The Reunion Aquatic Centre at Reunion Park, Bulbring, Darlington was designed in response to the severe storm-damaged beach lifesaving facility located at the mouth of the Ispingo River. After the original building was declared unsafe and eventually demolished, the decision was taken not to redevelop on the same site due to the risk of future wave action damage.

An Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) informed the relocation of the lifesavers' facility to the existing ski-boat club – a simple, largely single-storey brick structure bordering the dune vegetation at the southern end of Reunion Park. This building, while structurally sound, had been vandalised and left to disuse.

The EThekwini Parks and Recreation Department required the centre to accommodate club and professional lifesavers, the ski-boat club and beach maintenance personnel. While the existing structure could expand upwards, no increase in the building footprint was permitted. This posed a significant planning challenge as most of the proposed functions and facilities were more practically located on ground level with direct access to the beach.

The upper level was extended to accommodate lifesavers' change-rooms, training and duty rooms, and the ski-boat control tower and change-rooms. The remaining unused decked area was refurbished as viewing platforms

The face-brick of the existing structure not weathered well and was retained to retain the building's past and its relationship to context. In contrast, the new first-floor masonry component was plastered and the new training tower constructed in steel and glass.

The tower, notably taller than the original structure, acts as a beacon when viewed from the beach. The tower is accessed via a new stairwell, which creates a transparent double volume through the building's narrow north-south axis, articulating the lifesaving and ski-boat club components.

Roof forms were kept as simple as possible, with large overhangs to protect walls. Mosaics along the beach shower walls provide texture and interest. Dune vegetation coastal red milkwoods and other indigenous tree species were reinstated along the building perimeter.

The development of the Aquatic Centre has provided a landmark for Reunion Park, rejuvenated the ski-boat and lifesaver clubs, upgraded facilities for a previously marginalised community, and is encouraging greater use of one of Darlington's most beautiful beaches.