

Save Bastion Point

protect this coastal environment from inappropriate development

MEDIA RELEASE

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Strong community opposition to Option 3b Breakwater at Bastion Point, Mallacoota

Results of recent public submissions on options for a boat ramp at Mallacoota's Bastion Point show that the vast majority (88.2%) would prefer a smaller development than the large Option 3b breakwater and beach road. Yet the East Gippsland Shire Council Executive have chosen to ignore public opinion and the Department of Transport's commissioned analysis of a lower impact solution, and are asking Councillors to seek approval for construction of Option 3b.

The Save Bastion Point Campaign is calling for East Gippsland Shire Councillors to listen to the loud and clear message from the community and drop its destructive and unpopular Option 3b proposal. Council will vote on this issue on 3rd April 2012.

As a result of a review of the project by the Baillieu government, a further Option was put on the table. SBPC spokesman Leo op den Brouw said: "We support the move away from Option 3b to a solution at the current ramp site; it reduces vegetation clearing on the headland by almost half, doesn't require a road on the beach, doesn't throw a large breakwater through the Broken Boards surfbreak, and will have significantly less impact on aboriginal heritage sites."

Council has now been the proponent for the Option 3b development for over seven years. The proposal was the subject of an Environment Effects Statement (EES) that was examined by an Inquiry Panel.

"Of almost 500 submissions to the EES Inquiry, 87% opposed it", said Mr op den Brouw. "The response to the recent review by the Department of Transport is remarkably consistent, with 88.2 % of submissions preferring a smaller development than the Option 3b. Victoria's peak boating body, the Boating Industry Association of Victoria's submission to the review also recommended the lowest impact development."

The Option 3b development has now failed multiple tests. The EES Inquiry Panel concluded that it was of no overall societal benefit and was not supported by Victoria's coastal policy. In addition, a Marine Safety Victoria funding panel found the development had poor economic and safety credentials. "Annual operating costs are expected to be very high, and are likely to become a burden for ratepayers" said Mr. op den Brouw.

The review by the Department of Transport proposes using the existing ramp site. The SBPC urges the Government and Council to find a solution for the existing site that is acceptable to the community. "We believe an upgrade at this site is possible, one which is safe, and has good environmental, economic and landscape credentials" Mr op den Brouw continued.

"We believe the Option 3b development complies neither with the letter nor intent of the Coastal Management Act, which is a further hurdle for this development to overcome. We urge East Gippsland Shire Council to vote for a positive community result, unlike Option 3b which has caused so much division in the Mallacoota community over the years."

Contact details for interviews –

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