



2012 - 2017

WAIKANAЕ GOLF CLUB (Inc) - STRATEGIC PLAN 2012 - 2017



PREAMBLE

The Board has reviewed and up-dated the Waikanae Golf Club's strategic plan for the next five years. The plan should continue to be reviewed by the current board and by future Boards as circumstances and new priorities change. However, it is important to put a new stake in the ground and set some long-term goals which provide a framework and point of reference in planning for the future.

As expected, the Club's vision and mission statements remain relatively unchanged (as has been essentially the case since the Club's inception) even though the precise words may vary from time to time.

A **vision** encapsulates our *raison d'être* as an organization – what we see ourselves as and want to be; the **mission** statement describes what motivates all the paid and unpaid workers within the Club to “come to work” for the Waikanae Golf Club.

The **strategic plan** gives our organisation focus, coherence and a sense of direction. It identifies the key objectives and goals we seek to achieve, thereby enabling us to better realise the Club's vision. The objectives provide the basis for the **annual business plan**, which is an essential tool for Board and Management, as it sets out in detail the actions that need to be taken each year in order to achieve the objectives.

It is against these actions and the related objectives that the Club's performance at both governance and management levels should be measured and assessed. They provide the disciplines which should underpin all our decisions and operations.

The Board is pleased to present the Strategic Plan and is grateful for the input received from past and present Board and Committee members and staff.

Grahame Bilby
CHAIRMAN

2012

SWOT ANALYSIS 2012

Strengths (Internal)

- Location – centrally accessible in an expanding community
- The golf course – appearance, layout and challenge are of a high standard
- Pro-shop – professionally run, providing desirable levels of service to members
- Volunteers – a major strength in this Club
- Good and improving levels of communication and cooperation
- Friendliness
- Board of Management and Committees – forward-looking, vibrant and committed
- Staff Competency and Commitment

Weaknesses (Internal)

- Ageing membership (leading to natural attrition, and diminishing levels of participation in wider club activity)
- Lack of a single focus-point for operational management (ie, no General Manager)
- Financial fragility – the club is currently managing only to pay its way without ability to provide for future requirements
- Physical limitations on expansion (for improved car parking, practice facilities, etc)
- Office management knowledge vested in a single staff member – a potential single point of failure.

Opportunities (External)

- Improve club profile (popularity, affordability) as a preferred venue/club of choice
- Increase membership through marketing, recruitment and retention
- Increase Green Fee takings through increased course usage
- Focus recruitment to reflect local demographic (juniors, over-45s, retirees, etc)
- Seek resource-sharing synergies with other clubs
- Improve engagement with Summer Members and wider community within club activities and tournaments
- Possible sale of land that is not required by the Club, and acquisition of land for parking, practice facilities etc as outcome of motorway build land re-allocations.

Threats (External)

- Ever-increasing costs to maintain course and amenities to member requirements
- Effects of economic downturn on members' disposable incomes
- Competition for membership from other clubs
- Possible run on funds could be occasioned by untimely debenture-holder withdrawals
- Major machinery or irrigation failure/breakdown requiring immediate replacement

THE CLUB'S CURRENT FINANCIAL MODEL IN A NUTSHELL

An analysis of the Club's current financial position and prospects for future sustainability reveals that the Club is barely paying its way, carries moderate debt-levels and faces some foreseeable major expenditure issues in future (eg, major equipment replacement and/or capital developments) for which, currently, there is no provision. To date, continued financial viability has been made possible only through cost containment (which has probably reached its limits) coupled with success in accessing some generous subsidies through grants (but this must be viewed as an unreliable source).

The Board of Management has recognized that, while it must continue with the aforesaid cost-containment and grants-accessing strategies, the Club also needs to return to a sustainable financial structure that not only pays its way, but also makes adequate provision for future requirements. In short, it must:

- Continue to provide the service that members expect and require
- Contain, then reduce debt levels
- Provide for known future capital expenditures without an over-reliance on grants.

The Club has two major reliable income streams: Subscriptions and Green Fees. The fewer members there are, the higher both subscriptions and green fees have to be in order to maintain the required standards for the course and amenities. Therefore, the choices before us are clear – we can optionally:

- Cut costs to reflect current income levels (ie, live within our current means) – this is not a sustainable option because the course and amenities would soon fall below acceptable standards.
- Raise subscriptions to fully cover cost increases – this is a simple solution, but a surefire recipe for failure through membership attrition being caused by increasing fees.
- Raise subscriptions to cover increasing costs, but at the same time increase both membership numbers and green-fee receipts to restrain the fee increases through widening the income streams – this is deemed the only definite recipe for sustainable success.

Reduced to its simplest, what members and green fee players both really want from a golf club is 'enjoyable golf in a welcoming atmosphere'! Therefore, if we are to successfully attract new members and encourage return custom from green fee players, Waikanae's competitive advantage must be to continually provide a golf course of high standard and value at which members and visitors will always feel welcome to attend and enjoy spending their time.

Therefore, since we are constantly competing with other clubs and recreational outlets for members and fee-paying participants, to increase membership and green fee uptake will need the engagement and cooperation of us all.

OUR VISION

Experiencing enjoyable golf at Kapiti's most welcoming club.

Elements of enjoyable golf:

- Course design that provides interest and challenge
- Course laid out and set-up to predictably high standards
- Course grooming that optimizes playability & visual pleasure
- Golf programmes that provide interest and challenge
- Practice facilities that are suitable for all aspects of play

Elements of a welcoming Club:

- Committed and friendly staff and contractors
- Professionally efficient and courteous administration
- Suitably styled, well-specified and kept amenities
- Friendly, welcoming and hospitable members
- User-friendly green fee experiences that invite return custom

OUR MISSION

*To promote the growth and development of the Club and ensure its long-term financial viability
for the benefit and enjoyment of all present and future members and visitors.*

OUR CORE VALUES

The core values that inform and underpin this plan are:

- A desire to be transparent in all decisions and actions
- High standards of integrity and honesty
- Commitment to professionalism at all levels within the organisation
- Loyalty and commitment to the Club and its best interests

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

Strategic Objective #1: Marketing and Membership

1. To market and promote the unique features and benefits of the Club effectively to both current and future members with the objective of increasing membership, which in turn will provide the revenue necessary to assist in running and improving the Club and its facilities.

Areas to address

- 1.1 Brochure / promotional flyer
- 1.2 Media releases and media promotion
- 1.3 Sponsorship contracts
- 1.4 New Member initiatives
- 1.5 Attractiveness to Green fee players
- 1.6 Kapiti Coast Airport Opportunities
- 1.7 Special Tournaments and Fund Raising Events
- 1.8 Relationship-building with key user groups/clubs

Strategic Objective #2: Governance and Management

2. To maintain an efficient and pro-active governance and management structure of all the Clubs assets and financial affairs, ensuring the Club functions correctly and sustainably within the agreed terms of its legal constitution.

Areas to address:

- 2.1 Budgeting and financial management (includes cost containment through prudent expenditure planning and control)
- 2.2 Balance Sheets - Profit & Loss
- 2.3 Revenue streams - subscriptions and green fees
- 2.4 Staff management and development, including regular performance reviews
- 2.5 Accounts both inwards and outwards
- 2.6 Annual Business Planning
- 2.7 Current and future Asset opportunities
- 2.8 Club Policy and Operating Manual
- 2.9 Key Role Succession Management
- 2.10 Employ a General Manager when finances allow.

Strategic Objective #3: The Course

3. To continue to maintain, develop and upgrade the course to an excellent standard, working within the parameters of the annual course budget, and in accordance with NZ Golf course maintenance “best practice” at all times.

Areas to be addressed:

- 3.1 Grounds: Entire course and all surrounds maintenance: Including tees, greens, fairways, rough, hazards, waterways etc
- 3.2 Machinery. (Existing and replacement)
- 3.3 Trees and shrubs. (Existing and new plantings)
- 3.4 Irrigation
- 3.5 Future course development

Strategic Objective #4: The Game

4. To constantly promote the overall participation in golf including the encouragement and promotion of both junior and 9-hole golf, supported with access to professional coaching and ongoing assistance.

Areas to be addressed:

- 4.1 Programme
- 4.2 Competitions
- 4.3 Rules
- 4.4 Tournaments
- 4.5 Coaching
- 4.6 New Members induction

Strategic Objective #5: House/Supporting Facilities

5. To provide a clubhouse and a full range of supporting services to members and visitors of the highest standard, delivered through welcoming, friendly personnel and supported with quality facilities at all times.

Areas to be addressed:

- 5.1 Bar / 19th
- 5.2 Food / Catering
- 5.3 Club House. External, and all internal furniture and fittings
- 5.4 Security
- 5.4 Future possible development of the Clubhouse when applicable

Strategic Objective #6: Pro Shop – the Face of Golf for all Players

6. To ensure that the Pro Shop at all times provides a welcoming, friendly atmosphere with appropriate facilities to all members and visitors alike.

Areas to be addressed:

- 6.1 Administering and fostering the game on a daily basis including tee bookings etc, facilitating for all golfers to experience an enjoyable game while on the course
- 6.2 Providing a competitively priced range and quality of both golfing equipment and clothing for all who visit the Club
- 6.3 Run and administer various competitions on the day in conjunction with the Club Programme
- 6.4 Work closely with the Club and its committees to ensure both the game and its facilities are promoted and delivered to members and visitors at the highest standard at all times. (All entities communicating and working very closely together, to promote a cohesive and united front)
- 6.5 Ensuring that the Shop contract is reviewed annually and remains relevant to Club needs.

Strategic Objective #7: Communication and Club Culture

7. To develop and promote a club culture which values the etiquette and spirit of golf, takes pride in the Club's proud history and traditions, and provides a friendly, welcoming, supportive environment for all members and visitors to participate and enjoy.

Areas to be addressed:

- 7.1 A regular Club newsletter to keep all members updated with club activities
- 7.2 Ensure that all new members are properly welcomed and introduced to the Club and its facilities at the time of joining
- 7.3 To ensure that members views are listened to at all times and any complaints laid with the Club are investigated and the appropriate action taken accordingly.
- 7.4 To encourage and foster members to participate in various work activities at the Club on an ongoing basis to assist in the overall Club development and improvement
- 7.5 To encourage and foster members to participate in various social activities at the Club to promote improved communication and cohesiveness through sharing these experiences
- 7.6 To communicate the strategic direction and achievements of the Club by the Board to its members at appropriate times throughout the year

ANNEXES:

- A. Critical Targets 2012 – 2013
- B. Course Development Plan, including:
 - a. Course Maintenance Standards
 - b. Major Fixtures¹, Machinery and Irrigation Maintenance Plan
 - c. Major Fixtures, Machinery and Irrigation Upgrade and Replacement Plan
- C. Facilities Development Plan, including:
 - a. Clubhouse Development Plan
 - b. Office, Bar and Kitchen Fittings Upgrade and Replacement Plan
 - c. Clubhouse and Outbuildings Maintenance Plan
- D. Club Policy and Operating Manual, including:
 - a. Terms of Reference for BOM Members and Administrative Staff (both with, and in the absence of, a General Manager)
 - b. Terms of Reference for Club Captain and Key Committees, and
 - c. Standard Operating Procedures.

NOTE: Annexes B, C and D remain under development at time of printing.



¹ For example, bridges, fences and gates, retaining walls etc

CRITICAL TARGETS 2013 -14:

The following critical targets, from which action plans will arise, are identified for the next 12 months:

	STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE	TARGET	MEASURE	BY WHEN
1	Marketing and Membership	1.1 Increase net membership by 40 per annum	#Members	MAY 2014
		1.2 Produce and implement a marketing plan with the goal of strengthening and diversifying club revenue streams from members, visitors, corporate activities, grants and better use of existing assets.	Plan Produced	AGM 2014
2	Governance and Management	2.1 Produce and implement a financing plan that sets complementary targets for club indebtedness, liquidity and business unit profitability.	Plan Produced	AGM 2014
		2.2 Review Club Constitution	New Constitution Drafted	AGM 2013
		2.3 Produce Club By-laws and Policy & Procedures Manual to support the Constitution and Strategic Plan.	Documentation Drafted	AGM 2013
		2.4 Position the club to benefit from land transfers associated with the proposed expressway development.	Options Analysis Produced	AGM 2014
3	The Course	3.1 Implement and manage the machinery upgrade and replacement plan.	Milestones Reached	AGM 2013
		3.2 Implement Course Development Plan	Milestones Reached	EOFY12/13
4	The Game	4.1 Nil	Nil	
5	House/Supporting Facilities	5.1 Produce clubhouse maintenance and refurbishment plan.	Plan Produced	AGM 2014
		5.2 Produce Clubhouse long-term development plan	Revisit when financial position improved.	AGM 2014
		5.3 Investigate options for maximising club returns from bar and catering operations, including the need for facilities investment.	Report completed	AGM 2014
6	Pro-Shop – the Face of our Golf Club	6.1 Increase green fee takings by 10% per annum	\$ increase	MAY 2014
		6.2 Upgrade service delivery with the aim of gaining and retaining members based on member and visitor survey feedback.	Improving Performance	AUG 2014
7	Communication & Culture	7.1 Nil.	Nil	

Course Development Plan 2013 - 2023

Overview

This Development Plan is intended to complement the Course Standards and Maintenance Schedule which deals with on-going maintenance. The Course Development Plan defines a programme of developments and improvements which support the club Strategic Plan.

The Vision Statement of the Strategic Plan is “experiencing enjoyable golf at Kapiti’s most welcoming club.

The elements of enjoyable golf specifically relevant to the course are

- Course design that provides interest and challenge
- Course laid out and set up to predictably high standards
- Course grooming that optimises playability and visual pleasure
- Practice facilities that are suitable for all aspects of play

Our Mission is to promote the growth and development of the club and ensure its long term financial viability for the benefit and enjoyment of all present and future members and visitors.

Accordingly:

The course will be maintained and developed to provide the best possible course for the majority of members given the location, natural characteristics and financial considerations.

We must provide an enjoyable and playable course for all members and visitors including new and older players and a challenging course for low handicap players, and events such as the pro-am tournament.

The general nature of the course, governed by the natural land forms will be preserved to the extent practicable. The course is generally open and undulating due to its position on former sand-hills and reclaimed swampland. Streams enhance the course and are essential for drainage of the course and adjacent swampland. Stream boundaries should be improved aesthetically and maintained to minimise maintenance demands.

Plantings will be selected and located to have minimal impact on playability of the course, to provide a pleasant and ecologically sound environment and be economically maintained.

Trees will generally be native varieties. Those used to define and separate fairways will be predominately Pohutakawa which are suited to the terrain and the weather and wind borne salt air.

Structures such as bridges, formed paths and retaining walls will be designed to blend in with the natural land forms and impose minimal visual and physical impact and require minimum maintenance.

Course developments will support economically and ecologically sustainable management practices. The core Plan is supplemented by 3 Appendixes

- Trees and Plantings detail
- Ecology Strategy
- Long term issues

Development and ratification of plan

The draft plan was developed initially by the Greens Committee in conjunction with the Course Superintendent. Following consultation it has been developed further and has been ratified by the Board as club policy for development and improvements to the course.

The planning period is 10 years; the initial plan will cover the period 2013 to 2023. It will be reviewed each year. An annual work plan will be developed each year from this plan by the Greens Committee in conjunction with the Course Superintendent to address significant development requirements. This will involve reassessment of priorities in conjunction with budgetary constraints. Significant projects will be detailed as a standalone project including specifications, timelines and budgets.

Small projects and tasks will be programmed by the Course Superintendent to make the most efficient use of resources within normal course maintenance demands.

Consultation

Comments and suggestions are invited from all club members, in writing to the Course Convenor care of the Office Manager or by email to waikanae@golf.co.nz (subject Course Development Plan. Proposal and suggestions will be accepted any time: the plan and all suggestions will be reviewed annually and the plan amended accordingly.

Scope

The scope of this plan encompasses all the land the club owns or leases including the course, plant and turf nurseries, practice facilities and maintenance areas. This plan does not include the clubhouse and surrounds or the car park which will be addressed separately. An acquisition and replacement programme for equipment necessary for the maintenance of the course will be developed separately.

This development plan assumes that the course par and course ratings will be maintained at current 2013 values. Should a significant change to these values be proposed the merits and cost of such a change will first be determined then if appropriate any structural changes to achieve such a determination will be considered. It is expected that if fundamental changes to the course are considered then the services of a course architect will be employed.

Development issues are documented below in relation to the essential course components including greens, tees, fairways and rough, and specifically hole by hole. Priorities and estimated costs will be developed once a reasonable degree of consensus is reached.

Greens

The current renovation programme will be continued to reduce organic matter and Poa-Annua making the predominant grass variety creeping bent which is less susceptible to disease and demands less water. It also provides a smoother, more consistent putting surface.

Tees

All tee blocks will be renovated by rotation to maintain level surfaces, quality turf and sloping surrounds to provide adequate drainage and efficient access for mowers.

Fairways

Fairways will be renovated to provide improved turf quality. A build-up of thatch since irrigation was introduced indicates a need for regular aeration. The on-going process of reinforcing grass varieties which require less water and are more disease and pest resistant will be continued.

Rough

All areas beyond the greens, tees and fairways will be defined as rough; first, second and long.

The first cut will generally be within 3 to 5 meters of the fairway. The second cut will be the remaining maintainable areas of the course apart from defined hill areas and amongst significant treed areas.

Long rough will be maintained to be predominantly grassed with fescue providing open, sparsely grassed ground in which a ball should be readily found. It should demand minimum maintenance.

Areas which are too steep or inaccessible for mowing will be cleared of noxious plants such as blackberry and gorse and planted with native plants which are most appropriate to the specific areas and which will require minimum maintenance.

Trees

The predominant tree variety to define and separate fairways will be Pohutakawa. In other areas native varieties which are most appropriate to the specific location will be selected.

Introduced varieties including pines, macrocarpa and willows will be progressively removed and replaced with appropriate native varieties. Where possible pine and Macrocarpa will be culled at a rate which has minimum impact on the playability of the course and enables them to be split and sold for firewood as they are felled. It is important that trees are culled before they become of a size that makes them difficult or expensive to deal with. To the extent practicable, new plantings will be made to achieve a reasonable size before the existing trees are culled. Where appropriate, temporary "nursery" planting will be employed to protect new trees and to achieve the desired effect while the long term trees grow to maturity.

Potentially large varieties such as Kahikatea, Rimu, Totara, Karaka and Puriri should be planted as soon as possible in appropriate areas to provide a long term legacy for future generations of club members.

Other varieties which are observed to thrive in this environment include Manuka, Pittosporum, Griselinia, Ake Ake Karaka, Kohekohe, Tawa and Silver Beech (Nothofagus Menziesi).

Banksia, Cabbage trees and Flax will be progressively removed from any areas where they interfere with course maintenance. They all cause unnecessary damage to mowers.

Norfolk Pines will be progressively removed or replaced. Their roots create large unplayable areas and their propensity for catching and stealing balls is a cause of slow play.

A scheduled plan for tree removal and planting is detailed in appendix 1.

Bunkers

Bunkers will continue to be maintained with local sand, this being economically and environmentally sound.

Irrigation

The irrigation system will be maintained and incrementally improved.

The water rights allocation will be reviewed and application for increased rights made where it is technically and economically feasible. Course management practices including conversion to grass varieties which demand less water will be implemented wherever practical. The cost of irrigation is expected to increase and access to suitable water will become more difficult in the future.

Drainage

Effective drainage is already a problem in some areas and this can be expected to be more challenging in the face of projected global warming and periodic weather variations. While we cannot impede the main stream through the course which drains the adjacent wetlands and is considered to be important for Whitebait breeding, we will investigate options to improve drainage including use of non-return valves for the ditches which drain into the main stream left of 18, alongside 13 and alongside 2.

The northern stream bank in front of the 10th green will be retained to protect the green. A 2 level retaining wall is suggested to enable easy ball retrieval and to dissipate flood force and damage.

Improved drainage for the practice fairway and 1st fairway will be investigated.

The ditch to the right of the 2nd fairway will be realigned to follow the base of the hillside and the fairway side of the ditch formed as a gentle slope to improve drainage of the fairway, improve the appearance and be more easily maintained.

Security

Fence the access from Atua St adjacent to the existing gate.

Hole by hole detail

1st

Willows to the right of the fairway which define the dogleg and protect the practice fairway will be replaced by Pohutakawas.

The rough to the left which is a natural thoroughfare for course maintenance vehicles will be developed as a formed road to the extent possible while retaining natural drainage to the swamp. This will help define the extent of the hazard more clearly.

2nd

The ditch to the right will be realigned and formed as a wide swale to follow the base of the hill.

The fairway will be built up using fill from realignment and smoothed to provide natural drainage to the ditch which will be formed as a wide swale.

3rd

The pine trees to the right will be progressively removed which will enable the existing Pohutakawa trees to thrive in the absence of competition for light and nutrients from the pines. The pines have a lot of loose and hanging branches. They are already large and the longer they are left to grow the more difficult will be their eventual culling. The ground between the fairways will be mounded and maintained as secondary (long) rough. They will be cut out at the rate of 2 or 3 a year.

A group of pohutakawas has been planted on the hill to the north of the pines to penalise shots from the east of the existing trees thereby providing a little more protection for the 5th fairway.

The Banksia tree to the right of the green will be removed. It sheds a lot of cones and leaves on to the green. The cones cause wear and damage to mowers.

The hill to the right will be modified to enable it to be maintained more easily.

The bridge from the 3rd to the 12th will be replaced. It is a major access bridge for greenkeeping equipment.

Action 2013

4th

Invasive tree roots from the trees on the boundary will be cut back by trenching.

5th

The willows to the left of the tee blocks will be removed to minimise shading and root invasion.

6th

The grass below the ridge line between the green and the fence will be allowed to grow longer to reduce the likelihood of balls going out of bounds while retaining an element of punishment for poor shots.

The ridge to the right of the green will be carved off and a catching bunker created from abeam the front edge of the green to 3 to 4 meters from the back of the green.

The boundary fence will be improved to reduce the likelihood of balls going out of bounds and lost.

7th

The old pine trees to the right in the vicinity of the 6th tee blocks will be removed. Pohutakawas will be planted on the mound to the right of the fairway to protect the 6th fairway and to replace the old pines. The removal of trees will be staged; the middle trees will be cut out first and the first and last retained as long as practicable to discourage using the 6th fairway as a shortcut to 7.

7th green

The apron in front of the green will be built up to reduce the likelihood of balls running off the green when putting from top to bottom tier.

The high area to the left of the fairway will be lowered as soon as sand mining in that area is complete to reduce the slope and reduce water runoff so that turf quality on the slope and in the gully in front of the green can be improved.

8th

The hill to the right between the alternative paths to the 8th green will be re-contoured and planted in low maintenance plants to make it lower and enable it to be more effectively maintained.

The slope in front of the left hand tee block will be planted with grasses and small trees and shrubs.

Renovate tee blocks

Action 2015

9th

The Blue tee block will be enlarged and levelled. It may be lowered by about half a meter to help gain area.

Action 2013

The White and yellow tee block will be levelled.

The pine trees to the left of the fairway will be progressively cut out and the area developed as long rough.

The hill to the right of the fairway will be topped and re-contoured to make the eastern slope more moderate and maintainable.

The willows between the fairway and the practise area will be replaced with Pohutakawas.

10th

The northern bank of the stream will be retained with materials sympathetic to the course. (possibly railway sleepers or similar). The retaining structure should be in two levels to dissipate the force of flood water more effectively and enable players to recover balls from the stream reasonably easily. A significant reason for erosion is damage by players clambering up and down the existing bank. The southern bank will be maintained as a gentle slope to provide a relatively open water course, dissipate storm water force and enable reasonably easy retrieval of balls. Action 2014

Earlier proposals to redirect the stream further away from the green are not considered to be cost effective or desirable from a playing perspective.

The gateway willows will be replaced with other appropriate trees, possibly Kahikatea.

11th

The old pine trees adjacent to the Atua St access to the left will be removed. Replacement will be considered in relation to possible sale of land south of the access gate. Pine trees along the boundary will be retained as long as possible to protect neighbouring properties.

The ridge below and west of the 13th white tee block will be modified to the extent necessary to enable effective maintenance as long rough.

12th

The GUR status of the hill to the right will be retained in the short term. This area is proving to be a problem when shots off the 11th may or may not have entered the area creating uncertainty over the correct course of action when a ball cannot be found. The area is out of sight of the tee area. This would contribute to delays if the only recourse is to replay the previous shot. It is particularly an issue for visiting players. To some extent this also applies to stray shots off the 12th. The cutting characteristic of To-Toi leaves in particular deters efforts to search for balls. The southern side of the hill will be planted with pohutakawas to replace areas where flax and Toi Toi plantings have been unsuccessful.

A shallow bunker will be created between the green and the path to the southwest of the green to catch long right shots. A bunker shot is considered fairer than a shot from the rough beyond the path given the extreme slope of the green.

13th

The Yellow tee block will be raised to provide better drainage. The blue tee block will be extended and levelled. Increased area will be achieved by lowering it by 1 to 1.5m.

14th

The willow beyond and left of the green is rotten and must be removed. New trees will be planted to protect the 15th tee and along the stream boundary to minimise erosion.

The slope of the upper level of the green makes it extremely difficult to get a ball from the tee to hold on that level of the green. Consideration will be given to level the top tier to eliminate the slope away from the tee direction.

15th

The pines to the left will be removed. They are important to guard the 16th fairway. Some pohutakawas have been planted to replace them but will not be really effective by the time the pines will have to be felled. The area of long rough will be extended south the base of the hillock the pines currently stand on to help separate the two fairways. Alternative short term plantings will be considered to reinforce the dog leg concept of this fairway.

The two ponds will be deepened so that the water temperature will be more constant and less subject to algal blooms and seasonal weed infestation. These 2 ponds are frequently unsightly.

16th

The White tee block will be lowered and the yellow block raised slightly to create a one level block. The gardens will be removed. Maintenance of these has become a problem. The trees offering protection from 17 will have to be replaced. The Blue tee block will be lowered to the extent that no retaining walls are required and will be extended using fill from the white tee block. The Norfolk Pine between the Blue tee and the 15th green will be removed. It shades the green and will partially block the new tee block. **Action 2013**

The pine trees between 16 and 17 will require action toward the end of this review period.

17th

The 17th tee will be levelled and the hill front right cut back to provide fill and enable the path to be straightened or alternatively realigned behind and west of the tee block. **Action 2014**

The old Macrocarpa and pine trees to the left of the tee must be retained to the extent practicable as a visual shield for the mobile phone tower. Replacement trees such as Karaka should be planted as soon as possible to eventually replace these unsightly and storm prone trees. The slope to the right will be realigned to the extent necessary to achieve reasonable turf coverage.

18th

The fairway adjacent to the swamp will be raised and sloped toward the swamp to provide better drainage and to lift it above the flood level of the stream to eliminate salt damage to the turf.

Pohutakawas will be planted along the mound right of the fairway to help protect the 15th fairway.

The Willow on the left of the swamp at the far end will be removed and that corner of the hazard reclaimed as rough to encourage shots to the left rather than to the right where they are a hazard to players on the 15th.

Plant Kowhai trees to eventually replace the willows on the north side of the pond.

Practice Facilities

The practice fairway will be levelled providing a drained surface to the extent practicable without compromising the quality of the 1st fairway. A safety fence will be erected to protect the practise area from stray shots from the 1st tee. The practise fairway will be extended by opening out and moderating the hill at the end so that it can be maintained as long rough

John McConway

Course Convenor

Course Development Plan - Trees and plantings

Objective

To identify which trees should be removed and any conditions and priorities for the guidance of the Course Superintendent in managing his resources.

1st

The Norfolk pine behind the green to be removed before it starts affecting the green.

3rd

Commence culling the pines right of the 3rd fairway; one or two a year. This will allow the Pohutakawas to get more light and nutrient and grow to fill the gaps. Mound the stumps and allow longer grass to minimise balls running through to the 5th. **Start 2013**

5th

Remove the willows left of the tee blocks to allow more light onto the tees, minimise root intrusion and reduce wind blown debris.

6th

Cut out the pines on the hill to the left before they become difficult to manage.

7th

Once the fairway is recontoured; cut out the pines to the right of the fairways at a rate of not more than one per year.

9th

The pines to the left to be cut out for firewood. Contracts to be investigated. Low priority.

Remove the willow nearest the green. It is rotten and drops a lot of debris but does not affect the course from a playing point of view.

11th

The stand of pines to the left adjacent to the Atua St entrance to be cut out for firewood. Cut out agapanthus to the left of the first hill, extend the tree cover and establish long rough grass closer to the fairway.

Plant boundary protection trees to replace the existing pines.

Start 2013

13th

Norfolk Pines to the right of the fairway to be removed.

14th

The willow behind the green near the stream. It is rotten and if it blows over may rip up irrigation. Replacement protective trees to be planted to protect the 15th tee and protect the stream boundary from erosion.

The Norfolk Pine to the right of the fairway affects the course rating and should be retained while options are reviewed.

15th

Monitor the pines left of the fairway and remove if they become a hazard; otherwise leave until the Pohutakawas become better established.

Remove the two Norfolk pines adjacent to the green and 16th tee. They dump debris on the green and the northernmost one will encroach on the renovated 16th blue tee.

16th

Pines between 16 and 17 may be removed if we can secure a profitable contract to do so. Commence planting trees to protect the 16th white tees from stray shots from 17 in preparation for renovation of the 16th tee blocks.

17th

The pines and macrocarpa left of the tee have to be retained as a visual barrier for the proposed cellphone tower.

18th

Remove the willow at the far end of the hazard to the left.

Remove the Norfolk Pines to the right of the fairway. They serve no purpose relevant to the course and will become a nuisance.

Retain the Cypressus hedge for protection of the 15th green and approach but investigate alternatives.

Retain the willows by the pond to the right of the fairway until replacements are established. Replacements should be a row of Kowhai around the pond.

Retain the Norfolks guarding the approach to the green but find and plant replacement trees more suited to the course.

Prepared by Jim Lynch QSM

Former chairman of Wellington Forest and Bird Protection Society.

Author of “Natural Wellington” 1992 plan to bring the birds back to Wellington

Founder of Zealandia

Contractor to DOC for education and management systems

Introduction

- This paper sets out the ecological issues relevant to course development and maintenance. There are various reasons including good citizenship, requirements to meet certain local and government regulations (e.g. with streams) and making the golf course a more enjoyable place for members.
- Definitions:
 - **Ecology** is the study and management of living natural systems.
 - **Biodiversity** is the number and variety of organisms and ecosystems.
 - **Ecosystems** are assemblages of species that naturally occupy and interact with certain physical and climatic environments and each other.
 - **Habitat** is the living space needed for certain species.
 - **Indigenous** means characteristic of or originating in a certain place.

Purpose

The purpose of this strategy is to provide policy guidelines for future action in four matters with ecological relevance. These are; ecosystem preservation, habitat improvement, species welfare and regulatory compliance.

The strategy must be considered within the context that the purpose of the club and the course is to provide an enjoyable golf experience for golfers.

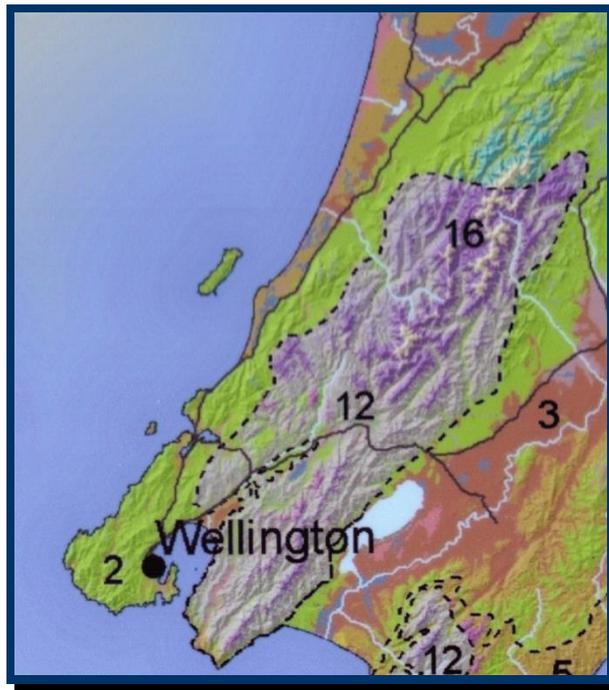
There may be opportunities to secure funding for ecological purposes which are in sympathy with golfing prerequisites.

Ecosystem preservation

- The golf course occupies about 10 ha of land, about 10 to 15% of that is peat swamp and shrublands. The main area is between the 1st, 2nd and 13th fairways and there seems to be a smaller area adjoining the QE II block boundary and adjacent to the 7th fairway, the 8th green and the ninth tee block. A check of the aerial maps and cadastral boundaries can confirm the extent of these.
- The course occupies land on what constitutes one of New Zealand’s rarest ecosystems. This is lowland swamp/dune forest and wetlands. Landcare data indicates that there is as little as 2% of this remaining nationally. Consequently any remnants of

these are regarded as being of very high biodiversity value. KDC and GWRC have policies which are specifically aimed at encouraging the preservation of these remnants.

- These old ecosystem on which the course is built would have consisted of a mosaic of old sand dunes with dune lakes in the swales and peat swamps in the low lying areas between the dunes, all intersected by very slow moving streams. The area would have been very flood prone with extensive inundation in winter. The vegetation would have been flax/raupo beds in the permanently wet areas, tall kahikatea, pukatea, kanuka forest in the periodically wet areas and rimu, matai, totara, tawa, titoki forest on the dryer dunes. The best remaining examples of this ecosystem are Nga Manu (Waikanae) and Papataonga (Levin) reserves.
- The course has been massively modified ecologically. The golf areas (fairways, rough, tees, greens) are intensively managed as a monoculture, hazards and waste ground are full of invasive weeds and the stream flows have been altered by drainage ditches and flood control. However this does not detract from the relative value of the remnants. There is also some potential for restoring areas which are between golf areas and which have no golfing value.



Map of historical Wellington ecosystems.

- Issues for consideration in ecosystem protection may be; what protection should the remnants have (if any), how should they be managed, improved and maintained (if at all), what local biodiversity rules and regulations do we need to comply with, how should we manage the streams and their riparian zones, do we want to restore any areas outside the existing remnants, what should we avoid doing that might degrade the ecosystem further (e.g. planting invasive species or using sprays which are detrimental), what species can we plant on the golf areas which are sympathetic to the indigenous ecosystem?
- The action to enable us to answer these questions would be to complete a survey of the existing and potential areas, develop an indigenous species list for the area, investigate options for ecosystem remnant protection and their costs, benefits and implications for the future, define a set of management policies for the ecosystem areas.

Habitat improvement

- The course is home to many indigenous fauna species, especially birds and fish. Native wetland birds seen by me on the course include; pukeko, royal spoonbill, black swan, paradise duck, grey duck, grey teal, shoveller, heron and bittern. Terrestrial native birds seen include; tui, bellbird, pigeon, harrier, falcon, fantail, silvereye and grey warbler. There will be galaxid fish (whitebait) and eel in the wetlands and streams. The wetlands are potential habitat for spotless crake and fernbird. The ponds are potential permanent habitat for brown teal.
- If the ecosystem remnants are managed well then they will continue to provide critical habitat for wetland birds. If the large trees are eventually restored to some of these areas they will be improved as habitat for terrestrial birds.
- The habitat value of golfing areas can be improved by planting bird friendly species (flowering trees) as fairway trees, as tee block shelter and in hazards.
- The fairways are already extensively used as grazing and foraging ground by pukeko and paradise duck. Sprays and other maintenance and control products should be selected high will not adversely affect them.
- The ponds and other hazards could be improved by riparian and other planting, e.g. *Carex secta* grass around pond edges.
- Exotic trees such as willows and pines can be managed out over time and replaced by bird food species.
- An issue to be considered is the planting of native plants which are not indigenous to the area, exotic plants which are highly valuable and attractive to birds for nectar and grazing and native species which are hybrids. For example, Australian species such as bottlebrush and *Banksia* are very attractive to tui and bellbird when in flower. Also pohutukawa and karo are not native to Wellington and their planting is discouraged by DoC. Some of our Pohutukawa appear to be a Kermadec islands variety. Many existing plantings, especially *Pittosporum* and *Coprosma* spp. are hybrid varieties.
- Generally if we were serious about planting in sympathy with the ecosystem we would only plant locally indigenous species which were not hybrid. Our policy is to take a wider view and plant native varieties which best meet the needs of a golf course and provide a good habitat for native fauna. There are many options for fairway and other planting which are specifically local and are very attractive to birds; e.g. kowhai, ngaio, kanuka, wineberry, totara and so on. Most of the issues around habitat improvement relate to those of planting and spray use policy.

Species welfare

- Species welfare relates to the safety of bird and fish species from non-natural agents; exotic predators and competitors, habitat disturbance and chemical application.
- Policies described above on chemical and spray application and restrictions on planting invasive weed species would be all we could practically do in this area.
- There are many exotic birds living on the course; including mallard duck, spur wing plovers, magpies, starlings, rosella, blackbird, thrush and various finches and small passerines. Generally these birds cause few problems as competitors to native birds and nothing needs to be done about them (it wouldn't be practical anyway). They actually add another dimension of interest to the course.
- Predator (stoats, rats and cats) control and browser (possum and rabbit) control is a potential black hole which we almost certainly don't want to get into except perhaps where pests damage fairways. Hawks are natural predators and should be left alone.

Regulatory compliance

- There are regulations; both local and national which relate to ecology which the club is required to comply with. They primarily centre on stream management, existing habitat preservation and chemical spray application.
- Each of these has been discussed above but should be all identified and listed so that they can be added to other compliance requirements that the club has in the strategic plan.

Summary of actions to complete an ecological strategy

- Work with KCDC to map and inventory the remnant ecosystems and habitat potential and develop an indigenous species list for the area.
- Explore options for ecosystem protection and improvement and future management policy (including special funding options) for consideration by the board in due course.
- Develop a planting policy which is in tune with the golf purpose and member's desires, which is sympathetic to the ecosystem, which will improve fauna habitat and which will prevent invasive species spread.
- Review policy on application of chemicals to ensure it is in accord with ecosystem protection and species safety.
- Develop a list of all ecological compliance issues for consideration with the strategic plan.

Long Term Issues

The following suggestions are documented as “long term issues “. They are generally possibilities should the club wish to extend the course but are considered to be prohibitively expensive in the short to medium term.

2nd green

Long term consideration will be given to extending this as a par 4 utilising the plateau across the stream and more or less below the 13th blue tee. (a draft proposal is on file)

4th green

Long term consideration will be given to moving or extending the green about 20m to the right to take the hill and out of bounds largely out of play.

5th blue tee

Long term consideration will be given to extending the blue tee back to the boundary fence.

6th green

Long term consideration will be given to extending or relocating the 6th green to the west to help minimise the out of bounds problems. Protection of players on the 5th fairway must be a high priority in the event of such a change. The gas pipeline which passes under part of the current green will be a consideration.

8th green

Long term consideration will be given to lengthening the hole by moving the green to the open area to the left of the current green.

12th green

Long term consideration will be given to relocating the green to the foot of the slope between the current green and the stream. From the blue tees the 12th is considered by some to be an unrealistic Par 3. The stream and access for course maintenance will have to be taken into consideration.

16th green

Long term consideration will be given to relocating the green further toward the 17th tee.

Course Standards and Maintenance Schedule

Background

The Course Standards and Maintenance Schedule has been developed by the Greens Committee in conjunction with the Course Superintendent.

The standards and maintenance schedules are based primarily on the informal or de facto schedules and practices indicated by past monthly course reports and guidance material from NZ Golf and the NZ Sports Turf Institute.

The Course Standards and Maintenance Schedule is posted on the club web site for information to all club members. Suggestions, criticism or proposals can be made directly to the Course Convenor or through any member of the Greens Committee.

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to establish standards and schedules which define mutually agreed expectations of club members and guidance and performance outcomes for the Course Superintendent and staff. It is intended to support consistent management and of the course through inevitable changes in elected club representatives and committees and to employees of the club.

This document addresses day to day maintenance issues; a separate document will detail course development issues.

The standards and schedules will provide a baseline for determination of course maintenance budgets and staff levels.

In establishing standards and guidelines it must be understood these apply in ideal weather conditions for the seasons and variances dictated by seasonal or short term weather patterns must be accepted.

Assessment of achievements of standards and performance in respect of the schedule will be assessed regularly by the board in conjunction with the Greens Committee.

Review

Annually; (during February)

Key aspects to be considered are

- Greens
- Tees
- Fairways
- Rough
- Bunkers
- Supplementary issues: (paths, signs, trees, out of play areas)

Communication and delegation

The Course Superintendent and his staff are responsible to the Course Convenor appointed by the Board of Management. This responsibility includes meeting set standards and maintenance schedules and doing so within annually agreed budgets.

All supplementary instructions or requirements not documented in this document will only be accepted through the Course Convenor and will be submitted to the Course Superintendent in writing or email with the exception of requirements for tee and pin placements as detailed below.

The Club Captain or a nominated member of the Greens Committee (currently Ron Olivecrona) may specify tee marker and pin placements with a minimum of 7 days notice in accordance with procedures in the Tee and Greens sections of this document.

All suggestions for changes or complaints in respect of course issues must be channelled through the Course Convenor who will consider the issue in consultation with the Greens Committee and such other bodies as considered necessary and take appropriate action.

The Course Convenor will meet the Course Superintendent at least monthly to review conditions and activity.

The Course Superintendent will submit a course report each month to the board and the Greens Committee.

Match Programme

A Match Programme is prepared monthly by the office manager and will be used to determine course presentation requirements. It should detail start times, tees to be used for starting and any particular requirements such as tee or pin placements and specific

grooming requirements. Grooming requirements which are not able to be accommodated within normal staff resources and budget must be approved by the Course Convenor.

Major events should be notified as soon as possible.

Priorities

The first priority of the Course Superintendent shall be maintenance of the “in play” areas of the course and practise areas in accordance with this schedule and standards.

To the extent practicable the Course Superintendent will:

- implement upgrades and changes to the course in accordance with the Course Development Plan (under development and to be posted on the website for consultation)
- develop and improve non playing areas within the club property in accordance with the Course Development Plan.
- Maintain the Club House surrounds and car park areas

Greens

Putting surfaces should be firm and smooth

Characteristics of all greens, including the practise green should be consistent.

Green speed 9 to 11 feet under ideal conditions.

To achieve these standards it is anticipated that the following schedules will be applied:

Mowing Heights 3 to 3.25 mm	Heights will be adjusted according to seasonal issues to achieve the desired green speed and over the height of summer may be raised to 4mm to protect the turf.
Frequency	daily except Thursday and Saturday. Additional mowing on Saturdays may be required for interclub and other special events.
Hole rotation	minimum twice per week
Pin placement	Rotated through four quadrants at the judgement of the Course Superintendent in accordance with

	conditions and wear. Rotation at least twice a week. The Match committee may specify location by quadrant for specific events provided at least a week's notice is provided.
The course length used for establishment of the course rating shall be maintained as far as practicable by coordination of pin placement and tee marker placement except that during summer the distance may be extended by up to 20m and during winter reduced by 20m.	
Alternative holes should be cut, one short and one long to manage wear and to permit adjustment for strong wind conditions.	
Generally holes should be positioned at least 3 paces from the edge of any green.	
The area within 750mm to 1m around any hole should be as nearly level as possible. Holes should not be positioned within 4 paces of any severe slope or ridge.	
Rolling	Minimum once per week
Sand top dressing	not less than monthly except that and during winter the schedule will be dictated by growth conditions.
Verticutting	Monthly except during winter and during hot summer conditions.
Renovation (coring)	Annually during September and April.
Fertilising	As required.
Pest control	As required

Tee Blocks

Tee Blocks should be level and firm.

The areas should be adequate to enable adequate recovery. They should be aligned with the fairway

Mowing height 10 to 15 mm

Mowing Frequency - weekly except for par 3 Blue blocks which shall be mowed twice weekly including on late Thursday or Friday to ensure suitability for Sunday Club Day.

Sand divot repairs - weekly

Rotation of tee markers - weekly – positions consistent with pin placements; twice weekly for par 3 white and blue blocks. On wide tee blocks the markers shall be set at a width of 4 to 5 paces for effective rotation of wear.

Fairways

Fairways should be firm with a consistent quality of turf. Clearly defined and maintained to the width and profile used to establish the course rating.

Mowing height - 12.5 to 18mm

Frequency - Weekly during spring and summer; fortnightly autumn and winter to achieve a consistent surface. Balls should sit on top of the turf and permit a clean strike of the ball.

Rough

The rough is defined in two categories:

- Rough
- Long rough

Ideally, readily adjustable mowers should allow for cutting to different levels however until suitable equipment is provided the conditions may be approximated by variable frequency of mowing.

The intention is to minimise mowing costs in terms of time, fuel use and wear and tear on equipment and consequently to minimise impact on the environment. This will progressively punish wayward shots or, conversely reward accuracy. This will be addressed in the Course Development Plan.

Height 75mm which will allow a ball to nestle into the turf but be readily visible from within 20 to 30m.

Long rough

Areas clearly beyond normal play and including the hill areas which will be designated in due course in an accompanying schedule. These areas will be exclusive of hazards, GUR and other specified areas. These areas should be maintained to the extent that balls should be observable by a player within 1m.

The grass variety in these areas should be predominately fescue. These areas will be sprayed to minimise the effects of other plant varieties.

Areas which are too steep to mow safely will be designated and mitigation of the terrain will be considered in the context of the course development plan.

Bunkers

Bunkers should be maintained to collect balls in a central depression with adequate room for a full swing from this position.

There should be consistency within and between bunkers

They should be shaped and raked to gather balls away from the bunker edge

Sand should be clean and free of weeds and pests

Sand depth should be between 75 and 100mm

Fringe edges will be cut to a similar length as the surrounding rough

Raked at least once each week

Supplementary issues

Course markings

Out of bounds

Where out of bounds is not defined by a fence or wall out of bounds will be defined by white marker pegs or flags. Where the direct line between pegs or flags cannot be readily observed, a painted line shall be used to define the boundary except where the “natural boundary” is able to be determined by the extent of the mown part of the course.

Hazards

- Lateral hazards will be indicated by red stakes.
- Water hazards will be marked by yellow stakes.

Hazard marker stakes will be sufficiently close to enable the boundary to be determined by sighting between stakes (normally 30 to 50 meters) or the boundary marked with a paint line and sufficient marker pegs place to identify the type of hazard except where the natural margins are readily identifiable as in the case of a stream or where a defined boundary is maintained being the extent of the mown area of the course.

Ground under repair

GUR will be indicated by blue stakes whenever the area is significant or the area is expected to be GUR for a significant period. Stakes will be sufficiently close to enable the boundary to be determined by sighting between stakes (normally 30 to 50 meters) or the boundary marked with a paint line and sufficient marker pegs place to identify the type of hazard except where the natural margins are readily identifiable as in the case of a stream or where a defined boundary is maintained being the extent of the mown area of the course.

Drop Zones

Drop zones will be established where the golf committee considers it impossible for relief to be otherwise taken in accordance with the rules. Drop zones will be identified by the words drop zone or letters DZ. The extent will be identified by a paint line. The areas will be maintained as for the first cut of rough.

Miscellaneous

The rubbish containers at each tee shall be emptied once a week and following any major events and sponsored tournaments.

The water buckets and ball cleaners shall be replenished each week.