

Submission Cover Sheet

Fingerboards Mineral Sands Project Inquiry and Advisory
Committee - EES

10

Request to be heard?: Yes

Full Name: Alexander Arbuthnot

Organisation:

Affected property:

Attachment 1:

Attachment 2:

Attachment 3:

Comments: See attached submission.

Kalbar. EES Fingerboards Mineral Sands Project.

Alex Arbuthnot AM, Summary/ Comment. Sept. 2020

1. Project Summary.

Mine will extract 170 m tonnes zircon, titanium minerals & rare earths, \$5 billion income over 15-20 years, \$190 m capital exp.- 400 jobs. Cover 1000 hectares & 160 ha's for facilities.

Victoria has a proven history of successful mineral sands mining. The MRDA (Mining Act) requires the land to be restored back to farming & payments to landholders are very progressive.

2. Environment Effects Statement (EES)

Vic. Minister in Dec. 2016 requested an EES covering- Biodiversity & native veg, surface & ground water, existing land uses, amenity & landscape, cultural values. Also Fed. Govt requires accreditation under EPBC Act, (Ramsar wetlands/ radiation). & Project to have no/little impact on Gippsland Lakes Ramsar site.

3. Community Consultation.

A number of community meetings & workshops were held. VG Agreed to est. 'Environmental review committee' and a Community reference group. VG & support.

- Safe communities & Safe roads a priority. VG
- A community complaints procedure to be developed. VG *and recommend a one person point of contact at Kalbar.*
- Earth bunds constructed to reduce noise.

4. Agriculture.

Agric. Impact Assessment carried out by Hamilton SierraCon. Note Melb. & Rutherglen Offices & considerable exp. in mining & energy projects.

- 19 landowners, av. area impacted 443 Ha's, av. income loss \$58K, - \$83K,
 - *should add solatium as outlined in the Act.*
- 9 major impacts.
 - . Compensation (as per MRDA & VFF provides VG information). better defined as 'Payments' – *should incl. 'use of/ access to asset.*
 - . scheduling operations. – *recommend an Access Agreement.*
 - . test pit & monitoring. *Support.*
 - . Progressive rehabilitation. VG *-support – should include long term assessment of rehab. Works.*
 - . EMP (Enviro. Management Plan) - VG
 - . Landowner engagement. *Must include Landowner sign off.*
 - . Stakeholder engagement with vegetable industry. *Support.*
 - . include safeguards & assessments for landowners post mining. *support & note above comments.*
 - . Traffic procedures, farm & local – VG.

- Environmental Management Framework. (EMF) – cover 3 key areas. General enviro. management, monitoring of rehab., stakeholder engagement.
 - . a direct & continuous Kalbar point of contact for each landholder. VG
 - . contact to have strong skills & keep good records etc. VG
 - . provide notice & regular updates.
 - . Kalbar have regular contact & feedback.
 - . Direct contact with landholders on rehab. – pasture species & fert. etc
 - . Have dispute/grievance resolution procedures. VG
 - . Establish formal review mechanisms. Ie. Enviro.review & Community Ref. Groups. VG
- Roads, Traffic & Transport. – 80 B- double trips/day when operational.
 - . 3 proposed routes studied. & preferred to a new Fernbank East rail siding. – *note some rural people raise concerns on inc. traffic issues. I always maintain we should accept the activity & use the situation to obtain improved roads & new facilities – rail & or ports etc.*
 - . Develop a Transport Operational Plan. Support.
- Land Use & Planning. - Project not likely to lead to inappropriate land use conflicts.
 - . note a temporary loss of agric. production on 443 Ha over 20 years. No risk of permanent loss & farmers will receive income loss compensation.
 - . Statutory obligation to return land back to farming. *And suggest a landholder tour of successful farm rehab programs in other mined areas in Vic.*
 - . Planning scheme amendment to cover any works outside the ML area. Ie water pipeline, new roads over farmland, vegetation removal.
- Radiation – see comments later.
- Groundwater. (GW) EMM Consulting. Modelling & Supply Options.
 - . investigated Latrobe aquifer option.
 - . some GW mounding may occur.
 - . drawdown pressure is minor & no threat to 3rd party users & or the Enviro.
 - . Impacts managed by GWP & accountable to EMF. VG

5. Horticulture.

RMCG undertook the horticulture impact assessments (& a VG consultancy) & recognising the importance of the Lindenow flats reputation for high quality fresh vegetable production.

- Study included; consultation, tech. reports. case studies, risk assessments.
- Key issues – dust, contaminants, water quality & availability, clean – green image, CC impacts etc.
- Study outcomes.
 - . dust – management processes. OK

- . contaminants -OK
- . Water – management plan OK
- . Irrigation water issues- covered by SRW & Mitchell River has unallocated water (6 GLs)
- . Clean – green image – case studies in Northern Vic (Wemen) & WA show that coexistence can be successful. Agreed AA
- . Labour – Project may attract labour, however competition for seasonal workers may be a negative. On going discussions occurring.
- . Traffic issues – covered by improved roads & a railway siding would be a benefit.
- . CC – Study identified risk of lower rainfall impact on irrigation water availability. *Note ClimateWorks & Faggian Studies identified no rainfall losses for East Gipps. & maybe inc. in rainfall. AA*
- Specific recommendations. 6, incl.
 - . est. a community working group (CRG) – VG
 - . est. an enviro. review committee. VG
 - . support local Harvest Festival & other events. VG
- Note the EMF has clear measurable accountabilities.

6. Rehabilitation.

- 3 major points (data – R & trials etc) – *should include a long-term review of rehab.*
- Note major aim – ‘establish landforms that are at least as productive as currently present’ *perhaps delete ‘at least’!*
- Rehab. priorities. VG. *Note rehab. can be a continuing program & in some cases may improve land reforming.*
- Agric. land – *ensure weed control program.*
- Native reveg. Program. *Suggest a local Landcare partnership. AA*
- Final landform will reflect the agric. landscape with a natural appearance.

As mentioned above rehab programs with mineral sands projects have a VG record in Vic. & note under the Act a Govt. bond is required.

7. Socioeconomic.

The SEIA undertaken by Coffey Services Aust.

- 3 Aims – community health, social amenity & values. VG
- Community meetings & Workshops.
- Findings incl. that greater regional impacts (travelling visitors) were an issue.
- Note Noise & Vibration study by Marshall Day Acoustics & mitigation strategies – accountable under EMF.

8. Radiation

Study done by SGS Australia. & noting Kalbar requires a licence under the Vic. Radiation Act 2005.

- A very complex issue as natural radioactivity also occurs.

- Noting the community concerns & rallies held with the Mallee/ Wimmera Projects.
- And a social L issue also.
- Outcomes – generally negligible.
- Kalbar – required to have. Radiation Management Plan, Radiation Waste Management Plan & a Radiation Environmental Plan. VG
- Note also the Human Health Study by Coffey & covered by EMP.
- And 4 COPs stipulations incl. with Licence.

9. Landscape and Visual.

Study done by Urbis. - Visual impacts, recreational values of the Mitchell River National Park.

- Some sensitivity viewpoints identified within project area- tourist roads (Fernbank & Dargo) but visual impacts low to negligible.
- Est. vegetation screens, overburden management, temporary bunds.
- Accountable to EMF. VG

10. Cultural Heritage.

Study done by Andrew Long & Assoc. Archaeological evidence suggests human occupation over thousands of years & local historical significances with past grazing.

- Desktop Rs undertaken incl. with VAHR.
- Site visits conducted with Gunaikurnai (GLaWAC).
- No registered historical sites but stone artifacts identified on 8 locations.
- Outcomes – Prepare a Cultural Plan (CHMP) acc. to EMF. VG

A very comprehensive & professional EES Report. The Project will provide outstanding benefits to the Gippsland Region and the Victorian economy. As a farmer I do understand there may be some personal concerns & distress; however, experience in other parts of the State indicate that landholders can receive many positive benefits & financial rewards.

All the best Kalbar.