

Submission Cover Sheet

Fingerboards Mineral Sands Project Inquiry and Advisory
Committee - EES

540

Request to be heard?: No

Full Name: Sophie Grant

Organisation:

Affected property:

Attachment 1: EES_Submission_S

Attachment 2:

Attachment 3:

Comments: see attached submission

To the Inquiry and Advisory Committee

I grew up in this area knowing how clean and safe it was and decided to move back so my children could experience this environment. I have 2 children living not far from the proposed mine. One of my children is an asthmatic and attends Lindenow Primary School. I fear for their future health.

I am extremely concerned about the radioactive dust that will blow across the area with the prevailing winds.

We also have tanks which are our domestic water supply which will be contaminated. At a community meeting Kalbar said they will not be able to control all of the airborne dust.

The environment is another concern of mine as we live here because of the peace and quiet and natural assets in the area.

The Mitchell River National Park and the Gippsland Lakes are favourite destinations for my family.

Having attended the Natural Resources and Land Management course at Forestech (East Gippsland TAFE) I have had the opportunity to study the ecology of the Gippsland Plains and to realize the value of the grasslands. Many species and communities are listed as threatened and some are critically endangered under the Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act (1999) and the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act. It is vitally important these ecosystems are not fragmented further and what remains needs full protection. Not to be destroyed by the proposed mine.

Remnant vegetation on roadsides is extremely important for species survival. The Fernbank Glenaladale Road and the Bairnsdale Dargo Roads are to be realigned. This will mean the destruction of critically endangered listed ecosystems and vegetation communities.

The preferred option of the rail siding at Fernbank East will impact a significant area of Gippsland Red Gum Grassy Woodland and Associated Native Grassland. (EPBC listed), a population of Purple Diuris and other threatened grassland species. This area was fenced off to protect the grassland community.

How can a mining company come in and destroy this critically endangered grassland which the community and Government have partnered to protect?

The Mitchell River will be under threat from 3 – 4 gigalitres to be extracted from the river and groundwater extraction. The damming of all the gullies and tributaries of the

Mitchell River within the project area will prevent natural freshwater runoff from the proposed mine site.

In the advent of heavy rain sedimentation will runoff into the Mitchell River, this sediment will contain pollutants which will affect aquatic species and their survival. Both water extractions from the river and sediment runoff will affect the RAMSAR listed Gippsland Lakes impacting migratory species, fish breeding grounds and fringing wetlands.

The Perry River is another concern as the freshwater holding dam is to be built on Long Marsh Gully that is the watershed for Honeysuckle Creek which runs into the river. This will prevent runoff into the river system off the plateau. The processing plant and the Tailings Storage Facility are also to be built in the Perry River and Mitchell River catchments. Any seepage or spills from these two structures will contaminate the river. In the event of a failure of the Tailings Storage Facility the effect will be catastrophic to both the Perry River and the Mitchell River.

Mining is proposed in the pines to the west of the processing plant. A large tributary of Honeysuckle Creek flows through this area. It will be impossible to prevent sediment flowing into the Perry River.

The Perry River is known for the Chain of Ponds formation, an interconnecting ponds system which is replenished following rainfall. The river flows through Providence Ponds Flora and Fauna Reserve into the Avon River and finally into the Gippsland Lakes. It supports a large wetland near Perry Bridge which is a migratory bird site.

The pipeline, haulage road, bore field and power line are not included in the 1680 hectare area of the project site so the disturbance to the environment will be far greater than the proponent is suggesting.

I object to the Draft Planning Scheme amendment which will allow compulsory acquisition of farmland. This is for all infrastructure located outside the mining project boundary.

The loss of nearly 800 large trees including ancient Red Gums and other tree species that contain hollows is unthinkable as they are crucial habitat for many species with their varying size hollows and seasonal flowering. These are irreplaceable and must be conserved.

The horticultural industry on the Lindenow flats is known for the quality of produce. Contamination of the vegetables will not only shut down the industry but will make redundant 3,000 jobs and deprive the East Gippsland economy of \$150+ million a year.

The proposed mine will also affect many other agricultural industries in the area including beef, dairy, vineyards, wool, fat lambs and orchards.

Noise is another issue, as mentioned earlier in the submission I live here because of the peaceful environment, noise from the proposed mine will impact on the tranquility of this rural area. Noise from the mine will be heard many kilometres away.

The region of East Gippsland has many attributes which will be threatened by any industrial activity of this magnitude. It is to be hoped that the Committee will not recommend that the proposed mine goes ahead.

I thank the panel for the opportunity to make this submission.

Sophie Grant