

Draft Gateway Lakes 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, stakeholder meetings and a have your say page on makewodongayours.com.au.



FACE-TO-FACE ENGAGEMENT IN THE COMMUNITY

3

stakeholder meetings

33

residents who engaged with us in person



RESPONSES

2

submissions through Make Wodonga Yours

0

relevant comments on social media



COMMUNICATIONS



5073 emails



48.6% average open rate



20 click-throughs



4 Facebook posts



1662 reach



1 likes and reactions



2 Instagram posts



496 reach



0 likes and reactions



2 LinkedIn posts



721 impressions



63 likes and reactions



121 website visits

95

unique pageviews



1 public notices



FEEDBACK

GATEWAY LAKES USER GROUP WODONGA

Fundamental Needs

- **Water-skiers**
It is a great facility as long as it is kept secure, the bank is maintained to dissipate waves, the water level is consistent, the trees are native and provide wind breaks and shade.
National champions have come from here.
- **Canoe Club – MMCC**
Historically the Murray River was very low in winter and the lake was used as it was safe and navigable for learners compared to a low flow river with snags. Now with more consistent flows (except for floods) it is very important for schools and beginners to have the lake as it is very safe compared to the Murray River to learn on. National champions have also come from here as a stepping stone to the Murray River then the big time!
- **Rowers**
Main issue is the course is too short for events. Expanding the size of the lake from the current 500m course length to 1000m for rowing would be a start. The work done during the Development Corporation days to extend the lake into the neighbouring quarry to provide an International standard 2000 meters rowing course would have been perfect and attracted a lot of events to the border where the transport and accommodation facilities are very good. This is the main need.
A good extended training facility could allow schools to be more involved and promote the sport.
- **Dragon boat clubs**
There are 2 main needs.
It is the perfect sort for breast cancer survivors (Brave Hearts).
It is where both clubs train for races. The venue hosts Australian championships.
There have been representatives on the world stage from here.

Expanding the size of the lake is very important, ideally opening the lake at the quarry end would encourage events to Gateway Lakes. Training times are also restricted as water-skiers cannot be safely on the lake at the same time as the other clubs but if the lake was extended then more access time would be available for all clubs to train due to the increased water area.

Basically, the GLUGW agrees with this plan and supports it in particular the Gap analyses P34 is agreed with, particularly:

- Enhancing facilities and storage for existing lake user groups. The only constraint is the 5 clubs are not for profit with limited funds so would need grants to do anything.
- Kiosk relocation to above flood levels would save a lot. The kitchen has been replaced twice in the last few years due to flooding.
- Water level and visual appeal (water colour)
- Bank stabilisation and wave management
- Removal of weeds (willows and blackberry) and native tree planting and revegetation, including reeds on the lake foreshore

Brave Hearts Dragon Boat Club specific input.

Some amendments

Page 35, could the following please be amended for accuracy...

- Amend dot point 1 of which 40 members regularly attend training
- Amend dot point 2 ...members are predominately sporting participants and include cancer survivors or those going through treatment
- Amend dot point 6... please add Leisure Paddling on Sunday afternoon
- Last point under Competition... we don't aspire to reorientation of roller doors for a number of reasons, including the difficulty and cost of retro fitting to an existing building. We would like this to be omitted please.
- BHDBC utilities... Could this please be amended to electricity is connected. Change will then need to be made to the information on p41

Page 43....

- We are not committed to a common clubhouse for a variety of reasons. Perhaps this could be reviewed across all stakeholders and investigated?
- Are there any plans for opening up the lake at the quarry end to increase the size of the lake? We are very supporting of this as a plan going forward.

WARRIORS specific input.

Warriors are very supportive of the revegetation aspects of this plan, however feel that there are a number of areas that may be too aspirational due to the cost imposition on existing clubs, eg remodelling sheds within the next 1-3 years.

A number of suggested amendments or considerations are detailed below:

Water infrastructure: throughout the document there is a lot of mention of the ski club's water infrastructure (which is great) however there is very little acknowledgement of the water infrastructure used for Dragon Boating.

Currently there are 2 cables running the length of the lake that support creating 6-7 lanes for Competitions. Extra support cables are needed to help keep the course straight. When a Dragon Boating competition is held on Gateway Lake it takes approximately a week to set up the water course with buoys, start pontoons, finish lines etc. After the regatta/ competition, the course needs to be taken down so the other GLUG groups can use the lake easily. Again, this is a time-consuming task. The money invested in this infrastructure is in the 10s of thousands of dollars. Without this infrastructure Gateway Lake would not be used for Dragon Boat competitions such as the Australian

Cross Border Championship and the Australian Dragon Boat Championships. These events attract over 1000 and 3500 paddlers respectively.

Areas in the document that need to reflect Dragon Boat water infrastructure include:

- P18 "anchored cable" should read "anchored cables"
- P19 – only shows ski club anchored cable – should also show dragon boat anchored cables
- P39 – should include Dragon boat infrastructure (we would not have events without it)
- P44 – states an outcome of the plan is to maintain the ski club water infrastructure as to a standard to support continued competition. The infrastructure for dragon boating also needs to be maintained to competition standard.

Storage: The masterplan states that a desired outcome is the removal of containers from the foreshore, and a common storage area built. This would be impractical given the distance between the first shed (warriors) and the last shed (Bravehearts, Canoe and Orienteering). One container on the Warriors site contains all the equipment required to set up the water course (buoys, loading ramps, tools, ropes, extra cables etc). When setting for the annual Australian Cross Border Championships, these need to be close by for both practicality and safety. The shed space that Warriors currently occupy is not large enough to store the equipment. Without adequate storage Gateway Lakes could not be set up to host any Dragon Boating events.

Areas in the document that reflect our concerns about storage are:

- P40 – states a desired outcome is for removal of containers. As explained above a common storage area would be impractical for all clubs.
- P43 – recommends common storage

- P46 – map shows common storage options (numbered 8 and 9 on the map). These would be impractical and also pose a safety risk as Warriors would need to cross Lemke Road to access water infrastructure equipment and ground maintenance equipment etc

Warriors' Shed: In an ideal world, Warriors, like most sports clubs would love a bigger and more practical shed. The building of the Warriors' current facilities (2 abutting sheds) reflects the nature of how various funding grants are received over time, and how clubs make the best of what grants are on offer to build their facilities. The time frame of 1-3 years for Warriors to “remodel and refurbish” our existing facilities is unrealistic, unless of course council has a significant amount of funding on offer.

Lemke Road: There are a number of comments regarding Lemke Road

- P14 - states the road is in excellent condition – it should be noted that the condition of the dirt road is variable, mostly due to weather conditions. Currently it has a number of large potholes, at other times is flooded.
- P51 - It is suggested that Lemke Road be sealed within the next 4-7 years. This is a good idea as the dust from cars driving up the road creates a health hazard when paddlers are on the land warming up.
- However, rather than just seal the road, could we recommend that Council investigate moving the road further west, thus creating a larger foreshore. This would also enable all GLUG users to have access to a flatter area of ground where they could safely engage in warm up and cool down activities. Currently essential land based warm ups are conducted on uneven ground with trip hazards.

Events: The masterplan states on P 36 that the Australian Cross Border Championships are held every 5 years. They are actually an annual event which. Dragon Boat Victoria has guaranteed that they will be held at Gateway Lakes for at least another 3 years – most likely longer.

Natural aesthetics and concrete/asphalt: the pictures at the end of the masterplan document show images of a lot a concrete construction around the foreshore. What people treasure about Gateway Lakes is that it hasn't been urbanised. When warriors host major Dragon Boating event the Comments from people from metropolitan areas and capital cities is that they love the natural feel of the place, enjoy not seeing it overdeveloped with concrete. Whilst we realise that the images included in the plan are just that, images, and not any final design, Council should be mindful of what makes people enjoy the place and why so many people enjoy coming to major boating events.

Other:

Point 4 of the development plan on P21 refers to Dragon Boat paddlers as “elderly and Incapacitated”. This is a misrepresentation of the sport and its members. Like all clubs, Warriors is inclusive of people of all ages and abilities. We do not object to increased safe water access, we do however, object to being portrayed as elderly and incapacitated. The club has many people who despite their age are exceptionally fit and able.

- P32 provides data for skiing in Australia. A quick google search indicates that dragon boating is the fastest growing water sport in Australia
- P16 – States that the “lake foreshore area is valued by water sports”. We do value it, but it really should read “essential to water sports”. Without it we would not be able to host regattas.

MMCC

Page 37....There is opportunity to provide enhanced opportunities for beginners to learn water sport skills and gain confidence, and transfer their interest to one of the activities currently offered at the lake. This is important as the only other option to learn to kayak is on the Murray River or the Hume Dam both of which are potentially dangerous for beginners

General

At some stage if Lemke Rd is to be sealed it would be a great opportunity to move it NW to better utilise the vacant roadside verge to increase the GLUGW area surrounding the lake.

There would be an advantage for events if there was camping nearby for events.

FREEZA YOUTH PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

- Agreed the path connection from Belvoir and to join the rest of the island path network was a good idea and could activate the area for youth.
- Expressed a lack of awareness of the clubs (esp. Gateway Lakes) and Model Engineers.
- Spoke around how to better promote the clubs by connecting with ReLink, newsletters to schools and suggested making contact with homeschooling network.

NATE B

I believe the economic benefit of this masterplan needs to be investigated further.

Once completed, where will the spend of those visiting the site be distributed? I would envision, given its proximity to Albury CBD (short walking distance compared to Wodonga's CBD) that the majority of spending will take place in NSW.

My suggestion would be to focus our spending on improving areas closer to our CBD to attract activation and local spending. Without this, High st and the Wodonga CBD won't attract the businesses we need for a thriving city heart.

Instead of spending the money on Gateway lakes which already has good facilities for what and where it is, how about a business case for further work at Sumsion Gardens?

Including:

- Understanding it is a man made storm water area - can it be transformed into a beautiful swimmable lake? Competing with a dangerous and crowded Murry River at Nouriel. Imagine the potential for visitation, and what it would do for our CBD.
- Better connection (including signage) into the CBD
- Permanent cafe and other private opportunities
- Connection to Wodonga Creek
- Improve quality and experience of native gardens.

I understand there is a Sumsion Gardens masterplan, but as a ratepayer, my suggestion would be to focus our money and energy here, where it will benefit us, not Albury.

MEETING WITH ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER COMMUNITY MEMBERS

Participants identified a lack of cultural overlay as part of the master plan. A presentation was given highlighting the potential for cultural acknowledgement, storytelling and cultural enterprise.