



An illustrated history of Temple Golf Course

Version date: 7 May 2020

Foreword by Malcolm Peake

I started playing golf at Temple in 1965, but as Squash member, and joined the golf club proper in 1979. I was invited to join the Committee in 1990 and was particularly interested in the golf course, but I found few records on the history of the golf course architecture or maintenance.

I began collecting information from early club minutes, the club handbooks starting from 1910, also a Golf Illustrated magazine article on Temple from the 1930s. I was told that Tommy Potts Captain in 1961 had been very involved with the course and had a very informative meeting with him, also Donald Steel, a good friend of Raymond Oppenheimer, a member of the club and an international golf course architect, also a great character in Cecil Alder, a long time artisan member and caddy, they all provided useful information.

I pieced together the history as a record for the interest of Temple members. David Boorman has taken up the baton and added the last twenty years, including more photos and diagrams. Hopefully this booklet will be updated, revised and amended in future years.

Preface

I enjoyed reading Malcolm Peake's *History of Temple Course* and understanding better how the course had changed over years. I thought it would be a quick job to bring it up to date, and add a few more maps, photos and diagrams. Several years on the booklet you have in front of you is the result.

However, it is still very much a work in progress, and is already in need updating to reflect the changes made to the 18th hole in the autumn of 2019.

This document no doubt contains errors of a factual nature and omissions. If so, I hope readers will point these out and ideally provide evidence that be included in future versions of the history of the course. Opinions in agreement with, or contrary to, those expressed in the booklet are also welcome!

Acknowledgements

In addition to Malcolm Peake for providing the inspiration to produce this version of the *History*, I am very grateful to Keith Adderley, Ben Kebby and Bryce Martin, for their help in correcting, informing and polishing my early drafts.

About this history

This document draws heavily on the *History of Temple Golf Course* written by Malcolm Peake in 2012¹. It is essentially a refreshing of that document using additional resources and, of course describing changes made in the last several years.

After introductory sections on the landscape and general changes, the document comprises a hole-by-hole description of the course and how each has changed over the years.

Setting the scene

It was Captain G MacDonald who first recognised the potential of the well-known and beautiful Temple Park in which stood Temple House on the riverbank near Temple Lock. The house had been partially destroyed by fire, and in 1905 the 600-acre Temple and Hurley Estates was broken up and sold by lots. Captain MacDonald formed a company together with other Guards officers and local gentry to buy 140 acres (57 hectares) on which to develop a golf course. In 1909, Willie Park Jr. was invited to lay out a course, as he had already designed two landmark courses locally that both opened in 1901, namely Sunningdale Old Course and Huntercombe.

Willie Park Jr. was Open Champion in 1887 and 1889, but more of importance and relevance in the current context, was acclaimed by Jim Arthur (1997) as being the first true golf course architect who developed the concept of strategic as opposed to penal design, i.e. making the golfer think where to place tee shots in order to have the best approach to the green.

The Temple Links, as the course was known, quietly opened for play on 4th May 1910. The course was described in the first handbook “as by nature a sporting course consisting, more or less, of a series of ridges which have been skillfully utilised so that, whilst unnecessary fatigue is avoided, there is very little that is flat or uninteresting. The hilly chalk lands ensured good drainage and an absence of mud and casual water common with many inland courses. At the same time, it has the advantage that the herbage does not burn up in a dry summer, as it does on many courses.”

Although the landscape is open and links-like, a number of specimen trees had been planted in Temple Park during the 19th century and Willie Park Jr. integrated these into his course design.

¹ Malcolm Peake acknowledged the following sources in compiling his history.

- Temple archives, aerial and historic photographs.
- Members Handbooks.
- “*Twentieth Century Temple*” published to celebrate the Millennium.
- Memories of Tommy Potts, a Past Captain and Chairman of Green, who worked closely with Raymond Oppenheimer.
- Donald Steel (Temple Course Architect).
- Steve Isaac (Director - Golf Course Management The R&A).
- Keith Adderley (Club Secretary) who researched the Minutes.
- Martin Gunn, Keeper of the Green at Temple for 25 years, who provided on site architectural guidance of historic tee and bunker positions.

While the description of Temple as an “inland links” clearly goes back to the earliest days of the course, it is one that divides opinion. The purist will say that the term “links” refers specifically to the sandy strip of land that in many places forms the link between the land and the sea. Temple is far from the sea and is built on chalk and clay, rather than sand. Others argue that the open nature of the course gives it something of the feel of a links course, and perhaps relish the label of an inland links as differentiation from other courses in the same part of the country.

So, Temple is essentially built on a chalk downland and in places retains many of the plants that are characteristic of such a landscape. It was, though, built in a park and as we shall see the parkland nature of the course has been further developed by the planting of many trees.

Members’ golf clubs have always been run by committees and Temple is no exception. The Board of Directors works to a Forward Plan which includes an agreed strategic objective for the course that is to place Temple in the *Top 100 courses in England* by 31 July 2020.

The priority action points of the current course improvement plan are to:

- create an improved and lasting visitor experience across the opening and closing holes (practice putting green to 4th tee and 16th tee to practice putting green)
- improve the bunker architecture and playability throughout the course
- improve and, where possible, extend teeing grounds throughout the course
- follow a woodland policy that targets better air and natural light circulation, and
- opens-up/restores desirable views.

The Course Management Policy Document, *Course Three-Year Development Plan*, and sound external professional advice are vital components to ensuring continuity as the management and membership are temporary custodians of the course. A small course management team comprising our professionally qualified Course Manager with an experienced Chair of Green and Secretary, is responsible for the operational and strategic aspects of the course with input from the Green Committee which is made up of members representing a cross section of the membership. Good communication is key, and members of the Green Committee are two-way conduits between the course management team and the many would-be course managers within the membership. The course management team meets on a weekly basis throughout the playing season and fortnightly during the winter months.

The Oppenheims

Louis Oppenheimer moved to Waltham Place in 1910, so would appear not to have been part of the company that founded the course. He had apparently been considering building a course on Maidenhead Thicket, but since Temple was already under construction decided not to and instead joined Temple. Just two years later in 1912 he was invited onto the Board and in 1924 was elected Chairman of the Board of Directors, a post he held more or less continuously until 1938. Louis Oppenheimer's association with the Club continued with him holding the role of President until 1956.

The role of President has been passed on within the Oppenheimer family with Louis' son Raymond Oppenheimer succeeding him, and in 1984 the baton was handed on to Raymond's nephew Nicky Oppenheimer. This succession is no surprise as the Oppenheims own the freehold of the land on which the golf course is sited.

The arrangement since 1959 has been that the Club is managed by Temple Holdings Limited. The company's initial lease was for 50 years running from 1959 with a rent of 1/- (a shilling, equivalent to 5 new pence) per annum, if called for. In 1997 a new 30-year lease was granted by the Oppenheimer Trust, although now with an annual rent greater than one shilling a year. When the Oppenheims acquired the freehold of the land is not known as there are no records held by either the club or the Oppenheimer Trust.

However, it seems that for the first 50 years of its existence the Club was funded by debentures and ran on a hand-to-mouth basis with its wealthy members being asked to contribute when times were hard. Certainly in 1959 the company running the club (presumably the original company founded by Captain MacDonald) was in a dire financial situation and could not meet the demands of its creditors or settle with its debenture holders. It's not known if this is when the Oppenheims purchased the freehold, or whether this had been during some earlier financial crisis. However, it seems likely that the purchase was yet another act of generosity by the Oppenheims to ensure the continued existence of Temple Golf Club.

It would however, be very wrong to see the relationship between the Oppenheims and Temple Golf Club as only being one of landlord and tenant!

Louis Oppenheimer's son Raymond Oppenheimer joined Temple as a junior in 1917 and was a scratch golfer at the age of 16. He was captain of Oxford University and won numerous prestigious trophies. At his peak Raymond was a +2 handicap golfer and one of the best amateur golfers of his day. In fact he retained a plus handicap for over 25 years, played for England either side of the war, captaining the side for four very successful years, and added the Walker Cup captaincy in 1951 to his list of honours. No surprise then that he had been Temple Club Captain in 1929 at the age of 24.

Raymond was clearly very well connected, and these connections put Temple on the map. Notable amongst these were Henry Cotton, winner of three Open Championships, who was associated with Temple for a number of years and Club Professional for a period from 1959. Raymond was also close friends with Bobby Jones, the last amateur to win the Open, holder of the "impregnable quadrilateral"² in 1930 and, of course, founder of the Augusta National. And as we shall see his friendship with Donald Steel, golfer and course architect who was to become President of the

² Winning the Open and Amateur Championships of the UK and US in the same year.

British Association of Golf Course Architects (1986-89) and elected President of the English Golf Union, has played a significant role in planning alterations to the course.

In *Temple Delights*³ we read that Raymond Oppenheimer “was a benevolent Dictator, with only the interests of Temple at heart”, and that this management model was considered by many to be the best way to manage a golf course. Indeed, *Temple Delights* records that when it came to changes on the course “nobody argues with Raymond”.

One of Raymond’s policies was never to allow any change to Temple without prior consultation with a golf course architect – at least this is what Donald Steel says in his report to the club in 1993. This consultation process was intended to prevent acts of folly by either individuals or committees, although perhaps, in the early days, Raymond saw himself as being the exception to this rule. Indeed, a bunker he introduced in the bowl containing the 10th green became known as “Raymond’s Folly”.

Architects of change

According to an early handbook, considerable alterations and improvements were made to bunkers and greens in the winter of 1912-1913, presumably by Willie Park Jr.

Raymond Oppenheimer acted as architect for changes in the sequencing of holes that are thought to have taken place in the 1920s.

To advise on improvements, Raymond used his good friend Henry Cotton during his time as Temple Club Professional, and Frank Pennink, well-known architect of the Old Course Vilamoura (opened in 1969) and Palmares (opened 1975) both on the Algarve.

The records of changes made during this period are poor and rely on historic detective work.

In 1992 the Club invited renowned international architect, and longstanding friend of Raymond Oppenheimer, Donald Steel to advise on golf course development and improvements. Donald Steel was at the time one of the country's leading golf course architects; in fact he was the only architect to have advised every club or course on which The Open Championship has been played.

He visited on 3rd November 1993 and sent in his report on the 11th. This report commented on all 18 holes, and his observations will be referenced in the hole-by-hole descriptions that follow. It is, however, worth noting that in his introduction he makes some general comments. He notes that the planting of copses have “beautified the setting considerably”; that bunkers require continuous attention to keep them playable; that defences should be maintained to protect the course from the modern golfer and the advances in his equipment; and that the greens had shrunk in size over the years, possibly as a consequence of the installation of a pop-up irrigation system. This report also led to significant changes in management. Temple was to move towards the finer grasses which produce a superior year-round surface whilst requiring less fertiliser, pesticide and irrigation.

³ *Temple Delights* published in 2009 in celebration of 100 years of Temple Golf Club.

There was further discussion concerning the bunkering on holes 11 and 13 in 1994, and he returned again in August 1995 to discuss the 1st, 3rd and 7th greens and the 12th fairway.

His associate Tom Mackenzie visited in May 1996 with the remit to assess the 3rd hole, bunkering on the 4th, the 5th greenside bunkers, the 9th tees and 10th green. He visited again in October 1996.

Donald Steel himself returned in June 1997, this time to look at the 14th and 16th holes as well as looking more generally at the course. Comments relating to the latter include being careful when planting trees not to plant so many as to revert to a woodland landscape, to plan for the replacement of “important trees whose remaining life is limited”. He also notes some planting of incongruous bushes and hedges. In addition, there is a comment on growing of meadow rough between tees and fairways: he suggests a carry of 100 yards is reasonable and that those who cannot cope with this “should not really be playing at Temple”.

Having noted this comment, it is only fair to point out that Donald Steel’s belief was that bunkers should not be placed to punish the weaker golfer but to challenge the better golfer. Indeed, as Bobby Jones, founder and co-designer of the Augusta National, said “the purpose of any golf course should be to give pleasure to the greatest number of golfers, offering problems a (golfer) can attempt according to their ability. It will never become hopeless for the duffer, not fail to challenge and interest the expert” (Arthur, 2003). This approach remains essential in the 2020s as Temple seeks to broaden its appeal and increase both membership and visitors.

Also in the 1997 report, Donald Steel discusses fairway watering: he notes that if water is likely to be available when required, the danger is overuse, i.e. the grasses that exist at Temple are hardy and drought tolerant, and that over-watering may change the grass type. All golf course irrigation is the subject of much debate. Many golfers want their courses to replicate the lush greenness they see on television, and especially in the USA. The opposing view is that “green is not great” and that “over-watering is the cardinal sin of greenkeeping”.

There are further visits in September 2002 (5th, 14th, 16th and 17th holes) and May 2003 (5th, 8th, 14th, 12th, 16th and 17th holes).

Then in July 2005 Tom Mackenzie (now of Mackenzie & Ebert) returns to look at the 3rd, 10th, 12th, 14th, 16th and 18th.

Well, lots of visits and many suggestions but not all of these have, for whatever reason, been well received and acted upon by those responsible at Temple. No doubt this will in part have been a consequence of resources.

In February 2015 Ben Kebby joined Temple and working very closely with the Chair of Green, Des McSweeney, and Club Secretary, Keith Adderley, took the initiative regarding renovations to the course, although Donald Steel continued to offer his advice on a less formal basis. Most notably Ben Kebby tabled a five-year bunker renovation programme in June 2015. Chris Milne took over as Chair of the Green Committee in the winter of 2019.

In 2019 Murray Long was invited to provide architectural advice and this started with his review of the 16th and 18th holes.

Perhaps also worth mentioning the contribution of STRI (formerly the Sports Turf Research Institute), and in particular Alistair Beggs, although this is rather more about agronomy and course maintenance than course design. Alistair Beggs moved on from the STRI in 2019 and Temple ceased using STRI for agronomic advice.

Finally in reviewing who has been responsible for making changes to the golf course, it is worth reflecting on the words of Henry Cotton in his forward to F.W.Hawtree's *The Golf Course* (1983): "There are many amateur golf course architects who seek to alter holes they dislike; some I have known have even become golf club officials in order to fill in a hazard which regularly collects one of their shots."

Early changes

The order of holes on the course has changed in sequence and greens have been moved on several occasions.

There is a lack of evidence of changes from the period prior to the Second World War, but it is certain that significant changes were made to the holes currently played from 6 to 10 and also to holes 12 to 14. Some of the evidence for this comes from the scorecard from the 1912 handbook.

The 1912 scorecard gives a bogey score, which originally meant the score a good golfer should take and was the first stroke system to be adopted. The bogey score for the course was 78. Par is now the term used to denote the pre-determined number of strokes a scratch player should require to complete a hole and bogey is of course used for a score of one over par on a hole.

Comparing this with the present-day card (2019 version) the yardages of many holes have changed. Some of this is because of the way the holes were measured in the last century, i.e. trundling a measuring wheel from tee to green, which differs from the laser survey of today which provides a highly accurate straight-line measurement: and it is partly due to the change in shape of the line of some of the fairways. But in addition, some holes have been lengthened and some shortened.

LENGTH AND BOGEY SCORE OF THE COURSE						
Hole.			Length. Yards.			Bogey Score.
1	..	..	420	..		5
2	..	..	370	..		5
3	..	..	305	..		4
4	..	..	530	..		6
5	..	..	140	..		3
6	..	..	215	..		3
7	..	..	410	..		5
8	..	..	300	..		4
9	..	..	300	..		4
			2990	..		39
10	..	..	270	..		4
11	..	..	345	..		5
12	..	..	475	..		5
13	..	..	280	..		4
14	..	..	130	..		3
15	..	..	330	..		5
16	..	..	235	..		4
17	..	..	400	..		5
18	..	..	235	..		4
			2700	..		39
			5690	..		78

Figure 2 Scorecard from 1912 Handbook - Bogey 78

COMPETITION															Please circle for and			
DATE		Hole	White Yards	Yellow Yards	Par	Stroke Index	Player's Score				Net Score	GF + 1 = 0 Points	Out Yards	Par	Stroke Index	PAR 335	70	
A							A	B	C	D						335	71	
B																335	72	
1	381	351	4	9												338	4	11
2	425	407	4	1												376	5	9
3	364	349	4	13												336	4	5
4	508	465	5	15												468	5	1
5	144	135	3	17												129	3	17
6	390	311	4	5												307	4	15
7	346	327	4	3												314	4	7
8	230	212	3	7												194	3	13
9	513	434	5	11												410	5	3
	3302	2991	36	39	OUT											2874	37	
GREEN MARKERS ON FAIRWAYS INDICATE 150 YDS TO CENTRE OF GREEN																		
10	243	235	3	8												196	3	10
11	412	396	4	2												386	4	2
12	498	480	5	14												464	5	6
13	137	129	3	18												117	3	14
14	337	330	4	12												322	4	4
15	396	325	4	6												287	4	8
16	213	227	3	10												234	4	18
17	413	413	4	4												392	5	12
18	259	245	4	16												243	4	16
	2908	2782	34	IN												2641	36	
	3302	2991	36	39	OUT											2874	37	
	6210	5773	70	79	TOTAL											5515	73	

■ Red Flag: Hole inside front of green
■ Yellow Flag: Hole towards middle of green
■ White Flag: Hole towards back of green
■ Blue Flag: Temporary green in use

Marker's Signature _____ Player's Signature _____

HANDICAP _____
 NET _____
 BOGEY _____
 STROKE POINTS _____

Figure 1 Scorecard from 2019

However, there were two major changes. The first is that after completing the 5th, play used to be to the present day 8th and 9th holes, then a hole from the 9th green to present day 7th green, followed by the present day 6th hole, and then from a tee near one of the forward tees on the present day 7th (backwards) to the present day 10th green. It is pure speculation that re-routing to form the present format allowed the construction of the back tee on the (present day) 6th to fit in to a neater pattern of play, and also that it prevented the uphill climb from the present day 9th tee back to the present day 7th green. It would also seem that with the original layout there would be less possibility of interaction between golfers on the original 8th and 9th, compared with what can occur today between golfers on the 6th and 7th holes.



Figure 3 *The original sequence of play and layout for holes 6 to 10 (Map data ©2017 Google)*

The other major change was to the sequence from holes 12 to 14. Originally the 12th green was on the other (left-hand as played) side of the track, so the hole was aligned rather more along the valley bottom. Here too the greater separation of the 1st and 12th fairways would have meant that there was less risk of a golfer on the 12th fairway being troubled by a wayward drive from the 1st tee. The 13th was a short par four to a green roughly halfway along the current 14th fairway, and the 14th used to be a short par three to a green close to the position of the present day 14th green. This green was actually moved away from the A404 at a much later date, more of which later.



Figure 4 *Approximation of original layout for holes 12 to 14 (Map data ©2017 Google)*

These changes probably happened around 1929 when Raymond Oppenheimer was captain. At that time it was minuted that "Raymond Oppenheimer to act as architect for reconstructing the 12th by having the green on the opposite side of the track."

Drivers of change

A number of factors have provided the impetus for, necessity of, and opportunity to, change. Let us start with a very obvious one, driven by the golfer.

In the late 1898 Garden G. Smith wrote in *The World of Golf* that “a long driver will ... carry some 150 to 170 yards, and a less powerful player some 130 to 150.” The 2017 Review of driving distance (USGA & R&A) gives the average driving distance of amateur male golfers as 208 yards. The increase is the result of several factors including: better clubs and balls; improved technique; and greater fitness. All golfers make their own decision concerning their investment in time and money in order to hit the ball further, but obviously, on average, driving distances have increased.

Every golf club needs to decide how to respond to the increase: should it lengthen the holes, move the bunkers, or “tighten-up” the course to make driving accuracy more important than length? The club’s response will itself be governed by factors such as the opportunity with the club’s grounds to make changes, and whether it has the financial resources to do so. There is also, of course, the option of doing nothing!

There is no right or wrong choice; what a club does will depend on the opinion of whoever is in charge at the time. And there are far more factors to consider than just the increasing distances that golfers can hit the ball.

Other factors for the club to consider relate to what it is now possible to do at reasonable cost.

Perhaps the greatest of these concerns advances in machinery and agronomy that open so many possibilities in how to develop and maintain a course. When Temple was built, construction techniques were simple: thirty to forty men with spades and wheelbarrows aided by a horse and scoop. During the early part of the 20th century, the greenkeepers’ tools were sickles, scythes, forks and spades, with the fairway mowing equipment drawn by horses. In 1919 the club owned three horses for use on the course; it may be the remains of their stables that have emerged from recent clearing of the woodland edge behind the 16th tee.

Sheep grazed the hillside and a local farmer cut and baled the hay.

Temple bought its first tractor in 1925 and by the 1930s tractors became widespread in construction and maintenance. Nowadays there is machinery for earth-moving, grass-cutting, aeration and so on, but the important point is that it has become more affordable to operate.

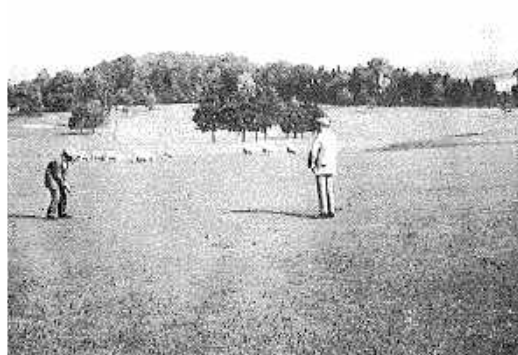


Figure 5 Approaching the 3rd green circa 1913 with sheep

Other possibilities to manage golf courses include the use of irrigation systems (green, tee and fairway), and the use of chemicals as fertilisers, pesticides, wetting agents and so on, although it should be noted that some previously available treatments have now been banned.

The upshot is that whoever is managing the golf course now has the opportunity, if they so desire, to mow from boundary to boundary, or to make the course “neat and tidy and green and stripey” as Malcolm Peake puts it. But they also have the opportunity to maintain meadow roughs and their associated biodiversity, and to have fairways with the slightly white tinge of chalk grasslands.

So, who is it that decides which holes to lengthen, which bunkers to move, and how green and stripey the course should be? We have established that in the early years Raymond Oppenheimer had his way. Subsequently we’ve seen that architects have advised on changes, but that these have been considered by appointed officials of the Club. As already noted, key among these are the Chairman/Captain, Chair of Green, Course Manager, and Secretary.

Of course, the individuals holding these positions come and go, and they each bring with them their own opinions and philosophies. Some may try to bring about changes in the long-term, while others may seek to make a more immediate impact.

It would be wrong at this point not to mention the adoption of a “natural” golf course management philosophy as a reaction against the transformations imposed on some courses towards the end of the 20th century in the pursuit of perfect, yet possibly dull and uniform conditions. The philosophy was widely embraced and supported by many high-profile names in golf as witnessed by the contributors to Malcolm Peake’s book *A Natural Course for Golf* (2005). Early impacts are Temple were impressive, with substantial financial savings from reduced irrigation, fertiliser, and pesticide use. Perhaps this was subsequently adopted over-enthusiastically, and so today a more balanced approach is used that combines recognising the natural setting of the course, but providing excellent playing surfaces, and also outstanding meadow roughs and well-maintained ancient woodlands.

Grass

Playing surfaces

The green sward is prominently a 50/50 mix of Bent grass (*Agrostis capillaris* and *A. tenuis*) and annual meadow grass (*Poa annua*), the percentage of both types of grass changes, depending on particular greens. The surfaces of greens go through regular and thorough testing, of which organic matter is one of the most vitally important elements; organic matter has an effect on the playability of a golf green as well as the health of the plant and soil. Organic matter is measured and controlled throughout the year in a variety of ways. Too much organic matter can cause soft, slow and bumpy greens, and too little can lead to lack of nutrient for the grass plant and unforgiving firm bumpy greens. Trueness, smoothness, firmness, speed and water moisture are also tested regularly to maintain a consistent green performance throughout the year.

Approaches are similar in sward species to the greens with the addition of having unwanted coarse grasses, such as Perennial Rye grass (*Lolium perenne*) and Yorkshire Fog (*Holcus lanatus*). These grasses have a thicker leaf than the Bent or Poa grasses and produce poorer playing surfaces in relation to smoothness and trueness. The management adopted on approaches is set to reduce the undesirable grasses and promote the finer grass.

Teeing surfaces are predominantly Perennial Rye grass, whereas Rye grass is unwanted within approaches; it is in fact desirable within teeing surfaces because of its drought resistance, dense coverage, fast recovery and quick seedling establishment.

Fairway surfaces are a true mix of all species including many different Fescue varieties.

Temple does not have fairway irrigation therefore the surfaces are subject to drought throughout the summer and in extreme cases can lose turf from heat stress; the grasses present within the fairways are those which adapt best to summer heat stress and drought.



Figure 6 Testing for green speed using a Stimp meter. The white dot is at ten feet. Ideally the test is run on a flat area of the green but is performed in both directions to account for slight slopes



Figure 7 Testing for green firmness using a Clegg Hammer, which provides, within and between greens, measures of variability



Figure 8 Measuring moisture content

Despite the comment made in the early days of the course that the “herbage does not burn up in a dry summer”, this is what happened in 2018 when the fairways suffered from both the lack of rainfall and heat stress. The process of recovery has been slow with effects lingering on into 2020 in some places. Interesting to compare this situation with long hot summer of 1976. While the stress was probably more severe in 1976, fairways were not so closely mown, so that although turning brown, recovery was relatively quick.

Meadow rough

Downland rough is a real strength of the course giving visual and textural definition. It provides habitat for a multitude of desirable plants, animals and insect species and reflects well on Martin Gunn’s stewardship over his term as Course Manager.

In 2017 Alastair Beggs in the report of the STRI reported that the Club can boast some of the best meadow roughs in the country.

Some tees, greens and fairway bunkers now have tall fescue faces that fit naturally with the nearby meadow rough.



Figure 9 The view from the 12th tees back across the 2nd tees shows the fine Temple meadow rough



Figure 10 Some meadow rough becomes extremely thick if the weather is conducive to growth



Figure 11 Shaggy fringes to greens and tees divide opinion

Trees

Temple has three notable woodlands: Mungden Wood between the 1st and 4th fairways, Badger Wood between the 7th, 8th and 9th holes, and Carpenter's Wood/Dungrovehill Wood (i.e. the woodland in which the A404 sits). Whether these are ancient woodlands, i.e. woodlands that have been in existence since 1600, requires further research. Nearby Bisham Woods are certainly ancient woodlands and The Woodland Trust, owners of parts of the wood, claim it to be "one the UK's most colourful ancient woodland sites". Wikipedia notes that Carpenter's Wood and Dungrovehill Wood are areas of 19th and 20th Century planting. A survey of the woodlands is underway in 2019.

A quick overview (before the hole-by-hole commentary) of how tree planting has transformed Temple is provided by comparing the 1945 aerial photographs taken by the RAF (and inexpertly merged into one image by the author) and a recent grab from Google maps.

It has been suggested that Raymond Oppenheimer was responsible for the planting of copses, but later in the 1960s much of the planting was attributed to former captain Tommy Potts. No doubt the trees have significant impact on the way some holes are played, although they have obscured some of the original Willie Park Jr. views and features, such as humps, hollows and grassy pot bunkers. However, some of the planting is considered by many to be unimaginative, and copses were not thinned as the trees grew.

While the photographs show the extent of the planting, they don't reveal is the species that have been planted. While our older trees and woodlands are those trees seen locally: beech, ash, elm (before Dutch Elm disease in the 1970s), et cetera, much subsequent planting has been with fast-growing non-native pines, larch and silver birch.



Figure 12 Some copses are perhaps less attractive than others although, of course, beauty is in the eye of the beholder

It has already been noted that trees challenge golfers and protect the course during winter (when there is no meadow rough), provide a measure of screening between adjacent fairways and, of course, may enhance the scenic appeal of the course. However, as trees grow they can greatly restrict the light and air reaching the course and cause problems especially on tees and greens. This can be especially problematic where tees have been tucked closer to the boundary trees when holes were lengthened. In other areas of the course, trees in copses need to be managed to maintain balanced growth. In addition, trees don't live forever, and are subject to damage and disease.

All of this means that trees must be managed and again Ben Kebby has introduced an ongoing programme of winter tree work to tackle problems caused as trees grow. As the improvement to the playing surfaces becomes more apparent this is generally meeting the approval of members. Perhaps more controversial to some members is the opening up of some views to restore some of the more open character of Willie Park Jr.'s inland links design



Figure 13 Aerial photograph taken by the RAF in 1945



Figure 14 Google maps view of the area as in the previous figure (Map data ©2017 Google)

Bunkers

Bunkers cause problems away from the traditional links (sand-dune) environment of a golf course; indeed early opinion was that “... on an inland course ... sand bunkers of the orthodox kind are necessarily unobtainable” (G.G Smith again). This was one reason perhaps for Wille Park Jr. to favour grassy hollows. Nevertheless, sand bunkers have been created and have required much maintenance, notably to cope with the mixing of the sand with the underlying soil and in the case of Temple, chalky rubble.

So, bunkers have been moved, filled-in, dug out again, replaced with grassy swales and so on. Bunkers have been simply cut into the ground or lined with turf or fabric. Ben Kebby, as part of his 2015 bunker renovation strategy, introduced the lining of greenside bunkers with “blinder” the same sort of rubber chips used in children’s playgrounds which facilitates drainage and prevents contamination from below. The blinder is troweled into place on top of a stony foundation which is itself laid on top of a prepared soil base.

It’s perhaps surprising that even in the parts of the course that sit on top chalk even a thin layer of soil can prevent, or greatly slow, the drainage of water. Thus in some bunkers a sump is dug through the soil down into the underlying chalk.

Around the edge is a flat ledge which is maintained in all three layers i.e. soil, foundation and blinder.

The ledge running around the bunker is covered by stacked turf before the whole of the surround is re-turfed.

Bunker blinder has been used for the refurbishment of all greenside bunkers in recent years, but as an experiment the fairways on the



Figure 15 Chalk stones inevitably contaminate unlined bunkers from below



Figure 16 Digging out the bunker prior to laying new foundations – note sump well connected through the soil into the chalk below



Figure 17 The foundation layers of the bunkers



Figure 18 Laying the bunker blinder

12th have been lined with a different more “cost-effective” material – a crushed granite.

At the same time that bunker blinder was introduced the decision was taken to move away from a golden-coloured traditional sand to a white/grey clay-based soil. The necessity for a change came from the exhausting of the source of the previously used sand. Sand has particular characteristics such as the size and shape of the individual particles. The sand Temple had used was in short supply and the clubs that were able to were buying up the remaining stock, so for Temple this meant a change.

With the financial concerns facing Temple in the 2010s the ongoing programme of renovating bunkers may take longer than initially envisaged. It is worth noting an alternative view of bunkers as “hazards”. There’s a clue in the name and perhaps rather than lavishing money on them, whatever cash is available should instead ensure that the playing surfaces (tees, fairways, approaches and greens) are immaculate. Additionally, bunkers could be removed completely and replaced with grassy hollows, which would save considerably on maintenance.

It is interesting to note these different perspectives, but no doubt many sand-filled bunkers will be retained at Temple, and efforts will continue to maintain their visual impacts and “playability”.



Figure 19 The liner complete ready for turfing the surround



Figure 20 With sand and back in play - the left-hand bunker of the 13th



Figure 21 During the bunker programme, work on the 2nd was completed and they have the new ‘white’ sand while those on the 6th still have the older ‘yellow’ sand
(Map data ©2017 Google)

Greens and drainage

First, a general point note concerning drainage. It's already been noted that much of the course is on chalk and well drained. Some greens, though, are on clay. And it seems that when built, retaining water for the summer months was more of a concern than winter drainage, so several greens were built as saucers to hold water. The extreme of this is the punchbowl green (a general term, not a reference to Temple's 10th) which Hawtree describes as providing "a built-in automatic water system (so that) the grass stayed greener in the summer".

This saucer shape has caused problems in recent years and in the winter of 2016-17 action was taken to address this on the 15th and 16th greens.

This involved cutting a series of parallel trenches along the length of the green and linking them into cross-cutting drains to take the water well away from the green and into a sump, again ideally linked into the underlying chalk.

These photos show the 16th, and the location of the sump. On the 15th the sump is at the back of the green towards the house to the left had side of the green, "Little Temple", but the sump may not have connected with the underlying chalk because of the thickness of the overlying soil.

When the turfs were removed to allow the digging of the trenches each turf was numbered and stacked so that after the trenches has been dug and infilled each could be returned to almost the exact place from which it had been taken.

This work appears to have been a success and maybe considered for other poorly draining greens. In the meantime, several of these greens have deep sumps installed to aid drainage in the areas most likely to ponding.



Figure 22 Removing the turf strips for the new drainage



Figure 23 Turf labelled to allow replacing close to original locations



Figure 24 Top of the drainage sump by the 16th



Figure 25 Only a slight drift occurred when replacing turf

Stroke indices

This subject is a slight digression as stroke indices concern the *use* of the course managed by the Golf Committee, rather than the management and development of the course which is the remit of the Green Committee.

Stroke indices are allocated to holes for matchplay, Stableford and bogey competitions. They can be set in a way that is seen as better/fairer for matchplay or entirely based on the difficulty of the holes as recorded in competition play. Appendix G of the Council of National Golf Unions (CONGU) Unified Handicapping System 2016-2018 provides recommendations on how to allocate the stroke indices. There can be different stroke indices for different forms of play and for play from different tees.

Temple's stroke indices were last reviewed in 2017. At that time, it was noted that Temple, along with many other clubs, had always based its stroke index on difficulty rather than for matchplay. The approach was reviewed by the Golf Committee and the unanimous decision was to stick with a difficulty-based system.

Table 1: Temple Stroke indices

	SI 1990s	SI 2014	SI 2017	Rank 2014	Rank 2014	SI 2014	SI 2017	Rank 2014
1	9	9	9	10 (9)	11 (13)	13	11	9 (11)
2	5	1	1	1 (1)	2 (1)	5	9	13 (17)
3	13	13	13	11 (11)	9 (9)	7	5	5 (5)
4	1	15	15	14 (15)	10 (11)	1	1	3 (1)
5	17	17	17	12 (13)	15 (17)	17	17	12 (15)
6	15	5	5	8 (5)	6 (5)	15	15	8 (9)
7	7	7	3	7 (3)	14 (15)	9	7	11 (13)
8	11	11	7	9 (7)	8 (7)	11	13	6 (7)
9	3	3	11	16 (17)	3 (3)	3	3	4 (3)
10	10	10	8	4 (6)	4 (4)	10	10	2 (4)
11	2	2	2	2 (2)	1 (2)	2	2	1 (2)
12	6	8	14	15 (14)	16 (14)	6	6	17 (16)
13	18	18	18	17 (16)	18 (18)	14	14	15 (12)
14	12	12	12	13 (12)	13 (12)	4	4	7 (6)
15	4	4	6	6 (10)	5 (6)	12	8	10 (8)
16	14	14	10	5 (8)	7 (8)	18	18	18 (18)
17	8	6	4	3 (4)	12 (10)	8	12	14 (10)
18	16	16	16	18 (18)	17 (16)	16	16	16 (14)

The table above shows the stroke indices at three different dates for the white/yellow tees and for two dates for the red tees. It is, of course, wrong to compare between the white/yellow and red as the par and hole lengths are very different. Of course, there are differences in length, too, between the yellow and white courses, but the only difference in par is on the 9th which is four (yellow) and five (white). And the holes have changed too: in the

1990s the 4th was stroke index 1 but was just 484 yards off the white tees; by 2017 it had been extended to 509 yards and yet had become stroke index 15.

The columns headed “Rank” are based on the analyses of scores undertaken in 2014 so the playing difficulty at that time ranked from 1-18. The figures in brackets in this column represent the stroke index that would be assigned based on the rank figure alone, having decided which nine should have the odd/even stroke indices.

The difficulty of assigning a stroke index for both white and yellow is apparent and achieving a compromise has had knock-on effects through the front nine. But some of the difficulty rankings are surprising, the change on both 7 and 17 between the yellow and white for example.

Well, all very interesting and lots of scope for discussion amongst those that debate such things.

Stroke index will be mentioned again in the hole-by-hole notes.



Figure 26 The fine view from the 1st tee

Hole 1

Today this is a magnificent 381-yard downhill hole, with views across the Thames Valley to Marlow and beyond. This is same view that can be appreciated sitting on the club's terrace and is somewhat unexpected on a first visit to the club.

The original 1st tee was situated where the Artisan Clubhouse now stands and the hole was a 420-yard bogey 5, so one of the holes that, unusually for any golf course, has been shortened.

The hole was described as a good test for straight driving as a pulled or sliced drive is punished by running into long grass on both sides. A number of grassy bunkers, replaced by trees during the late 1960s, trapped shots sliced to the right. These areas can be seen clearly in aerial photograph taken in 1945 between the 1st and 12th fairways, but these distinctive Willie Park Jr. features have been erased.

The wooded area to the left of the 1st has changed considerably since the photograph of the course from 1945. Certainly, the hole would have been unplayable from a tee where the Artisans' Clubhouse now stands with the extent of today's woodland. The 4th yellow and red tees would have been vulnerable to any hooked shot from the first without the infilling of the woodland further down the hill, but note that the tees on the 4th have also been moved. It is also notable that in 1945 there were no trees between the 1st and 12th holes.

The left-hand greenside bunker was introduced in the late 1980s to replace a worn area caused by trolley wear and tear. The shape of this bunker is rather more characterful than many others at Temple which are simple oval shapes, as to a certain extent is the front right bunker on this hole. Donald Steel (1993) thought the opening of the green was not sufficiently challenging and that the left-hand bunker should be realigned to prevent a poor shot to left of the fairway being bumbled onto the green. He also commented that the green had shrunk away from its bunkers on both sides, and questioned the severity of the mounding to the right of the green in the light of the difficulty posed for modern maintenance (i.e. no longer undertaken by an "army of men").

Increasing the size of the green was addressed promptly, on this hole and elsewhere.

Donald Steel returned in August 1995 to discuss the bunkering here again. He reiterated his comment about the entrance being too wide for a short par 4 (contrast this with what he says

about the greenside bunkering at the 11th) and suggested the left-hand bunker should be divided in two and extended across the opening to the green. He also proposed refining the shape of the right-hand bunker.

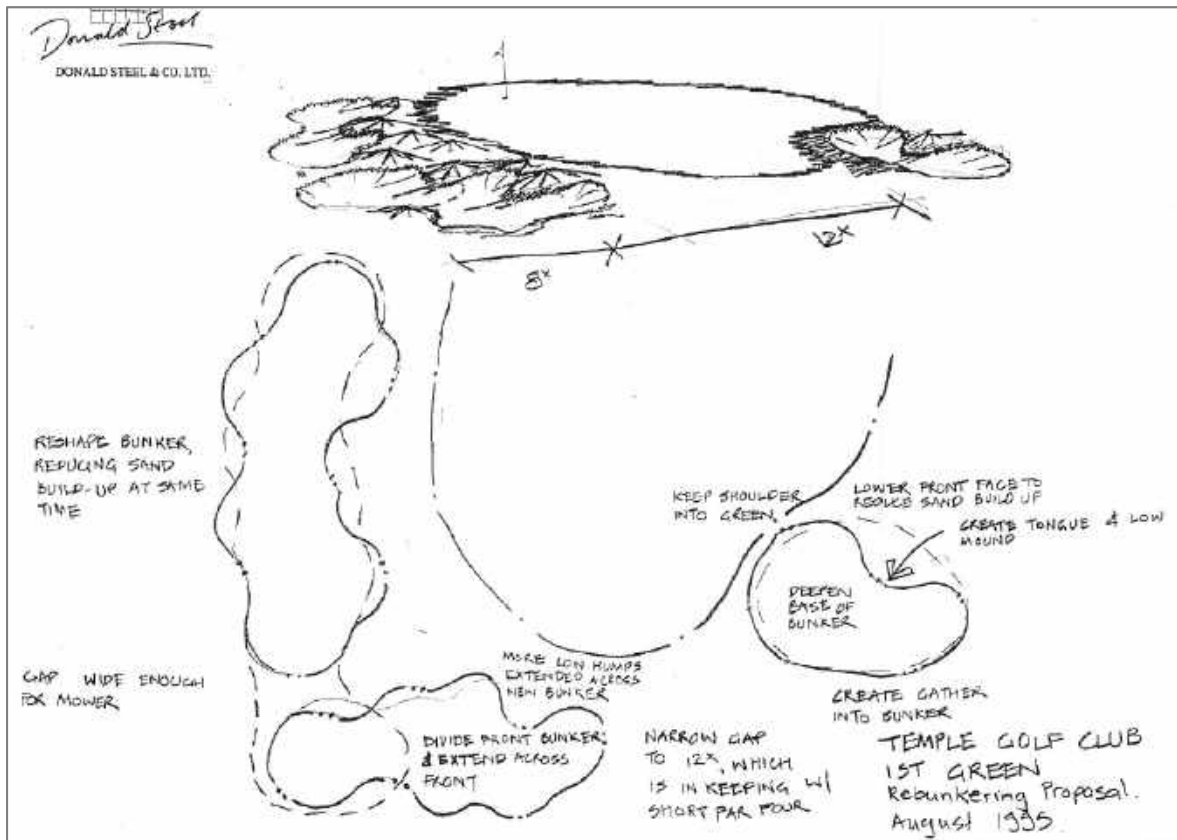


Figure 27 Donald Steel's proposal for re-bunkering on the 1st green, 1995

But it took until the winter of 2017-18 to address the bunkering. The left bunker has, however, been reshaped and very much reduced in size, with the objective of reducing wear towards the back of the green, and the right-hand bunker been reshaped. Both were in play for the 2018 golfing season.

So, it is interesting to see that some recommendations of the architect were implemented quickly while others are considered at length, and possibly delayed by financial constraints.



Figure 28 New bunkering on the 1st green ready for the 2018 season

The copse behind the first green contained a mixture of beech and sycamore, to the left, Scots and black pines, to the right, with silver birches in between. In the winter of the 2016/17 the remaining silver birch was felled opening up views between the clubhouse and the 12th tee. This restoration of aspects of the original open character of the course has not been universally appreciated by the members. Unfortunately, the large beech to the left is not in a good state and it, too, may have to go.

Hole 2

The original tee was located just beside the 1st green and the hole measured 370 yards. The original tee still exists and is used for the Willie Park Jr. course.

But from the 1945 photograph it is clear that a new tee had already been built in the area of the current yellow and white tees, and today the hole measures 425 yards from the white tees and is par 4; from the red tees the hole is, at 376 yards, almost the same length as when built although the tee has moved to the other side of the trees behind the first green. It is played as a par five from the red tees.

It is very interesting to compare the hole as it was in 1945 with what it was in the 2000s and what it is today.

The grassy bunkers short of the fairway on the right-hand side have now gone. The current fairway is much narrower than in 1945 but is surrounded by a first cut before the meadow grass. Cecil Alder's recollection in *Twentieth Century Temple* was that "the course had twice as much rough then as it has nowadays and in spring and summer you usually lost your ball if you were more than a foot off the fairway, which were very narrow." Well it may be that the transition from fairway to meadow rough was more abrupt, but possibly with somewhat wider fairways.

Fairway bunkering in 1945 comprised one bunker on the left-hand side slightly beyond the holm oak. Later, two were added that are closer to the tees. Donald Steel (1993) noted that the best drives cleared the first two bunkers but couldn't reach the third. He thought the hole was sufficiently tough not to require fairway bunkers especially when like these as "they were little more than holes in the ground". The original layout created quite a narrow gap between the bunker(s) and the oak, whose branches were allowed to hang down to the ground.

In 2019 the fairway bunkers were moved back towards, but not as far as, the former location, so as to challenge the lower handicap golfers.

It is clear that many of the trees visible in the 1945 photo are still present. The holm oak on the right of the fairway is still a fine healthy specimen. But many other trees are showing their age e.g. those by the original tee and three to the right of the fairway and short of the holm oak. A large



Figure 29 The 2nd seen from the 12th tees



Figure 30 The bare area is where the fairway bunkers used to be; the new bunkers are further up the fairway



Figure 31 The new fairway bunkers on the 2nd: these cannot be described as "little more than holes in the ground"

elm, sadly lost to Dutch elm disease in the 1970s, stood behind the green. This all provides a reminder that trees live a long time but not forever, so require careful and long-term management, especially true in the case of feature specimen trees. A more recently planted lone silver birch now stands on almost the perfect driving line from the original Willie Park Jr. tee; the rationale for this is unclear.

The greenside hazards were originally provided by grassy hollows, on both the 2nd and 6th holes, but there are now three bunkers one left and two right. In 2019 it was decided to remove the greenside bunker to the left of the 2nd green, restoring it to the original design.

It has been suggested that at various times the 2nd and 6th greens have been cut to form a double green in a similar manner to those found at St Andrews. With the present day bunkering the join would be somewhat slender and artificial, and rather like the join at the centre of an hour-glass. In recent years the greens have been separated, as advised by Donald Steel (1993).

The hole is stroke index 1 for yellow and white tees. It is a tough hole: long, uphill and played into the prevailing wind. But having the second hole as stroke index 1, doesn't meet with everyone's approval. CONGU guidance (2016 Manual, Appendix G) suggests that when setting the stroke indices for matchplay, holes with SI 1 and 2 are placed in the middle of each nine. However, Temple's stroke indices are based on playing difficulty, and allocating odd stroke indices to the front nine and even numbers to the back nine. Again the decision is not to everyone's liking.

A suggestion to resolve this issue is to further lengthen the hole and turn it into a short par five. While there is sufficient space to accommodate the extra length, this would require an extended walk up towards the 12th tees. This was trialled on Captains' Day 2015 but there is generally little enthusiasm for the change to be permanent.



Figure 32 The front left greenside bunker on the 2nd



Figure 33 The 2nd and 6th greens are now separated but may have been joined in the past

Hole 3

The 3rd was originally a 305-yard hole but newer tees have been added on three occasions so that now the hole measures from 338 yards (red tees) to 364 yards (white tees). The newer tees not only added length but also edged towards the 4th fairway and as a consequence the 4th fairway has been moved about 25 yards away from the 3rd tees (about which more later).

The idea of further lengthening the hole has been considered but rejected on the basis of further extending the walk back to the tees from the 2nd green, and a new tee coming into range of wilder shots from the 6th tees (Tom Mackenzie 2005).

Donald Steel (1993) suggested that the fairway bunker should be relocated by the recreation of a bunker to its right, although his report is somewhat difficult to interpret.

He returned in 1995 to look at the green-side hazards; he recommended reshaping the dull side of the front two bunkers, filling in the back left bunker and mellowing out the humps and bumps to enable maintenance with ride-on machinery. He regarded these as cosmetic changes to an outstanding hole. By 1996 the humps on the right-hand side of the green had been softened, and a third greenside bunker (back-left) had been removed.

Tom Mackenzie visited in 1996 to comment again on the fairway bunker. The bunker was not far enough from tee, but sits in a line of mounds that make an excellent feature, so the suggestion was to move the tee back by some 15 yards. But in addition he commented that the bunker extended too far into the fairway and thus the constriction between the bunker and the trees opposite was too severe: the bunker should be moved about seven yards to the right.



Figure 34 The 3rd hole from the original tee



Figure 35 The 3rd hole from the back tees, 2019

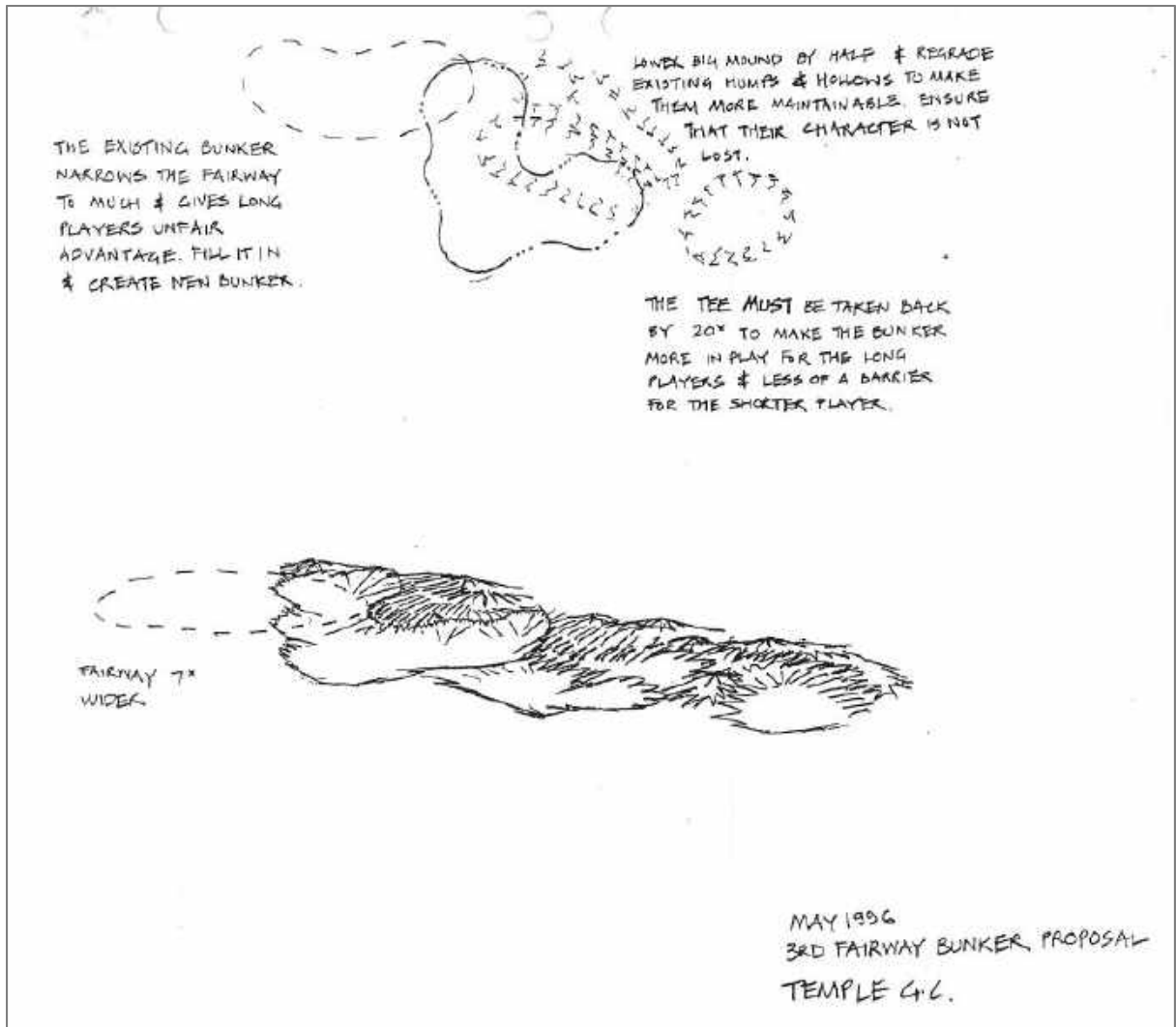


Figure 36 Tom Mackenzie's fairway bunkering proposal, 1996

This is one of those changes that seems to have been implemented quickly and more or less exactly as proposed by the architect.



Figure 37 The fairway bunker on the 3rd, 2018

Hole 4

The original tee was constructed in the dell beside the first fairway, making this a 530-yard Bogey 6. The fairway used to run in the bottom of the valley between the woods on the left and the sixth fairway, but as previously noted was moved about 25 yards left when the current white and yellows tees were relocated on the preceding hole. As a consequence, the first half of the current fairway has a marked left to right slope, and further up the fairway the right-hand fairway bunker is the remains of what used to be a cross bunker more or central in the fairway.



Figure 38 The 4th fairway which has been moved from the bottom of the valley to accommodate the new back tees on the 3rd

At some time the 4th tee was moved and the hole shortened, perhaps done at the same time, and possibly as a consequence, of moving the tee on the 1st. When Donald Steel visited in 1993 he noted that at 484 yards from the white tees it was a marginal par 5 and could be extended by some 30 yards. He also suggested a new left-hand fairway bunker be introduced and the planting of trees on the opposite side of the fairway. He also suggested some work to the greenside bunkers; indeed at this stage in his report he suggested “you need to go round every bunker on the course and see what could be done to improve their playability and appearance”!

Tom Mackenzie visited the 4th in May 1996 to expand on his previous suggestions: create a new tee some 30 yards further back; add a fairway bunker on the left requiring a carry of 250 yards to clear it and blend it in by creating grassy hollows as with the other fairway bunker on this hole and on the 3rd.

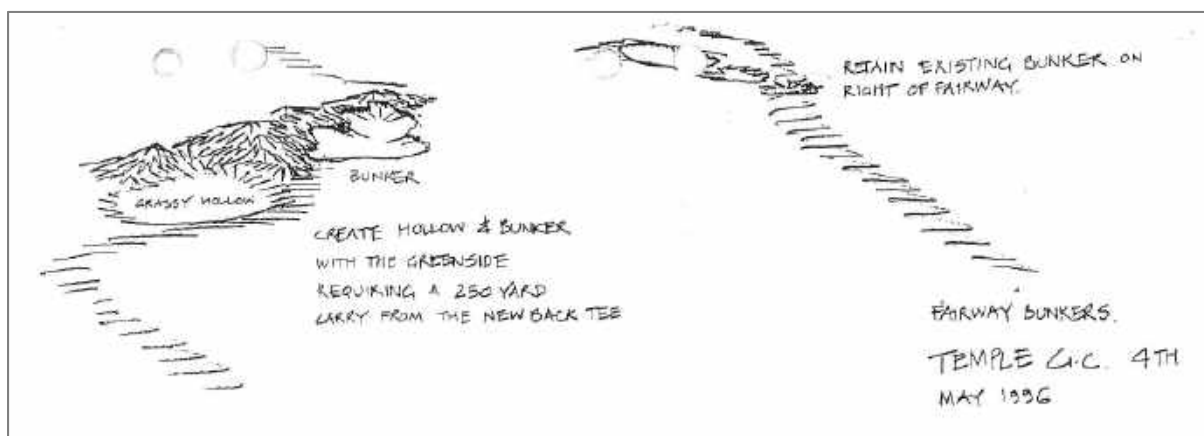


Figure 39 Tom Mackenzie's fairway bunkering proposal, 1996

Again, this proposal was quickly implemented and remains unchanged.



Figure 40 The left-hand fairway bunker on the 4th, 2018

He noted that the strategic copse close to the green right which was planted by Tommy Potts (Club Captain in 1961 and 1962) to tighten up the approach, were now beginning to encroach on the bunker. He thought the bunker necessary on a short par five and that it should be moved three or four yards to the left. Again, we see a rather dull oval bunker being given more character.

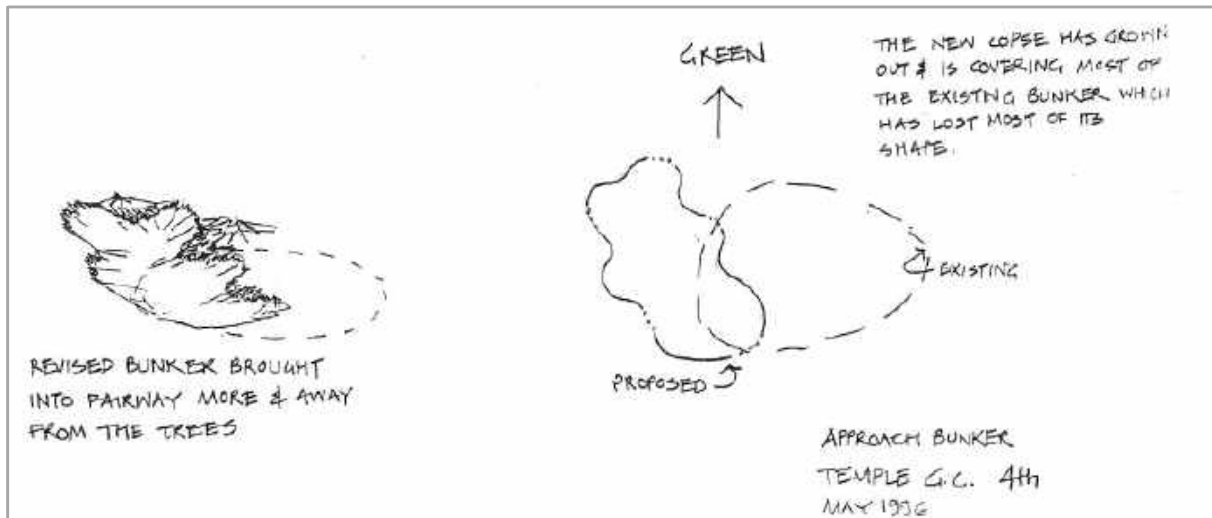


Figure 41 Tom Mackenzie's approach bunker proposal, 1996

In his view, the left front bunker needed tidying, but the one behind it was featureless and remote from the putting surface; it should be moved closer to the green. He thought the mounding to the right a little severe especially the sharp angle at the base of the mounds. He did not mention the bunker.

In 1998 some of Donald Steel's recommendations were implemented: in February a new left-hand side fairway bunker was built, and the greenside bunkers reshaped. On Captain's Day 1998 the new white tee was opened.

The 4th green is a long one and now starts just beyond the first greenside bunker. In the past the green was very much smaller, possibly just half the size. This may have been one of the greens Donald Steel was referring too when he commented that the greens at Temple had been reduced in size from the original design.

Hole 5

It's curious that today the two short par threes both have greens that are somewhat higher than the tees. Indeed, of the five par threes there is only one, the 8th, at which the golf has a good view of the green and the opportunity to see the ball disappear for a hole-in-one!

Well, perhaps not so curious as when the course was built the other short par three did afford a view of the green, and the other three were all over 200 yards, so with the equipment of the day not drivable.

Nevertheless, the par 3s today represent a severe challenge, being long, blind or both! It is therefore hardly surprising that many regard playing the par threes well as being key to a successful round at Temple.

Back to the 5th which was originally a 140-yard uphill hole from today's yellow/red tee to a green that slopes from front to back, which is considered a classic Willie Park Jr. design. To both add length and improve the view of the green, a new white tee was built and the yellow/red tees elevated to create a large two-tier teeing area.

Despite its size, this tee has been a problem for many years as the trees that surround it have grown restricting both light and air circulation and thereby creating conditions in which it is difficult to grow grass. For many years, steps led up the middle of the tee and there was a mat for winter golf. Both steps and mat were removed in the winter of 2015, and a new mat installed to the right of the yellow/red tee. Removing the steps and mat increased the area of grass available for the tee, but growth remains an issue which will remain unless there is a major tree clearance behind the tee.

Originally there was grass bunker across the hole about 75 yards short of the green, but like similar features on the 2nd and 3rd there is now no more than a hint of its existence. At the green, there were bunkers left and right and a rear bunker on the left was added in the 1970s. It was removed in the 2010s.

Various schemes were outlined to improve, or partially improve, the view of the green. In 1993 Donald Steel suggested lowering the high area on the front right so that more balls would be gathered by the front right bunker. On Tom Mackenzie's visit in 1996 he made the same comments and it was agreed that some investigation of the amount of sand build-up there had been on the green side of the bunker. In 2002 the greenside bunkering was discussed again, and again taking out the hump behind the front right bunker was proposed as the only workable solution. It was also suggested to take out the rear greenside bunker on the left and to replace it with an area of humps and hollows. The front left bunker required reshaping it was decided. But in May 2003 the front right bunker was still being discussed: everyone agreed on the problem but still not on the solution.



Figure 42 The 5th hole: the tee sits back in the trees; the right-hand rear bunker is no more



Figure 43 The left-hand green side bunker on the 5th in 2017

Hole 6

As already noted, this was formerly the 8th and was a 300-yard hole was played from close to today's red tees. A new white tee is located about 80 yards back, and the only place at Temple where holes cross⁴. But as on the 5th, putting a tee back in the trees comes with the same problems of insufficient light and air. As a consequence, there is another mat for winter golf, although in recent years there has been a preference for moving the white tee to the red/yellow tees rather than use the mat. This somewhat restricts wear across the approach to the 5th green.



Figure 44 The gloomy medal tee on the 6th

The first half of the fairway falls away slightly to the right towards the valley in which the 4th sits. To the left the 7th fairway falls away to the left as viewed playing the 6th.

The planting of trees has completely transformed this part of the course. Copses separate the 6th and 7th fairways, and on the right the 6th fairway is separated from the area of meadow grass behind the 3rd tees.

As noted previously, the green lies alongside the 2nd and was for some time cut as a shared double green. Double greens were very distinctive features on an inland golf course and most famously seen on the Old Course at St Andrews. A *Golf Illustrated* article dated July 1937 confirms this fact.

There were two sand bunkers, those between the 6th and 2nd greens, the rest were grassy bunkers, but at a later date a left-hand sand bunker was added.

⁴ It is a moot point as to whether the same applies playing from the white tee on the 9th as this shot should fly over the 8th green.

Hole 7

Originally the 8th this was a 300-yard hole played from an area behind the 10th tee and above the current 9th green, so at that time the hole was rather more uphill. Today's fairway slopes away to the right towards an area of meadow grass that falls away towards the 9th fairway.

There were originally no trees on this hole but a number of grassy bunkers and humps and hollows, but as noted previously with the new playing order of the holes, the 6th and 7th fairways run parallel and trees have been planted to separate them and offer some protection from wayward shots.

The green is slightly tucked behind the last copse of trees and although trees were removed from this copse in the winter of 2016/17 the green is only just visible from the tees.

There was only one bunker (front left) but a second was added front right in the 1970s.

Donald Steel was particularly critical in 1993 of the left-hand bunker, which he said required drastic attention. He revisited these bunkers in 1995 and described the bunkering as "almost totally anonymous and does little to excite what is otherwise a strong short par 4". He thought it straightforward to "spice up" the left-hand bunker, and also to lower the lip to give a better view of the green. He suggested dividing the right-hand bunker in two and extending the front one some way to the left both to improve the visibility of the sand from the fairway and to catch balls that might otherwise run off into the woods.

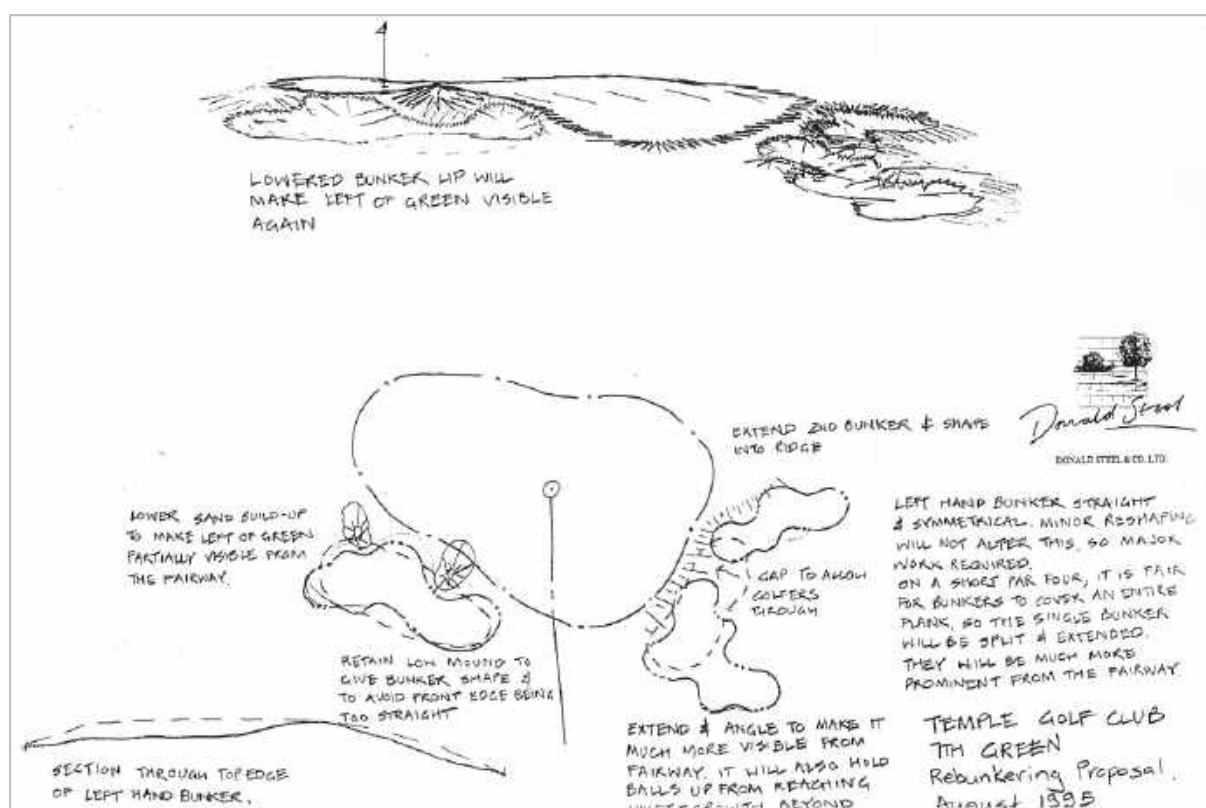


Figure 45 Tom Mackenzie's greenside bunkering proposal, 1995. (Original image also truncated along bottom edge)

The bunkers were reshaped in the 1990s with the addition of a new bunker back right.

These bunkers and their surrounds have always caused problems and were completely rebuilt in 2016.



Figure 46 The 7th green is slightly offset, and well bunkered



Figure 47 The 7th green has a backdrop of trees with many seasonal colours

Hole 8

Once the 6th, now the 8th, this is a fine 194/212/230-yard downhill hole with an outlook across the Thames Valley although there is no sign of the river itself.

Originally there was a large cross bunker to catch the thinned tee shot but that is long gone. The hole has also been extended, with a new medal tee built in 1993/4. Bushes in front of the tees which restricted the view of the green were removed in 1998.

Behind the two bunkers short and right of the green, are grassy humps and hollows which as we have already noted are trademark Willie Park Jr. features. The have, however, proved difficult to maintain and there have been suggestions to convert them to a new bunker (Donald Steel, 1993) or mellow them to allow maintenance with ride-on mowers (Tom Mackenzie, 1996).

Although not obvious from the tee, the hole is bounded to the left by the Maidenhead-Henley road and behind by Hurley Lane. Wayward tee shots have caused numerous incidents and complaints from property owners along Hurley Lane, and trees have been planted along both boundaries in an attempt to prevent such incidents and to better define the course boundaries.

Prior to Donald Steel's visit in May 2003 a cold, dry spring had led to a problem with the turf in the hollow at the back right of the green. A bunker was suggested but rejected by Steel. In the winter of 2018-19, the hollow was filled leaving a gentle slope from the green towards the boundary hedge.

By 2015 the view from the tee had become very restricted as tree growth had encroached on both sides and major tree work undertaken to open up the prospect from the tee.

A new winter tee was installed to the left of the path in the winter of 2018-19, creating a very playable 150-yard hole. It was quite a challenge to subsequently return to the main tees in the spring of 2019.



Figure 48 6th, now 8th, tee 1912

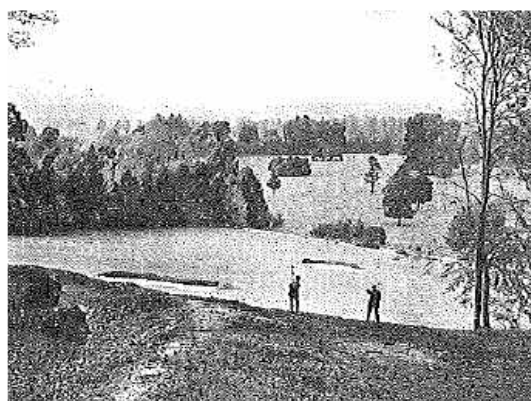


Figure 49 The 6th hole in 1912



Figure 50 View from the 8th tee, 2016



Figure 51 The new winter tee on the 8th constructed 2018-19

Hole 9

Originally the 7th, this was a 410-yard hole played from the area of the current yellow/red tees to a green at the top of the slope above the existing 9th green where a grassy bunker can still be seen. The current 9th green was built pre-1937. At some stage a back tee was added behind the 8th green.

In 1993 Donald Steel recommended pushing the medal tee back further and filling in the fairway bunkers which he considered unfair barriers. He also commented on suggestions to address the right-to-left slope of the fairway than meant many balls ended up in the boundary hedge under summer conditions; he thought that this was too enormous a task to consider and that the result would look extremely unnatural. Interestingly, he also said that he considered the 9th to be one of the feature holes at Temple and that therefore drastic changes should not be made.

The effect of the slope is somewhat exacerbated by the fact that most of the wear is down the left-hand side of the hole, so that in the area where golfers are hoping their ball may come to rest the soil is somewhat compacted and grass growth is weak.

Attempts to solve the “problem” of the slope have focused on the shaping of the fairway and managing the growth of the rough. The latter is itself problematic, as the growth of the rough is so weather dependent, i.e. if cutting is followed by a dry spell there may be insufficient growth to stop balls later in the season. For some years the fairway was divided in two with an area on the steepest part just beyond the end of the wood on the right-hand side not cut to fairway height. Some golfers objected to being in the rough, or of being unable to avoid the rough as they cannot carry the gap in the fairway on what is the only line from tee to green.

For the 2019 season following restrictions to traffic down the left-hand side of the hole the plan was to have a narrow fairway at the top of the slope with rough or “first cut” on the lower half of the slope which would be sufficiently thick to stop a ball.

Back on the tee, there are other concerns. Following Donald Steel’s recommendation in 1993 the new medal tee was completed in 1994-95, but yet again the proximity of trees caused poor growth, so that a mat was installed for winter golf in 2014. After extensive tree work the mat was removed in 2016 and the medal tee extended in size. This slightly mitigates the problem of the trees planted behind the 8th green to prevent balls crossing Hurley Lane now encroaching on the driving line.

Two issues remain. Firstly the “desire line”, i.e. the favoured route, away from the medal tee creates an area of wear behind the 8th green and towards the red and yellow tees. Secondly, the



Figure 52 The severe slope across the 9th fairway



Figure 53 Looking back down the 9th hole. The original green was at the top of the bank to the left

forward tees are at risk from wayward shots off the 8th tee. No words of caution on the 8th tee appear to be sufficient to prevent play from the 8th before golfers are out of danger on the 9th, i.e. on the medal tee or well down the fairway; as a consequence, it seems likely that the yellow and red tees will be moved 30-50 yards down the fairway at some future date.

This approach will resolve one issue with the hole which is that currently from the yellow tee the hole measures 434 yards and is the longest par 4 on the course, yet is stroke index 11; from the medal tee the hole is a par 5 at 513 yards. So, shortening to below 400 yards makes sense, and also means the stroke index should work better for both white and yellow tees.

At the green, the bunker short left was reshaped at Tom Mackenzie's recommendation in 1997.

Hole 10

The 10th hole, known as the Punchbowl, was designed by Willie Park Jr. using a pre-existing bowl to make this unique golf hole. It has been suggested that the bowl was a chalk pit, lime quarry, or perhaps, as Mungo Park suggests, a swallow hole.

The favoured explanation is that it was a “chalk well” to extract chalk and the associated flint. A central shaft was dug out from which radial tunnels were excavated supported by wooden props and beams. When the chalk and flints had been extracted, the timbers were burned and the ground subsided with the original top soil and grass still in place. The dell to the left of the first fairway and hollow in front of the 12th tees are further examples of chalk wells.

Originally there was a sand bunker at the top of the bank in front of the green and no bunker on the green. As previously noted, the hole was previously played from a tee by the present day 7th tee and was then rather longer than today at 270 yards, so not a green that golfers would expect to reach from the tee at that time. It's also worth noting that the original hole played somewhat downhill with a slightly better view of the distant punchbowl.

The greenside bunker was introduced by Raymond Oppenheimer and became known as “Raymond's Folly”. As Donald Steel says this is one of Temple's feature holes; his description is an “old fashioned punchbowl green [that is] much talked about. I can see no alternative which would make in better”.

The problem here is that by the late 20th century the hole was a 243-yard par three from the medal tee and many golfers *did* expect to drive the green. Those that could considered Raymond's Folly to be an unseen, unfair hazard. This bunker was discussed by Tom Mackenzie (1996) and his recommendation, adopted in 1997, was to reshape the bunker to avoid awkward lies. He revisited the hole in 2005 to comment on two proposals. The first was to allow rough to grow across the front of the green to prevent topped shots reaching the green: he considered this draconian. The second, was whether there should be additional bunkers in the banks around the green: no, he decided, this would be hard to achieve sympathetically. He suggested a chicane in the fairway created by bulges in the rough might be the best option.



Figure 54 *There is a green there - honest!*



Figure 55 *The 10th green and Raymond's Folly, 2018*



Figure 56 *The marker post behind the 10th green in 2018 with Raymond's Folly removed*

Raymond's Folly was removed in the winter of 2017-18.

In the centre of the green is a hollow that by 2013 had become too severe and was lifted in the winter after being dug out to a depth of some five feet. The hollow has since reappeared.

As Malcolm Peake noted: "... love or hate it, every golfer who plays Temple remembers the 10th".

Hole 11

As Donald Steel said in 1993, “this is one of the best holes at Temple”. As such it is surprising how much it has been tinkered with over the years, although perhaps the most unfortunate change being, in Steel’s words, the fact that “it has been stripped of its raiment by the loss of the tree”. The tree in question was a magnificent beech whose stump is in the centre of the new copse before the dip on the right-hand side.

The hole was initially 345 yards, so has been extended considerably to the present day length of 412 yards from the medal tee. As elsewhere this was probably the outcome of a sequence of new tees being built, the last in 1996.

Originally there were two sand bunkers on either side of the fairway at about 150 yards. The right-hand one had gone prior to Donald Steel’s visit in 1993 and at his recommendation the second was removed in 1994. He often remarks how bunkers shouldn’t be positioned to punish the weaker golfer but challenge the better golfers; he thought this bunker “unnecessarily severe” on the shorter-hitting player.

The fairway runs across the dry valley that winds its way up through the remaining holes. The dry valley however became flooded in the winter of 2013/4 and a new water feature slowly grew out from the boundary fence to the right-hand side of the fairway. On a previous occasion the valley had been covered in soil washed through the tunnel from the fields to the east of the A404.

On the upslope was a large cross bunker guarding the approach to the green which is said to have been removed during his captaincy by Tommy Potts as his wife, Phyllis, consistently hit her golf ball into it. The site of the bunker remains and is now used as a temporary green.

The greenside bunkering has been changed often. Originally there was only one greenside bunker, a small bunker on the right-hand side. The left-hand bunker was introduced in the 1970s probably when the bunker which plagued Phyllis was removed.

By the time of Donald Steel’s visit in 1993 these bunkers had grown, narrowing the gap between them to what he described as “ridiculously severe”. He suggested that the left-hand bunker should be removed and that the grassy slope would provide enough to check shots that don’t pitch on the green and provide a difficult chip onto the putting surface.



Figure 57 The 11th hole from the medal tee



Figure 58 The “spectacle bunkers” on the 11th green, the outcome of greatly reducing the size of the bunkers as they were in the early 2010s



Figure 59 The 11th hole's two-tier green

Steel noted that some bunkers at Temple, including those here on the 11th, had been rebuilt with inappropriate revetted faces; he was of the opinion that all bunkers on a course should confirm to a single style. Revetting is where the bunker wall is made up with layer upon layer of turf giving them a distinctive lined appearance. Revetting is useful on sandy links land soil to help stabilise the face against wind erosion. Malcolm Peake describes the decision to introduce revetted bunkers as an act of folly in the mid-1980s by a Captain of the club who was also a member of Royal Dornoch, a course well known for its deep, revetted bunkers.

These bunkers were clearly the subject of further discussions with Donald Steel and co, and in November 1994 Tom Mackenzie provided sketches of new bunkers with grassy tongues. The opening was widened slightly by moving the right hand bunker further round the green. He describes this as to “fill in most of the right-hand bunker and reopen the old one further round”. So, obviously much tinkering has happened with these over the years.

On Mackenzie’s visit in 1996 these bunkers were discussed again, and he noted that there was “always going to have to be a little bit of experimentation” to get the right combination of bunkers within the steep terrain.

By the early 2010s the bunkers were in a bad condition and with surrounds in poor condition. The decision was taken to greatly reduce both in size and to reopen the gap between them.

Hole 12

As noted earlier, the holes from 12 to 14 were remodeled by Raymond Oppenheimer in the 1930s. It seems likely that prior to this the 12th was played along the valley to a green to the left-hand side of the track. As with the original alignment of the 4th, it seems logical to have the hole at the bottom of the valley rather than slightly up one side of it. It is pure guesswork to suggest that the track interfered with the play of the hole and so it was re-aligned to keep right of the track from tee to green.

A consequence of the change is that today's green has a severe slope from right to left. Donald Steel described it as "distinctive". Another consequence of the change was the loss of the short 14th which was described "as a decidedly good specimen of a short hole" in the club's first handbook.

Today the hole is a par 5 of 464 to 498 yards, with new tees along the tree line at the end of the course slightly above where the original tee would have been. The tee provides one of the most panoramic views of the course: back up the 1st, down the 2nd, across the 3rd green and 4th tee and of course down the 12th itself.

The planting of trees between the 1st and 12th fairways, which replaced some huge grassy knolls, has already been noted. The only other significant changes concern the fairway bunkers.

In 1993 Donald Steel suggested that the two bunkers right of the fairway needed to be moved so that at least the second of the pair was in the fairway rather than the rough. He revisited in 1995 and elaborated on his previous suggestion (see figure) and explained "that the thrust of the proposal here ... is to create a pair of small bunkers that will challenge the good drive rather than the drive of the higher handicapper".

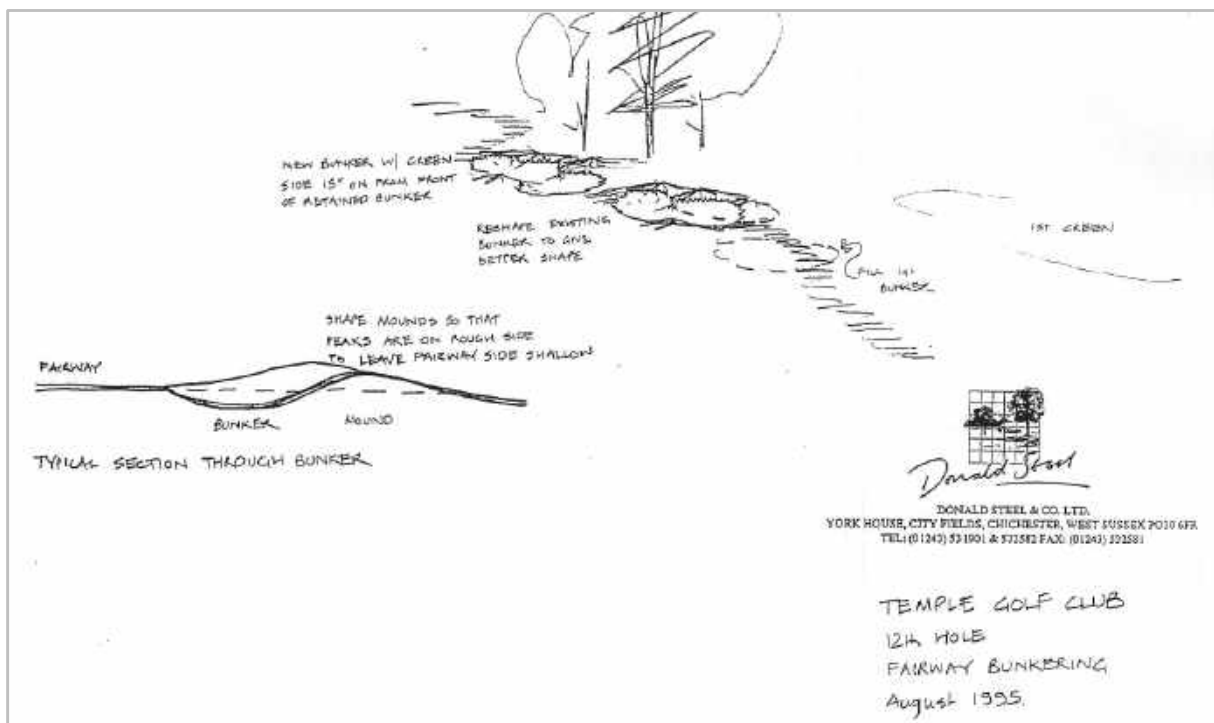


Figure 60 Fairway bunkering proposal 12th hole, 1995

Tom Mackenzie made similar recommendations in 1996 and 1997 and it seems that some changes were made. However, when he visited in 2005 he judged what had been done was too conservative and wrong. The bunkers were still not a challenge for the longest players. He suggested a third bunker set into the ridge, in about 18 yards further on and encroaching more into the fairway.

Only in the winter of 2017-18 were these bunkers moved and redesigned to provide a challenge to the longer drivers, and to greatly enhance their appearance from the tee.

The distinctive slope of this green has already been noted and greatly limits the possible pin positions when the greens are running quickly in the summer months.

Another giant elm that was situated behind the green and used for target practice by the Home Guard during the war, succumbed to Dutch elm disease. It's been replaced by a holm oak and two copper beeches.



Figure 61 Fairway bunkering proposal, 1996



Figure 62 And as built 2018



Figure 63 12th green with elm behind 1967

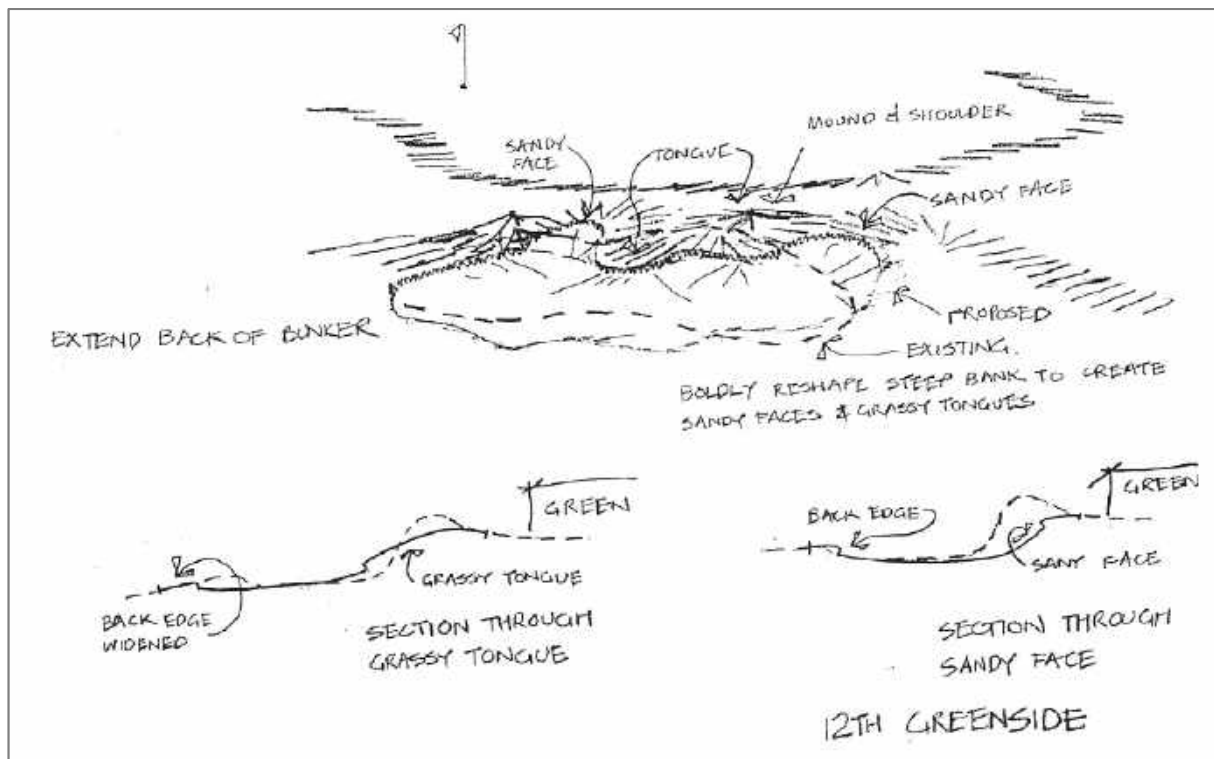


Figure 64 12th greenside bunker proposal, 1996



Figure 65 The "distinctive" slope of the 12th green

Hole 13

The original 13th is almost completely lost; perhaps the site of the original green is just beyond the copse of trees to the right of the 14th fairway. There are certainly some grassy hollows they may have been greenside features. It appears that the 13th and 14th holes were redesigned and built in the 1930s at the same time as the 9th green. These clay bowl greens were designed to help retain rain in the days preceding irrigation systems; they have created agronomic problems ever since.

The present day 13th is an uphill hole of 117 to 137 yards.

The changes made here concern the bunkering; at various times there have been two, three and four greenside bunkers.

When Donald Steel visited there were three and he commented that “the bunkering has been overdone in front of the green”. He thought that the gap between the two front bunkers was too narrow and that, as on the 11th, the left-hand bunker might be removed.

As with the 11th, there appears to have been further discussion regarding these bunkers and Tom Mackenzie provided sketches of new bunkering in November 1994. These show a narrowing of the opening at the front and with this aligned towards the red tees. His sketches and notes suggest bunkers with broad grassy tongues to break down the dominant straight faces.



Figure 66 The 13th green in 2016



Figure 67 The 13th green in April 2018

Hole 14

The 14th started life as a short and flat 130-yard Bogey 3 with large bunkers guarding the green. It was described in the first handbook as “a good mashie (5 iron) shot and a decidedly good specimen of a short hole”.

By the 1940s it was a 346-yard Bogey 4 but there is no minute regarding the changes. It appears the hole was redesigned at the same time as the 13th.

Donald Steel noted in 1993 that this was a “fine hole with a fine drive and second shot” and that the “six bunkers are another unusual feature”. It’s certainly true that this hole was highly regarded by the members and by Henry Cotton during his time as club professional.

However, subsequent reports noted problems of wetness caused by poor drainage and shadowing by trees, as well as issues associated with maintaining the bunkers. The club’s agronomist had tried everything to improve the green but without success. It was noted that the materials used were what was available in the vicinity and that the foundations were no doubt poor.

Drastic action was required, hence the idea of moving the green to the right as it is played. Doing so would move the green away from the now mature trees down the left-hand side of the hole.

In his report following his visit in 1997, Steel noted that doing this would increase the benefit of driving down the left-hand side of the fairway.

The management and advisers researched the design and construction in an effort to replicate the performance of the best Temple greens. As a trial, a new green was successfully constructed in 2000/1 (now 14A)



Figure 68 14th Green 1912



Figure 69 The 14th in 1980s?



Figure 70 Donald Steel's 2003 proposal for the 14th

using the recommended method of on-site materials and indigenous turf cultivated on the practice range.

In 2002 Steel thought the new green (14A) had shaped up most attractively. He was keen that the large horse chestnut at the end of the practice ground must be in the out of bounds area so that any ball clipping it “receive the ultimate penalty”.

In June 2003 Steel completed the design for the new green. It was to be moved over to the right, built on two levels, and realigned “to reward the player who holds the fairway”. After ground was broken it became apparent that the land available to the right of the green could not facilitate the planned two bunkers. The original design was modified with a single but enlarged bunker on the right-hand side.

When work started the turf was stripped from the green with the plan to re-lay it. However, the wet weather experienced during the construction led to the turf becoming rotten so that it could not be reused, and instead fresh turf was used.

The design sketches show a slope down from the green on the right-hand side. As built the slope is towards the green. It was the intention that the back half of the green, or even the whole green, should be rather more elevated than as built.

When he returned in 2005 Tom Mackenzie noted that part of the original redesign had been to remove the beech tree just short of the green and trim back the lime tree further down the fairway. He noted that both of these were required actions.

The green-side beech tree remained until 2014 when it was finally removed.

The greenside bunkering on the 14th was revisited in the autumn of 2018 and the decision taken to take out the front left bunker and to reshape the remaining two bunkers. Removing the front left bunker was seen as making the hole slightly fairer as many tee shots fell away to the right because of the slope of the fairway and the tendency of many



Figure 71 Revised plan for 14th green, 2004



Figure 72 Inclement weather caused problems in rebuilding the 14th green!



Figure 73 The two trees short of the 14th green



Figure 74 View from the tee with the beech removed

higher handicap golfers to fade the ball, resulting in the shot to the green being blocked by the large lime.

The work was undertaken in the winter of 2018-19 which was almost as wet as when the green was remodeled in 2003. Both remaining bunkers had deep sumps installed to aid drainage.

Both of the new bunkers were shaped with Temple's characteristic humps and hollows. For the front right bunker these have the additional purpose of diverting any water that may run off the adjacent track away from the bunker and the green.

There is now a considerable approach/run-off area at the front left of the green. The back left bunker is raised at the back to improve visibility from the fairway.



Figure 75 The new front right bunker at the 14th during construction



Figure 76 The completed front right bunker on the 14th in 2019



Figure 77 A run-off area where the front left bunker had been and the new back left bunker on the 14th

Hole 15

The 15th hole was played from close to the current yellow tees although at only 330 yards in length it was a Bogey 5 and so presumably seen as a difficult hole.

The current white tee extends the hole to 396 yards, with a dog-leg around an adverse camber.

For a short time in the early 1970s the hole was played as a par 5 from a back tee, the remains of which can still be seen on the other side of the fairway to 14a. This change was allegedly on the whim of a captain.

In 1993 Donald Steel noted that the copse of trees some 150 yards from the white tee and to the right were encroaching on the perfect driving line. The trees have, of course, continued to grow and in the winter of 2017-18 consideration was given to removing two of them; they were given a reprieve for at least one more year.

At the green there was once a bunker short to the left. Donald Steel noted that yet again this should be restored to its former shape. But it was removed in the early 2010s leaving the green bunkerless.

Two, some would say bland, fairway bunkers were introduced to stop golf balls rolling onto the track of the left approaching the green; these were removed in the winter of 2016-17 and replaced with a grassy swale, leaving the entire hole without bunkers. The 15th is only par four at Temple with no bunkers.



Figure 78 The now-abandoned back tee on the 15th



Figure 79 From the 15th white tees



Figure 80 The fairway bunkers replaced with a grassy swale, 2017



Figure 81 From behind the 15th green

Hole 16

This hole was originally 235 yards and was played from what is now the red tee. Unusually this hole plays as a 235-yard par 4 from the red tees, 227-yard par three from the yellow tees and a 216-yard par 3 from the white tees. It is therefore a difficult hole to manage in terms of its architecture and playability.

There is a disused tee 50 yards back in the woods but no official record of the hole ever being longer. It may have been another Captain's tee which again did not work and endorses the merits of using an experienced golf course architect when considering any changes. Also in this area were stables for the horses used to pull the mowing machinery prior to the use of tractors, and a parcel of land was lost to the course when the A404 was converted to a dual carriageway.

As Donald Steel noted in 1993 “this is another of Temple’s controversial holes”, the complaints being about the length from both men’s tees and again the fact that the surface of the green cannot be seen from the tee on a par three. On his recommendation more trees were planted in the 1990s to tighten the hole and give it more definition. and the area around the green was landscaped to improve it visually. He also suggested the planting of trees back right of the green to provide a backdrop.

The hole was discussed at length during Steel’s visit in 2002. He thought there were two main problems. Firstly, the width and alignment of the hole means that the ideal line is the middle of the fairway whereas “it is a recognised principle that the better player is expected to flirt with danger to achieve the optimum performance”. Secondly, the bunker was too remote from the green, and “likely to handicap the wrong players”. His plan was therefore to shift the fairway to the left and move the greenside bunkers. At the same time he suggested humps and bumps to reduce the blandness back right of the green.

This work was quickly undertaken and met with Steel’s approval when he returned in 2003. He thought the creep of the bunker to the left was acceptable given the slope of the green which meant that it would be possible to run the ball into the area behind the bunker.



Figure 82 The usual sequence of the 16th tees: red behind yellow behind white



Figure 83 The new Willie Park Jr./winter tee on the 16th



Figure 84 Removing the trees behind the 16th green opens up distant views and creates an “infinity” green

A new winter tee was built but when he visited in 2005 the tee was badly worn and he thought it needed to be made much bigger ($>200\text{m}^2$). At some point the grass was replaced with a mat.

There is evidence that there may have been a small dew pond to the left of the green in the early years.

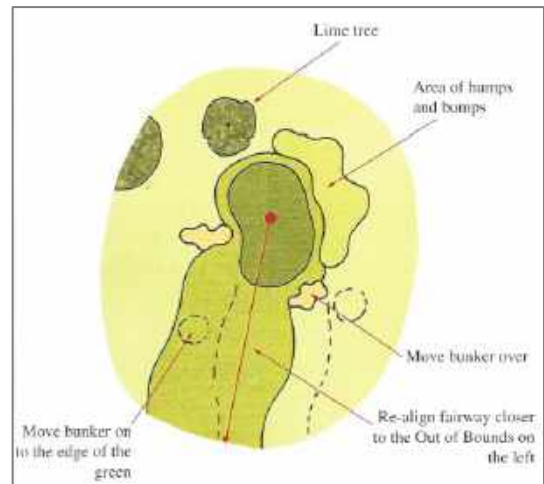


Figure 85 Donald Steel's proposal for the 16th in 2002



Figure 86 The left-hand greenside bunker on the 16th which many feel does not face the green as it should

Hole 17

The 17th was originally 400 yards, so about the same as from today's red tees from which it plays as a par 5. It is 413-yard par 4 from both yellow and white tees.

The copse on the left-hand side of the fairway was added to protect the nearby properties.

At the time of Donald Steel's visit in 1993 there was clearly a debate as to whether this should hole should be extended and converted to a par 5. His advice was to leave it as a testing par 4, but perhaps to build a small tee further back as a trial. This was still being discussed when Steel returned in 2002, and to this day remains a subject of discussion.

There was a small bunker front right of the green and the left greenside bunker was added on advice from Steel. The large grass fairway bunker can still be seen short and right of the green.

The right-hand greenside bunker was removed on the advice of Tom Mackenzie who suggested extending the humps and hollows around the right-hand side of the green as a replacement. This was not a success as the thin soil did not support grass capable of enduring the wear in this busy corner and the bunker was reinstated.

Tom Mackenzie also suggested pushing the left-hand bunker back so that it sat "immediately alongside the putting surface [where it will] exercise the minds a little more".



Figure 87 From the green tee (not an original Willie Park Jr.) the green is visible



Figure 88 No sign of the green from the 17th yellow tee



Figure 89 Grassy hollow short of the 17th green and site of former bunker



Figure 90 The 17th fairway is hidden in a dip

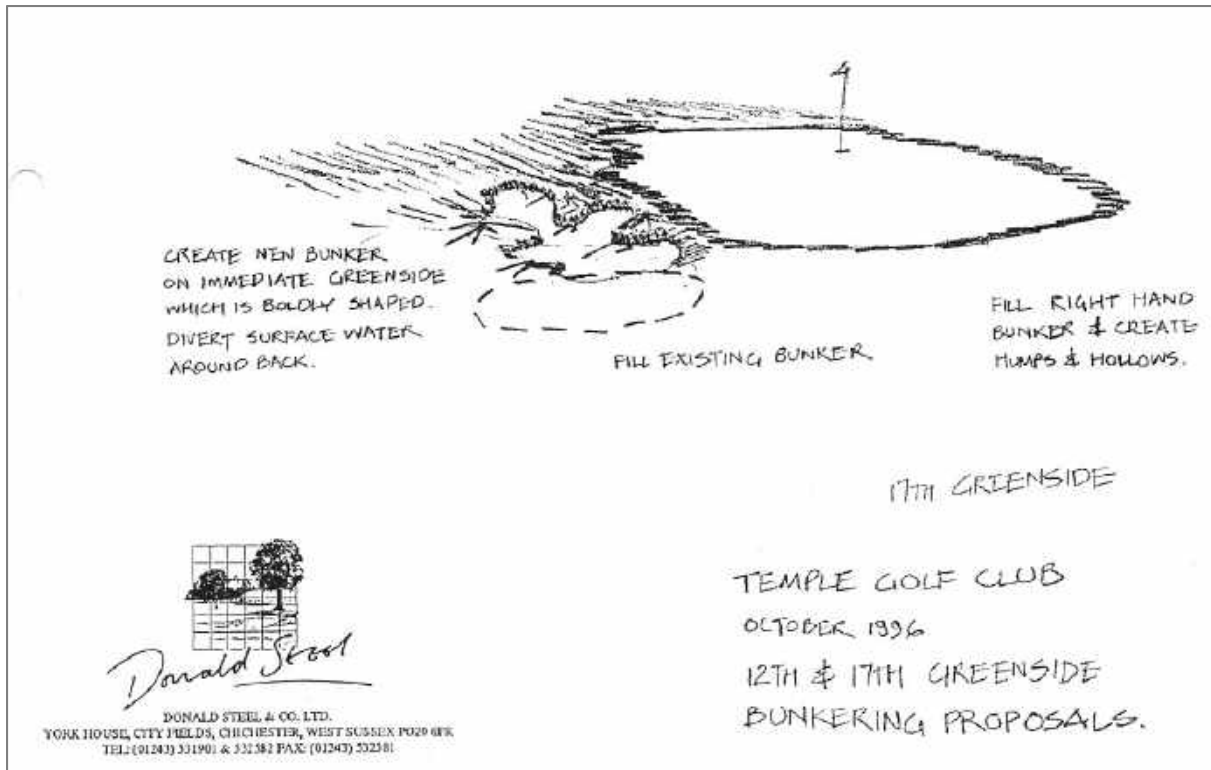


Figure 91 17th green bunkering proposal, 1996

Hole 18

This has always been a short par 4, initially 235 yards and now 243 from the red tees, 245 yards yellow tees and 259 white tees.

The 18th has one fairway bunker short and right which is now known as the “ Pensioners’ Bunker” and avoiding it is a badge of honour for golfers of a certain age. The left-hand fairway bunker was added in the 1970s.



Figure 92 The 18th hole from the tee

The green was protected by “natural hazards” and has hardly changed except that the current sand bunker was originally a grassy hollow and the right-hand copse was an addition in the late 1960s.

Donald Steel made “no comment” after his 1993 visit, but the 18th was discussed at length in Tom Mackenzie’s report of his visit in 2005. He considered the 18th drivable and exciting, but involved little strategy for the better player “they simply stand on the tee and hit it hard”. His solution was to revamp the bunkers and to contour the area to the left of the green.

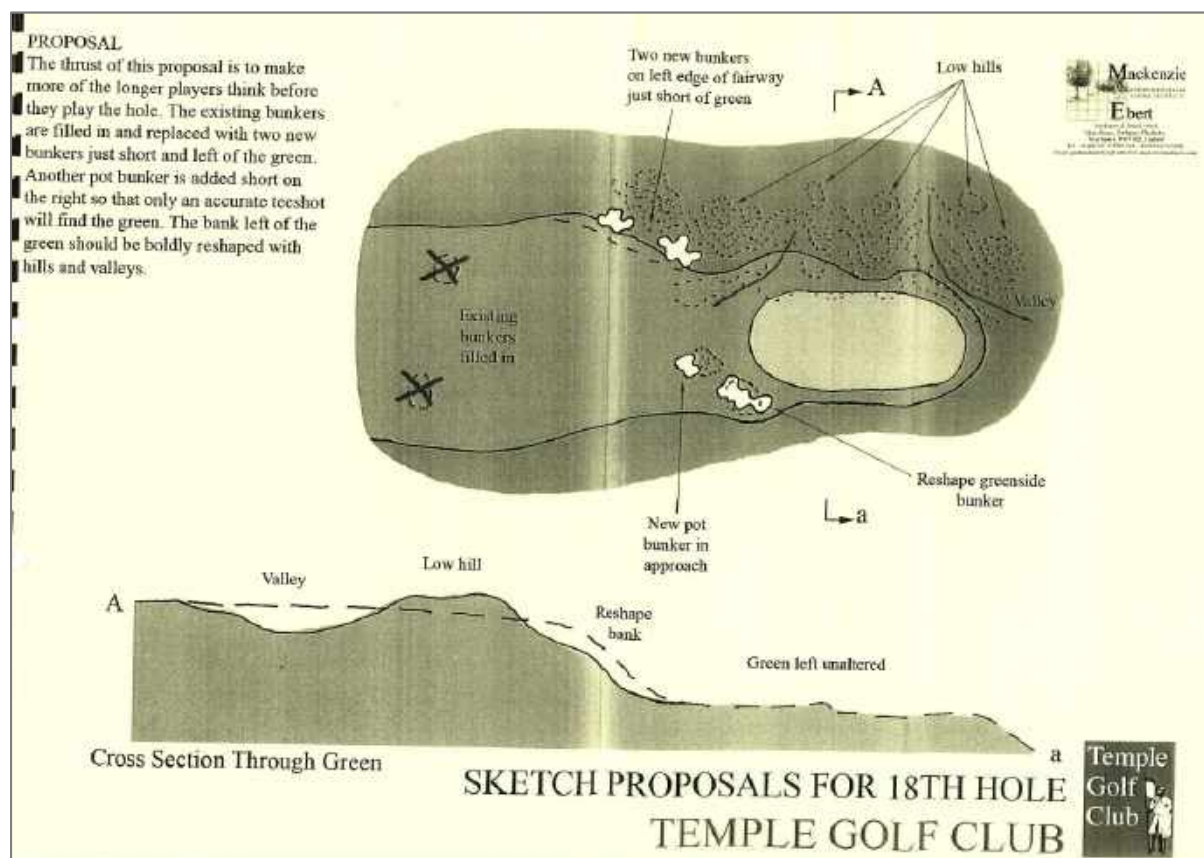


Figure 93 Tom Mackenzie’s proposal for the 18th in 2005

But these proposals have were not acted upon by the Club; the two fairway bunkers remain and the rather gentle slope down from the the out-of-bounds putting green remains unaltered.

This is no doubt in part for fear of making changes to a hole that has inspired many a tale, including those of Louis Oppenheimer as retold by Nicky Oppenheimer in *Temple Delights*, and Keith Adderley's reminiscences in the same volume.



Figure 94 *The pensioners' bunker*

In 2019 golf course architect Murray Long was invited to give conceptual ideas for changes to the 18th hole. He was keen to maintain the heritage of a Willie Park Jr. course, while suggesting changes that would 'reflect' the modern game. His proposal is below

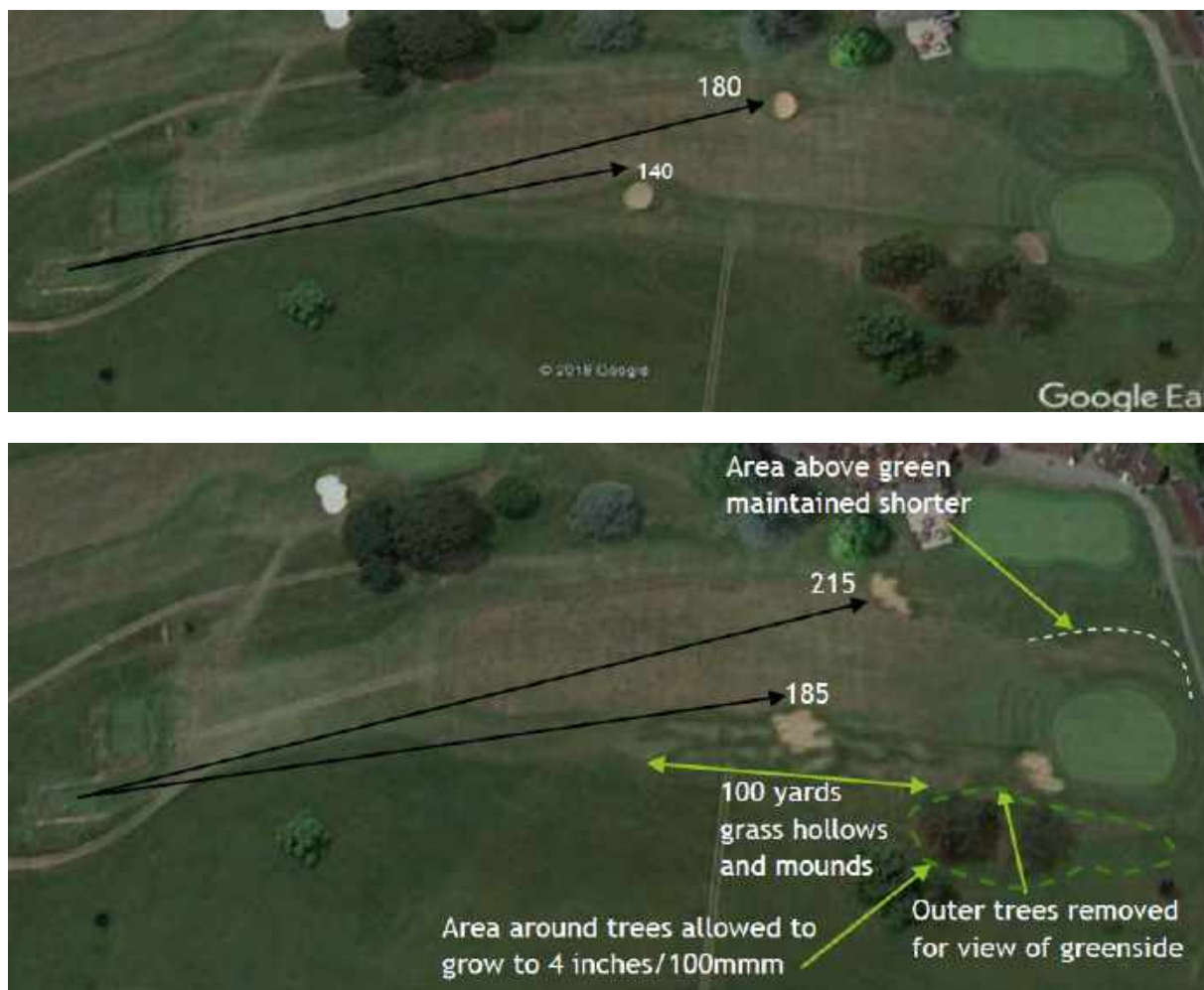


Figure 95 *The 18th as in September 2019 (top) and Murray Long's proposal (bottom).*

The humps and hollows were seen as being in the style of Willie Park Jr. and were intended to stop some of the balls running into the meadow rough in the summer.

Pushing the fairway bunkers towards the green would make them more relevant to the driving distances of today's golfers.

The suggestion to remove the outer trees from the copse close to the green to improve the view of the green (from the white tee, see figure) came into some criticism from a section of the membership. Much work had been done to Temple's coves under Ben Kebby's stewardship of the course, and some saw this as a step too far.

All other aspects of the proposal were implemented as part of the 2019/20 winter work program. Only one silver birch was felled.



Figure 96 Murray Long's impression of his proposal for the 18th.

The practice ground

This was discussed during Tom Mackenzie's visit in 1996 with a view to creating a practice green and bunker. The option of siting this practice green within the existing practice ground was ruled out as it would be bombarded by shots creating pitchmarks that wouldn't be repaired.

His preferred option was to create a practice green with bunkers to the left of the 12th fairway. This could also create a 19th hole for when work on the course took any hole out of play; play could be to this green from the original 12th tee, as a par four, and that from behind the spinney there would be a tee for a short hole to the 12th green.

However, by creating a practice green to the west side of the track behind the 15th white tee the same outcome was achieved. This could be played from the 14th tees as 14A when required, with an additional short hole created from playing from a temporary tee located beyond the large lime tree to the right-hand side of the 14th fairway, into the usual 14th green.

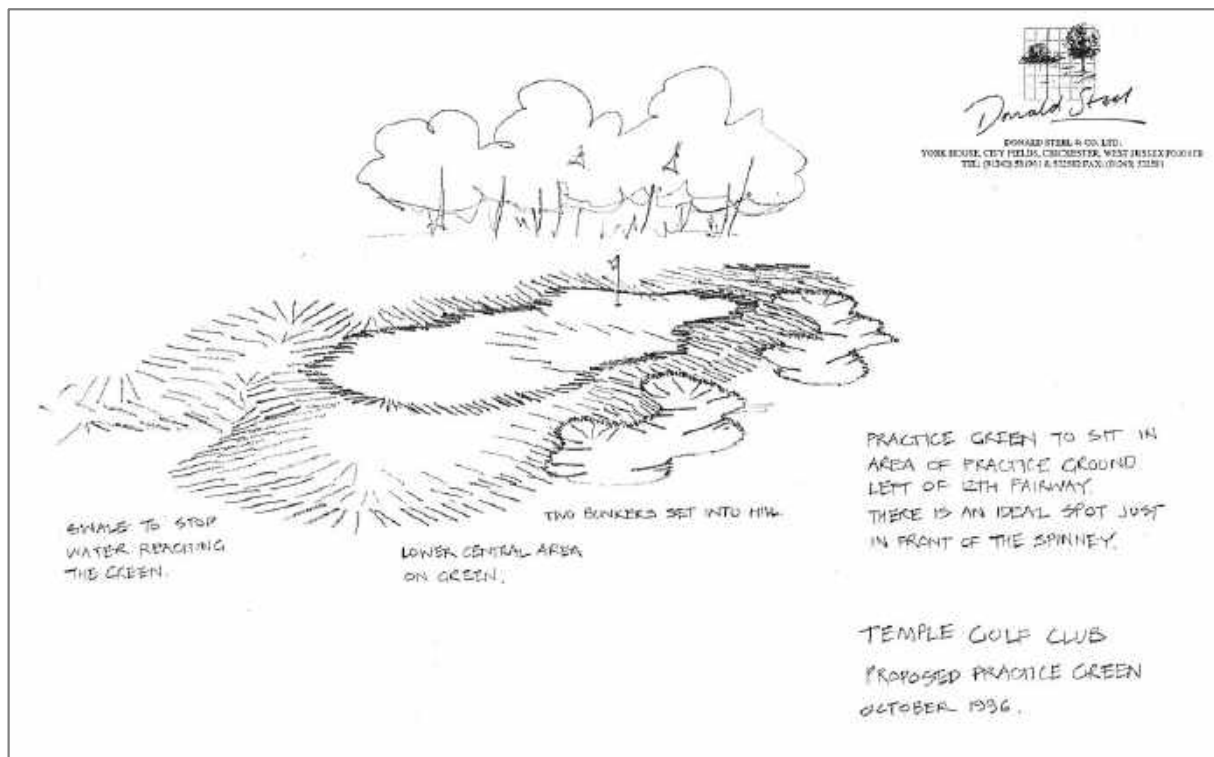


Figure 97 A proposal for a practice/19th green alongside the 12th fairway, 1996



Figure 98 Card and Map of Course 2009

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