



**Hamilton SierraCon**  
Social & Economic Consulting

**Kalbar Resources Ltd.**  
Fingerboards Project  
**Agriculture Impact Assessment**



# Introduction

---

- About Hamilton SierraCon
- This presentation outlines:
  - The Study objectives and methods
  - A brief overview of local agricultural activity and “values”
  - Potential agricultural impacts that need to be addressed through the EES

# EES Scoping Requirements

## — Evaluation objective:

- “To minimise potential adverse social and land use effects, including on agriculture, dairy, irrigated horticulture, ...”

## — Key issues:

- “The potential for dislocation due to severance causing reduced access to farm land...”
- “Potential for adverse effects on the existing and future land and beneficial uses, including agricultural, dairy, irrigated horticulture, forestry, tourism and local businesses”.

# Purpose of the Study

## — To describe:

- Agriculture in the Project Area and Region, including economic value
- Potential economic contribution of the Fingerboards Project
- Possible actions to reduce or avoid significant impacts on agriculture
- Possible actions to monitor and manage Project performance

## — To assess the impact of the Fingerboards Project on current agricultural operations

## — Excludes environmental technical issues (covered by other studies)

# Method of Study

---

- Review of available reports and data
- Consultation with:
  - Four Project Area landholders
  - Two nearby landholders
  - Five Lindenow vegetable growers
  - Relevant local agencies and industry groups
- Collection of information about farm management practices, productivity and employment

# Findings so far: Current Agriculture

- **Local Agriculture Region (Bruthen-Omeo-Bairnsdale):**
  - \$169 million farm gate value
  - Vegetables - \$ 50.4 million
  - Beef cattle - \$42.4 million
  - Sheep and wool - \$ 24.5 million
- **Project Area (1,675 ha):**
  - Dryland grazing: sheep and beef
  - Blue gum and radiata pine
  - Remnant native vegetation

# Findings so far: Current Agriculture

- **19 landholders:** full-time, part-time, lifestyle
- **Farming Challenges:** Variable weather and prices, cost-price squeeze, soil and animal health
- **Local challenges:** Maintaining prosperity and population, a lack of local jobs, particularly for young people
- **Feedback themes:**
  - “Peaceful”, “beautiful”, “attractive”, and “quiet” area
  - A great part of the world
  - Family heritage, a great place for families
  - A good farming area, positive vegetable industry outlook

## Finding so far: Effects on Project Area Production

---

- **Average 443 ha** out of agriculture
- Lost gross margin: **\$57,750 and \$83,000** p.a.
- Loss of employment: **0.39 to 0.70** staff and contracting
- Mitigation: minimise land take and progressive rehabilitation



# Potential Impacts and Responses

---

## Consideration on the vegetable industry

- Risks: dust, sedimentation, water-borne contamination
- Actual or perceived risks could impact on industry's reputation
- Thorough assessment: avoid/mitigate potential environmental impacts
- Engagement with the vegetable industry, e.g. reference group
- Investigate opportunities to support off-river storage infrastructure

# Potential Impacts and Responses

---

## Success and assurance of land rehabilitation

- Concern of whether full rehabilitation is possible
- Track record of rehabilitation of other mining projects
- Explain rehabilitation through consultation
- Test pit and early monitoring of rehabilitation
- Safeguards and assessments for land hand back

# Potential Impacts and Responses

---

## General disruption to agriculture, restriction on property sale and development

- Scheduling and procedures for best possible property access
- As much information and certainty as possible
- Landholder Compensation process and landholder lease agreements

# Potential Impacts and Responses

---

## Loss of on-farm infrastructure, property severance:

- Road diversions, potential isolation, ability to access paddocks
- Scheduling and procedures to provide best possible property access
- Consultation to identify and avoid severance issues
- Comprehensive landholder compensation and lease agreements

# Potential Impacts and Responses

---

## Project traffic

- Traffic procedures considering farming traffic

## Environmental issues and concerns

- “General feel of the local area”, noise, dust, worker influx
- Environmental assessments, Environmental Management Plan and stakeholder engagement

# Potential Impacts and Responses

---

## Farming community cohesion

- Feedback: many locals are upset and stressed about the Project
- Some local relationships have been strained - a divisive issue
- A desire for detailed Project information now
- Stakeholder Engagement - explain the Project as much as possible
- Opportunities for community investment

# Possible Monitoring Measures

- **Environmental monitoring**
- **Monitoring of land rehabilitation:**
  - Specific variables, e.g. pasture cover, soil health monitoring
  - Sign-off for the handover of rehabilitated land
- **Stakeholder Engagement**
  - Point of contact for each landholder
  - Regular landholder communication about access and feedback
  - A grievance management system
  - Vegetable industry feedback