

ATTACHMENT 1

CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS – OCEAN ACCESS PROPOSALS

When	What
1960s	Existing concrete boat ramp built (or approved?) by Shire of Orbost, on Crown land for which it was Committee of Management
1970s (to present)	Sand build up on the ramp and offshore reduced effectiveness of the ramp. Abalone fishing boats use the ramp for launching and retrieving, with the aid of a tractor to tow boat trailers.
1988	Port of Melbourne Authority prepared a number of designs of alternatives to improve ocean access from Bastion Point.
1989	Shire of Orbost sought planning approval from the Ministry of Planning & Environment for a proposed breakwater, new boat ramp and car park at Bastion Point, based on the PMA's preferred option. MPE requested an assessment of environmental impacts, a full report and a proper community consultation process.
August 1990	Shire of Orbost engaged Tract Consultants to prepare a proposal for new and improved facilities for ocean access at Bastion Point, using the PMA designs as a starting point. The estimated cost of the development was from \$500,000 to \$1.3 million, depending on the design chosen. The report was submitted to the Coastal Management & Co-ordination Committee (CMCC). An application was made to State Boating Council for funding.
July 1991	CMCC responded to the Tract report: incomplete public consultation and inadequate assessment of environmental impacts including flora and fauna, archaeological sites, landscape and visual values and coastal processes. Other issues included incomplete analysis of safety implications of increased ocean access and the lack of net economic benefit and of a demand analysis.
December 1994	Responsibility for the ramp passed to East Gippsland Shire Council.
July 1995	Mallacoota Inlet Business & Tourist Association held a public meeting to revive interest in the proposal to upgrade/replace the ramp.
November 1995	East Gippsland Shire made a presentation to the Minister for Natural Resources (Hon. Geoff Coleman) seeking a commitment from the State to funding for upgrading of ocean access at Mallacoota.
August 1996	Tract Consultants briefed the Mallacoota community on their original report and proposal.
October 1996	Funding submission to Minister for Conservation (Hon. Marie Tehan) for financial support for detailed studies of the proposal.
1997-98	East Gippsland Shire & NRE commissioned a study of the demand for the facility and its potential economic benefit. Coastal Engineering Solutions report was presented at a public meeting in Mallacoota in March 1998. Report identified two more alternative sites, in addition to those evaluated by Tract – one at Bastion Point, one at Airport Cove.

When	What
1998	Further funding submission to Minister for Conservation for detailed site evaluation, feasibility study and, if successful, construction of the facility.
January 1999	NRE commissioned a study of Airport Cove to investigate its suitability for an ocean access facility. The report – by Shearwater Environmental Management & others – was released at a community meeting convened by Council in March 1999. It concluded that the site was unsuitable for environmental reasons and would probably silt up easily.
April 1999	East Gippsland Shire submitted another application to the State Boating Council, for a four stage process to cover community consultation, site evaluation, design and construction.
May 1999	East Gippsland Council and NRE prepared a preliminary brief for the minimum level of studies thought to be required and sought advice from the Minister for Planning
July 1999	Dol convened an issues scoping meeting at Mallacoota to assist in deciding if an Environmental Effects Statement was required.
September 1999	Council appointed Coastal Engineering Solutions to carry out an initial assessment of upgrading the existing ramp (rather than moving it to either the location recommended by Tract or the CES alternative).
October-November 1999	Coastal Engineering Solutions report received. Council resolved to pursue upgrading the existing ramp and to conduct a ballot of Mallacoota ratepayers and residents to determine views on the project.
February 2000	Ballot carried out by Victorian Electoral Commission. Over two thirds of votes cast (and more than half the eligible voters) supported upgrading the existing ramp. Total ballots issued: 1,257; total returned 966; total in favour 640; total against 325; informal/late 19.
February 2000	28-2-00 Letter from Dol providing a brief outline of the scope of studies likely to be required and questioning some of CES's conclusions.
April 2000	Meeting between staff of Shire, NRE and Dol, with Coastal Engineering Solutions, to consider requirements for further studies.
August 2000	<p>Letter from Minister for Planning setting out the issues to be addressed for the boat ramp and associated works. Includes: 'analysis of alternate options for location and construction of the boat ramp and associated facilities'. Since a planning permit is not required 'and the Coastal Management Act does not provide a suitable alternative assessment process', an EES should be undertaken. In view of work already done, proposes an Inter-Agency Contact Group is to be convened by Dol, (rather than a Community Consultative Committee). Exhibition of draft scoping guidelines (for EES studies) is required for 28 days, stakeholder meetings will be convened by Dol & Council to discuss specific issues, and a Council-run community information process is required throughout the preparation of the EES.</p> <p>'In addition, I am aware that there is presently no agreed method of developing a detailed understanding of the coastal processes in this area, and that the impact of the ramp on sedimentation will be a critical issue in the assessment.' The EES should not be commenced until Council & NRE had reached agreement on the method to be applied.</p>

When	What
May 2001	Letter from Minister for Planning, to Craig Ingram, MP, advising of contribution of \$60,000 "for assessment of key factors impacting on the proposed project (i.e. mainly on marine assessment components)" on a \$:\$ basis. Notes that he understands there is still some strong community concern – funding to be used to clarify issues and provide certainty to Council and community.
August 2001	Letter from Council to Lyndsay Neilson, Secretary of DoI, requesting a review of the need for an EES, given the small size of the project.
November 2001	<p>Letter from Acting Secretary DoI confirming the need for an EES but proposing further modifications to the process: coastal processes/ sediment transport study to be undertaken first – according to a method approved by DNRE - to determine the technical feasibility of the project. 'No public input would be needed at this stage'. Should the technical feasibility be proven, the rest of the EES process would be carried out.</p> <p>'Initially, a meeting between DoI, EGSC and DNRE should occur to discuss the studies needed as part of the EES and to identify where past studies can meet expectations.' 'DoI would then' [after the technical feasibility is determined] 'confirm the EES scope – following input from other agencies and a stakeholder workshop. This streamlined EES process is appropriate to the scale of the issues involved.'</p>
January 2002	Meeting between staff of DoI, EGSC and DNRE to agree on the sequencing of the studies. Agreed that evaluation of alternatives could be based on previous studies and that the economic evaluation only needed to be updated, not redone.
April 2002	EGSC commissioned Shearwater Associates to determine sequence and content of required studies, and obtain indicative prices.