

# Submission Cover Sheet

Fingerboards Mineral Sands Project Inquiry and Advisory  
Committee - EES

# 628

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**Request to be heard?:** Yes

**Full Name:** Malcolm Ronald Baker

**Organisation:**

**Affected property:**

**Attachment 1:** Mal\_Bakers\_Subm

**Attachment 2:**

**Attachment 3:**

**Comments:** My Submission has been attached

Dear Inquiry and Advisory Committee Members,

I am writing this submission about the EES for the proposed Fingerboards Mineral Sands Mine and wish to state my opposition to this mine.

Having been employed in the mining industry for some 30 years of which 5 years was in mineral sands extraction, I am aware of some of the hazards that come with mining operations. Dust and water are always a huge concern within the operation. The lack of water increases the risk of dust and in this day and age water cannot be taken as a 100% given.

A question was raised at one of the public meeting regarding the non-availability of water on certain days and the answer given was that operations would cease for that time. In my experience, operations were never stopped due to lack of water for dust suppression. All means available would be taken to minimize but due to the huge daily ongoing costs, operations were never halted. These costs amounted to many tens of thousands of dollars per day.

Considering this, the proposed mining operation is much too close to where many families live, farm and work. I have been in contact with a farmer who will be directly affected by the mine and can understand his concerns over the mining operation. Also, the number of houses within the vicinity of the proposed mine have been seriously under-reported .

I had raised the question at a public meeting of where the final processing would be carried out as from my experience there was a certain amount of low level radio-active waste from this part of the operation and needed to be disposed of somewhere. The question was never answered.

I consider the risk of dust from this operation to be very high and considering the close proximity to the Mitchel River, the local vegetable growing industry and the Woodglen Reservoir where domestic and commercial water is stored for the whole Shire, this risk should not be taken.

According to local farmers in the area, if the 3 billion litres of water, which is required by the mine to operate, were allocated to the horticultural industry, that has already proven its worth, 3 times more ongoing jobs could be created than is proposed by the mine. Also, in my experience within the mining industry, due to the high labour costs and huge technological advances, more and more of the operations are being automated and consequently less jobs in the field. Why are we overlooking this massive opportunity to advance an already sustainable operating industry?

In my last working years, I was heavily involved with building tailing dams and from what I can understand of the proposed dam construction in this mine, there is a risk of contaminated leakage or worse, a wall failure, albeit a small risk. We already have many examples of dam failures. Again, can we afford to take this risk.

My final point to make is that, 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 EG Shire Council to determine?

I would like to thank the Panel members for the opportunity to make this submission

Signed: Mal Baker