



Lease for Cheltenham Golf Course

Community engagement summary report
September 2025

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Overview

Council sought community feedback on a proposed new 21-year lease for Cheltenham Golf Club (CGC) to manage Cheltenham Golf Course between 20 August and 21 September 2025. A proposed new lease aims to provide the Club with longer-term certainty to implement safety upgrades and its Tree Management Plan.

There were around 1,200 participants in the engagement program, primarily via online survey. There was overwhelming community support for the proposed new lease with:

- **96%** support for granting a new lease to Cheltenham Golf Club
- **95%** support for the proposed 21-year term
- **88%** support for the proposed rent
- **90%** support for the Club's capital investment

The key reasons raised by 1,138 respondents for supporting a new lease for Cheltenham Golf Club to manage Cheltenham Golf Course included community access, social connection and affordability of the public course, health and wellbeing benefits, preservation of green space, the Club's junior programs and family-friendly environment, the continuation of the Club's heritage, as well as safety improvements.

Among those who opposed the lease (37 respondents) or weren't sure (11 respondents), concerns were raised about the process and early renewal, financial considerations including perceived low rent and Club's capacity to fund upgrades, equity of a large public space for specific use, and environmental impacts of golf course.

Next steps

Council will consider this report on community feedback and whether or not to grant a new lease to Cheltenham Golf Club at its November 2025 meeting.

Council has been provided with all verbatim submissions to support this report. A full list of verbatim quotes is not included in this public document for privacy and legal reasons.

The agenda for this meeting will be published on Council's website from 13 November 2025.

1 Background

This document provides a summary of stakeholder and community feedback on a proposed new lease to Cheltenham Golf Club (the Club) to manage the operations of the facilities on the Cheltenham Golf Course (CGC).

The Club's existing lease had around five years remaining, expiring on 28 November 2030. The Club was seeking a new 21-year term lease to provide longer-term security, enabling the implementation of its proposed capital works program, including works to address errant golf ball safety issues.

The Cheltenham Golf Course (CGC) site comprises a clubhouse, car park, and 9-hole golf course. The clubhouse and part of the car park are owned by the Club on freehold land. The 9-hole golf course and part of the car park are situated on Crown Land, reserved for use as a public park.

The Club is classified as a not-for-profit entity and operates as a private club, with the lease stipulating that green fee players could book available times when not reserved for members. The Club had been fully responsible for all maintenance, capital investment, and renewal of the site since its inception.

The proposed new lease was intended to provide the Club with the stability required to facilitate the necessary course upgrades to address the errant golf ball safety concerns on its boundary with Victoria Golf Course (8th & 9th Tee) and the 5th Tee, while also enabling the Club to proceed with the implementation of its Tree Management Plan.

Under the current lease, the CGC site returns approximately \$69,994 (plus GST) in annual rental to Council.

The proposed new lease includes substantial investment in the site:

- \$840,000 to \$1.75M capital investment in the Golf Course to address errant golf ball safety concerns.
- \$150,000 over 5 years to implement the Tree Management Plan
- Base rent of \$46,000 GST inclusive.
- Assignment of Telstra Mobile Tower Lease to Council with current rental of \$33,000 per annum.

Council had been approached by Victoria Golf Club seeking an expression of interest process for the site at the end of the current lease period. Victoria Golf Club have undertaken exploration of an alternative use for the future of the site. This would include intensification and commercialisation of golf use with a driving range, mini golf and short hole course. The speculative proposal suggests the return of some land to Council for alternative uses, provide for a commercial income and seek to support the continued operation of the Club at the site noting CGC do not support the proposal at this time. Council was also approached by another party that would be interested if the site was to go to an EOI.

Council considered a report on a new lease for the Cheltenham Golf Course site at its [August 2025](#) meeting. Council also considered a petition for Bayside City Council to undertake a transparent and community-first process to determine the future use of the public land currently leased to Cheltenham Golf Club at this [meeting](#). The petition was made "with the full support of the Cheltenham Football & Netball Club, Bayside Argonauts Football (Soccer) Club, Cheltenham Cricket Club and the Board of the Victoria Golf Club".

Following Council's resolution at its [August meeting](#), Council undertook community consultation between 20 August and 21 September on the proposed terms of a new 21-year lease to Cheltenham Golf Club for Cheltenham Golf Course.

2 Definitions and scope

Within this document, reference is made to stakeholders. These stakeholders are:

- Cheltenham Golf Club members
- Neighbouring residents and clubs
- Potential future users of the Cheltenham Golf Course
- Broader Bayside community

2.1 Glossary

Item	Definition
CGC (the Club)	Cheltenham Golf Club
RMGC	Royal Melbourne Golf Club
The site	Cheltenham Golf Course
VGC	Victoria Golf Club
Stakeholders	See above for stakeholder list.

2.2 Related Council documents

- [Property Strategy](#)
- [Lease and License Policy](#)

3 Consultation process

3.1 Consultation purpose

Following Council's consideration of a proposed new lease for Cheltenham Golf Course at its [August 2025 meeting](#), Council undertook community consultation between 20 August and 21 September on the proposed terms of a new 21-year lease to Cheltenham Golf Club for Cheltenham Golf Course.

3.2 Consultation methodology

The engagement process was designed in accordance with Council's Community Engagement Policy and Section 115 of the Local Government Act 2020.

Due to the high level of interest in this consultation, participants were required to register or log-in to Council's Have Your Say website to ensure individual and unique responses.

Participants could also participate via printed survey or upload a written statement

Table 1: Scope of engagement

What can the community influence?	What can't the community influence?
• Whether Council proceeds with new leases to The Club. • Any variation to the terms of the proposed leases.	• Primary use of the site as a public golf course • Council's Lease and Licence Policy

3.2.1 Community engagement

Between 20 August and 21 September 2025 (inclusive), the following activities were undertaken:

Details	Activity
10,084 visits	Have Your Say (online)
8,323 visitors	yoursay.bayside.vic.gov.au/CGC-lease
1,228 contributions	• Online survey: 1,178 contributions
1,189 contributors	• Written statement: 22 statements uploaded
897 project followers	• Q&A forum: 42 contributions
	Printed survey
	• Post and email submissions: 8
	Correspondence
	• Email enquiries received: 22 (Many were redirected to the online 'Have Your Say' page.)

3.2.2 Communications

Key tools for communicating this consultation to interested stakeholders included:

- site signage
- letters distributed to nearby and neighbouring residents
- news story on Council's website and e-newsletter This Week in Bayside
- social media
- direct email to related community engagement project subscribers and Have Your Say members
- newspaper advertisement in The Age
- public notice on Council's website

4 Participant profile

Participation came from all Bayside suburbs and age groups, particularly among residents of Cheltenham, Beaumaris, and Black Rock, including residents neighbouring the course.

Most participants (749) indicated they had played golf at the course, with around half of those also being a member of a Golf Club. Membership of Cheltenham Golf Club was most frequently mentioned (171+), followed by Victoria Golf Club (12+) and Sandringham (10+).

Chart 1: Connection to Cheltenham Golf Course

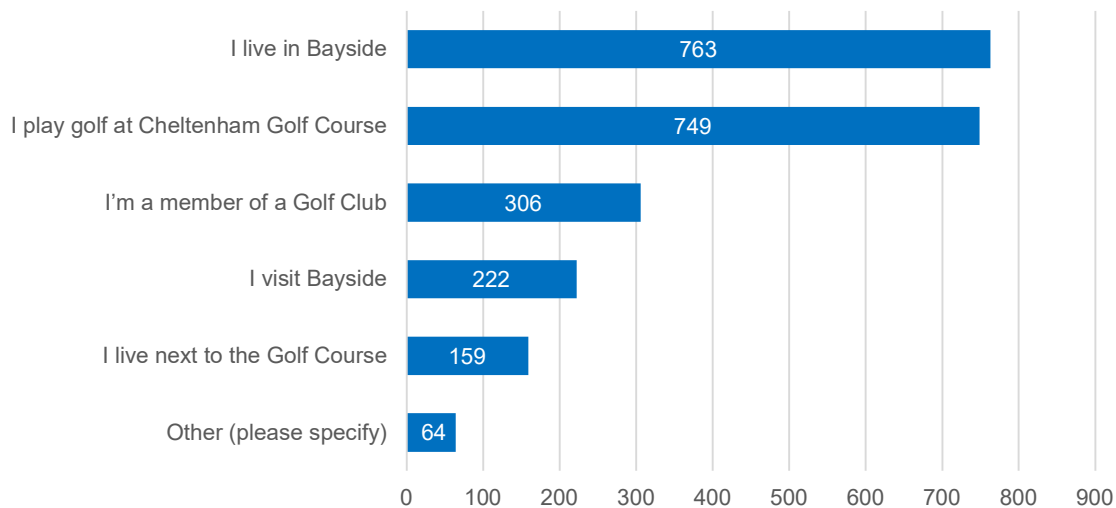


Table 2: Participation compared to Bayside demographics

	Demographic	Bayside 2021 Census	Participants (%)
Gender	Male	47.8%	67.3% (668)
	Female	52.2%	31.7% (315)
	Unknown	-	1% (10)
	Other identity	-	
Age	Under 18	21.6%	1% (14)
	18-24	7.8%	1% (10)
	25-34	7.8%	7% (66)
	35-49	19.4%	22% (209)
	50-59	15.7%	23% (220)
	60-69	12.1%	27% (258)
	70-84	12.2%	18% (168)
	85+	3.4%	1% (11)
	Undisclosed	-	182
Suburb	Beaumaris	12.8%	21% (202)
	Black Rock	6.2%	7% (68)
	Brighton	23.7%	5% (53)
	Brighton East	15.6%	3% (30)
	Cheltenham	3.9%	21% (202)
	Hampton	13.6%	6% (61)
	Hampton East	4.9%	1% (7)
	Highett	7.6%	6% (54)
	Sandringham	11.8%	8% (76)
	Outside Bayside	-	23% (222)
	Prefer not to say		1% (9)

5 Consultation findings

The following section summarises the key themes which arose in community feedback on the proposed lease for Cheltenham Golf Course. Council has been provided with all verbatim submissions to support this report. A full list of verbatim quotes is not included in this public document for privacy and legal reasons.

5.1 Support for actions

The overwhelming majority of respondents (1,138, 96%) generally supported the renewal of the Cheltenham Golf Course lease to Cheltenham Golf Club, highlighting the club's value as an affordable, inclusive, and welcoming community asset.

The majority of comments emphasised the importance of public access to golf for people of all ages and backgrounds, especially for those unable to afford private club memberships. The club was frequently described as a social hub, providing opportunities for social connection, physical activity, and intergenerational engagement.

There was very strong support from online survey participants for all aspects of the proposed lease:

Chart 2: Level of support for aspects of the proposed lease

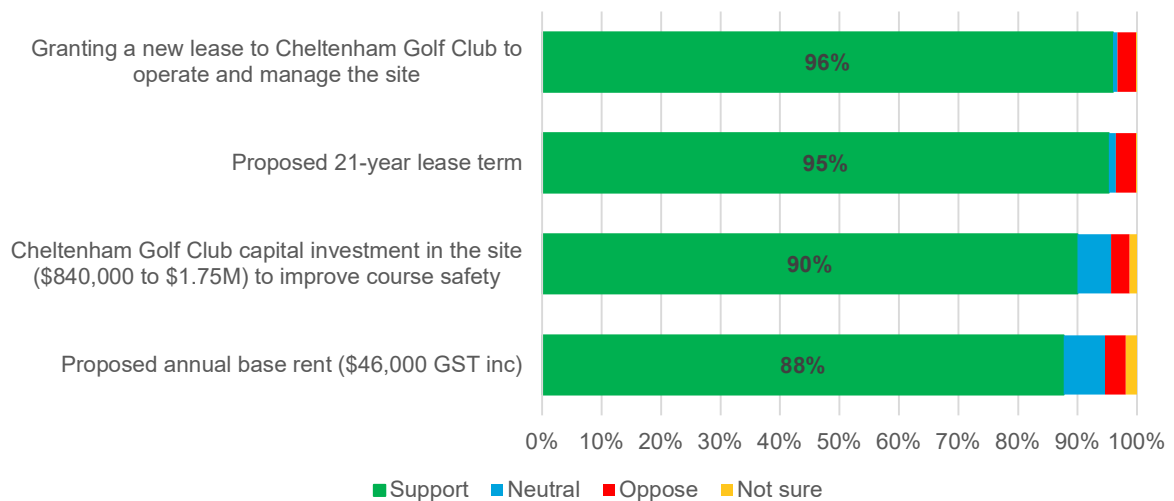


Table 3: Detail of level of support for aspects of the proposed lease

Aspect of lease	Support	Neutral	Oppose	Not sure	Count
Granting a new lease to Cheltenham Golf Club to operate and manage the site	96% 1138	1% 9	3% 37	0.2% 2	1186
Proposed 21-year lease term	95% 1130	1% 14	3% 40	0.2% 2	1186

Aspect of lease	Support	Neutral	Oppose	Not sure	Count
Proposed annual base rent (\$46,000 GST inc)	88% 1041	7% 82	3% 41	1.8% 22	1186
Cheltenham Golf Club capital investment in the site (\$840,000 to \$1.75M) to improve course safety	90% 1068	6% 67	3% 37	1.2% 14	1186

5.2 Reasons for sentiment on proposed lease

Following the selection of a level of support for aspects of the proposed lease, participants were asked to provide a reason for their response.

Responses have been summarised in key themes below. Council has been provided with all verbatim submissions to support this report. A full list of verbatim quotes is not included in this public document for privacy and legal reasons.

5.2.1 Reasons for overall support of the proposed lease

After reviewing the responses, several strong and recurring themes emerge in the reasons for support for the Cheltenham Golf Club lease renewal:

The overwhelming support for the Cheltenham Golf Club lease renewal (1,138, 96%) is grounded in its role as an inclusive, affordable, and multi-use community asset that delivers health, social, environmental, and economic benefits. The most common reasons for support are community access, affordability, health and wellbeing, preservation of green space, and support for youth and families. There is also strong opposition to any privatisation and a desire to maintain the club's heritage and community focus.

Table 2: Key themes in feedback supporting the proposed lease

Topic	Community feedback
Community access and inclusion Over 800 responses reference community access, inclusion, or affordability.	The club is described as a vital, accessible, and affordable community asset, open to all ages, genders, and backgrounds. Many respondents highlight that Cheltenham is one of the few public golf courses in the area, providing opportunities for those who cannot afford private club fees. The course is valued not just by golfers, but also by walkers, dog owners, families, and community groups who use the grounds and clubhouse for social, recreational, and cultural activities. Example comments: <i>“Cheltenham golf club is a vital community asset, open to everyone regardless of age, gender, or background. It’s one of the few public golf courses left in the area and is used by golfers, walkers, dog owners, and community groups.”</i> <i>“It is a great community club and incredibly important that it remains open to the public and the lease renewed to Cheltenham golf course.”</i>

“The club is accessible and affordable for all the community. It is a community club, unlike other local clubs.”

“Cheltenham golf club is a rare gem of the Melbourne sandbelt – a uniquely designed course just minutes from the city, offering the quality and charm of Melbourne’s most elite golfing destinations without the intimidating price tag.”

“The Cheltenham golf club is unique in that it provides facilities for not only club members and the casual golfer but also the general public are most welcome to use it as a park and the club house as a meeting venue.”

Affordability and accessibility

Over 500 responses reference affordability, cost, or accessibility.

The club is repeatedly described as affordable compared to private clubs, with reasonable membership and green fees.

Respondents stress that without Cheltenham, golf would become an “elitist” sport in the area.

Example comments:

“Cheltenham is one of the few public golf courses in the area, providing opportunities for those who cannot afford private club fees. membership is affordable and the atmosphere is welcoming.”

“If cheltenham closes, golf will become an elitist sport enjoyed only by the minority with the means and connections to join a private course.”

“It is an accessible, low cost option for golfers in the area, where every other club is either private or has outrageously expensive green fees.”

“Public access is excellent, with green fees starting from \$25 for juniors and \$33 for seniors—far more affordable than nearby courses.”

“Cheltenham golf club offers an affordable option to play golf which other clubs don’t offer. in the absence of this club i would not have an option for my children and i to play golf.”

Health and wellbeing

Over 400 responses specifically mention health, wellbeing, or social connection

The course is seen as important for both physical and mental health, providing a place for exercise, outdoor activity, and social connection.

Many mention the positive impact on seniors, juniors, and families, and the role of the club in combating social isolation and supporting mental health.

Example comments:

“Cheltenham golf club provides accessible, affordable golf that creates strong communities, lasting friendships, enhanced physical and mental health outcomes and for many, a significant source of meaning and enjoyment as they play the game they love with friends in a beautiful natural environment.”

“The course is important for both physical and mental health, providing a place for exercise, outdoor activity, and social connection.”

	<i>"Golf is a very popular sport within the community. all ages from children, teenagers, adults love to play golf. it is expensive to join private golf courses so it is extremely important to keep public courses open for the public to use."</i> <i>"Playing golf keeps people, especially the elderly, connected with friends, active and therefore happy."</i> <i>"The club is a vibrant hub for local residents to gather respectfully in friendship to play, compete, banter, laugh and support each other's good health and wellbeing."</i>
Preservation of green/open space Over 300 responses mention green space, open space, or environmental value.	The course is valued as a public green space in a rapidly densifying area. Many express concern about the loss of open space to development, and the importance of maintaining green corridors for recreation, wildlife, and environmental benefits. Example comments: <i>"The course is valued as a green space and 'urban lung' in a rapidly densifying area. we need our lovely green spaces around us. there is enough development happening in the bayside area already."</i> <i>"Green spaces are critical for wellbeing. losing this course would be a tragedy for the community and future generations."</i> <i>"It is a green space that is maintained by the club and also the individual members."</i> <i>"The golf course is a significant area of green open space in an increasingly urbanised bayside. it contributes to biodiversity, tree canopy, and environmental sustainability."</i> <i>"The course is a haven for animals and birds which live in the indigenous vegetation."</i>
Youth and junior development Over 200 responses reference junior/youth access, development, or family participation.	The club is praised for its junior programs and as a "pathway" for young people to learn golf affordably. Respondents note the importance of having a local, accessible club for children and teenagers, especially as private clubs are expensive and have long waitlists. Example comments: <i>"This is a community golf course that supports kids developing the love for the game at entry level prices. it is also a space for all to use after hours to walk and keep open as a park space."</i> <i>"Having access to a welcoming, family-friendly club is essential for my son's development and our community life. the club's junior programs are particularly important."</i> <i>"Cheltenham golf club has always provided a wonderful and affordable facility for bayside residents of all ages to play golf and has thereby been an enjoyable experience for children and adults of all ages and financial position to learn the game and enjoy the friendly club facilities."</i>

	<i>“The club provides an affordable club to play golf for all ages and is a great social club for the community, not just the golfers. the club is also very accessible for our younger generation to learn and play the sport.”</i> <i>“My 8-year-old son plays golf three to four times a week, and having access to a welcoming, family-friendly club is essential for his development and our community life.”</i>
Social and intergenerational connection Over 250 responses reference social connection, family, or intergenerational play.	The club is seen as a social hub, fostering friendships and intergenerational connections. Many mention playing with family members across generations, and the club’s role in building community bonds. Example comments: <i>“The club is seen as a social hub, fostering friendships and intergenerational connections. we have played golf with three generations of family friends and entertained visiting business people at cheltenham golf course.”</i> <i>“It’s a wonderful and welcoming place to walk through, and have a social get together at the clubhouse. i’m not a member of the golf course and do not play golf but walk through the course most days. i love being so welcomed at the club by friendly golfers and staff.”</i> <i>“The club provides a wonderful opportunity for young golfers to start their careers without having to commit to expensive memberships or other prohibitive criteria in order to become accomplished golfers. it also provides an affordable opportunity for many older community members to participate actively in a club environment which may not be possible elsewhere.”</i> <i>“The club is a social hub for many people across the bayside and kingston areas, and further afield. there is nothing else quite like the club and the offering it provides.”</i> <i>“The club is a great place for companionship. members often meet two or three times a week, and traditions like the ladies bringing biscuits and home-baked goods to share over a cup of tea after nine holes on fridays are treasured.”</i>
Opposition to private/exclusive takeover Over 150 responses explicitly mention opposition to privatization or “land grabs.”	Strong opposition to the idea of the course being taken over by private interests (e.g., Victoria Golf Club), which is seen as a threat to public access and community benefit. Example comments: <i>“We absolutely oppose the attempt by the victoria golf club to take over the cheltenham golf club to extend their already well endowed but expensive and exclusive club next door.”</i> <i>“Please do not allow this vital public facility to be taken over by victoria golf club. renew the lease, allow the community the ongoing use of the land and facilities and keep the social connections open for our older generations.”</i> <i>“I am totally against a private club, which provides no community benefit, taking over the lease, and then changing the use of</i>

	<i>crown land for its financial gain, to the detriment of bayside ratepayers.”</i> <i>“I am a member of victoria golf club and i do not support its plans for the takeover of cheltenham golf club and have never been inconvenienced by errant golf balls. cheltenham is a valuable asset to the community and should be allowed to continue its good work of nearly 100 years.”</i>
Support for local economy and volunteers Over 100 responses reference economic benefit or volunteerism.	The club supports local businesses and provides local employment. Many responses note the contribution of volunteers in maintaining the course and running community events. Example comments: <i>“The club supports local businesses and provides local employment. members and visitors spend money in surrounding cafés, restaurants, and shops.”</i> <i>“A regular group of players volunteer their time each friday to ensure that garden beds are beautifully presented and maintained, especially in spring when there is renewed growth of weeds.”</i> <i>“The club has a thriving social scene and this is important to maintain social connections with locals and members. additionally, this is a course that junior players can get relatively easy access to and be introduced to the game.”</i> <i>“The club supports local employment and plays a part in attracting visitors to the area.”</i> <i>“The club is maintained by the staff and the members of the cheltenham golf club who take enormous pride of the great condition of the course.”</i>
Heritage and tradition Over 100 responses reference heritage, tradition, or history.	The club’s long history (nearly 100 years) and tradition of serving the community are frequently cited as reasons to support a proposed new lease. Example comments: <i>“The club’s long history (nearly 100 years) and tradition of serving the community are frequently cited as reasons to support its continuation.”</i> <i>“Cheltenham golf club has been at the site for about 100 years. it provides a reasonably priced round of golf compared to other courses close by.”</i> <i>“The cheltenham golf club is a wonderful community asset with the golf course and also the club house facilities. to remove this would be a huge backward step for the major of people of bayside and surrounds who enjoy this public asset for their physical and mental health.”</i> <i>“Cheltenham golf club is a historic and important fabric of our community. the community run club is welcoming to all and is unique in our area.”</i> <i>“The club has been there for almost 100 years and is a ‘community hub’. not only is it a place for golfers, both members and ‘green fees’ public players to enjoy their sport, but also for</i>

	<i>hundreds of walkers enjoying their recreation, all coexisting harmoniously and respectfully.”</i>
Safety and course improvements Over 80 responses reference safety improvements or capital investment.	Some responses support the lease on the basis that it will enable necessary safety upgrades and ongoing investment in the course. Example comments: <i>“Looking forward to improvements to address errant balls as they do land in my property and have caused damage in the past although the club has responded and actioned appropriately.”</i> <i>“The proposed lease extension will allow the club to address errant golf ball risks, implement its tree management plan, and make ongoing capital investments that ensure the facilities remain safe, well-maintained, and accessible for members and green fee players.”</i> <i>“The club has committed to mitigation work costing >\$1million, to stop errant balls straying into some neighbouring facilities. in order to do the work, the club needs certainty of tenor and hence the application now for a 21 year lease.”</i> <i>“I support the reversal of holes 8/17 and 9/18 in order to promote greater safety for our neighbours.”</i> <i>“The club serves a large population of bayside residents as members and non-members. particularly for many local retirees, the club provides an irreplaceable source of friendship, purpose, and community involvement. it is one of the few avenues of meaningful social engagement including card-clubs, games venue, monthly ‘dinner’ themes and as a venue for groups to meet e.g. probus, and to host special occasions. there are few and limited alternatives in the area to provide the same mix of accessibility, affordability, and camaraderie.”</i>

5.2.2 Reasons for opposition to the proposed lease

37 respondents were generally opposed to the proposed lease. Opposition to the lease renewal centred on a desire for more inclusive and flexible use of public land, greater transparency and fairness in decision-making, better financial returns for the community, concerns about exclusivity, and environmental impact.

Topic	Community feedback
Preference for broader public use/open space Approximately 18 mentions	Some respondents believe the land should be repurposed for general public parkland, open space, or broader recreation, rather than reserved for a single-sport facility. Example comments: <i>“Golf courses offer little to no amenity except for those who play golf. Turn this into a park or develop it into housing, a much better use of the land.”</i> <i>“There are many golf courses in the area, for golfers to pursue their sport. At the end of the current lease the</i>

land should be returned to the community. Free open areas are for all socio economic groups.”

“A 21 year lease would basically make it impossible to repurpose the land for two decades, amidst a housing crisis, while the land is within walking distance of Cheltenham village and train station.”

“We have a very large parcel of land that has the potential to accommodate much-needed general housing and government housing, as well as provide open space for our community to enjoy without cost.”

“Bayside needs more open to public parkland space. There are numerous golf options already available. The golf course should become an open park for all, not a dedicated space for the 0.5% of the population that play golf there.”

Concerns about lease process, transparency, and alternatives

Approximately 14 mentions

Some respondents object to the lease renewal process, citing a lack of transparency, insufficient consultation, or the absence of a competitive tender/open expression of interest for alternative uses or operators.

Example comments:

“What other options were offered? This was a one-sided renewal of a lease and doesn't seem to have any other options.”

“Council's current lease and licence policy draws to attention the opportunity for Council to market test the use of the asset. Is there any reason why an open (as opposed to a confined) expression of interest has not been developed, affording other entities, including near by golf clubs the opportunity to respond, particularly given the proposed length of the lease?”

“I oppose early renewal of the proposed lease in its current form, not due to any objection to Cheltenham Golf Club itself — which plays an important role in the community — but because this long-term lease risks locking in a narrow, single-use outcome on a unique public landholding without adequate consultation, transparency, or future vision.”

“It simply doesn't make sense to renew a 21-year lease five years early. In 26 years' time, the needs of the Bayside community will be vastly different. With the current lease not yet due for renewal, this is the perfect opportunity for council to adopt a consultative, inclusive, and visionary approach to what is undeniably a complex planning challenge.”

“A long term lease over Crown land should be subject to a public tender and appointment of what is best for local and non-local Victorian residents. It should never be simply re-extended without a public tender

(particular where others have expressed interest) so that the best use of Crown land can be then assessed."

Financial concerns

Approximately 11 responses reference concerns with rent, value for money, and club's capacity

Some respondents object to the proposed rent as being too low for the value of the land, or question the club's financial capacity to deliver on safety and capital works.

Example comments:

"That rent is an offence to the community. The golf club gets 170,000 square meters for \$46,000. If this was a proper commercial lease that wouldn't cover the rent of the club house. As commercial space this should return to the residents \$20 million dollars a year or more."

"\$70k rent was ridiculously low for that amount of land, equivalent to a couple of family homes. How can you possibly be considering reducing it? The fence and tree capital works are just maintenance that should be assumed for running a golf course."

"The rental fee proposed seems extraordinarily low for such a large piece of crown land. The Sandringham public course (18 holes) apparently pays over \$650,000 PA. A 21 year lease to CGC for half that amount (9 holes) represents a huge loss to Victorian tax payers and local residents, in the millions of dollars loss level."

"To secure and service a \$1.89 million loan, CGC would need to increase its net profit to at least \$216,000–\$236,000 annually. Any decision on the future use of this land must be grounded in long-term financial viability, not short-term enthusiasm or optimistic claims that cannot be substantiated."

"I need to be convinced CGC has the financial capacity to improve the overall golfing experience – course; practice facilities; parking; clubhouse and safety."

Equity and exclusivity

Approximately 9 mentions

Some respondents object to a large public asset being reserved for a single sport or a small, relatively privileged group, rather than being accessible to the broader community.

Example comments

"It is not reasonable for priority to be given to a small minority of golf players, particularly when there are already several public golf courses in our surrounding area."

"Seeing a small number of community members having almost exclusive use of such a large, valuable and scarce land resource is not in the best interests of the broader community."

"This is prime public open space and could be used for general community use and not just golf users, who

have plenty of other options available to them in Bayside and surrounds.”

“Golf courses are only used by a small proportion of the general public, and the demographic is wealthier than the average person.”

Environmental concerns Approximately 7 mentions	Some respondents raise concerns about the environmental impact of maintaining a golf course (water use, biodiversity, tree removal), and suggest alternative uses that would better support local ecology. Example comments: <i>“Trees removal for the new development will be significant.”</i> <i>“Golf courses require lots of water to upkeep the grass, and do not have enough tree or bush land cover to effectively sustain native wildlife.”</i> <i>“This golf course should be rewilded into native Australian bushland to improve biodiversity in the area and provide accessible beautiful green open space for all residents, not just rich ones.”</i> <i>“For a 21 year lease the planned investment is both vague and insufficient. In addition, as crown land there must be improvements to the safety and amenity of public access, including signage, improvements to native vegetation, and open public access.”</i> <i>“I would request a higher budget for increasing vegetation and looking into the possibility of using native grass with lower watering requirements.”</i>
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5.2.3 Reasons for being neutral or not sure about the proposed lease

11 respondents were generally neutral or not sure about the proposed lease. Neutral and not sure comments mainly reflect uncertainty about lease details, process, and financials, a desire for broader community benefit, and conditional or mixed support, with some respondents requesting more information or consultation before making a firm judgment.

Topic	Community feedback
Lease term, process & alternatives (6 mentions)	<i>“A 21 year lease would basically make it impossible to repurpose the land for two decades, amidst a housing crisis...”</i> <i>“Is it usual for a lease agreement to be raised 5 years before lease ends? And why 21 years?”</i> <i>“Council could run a EOI process for other community organisations...”</i> <i>“Council should consider working with Victoria GC... similar to the Royal Melbourne/Sandy Links situation.”</i>

	<i>"Should/could this site be made available for walking, passive recreation, and other community uses instead of being locked into a golf-only lease for 21 years?"</i>
Accountability & financial concerns (5 mentions)	<i>"What is the time frame to fix up the errant ball issue? Is there any comeback if it is not rectified in a timely manner? How will Capital Expenditure... be monitored... Can the lease be terminated if Capital Expenditure is not adequate?"</i> <i>"Unless CGC can be held accountable for capital investment (with financial penalties for non compliance), it may never happen or be restricted."</i> <i>"...proposed lease arrangements (rent) are far more generous than Sandringham and Brighton..."</i> <i>"I need to be convinced CGC has the financial capacity to improve the overall golfing experience..."</i> <i>"I cannot fathom why it would cost that amount, errant golf balls.. errant accounting!!"</i>
Safety & course improvements (3 mentions)	<i>"Spending the money on course safety (which clearly is required) will negatively impact on CGC's ability to improve the course layout, conditioning and presentation."</i> <i>"The course is not very long for today's game and requires redesign to make it more interesting and safer for all players."</i> <i>"What is the time frame to fix up the errant ball issue?"</i>
Environmental & public access considerations (3 mentions)	<i>"Golf courses require lots of water... request a higher budget for increasing vegetation and... native grass with lower watering requirements."</i> <i>"Who will monitor compliance with the Tree Management Plan to ensure biodiversity protection?"</i> <i>"I like the idea of this being public open space... We need to keep as much open space in Bayside as possible..."</i>

6 Project evaluation

This report presents the findings from the analysis of the community feedback gathered during community engagement from 20 August – 21 September 2025.

The consultation was promoted to key stakeholders including members of the Cheltenham Golf Club, project subscribers with an interest in open space or Cheltenham and nearby residents.

Due to the high level of interest in this consultation, participants were required to register or log-in to Council's Have Your Say website to ensure individual and unique responses. This did not provide a barrier to participation.

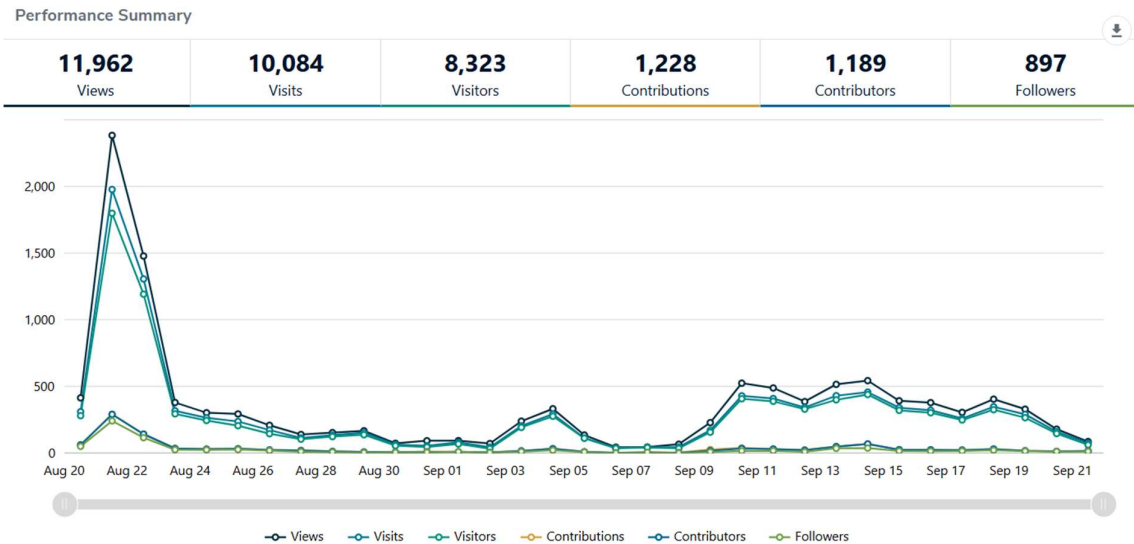
Site signage, social media and the website news story and This Week in Bayside e-newsletter also ensured the wider Bayside community was given the opportunity to provide

feedback. The project page on Council’s Have Your Say platform was viewed 11,962 times during the consultation period.

The length of consultation was four weeks, with most responses received in the first week and then steadily throughout the consultation period.

The engagement program received a total of 1,228 contributions, including 1,178 online surveys which included 22 written statements completed via Have Your Say, 8 surveys submitted via post and 42 questions via the Q&A forum. 14 questions had to be moderated from the platform as they did not meet Council’s moderation policy.

Have Your Say project page – reach and participation

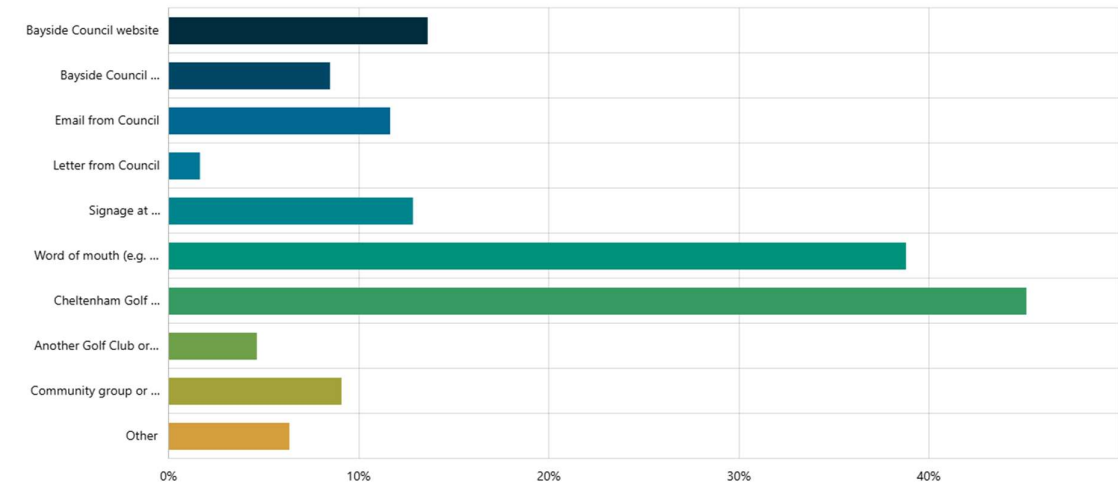


Engagement targets for the Have Your Say webpages were that:

- 20% of visits would last at least one active minute (exceeded, 47.5%)
- 10% of visits would have at least two actions performed, such as moving around the project page or clicking on links (exceeded, 14%)
- 5% of visits had at least one contribution made (exceeded, 11.5%)

Many participants heard about the consultation from a range of sources, with most via word or mouth or Cheltenham Golf Club. Signage and Council communications were other key sources.

How participants heard about the consultation



Satisfaction with engagement process

Nearly all (95%) of participants found the information was very (70%) or mostly (25%) easy to find and understand; 1% said they weren't sure, while some said they found the information mostly (2%) or very (1%) hard to find and understand.