

# Monash Tennis Centre: Feedback Report 2

*Listening Posts, Glen Waverley Golf Course Driving Range, Saturday 27 February and Monday 1 March 2021 (v1.0 2/3/2021)*

## PROJECT BACKGROUND

Monash Council is delivering on the development of an 18-court public tennis facility at the Glen Waverley Sports Hub, with \$21m funding from State Government.

The new tennis centre will replace the existing 23-court tennis centre in Boroondara, currently located on land needed for North East Link. The Monash Tennis Centre will operate on a non-commercial, club-based model.

This report summarises the second round of three in-person consultations with neighbouring residents held on 27 February 2021 at 10am and 12noon, and on Monday 1 March 2021 at 6.30pm.

## SUMMARY OF ENGAGEMENT

The purpose of the consultations was to present four siting options to the local community who are most likely to be impacted by the project, answer questions and hear feedback on minimising any negative impacts before planning begins.

Monash City Council wrote to the nearest 400 households to the current driving range, the site selected for the development of the tennis centre. The residents of these households were invited to meet with councillors, staff and specialist consultants on site to share their thoughts and questions.

The sessions were attended by 63 people representing 46 households, or 12% of households invited. Another 10-12 people including golfers attended the sessions. Further to this, several residents have engaged with Council via email or telephone in preference to, or in addition to public consultation. Attendees were asked to register online, and a Covid-safe plan was in place.

The consultations ran for one hour each and included presentations from:

- Russell Hopkins, Director Community Services
- Tony Oulton, Manager Active Monash
- Ossie Martinz, Director Infrastructure
- Technical experts on Horticulture, Engineering (traffic), City Design, Lighting and Acoustic Engineering Consultants

The presentations covered:

- Monash Council's vision for the tennis centre as a community club focused facility
- Council's commitment to deliver 18 courts
- Council's commitment to look at the feasibility of alternative siting options within the golf course away from residential boundaries
- Project overview and outcomes of consultation with adjoining residents on 20 January
- Overview of siting options, explored by golf consultants, WellPlayed

- Pros and cons of Council's preferred option and the sites proposed by adjoining residents at the previous consultation – including technical considerations, trees, overlays, siting, budget, timelines, etc.
- What's next: an update will be provided once investigations are completed in May

Councillors, staff and consultants were in attendance at the site to listen to feedback, answer questions if possible, discuss ideas and possibilities, and take note of concerns and questions arising from the project.

### Pros and cons of layouts presented

Four different layouts for the tennis centre were on display.

1. Council's preferred layout (layout 7) with a 50m buffer from the nearest residents' boundaries
2. the original layout presented (layout 2) with a 35m buffer from residents' boundaries
3. The layout on the site of the 6<sup>th</sup> hole of the golf course (layout 10), requested by residents at the previous consultation on 20 January.
4. The layout on the site of the 17<sup>th</sup> hole of the golf course (layout 9), requested by residents at the previous consultation on 20 January.

These are among 12 layouts that have been considered, and were available to residents to view together with positive and negative indicators based on assessment criteria. The criteria include social impact, visual amenity, and environmental issues such as retaining vegetation, engineering and traffic.

Officers explained these are not the top four options. They are the ones that have been discussed the most.

The layout with the 50m buffer (layout 7) is Council's preferred option because it has the least impact on vegetation, has been pushed further away from residents' boundaries, is a good layout for tennis operations, has the least impact on the golf course, and more retention of high value trees.

The two layouts positioned on the 6<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> holes of the golf course were assessed and found to be not feasible for a range of reasons including environmental impacts.

### Next steps

Officers explained the next steps which are to take the feedback for further development of the layout. A more collaborative session will follow, noting that views are not consistent among participants, and some residents prefer to meet individually than in a group setting. The next session will be open to anyone and an expanded catchment will be invited.

## ENGAGEMENT RESULTS

### Summary of Feedback

While it was not possible to capture every observation, statement and question, officers' notes are collated and presented below.

SITING OF TENNIS COURTS	
Participant feedback on minimising negative impacts	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a proper sporting precinct with access into Jells Park and 15km speed limit</li> <li>• Important to do the project right, not piecemeal, let's do it properly</li> <li>• Broadly supportive of the project and sporting opportunities</li> </ul>	
Participant Questions	Council officer responses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What guarantee have we got that this won't be expanded?</li> <li>• Can you confirm there will be no further development?</li> <li>• Will the project be further extended in a few years' time?</li> <li>• Will there be more courts added?</li> </ul>	This is not a private enterprise, this is a Council facility and we will not be extending.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tell us the cost of putting it on the 6<sup>th</sup> hole</li> <li>• Why isn't the 6<sup>th</sup> hole a preferred option?</li> </ul>	There are major issues with locating the tennis centre on the 6 <sup>th</sup> hole. An environmental assessment was done across the whole golf course, including cultural heritage, flood overlays, vegetation and fauna impacts. Hole 6 is not a feasible option. It would need a lot of trees removed, and a redesign of the golf course.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proposal for 17<sup>th</sup> hole means not losing the driving range or Halcyon Centre; loses fewer trees; retains clubhouse and carparks, why aren't you considering it?</li> <li>• Siting on the 17<sup>th</sup> hole would have low impact on golf, traffic, etc – 38 mature trees would need to go and some scrubby ones which is less than .01% of all the trees.</li> </ul>	This option is not feasible because there would be a negative impact on residents with only a 9-12m buffer, and negative impact on vegetation. Shepherd Rd would not be able to handle the additional traffic.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are you aware of flooding issues in the driving range area?</li> </ul>	A drainage design has been done, which will be going to Council.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will Glenvale Tennis Club stay as it is?</li> </ul>	We will look at other options, including open space.
Participant Questions	Council officer responses

SITING OF TENNIS COURTS	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What was the weighting of criteria with the traffic light system to determine which sites go forward</li> <li>When you look at the traffic light system you have used, options 8 and 2 rate higher</li> </ul>	<p>Traffic light system was equally weighted and considered a range of criteria such as adjacent resident amenity, ecological impacts, tennis and golf usability, etc.</p> <p>Layout 7 rated the highest.</p>

NOISE	
Issues identified by participants	Participant feedback on minimising negative impacts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Noise will go up the hill</li> <li>Can hear cows at night with the right wind direction</li> <li>At other clubs, people finishing playing and then socialise, noise until 11-11.30pm in the car park with people leaving and talking, that's what will happen here</li> <li>Golfers will be impacted by noise from tennis</li> <li>See how far noise carries.</li> <li>We can hear softball and netball. Can't have people playing at 11pm.</li> <li>Noise in carpark after tennis, after socialising, deliveries, etc</li> <li>I don't want to be lying in bed hearing tennis balls whacking about</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is lots of hooning here at night, this area should be gated so they can't get in</li> <li>We don't know how much noise will be buffered when a noise study has not been undertaken</li> </ul>
Participant Questions	Council officer responses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What about noise abatement?</li> </ul>	<p>Advice from acoustic engineer was for 6-8 feet high fence.</p>

LIGHTING	
Participant Questions	Council officer responses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lighting on Merri Creek attracts crime</li> </ul>	<p>Crime Prevention Through Environmentally Sustainable Design (CPTED) principles will be incorporated into the design of this project.</p>
Participant Questions	Council officer responses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How bright will the lights be at night</li> <li>When do the softball turn lights off, those lights are very bright</li> <li>Will there be lighting for the carpark?</li> </ul>	<p>You will find light spill from older technology using box-style lights that produce glare and are not remotely controlled.</p> <p>Newer technology does not have those issues.</p>

TRAFFIC AND PARKING	
Issues identified by participants	Participant feedback on minimising negative impacts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Traffic is really bad and going to get worse</li> <li>• People parking in side streets</li> <li>• Traffic is the biggest impact</li> <li>• Concerns around the exit and entrance to the site and increased traffic</li> <li>• The roundabout does not work at Caulfield Grammar, useless, traffic builds back to Strickland Avenue</li> <li>• The car park is already full with golfers, additional parking is needed. People park up and down the road and will park in our streets</li> <li>• The netball extension is a massive project – the traffic from that is going to cause a huge impact</li> <li>• It is going to get very busy</li> <li>• Chapman Blvd traffic flow. Is the street going to be jammed every weekend.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Permits for residents</li> <li>• Can Council impose parking restrictions in side streets?</li> <li>• Footpath near Jells Road entrance needs to be improved, people have to walk on the road</li> <li>• Traffic count is useless at the moment as we are not back from COVID so not a true representation</li> <li>• The 50km zone along the entrance to Jells Park doesn't work, people go through there at 60/70 kms</li> <li>• Traffic audit should go beyond the Jells/Waverley Road corner</li> <li>• Permits need to be provided for residents so they can park in their street</li> <li>• There needs to be parking permits for residents, I live in Northam Street and I'm worried I won't be able to park outside my house or visitors won't be able to</li> <li>• We already have a problem with Shepherds Rd hoons, dumping rubbish, doing burnouts. Can it be gated?</li> </ul>
Participant Questions	Council officer responses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will it be a single level car park or multilevel</li> </ul>	Single level
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explain how traffic will be improved</li> <li>• How will you resolve traffic issues?</li> </ul>	<p>We accept traffic is a major issue which is why it is a part of this whole proposal.</p> <p>Traffic studies will be undertaken and we will work out how much additional traffic the tennis courts will generate. Our consultants are road safety auditors who will work out a safe and workable solution. The project will generate more traffic but not as much as netball and softball.</p> <p>We looked at parking and drainage issues and asked for additional funding in the project to do this.</p> <p>If additional traffic is still causing concerns, we will look at parking restrictions. The process is to put a proposal to everyone in the street.</p>

TRAFFIC AND PARKING	
Participant Questions	Council officer responses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There was congestion at Jells &amp; Waverley Roads 15 years ago and VicRoads did a report. Can we have that traffic report before final approval?</li> </ul>	<p>We will ask VicRoads to get the report from the archives.</p> <p>There has been no dialogue with Department of Transport yet, but there is a process we have to go through.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Will you be consulting with other stakeholders about the traffic issues?</li> </ul>	<p>Consultation will continue throughout the planning phase of this project, including traffic and parking studies at existing complexes of comparable scale.</p>

SAFETY	
Issues identified by participants	Council officer responses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Access road is dangerous when people park there – 50km zone – softball people park there</li> <li>A major impact of construction phase is safety</li> <li>A bike trail will need lights and that's more impact to residents</li> <li>Will increase crime</li> </ul>	<p>All of these considerations are paramount. Safety is certainly a priority that Council's engineers and relevant consultants are mindful of.</p>

PROPERTY VALUES	
Issues identified by participants	Council officer responses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Light pollution and noise will affect property values</li> </ul>	<p>Measures will be implemented to mitigate the light and noise impacts of this project.</p>

ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS	
Issues identified by participants	Council officer responses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Main concern is removal of worthwhile trees – but not shrubby trees</li> </ul>	<p>Council's preferred layout is considerate of preserving and maintaining trees of remnant significance.</p>

ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS	
Participant Questions	Council officer responses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What trees are going?</li> <li>• Does Council need a planning permit to remove trees, or can they remove as many as they want?</li> <li>• So Council approves its own application?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council's preferred layout is considerate of preserving and maintaining trees of remnant significance. Additional tree planting will occur to replace any non-remnant trees lost through this project, however the specifics of which trees may go is to be informed by the detailed design process.</li> <li>• The area is zoned for public and recreational use and some trees can be removed without a permit. If native vegetation needs to be removed we need a planning permit.</li> <li>• There is a structured, legal process in place based on the planning scheme for planning permits. There is also the ability to go to VCAT if any party is unhappy with the decision. There will be very little native vegetation removal with Council's preferred option.</li> </ul>

BUFFER/LINEAR PARK SPACE	
Participant feedback on minimising negative impacts	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Don't want a path in this area</li> <li>• Want nice clear open space so I can kick the footy and throw the Frisbee with my kids</li> <li>• Don't want a concrete fence, want to be able to see through it</li> <li>• Buffer to be above lighting</li> <li>• Trail nearer to tennis courts</li> <li>• Mounds off tennis courts</li> </ul>	
Participant Questions	Council officer responses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What will the acoustic barrier look like?</li> <li>• Can we get baseline acoustic data and comparison sites, e.g. Boroondara Tennis Centre?</li> </ul>	<p>This is to be confirmed through the design process, but we are mindful that any acoustic barrier should be in keeping with preserving visual amenity as much as possible.</p>

ADDITIONAL OR COMPLEMENTARY FACILITIES	
Participant feedback on minimising negative impacts	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open space area with grass</li> <li>• Don't want minigolf or playspace, golf course is no place for children, it's dangerous</li> <li>• We don't want a path at the back of our house – privacy, security, massive issues</li> </ul>	

ADDITIONAL OR COMPLEMENTARY FACILITIES	
Participant feedback on minimising negative impacts	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No bike path – there have been bikes on the golf course in the past, and a history of bad behaviour</li> <li>No bike path, long history of bikes causing damage to the course</li> <li>Bikes and dogs off-leash don't mix</li> <li>No need for mini-golf or a playground – they will just increase parking demand</li> <li>No playground – no need to have children near a golf course – it is dangerous</li> </ul>	
Participant Questions	Council officer responses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is the dog park going ahead?</li> </ul>	It is not our intention to provide a fenced dog park at this facility, however, maintaining an open space that can be used as leash free for dogs is something that we are considering.

EXISTING USES OF THE SITE	
Issues identified by participants	Council officer responses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Driving range is a great asset</li> <li>Only driving range in Monash</li> <li>Important when you're learning to play golf</li> <li>Won't learn anything from cages</li> <li>The driving range is busy from morning to night, there are more than 15 people a day that use it</li> <li>You cannot have a golf club without a driving range</li> <li>The driving range is a great asset, needed to get people learning</li> <li>This is the only driving range where you can hit off grass. Very rare. Difficult to learn otherwise.</li> <li>Our boys play 2 to 3 times a week. It is the closest practice range around.</li> <li>Saturday and Sunday sessions are booked out. Shame to lose driving range.</li> <li>The golf club will lose members and newcomers if there isn't a compromise. Please find a resolution</li> <li>The club champion uses it all the time</li> <li>Look for an alternative, nets are not acceptable</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The constraints of the existing driving range are well known. The driving range is under-utilised compared to other facilities. The short length and lack of fencing present safety problems with errant golf balls for cars, pedestrians and residents.</li> <li>With regard to the loss of the driving range as a golf teaching facility, there are varied views around the value of learning to play on a driving range versus learning to play on the course itself. There are currently periods during the week when the course is underutilised, and golf clinics for juniors or beginners could be programmed during these times.</li> <li>We are committed to engaging with golf club members and regular golfers at this site to explore a range of golf practice facilities that can be developed at this site to replace the existing driving range</li> </ul>



EXISTING USES OF THE SITE	
Participant Questions	Council officer responses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What do we get in return for our driving range being taken?</li> <li>Will the driving range go? What will you replace it with?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We recognise the loss and will look for alternatives for practice.</li> <li>There will be no driving range.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Can the chipping green stay?</li> </ul>	Yes, that can be retained in the preferred plan.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Have you consulted users of the driving range and golf pros?</li> </ul>	We have discussed this with the golf pros.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How did you decide there was no need for a golf range? What sort of study of done?</li> </ul>	We asked and were told at peak, there were 15 users per day, but we recognise this could be an underestimate.

TENNIS CLUB OPERATIONS	
Issues identified by participants	Council officer responses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Club players don't like plexipave</li> <li>We won't have our own space, kitchen, etc</li> <li>Playing surfaces for the courts are important</li> <li>It won't work to share the pavilion with golf, and tennis players don't want to. Golfers have beer after playing, tennis is for families</li> <li>Older people won't be able to afford the new club.</li> <li>Concern with court surfaces and losing community feel</li> <li>Night play should finish at 10pm</li> </ul>	We have engaged with potential tennis club users and the tenant golf club at this site. We are confident that club usage of the building can be accommodated successfully and in a way that is suitable to club members. Club members will still be able to bring food for 'after-match' social activities as they would at their current facilities.
Participant Questions	Council officer responses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What time will the courts close – 10pm 11pm?</li> </ul>	Our lighting policy says that play can continue until 11pm. It is expected that both resident clubs would get the same hours they have now.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The facility will be multipurpose with weddings and large events held impacting on local neighbourhoods</li> <li>Is there an intention to have late night functions? The NELP website implies it will. Will it be licenced? And kids?</li> <li>This is a private enterprise – they will turn around and put up another hall for wedding receptions and parties</li> </ul>	The facility will not be for functions, or for weddings or 21 <sup>sts</sup> . It will be used for club-based activities such as AGMs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Boroondara charge \$30-38/hr for court hire. We can't afford that.</li> </ul>	Tenant clubs will still set the membership fees for their members.

TENNIS CLUB OPERATIONS	
Participant Questions	Council officer responses
What will the court surfaces be?	Minimum of 14 of the courts will now be synthetic grass
What about running tournaments?	<p>There will be some tournaments held at the facility, however it is Council's intention that club comps and activities be accommodated. We will be working with the club committees on what would be acceptable, and they will consult with members, etc.</p> <p>We are also working with Waverley District Tennis Association, Tennis Victoria and NELP on an indicative tournament schedule that is suitable to all parties, including potential clubs.</p>

### Further questions

There were a number of questions about the decision to build the tennis centre and other matters. The questions and responses are shown below.

Participant Questions	Council officer responses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Why was the decision confidential?</li> <li>Whose decision was it to build the tennis centre?</li> </ul>	<p>Confidentiality was part of the process. We were not able to consult. We did express concern about that condition with NELP, but we did submit an expression of interest.</p> <p>It was a Council decision to build the tennis centre.</p> <p>[Representative of North East Link took the question on notice and will provide a response.]</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Who chose this site?</li> <li>Who decided where it would go?</li> <li>Why did it end up in Glen Waverley?</li> <li>Were other sites in Monash considered?</li> <li>Can you look at other options including open space</li> </ul>	<p>The site had already been identified as a potential location for a larger tennis centre. Fewer, larger facilities are preferred in areas zoned for recreational purposes.</p> <p>There were no other sites with underutilised space for recreation purposes.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Can you go back and say we don't want it?</li> <li>Why don't you upgrade existing tennis facilities and not build this one?</li> </ul>	<p>We want to be clear that this consultation is not about whether the tennis centre goes ahead, it is about minimising the impacts.</p>

Participant Questions	Council officer responses
	This is a good facility for the community and solves a problem of ageing facilities. This area is zoned for recreation.
Has the contract already been tendered?	No, we are not at that stage yet
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Why weren't residents of Gallaghers Rd, Madigan Drive and Shepherds Road invited?</li> <li>I live on Jells Rd and didn't receive an invitation to this meeting</li> </ul>	<p>For this round, we invited the 400 households closest to the site.</p> <p>We will hold another session with an expanded catchment. It will be open to anyone.</p>
Is the area being used for fill from North East Link?	No, there is no such arrangement with NELP.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is it a true a consultant has been asked to find the \$5.77m because it wasn't budgeted?</li> <li>Where is the \$5.7m Council is contributing going to come from?</li> <li>Are you going to sell off the other courts</li> <li>Is the cost of demolishing existing courts in the budget?</li> <li>What projects are not going ahead because the money is being diverted into this?</li> </ul>	<p>No, Council budgets for a range of projects. This money will not be instead of other things. Council budgets for capital investment and operations funding. There will be no rate increase, it is part of normal budgeting.</p> <p>We will not be selling off the other courts.</p>
How will costs be covered if clubs don't want to relocate?	That won't happen. Some tennis clubs are very interested.
Will you release Council's Expression of Interest for this project?	We are working on that, because it is a confidential document.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are there any requirements in the contract with NELP that have to be met (NELP to report back?)</li> <li>What are the non-negotiables with NELP?</li> </ul>	NELP requirements around budget and timeframes are clearly articulated and we are committed to working within these parameters.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What other stakeholder groups have you met with?</li> <li>What information did you share with other groups and what was the feedback?</li> </ul>	<p>We have met with the committees of the tennis clubs and the golf club. The discussions with the tennis club committees are confidential because they are on relocation. We attended the AGM of the golf club. It is our expectation that the committees inform and continue the conversations with their members.</p> <p>Some neighbours prefer to meet individually and feel safe.</p>
Can we have a clear list of what we can and cannot influence?	Yes, we will provide that.

Participant Questions	Council officer responses
Is the vacant land at the front going to be used for the suburban rail loop and a station?	There are absolutely no plans for that.