly monitored. The dust will contain toxic particulates and will spread to nearby market gardens, town water supplies, farms and housing developments. Kalbar states the mine will keep dust levels to a minimum with the use of extreme amounts of water to suppress excessive dust, or close operations if the use of water is impractical. Will operations cease when the wind levels increase to an unacceptable velocity – or only when someone complains? In the event where water restrictions are applied to the level where no more water can be extracted, what then happens to dust suppression? It suggests that Kalbar has already admitted there is a major concern!

Why is Kalbar allowed 'carte blanche' use of water required, even though the extraction sites for the water are not included within the tenement boundary? Compulsory acquisition is not an answer. East Gippsland Shire should be protecting landowners. Law and planning departments have appropriate measures to thwart any activities that do not comply. Water authorities also have those restrictions at hand. If the Horticultural industry were allowed the proposed 3 gigalitres [per annum] use of the water, that industry would be able to increase threefold.

There is also the psychological aspect on the landowners who will have their residences, farm sheds and yards sitting on what will be 'mesas', high above the 45 metre deep extraction sections where the mining will take place. There are already reports of some landowners experiencing extreme distress. Maps displayed by Kalbar at public meetings have never shown where farm houses etc are situated. Has the stability of those buildings been taken into account? What happens to the income derived from the farming practices already being carried out upon which the farmers rely? What level of compensation is being offered and for how long?

Will the Department of Agriculture/Department of Primary Industries be required to examine the EES and make recommendations in order to protect the food bowl enterprises, some of which are but 500 metres from the mine boundary? The existing industry supports up to 1200 jobs, supplies fresh vegetable products to markets in many parts of Australia. Some of those enterprises are 'organic' and will lose that safety standard with minimal contamination.

Will DELWP require the 700 [approx.] mature trees be protected, given the current public concerns on climate change and the removal of vegetation. Many concerned landowners and volunteer groups are currently re-planting vegetation corridors in order to preserve flora and fauna in the region.

The EES has very little information about the construction and engineering detail of the tailings dam. In the event of flood and/or breaching and leaching, how will overflow and leakage be mitigated. Contaminated overflows/leakages will affect the Mitchell River and the Ramsar protected Gippsland Lakes. Are there sufficient penalties in place in order to pay for corrections and de-contamination?

What measure of rehabilitation is being considered, given that most mineral sands mines in Australia never return the land to its original status? There are many examples all over the country. Will the State demand a bond [or similar – but not just directors guarantees] be deposited in the event the project collapses in order to return the site to its current condition [without cost to tax/rate payers] so the landowners can return to their enterprises? That figure should not be underestimated. Kalbar has appointed a 'gardener' to oversee rehabilitation. His biggest project has been participation in approx. 20 acres of re-establishing some grasslands elsewhere. He also suggested re-locating the 100 year old trees. Grandiose? The way Kalbar has made that calculation appears to considerably less than what would be needed.

Some of the individuals compiling the EES have never been on site and have admitted others who live out of Victoria, are contributing to the EES using theoretical modelling methods.