

Submission Cover Sheet

Fingerboards Mineral Sands Project Inquiry and Advisory
Committee - EES

660

Request to be heard?: No

Full Name: Stephanie Amos

Organisation:

Affected property:

Attachment 1: Fingerboards_min

Attachment 2:

Attachment 3:

Comments: see attached submission

Dear Inquiry and Advisory Committee members,

I am writing this letter in response to the Environmental Effects Statement (EES) conducted by Kalbar for the Fingerboards mineral sands mine project. I **strongly oppose** the mine and desperately ask the Minister for Planning to step in now and help this beautiful part of Victoria survive.

I am 27 and have lived in Bairnsdale my whole life, it is an incredible place to live and for many others to visit. Our community must be protected from inappropriate mineral sands mining and the serious, irreversible environmental damage.

Considering the massive proposed open-cut mineral sands mine is only 20km north west of Bairnsdale in East Gippsland and hundreds of people live just within 5km, it is a highly unsuitable location for a mine, far too close to where people live, work, farm and children go to school.

A proposed mineral sand mine here should be stopped immediately and I would like to list some of many issues that I find extremely alarming and trust your discernment will conclude the same.

- The mining proponent Kalbar Operations Pty Ltd has acknowledged that radiation, respirable silica dust and heavy metals will be present and can't all be eliminated. These are carcinogenic and radioactive materials that put human/animal health at major risk, increasing cancer (silicosis and lung disease) due to the dust generated from excavated and crushed substances mined. I do not trust the EES because the truth has not been disclosed about the content or hazard rating of the ore or of the concentrate. It is your duty of care to ensure full disclosure and examination of these health risks.
- Dust will travel many kilometres as the mine is on a plateau that catches a lot of wind raising concerns of dust contamination to the soil, pastures, crops, stock water, the heritage listed Mitchell River and poses a health threat to workers/farmers inhaling silica dust every single day as the Lindenow Valley vegetable growing area begins only 400m downwind from the mine.
- The horticultural industry will have to compete with Kalbar for water which is imperative to the success of vegetable growers who have already struggled through one of the biggest droughts. If over 3 billion litres of water the mine is demanding was redirected to growing vegetables more than 3 times the number of long-term sustainable jobs could be created.
- What will the impact of this be on bores, aquifers and the Mitchell River if over 3 billion litres of water are required by the mine annually for up to 15 years?
- Contamination of the aquifers (groundwater) and surface water used to irrigate fresh, world-class vegetables and make ice to transport them is serious. How will you guarantee crops and livestock be sold in a contaminated, toxic mining area? Will they even be safe to eat? This shouldn't be a question, it's a clear violation of people's livelihoods and right to pure, clean water sources.
- During heavy rains and potential floods, it will be impossible to contain run-off and siltation of the Mitchell River causing harm on aquatic biodiversity.
- 75% (9 of the 12) horticultural business owners from the Lindenow Valley vegetable growing area have signed a letter on 31st January 2019 to Kalbar's CEO rejecting Kalbar's Horticultural Impact Study (part of the EES). To ruin a highly successful and sustainable vegetable growing industry that is valued at more than \$150 million annually is inexcusable and we need to ensure a future for our next generation farmers.
- Tourism brings \$294 million to East Gippsland's economy. Economic activity that supports this community will fail due to a mineral sand mine in this location.
- It is unacceptable to allow compulsory acquisition of private land to be used by the mine for infrastructure that is located outside the mining project boundary for: water pipelines, bore pumps, bore field, roadworks, new powerlines, easements, rail siding and vegetation

removal. Why wasn't this part of the mine project area? Why isn't this a matter for the East Gippsland Shire Council to determine?

- Gunaikurnai people are the traditional owners of Gippsland. The Fingerboards area which is of great historic and indigenous cultural significance would no longer exist. The result of potential loss and destruction of important aboriginal culture and heritage is unacceptable and must be protected at all costs.
- Crucial habitat for rare and endangered species will be destroyed including 700 mature shade and habitat trees.

This proposed mine is in a dangerous location, threatening our food, water, health and already reduced river flows. Over 4,200 people have signed a petition to the Legislative Assembly stating their opposition to the mine. For the Government to put the community's health and wellbeing, local economy, businesses, farms and aboriginal cultural heritage at risk is irresponsible. This is never, ever ok and I plead that the Minister for Planning stop Kalbar, an inexperienced, destructive mining company.

Please do the right thing

Thank you for the opportunity to make this submission

Sincerely,

Steph Amos