

# 'Hybrid' concerns

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"The EES coastal processes study undertaken by Peter Riedel of Coastal Engineering Solutions, confirmed recent advice that the nett sand movement from east to west and west to east is pretty much equal for any of the sites at Bastion Point, that were considered in the EES.

"However, Mr Riedel also suggested that at the site of the proposed H2 option, a second breakwater of approximately 140m in length is required to stop sand ingress onto the boat ramp area, from the beach immediately to the north.

"The H2 option, proposes to provide a jetty of approximately 70m in length on the northern side of the ramp (where the second breakwater was proposed). This jetty is to have vertical solid walls to attempt to prevent the localised sand movement from the adjacent beach. This proposal would seem inadequate based on Mr Riedel's data and predictions. It would appear that the jetty would have to be 140m long to be effective, based on Mr Riedel's studies.

"Clearly a 140m long jetty would add significant cost to the H2 proposal and would be visually intrusive."

Mr Waites said the it should be recognised that 3B car/trailer parking capacity is considered low for a 2 lane boat ramp, even more-so considering the significant amount of car-only parking that is required to cater for beach-goers.

"H2 would see a continuation of unsafe roadside parking during busy periods. This is a safety issue that needs to be moderated by providing as much parking as possible,

recognising that there may still be some roadside parking on peak use days, even with the 3B parking provisions.

"There is also a level of concern regarding the proposed de-rigging area for H2. Boats are expected to rig and de-rig at the top of the steep hill above the ramp. It is not common practice to have to drive up or down a steep access road with a partially secured vessel."

Mr Waites states that it has been suggested by the Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) that the environmental impact of 3B is much greater than H2.

"Council recognises that there is a visual impact of the road along the beach with 3B, however the visual impact of H2, which sits immediately beside the family (small children) swimming area, also needs to be recognised."

In respect to the project cost, Mr Waites says it's "very difficult to accept that H2, even as proposed, would cost \$2 million less than 3B".

"The only significant differences between the two options are the length of road along the beach in 3B, and the larger parking area," he said.

"Given the need for additional parking, similar to 3B, and the likelihood that a second breakwater or significantly longer jetty of 130-140m in length will be required to control sand movement, it is very likely that the cost of H2 will mirror that of 3B.

"With only concept drawings currently available for H2, many concerns remain unanswered."

The previous State Government pledged \$6.2 million to construct 3B and the council has budgeted \$300,000 towards upgraded car parking at the site, resulting in a total available budget of \$6.5m.

"It is understood that the state funding remains available to deliver the project."

The current pre-design estimate for H2 is \$4.4m.

"It must be recognised that this figure is likely to grow if the proposed parking area is increased to better reflect demand, as provided in the design for Option 3B."

# Council sticks to its guns

The merits of the State Government's hybrid (Known as 'H2') Bastion Point boat ramp design to solve ocean access issues will go before East Gippsland Shire Council tomorrow night, however the council is preparing to stick by its preferred 'Option 3B'.

Council director operations, Chris Waites, in his report to be tabled to council, states that following a review of all information provided to council, and through observation of the community consultation process, there remained a number of significant areas of concern in respect to H2, the Government's own design in the same location as the current inadequate ramp, but with a breakwall. H2 doesn't require a road along the beach.

Mr Waites will recommend the council re-confirms its previous decision in relation to Mallacoota Ocean Access Boat Ramp Option 3B (as voted on at the August 3, 2010, council meeting), to submit the detailed design and supporting documentation to the Minister for Environment and Climate Change to seek Coastal Management Act Consent, and to construct the facility upon receipt of such consent and sufficient external funding for the project.

Mr Waites states in his report there remains a number of areas of concern with the Government's H2 concept. H2 was developed for the Government at its request after it won power and elected to review the previous Government's decision to proceed with Option 3B.

Mr Waites summarises the issues with H2 issues as:

- \* Increased operational costs compared with Option 3B, due to increased volume of sand dredging.
- \* Inadequate parking facility, resulting in unsafe roadside parking.
- \* Conflict with swimmers and surfers; more significant than 3B.
- \* Significant delay to the project start due to preparation of detailed design.
- \* Potential for damage to cultural heritage sites near head of proposed ramp.
- \* Construction costs likely to mirror or exceed 3B costs, if second breakwater of 140m length is constructed to minimise sand intrusion into facility.

Mr Waites summarises the issues with H2 issues as:

- \* Significant aesthetic impact due to proximity to adjacent family swimming area.
- \* Impact on usability of family swimming beach.
- \* The issue of sand movement and volume of annual sand removal from any of the proposed ramp options is of concern, given the likelihood that the shire will be the operator of the facility," Mr Waites said.

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