

# Submission Cover Sheet

Fingerboards Mineral Sands Project Inquiry and Advisory  
Committee - EES

# 834

---

Request to be heard?: No

**Full Name:** Melanie Steed

**Organisation:**

**Affected property:**

**Attachment 1:**

**Attachment 2:**

**Attachment 3:**

**Comments:** See attached submission

To the Panel Members

My name is Melanie Steed, and I'm 17 years old. I have travelled both within Australia and overseas with my family, but have always called East Gippsland home.

What is very distressing are plans for Kalbar to undertake Mineral Sands Mining near Glenaladale.

This letter is to put forward my very loud and clear OBJECTION to this occurring.

How is it that the proposed Kalbar mine has even reached a Panel Hearing? If Minister Syme can declare 4000 ha in the Lindenow Valley exempt from Mining last year, why can't this also occur on the plateau? This would save the Fingerboards ecology and all those industries and businesses that rely on a Clean Green image. The same one that the East Gippsland Shire Council tout in their marketing. The Government has the capacity to exempt more land and should do so.

The Government needs to step up and extend that exemption to cover the land where this mine is proposed to be. There are just too many risks to the environment, horticulture, agriculture and tourism, water quality (including our drinking water) and the wellbeing communities.

I have many concerns with this proposed mine. Firstly, there's the location. Which is something that can't be changed. It's right above the nationally significant Mitchell River. This flows into the Ramsar protected Gippsland Lakes and then out to Bass Strait. Along its path, there are industries worth many billions of dollars a year to both the local and State economy. These include tourism and employment linked with agriculture and horticulture. Both directly and indirectly. If you've ever been to Lakes Entrance in Summer, where the population swells many, many times over, you would understand how important Tourism is. And it's not just the warmer months that visitors come to the region.

Kalbar plan to use 8 million litres A DAY for the Mine processing, every day for 15 years or so. This is not sustainable. And no fair on the Agriculture and Horticulture industries. Let alone the impact on Mitchell River Flows and our drinking water. That's not Okay!

Kalbar talk about the 200 jobs they will create, but also their website says "local" means within Australia. How many locals know how to drive a massive mine vehicle?

If the water they want was available, and used for Agriculture and Horticulture, the National Farmers Federation has calculated there would be 4 times more direct and indirect jobs created in these sustainable and vital industries.

The food on your dinner plate comes from the Lindenow Valley – that's milk, vegies, dairy, lamb and more. And lettuce from Drive Through Hamburger chain stores.

How can the Panel think it's okay to endorse a mining project that has so many risks to the Environment, and that includes food security? Endorsing it is not Okay!

The Mine Pits will be up to 45m deep and cover over 13 square km. And that's just the mine site, not the bore field or service corridors.

The massive number of ancient trees, which predate European settlement in the area, will be destroyed, taking with them the animals that rely on this vegetation for food, shelter and breeding. The Rehabilitation is farcical, replacing these trees with tube stock and relying on rainfall ... really! And we know the track record for Rehabilitation of mine sites. And Kalbar get to choose their own Rehabilitation Bond amount. How can that be okay?

And the Aboriginal cultural artefacts and Story that is part of the Landscape will, by Kalbars own calculations, be "100%" destroyed. This doesn't sit with the Rights of First Nation People or protective legislation. The risk mitigation measures of Kalbar are a joke. For artefacts, it's a case of 'keep an eye out and report any you see' ... as you drive a massive truck over dusty landscape. That works ... not! It shows no respect for the Culture and compound Generational Trauma. That's not okay.

The Tailings Dam, at 90 ha, will be over 1 km square at sits at the top of the Perry and Mitchell River catchments. Filling this with toxic sludge, knowing it seeps, and there's a real risk of the dam wall failing, is not okay. I've looked up the statistics on dam wall failure. It's frightening and will cause catastrophic and unrepairable damage to ecology and industry. Forever. That's not okay!

We don't have to look far to see failings in the Mining Industry. They have a project, cobble together an EES, present it to the Panel and go on their merry way. Recommendations from the Panel aren't enforced, and Earth Resources have a woeful record of enforcing action. The Auditor Generals report of Aug this year was scathing. Conflict of interest and poorly resourced were the main themes, and that results in Mining companies doing whatever they please, free of recriminations.

Just look at the Douglas Mine at Balmoral, Bendigo mine at Kangaroo Flat, Latrobe Valley and the Coal mine there and Benambra near Omeo, just to name a few. Earth Resources don't have accurate records of mine activity which is not okay. 'Decorative' not 'Functional'. And that's not okay.

And Kalbar themselves are not upfront with their Business Plan – how do we even know they can do what they say? The EES has no details of costings for set up, operation and other expenses. Will they run out of cash during the process and just leave? Or sell out to another company?

So, with all this in mind, it is not okay for the Project to proceed.

How can you, The Panel, endorse something that is so wrong and will cause so much irreversible destruction?

Thank you for the opportunity to express my concerns.

(Name, no address)

