

Bellarine Beach Renourishments

What We Heard

Community consultation has been held about upcoming beach renourishment works on the northern Bellarine Peninsula

Overview

The Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) conducted community consultation in June 2020, ahead of beach renourishment works on the Bellarine Peninsula in 2020 and 2021.

Beach renourishments typically involve adding new sand to a beach and in some cases building structures to hold sand in place to help protect the coastline.

Works will take place on four northern Bellarine beaches which were selected during an independent assessment in 2019.

During the recent community consultation, residents were given the opportunity to help prioritise specific sites for renourishment within four beaches:

- Indented Head, Taylor Reserve
- Indented Head, Wrathall Reserve
- St Leonards North
- St Leonards

The community was also invited to share preferences around the type of sand and structures that could be used in the works.

The project is part of the Victorian Government's \$8 million Port Phillip Bay Beaches Renourishment Program.

What We Heard

During the community consultation, 63 responses were received which included a combination of online and hard copy survey responses.

The following is a summary of the feedback.

Indented Head, Taylor Reserve

Location: the section of beach between Aylmers Reserve and Batman Park



Respondents prioritised the beach at the northern end (towards Aylmers Reserve) as the area most in need of works, due to erosion impacts. Comments were received in relation to the existing groynes further north of this site, questioning their impact on erosion in the local area.

“This is the most popular spread of beachfront where the majority of beachgoers sit. The sand space has continually become less and less each year due to erosion.”

“Two timber groynes adjacent to Aylmers Reserve have reduced sand around our swimming zones, and instead accumulated sand on the DDA ramp, making it dangerous for [people with disabilities]. The sand build-up also blocks the stormwater drain, leaving a pool of stagnant water.”

Indented Head, Wrathall Reserve

Location: the section of beach south of the Indented Head boat ramp



There was a general view that the area immediately adjacent to the Jade Tiger Abalone farm extending southwards, should be the focus of works to address erosion. Concern was voiced that the walking trail, boardwalk and exposed pipework could be at risk. A number of respondents wanted to see groynes built in this area.

“Need to stop further erosion around and under boardwalk and retain sand cover over pipes servicing abalone farm.”

“[Install] groynes to stop further erosion under the boardwalk towards the road and to retain sand over the exposed Jade Tiger Abalone pipes on the beach, plus works to stop further erosion to the south.”

St Leonards North

Location: the section of beach north of St Leonards extending south from the Salt Lagoon to just north of the St Leonards Pier



Respondents noted areas of erosion along the entire stretch, drawing attention to key assets at risk in low lying land and dunes adjacent to the Salt Lagoon. The feedback highlighted a need to address erosion impacting the cliffs and beaches at the southern end of the site, immediately north of the St Leonards Pier.

“Different methods are being used to protect this part of the coastline and it doesn't seem to be fully working.”

“Rock cliffs keep falling down, wire should be placed in front of them- so many rocks in the water from the cliffs.”

St Leonards

Location: the section of beach south of St Leonards Pier, to the southern end of Bengalat Reserve



Residents raised concerns about erosion along the entire stretch of beach and highlighted a preference for works to protect the southern end. Some of the feedback pointed to a need to protect the camping sites and playgrounds in this area.

“[Works should protect] some of the playgrounds in foreshore camping grounds in St Leonards.”

Preferences around renourishment methods

Common methods of addressing coastal erosion are the addition of new sand and the construction of groynes. Respondents were open to these methods, but some raised concerns about the unintended problems groynes can cause by trapping sand in one location while taking sand from beaches elsewhere.

When asked about preferences around the addition of any new sand, the majority of respondents said having sand that stayed in place was their highest priority. Others felt it was more important to have sand that was the same colour and the same grain size to match existing beach sand.

Views were expressed that the beach renourishments could potentially have a negative impact on the natural environment. Some respondents suggested that more research was needed.

“Groynes are fine if they can be shortened if necessary. Sand dumping is far less sustainable unless in large sandbags which are eyesores.”

“I see an issue with renourishment impacting on the intertidal zone as habitat. Consideration needs to be given to beach nesting birds and sea-grass meadows etc.”

Next steps

DELWP is incorporating community feedback into planning for the upcoming beach renourishment works on the northern Bellarine Peninsula. Coastal engineers are developing draft design options which will be provided to the community for comment. DELWP will also continue to communicate with the local community as the works are carried out.

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