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A 'NO' case for BMYS members to consider when voting on the resolution proposed by the BMYS Board to reaffirm its marina plan

The 'NO' case: Why BMYS members should vote against the Board continuing with its proposal for a marina, dry storage shed, etc.

It is five years since the BMYS Board held a postal ballot of its members in July 2008 to seek approval for the above project on the basis that BMYS would not proceed without a 75% affirmative vote. A letter from the then Commodore, Peter Barnes, accompanied the ballot paper indicating a budgeted cost of \$350,000 for the approval process.

The Commodore's letter stated, "*BMYS has a narrow window of opportunity to expand our facilities with some government support. The Board believes the upgrading of our leased area must occur if we are to have the continued support and respect of the State Government. If we do nothing, when our lease comes up for renewal in 2018, BMYS may have a difficult time explaining what we have done as custodians of our leased area. It may make the renewal of our lease difficult at that time.*" That ballot showed just over 75% of voters supporting the proposal then. The Commodore's claimed fears about a non-renewal of a lease of some 50 years standing for an area of filled seabed with no other realistic uses than its present use has struck many observers as a flimsy and misplaced argument for the project. The Board has reduced the target for the 2013 ballot to just 50% + 1 vote, and circulated a 'YES' case only, despite calls for a 'NO' case.

As late as June 2009, [Mr Barnes reported to BMYS members](#) that the Board expected to receive approval from the Planning Minister, Hon. Justin Madden, not to have to produce an Environment Effects Statement (EES). That expectation proved to be poorly-based, as the Minister, in [November 2009](#), doing his duty under the [Environment Effects Act 1978](#), determined that an EES was required before approval could be considered.

In the five years since, stormy financial times have pressured BMYS and many of its members. The current Commodore told a BMYS General Meeting in October 2013 that a new postal ballot would be held to seek reaffirmation of support for the project given the considerable changes in membership since July 2008, and changes that have occurred in the originally forecasted costs and timings (*familiar story*) mainly because of the requirement placed on the club, only a year after the 2008 ballot, but more than four years before that meeting, to undertake a full Environment Effects Statement (EES). He revealed further cost projection to be \$290,000.

Beaumaris Conservation Society Inc. members are part of a widespread area of opinion among Beaumaris residents that strongly oppose this marina project. The marked proposed change in use of the site from its 50-year use as a launching and retrieval site for boats, which have never been stored on the site, to a quite different and unacceptable use where the site would become a large parking area for a [much larger average size of boat](#), to constitute a serious degradation of Beaumaris Bay. It is not just the large number of parked boats proposed, but also the intrusive imposition of high rock seawalls some 500 metres in length to be dumped on some 1.2 hectares of seabed.

That intrusion would involve dumping 130,000 cubic metres of basalt rocks in a bay without any such rocks naturally occurring there, further smothering fossils in an area that the Victorian Government [has acknowledged](#) to be the only public land of International Geological Significance in the Melbourne Metropolitan Area. The alteration to currents can affect sea grass beds, and rock dumps can house rats and marine pest species. BMYS admits that trucks in daylight hours would bring a new load of rocks every ten minutes for some five months. The 3-storey 78-metre long dry storage shed would be as high as the cliff, and ruin the fine view of it from Beaumaris Bay.

The Beaumaris community's view on the arrogance of a major degrading of Beaumaris Bay for a private club will emerge once the EES is published. BMYS is not being well advised for its future. VOTE **NO** now.