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## Community and Stakeholder Engagement Report

### Mona Vale Golf Course, Lease renewal (Stage 1 of 1)

Impact level: 4

Consultation period: 17 September to 14 October 2021

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# 1. Summary

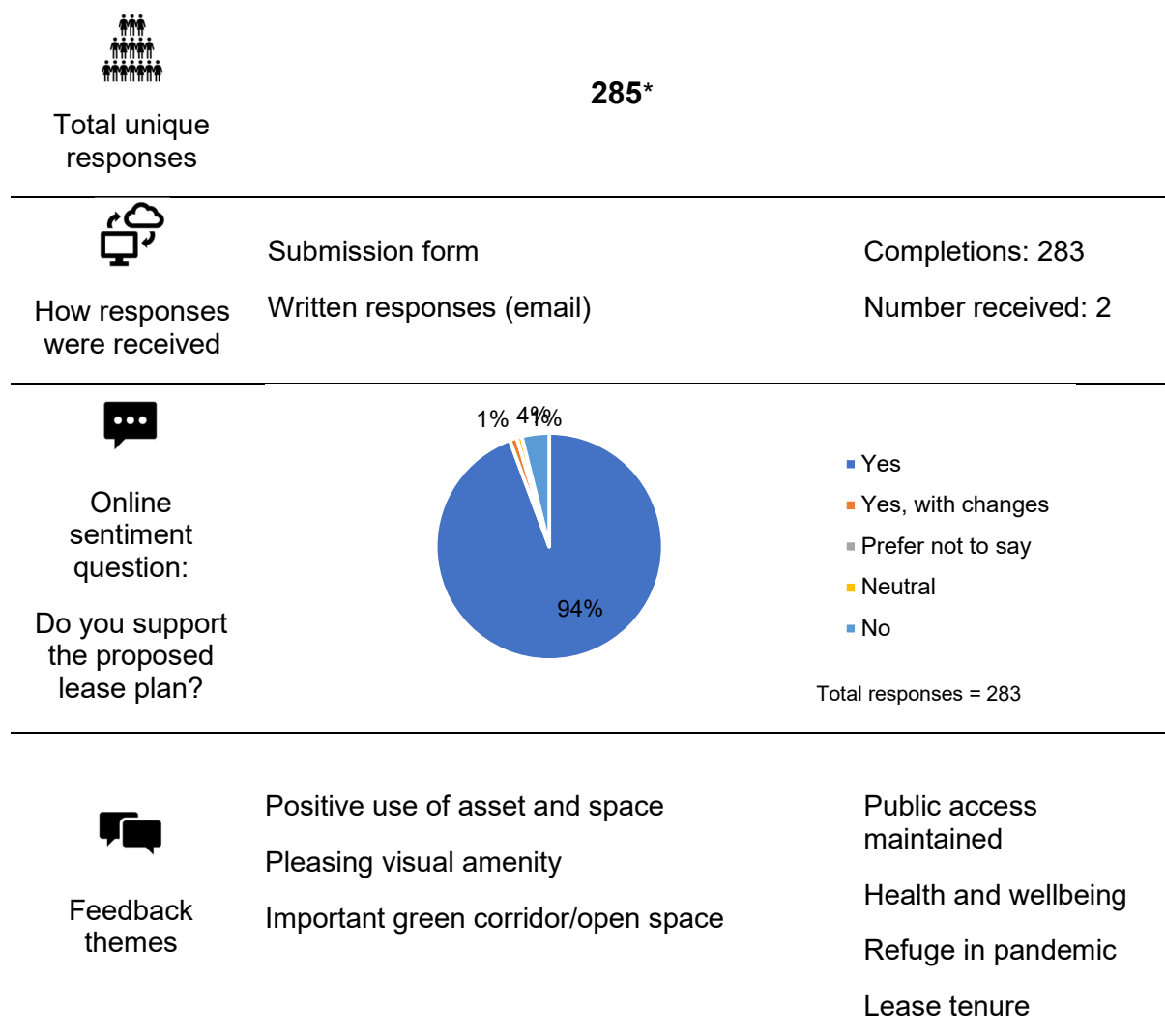
This report outlines the outcomes of community and stakeholder engagement as part of a proposal to renew a lease for a portion of Beeby Park Reserve, Mona Vale. The purpose of the lease is for the Mona Vale Golf Club to continue its occupation of the land and use as Mona Vale Golf Course.

Council publicly exhibited the proposal from 17 September to 14 October 2021.

The feedback collected during consultation indicated a very high level of support for the proposed renewal of the lease for a 20-year lease operation, with over 94 percent of respondents noting they supported the proposed lease plan due to the benefits the use of land provides for golf club members and the public.





Respondents who were not supportive of the proposal suggested Council should consider the length of the lease extension and the need for more public open space opportunities and sportsfields.

## 1.1. Key outcomes






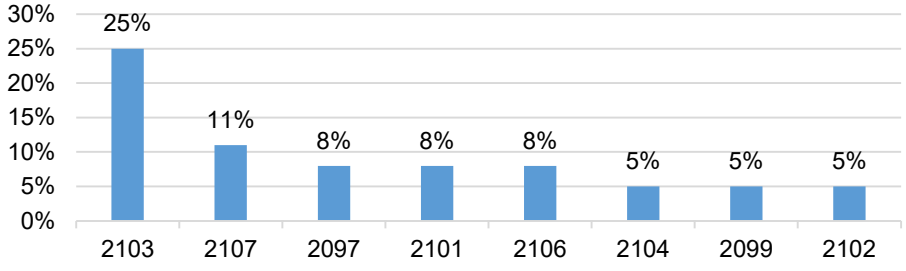


\* Not every respondent made a comment in addition to answering the sentiment question

## 1.2. How we engaged

 Have Your Say: visitation stats	Visitors: 1715	Visits: 1964	Av. time onsite: 2m51s
 Print media and collateral	Letterbox drop  Site signs used		Distribution: 235  Number of signs: 1
 Electronic direct mail (EDM)	Community Engagement (fortnightly) newsletter: 1 edition  Council (weekly) e-News: 1 edition  Stakeholder email: 4 campaigns		Distribution: Approx. 22,000 subscribers  Distribution: Approx. 150,000 subscribers  Subscribers:
 Key stakeholder engagement	Online meetings: 2 meetings with Mona Vale Golf Club		Attendance: 2 people

## 1.3. Who responded<sup>1</sup>

 Gender	<div> <div>Male</div> <div>Female</div> <div>N/A</div> </div> 
 Age groups	<div> <div>26-50 yrs</div> <div>51-75 yrs</div> <div>76+ yrs</div> <div>N/A</div> </div> 
 Postcodes <sup>2</sup>	

<sup>1</sup> Demographic data was gathered by request only. The data represented only includes those respondents who provided this detail.

<sup>2</sup> Top 8 of 22 post code areas that respondents identified as being from.

## 2. Background

Mona Vale Golf Club Limited, a not-for-profit organisation, has been a long term tenant of Council over three lots of Council owned or controlled land which form part of the Mona Vale Golf Course at Golf Ave, Mona Vale.

For Council to consider a lease renewal for Mona Vale Golf Club Limited, public notification was required under *Section 47 of the Local Government Act 1993*, for Council to review submissions for the proposed lease and gain an understanding of the level of support in the community. There are no changes proposed to the land use as part of this lease proposal.

The proposal was publicly exhibited for a period of 28 days.

## 3. Engagement objectives

Community and stakeholder engagement aimed to:

- inform the community about the proposed lease renewal
- seek feedback from the community around their level of support for the proposal

## 4.

### Engagement approach

Community and stakeholder engagement for the Mona Vale Golf Course, Lease renewal was conducted over a four-week period, from 17 September to 14 October 2021, and provided opportunities for community and stakeholders to contribute.

The engagement was planned, implemented and reported in accordance with Council's [Community Engagement Matrix](#) (2017).

A project page was established on our have your say platform with information provided in an accessible and easy to read format.

The project was primarily promoted through our regular email newsletter (EDM) channels. The public notification also included a notice on Council's website, letters to surrounding property owners and residents, and a site sign erected at Mona Vale Golf Course.

Feedback was captured through an online submission form embedded onto the have your say project page. The form included a question that directly asked respondents for their level of support on the proposal (by answering 'Yes', 'Yes with changes', 'Neutral' or 'No' in support and providing feedback).

An open-field comments box provided community members a space to explain or elaborate on their support, not support or neutral sentiment as well as any other feedback they wished to contribute. Not all respondents provided submissions in the open submission field.

Email and written comments were also invited.

## 5. Findings

There was overwhelming support for the proposed lease renewal, with more than 94 percent of respondents indicating support for the proposed 20-year lease. Reasons for support included:

**Positive use of asset and space** - the course is in pristine condition and that the area provides an important community asset, as it can be accessed by both members and non-members for facility use, functions, bird watching and general exercise.

**Pleasing visual amenity** - the valuable amenity provided for the local community and visitors by the golf course. As well as the notion that the course visually looks appealing with its trees and open areas.

**Important green corridor/open space** - the current use is seen by the community as providing a wonderful green space and habitat for birdlife and it retains the area safe from development.

**Health and wellbeing** - the exercise and recreation benefits of the area and the important resource this provides for social connection.

**Refuge in pandemic** – the pandemic has clearly demonstrated the benefits of retaining publicly accessible golf courses for the social welfare of the community as it provided a lifeline when many activities were closed due to public health orders.

**Table 1:** Issues raised and response

Theme	What we heard	Council's response
Lease tenure	Concerns over the length of the lease renewal and the need to maintain public access	Given the significant ongoing capital contribution that is required to maintain a golf course a 20 year term is quite standard for golf course leases.
Alternative use of land	Public space being used by a small minority of the community, would like public space to be accessible by all.	<p>Mona Vale Golf Course is a public golf course and is operated by Mona Vale Golf Club who is a not-for-profit organisation.</p> <p>The public are welcome to play golf at the course through either casual play or membership options.</p> <p>Specific individual community responses have been provided to our Parks department with relation to requests for additional open recreation space around Mona Vale. These submissions will be considered as part of our forthcoming Open Space and Recreation Strategy project and Mona Vale Place Plan.</p>
More sports fields required	Demand for more sports fields and a suggestion that the land should be converted to Hockey fields with synthetic turf or specifically for Olympic sports	<p>Council is committed to finding a suitable location for new hockey fields. Our commitment is outlined in Council's Sportsgrounds Strategy 2017, which confirms a need for better hockey facilities on the Northern Beaches particularly synthetic hockey fields. Several locations for new hockey fields have been investigated, however, none have been deemed suitable as yet. Any viable opportunities that arise Council will investigate including on school land.</p> <p>There are multiple sportsfields, tennis courts, bowling greens and a skate park in Kitchener Park, Mona Vale that is adjacent to the site.</p>
Need for more affordable housing	Demand for more affordable housing to cater for the homeless.	<p>The land is zoned RE1 Public Recreation, housing is not a permitted use.</p> <p>Council has an affordable housing policy and are working on planning and policy changes to improve the availability of affordable housing on the Northern Beaches.</p>

During the consultation period. Council received two similar questions either through direct contact or within feedback received.

**Table 2:** Question and Council's response

Question	Council's response
<p>I was curious about the terms of this lease renewal proposal and thought that these would be included in a text document found by clicking on the 'Download the lease plan here' button, but all it contained was the same diagram already shown on the web page.</p> <p>Could you please point me toward a resource that details the terms and conditions of the lease, particularly with regard to public access to this public land for the proposed next twenty years?</p>	<p>In accordance with the Crown Land Management Act 2016 and Local Government Act 1993, a copy of the lease is not required for the public notification process and the lease documents are subject to the Crown Land Minister's approval and final approval of the Council.</p> <p>Once the lease is finalised, public can access lease documents via GIPA.</p> <p>This land has been leased to Mona Vale Golf Club for golf purpose since 1950's, and the latest lease is a continuation of leases previously entered into by the former Pittwater and Warringah Councils.</p>
<p>I can only see a map of the area on your website. I'd like to see the actual lease documents and conditions please.</p>	

## Appendix 1 Verbatim community and stakeholder responses\*

*Of the 285 submissions received only 78 respondents chose to provide comments in addition to the sentiment question related to their level of support for the lease.*

Number	Submission
1	200% in support. I wish it was a 100 year lease! The uncluttered green space provided by any golf course is essential. The exercise & social interaction provided to public & members alike is also a vital part of a well functioning community.
2	A great asset for the Mona Vale community.
3	ABSOLUTELY essential to continue this GREAT GOLF COURSE'S usage of this Crown Land = the Peoples' Land (ultimately) - as a Golf Course with no alterations to the conditions of Lease or purposes for usage. 1. It is an A Grade comp course, beautifully maintained, and of a challenging level of difficulty. 2. It is a large tract of open, unbuilt on, preserved GREEN land. 3. That Golf Course provides several hours of physical exercise to all aged players engaged in a round of golf every day they do it. That is ABSOLUTELY essential to those Seniors in the N.B. population who frequent the Course for their health and wellbeing and, as a largely individual activity (even when playing in a foursome) in the OPEN AIR, it is a COVID safe way of exercising. 4. It provides a delightful vista from several aspects of view from Mona Vale Hospital, aiding the regeneration and rehabilitation of patients there. 5. The last thing I want for Sydney (and the Northern Beaches in which my wife and I have lived for all but 11 of our 70 odd years) is for it to become another Japan where God's given open land is consumed by development / housing such that where there is a golf course, it is only accessible to the very rich.
4	An essential piece of community infrastructure
5	An excellently maintained facility with the majority of members living within the Northern Beaches LGA. Also heavily supported by locals who are not members playing golf socially.
6	As a 7 day member of MVGC I am one of many people who enjoy playing golf in such a beautiful & well managed facility. It also is a place that welcomes all players including public & social players. The course is meticulously maintained by the ground staff & is a showpiece & a credit to the NB municipality. The clubhouse is also a facility for public dining & many functions including weddings etc. In such an era of development of high rise apartments & high density living it is refreshing to see such a beautiful green & tree filled area that is open & welcoming to all.
7	As a current MVGC member I support the proposed lease plan as it provides a valuable sport and recreation asset on the Northern Beaches. The land lease is not only a benefit to members of the golf club but also for the general public to enjoy golf on land that is highly utilised and environmental aspects managed professionally.
8	at least half of Mona Vale golf course should be turned into a public park when covid closed down parks in 2020 - I realised what a special place the area is and how wonderful it would be to have more passive recreation areas in Pittwater looking at the map - council land could be turned into some playing fields as well as passive area, while crown land could continue as 9 hole golf course
9	Golf courses are a fantastic benefit to the community which can not return if lost. I am an irregular golfer (1 to 2 times a year) but I also get great pleasure from looking at an expanse of green and watching people out and about.
10	Golf courses are used by fewer and fewer people every year. It's time the massive land areas used by only a few and restricted to fee paying members were opened up for proper public use.

*\*Personal details and inappropriate language have been redacted where possible. Spelling and grammatical errors have been amended only where misinterpretation or offence may be caused.*



11	Golf has been a lifeline for many over the COVID period. It is an integral part of Australian culture and society. Mona Vale GC has been extremely well run and fully utilised. Council should continue to support all northern beaches golf clubs
12	Golf is a sport which can be enjoyed by people well into their latter years, some into their 90's which makes it different from other sports. As such it is important that facilities such as the MVGC be provided. That coupled with the benefit to birds and other wildlife that green open spaces provide make the renewal of the lease very worthwhile.
13	Good use of land
14	I am not a golfer but I support the maintenance and improvement of all sporting facilities. I also support long term leases to not-for-profit organisations on the basis that they maintain and improve the facility for which they have been granted the 'caretaker' rights. I am not in a position to view their financials to see if they are adequately providing for this but trust that council is addressing this. They need to be forward looking and working towards building the facility that needs to be there 20 years from now: not hand over a dilapidated building & course. Please ensure this is the case.
15	I approve and will continue to support this land as a golf course
16	<p>I believe the land should be used for a public recreational area. Picnic park, walking and jogging tracks. We have too many golf clubs on the Northern Beaches. This area is under utilised. There are more people walking, jogging and riding their bikes by it than actually playing golf on it.</p> <p>I walk and run by it 5-6 days a week. I often think what a waste of a beautiful parkland. Most of the time it's empty and often golf balls are hit through on to walking paths. A golf just missed my wife and I by 15 meters 2 days ago.</p> <p>So Cancel the lease and give us a beautiful parkland that everybody can enjoy. Not just the golfers.</p>
17	I feel the general public should have a day per week or even once per month to access the grounds for picnics and walking. It's a huge area of crown and council land that is used by those people with privilege and money to be club members. Even a small entry fee/ticket would be preferable to being locked out of this beautiful area. Thank you
18	<p>I fully support renewal of the lease but the term is far too short. It should be 50 years at least.</p> <p>I am a member of Long Reef Golf Club so I am aware of the very long term planning that has to be done and then executed well to maintain and develop top class golf courses such as both Long Reef and Mona Vale. The shorter the lease term, the more the club is constrained in what it may plan.</p> <p>It would serve the community and the golf club much better if the term of the lease was such that it could encourage MVGC to look further into the future. There are areas of the course that could benefit from some major redevelopment, especially on the border with Mona Vale Hospital and the longer holes that run close and parallel to the coastline. A longer lease might also encourage the club to look at providing much more parking on-site to reduce pressure on public parking in Golf Ave.</p>
19	I support the lease plan. The golf course is a great asset to the recreational options in the area. As well as being enjoyed by members, the public enjoy great use of the course and club; many juniors start golf here; and the board and grounds staff have really improved the drainage and presentation of the course in the last 3 years. I'm also a great function venue with a great view. Regards.
20	I support the lease renewal as proposed. The MVGC facility supports thousands of rounds of golf throughout the year which add to the health and lifestyle benefits for thousands of Northern Beaches residents. The membership fees from the club ensure that the greenspace remains well maintained and aesthetically enhancing to the local area, at no cost to the Northern Beaches Council. This lowland area is also a haven for a wide array of birdlife that call the golf course home and needs to be retained in its current form.
21	I support the proposed 20 yr lease.
22	I support this lease renewal. It is an excellent use of this beautiful parcel of land. The Golf Club keeps it in immaculate condition. It is heavily used by golfers seven days a week and also provides clubhouse facilities which are available to all.

23	I think it is the best golf course on the northern beaches, beautiful green space, and is very well taken care of. It has lovely a vegetation and there are so many different birds enjoying the area. I have loved playing here over the many years and hopefully will be able to in the future, and now my Children and Grandchildren are all starting play. Kind regards
24	I think the golf course is a wonderful public facility for the community. The lease should be longer than 20 years. it is too short for the golf course staff to plan ahead. It should be a 50 -99 year lease.
25	I think the land could be much better used Tiny housing for the home less More sports fields etc etc
26	I would prefer then land to be used for a purpose which benefits the majority rather than a small minority. There are many golf courses in the vicinity. With declining levels of golfing participation most frequently the land is under or under used in its current capacity. I would prefer this to be a mixed use area of residential, retail and parkland similar to what they have done at the Canopy in Lane Cove or a community sports centre which could be used to the benefit of all. If you are to grant an extension I would suggest 5 yrs to be a more appropriate time frame.
27	I would suggest and support a lease term exceeding 20 years, as currently proposed. MVGC is a special facility and well worth securing and protecting for future generations of golfers and the public at large.
28	In favour of no change to 'land use'.
29	It has been a lifeline during COVID with many new members due partly to working from home.
30	It is a lovely use of the land, open and well kept for anyone passing (or playing) to enjoy.
31	It should remain as a golf course.
32	It's not broken so .....
33	It's a wonderful golf course, kept in terrific order and is a great boon to the district.
34	It's outrageous that councils continue to lease primary Crown greenspace for use by a small paying minority. Imagine the outrage if an exclusive lease was suddenly granted for a small paid walking club.
35	Keep the golf course, a bit of open green land is what we want not more developments.
36	Let's use the land for the use of different sports that are in the Olympics. So more children can access and train.
37	Mona Vale Golf Club is a very popular and well used asset for the local community
38	Mona Vale Golf Club is a vital facility providing the opportunity for exercise and fellowship so important to the physical and mental well being of our community.
39	Mona Vale Golf Club is an important amenity to Mona Vale community. As well as a great sporting facility, it provides wonderful green space and habitat for birdlife.
40	Mona Vale Golf Club is an important community sporting facility, encouraging excellent outdoor activity. Golf is a sport that can be enjoyed by people of all ages and with its handicapping system, is one of the few sports where one can stay relatively competitive for many years.  The current COVID pandemic has clearly demonstrated the benefits of retaining publicly accessible golf courses for the health and well being of the community.
41	Mona Vale Golf Course is a very well maintained facility that supports all age groups who want to play golf.
42	MV golf course supports providing clean open space for golfers and the community generally by providing a pleasing green landscape and ambience. The many trees support a clean environment. In addition the course provides a well manged egress into the ocean for surface water and street water from local areas gutters.  Alternately, seeing high rise apartment blocks built on this space, while providing a financially attractive one off cash injection into community coffers, would significantly detract from the general ambience of Mona Vale area and heightened the population density and summer time parking issues.  It is noted that adjacent park areas between the golf course and MV road have become habitats for groups of youths and young folk acting in disorderly ways, and sometimes

	requiring police involvement to curtail the intoxicated drinkers, and drug pushing. Converting the golf course to more of these parklands may attract further mobs of youths and greater unwieldy behaviour.
43	MVGC is an excellent course and a vital facility for the community. Long May it thrive!
44	No all good
45	Not only is it fantastic to have a tier 1 public golf course in Mona Vale.  As council would know most of the course floods when the beach drain blocks (eg with sand and waves at high tide). MVGC staff unblock the beach drain and maintain the wonderful facility at no cost to council.
46	Retains the land as open space safe from development and provides access to the public as a public golf course.
47	Term of 20 years is excessive. Max 10 years would be more appropriate to ensure the City has flexibility.
48	The club is a valuable amenity for the local community and visitors. The course looks appealing with its trees and open areas. It is an important green space.
49	The Club provides a much needed sporting facility to the community. It also provides a high level of environmentally friendly parklands for native flora and fauna.
50	The contribution made by MVGC to open space, community welfare, and sporting activity is in my opinion exceptionally valuable. Both to the community and the environment. We must protect what we have. Unfortunately a future of less is a distinct possibility if we do not.
51	The course is very well looked after and run by board and management.
52	The course is in beautiful condition and am proud to be a member of this public facility. especially in these trying times it has been a God send to walk around the golf course.  Congratulations to the Board the wonderful grounds staff and the ladies committee in maintaining such a high standard which is the envy of other public courses.  A happy member
53	The golf club has been managing this area well I agree with a lease renewal/extension
54	The golf club has provided a high-quality course and clubhouse to the residents of the northern beaches for nearly 100 years. During that time countless youngsters have learned to play the game that stays with them for a lifetime. The club has a relentless attitude to improvements to the golf course, the result being it is regarded as one of Sydney's best. It is very conscious of the role it plays in protecting and enhancing the natural environment of the leased area. Some several years ago it commissioned a leading environmental scientist, Ms Mia Dalby-Ball to produce a comprehensive environment management plan which it uses to improve the waterways and native flora and fauna found on the area. I recommend Northern Beaches Council approve the new lease.
55	The golf club maintains the golf course in excellent condition. The course provides a much needed recreation outlet for the multitude of golfers on the northern beaches, both members and social players. The course is always very well utilized, and even more so at present.
56	The golf club manages the land well keeping it free of weeds and pests. The course must keep the whole area it currently occupies to provide the community with an important outlet for exercise and social engagement.
57	The golf club provides a great community resource for exercise and social connection and maintains the valuable open space
58	The golf course is an essential facility for the well-being of northern Beach residents
59	The golf course provides recreation for many people, and is particularly a good way for older people to remain fit and healthy. It is well maintained and the club has spent large sums of money installing drainage and maintaining the environment.
60	The grounds of MVGC and surrounds are exquisite as a result of the hard work of ground staff and golf club volunteers. The finest of any views a golf club could enjoy. All available for public golf and recreation.
61	The Mona Vale golf club provides an important recreational facility which has over the years been shown to significantly benefit the community. The course not only benefits members but the community as a whole as a visual open air space which residents use to exercise and as access to the beach.

62	The proposed lease plan needs to go ahead to maintain the 18 holes currently available on the coarse.
63	There are so many golf clubs on the Northern Beaches and the rest of Sydney. The Council can rather build some synthetic hockey fields on those grounds for field hockey players, as hockey players don't have any synthetic fields on the Northern Beaches. We must travel to Sydney Olympic Park, Pennant Hills or Ryde to play on synthetic fields.
64	These golf courses should be converted to public parks, not locked up for a select few.
65	This course is well run and provides a mix of member and public access including local clubs and social groups. The land use is attractive and adds to the visual vistas of the area.
66	<p>This is a valuable open space resource that has during Covid proven its worth to the wellbeing of a vast number of local residents not just the golfing fraternity. Many people use the course for just exercise or to walk their dogs after hours. A great deal of birdlife also benefits from the course and its many waterways.</p> <p>A new lease will provide the security needed to enable continued investment in the upkeep of this resource.</p>
67	This is a well maintained asset to our community.
68	This is an important community facility that needs to stay as a golf course.
69	Totally support this. It benefits many Northern Beaches residents (as well as visitors)
70	We have more than enough golf courses and what we need is more natural bushland, open spaces accessible to all and more playing fields for soccer, rugby etc. As a compromise, half could be leased to the golf club as a nine hole course and the rest restored to natural bush and a few more playing fields would be wonderful
71	We must keep our open spaces, any change would reduce our chance of playing the sport of golf now and in the future. Mona Vale is a beautiful location for a course and the sport keeps us healthy.
72	We need open space for wildlife and golf courses are a great example allowing wildlife to thrive and thousands of people to exercise during the year. I am fully supportive of the new lease.
73	We need to maintain golf courses on the Northern Beaches for the purpose of essential open air exercise.
74	What a great icon of the NBs
75	With the proposed State Government plans to increase housing infrastructure, the Northern Beaches requires more open, community parkland. I see the denigration of crown land pockets of natural bush being eroded by mountain bikes, BMX bikes e.g Manly Dam, Cromer, Red Hill etc. I would like to see Council consider a review of golf course leaseholds and identify those which could be converted into public parkland thereby preserving our natural environment, flora and fauna habitats and enabling biking enthusiasts to have dedicated areas which means our natural habitats are preserved.
76	<p>Mona Vale Golf Course is critical to the Northern Beaches.</p> <p>Please renew this lease - maybe 30 or 40 years would be better.</p>
77	<p>I was curious about the terms of this lease renewal proposal and thought that these would be included in a text document found by clicking on the 'Download the lease plan here' button, but all it contained was the same diagram already shown on the web page.</p> <p>Could you please point me toward a resource that details the terms and conditions of the lease, particularly with regard to public access to this public land for the proposed next twenty years?</p>
78	I can only see a map of the area on your website. I'd like to see the actual lease documents and conditions please.

Document administration	
Version	3.0
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Related Projects	Mona Vale Golf Course, Lease renewal
Notes	Community and stakeholder views contained in this report do not necessarily reflect the views of the Northern Beaches Council or indicate a commitment to a particular course of action.