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## Clover Moore's plan to shrink Sydney golf course stuck in the rough



By [Megan Gorrey](#)

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Sydney lord mayor Clover Moore's controversial proposal to halve a popular golf course to provide more parkland for inner city residents appears to be stuck in the rough amid opposition from the NSW government and golfers.

The City of Sydney last year released [two options](#) for shrinking Moore Park Golf Club from 18 holes to nine – a suggestion that angered some councillors, Labor and Liberal MPs, the club and the city's golfing enthusiasts.



Clover Moore wants to reduce Moore Park golf course from 18 holes to nine to provide more parkland for residents. EDWINA PICKLES

Amid debate in [Sydney](#) and [Melbourne](#) over turning fairways into parks, [Cr Moore argued](#) residents needed more space to salve the impact of intensive residential development in Redfern, Waterloo, Green Square and Zetland.

But the idea hit a roadblock when Planning and Public Spaces Minister [Rob Stokes' intervened](#) in support of retaining the 18-hole course before the council's public consultation period for the proposal ended in December.

Cr Moore was disappointed Mr Stokes had "pre-empted" the [council's report on the public feedback](#), which she presented to him on Thursday.

"The response to our Moore Park Golf Course proposal shows the growing inner city community thinks the government should step up and provide more access to parkland," Cr Moore said on Friday.

"Opposition to the proposal has come from outside the inner city, from neighbourhoods with greater access to private and public open space and evidently a keen interest in golf."

An online survey that attracted more than 10,000 responses showed half of the respondents wanted to retain the 18-hole course, while the other 50 per cent supported reconfiguring the course to create more parkland.

The council's report said about 48 per cent of respondents had used the club's facilities in the past year.

That was compared to a phone survey of 402 households within 5 kilometres of the golf course, which showed 47 per cent of residents surveyed wanted half the course converted to parkland and 30 per cent would like the entire course turned into a park. Less than a quarter, or 23 per cent, would prefer the full 18-hole course to be retained.





Residents voiced support for keeping the 18-hole course several years ago.

WOLTER PEETERS

Moore Park Golf Club president John Janik said the council's consultation process was flawed and he was relying on Mr Stokes' stated support for retaining the 18 holes while requesting the Greater Sydney Parklands Trust, which oversees Centennial Park and Moore Park, to investigate how to create more public access.

"We've made ourselves available to the Minister and Greater Sydney Parklands to discuss improving access to the public. We're happy to sit down with them and give our professional opinion as golfers," Mr Janik said.

Cr Moore still believed converting part of the course to parkland would be the best outcome.

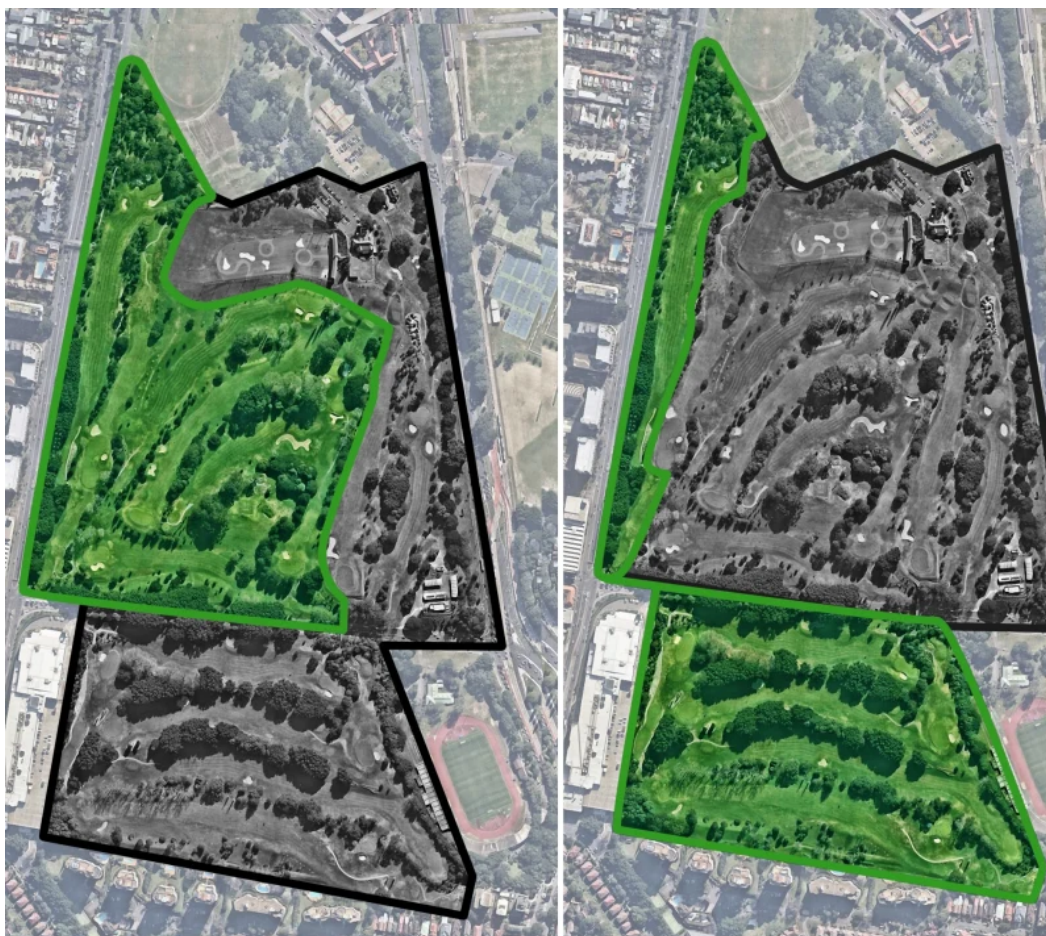
"I'm glad through our advocacy and this consultation process we have initiated a rethink about the best use of scarce inner city land."

Mr Stokes said that "based on the responses to the consultation, it's clear there is a need for open space in this area" and he had been given many ideas that would create a "win-win" for keeping the 18-hole course and increasing open space.

"As for next steps, the Greater Sydney Parklands board is developing options and will make recommendations to me in coming months."

Liberal councillor Craig Chung said the "us-and-them battle" waged over the future of the course had been "completely unhelpful and orchestrated by Clover in an election year to pit people against each other".





The council's two options to reduce the 18-hole golf course at Moore Park to nine holes, accompanied by 18 to 20 hectares of parkland. CITY OF SYDNEY

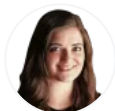
He has suggested to Mr Stokes install lights so sports teams could use some areas after dark, redesign fences and close the first nine holes from 4pm to allow for community use - an idea Mr Stokes said was "worth exploring".

The council's report showed Deputy Premier John Barilaro, who is National Party leader, wrote to Cr Moore and the council imploring them in "the strongest possible terms" to "keep your hands off" the Moore Park Golf Club.

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