

Submission Cover Sheet

Fingerboards Mineral Sands Project Inquiry and Advisory
Committee - EES

737

Request to be heard?: Yes

Full Name: Catherine Lanigan

Organisation:

Affected property: [REDACTED]

Attachment 1: EES_submission.p

Attachment 2:

Attachment 3:

Comments: See attached submission

Dear Inquiry and Advisory Committee members,

I am writing this submission about the EES for the Fingerboards mineral sands mine project. I am strongly opposed to the establishment of the mine for environmental and health reasons as outlined below.

I have lived in Metung for 20 years and am concerned at the potentially damaging effects to the environment and the health of myself, my family and our community. My greatest concern is the potential impact on the Mitchell River and our drinking water supply, as well as the impact on the health of the Gippsland Lakes.

Health Concerns

Kalbar Operations Pty Ltd has acknowledged there are radioactive substances being mined including rare-earths. I am extremely concerned about the environmental impact of these substances, particularly if they enter our rivers, lakes and water supply. Can you please ensure that laboratory tests of the ore body are fully disclosed so dangers to human/animal health can be ascertained?

I am also concerned about dust contamination and the health risks posed by it. Dust travels! You have a duty of care not to add to the health, and potentially cancer burden, of the community. As a health practitioner, I am extremely concerned about health risks in the future such as lung disease from respirable silica.

The vegetable industry in the Lindenow Valley is only 500m downwind from the mine with most of the vegetables grown above ground, so dust from the mine is a high risk, including the organic produce that I buy fortnightly. I prioritise the health of myself and my family and buy organic food whenever I can. I don't want to eat contaminated vegetables or risk that industry being shut down.

Water to irrigate the crops comes from the Mitchell River. The mine is on the other side of the river on top of a plateau. There are risks of the river being contaminated, impacting on the crops, as well as the health of the rivers and the Gippsland Lakes.

Cultural concerns

I believe there are also Aboriginal cultural heritage sites present in the area that may be impacted. That is unacceptable. Given the excavation down to 45m, how is it possible to avoid destruction of artefacts and heritage? How will mitigation measures be able to avoid the obliteration of cultural heritage?

Environmental concerns

I am concerned about the 90 ha tailings dam containing mine tailings waste and flocculants which are harmful to aquatic life. **There is a stated risk of leaching from the dam.** If there is a 1 in 100-year flood, tailings waste & flocculants could be released into the creeks/rivers, harming aquatic life and aquifers. The risks are considerable and foreseeable given the many examples of dam failures.

The Woodglen Reservoir where domestic and commercial water is stored for the whole Shire is 3.5kms downwind from the mine. I am extremely concerned about these contamination risks.

With 13 square kms of land being mined a lot of trees and habitat will be removed including over 700 large mature trees. Flora and fauna species are threatened. The landscape of the area will never be replaced; offsets can't address this loss.

I urge that the project not proceed given the serious environmental and health concerns.

Thanks for taking the time to consider my submission.

Kind regards



Catherine Lanigan