

Have Your Say

Misguided proposal

Sir.- Minister Madden's decision to approve the Bastion Point boat ramp despite the EES panel strongly recommending to the contrary, is stunning.

It appears that all the evidence presented and considered at length in the EES panel hearing has simply been ignored.

The panel's report is interesting reading, and it is important to highlight some of the key findings.

The panel found that the proposed boat ramp would have an unacceptable visual impact, and there would be major safety issues as boats enter and exit the facility.

But interestingly, the panel also found that any economic benefit to Malla-coota is highly questionable, and "the economic case for the proposals based on increased recreational ocean boating is flawed, and that the economic prosperity of Malla-coota rests on sustainable nature based tourism, and low impact activities compatible with nature based tourism" (page 135).

Further, the panel found that the proposal failed to fully satisfy any of the stated evaluation objectives, including safety, sediment movement, water quality, character and amenity, cultural heritage, terrestrial ecology, economic considerations and overall social benefit.

Surely the shire must now recognise the folly of this ill-conceived and misguided proposal and look for low-key alternatives.

Yours etc.,
David Huxtable,
Mallacoota.

Fight is not over

Sir.- I write in response to Justin Madden (Planning Minister) and Craig Ingram's (Gippsland East MP) article about the approval for an ocean access boat ramp at Malla-coota.

I am outraged by the arrogance of these men. The reason we have just been through the extensive Environment Effects Study was to establish whether this development should go ahead.

All the evidence for and against from expert witnesses, community members with years of experience at the site and those who have an interest in the issue was presented to the independent panel, who rejected the project on economic, environmental, safety, cultural heritage and social grounds.

These arrogant men did not like the results of a democratic process, so they overrode the umpires and are proceeding to do what they want anyway. Is this the kind of leadership we want in this state?

I am tired of reading misleading comments from Craig Ingram about what is in the best interests of Mallacoota.

Most Mallacoota residents do not support this proposal as it is a huge engineering solution to the need for improved ocean access that will dominate the landscape of our town beach. It has been proved to not be beneficial or necessary to our sustainable future.

As outlined in the panel's recommendations, a smaller upgrade of the existing ramp is the preferred option agreed upon by most people who have been involved with this issue.

The fact that this development has been given approval by Justin Madden against all the evidence does not mean this is the end of the matter. We will continue to challenge this development all the way.

Yours etc.,
Melinda Beacham,
Mallacoota.

It's our 'shrine'

Sir.- It was with interest that I watched the news last night (Tuesday, June 23) and discovered that Justin Madden had vetoed the building of an 117-metre tower near the Shrine of Remembrance in Melbourne.

The reason he decided against the planned building was cultural.

I would like to draw your attention to the irony in the difference between that decision and the one he made in favour of the East Gippsland Shire Council's proposal to build an intrusive boat ramp and car park at Bastion Point, Mallacoota.

The expert panel, which his Government put in place, advised against this boat ramp for cultural, economic and environmental reasons.

It seems that there are more votes in Melbourne than in far East Gippsland. Or am I being cynical?

To a majority of Mallacoota residents Bastion Point is a shrine too. A shrine to what is left untouched and beautiful in a world gone mad for short-term economic gain.

It is one of the reasons tourists flock to our town every Christmas and Easter.

Yours etc.,
Libby Greig,
Mallacoota.