

Submission Cover Sheet

Fingerboards Mineral Sands Project Inquiry and Advisory
Committee - EES

316

Request to be heard?: No

Full Name: Carla Cutrone

Organisation:

Affected property:

Attachment 1: submission-Gunai

Attachment 2:

Attachment 3:

Comments: "see attached submission"

I am writing this submission as I have grave concerns if the Kalbar mine proposed in the East Gippsland region goes ahead.

This mine will see 200 millions tons of ore excavated over 20 years.

The boundary of the mine will be a mere 500m from the banks of the Mitchell River, putting the health of the river at risk. This region where the mine is proposed - the Lindenow Flats is a high, high value agriculture production region that relies on the water from this river.

The proposed plan to rehabilitate the land back to farming land post mining is outrageous. History shows us that only 1 out of 150 operated Victorian mines have ever been fully rehabilitated. And what happens to everything relying on this area for survival over the twenty-year period of the life of the mine? The earth cannot take any more mining, destruction and abuse like this mine will create.

This region has been experiencing significant drought. The mine will guzzle a massive 4GL of water annually. This water already needs to be protected, for the water and cycles of the region and to increase rainfall, to sustain all life and for agriculture in which this region supports making \$200 million per year in food production.

The Woodglen reservoir supplies 29 000 homes and 3 500 commercial premises with water and is a mere 3.5km downhill from the mine. On top of taking away water that could go back into food production – in which this demand for water will continue to increase overtime with the effects of climate change. Over the next 20 years water is only going to become more scarce and agriculture will become increasingly difficult and therefore significant issues with food security will continue to arise. GMO varieties of fruit and vegetables are not the answer, but rather the return to a more natural style of farming, one that does not require phosphate fertilisers or herbicides or pesticides. This 4GL per year diversion of water away from agriculture in this area which is Victoria's food bowl, could be the death of the river as we have seen happen in the Barka River / Murray-Darling River.

I am a Registered Nurse working at Royal Melbourne public hospital. Public health is my work and also passion. The mine will cause significant risks to peoples health. Due to the mines use of silica sand and the dust that will form and threaten the health of some of the local populations water sources – in water tanks. People's lung health is also at risk, especially given the proximity of the mine to where children attend school! The other threat to people's health is through exposure to heavy metal dusts. Kalbar mine has not released effective data yet about the content or hazard ratings of the ore or the concentrate. Experts have said it will contain; arsenic, lead, thorium (which is radioactive), along with titanium (which is carcinogenic when inhaled).

Sovereignty has never been ceded anywhere on this continent and the Gunaikurnai people, the traditional owners of these waters and lands in which

the Kalbar mine is planned to threaten have not given consent. After the utterly devastation of what happened this year with Rio Tinto at Juukan Gorge in Western Australia. This has to be the last time something like this happens. We cannot have this destruction of cultural heritage and of Country continue. All land is sacred, and all land has significant cultural heritage. No mine can be given the 'OK' unless signed off by traditional owners of the land. In saying this, the Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation says - "The proposed mining operation will disturb and hurt the cultural connection of the traditional owners to the land and water that is part of the development area.". My Wiradjuri heritage through my mother has taught me the invaluable lesson that all land is sacred and must be treated this way, especially at a time like now in human evolution, where we have become so separate from nature and the resources we are stripping from the earth equates to four earths, which obviously cannot be sustained. The First Nations people and the land they are custodians of and responsible for it's care and protection is also every ones responsibility and we must listen to our First Nations peoples and respect their knowledge of Country.

The dam that will need to be built for the mine to function will threaten the water ways and unique chain of ponds and biodiversity, through the potential of leaching and contamination.

Tourism is the third largest employer in East Gippsland. Both the dam and mine are a potential serious risk to the lakes area and inturn to tourism.

The mine will produce concentrate, which will be shipped over seas to be processed (polluting somewhere else and putting other human workers at risk). The concentrate and the flocculants used will be transported by truck. They are very hazardous and the transport route to the port has not yet been disclosed either.

As per Friends of the Earth Melbourne - 82% of directly impacted landholders by the Kalbar mine, oppose the mine wanting their land free from mineral sands. 75% of horticulture business owners from Lindenow Valley vegetable growing area (an industry worth nearly \$200 million per year and employing 1500 people) have signed a letter to Kalbar's CEO rejecting Kalbar's Horticulture Impacts Study. Over 240 local businesses owners and leaders of community groups oppose the mine.

This mine cannot go ahead. All signs point to the Kalbar Operations Pty Ltd mine creating irreversible problems with devastating knock on effects. My self and others are asking could the water and energy instead not be put back into sustainable agriculture and create more jobs this way instead?

I ask you to really think about this and the state of our planet.