

Jewel to be destroyed to benefit just one group

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Illustration: Michael Leunig

It is heartbreaking to see the destruction of Bastion Point beach by earth-moving equipment in preparation for the massive development planned ("Beach battle finally falls to developers", *The Saturday Age*, 16/11). Our protests aren't entirely about saving the jewel in the crown of the "wilderness coast" for future generations; they are also about the fact that this beach is to be destroyed to cater for one user group only - boaters - to the detriment of all others. The development will desecrate the rock pools used by students of the Mallacoota P-12 College for science lessons and by marine biologists from Wollongong and Sydney universities. It will also destroy the surf break known as "Broken Board". The beach, rockpools and surf break are loved by locals and visitors. The development - a sealed two-lane road on the beach, a 130-metre breakwater, a channel with a dredge and other infrastructure - will change the face of tourism to Mallacoota for ever. A smaller, less invasive structure could see a win-win situation for all.

Jeannette and Ray Davey, Mallacoota

Coastal wonderland under attack

The iconic image of Australia is of its beaches - miles and miles of glorious sand in the sun. And rightly so. Our coastal wonderland not only gives pleasure, but has sustained humans and animals for centuries. But now the eastern seaboard is under attack - from thoughtless destruction powered by greed and disconnectedness from the land. It is starting at the top end, where three super ports are to be built opposite the Great Barrier Reef, and waggles down the coast to my corner of Australia. Soon we'll be dipping our toes into water where it's not the call of shorebirds that can be heard but the thump, bump and grind of dredges.

Lorelle Roberts, Mallacoota

Can common sense prevail?

This despoliation of the UNESCO biodiversity sphere within which Mallacoota lies demonstrates how the special pleading of narrow interests can overturn the sane advice of even a government's environmental experts. Further, this unsafe complex is being built with taxpayers' funds, and ratepayers will shoulder the extra cost of maintaining a facility they don't want. The win-win solution was ignored. Why? The worst damage - the intrusive breakwater - can still be averted. Can common sense prevail?

Ray Edmondson, Mallacoota

Beauty of nature undervalued

It seems humans sometimes value our own efforts too highly and undervalue the beauty of nature. Francis Bacon's work is remarkable, and artwork of his recently sold for more than \$150 million. Care will be taken to protect it and if it were defaced it would be a significant news item. If we valued the aesthetic qualities of the unspoilt coastline at Mallacoota there would be widespread outrage at its defacement. How much is the Bastion Point "experience" worth? If public apathy is a measure, only a tiny fraction of a Francis Bacon work.

Simon Thornton, Alphington