Four golf courses to make way for other land uses by 2035
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Four golf courses will close permanently by 2035 to make way for other uses, such as housing, leaving Singapore with 12 courses in the coming years.

The Ministry of Law (MinLaw), which oversees land policy and administration, said on July 7 that the leases or tenancies of Mandai Executive Golf Course, Warren Golf and Country Club, Orchid Country Club and Tanah Merah Country Club's Garden Course will not be renewed, as their land is needed for future plans.

This continues recent moves to reclaim golf course land for other uses. For instance, the Marina Bay Golf Course was closed in June 2024, and its site will be partially occupied by the upcoming Bay East Garden, which is currently being developed.

The leases of two other courses – Singapore Island Country Club's (SICC) 18-hole Bukit Course and Keppel Club's 18-hole Sime Course – will expire on Dec 31, 2030.

Thereafter, the two courses will be reallocated for public use, with at least one public 18-hole course.

MinLaw said a portion of the site occupied by the 56ha Bukit and 61ha Sime courses – which are next to each other – may be allocated to the National Trades Union Congress (NTUC) for its

CONTINUED ON PAGE A2

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Competing land needs considered: MinLaw

FROM A1



Warren Golf and Country Club in Choa Chu Kang has a lease that expires on Oct 31, 2030. The site has been zoned for residential use, according to the Urban Redevelopment Authority's Draft Master Plan 2025. ST PHOTO: KELVIN CHNG

members, given Orchid Country Club's impending lease expiry.

NTUC currently operates Orchid Country Club through NTUC Club.

The ministry added that how the land will be parcelled and allocated is being studied. It did not say how long the lease for the site would be beyond 2030.

The first of the four courses to close is the public nine-hole, 13ha Mandai Executive Golf Course, which is on a tenancy that runs until Dec 31, 2026.

Its land will be used by the Ministry of Education (MOE) to develop an Outdoor Adventure Learning Centre. MOE has previously said this will be one of three new campsites to be built by 2032.

Another two courses will close in 2030, and their sites have been zoned for residential use, according to the Urban Redevelopment Authority's Draft Master Plan 2025.

They are the 18-hole, 51ha Warren Golf and Country Club in Choa Chu Kang, which has a lease that expires on Oct 31, 2030, and the 27-hole, 107ha Orchid Country Club in Yishun, which has a lease that expires on Dec 31, 2030.

Finally, Tanah Merah Country Club's 50ha Garden Course will close after its lease expires on Dec 31, 2035.

"Given its proximity to Changi Airport, the land is being studied for uses that have synergies with the airport to support economic growth," MinLaw said, adding that more details on the site's future use will be announced closer to 2035.

Following the closures, Singapore is set to have 12 remaining golf courses after 2035, including the existing Bukit and Sime courses.

Of these, two will have their leases expire in 2030 and will be offered renewals until Dec 31, 2040 – the 18-hole, 62ha course in Kranji under the National Service Resort and Country Club and Sentosa Golf Club's 18-hole, 59ha Serapong Course.

Another seven are on leases that expire in December 2040, and have a combined land take of 564ha.

They are: SICC's Island location which has 45 holes in all, Changi Golf Club's nine-hole course, Laguna National Golf Resort Club which has 36 holes in all, Seletar Country Club's 18-hole course, the 18-hole course at National Service Resort and Country Club (Changi), Sentosa Golf Club's 18-hole Tanjong Course and Tanah Merah Country Club's 18-hole Tampines Course.

A MinLaw spokeswoman said agencies will review the longer-term plans for these courses before the end of their terms.

"Golf clubs will be informed of the lease renewal decisions once reviews are completed," she said.

The last course, at Sembawang Country Club, has 18 holes and is operated by the Ministry of Defence (Mindef) under a licence agreement. The 49ha course sits on state land allocated to Mindef.

MinLaw said that in deciding whether to renew the leases of golf courses, it considered competing land demands such as housing, economic activities, transport infrastructure and essential services.

"The demand for land for national uses will become more acute in Singapore, and this will impact the amount of land available for golfing over time," the ministry said.

"The Government will balance the access to golfing facilities by private golf club members and the general public so that there can be golf courses catering to different segments of the golfing community."

The ministry noted that golf course leases are for a fixed term, with a publicly known end date, to allow course operators and golf club members to make informed decisions.

"This also ensures that land occupied by golf courses can be returned to the state and redeveloped for more pressing national needs in a timely manner," MinLaw said.

The ministry's spokeswoman added that the Government does not plan to set aside land for new golf courses because of competing land use needs.

Golf clubs that will not have a course – including Keppel Club – can consider continuing operations as social clubs, she said.

"They can consider options in the private market and also approach the Singapore Land Authority to identify suitable state properties for rent."

Golf club membership brokers said having fewer courses in Singapore will likely drive membership prices up in the long term.

Ms Lee Lee Langdale, founder and owner of Singolf, reckons that the immediate impact on prices will be minimal, as long-time golfers will not be surprised that Warren and Orchid, for instance, will be taken back by the state.

Some club members – including those at Tanah Merah – might choose to sell their memberships now, thinking that values will drop, she said, adding, however, that she expects prices to appreciate across the board eventually.

She also noted that most of the closures are still years away, and land use needs could still be tweaked between now and the expiry of existing leases.

Ms Fion Phua, owner of club membership broker Tee-Up Marketing Enterprises, said the news will primarily impact two groups – younger golfers who have yet to own a membership and "absentee owners" who live overseas and own memberships as an investment.

With the fate of clubs such as Warren and Keppel sealed, younger golfers who have been considering buying memberships are now more likely to take the plunge and join clubs that have longer leases, even if they are costlier, she said.

She added that overseas investors could be more inclined to sell their memberships now and "cash out" in fear of prices dipping in the future.

Ms Phua added that memberships at clubs with a longer runway – such as Seletar and Sentosa – will get more expensive.

"I've already heard from six buyers for Seletar, and the price has gone from $63,500 to $66,000 – it will keep rising," she said about three hours after MinLaw's announcement.

Professor Sing Tien Foo, provost's chair professor of real estate at the NUS Business School, said the falling number of golf courses over the years – when compared with an increase in the number of parks – reflects moves by the Government to make recreational spaces more accessible to the public.

With golf's large land take and competing land use needs in Singapore, it is challenging to justify keeping too many courses, he added, given that golfing facilities in neighbouring countries are available and popular among Singaporeans.

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