

# Submission Cover Sheet

Fingerboards Mineral Sands Project Inquiry and Advisory  
Committee - EES

# 861

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**Request to be heard?:** Yes

**Full Name:** Alan Mihan

**Organisation:**

**Affected property:**

**Attachment 1:**

**Attachment 2:**

**Attachment 3:**

**Comments:** See attached submission

Dear Inquiry and Advisory Committee Members

Thank you for the opportunity to make this submission regarding the Environment Effects Statement (E.E.S.) for the Fingerboards Mineral Sands / Rare Earths mine project.

I am not opposed to mining per se however this proposed mine is completely inappropriate in its placement and size, works proposed, etc.

lets begin with some explanations of the terms used in the EES.

Rare Earths Ore:

Rare Earths are not a rare occurrence in the rock straten of Australia, in fact being a very common material making up the Earths Crust. It becomes a very dangerous product once it is dug up and deposited in the open air ie Mined. This is because of the Carcinogenic and Radioactive components (Uranium, thorium, titanium) to name a few.

Despite Kallbars assertions the dust from this mined Rare Earth not being dangerous due to its size (4 microns), I have been assured by an expert in the field that it in fact breaks down to 0.2 micron (similar to Bush Fire Smoke particles) and therefore Bio-accumulates in soils, plants and water; in the latter being impossible to filter out or otherwise remove.

Studies being Peer Reviewed.

Many people when informed the studies, etc, are Peer Reviewed mistakenly believe the information is therefore correct and beyond questioning. However the term Peer Reviewed simply implys the process and process guidelines have been complied with and therefore the study methodology, site work carried out, the various conclusions drawn have complied with the government guidelines for the development of the EES.

Peer Reviewing is only verifying the Process Compliance NOT the collected data's veracity, etc.

## Flashy Presentation

Kalbar has gone to a lot of trouble and expense in preparing this wonderful, fancy looking E.E.S. (10 out of 10 for presentation) however @ 8,500 pages of technical information and graphics, maps, etc unfortunately much of it written in jargon and 'technese' rendering it mostly inaccessible to the average person who may have a genuine need to understand the implications, possible results, etc, maybe this is the whole point, 'Bullshit Baffles Brains Everytime'!

Very few of said potential objectors to this project, I suspect, would have the time, patience or knowledge to wade through such a dense and mostly inaccessible document. We mere mortals are at a distinct disadvantage in the whole process. We can see that a lot of what is proposed doesn't stand up to the Pub Test however are we going to be allowed to get this through to your good selves.

As I am not an expert in any of the EES fields I will not attempt to argue the technicalities of the information as presented in the EES however the body of my submission against this proposed Rare Earths/Sand Mine will attempt to set out the case for why the proposed site is wholly unsuitable for the use proposed.

Let us begin with why we find Kalbar wishing to mine this particular material on this particular site.

Kalbar purchased the rights to explore this particular area some seven years ago from Rio Tinto and have gone on to spend the value and the purity of this one body ever since. One would have thought if this is such a valuable deposit that maybe Rio Tinto would have exploited it themselves.

Kalbar originally approached the Mossface community (near Bruthen, East Gippsland) and at a Community meeting attended by some 200 residents, rapidly drew the conclusion their proposal was not going to happen due to resident's opposition, no matter how valuable to the economy, etc, and instead chose the Fingerboards, Glenaladale to exploit. You know, low grade land, failed Blue Gum Plantations, a few farmers scraping a living from sheep, cattle etc, these people will jump at their proposed fabulous Mine. WRONG! The proposed mine has been soundly rejected by the locals.

Unknown to Kalbar or at least unacknowledged by Kalbar is the growing number of people downstream of their proposed mine

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beginning to realize the potential disaster for the area this mine will be. Kalbar keep insisting the people against their mine are just a roudy rabble of maybe two hundred people who refuse to see how wonderful this project will be for the area.

### DUST

Kalbar claims the dust from this proposed project will be of minimal disruction/nuisance to the vegetable farmers (K.E.S.) down wind because their produce is all washed as part of their production processes and dust removed. Kalbars experts have assured them the dust particles will be a minimum size of 4 microns and not a danger to the environment, water, etc.

As previously stated I believe the dust will be bio-accumulative @ 0.2 micron and therefore absorbed into plants, soils, water.

Kalbar states (KES) they will require large amounts of water and chemicals to assist with dust minimization; to their credit they do admit their inability to control all dust from site.

Given the Mitchell river is 300 mtrs downwind of the proposed works site; the nearest Vegetable farmer 500 mtrs downwind and East Gippsland Waters major water storage at Woodglen and Water Treatment Plant nearby is 2500 mtrs downwind I would consider the possibility of Dust pollution at these facilities as being very likely, totally unacceptable and definitely not worth the risk given this dust will contain radioactive and carcinogenic particles from the mine site.

### Weather Recording

Kalbar have constructed (and according to their data) a very comprehensive and accurate weather monitoring station at their Fingerboards site and have drawn all manner of conclusions and predictions regarding 1-100 yr rainfall events, wind strengths, average weather patterns, etc.

However the wind strength and rainfall data do not accord with what the locals know from their daily experience living in the area and the general consensus among these residents is the weather monitoring station is actually in the WRONG

POSITION to give an accurate picture of the prevailing weather conditions on the overall site. Putting it candidly it is in a Rain/Wind Shadow; 100 mtrs either side of its current

position will yield very different Wind Strengths / Rain Patterns.

Did Kalbar deliberately place their weather station to minimize the wind/rainfall patterns? If they have then their strategy mightily backfired on their work program. As I write this (Monday 26/10/20) one of Kalbar's contractors (a drilling rig) has proceeded onto a property at Glenaladale to proceed with further survey drilling and become hopelessly bogged 150 mtrs into the paddock. Now over this last weekend the area has received approx. 70 mm of rain (according to local farmers) which usually means no tractor/4wd movements on any land for maybe 1 week. Did Kalbar's instruments measure less? If so, how can the general public trust any of their measurements/predictions re their EES? Obviously the Company didn't warn the contractor about the conditions on site.

### Conclusion

In concluding this submission I make a number of further points:-

- The 24/7 Noise from the proposed site, loss of amenity and the visual effect during the proposed mines operation;
- The fact Kalbar whilst touting local jobs, consider local to mean Australia wide particularly hatrobe Valley because of ready trained, unemployed open cut workers;
- Kalbar have utilized huge Advertising Signs at Stratford, Victoria on the Princes Highway espousing the value of Mining, etc, to the Australian economy, while using local Government / Vicroads regulations to make it very difficult for others to erect signage opposing mining in this area;
- The local Media Co. appears to discourage anti-Kalbar material being presented in Print;
- East Gippsland Council election candidates election statements appeared to be suitably 'cleansed' of any mention of a potential mine in the area, frustrating many voters who wished to cast their vote for a candidate who would oppose the proposed mine on their behalf.

I wish to thank the Inquiry and Advisory committee members for their time and patience in reading my submission and conclude by saying I am a 69 yr old semi-retired person who wishes to continue to enjoy the amenity, etc, offered by this area in my retirement without the fear of a Mining Disaster ruining that amenity.

This potential Mine is totally in-appropriate for this area regardless of the supposed economic benefit which is outweighed by the lack of SOCIAL LICENCE.

ALAN MITMAN