

# What we heard

## The Future of Moore Park South

December 2024

# Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the lands, waters and sky upon which the parklands are located and pay respect to the Elders of these lands – past, present and emerging.

We recognise First Nations peoples' unique cultural and spiritual relationships to place and their rich contribution to society. We acknowledge the rights and interests of First Nations peoples to be involved in the ongoing management of these traditional lands.

We will work in a respectful manner with Traditional Custodians, Local Aboriginal Land Councils and the First Nations communities of Greater Sydney.

We will support their custodianship of the natural and cultural heritage of parklands so that these are places where First Nations peoples feel socially, culturally and economically included.

Image: Greater Sydney Parklands

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# Overview

The NSW Government is transforming 20 hectares of Moore Park South into green open space for community recreation in one of the densest parts of the city. This decision responds to the needs of the growing communities surrounding Moore Park.

The Discussion Paper released by the NSW Government outlined the decision to transform an area on the western side of Moore Park Golf Course on the north of Dacey Avenue to public open space while retaining a minimum 9-hole golf course, driving range and clubhouse.

Image: Greater Sydney Parklands

# Consultation



The NSW Government asked Greater Sydney Parklands to consult with the community and stakeholders on their vision for a future park at Moore Park South. Consultation was undertaken widely with park users, sporting groups, surrounding communities and councils, and government agencies from 25 February to 10 April 2024.

Image: Greater Sydney Parklands

Feedback was sought on the 4 questions outlined within the Discussion Paper.

1. How would you like to use the new recreational area within Moore Park? What would you like to see and do there?
2. What opportunities are there to reimagine golf at Moore Park?
3. What, if any, barriers are there for you in accessing this area of open space?
4. What else should we be thinking about with this proposed change?

This report is structured around the responses to these questions and summarises the diverse feedback received across an extensive engagement program.

The NSW Government thanks everyone who took the time to get involved and shared their thoughts. The feedback received will help shape the future of the new public park and the future of golf at Moore Park.

# How we consulted

## 8 pop-ups

- 4 neighbourhood sessions with 229 community members engaged
- 4 in-park sessions with 140 community members engaged
- A total of 369 conversations

## 5 workshops

- Centennial Park and Moore Park community trustee board
- Golfing stakeholders
- Local councils and government agencies
- Young people
- Community and residents' organisations

## 6 briefings

- Local councils
- Centennial Parklands Foundation

## 8,615 completed surveys

## 315 submissions, including 25 from

- Councils and government agencies
- Golfing groups
- Community and resident organisations
- Peak bodies and advocacy groups
- Sporting groups
- Member for Sydney - The Hon. Tanya Plibersek

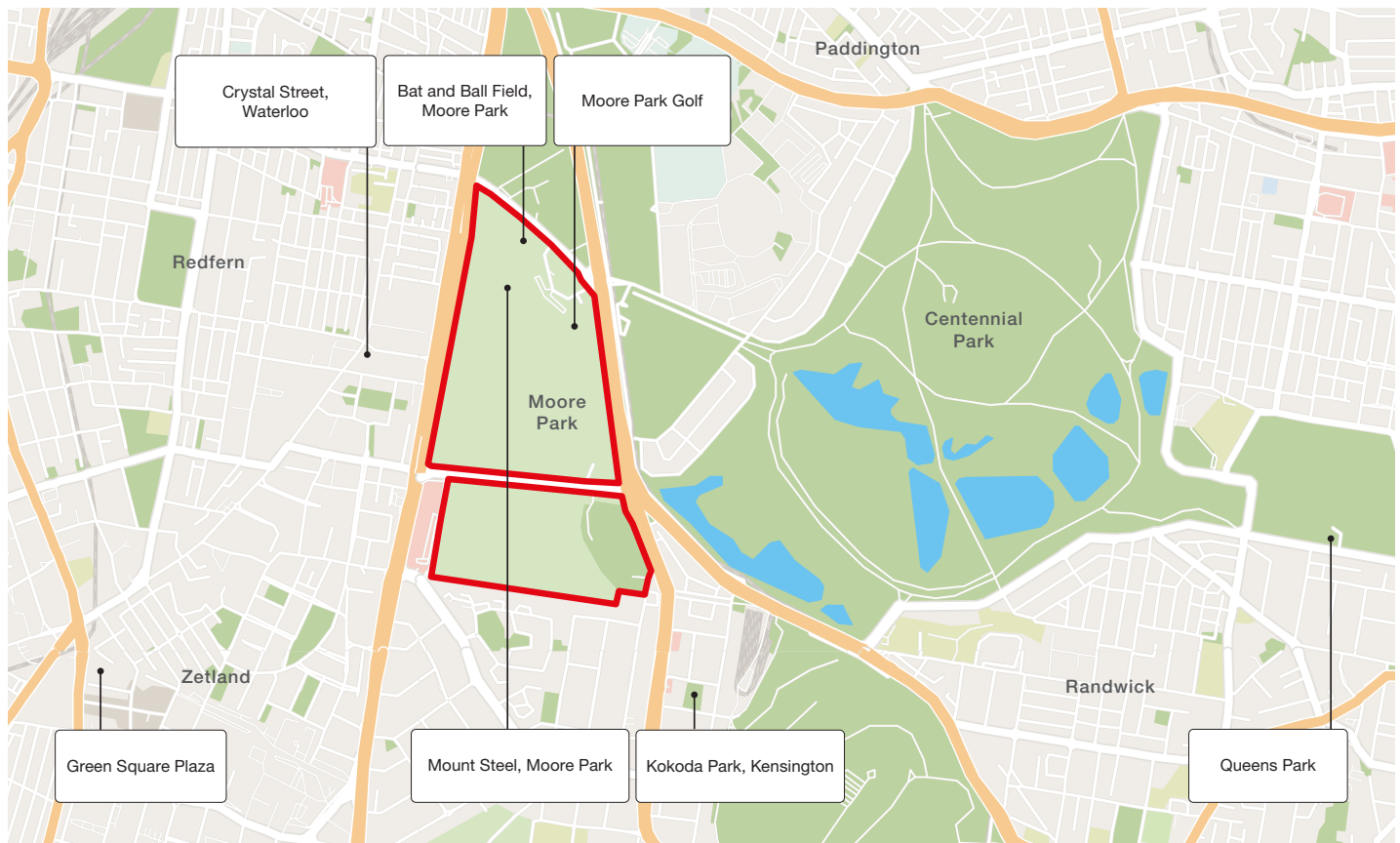


Image: pop-up information session locations

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# Feedback snapshot

## Key themes across all feedback received

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### 1. Ideas for the new park

A wide range of feedback was received about the new park. Many want it to be a place for **everyday informal recreation** such as walking, exercise and meeting with friends and family.

The new park should contribute to **habitat preservation and creation**, provide **nature play** for children, and offer places for people to connect with and relax in nature.

There should be **easy and safe access within and to the new park** along with **good quality supporting amenities**.

Many people felt the park should be allowed to **evolve over time** in response to how the community uses the park and the changing needs of the growing community.

### 2. Existing open space utilisation

Throughout the consultation we also heard that there were **existing open spaces** within Moore Park that have low amenity, and these **could be improved** to better respond to community needs.

There was also a view that the **new park does not add to the net amount of open space** within a growing area.



Image: Greater Sydney Parklands

### 3. Potential barriers including access

Feedback also highlighted **potential access improvements** to the busy roads and intersections bounding the Moore Park South area. Many people noted that for the park to be successful it would need to be **integrated into surrounding public and active transport networks** and that these too would need to be improved.

**Traffic and aircraft noise** were viewed by some as impediments to the park being a place where people could relax. Concerns were also noted about **habitat disturbance and possible loss of environmental values** from reconfiguring the golf course and park, as well as through activities such as night golf.

### 4. Potential impacts

Feedback also focused on the **impacts to golf with the reduction of the course to 9 holes**. Feedback suggested that Moore Park Golf:

- is important to the community, as a publicly accessible, affordable and inclusive facility
- is a high quality, championship level course
- has a high level of use and patronage is growing with the overall increase in participation in golf
- has a strong heritage and legacy
- is a recreational attraction for Sydney.

Concerns were expressed that a **9-hole course may not be as attractive to players** and would result in the loss of competition status. These changes would see members leave with an accompanying **decrease in social, health and economic outcomes**. The **lack of an alternative, publicly accessible 18-hole golf course** within the eastern suburbs of Sydney was also expressed.

Golf, as it presently exists, was identified as a significant contributor to revenue for operations across Centennial Parklands. Feedback received indicates there is a need for **certainty around funding the new open space given the potential reduction in income** due to increased golf patronage.

### 5. Decision making processes and funding

Many community respondents **sought certainty about the process** for creating the new park, wanting to see:

- a more **detailed design** developed, and **business case process** undertaken in consultation with the community
- integration of the new park and golf offering change into **Moore Park Master Plan 2024**
- **commitments to funding** delivery and operation of the new park



Image: Greater Sydney Parklands

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# What we heard

How would you like to use the new recreational area within Moore Park? What would you like to see and do there?



## A natural park for everyday community recreation

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There was preference for the new park to be a place for **everyday passive recreational use** and a **place to spend time and appreciate nature**. Suggested activities included:

- tracks for walking, running and cycling
- dog walking, including enclosed off-leash areas
- nature play for children
- picnics, barbecues and spending time with friends
- exercise stations and outdoor gym equipment
- meditation and yoga platforms
- community gardens
- informal sporting facilities

The new park should work with existing topography and vegetation. Through **building on what is already there** and **planting more trees and shrubs**, opportunities exist to:

- feature endemic plants and improve local biodiversity
- create new habitat
- increase canopy cover
- buffer traffic noise
- provide natural beauty

Similarly, a focus **on water sensitive urban design** could see new water bodies created throughout the park, supporting aquatic life, managing and storing stormwater runoff, and adding focal points to the park.



## An integrated and connected park

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We heard that the new park **cannot not be considered in isolation**. The role and function of the new park within Moore Park needs to be understood and enhanced through:

- **better integration** of the broader Moore Park precinct
- **improved connections** to Centennial Park and surrounding neighbourhoods
- secure and safe links **to regional cycling and pedestrian networks**

- contributing to and **supporting regional environmental and riparian corridors** through planting more trees, shrubs and water retention bodies within the park
- **balancing the allocation of space** for community sporting use (formal and informal) **against** general community use.



Image: Greater Sydney Parklands



## Low key supporting infrastructure

**Good quality supporting infrastructure** was seen as critical to the success of the park. This included wide and/or separated walking and cycling paths, lighting, drainage, toilets, bike repair stations, picnic areas and barbecues.

We also heard that infrastructure should be **low key and not dominate the natural environment**. Built form such as amenities blocks, play areas, service infrastructure and

sporting fields/facilities should be clustered into **activity hubs** to maximise natural open space.

There were **mixed views regarding cafes** within the park, with many noting they are an important amenity for park users and contributed to safety and activation. Others expressed concerns about possible over-commercialisation through uses such as cafes and restaurants.



## Allow the park to evolve

Many respondents felt that the park would be best if it was **not created in “one go”** and instead was **a place that evolved over time**. It was frequently suggested that an overall guiding plan be developed to progressively deliver the park and respond to community use and the changing needs of a growing population.

This approach could include **upfront delivery of core infrastructure** such as paths, lighting, drainage, picnic areas and amenities, as well as planting and habitat restoration. The delivery of other initiatives could occur over a longer timeframe.

Of the **8,240** people who responded to this question in the survey:

- **55%** wanted the **18-hole golf course** retained
- **30%** wanted a place to **get active**
- **24%** wanted a place to **connect with nature**
- **23%** wanted a place to **relax**
- **21%** wanted a place to **meet with family or friends**
- **18%** wanted a place with **activities for young people - children (11%) and teenagers (7%)**
- **11%** wanted a place to **bring dogs**

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# What opportunities are there to reimagine golf at Moore Park?



## Collaborate to explore innovative ways that an 18-hole golf course and park can coexist

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Much of the golf related feedback supported the retention of the 18-hole golf course and called for investigation of options for an 18-hole course and community park to coexist.

Common suggestions included:

- look at **improvements to existing areas** within Moore Park along with **a redesign of the 18-hole golf course** to enable a full championship golf course and a quality community park coexist.
- **regular golf free days** when the community can access the course

- **accessible shared pathways** throughout the course
- opportunities to **open the clubhouse and supporting amenities to wider community use**

It was noted that if an 18-hole course cannot be accommodated there should still be a design exercise undertaken that seeks to **maximise the number of holes that can be retained.**



## Broadening the golf offering at Moore Park

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Suggestions to extend the golf offering and bring in new user groups under the 9-hole course proposal included:

- an **enhanced driving range** with additional infrastructure and technology to meet growing demand
- **mini golf**
- **disc golf**
- **night golf**, noting reservations were expressed about potential impacts on neighbouring residents and wildlife.

Of the **7,190** people who responded to this question in the survey:

- **84%** wanted a **golf course**
- **63.5%** wanted a **driving range**
- **43%** wanted **night golf**
- **33%** wanted **range technology/simulation**
- **28%** selected **young people's programs**
- **28%** selected '**other**', **80% of these comments want to see a full 18 holes of golf retained**, and around **7% opposed the presence of golf at Moore Park**, **3%** emphasised the **importance of inclusive golf** (programs for youth, women and people with disabilities) and **3%** suggested **alternate sport and recreational opportunities** for the area.

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# What, if any, barriers are there for you in accessing this area of open space?



## Safe and easy access to the park

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We heard that the overall need was for a park that is **readily accessible by walking, bike or public transport** and that this access should be safe for people of all ages and abilities (including carers with prams, children on scooters or bikes, and people walking dogs).

There were **mixed views about providing car parking** within the new park. Some noted that a level of parking would be needed to secure access for people with disability and people with young children, while others opposed any parking as this would add to congestion and take up valuable open space that could be used as parkland.

The **challenges of crossing surrounding busy major roads** to get to Moore Park and Centennial Park were frequently raised.

Suggestions to improve access included:

- changing signalisation of intersections to favour pedestrians and cyclists
- improved walking and cycling paths around the perimeter of Moore Park South
- pedestrian overbridges
- a new cycle lane and parking along Dacey Avenue



## A park that is easy, safe and enjoyable to get around

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Walking was one of the most popular activities provided in the feedback. People wanted to see **safe walking and cycling tracks** within the park with a preference for separated paths where possible. If these cannot be provided, then ample wide paths to enable pedestrians and cyclists to safely share the same space are needed.

Safety could be further improved by having paths that are:

- well lit
- have good sightlines
- made of resilient and easily maintained materials
- free of vegetation
- supported with clear wayfinding

People want to see **walking loops** that allow you to visit the park without having to return along the same route. There were also suggestions for **gateways** to act as markers of entry to the park and as a place to gather and get your bearings. Given the size of the park and complexity of the surrounding road network, **wayfinding and signage** would also be important in helping people to navigate their way to and through the park.



Image: Greater Sydney Parklands



## A park that is integrated with active transport

For the park to be successful more attention should be given to **facilitating access from neighbourhoods to the south and southwest** of Moore Park, including Kensington, Waterloo Zetland, Green Square and Rosebery. This would require **linking into surrounding walking, cycling and public transport routes** at both a local and regional scale. Submissions from cycling and walking groups provided several specific suggestions as to how this could be achieved.

There were some suggestions to consider **relocating the new park to the section of Moore Park that is south of Dacey Avenue** and closest to where new residential development is planned.

It was acknowledged that enhancing connections to the new park would require **integrated planning and cooperation** with councils and various NSW Government agencies.

Of the **4,320** people who responded to this question in the survey:

- **26%** noted **no barriers to accessing** the new park
- **20%** wanted access to **18 holes of golf retained**
- **11%** noted **difficulty crossing busy roads**
- **11%** noted a **lack of public transport**
- **11%** noted the **lack of car parking** as an access challenge
- **10%** noted the **lack of safe pedestrian access**

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# What else should we be thinking about with this proposed change?



## A strategic and considered approach to planning

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Across submissions and workshops there were calls for the new park to be considered **within the context of Moore Park and Centennial Parklands**. This included consideration of the **Moore Park Master Plan 2040** and the park's **varied role as a sports, events and community precinct**. There were calls to develop a **specific master plan** for the new park and modified golf course in consultation with stakeholders, and for an **independent business case** to be undertaken.

While the new park was welcomed by some, concerns were expressed that **additional open space still needs to be provided within new development areas** and that the creation of this park should not be used to **justify more development** than is already planned.



## Funding certainty

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Many stakeholders noted the need for **certainty around funding** to deliver the new park and modify the golf course, as well as **additional operational funding to address the shortfall in income** for Centennial Parklands that is currently provided by the golf course.

Concerns were also expressed that expenditure on the new park and golf course could **draw investment away from other planned projects across Moore Park** and more broadly across Centennial Parklands.



## Consideration for community-based sport

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Submissions from a range of sporting groups encouraged the **integration of community sporting facilities** into the new park and noted that community-based sport plays an important role in **community building, health and wellbeing**.

Of the **5,280** people who responded to this question in the survey:

- **62%** wanted an **18-hole golf course retained**
- **13%** called for **better planning** for open space in growing areas
- **7%** wanted more **sport and recreation facilities**.



Image: Greater Sydney Parklands



## Connecting with Country

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First Nations stakeholders identified the importance of the early involvement of **Traditional Custodians and Aboriginal groups** in the design process to ensure **meaningful input to the design** of the park which fosters **Connecting with Country**, and a desire for **opportunities for Aboriginal businesses and services** to be involved in creating and managing the new park.

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# Next steps

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Feedback will assist in designing the new park and the new golf offer at Moore Park.

The NSW Budget 2024-25 includes \$2.6 million for preliminary design and planning works to transform part of Moore Park Golf Course into a new public park.

Design of the new park and the golf course will involve ongoing conversations with the community and stakeholders throughout 2025. This will include working with Transport for NSW and councils on access and movement considerations. We will come back to the community on the new park design and golf offer by mid-2025.

It is anticipated that no significant works related to the new park will commence prior to end of the current operating agreement in mid-2026.

# Appendix

## How we engaged

The engagement program generated the highest levels of participation for any consultation undertaken by Greater Sydney Parklands. Given the local and regional role of Moore Park, an extensive engagement program with multiple channels for participation was developed and multiple methods were used to generate widespread awareness of the opportunity to provide feedback. The high level of awareness and participation is summarised below.

## Methods

The community was informed about the proposal and how they could have their say via:

- media release and earned media via newspapers, radio and TV
- 26,800 newsletters distributed to surrounding households
- 27,000 webpage views (22,000 unique views)
- 14,426 subscribers of the Centennial Parklands' eNewsletter
- 92,836 reach across 2 paid social media ads, and 138,289 earned reach via Facebook posts by City of Sydney and Randwick councils
- Direct notifications to local community groups and peak bodies
- Workshop invitations for key stakeholder groups (various)
- Meetings/briefings with local councils
- 8 community pop-up sessions, including 4 locations within Centennial Parklands and 4 in surrounding neighbourhoods
- QR code signage throughout Centennial Parklands, including Moore Park.

## Participation

- 8,615 survey responses
- 369 attendees at 8 pop-up sessions
- 315 submissions
- 13 workshops and briefings



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## About the survey

The online survey was developed to support the Discussion Paper, providing an opportunity for the community and stakeholders to share their thoughts on key questions within the paper, as well as provide detailed qualitative feedback.

We received 8,615 survey responses, with over 29,000 unique items of qualitative data (free form responses). Greater Sydney Parklands engaged the NSW Data Analytics Centre to independently analyse this feedback.

### Respondent overview:

- 29% visit Moore Park weekly, and 30% a few times per year
- 26% were aged 35-49 years
- 72% were male
- 4.75% identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
- 16% speak a language other than English
- 44% live in single dwelling/house, 38% in apartments, 16% in semi-detached and 2% other
- 76% family composition, followed by 14% single person households
- 50% do not have children living at home

## About the submissions we received

A combination of long and short form submissions were received from stakeholders representing a wide range of demographics and locations, including interstate and international participants.

In total we received 315 submissions. These were from:

- Councils and government agencies
  - City of Sydney
  - Woollahra Municipal Council
  - Randwick City Council
  - Sydney Water
- Golfing groups
  - Save Moore Park Golf Collective
  - Clublinks
  - The Australian Golf Heritage Society Inc
- Community and resident organisations
  - Saving Moore Park Inc
  - Paddington Society
  - Paddington Darlinghurst Community Group
  - Raleigh Park Community Association
  - Kingston Heath Strata Committee: Raleigh Park
  - St Andrews Strata Committee: Raleigh Park
- Peak bodies and advocacy groups
  - Committee for Sydney
  - Centennial Parklands Foundation
  - Bicycle NSW
  - BIKEast Inc
  - Walk Sydney
  - Sport NSW
  - Parks and Leisure Australia
- Sporting groups
  - Alliance of Moore Park Sports (AMPS)
  - Eastern Suburbs Football Club
  - Football NSW
  - AFL NSW/ACT and the Sydney Swans
- Local member
  - The Member for Sydney - The Hon Tanya Plibersek
- 289 individual submissions

## About the workshops and briefings

As part of the consultation, it was important to provide an opportunity for deeper discussions with various stakeholder groups - 5 workshops were held throughout March and April 2024:

- Centennial Park and Moore Park community trustee board
- Golfing stakeholders
  - Golf NSW
  - Moore Park Golf/Save Moore Park Golf Collective
  - Clublinks
  - Golf Australia
  - PGA
  - Sport NSW
- Community and residents' organisations
  - Alexandria Residents Action Group
  - Alliance for Public Parklands
  - BIKEast Inc
  - Bondi Junction Precinct Committee
  - Chippendale Residents Interest Group
  - Committee for Sydney
  - Paddington Darlinghurst Community Group
  - Paddington Society
  - Raleigh Park Community Association
  - Saving Moore Park Inc
  - St Andrews Strata Committee
  - Sydney YIMBY
- Local councils and government agencies
  - City of Sydney
  - Randwick Council
  - Transport for NSW
- Young people
  - Inner City High School students
  - Sydney Boys High School students
  - Sydney Girls High School students
  - UNSW Sydney students
  - Youth Advisory Council NSW

The workshops were supplemented with 6 briefings for:

- City of Sydney
- Bayside Council
- Randwick City Council
- Waverley Council
- Woollahra Municipal Council
- Centennial Parklands Foundation



Image: Greater Sydney Parklands