

Kingston's new Aquatic and Leisure Centre FAQ

Why did you close Don Tatnell?

The Don Tatnell Leisure Centre was closed in February 2020 after serious structural issues were found at the site, making it unsafe for use.

How did the maintenance at Don Tatnell fail?

Whilst Council has invested heavily in regular and ongoing maintenance at Don Tatnell, the building was aging, and at 40 years was reaching end of useful life.

This aging facility faced a number of challenges over the years; however, it was the crack to an inaccessible pipe below the 25m pool that led to the serious structural issues found in early 2020. Despite many attempts to repair it, this crack was a result of ongoing ground movement, likely compounded by the adjoining landfill conditions.

Is the Mordialloc Community Centre safe?

The community centre is a separate building to Don Tatnell and has been assessed by engineers as safe. The structural issues were isolated to the Don Tatnell building only.

What work has been done to identify the best site for the new facility?

Council have been working hard to find the best available site for Kingston's new Aquatic and Leisure Centre. We started with over 180 sites across the central and southern suburbs of Kingston. The list was refined by ruling out locations that:

- were deemed too small to host a district level facility that includes a lap pool, learn to swim pool, gym and fitness area, spa and sauna and warm water exercise facilities;
- would result in the loss of valuable open space currently used by the community for parkland and/or existing sporting facilities;
- were located too close to residential homes and would therefore have a significant impact on neighbours;
- were located too far from activity centres and good transport opportunities;
- were outside of strong population catchment areas; and
- were subject to significant environmental constraints.

Following this shortlisting process, we undertook detailed site assessments on the three shortlisted sites.

Why has this taken so long?

This will be the largest ever single infrastructure investment for Kingston Council; therefore, it is essential to get the planning right. A great deal of work is being undertaken behind the scenes to ensure we provide adequate services that will meet the needs of the community now and well into the future. With the Aquatic Facility Plan endorsed in April 2021, the site assessment was progressed, including detailed site investigations.

Why is the greater Walter Galt Reserve deemed 'not viable'?

Walter Galt Reserve is a former landfill site. Site conditions prohibit building outside of the existing building's footprint.

Why don't we build a smaller facility to fit the existing Don Tatnell site?

The Aquatic Facility Plan identified the need for a district level facility to meet the needs of the community now and into the future. The former local level Don Tatnell Leisure Centre struggled to meet current community needs with access times limited and many programs running at capacity.

Can't we build a two-storey building on the existing Don Tatnell site and include the community centre?

Engineers have indicated that soil and groundwater conditions limit the constructability of a two-storey development at the existing site. In addition, the community centre includes an extensive gymnastics facility in addition to its other program rooms. These requirements would simply not fit within the existing site when combined with a district level centre.

If moving the MCC is considered not viable, why is Walter Galt even listed as an option?

Council have released the outcomes of the detailed site assessment results for all of the three shortlisted sites. This included Walter Galt Reserve. The extent of landfill, and impact on construction was not known until detailed investigations were completed.

What will happen to the existing Walter Galt site and the Don Tatnell building?

Once a site for the new aquatic centre is resolved, planning for the demolition of the existing Don Tatnell building will commence. Consideration will then be given to future opportunities for this section of the reserve. Any future planning for the reserve will include consultation with the adjoining MCC and other surrounding stakeholders.

How will residents around the former Don Tatnell site be supported if this Centre is not returned here?

Walter Galt Reserve remains a significant asset for the local community with the Mordialloc Community Centre, playgrounds and sporting facilities. Any future planning for the site, will include community consultation with key stakeholders and surrounding residents and community.

Will the new centre still be called Don Tatnell?

We are only in the very early stages of planning for the new centre, and future naming opportunities are yet to be considered. Council has and will continue to liaise with Don Tatnell's family throughout the project.

How much would it cost to buy the Governor Rd/Wells Rd Mordialloc property?

Council engaged the services of two independent property valuers and a probity advisor to support the determination of a fair and reasonable purchase value and process for the property. In early December 2021, an Option Deed was executed providing Council with the option to purchase the Governor Rd/Wells Rd property for an agreed value of \$14.6M at any stage up until 30 June 2022 (including land settlement transfer), following further due diligence and Council's consideration of community feedback.

It is important to note that the execution of the Option Deed does not tie Council to buying the land, it only secures a fixed price and Council's sole right to decide on purchasing before June 2022. Council would need to resolve at a future Council Meeting to proceed with the land purchase.

How can Council justify spending \$14.6M to buy land rather than just re-building Don Tatnell?

The existing Don Tatnell facility was a local level facility. As per the endorsed aquatic facility plan, a larger district level facility is required to meet the future needs of Kingston.

Construction of a larger facility on the existing site would incur an estimated \$10M in land remediation costs, plus an additional cost to relocate the MCC (estimated to cost \$25M).

What are the public transport options around the Governor Rd/Wells Rd site?

The Governor Rd/Wells Rd site is approximately a 15min walk from the Mordialloc train station. There are also two bus services that run along Governor Rd, with a stop at Jack Grut Reserve. This is the 705 and 708 bus services.

Has cultural heritage been considered for the Governor Rd/Wells Rd site?

Yes, this has been considered, and Council will be seeking advice regarding this during further due diligence reviews.

How high will the building be on Governor Rd? Will it overshadow housing in Epsom Estate?

A two-story development would be proposed for the Governor Rd/Wells Rd site, however design plans are yet to be completed. Exact heights of the facility are not yet known, however given the distance between the site and residential houses, we would not expect to see overshadowing impacts on residential areas.

How will you protect local residential houses from the noise associated with this building?

Indoor aquatic facilities do not typically generate a great deal of noise outside of the building, however proximity to nearby residential properties was a key assessment criteria within our search. The Governor Rd/Wells Rd property provides good residential buffers to nearby residents, via the reserve to the west, the industrial area to the east, the creek to the south and the existing raised landscaping and vegetation between Governor Rd and the Epsom Estate.

Why is there only one site considered in the South?

There were many sites considered throughout Kingston for this new development, including numerous sites within the South. Available land, challenging site conditions, and limited population growth were key criteria impacting the viability of sites in the South.

Why is Edithvale on the list if it has been ruled out? Is there still a case for this location?

As detailed within the presentation, whilst Edithvale was one of the shortlisted sites, detailed investigations ruled it not viable due to the significant flood and environmental risks. Council are unlikely to obtain approval from Melbourne Water to develop this site.

How can I find out more about the site assessment process?

Council will be conducting three Community Information Sessions on the dates below. These sessions will outline the site assessment process undertaken and answer any questions from the community. Visit our project page to register or submit a question for the information session.

Information Session Dates: 6pm Monday 20 December 2021
 12:30pm Tuesday 11 January 2022
 6pm Thursday 3 February 2022

How can I provide my feedback on the site assessment process?

Feedback on the site assessment process and outcomes can be forward to aquatic.planning@kingston.vic.gov.au

When will the new centre be built?

The development of this type of facility typically takes five or more years from initial planning through to construction. Construction of a new facility will take up to 2 years to complete once contractors commence onsite.

Why doesn't the timeline have any dates on it?

The current timeline is indicative to provide an overview of the process and key milestones. This is an important and complex project, and we are still in the early stages. We will update the timeline and provide more accurate dates as we progress through the project.

What facilities will be included?

This will form an important part of consultation, however opportunities for warm water exercise, universal access for all abilities, to all facilities, appropriate learn to swim facilities, and multiple opportunities for health and wellbeing programs will all be included.

What sustainability initiatives are being considered for the new facility?

In 2021 Council adopted the Climate and Ecological Emergency Response Plan, with a key goal being improving sustainable building design. In addition, Council also has a strong Environmentally Sustainable Design Policy which will be used to guide design development for this aquatic facility. We have and will continue to work with industry leaders in sustainability to investigate and consider new technology as it becomes available, and as it is implemented by others.

What is the difference between a regional and district level facility?

Waves is Kingston's 'Regional' facility. It provides for the greater population needs and in addition to the learn to swim pool, lap pool, gym health area, spa and sauna also includes a leisure offering (wave pool and splash park).

A 'District' level facility extends the provision of aquatic and leisure facilities to a more localised area, without the extended leisure offering.

The former Don Tatnell Leisure Centre would have been classified as a 'Local' level facility.

Why not a 50m pool

As per the Aquatic Facility Plan, Council has endorsed the development of a district level facility which traditionally includes a 25m pool. The final components of this new facility however are not yet confirmed it will form part of future community consultation.

Will the new centre have improved access for rehabilitation and injury recovery?

Yes, this is a key focus for Council. The new centre and all pools and facilities will be fully accessible and provide options for rehabilitation and therapy. These details will be developed further during design and shared with the community

Will there be an outdoor heated pool?

An outdoor pool is not currently being considered for this new development. Typically, a district level pool would include indoor facilities that maximise opportunities for programs such as learn to swim, warm water exercise and lap swimming all year round.

Can I see the designs?

We are very much looking forward to sharing the designs with the community; however, we don't have them yet. Council is currently finalising the appointment of specialist consultants to develop the business case and concept plans for the new development, and community consultation will form a big part of this process.

This area is very congested with traffic, has this been considered (similar question for all three sites)?

All three sites are located on key road networks that are challenged either during peak hour times or at school pick-up/drop-off times. A detailed traffic study will be completed on the preferred site that will model anticipated usage patterns and provide recommendations for minimising impacts on the local road network.

The Governor Rd/Wells Rd site provides two access points off Governor Rd and Wells Rd which is hoped will minimise this disruption.

How much parking is allocated for the Governor Rd/Wells Rd site?

Parking considerations will form a part of the detailed traffic study that will be completed on the preferred site. This will be further resolved as we move into the concept design stage.

How much will the new centre cost to build?

We won't know the investment required until we have plans and a confirmed location for a new centre, however a centre of this magnitude would typically cost approximately \$40-50 million to construct.

How will Council fund the new facility?

Council is currently in a strong financial position and is expected to be debt free by the end of this financial year. As a result, it is proposed that the development be funded primarily from borrowings. We are also developing an advocacy strategy, to support the identification of funding opportunities at both a state and federal government level.

The project is not anticipated to impact rates, with Council continuing to raise rates only in accordance with the Victorian Government's rate cap.

Will the Wave pool in Moorabbin be closed after this one is built?

Council's Aquatic Facility Plan identified the need for two aquatic facilities in Kingston. A district level facility to the central/south and a regional level facility to the North. Waves Leisure Centre is Council's regional facility to the north. The plan also allows for future development of Waves in the medium to long term.

How can I stay up to date on the new progress of the new aquatic and leisure centre?

This web page is the central hub for community information on the new facility. You can also [sign up](#) to our mailing list for regular project updates.