

Submission Cover Sheet

Fingerboards Mineral Sands Project Inquiry and Advisory
Committee - EES

865

Request to be heard?: No

Full Name: Gary and Bernadette Rye

Organisation:

Affected property:

Attachment 1:

Attachment 2:

Attachment 3:

Comments: See attached submission

SUBMISSION FROM: - Gary James & Bernadette Mary Rye

25th October 2020

Thank you for the opportunity to submit our objections to Kalbar's proposed mineral sands mine.

We live on the Fernbank road within 1.5 kms from both the proposed sites for the processing plant and the haulage road for the 40plus B doubles trucks both in and out which will be transporting the mineral slurry to and from the project area. We are also within close proximity to the mine site itself which is on an elevated ledge which overlooks the Mitchell River. It is this inappropriate location which is the cause of concern to the community and why we are in opposition to the mine. We are not against mining in general.

We have listed some of our major fears about the highly probable risks and consequences to both our local area and to the neighbouring communities as far as Bairnsdale and beyond.

1. Due to the proximity of our residence to the mine we have been labelled by Kalbar as 'sensitive receptors'. As such we will be susceptible to the noise and lights from the processing plant, also the general heavy machinery which will be used in the day to day working of the mine. Although the mining company was supposed to consult closely with people in the community and inform them about the details of the project, no one from Kalbar ever met with us to let us know that they had moved the processing plant from its original location on their property at the Fingerboards to an old plantation with stick size trunks, sparse crowns and absolutely no understorey or vegetation between the trees. Kalbar claims that the plant will be screened from the view of passers-by and residents and that the noise and lights will have an acceptable impact on the nine neighbouring residents. However the screening and noise damping effects will be negligible. We retired here nine years ago for a peaceful rural lifestyle. To be told that the noise level will be an acceptable level as per the EPA is however not acceptable to us as there is no noise at present to interrupt our rural life. The noise of a night is deafeningly quiet.
2. To be told back in 2014 that Kalbar Resources Ltd was a 100% Australian owned company and now the project appears to be owned by Kalbar Operations Ltd which is 94% foreign owned and apparently a subsidiary of the Dutch investment company Appian. But Kalbar Resources' CEO has never explained these changes to the community. This has created even more doubt, distrust and lack of confidence that what they say will happen. One thing is that if this has changed hands once how many more times is it going to be sold on and then will the next company do the right thing by the area, we don't think so. The thought of this beautiful area being torn apart and never returning to what we have now is a nightmare only the people of the area would understand. The residence in the area have been through fire in 2014, drought in the last two years fighting to keep their stock going for future generations, another fire last year in the area. Now Covid19. How much more do we have to take?

3. The Mitchell River is the lifeblood of the region. Without it there is no Horticulture Industries, the Tourism Industry would not be as great. The threat to The Gippsland Lake area is enormous. The river is not just for the farmers but all the people of the area. If the mine is allowed to take the amount of water from the river everyone in the area will once again possibly be on water restrictions. The river supplies an enormous area. The thought of the river being contaminated by run of, if the tailings dams don't hold. Yes we know that they say it will be fine but we are sure it's not 100% guaranteed. It has happened in the past in the area and is still happening. If this extra water that Kalbar wants to use was to be diverted to Agriculture in the surrounding area this would possibly increase production and therefore more jobs for the future generations and not a short term mine that would leave the area a disaster.
4. We are also concerned with the amount of jobs that Kalbar are saying they will bring to the area. These people will have to be qualified to do mining procedures, this will be a specialised criteria and not something that a lot of locals would have. This means people from out of the area leaving locals without jobs once again. Yes there might be jobs in the initial set up but that is all.

We have attended all the meetings and our extended family who also live in the area have also been to some of the meetings. To say that at some of these meetings we have felt that they have treated us like idiots instead of the knowledgeable people that we all are. To bring in Experts to tell us that all is going too alright and when questioned about their visit to the mine site, their answer was that they hadn't even been out to the mine site they were going off the details that Kalbar had supplied to them from their people.

The mental anxiety that we have endured in the last five and half years is tiring. To not know that when we are in our back yard will we still see the beautiful area that we see at the moment or are we not going to be able to still enjoy our peaceful lifestyle because of noise and dust.


Gary James Rye


Bernadette Mary Rye