

## Summary of the Bastion Point Campaign

(August 2011)

Bastion Point is an iconic headland on Victoria's Wilderness Coast, with significant natural, recreational and cultural values. It is situated in Mallacoota, a small town in East Gippsland, surrounded by Croajingolong National Park, a World Biosphere Reserve. Bastion Point is appreciated by locals and visitors alike for its breathtaking beauty, its surf, its beach, its rocks and its diverse wild life.

Bastion Point also provides ocean access for recreational and commercial boaters. The current boat ramp is in a state of disrepair. However, the proposal put forward by East Gippsland Shire Council to "improve" the area for boating is a gross overdevelopment that is totally inappropriate for the area. It includes a 110m long 2.8m high breakwater constructed on the reef and into a surf break, a 150 metre road/causeway on the beach, and a large car park extending along the cliff top. The creation of the boating channel requires the destruction and removal of 3500 cu metres of rocky reef, and ongoing dredging to remove sand that will accumulate.

The Save Bastion Point Campaign (SBPC) formed in 2005 to better coordinate action for the protection of the many values of Bastion Point, and the prevention of inappropriate development on our coast.

The proposed development required an Environment Effects Statement (EES). This was prepared by the proponents, the East Gippsland Shire Council. A public Inquiry was subsequently held. After a thorough examination of all the submissions and expert evidence, the Inquiry Panel concluded that the proposed development was of no societal benefit, and should not proceed. Instead, it recommended a minor upgrade, without break walls, at the current site.

The then Minister for Planning chose to ignore this advice and recommendation, and gave his nod to the proposal known as Option 3b. Subsequently, the East Gippsland Shire Council continued to prepare its Application for final consent required from the Minister for Environment under the Coastal Management Act.

Angered and dismayed at this blatant overriding of due process, the Campaign continued in its efforts. This has included a judicial review in the Supreme Court, VCAT hearings, continued analyses of the economics of the development, boating data collection, political lobbying and the promotion of an alternative concept plan developed by the Campaign.

During the last state elections, Independent Craig Ingram, an outspoken advocate for the development, lost his seat to Nationals candidate, Tim Bull. The Coalition had promised to review the project if elected. This is currently occurring.

An alternative design is being produced by a firm engaged by the Government. This firm was provided with a concept plan drawn up by SBPC, and with the section of the Inquiry Panel Report that dealt with suggestions for a minor upgrade. When completed, the Government plan to compare this design with Option 3b, considering safety, costs and environmental impacts, before making a final decision.