
Request to be heard?: No

Full Name: Josef Ciemcioch

Organisation:

Affected property:

Attachment 1:

Attachment 2:

Attachment 3:

Comments: Dear Inquiry and Advirsory Committee members, My name is Josef Ciemcioch and I wish to express my concerns about the proposed Mining Project by Kalbar. I consider myself very lucky to live in an area with such rich ecosystems, sustainable natural resources, and vibrant communities as East Gippsland. I am worried that the Kalbar proposal puts undue risk on these assets for the sake of a relatively small and short term profit, only a small portion of which will go back into the community. While the expected economic benefit to the region as a whole is small in relative terms, the physical size of the project, at 13 km² in area and up to 40 meters in depth, is anything but – it should also be noted this is much larger and deeper than previous projects of its kind. There is great risk of subsidence effecting this large area of land following the project, and this could make the land unusable for agriculture requiring boom sprays, and be a significant detriment to any other land use. There is also potential for degradation of topsoil biota as it is stockpiled. While I understand there are provisions for rehabilitation of the land, such assurances have been made before on smaller and shallower projects only to fall through, as was the case with the Douglas Mine in Wimmera. Even more worrying than the effects on the land itself are the long-term consequences for the region, in particular the agriculture industry and the Mitchell River. The mine would be situated on a plateau above and 500 meters from the Mitchell River and the agriculture fields of the valley. Our prevailing westerly winds and incidents of heavy rains or flooding greatly exacerbate the danger of spreading irradiated or contaminated dust into our river, onto our fields, onto the roofs of residents, and into the Woodglen Reservoir. There are many consequences to this but of particular note is the risk to the economic viability of our farmers, who trade off a “clean, green” image and many of whom run organically certified operations. Kalbar’s assurances of dust suppression through water spraying are at best a partial and inadequate countermeasure against this risk. There is a reason it is termed ‘suppression’ and not ‘prevention’. Another point the proposal fails to measure up is its excessive water usage. Kalbar estimates it will use 3 gigalitres annually. This is a truly massive amount and it can be expected to mainly be taken from the Mitchell River, given the level of the Latrobe aquifer. This is a very inefficient use of natural resources as multiple times more jobs and indirect jobs could be created if such a volume was made available to local agriculture. However as custodians of our land we need to be mindful of not overtaxing our ecosystems; and it is vital that we do not reduce the flow of the Mitchell to levels which do not sustain its health. Thank you for taking the time to read my submission and I hope you will appreciate the long term costs associated with the mining project