

Bunker Project

Background

In recent years, our bunkers have become more difficult to maintain to a high standard with the constant ingress of mud and have become larger with the collapse of edges and edge trimming. As well as this some bunkers were challenging for the less agile golfer to enter to and exit from. Sand depth throughout bunkers is inconsistent due to poor design/construction.

An application was made for a Sports Capital Grant to address these issues and was successful in the part funding for this project. Ken Kearney Golf Design was engaged to survey our bunkers and come up with a bunker plan for all three nines.

Ken's view was that we have very large bunkers with 54 bunkers on Blue-Red with a total area of 3733 M² and maintenance of these bunkers with our staff level is unsustainable. Also sand in unlined bunkers becomes contaminated with mud and stones over time and silt collects at base of bunkers from poor drainage. Cost to replenish 3733 M² of sand not sustainable. He proposed that we remodel and/or move bunkers that are constructed with industry standard drainage and a porous lining.

A sub-committee was tasked with reviewing the proposed design and after several meetings it was decided to start with the blue Cluide nine and complete the maximum with the available budget.

Tender Process

With budget constraints, it was decided to concentrate on the green-side bunkers and leave any work on fairway and Red/Yellow bunkers to later phases when funding is available. DAR Golf Construction & Atlantic Golf Construction both submitted tenders for the project with DAR's tender significantly smaller.

After considerable negotiation the project cost was brought into line with available budget and DAR have been engaged to undertake works. DAR were recommended by Ken Kearney and have an excellent reputation for similar projects on Golf Courses in Ireland and the UK.

Schedule

- DAR Golf have recently informed the start date on May 2nd and expect to complete works over three weeks.
- After construction we will have areas around bunkers reseeded with a grass seed formula as recommended by Ken. This will take some weeks to establish and be ready for play.
 - Why are we reseeding and not sodding was a question raised.

- Sodding is 22 times more expensive than seeding and if we were to sod disturbed areas then only green-side bunkers on 5-6 holes would be completed within the budget.
- Seeding during the peak growing season (May-June) requires a similar 'healing' time as sodding as advised by Ken. Also, sods are difficult to maintain in dry weather.
- All competitions will move to the Yellow-Red course during this period.
- Casual golf will be possible on the Blue nine with bunkers out of play.
- While seeded areas are recovering, we will have GUR areas where ground has been disturbed with drop zones.
- Fairways, rough and greens will continue with normal maintenance.

Further information displayed in foyer of clubhouse.

- Information displayed is for information purposes only as final shape and position of bunkers will be marked out by Ken Kearney during construction.