

Varsity Lakes

Gold Coast City, Queensland, Australia

Development Team

Owner/Developer

Delfin Lend Lease
Varsity Lakes, Queensland, Australia
www.delfinlendlease.com.au

Architects

Dryhurst Halstead Stuart
Gold Coast City, Queensland, Australia
www.dhsa.com.au

Alan Griffith Architects
Gold Coast City, Queensland, Australia

Design Forum Architects
Gold Coast City, Queensland, Australia

Hamilton Hayes Henderson
Gold Coast City, Queensland, Australia
www.hhh.com.au

Design Engineers

Baseline
Gold Coast City, Queensland, Australia

Brad Lees Consulting
Gold Coast City, Queensland, Australia
www.bradlees.com.au

Cozens Regan Williams Prove
Gold Coast City, Queensland, Australia

Terranova Consulting
Gold Coast City, Queensland, Australia

Civil Dimensions
Gold Coast City, Queensland, Australia

Still three years from completion, Varsity Lakes has already won wide acceptance in the market. At build-out, the master-planned community on the shores of Lake Orr in Gold Coast City will comprise 3,000 dwellings and up to 150,000 square meters (1.6 million sf) of commercial space. Furthermore, the community's economy will supply 4,500 permanent full-time jobs—based on a strategy for job creation and economic sustainability worked out by the developer, Delfin Lend Lease (Lend Lease's master-planned community builder in Australia), with the city and state governments.

The 343-hectare (848 ac) Varsity Lakes is being built on a greenfield parcel in Gold Coast City, Australia's sixth largest city, located in southeast Queensland, 60 minutes south of Brisbane. The project's mixed-use precinct is synergistically situated next to Bond University, founded in 1987, Australia's first private, nonsectarian university.

According to Delfin Lend Lease CEO David Keir, Varsity Lakes already has earned a reputation as a benchmark in community development, both in Australia and internationally. "Varsity Lakes has been master planned with intelligent land uses, strong social infrastructure, and initiatives to build the prosperity of the community," says Keir. "The innovative integration of a range of uses within the master plan has allowed the delivery of a diverse range of housing types, community services, education offerings, and business options. Launched in 1999, Varsity Lakes is now home to more than 6,000 residents and has provided a commercial precinct that has generated more than one job per day since the start of the new millennium." The community's popularity and desirability are apparent in the fact that 30 percent of all home sales are made to households already living in Varsity Lakes.

The master plan has been influenced most tellingly by Lake Orr, the community's major amenity. An extensive system of lakeside linear parks opens the lake to public use and provides pedestrian and bicycle connectivity to commercial and mixed-use areas. A modified-grid system of residential streets creates walkable neighborhoods and encourages the solar orientation of houses and passive surveillance of public areas.

A variety of lot sizes gives rise to varying housing densities (25 to 50 units per hectare/ten to 20 units per acre) and a diversity of housing forms and types—which makes it easy for residents to move up or down the housing scale as their living requirements change. Transitional housing forms, such as lofts, are encouraged in areas between outlying residential neighborhoods and the mixed-use precinct. In order to widen the array of housing choices, multifamily rental housing is permitted. As part of the Varsity Lakes overall economic sustainability strategy, home-based businesses are a permitted use in all residential areas.



An environmental management plan helps preserve and enhance the site's environmental resources. The original 55-hectare (136 ac) Lake Orr has been expanded to 80 hectares (198 ac) in order to enhance stormwater retention and create an exclusive island address, Azzurra Island. The 22-hectare (54 ac) island accommodates four parks and 178 single-family lots. The lake expansion added 4.2 kilometers (2.6 mi) of community-use shoreline to Lake Orr, and made it the largest recreational lake on the Gold Coast. An additional 40 hectares (99 ac) of wetlands are being constructed. Altogether, parks—of which there are 30 of varying sizes—and extensive walkways provide 56 hectares (138 ac) of common open space.

Varsity College, a public K–12 school with 2,500 students, started operations on two campuses at Varsity Lakes in 2001. The 3.6-hectare (8.9 ac) Central Park was completed in 2002. Market Square, the community's retail core, opened for business in 2004. To date, Varsity Central, the community's business precinct, supports more than 500 businesses with more than 3,000 employees. About AU\$300 million (US\$252 million) in residential sales have been thus far recorded, and the entire project is extrapolated to exceed AU\$1 billion (US\$840 million) in value by buildout in 2010. The community's rapid buildout has led Queensland Rail, the state transit system, to commit to a 4.1-kilometer (2.5 mi) extension of a light-rail line to serve Varsity Lakes and Bond University.

Civil Engineer

Morrison Geotech
Gold Coast City, Queensland, Australia

Environmental Engineers

Gilbert & Sutherland
Gold Coast City, Queensland, Australia
www.groupgs.com

Mark Rigby & Associates
Gold Coast City, Queensland, Australia

Planit Consulting
Gold Coast City, Queensland, Australia
www.planitconsulting.com.au

WBM
Brisbane, Queensland, Australia
www.wbmpl.com.au

Project Data

Website

www.varsitylakes.com.au

Site Area

343 hectares (848 ac)

Facilities

At buildout in 2010:

150,000 m² (1.6 million sf) office

3,000 residential units

Land Uses

residential, office, retail, recreation,
education, parks/open space

Start/Completion Dates

August 1999–2010