

# Submission Cover Sheet

Fingerboards Mineral Sands Project Inquiry and Advisory  
Committee - EES

# 832

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Request to be heard?: No

**Full Name:** Moira MacDougall

**Organisation:**

**Affected property:**

**Attachment 1:**

**Attachment 2:**

**Attachment 3:**

**Comments:** See attached submission

Dear Inquiry and Advisory Committee Members,

Re: Objection to Fingerboards Mineral Sands Mine Project

As an East Gippsland Shire resident who lives about 35 kilometres from the mine project, I am writing to voice my strong objection to this proposed mine. It will be too close to a major food growing area in the Lindenow Valley, National Parks, the heritage listed Mitchell River, the Internationally listed Silt Jetties and the nearby Ramsar wetlands. I am concerned that our agriculture and tourism industries will be negatively impacted. We need these industries in the long-term to support our local economy and the many thousands of jobs that support those industries both direct and indirect.

I am concerned about the proposed nineteen dams on the mine footprint. Is it legal to dam creeks and gullies? Given the high rainfall that occurs in that area I am concerned that the spillways on those dams won't hold and that contaminated substances and soils will enter the Mitchell River which is immediately below the mine site. Water from the Mitchell River is used to irrigate vegetable crops from the Lindenow Valley, so there is a high risk that those vegetables will be contaminated. Approval should not be granted for those dams there are too many environmental risks.

My drinking water is sourced from the Woodglen reservoir which is only 3.5kms downwind from the mine. How can we be certain that toxic dust which will be very fine will not impact our drinking water since the reservoir isn't covered?

There are many people who live within a few kilometres of the proposed mine site. It is unacceptable for them to have to cope with the noise and lights from a 24 hour per day seven day a week mining operation. A mine in a residential area should not be allowed to operate during the night that is totally unacceptable and is a risk to people's health and wellbeing. Noise will be heard.

As Kalbar is planning to excavate and remove over 13 square kilometres of land, this will result in a massive amount of biodiversity loss particularly from so many mature trees that will have to be removed. Given the bushfires we have experienced in the area so much biodiversity has already been lost so we need to protect habitat in this area. There are endangered orchids, ancient River Red gums, grassy woodlands that would all be lost. Offsets will not compensate for the massive losses. The loss of wildlife that will be impacted such as wombats that are common in the area is unacceptable as they are a protected native species. This area is a wildlife corridor. Flora and fauna studies in the EES are woefully inadequate with EES scoping requirements not being met.

Because excavation will be 45m deep with the use of bulldozers, cultural heritage will be difficult if not impossible to preserve. As it is acknowledged by Kalbar that unknown artefacts are expected to be lost; this is unacceptable.

I am concerned that the vegetables that came from the Lindenow Valley that we eat will become contaminated. The toxicity of the ore body hasn't been presented in the EES so I am concerned about human and animal health risks. Contamination will also have a profound impact on food security. I ask that the panel please ensure that full disclosure of what is in the ore body and its toxicity be reported as the risks to human and animal health are too high.



A tailings dam nearly 1 square kilometre is proposed on a ridge above a catchment of the Perry and Mitchell Rivers. Given there are no plans for this massive structure in the EES the risks cannot be considered to be low. The EES says that failure would result in extreme consequences so given failures of tailings dams are frequent the risk of this massive structure failing is high with catastrophic consequences. The tailings dam will be too close to the unique Chain of Ponds which if contaminated could destroy them and their aquatic life. That risk is severe.

The August 2020 Victorian Auditor-General's Report on Mining and Rehabilitation was scathing about ineffective enforcement and low bonds being set. There is a huge risk that if this mine goes into care and maintenance that the tailings dams, the dams on gullies will be left behind with the community having to foot the bill for rehabilitation as we did for the Benambra mine. This is an unacceptable risk. There are no guarantees that progressive rehabilitation will happen as there are no legal obligations for them to do that. At the Douglas Mine at Balmoral the promised progressive rehabilitation didn't happen there.

The mine requires too much water that should be redirected to other uses such as environmental flows of the Mitchell River to promote the health of the Gippsland Lakes.

This mine is in a highly dangerous location. For the wellbeing of our community please recommend that this mine proposal be rejected as the risks and consequences are too high and all the scoping requirements haven't been met.

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission.

Yours sincerely

Moira MacDougall