

» swimming pools redevelopment project



October 2017

Our shire residents and visitors will be aware that the Ballina and Alstonville community swimming pools are currently being completely redeveloped. This significant investment is being made by Council because the former pools, equipment and associated amenities were approaching the end of their useful life.

Council is wishing to improve the general amenity of the facilities for users, ensuring compliance with current standards for accessibility, and also to improve the pools' operational efficiency through the use of modern equipment and solar technology. The pool upgrades reflect Council's desire to provide our residents and visitors with great recreational opportunities.

As we enter the summer swimming season, it is understandable that our residents are eager to know when the new pool facilities will be available for use. We hope that the responses to the following questions will be helpful in clarifying the matters associated with the pools upgrade project.

» FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

1. When will the pools reopen?

It is not currently possible to determine the dates upon which the Ballina and Alstonville pools will reopen. As soon as these dates can be ascertained, public announcements will be made.

Unfortunately, it has been necessary to extend the initial contract timeline for the construction works to be undertaken.

2. What has caused the delay in the project?

The most significant impact to the construction timeframe has been caused by wet weather, which is something we are accustomed to on the North Coast of NSW.

However, the project has also been delayed for other reasons. The construction contractor was required to appropriately treat and dispose of a much larger volume of asbestos than had been anticipated when removing the old pool infrastructure at both the Ballina and Alstonville sites.

Also, the substantially improved new facilities generate a greater demand for power than has previously been available to the two sites. Council staff is working closely with Essential Energy and the construction contractor to ensure the additional power supply can be urgently made available.

Despite these unfortunate delays, everyone involved is working hard to enable the community to access and enjoy the new facilities as soon as possible.

3. Why were the Ballina and Alstonville Pools closed and redeveloped at the same time?

Options were examined to undertake the pool redevelopments one after the other. However, it was determined that redeveloping both sites at the same time would achieve significant cost savings and efficiencies. Bearing in mind that one contractor has been engaged to undertake the work at both sites.

4. Are we able to book our school swimming carnival for early next year?

Bookings for swimming carnivals can be made by contacting the respective Ballina and Alstonville Pool management contractors.

Ballina Memorial Pool

Lee and Vicki Fitzgerald
Ph: 0408 480 325
Email:
ballinapool@outlook.com

Alstonville Pool

Greg and Kelly Fettell
Ph: 02 6628 0826
Email:
gregfettell@hotmail.com

Whilst we'd really like to be able to say the pools will be available for the return of the school year, such an assurance cannot be given at this time.

We do understand that school students do enjoy swimming carnivals, and some rely on progression from the carnivals to higher representative competition.

In these circumstances, as a contingency, schools may wish to examine options to use other pool facilities in the region to conduct their carnivals, in the short term.

5. When can I book my child's birthday party at the pool/s?

Refer to response to question 4.

6. Will the Ballina Waterslide open before the Ballina Pool reopens?

The waterslide, which is leased independently from the pool, can only operate when the pool is open. Waterslide patrons must have access to the pool's amenities and changing facilities. Access to the waterslide is also via the pool.

7. When will season passes to the pools be available? How much will they cost? Will half-season pool passes be further discounted?

Council will not be offering full-season pool passes this swimming season, because of the reconstruction program. Partial season passes will be offered when reopening dates are confirmed. The cost of these passes is presently unknown, but will be adjusted according to the extent of the remaining pool season.

8. What will be the cost of pool entry fees?

Pool entry fees are in accordance with Council's adopted fees and charges. This information may be obtained from Council's website ballina.nsw.gov.au by typing into the search field 'Fees and Charges' and following the links.

9. When the pools are open, will I be able to book-in my child for swimming lessons?

Everyone is able to reserve an area within the pools to conduct private swimming lessons. This may be done by contacting the respective pool managers (contact details over page). Alternatively, the pool managers can give you contact details for people who routinely coordinate learn-to-swim classes at the respective pools.

10. Will the new pools be open year round?

The Ballina and Alstonville facilities will be heated, with each containing a 50 metre pool and a 25 metre pool. The smaller pool will be roofed and will be enclosable. Council is yet to determine whether the swimming season for the new facilities should be extended. Whilst there may be a community desire for this, the benefits would need to be balanced against substantially increased management and operational costs.

11. What will be the opening hours for the new pools?

Initially, the daily operating hours for both pools will be unchanged. However, if there is strong evidence that the community wishes to see an extension of operating hours and/or an extension of the swimming season at Ballina and/or Alstonville, this can be considered by Council, in consultation with the respective pool contractors.

We need to be mindful that any expansion of the pool operating hours may have significant cost implications for the community.

12. Where will the memorial at the Ballina Pool be relocated to?

Ballina Pool is a dedicated war memorial. In consultation with the Ballina RSL Sub Branch, arrangements are being made to relocate the memorial plaques to a suitable location at the facility.

13. What disability access provisions are being made in the new pool complexes?

The new pools in both Ballina and Alstonville are designed to be fully accessible. The new amenities area within the Ballina site will be fully compliant with accessibility standards.

The work undertaken by Council's Access Committee to review and critique the pool redevelopment plans has been appreciated.

14. When the new pools are open, will I be able to buy a cup of coffee without paying pool entry charges?

The proposed new kiosk within the Ballina Pool and the existing kiosk within the Alstonville Pool are operated by the respective pool managers as a convenience to pool patrons. The current arrangements will continue; that is, non-swimming patrons who enter the facilities are required to pay a spectator entry fee.

Further information:



Ballina Shire Council, Strategic and Community Facilities, phone 1300 864 444.
communitypools@ballina.nsw.gov.au
ballina.nsw.gov.au (search 'pool redevelopment')