



MEDINAH COUNTRY CLUB

Master Plan Course #3

November 2021

OCM



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INTRODUCTION

Medinah is one of the great Country Clubs of America with three terrific golf courses, a rich history of hosting significant major championships and a beautiful landscape punctuated by Lake Kadajah and stands of old Oak trees.

Course #3 sits on the best parcel of land and it has the most significant history of the three courses. Originally designed by Tom Bendelow, it has changed considerably over the past 80 years, with several well-known architects making refinements and renovations. In preparing the Master Plan we have spent a considerable amount of time reviewing the current course and looking through historical records to better understand how and why the holes have evolved. In reading through this document, it will be apparent that we would like to restore parts of the course, other areas will stay more or less in their current form with only minor changes, and then there are those where we have suggested a more significant change to achieve the best outcome.

As golf course designers we constantly try and balance the line between creating holes which are challenging for the good player but at the same time not too difficult and enjoyable for the beginner. Perhaps the best group of courses to achieve this ideal can be found close to our home, here on Melbourne's sandbelt. They are wide enough so the average golfers can easily find the fairway, with little in the way of long rough to frustrate the wayward, and yet with cleverly designed greens and bunkers good players need to take on an element of risk if they are to score well. Even under tournament play there is little that changes in terms of course set-up, other than playing from a handful of back tees.

In reading through the Master Plan it will become obvious that there are some changes which will make holes easier and some, which will make them harder but overall we feel the level of difficulty for the average member should remain about the same.

As a general rule there will be more short grass around the course. Fairways will be widened a little and there are numerous new short grass links between holes and from greens to tees. For the average golfer this will make the game a little easier as more golf can be played from short, fairway length grass. In concert with this change around the greens there are holes with new bunkers added plus the greenside bunkers will be cut closer to the putting surface allowing for more interesting pins cut close to the hazards. So is the course harder, or easier as a result? Whilst we don't believe it will be significantly one or the other perhaps the most important question is whether it will be more interesting and ultimately, better.

A handful of extra tees have also been suggested. Some will add length for major events while others offer golfers more variety by way of a slightly different angle or shorter hitters with an alternative route around a hazard. The additional tees allow the course to play anywhere from 5465 to 7665 yards.

Greens should be rebuilt both to improve their design as well as addressing some agronomic issues. This will include creating slightly larger putting surfaces to offer more pin positions and help spread wear, but at the same time we want to improve the variety and strategic interest. Construction technique will also be critical to ensure the greens and surrounds play consistently firmer than they currently do.

The old Oaks dotted throughout the course are an incredible asset and we have attempted to preserve as many trees as possible as part of the redesign. Where tree removal is necessary, for either design or to help improve the quality of turf, their loss is being offset with planting elsewhere on site. The realignment of the 6th and 10th holes provides an opportunity to add a vegetative screen along the fence-line and once and for all eliminate cars, power lines and buildings from view.

As architects we tend to focus on the various elements of design but there are other aspects which are just as important to address as part of any long term plan. The drainage on Course #3 is deficient and unlike Courses #1 and #2 there is no macro system in place to help move water away quickly from the playing surfaces after storms. This is a critical factor to address if the course is to play consistently firmer. The irrigation system also requires upgrading to ensure a more efficient and effective means of watering the golf course. Cart paths and the timber boards on bridges are also reaching the end of their useful lives and need to be replaced as part of any course upgrade.

Medinah and Course #3 have been an important part of American Golf for almost 100 years, regarded as one of the great Country Clubs and playing host to several Major Championships. Course #3 has undergone several major redesigns in its life and each have advanced various elements of the design. This Master Plan, which draws inspiration from many past and present versions of the course, looks to advance the course yet again, and we hope sets the club up for many generations of golfers to come. Like any major venue who looks to appeal to both member and tournament profession, we hope the new design proves to be just as intriguing and enjoyable for a midweek social round as it will be for those playing in the 2026 Presidents Cup.

HISTORICAL STUDY

“No. 3 was instantly acclaimed as one of the world’s greatest, opened in June 19, 1932”

Medinah Heritage Committee

Medinah has an interesting architectural history and the club is indeed fortunate to have some wonderful archival photos, plans and aerials which illustrate how the courses have evolved over the last century. Irrespective of whether the intent is restoration or redesign we find it beneficial to study the evolution of the course as part of the design process moving forward. We found the most interesting era to be around 1930 after Tom Bendelow converted the layout from a ladies course into the design which more or less exists today. Looking through reports there may have also been some involvement by AW Tillinghast but his influence is difficult to determine. Irrespective, by examining the 1929 plan and 1934 aerial we start to get a picture of what the course was like just after this redesign and interestingly many of their ideas align with some of our early thoughts for the golf course.

On the page opposite we have a copy of the 1934 aerial over which we’ve highlighted fairways, greens and bunkers. Due to the poor resolution some guess work was required but by cross-referencing with other images we feel we have created a fairly accurate picture. Of particular interest, over the page we have overlaid this line-work onto the current course aerial.

Bunkers

Whilst the exact shape of the bunkers is difficult to see what the comparative photo does show is a far more interesting and varied approach to bunker placement. Hazards were built into many of the natural rises (e.g. 3rd and 4th hole) and are positioned at far more varied distances which would ensure a wider range of golfers had to deal with them. This is also our preferred approach to bunkering... ensuring that over the course of a round that everyone from Rory McIlroy to an club 18 handicapper has to deal with the same strategic questions.

The bunkers - especially the fairway hazards - also come into play to a much greater extent than the current arrangement. Most of the fairway bunkers on the current course tend to flank the holes and catch poor shots, whereas in the 1920’s they jut right out into play. Often times they were on a direct line to the target which forced the golfer to play over or around trouble.

The scale of the bunkers is also interesting. Generally speaking they have a greater variety of sizes including some very large hazards (e.g. 4th hole). Medinah is a big scale golf course and there are some areas which suit larger hazards. This is something we would like to see returned.

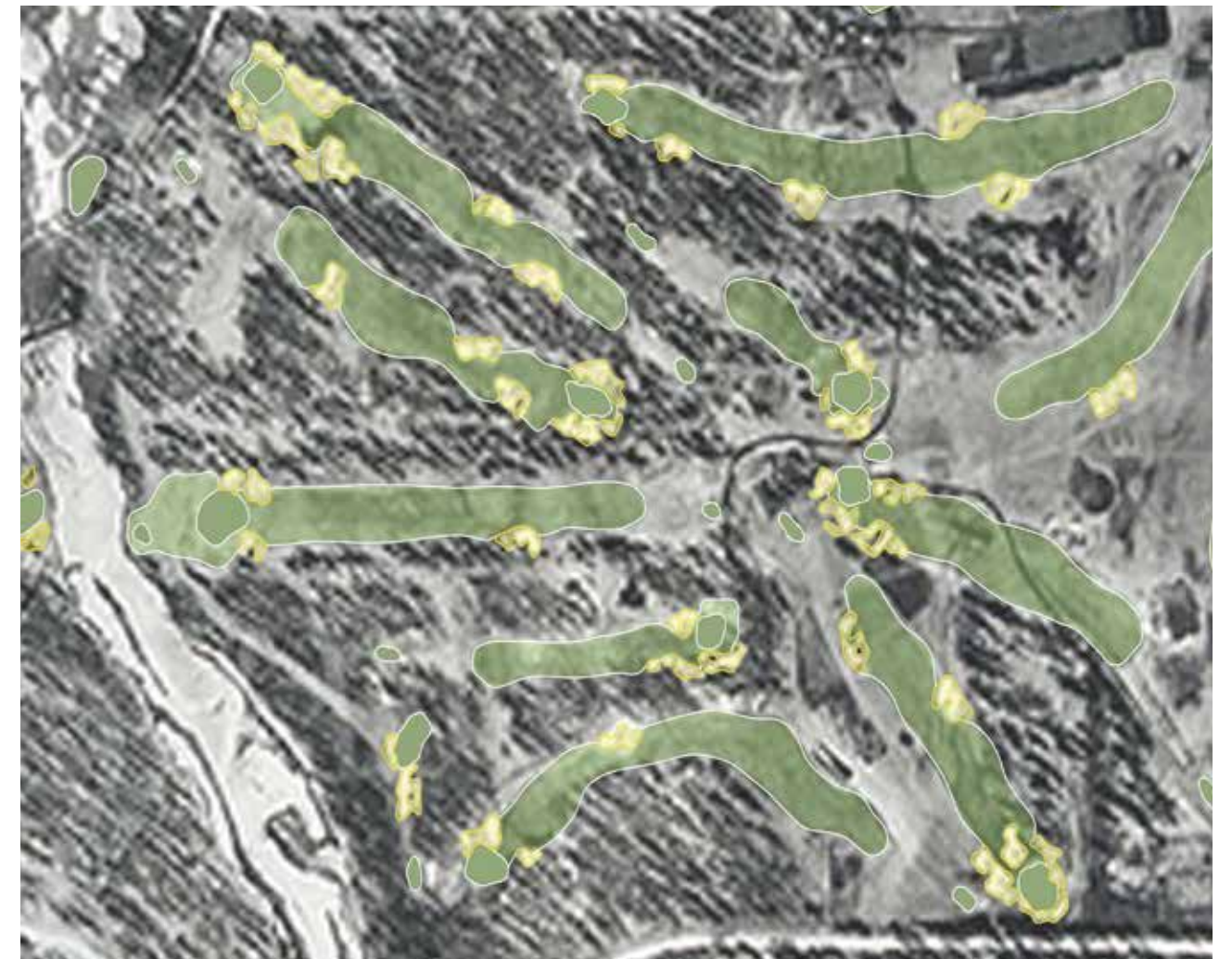
The bunker style is also interesting to compare and whilst there are no close up images to study the plans and aerials indicate a much more artistic and varied shape than to today’s hazards. This was a trait of many of the best known golden age courses and we believe should something that is returned to Course #3.

Fairways

Like a lot of courses built in the 1920’s and 30’s the obvious first impression is that this was a much wider golf course. Fairways looked 40 or even 50 yards wide in places and extended much further back toward the tee. Obviously there is a balancing act between width and difficulty but with well shaped bunkers and greens its important to remember that wide doesn’t necessarily equate to easy. Courses such as Augusta prove this year in, year out, plus of course, wider corridors would go a long way to make the game easier for the average golfer. This is a key part of making a member friendly tournament course.

Difficulty

The 1930’s version of the course was no doubt an easier one for the average member but some really bold bunkering would have ensured that better players were also engaged and tested. Most importantly the course looks interesting...there are lots of strategic decisions to be made and judging by the size and position of the hazards it would likely have been a more dramatic looking course than today’s version.



A section of the 1934 course with holes defined and coloured.

1930'S OVERLAY

Course #3 as it would have appeared in the early 1930's shown in white, overlaid onto today's layout.



STRATEGY 101

“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 of 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

“No hole is a good one unless it has one or more hazards in a direct line of a hole. Max Behr, who is one of the best American golf architects’ states that the direct line to the hole is the line of instinct, and that to make a good hole you must break up that line in order to create the line of charm.”

Alister Mackenzie

Perhaps the most important concept to understand before going through our Master Plan is that of strategy and in the past 100 years few have explained this concept as well as George Thomas, designer of Riviera, LA Country Club and Bel-air.

Whether playing on a parkland course in America, the links of Scotland, the heathland of London or the sandbelt of Melbourne the very best courses obey the same simple principle of design. That is, that the best hazards are positioned exactly where the ideal approach to the green is played from; whether that’s the shortest route to the hole or the best angle. In doing so golfers need to make a special effort to play around the trouble.

This concept is best exemplified on doglegging holes. The greatest examples of architecture almost always follow the rule of placing hazards on the inside corner of the dogleg....holes such as the 13th at Augusta, 4th at Pebble Beach, 18th at TPC Sawgrass or the 1st at Merion are just a few examples. By playing close to the hazard and taking on some risk the player is rewarded with the best line to the flag. When the greens are designed with this strategy in mind, the strategy can be further exaggerated by tucking the flag into the opposite corner of the green (e.g. a back right pin on the 13th at Augusta for instance).

Occasionally holes will break from convention and favor play from the outside of the dogleg but we feel at Medinah this occurs too often. In fact, on 6 of the par fours the strategy is the complete reverse of the ‘traditional’ way to design such holes. The 3rd, 6th, 9th, 11th, 16th and 18th all dogleg (mostly left) with trees on the corner and a bunker or bunkers on the outside. In an effort to lengthen the course many back tees have also been added and due to space constraints they have typically pushed back in a manner which further accentuates the dogleg (e.g. at the 9th hole where in fact the better line at that distance would be standing on the 11th green).

Often times the intention of placing trees on the corner of the doglegs is to ‘toughen them up’, what typically occurs is that the gap between holes which are playable for members but also challenging for tournament golf is pushed further apart. The modern tournament professional takes aim directly over the corner of the dogleg - as we have seen at the recent events played at Medinah - whilst the shorter hitting member finishes in an impossible position behind a wall of trees.

A better arrangement - and our preferred philosophy - is to use ground hazards on the corner instead of trees. If positioned at the right distance the professional will be faced with the decision of whether to lay-up, take on a dangerous carry or try and slide one close to the bunkers in order to get a better angle to the green. Meanwhile the average golfer is not disadvantaged. Whilst they may not hit the ball as far, the observant player who can hit toward the bunker will at least have a clear second shot from the correct angle.

Importantly there should be ample room away from trouble but from here the angle to the green gets worse and the shot becomes more difficult. As Bobby Jones put it... ***“there should be lots of space away from trouble for the golfer to hang ‘emself”***

When it comes to the green, bunkers can again be used to favor play from the ‘correct’ angle but contour can also be used to great effect. With a simple tilt to the putting surface the golfer who has played to the correct position can be further advantaged while the player who hits to the non preferred side of the fairway now faces a shot over a greenside hazard and a putting surface sloping away.

The final piece to the strategic puzzle is an agronomic one. Firmness. It doesn’t matter how interesting or strategic a hole has been designed, if the greens are soft and approachable from any angle then it becomes defenceless against the best players in the game. For this reason the science of sand selection, irrigation and construction method are just as important as the design.



An aerial view of the 9th on Course #3 at Medinah



6TH WEST

Royal Melbourne has a number of world class dogleg holes. The 6th on the West course clearly illustrates the principle of ground hazards as opposed to trees on the corner of doglegs. This brilliant par four clearly advantages the player who can play close to the fairway bunkers with a shorter shot and better angle - especially to a left flag. Conversely there is plenty of space to play away from the corner bunkers but the front bunker into the green and longer distance makes it an incredibly difficult shot to get close.

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

So much of the strategy of the golf course relies on the greens. They determine the best place from which to approach the hole and the great strategic courses defend that ideal place from which to play with hazards that must be challenged.

It is important to make a set of greens that approach the standards of some of the best in the game. In our experience Pine Valley, Shinnecock Hills, Oakmont, Augusta, Royal Melbourne, Kingston Heath, Sunningdale and Morfontaine in Paris have some of the finest sets of greens in golf. These greens have an interesting mixture of big contour and small, they are varied, intricate and demanding – without featuring radical contours which will be unloved by the majority. They should fit the landscape and where possible appear almost as though they are part of the fairway. On so many of the great greens it looks like it is just the mowing height has been lowered. Greens like this are not designed on paper or built using a GPS. They are shaped by hand with subtle changes being made by the architect in the field.

There isn't a great deal of variety to the greens on Course #3. Far too many use the same concept of a narrow approach with bunkers left and right. Aside from being monotonous, they don't really influence play to the extent they should because the approach doesn't really differ irrespective of where you are on the fairway. This is not the case on the best examples of green design and quite often moving from one side of the fairway to the other can be the difference between a chance to get close to the pin, versus one where you're hoping just to finish on the green.

When it comes to the putting surfaces themselves contour can be used to reinforce the strategies set up by green orientation and bunker position. If say, we want to really try to make a shot difficult from one side of the fairway, bunkers might be cut into the between the golfer and the flag but to add to the difficulty you may choose to tilt the green a little away from the player.

One of our favourite ploys is to flare up the edge of the greenside bunker where it meets the green. This can visually make the approach shot intimidating by hiding some of the putting surface but also works in a similar way to the above example, with the down-slope making any shot played wrong angle more difficult. On the opposite side of the coin, it helps make an approach or recovery shot easier from the correct side of the fairway as the contours can serve as a handy backstop or as a slope top help funnel a ball towards the flag.

Aside from design, there are some important agronomic issues also to address.. The greens across Course #3 are relatively small which restricts the number of available pin positions and the ability to spread the wear caused by golfers. As part of the redesign, greens should be made larger (roughly 20%) but importantly there should still be some variety in size across the course. With slightly larger greens we also see adding a little more contour but this will typically be on the edges of the green where the putting surface meets a bunker or a mound.

Whilst our primary consideration is the orientation of the greens and positioning of hazards as it pertains to the design of holes, player access is an important consideration too and many greens such as the 17th suffer from wear because golfers use the same point of entry and exit, day in, day out.

One of the aims of reconstruction should also be to create consistently firmer greens and green surrounds. No matter how well designed the course might be if the greens are soft it becomes defenceless against the best players in the world. Green construction techniques and of course drainage are therefore critical factors and we are exploring a variety of options to try ensure the playing conditions compliment the design.



GREEN DESIGN

A great view of bunkers cutting right into the putting surface to create some dramatic pins and placing more of a premium on correct positioning back in the fairway.

TEES

Our favourite tees are those that blend so well with the surrounds that they barely look like tees at all. Whilst they need to be functional areas with enough flat spaces to play from (and to avoid wear) a little contour surrounding the tees helps give them a natural appearance. Nothing looks worse than a tee which appears like its been built as an afterthought. In our minds the same effort and attention should be given to the teeing grounds as any other part of the golf course.

Many tees across the course have been built well above the surrounding ground and over the years as tees have been added to lengthen the course, they have been made higher and higher. Aside from looking unnatural it has led to some slumping around the edges, which has reduced the effective area golfers can play from. As part of the course redevelopment the tees should be rebuilt and made a little larger, lower to the natural ground and tied into the original landscape in a more seamless fashion.

In rebuilding the tees the question of style is also something to consider. Square tees are a feature of many Country Clubs throughout America but an alternative worth considering are tees with a more organic or free form shape. These work well when linked to the previous green using short grass and would provide a point of difference over Courses #1 and #2.

Forward tees should be constructed using the same methods as all other tees on the course. They should never look like they have been tacked on as an after thought. Many of the existing green tees are little more than a mown circle but they should be adequately sized and shaped as we would like to see more golfers opt to “play it forward” to make the course a little less challenging.

We are devotees of alternate play options, and we often try and include a handful of additional tees to allow holes to be played at different lengths, angles of play or even on occasion, par. Golf can be monotonous if every day holes are played from the same tee and there should be the flexibility to change things around – especially as part of moving the flag or as the wind and weather dictate.

While forward tees are an important addition to Course #3 we cannot forget that as a tournament venue some length is needed to test the games very best - especially in an era where professionals are driving the ball further than ever before. We have managed to find some extra length on a number of holes including the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 7th, 8th, 9th, 12th, 16th and 18th.

Where tees are closely located to the previous green we will often try and link the green surrounds through to the teeing area itself. This helps avoid clutter in the form of rough, paths and garden beds but also helps create a wonderful flow to a golf course, where one hole seamlessly melds into the next.



*Top Image: An example of one of the existing green tees on Course #3
Bottom Image: One of the many back tees that rise well above the natural landscape*

SHORT GRASS

This is great view of the transition areas at Peninsula Kingswood, from the green and fairway on the 2nd hole through the upper and lower tees of the 3rd hole. It also illustrates that paths can still be incorporated into this concept but they are best positioned around the short grass rather than through it.



FAIRWAYS

So much of modern golf is influenced by what we see on television and professional golf is very often arranged to be a simple test of execution. Fairways are narrow to reward straight driving and rough plays a big part in punishing the ‘crooked’ hitters. In our opinion this is not the best, or the most interesting, way to play the game. Certainly it is not the most interesting way to watch the game as a spectator. This penal form of the game simply tells players what to do as opposed to asking the player to think. More importantly it does not make the game much fun for the amateur desperately in need of space to play. There is no joy in simply avoiding hazards designed primarily to catch poor shots. Alister Mackenzie’s philosophy was that it was impossible to punish every bad shot – and that hazards should instead be built to catch the ‘almost good shot’ as opposed to the bad one.

Providing space to play was a feature of all the golden age courses and it’s a big part of what makes Augusta such a brilliant design. That and of course a wonderful set of green complexes which reward or punish depending on what side of the sometimes 60 yard wide fairways you happen to find yourself on.

Wider, strategic courses do not mean driving should be easy. Players still must think about where best to play and there will also be holes where straight driving is rewarded. It is easy to hit the fairways at Augusta but it is much more demanding to hit to the right parts of those fairways or to correctly shape the drive to take advantage of the contour. Of course fairway width cannot be looked at in isolation as it must compliment whatever strategies are being set up at the green.

The use of short grass around the greens is another important aspect to address. Aside from the fact we feel it looks far more attractive and elegant than rough, short grass around the putting surface makes for many more options for recovery shots and ultimately makes the game more interesting. Some may choose the bump and run, others will play a lob shot, a few may try the 3 wood chip and others may opt to putt. Conversely chipping from heavy rough is onerous and one-dimensional and almost always are best played with a chopping motion using a high lofted wedge.

The beauty of short grass around the greens is that it manages to make recovery shots more difficult and certainly more interesting for the good player while making the game a little easier for the club golfer. Plus with greens typically elevated, missed shots tend to run further away from the target rather than gathering in the rough. There is also the psychological effect on approach shots, with the fear that a missed shot might finish 20 or 30 yards away from the edge of the green instead of just a few yards when a green is surrounded by rough.



Increasing the amount of short grass around greens makes for much more interesting golf course. Missed shots finish further away from the green with long capable of push a ball 10 or 20 yards away from the putting green, plus as short grass there is a greater number of options for recovery play. Everything from a putter through to a 3 wood can legitimately played as opposed to the very one dimension gauge with a sand wedge when maintained as rough.

BUNKERS

“Most golfers have an erroneous view of the real object of hazards. The majority of them simply look upon a hazard as a means of punishing a bad shot, whereas their real object is to make the game more interesting.”

Alister Mackenzie

“The true hazard should draw the play towards it, should invite the golfer to come as near as he dare to the fire without burning his fingers. The man who can afford to take risks is the man who should gain the advantage”

John Low

There are a number of points to address with the bunkering.

Aesthetics and Bunker style

The style of bunkering should be tailored to each course, taking into account factors such as their original style, soil type and drainage considerations, scale and contour of the property and finally the climate and grass variety. On big sites with broad contours for instance, quite often larger bunkers will suit. On a windswept coastal links, small bunkers less prone to erosion are likely the best style.

The bunkers have clearly evolved in style over time and whilst we don't have any close up images of bunkers from the 1930's and 1940's, the aerals would suggest there were some wonderfully shaped hazards around the course. We think a return to this more artistic style would work very well at Medinah, making for a more natural, and visually intimidating, hazard.

Fairway Bunkers

In building fairway bunkers we often try and take advantage of natural rises or hills as they make for the best looking hazards. We never like to build them at set distances as they inevitably only affect the person that hits it to that number. By building them where they best suit the landscape you end up with bunkers scattered across various distances which ensures that everyone has to confront a hazard at some point in their round. Whilst shot-link data and tournaments are important to ensure they remain relevant to the very best players in the world, just as importantly the average member should not be forgotten about.

Many of the existing fairway bunkers have been positioned well off the line of play and therefore tend to catch poor shots rather than the 'almost perfect one'. The old aerals show that this wasn't the case in the earlier designs which featured many more bunkers directly in the line of play which forced golfers into making a decision. It also appeared that there were many more bunkers which took advantage of the natural rises on holes like the 3rd and 4th, which help make for more intimidating and dramatic looking hazards.

Another issue related to fairway bunkers concerns the strip of rough between the fairway and the bunker. We can never understand the rationale behind this band of rough as it ends up making the hazard largely redundant with running balls gathering in the rough when they should finish in the hazard. If well positioned the ultimate strategic hazard is one where the fairway runs right to its edge and the golfer who plays nearest the trouble enjoys the greatest reward (i.e. a shorter shot or better line).

Relationship to Greens

Too often there is far too much rough between the putting green and the hazard which like the rough around the fairway bunkers, ends up making the bunkers an irrelevant hazard for the good player. In many cases the bunkers are 8 or even 10 feet from the edge of the green and we would like to see this reduced to just 1 or 2 feet. Augusta does this very well and may prove to be a useful model.



Above: A close up of the bunkers on the 10th and 15th holes in 1934 (left) and 1952 (right). Some of the early bunkers at Medinah had some wonderful shapes and would have been beautiful looking hazards but sadly they were altered barely a decade after the course was built. Whilst the course has seen many different redesigns in the years since, the bunkers have never been returned to anything resembling these original hazards and we think it is something worth restoring or at least taking inspiration from.



Narrowing the gap between greenside bunkers and the putting surface allows for many more interesting pin positions and improved strategy across the golf course. Augusta (top image) does a good job of this, with just 1 to 2 feet of fairway length grass between the hazards and green, as opposed to Medinah with up to 10 or 12 feet of rough (bottom image).

*Top Image : Fairway bunkers on the right side of the 3rd hole
Bottom Image: A good example of mowing fairways right to the edge of fairway bunkers can be found on the Melbourne sandbelt.*

ROUGH

There are two issues to consider when it comes to the use of rough around the golf course. The first concerns the strategy and playability of holes. Generally speaking we believe there is too much maintained rough in play and have suggested that in many instances areas are converted to short fairway length grass. Course #3 is big in scale yet relatively narrow with just 25 acres of fairway grass and as a rule we would like to see this increased - particularly to make the course more playable for the average golfer. Other specific areas include areas surrounding greens as well as eliminating the rough which separates many hazards from the playing surface, be it a fairway or green.

The second area to discuss is one of aesthetics.

To help contrast with the areas of maintained rough and offset the extra areas of short grass we would like to start experimenting with adding some rough grasses which may be able to be grown a little longer in certain sections of the course. This should not be interpreted as a desire to make the course harder by adding long rough and so for the most part it would be kept out of play. Visually the addition of some longer rough will add texture to the out of play areas and the slight brown colour when allowed to grow a little longer in the warmer months will help offset the lush green colour elsewhere around the course.

From a maintenance perspective some large sections of 'uncut' rough will also help offset the additional maintenance required by having more areas of short grass to mow.

There are some excellent local examples of feature rough being used to add to the aesthetics of a property, most notably at nearby Old Elm and Chicago Golf Club.



The use of fescue as a feature rough at Chicago Golf Club provides a great model for Course #3

DRAINAGE

A significant part of the Master Plan is drainage and we're fortunate to be working closely with Burke Engineering who were heavily involved with the redevelopment of Courses #1 and #2. Unlike Courses #1 and #2 there is no macro-drainage system in place around the course and so it regularly floods after high rainfall.

From a design point of view we'd like to see the golf course consistently play firmer but without a good quality drainage system its nigh on impossible. This doesn't just mean tees, greens and bunkers need to be drained but there needs to be a large scale drainage system to take water away from these areas quickly, including in the fairways and roughs. On top of that we may need to reshape certain parts of the flatter areas of the golf course or natural collection areas in order to direct water flow toward pits and pipework.



A recent photo illustrating how water collects at the bottom of the 5th fairway. Trying to achieve consistently firm playing surfaces is impossible without rectifying these sorts of issues.

PATHS

Another key part of the infrastructure that requires upgrading are the paths. Maintenance and cart paths around the course are generally in decline with pot holes and crumbling edges. Their upgrade is an important part of the plan to address, not only to improve the surface but also their position in-line with design changes and to ensure golfers can access greens and tees without putting undue stress on the turf grass.

Formal paths are somewhat of a necessary evil in golf course design and whilst they must be positioned so that they serve a functional purpose, we are also conscious of hiding them as best we can. There are a number of different types of path which can be considered including exposed aggregate concrete which we have used on a number of recent projects. Aside from being hard wearing, the colour and stone within the surface helps create a more natural look that ensures they better blend into the surrounding rough or tree-line.



A close up view of the proposed cart path plan. Red lines indicate golf cart paths (10ft wide), yellow lines are maintenance paths (10ft wide) and blue is the road access behind the 3rd tee and 5th tee (20ft wide).

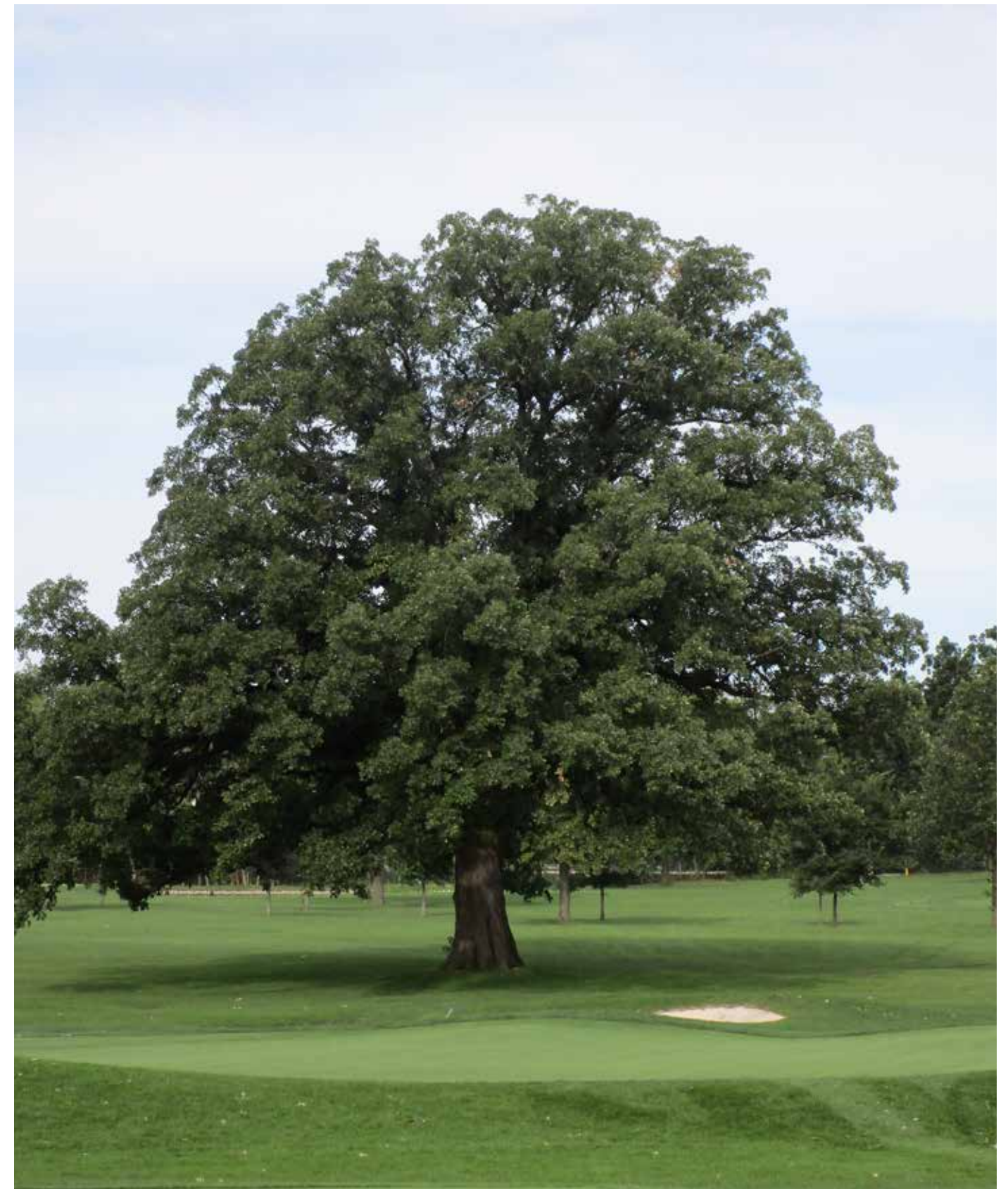
VEGETATION

Course #3 is built over a beautiful piece of land and without question it is the stands of old Oaks that really give Medinah its unique feel. Retaining this feel is a critical part of the project and so we are very conscious to retain as many of the significant trees around the course as possible. Some tree removal is necessary, be it as a result of agronomy (turf) or specifically related to design, but the intention is to plant at least the same number of trees that are removed which we estimate to be between 250 and 300 trees.

The main section of tree removal is a result of the new holes to be constructed on the back nine, plus some removal is also necessary to realign the 6th and 10th holes further from the boundary, but this in turn allows us to plant many more trees along the fence-line so that cars and buildings can be properly screened.

Elsewhere, some tree removal has been suggested on the corner of some doglegging holes (e.g. the 9th and 11th), however these trees were planted well after the course was originally built and aren't as significant as the original stands of Oaks. Trees are used on the corner of many of the doglegs but as discussed earlier in the report our philosophy is that holes are generally best defended by hazards on the ground rather than hazards in the air (trees). We're not alone in our view of using trees in design and it's a sentiment shared by the world's best architects - past and present. We're often reminded of a great quote by Harry Colt who suggested "that trees should be part of the scenery but never the stage".

Some tree removal or pruning may also be needed to ensure that the turf quality continues to improve. Unfortunately, trees and low cut turf are simply not compatible. Trees cast shade and grass needs light, so some trees close to playing surfaces will need to be removed or at least pruned to open up the canopy. Ensuring good air flow is also a consideration - particularly around the greens. Plus of course, encroaching tree roots can rob the grass of moisture and nutrients and lead to compromised turf.



One of the many beautiful Oaks dotted around Course #3 at Medinah which help to give the golf course its unique and enviable feel.

PRACTICE

Practice areas have come a long way since Medinah was first laid out in the 1920's. Most clubs were lucky if they had a putting green for golfers to hit a few putts and some space near the clubhouse to have a few swings before the round. In the last 15 or 20 years the notion of a practice area has changed and we have seen some fantastic innovations with modern teaching centres, short game facilities, short courses and putting courses added to both public and private facilities. Not only are these proving to be valuable areas to practice but they can also provide other areas to play as an alternative or compliment to the main courses, which has proven to be an incredibly popular as a pathway into the game.

Medinah is fortunate to have some wonderful areas to practice but there are some improvements that can be made. The driving range has become so popular the tee is not large enough to cater for the amount of play it receives, plus the front putting green is too steep and needs to be flattened to be a more functional space. Perhaps the biggest opportunity comes with the changes to the 18th hole we have suggested, which frees up a large space close to the entry road for a possible new 5-hole short course and putting green.

Front Putting Green

The main issue with the front putting green is how steep the surface is. Ideally this is flattened considerably to provide a more usable area to practice or warm up. The exact design should however take into consideration the other greens in the immediate area. With a large green on the other side of the clubhouse that better represents those on the course and potential new green near the entry that could be heavily contoured this area might be best kept relatively flat. On some of our recent designs we even gone to the extent of building a small green or section of a green that is exactly level, complimenting the more undulating areas that mimic the conditions on the course with somewhere golfers can practice their alignment and stroke.

Driving Range and Practice Centre

It is possible that the biggest problem with the existing range has come as a result of its popularity. Its perhaps too good a facility and therefore even at 8000ft² tee (which is huge by most standards) the tee isn't large enough to cater for all the golfers wishing to hit balls.

Perhaps in an ideal world a longer narrower tee would be better served than one that's shorter and deeper but this is largely a function of the space. We have looked at a number of different ways to make this tee bigger but the location of the teaching facility, path and 8th hole on course #2 make this problematic. As an alternative, we explored an option to build an additional tee to the South and close to the maintenance facility. This not only allows for another large tee to be built but offers golfers a chance to choose an alternative angle depending on the wind direction, plus it links nicely to the short game facility and some additional car parking. Further consideration could be given to formalising the target greens and adding some bunkers to better simulation the playing conditions on the course by offering more realistic targets. This has become a popular addition to many driving range and there are few better examples than the work done by Coore and Crenshaw at Clear Creek in Tahoe, Nevada (image over the page). Further refinements and permitting will be required to develop these initial concepts and therefore this will likely not form a part of the course #3 project.





DRIVING RANGE CONCEPT

One of our favourite driving ranges was created by Coore and Crenshaw at Clear Creek in Tahoe. Greens, bunkers and acres of short grass help to add interest by replicating the types of shots faced out on the course.

PRACTICE

Short Game Facility

With up to 80% of shots played within 100 yards of the hole, short game facilities are arguably a more important part of the practice facility than a driving range. The best examples look to mirror the shorts of shots and conditions found out on the golf course and provide a variety of shots up to 30 or 40 metres including all manner of bunker shots, bump and runs, chips, pitches and even putts.

The existing area could be significantly improved. As a result of the steep slope there isn't a lot of variety to types of shot which can be played. Most are played off a sloping lie and the couple of bunkers down near the creek are incredibly deep and difficult. The greens are also quite small and not really representative of those found out on the any of the courses.

The ground along the creek has become overgrown and should be cleared out to make a feature of the water and the more significant trees. If the ground surrounding the creek can be raised it will help flatten out the ground and could make for a wonderful hazard against the bottom green. With short grass linking across to the new tee this area also become part of the short game area and allows golfer to hit shots across to the other side.

“The Camel Trail”

Relocating the 18th fairway to its original position next to the 1st hole, opens up some space near the entrance which we believe could make for a terrific 5 or 6 hole short course. Short courses have become incredibly popular in the last 15 years or so at both public and private clubs. Some of the better known facilities include “The Sandbox” at Sand Valley, The Cliffs at The Olympic Club, The Cradle at Pinehurst and of course one of the best known early examples at Augusta, with their Par 3 course which showcased on the Wednesday of every years Masters event.

Part of the popularity of Par 3 courses is how inclusive they are. Irrespective of age or ability, they provide somewhere away from the spotlight and pressure of a ‘big’ course to learn and enjoy the game. For time poor its also a way of playing holes without having to set aside 2 or 3 hours; plus of course, it can just be somewhere to hang out with friends, settle a bet and have some fun. At Medinah a short course here would also provide members with another practice area, close to Course #3 and within walking distance of the clubhouse.

Putting Course

In the 1890's Old Tom Morris built a large putting course next to the 2nd tee on the Old Course. Taking up around 5 acres it would be known as the Ladies Putting Course but more affectionately as the “Himalayas” such was the dramatic nature of the contours. In many ways it was the very first mini golf course anywhere in the world. Rather than just being a large undulating green the Himalayas green features 18 fairly distinct holes with plenty of quirk and variety to keep it interesting day to day.

In recent times the concept has seen a revival and putting courses have been built at a number of well known private clubs and resorts including Bandon Dunes, Gamble Sands, Streamsong, Big Cedar Lodge, Erin Hills, Pinehurst and our own soon to be open public facility in the heart of the sandbelt at Sandringham Golf Course.



*Top: The Ladies Putting Course or “Himalayas” at St. Andrews, Scotland
Bottom: An aerial view of “The Cradle”, the par 3 course at Pinehurst which has averaged 40, 000 rounds a year since opening.*



THE CAMEL TRAIL

An aerial animation of the proposed new short course we've entitled "The Camel Trail". Up to 5 holes can be built in the area currently occupied by the 18th fairway, each measuring between 75 and 100 yards.

THE HOLES

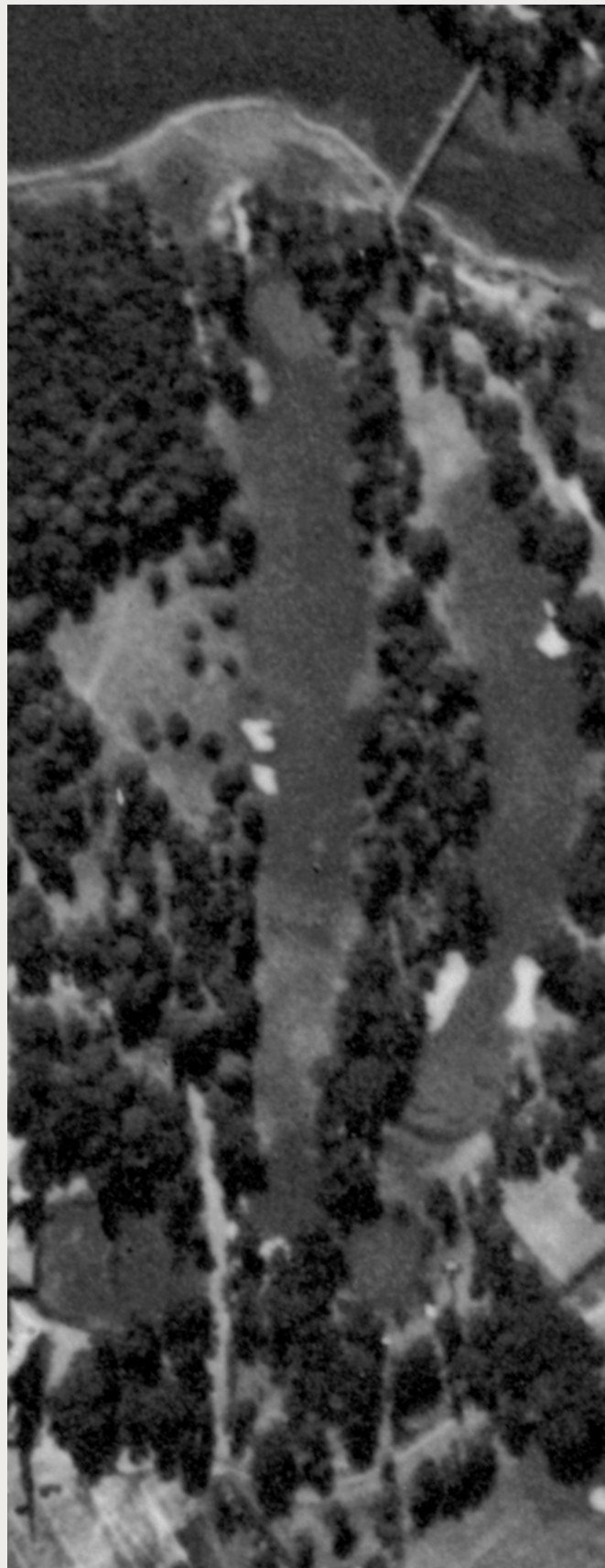
MEDINAH COUNTRY CLUB

Course #3



1ST HOLE

Historical Study



1939



1962



2002



1930'S vs 2020

1ST HOLE

Existing			Proposed		
Gold	Par 4	433 yards	Gold	Par 4	445 yards
Silver	Par 4	383 yards	Silver	Par 4	385 yards
White	Par 4	357 yards	White	Par 4	360 yards
Green	Par 4	357 yards	Green	Par 4	300 yards

Many of our favourite opening tee shots feature wide expanses of fairway, sometimes even extending even all the way back to the tee. This can make for an elegant look and help convey a dramatic sense of space.... aside from helping put the average golfer at ease with their first swing of the day.

The swale on the left is an ideal position for fairway bunkers but they could be a little more dramatic and more natural in their appearance. In conjunction with their reconstruction more fairway should be added in front of the hazard to allow the shorter hitter a little more latitude - albeit from here the green is blind so the shot is still a challenging one.

The current green looks a little artificial as it sits well above the natural ground level and as a general rule our preference is to build greens and bunkers into the landscape to give the impression the features have been found rather than manufactured.

Our suggestion here is to build a green that falls with the natural slope of the ground so the putting surface would tilt slightly from front right to back left with bunkers added to guard the left side.

Behind the green there is a chance to use short grass to greater effect. If the left-hand cart path is moved, short grass can extend right from the edge of the green all the way through to the main 2nd tee and with the slight front to back tilt we expect of the putting surface, there should be plenty of chipping and recovery shots played from this area. As a broad swath of fairway grass it will create a terrific visual of linking the two holes together; penalize poor shots more effectively than rough with the ball running further away from the target; and at the same time, offer far more variety for recovery shots.



Link green surround through to 2nd tees with short grass

Construct new green which compliments the natural contours of the area. This will result in a putting green which tilts slightly from front right to back left

Rebuild fairway bunkers along left and re-contour the surrounding hill to make more natural looking hazards

Bunkers can also be pushed further along the hole to create a longer carry for the tournament golfer

Widen fairway short of bunkers

Construct new forward green tee

Extend fairway (short grass) back to tees and link through to 18th green surround

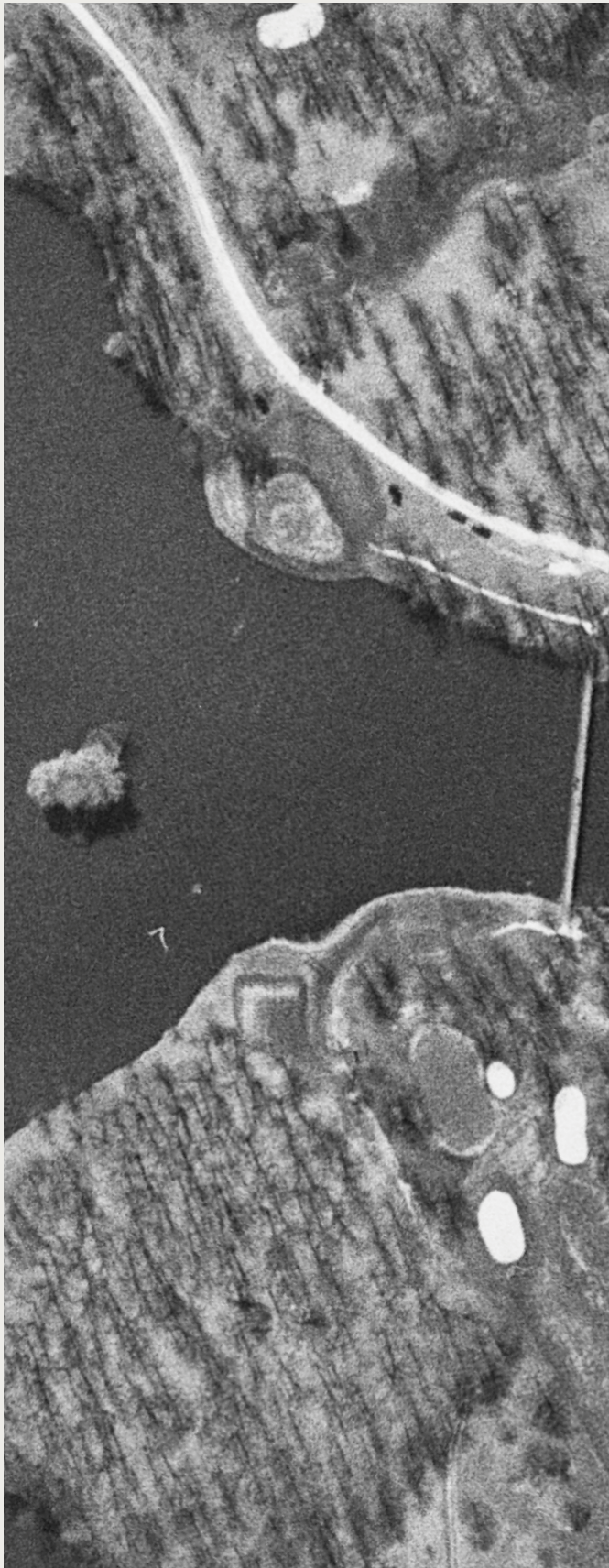
Construct new tournament tee roughly 10 to 15 yards further back

2ND HOLE

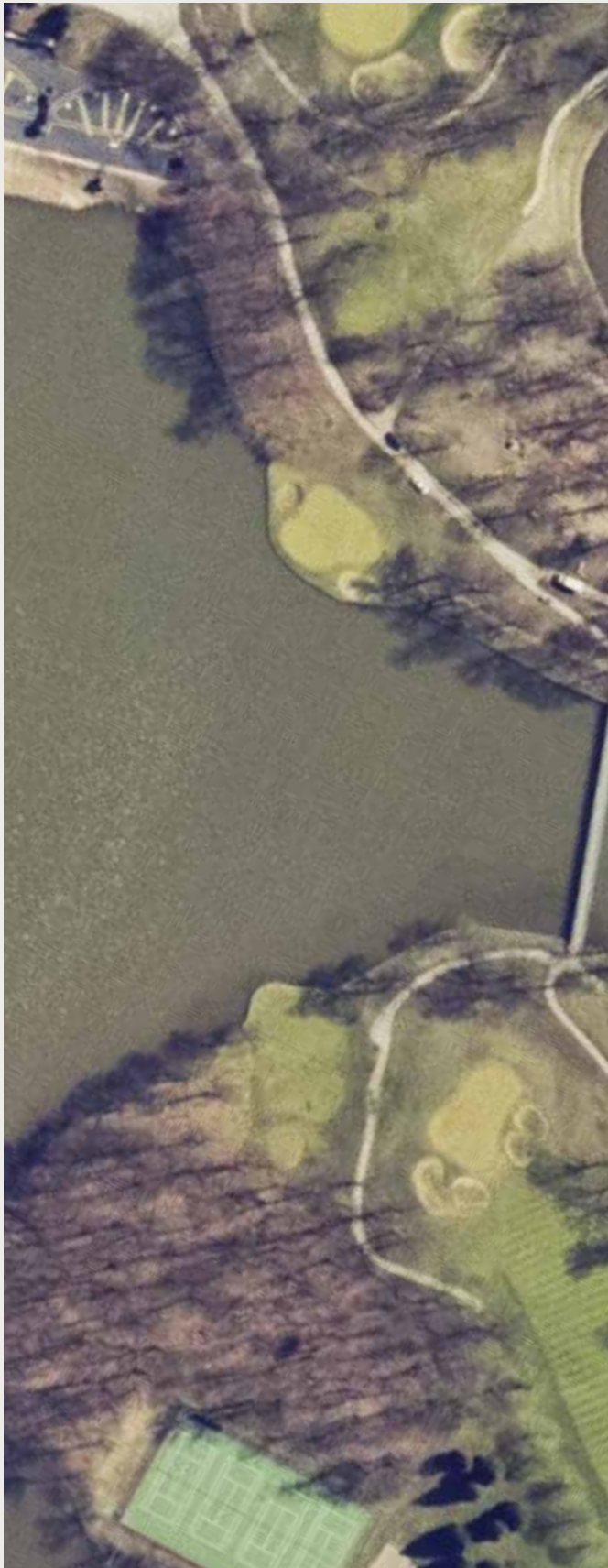
Historical Study



1939



1962



2002



1930'S vs 2020

2ND HOLE

<i>Existing</i>			<i>Proposed</i>		
<i>Gold</i>	<i>Par 3</i>	<i>192 yards</i>	<i>Gold</i>	<i>Par 3</i>	<i>205 yards</i>
<i>Silver</i>	<i>Par 3</i>	<i>172 yards</i>	<i>Silver</i>	<i>Par 3</i>	<i>180 yards</i>
<i>White</i>	<i>Par 3</i>	<i>151 yards</i>	<i>White</i>	<i>Par 3</i>	<i>165 yards</i>
<i>Green</i>	<i>Par 3</i>	<i>151 yards</i>	<i>Green</i>	<i>Par 3</i>	<i>140 yards</i>

This is the first of the water holes at Medinah and it’s a thrilling mid iron to a fairly small target. It also represents the first example of a shot which is difficult for the average golfer yet relatively simple for the tour professional and ideally this balance would be corrected a little.

There are a couple of things to consider at the green end – one is the shaping of the ground and the other is the role and extent of the sea wall.

There are a few greens which don’t naturally tie into the surrounding landscape and it makes for a somewhat disjointed look. The best green complexes have contours that effortlessly flow from one feature to the next and sometimes just the height the grass is mown at is the only clue that you’ve moved from putting surface into the green surround. In contrast the 2nd looks contrived with the steep bank behind the green clearly at odds with the height and slope of the putting surface. Raising the putting surface allows us to create a more natural-looking green and improvements to the drainage system.

To make the hole play a little easier for the average golfer, we would like to fill a small section of the water at the front of the green. This change provides a shorter carry or ‘bail out’ and places the water hazard on more of a diagonal as opposed to lying directly across the line of play. Diagonal water carries almost always make for more interesting golf holes than water positioned directly across the line of play as it tests both line and length for the approach.

In addition to the re-alignment of the sea wall here, we are exploring ways to add a facade of dry-stack stone to improve its appearance.



Construct new green complex. Bunkers will again be used behind the green to help soften the appearance of the steep bank.

Feature rough to be used behind green and along ridge to gun club to improve backdrop.

Small section of lake to be filled to reduce carry and green surround to be maintained as fairway (short grass).

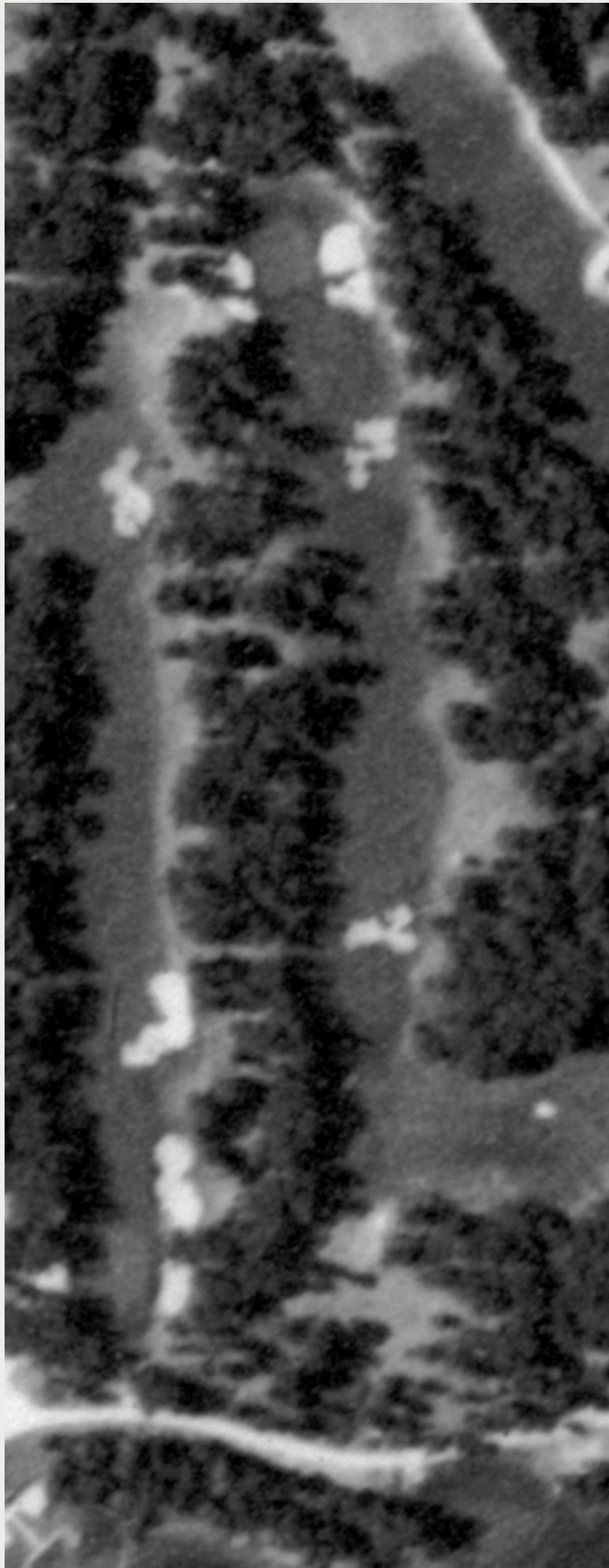
Feature rock wall used against green edge to improve the appearance of the sea wall.

Link green surround through to 2nd tees with short grass

Tournament tee added back and left along edge of Lake, making the hole play at least 205 yards.

3RD HOLE

Historical Study



1939



1952



2002



1930'S vs 2020

3RD HOLE

<i>Existing</i>			<i>Proposed</i>		
<i>Gold</i>	<i>Par 4</i>	<i>412 yards</i>	<i>Gold</i>	<i>Par 4</i>	<i>425 yards</i>
<i>Silver</i>	<i>Par 4</i>	<i>386 yards</i>	<i>Silver</i>	<i>Par 4</i>	<i>400 yards</i>
<i>White</i>	<i>Par 4</i>	<i>365 yards</i>	<i>White</i>	<i>Par 4</i>	<i>375 yards</i>
<i>Green</i>	<i>Par 4</i>	<i>365 yards</i>	<i>Green</i>	<i>Par 4</i>	<i>365 yards</i>

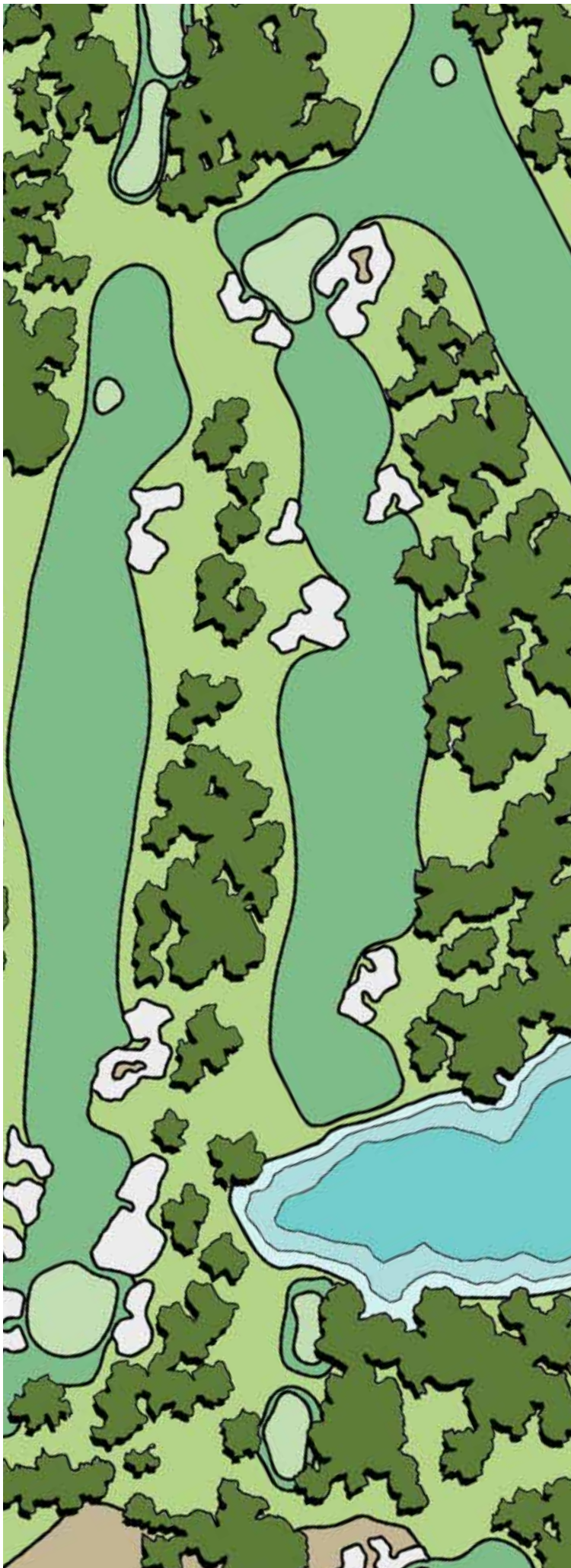
Of all the historical photos and aerials we have searched through, the images of the 3rd and 4th holes are perhaps the most exciting and visually dramatic. Moreover, they highlight an opportunity for some relatively faithful restoration of the 1930’s bunkering.

Interestingly that while driving distances of the past 100 years have practically doubled, the arrangement of hazards from the 1930’s works very well today. Perhaps, what are now drive bunkers, were positioned to influence players second shots during the hickory era, but nevertheless the arrangement is something we would like to see reinstated.

The third hole also presents a terrific example of the concept of building hazards where they best fit the landscape instead of placing them at some prescribed distance from the tee. The benefits of building bunkers where they best suit the ground is that you end up with a range of lengths, which in turn influences a range of golfers. Plus, of course, you end up with better-looking hazards built into the natural rises instead of on the flat ground that is less suited to creating impressive bunkering.

We like the combination of left and right fairway bunkers and a green that widens towards the back as it helps create different strategies day-to-day depending on the pin position. For example, pin left, and the preferred line from the tee is out to the right. Pin right and the strategy flips with the best line out to the left.

There is also room beyond this green to extend the hole a little (15 to 20 yards), which we believe is worth exploring.



- Construct new green roughly 10 to 15 yards behind existing green.
- Extend amount of short grass around green and link through to 12th fairway.
- Fairway bunkering to largely restore the 1930’s version of the hole
- Fairway will be widened slightly both left and right to match the strategy set up by the green.
A pin positioned on the right side of the green will be best approached from the left side of the fairway, and when the pin is on the left the reverse applies.
- Re-instate short right fairway bunker which was a feature of the tee shot in the 1930’s

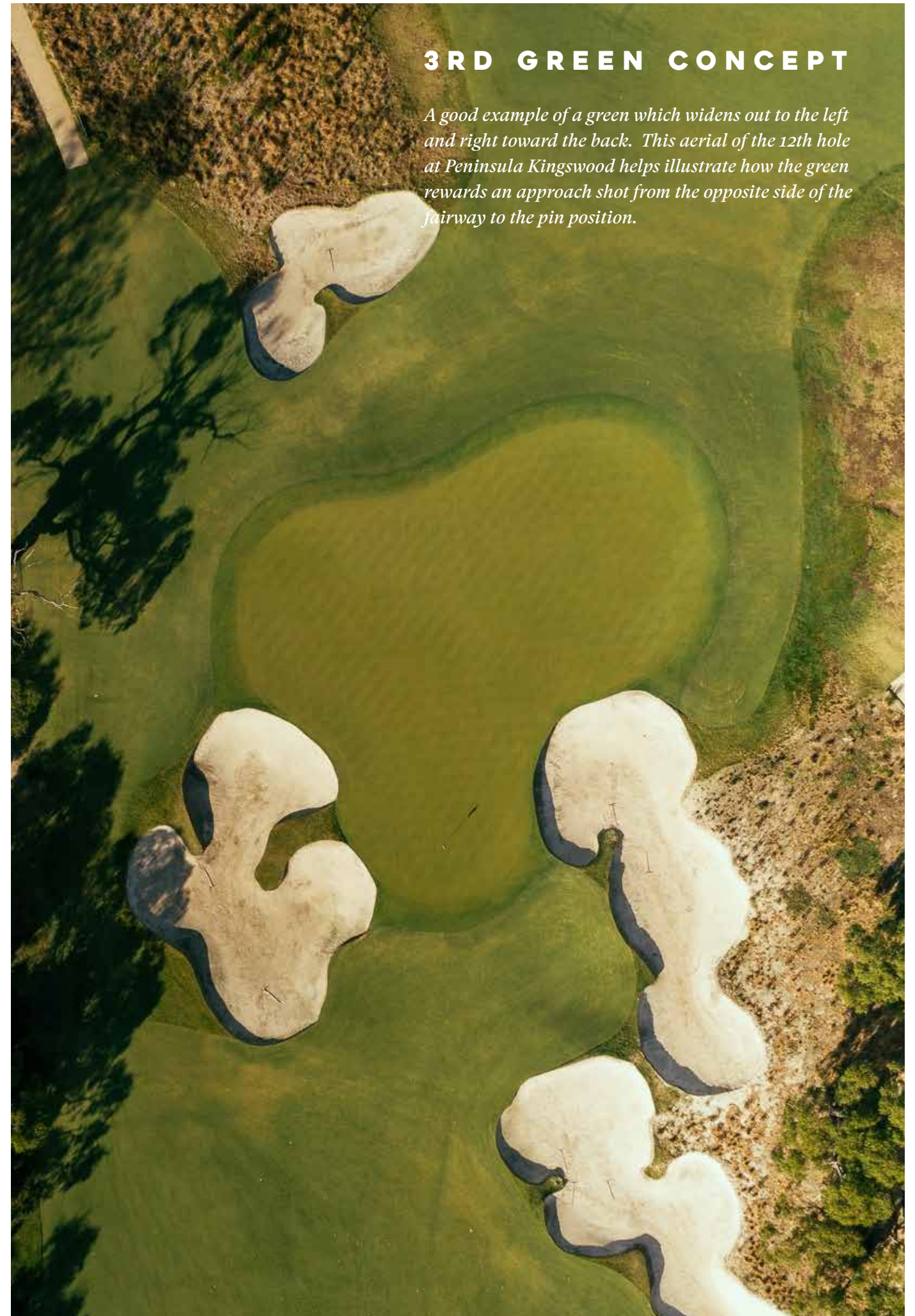
3RD CONCEPT

There is a wonderful opportunity to restore much of the early bunkering here at the 3rd hole, highlighted in this photograph taken sometime in the early 1930's.



3RD GREEN CONCEPT

A good example of a green which widens out to the left and right toward the back. This aerial of the 12th hole at Peninsula Kingswood helps illustrate how the green rewards an approach shot from the opposite side of the fairway to the pin position.



4TH HOLE

Historical Study



1939



1952



2002



1930'S vs 2020

4TH HOLE

<i>Existing</i>			<i>Proposed</i>		
<i>Gold</i>	<i>Par 4</i>	<i>463 yards</i>	<i>Gold</i>	<i>Par 4</i>	<i>485 yards</i>
<i>Silver</i>	<i>Par 4</i>	<i>432 yards</i>	<i>Silver</i>	<i>Par 4</i>	<i>435 yards</i>
<i>White</i>	<i>Par 4</i>	<i>401 yards</i>	<i>White</i>	<i>Par 4</i>	<i>400 yards</i>
<i>Green</i>	<i>Par 4</i>	<i>337 yards</i>	<i>Green</i>	<i>Par 4</i>	<i>325 yards</i>

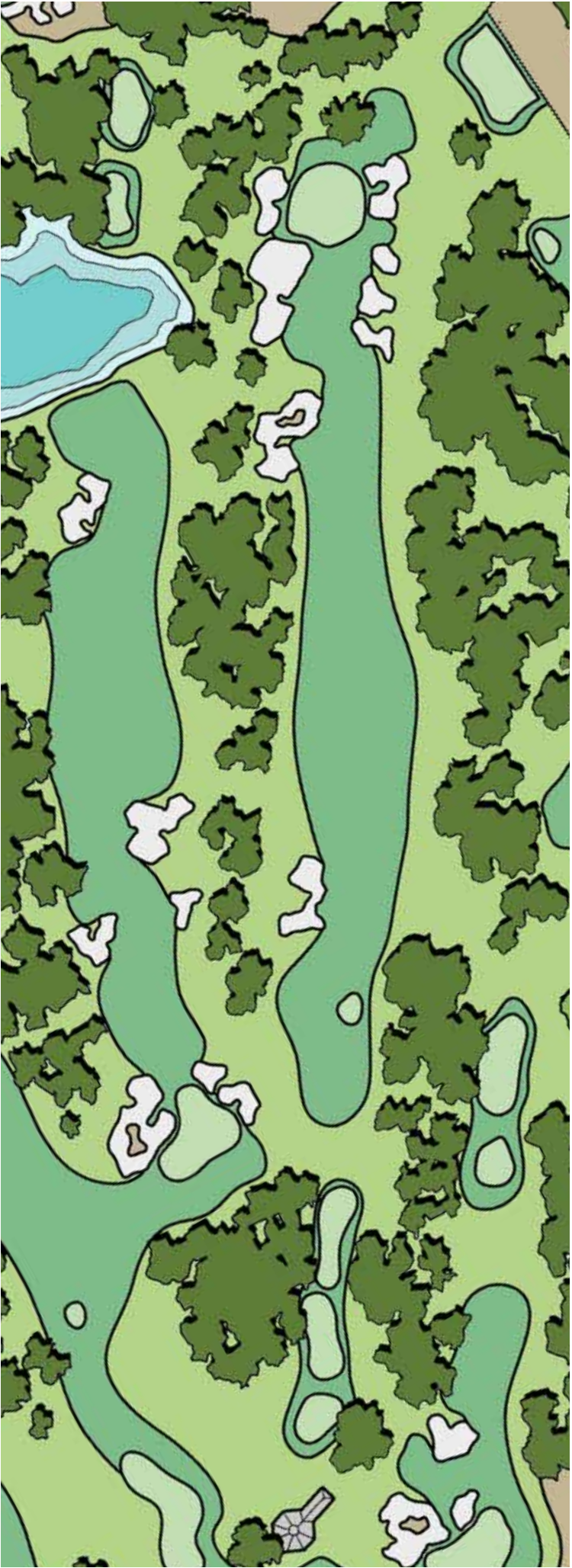
The 4th hole presents another opportunity to potentially restore some, or all of, the bunkering scheme from the 1930’s. Again, the historical images suggest this was an impressive looking hole, with a bold set of bunkers both left and right cut into the hill and leading up to the green.

Like the 3rd hole, there was originally a short bunker off the tee, but here it cut into the left side of the hole instead of the right. So again, we think this could be a terrific addition, however, we’re mindful not to have too many short hazards around the course unless they can be compensated by more short grass so the shorter hitters have room to play around the trouble.

Left and right, we see widening the fairway a little and extending back toward the tee, but this will remain one of the tighter tee shots and still ask for a well struck, accurate drive.

The green site is an excellent one, perched on top of the rise and the only change is to create a little more putting surface so that wear and pin positions can be more adequately spread. Elevated greens such as this always feel a little scarier when beyond the green is unknown - hence why skyline greens can be so dramatic. Adding a little extra short grass will add to the uncertainty, knowing that a miss long may finish well beyond their target rather than getting held up by rough.

At the tee end, there may be an opportunity to create a new tee back towards the ‘halfway house’ and a more formal forward green tee.



Retain existing green site but increase the amount of short grass in the surround

Restore 1930’s bunker scheme

Widen fairway slightly - particularly on the more open right side of the hole

Restore original 1930’s short left fairway bunker.

Extend fairway (short grass) back roughly 40 to 50 yards and create a new formal green tee

Construct new tournament closer to the halfway hut

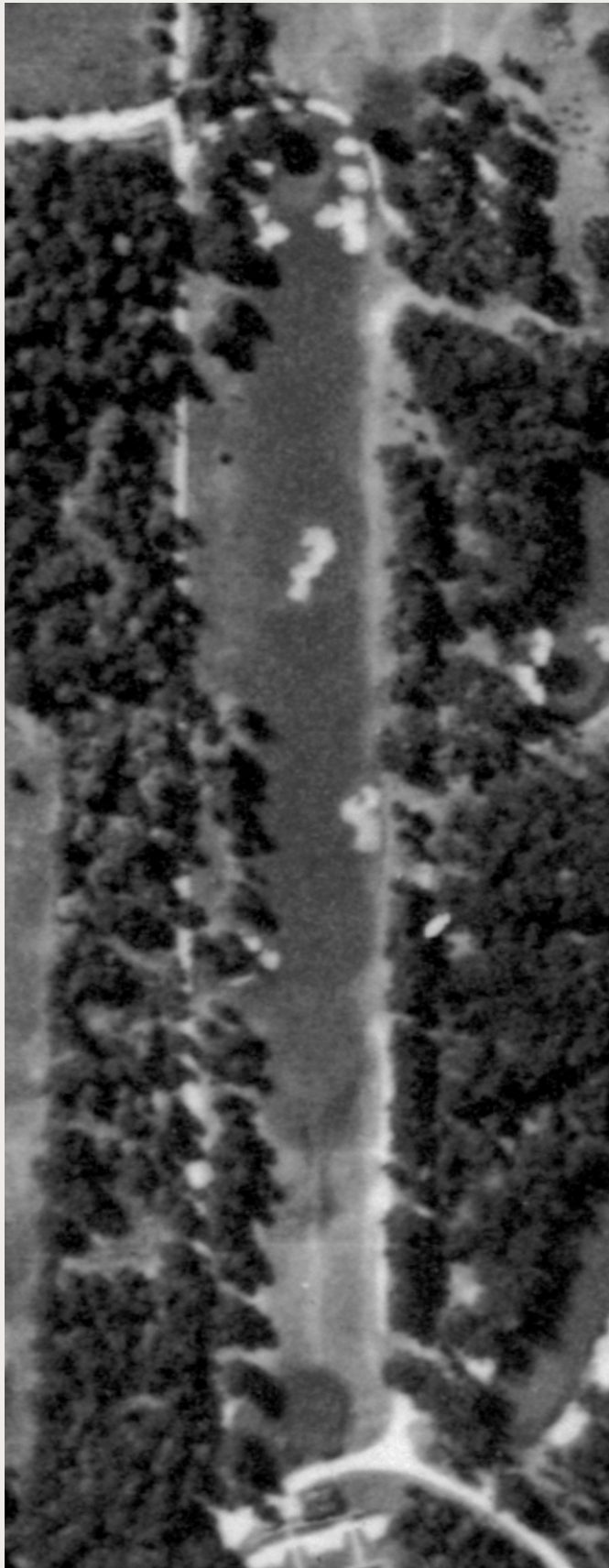


4TH CONCEPT

Another wonderful image of the 4th hole taken in the 1930's highlights some of the wonderful bunkering which was a feature of this hole is something we're keen to restore here.

5TH HOLE

Historical Study



1939



1952



2002



1930'S vs 2020

5TH HOLE

<i>Existing</i>			<i>Proposed</i>		
<i>Gold</i>	<i>Par 5</i>	<i>536 yards</i>	<i>Gold</i>	<i>Par 5</i>	<i>535 yards</i>
<i>Silver</i>	<i>Par 5</i>	<i>503 yards</i>	<i>Silver</i>	<i>Par 5</i>	<i>500 yards</i>
<i>White</i>	<i>Par 5</i>	<i>488 yards</i>	<i>White</i>	<i>Par 5</i>	<i>490 yards</i>
<i>Green</i>	<i>Par 5</i>	<i>488 yards</i>	<i>Green</i>	<i>Par 5</i>	<i>440 yards</i>

The short par five, the 5th hole plays over a nice piece of ground with the gentle rise perfect for building some dramatic looking hazards.

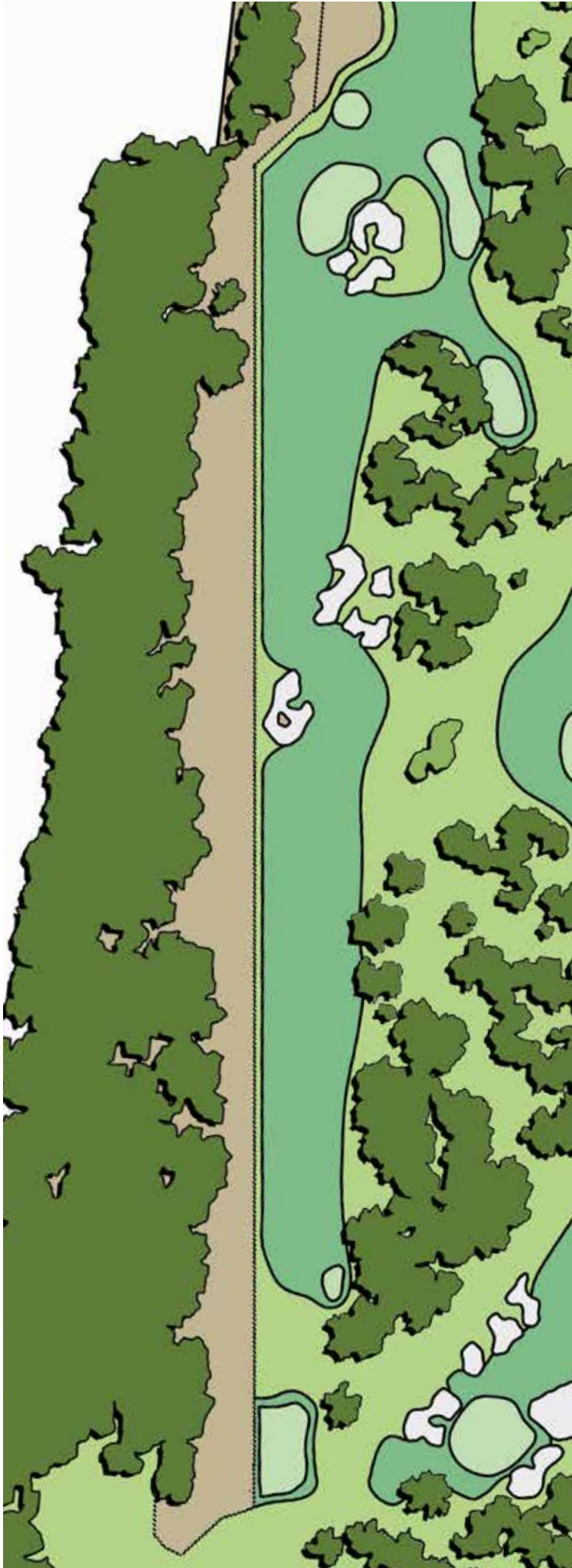
This fifth is easily reachable in tournament play, and we see no problem with that, but we would like to see more decisions from the tee and for players second shots by introducing more of a penalty if they poorly execute (or think through) their shots.

There is an opportunity to re-introduce the out of bounds as a hazard down the left which was no doubt a feature of the early design and could again make for an effective hazard on this short hole. We suggest an attractive split rail or timber fence be constructed between the existing tree line and the fairway, starting at the tee and finishing behind the green.

The strategy of the hole becomes a simple one. Play close to the out of bounds and the lone left fairway bunker and gain an advantage with a better angle to the green. This philosophy is the same irrespective of whether the golfer needs 2, 3 or 4 shots to reach the green.

A critical part of the hole design comes with the green which is angled to favor play from the left and close to the out of bounds. While there is plenty of fairway shown to the right of the hole, the angle is poor, and the approach becomes a difficult one playing across bunkers and to the narrowest part of the green. Bobby Jones would eloquently say of holes of this type that they should provide space for “players to hang em’selves”!

Short grass should feature prominently around this green both to link the hole through to the 6th tee and fairway and make for more interesting recovery shots around the elevated green.



Construct new green complex to reward play from the left side and close to the fence-line

Construct new bunker cluster into hill on right

Reshape left fairway bunker

Construct new timber post and rail fence along left side of hole to introduce the concept of the boundary playing a strategic role

Construct new forward green tee at the top of the hill and extend fairway back to encompass tee.

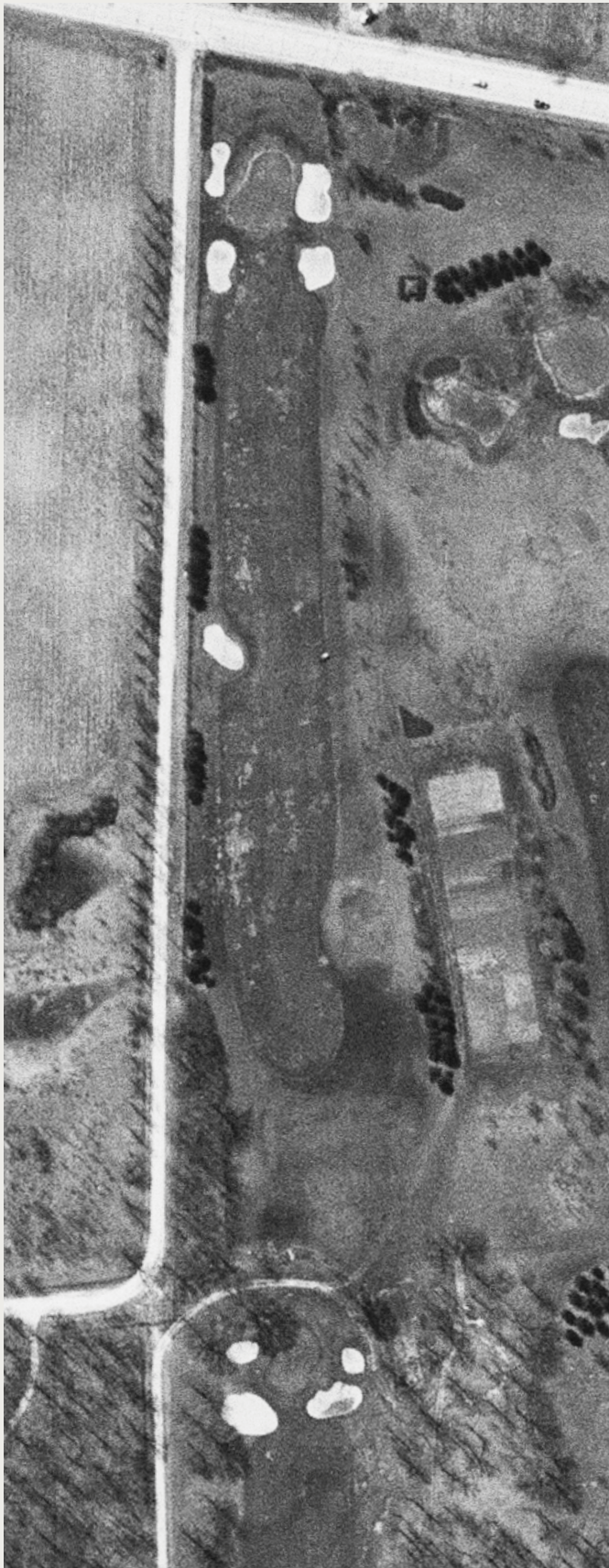
Extend main tee to the right to improve the view down the hole

6TH HOLE

Historical Study



1939



1952



2002



1930'S vs 2020

6TH HOLE

Existing			Proposed		
Gold	Par 4	509 yards	Gold	Par 4	495 yards
Silver	Par 4	454 yards	Silver	Par 4	445 yards
White	Par 4	432 yards	White	Par 4	385 yards
Green	Par 4	353 yards	Green	Par 4	360 yards

Early plans for the course indicated that the 6th hole was designed to use the boundary line as a feature and like the last there were advantages in playing close to the trouble. Of course, 80 years after the hole was originally designed, the once quiet dirt track has become a busy road with unattractive views and safety issues to be resolved with any plan moving forward.

The club is fortunate to have space to the right of both the 6th and the 10th, which allows us to physically shift the fairways 20 or 30 yards from their current position without the need to alter any of the surrounding holes. Planting multiple rows of trees along the boundary fence which will ensure houses, power-lines, roads and cars are ultimately screened from view. A perimeter maintenance path can also be added to assist with tournaments and general access.

With the hole shifted, there is an opportunity to re-introduce the concept of a fence into the design of the hole. As an extension of the last hole, the same timber fence could run along the left side of the fairway here to make an interesting and effective hazard from the tee and for the approach to the green.

Many great holes around the world use a boundary to create interest, and almost without exception, they reward the golfer who is brave enough to play close to the trouble. The same would apply here at the 6th with the approach to the green, made simpler from the left than out to the right.

In addition to reshaping and flattening the existing tees, there is a chance to re-introduce the original alternate tee immediately behind the 5th green, which creates an interesting angle for the green tees.



Link 6th green through to 7th tees, 10th tees and 9th green using short fairway length grass

Construct new green short and right of existing location. This could potentially use the fence-line as a hazard as an alternative to bunkers

Combination of fence-line along the left and bunkers down the right of the hole will create the strategic interest of the new hole

Shift 6th hole 20 to 25 yards to the right to allow fence-line to be appropriately screened with vegetation

Restore original short tee immediately behind the 5th green and link surround through to 6th fairway with short grass

Construct new tournament tee 20 yards behind existing tee

7TH HOLE

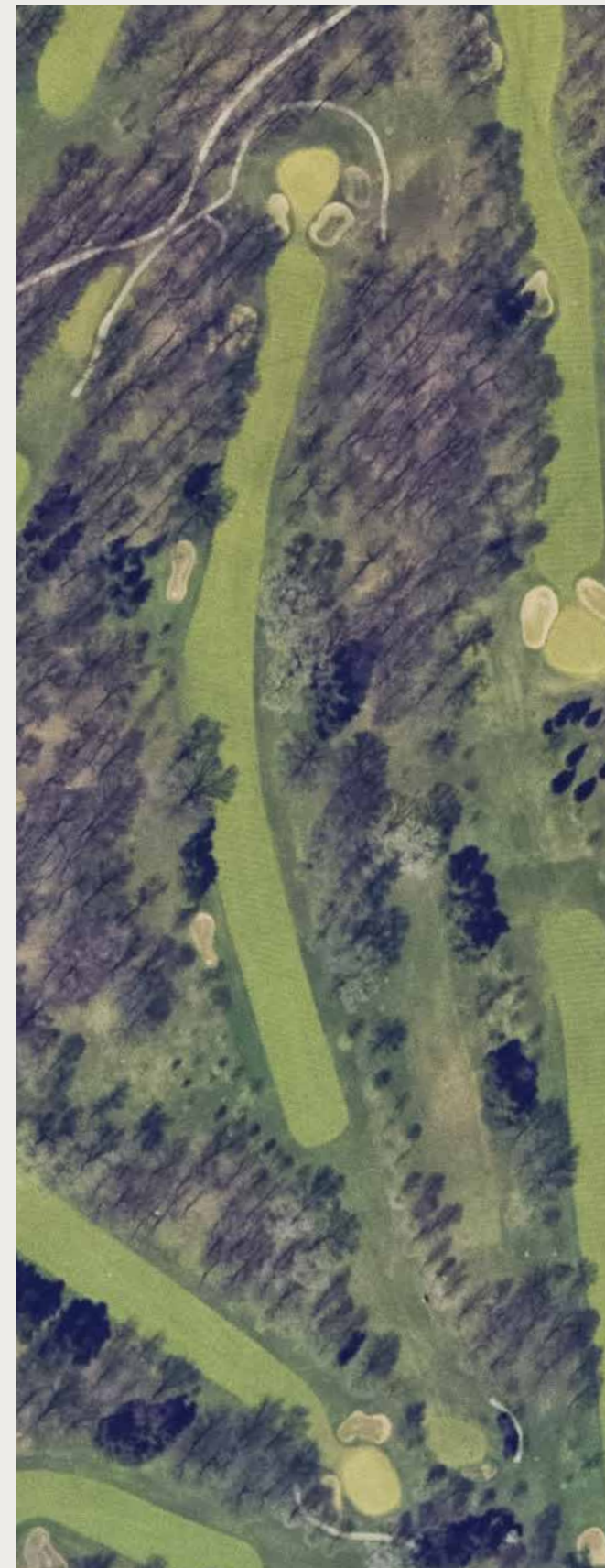
Historical Study



1939



1952



2002



1930'S vs 2020

7TH HOLE

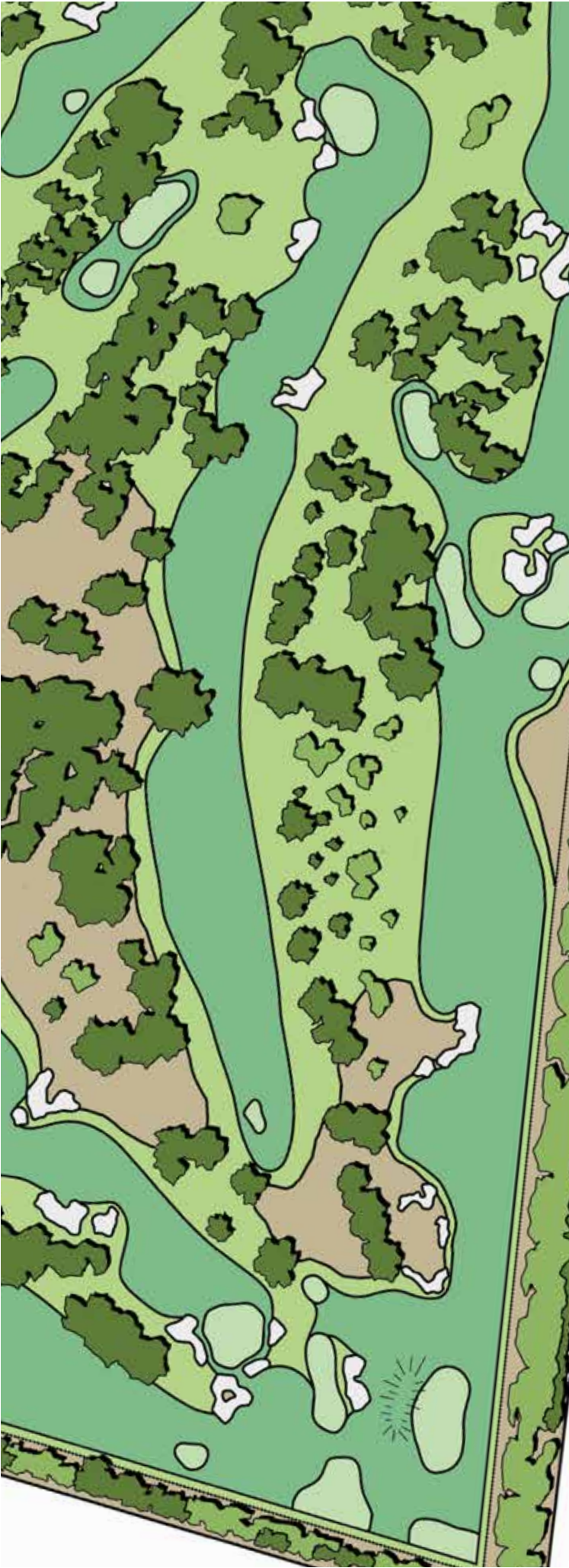
<i>Existing</i>			<i>Proposed</i>		
Gold	Par 5	617 yards	Gold	Par 5	655 yards
Silver	Par 5	585 yards	Silver	Par 5	600 yards
White	Par 5	571 yards	White	Par 5	560 yards
Green	Par 5	460 yards	Green	Par 5	460 yards

There are very few great examples of trees being used as an effective hazard in golf. Two that spring to mind can be found on the 18th at Pebble Beach and the 15th at Augusta. There is ample space to play around the trouble in both cases, with short grass up to the base of the trees to ensure a variety of recovery shots are available instead of hacking out of the rough sideways.

Here at the 7th hole, the majestic “Bebb’s Oak” is positioned through the fairway, and we believe the Oak could be used a little more strategically to help defend the hole. We have never been great advocates of building bunkers behind vegetation and creating a ‘double penalty’; instead, we would like to replace them with fairway. Those capable of threading their drive down the right half of the fairway gain the advantage of a clear second while those who play left must contend with the tree.

Giving the player more space to play won’t necessarily make the hole easier, as anything left will just finish stymied behind the tree. Still, at least in short grass, it will allow for a variety of recovery shots and not just a chop sideways out of the rough. 15 at Augusta does this really well, and there will no doubt be occasions where just like in Georgia, players gamble with a recovery by taking on some additional risk to advance their ball close to the green. Something not possible if the area was cut as rough.

We like the general orientation of the green here but suggest that rather than bunkers to the right the area would be more interesting if maintained as short grass. With the green elevated, the slopes will carry a missed shot much further away from the green than bunkers or rough, plus as fairway length grass, there will be many more options for recovery.



Retain green site but replace right bunkers with a large expanse of short grass

Construct new fairway bunker into natural rise on right

Remove left fairway bunkers and convert to fairway

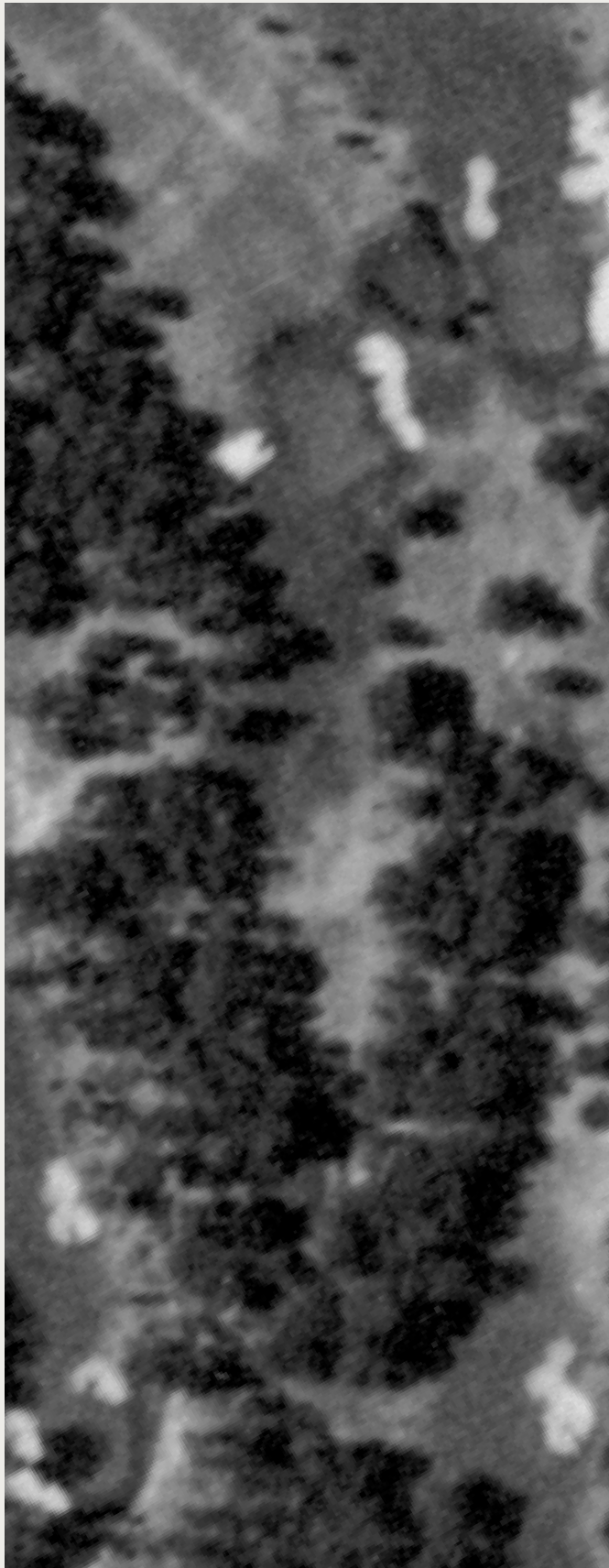
Extend fairway back to green tee

Link tees through to previous green using short grass

Potential to create a combined tournament tee with the main 10th members tee

8TH HOLE

Historical Study



1939



1952



2002



1930'S vs 2020

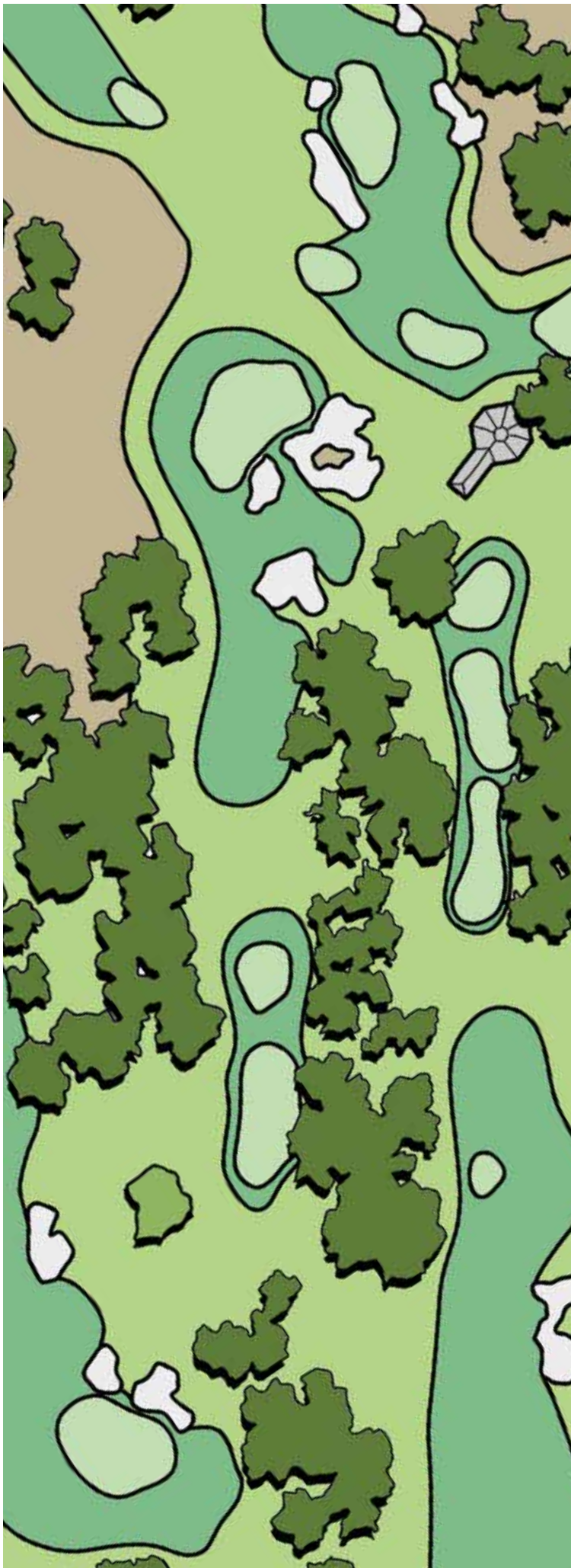
8TH HOLE

<i>Existing</i>			<i>Proposed</i>		
<i>Gold</i>	<i>Par 3</i>	<i>201 yards</i>	<i>Gold</i>	<i>Par 3</i>	<i>215 yards</i>
<i>Silver</i>	<i>Par 3</i>	<i>177 yards</i>	<i>Silver</i>	<i>Par 3</i>	<i>200 yards</i>
<i>White</i>	<i>Par 3</i>	<i>153 yards</i>	<i>White</i>	<i>Par 3</i>	<i>175 yards</i>
<i>Green</i>	<i>Par 3</i>	<i>153 yards</i>	<i>Green</i>	<i>Par 3</i>	<i>155 yards</i>

Variety is such an essential part of design, and when looking at the short holes, we like to ensure there is a good range of shot length, direction of play, and green orientation. In an ideal world, the mix of one-shotters would include a very long par three, a couple of medium length holes, and a great little sub-140 or 150 yard hole.

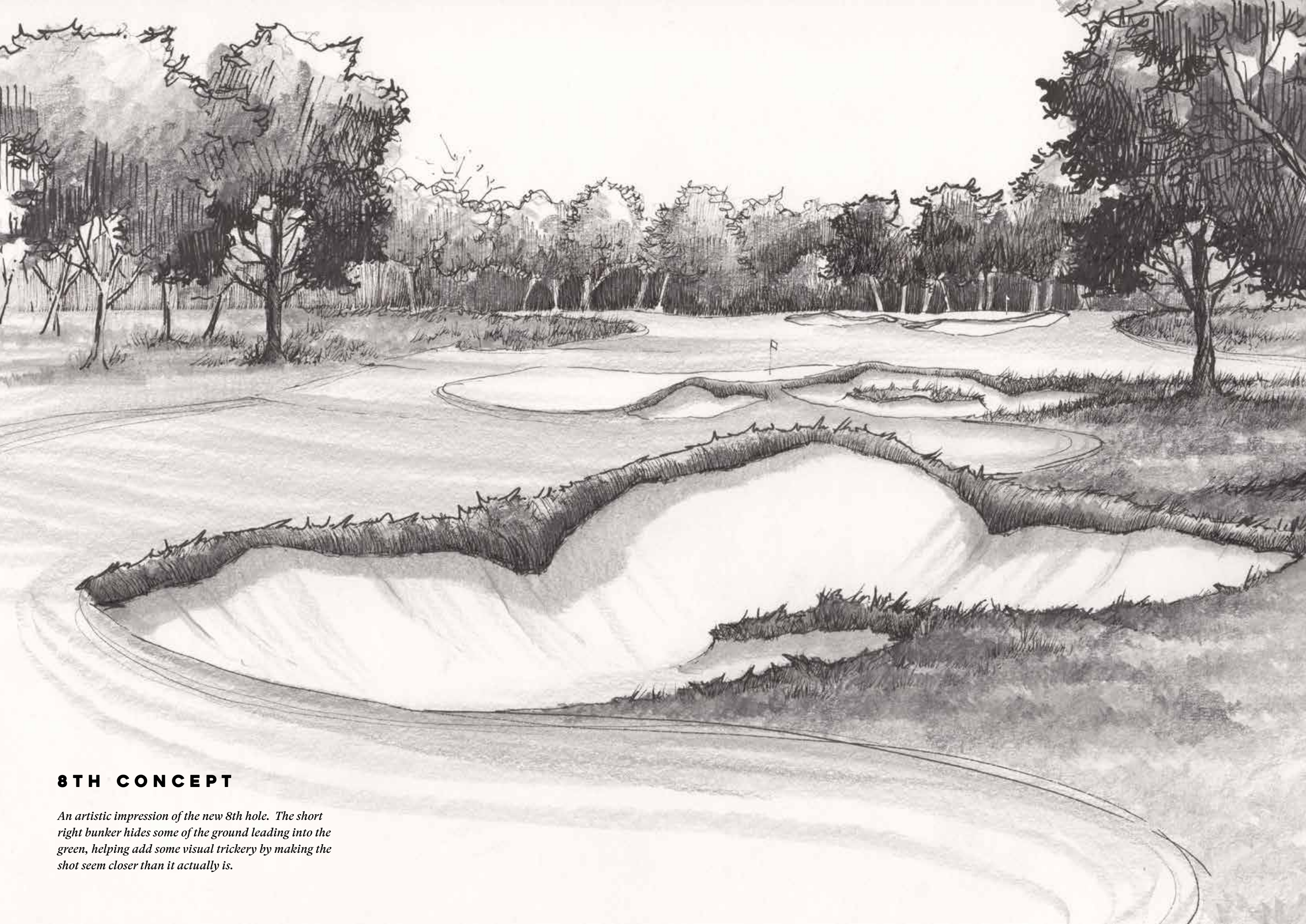
The proposed new layout includes a short par three at the 13th and a medium-length 17th hole, which suggests this hole maintain its current length or be made a touch longer.

With the natural slope of the land tilting from left to right, it also makes sense to build a hole that rewards a shot played in this direction. The natural slope also nicely offsets the right to left shape of the 2nd and 17th holes.



New green designed to compliment the natural left to right slope of the land. Bunkers will be built down the right and the green angled to favor a left to right shape.

Add approximately 10 to 15 yards to the tournament tee



8TH CONCEPT

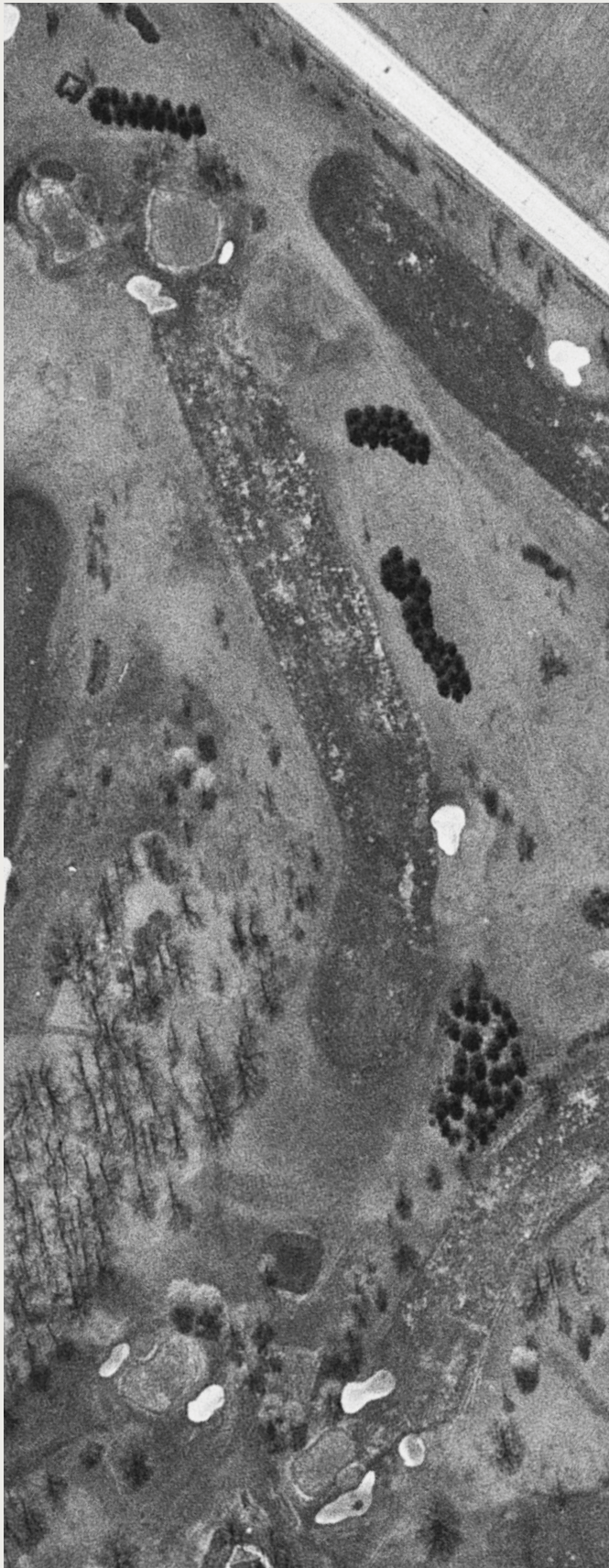
An artistic impression of the new 8th hole. The short right bunker hides some of the ground leading into the green, helping add some visual trickery by making the shot seem closer than it actually is.

9TH HOLE

Historical Study



1939



1952



2002



1930'S vs 2020

9TH HOLE

<i>Existing</i>			<i>Proposed</i>		
<i>Gold</i>	<i>Par 4</i>	<i>432 yards</i>	<i>Gold</i>	<i>Par 4</i>	<i>490 yards</i>
<i>Silver</i>	<i>Par 4</i>	<i>415 yards</i>	<i>Silver</i>	<i>Par 4</i>	<i>465 yards</i>
<i>White</i>	<i>Par 4</i>	<i>397 yards</i>	<i>White</i>	<i>Par 4</i>	<i>425 yards</i>
<i>Green</i>	<i>Par 4</i>	<i>397 yards</i>	<i>Green</i>	<i>Par 4</i>	<i>355 yards</i>

The 9th and 11th holes share some similarities. They are virtually the same length, turn fairly sharply right to left, and large trees defend the corner of the dogleg.

The ground to the left side of the fairway is more undulating than the 11th and presents a chance to build some terrific looking fairway bunkers. We suggest a large, short bunker, plus a couple, further along to defend the hole against the longer hitter.

The right bunkers roughly 70 yards short of the green are designed to be slightly raised so that any shot played from the right side of the fairway is both a poorer angle and somewhat blind to the green. With just the top of the flag visible and nothing to indicate the position of the surrounding bunkers, it can make the shot a little unnerving - even for the best players in the world.

With the 10th hole moving across and pushed closer to the 9th there might be the opportunity to link the fairway as a common area where the trees are at their sparsest. These small links can really help the visuals on a golf course by the promoting a feeling that holes flow from one to the next rather than being all separated by paths, trees, and rough.

The other point of difference between the 11th becomes one of length. To retain the beautiful old oaks on the corner of the 11th hole, we suggest the hole is shortened slightly with the green coming forward and right. This change allows the 9th to be lengthened in tournament play to almost 500 yards, with the tee able to come right back and close to the halfway hut.



Existing green site to be retained but bunkering rearranged to favor shots from the left of the fairway

New short right bunkers will obscure much of the green for anyone playing from the right half of the fairway

Replace trees on corner of dogleg with fairway bunkers

Widen fairway along left to the original 1930's mowing line

Construct new short left bunker into hill.

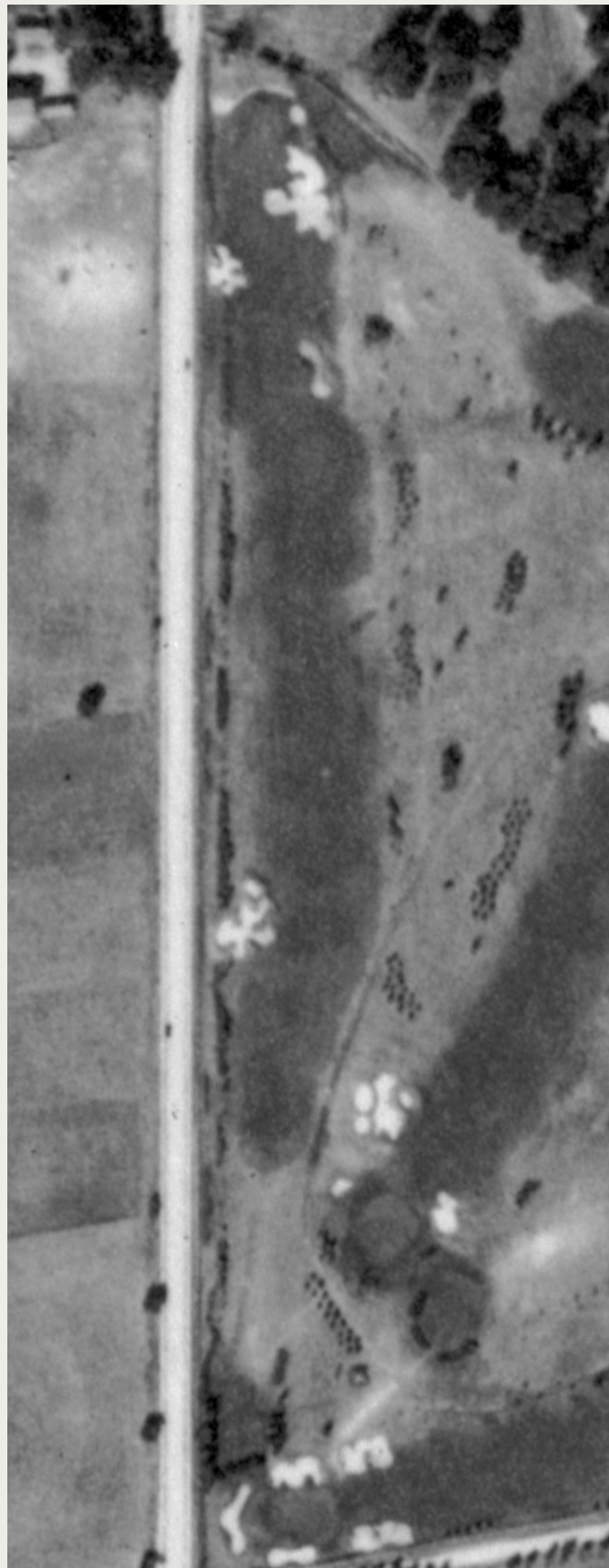
Feature rough to be used in large open space between 8th, 9th and 7th holes.

Short grass to extend from green surround on 11th through to main tees on 9th

New tournament tee close to the edge of the halfway hut. This may potentially double as the back tee for the 12th hole

10TH HOLE

Historical Study



1939



1952



2002



1930'S vs 2020

10TH HOLE

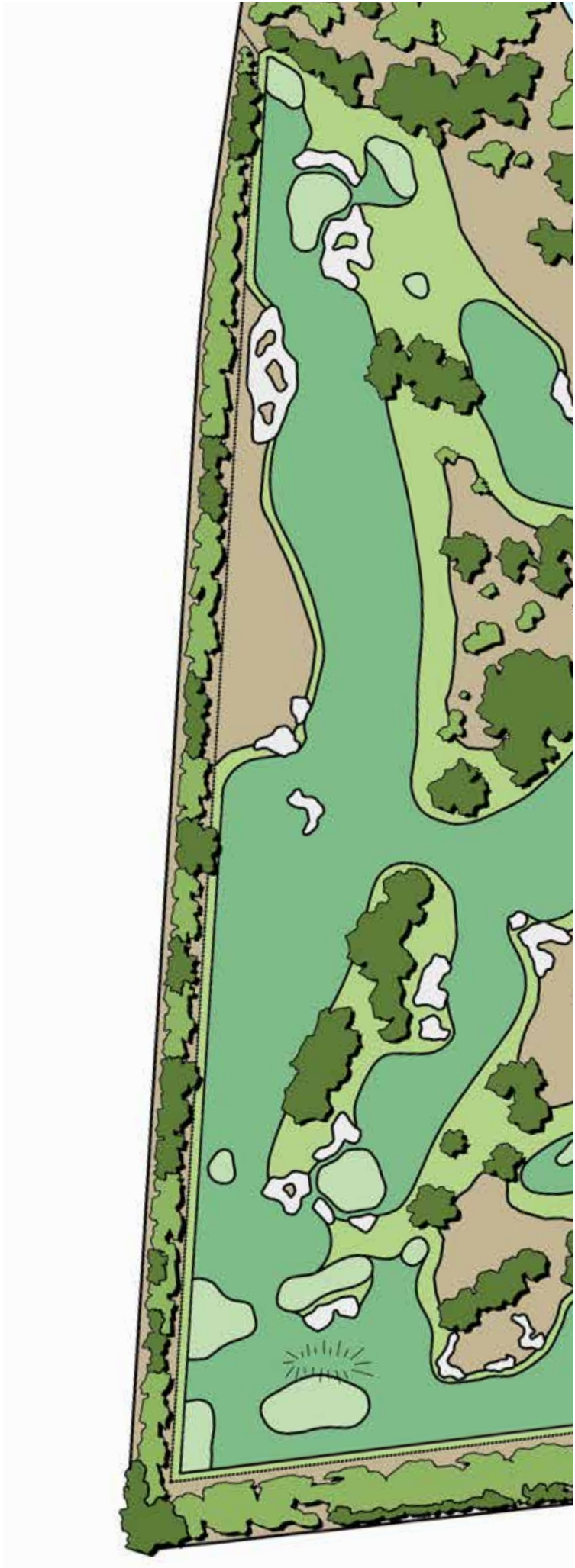
<i>Existing</i>			<i>Proposed</i>		
<i>Gold</i>	<i>Par 5</i>	<i>578 yards</i>	<i>Gold</i>	<i>Par 5</i>	<i>590 yards</i>
<i>Silver</i>	<i>Par 5</i>	<i>567 yards</i>	<i>Silver</i>	<i>Par 5</i>	<i>575 yards</i>
<i>White</i>	<i>Par 5</i>	<i>555 yards</i>	<i>White</i>	<i>Par 5</i>	<i>515 yards</i>
<i>Green</i>	<i>Par 5</i>	<i>463 yards</i>	<i>Green</i>	<i>Par 5</i>	<i>455 yards</i>

Like the 6th hole, we suggest moving the hole away from the boundary to help with safety and better planting to screen the course from cars and road noise. Fortunately, space is abundant to the right here for the hole to move across.

Rather than just building flanking bunkers, there is sufficient space to consider a central bunker off the tee. Such holes aren't that common as they require a wide expanse of fairway (almost double that of a normal fairway), but they can make for a unique and interesting decision from the tee. Perhaps the most famous version is the 6th at Carnoustie. This long par five has an out of bounds down the left and just 15 to 20 yards of fairway between the fence and the central bunkers but a drive here creates the best angle and a shorter shot to the green. Away from the central bunkers was a wider expanse of fairway, but the angle is poor and the shot too far to threaten the green in two. The hole would, of course, become more famous after Ben Hogan's victory in 1953 and the skinny strip of fairway would become known as 'Hogan's Alley' with Ben thrilling the gallery by playing down this chute every day of the tournament.

Importantly holes of this nature are just as interesting for the shorter hitters needing three or more to get home. For them, the large bunker on the left is in play and must be skirted to get a good angle for their approach.

Angle and slope on the putting surface are needed to really set off the strategy and reward those who have hit to the best position on the fairway so a good tilt off the bunker on the right would work well here.



New green shifts away from the fence-line by 15 to 20 yards

Construct new short bunker and incorporate native grasses to defend the ideal line for the second shot.

Construct new dive bunkers down the left side

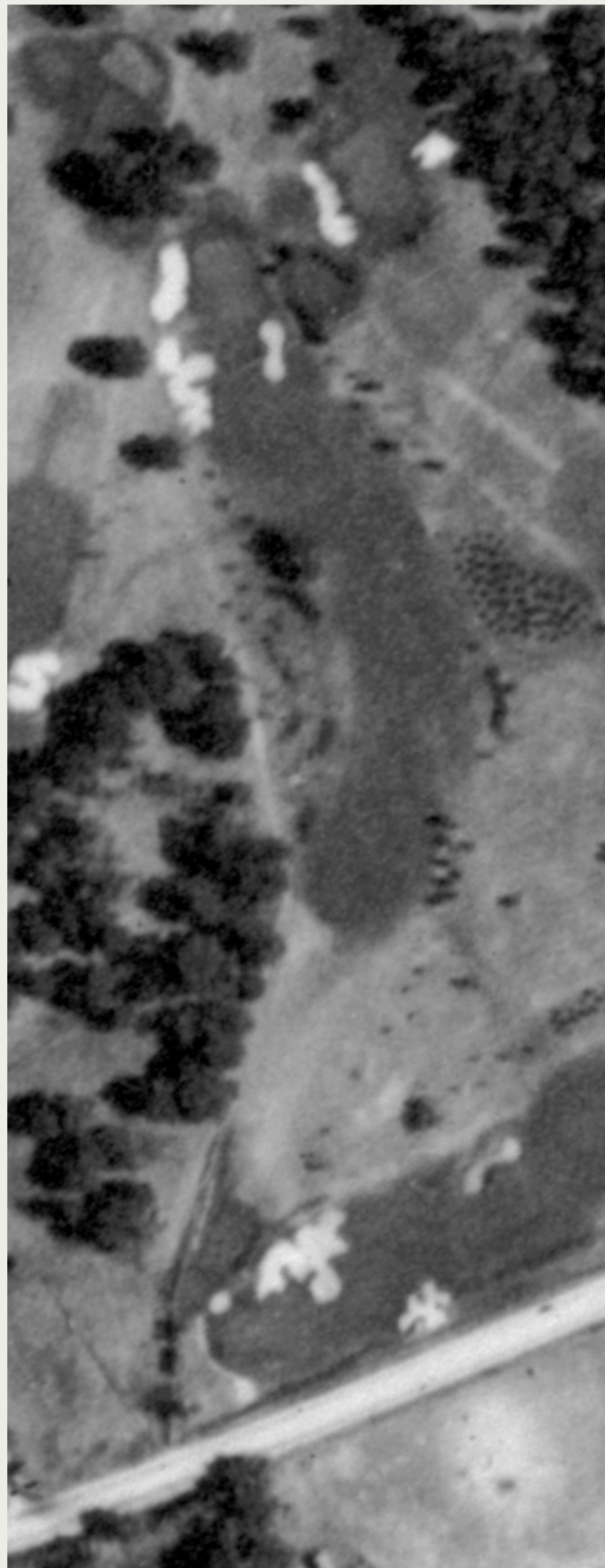
10th fairway to shift 15 to 20 yards right to allow the boundary to be appropriately screened with vegetation.

Construct new tournament tee in the corner of the property, roughly 25 to 30 yards further back

Link all features together using short grass.

11TH HOLE

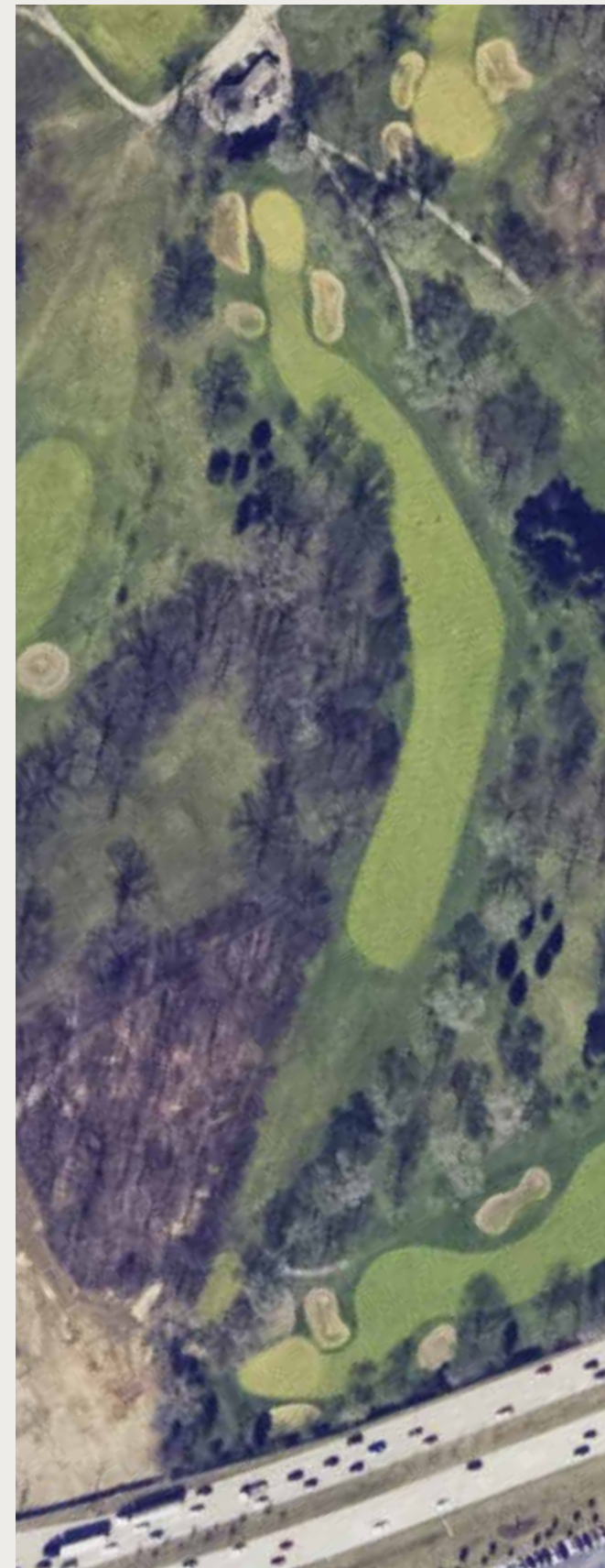
Historical Study



1939



1952



2002



1930'S vs 2020

11TH HOLE

<i>Existing</i>			<i>Proposed</i>		
<i>Gold</i>	<i>Par 4</i>	<i>440 yards</i>	<i>Gold</i>	<i>Par 4</i>	<i>390 yards</i>
<i>Silver</i>	<i>Par 4</i>	<i>389 yards</i>	<i>Silver</i>	<i>Par 4</i>	<i>380 yards</i>
<i>White</i>	<i>Par 4</i>	<i>374 yards</i>	<i>White</i>	<i>Par 4</i>	<i>315 yards</i>
<i>Green</i>	<i>Par 4</i>	<i>374 yards</i>	<i>Green</i>	<i>Par 4</i>	<i>275 yards</i>

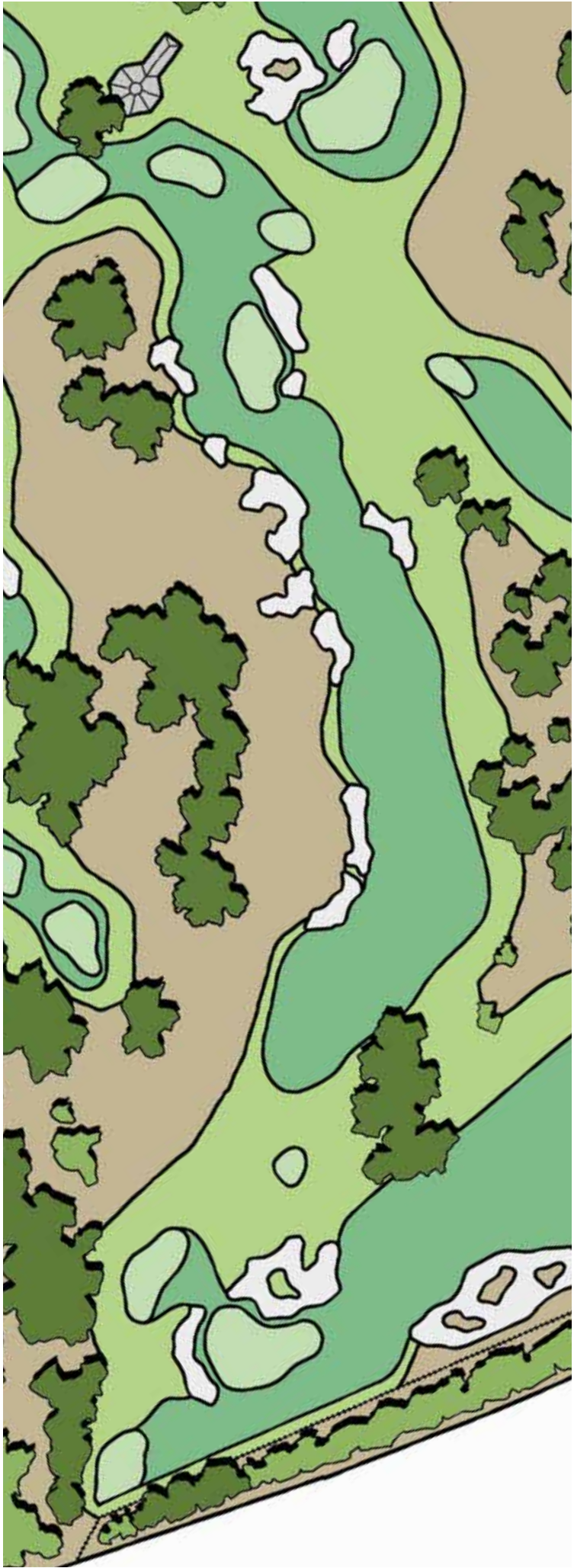
Like the 9th hole, the existing 11th turns severely from the tee and around a large stand of trees which appear to have been planted shortly after the course was constructed. We really like the doglegging nature of the hole and do not want to see this changed as it provides a pleasant contrast to the holes which are fairly straight or turn just a little.

The primary issue we have with the hole is the trees that guard the corner. Virtually every great dogleg in golf, from Long Island to London or down to the sandbelt in Melbourne, is defended on the corner with a ground hazard. Be it a sandy waste, bunkers, rough or heath. This makes for thrilling decisions off the tee and ensures that all skill levels face a similar decision, without prejudicing against those who can't make the corner.

The 11th hole reminds us a little of the 14th hole at Prairie Dunes in Kansas. Like this hole, the tee shot plays gently downhill, so from the tee, the golfer gets a good view of the fairway and green in the distance, while a series of bunkers and rough create a diagonal carry from the tee. The decision is simple. How brave do I want to be today? How much do I try and carry?

For holes like this to reach their full potential it is vital that from the tee, the golfer gets the full view of the hole - everything from the start of the fairway on the right, all the way across to the green in the distance. This way, every possible option is available to them. For the very long hitters or if the tees are pushed forward, they may wish to take on an ambitious carry far in the distance, while mortals will choose a more forgiving line to the right.

Importantly, the green is again angled to favor play from the left, thus rewarding those who can keep to the left side of the fairway.



Short grass used to link green surround through to the 9th tee complex.

New green constructed forward and right of its current location. Green is shaped and bunkered to advantage those who can keep to the left side of the fairway and close to the bunkers.

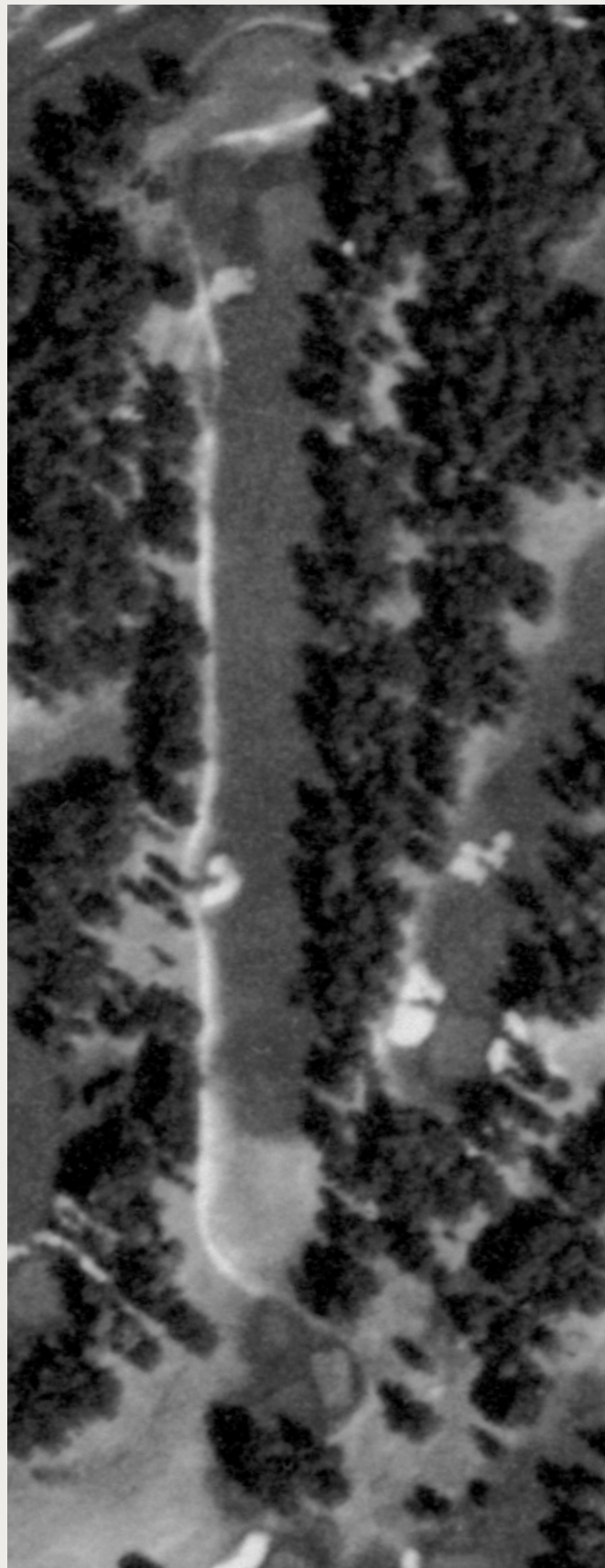
Trees on the corner of the dogleg replaced with a series of bunkers to help set up a dramatic looking diagonal carry.

Feature rough added to the left of the bunkers

Tees to shift slightly right and link to previous green with short grass

12TH HOLE

Historical Study



1939



1952



2002



1930'S vs 2020

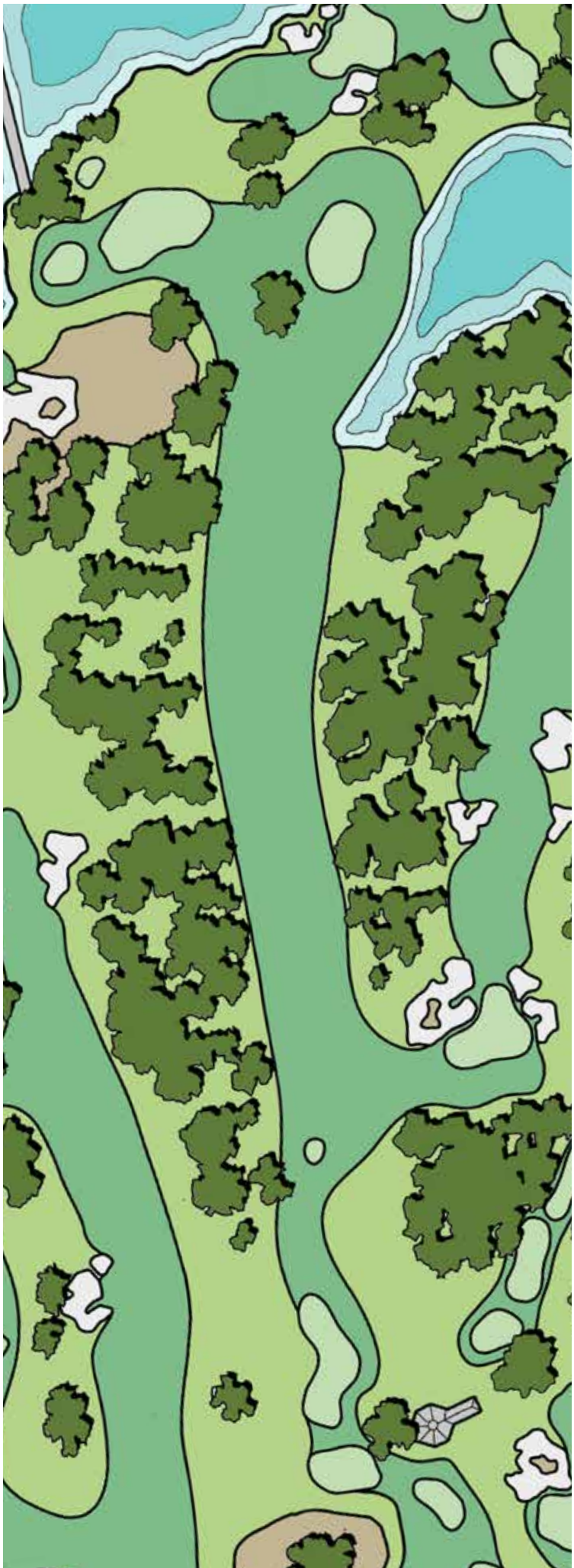
12TH HOLE

<i>Existing</i>			<i>Proposed</i>		
Gold	Par 4	476 yards	Gold	Par 4	505 yards
Silver	Par 4	463 yards	Silver	Par 4	470 yards
White	Par 4	452 yards	White	Par 4	440 yards
Green	Par 4	383 yards	Green	Par 4	370 yards

The twelfth is one of our favourite holes at Medinah and we love the simplicity of its design. The lack of any fairway or greenside bunkers creates a superb contrast with many of the other holes that rely on sand hazards to generate interest, and the use of the water and the slope off the front right of the green is a unique form of defense. So, our suggestion here is just to push the concept a little further along the same path.

Undoubtedly, the 12th plays as a long hole for most of the membership, but in the modern age of professional golf, it has been reduced to little more than a short iron for much of the field. With the suggestions for the final six holes, there is room to move this tee a little left onto a better line down the hole and back as far as necessary to put a mid to long iron in the hands of the professionals. The concept of the slope running off the green is an excellent one, but it works much better and is far scarier with a longer club in your hands than a wedge or 9-iron.

With the widening of the fairway along the right and removal of some trees along this side, both the pond here and Lake Kadijah in the distance will become more visible and make for a more dramatic approach. Potentially, the view to the 17th hole will also open up, and we suspect this hill could become a significant part of the course, with many holes playing to or away from the area and with beautiful views across the Lake.



Shift green slightly forward and right but retain concept of a smallish green defended by a bank of short grass falling off towards the water.

Short grass should be used to link the 12th green surround through to the 13th tee.

Thin vegetation along right and widen fairway to create a better angle into green

Extend fairway back to teeing areas

Relocate tees further left to improve angle down the hole.

Construct new tournament tee close to the location of the current 15th tee

THE FINAL SIX

holes thirteen to eighteen

The last six holes present the most significant opportunity to elevate the architecture of Course #3 and provides a chance to create an exhilarating world-class stretch of holes. We have spent a considerable amount of time looking at options here, including some which keep the hole alignments closer to their current form, but with every iteration we felt there was a missed opportunity to create something better and more memorable. The re-routing of the last six holes looks to take better advantage of one of the club's most outstanding natural assets - Lake Kadijah. While it adds a beautiful backdrop to many of the existing holes and helps give the course its enviable feel, the lake doesn't offer much interest as a strategic hazard, like so many of the world's great courses that play around water.

Before discussing the holes in more detail, it is worth highlighting some of our observations and critique of the current six holes that promoted this idea. These include: -

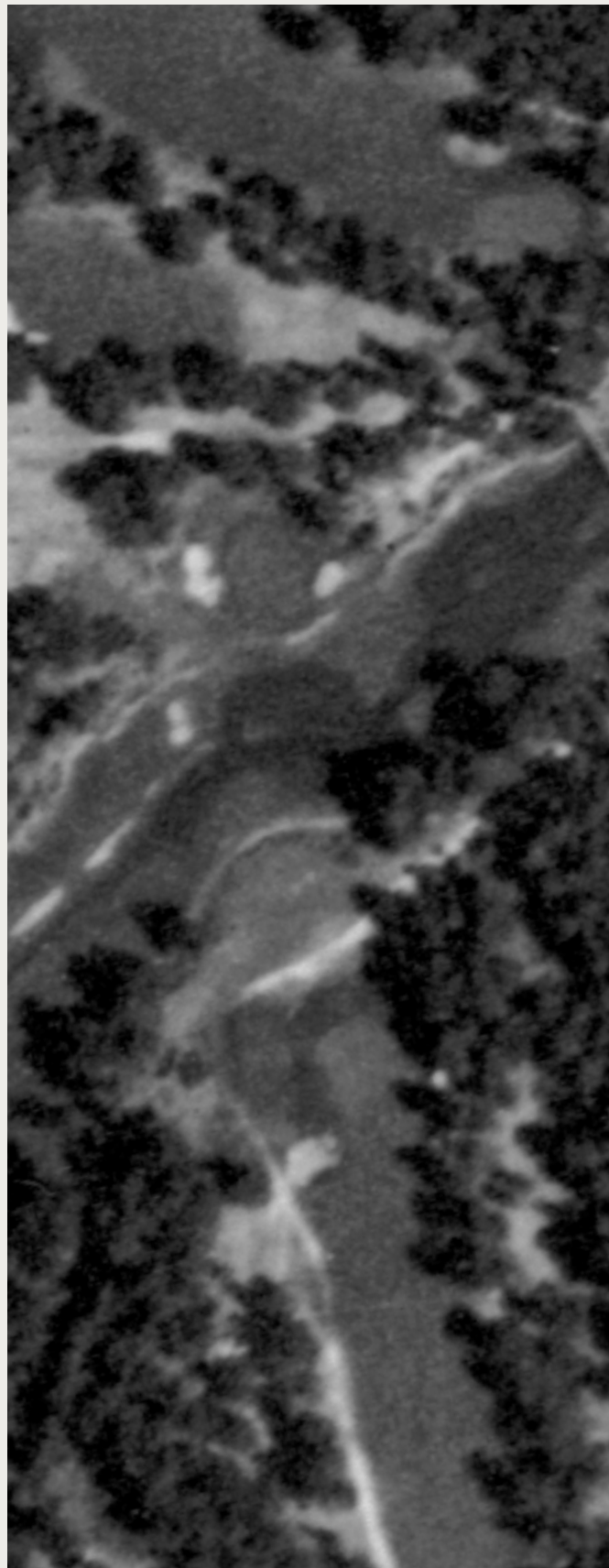
- The 2nd, 13th and 17th are somewhat similar, particularly the 13th and 17th since they also play in the same direction and alongside one another.
- The course lacks a truly great short par four, with the current 15th lacking the drama nor offering the strategic interest of the world's best examples.
- Use of water around the course as a hazard. It is repeatedly used across the line of play or in the case of the 15th alongside the fairway. In contrast, golf's most exciting water hazards are positioned diagonally, so golfers must decide how much of the hazard to play over.
- The potential to make a more dramatic finish for both members and in tournament play.
- Most importantly, determining the best solution to improve the architecture and variety of shots.

Designing for tournaments can be fraught with danger as far too often changes are made for an event played over just a handful of days every few years while the average member is left with an impossibly long or difficult course. The suggested concept avoids this with several alternate tees placed to reduce the carry or even eliminate it. For tournament play, the thrill of the closing holes winding their way across and alongside Lake Kadijah should make for some incredible golf. The variety of the finish will also have the potential to add to the drama with plenty of eagle and birdie opportunities mixed in with difficult pars.



13TH HOLE

Historical Study



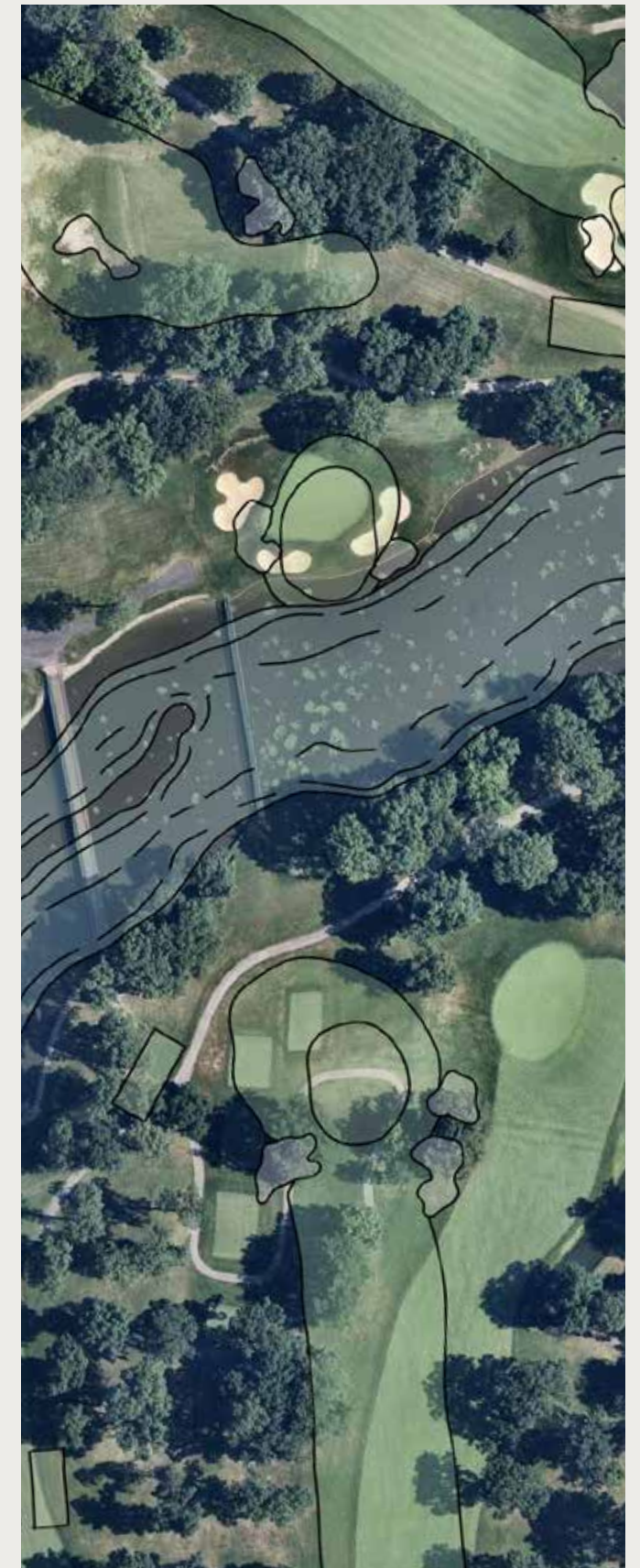
1939



1952



2002



1930'S vs 2020

13TH HOLE

<i>Existing</i>			<i>Proposed</i>		
<i>Gold</i>	<i>Par 3</i>	<i>245 yards</i>	<i>Gold</i>	<i>Par 3</i>	<i>160 yards</i>
<i>Silver</i>	<i>Par 3</i>	<i>189 yards</i>	<i>Silver</i>	<i>Par 3</i>	<i>150 yards</i>
<i>White</i>	<i>Par 3</i>	<i>151 yards</i>	<i>White</i>	<i>Par 3</i>	<i>140 yards</i>
<i>Green</i>	<i>Par 3</i>	<i>151 yards</i>	<i>Green</i>	<i>Par 3</i>	<i>120 yards</i>

Some of our favourite holes in golf are the little par three's. They often require no more than a short iron or wedge and with one well-struck approach a birdie is a realistic chance for most golfers. Yet, under tournament conditions, even a seasoned professional can be humbled with a bogey, or worse!

There is some excellent ground playing alongside Lake Kadijah, from close to the existing 13th tees and towards the start of the current 14th fairway, to make a hole of between 120 and 160 yards.

Unlike the current 13th hole, which plays directly over the water, the idea here is to build a green right on the lake's edge and play alongside it, which creates an entirely different setting to the existing holes around Lake Kadijah. We may also convert the ground behind the new green site to water, which will help give the impression the new green juts out on a small peninsula of land with water to the right and behind the putting surface.



Lake Kadijah expanded to help give impression the green sits out on a Peninsula into the water.

New green positioned close to start of current 14th fairway.

Short grass used to link green surround through to the 14th tees

Construct tees in approximate location of current 13th forward tees



13TH CONCEPT

An animation of the proposed new 13th hole. This view is taken from close to the current forward 13th tees and looking across toward the start of the current 14th fairway.

14TH HOLE

Historical Study



1939



1952



2002



1930'S vs 2020

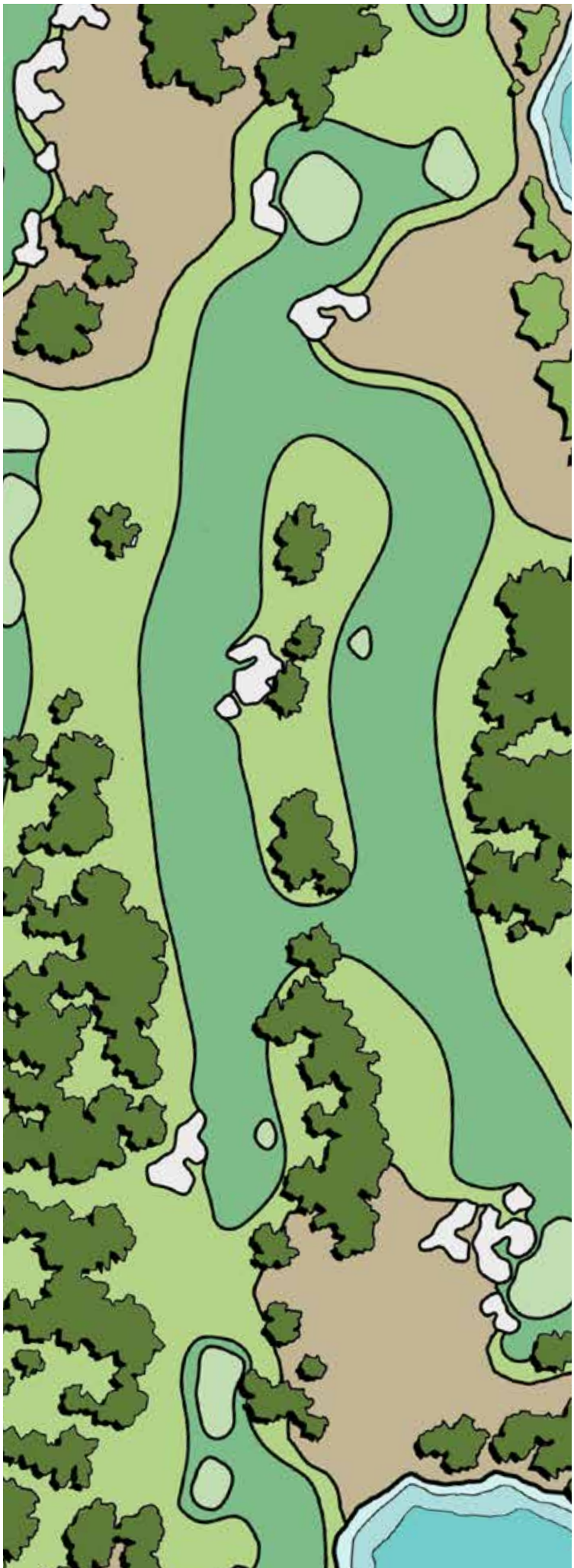
14TH HOLE

<i>Existing</i>			<i>Proposed</i>		
<i>Gold</i>	<i>Par 5</i>	<i>609 yards</i>	<i>Gold</i>	<i>Par 4</i>	<i>475 yards</i>
<i>Silver</i>	<i>Par 5</i>	<i>550 yards</i>	<i>Silver</i>	<i>Par 4</i>	<i>455 yards</i>
<i>White</i>	<i>Par 5</i>	<i>531 yards</i>	<i>White</i>	<i>Par 4</i>	<i>435 yards</i>
<i>Green</i>	<i>Par 5</i>	<i>495 yards</i>	<i>Green</i>	<i>Par 4</i>	<i>350 yards</i>

The first half of the 14th sees a return to an earlier version of the hole when it played as a short par four from a tee just forward of the current start of the fairway, but rather than playing to the current green, we are suggesting the green moves back and just in front of the beautiful stand of Oak trees currently left of the current 15th fairway.

The 14th features some fantastic rolling terrain for the drive, and there is a chance to build one or two very visual bunkers, which will add interest to the drive. In addition, the backdrop of Oaks trees – including some of the oldest on the property – makes for a unique and attractive setting.

The proposed new 14th hole would no longer feature the water carry from the tee; however, the new 18th hole replaces this concept and will play as a par 5 from all but the tournament tees. This ensures that the existing par is retained at a 72 for the silver, white and green courses, and a par 71 for the tournament layout.



New green positioned close to start of current 15th fairway, with the beautiful stand of old Oak trees creating the backdrop

Section of common fairway linking the 14th and 15th fairways with a section of feature rough beyond

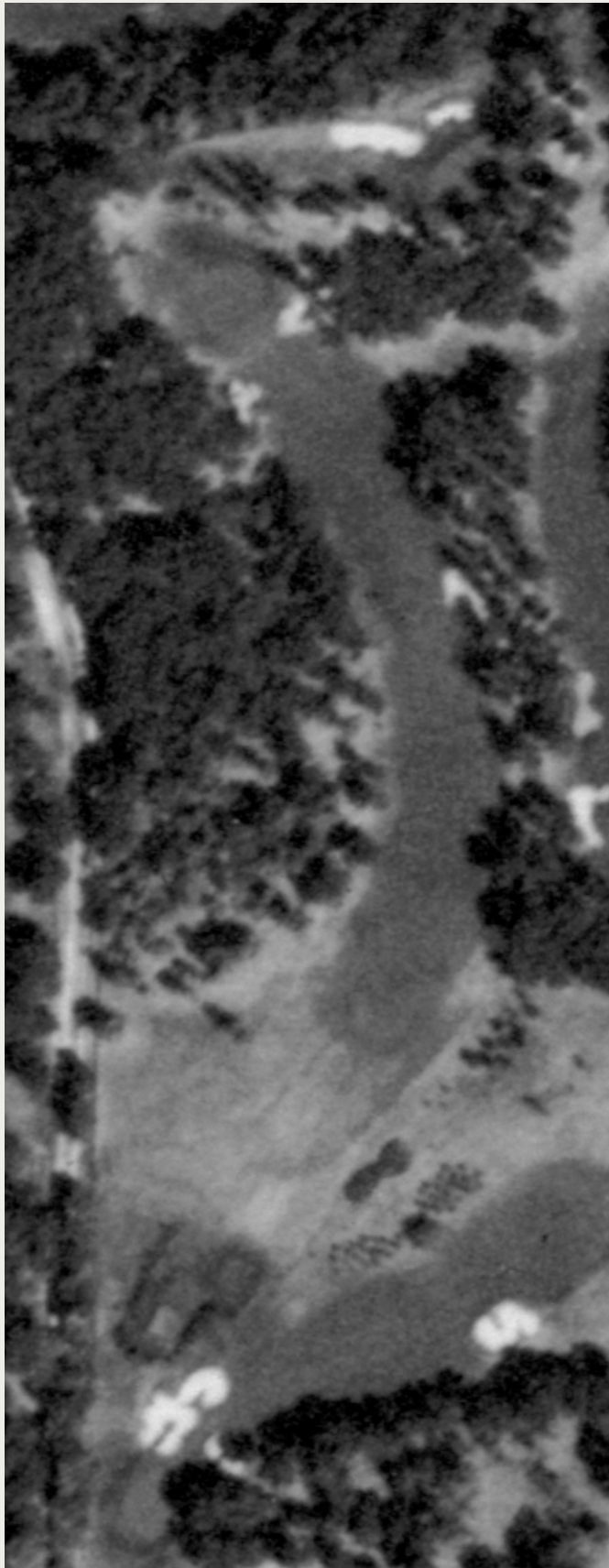
Fairway bunkers built close to the current location of the 14th green

New short bunker built into the left hill with a forward green tee built into the same rise

Original 14th tees re-instated on top of rise

15TH HOLE (EXISTING 16TH)

Historical Study



1939



1952



2002



1930'S vs 2020

15TH HOLE

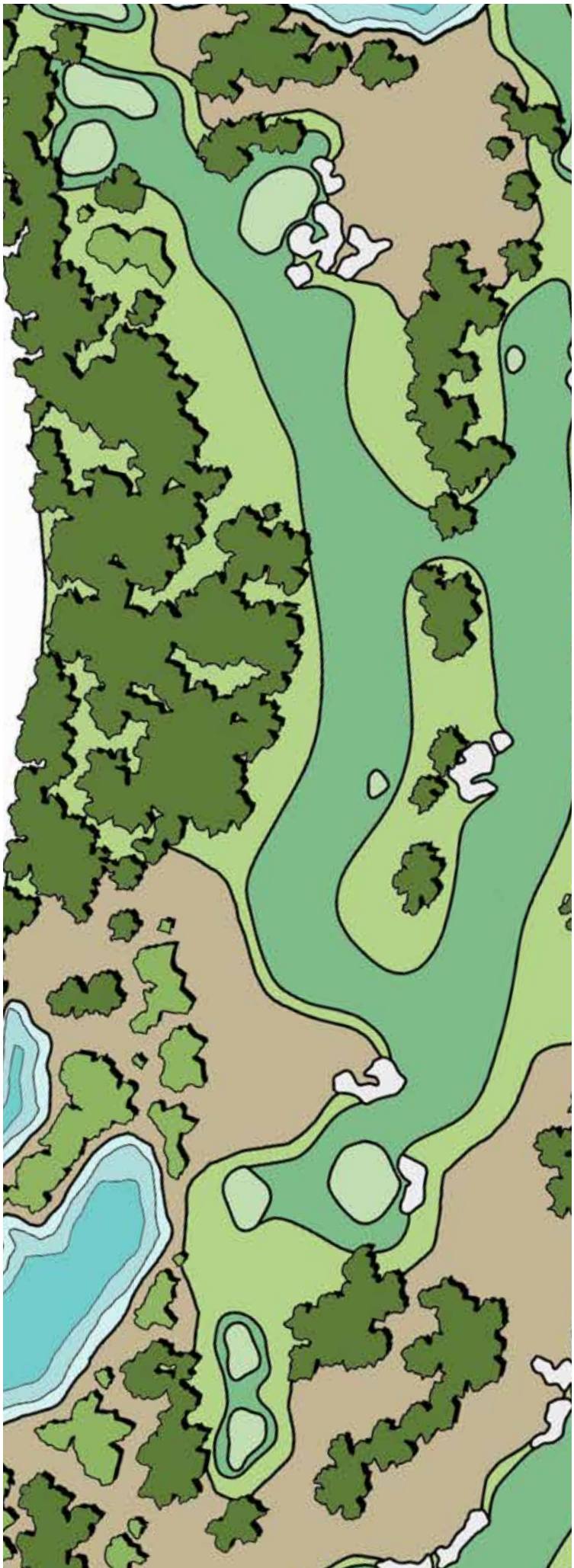
Existing (16th hole)			Proposed		
Gold	Par 4	482 yards	Gold	Par 4	520 yards
Silver	Par 4	434 yards	Silver	Par 4	474 yards
White	Par 4	413 yards	White	Par 4	415 yards
Green	Par 4	348 yards	Green	Par 4	250 yards

The current 16th hole (proposed 15th) is a terrific strong par four. With the removal of the existing 15th hole, there is more space for the tee to come away from the boundary fence which improves the line and allows the hole to be lengthened for tournaments. The other advantage of moving the tee is that it frees up some space along the boundary line for more trees and shrubs to screen the roads and power lines.

We don't see the need here for fairway bunkers, and we really like how the hole turns around the stand of mature trees. Of course, like any dogleg that wraps around tall trees, there is a balancing act between making the hole challenging and not making the second shot too punitive for those who can't reach the corner. We have no wish to remove any significant trees here, so moving the tee right a little helps achieve the same outcome by providing a little more room to avoid the trees - particularly for shorter hitters.

As a hole that turns left, it makes strategic sense to bunker the right side of the green, and this aspect should stay more or less as it is. However, short of the green, we suggest re-contouring some of the slope to help open up the approach to the green and ensure short shots do not all funnel to the same position at the bottom of the hill, which is consistently covered with divots.

Beyond the green and to the left, we see short grass being used to offer a range of recovery shots and to penalize anything a little long.



Green orientation retained with the angle and bunkering designed to favor a shot played from the left side of the fairway.

Feature rough used to help frame the new bunkers and link through to the lake and 13th green site.

New forward green tee which allows the hole to play as a much shorter par four and avoid the trees on the corner.

Forward tee links to the 14th green surround with short grass.

New tees positioned well to the right of their current position, allowing golfers the chance to avoid the trees on the corner of the dogleg.



15TH CONCEPT

An animation of the approach to the proposed new 15th hole (existing 16th).

16TH HOLE

New Hole		
Gold	Par 4	380 yards
Silver	Par 4	350 yards
White	Par 4	325 yards
Green	Par 4	280 yards

The most dramatic change to the course comes at the 16th hole. A ‘Cape’ style par 4, playing from the current 17th tee to the 14th tees with Lake Kadijah making a spectacular diagonal hazard all the way to the green. Charles Blair Macdonald created the original Cape concept when designing the 14th at National Golf Links of America. He and his protégé Seth Raynor would go onto build many more during his career, including the 5th at Mid Ocean, 8th at St. Louis, 14th at Fishers Island, and the nearby 2nd at Shoreacres.

Any number of tees could be built here to vary the line and length of the carry, and we’d like to see the tees regularly moved around to alter the decision day-to-day. The views from the very back tee will no doubt be the most dramatic due to the elevated ground, but arguably, the more interesting shot is from a forward tee when golfers may be tempted to have a go at the green.

Holes such as this work incredibly well toward the finish of a round, with golfers trying to close out an opponent, finish off a great round, or if they’re trying to salvage something from their day with a birdie or even an eagle.

This works just as well as a tournament venue, and the run of holes around the lake will undoubtedly become a brilliant finishing stretch of golf for players and spectators alike. For the 2026 Presidents Cup, the re-ordering of these holes also brings the last three holes closer to the clubhouse. With the 16th hole being the most statistically likely for matchplay contests to finish, this new layout will help make for some thrilling conclusions.



New green positioned close to the forward tees on the current 14th hole

New fairway established along edge of Lake Kadijah.

Forward green tee located on far side of the lake to avoid a water carry

New tees positioned close to the current position of the 17th tees and linked through to the previous green using short grass.



16TH CONCEPT

An animation of the proposed new 16th hole. A “Cape” style hole this is one of the most dramatic changes on the course and makes a wonderful strategic hazard of lake Kadajah. This view is taken forward of the tees and looking down the Lake towards the existing 13th green

17TH HOLE

<i>New Hole</i>		
<i>Gold</i>	<i>Par 3</i>	<i>225 yards</i>
<i>Silver</i>	<i>Par 3</i>	<i>170 yards</i>
<i>White</i>	<i>Par 3</i>	<i>135 yards</i>
<i>Green</i>	<i>Par 3</i>	<i>120 yards</i>

The proposed 17th hole replaces the existing 13th and 17th holes as the par 3 that plays across Lake Kadijah on the back nine. This could be a spectacular “one-shotter,” far exceeding the drama of the current 13th or 17th holes due to the brilliant green site. The hole can play anywhere from 120 yards to 225 yards, but our preference is that it plays as a mid-length hole of around 150 or 160 yards.

The elevated ground should make for a dramatic looking “one-shotter”, and this area could become a real focal point of the course with the 12th and 17th greens close together and terrific views in every direction.

We have indicated a few bunkers here - two into the slope at the front and one to help divide the 12th green from the 17th. By placing the tee shot on the diagonal and creating a green where there are “Sunday pins” in the back left corner we also expect the lake to be a relevant hazard, even for the very best players in the world.



*New green site located on the far side of the lake
and just behind the 12th green*

*Forward green tee located on far side of the lake
to avoid a water carry*

*Tees located close to the located of the current
14th tees and continuing forward towards th edge
of the water*

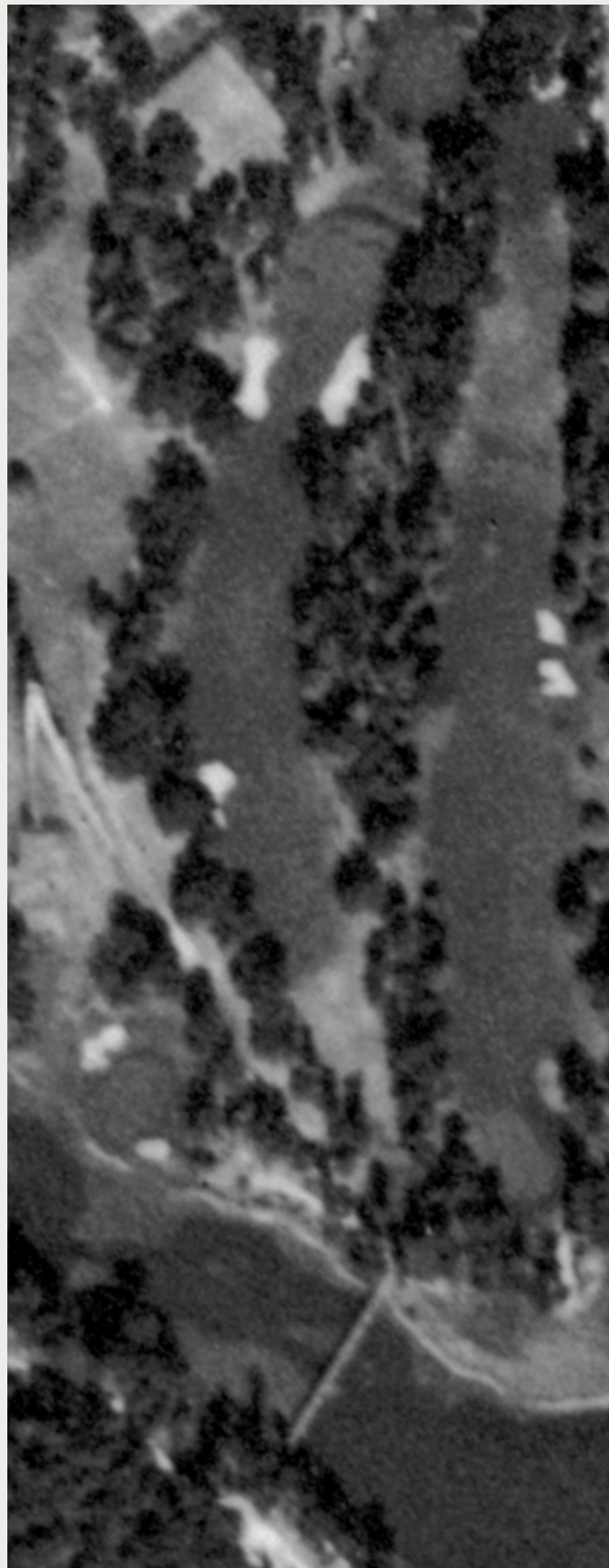


17TH CONCEPT

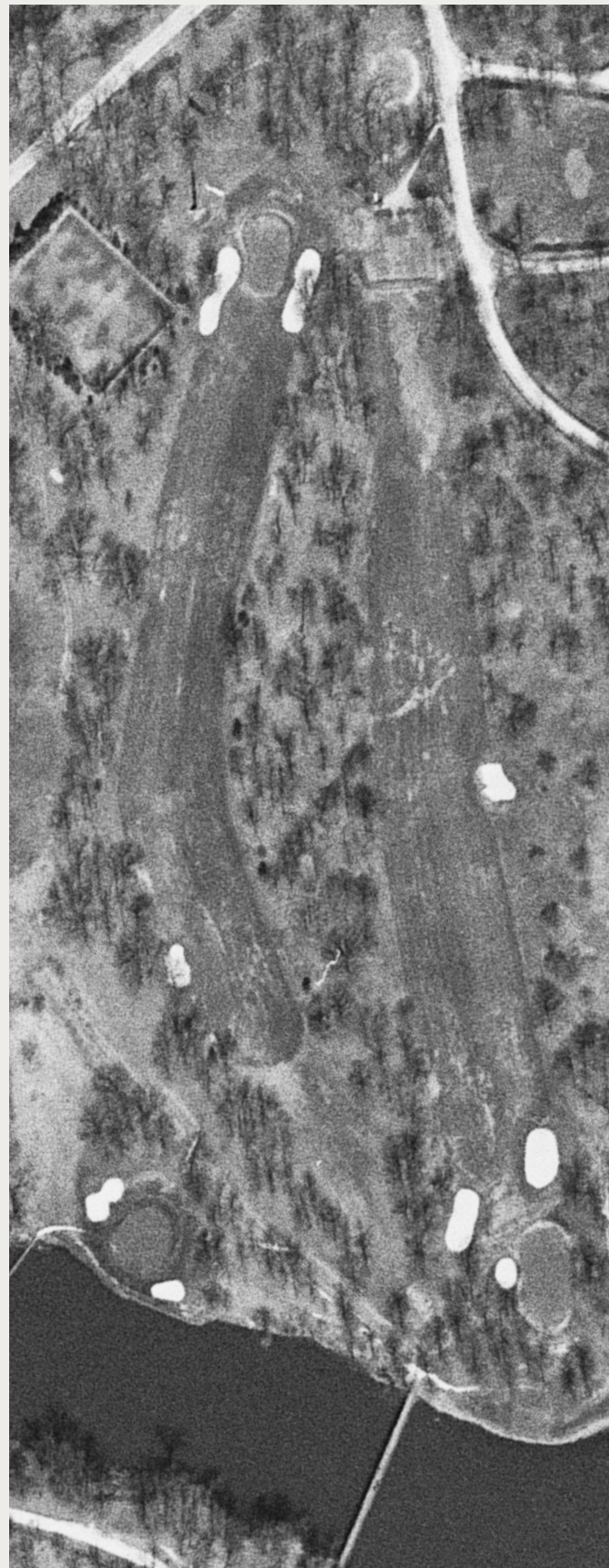
An animation of the proposed new 17th hole. This view is taken from an elevated position above the back tee.

18TH HOLE

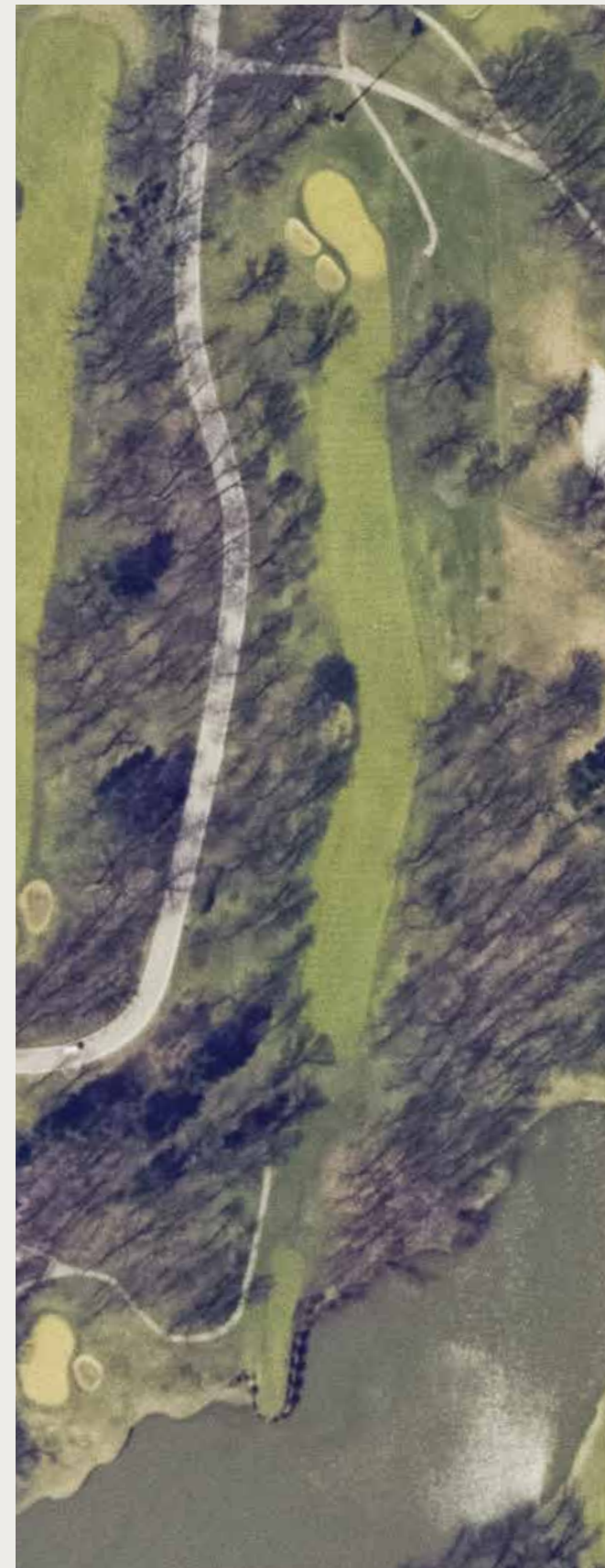
Historical Study



1939



1952



2002



1930'S vs 2020

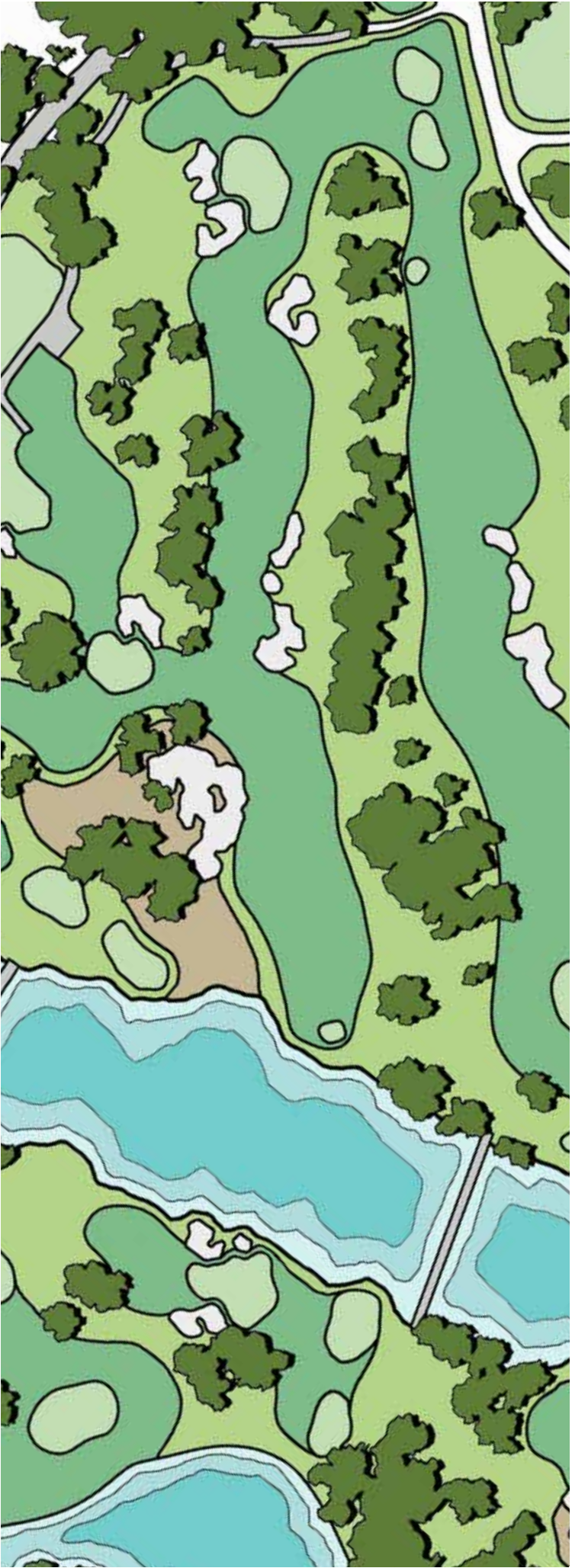
18TH HOLE

<i>Existing</i>			<i>Proposed</i>		
<i>Gold</i>	<i>Par 4</i>	<i>449 yards</i>	<i>Gold</i>	<i>Par 4</i>	<i>500 yards</i>
<i>Silver</i>	<i>Par 4</i>	<i>421 yards</i>	<i>Silver</i>	<i>Par 5</i>	<i>500 yards</i>
<i>White</i>	<i>Par 4</i>	<i>398 yards</i>	<i>White</i>	<i>Par 5</i>	<i>470 yards</i>
<i>Green</i>	<i>Par 4</i>	<i>398 yards</i>	<i>Green</i>	<i>Par 5</i>	<i>345 yards</i>

The final hole presents an opportunity to restore some elements of the original design. Long-standing members may well remember that before the mid 1980's, when the 17th hole was built, the course finished by playing up the strip of ground adjacent to the 1st hole. Our suggested 17th green returning to the same hill as the 12th green site it aligns perfectly to restore the original tee shot, albeit from the other side of the water.

At around 500 yards, the hole will become a very strong par four for the tournament professionals, but for the member, it will play as a par 5 to replace the loss of the current 14th hole and ensure the course retains its par of 72. Like the 16th and 17th holes, a tee should also be built on the far side of the lake so that short hitters aren't forced to carry the water.

The steep hill that rises from the lake edge is a far more dramatic and interesting piece of ground than the current 18th tee shot and will allow for some spectacular bunkering and, overall, a more thrilling and interesting final hole for the round.



Current green site retained but angled toward the new fairway alignment

Original fairway alignment restored.

Fairway bunkers added to the right side, defending the ideal line to the green

Large bunker and feature rough added to short hill on the left side of the fairway.

Forward green tee located on far side of the lake to avoid a water carry

Main tees constructed close to irrigation pump station.



18TH CONCEPT

An animation of the proposed new 18th hole which looks to re-introduce the original fairway corridor but played from the far side of the Lake. This view is taken from an elevated position just forward of the main tee.

APPENDIX A

COURSE PLAN



MEDINAH COUNTRY CLUB

MASTER PLAN

Course #3



OCM

November 2021

