

# GOLF COURSE MASTERPLAN



CATALINA CLUB

a project with

Clayton, DeVries & Pont  
and  
KruseGolf

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This masterplan presents a comprehensive vision for the future of golf at Catalina Club, Catalina . The central objective is to elevate the course's architectural quality to create a more strategic, engaging, and enjoyable experience for players of all standards. This is not an attempt to create a championship course to test the country's best players, but rather to build an excellent piece of architecture that is fun and cerebral to play. The overall difficulty should not noticeably change; the key is to make better, more interesting golf.

While the current course is enjoyable, a compelling case for significant change exists. The primary drivers include:

- **Modern Facilities:** A redesign is necessary to accommodate a modern driving range and other diversified golf offerings near the clubhouse.
- **Strategic Deficit:** Many holes currently offer a one-dimensional experience due to narrow corridors and an overuse of trees as hazards, lacking the strategic elements that make golf engaging.
- **Inconsistent Architecture:** The course lacks a cohesive architectural vision, with some well-designed holes feeling out of character with the rest of the layout.
- **Enhanced Experience:** A redesign allows for the introduction of more thoughtful hazard placement, artistically contoured greens, and the restoration of fairway width, creating a course that challenges players to think their way around.
- **Competitive Positioning:** An improved Catalina Club will become a more attractive destination, capable of hosting tournaments and establishing itself as the premier coastal course between Melbourne and Sydney.

This is a far-reaching proposal to make the best possible use of the club's land rather than merely improving what is currently on the ground. The masterplan is conceptual, with the understanding that final details will be refined on-site during construction to achieve the best results.

The core components of the proposal are:

- **New Course Routing:** The plan reimagines the course layout to create a stellar 18-hole course and a compelling third nine (holes 19-27). This rerouting improves the flow between holes and frees up land for the new practice facilities.
- **Greens:** All greens are proposed to be rebuilt. The new greens will be larger on average, with a greater variety of shape, size, and contouring to introduce more strategy and interest to approach shots and putting.
- **Bunkers:** The course will be entirely re-bunkered. The new bunkering will be strategic, designed to catch the "almost good shot" and influence the line of play, rather than simply penalizing poor shots. Their style will be appropriate for the site's sandy, coastal nature.
- **Fairways and Tees:** Fairways will be widened where possible to restore strategic angles and provide more options from the tee. Tees will be enlarged to manage wear and expanded to offer a greater variety of hole lengths, with particular attention paid to creating more appropriate forward tees.
- **Agronomy:** While fairways will remain Kikuyu, green surrounds and tees will use a firmer grass variety, such as couch grass, to provide more consistent playing surfaces and a wider range of short-game options, aligning with classic design principles.

**By implementing this masterplan, Catalina Club has the potential to become the outstanding golf destination on the coast between Sydney and Melbourne, offering a unique, strategic, and memorable experience for all golfers.**

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....1

INTRODUCTION .....3

A CASE FOR CHANGE .....3

STRATEGY .....4

THE FEATURES .....5

GREENS .....6

BUNKERS.....8

TEES .....11

FAIRWAYS.....12

AGRONOMIC SUGGESTIONS .....13

PRACTICE FAIRWAY .....15

COURSE FURNITURE .....15

SHORT COURSES .....16

THE CURRENT COURSE .....17

SUMMARY .....19

OUR PROPOSAL .....19

THE FIRST .....21

THE SECOND.....22

THE THIRD.....23

THE FOURTH.....24

THE FIFTH.....26

THE SIXTH .....27

THE SEVENTH.....28

THE EIGHTH.....29

THE NINTH.....31

THE TENTH.....32

THE ELEVENTH.....33

THE TWELFTH.....34

THE THIRTEENTH.....35

THE FOURTEENTH..... 36

THE FIFTEENTH..... 37

THE SIXTEENTH..... 38

THE SEVENTEENTH..... 39

THE EIGHTEENTH..... 40

HOLES 19 TO 27..... 41

THE NINETEENTH..... 42

THE TWENTIETH..... 43

THE TWENTY-FIRST..... 44

THE TWENTY- SECOND..... 45

THE TWENTY-THIRD..... 46

THE TWENTY-  
FOURTH..... 47

THE TWENTY-FIFTH..... 48

THE TWENTY-SIXTH..... 49

THE TWENTY-SEVENTH..... 48

CONCLUSION ..... 50

APPENDICES ..... 51

COMMON QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS..... 51

COURSE DETAILS & TECHNICAL FEATURES..... 52

## INTRODUCTION

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*“The object of golf architecture is to give an intelligent purpose to the striking of a golf ball. To be worthwhile, this purpose must excite and hold interest.*

*If it fails in this, the character of the architecture is at fault.” - Max Behr*

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Improving the golf at Catalina Club is quite simply a matter of elevating the quality of the golf course architecture. The condition of a golf course can always be improved but it’s not going to noticeably improve the golf.

There must, therefore, be an appetite for more interesting golf, something eminently achievable without making the game more difficult. Ultimately, it’s about building holes where players – no matter their standard – find the game both fun and cerebral to play because the holes are asking interesting questions and posing a variety of problems.

The task is to make the best possible 18-hole course and form the remaining nine (19-27) into something of equal architectural merit and close to equivalent difficulty and par.

It’s important to recognise Catalina Club is not trying to be a championship course designed to fully test the best players in the country - a role best left in New South Wales to The Australian, Royal Sydney, The Lakes and New South Wales.

Nor is there any reason a course accommodating, and making allowances for, the average player, cannot be an excellent piece of architecture asking difficult questions of first-class players.

The overall balance of the difficulty of the course shouldn’t noticeably change but this does not mean some shots and some holes will not be more difficult – or easier – to play.

The key is to make better, more interesting, golf without making the course noticeably easier or harder.

## A CASE FOR CHANGE

Catalina Club offers an enjoyable golfing experience for members and visitors alike. One might ask, why change anything? There are of course several reasons why we think it worth pursuing:

- **Changing Golfing Landscape:** The Club has indicated a desire to pursue a diversified golf offering including a modern driving range with technology and mini golf (later stage) . This is driven by the evolution of golf and golfer preferences toward shorter and less formal forms of the game. In order to fit these facilities near the clubhouse, the course must change. Our solution has produced the best and longest 27-holes possible within the property boundaries.
- **Maintenance Benefits:** New greens and bunkers will allow the course team to produce more consistent and better performing playing surfaces. This is due to improved soil profiles combined with state-of-the-art grass types.
- **Strategic Deficit:** Many holes lack the strategic elements that make golf truly engaging. The prevalence of narrow corridors and the overuse of trees as hazards have resulted in a one- dimensional playing experience. By introducing greater width, more thoughtful hazard placement and green complexes, we can create a course that challenges players to think their way around.
- **Architectural Consistency:** While some holes, like the 15th, show flashes of good design, they are often criticised for being "out of character" with the rest of the course. This inconsistency speaks to the need for a cohesive architectural vision that elevates the entire layout.
- **Under-utilised Land:** The current 27-hole layout, while providing variety, doesn't maximise the potential of the available land. By reimagining the routing, we can create a stellar 18- hole course and a compelling third nine.
- **Technological Advancements:** Modern equipment has rendered many of the course's original challenges obsolete for longer hitters, while still providing sufficient difficulty for the average player. A redesign allows us to address this disparity, creating a course that remains challenging for better players while being more enjoyable for all.
- **Environmental Considerations:** The removal of inappropriate and invasive species, revegetation with indigenous species, and the introduction of more natural-looking hazards will not only improve the course's playability but enhance its ecological value and visual appeal.
- **Competitive Relevance:** While not necessarily aiming to be a championship venue, an improved Catalina Club can position itself as a more attractive destination, appealing to golfers from further afield, while also being capable of hosting regional and state tournaments.

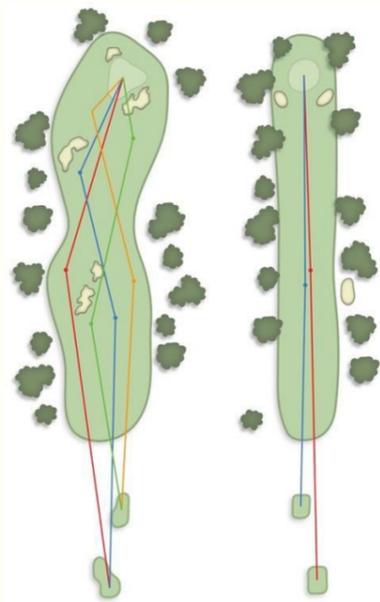
## STRATEGY

*“The strategy of the golf course is the soul of the game. The spirit of golf is to dare a hazard, and by negotiating it reap a reward while he who fears or declines the issue of the carry has a longer or harder shot for his second; yet the player who avoids the unwise effort gains advantage over one who tries for more than in him lies, or who fails under the test.” - George Thomas*

George Thomas, a brilliant American architect, designed both the Los Angeles Country Club and Riviera Country Club and no one since has better, or more simply, articulated the essence of strategic golf.

Any suggestions here are made with the aim of making the golfer think about how best to play a hole – as opposed to simply ‘socking a ball’ as Alister MacKenzie (the man who transformed the art of golf course architecture in Australia) would have said.

*“The player closest to a fairway hazard should have the best angle to the green, rather than the player who took the conservative route and avoided the hazard. His second shot should be at a little bit more of a disadvantage. That’s the essence of strategic architecture.”*  
- Bill Coore



There is very little strategy at Catalina (the 15th is one notable exception and why some perhaps judge it to be “out of character”) and introducing some would make the game both more interesting and more fun.

## THE FEATURES

Before construction, we will develop detailed plans of our designs for the club but building exactly what is drawn, limits us to what we imagine in an office. We much prefer to spend more time on-site and use our own experienced shapers and preferred contractors to build greens and other features.

As the great Pete Dye once said of plans – “Why do I need plans? – I’m always here.”

This does not mean the concepts discussed in the masterplan are altered - or if they are they will be discussed and agreed upon with the club.

## GREENS

*“Putting greens to a golf course are what the face is to a portrait. The clothes the Subject wears, the background, whether scenery or whether draperies—are simply accessories; the face tells the story and determines the character and quality of the portrait –whether it is good or bad. So it is in golf; you can always build a putting green. Teeing-grounds, hazards, the fairway, rough, etc., are accessories.”*  
- Charles Blair Macdonald

C.B. Macdonald, ‘The father of American golf’ thought green design the most important individual feature of a course.

A first-class set of greens is a hallmark of all excellent courses and to noticeably improve the course there is no way around the necessity to rebuild greens and make something more interesting.

Working on sandy ground is a priceless asset and there is no reason the club’s greens cannot match the architectural quality of the best in the country.

*A strategic hole (left) is a test of both thought and execution. The other one - a hole bearing a striking resemblance to the 8<sup>th</sup> hole -simply requires the player to hit the ball straight. It is a test of execution.*



*Royal Melbourne 5. One of the best green complexes in the country.*

One way to introduce strategy is to make greens where the shot from one side of the fairway is noticeably different from a shot from the other side – and to defend the ‘easier’ side with some sort of hazard.

Thoughtfully designed greens suit the hole they serve, a principle best exemplified at Catalina Club at the par 3 ,25<sup>th</sup> hole. It is perfectly contoured, shaped, and oriented to reward a left to right tee shot.

On more difficult holes the green is likely to be bigger and easier to hit from far away. The opposite is usually – but not always – true of holes demanding of a shorter approach. Bigger greens on short holes can work well by completely changing the nature of the approach shot and, often, the ideal place to drive.

Well-contoured greens make for more interesting and adventurous putting, and thoughtfully constructed slopes can feed shots both towards, and away, from the hole.

A study of the finest greens in the world makes it evident the ones at Catalina aren’t in the same class as those at, for example, Kingston Heath. We use Kingston Heath as an example because it is one of the finest examples of great architecture on a site like Catalina.



*The well defended 10<sup>th</sup> green at Kingston Heath.*



*The 15<sup>th</sup> green at Winged Foot (West). Photo: TheFriedEgg.com*



*The 14<sup>th</sup> green at Augusta National. Photo: Masters.com*

The current greens range in size from 300m<sup>2</sup> to 400m<sup>2</sup>.

By comparison, Kingston Heath's greens range from 380m<sup>2</sup> to 775m<sup>2</sup> with an average of 560m<sup>2</sup> (not including the 1184m<sup>2</sup> double green 8/16<sup>th</sup>).

The course's scale lends itself to a small to medium sized set of greens, however, they should be expanded if only for agronomic reasons.

Greens averaging 550m<sup>2</sup> would be more appropriate for the site and there should be a greater range of both shape and size.

In terms of contouring and shape, too many of the greens lack the internal character and charm of the best putting surfaces. Artistically contoured greens and surrounds make for more interesting golf because they can set up the strategy from the tee and ask for a wide variety of approach shots.

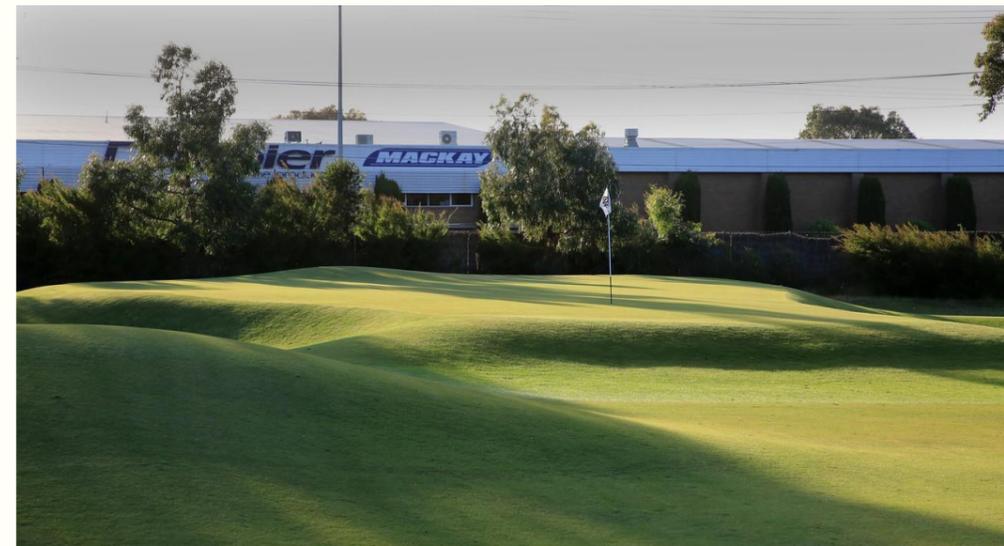
An example of this is the 17<sup>th</sup> green (pictured upper right). The green is bunkered symmetrically and lacks visual character. This creates a one-dimensional hole, testing accuracy only.

If the green were contoured and defended in such a way that it were better to approach from one side of the fairway, and parts of the green were more difficult than others, this would introduce an element of strategy and day to day variety that the hole is missing. This creates far more engaging and interesting golf.



*The 17<sup>th</sup> is an example of a green that could be designed better.*

A course in Australia known for its small, challenging greens is Woodlands in Melbourne. Perennially ranked in the country's top 20 courses, inspiration could be taken from several of its remarkably well constructed targets.



*The bunkerless green at the 245m par-4 4<sup>th</sup> at Woodlands presents a challenging target for good players but can be approached simply with a putter by less skilled players who miss the putting surface.*



*The 13<sup>th</sup> hole at Woodlands with its beautifully contoured green and surrounds. Photo: Woodlands Golf Club*

Royal Queensland (designed by Mike Clayton, Bruce Grant and John Sloan) sits on similar flat land to the low-lying holes at Catalina and the greens add plenty of visual and playing interest.



*The morning light showing off Royal Queensland's most heavily contoured green – the 16<sup>th</sup>. Photo: Royal Queensland Golf Club*



*The approach to 16<sup>th</sup> green at Royal Queensland requires precision to avoid the swale that bites into the left of the green. Photo: Royal Queensland Golf Club*

In Sydney, Harley Kruse's redesign of Killara has elevated the course, largely with the new design of its greens and bunkers which are far more sophisticated than the ones they replaced.



*The 16<sup>th</sup> green at Killara Golf Club presents a far more strategic test than the green it replaced thanks to extra fairway width, and new greenside bunkering and green contouring. Photo: Killara Golf Club.*

Fortunately, it costs no more to build a first-class green than a boring one, and well-designed greens save ongoing maintenance costs.

## BUNKERS

Amongst the great architects who worked before World War II, the role of bunkers wasn't much debated. They moved the game away from a penal era of architecture where designers, very often golf professionals, positioned bunkers with the aim of merely catching poor shots.

Alister MacKenzie, Harry Colt, Tom Simpson, George Thomas and their contemporaries determined bunkers should be used to enhance strategy and as carry hazards for dramatic effect. It was Thomas who called strategy 'the soul of the game.'

Their bunkers were placed exactly where players wanted to go and thus to capture the almost perfect shot as opposed to the bad shot. MacKenzie reasoned those hitting bad shots were likely having a hard enough time of it already without him adding to their struggle.

Many golfers conclude, however, that bunkers are simply there to make their life a misery. Related is the commonly held view bunkers should only affect 'good players' and should never be placed where a short hitter might go.

If players accept bunkers are placed to make the game more interesting, then why not place bunkers at random distances so occasionally the shorter hitters face the same decision a longer hitter finds on another hole? Either not building bunkers or removing bunkers likely to catch a

shorter hitter, under the guise of them only affecting bad players, surely treats those with a sporting instinct with a level of contempt?

Speaking specifically to Catalina, in many cases the bunkers are too far removed from the greens (the front bunker at the 11<sup>th</sup> hole is one example) to challenge – or threaten – the better player and often they are placed to catch the poorer shots of the poorer players. It's not the way we think golf is best arranged.

As a rule, bunkers should aim to catch the 'almost good shot' as opposed to simply a bad shot.



*Bunkers cut close to the green. The 7<sup>th</sup> at Victoria.*

Nor are there many fairway bunkers – which isn't a problem – but there are too many holes with trees on the inside corners of the doglegs.

Hazards on the ground – bunkers most often – are infinitely preferable to hazards in the air – or "bunkers in the sky" as the Scots disdainfully refer to them.

Too often shorter hitters are both on the fairway and behind a copse of trees and this is never an admirable principle.



*Royal Melbourne's 12<sup>th</sup> hole showing off the principle of playing over a hazard on the ground – as opposed to Trees.*

Bunkers, more than any other feature on a golf course are constantly evolving. Maintenance practices of edging, as well as wind erosion can drastically alter the shape and size of bunkers over time. Generally, we observe them get larger and rounder, and this seems to be the case with many of the bunkers at Catalina.

The sand type, grass type and climate will heavily influence the style chosen for the bunkers. For instance, Melbourne's beautiful sandbelt bunkers are difficult to replicate because the fine and highly angular native sand conducive to the famous steep faces and sharp edges is unique to the sandbelt area.

Fescue-laced bunker edges popular in the UK and US have proven a successful companion grass with Kikuyu on the

bunker edges at the Lakes Golf Club in Sydney, where Michael Clayton Golf Design redesigned the course in 2006-

2008.

Key, is the chosen style should be appropriate to the site, and not require excessive costs to maintain its appearance.



*Sandy waste areas at The Lakes Golf Club in Sydney.*

Bonnie Doon in Sydney (Ogilvy Clayton redesign) has also used fescue as a companion grass to couch on bunker edges, to great effect.



*Fescue laced bunker at Bonnie Doon, NSW.*



*Waste bunkers in front of the 17<sup>th</sup> green at Royal Queensland Golf Club*

Further afield, World Top 100 courses like Maidstone, Friars Head, and Tara Iti sit on similar sandy sites to Catalina Club, and exhibit a similarly artistic and attractive style of bunkering. There is no reason we couldn't achieve something similar.



*Naturalised blow-out style bunkers at Tara Iti Golf Club, New Zealand.*



*Naturalised flashed sand bunkers at Maidstone Club, New York.*



*Artistic flashed sand with rolled turf edges at Friars Head Golf Club, New York.*

The above examples show an aesthetic we think could suit Catalina 's naturally sandy and wind-prone site. Tying in many of the bunkers to new developed areas of sandy heath populated with herbaceous natives, grasses, and shrubs could be a great option to give the bunkers a natural

and aged feel. Much of the work in expanding these areas of sandy vegetation between holes and tying into bunkers is an exercise in landscape restoration.



*Restored areas of heathland tied to bunkering at Metropolitan GC in Melbourne (work undertaken by Mike Clayton in 2009).*

The prevailing winds will be considered carefully in all bunker shaping and placement to ensure wind blow is minimised.

Ease of entry and exit points from bunkers is also important for less physically able golfers.

## TEES

The tightness of the site doesn't allow many opportunities to bring a greater variety of teeing angles to holes, although some holes do present this opportunity and there are potential improvements to be had.

The main opportunity for Catalina is to introduce a greater range of hole lengths, and in turn a greater flexibility of course set up. This will mean golfers will not be playing holes from the same length, week in week out.

Long stretched out tees have been introduced to Royal Sydney in its recent renovation where Harley Kruse has worked alongside Gil Hanse.

This will allow for greater flexibility of tee marker positioning and present a greater variety of lengths to impact club selection and shot making. The movement of markers also importantly allows for the management of wear and tear on the tees.

The second and most needed upgrade of the tees is increasing their surface area to handle the increased rounds of golf being played and associated wear and tear. Some tees are quite small and if in shade then they suffer from wear issues and slow recovery in winter months. The proposed new bigger tees addresses this issue.

The forward tees also need greater consideration in their placement and choices of length and set up. On several holes, the tees women commonly play are not far in front the men making the course arguably too tough of a test for most of these players.

The current handicapping system allows golfers to play whichever is most appropriate to them, and so the creation of more forward teeing ground will not only benefit women's golf but all other slower swing speed golfers including seniors and juniors. These tees are an important way of keeping senior members enjoying the game for as long as possible whilst they also allow the club to grow members through junior programs.

## FAIRWAYS

In many areas the fairways at Catalina Club are quite tight. There are opportunities to widen some fairways and allied with the new greens, this adds to the strategic options and choices the thoughtful player will consider.

In most cases this increase in fairway width will be a restoration of the playing character of the course from years-gone-by, as trees have been planted, grown, and encroached on the playing corridors of most holes.

Restoring this lost fairway width is a worthy goal.

The shared fairways at Kingston Heath's 8<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> holes are a fine example of the principle, as is the wide expanse of fairway shared between the 1<sup>st</sup> East and 8<sup>th</sup> West hole at Royal Melbourne.



*The shared fairways at Kingston Heath's 8/17<sup>th</sup> holes.*



*Shared fairway and bunkering between the East and West courses at Royal Melbourne.*



*Connected fairways and shared bunker across the proposed front nine for Catalina Club.*

Additionally, because the course is built on naturally free draining sands there is an opportunity to introduce more undulation and contouring to the fairways. It is the variability of lies and bounces that makes links golf so interesting, and introducing some of this character to Catalina would add to the fun and interest of playing the course.

## AGRONOMIC SUGGESTIONS

When the ball rolls out on fairways and greens, players must consider both ideal landing spots and shot trajectories. It enhances the strategic elements of the game as preferred angles of attack are emphasised. Firm turf also encourages a wider range of shots which add to the excitement and variety of playing the game.

While it would be ideal to have firm couch grass across the property, this would be expensive and only make a short course play shorter.

We think kikuyu is a reasonable choice for the fairways, however, we suggest that the green approaches, surrounds, and tees be connected in an alternative grass.

One of Dr. Alister MacKenzie's 13 Principles of Golf Design is,

*"The course should be equally good during winter and summer, the texture of the greens and fairways should be perfect,  
and the approaches should have the same consistency as the greens."*

Clearly, converting the approach areas to a grass that plays firmer and faster would present a surface that more closely resembles the playability of the greens and align well with MacKenzie's ideals.

These surrounds would also increase the difficulty for good players, by allowing balls to run further away from the green and provide a more perplexing set of options after a missed green. Poorer players, on the other hand, will have an easier opportunity to easily bump or putt a ball to get down in 3 strokes.

Several clubs around Australia have undertaken a similar approach in recent years.

Royal Melbourne uses fescue in its surrounds, which more closely resembles the consistency of the greens than its Legends Couch fairways.

Concord in Sydney has kikuyu fairways and couch grass surrounds and tees.

At Killara in Sydney, Harley Kruse selected Zoysia grass for the green surrounds and tees, which has better playing characteristics than the kikuyu fairways. Couch was ruled out here due to shade issues, although would have been selected otherwise.



*Zoysia surrounds and teeing area at Killara Golf Club in Sydney.*

## PRACTICE FAIRWAY

There are two forms of practice.

The first is players warming up before they play. Usually, it involves hitting fewer than 50 balls.

The other is players practicing their game – hitting balls, chipping or putting with the goal of improvement. This can be hitting 200 balls – or more.

The practice fairway is perhaps not ideally situated as a place to warm-up prior to playing but we like the feel and look of the practice fairway.

It's beautifully conditioned (something several sandbelt clubs could learn from) and far enough from the clubhouse to be a peaceful place for players to work on their game.

## COURSE FURNITURE



*A rubbish bin, ball washer (attached to the back) and a tee signage all in one. Royal Queensland.*



*Above: Rubbish bins and tee signage at Peninsula Kingswood.*

Classic course fixtures including rubbish bins, tee markers, signs, rakes, flags and flagsticks add much to the ambience and class of a course and the best of them are made of quality materials.

Primarily using wood and no recycled plastic are good rules. (The new directional posts by the 10<sup>th</sup> tee are excellent examples of quality furniture.)

And no ball washers. It's a fair bet the greenkeepers detest maintaining them, they are ugly, cluttering and everyone plays with a towel. Just keep it wet. (Note: Royal Melbourne have just removed all ball washers.)

## SHORT COURSES

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*"It's a pity the conversation in America doesn't centre more on 6000 yarders that make you hit every club in the bag and have you shaking hands on the 18<sup>th</sup> green in three hours."*

*- RanMo Rissett (one of the world's pre-eminent writers on golf architecture)*

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*The world's finest example of 27-hole golf is Morfontaine in Paris.*



*Morfontaine, Paris – by Tom Simpson.*

The main course is ranked amongst the world's top 50 and the Valierre is a brilliant par 33 short nine offering an alternative to traditional (par 35, 36, or 37) golf.

The Third Nine (holes 19-27) at Catalina will, inevitably, be a little shorter but stretching the 23<sup>rd</sup> hole to make a par 4 gets holes 19-27 to a par of 35.

The 22<sup>nd</sup>, 23<sup>rd</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> holes are three short par 4s, but they will be strategically interesting by capturing the essence of the questions posed by the best collection of sub-300-metre holes in the world on the Melbourne Sandbelt.

One of the most relevant of these is the 3<sup>rd</sup> at Kingston Heath, a hole made on a simple piece of flat ground with no natural features other than a perfect bed of sand.

The preferred line to the flag is from close to the fairway bunkers on the left, a strategy set up by the green which is more difficult to play from the further right you drive.



*Kingston Heath's 3<sup>rd</sup> hole – a simple strategic test.*

*Artwork: Joe McDonnell*

## THE CURRENT COURSE

### SUMMARY

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*“Never follow the advice of a golfer, however good a player he may be, unless he is broadminded enough to disregard his own game and recognize that not only has the beginner to be considered, but also that a very high standard of golf architecture improves everyone’s play.”*

*- Alister MacKenzie.*

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The best examples of golf course architecture in the country are highlighted by long-established principles.

Dr Alister Mackenzie transformed golf in Melbourne when he came to Royal Melbourne in 1926 and built the members a new course. He showed us what great golf looked like and it’s a pity he was here only ten weeks. Had he stayed longer his influence would have been even more profound.

Few since have better summarised what makes good golf than the Scotsman.

*Alister MacKenzie’s Thirteen Principles 1920.*

1. *The course, where possible, should be arranged in two loops of nine holes.*
2. *There should be a large proportion of good two-shot holes, two or three drive and pitch holes, and at least four one-shot holes.*
3. *There should be little walking between the greens and the tees, and the course should be arranged so that in the first instance there is always a slight walk forwards from the green to the next tee; then the holes are sufficiently elastic to be lengthened in the future if necessary.*
4. *The greens and the fairways should be sufficiently undulating but there should be no hill climbing.*
5. *Every hole should have a different character.*
6. *There should be a minimum of blindness for the approach shots.*
7. *The course should have beautiful surroundings, and all the artificial features should have so natural an appearance that a stranger is unable to distinguish them from nature itself.*
8. *There should be a sufficient number of heroic carries from the tee, but the course should be arranged so that the weaker player with the loss of a stroke or portion of a stroke shall always have an alternate route open to him.*
9. *There should be an infinite variety in the strokes required to play the various holes - viz., interesting brassy shots, iron shots, pitch and run-up shots.*
10. *There should be a complete absence of the annoyance and irritation caused by the necessity of looking for lost balls.*

11. *The course should be so interesting that even the plus man is constantly stimulated to improve his game in attempting shots he has hitherto been unable to play.*

12. *The course should be so arranged that the long handicap player, or even the absolute beginner, should be able to enjoy his round in spite of the fact he is piling up a big score.*

13. *The course should be equally good during winter and summer, the texture of the greens and fairways should be perfect, and the approaches should have the same consistency as the greens.*

The finest courses are well routed meaning the flow of the holes makes for easy green to tee.

transitions, the natural undulations are well used (The 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> holes are an excellent example of using a natural high point) and

there is an interesting variety of holes.

The best courses have beautiful sets of greens oriented, shaped and contoured to reflect the shots being played into them.

The man-made construction is, in the words of MacKenzie, “indistinguishable from nature” and the bunkers, both fairway and

greenside, do much to dictate the strategy.

Trees are, as a rule, a “part of the scenery but not a part of the stage.” (Harry Colt)

The recent tree clearance at the 12<sup>th</sup> hole highlighted this principle as well as any hole in the country.

The golf course in its current form lacks much meaningful strategy if Australia’s finest courses are the measure. The bunkering isn’t

particularly well done, and the greens likewise are far from the level of the finest greens on the Melbourne Sandbelt. (The Sandbelt

is particularly relevant because much of it is made on similar, flattish, sandy ground and it shows off simple but brilliantly designed

strategic golf.)

One feature of the sandbelt bunkers is how they cut right up into the greens.

The front bunker at the 11<sup>th</sup> hole is one example of a hazard cut too far from the edge of the green. It’s never going to bother a good

player, so its role is simply to catch the shots of the higher markers without making the game more interesting, or demanding, for

the first-class player.

The routing of the holes especially on the front nine has an odd flow to it. The logical place to go from the 2<sup>nd</sup> green is the 6<sup>th</sup> tee

but instead, there is an awkward walk to the current 3<sup>rd</sup> hole.

A noticeably improved flow is one aim of the revised routing.

The par 3s – the 5<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> holes – are all acceptable holes but a comparison with the finest short holes in the country

shows off something underwhelming if classic Australian short holes are the measure.



*The par 3 2<sup>nd</sup> at Peninsula Kingswood.*

The short par 4s need to be more strategic. (In the proposed routing the new 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup>, 23<sup>rd</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> holes all qualify as 'short' par 4s)

They should be holes where the high marker can, with a couple of good shots, make an easy par or even a birdie whilst the scratch player can make a bogey by making a reckless choice or hitting a poor shot.



*The 10<sup>th</sup> at Royal Melbourne – a classic, strategic short par 4*

The par 5 12<sup>th</sup> hole plays over the most interesting piece of ground on the property and removing the trees on the left has been a significant improvement. Adding a little length and building a new green should further improve it.

Ultimately the way to improve the golf (and accommodate the driving range) is to have the routing to flow better, to build a first-class set of greens, to create interesting strategies and to build holes matching the standards of the best courses in the country.

The ground is sandy which is an incalculable advantage allowing for creative shaping and construction costs noticeably cheaper than working in heavier soils.

Catalina Club should be the best course on the coast road between Melbourne and Sydney. It's not a particularly high bar and you have the ground and the potential to be the outstanding coastal golf course between the two cities.

## OUR PROPOSAL /CDP + KRUSEGOLF

A more conventional masterplan would address the strengths and weaknesses of the existing holes. It would discuss both how to retain and enhance the assets as well as solving the problems detracting from the golf.

This proposal is more far-reaching and rather than improving what's currently on the ground the aim is to make the best possible golf on the club's land.

The proposed opening nine is quite different to the holes the members are familiar with, but the golf should be much improved.

The main 18 includes holes from the three existing nines and whilst the 'Third Nine' is shorter we can make excellent golf and, arguably, golf more than suited to a significant group of members who don't hit the ball very far, who want to play quickly or play fun golf.

It is clear making 'three equal nines' is not easy if significant parts of the 1st and 9th holes are taken for the proposed driving range, but all three nines are par 35. The holes 19-27 are shorter but should not be necessarily noticeably easier.

It is important to understand these notes and the accompanying drawings are conceptual in nature and may alter slightly as the holes are coming out of the ground. This is the way all the best architects work and anything beyond minor changes will be discussed with the club's representatives.

We will draw more detailed plans in the detailed design phase but limiting ourselves to these restrict us to our imagination in the office, and many times as a hole is being built, we see either things which aren't working as well as we hoped, or something which will improve on an office-drawn plan/concept.

Having the freedom to alter things on the ground is critical to ensuring the best result and the following notes will show off the options and choices we have made in coming up with the overall masterplan.

Scorecard					
Hole	Par	Meters	Hole	Par	Meters
1	4	392	10	4	357
2	3	136	11	3	195
3	4	380	12	5	440
4	4	317	13	4	410
5	4	289	14	3	185
6	5	508	15	4	376
7	4	411	16	5	520
8	3	191	17	3	166
9	4	376	18	4	382
Out	35	3000	In	35	3031
Total		70	6031		

Scorecard		
Hole	Par	Meters
19	4	328
20	4	303
21	5	474
22	4	290
23	4	260
24	4	332
25	3	164
26	4	272
27	3	171
Out	35	2594





**Hole Improvement Notes**

A - The new 1st hole plays over what's now the 8th fairway. The tee moves back to make a hole just over 400m off the back tees.

B - The plan for of the new green is to retain the concept of a long and quite narrow green.

**1**

**Par 4  
392m**

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**THE FIRST**

The role of the first hole varies wildly from course to course. Kingston Heath’s opener was originally a par 5 (until 1968) and it’s now twenty metres longer and a 445m par 4. It’s probably the hardest hole on the course and a stern beginning.

Harry Colt, the great English architect believed in “a gentle handshake” and his philosophy is best exemplified at Royal Melbourne’s West Course. The fairway is exorbitantly wide – almost unmissable – and the green is both big and easy to run even a long second shot onto the green. One small bunker sits off to the right of the green and barely impacts the hole.

The proposed first hole is the current 8th. It’s a relatively long two-shotter played over flat land and suited more to Colt’s role of a gentle beginning.

The green retains the principle of something long and favouring a running shot to get back to a pin cut in the back of the green.

The concept is the green is defended on the left by two bunkers with a strategy setting up to reward a tee shot played to the right half of the fairway.



**Hole Improvement Notes**

A - This is an entirely new hole - a short par 3 playing from close to what's now the 9th tee and out onto the current 1st fairway. Its maximum length is around 150 meters with a green guarded on the right with bunkers but open on the left but saving par from there will not be easy.

**2**

**Par 3  
136m**

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**THE SECOND**

This is a short par 3 – around 140 metres for off the back tee and 110 of the forward tees.

There are any number of ways to make a first-class short hole on flat ground.

Commonwealth's 9th and Kingston Heath's 10th are surrounded by difficult bunker shots and both feature long and quite narrow greens where shots to the front and back pins are demanding.

Here the concept is to defend the green heavily on the right and make shots to the back right pin difficult.

The green is open on the left allowing players to 'bail-out' safely away from what will be quite difficult bunkers on the right. The chipping from the left will, however, be testing. We can cut hollows out of the left side of the green so players are chipping up a bank to a green above the level of their ball and tilting the green from left to right would make the chip shots from the left difficult to get close but not onerous to get onto the green.

This concept is similar to that of the 17<sup>th</sup> hole at Peninsula Kingswood (South) pictured below – but the mirror image. There is ample space right of the green, but a shot played towards the pin must navigate the daunting front-left bunker.



*The 17<sup>th</sup> at Peninsula Kingswood's South course, renovated by Mike Clayton and*

*team in 2016- 2018.*



**Hole Improvement Notes**

A - The 3rd is a revision of the current 2nd hole with the green moved marginally forward and importantly further away from the boundary on the right side for improved safety.

B - The fairway landing area can be widened to the right.

C - Increase planting along the boundary to provide a better screen now and for future multi-storey development.

**3**

**Par 4  
380m**

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## THE THIRD

The obvious strategy here is to direct play away from the next (4th) fairway without impacting on the boundary properties on the right which are some way from the centreline of the fairway.

There is some subtle undulation in the fairway to add interest, but it is at the green where an accurate drive to the right half of the fairway is rewarded. It's a quite similar strategy to the 1st hole and it's important we distinguish between the two with a green complex (greens, bunkers and surrounds) playing differently.

We could, for example, cut a hollow across the front of the green here (reflecting the undulations in the fairway) to complicate the approach especially to a pin cut at the front of the green.

Ideally a decision like this would be made on site as the green is being constructed.

What's important is whilst the 1st and 3rd holes play in the same direction and over similar land we make approach shots and shots around the green quite different and avoid replication.



**Hole Improvement Notes**

A - The awkward and unsafe current transition from the 2nd green to the 3rd tee is resolved by transitioning from the new 3rd green and playing 2 holes 4 and 5 down the current 6hole.

B - This 316 m hole to the right with a centre-line bunker being an important part of the strategy. Do you play left, right, short or over? The hole uses the interesting landform on the right to play over to the green.

**4**

**Par 4  
317m**

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## THE FOURTH

This is the first of two short holes playing over the land of what's now the 6th fairway.

Australia has some of the finest holes of this length in the world and a good number of them are on the Melbourne Sandbelt.

Some of the best examples on relatively flat ground include:

- Kingston Heath 3
- Victoria 15
- Peninsula South 7
- Peninsula North 13
- Woodlands 4
- Royal Melbourne East 15
- Royal Queensland 12
- Barnbougle Lost Farm 14



*The 15<sup>th</sup> hole at Victoria GC. The hole plays progressively narrower the more aggressive one is from the tee.*



*The 14<sup>th</sup> hole at Barnbougle Lost Farm. Playing left, away from the hazards, leads to a longer and more challenging approach.*

The overriding feature of the best 270-300 metre par 4s is that par is easily made with competent and sensible play. You can

play

a safe tee shot avoiding all the trouble and pitch to the easiest part of the green to access and so long as you two putt you've

made an easy 4.

The only way to make a five is to set off in search of a three and mess up.

The key principle of these holes is a relatively difficult green – certainly a more difficult green than you would find on a hole

50-80 metres longer – and/or the threat of a forty-metre bunker shot. No one plays this shot with any certainty and it's to

be avoided at all costs.

The concept here is to make a centreline bunker between 225-265 metres from the back tee. Like all worthwhile centreline

bunkers it sets up four options – short, left, right or over.

Carrying the bunker is something reserved for the longest hitters, but the other three options should be relevant for most.

The intent will be to make the fairway to the left of the bunker slightly narrower but from out there the pitch to the flag will

be a little easier.

The green will be smaller than average but it's also important to be able to cut pins in different sections of the green and ask



**Hole Improvement Notes**

A - This short par 4 hole turns the opposite way to the 4th and the green is quite different.

B - The green here will be wide, quite shallow and offering an easier pitch to those who've driven close to the fairway bunker on the right-side of the fairway.

**5**

**Par 4  
389m**

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**THE FIFTH**

Following one short par 4 with another is unusual but not without precedent. The National Golf Links of America – one of the finest handful of courses in that country and ranked #5 in the world – begins with a pair of 300 metre holes.

The aim here is to make a hole of similar length to the 4th but one which asks much different questions.

A bunker on the right of the fairway beginning around 200 metres from the tee defends the preferred line to the flag and bunkers short and left of the green threaten longer hitters trying to reach the green with the horrible length bunker shot.

The green here is wide and shallow and rewards play from the right – in contrast to the previous hole where the long, narrower green is best played to from the left.

Important too is the drive bunkers are different distances from the tee – the one on the right of the fairway is noticeably closer to the tee than the bunker in the middle of the 4th fairway.



#### Hole Improvement Notes

- A - This is the first of the par 5s and plays backwards up what is now the 3th fairway.
- B - We can use the existing pond on the left towards the green as an interesting hazard - for the longer hitters going for the green in two - and for the majority with their third (or fourth) shots.

# 6

Par 5  
508m

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## THE SIXTH

The new 6th hole is a 500-metre par 5 playing backwards up what is now the 3<sup>rd</sup> hole.

There are two important points to stress here.

The first is a longish par 5 – as this one is off the back tees – wants to set up a relatively simple tee shot and from there make a second shot where longer hitters might contemplate going for the green and the rest are thinking about where best to play a long second shot to earn an easier third.

There are deliberately no drive bunkers and the water down the left of the long second shot will be a nagging presence and the closer you play to the water the shorter the pitch shot.

Players can choose to play away short and to the right, but the next shot is longer, and all the modern statistics gurus point out the closer you dare play to the green on a hole like this one, the lower you will score.

Water is not a often used hazard on par 5s in Australia but three well-known examples are the 11th, 14th and 17th holes at The Lakes in Sydney. The 14th demands all players carry the water at some point, but the 11th is more like the proposal here with water on one side of the green but with plenty of room to play safely away.

The second shot at Lakes 17 is threatened all the way, with water along the left and might be the closest example of what we are trying to do here.

Players playing right and away from the water should be expecting to play a more difficult following shot.



**Hole Improvement Notes**

- A - This long par 4 over 400m is the current 4th hole played in reverse.
- B - The back tee is located on the current 5th fairway (a hole no longer part of the course).
- C - It will be important to ensure shorter hitters aren't asked to make too long a carry across the water.
- D - A water course/drain to the left of the current hole is to be built as a more attractive strategic hazard. Likely it will be the most difficult hole on the front nine.

**7**

**Par 4  
411m**

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**THE SEVENTH**

The current 5th and 4<sup>th</sup> holes in reverse and at around 430m off the back tees, it will one of the most difficult par 4s on the course.

There is a drainage ditch running down the right side of the proposed hole here and it can be cut out and made into an attractive creek impacting on the strategy.

Two fairway bunkers cut into the left side of the hole suggest playing down the left is the ideal line into the green – which will be appropriately large befitting the length and difficulty of the hole.

Those playing from the fairway will face a long second shot over the creek and their choice will be to take on the bold and dangerous shot or to play safely right and try and save a four with a pitch and a putt.

We will be able to arrange the respective tees, so players are not asked or expected to make an unreasonable carry across the water.



*A man-made creek strategically cuts through Peninsula Kingswood's South course 1<sup>st</sup>*



**Hole Improvement Notes**

A - From the previous green you walk across the creek and out to the middle of the 26th fairway where the new tees are located

B - the hole will play a long par 3 to a greensite located near the existing 26th green. Off the very back tees it will be a long 190 meters playing in a south west direction

C - For the shorter hitters it could be played as either medium length par 3 off forward tees or as a short par 4 off the back tee.

**8**

**Par 3  
191m**

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## THE EIGHTH

One of golf architectures debates is whether par 3s have any strategy or not.

Some do and some don't. By strategy, we mean does the position of the pin change the shot you might play to the green.

There are great examples of both holes in Australia. The 7th green at Barnbougles Dunes is a tiny green and no matter where the pin is cut players essentially play the same shot towards the middle of the green.



*The 7th green at Barnbougles Dunes – co-designed by Mike Clayton*

The 13th hole at Barnbougles is something completely different and where the pin is cut on the biggest green on the course completely dictates and changes the ideal shot from the tee.

Like Barnbougles's 13th, the green here is quite big befitting a long par 3.

Having said that, one of the best long 3s in the country is Royal Melbourne's 16th and the green there is one of the smallest on the course.

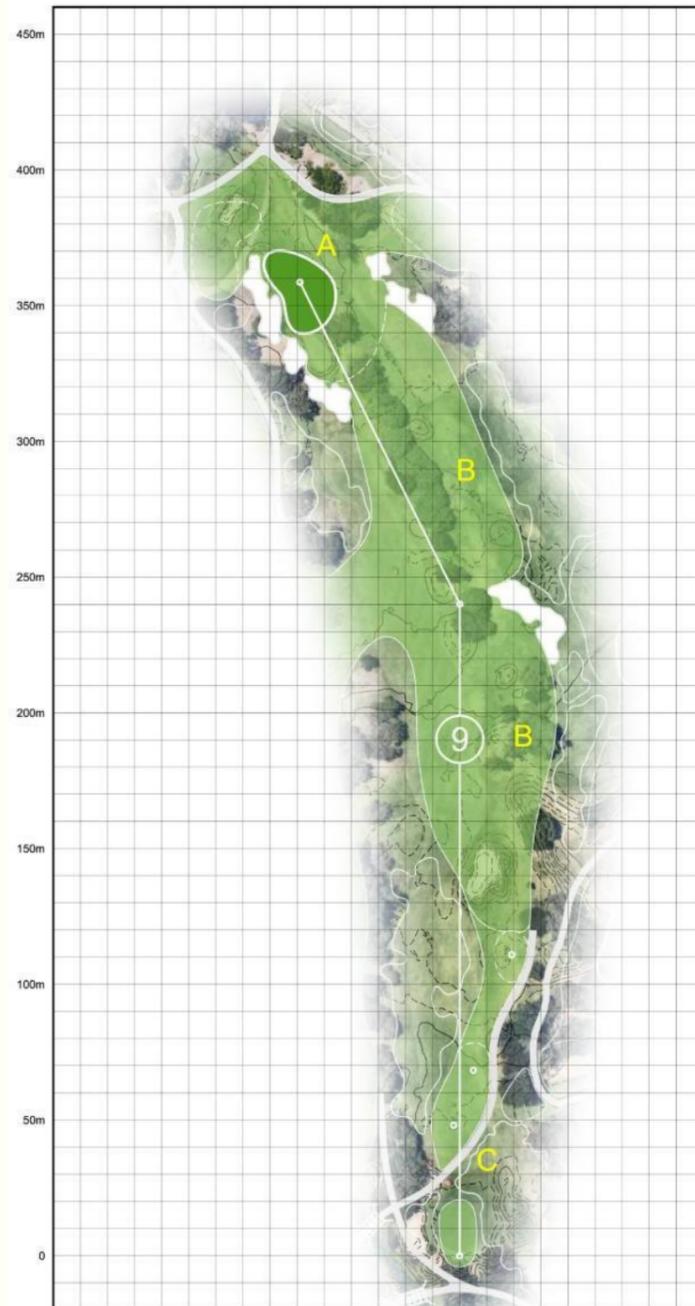
The ideal shot here at the 8th is one moving from left to right to follow the orientation of the green.

A single bunker on the right defends the right side but whilst the left side of the green is undefended by sand doesn't mean those missing the green on the left will face an easy up and down. Ideally, it should be just as difficult to make a three from the left as from the right – but it should be easier for the bogey player to make a 4 from the left than the right.



*The 193m 16<sup>th</sup> at Royal Melbourne West with a small green.*

If the women were interested in doing something different, we could build a green which works as a long 3 for men but equally well as a short 4 for the women.



**Hole Improvement Notes**

The choice here was to play the current 27th hole or play backwards up what's now the 19th. There were pros and cons to both choices but ultimately, we chose the latter for several reasons.

A - The green is closer to the 10th tee for better golf traffic flow  
 B - The hole uses a fair amount of the current driving range achieving a grand width of hole and freeing up more space for holes 19 and 27.  
 C - The tees are set well back to achieve a strong finish over 370m.

**9**  
**Par 4**  
**376m**

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## THE NINTH

The proposed 9th hole is the current 19th hole in reverse with a green close to the 10th tee.

We've chosen to play this hole, as opposed to the current 27th, as the 9th because it makes for an easier/shorter transition to the 10th tee and it allows us to add length to the par 5, 12th hole.

There are a couple of ways to set up a hole like this one.

We could bunker the left side of the fairway and the right side of the green – but we've used that strategy at the 7th hole - notwithstanding the hazard on the right of the green is a creek as opposed to a bunker.

Not wishing to replicate the same strategy, we have chosen to bunker the right side of the fairway and orientate the green to reward a drive into the right half of the fairway.

Players driving safely away to the left will face a second shot across – or skirting – the bunkers on the left to a green more difficult to hit from the left.



**Hole Improvement Notes**

With all the rerouting front nine holes to make room for the new range and also to solve both boundary and internal safety issues, holes 10-18 will play down essentially the same corridors with only the 17th and 18th holes changing noticeably for both improved golf and boundary safety.

A - The green comes forward to get away from the unnatural, and not particularly attractive dam bank.

B - The fairway is widened to the right and the new bunkering into the natural rise in the fairway

C - tees are reconstructed to the right towards the current range making more room for a wider 18th hole.

**10**  
Par 4  
357m

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## THE TENTH

The fairway is widened to the right to make one of the largest driving spaces on the course.

Fittingly there is a bunker in the fairway at 230 metres (approx.) and another further along at 260 metres.

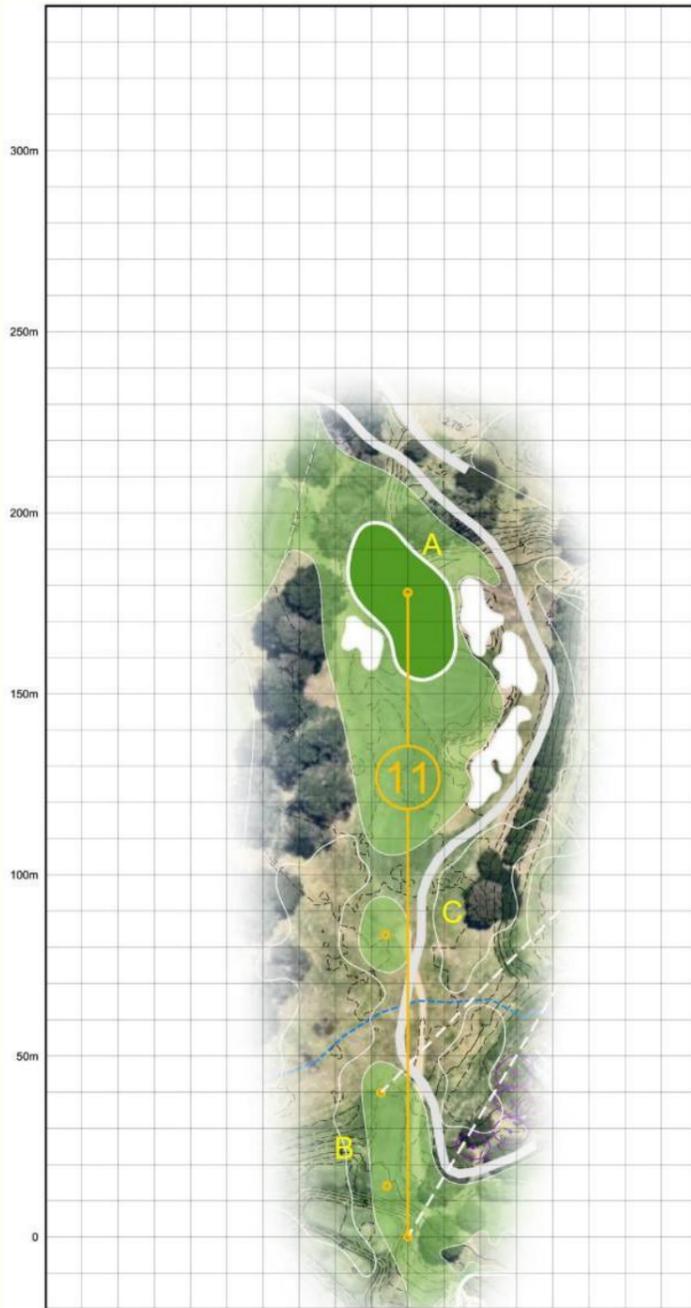
They will ask the primary questions from the tees – with each affecting different players – and the green will be best approached from different parts of the fairway depending on where the pin is cut. When it's back in the back right corner the preferred angle is from the left but a back left pin is more easily accessed from the right half of the fairway.

One way to make interesting and varied strategies is to set a green where the shot from one side of the fairway is as different as possible as the shot from the other side of the fairway and here is a chance to implement such a feature. It can be subtle or blindingly obvious and here we have an opportunity to make something quite different from the left versus the right.

One of the better examples in the world of a wide green is the 14<sup>th</sup> at Augusta National.



MacKenzie's original 14<sup>th</sup> green (top) and its current form (bottom)



**Hole Improvement Notes**

A - The green moves a touch back and to the left. The proposed 8th green favours a left-to-right shot this one will do the opposite and help a right-handers draw.

B - The tees come further down off the dam wall and rear tees will remain elevated with the dam overflow swale shaped as a more natural looking open creek.

C - This hole will be the longest par 3 on the course playing over 190m and to slightly west of north direction (opposite to hole 8) which means it will be a tougher test in summer playing into the north east sea breezes.

**11**

**Par 3  
195m**

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**THE ELEVENTH**

Unlike the 2nd and 8th holes where the greens are oriented to favour a left to right shape, this 11th hole will reward a right to left shot.

The green will tip a little from high on the right to the back left corner and players can either carry the ball across the left bunker to a left pin or use the contours to tip the ball back to the left.

The plan here is to move the back tees down off the wall of the dam and given all the space between the current green and the 12th tee it makes sense to use it and move the green back closer to the 12th tee.



#### Hole Improvement Notes

- A - The back tee moves back to add a little length.
- B - the green comes to the right - something made possible because the 13th tees move to the left.
- C - This hole plays over some of the most interesting ground on the course with the diagonal ridge running across the fairway in a perfect place. Taking the trees off the edge of the dam has highlighted the potential of this excellent hole.

**12**  
Par 5  
440m

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## THE TWELFTH

'Half par holes' are some of the best and most famous in the game. Two of the best-known examples are the 13th at Augusta National and The Road Hole at St Andrews. In Australia, one of the better ones is the 12th at Royal Melbourne – a hole which plays as a par 4 in a big championship but a par 5 for the members.

They have dangerous long second shots for players going for the green in two shots but also interesting lay-ups and then third shots to the green. The green at The Road Hole is an extreme example – one you would never build at Catalina – but the spirit and principles of that green and of Augusta National's 13th are worth capturing even if it's just a little bit.

This is the ideal length for a 'half-par' hole – one easily reached in two shots by long hitters but a three-shot hole for the majority of members.

For those playing it in three shots there are bunkers short and right of the green protecting the ideal line into the flag.

For those reaching the green in two shots the ideal approach will be coming in from right to left.



**Hole Improvement Notes**

- A - The tees here to the left to make a better tee shot.
- B - The 20th tee moves to the right freeing up room to move the 13th green a touch to the left and open up the turf behind and rear left of the green.
- C - It will still be a sliding left-to-right hole, one obviously favouring a tee shot moving the same way but the green will favour a right to left approach.

**13**  
**Par 4**  
**410m**

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## THE THIRTEENTH

The original designer must have been a fader of the ball (assuming they were right-handed) because this is one of so many holes (1, 2, 4, 6, 8, 13, 15, 16, 17,19, 21, 24 and 26)

This should be a classic par 4. The tee shot is played downhill, and the perfect drive will be into the right corner of the fairway – a fade preferably – followed by a green orientated from right to left and favouring a draw.

It's the same strategy as The Road Hole at St Andrews – timelessly enduring and interesting.



#### Hole Improvement Notes

- A - The very back tee can be shared with the 24th hole but there will be multiple teeing options of both line and length.
- B - The green moves back and noticeably closer to the 15th tee which make a shorter transition. This is allowed by moving the 22nd out of the area between the current 14th green and 15th tees which also cleans up a lot of the clutter between the current green and the 15th tee.

# 14

Par 3  
185m

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## THE FOURTEENTH

This is a long par 3 – 190 metres – with a green turning around a bunker on the left.

Being a one-shotter the choice of shot will depend on the pin and whether it is cut in the front half of the green or the back.

Australian clubs are obsessed with playing major events off the back tees, but this hole can be just as interesting played from 130-140 metres to a pin cut in the back left corner of the green. It's easy to play safely to a pin 175 metres away but much more tempting to play to a tight pin with a short iron.

There is also the opportunity to remove the cypress trees to the left of the tee and create a completely different line to the green.

The more variety of both length and line on the par 3s, the more interesting the golf.



#### Hole Improvement Notes

Given this hole was redone a few years ago there isn't any recognisable change here.

**15**  
Par 4  
376m

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## THE FIFTEENTH

This hole was redone a few years ago and unless anyone sees a pressing need to alter the strategy it's better left. It's been criticized for being 'out of character' which is an almost inevitable comment when an architect builds a one-off hole which is something quite different from the rest.

It is different because it's a wider hole than almost all the rest and the green is from left to right, a classic orientation to punish the poor shots of a right-handed player – the weak push to the right and the pull to the left which inevitably carries further. It's the reason left handers have such an advantage at both the 12th and 13th holes at Augusta.



**Hole Improvement Notes**

A - This hole becomes a par 5 with the green moving higher up the hill and to the left of the current greensite. Importantly getting the green in full view from the tees and getting the green away from the site boundary.

B - The fairway on the right will extend towards the far boundary of the hole and the strategy is arranged to reward a tee shot played down the right quarter or third of the hole - in part by the preferred line being from the left and the line in from the right being a touch more difficult.

C - the tees come back for additional length.

# 16

**Par 5  
520m**

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## THE SIXTEENTH

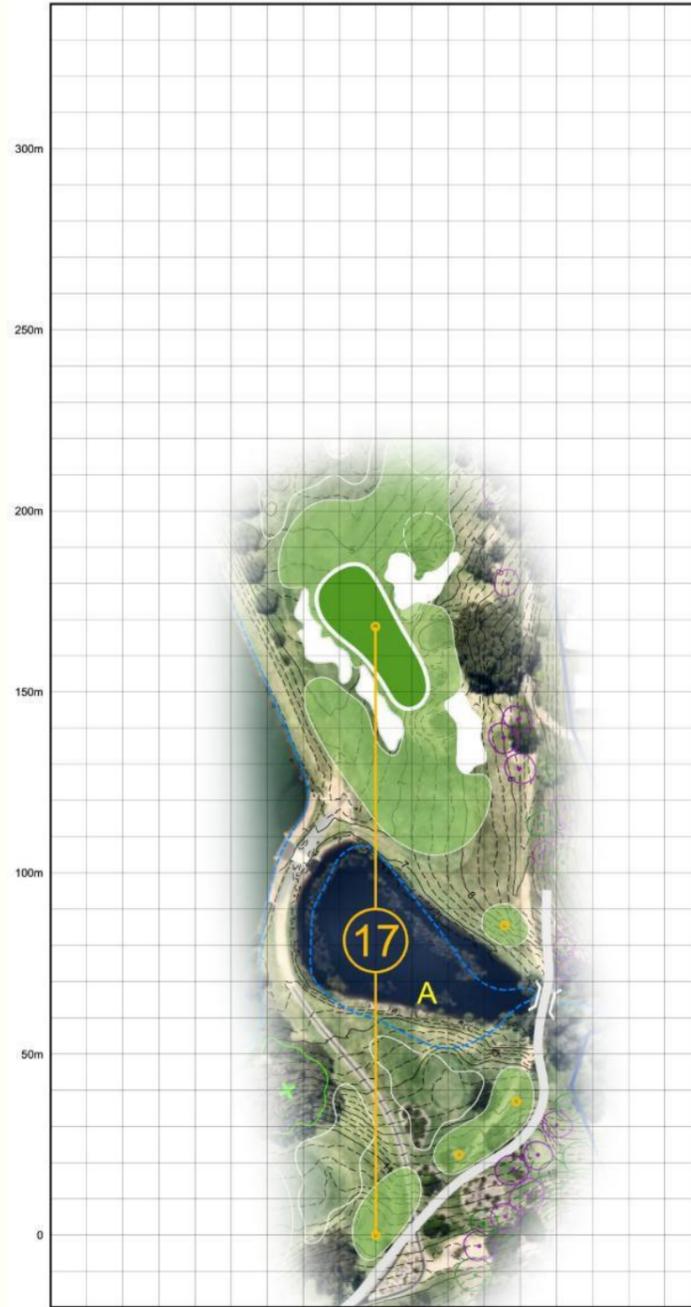
A well-used boundary is one of golf's most interesting hazards. It's dangerous to flirt with the edge of the property but rewarding to earn a distinct advantage with the next shot.

There are few better examples than the 16th and 17th holes at St Andrews where there are distinctly easier lines into the pin from close to the boundary.

Here, the boundary down the right can be used in the same way by cutting the fairway all the way to the right and the edge of the tree line.

The bunkers coming out of the left side of the second shot mean a drive down the left half of the fairway will have to play across to the right – or carry over them – while a drive down the right will have a clearer line into the flag.

This is also an example of a hole where the strategy will evolve as the hole is worked on and shaped. It's always easier to see how the hole is 'coming out of the ground' and how it might change a little from the plans.



**Hole Improvement Notes**

A - The final two holes should be looked at as a pair and there were multiple choices of how best to get to the clubhouse from the 16th green. Ultimately the choice was to make a par 3 at the 17th hole, and a longer 18th with the final green coming forward onto the 'other side' of the water.

**17**  
**Par 3**  
**166m**

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## THE SEVENTEENTH

The concept here is to make an angled green running from left to right and with fronting greenside bunkers making for something of a forced carry – but with a ‘bail out’ area on the right for the bogey players. Again, the position of the pin will completely change the shot from the tee.



**Hole Improvement Notes**

- A - Shortening the 17th means the 18th tee can come to the right and away from the quite unattractive boundary.
- B - Boundary should be planted out with a long-term aim of hiding the houses.
- C - The green comes forward to the 'other side' of the water which frees up space to make a much bigger practice putting green as well as moving the green away from the car park.
- D - The proposal is to cut a hazard across the front of the green - but not hard up against it - and it'll make for a strong, and interesting, test at the end of the round.

**18**  
Par 4  
382m

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## THE EIGHTEENTH

Breaking up the final two holes into a par 3 and a longer par four, should make for a more interesting finish and free up more space around the clubhouse for a properly sized practice putting green which should be one of the best in the country.

(If it was up to us, we'd build a Himalayas putting green -see St Andrews below- because they are both increasing in popularity and are great fun for golfers of all ages and abilities. It's mini golf for grown-ups – but also great for kids because there is no pressure to get the ball in the air, no one knows where they are aiming and the ball is rolling over wild, undulating ground. ).



*The Himalayas putting green at St. Andrews, Scotland*

They need space and moving the 18th green to 'the other side' of the creek opens up the possibility.

The new 18th is a around 400 metres making for a demanding finish but also an interesting hole with a creek cut on a diagonal line from left to right across the hole but not so close to the green that it makes it too difficult for the average players.

The closer the drive to the left side of the fairway the easier the approach into the green.

## HOLES 19 TO 27

This nine is inevitably shorter than the other two because of the restrictive nature of the land it plays over. Our observation of the membership concludes many are older golfers likely to struggle on longer holes and longer courses. The aim of the architecture is to make a fun, nine which is both strategically interesting and full of choices and options.

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*"It's rare for a course of 5600 yards to be of interest for better golfers but isn't that really because most such facilities never make an effort to succeed."*

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- Tom Doak.

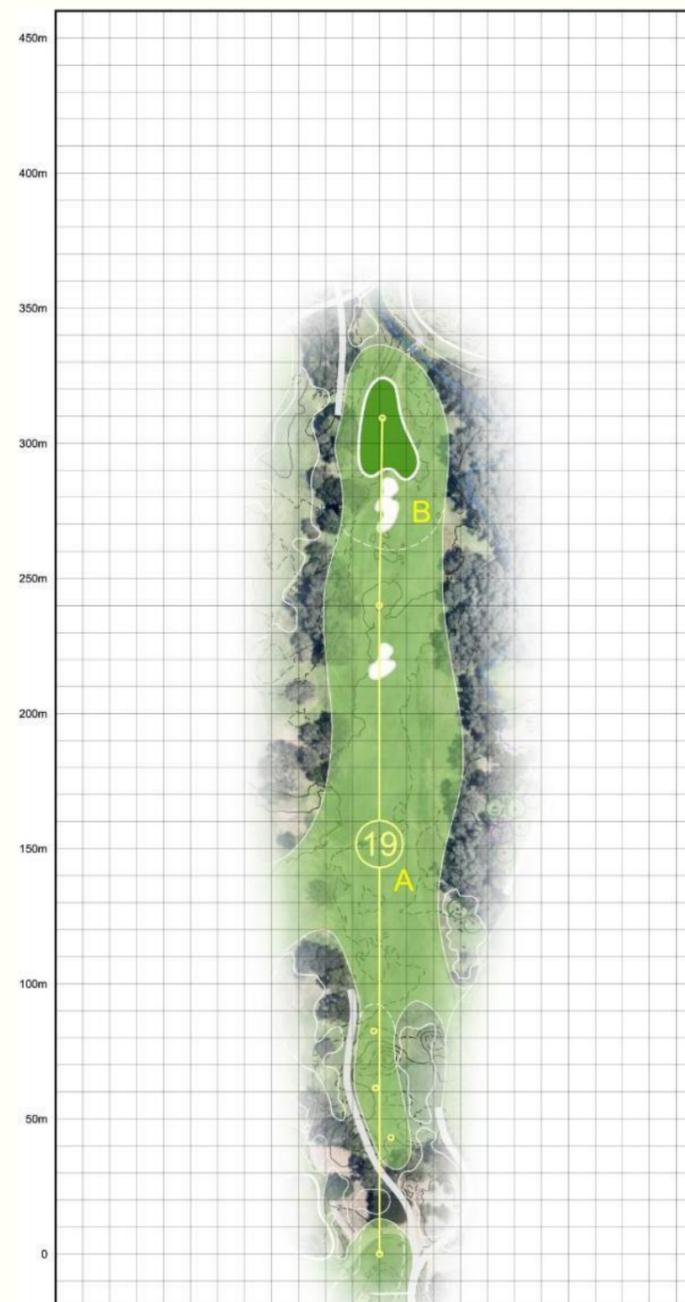
## THE NINETEENTH

The 'Third Nine' begins with a short/medium length par 4 and a centreline bunker about 215 metres off the tee. Again, the options are short, left, right, or if you're long enough, over.

The green here is somewhat unusual but reminiscent of the 16th green on the East Course at Royal Melbourne. The bunker cuts up just a touch into the green creating small wings on either side.

When the pin is in the front, left the ideal tee shot will be to the left of the fairway bunker – and vice versa.

The green also narrows at the back – making for a testing approach shot for players prepared to go all the way back there. Otherwise play to the middle and putt back.



### Hole Improvement Notes

- A - The beginning of the 'Third Nine' is a medium/short two-shotter playing backwards down the current 27th hole.
- B - The green has a central bunker coming up into the front of the green with 'wings' on either side.

# 19

Par 4  
328m

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#### Hole Improvement Notes

A - The tree clearing on the right has allowed for a much better positioning of the tees across to the right and opening the left side of the fairway.

B - The shift of the fairway to the left results in the tall tree in the middle of the fairway now being the right edge of the hole. This also allows more room to move the tees on the 23rd hole.

# 20

Par 4  
303m

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## THE TWENTIETH

*"The most offensive of all trees is the one "in" the fairway proper. There is nothing more frustrating than seeing a situation where a player can hit their very best down the centre of the fairway only to have their tee shot knocked down by the tree or becomes stymied on their next shot. There is not a single great tree found in a fairway in golf, each is as ridiculous and inexcusable as the last.*

*Their only value comes one year after they are cut down when the firewood is dried out enough to make it to the clubhouse fireplace".*

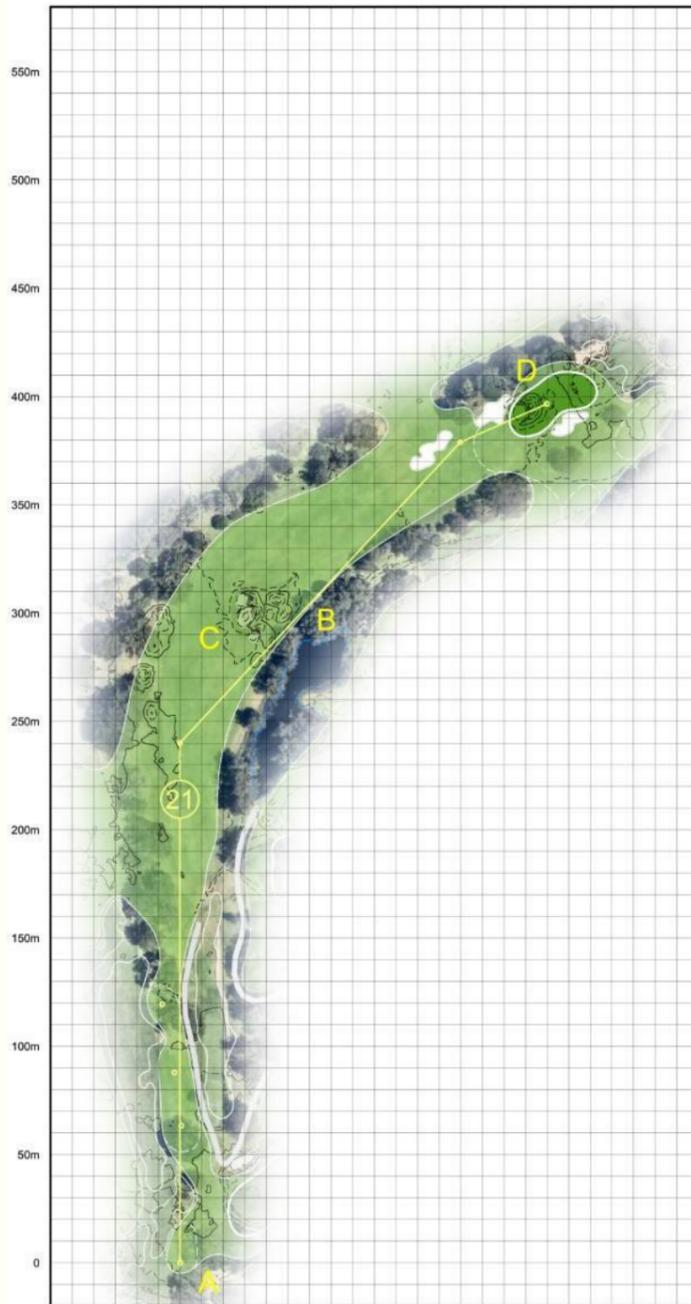
*- Ian Andrew (Canadian GCA)*

The feature of this hole has always been the tree in the middle of the fairway. It's a worthwhile tree – not as good as the beautiful tree in the rough between the 12th and 13th holes – but too good to simply cut it down.

Moving the tee far to the right here has set up a much better line down the fairway and we can extend the fairway to the left – something essentially moving the tree to the far right side of the fairway.

The greens complex sets up the ideal line into the hole by rewarding the tee shots down the left quarter of the fairway.

Moving the fairway to the left gives us more opportunity to do more with the tee shot at the 23rd hole.



Hole Improvement Notes

- A - This par 5 will be a noticeably improved hole for the tees moving back and across to the left.
- B - Trees removed off the right side of the hole along edge of the water allowing shorter drivers a clearer second shot.
- C - The fairway bunkers on the right are removed.
- D - The green is moved forward and a little to the left.

**21**  
**Par 5**  
**474m**

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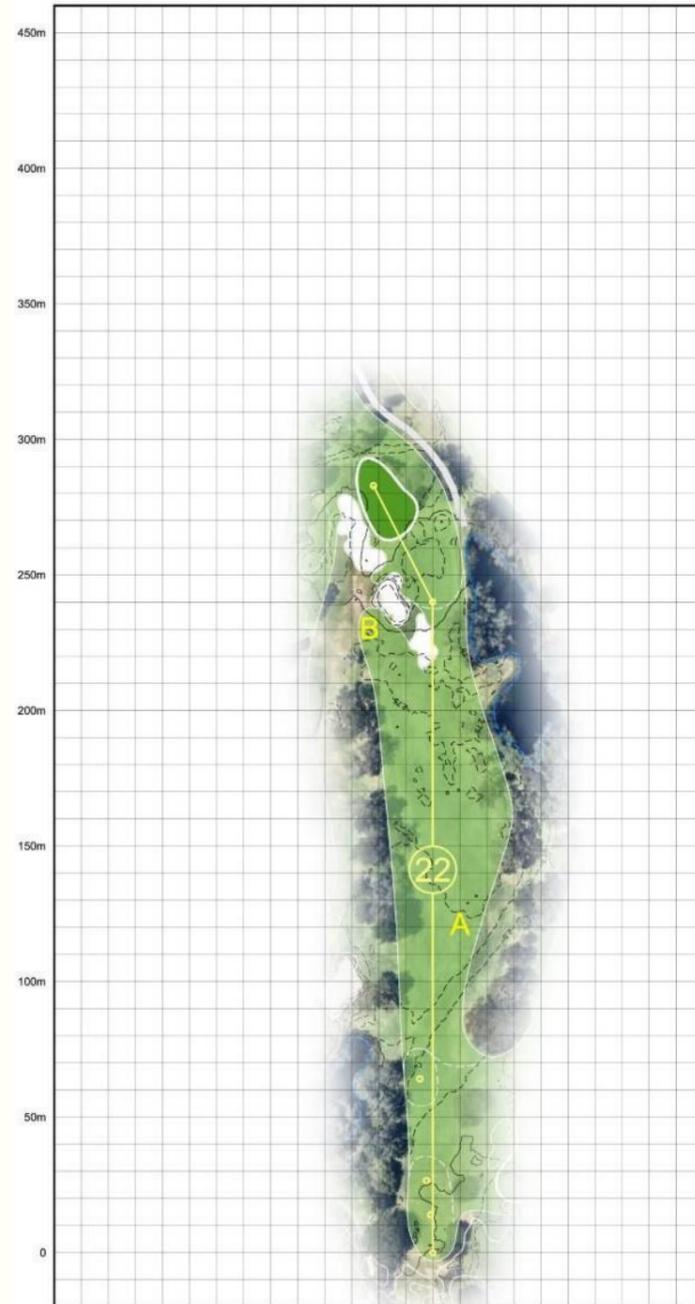
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## THE TWENTY- FIRST

The one par five on the nine should be a much-improved hole.

Taking the trees off the corner of the water on the right will both open the line and the view to the second half of the hole, which not only improves the look of the tee shot and the long second, but makes it much more playable for the shorter hitters.

The fairway bunkers on the corner of the drive are removed – with the water becoming the primary hazard – but one is added about thirty metres short of the green. It is to be avoided at all costs because of the difficulty of that length bunker shot.



**Hole Improvement Notes**

Short, fun and strategic par 4s are one type of hole Australian-golf does better than most. This one uses a line of diagonal bunkers coming out of the left side of the fairway, the water on the right and a green best approached from the right side of the fairway to create the interest.

**22**  
**Par 4**  
**290m**

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## THE TWENTY- SECOND

The two hazards here dictating the choices off the tee are the diagonal bunkers on the left which come out into the middle of the fairway and the water on the right.

Those trying to drive it up by the front of the green will need to deal with the sand and those laying back – or driving short – but wanting to open up the easier line into the green, will want to edge closer to the water on the right of the fairway.



**Hole Improvement Notes**

A - This par 4 is the current par 3 extended to make another short 4 filled with options. The tee moves back and right of current par 3 tee.

B - The pond to the right of the green as well as the back with make both an interesting the tee shot and a quite demanding pitch to a wide green that can be shallow front to back rewarding a precise length of approach shot.

**23**  
**Par 4**  
**260m**

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**THE TWENTY-THIRD**

The previous green is long and narrow, and this one is quite different. The wide green will test distance control – as will the water behind the green.

The alterations to the 20th hole (the fairway moving to the left and away from this hole) will allow us to move the tee back and to the right. How far is something we can best determine on site as the holes are being built. It'll only be a few metres either way but it's silly to be definitive at this point when the final answer is fluid and dependent on some tree removal.

Again, bunkers short and left of the green defend the ideal line into a back, right pin.

The key to these short par 4s and setting up options off the tee – both of club and line.



**Hole Improvement Notes**

- A - The uphill par 4 turning to the right is one of the more difficult holes on this nine and it's always been a good hole.
- B - The tees are to be rebuilt and including the option of a new forward tee.
- C - The green is brought forward to improve safety setback dimensions with the boundaries of the adjoining house lots.

# 24

**Par 4  
332m**

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## THE TWENTY-FOURTH

This is one of the longer par 4s and playing uphill makes it play a little longer.

Playing into a back left pin will be easier from the right side of the fairway.



#### Hole Improvement Notes

A - The green here is one of the few obviously advantaging a specific shot - in this case one from left-to-right. Of course, you don't have to play it that way but it's an admirable feature and an important concept to maintain here and use throughout the course.

B - The green is moved a little further away from the housing boundary.

**25**  
Par 3  
164m

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## THE TWENTY-FIFTH

The current 25<sup>th</sup>. The green here is one of the most interesting on the property and it makes the hole by obviously favouring a tee shot shaped from left to right and coming in from the left.

The new hole will continue to reward a left to right shot and the long green will mean quite different – but both interesting – shots to the pin cut in the front and back of the green.



**Hole Improvement Notes**

A - The feature of this nine can be the short par 4s and this is a new hole playing down what is now the first half of the current 26th hole. It's a poor hole and breaking it up to make a new 8th hole and this 26th hole will noticeably improve the current course.

B - A tee shot down the left is the ideal and the bunkers to the right of the green will separate the green complex from the 8th tee.

# 26

**Par 4  
272m**

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## THE TWENTY-SIXTH

This hole runs down what is now the first half of the current par 5, 26th hole – a poor one in our estimation and breaking it up into a short 4 and a par 3 (8th hole) improves the golf.

Driving down the tree guarded left side will set up the easiest line to the flag.



**Hole Improvement Notes**

- A - The nine finishes with a par three using the space currently occupied by the 7th hole and part of the current 27th hole.
- B - The green on the edge of the water and orientated noticeably from right to left bears some resemblance to the 16th at Augusta. The green won't be as severe - which would be no bad thing!

**27**

**Par 3  
171m**

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**THE TWENTY-SEVENTH**

The final hole on the Third Nine. A par three with water on the left side of the green – and a green favouring a draw.

Members will be familiar with the par three 16th at Augusta National and the green there is very severe – more severe in person than it appears on television – and something replicating its principles, but without the severity will make for a fun par three to finish the nine.

## CONCLUSION

Our Golf Course Masterplan has identified that while Catalina Club currently offers an enjoyable experience, it possesses untapped potential and lacks the meaningful strategy and architectural consistency found at Australia's leading courses. The property's sandy ground is a priceless asset, presenting an incalculable advantage for a successful and cost-effective transformation.

The proposal outlined within this report is far-reaching, aiming not simply to improve the existing layout but to create the best possible golf on the club's land. Through a considered re-routing, the creation of a premier 18-hole course and a compelling third nine is achievable. This will be realised through a complete redesign and rebuilding of the course's core features, including more interestingly contoured greens, strategically placed bunkers, and restored fairway widths that encourage thoughtful play.

The guiding philosophy is to craft a course that is more fun and cerebral, asking interesting questions of every player without making the game noticeably harder or easier. The intent is to build holes with strategy at their soul, stimulating the best players while ensuring the average golfer can thoroughly enjoy their round. This vision for course improvements is compatible with the club's desire to incorporate modern facilities, such as a new driving range, while enhancing its long-term competitive relevance.

By embracing this masterplan, Catalina Club has the opportunity to fully realise its potential. You have the ideal sandy ground and the capacity to become the outstanding coastal golf course between Melbourne and Sydney. This plan provides the architectural blueprint to achieve that status, delivering a cohesive, strategic, and engaging experience that will secure a vibrant future for the club, and its members.

## APPENDICES

### Common Questions and Answers

#### The Need for Change & Overall Vision

##### 1. Why do we need to spend money changing a course that is already enjoyable to play?

This masterplan is driven by several key factors that point to the need for considered change:

- **Accommodating New Facilities:** The Club has indicated a desire to add a modern driving range with technology, which requires the course layout to change to fit these facilities near the clubhouse.
- **Improving the Golf:** The primary goal is to elevate the quality of the golf course architecture. Many holes currently lack strategic engagement and rely on narrow corridors, promoting a one-dimensional style of play. The plan aims to create more interesting and fun golf without necessarily making it more difficult.
- **Architectural Cohesion:** The course currently has some well-designed holes, like the 15th, but they are often criticised for being "out of character" with the rest of the layout. This plan introduces a cohesive architectural vision for the entire property.
- **Becoming a Destination:** The ultimate goal is to establish Catalina Club as the outstanding coastal golf course between Melbourne and Sydney, enhancing its competitive relevance and making it a more attractive destination.

##### 2. Will this plan make the course too difficult for the average member?

No. The explicit goal is to create more interesting and thought-provoking golf, not to make the course noticeably harder or easier. The key principles ensuring playability for all members are:

- The overall balance of the course's difficulty is not intended to noticeably change.
- The plan is not to create a top-tier championship venue; it is designed to accommodate all players.
- The design ensures weaker players will always have an alternate, safer route available to them, in line with classic design principles.
- Considerable attention will be given to creating more forward teeing grounds to benefit women, seniors, juniors, and all slower swing speed golfers.

##### 3. The plan creates a shorter 'Third Nine'. Will this be an inferior or 'easy' course compared to the main 18?

No. The objective is to form the remaining nine (holes 19-27) into a course of equal architectural merit to the main 18-hole layout.

- While this nine will be shorter, it should not be noticeably easier.

- The design focus for this nine is to be fun and strategically interesting, full of choices and options for the thinking golfer. As noted in the report, it is a fallacy that shorter courses cannot be interesting for better players.
- This shorter, engaging loop will be ideally suited for a significant group of members who may not hit the ball as far, or who wish to play a quicker round of golf.

## DESIGN & STRATEGY

##### 4. What does 'strategic golf' actually mean, and how is it better than what we have now?

Strategic golf is about making the player think, giving "an intelligent purpose to the striking of a golf ball". It moves beyond a simple test of execution (hitting the ball straight) to a more cerebral and engaging game.

- A strategic hole asks interesting questions and poses a variety of problems for the golfer to solve.
- It is defined by the principle of "daring a hazard...and by negotiating it reaping a reward". For example, a player taking a riskier line closer to a fairway hazard should be rewarded with a better angle for their next shot.
- Currently, there is very little strategy at Catalina, resulting in a one-dimensional experience. Introducing these principles will make the game both more interesting and more fun.

##### 5. What is the proposed approach to mowing lines on fairways?

The approach is inspired by the classic aesthetic and strategic character of Melbourne Sandbelt courses.

- Fairways will be mown as wide as possible to enhance strategic options.
- There will be no defined 'first' or 'second' cuts of rough. Instead, fairways will bleed naturally into the rough, creating a more seamless appearance.
- The overall approach is to enhance playability, encouraging a wider variety of shots, including the running game.

##### 6. What are the plans regarding sightlines and strategic play lines?

While current sightlines are mostly excellent, the plan aims to enhance the strategy of the playing lines.

- The play lines will be re-emphasised so that the centre of the fairway is not always the ideal angle to the green.
- This is achieved by designing greens and hazards where the shot from one side of the fairway is noticeably different from the other, rewarding the player who has chosen the correct side to approach from.
- In specific instances, such as the proposed 21st hole, tree removal will be undertaken to improve visibility on what is currently a blind tee shot.

## COURSE DETAILS & TECHNICAL FEATURES

### 7. Why is it necessary to rebuild all the greens?

To noticeably improve the course, rebuilding the greens is a necessity. As the "face of the course," they are its most important feature.

- A first-class set of greens is the hallmark of all excellent courses. The current greens lack the internal character, contour, and variety of the best putting surfaces.
- Artistically contoured greens and surrounds are what set up the strategy from the tee and make the golf far more engaging.
- The current greens are also relatively small, averaging 400m<sup>2</sup>. The plan proposes expanding them to an average of 550m<sup>2</sup> for better agronomic health and to allow for a greater variety of shapes and hole locations.
- Rebuilding at least some of the greens is a necessity of the course rerouting. By rebuilding all greens, it ensures that the greens across the course will be of the same grass, construction method, and aesthetic style – leading to easier maintenance, and a vastly superior cohesive style.

### 8. Are the bunkers being restored or redesigned?

They are being completely redesigned. There will be no restoration of existing bunkers.

- The course will be entirely re-bunkered with new designs and improved presentation.
- This is because many current bunkers are poorly positioned, often too far from the greens to challenge better players or placed simply to catch poor shots rather than to enhance strategy.
- The new philosophy is to use bunkers strategically to dictate play and to catch the 'almost good shot' as opposed to a simply bad one.

### 9. How will tee construction address size, wear, and angles of play?

The tees require a significant upgrade to improve flexibility, durability, and playability.

- **Size and Wear:** Many current tees are quite small and suffer from wear, especially in shaded areas. All new tees will have an increased surface area to better handle traffic and allow for wear to be distributed evenly.
- **Variety and Angles:** The new tees will be designed to offer a greater variety of hole lengths and setup flexibility, ensuring members are not playing the exact same hole week after week. Their orientation will encourage a variety of strategic lines of play.
- **Forward Tees:** Additional forward tees will be incorporated to ensure the course is enjoyable and appropriately challenging for all golfers.

### 10. What grass types are intended for the greens and surrounds?

The plan proposes using specific grass types to enhance playability and strategic character.

- **Greens:** Pure Distinction (Bent grass) will be used on the putting surfaces.
- **Surrounds:** Zouysia grass is the preferred choice for green surrounds. The reason for this difference is to create firmer, faster approaches that have a similar consistency to the greens themselves, which encourages a wider variety of short game shots. This aligns with Dr. Alister MacKenzie's principle of golf design. For less-skilled players, this surface also provides an easier opportunity to putt the ball from off the green.

### 11. How will the design address carry distances from tee to fairway?

The design philosophy ensures the course is playable for everyone, regardless of how far they hit the ball. There is no intent to penalise shorter hitters with excessive forced carries.

- The practical rule is: if a ball can be thrown from the tee to the fairway, then the carry is acceptable.
- This is consistent with the classic design principle that the weaker player shall always have an alternate, safer route open to them.

### Process, Environment, and Facilities

#### 12. How will routing and path flow improve overall playability?

The proposed re-routing of the course, particularly on the front nine, will significantly improve the flow of play and the overall experience.

- The current layout has an odd flow in some areas, such as the awkward walk from the 2nd green to the 3rd tee. The new routing is more logical and efficient, creating easy green-to-tee transitions.
- An example of the improved flow is the seamless transition from the proposed new 7th hole green to the new 8th hole tee (currently the 26th).

#### 13. What is the philosophy behind internal and boundary vegetation?

The philosophy is long-term and focuses on both aesthetics and ecology.

- **Internal Vegetation:** All planning will prioritise how the course will appear in 25, 50, and 100 years, with a preference for indigenous species. It is critical to consider the long-term impact of trees, avoiding those that may become overly dominant or negatively affect turf conditioning.
- **Boundary Vegetation:** The intent is to plant out the housing boundaries to screen neighbouring homes from view over the next 25 years. This will be discussed in detail with the superintendent.

#### 14. Are there agronomic concerns such as airflow and shade?

While airflow and shading do not appear to be major, widespread concerns, the plan looks to identify and address localised issues.

- For example, some of the current tees are quite small and, being located in shade, suffer from wear and slow recovery.
- The proposal to build new, bigger tees directly addresses this known problem. All such aspects will be reviewed on-site with the superintendent to identify any other problem areas.

**15. What improvements are planned for practice facilities?**

The practice facilities are a key part of the masterplan scope, with significant improvements planned for both short and long game practice.

- **Long Game:** The plan accommodates a modern driving range with technology, allowing members to practice their game rather than just warm up.
- **Short Game:** The re-routing frees up space around the clubhouse for a properly sized practice putting green that should be one of the best in the country. We also suggest the exciting possibility of a large, undulating "Himalayas" style putting green, which is great fun for all ages and skill levels.

**16. How will safety be handled?**

Safety for both players (internal) and surrounding properties (external) is a priority. These have been thoughtfully considered with the concepts shown and will be reviewed, in detail, during on-site discussions with the club.

We find these matters best explained in-person and on-site to ensure all stakeholders can focus on the same issues and opportunities together and can better understand our proposals.