

Submission Cover Sheet

Fingerboards Mineral Sands Project Inquiry and Advisory
Committee - EES

883

Request to be heard?: Yes

Full Name: Jo-Angela Boucher

Organisation:

Affected property:

Attachment 1:

Attachment 2:

Attachment 3:

Comments: See attached submission

29th October 2020

Fingerboards Environment Effects Statement (EES)

Dear Inquiry and Advisory Committee Members

Thank you for the opportunity to let you know that I am strongly opposed to the Fingerboards mineral sands mine project at Glenaladale. I am not alone in expressing this opposition, it is very much what I am hearing in the wider community. Many different people from all walks of life be it young people, working families, young business professionals as well as long-term residents and business and industry professionals are very concerned about what could happen and the potential disasters.

In relation to the content of this letter, I would welcome the opportunity to speak at the panel about the potential impacts of the mine for the following reasons:

- I am a long-term resident, living here since at the age 16 years. I am now 63 years old. I have raised a family of five children.
I have firsthand knowledge of the stresses this mine is placing on individuals, families, and business owners within the East Gippsland Community. Friends have become divided. In some cases, friendships have been lost. The social impact of this mine is unreasonable/unacceptable in today's modern world. Some people are at breaking point. I am mindful that some may be suicidal and ongoing mental health to support these people and their families will impact on our community's wellbeing. The socio-economic impact study that was undertaken was a long time ago; it was woefully inadequate. The division that has been created in the community is because of the mine so the suggestion that Kalbar will encourage social interaction is a nonsense mitigation strategy, the irreparable damage has already been done. Furthermore, Kalbar has done nothing to date to fix that so why should that change if the mine is approved?
- There are many families who live near where the mine is proposed to be located and they will be impacted by the noise of a 24 hour per day seven day a week mining operation in what is an agriculturally zoned district. It is unacceptable that a mine be allowed to operate throughout the night when so many people live nearby. Other mines in Western Australia weren't allowed to operate during the night so why is that being considered here?
- There are huge environmental risks to the health of both the Perry River and the heritage listed Mitchell River. The mine will sit on the catchment of both significant river systems. There are risks of these rivers being contaminated, impacting on the vegetable crops in the Lindenow valley, fishing, agriculture, the health of the rivers and the Gippsland Lakes (an important Ramsar-listed wetland). I have been speaking with farmers who all say that the ground is porous and that wastewater from the tailing dams will leak into the surrounding land and end up in both rivers. These are not emotional statements. The farmers know the land and surroundings. It appears that not enough evidence has been contained within the EES to assure me otherwise.
- I did my training as a nurse at the Bairnsdale Regional Hospital in my thirties.
- The Woodglen Reservoir where domestic and commercial water is stored for the whole Shire is 3.5kms downwind from the mine. I am concerned that our drinking water will get contaminated. As not all the facts are expected to have been released about what will be in the dust, how will East Gippsland water be able to assure us that there won't be any risks to our health from the water?
- It will be impossible for people to redevelop a connection with the land once 13 square kilometres has been dug 45m deep and all the ancient trees and woodlands removed. The hilly terrain and the natural gullies that have been formed is what makes this area so special. This cannot be replicated. These high risks cannot be mitigated, and it is an insult to those who live locally to suggest otherwise.
- What assurance is there that funds will not run out leaving the community and Government with the costs of rehabilitation as occurred at the Benambra/Stockman mine that is still leaching into the Tambo River?
- It will be impossible for people to redevelop a connection with the land once 13 square kilometres has been dug 45m deep and all the ancient trees and woodlands removed. The hilly terrain and the natural gullies that have been formed is what makes this area so special. This cannot be replicated. These high risks cannot be mitigated, and it is an insult to those who live locally to suggest otherwise.
- It is unacceptable to allow compulsory acquisition of private land to be used by the mine for infrastructure that is located outside the mining project boundary for: water pipelines, bore pumps, bore field, roadworks, new powerlines, easements, rail siding and vegetation removal. Why wasn't this part of the mine project area? Why isn't this a matter for the EG Shire Council to determine?

I welcome the opportunity to speak to the panel from professional, personal and volunteer perspectives.

Yours sincerely

Angela Boucher