

Submission Cover Sheet

Fingerboards Mineral Sands Project Inquiry and Advisory
Committee - EES

164

Request to be heard?: No

Full Name: Angela Rintoul

Organisation:

Affected property:

Attachment 1: Kalbar_EES_Rinto

Attachment 2:

Attachment 3:

Comments: See attached submission

24 October 2020

Submitted online

Dear Inquiry and Advisory Committee members,

EES for the Fingerboards mineral sands mine project

I write in reference to the EES for the Fingerboards mineral sands mine project. I strongly oppose the mine.

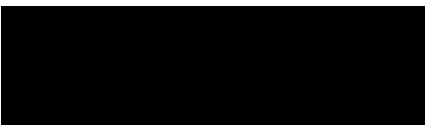
I am a public health academic at Deakin University. I grew up in Sale and my friends and their families still live in the Lindenow area.

Kalbar Operations Pty Ltd, a new company with no experience operating a mine is proposing an enormous open-cut mineral sands mine at the Fingerboards, 20km north west of Bairnsdale in East Gippsland. This incorporates a 13 square kms plateau above the Mitchell River and the vegetable fields of the Mitchell River Valley. Kalbar's geochemistry report lists a number of radioactive and carcinogenic substances that will be present in the dust generated. The \$155 million per year Mitchell River Valley vegetable industry employs up to 2,000 people is as close as 500m downwind from the mine. The Mitchell River, the source of water to irrigate those vegetables and make ice to transport them is 350m downwind (between the mine and the vegetable fields). Kalbar needs over 3 billion litres of water annually for processing and dust suppression for 15 years. This shows how much water is needed to control the dust which will potentially pose major human and animal health risks. Kalbar's high need for water could lead to earlier and tighter restrictions on users reliant on water from the Mitchell River (such as the horticulture industry) and is likely to impact the health of the Gippsland Lakes from reduced fresh water.

There are concerns that jobs in tourism and agriculture are at risk from potential contamination of the river and crops. If the three billion litres of water Kalbar requires annually was redirected to growing vegetables, three times more jobs could be created than Kalbar's proposal. These would be long-term sustainable jobs to grow food. According to National Farmers Federation statistics, every job created in agriculture leads to 4.2 indirect jobs. According to Kalbar, one mining job leads to one indirect job.

This proposed mine is considered to be in a highly inappropriate and dangerous location, threatening our food, water, health and already reduced river flows.

Sincerely,

A solid black rectangular box redacting the signature of the sender.

Angela Rintoul, DPH, MSoc Sci, BA, VPHTS, CF

Research Fellow, Deakin University