

Save Bastion Point

protect this coastal environment from inappropriate development

MEDIA RELEASE

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Devastated gallery turns its back on Councillors

The East Gippsland Shire Council has tonight voted 5 to 3 in favour of the controversial breakwater development for an ocean access boat ramp and breakwater at Bastion Point, Mallacoota.

Councillors had just over one week to make their decision after receiving the final design and economic reports which have come under considerable criticism.

Spokesperson for the Save Bastion Point Campaign, Mr Leo Op den Brouw said "We are extremely disappointed that Council made this decision. The economic report has grossly inflated figures on expected income and the number of launches anticipated in any given year and some of the risk treatments required in the safety report have not been included. Their decision to proceed while so many uncertainties remain is irresponsible".

More than 60 people in opposition to the proposed development packed the public gallery. When Councillor Buckley gave an illustrative example of why he supported the proposal, the shocked gallery turned its back on him and some people walked out. He said "that if a road is windy and unsafe and you needed to straighten the road to deal with the safety issue and an Aboriginal midden was in the way then of course the development should go ahead because ***it was only an aboriginal waste dump***".

"This is a typical example of the complete disregard for community sentiments and highlights the fact there is little understanding of the real issues associated with boat launching, environmental impacts and cultural heritage at Bastion Point," said Mr Op den Brouw.

Despite putting forward an alternative boat ramp concept for Bastion Point, Mr Op den Brouw said "We are deeply disappointed in Council's decision to not even consider a lower impact facility as recommended by the EES Panel and now hold hope that Minister Jennings will make an impartial and balanced decision on this long-standing issue".

As the proponents for the proposed development, the Council will now seek final approval under the Coastal Management Act from Minister for Environment, Gavin Jennings in order to proceed with construction works.

The Save Bastion Point Campaign will continue their fight to stop this inappropriate boat harbour development and ensure the wilderness values of this unique coastline are kept intact.

Contact details for interviews –

Leo op den Brouw, Save Bastion Point Campaign Ph: 51580255 M: 0428 535 192