

# Woodland & Environment Development Plan for Waterford Golf Club

Purpose:

- use the trees and woodlands in wgc to enhance the visual and golfing experience
- Control Noxious Weeds and Invasive species
- add to species and environmental diversity at WGC

There is an excellent collection of trees on the course which delineate the holes and provide screening for aesthetic and safety reasons. However, there is a substantial amount of work to be undertaken to remove scrub and to thin and prune the current collection. This project will help WGC distinguish itself for its consideration for aesthetic and environmental awareness.

## Outline of Plan

- Reclamation of scrub – briars, nettles, noxious weeds – thistles etc and unwanted species such as invasive species Japanese Knotweed
- Revitalisation programme of felling, planting and underplanting
- Tree species such as Sitka spruce, Leylandii and poplar should be gradually removed and replaced by mainly native tree species. Individual specimen exotic tree species will be retained

## Work programme for improving woodland features

1. Tree Surgery is required for felling/limbing of malformed, invasive and dangerous trees. Fell trees where required to create planting gaps or coupes or shape course.
  - Select trees & limbs to be treated & contractor to do work by mid September 2017
  - Remove/ reduce non-native species that threaten links and greens i.e. the poplar & *Leylandii*
  - Thin out the branching system to allow more light on to Tee and green surfaces and lessen disease pressure – e.g. T3, T6, T12. Remove some ash at T6, poplars at T8 and poplars & ash at T12 by mid January 2018
2. Enrichment planting to improve species composition and crop quality, particularly in the understorey. Suitable shade-tolerant species include hazel, holly, hornbeam. Some larger coupes will be opened up to facilitate oak planting amongst the pine. Thinning/respacing will promote growth & improve appearance. For instance there are some Lodgepole Pine copses that were planted 30 - 40 years ago at the upper end of the course that need to be thinned out.
  - Provide plan for work by mid September 2017
3. Raising the crowns of Trees. This entails removing all the low branches of the trees up to a height of c. 3.00 metres by end March 2018.



Ideal Spinney for Thinning – on left of fairway 9'

Label trees in specific areas. Consider display in Clubhouse indicating areas of the Course showing features of aesthetic and environmental interest.

## **Work programme for improving course aesthetic & environmental features**

1. Identify and control Noxious weeds and invasive weed species in 2017. These weeds have to be controlled by law - thistle, ragwort, and dock are noxious weeds. The invasive species Japanese Knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*) and Old Man's Beard (*Clematis vitalba*) are present and are a serious threat to course maintenance.
2. Highlight and document/label points of interest such as mass path, specimen trees and shrubs as well as interesting views in 2018
3. Encourage species diversity including wild flowers – join the "Pollinator project" in 2018.

Prepared by Jim O'Mahony Chairman wgc & Ger O'Farrell Head Greenkeeper June 2017