

Save Bastion Point

protect this coastal environment from inappropriate development

MEDIA RELEASE

Wednesday, 27 October 2010

Labor Puts Cart Before Horse In Funding Controversial Bastion Point Harbour Development

Today's announcement by Ports Minister Tim Pallas that the Labor Government will provide \$6.5 million funding for a boat harbour at Mallacoota's iconic Bastion Point has been condemned by Save Bastion Point Campaign.

SBPC spokesperson Leo op den Brouw said that the funding has been announced before environmental approval has been given by Minister Jennings and cultural heritage approval by Aboriginal Affairs Victoria.

"The Minister's announcement is just another blunder in a deeply flawed process that has failed to even pay lip service to appropriate environmental planning and cultural heritage policies and laws." said Mr op den Brouw. "This development has little local support. Nor did it get support from the Independent Panel."

The Panel found that the development did not accord well with the Victorian Coastal Strategy, it would promote launching into hazardous waterways, was of 'no societal benefit' and 'would have a significant effect on the wilderness and landscape values of Bastion Point and an overall net detriment to tourism. It was also likely to be a financial burden on the people of East Gippsland.

The project was submitted just over one month ago by East Gippsland Shire Council to Minister for Ports for funding prior to final approvals. "A month ago the project cost was \$5.25 million. The new figure of \$6.5 million is a 23% increase in one month, and 380% of what the original cost was in the Environmental Effects Statement. The cost continues to blow out while the project's estimated tourism benefits have been grossly exaggerated by \$2.8 million every year." said Mr op den Brouw.

There is a better, cheaper and sustainable solution for safer ocean access at Bastion Point. That's what the Labor government should be supporting and funding rather than the devastating development that they have announced today.

Contact details for interviews –

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Link to electronic copy of recent Melbourne Times advertisement:

<http://savebastionpoint.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/07/Melbourne-Times-27-Oct-2010.pdf>

Link to SBPC website: <http://savebastionpoint.org/>

Link to Independent Panel Executive Summary:

http://savebastionpoint.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/01/Exec_Summary_Panel_Report_2008.pdf