

Before I begin I would like to make three points of clarification:

1. I have used the name 'Kalbar' to denote both Kalbar Resources Ltd, the company's original name and Kalbar Operations Ltd [KOPL]

*2. When I use the word 'consultation' I am applying the following dictionary definition: 'Consultation is the process of formally meeting others for the purpose of giving and **receiving** information and usually involves collaboration on the merits or problems of a plan or situation'. I mention this because I believe that many people in the community have an expectation that when Kalbar CEOs use the word 'consultation' it is within the context of the above definition. If the placement of advertisements and media releases in the newspapers, holding public meetings and surveys, count as consultation, then Kalbar has met this requirement. But if Community concerns have not been satisfactorily addressed and the process has not been collaborative, then it has fallen short of the proper purpose of the consultation process. That is why I have used the words 'timely', 'respectful', and 'transparent' when talking about Kalbar's consultation process.*

3. In assessing the impacts of the proposed mine on the physical environment of the area, the Panel has the duty also to assess the impacts on the social environment and that is the basis of my presentation to you today.

Presentation to the IAC Panel

I live in Fernbank close to the proposed location of the Processing Plant and to the Fingerboards intersection. The Fingerboards is the junction where several local communities intersect – Upper and Lower Glenaladale, Fernbank, Walpa, and Woodglen, which is why people in these communities feel both physically and emotionally connected to this area. Historically the Fingerboards has been the meeting place for these communities. Sale yards were once located here where stock was bought and sold, and families gathered in horse drawn carts -before travelling to Church or for shopping in Bairnsdale. It is today still a convenient central meeting place, an emergency gathering point and the location of a tank for firefighting water to protect these communities.



Photo 01

In my written submission, I described how much the people in these communities appreciate this naturally beautiful area, which, if the mine is approved, will transition from an aesthetically pleasing landscape with undulating hills, distant mountains and sweep of river, to an industrial landscape denuded of trees and much of its vegetation, and impacted by upgraded power lines on tall power poles, earth bunds, exposed pipes, wire security fencing around mine infrastructure and views of B double trucks moving on the roads day and night. Landscape value for these communities is aligned with ‘place attachment’ ie the residents here have developed an emotional bond to their environment, and this bond has become the source of people’s commitment to manage their area responsibly. For those like myself who are not second or third generation residents, the emotional bond is usually formed firstly from their appreciation of the landscape values of the area. A sense of identity gradually develops followed by a feeling of belonging. I noticed that one of the experts for MFG also mentioned this concept of ‘place attachment’ in her submission. Place attachment is the main concept of environmental psychology. I am a perfect example of this concept. I lived in Sydney on the beautiful Northern beaches. Our family home was directly across the road from Long reef Beach and when I left home I bought a unit in Mosman which had 180 degree views of boats bobbing on Pittwater. I never dreamt that I would one day live in Victoria on a sheep farm. However I got married and woke up one day to find myself in Fernbank looking at sheep, trees, an almost empty dam and grasshoppers because it was one of those many periods of drought. My

husband made the mistake of taking me to visit friends who lived in Metung and that was it! Before the year was up I planned to have moved him and the sheep and be living close to the Lakes. But here I am, 40 years later not only still living in Fernbank but I have bought a second property in Glenaladale a stone's throw from the proposed mine site where we had hoped to build our 'retirement home' - all because of 'place attachment'. And thank you again for visiting this property and allowing us to show you the problems of erosion, the impact on our gully dam if the mine is approved, the difficulties of rehabilitating trees and vegetation after the fires of 2014 swept through the whole property, from the road to the banks of Moulun Creek which flows into the Mitchell River.

I mention this concept of place attachment because I believe this is what has inspired our communities to form the tight knit group of MFG and its supporters, who, allied with the wider Bairnsdale communities have managed to campaign heart and soul for 7 years to oppose Kalbar's proposed mine.

In my submission I mentioned that my strong opposition to the proposed project was due to various reasons, one very important one being the unprofessional conduct of the proponent. I also referred to Kalbar's lack of respect for the community. I'd like to take this opportunity to explain to you more fully what I mean by describing the proponent's behavior as unprofessional. It is important that you understand what the community has experienced for those stressful and frustrating years since 2014 when the first Kalbar Resources' CEO, Rob Bishop, announced their intention to develop an open cut mineral sands mine in Glenaladale. I realise that you have already heard much of what I am going to say before from other community members but when I started to delete those bits and pieces it was rather like unpicking stitches in knitting – the whole thing began to unravel so at the risk of boring you I will just repeat it, because it will help you understand why this proposed mine will never be accepted by the bulk of the community and will fail, even if you approve it.

To help explain why I have described the proponent's behavior as unprofessional I have made a list of examples of what I will call 'Kalbar's failures'.

1. The first examples describe **the lack of respect shown by the proponent to the Community**.
2. The second, give you some examples of the **inaccurate, misleading or contradictory information** given by Kalbar CEOs and staff during consultation with the Community, in their articles in the local newspapers and in the EES. I have also included in this group, some examples of the **important omissions** they are guilty of - including their insufficient consultation, modelling, testing and reporting and their failure to disclose fully and transparently the economic, social and environmental impacts of the project.

The accumulation of all these failures - over the past 7 years from 2014 until now have led to the Community's lack of trust and confidence in Kalbar as the proponent of the proposed Fingerboards' complex, very high risk project. The failure of Kalbar to consult openly and honestly with the Community they expect to host their ambitious project, their failure to fully acknowledge and accept the environmental impacts of their proposed project, and to provide the Community with sufficiently detailed and timely information, demonstrates their ignorance of the socio-economic values held by the local and wider Community and their inability to assess the costs to the residents of the loss of amenity currently enjoyed if the mine is developed.

Let's look first at KALBAR'S LACK OF RESPECT FOR THE COMMUNITY

* When they arrived in 2014, Kalbar CEOs and staff failed to understand the disastrous impacts of the recent bushfires, on the shell shocked Glenaladale residents and showed no empathy in their communications - reflecting a noticeable lack of respect and consideration for the demoralised Community when they fronted devastated stakeholders almost immediately after the Mt Ray bushfires.

* Indeed, during the 7 years of the proponent's interaction with the residents there has been little genuine attempt to understand the impacts of the 2014 and 2020 bush fires as well as the long drought on the lives of the people in this region - not to mention on the habitat of the wildlife. That landholders were still in shock, destroying burnt stock, desperately replacing fences and trying to feed what stock remained, seemed of little importance to them. One of their directors tried to justify this later by saying: "we were from Sydney and knew nothing about the fires.....besides which, we were on a strict timeline."

Is this the way to develop a rapport with the local people?

* Rob Bishop was the first Kalbar CEO whom the community met. His arrogant and condescending attitude and inexcusable ignorance of the Glenaladale area was clearly demonstrated at a packed public meeting at the Mossiface Hall when he informed the gathering that the proposed mine would be at Glenaladale, not Mossiface, because there was 'nothing at Glenaladale except burnt blue gums, some sheep and a few lettuce growers'. 'This derogatory dismissal of the valuable farming and vegetable growing area greatly offended the residents of Glenaladale who are proud of the natural beauty and the resilient agriculture and horticulture of the region.

* Kalbar failed to engage with sufficient understanding and empathy with the Gunai Kurnai elders and to respect both their tangible and intangible cultural heritage

values - this has contributed to strong opposition from the Gunai-Kurnai to the project. Roger Fenwick has already told you about this. Kalbar even deceptively claimed that 'agreement with the Gunai Kurnai was already in place. [see extract from a Kalbar community bulletin

It is also interesting to note in this extract that Kalbar anticipates the granting of approval for the project and claims that there will be greater communication with the community when this happens

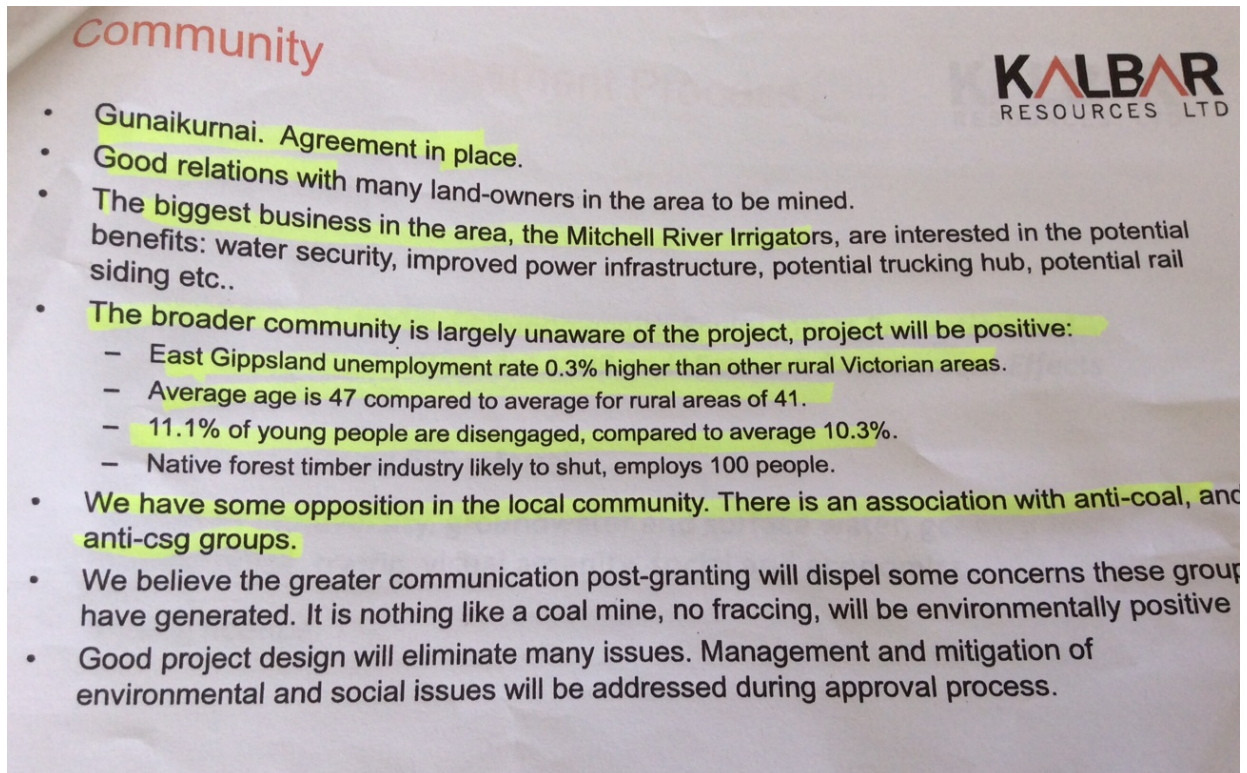


Photo 02

Kalbar promised the Community that it would consult openly and transparently, with them but the Community was never informed in a timely way about the significant changes, which Kalbar made to many aspects of the project. These changes included the project size being increased from 1400 Ha to 1675 Ha, the 2 to 4 B double trucks a day gradually blew out to 10, then 40 trucks per day, the CEO deceptively omitting the fact that it would be 40 **return** trips, in other words 80 truck trips in total per day; the processing plant was moved closer to 9 homes without any prior consultation with the residents. My husband and I are among those residents and were never consulted. The Tailings dam (now redundant we assume) was increased in size from 60 to 90 Ha, also to the Council's consternation a Planning Scheme Amendment was added for unspecified infrastructure, a bore field was also added which has since been relocated the project size has been increased yet again in Kalbar's mining licence application.

In the words of Tim Bull, the local MP, and I quote: "What I found disappointing was the number of changes submitted by the proponent shortly before the scoping requirements were finalised. Submissions previously lodged were based on detail that changed at the death knock,"

*Community consultation which was supposed to be an integral part of the process degenerated into meetings where peoples' concerns were dismissed by Kalbar's CEOs who merely continued to maintain that computer modelling showed that the proposed mineral sands mine was compatible with current land use. In the article below in the Gippsland Times newspaper in 2018 Lex Hammond who lives in Bairnsdale was interviewed at a Kalbar information night. He is not known to MFG so his concern about the information given by Kalbar at the meeting can't be accused of being biased.

'Lex Hammond said he came away from the Kalbar information session "reeling in disappointment" after the only information presented was targeted towards ensuring the approval of the project and whitewashing resident, neighbor, community's and public's valid opinions, questions and concerns'



Residents at a meeting in Lindenow regarding the proposed Kalbar mineral sands mine.

GIPPSLAND residents are demanding more details on the environmental effects of a proposed mineral sands mining project in Lindenow, after a recent information session fuelled community concern on the investigative processes.

About 80 people attended the consultation session last Tuesday for the Fingerboards Mineral Sands project in Lindenow, on the doorstep of one of Australia's largest food growing regions, to provide feedback on technical studies being prepared for the project's environment effects statement.

Attendees heard from technical consultants and shared their views on issues related to air quality, biodiversity, socioeconomic and agriculture studies being undertaken to assess the potential impacts of the mineral sands mining project.

Community members from the Glenaladale area and further afield were asked to provide initial feedback on the three studies, with community input contributing to the finalisation of the studies and EES report.

But Bairnsdale resident Lex Hammond said he came away from the Kalbar information session "reeling in disappointment", after the only information presented was "targeted towards ensuring the approval of the project and whitewashing resident, neighbour, community and public's valid opinions, question and concerns".

"This is disturbing. We need truly independent reports created, with raw data publicly

<http://www.gippslandtimes.com.au/story/5541547/mixed-responses-from-local-kalbar-meeting/> 24/07/2018

Photo 03

* On the 15th March 2016 at the 16th Annual Mineral Sands Conference, Carolyn Balint at the time one of Kalbar's senior staff and Senior Principal ESIA, at Coffey, presented a case study on 'How to win a social license from a community to operate a mine.' Without the knowledge of the residents of Glenaladale Kalbar selected the Glen community for the case study and also, without their permission, featured a photo of a group of residents gathered at the Fingerboards for a photo shoot in a handout distributed to participants at the conference.

Included in the handout were also photos of the area and a most unflattering photo of the CFA shed and the back of the Glenaladale Hall which gave a very deceptive and misleading impression of the community. The lack of respect for the community revealed by this use of the residents as **'Guinea pigs'** for the case study is upsetting and although not illegal is not what you would expect from a company which is trying to win the trust, respect and acceptance of your community. Ms Balint working at that time on behalf of the proponent did not intend Glenaladale residents to know about the case study and was embarrassed when faced with the handout but swept it under the carpet and didn't apologize.



Photo 04

Image blurred for privacy...this photo reproduced by Kalbar in the conference handout was taken from the local newspaper 28/3/2016.

Photo 05 on the next page:

A page from the handout distributed to the attendees of the 16th Annual Mineral Sands Conference in 2016

- Establishing effective stakeholder engagement
- Foundation for establishing a social licence to operate



Photo 05

This unflattering photo of the back of the Glenaladale Hall and the fire shed totally misrepresents the active, hardworking and proud community.



Photo 06 Glen Hall as it really looks

It seems that Kalbar also intends the community to be guinea pigs again if the mine is approved, by being the first proponent in the world to attempt to use Centrifugation for a mineral sands mine. And this attempt to be made by a junior mining company with no previous experience in operating a mine and whose only experience has been to develop a bauxite mine in Indonesia and immediately sell it on to an Asian consortium rather than operating it. This information was previously on the website for Kalbar Resources Ltd which has since been removed and replaced by the KOPL website which gives no information about the past history of the original company. When Indonesian exports were shut down Kalbar turned its attention to finding a suitable Bauxite Mine in the NT to develop.

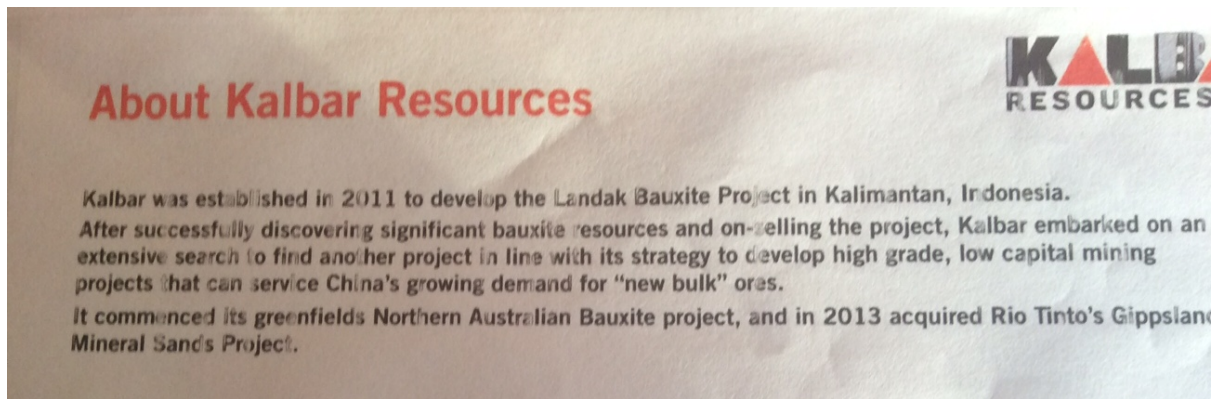


Photo 07 of the page from an early Kalbar Resources community bulletin giving brief background of the Bauxite mine in Indonesia they developed and sold immediately after approval. The original mission statement of the company was to 'service the Chinese economy'. Over time this mission statement was removed, the information altered .until finally the website was removed altogether



Photo 08

Will Kalbar 'spin off' the Fingerboards mine if it wins approval? The community is left wondering.....!

* An upsetting example of Kalbar's treatment of one particular stakeholder with a disgraceful lack of respect and disregard was not informing him that one of the roads the proponent proposed rerouting would then cut right through his stand of cherished trees and vegetation on his property. When he found this out through other sources he was devastated and very angry. (Since then Kalbar's road alignment plans have changed)

When asked on many occasions about compensation if the mine is approved and becomes responsible for damage or adverse impacts of some kind to community members or their property, Kalbar's response was invariably a dismissive: "Only when mining legislation requires". They refuse to consider any moral obligation on their part to landholders, or duty of care as proponents who stand to reap huge financial rewards from the proposed mine. Yet they have generously donated money to business and sporting organisations as inducements to win acceptance of their mine and to enhance their prospects of winning Government approval.

There are many other examples of lack of transparent or timely consultation and also examples of harassment of community members by Kalbar staff but at this point I believe it serves little purpose to enumerate them all so I will move on to discuss how the lack of professionalism, lack of empathy and consideration on the proponent's part is also demonstrated very clearly in many of the mitigation measures Kalbar describes for the sensitive receptors in the Socio Economic Impacts section of the EES where the following simplistic and arrogant, mitigation measures are suggested: in relation to loss of amenity Kalbar's consultant suggests 'Some people may experience reduced amenity which may lead to them changing their behavior, closing their windows, spending less time

Lack of consideration is also evident in the advice given to those concerned about loss of peaceful lifestyle: 'some residents may change their behaviors, alter the time they spend on their properties or move to another location.' And in relation to dust: if residents in the vicinity of the mining operations are bothered by dust 'they can keep their windows and doors closed, hang their washing inside, or move to another area.' If they are unhappy about the changed views from their home they can move to rooms on the other side of the house or pack up, 'and move somewhere else.' And if they don't like the noise, once again 'they can close their windows and doors or move.' Kalbar takes no account of residents' financial status, mental health, age, vulnerability due to ill health, asthma or other circumstances like shift workers or families with young children or elderly relatives who need their sleep. East Gippsland Shire Council's plan for 2017-2030 is to *improve* the livability of an area, not to destroy it. Kalbar fails to consider the stress and other impacts of selling a home and moving to another area especially as there will probably be very limited, if any, buyers for a property so close to a mine and homes will be considerably devalued. Local real estate agents have quoted an average drop of 30% in house prices close to the mine if approved.

There is no offer to provide air conditioners for the residents who have to close their windows and doors against dust when it is hot, and no offer of clothes dryers if they have to hang their washing inside because of dust. No offer to soundproof

bedrooms exposed to noise. These would have been genuine mitigation measures, of comparatively minimal expense for the few sensitive receptors requiring them - and would have demonstrated empathy, understanding and a sense of responsibility for the impacts the project will have on residents close to the mining operations.

Surely the stakeholders and residents in the area have a right to expect a more generous duty of care from the proponent of a disruptive, potentially life changing open cut mine that it is expected to host for 20 years.

The current Covid crisis is a testament to the fact that our government seeks to protect the rights of people of every age and level of health to enjoy the amenities that afford them safe living but it seems that Kalbar doesn't share this moral obligation and duty of care. To suggest as a mitigation strategy to minimize the impacts of dust that one should close one's windows or move to another area is surely not an example of the measures the new EPA act would approve to minimize dust impacts!

The EES itself, long and nervously awaited by the Community is nothing short of a slap in the face in its poor, unprofessional compilation and presentation. Many reports appear rushed, hastily compiled, and incomplete - and are an insult to the community who incurred further waste of time and more stress in reading the many documents with contradictions or constant repetition of the same information. Kalbar obviously didn't even check the documents carefully as you would expect of a professional organization, before releasing them for community perusal. The Kalbar staff in the office were often unhelpful and unapologetic in their dealings with community concerns about the too small print of the important Risk Register, the many inadmissible typos, such as 'wank' water instead of 'tank' water, pages in the wrong order or upside down.

The broader community, many still traumatized by the recent bushfires - (in one suburb of Bairnsdale, Sarsfield, 79 homes burnt down) - and dealing with loss of income and Covid restrictions- were pressed for time to read the 11000 page long document. It was obvious that Kalbar staff hadn't checked their consultants' reports before releasing the EES documents for the public - causing frustration and disbelief. And making the whole experience more time consuming and stressful for the community than it should have been – disrespectful, utterly unprofessional with no consideration given to the stresses people in the area have experienced from the fires, drought and Covid.

Photo 09

Photo of the 2020 bushfires seen approaching Bairnsdale. It burnt 79 homes within 10-20 km of the town and many opponents of the mine are still dealing with the loss of their homes, farms, businesses, fences and animals while coping

with the EES. Glenaladale was saved from this fire by prevailing wind however was ravaged in the 2014 bushfires. Photo 09 Bush Fires



*Ms Porter in her summary of the case for MFG described Kalbar's attitude as 'entitled'. I believe this sense of entitlement was largely responsible for Kalbar's intimidating behaviour during a public meeting they held on the 11th December 2019 in the TAFE building in Bairnsdale. One of the television stations had contacted MFG and its supporters to do a photo shoot before the meeting. It was not a protest although many car and truck drivers tooted in support when they saw the orange MFG signs. The MFG supporters were in full view of the police station across the road and the officers on duty could see them, but realising it was a peaceful event saw no reason to intervene. After the photo shoot the MFG group went into the meeting - as participants, not as protesters- and the meeting started without any problems. About ten minutes into the meeting two police officers arrived and interrogated a lady in the audience. Afterwards she said she had been terrified thinking they had come to tell her a family member had been in an accident or hurt. One of the Kalbar staff members had called the police even though the meeting had been proceeding peacefully without any sort of protest whatsoever. The lady the police spoke to had not even been involved in the photo shoot. The action of calling the police to the meeting without any sort of provocation was intimidating and threatening but above all it revealed the extent of the break down in the relations between the proponent and the community. The MFG supporters who had taken part in the photo shoot had been sitting quietly at the tables with the rest of the attendees and the police seeing no trouble had left almost immediately. It looked as though Kalbar had intended their action as a threat - a deliberate warning to the community that the police would be summoned if there was any sort of protest. The lady demanded a letter of apology and in his apology Mr Hugo said Kalbar was just following procedure.

*It is important to note here that the Kalbar staff member, possibly acting with the consent of the CEO, had no justification for their action to call the police. The only form of ‘protest’ action the opponents of the mine have engaged in over the past 6-7 years was ‘placarding’ i.e. holding placards and banners.

Prior permission and advice was always sought from both the Bairnsdale Police and VicRoads which would be easy for you to verify.



Photo 10: police officer called by Kalbar questions a participant at a public Meeting



Mine-free Glenaladale took its plight to Parliament House on Wednesday as it continues its #StopKalbar campaign, which aims to put a halt to the proposed mineral sands mine at Glenaladale. #5

Campaign taken to parliament

Mine-free Glenaladale took its #StopKalbar fight to Melbourne's Parliament House on Wednesday, more than 100 people opposed to the mine putting forward their case to the State Government and Minister for Planning, Richard Wynne, as to why the Fingerboards project should not see the light of day.

Parliament steps were covered in bright orange as a petition with 4500 signatures was tabled by Greens MP for Brunswick, Tim Road.

"I was greeted by dozens of people in orange and three wheelbarrows of broccoli and carrots," Mr Read said. "I was very impressed that they had gathered 4500 signatures and organised this very effective event. I hope the planning minister pays close attention and this mine doesn't go ahead."

Mine proponent, Kalbar Resources, is in the final stages of preparing an Environment Effects Statement (EES) for submission to the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) and last night discussed some of findings at a community information evening in Lindenow. (Details to follow in Monday's *Australian*.)

Kalbar chief executive officer, Dr Victor Hugo, is concerned Mine-free Glenaladale has been delivering "misleading" statements, including the number of jobs that could be at risk due to radioactive and highly toxic substances and the percentage of directly impacted landholders.

"The technical studies conducted as part of the EES have determined that the ore, tailings and overburden are not considered radioactive under Victorian or International radiation regulations. We have also not found levels of metals or other chemicals, which could be considered as 'highly toxic substances,'" Dr Hugo said.

"Whilst Kalbar Resources encourages public discussion and respects the right of community members and groups to voice their opinions about the project, we believe that factual evidence presented through the EES process is a more reliable basis for decision-making than the unsubstantiated claims that are being made by anti-mining interests."

Photo 11

Previous Page Peaceful Protest on the steps of Parliament House with posters and placards.

Below: another example of MFG placarding in a side street of Bairnsdale. Vic Roads had advised MFG not to placard along the main road for the sake of safety and Bairnsdale Police had advised not to wave placards to distract drivers and not to stand in shop entrances.



Photo 12

* How can our community have confidence in a company that has continually displayed so little professionalism and integrity, so little understanding of our community values, so little respect for the wellbeing of the residents, so little genuine concern about the many irreparable and harmful impacts of their project on our environment and amenity? They have failed to be transparent and to consult openly with the Community and to respect the knowledge and experience of its members, they have on too many occasions refused to listen to the advice of several generations of locals who have lived in the area for many years; failed, for example, to acknowledge the impacts of climate risk, the potential risks of the proposed mine to the unique environment of the region and the risk to the existing

industries of their vast water requirements. ..Ironically it is our Community which has been transparent in the advice they have given the proponent - on the nature of the dispersive soils, the East Coast Lows, the tunnel erosion and many other potential impacts - but their advice has been in most cases ignored. In the list of nine provisions identified in the New EPA Act, provision 7 is listed as 'Accountability', and states that members of the public should be provided with a good understanding of the project and be part of decisions. Kalbar has continued to claim that mining can co-exist with farming but perhaps another question should be asked: **If this project is approved can the community and the mining company co-exist?**

* Kalbar has angered and disgusted many in the community with their last minute offer of a \$2000 'Community Grant' to fund sporting and other groups which meet Kalbar's criteria of benefiting the community. The last application for the Grant is due in December 2021. This attempt to 'buy' community acceptance of the proposed mine from people who have probably not read the EES and know little about the impacts of the project and its risks implies that Kalbar is an accepted and established organization in the community, that they are here to stay, that the mine will be approved. The many examples of Kalbar's contemptuous treatment of the Community clearly demonstrate that these sort of inducements are not motivated by genuine care for the Community but are simply a means to an end - to win the social license that they have not succeeded in achieving during the past 7 years.

* Kalbar's expectation, frequently expressed in their EES, that the local and broader communities will cooperate in its suggested mitigation and rehabilitation activities if the project is approved, demonstrates an arrogant disregard for the extent to which they have alienated the residents from both the proponent and their proposals. Their proposed measures to mitigate and manage environmental damage, noise, visual pollution, dust impacts, and social dysfunction ignore the obvious feelings of resentment, disbelief and frustration of the community towards the proponent's expectation that community members will participate in committees to advise about rehabilitation strategies, to help facilitate social cohesion and cooperative engagement with Kalbar's workers and managers.

I have mentioned examples of Kalbar's lack of respect for the community and the environment. But over the past 7 years, as well as more recently in the EES the proponent has also provided **INACCURATE and MISLEADING INFORMATION and CONTRADICTIONS about the project which has confused the community and caused them to lose trust in both the proposed project as well as in the proponent.**

The EES document is full of unsubstantiated statements, assumptions and incorrect facts. These have led to the communities' lack of confidence in the professionalism, knowledge and expertise of the proponent. As I have mentioned, many of the mitigation strategies proposed in the EES rely on the cooperation, engagement and good will of the Community and will be an imposition on already angry and stressed people who will be reluctant to cooperate with the representatives of a proponent which has treated them with such blatant disregard. Due to this irreparable breakdown between the Community and Kalbar, the proponent's poor interaction with most of the stakeholders and local residents, the arrogance, contempt displayed by the Kalbar CEO S, the incidents of bullying, attempts to 'gag' the Community, the lack of respect for the experience and local knowledge of second and third generation farmers, the lack of transparent, genuine consultation, the constant changes to the project both prior to the EES and afterwards, these measures will fail.

Some examples of **the misleading information** Kalbar has given the community include the following:

- * Their attempt to misrepresent the value of the current agricultural uses of the land and to suggest it is more valuable for mining. Kalbar repeatedly underestimated the quality of the farmland in the area and the value of Farm production in order to strengthen their fallacious argument that the land is more valuable if used for mining. In the EES Agricultural report the value of vegetable production on the Lindenow Flats is underestimated despite much more accurate and higher figures being available and also quoted by the Local Member of Parliament and the Minister for Agriculture
- * On many occasions Kalbar misleads the community by giving too few details when passing on information. This minimizes the full impact of the information and is an attempt to reduce community concern. An example of this is evident in the following statement "no more than 40 trucks containing concentrate are expected to leave the project area every 24 hours" - which really meant, in effect, that there would be 80 truck movements (40 **return** trips) day and night passing homes, a school and a golf course, until the heavy mineral concentrate can be transported by rail. Those who have kept informed of the project from Kalbar's bulletins, will have followed with amazement the many changes to the project made with no explanation and in most cases no acceptable justification. It is however interesting to note that many of the changes appeared to be in response to the level of opposition in the community. The water required by the project was originally 4-5 Gl. As opposition to the project grew, the volume of water required gradually fell to 3 Gl to be increased to 3-4 Gl in the Webinar held just prior to the release of the EES, then dropped back to 3Gl in the EES. Then a 'mistake' in Kalbar's calculations was 'discovered' and this opened the way for

Kalbar to introduce the Centrifuge option rather than a vast tailings dam in the Perry River Catchment area which West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority with its State Government grant of 1.6 million dollars to restore and protect the Chain of Ponds totally opposed in its submission. This of course begs the question: *‘Why didn’t the Kalbar CEOs listen to the Community’s repeatedly expressed concerns about the tailings dam and the high risk adverse impacts on the Chain of Ponds at their public meetings?’*

*Another big change made to the project 2 years before the EES was released was the depth of the mine which initially was an average of 23m but the depth gradually increased to almost 50 m in the EES with no explanation for the change. A guess might be for the mining of rare earth metals. But the community is left wondering.....

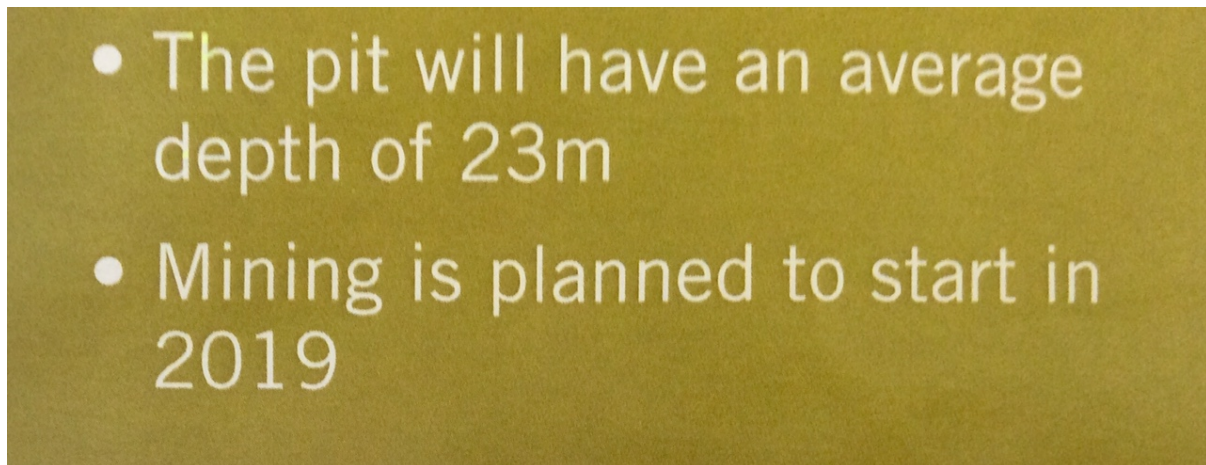


Photo 13

* Likewise Kalbar progressively increased the figure for the jobs created by the project in line with the increase in community opposition. The first CEO Rob Bishop gave a figure of 60 mining jobs and 180 indirect jobs.

*

Photo 14

Linderoth Community.

We anticipate that there will be 60 jobs at the mine with further employment by contractors for transport and other services. The Minerals Council of Australia estimates that for every job on a mine, a further two jobs will be created in the local community in the provision of goods and services.

This number has since increased in the EES to 200 construction jobs, 200 operational jobs and 200 indirect jobs. There appears to be no evidence to support the increase in jobs, the figures seem simply to be Kalbar's 'projections'. Comparisons made with other mineral sands mines of similar size and scale reveal that 30-40 workers are needed on site during operations during a 12 hour shift. As Kalbar is proposing 24/7 operations this of course would mean that up to 80 workers would be required in a 24 hour period.

Of course these early estimations of the size, depth of the mine, numbers of jobs created, are Kalbar's projections at the time and cannot be expected to be set in concrete - however there is no justification for the extent of the discrepancies, and it is understandable that the community found it confusing and difficult to accept these constantly changing figures over a 7 year period when Kalbar gave no explanation for them.

When a local Vegetable grower, John Hine, toured some of the mineral sands mines in WA and Victoria with Kalbar, he found that no more than 40 to 60 workers at most were on site during a 12 hour shift so that in 24 hours about 80 to 120 would be needed. This is far short of the 200 stated in the EES.

The two VFF reps who accompanied him at his invitation, can confirm these numbers. He also took the opportunity to ask why the mine did not operate at night and was told by the workers at all the WA mines that the surrounding communities would not tolerate 24/7 mining operations . **Our** community's concern about 24/7 operations has been ignored.

One important omission for the farming community is the lack of studies done by Kalbar to determine the risks on animals and stock as they inhale dust at ground level. Healthy stock is their livelihood and any impact on the health of their animals affects their income.

*Kalbar has made misleading comparisons between the proposed Fingerboards mine and other mineral sands mines in WA and Northern Victoria. These

comparisons have featured regularly in newspaper articles and in their presentations at public meetings and Kalbar has used these misleading case studies to prove that mining at the Fingerboards and horticulture can coexist but they fail to disclose the duration of mining, the size and depth of the mines, the topography and rainfall of the different regions, and the type of vegetable grown.

To explain this in more detail the vegetable farmers in the Lindenow Valley who are regulated by strict Quality Assurance measures, are concerned about air borne dust and contamination from silica as well as the contaminants from the heavy minerals in the exposed ore body. Yet they are told by Kalbar that there are many examples of mines of this type near Horticulture crops in other areas. But the examples they provide are misleading like the avocado farm near a mineral sands mine in WA. The cultivation of thick skinned avocados on trees being totally different to the broccoli, baby leaf, cauliflower, lettuce and beans which are the predominant crops of the Glenaladale/Lindenow area. These crops can be too easily damaged by dust blown from the mine. The WA mines Kalbar has used in comparisons were on generally flat stable ground unlike the proposed Fingerboards site which has a drop in elevation of 90 meters over the area and which consists predominantly of unstable sodium rich soils that are subject to severe tunnel erosion when disturbed. The WA mine sites rarely have a life of more than five years with depths varying from two to twenty meters – nothing as deep as the depth of 45 - 50 meters for Kalbar's mine. Vegetation removal and loss in the WA mines is minimal in comparison to the predicted removal of 242 Ha of native vegetation and at least 800 mature trees some of which are hundreds of years old for the Fingerboards mine.

Next page: Note the increases in size of the Fingerboards project area since the original size proposed of 1440 Ha. The original water required was 4 to 5GI

However a comparison with these Western Australian sites against Kalbar's proposal exposes some interesting facts.

MINE	LIFE Years	DEPTH Meters	PROJECT AREA Ha	VEGETATION LOSS Ha	WATER REQUIREMENTS Gl/Yr
Fingerboards	20	40	1440	242.7	Up to 5
Yalyalup	4.5-5.5		894		
Wonnerup	4				
Wonnerup Nth	5				
Wonnerup Sth	1.5		165		
Tutenup	5-6	15	232		2.5
Waroonna	4		184	21	2
Keysbrook	6.5-8	2-5	1366	182	1.8
Yarloop	1.5		19.7	2.7	
Dardanup	3.5-5	14	301	36.5	1.09

Photo 15

2. Yoganup: Mine life of 5 years (2004-9)

Fall of 30 to 50 meters across the mine site compared to the Fingerboards fall of 90 meters.

Maximum depth 20 meters compared to Fingerboards depth of 45-50 meters.

3. Gwindinup Fall of 30-50 meters across mine site compared to Fingerboards fall of 90 meters. ,

This mine together with the adjacent Happy Valley North and Happy Valley South mines have a total life of 9 years which according to **mining-atlas.com** is relatively long for the region. Compare the 20 years' life of the Fingerboards mine.

4. Cloverdale mine near Yoganup West and Yoganup has a 2 year life

Total of 350 Ha disturbed

5. Waroonna mine life of 4 years. Compare Fingerboards 20 years.

Project Area is 184 Ha. Compare size of Fingerboards project 1165 Ha.

Vegetation loss of 21 Ha

Water required 2Gl yearly compared to the 3-5Gl required for the Fingerboards mine.

6. Dardanup mine: Operated by Doral mines which is a subsidiary of Iwatani International Cooperation (Japan)

Life of mine 3.5-5 years

Depth of 14 meters

Size of Project area is 301 Ha the Fingerboards is 1625 Ha

Vegetation removed 36.5 ha compare 242.7 Ha for the Fingerboards

Water requirement 1.09Gl annually

7. Keysbrook Life of Mine 7 years compared to 15-20 years for Fingerboards.

Depth of 2-5 meters compared to 47-50 meter depth of the proposed Fingerboards mine.

Project area is 1,366 Ha but only 402 ha will be mined.

Vegetation loss of 110 ha and water required 1.8Gl annually, compared to 3- 5Gl required by the Fingerboards mine

8. Yoogatillup Operated by Doral mines. Water requirement is 1.6Gl per year.

Total area of 152 Ha of which only 96 Ha will be disturbed

Life of the mine is 3 years

*Kalbar not only failed on most occasions to engage fully and transparently with the community, but in 2019 - in the hope of suppressing growing community opposition, - Kalbar attempted to 'gag' the community. At a public information meeting Kalbar CEO Doctor Victor Hugo refused to answer community questions, saying: 'it will be in the EES.' Later at an East Gippsland Shire Council meeting Doctor Hugo, insisted that the Council not discuss the proposed mine with the community saying that it would be wrong for them to do so before the EES. He also wrote a letter that was published in the Bairnsdale newspaper in which he stressed that it was 'inappropriate for people to discuss the project before the EES'

Yet in all other formal documentation about the EES process the recommendation is that people should be exploring and questioning all the issues during the whole of the process and Kalbar should be consulting with the community throughout. When the EES was released the community was dismayed - not just because of the inadequate compilation and presentation but because instead of providing answers it largely lists what the proponent will do when it is approved and operating, thus putting in doubt the efficacy of many of the mitigation strategies. This uncertainty doesn't reassure the community that the measures are either appropriate, feasible, or indeed that they will be put into practice by the proponent.

*In addition, information provided in the EES is often incorrect e.g. “winter winds are predominantly from the North-West and summer winds most frequently occur from the South-East and South-West.” In fact it is the opposite. The bushfires which threaten the area in summer come from the north-west and are driven by the predominantly north westerly winds in summer and as a result of this there is a bushfire overlay on the area. The measurements of wind speeds by the weather station were wrong. Basic mistakes like this cast doubt on the credibility and accuracy of any modelling done by Kalbar.

*Wind speed measurements were compromised by the location of the monitoring station being protected by a hill some meters higher than the anemometer. The ability to accurately model dust control was heavily reliant on data derived from Kalbar’s Weather Station at the Fingerboards being accurate, and failure to collect and accurately interpret that data would have an impact on other studies.

Professor Helena Parkington has spoken in detail about Kalbar’s modelling - who could forget her words ‘garbage in, garbage out.’

Kalbar’s consultant described the location of Glenaladale as being north of Dargo - a careless mistake. How accurate was the information Kalbar gave to its consultants? And how well did Kalbar check their consultants’ reports?

*Kalbar’s horticulture consultant provided incorrect information about vegetable production - for Bruthen and Omeo instead of for Glenaladale - yet another mistake that erodes confidence in the proponent’s capability and professionalism.

*Kalbar has also made a worrying number of wrong assumptions in the EES that cast doubt on the competency of the proponent to manage such a complex project. And it is the community which will suffer the consequences of these. These assumptions include that:

- all farm properties have first flush mechanisms on their water catchment systems.

- all sediment will settle and will not be stirred up during heavy rain events or if the tank level is low.

*The proponent has failed to take into consideration the damage done by suspended sediments to pressure pumps as well as blocking filters - a serious omission which could have expensive consequences for farmers and irrigators.

*Too many management measures in the EES are misleading ‘feel good’ proposals - window dressing - designed to win approval for this project-for example, the intention to return 200 Ha to plains grassy woodland. This could only be achieved in ideal, perfect conditions - perhaps if the Fingerboards was in Camelot, and the soils that have to sustain the native grasses and plants were still

rich in the organic minerals and nutrients that Dr Jessica Drake has so well explained in her expert evidence on soils. Apart from the fact that before Gibson Roy begins his experiment, which is all this concept could ever be called, the land historically will have been grazed, sown to canola, deep ripped for a blue gum plantation, weeds sprayed with herbicides, trees ripped out after 14 years, then the land dug up and mined. Gibson Roy is an employee of Kalbar and not independent so if the mine closes prematurely and Kalbar walks away, Gibson Roy will not be funded to complete the rehabilitation of the native vegetation and it is unlikely that any of the local landholders, Authorities, or conservation Bodies will want to take responsibility for it. In all probability the land will be sold, and returned to pasture for grazing. If the project does run the whole 20 years, who will take on the responsibility of managing and funding the maintenance of the block for perpetuity, preventing it from becoming a fire hazard, controlling thistles, as well as the noxious African Love Grass, and controlling vermin. Members of Glenaladale Landcare already spray the Lovegrass on the roadsides, and neighbors adjoining Kalbar's land spray this fast spreading weed. It seems Kalbar hasn't considered any sort of herbicide regime to prevent invasion of Love Grass in adjoining properties.

*Kalbar fails to adequately identify and mitigate the impact of its mine infrastructure on the visitors who have to pass through the project area to access the Mitchell River Park, the popular Den of Nargun, kayaking on the River, rafting, Bush walking and other adventure activities, -so that they may be dissuaded from a return trip because of the visual impacts of the mine infrastructure. The mitigation strategies they have proposed - earth bunds, vegetation and other screens, are unlikely to reassure tourists and visitors passing through this well-known gateway to the Mitchell River National Park and the High Country, or compensate for the changed landscape denuded of trees and distant views of mountains and river. Mines are inevitably associated with industry and pollution.

*One of the most concerning omissions on the part of Kalbar is that it fails to identify the values held dearly by the community-the intense fear of the community for water security; its love of the environment and its aesthetic and landscape values; its appreciation of the recreational opportunities and the amenities which sustain wellbeing and the mental and physical health of its people. Fears for water security are held not just by the irrigators whose livelihoods depend on it but by everyone who has lived through the frequent years of drought, and experienced water restrictions, the sight of dying stock in dry brown paddocks, and the scarcity of good quality fresh vegetables.

*There is no acknowledgement of what action or mitigation strategy Kalbar will take if unplanned or unanticipated natural or manmade events occur e.g. a severe

East Coast Low followed by a flood; suspension of operations due to breakdowns of equipment; cuts in power supply; drop in prices of minerals; interruptions to equipment supply chains; intense damaging weather events; global recession. Will the proponent rehabilitate any still open mine void (unlike Iluka's Pit 23 and Pit 19 of the Douglas mine in Western Victoria) or will it walk away from its responsibilities?

*Kalbar has failed to demonstrate that it has the experience and competence to develop and operate **this** project in **this** environment.

There are multiple examples to illustrate this including the almost unbelievable mistake in the volume of water required for the project supposedly requiring the introduction of the Centrifuge option; the failure to take accurate wind speed measurements and this wrong data consequently used as the basis for other modelling; the financial error of \$147 million hastily corrected so that KOPL was no longer 94% foreign owned. Not to mention the recent Ausenko debacle. How could any community confidently accept a company capable of these sort of errors to manage a high risk project with so many irreparable impacts on a beautiful part of Victoria? How can any responsible Government approve a project that will wreak untold environmental, social and economic harm and misery on its people?

* Kalbar has failed to consider the property owners whose dams will be impacted by the water retention dams on gullies within the project area. Nowhere in their documentation have they examined the impact of these gully dams on the flows further down the gullies and the effect they will have on those dams. Nor does it seem that they have examined the impact of these dams on gully springs or the ecosystems that are reliant on them.

*The proponent neglects to say that 443 hectares of farmland will be removed from agriculture at any one time and this will equate to a total of about 1,350 hectares over the life of the project. However there is no acknowledgement of this when they so enthusiastically embraced the intention to develop a pastoral company at the fingerboards just prior to the Panel hearing

*Why did Kalbar introduce the Centrifuge process so late when they knew as early as December, if not months earlier in 2020 that they intended to use this method of 'dewatering' the tailings? Kalbar's Financial Statement in 2018 included reference to the testing of the use of Centrifuge pumps to dewater tailings. Kalbar's failure to keep the community informed in a timely and transparent way has had repercussions that have added to the anger and frustration of the Community and have fueled a growing **feeling of injustice that Kalbar is not 'playing by the rules'**. The community had in good faith openly expressed their concerns about the tailings dam at many community meetings, in the media,

and in submissions to state Government authorities with no response from Kalbar to their concerns until Kalbar introduced the completely new technology of Centrifuges to dewater the tailings. Ms Porter, the MFG barrister has described the proponent's attitude as 'entitled' - and given the aptness of this description the question must be asked again: is it possible for the community and proponent to co-exist and deliver a successful project with net community benefit, state benefit and minimal and acceptable environmental impacts? The Community is adamant that the answer is 'no' and have provided a multitude of evidence to prove this.

*Kalbar has failed to successfully demonstrate in its EES that it has met the accepted definition of sustainable development that meets the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

In fact, Kalbar has failed to demonstrate convincingly in the EES that they see sustainability as their corporate responsibility. Why?

The EES hasn't addressed the challenges of adherence to the modern corporate sustainability agenda, which is becoming critical to the mining sector with 'both risks and opportunities stemming from environmental and social pressures. Kalbar has failed to demonstrate that the company has an integrated sustainability strategy. If it had such a strategy it would have shown the Community that it is committed to high standards, often going beyond legal requirements - unlike the response they gave to the question about compensation for damage ie that any compensation will be in line with the applicable mining regulations. For example, instead of their mitigation measures for dust, noise and visual impacts on sensitive receptors - suggesting they close their windows or pack up and move, they could have promised to provide them with the equipment I mentioned previously, like clothes dryers, sound proofing, air conditioners. The proponent could have and **SHOULD** have consulted openly with the residents who will be impacted by the proposed mine and built a relationship based on confidence and trust with them. It could and **SHOULD** have incorporated in the EES strategies and actions to manage anticipated climate risks such as East Coast Lows. It would have reassured the local communities that it wouldn't compromise the ability of future generations to meet their economic, social and environmental needs. Examples of their possible needs might be intergenerational equity. and succession planning, having sufficient mature trees to provide shade and shelter to cope with the anticipated climate risks of hotter, dryer summers and heavier rainfall periods. Kalbar could have and **SHOULD** have made a better effort to understand, listen to, and engage with all the stakeholders to increase their knowledge of the company's goal to achieve consistent, high quality social and environmental performance across all its operations while at the same time limiting social and environmental impacts. It also **SHOULD** have realized that mining the" resource

at the Fingerboards was not a viable mining project and was not the best use of a resource that is compatible with the economic, social and environmental objectives of the State. That this project would not enhance community wellbeing nor safeguard the welfare of future generations

* Kalbar has failed to acknowledge the volatility and risks of the Covid crisis and to identify in the EES the need to build a high degree of flexibility and continued resilience into their short and medium term strategising. They have neglected to demonstrate the measures they will take to be ready to adjust operations up and down and not assume that recovery will be a continuous and linear process. Consideration should be given to which aspects of the strict separation, hygiene, control and business resilience measures adopted at the height of the crisis need to be maintained and stepped up or down as needed. Although Kalbar claims that it is a 'Covid safe' company, there have been several occasions on which it has violated basic Covid safety guidelines and carelessly put our residents at risk.

When several community members went into the Kalbar office to collect copies of the EES, even though they had to make an appointment for a particular time to come to the office, on at least one occasion community members encountered the staff at reception not wearing masks and Kalbar's Regional Manager who was in the office at the time had actually to be reminded by a community member to put on his mask when he came from the back room with a trolley loaded with the 14 heavy volumes of the EES documents for that person. [Names withheld]

Contractors working for Kalbar on several occasions did not wear face masks when they came to do drilling at the end of August 2020

Photo of drill rig workers without masks



Photo 16

On the 5th September 2020 when an elderly local farmer was picking up the EES documents from Kalbar's office, Kalbar Operations Regional Manager, breached the 1.5 meter social distancing regulations, pressing close to a man in his seventies while pressuring him to allow a drill rig on his land. The age of the man places him in a high risk demographic for Covid infection and the Regional Manager stood 800 mm from him.



Photo 17

*Kalbar has contributed to the creation of hostility and division between community groups because a number of staff they have employed are openly antagonistic towards the community members who are opposed to the mine. And Kalbar has done nothing to discourage this. Their hostility can be seen in the vandalism of the signs on the property of opponents of the mine, 'anti farming' slogans painted on public roads near the residences of Kalbar opponents, in disparaging comments on Facebook, and in letters written to newspapers.

*Kalbar continually attempted to pin the label 'anti mining group' on the opponents of the project to detract from their credibility. Candidates seeking election to be Councilors in 2021 received an email from Kalbar's CEO dated 2 October 2020. The stated purpose of the email was to 'correct misinformation' about the proposed mine from 'the main anti mining group'. Kalbar's motivation for the email has to be questioned. The CEO provided no evidence for his claims.

The opponents of the project including MFG and its hundreds of supporters are **not** 'anti-mining.' Rather, they are very aware of the need for the important products and technologies that the minerals enable. But Kalbar CEOs and staff persist in attributing this very misleading label to those who oppose the mine even though they have asserted many times both publicly in the media and in letters to the newspaper as well as openly at Kalbar run meetings that they are **only against**

mining in inappropriate locations. Kalbar know this too but persist in labelling them in this way in order to discredit their opposition

- * During an ABC Gippsland radio interview prior to the webinar on the 25 June 2020, Kalbar's present CEO stated that the moderator ,(name withheld) would be independent. If the moderator was truly independent, why did she provide responses to questions about suppliers and other information that Kalbar obviously hoped would help facilitate its chances of approval of the project.
- * This is something you would not expect an independent moderator to be doing. Her behavior before the webinar started was unprofessional, when she was recorded poking her tongue out in jest at someone (image attached although it has since been removed in Kalbar's edit. The Moderator also identified with Kalbar using words such as "we", "us", and "I can safely say on behalf of Kalbar", words or phrases not consistent with being independent. The way she spoke, and her demeanor, showed a level of familiarity that was also not consistent with someone who was supposed to be independent. A copy of that recording has been retained in spite of Kalbar having edited the original version.



Photo 18

Conclusion

On Wednesday 20 January 2021 Kalbar's CEO provided the following answer to the hypothetical question asked in its 'Kalbar Question & Answer' information: 'Do you believe you have a social license to operate? What **is** social license?

The CEO's Answer: 'We believe social license to be the informal 'license' granted to a company by various stakeholders who may be affected by the company's activities. Such a 'license' is based on *trust and confidence* - hard to earn, and easy to lose. Relationships between businesses and community need to be developed and nurtured and based on mutual *respect and understanding*, so social license is an ongoing and evolving process. Kalbar Operations is bound by

a strict code of conduct to ensure we demonstrate *respect, transparency, honesty and integrity* at all levels within the business and in all aspects of our operations and therefore confident that we are demonstrating and developing our social license.’

Fine words from the CEO but can he explain then why, no sooner had the new Project Director (name withheld) recently leased the home of one of our local community members, than Kalbar installed an imposing and threatening security camera inside the property gate - directed at the gate and the road. Kalbar has always claimed that it is part of the Community but this action reflects Kalbar’s true attitude to the Community and is ultimately evidence of the failure of its engagement process. That the house is located out of sight of the gate is not a plausible justification as no residences in this area have security cameras regardless of how far the home is from the road and the previous property owners had felt no need for this type of unfriendly warning at their front entrance in the many years they had lived there. This is hardly an example of the relationship of ‘mutual trust and confidence’, ‘respect and transparency’ the CEO claims the company strives to develop and ‘nurture’. It is ironic that Kalbar staff have so little trust in the community but they expect the community to trust their capability to manage a highly risky complex project on their doorstep.

Photo 19



BUT It is evident to the people of the local Glenaladale and wider Communities of Bairnsdale, that Kalbar has in fact clearly failed to establish a relationship with the community based on trust, confidence and respect or to meet its ‘strict’ code of conduct that it describes above and that it has not won,

nor even deserves to win, a social license. The ERC (Environmental Review Committee) will fail as a mitigation measure because Kalbar has failed to meet its obligations to consult with and engage with the community in a meaningful and transparent manner. There needs to be a high level of trust for the ERC to work which in light of Kalbar's past performance doesn't exist, in spite of the CEO's claim: "From the inception of the project exploration to the present day we have consistently engaged with all stakeholders openly and honestly" [Draft terms of Reference, Technical Note 027.

Kalbar has failed to establish a good working relationship with the Community. It has failed to demonstrate that it has recognized the value of the existing industries to the region and to the whole of Victoria, or to identify the insurmountable 'flaws in its intention to develop this high risk project – the lack of sufficient water available to support its project the topography of its location. The bitter opposition played out in the public arena is testament to the fierce determination of the Community to protect its environment, its social cohesion and the 'liveability' and amenity they currently enjoy. The protest is unlikely to abate if the mine is approved but will increase in intensity and acrimony when the project is unrolled, and the bitter and debilitating opposition will impact destructively on the community, the mine workers, people's mental health and their wellbeing.

Kalbar has failed to accept accountability and responsibility for the fear, devastation and stress it has wrought on the community. Throughout the many years of interaction with our communities and even after the release of its EES, it has shown unwillingness to recognise the concerns raised by the overwhelming number of community members whose trust and confidence in the proponent is now at rock bottom.

The cumulative effects of multiple stressors due to impacts of bushfires in 2014 and again at the end of 2019, six years of drought between those two events, and the economic, social and health impacts of Covid, have taken a huge toll on people in this region, especially on the high proportion of those already vulnerable due to their older age or by being directly impacted by the proposed mine.

There has already been a diminution of the natural values and the biodiversity of the area due to the impacts of the fires and the drought. Covid has increased people's appreciation and need for financial stability, and at the same time has created fear for loss of economic security in the future.

The unprofessional and distressing style of the proponent's communications to the public about the proposed mine in its wholly inappropriate location, together with the assertion that any potential risk will be successfully mitigated, reveals a complete denial by Kalbar of the real risks to the environment and the impacts on the health, amenity and future wellbeing of the local and wider communities.

This has resulted in bitterness between the few who support the project and the large number who actively sustain their opposition - division which will be impossible to repair unless the project is rejected. There has been breakdowns in friendships, hostilities exchanged on Facebook and acts of vandalism against those who oppose the project. The social and economic impacts of the project have been exacerbated by there being only a relatively short period of time since the fires, drought and Covid.

Landholders who have worked their whole lives to create a sustainable business and viable income for their family have lived with an axe hanging over their head for 7 stressful years and have been in the untenable position of not knowing whether the next generation will have a future on the farm or if they will have to leave the area.

The EES contains numerous deficiencies relating to incomplete design and detail, uncertainty about the potential benefits of many of the mitigation measures, their feasibility and extent of application. The lack of integrity, and professionalism of Kalbar staff, their poor understanding of both the community and the environment, does not auger well for either responsible management, community cooperation or the successful completion of the complex project proposed - if the project is approved. The anger, stress and frustration already felt by so many in the community will lead to resentment towards the mine workers, and Kalbar staff, and there will be little, if any, cooperation from landholders to ensure the success of the mitigation measures which have not yet been outlined in the EES with any clarity.

If the project is approved, fears of anticipated damage to the environment and loss of amenity, concern about changes to work plans or amendments to the planning scheme will lead to increasingly fractured social dynamics, multiple complaints and protests that will no longer be peaceful.

Even if Glenaladale was in Camelot and the location, topography, dispersible soils subject to susceptible to tunnel erosion and the weather didn't pose insurmountable threats to the environment and devastating impacts to the Ramsar protected Lakes, Kalbar's proposed mine will have disastrous, irreversible impacts IMPOSSIBLE TO MITIGATE. Many submitters have already told you enough about the environmental, economic and social ramifications of developing this mine and I add my pleas to theirs: please do not play Russian Roulette with our environment and our community by approving Kalbar's ill -conceived proposal. Kalbar's agenda lacks transparency, the mitigation measures the proponent offers

and continues to be allowed to offer serve as temporary band aids to patch up and conceal the many flaws and omissions as they crop up one by one.

END

Note: I was asked at the end of the talk about the location of the Processing Plant in the failed blue gum plantation and where I had taken the photo for my written submission. I explained that I took the photo from the main Fernbank Road and that in the last two weeks Kalbar workers had planted shrubs no doubt to create a screen for the Plant. I explained the difficulties of these plants becoming a satisfactory hedge 'screen' because of hot dry spells in summer, browsing by wallabies and wildlife and the length of time needed for the plants to grow to a suitable height. I forgot to mention another very important concern – that the shrubs have been planted on the firebreak which will make the trees and shrubs a fire hazard in hot windy conditions.

With huge thanks for looking again at the content of my talk, Astrid

I have included some photos on the USB stick which Tom has kindly downloaded for me. If I had time I was going to show you a brief snapshot of events that have taken place at the Fingerboards, from the location of saleyards, as a meeting place, and much later as a venue for Community 'fun' days. The landholder whose property adjoins the fingerboards donated some of his land to create a rest and recreation area and a meeting place for travelers to the High Country, tourists and local to leave their vehicles when carpooling to Bairnsdale or to Sale. Glenaladale Landcare and a group of locals planted shrubs and trees to enhance the area however most died in the years of drought that followed. I have also included a couple of newspaper articles on well known and beloved people who are part of the history of the place. I thought you might also be interested in an article about the 2020 discovery of Gunai Kurnai artifacts in the Mitchell River National Park area.

Fingerboards

Photo 20



**Anton family at The Fingerboards, East Gippsland, Vic
1916**

This photo was taken at the intersection of the Dargo-Lindenow and Fernbank-Glenaladale Roads, East Gippsland, Victoria, Australia. David Anton, farmer, stands next to his horses. His wife Flora and possibly their four daughters Bella, Mary, Maud and Dora are seated in the wagon. Grand daughter May sits on Topsy. Grandson Hugh Morrison is seated facing the horses.

Families and friends met in their horse and carts at the Fingerboards before travelling to bairnsdale.

Photo 21 Shirley McKenna and her dairy farm

Shirley McKenna is heart and soul Glenaladale

Shirley McKenna (nee Wilson) turns 86 this July and for all but her first four months has lived at the same place – her beloved farm next to Moilun Creek at Glenaladale.

Shirley's father moved his family to the property in November 1932. At the time almost all the landholders at Glenaladale ran mixed farms with sheep, cattle, the occasional pig, some cropping and always a milking cow or two. Shirley recalls there were 500 dairy farms between Glenaladale and Maffra in the early days with a van picking up cream once or twice a week (three times in summer) with the skim milk left behind fed to paddy calves.

Despite the lack of irrigation, most small farmers planted a variety of crops, particularly maize, beans and sugar beet.

She remembers during the World War II 'navy beans' being one of the most important crops. These were a type of haricot bean that doesn't lose its value during processing. The crops were purchased by the American Army.

Shirley has always enjoyed the challenges of farm life. A shrewd and resourceful woman, she grew up knowing the satisfaction and reward of hard work.

Her father was a shearer and worked away for six months of the year leaving Shirley, her mother and her sister, Marjorie, to run the farm.

Like so many other youngsters of the time, the farm income was supplemented by money the girls made from trapping and selling rabbits – money Shirley always banked. These skills and determination served her well when her father died unexpectedly of a stroke at the young age of 54, leaving 21-year-old Shirley to manage the farm with her mother (Marjorie had left some years before to work in Melbourne) – a task they performed admirably and independently, only getting outside help in during shearing times.

At the age of 17, Shirley met her husband to be, John McKenna, at the old Glenaladale Post Office (now owned by artist, Tony Power).

John was several years older and had been away to war from the ages of 19 to 23, including serving in New Guinea for four years.

John's family owned a well-known local property on Beverleys Road – 'Larapinta'.

John's own mother had died when he was only 18, and his father, a horse trader who travelled overseas a lot, had bought Larapinta to give his three sons a more stable future.

John and Shirley married when she was 24 and went on to have seven children in 15 years.

A mutual love of farming, hard work and sensible investments saw them increase their holding from the small mixed farm of 175 acres with next to no water to a highly productive 850-acre dairy farm, now being managed by their youngest son, Tim.

Shirley observes it took a long time to build up the farm because land at the Glen rarely comes up for sale – once people are there they very seldom want to leave.

The McKennas' first purchase of extra land in 1959 helped them start the transition to dairy farming. They were still milking by hand until 1961 and it was only in 1977 that they sent their first 'milk' away and could consider themselves dairy farmers.

Farm life was satisfying, but seldom easy, and Tim recalls the impact of several extended droughts on his parents and their gratitude to a neighbour, Gordon Hill, who used to let them bring their stock through his paddocks to the creek twice a day for water when theirs had dried out.

The experiences of drought made John McKenna passionate about conserving water, but it wasn't until 1990 that the family was able to put its first big dam on the farm.

This was followed by another four large dams and a good pivot irrigation system that has made dairying so much easier and more efficient than in the earlier days.

John died 15 years ago of liver cancer, leaving a massive gap in the family's lives, but Shirley and Tim continued to farm the property, with Shirley playing an active part in feeding calves, cleaning out the dairy and all sorts of odd jobs until persistent poor health made her slow down last year.

She has the time now to share some of her stories and recollections and spend time with her children and grandchildren. Stories of changing times, of childhood on the farm, school days at Glenaladale, social occasions, droughts and bushfires and transport in the old days.

Though not a keen reader, Shirley is an avid observer of people and can recall almost everyone who has lived in Glenaladale over the past 85 years. Her schooling took place at the Glenaladale School – a tiny, one room weatherboard schoolhouse, set amid the bush further up the Dargo Road and always at risk during fire season.

Most of the children walked to school, although the occasional one was lucky enough to ride a horse.

The school had a history of opening and closing depending on the number of children in the area. The lack of a school bus at the time meant when the school was closed the children had to be taught by correspondence or miss out altogether.

Shirley admits she was never much of a scholar so was not overly upset when the school closed only a few years after she started, when three families left the district, taking their nine children with them.

She was always far happier helping on the farm that stuck in a classroom. Social life at the Top Glen revolved around tennis and excursions to the caves (Den of Nargun).

Shirley recalls there being three tennis courts in the area, at the Higgins property (Meri Meri), at Walker's Post Office and another at the Glenaladale School. She recalls young



Shirley McKenna's father, William Wilson, and legendary bull, 'Willy'. (rs)



Shirley McKenna's childhood home, more or less where her current house stands today. (rs)

people such as Mary Banks (Schumann) and Jessie Schrader travelling for miles on horseback from Iguana Creek to Meri.

After the day's tennis, Mrs Higgins would give them all tea and they'd set off home again in the dark.

Tennis at the Glen school would often see upwards of 80 people playing and spectating, sharing afternoon tea, a game of cards or the occasional 'hop' afterwards with music provided by Jack Davidson on his piano accordion.

The caves were popular outside Glenaladale and many tourists stopped at Shirley's parents' farm for directions – especially during the war years when fear of invasion led to road signs being removed.

Many of the local families had husbands or sons at war who were recognised in an honour book that was proudly displayed in a glass cabinet beside the chimney place of the old school.

The book disappeared when the school closed, much to the dismay of many of the locals.

Shirley says it was nowhere near as hard to make a living in those days because there wasn't much to spend money on – no power, no phones.

The rates were a pittance and most families grew their own vegetables, milked a cow, made their own butter, killed their own meat and baked their own bread.

For those that weren't so self-sufficient there were regular deliveries of bread and meat to the Glenaladale Post Office.

She recalls old Mr Waller at the post office chiding a customer who had commented about his not having a vehicle: "If they all paid like you Mrs xxx, I wouldn't even have a horse and cart!"

Never one for much travel, but none-the-less very independent, Shirley did not get into Bairnsdale often. The family did very well on homegrown meat and vegetables, dairy produce and of course the delicious bread that Shirley continued to make until she was 65.

Very occasionally the family took advantage of the twice weekly deliveries to Walker's Post Office by the Lindenow butcher and baker.

Those who didn't drive the trip to

Bairnsdale depended on getting a ride in a friend's car, or if that wasn't possible, catching Harry Schumann's secondary school bus to Walpa, waiting there while Harry picked up the local children and took them to Bairnsdale, before coming back and collecting the Glenaladale passengers.

It was a short day in town with the process reversed for the afternoon pick up. However, it did give people the chance to catch up on all the latest news while they waited for the bus at Walpa.

The driver of the cream wagon doubled as a local 'shopper' and would often do grocery runs for the Glen people, and according to Shirley, would even be relied on to do such things as buy children's school shoes.

Fire was a constant threat throughout the summer months and Shirley has vivid memories of the 1965 bushfires that started over towards Valencia Creek and tore across East Gippsland before finally being stopped at Bruthen by a change of weather.

Shirley recalls the weeks of anxious waiting after the first fire took off, and then the final holocaust that some say was caused by fire spotting out from a backburn that had been done up towards Cobhanah to try to protect the community.

Fire tankers came from everywhere to help the local community out with most meeting at the Fingerboards to work out a strategy for attack.

According to Shirley, one of the wags got a great laugh from the other volunteers when he roundly stated, "To burn or not to burn, that is the question".

The McKennas lost all their fences and pastures but the house was saved by a dozer line, the tracks of which can still be seen today.

Although impacted by the ash and debris of the 2006 Alpine fires (the house was covered with ash and all the tanks had to be cleaned out) and some earlier fires, it wasn't until the 2014 Glenaladale-Mount Ray fires that the McKennas' property was burnt again, along with so many other properties at Glenaladale, including Larapinta and Meri Meri.

Shirley has kept rainfall records every day for over 65 years and noted the similarity between conditions

leading up to the 2014 and those of 1965 – lush spring growth followed by no rain to speak of for a couple of months in summer.

Like the '65 fires, the threat of the earlier Mr Ray fire loomed large for a couple of weeks, with locals' anxiety and fear about it not having been put out, being realised when it finally broke loose on February 9.

Fortunately for the McKennas, their irrigated paddocks meant the damage was nowhere near as bad as the 1965 fires. Others were nowhere near so lucky with many of Shirley's friends and neighbours losing houses, sheds, yards, machinery, fences, pasture and stock.

Shirley finds it hard to believe that no one died during the fire – there were certainly a few close calls, including three cars of tourists returning from Dargo, who were fortunate enough to be able to get refuge at the McKenna's dairy while the fire raged all around them.

Shirley has seen a lot of changes in her time at the Glen. The power was connected in 1965, and the Dargo Road was sealed 35 years ago. The farm is well watered and a picture of productivity.

The school has gone, there's no butcher in Fernbank or Glenaladale and no store at Walpa. You won't find children riding their horses to school or playing hopscotch on the road.

The lower Glen (Iguana Creek) is now the hub of the social life. The old timers still wish the likes of Tom Morrison was around to throw a match around to reduce fuel, and it's still very hard to buy land at the Glen.

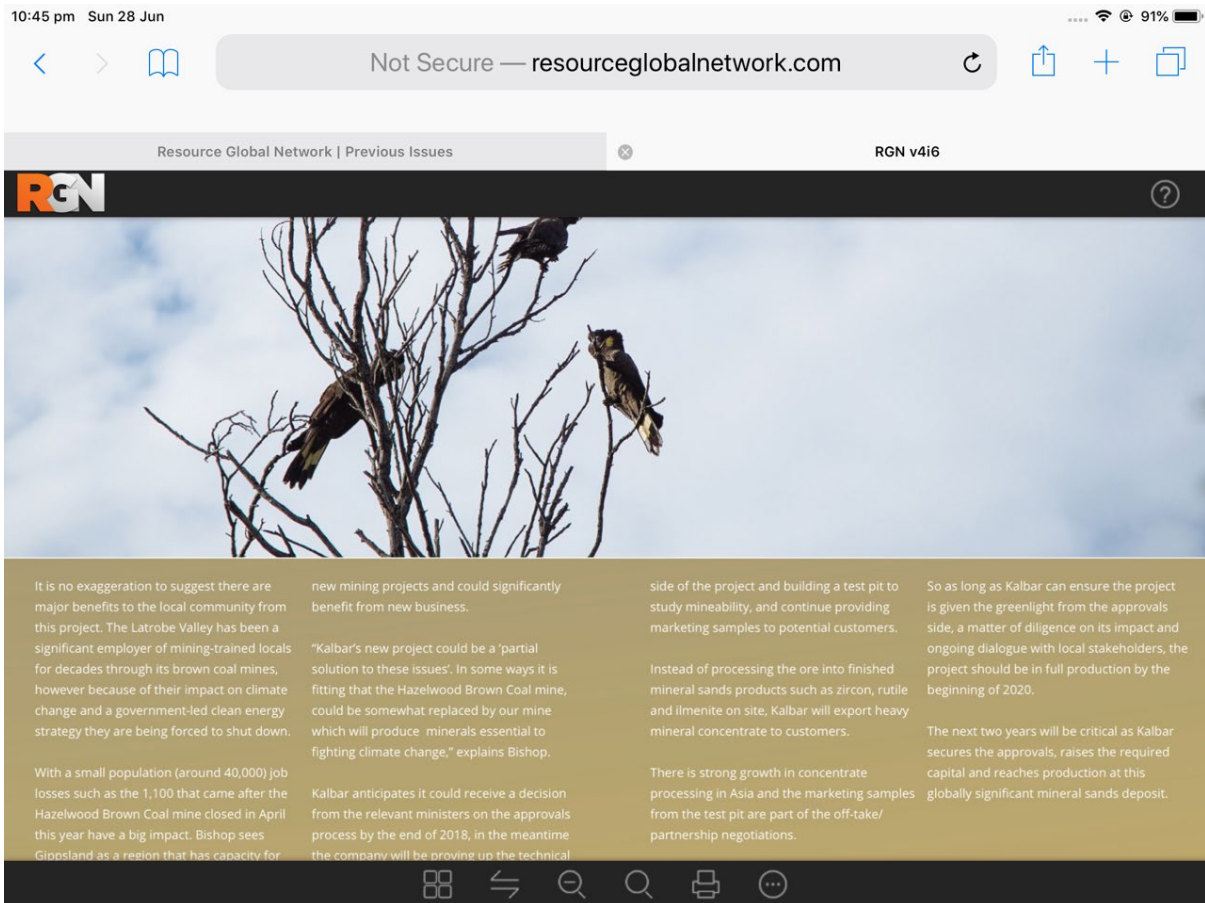
When people get there they just done want to leave.

One thing that hasn't changed over the years is Shirley's keen interest in local issues. She has been keeping abreast of the proposed mineral sands mine and cannot understand how anyone could think it is a good idea.

Water, traffic, dust, damage to pastures, loss of community and many other issues concern her.

"I just can't see how it will be any good at all for the people of this area," she said.

"What's the point of a handful of short-term jobs when so much else is likely to be destroyed forever?"



Article about Kalbar in A Mineral Sand Mining magazine which reveals their intention to employ out of work miners in the Latrobe valley. What happened to their boast of being a ‘local employer’?

Photo 23

DAY AT THE FINGERBOARDS
1ST SEPTEMBER 2018

COME BE INSPIRED
 - LOCAL PRODUCE
 - FLORA TALKS
 - EXPLORING HISTORY
 - KIDS ACTIVITIES
 - KIDS ART 8X10 'INSPIRED BY GLENALADALE' EXHIBITION
 (KIDS BRING YOUR WORK ALONG OR CREATE IT ON THE DAY)
 - ART WORKSHOPS
 NATURE SKETCHING (JUST BRING BOOK AND PENCILS)
 PHOTOGRAPHY (BRING CAMERA OR SMARTPHONE)
 WATERCOLOUR

FREE ENTRY
 10-3PM @ THE FARM NEAR THE FINGERBOARD SIGN (FOLLOW THE ARROWS)



A band of Glenaladale Landcare Group volunteers planted 300 shrubs at the Fingerboards on the Dargo Road yesterday morning. The Fingerboards are well known as a stopping off point for travellers, and in 2016 the Glenaladale Emergency Management Group constructed a shelter complete with information board to inform the public of attractions and events happening within the area. The next event planned for the district will be held on Sunday, August 20, at 2pm when a local history event will be held at Fernbank and the Landcarers invite the community along to the informal get-together in the Fernbank Hall to listen to local members of the Fernbank and district area and tell the gathering how it was in years gone by. PICTURED: Julie Webb, Tony Power, Sue Mills and Steve Mills. K962-2



Eva Banks and Astrid Rose busy planting. K962-4

Photo 24

Above: Planting Day at the Fingerboards recreation reserve

Below: Photo 25

•Stories from Glenaladale•

•Meet Tony Power•

Tony Power has been living in Glenaladale in East Gippsland for 21 years. Previously Tony grew up in Port Melbourne and then lived in East Burwood for 29 years.

A toolmaker by trade who studied at RMIT, Tony used to visit his cousins who had a holiday home on Newlands Arm and he used to sail on the Lakes. He loved the area so much that when he retired he moved from Melbourne to East Gippsland.

Being a creative and skilful craftsman, Tony originally looked for vacant land to build his own home from local materials. However when he found an old pioneer style house consisting of 2 adjoining cottages, he set to work to renovate the cottages and turn them into a comfortable dwelling with a studio, workshop, double garage and a delightful garden showcasing some of his artistic creations including an enormous, lifelike nest with 2 huge white eggs. To unify the twin cottages Tony grew a living 'roof' made of wisteria vines which in spring drapes the pergola over the courtyard between the cottages like a soft blue awning. In the garden Tony has planted Pin Oaks and Manchurian Pears and also a small orchard.

The cottages have an interesting history. Frederic Walker built the first of the two cottages to house his family and when the growing family needed more space the second cottage was built. Frederic was very enterprising and ran both a post office and butcher shop from the cottages. Of course both businesses are long gone.

During the time he has spent living in Glenaladale, Tony has produced some unique pieces of art from a variety of materials. When Shakespeare's play "The Tempest" was performed at Stratford for the Shakespeare Festival, Tony built the hull of a shipwrecked boat in steel on the Arts Trail in Stratford Park.

For an exhibition organised by 'Friends of the Gippsland Lakes' (FOGL) to promote the Lakes as a venue for nature he built a 4 foot tall waterbird which he placed in the lake near the Grange. People visiting by boat would come across the bird seemingly 'wading' in the Lake.

Tony loves to challenge the imagination and create oversize objects found in nature that will make people stop and look at them. He has worked in the Bairnsdale Art Gallery in Nicholson Street and as part of an exhibition with the environmental theme 'The Bird, the Bush and the Birdwatcher' he crafted a huge four foot diameter nest containing two huge, larger than life eggs. This nest is now perched in a large tree stump near the entrance to Tony's home in Glenaladale and looks so realistic that first time visitors are rewarded with an unexpected treat.

Tony also managed to surprise the owners of the 'Long Paddock' cafe in Lindenow with the nest. When, as a regular visitor to the cafe found out that Tania the owner had given birth to a baby girl, he took the nest with its eggs to the cafe and when she arrived at the cafe from the hospital with her new baby, she saw not only the nest but that Tony had painted the eggs pink!

Glenaladale is well and truly home for Tony now and he hopes to stay here for many more years his only real concern is, in his own words, 'I came here for the peace and quiet and the beautiful undulating country but if the proposed mineral sands mine in the area proceeds it will affect my enjoyment of the area.'