

Ramp 'facts'

Sir,- I would like to express the facts based on the letter issued by MADBATA (Mallacoota and District Business and Tourism Association) 'Bastion Point announcement welcomed', November 8.

The 45 members don't represent the Mallacoota business community because many of the members don't actually own businesses.

I would also stress that during the panel inquiry many facts were misrepresented by MADBATA and the creditability of the group in the community is far from healthy.

Just because our lawless representatives at the East Gippsland Shire Council and Independent MP Craig Ingram supports it, doesn't mean that the community holds a supportive view on Bastion Point 3B proposal.

The whole 3B proposal, EES report, economic report, safety report and many other reports doesn't consider the risks on all levels to the long-term future of Mallacoota and its visitors.

The business community thinks in a short-term beneficial way that only considers their financial future, not the long-term expenses, deaths and destruction to the Mallacoota option 3B will bring.

The community was at the panel inquiry and that's why it supports the alternative design. The majority supports it, not a group of 45 people after a pocket full of money and a one way trip out of town.

Yours etc.,
Tim Frazer,
Mallacoota.

Footing the bill

Sir,- Independent MP Craig Ingram claims (October 29) that the Bastion Point ocean access has 'been identified for many years as one of the regions top priority tourism and economic development infrastructure projects'.

Yet, I would challenge Mr Ingram to present economic data that shows that this project should be a top priority tourism project, when the independent panel appointed by the State Government to assess the project found it would be to the overall net detriment of tourism.

In 2006, a leaked letter shows Mr Ingram lobbied his seemingly reluctant fellow shareholders at the Mallacoota Abalone Fishermen's Co-Operative to get behind the project - not for the sake of tourism, but

to safeguard their ocean access.

A month later, a letter obtained by Freedom of Information shows Mr Ingram lobbied the Government to abandon holding any panel hearings.

It's time for Mr Ingram to listen to the people on this, and accept the findings of the experienced and careful panel.

Moreover, taxpayers are entitled to ask why they are footing the entire capital costs, and ratepayers are underwriting all operating cost shortfalls of this project, when the abalone industry is likely to continue as the major user.

Yours etc.,
James Thyer,
Northcote and Mallacoota.