

Save Bastion Point

protect this coastal environment from inappropriate development

Easter Update, April 2011

Current Status of the Bastion Point development:

Save Bastion Point Campaign (SBPC) representatives met with senior DSE staff in March to discuss the Bastion Point project. It was confirmed that the Government will review the project: it will investigate an alternative option based on the concept put forward by SBPC, and assess it using similar criteria to that used for assessing the East Gippsland Shire Council's (EGSC) Option 3b.

We welcome the Government's commitment to review the project and thank local member Tim Bull for his efforts in facilitating this. It is pleasing to have Government officials being proactive in opening communication channels with the community. This is certainly a step in the right direction, but we would see it as important that there be the opportunity for community input in the final design.

Despite the Government's commitment, the CEO of EGSC stated on ABC Gippsland radio (18 April) that the EGSC is continuing with its Application for Coastal Management Act consent for Option 3b, and expected to lodge this Application in a few weeks time.

However, there has been no decision yet regarding the status of the EGSC's proposal nor any new commitment/decisions from the Government.

We have been informed that the Bastion Point Project Control Board is in the process of preparing a scope to develop the alternative concept further, and it is expected that project plans will be developed, complete with estimates. The assessment will include a safety audit and operating plans. The alternative option and Option 3b will then be compared against a range of criteria including costs, safety, and environmental impacts.

Other recent news:

Bastion Point featured in the Age on 18th April, following our release of material gained under Freedom of Information (FOI) from the Department of Transport. The FOI material revealed that Tim Pallas had announced \$6.5 million funding for the project, just days before the government went into caretaker mode, **against** the advice of a boating safety panel.

This echoed the decision previously taken by Justin Madden to ignore advice from his own expert Planning Panel. The Age article highlighted the likely political agenda of the Brumby Government that allowed it to ignore due process in order to keep the then independent member for Gippsland (and abalone licence holder) Craig Ingram on side in case of a hung parliament.

This great investigative Age article generated strong media interest in the Gippsland region, and can be accessed along with further background information at www.savebastionpoint.org.

We are grateful to our more than 1,000 supporters who have helped us reach this current position. Continued support is however more important than ever.