

Submission Cover Sheet

Fingerboards Mineral Sands Project Inquiry and Advisory
Committee - EES

595

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

Full Name: Lester Goold

Organisation:

Affected property:

Attachment 1: Lester_Goold_opp

Attachment 2:

Attachment 3:

Comments: see attached submission

Lester Goold

Gippsland Community Member

Date 29/10/2020

Dear Inquiry and Advisory Committee members,

I am writing in response to the EES conducted by Kalbar for the Fingerboards Mineral Sands Mine Project. I grew up in Sale and am an active member in the Gippsland community. It shocks me to think of the potential devastation that will be caused to some of our pristine waterways and surrounding agricultural land if this proposal is approved. Having previously worked for the East Gippsland Shire Council as a Statutory Planner I understand this needs to go through the correct process before a decision is made. However, given the Environmental Significance of the Mitchell River and the Gippsland Lakes it's appalling to think this proposal would even be considered.

These are the reasons below I do not believe the Fingerboards Mineral Sands Mine Project should go ahead at Glenaladale, East Gippsland:

- The first thing to consider here is the potential damage to Aboriginal cultural heritage sites. The Mitchell river is Gunaikurnai country. Here lies 'the Den of Nargun, a sacred site on the Mitchell River. This place is of great cultural significance for Gurnikurnai women, who were thought to take part in initiation ceremonies here' (Victoria, n.d.). Flowing downstream to the Gippsland Lakes which were once filled with fresh water, teeming with fresh water fish and an abundance of native flora and fauna. A safe haven for the indigenous people. An environment once again destroyed by colonists when dredging Lakes Entrance allowing salt water incursion into the lakes, diminishing the pristine ecosystem. Given the proposed excavation down to 45m, it will be impossible to avoid destruction of artefacts and heritage. Mitigation measures will not avoid the obliteration of cultural heritage.

Something to consider is the fact that we have just experienced the Andrews government prove their disregard for indigenous culture by the forced removal of protesters to cut down sacred 350-year-old Djab Wurrung Directions Tree. This not long after Rio Tinto blasts 46,000-year-old Aboriginal site to expand iron ore mine. Don't allow Gippsland to be named and shamed.

- The concern for the environmental impacts caused by the mine is the second main issue to consider. The proposal is for 13 square kms to be mined 45m deep. This area is situated above the Heritage listed Mitchell River and the vegetable fields of the Mitchell River Valley.

There is evidence of radioactive and cancer-causing substances being found in the dust that will be caused by the mine. Major red flag? This along with the potential spillage of fuel products from their storage facility is enough to

investigate the impacts to the environment. If there is runoff there are risks of the river being contaminated, impacting the health of the river. This consequently will impact fish populations and other fauna who rely on the Mitchell as their primary water source. Native Flora can also be impacted by the potential runoff causing degradation to the river systems. And of course this all flows downstream to the Gippsland Lakes (an important Ramsar-listed wetland). affecting the amount and quality of fresh water into the ecosystem.

These are the risks. The risk mitigation approach should read. Avoid risk at all costs. forfeit proposal.

Victoria, c=au; o=Visit (n.d.). *Bataluk Cultural Trail, Gippsland, Victoria, Australia*. [online] Visit Victoria home. Available at: <https://www.visitvictoria.com/Regions/Gippsland/Things-to-do/Aboriginal-Victoria/Bataluk-Cultural-Trail> [Accessed 29 Oct. 2020].

Thank you for the opportunity to make this submission.

Yours sincerely,

Lester Goold

