

growth" ("Melbourne's growth study not going to plan", 26/1) is no surprise - they would mean big profits for builders. For everyone else, it just means even more congestion on roads and public transport, even more demand for schools and hospital beds, more crowds and much-reduced amenity all over our city, and an even bigger infrastructure deficit.

Both major parties are beholden to the growth lobby, which spruiks population growth to grow the economy and provide jobs. With huge immigration numbers over the past few years, where are all these jobs and growth? Victoria is teetering on the brink of recession and job losses are mounting. Rather than plan for population growth, let's question whether we want and need it in the first place.

**ANDREW VERLEI, Patterson Lakes**

### **Strengthen the rules**

The article "Shore thing: people's playground under pressure" (26/1) is timely. Not only are tougher planning guidelines necessary but environmental legislation must be strengthened to ensure councils and governments have to abide by the rules.

In the case of Bastion Point,

Mallacoota, the guidelines were ignored. The large breakwall and a road covering our beach were not recommended by a Labor government-appointed expert panel, Marine Safety, the Coastal Board or the Coalition's own Department of Transport. An alternative solution that was less costly, far more environmentally friendly, more sensitive to indigenous culture, safer and did not cut across a significant surf break was disregarded. It has left a divided town, with many grieving at the loss of our National Trust-classified foreshore.

**JUNE DRAKE, Mallacoota**

### **No royal consensus**

There have been three polls on the republic recently. The ReachTEL poll ("Republican cause takes heavy knock", 2/2) found support for a republic and monarchy neck and neck, at 40:40. Yet another recent poll by UMR found 48 per cent agreed with Governor-General Quentin Bryce's comments supporting a republic and a January poll by EMC found 47 per cent agreed with a republic at the end of the Queen's reign. Both those polls found a consistent 32 per cent support for monarchy.