

# Have Your Say

## Comments bemusing

Sir.- I read with some bemusement the profusion of benefits that are promised by Mallacoota and District Business and Tourism president John Rudge for the deeply unpopular boat ramp proposal at Bastion Point, Mallacoota (Advertiser, February 8).

Among the claimed benefits is the restoration of the small beach at the existing ramp that will be "restored for family activities".

However, what Mr Rudge fails to acknowledge is that this particular site has also been earmarked as the dumping ground for dredging spoil from the breakwater channel, hardly appealing for family activities.

Furthermore, the proclaimed benefits are targeted directly at recreational and commercial boat operators and associated businesses. As such I would sincerely hope that the East Gippsland Shire councillors will ensure that all operational, management and asset replacement costs will be met by the industries that stand to benefit from this development.

This will need to be done by ensuring that the facility operates under a user pays system at a fee structure that accurately reflects projected operating costs estimated to be in the order of \$270,000 per annum with long term asset depreciation costs averaging \$201,000 per annum based on the latest capital and operational cost estimates from the Department of Transport.

Should the EGSC plan on meeting these costs from the ratepayers' funds the residents of our shire can anticipate a steady and relentless increase in rates.

Yours etc.,  
Leo op den Brouw,  
Mallacoota.

## Access flaws

Sir.- I wish to comment on the article 'Ocean access decision provides opportunity' (Advertiser, February 8), in particular two aspects of Mr Rudge's statements on council's ocean access development at Bastion Point, Mallacoota.

Under the present proposal, dredge spoil from the new facility will be pumped into the Bastion

cove, rendering both it and the attractive sandy beach unsuitable for family activities.

Nor will it be possible to transfer family activities to the rock pools and beach between the cove and Bastion Point as this beach will be covered by a two lane road and pedestrian walkway.

I fail to see how this road, let alone the large breakwall in council's proposal, can possibly be described as ensuring minimal visual impact in sympathy with the immediate environment.

Sea-based eco tourism including recreational diving, whale, dolphin and seal watching and increased visitation to historical Gabo Island as described by Mr Rudge are suitable only when weather conditions are favourable. It would never be possible, whatever facility is built, to guarantee ocean access for any of the above activities.

An upgrade at the site of the current ramp, as recommended by the EES Inquiry Panel, would allow greatly improved ocean access in appropriate conditions.

Mr Rudge also fails to mention that there are businesses in Mallacoota that rely for their living on our reputation as a wilderness area, and any destruction of wilderness values will inevitably lead to a loss in this type of tourism.

It is the ultimate in selfishness to appropriate a much loved, multiple use public beach for a single use minority, particularly when an alternative is available.

I am in total agreement with the sentiments expressed by Bill Gamble in the same edition of your paper. Past attempts to have Bastion Point rezoned "industrial" have failed - is this industrialisation by stealth for the benefit of the few at the expense of the many?

Yours etc.,  
June Drake,  
Mallacoota.