

BURONGA GOL GOL SPORTING MASTER PLAN

November 2024



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Buronga Gol Gol Sporting Master Plan

About this study

The Buronga Gol Gol Sporting Master Plan study is a strategic assessment of the future sporting and recreation needs for the Buronga Gol Gol area. It provides a guiding framework for Council, and associated project stakeholders and partners, for the future provision of sporting and recreation facilities to meet the changing needs of the community.

Planning inputs have included:

- the demographic profile of the current and projected population for the Buronga Gol Gol area,
- the current provision of sporting facilities within Buronga and Gol Gol, and throughout other areas of Wentworth Shire and Mildura Rural City,
- the sporting and recreational needs of the Buronga Gol Gol area community, including new and emerging sports and trends of participation, and
- the current and estimated future levels of participation by the Buronga Gol Gol area community in sport and recreation.

The master plan becomes the ‘road map’ to guide the future development of sporting and recreation facilities in Buronga and Gol Gol. The plan identifies several projects and strategic directions required to achieve the vision for sport and recreation, including the expansion of the Carramar Drive Sporting Complex to create a consolidated, multipurpose and high quality regional sporting and leisure complex. Further investigation and feasibility of some of the proposed projects may be required depending upon their scale, likely impact and estimated cost.

It is important to note that projects proposed in the Buronga Gol Gol Sporting Master Plan do not directly commit the Wentworth Shire Council, or any other organisations to a responsibility for their funding and implementation.

This Executive Summary is an abridged version of the full draft study report.

Acknowledgements

The input into the study by the existing Buronga and Gol Gol sporting clubs is appreciated, and also the involvement from residents who provided feedback during the community engagement process. Other stakeholders that provided valuable information included relevant state and regional sporting associations, Mildura Rural City Council, and other community organisations.

The study was managed by Council’s Director Corporate Services, and the input and guidance provided by other Wentworth Shire staff and Councillors was important for the preparation of the master plan.

Acknowledgement of Country

Wentworth Shire Council acknowledges the traditional owners of the land on which we live and work, and pay our respects to their elders past, present, and emerging.

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

Buronga and Gol Gol are two towns located in the southeast of the Wentworth Shire in far southwest NSW, and approximately 5km from Mildura on the other side of the Murray River. The combined area of the two towns is the main growth area in the Shire, and is the fastest growing residential corridor within the broader Sunraysia Region. The population of the growth area is projected to increase to an estimated 6,000 people at full yield from the 3,185 in 2021.

The Buronga Gol Gol Sporting Master Plan is an important strategic investigation into the future sporting and recreation needs of the Buronga Gol Gol community.

Population growth, and the increase in female participation in sport generally, has led to an increase in participation levels for a number of sports which is placing pressure on existing facilities.

The study was informed by the following background reports:

- Buronga Gol Gol Structure Plan 2020.
- Wentworth Shire Community Strategic Plan 2022-2032.
- Wentworth Shire Operational Plan 2023/2024.
- NSW Office of Sport Strategic Plan 2020-2024.
- Far West Sport and Active Recreation Plan 2018-2023.

Existing Sporting and Recreation Facilities

The existing sporting and recreation facilities in Buronga and Gol Gol are located at three different venues (see Figure 1).

The Carramar Drive Sporting Complex comprises a sports oval, 2 netball courts, a cricket practice facility, a pavilion, and a multipurpose basketball court/ skate park.

The Midway Centre, a Shire multipurpose community facility, comprises a single indoor sports court (basketball/ netball), and 2 tennis courts and 2 bocce courts located outside the centre that are freely available for community use.

James King Park is the primary public open space area in Gol Gol, and comprises 8 tennis courts and a clubroom, a playground, a boat ramp, and public toilets.

All facilities are in good to excellent condition, except the 2 community tennis courts at the Midway Centre that are in poor condition.

Figure 1 – Buronga and Gol Gol sporting facilities



There are currently four sporting clubs in Buronga and Gol Gol:

- Gol Gol Hawks Football Netball Club
- Gol Gol Cricket Club
- Alcheringa Saints Basketball Club
- Alcheringa Tennis Club

In 2024, an estimated 624 players were members of the four Buronga and Gol Gol sporting clubs, including 31% female participation and 59% junior participation.

The overall sports participation rate by Buronga and Gol Gol residents is 19.5%, compared to the National sports participation rate of 14.5% and the rate for all of Mildura Rural City at 15.9%.

Stakeholder Engagement

Extensive engagement with stakeholders was a feature of the study research and can be summarised as follows.



April 2024

Meetings with the four Buronga and Gol Gol sporting clubs to collect information about the clubs' membership, their use and adequacy of existing sporting facilities, and club aspirations.



April 2024

Other Stakeholder Meetings with relevant Victorian and NSW State Sporting Associations, local and region sporting associations and leagues, Mildura City Council, and other community groups.



May 2024

A Community Survey collected information about the community's current participation in sport and recreation activities, and what activities people might like to participate in. 165 surveys were completed.

Key information collected from engagement activities included:

- The Gol Gol Hawks Football Netball Club is planning to introduce junior football teams in 2025 and believe a second football oval will be required to meet future needs.
- The Gol Gol Cricket Club believe a second cricket oval is required in the Buronga and Gol Gol area, as it currently has to use the No. 3 Oval in Mildura as its second match day venue.
- The Alcheringa Tennis Club believes that 8 courts will be sufficient to meet club needs over the next 20 years, however, its clubroom will require extension or replacement.
- The Alcheringa Saints Basketball Club is advocating for additional training courts to meet future needs.
- Of the 165 people who completed the Buronga and Gol Gol Region Sport and Recreation Survey, 85% participate in sport or outdoor recreation activities.
- 60% of survey respondents participate in their chosen sport or recreation activities outside the Buronga Gol Gol area, and 26% participate in some of their activity(s) outside the area.
- Of the 120 survey respondents who participate in their chosen sport or recreation activities outside the Buronga Gol Gol area (or sometimes do), most (78%) do so as the *'required facilities are not available in the Buronga Gol Gol area'*, followed by *'local facilities do not meet their needs'* (23%).
- Survey respondents were asked if there was anything else they would like to add about sport and recreation opportunities in the Buronga Gol Gol Area. Of the 79 respondents who answered this question, 44 advocated for a swimming pool (or 27% of the total sample of 165 survey respondents).

Sports Facility Demand Analysis

The method for determining the demand for future sporting facilities in the Buronga Gol Gol area utilised a combination of the following planning tools and other inputs.

1. Sports facility benchmarks endorsed by State Sporting Associations.
2. Optimum number of teams a facility can accommodate.
3. Optimum number of players a facility can accommodate.
4. The total estimated population for the Buronga Gol Gol area (6,000 people).
5. The current participation rates of Buronga and Gol Gol residents in sport.
6. Input from Buronga and Gol Gol sports clubs and other stakeholders.
7. Research that shows that sports participation is highest for people living in Regional Victoria (40%), compared to Metropolitan Melbourne (27%) .
8. The current availability of facilities throughout the Buronga Gol Gol area, in other Wentworth townships along the Murray River, and in Mildura and surrounds.

The demand analysis recommends the following mix of facilities are required for the Buronga Gol Gol area community at full population yield of 6,000 residents:

- 2 football ovals
- 4 multi-lined indoor courts
- 3 cricket ovals
- 2 lawn bowling greens
- 4 outdoor netball courts (with 2 line-marked to be multipurpose to support other sports)
- 2 soccer pitches

- 8 tennis courts
- 1 skate park
- Public outdoor swimming facility

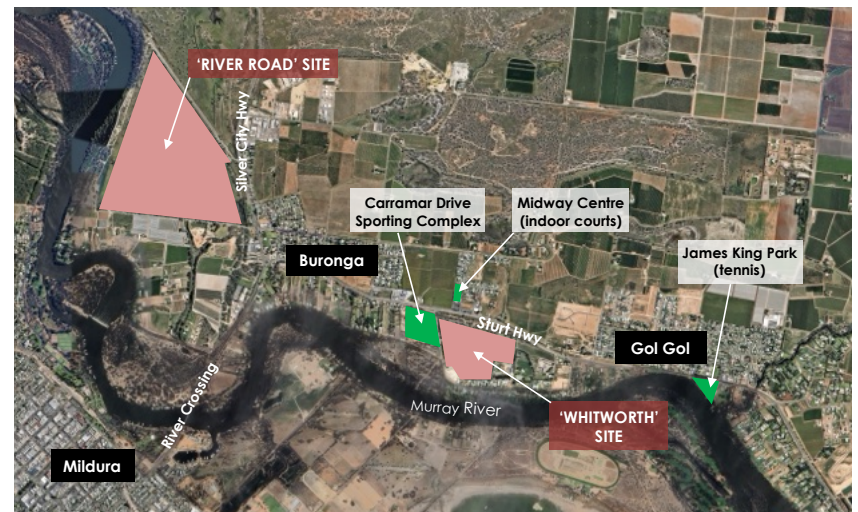
It was further recommended that where possible, all facilities be clustered to form a new sporting and recreation hub. For this to be possible, a site of approximately 15 hectares will be required.

Sports Facility Site Options

The Carramar Drive Sporting Complex is approximately 8.5 hectares in size and has capacity to accommodate some but not all future new facilities. With the assistance of Wentworth Shire Council officers, the following 2 sites were identified as potential sites for a future sporting hub (see Figure 2).

1. 'Whitworth' Site
2. 'River Road' Site

Figure 2 – Sporting Hub Site Options



Site	Ownership	Size
Carramar Drive Sporting Complex	Crown land with Wentworth Shire Council delegated management responsibilities	8.5 ha
'Whitworth' Land	Private - Louise Whitworth	24.1 ha
'River Road' Site	Crown land – Leased to Barry & Maree Lush	111.5 ha

The 'Whitworth' Site is preferred mainly due to the central location of the site to the future residential community, and the potential to incorporate the existing Carramar Drive Sporting Complex into the future planning of a Buronga Gol Gol sporting hub.

Carramar Drive Sporting Complex Expansion Concept Plan

At the Councillor and Executive Team Workshop held 17 June 2024, it was agreed that the study investigate the feasibility of combining the Carramar Drive Sporting Complex and the 'Whitworth' Site to form a new sporting and recreation hub for the Buronga Gol Gol area. Other related items were discussed, and agreed in-principle:

1. That there has already been significant investment in the development of facilities at the Carramar Drive Sporting Complex by user groups, Council and other stakeholders, and that the condition of most facilities is good to excellent.
2. That the Gol Gol Cricket Club would remain based at the Carramar Drive Sporting Complex, and would also have use of the 2 new ovals in summer on the 'Whitworth' site.
3. That the existing oval at the Carramar Drive Sporting Complex retain the turf centre wicket but be expanded to accommodate 2 soccer pitches when sufficient demand arises in the future.
4. That the Gol Gol Football Netball Club would relocate to the new sporting complex at the 'Whitworth' site (2 new ovals, 2-4 new netball courts, and a new pavilion).

5. That James King Park in the future will need to be developed as the primary recreational park and visitor stop in Buronga and Gol Gol which will require all tennis infrastructure to be removed to allow the quantity of usable public open space to be increased.
6. That Council consider including a new Library and community meeting rooms with the proposed new 4-court indoor sports centre. This would enable Council to either re-purpose the Midway Centre in the long term or dispose of it.
7. That a strong physical connection exists between the Carramar Drive Sporting Complex and the new sports complex on the 'Whitworth' site.

The Carramar Drive Sporting Complex Expansion Concept Plan (see next page) and is a visionary plan showing how all future facility needs can be accommodated within the precinct.

The total estimated cost for full implementation of the concept plan is \$89 million, excluding the cost of purchase of the 'Whitworth' land. A 4-stage implementation plan is proposed, which acknowledges that a project of this scale and cost will require a staged approach by Wentworth Shire Council and other project partners, and the timeframe required for the demand for some sports to reach a level that is sufficient to sustain a new club.

Study Conclusion

The Buronga Gol Gol Sporting Master Plan Study has applied evidenced-based research to predict the future sporting and recreation needs for the Buronga Gol Gol community at full population yield of 6,000 residents; there will also likely be demand for the new facilities from the expanding Mildura population.

The Carramar Drive Sporting Complex Expansion Concept Plan shows how future new facilities can complement existing facilities at the Carramar Drive Sporting Complex to achieve an integrated, multipurpose, and regionally significant sporting and recreation hub for the Wentworth Shire.

Carramar Drive Sporting Complex Expansion Concept Plan

