

# Submission Cover Sheet

Fingerboards Mineral Sands Project Inquiry and Advisory  
Committee - EES

69

---

Request to be heard?: No

**Full Name:** Lynne & Ray Blom

**Organisation:**

**Affected property:**

**Attachment 1:** EES\_submission\_-

**Attachment 2:**

**Attachment 3:**

**Comments:** see attached submission

Dear Inquiry and Advisory Committee members

We are writing this submission about the EES for the proposed Fingerboards mineral sands mine project, and our opposition of the proposed mine as outlined in the reasons below.

Although we do not live in East Gippsland, we have been regular visitors to the area over many years and know the Fingerboards area well. It is a beautiful, idyllic and peaceful area within regional Victoria which is why it is such a drawcard to visitors like us. To desecrate the area would be an injustice to the community who live and work in the area, along with the many catastrophic effects that would impact on the environment.

This area is prescribed for residential and agricultural land use. The constant noise, vibration and light from a mine which operates 24 hours per day 7 days a week would be detrimental to the anxiety levels of the residents and would impact on their daily lives having adverse effects both mentally and emotionally. The noise levels will be a problem and we do not accept that this would not be the case. We have found the quiet of the area to be exceptional and this highlight is one of the area's major assets. The proposed mine will turn away visitors to the area.

Heritage listed Mitchell River is just a stone's throw away from the mine site and one would accept that there are many conservation projects and environmental programs within the Mitchell River National Park. Visitor's flock to the area to experience the ambiance whilst partaking in the many activities of the area including walking trails, lookouts, canoeing, cycling, fishing, caravanning, camping and horse riding.

The Den of Nargun is a popular tourist destination within the park. The effects of having toxic substances leached or indeed flooding into the waterways is frightening. How can anyone allow a mine on its doorstep and take the risk that this would not pose non-renewable environment damage. Tourism is a huge part of East Gippsland and if the mine proceeds we will not be visiting the area or indeed Victoria again. There are many other beautiful places in Australia that visitors can go, Victoria's Tourist dollar will diminish, and other States will flourish at its expense.

We understand that there are radioactive substances being mined – undisturbed would not cause a health hazard but disturbed would. The dust generated by these substances being excavated would be carried into the environment and who knows what the long-term effects would be over the life of the mine. Should the government of today risk the health of its residents for the future. Just what has the laboratory been asked to analyse?

The vegetable industry is situated in the Lindenow Valley 500m from the edge of the mine project and is irrigated by the Mitchell River. The wind can be quite ferocious – we have experienced it. To know that the vegetable's, mainly grown aboveground, could be contaminated should be a concern to East Gippsland and the members of this committee.

The area is well-known as the "salad bowl" and the "food bowl" of East Gippsland. A better use of the 3 billion litres of water required annually for fifteen to twenty years, could be used to expand the well-established and productive vegetable growing industry, increasing the number of jobs within the area and providing even more good quality vegetables to Victoria, Australia and the world.

The amount of jobs created and touted by Kalbar, a company that is no-longer 100% Australian owned, is hardly grounds for proceeding with a mine that would have huge environmental ramifications on the area.

Has any research been done on the jobs lost long term? It certainly appears that the flow-on agricultural jobs has not been considered by the proponent. What are the impacts on the farming animals in relation to reproduction, contamination and constant noise/light? What of the families living and working in the area that will leave due to the hardships they would endure with constant exposure to dust, air pollution, noise pollution, radiation and water contamination?

We all know that rehabilitation of mines is not adequate, and most are left in a deplorable state. The Douglas mine at Balmoral in Western Victoria is an example of a toxic waste dump, although not according to the Victorian Environment Protection Authority. We are not opposed to mining per se but we are definitely opposed to a mine which is far too close waterways and agriculture – people seem to forget that agriculture is the growing of our food for human consumption. The visual impact on the landscape can only be deemed an eyesore.

It is unacceptable to allow compulsory acquisition of private land to be used by the mine for infrastructure that is located outside the mining project boundary for: water pipelines, bore pumps, bore field, roadworks, new powerlines, easements, rail siding and vegetation removal. Why wasn't this part of the mine project area? Why isn't this a matter for the East Gippsland Shire Council to determine?

We wish to thank the Panel members for the opportunity to make this submission.

Lynne & Ray Blom

