

# Correspondence

## Reconsider, Minister

Sir,- Why has Minister Madden overruled his own planning panel recommendation and extensive environmental effects process to steamroll a small community and the environment at Bastion Point, Mallacoota?  
Other small coastal towns feel threatened. Hopefully the Minister will reconsider and

Gavin Jennings, Minister for Environment and Climate Change, will revise the decision.  
Yours etc.,  
Marion Manifold,  
Port Campbell.

## Planning violation

Sir; - Minister Madden's decision to approve the construction of the Ocean Access Boat Ramp at Mallacoota is a

flagrant violation of planning guidelines, of the democratic consultation process, and of Australia's obligations to protect the world against climate change and environmental degradation.  
The proposed design is inherently flawed, both in terms of its justification, design and lack of consideration to ongoing operational requirements and costs.  
If the proposal is allowed to proceed any further then we will live to regret this mistake.  
Yours etc.,  
Stephen Chey,  
Bastion Point Road,  
Mallacoota.

An independent panel of experts appointed by the Minister for Planning to examine the various options, put forward by the East Gippsland Shire Council for ocean access at Bastion Point has found that 'there is no overall societal benefit in progressing these options further and they should be discarded'.  
The panel reached its conclusion after meticulously examining the many issues surrounding this contentious development.  
These issues included safety, coastal processes, economics, tourism, surfing, the environment and cultural heritage.  
It listened to arguments put forward by the council's legal team and information provided by its expert witnesses and supporters of the proposal. It also considered views and arguments expressed by the Save Bastion Point campaign and others with concerns over the proposed devel-

opment.  
The recommendation from the panel after this comprehensive inquiry is unequivocal - the East Gippsland Shire Council (EGSC) proposed development at Bastion Point should not proceed.  
Yet Minister Madden has given his seal of approval to the council's proposal. Extraordinary! Did he read the panel's report? Why does he ignore this expert panel? What is the EG Shire Council going to do now? Are they going to continue to throw more money at this ill-advised development?  
Minister Madden has not directed the council to continue the development. Rather he said "Should EGSC, as the proponent, seek to implement a new ocean access boat-ramp.." they should first fulfil specific requirements.  
These include detailed construction design that is visually unobtrusive, has provision for opera-

tional safety, and is designed for climate change.  
Can such requirements even be met? What about the ongoing maintenance costs of sand removal?  
Or is the council going to abide by the panel's recommendations and work with the Mallacoota community for a minor upgrade to the present facility without breakwaters.  
There is an opportunity for the EGSC to show both integrity and courage in following the recommendations of the backbone to do so?  
Yours etc.,  
Jenny Mason,  
Save Bastion Point Campaign coordinator.

good policy, that our planning minister, Justin Madden, has decided to go against the inquiry panel's recommendations and go ahead with building a high impact boat ramp in Mallacoota.  
Why was an inquiry panel put in place and a process carried through, only to be ignored?  
I wonder if he has ever visited this piece of pristine coastal wilderness, which he has given the ok to destroy?  
East Gippsland Shire Council should be ashamed of its attitude in all this too, preferring the lure of tourist dollars to the preservation of what little natural beauty we have left.

Their feelings seem to be that if the matter is settled it will stop being annoying to them. Is it any wonder that Australians are cynical about our politicians?  
Yours etc.,  
Libby Greig,  
Mallacoota.

## Cost absurdity

Sir; - Only twice in Victoria's history has an independent panel found in favour of a community group rather than a development proponent.  
One such group is the Save Bastion Point campaign.

## Shire should be ashamed

Sir; - It is surprising in these times when global warming threatens and being environmentally sensitive is considered

Shire should be ashamed