Renourishing Elwood beach

Project update – January 2011

Elwood beach renourishment update
The Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) will be investing approximately $3 million to renourish Elwood Beach and ensure its enjoyment for the whole community. City of Port Phillip is contributing $250,000.
The works will involve importing new sand which will increase the width of the beach to 25 metres at high tide and building of a rock groyne to help hold the sand on the beach for the next 20–25 years. A replacement boat ramp, in combination with the rock groyne, has been incorporated into the beach renourishment project design.

Community consultation
City of Port Phillip (CoPP) have worked collaboratively with DSE to lead the public consultation on this important community project. Activities including written surveys and group meetings were held with key user groups to allow participants opportunity for input into the design phase. Those engaged included the Elwood Life Saving Club, the sailing and angling clubs, sea scouts and local businesses.
On 10 June 2010 all the stakeholders agreed on the combined groyne/boat ramp design concept. This design provided the least visual impact on the beach, with consideration of both swimming safety and a suitable boat launching facility.
A further community meeting was held on 21 July 2010, to discuss project details including safety considerations and coordination of timing to minimise disruptions to the public, foreshore clubs and businesses.

Sand renourishment
Due to the northerly wind and wave action, the amount of sand supply arriving at the southern end of Elwood beach is less than the volume moving north. In recent years Elwood beach has been receding by around 0.7 metres per year. Elwood beach was last renourished in 1983.
To replenish the lost sand and provide necessary coastal protection, up to 57,000 tonnes of sand will be placed and profiled on Elwood beach. The sand will be imported from a quarry and the works will involve sand being spread along the beach using large trucks and grading equipment. It will be necessary to close the beach during construction hours. The new beach sand will be a courser grade compared to the current beach sand. The coarser sand will be heavier and less susceptible to the erosive forces.

Civil works
In addition to the renourishment, a combined boat ramp/groyne structure will be constructed to anchor the sand and maximise the beach renourishment. The site of this structure is over the previous boat ramp opposite the Elwood Angling Club.

Boat users should be aware that the boat ramp, like the previous structure, is only functional under certain weather conditions. Technical modelling has determined that the ramp will be under wave attack during certain weather conditions. As with any boat ramp, usage will be conditional on the severity of the wind and wave conditions. Detailed information about these conditions, including wave height safety limits, will be available to club members.
A shared pedestrian all access ramp will also be constructed onto the beach in front of the Elwood Sailing Club as well as the northern side of the boat ramp/groyne structure.
The design of the structures is consistent with the recommendations of the Victorian Coastal Strategy (2008) and will be constructed to allow for the predicted sea level rise.

Conceptual drawing of combined rock groyne and boat ramp.
Works program
The works are scheduled to commence in March 2011 and will take approximately 16 weeks to construct, depending on weather delays. The sand renourishment and civil works will be undertaken simultaneously to minimise the disruption for beach users and meet the nominated time frame.

CoPP is currently undertaking detailed planning for works to improve the Elwood foreshore and will include landscape improvements, upgrades to the Bay Trail bike path and sections of the car park, as well as filtering pollutants from car park stormwater flows.

Safety message
Sections of the beach will be closed to the public during construction times, 7.30am–5pm Monday to Friday. Whilst inconvenience to the public will be minimised as much as possible, safety is the first priority.

The approved contractors will manage all beach access, traffic movement and parking changes to ensure minimal disruption to beach events and local stakeholders.

For more information please contact the DSE Customer Service Centre on 136 186 or City of Port Phillip on 9209 6777.