



Course & Greens Update

Dear members,

This is the first of a regular course and greens update to better inform the members of the current state of the course, the issues being worked through, and the upcoming course maintenance or improvement plans.

Before we update you with course information, it is important we recognise the many volunteers who have dedicated their valuable time to keep the course playable over the past 15 years. Without your contribution it is fair to say we probably wouldn't have any greens at all. Thank you to everyone who has given up even a small amount of your time attending to greens watering, course maintenance or competition set-up, it is invaluable, and the members and directors appreciate and thank you. If you have some spare time and are considering becoming a volunteer, please give Chad or Nathan a call to discuss how you may be able to contribute to our great club.

The greens

As members of the club, we all know that summer takes an enormous toll on the greens surface, primarily due to lack of root penetration and depth and lack of resilience against the heat. Hot days burn off any surface moisture and due to low root depth, the bent grass goes into heat stress quickly. Whilst significant effort is provided by Steve and several volunteers to keep the water up to the greens during hot days, it seems the current program has its deficiencies and therefore we are moving to trial a new watering method whereby the greens sprinklers will be activated a few times during the day to replenish the surface water burnt off. The times the sprinklers will activate will be posted on the local rules board daily and will also be posted in the pro-shop. A local rule will accompany this greens watering initiative and will be posted on the local rules board.

We ask for your patience and understanding during these watering times as we assess the value this watering method adds to overall greens health.

There are several factors that are affecting the bent grass root growth including;

- Poor soil drainage, causing low oxygen and too much surface moisture.
- Tree roots from nearby trees absorbing moisture from the topsoil.
- Pest and fungal issues like Nematodes, Dollar Spot, Black Beetle, and Algae.
- Irrigation with high-saline water from the Hunter River.

Whilst we have applied the best greens management practices thought to be suitable in dealing with many of these issues to date, the current greens condition prompts us to rethink our strategy.

A couple of upcoming changes to prevent continued deterioration of the greens include;

1. The above-mentioned greens watering program providing more light watering through the day to cool and moisten the surface and less soaking morning and night.
2. Investing in a dam fountain to aerate the water is proven to improve the quality of the water before it is provided to the greens, and we are looking at options to have a fountain incorporated into the dam on the 7th.

Furthermore, the club with the support and agreement of Steve will be undertaking an independent assessment of the greens condition and maintenance program. This assessment will be undertaken by an agronomist who specialises in turf management. In addition to this, an assessment of the effects of the surrounding trees and their effects on the greens will be undertaken. More information on this will be provided when the assessment is completed.



Furthermore a plan is being developed to remediate the back portion of the second green where we will scalp out the top 500mm and refurbish this section with the aim of having this area playable for winter.

The practice green

You may or may not be aware that the clubhouse renovation will see the current practice green enveloped by the extension over the coming months, and therefore a new practice green is required. At this stage it appears the best option is to build a large practice green that caters for chipping on the practice fairway, see below image of proposal.

It is the intent of the club to build this practice green with the mindset that it will be the blueprint for all future green reconstructions, and therefore it will be built to the highest of standards. We are looking to keep the cost of this new facility to approximately \$25k with the bulk of the cost coming from the importing of quality soils that promote good water infiltration and drainage. Once the clubhouse renovation and extension are complete, a new practice putting green will be considered adjacent to the clubhouse and first tee, with a few options to consider.

Greens nursery

A new greens nursery is under consideration to be constructed in the orchard adjacent to the ladies 16th tee, see below image. This area was selected due to its good sun exposure all year round and is generally out of the way. The surface will be well delineated and signposted with a suitable drop zone established so as not to impede any course play. The nursery will assist with any future greens repairs and upgrades. In keeping with the green construction blueprint, it is anticipated that the cost of building this nursery will be approximately \$20k.

The tees

Not a lot of attention is being given to the tees at this point as they are holding their own. The removal of the [Camphor Laurel](#) tree on the 4th will see an improvement of sunlight year-round, and remove the moisture sapping nature of a tree this size. A lean-to shade structure is slated for installation in coming months to provide shelter for players.

Cart paths

The current program to upgrade the cart paths and promote carts to dedicated areas has been a welcome improvement in a couple of areas. We intend to continue this program however a review of the current locations and materials being used for the paths is currently underway. A momentary pause on this project will apply until a full program is developed that aligns to the future plans for the course. This may take a few months to establish but is important so as to maximise the investment of funds directed to this valuable project.

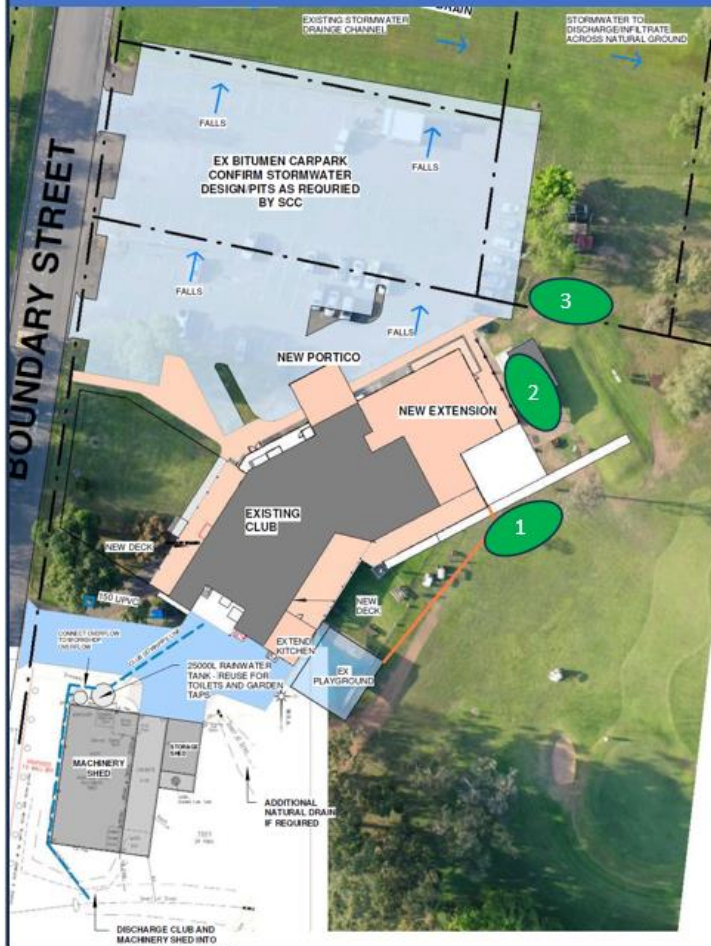
If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to send them through to Chad.Vesper@singletongolfclub.com.au

Yours in golf
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Future Practice Green proposed location options.



1. Proposed Green Nursery
2. Upgraded Chipping Green (*temporary putting green*).