

Tree Management
Muree Golf Club

August 2016 Report

The Muree Tree Management Committee, comprising of Ian Lovell, Rob Baker, Anne Redman and Ross Picot met for the first time to review a number of issues that have arisen as a consequence of naturally occurring propagation of native trees and a number of exotic and native trees that were planted by “well meaning” golfing members and have become problematic.

Ian Lovell had taken the time to document a number of observations on causal factors that require the Committee to act in terms of identification, decision-making and any action that may come from the process. For information, the document Ian submitted is attached as Annex A to this Report.

In an attempt to undertake this process in a systematic fashion, the Committee began with a tour of the course starting at the 1st hole and reviewing each of the trees that had been identified as dangerous (end of life), impacting on turf or greens, unsafe due to the proximity to neighbouring homes or clogging waterways.

Photographs of the trees have been taken and are incorporated into this document to ensure that the Board has a complete understanding of the issue and can make a determination on the recommendation of the Committee.

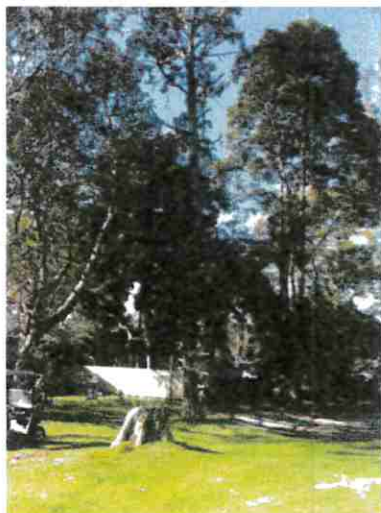
1st Fairway: A Camphor Laurel that is adjacent to the bunker of the left of the 1st green has been struck by lightning. Discussion around whether the entire tree should be removed resulted in an agreement to remove the large branch that has sustained the lightning strike in the hope that the tree will recover.



2nd Fairway: Approximately 100 metres from the 2nd tee, on the right hand side of the fairway, is an old Radiata Pine that has become unsafe due to dieback on most of the limbs of the tree. The dead limbs present a hazard to golfers and course staff as they may fall without notice and have the capacity to severely injure anyone underneath or close to the tree. The Committee has agreed that this tree in its present condition, must be removed. Discussion regarding replacement of this tree centred around using a native flowering tree such as a medium size Grevillea like Moon Shadow or Honey Gem.



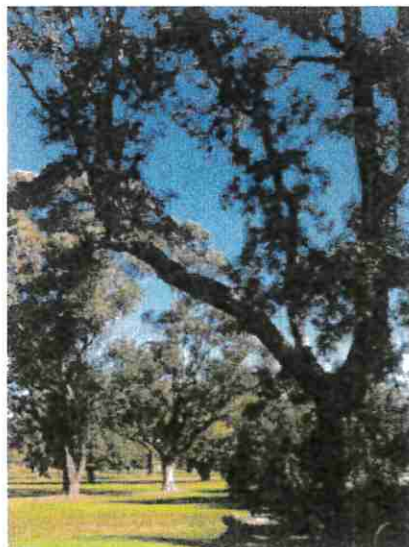
2nd Green: On the left hand side of the 2nd green there is a very tall, top heavy Grevillea Robusta. This tree has two issues that need to be addressed. The roots are impacting on the green and the surround turf and the tree is precariously leaning towards two neighbouring homes. The Committee all agreed to the removal of this tree, however the use of a professional tree surgeon is recommended due to the proximity to neighbouring homes. No replacement tree should be considered for this site.



3rd Green: The right hand side of the 3rd green has a number of very large Melaleucas that prevent sunlight and draw nutrient and water from the green. There were a number of options considered and after a lengthy discussion that involved removal of up to five of the trees, it was agreed to remove the closest tree to the green only. This decision may have to be revisited should the growth of the green and surrounding turf not sufficiently recover. Consideration was also given to removal of the first two (of the three) mounds in front of the right hand side of the green and construction of a bunker to replace the mounds.



4th Tee: To the rear of the 4th tee (not the shared 4th & 18th tee) is a very large Grevillea Robusta. There is a large branch that hangs out over the tee that is considered to be dangerous and presents a hazard to members. The Committee agreed that the branch should be lopped and if possible, remove other dead branches from the tree as these also present a hazard to passing golfers.



5th Fairway: The left hand side of the 5th fairway 15 metres back from the bridge to the 5th green, is a Camphor Laurel which appears under considerable stress. The tree has no impact on the rating of the hole and will be in the way of the proposed new path and bridge. The Committee agreed that removal of the tree should be undertaken with no replacement considered.

5th Green: The left hand side of the path around the 5th green is a large eucalypt that has been fatally struck by lightning. The tree presents hazard to all that use the path and the Committee agreed to its removal. No replacement was considered.



6th Fairway: Along the creek after the bridge crossing to the 12th tee are a number of melaleucas that are either dead or have branches that have fallen into the creek. It was agreed that these should be removed. Care should be taken not to damage remaining melaleucas as their removal will impact on the rating of the hole.



8th Hole: On the right hand side of the 8th, is a tall radiata pine that is dead (likely from the number of times I have hit it!). The Committee agreed to the removal of this dead tree.



11th Fairway: The first of the Swamp Mahogany eucalypts on the right hand side of the 11th fairway has a strangler fig growing in the crutch. The committee agreed that removal of this fig should be done as quickly as possible.

There are three trees to the right hand side of the 11th green, all the same genus (although what that is we are uncertain), that have severe dieback in most limbs. The Committee agree that these three trees should be removed although it is likely that a commercial service provider should be used to do this work.



12th Fairway: Before the start of the fairway to the 12th hole is a eucalypt that has severe die back. The tree presents a hazard to golfers and course personnel as there have already been instances of falling limbs. The Committee agreed that removal of this tree is mandatory.



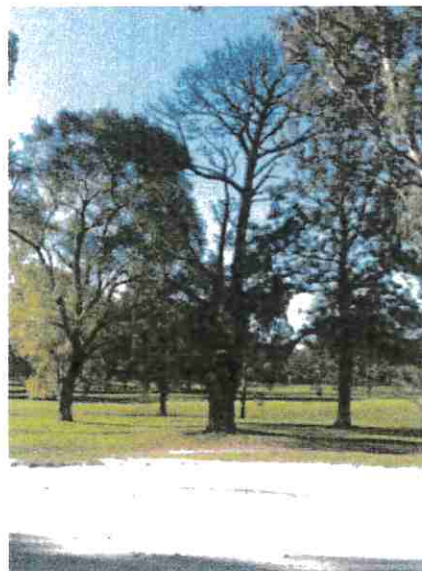
17th Tee: To the rear of the 17th tee, there is a strangler fig that has consumed a banksia. The fig will only become a burden for both the path to the 5th tee and block the sun from the 17th tee. The Committee agreed to the removal of the fig.



17th Tee: The southern side of the 17th tee has become overrun by paperbark and casuarina saplings. These saplings have choked the waterway consequently it was agreed by the Committee to remove all the saplings, while retaining the larger more mature trees.



17th Fairway: There is a radiata pine that has reached it's end of life and has become a hazard due to dead limbs. The Committee agreed that this tree should be removed.




17th Fairway: Adjacent to the bunker on the left hand side of the 17th green is a jacaranda that has a strangler fig lodged in the crutch of the tree. The Committee agreed that removal of the fig is necessary to ensure the jacaranda does not become consumed by the fig.


Conclusion: The Committee was in full agreement to the removal of all tree identified in this report. There were a number of trees not reviewed in this report and will be the subject of a future report.

The trees that the Committee has identified for removal and subsequent replacement, are to ensure that the course rating is retained while others are for aesthetic purposes. It was agreed that native flowering trees should be used. The Committee agreed to seek advice from a native tree specialist on this issue.


Anne Redman
Date:


6/9/16.


Rob Baker
Date:

 - 7/9/16.

Ian Lovell
Date:


8/9/16

Ross Picot
Date:


6 Sep 16

Personal thoughts on assessing what to do with 'trees'....

Trees can come to our attention as a Committee through a number of avenues:

- Greens staff observations, duties and requirements
- Suggestions from Members
- Complaints from Members
- Complaints from neighbours
- [Directives from authorities as a result of inspections, complaints, development approvals etc]
- Decisions regarding further beautification of any aspect of the course

Starting points for decision making and recommendations to the General Manager from the Committee:

- Is the comment justified?
- Is it a 'tree'?
- Is it a Native tree?
- Would a simple explanation suffice?

What part of the tree, or effect of its presence, represents an issue for the Committee?

- Branches, including shade/time distribution, unreasonable interference with player access or vehicular access
- Roots, including the effect on surrounding playing surfaces
- Foliage, especially as it relates to course playability (see rating issues below)

Is it really a problem? Consider:

- Danger
- Infrastructure damage
- Over growth expectations
- Rating issue
- Course enjoyment issue
- Potential for growth affecting any of the above (future effects)

How should it be dealt with?

- Is it classified as Rural Agricultural Management Activity under the definitions and actions listed in the NV Act?
- Pruning
- Root pruning

- Chemical or other beneficial treatment
- Tree surgery
- Removal, and possible replacement

Without limiting the authority of any Member of this Committee, processes leading to decisions and recommendations to the General Manager should be documented and minuted by the Committee and an accurate record of decisions and recommendations kept by the Committee, along with detailed records of work carried out on the Course, and by whom.

The General Manager's role would involve assessing decisions and recommendations, providing relevant information to the Board where necessary, authorising actions by persons working on the course (both Employees and Volunteer workers) and providing feedback to the enquirer.

The foregoing represents something of a checklist and possible starting point for course management into the future, and in accordance with legislation and sensible resource allocation. The potential of the course is often limited by impromptu actions, and leaves us liable in some cases to litigation, costly infrastructure repairs and maintenance and may result in loss of patronage.

IHL

11 August 2016