

Save Bastion Point

protect this coastal environment from inappropriate development

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MEDIA RELEASE

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Council fails the test on Bastion Point development

The East Gippsland Shire Council's decision last night to continue with its large and inappropriate boat ramp and breakwater proposal for Bastion Point in Mallacoota, was condemned today by the Save Bastion Point community group.

Save Bastion Point Campaign spokesperson David Huxtable said he was deeply concerned by the inaccurate comments made by the councillor's who support the proposal to build an extensive breakwater, access road on the beach, car park and boating channel.

"Despite the Council's decision, the vast majority of the Mallacoota community is still willing to fight for a much safer and more sustainable upgrade to the existing boat ramp," he said.

"Councillors Gamble and Urie championed a motion that would have seen the Council follow the expert Panel of Inquiry's firm recommendation to establish a Community Advisory Committee and independent facilitator to establish an appropriate and low-key boat ramp at Bastion Point. I would like to thank them for their support.

"Unfortunately, some of the other Councillors present failed to uphold the public commitments they made when elected to ensure economic responsibility, environmental protection and responsive governance. Instead they endorsed amendments to the motion in favour of the destructive development option.

"The Council has proposed a period of review and assessment, but not for a community-backed sustainable option which we would support. Rather it would be for the destructive council-backed option, an option that has already been comprehensively assessed, reviewed and rejected by the expert Panel of Inquiry."

Mr Huxtable said Save Bastion Point did not support the proposal because it did not follow the environmental protection principles of the *Victorian Coastal Strategy*, was unsafe and would destroy Mallacoota's unique ocean character.

"The Mallacoota community is not willing to sit back and let this happen," he said.

"We are now calling on the Environment Minister Gavin Jennings to reject the proposal and to use his powers under the Coastal Management Act to ensure this environmentally destructive idea is dropped once and for all."

Following a lengthy and comprehensive investigation, the Panel of Inquiry's report found that the proposed development did not satisfy any of the evaluation criteria, including safety, visual impact, cultural heritage, economic considerations and overall societal benefit, and should be rejected.

Of the 480 written submissions to the Panel of Inquiry, 87 per cent opposed the development, more than 90 per cent of public verbal submissions to the Inquiry sessions in Mallacoota opposed the development and no public verbal submissions in Melbourne sessions were supportive of the development.

For further comments, please contact David Huxtable on 0419 592 886.