

Submission Cover Sheet

Fingerboards Mineral Sands Project Inquiry and Advisory
Committee - EES

371

Request to be heard?: No

Full Name: Aaneke Fitzgerald

Organisation:

Affected property: [REDACTED] Collingwood

Attachment 1: Kalbar_Submissio

Attachment 2:

Attachment 3:

Comments: Thank you for the opportunity to make this submission, please consider the impact mining would have on these communities and habitats. Yours sincerely, Aaneke Fitzgerald.

Date 28th of October 2020

Dear Inquiry and Advisory Committee members,

I am writing in response to the EES conducted by Kalbar for the Fingerboards Mineral Sands Mine Project. I have a number of close friends and their extended families living in proximity to the mine site and have had many wonderful experiences with them on this country and among this irreplaceable landscape.

These are the reasons below I do not believe the Fingerboards Mineral Sands Mine Project should go ahead at Glenaladale, East Gippsland:

- Firstly, if the 13 square kms above the Heritage listed Mitchell River and vegetable fields of the Mitchell River Valley are mined, there are serious risks of run off contaminating the river, impacting profoundly the crops, fishing, agriculture, the health of the rivers and the Gippsland Lakes.
- Kalbar's geochemistry report lists *a number* of radioactive and *cancer-causing* substances that will be present in the dust generated by the mine project. This dust travels, and far, so this holds the potential to effect the entire district. The mine is too close to where many families live, farm, work and go to school, posing great risk to their safety, health and quality of life.
- The Woodglen Reservoir, where domestic and commercial water is stored for the whole Shire, is 3.5kms downwind from the mine. This poses contamination risks on Bairnsdale's drinking water and those on tank water living near the mine.
- The Mitchell River Valley vegetable industry that employs up to 2,000 people is as close as 500m downwind from the mine. As the source of water to irrigate those vegetables is 350m downwind (between the mine and the vegetable fields), what will happen to their crops, meat or livestock if their produce is contaminated and they are known to be in a toxic mining area?
- There will be a tailings dam 90 hectares in size, that will contain mine tailings waste and flocculants which have warnings on safety data sheets about being harmful to aquatic life. We have already seen significant mining travesties occurring in Australian waterways far too recently and often, it would be an extreme sadness to witness another.
- Given the massive excavation down 45m, it will be impossible to avoid destruction of Aboriginal cultural artefacts and heritage and with the removal of over 700 large mature trees; flora and fauna species are threatened. Mitigation measures will not avoid the obliteration of cultural heritage; this is exemplified by the State's continuous erosion of cultural sites, namely the recent destruction of sacred Djab Wurrung trees near Ararat. These are opportunities for learning, not making the same mistakes.

- Kalbar needs over 3 billion litres of water *annually* for processing and dust suppression for 15 years. This is how much water is needed to control just the dust, which will potentially pose major human and animal health risks. This high need for water would lead to tighter restrictions on users reliant on water from the Mitchell River and is likely to impact the health of the Gippsland Lakes from reduced fresh water.
- However, lastly, based on irrigation data, if the 3 billion litres of water Kalbar requires annually was *redirected* to growing vegetables, 3 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. From Kalbar's website, 1 mining job leads to 1 indirect job, and at a potentially great cost.

Thank you for the opportunity to make this submission, please consider the significant negative impact mining would have on these communities and habitats.

Yours sincerely,

Aaneke Fitzgerald.