

# Save Bastion Point



Photo Steve Wadsworth

## Mallacoota, Victoria



**Mallacoota**



**Croajingolong  
National Park**



**Bastion Point**

Mallacoota is Victoria's eastern most town. It is nestled within Croajingolong National Park, a UNESCO listed World Biosphere Reserve. Bastion Point, the town's main beach, is part of Victoria's Wilderness Coast.

# Save Bastion Point Campaign



Mallacoota families, abalone divers, surfers, teachers, business people protest in November 2005 - photo Gary Proctor

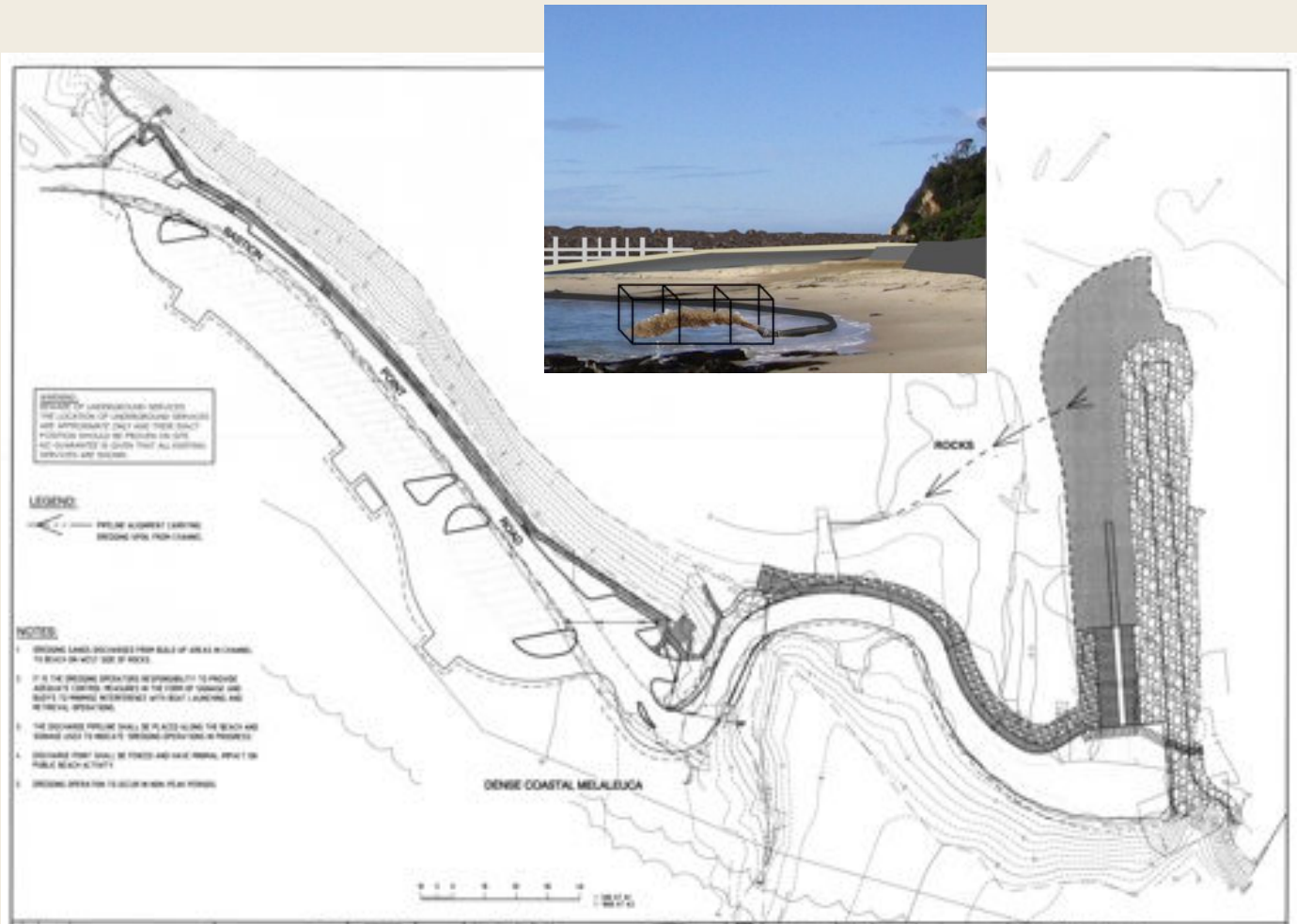
The Save Bastion Point Campaign was formed in 2005. It is composed of:

- Friends of Mallacoota
- Far East Gippsland Boardriders
- Mallacoota CoastAction/Coastcare

and is supported by:

- Mallacoota Surf Lifesaving Club
- SBPC Melbourne Group
- Surfrider Foundation Australia
- Australian Conservation Foundation
- Victorian National Parks Association
- Save the Waves Coalition
- Friends of Gippsland Lakes
- Disabled Surfers Association

# Breakwater and Beach Road Proposal



East Gippsland Shire Council (EGSC) proposes to build a 2.8 m high breakwater stretching 130 m into the surf break, a causeway/road raised over the beach, and a large carpark. A permanent dredge will be required.

EGSC produced an Environmental Effects Statement recommending an 'Option 3' placement of the breakwater.

# EES Exhibition and Panel



Members of Mallacoota community and SBPC present a signed surfboard at the start of the EES exhibition period in July 2007

Planning Minister Justin Madden appointed an expert Panel of Inquiry in September 2007 to review the EES, headed by Senior Panel member Mr Nick Wimbush.

EGSC had changed the plans for the facility weeks before the Inquiry – now favouring an access road raised above the beach on either piles or fill, and known as Option 3b.

The Inquiry report later labelled this ‘design on the run’.

# Submissions to EES and Panel



Panel and representatives inspect breakwater site where the raised beach road will meet the breakwater – photo Gib Wettenhall

The Panel sat for 14 days and heard from approximately 70 submitters and 13 expert witnesses.

The Panel delivered its report to Minister Madden in October 2008, but this was not released to the public until June 2009.

A copy of the Panel report can be downloaded from our website.

The panel reported that 87 % of 482 submissions to the EES opposed the development.

# Panel Finding on Character and Amenity



Photo Julie Parker

‘The Panel considers that the impact of the breakwaters in the new proposals will have considerable impact on the wilderness and landscape values of Bastion Point and an overall net detriment to tourism.’

# Panel Finding on Economic Impacts



The Bastion Point surfbreak will be significantly affected by all breakwater options – photo Dale Winward

‘The economic case for the project is very weak and likely to have a benefit cost ratio well below 1.’

# Panel Finding on Policy Framework



Bastion Point is one of the few accessible shallow reef habitats in East Gippsland. Swimming, snorkeling, rockpool rambling, walking, bird-watching and photography are some other popular activities – photo Steve Wadsworth.

‘The Panel does not consider the policy framework is as supportive of the development proposals as put in the Hearing by the Proponent’

# Panel Finding on Safety and Efficiency



Sea conditions quickly change in the boat launch area and are not suited to novice boat users – photo Leo Op den Brouw.

‘The new ramp proposals would provide a better facility at the actual launch and retrieval point but the Panel has serious concerns in relation to the safety of all the new proposals in relation to facility entry and exit.’

# Panel Finding on Cultural Heritage



Middens at the base of these tea-trees will become road-side verges of the over-beach causeway – photo Gary Proctor

‘The Panel has concluded that the ‘beach road’ options will significantly reduce impacts on Aboriginal sites but that impacts on other cultural heritage values (such as Aboriginal ‘sense of place’) will remain.’

# Recommendation of the Inquiry



Abalone boat being retrieved from current ramp, which Panel recommends upgrading – photo Julie Parker

The principle finding of the Panel is:

‘The environment effects of Options 1,2 and 3 as exhibited, Options 3a and 3b, and Option LS1 are such that there is no overall societal benefit in progressing these options further and they should be discarded’.

The Panel recommended:

‘an upgrade of the existing ramp and parking be undertaken’.

The SBPC fully supports these findings.

# Judicial Review of Madden Decision



Over one hundred Mallacoota residents meet on 30 June 2009 to affirm their support for the Panel recommendations – photo Michael Rayner

On 8 June 2009, Minister Madden announced that despite the Panel Report, EGSC, should it wish, could proceed with developing Option 3b.

Friends of Mallacoota mounted a case for judicial review of Minister Madden's decision in the Supreme Court of Victoria.

Justice Osborn found on 28 May 2010 that whilst Minister Madden acted within his powers, that his response was 'surprising' and the Panel Report was 'a careful, fair, and balanced evaluation.'

# Alternative Concept Launched



In September 2010 the Campaign produced visual materials of what an alternative concept at Bastion Point could look like. It is not 'do nothing' and seeks to separate and manage users of Bastion Point to make it better for all – whilst being costed at \$1.6 million – one quarter of Option 3b.

It will increase boating safety, without the negative effect on other tourism that the Panel found would likely outweigh gains in boating tourism. See website for more details.

# Funding Cart Before Horse

## Mallacoota Holiday Special

**\$4,240 for 3 Nights!**

Would you and two of your friends be willing to spend \$4,240 for a three day boating holiday in Mallacoota? Even camping?

Well that's what the recent East Gippsland Shire Council commissioned economic report is saying tourists will spend if the Bastion Point breakwater is built!

The \$4,240 price tag for three days inflates tourism daily expenditure by **400%**, due to one giant mathematical error, and by ignoring Tourism Victoria spending figures for Gippsland.

This report cannot be relied on as a justification for Council's proposed Bastion Point development!

Visit [www.savebastionpoint.org](http://www.savebastionpoint.org)  
for more information.



Sixty supporters from Mallacoota, Melbourne and East Gippsland attend Council meeting on 9 August 2010. Photo James Thyer

On 9 August 2010, upon receipt of a design and economic study, EGSC voted to proceed with seeking consent under the Coastal Management Act (CMA).

However, the Campaign found an annual \$2.8 million calculation mistake in the economic report, but despite our advertisement the report was used as the basis for funding applications to the Minister for Roads and Ports.

After 12 business days consideration, on 27 October 2010 Minister Pallas announced \$6.5 million funding - before consent had been given under the CMA.

# Where are we now?



The State Election of November 2010 saw all Gippsland East politicians other than Independent Craig Ingram supporting a review, or opposing Option 3b. Mr Ingram made his support of Option 3b a centre-piece of his re-election. He sustained the state's largest swing of 21 % against him.

The National Party's Tim Bull is now the sitting member, and has facilitated a review of the project and comparison of Option 3b with the alternative concept proposed by the community. We support this review, and welcome any involvement. The assessment process will be complete in 2011.