

# **EES Presentation Fingerboards Mining Proposal**

Submission no. 375

John Alexander

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## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

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I would like to acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we meet here today, the Gunaikurnai people, and pay my respects to their elders past, present and emerging. I recognise their deep spiritual, emotional and physical connection to the land water and sky.



# INTRODUCTION

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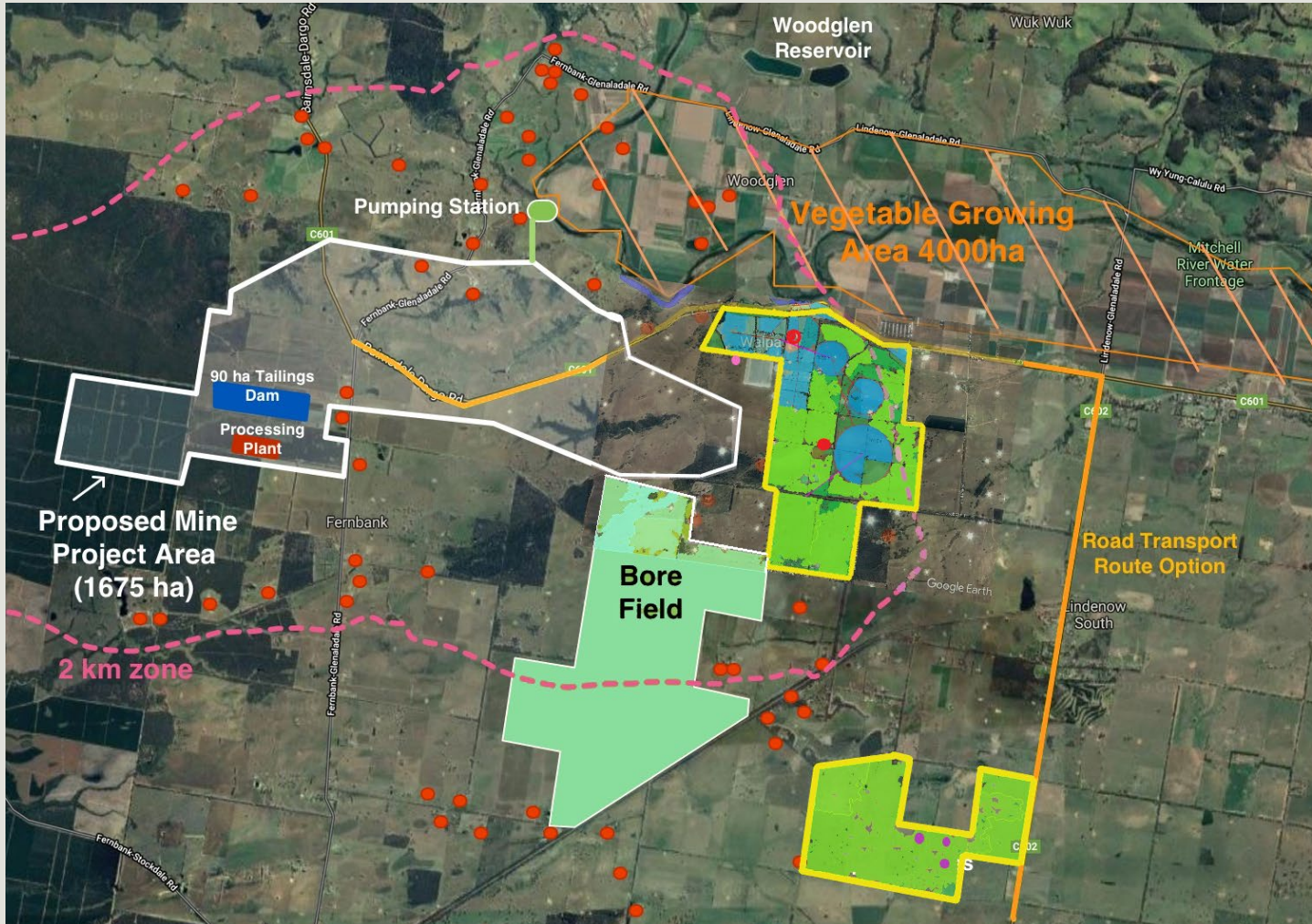
My appreciation goes to the Chair and the Panel for allowing me to speak to my submission and the important work that you are all doing.

For my presentation, I will focus on the key areas of my submission. I will also highlight additional matters that have arisen during the hearing which I feel are relevant to the IAC's task of making recommendations and advice to the minister.

My name is John Alexander. My family run business is a specialised irrigated grass fed beef and prime lamb agricultural enterprise of around 2200 acres. The business, along with two family homes; R28, R29, will be in very close proximity to the mine if approved.



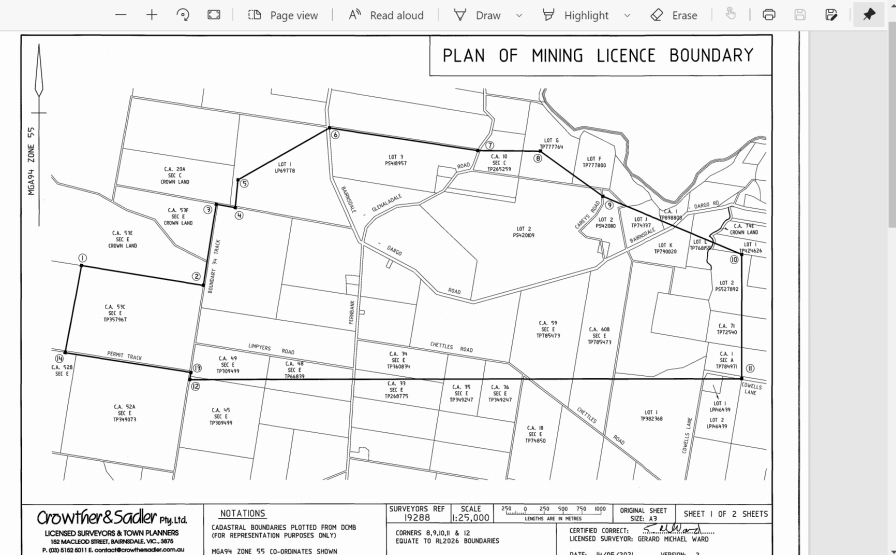
# MINE BOUNDARY MAP



This map highlights our farm in relation to the proposed mine:

- The yellow line indicates our farm boundary.
- The blue highlights our irrigated areas.

# APPLICATION TO CHANGE THE MINE BOUNDRY



- During the Hearing, KALBAR has made an application to alter and extend their mining licence boundary which will now include a section of our farm.
- There has been no consultation with us regarding this change of boundary.
- The top photo shows the retention licence sign marking the edge of the mine next to our boundary fence.
- A cause for even greater concern to my family and employee's health.
- We regularly have our young children working along side.

# MINE BOUNDRY

- The mine boundary is now 400 m closer to our house than in the EES.
- Only 720m from R29.



Photo: looking back to mine boundary from R29



# POTENTIAL RISK TO FOOD PRODUCTION

- We produce 100% grass fed beef and lamb which is at risk of contamination from the mine site.
- Accreditation to supply produce for both the domestic and international market is at risk.
- We are currently EU accredited. This accreditation requires adherence to very strict guidelines around heavy metal contamination.

**The National Residue Survey (NRS)** is delivered by the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment and monitors residues in animal products.

- NRS routinely test sheep and beef meat for heavy metal contamination to ensure participating industries satisfy Australian export certification and importing country requirements.
- Livestock ingest dust with heavy metals from grazing pasture/crops and from the ingestion of soil. One heavy metal such as Cadmium which is identified in the EES as being in the dust is routinely tested by the NRS in the liver and kidney of sheep and beef. The risk or perceived risk of food produced next to the mine could have elevated levels of heavy metals . Potentially impacting the viability and value of our business.

**Perceptions of clean green produce is at risk.**



## RISK TO AGRICULTURE

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EES Agricultural impact report: I question why our business was not approached for input into the report considering we are next door to the project area.

I support the Victorian Farmers Federation in their recommendation that “*further investigation are required to understand the consequences and allow for the preparation binding agreements with all farmers who may be impacted by the mine.*”

“The VFF recommends that on this consideration alone the project requires further investigations to establish the economic cost to production if control mechanisms do not deliver the promised environmental outcomes. **Further investigation are required to understand the consequences and allow for the preparation binding agreements with all farmers who may be impacted by the mine.** These agreements should respond to each control mechanism, the level of breach, the consequence of breach, how compensation will be calculated and administered and how integrated management systems will respond to key threats to each crop or production system.”

383. Submitter\_738 -  
\_Victorian\_Farmers\_Federation



# CLOSING

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- This proposed mine is operating far too close to our home and business, along with many other neighbouring families’
- I feel this is an unacceptable risk for my young family living in such close proximity to this mine. This is a risk that our family should not be expected to be exposed to. I fear the elevated dust/noise will create an unliveable environment, even with additional mitigations in place, forcing us to leave the area.
- I strongly oppose this project due to the extremely concerning health risks to local community, the serious agricultural and environmental consequences, and the negative economic impact it will have on existing businesses within the region.
- **The EES leaves too many unanswered questions with many changes occurring just prior and during the hearing.** I hope the Chair and panel reflect on what I have presented when you prepare your report for the minister and recommend that this mine is in an unsuitable location and should not proceed.