



DAVID MORRIS MP

Member for Mornington

Time for cooperation from Minister on Mount Martha North Beach

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Mr MORRIS (Mornington) (17:20): (4787) I raise a matter for the Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change, and the action I seek from the minister is that she work collaboratively with the Mount Martha beach stakeholder group to establish an agreed plan to renourish the beach and to undertake further protection works.

As I have mentioned on many occasions, this is a highly sensitive coastal system. We have had sustained loss for probably close to two decades now. We have had cliff erosion, undercutting and danger of collapse.

The Napthine government committed to protection works for the cliff during its term in government. The current government, after representations, was prepared to continue that work and to complete it, but we do not have a permanent solution yet in terms of the sand loss.

The member for Flinders, the Honourable Greg Hunt, has managed to extract \$1.5 million from the federal Treasury to undertake some works, and he has been negotiating a proposal with the department.

Back in August last year it was generally agreed that relocation of around about \$150 000 worth of sand—3500 to 4000 cubic metres—would renourish the beach and a stakeholder group would be convened to work on options for the future management of the beach, including determining the future scope of works and the nature of the works, including the potential for physical works.

The stakeholder group has now been established. It has met on a number of occasions, and the consistent view of that group is that a permanent engineering solution is what is needed.

Unfortunately it appears that the government does not agree with that, and the communications as I understand it have not been all that great.

Last Thursday the group wrote to the minister's chief of staff and a senior department official and asked a series of questions—there has been a contract awarded for renourishment works—around who the contractor is, whether the contractor was on the approved supplier panel, the value of the contract, beach closures and so on.

It has not been consulted on any of those issues, and there was certainly an expectation on the part of the commonwealth that they would be.

But more important, I think, is that there has been no consultation on the pedestrian and traffic management plan that has been put in place while these thousands of tonnes of sand are being moved, and we are now moving into the peak summer season for Mount Martha.

This proposal has the capacity to seriously disrupt the operations.

There was an existing group that could have been consulted; they have not been consulted. There is a real opportunity here for the minister to work with the group, and I ask her to do so collaboratively.