

Draft Martin Park Master Plan 2023

ENGAGEMENT SNAPSHOT

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WHEN: Wednesday, November 22 to Tuesday, December 12, 2023.

ENGAGEMENT METHODS: To encourage residents to get involved, we promoted the opportunity for people to have their say through our communication channels, including public notices, emails, social media and a have your say page on makewodongayours.com.au.

RESPONSES

1 submissions through Make Wodonga Yours

0 relevant comments on social media

COMMUNICATIONS

5073 emails

48.6% average open rate

14 click-throughs

4 Facebook posts

1711 reach

1 likes and reactions

2 Instagram posts

494 reach

7 likes and reactions

2 LinkedIn posts

721 impressions

63 likes and reactions

111 website visits

79 unique pageviews

1 public notices

CITY OF WODONGA VIC



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ENGAGEMENT SNAPSHOT

FEEDBACK

WODONGA SAINTS FOOTBALL AND NETBALL CLUB
ADRIAN BARRY (PRESIDENT)

Martin Park is indeed a well-recognised sporting facility in the in the Wodonga and surrounding region and while John Flower Oval is well known for its surface in the Ovens & Murray Football League and its history in the community, Les Cheesley Oval is quickly growing its reputation as one of the premier playing surfaces in the Tallangatta & District Football League due to its elite surface and all weather ability, in fact we had quite a wet winter during the 2023 football season and the surface was still pristine at seasons end and all of the rival clubs were in awe.

The Wodonga Saints Football & Netball Club now calls Les Cheesley Oval home and it has proved to be an absolute win for the club as we are now going through a significant growth period not only on the field and court but financially as the WSFNC no longer needs to pay the Wodonga Football and Sports Club approximately $11,000.00 per year to use the John Flower Oval facility for 9 days per year simply for playing use as well as being charged additional fees to utilise any of the ancillary facilities.

On top of this WSFNC was also paying a rental fee of $2,637.33 to Train on Les Cheesley Oval (Football) and around the same for use of Kelly Park for netball training (These fees are still currently paid to Wodonga City and Netball Wodonga) which was simply financially unsustainable hence the move to playing football on Les Cheesley Oval at the beginning of the 2022 season. (Note: WSFNC is still paying Wodonga Football & Sports Club $1,980.00 for the use of the current netball facilities at John Flower Oval)

It is well documented over the years that Wodonga Saints Football & Netball Club has been requesting Netball facilities as our club is currently cut in half which as you can imagine causes its own issues with major separation in the club members/players in completely different places during the week and only coming together on a Saturday.

WSFNC is home to 7 netball teams in Tallangatta & District Netball Association with up to 80 netballers competing each year and quite successfully I might add considering they don't have a home base of operations to call their own for training or playing. In 2024 the Tallangatta & District Netball Association is trialing an additional grade of Netball which will provide at least another 10 netball players an opportunity to play the sport they love and there the need of additional netball facilities at the Martin Park Precinct is real.

Project Overview

The Wodonga Saints Football & Netball Club agrees that the Martin Park facility requires a new master plan and that all users need to be considered whether they are a sporting club or the general public however we feel that the current draft Master Plan has missed the mark particularly in the area of public expectations and needs as per the dot points below provided in the draft Master Plan.

- Current character and functionality of the landscape;
- Public expectations and needs;
- Emerging issues and trends; and,
- The realities of the economic, social, environmental and legislative context of the time

Project Objectives

The project objectives state the below:

It will guide the creation of sport and recreation facilities to cater for the needs of the community and user groups over the next 20 years. The master plan has the following objectives.

However, the draft Master Plan does not cater for the ever-growing needs of all user groups at the Martin Park/Les Cheesley precinct due to vastly underestimating the sheer number netball teams that need to use the facility with WSFNC 8 Teams (Approximately 90 participants) and Wodonga Football & Sports Club 5 Teams (Approximately 50 participants) and two courts with very basic facilities will simply not suffice to fill the very real need today.

Strategic Context

Literature Overview:

In this section of this document it has sections quoted from the Active Living in Wodonga - Physical Activity Strategy 2021 to 2026 with the following quotes:

The Physical Activity Strategy is intended to guide the development of recreation facilities, services and programs for the next five years.

“To increase the number of Wodonga residents meeting the recommended National Physical Activity Guidelines”

Also quoted is the Wodonga Open Space Strategy 2023 with the following statements:

Actions are outlined in the strategy to address existing community and recreation needs and anticipate future public open space requirements to meet the future population’s needs taking into consideration changing leisure and recreation trends.

Unfortunately, the current draft Master Plan for Martin Park falls well short of providing equitable and sustainable facilities for all user groups.

Also, in this section it is stated that recommendations made in the Martin Park Master Plan 2015 were reviewed and many have been implemented however it is stated that Outstanding recommendations were further reviewed and included in this current plan where appropriate but what is not stated is that WSFNC were the recommended tenant for the Baranduda Fields Complex that is currently under construction however there is no mention of this in this document.

Demographic Considerations

The dot points provided in this section clearly show that the Wodonga City catchment area has a higher proportion of people under the age of 34 years 48.2% compared with regional Victoria 40.7% which indicates that the need is growing or improved sporting facilities across the Wodonga City area to provide the opportunity for a sporting outlet for these young people.

Trend Considerations

In this section of the document, it clearly states that Facility providers face an increasing trend to develop and redevelop sporting fields and courts to a higher level in order to increase carrying capacity however the upgrades mentioned in this plan do not provide any further/higher levels of participation than is already available as the facilities currently available (Including the not to Standard Netball Court) are already in full use and there is no additional playing/training surfaces being proposed in this Master Plan.

Site Analysis

WSFNC absolutely supports that Martin Park is zoned Public Park and Recreation Zone (PPRZ) and equal use of this area by all parties from each sporting user group and the general public is a must as it is an absolute joy seeing young families utilise the park at Les Cheesley, people walking their dogs or generally using the fantastic playing surface it provides for fun and games but we believe that the vision has fallen short of its full potential to the greater community and user groups.

Site Elements

In this section the WSFNC agrees with the site elements in this section however we recommend the high chain mesh fence between the two ovals, the old scoreboard and the high embankments could simply be removed creating another 8 meters (At the Narrowest Point) of space that could be utilised for additional parking and many other uses if it was considered, this would also create a one facility approach to the precinct rather than two very distinct zones.

Facility Snapshot

This section is mostly accurate however 5. Is listed as the Gordon Street entrance in error when it is actually the Vermont Street entrance.

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Les Cheesley Oval

It is indicated that Les Cheesley is one of the key homes for cricket in the region however it also provides a significant home for football in the region with the WSFNC competing in the Talllangatta & District Football League as well as the Wodonga Junior Football Club competing in the Albury Wodonga Junior Football League calling it home.

Netball-specific facilities

It is stated in this section that the main netball court is the competition home for 10 netball teams however with the WSFNC having 7 teams in 2023 (8 teams in 2024) and WFSC having 5 teams it is actually the competition home for 13 netball teams or approximately 130/140 participants.

Demand Analysis

It is mentioned in this section that the majority of input was from Wodonga Football and Sports Club however the WSFNC had significant contact with Scott Walker from Ross Planning.

As mentioned, many times the WSFNC response the need for netball facility growth and improvement is greatly understated and underestimated so a rethink into this part of the draft Master Plan must be reassessed if it is any chance of providing equitable and sustainable facilities for all user groups.

Many of the upgrades to the façade of the existing clubhouse at John Flower Oval fall into the want rather than the absolute necessity category whereas providing equitable and sustainable playing/training facilities for all user groups is definitely in the absolute need category so should be made a priority rather than simply beautifying a facility that already provides a functional facility for the Wodonga Football & Sports Club.

Stakeholder Engagement

Wodonga Football & Sports Club and Wodonga Junior Football Club are mentioned in the same membership considerations when in fact they are two very separate entities (Operate as two separate businesses) WFSC at John Flower Oval and WJFC at Les Cheesley Oval, therefore should not be considered as the one community group, if conducted in this way the need of upgrades at the Les Cheesley Oval facility is significantly increased and the use of John Flower Oval is significantly overstated.

Master Plan

In this section it stated that The master plan has been developed by considering all consultation, appropriate strategic contexts and previous research. Overall, it builds on the previous master plan for the site to ensure it meets the needs of the user groups and also the recreation needs of residents and visitors well into the future.

Unfortunately, this is not actually the case with this Draft Master Plan and where it is stated that The proposed improvements will increase the functionality of the site as a whole, and the tenant user groups it is actually very heavily biased towards the Wodonga Football & Sports Club which is very disappointing and actually calls into question whether the needs of the facility user groups was actually the intended purpose of this document.

Wodonga Saints Football & Netball Club Summary

It was believed by the WSFNC that the intended purpose of creating a new Master Plan was to create an updated facility that could be utilised equally by all user groups but in this case, it seems that the needs of WSFNC is way down the list and our club does not gain anything of real purpose that will assist in the operational needs and growth of our club.

Should the draft Master Plan stay in its current form the operational leases held by all parties need to drastically change so that Wodonga City Council controls the facility, and all user groups hold sub leases and therefore have equal rights to access to all facilities.

It is understood that Wodonga Football & Sports Club holds a stand-alone lease of the John Flower facility which ends in 2026 which the WSFNC feels that Wodonga City should not renew under any circumstance if the intention is to provide equitable and sustainable facilities for all user groups at Martin Park into the future.

If this is not an option, then WSFNC would like some guidance from Wodonga City Council on what the future looks like for our club considering the 2015 Master Plan has been in play for going on 9 years in 2024 and we are still no closer to being able to equally access facilities that support the needs of a growing football and netball club.

- Is relocation an option?
- Which sporting clubs are headed to Baranduda Fields? (All Codes)
- Is developing one of the facilities these sporting clubs currently inhabit an option?
- Is WSFNC a possibility of moving to Baranduda Fields once the football and netball facilities are complete?

WSFNC are open to all opportunities that could benefit the longevity of our club and we would welcome the opportunity to meet with all of the Wodonga City Councillor's prior to this Draft Master Plan being endorsed by Wodonga City as we feel it falls well short of community needs and is a short-term beautification project rather than functional needs solution for all user groups.

On behalf of the WSFNC Thank you for reading our response.