
Request to be heard?: No - but please email me a copy of the
Timetable and any Directions

Full Name: Nicholas Blandford

Organisation:

Affected property:

Attachment 1:

Attachment 2:

Attachment 3:

Comments: Dear Inquiry and Advisory Committee members, I am writing a submission to oppose the development of the mineral sands mine located in Glenaladale. I believe the risks posed to surrounding agricultural industries by the development of the mine are overwhelming. Unless the most robust conditions are imposed, the operation of the mine will always take priority of agriculture and this will always be detrimental to the ability for agriculture to function in a safe and sustainable way. I have moved back to the East Gippsland district, in which I grew up in, five years ago to start my career as a farmer and raise a family. I have started to move into leadership positions and advocate for young farmers and the role farmers need to play in adapting to and mitigating their effects on climate change. In that time the specter of the mineral sands mine has always hung over the district. Many of us could see the benefits that this mine could potentially bring with high value minerals and the jobs associated. However, I don't think anyone believed the project would be successful as if ever there was a place that open cut mining should not occur, this is it. Now, I have come to the realisation that a community wholeheartedly opposed to this mine may not be enough to stop it from going ahead. As part of my advocacy as a young farmer, I believe that sustainable agricultural land use and development is paramount to the future of our community, country and planet. It is a basic human right to be able to have access to safe food and this should extend to being able to produce food in a safe environment. The statement from the Agricultural Impact Assessment, as part of the environmental effects statement, that "Agriculture is not a protected land use" shows that even though consideration can be taken to minimise impacts of the mine on agriculture there is no way that this mine can or would try to eliminate all impacts on agriculture. Fundamentally, this mine will impinge on the basic human right to safe food. On a personal level, the access to safe and reliable groundwater is what the business that my family runs and I intend to continue relies upon. If this resource becomes unavailable then the ability to conduct this business becomes untenable. As the impacts of climate change take hold and ground water recharge rates decline this resource becomes even more important. For the stated operation of the mine to occur, up to three gigalitres of water from the same aquifer that our farm accesses will be required every year. I have grave concerns that this water resource will be over allocated and the aquifer will not cope with the huge burden placed on it by this mine. Thank you to the panel members for the opportunity to make this submission, Regards, Nicholas Blandford