

REPORT ON FUTURE DEVELOPMENT AT LEYNIR GOLF CLUB

AUGUST 2015 REVISED NOVEMBER 2015





INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY

TERMS OF REFERENCE

The present layout was extended to 18 holes, with the new holes officially opened in July 2000. Since then the club has been working steadily at upgrading the original holes and they are now looking to upgrade the remaining holes - 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13 and 18. This work will include rebuilding the greens and shaping the fairways for drainage purposes.

The Club has asked for an over-view of the course that concentrates on the work that is to be done on the remaining original holes. Comments on other holes are also invited. They want to maintain or improve their standing of being in the top 5 courses in Iceland, being able to host the national championship.

MACKENZIE & EBERT—EXPERIENCE

Mackenzie & Ebert, a practice of international golf course architects, has been appointed to produce the above study. They are specialists in links golf and advise 6 of the 10 courses on The Open Championship rota, including the major overhaul of The Ailsa Course at Turnberry and the enabling works to bring The Open back to Royal Portrush after more than a 60 years. They also advise many other highly ranked links such as Royal Dornoch, Cruden Bay, Saunton and Burnham and Berrow. They also design new courses inspired by the links courses that they admire so much and Skibo Castle in Dornoch was recently rated 24th in Great Britain and Ireland by Golf World.

They also are working extensively throughout Europe, with renovation projects either underway or recently completed in Denmark, Finland, The Netherlands, Luxembourg, France and Spain.



The old nine has some really interesting greens, such as the present 13th.



The remaining original holes are to be redeveloped over the coming years.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Leynir is an excellent golf facility that serves its community well, offering great opportunities for new players to start the game and to develop into top class players.
- The improvement of the course is ongoing with the original greens (the 8th to 13th and 18th) left to redevelop.
- Potential exists to use this as an opportunity to improve the course further.
- The recommendations involve splitting the current 7th into a par three and a long par four and dropping out the current 8th. The 9th becomes a par five. These holes will be moved to the back nine so that the glorious background of the mountains features strongly at the start of the round and in the finishing holes.
- Room is created between the 9th and 18th greens so that the proposed 1st (present 10th) can play from the rocks behind the present 18th green.
- The revised course will be almost the same length as at present with the same par.
- In time, the bunkers should be developed to be more attractive and visible. At the same time, the overall number of bunkers and area of sand can be reduced significantly without harming the overall quality of the course.
- The trees have added to the character of the course, but they must be managed to make sure that they do not cause problems for turf management, start to impede play lines and also that the trees are allowed to develop into good specimen. This will involve removing some trees.
- Recommendations are made to make the proposed 13th (present 4th) a fairer hole for all players. This involves removing the pond and creating an approach short of the green on the far side of the ditch. The teeshot is also to be improved by moving the yellow tee forward and left and creating a wetland on the left of the drive to break up the openness of this hole.

Strengths & Weaknesses

Strengths & Weaknesses - Overall Impressions



Strength

Overall Impressions

Icelandic golf is an example to the world. It shows how the game can grow successfully by keeping it affordable. As sports clubs, local communities help them to develop gradually as they become more popular. The steady expansion and improvement of Leynir is a great illustration of the success of the club. It is a popular place for the community and visitors because it is fun and varied to play. It offers challenge for the better players and does not torture the less talented players too much. It is a course that deserves to succeed. The plans for developing the clubhouse are exciting and are another mark of how far the Club has come.

Strengths & Weaknesses - Setting



Strength

Setting

Golfers love to play golf in beautiful places and there is no doubt that Leynir delivers plenty of beauty. The backdrop on a good day is as good as Gleneagles in Scotland and, although many courses in Iceland enjoy lovely settings, the beauty of the location has to be a major attraction. Money cannot buy a good setting and, so long as there is no development to damage the views, this will always be a great asset for the Club.

Strengths & Weaknesses - Layout



Strength

Layout

Overall, the layout is good. The shape of the site and the landform creates some headaches with the consecutive short par fours and short par three to start and the closing par three, but there are no rules in golf course architecture and the priority is to create the best possible number of good holes and fewest number of poor holes. There are many good memorable holes and a few weaker holes, but there is no doubt that good use has been made of a piece of land which was far from ideal for the creation of a top quality golf course.

Strengths & Weaknesses - Use of Natural Features



Strength

Use of Natural Features

The land is not blessed with many natural features and those that exist have been used well and improve the course significantly.

Strengths & Weaknesses - Greens



Strength

Greens

As a set, the greens are a strength of the course. There is good variety between them, with some that are difficult but fair, such as the 5th and 9th, others that are a little less memorable and interesting, such as the 1st and 15th, and a few that are probably a little too severe like the 6th. This is an excellent foundation and the remaining green re-development must ensure that the greens as a set remain a strength.

Strengths & Weaknesses - Green Surrounds



Weakness

Green Surrounds

On a related topic, the shapes of green surrounds are in many ways as important as the greens themselves. At Leynir, the green surrounds are a weakness. The shapes are not interesting and there is not enough variety in shot-making around the greens and in almost every situation a lofted recovery shot is the only option. Top class courses must offer more than that. The original budget means that the soils are not really good enough to cut the grass short around the surrounds and the result is unattractive clumpy grass. This is certainly something to improve over time and to try to address with the new greens.

Strengths & Weaknesses - Bunkers



Weakness

Bunkers

The course is one of the most heavily bunkered in Iceland. The need for so many bunkers is in itself is questionable, but the fact that most of the bunkers are hidden from view and offer almost no challenge for the better players is a problem. Bunkers are becoming more and more expensive to build and maintain and it just does not make sense to have so many bunkers do too little and cost money to maintain.

Strengths & Weaknesses - Trees



Impact of Trees In Breaking Up Course - Strength
Trees Blocking Play- Weakness
Trees Too Close To Greens - Weakness

Trees

It is recognised that trees are essentially a luxury item in Iceland and that having them on the course is a bonus and that they are the result of hard work planting and looking after them over the years. There are two risks. Firstly, the trees planted in the wrong positions will become so large that they damage the character of the holes by blocking the line of play and the second is that they have a bad effect on the turf by screening them of light, sucking out water and nutrients and blocking air movement. These are all recognised problems with trees all over the world and the same applies in Iceland. There is no doubt that some trees have been planted in positions that block the line of play and others that are much too close to greens and tees.

Strengths & Weaknesses - Par Threes



Slight Weakness

Par Threes

The par threes as a set are not a strength of the course, but neither are they weak holes. It is just that none of them stand out as excellent holes, although the 3rd is definitely a good hole.

Strengths & Weaknesses - Par Fours



Strength

Par Fours

The land that the course is built on is largely flat and that makes it challenging to create good par fours, especially when the bunkers do so little to improve the visual appeal of the course. The par fours where there is a little more movement and natural feature on the course are good, such as the 2nd, 5th, 6th, 9th, 15th and 17th. Those on the flatter ground are less exciting and memorable but they are not bad holes. Given the weakness of the bunkering which can be addressed, the par fours are a strength.

Strengths & Weaknesses - Par Fives



Front Nine Par Fives - Weakness
Back Nine Par Fives - Strength

Par Fives

The par fives are a real mix. The shorter two on the back nine, the 13th and 16th, are really excellent holes as they offer lots of strategic options and going for the green in two is not always the best plan. This is a sign of a good par five. The 7th is a poor hole and at 574m (often into the wind), it is a monstrously long poor hole. It has very little interest with no strategic challenge and so is a priority to address. The 4th is not right either. It is incredibly wide and too long, so the majority of players are left with a really long approach shot and, from watching play there during the visit, the vast majority of average to weak players go into the water. That is not right. They should have a way of playing around the water.

Strengths & Weaknesses - Practice Facilities



Strength

Practice Facilities

The practice facilities are excellent all round from the large putting green to the short game green, par three course to the range. They are close to ideal and are a real strength.

General Recommendations

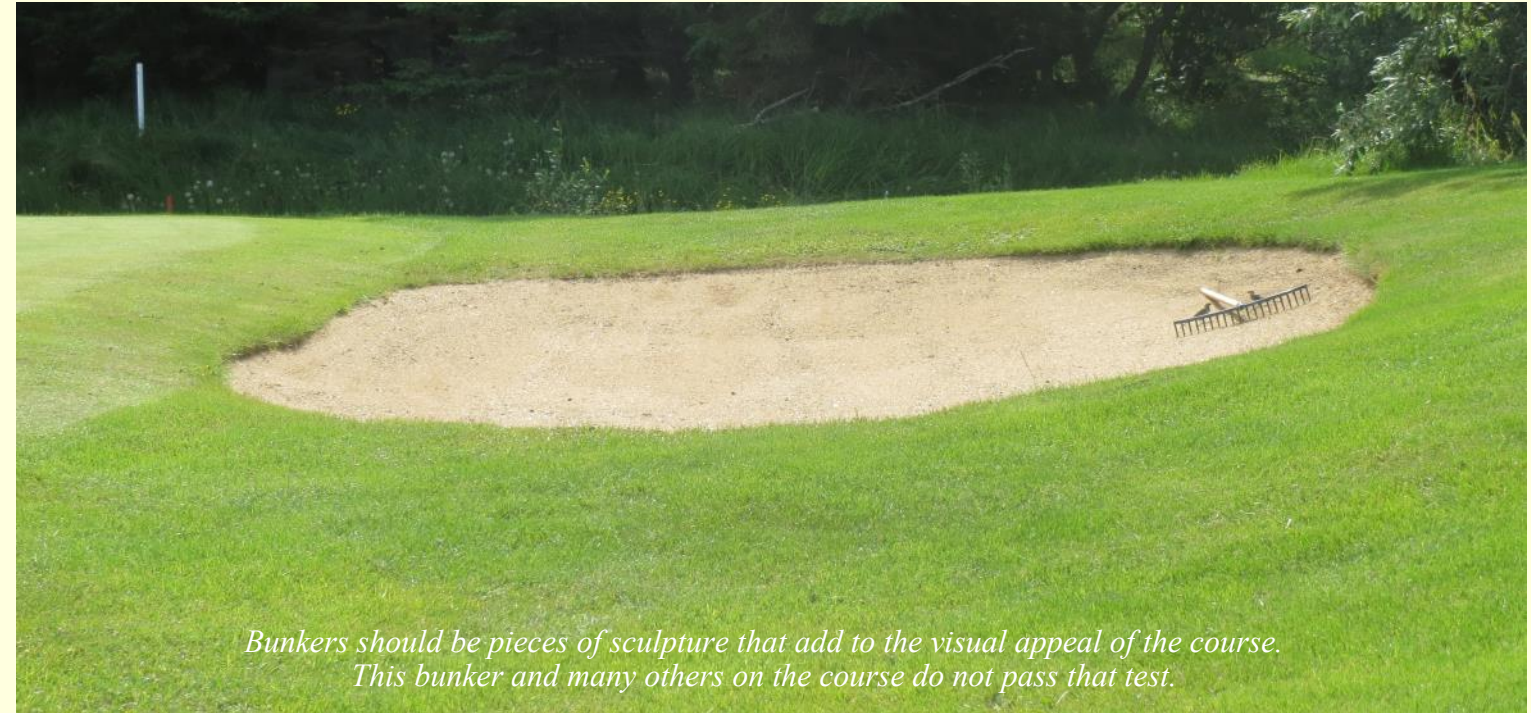
BUNKER STYLES AND POSITIONS

BUNKER STYLES AND POSITIONS

There is much to praise about the course and its evolution, but its bunkers are not a strength. The original design placed emphasis on this being the most heavily bunkered course in Iceland and there are almost 80 in all. They all need to be sanded, weeded and raked year after year and yet at least half of them cannot be seen from the tee or fairway. Similarly, bunkers are hazards as defined in the rules of golf and yet many of them are so flat and shallow that good players could get out of them using every club in the bag, except for the driver. There is a century old expression that “poorer players carry their bunkers with them”. In the case of Leynir, many of the bunkers are not just out of view but only cause problems to the poorer players.

The course is now well enough established that it does not need so many bunkers, especially those which are out of view. It is strongly recommended that many of the bunkers are removed, the overall sand area is reduced and that the remaining bunkers are placed and shaped so that they add to the visual and playing experience of the course than is currently the case. It makes no sense to be spending money on maintaining bunkers that are only making life more difficult for the less skilled players. It is much better to spend some money filling them in and then concentrating on the remaining bunkers.

The shape of bunkers is always a matter of discussion, but the simple round or oval shapes that dominate at Leynir mean that there are few that really improve the aesthetics of the course. The following pages give some ideas of styles that could be considered. Whatever style is adopted, it would make sense to carry out a trial to make sure that the details work in the Icelandic climate. The aim is to have a mix of sandy faces and grass tongues as the examples illustrate.



*Bunkers should be pieces of sculpture that add to the visual appeal of the course.
This bunker and many others on the course do not pass that test.*



These bunkers add little to the visual appeal of the course which is a pity.

BUNKERING EXAMPLES FROM TWO UK PROJECTS



BUNKERING - KEDLESTON PARK EXAMPLE

Kedleston Park near Derby in England embarked on a full bunker reconstruction programme in 2013. Phase One commenced in the autumn of that year after member consultation, Phase Two in the following year, with the programme due to be completed in 2015. Every single bunker has been rebuilt, the topsoil improved around the surrounds, re-drained, re-lined and new sand added.

The bunkers had lost all of their shape and many could not be seen from the tee or landing area. Similarly, many of the bunkers tested the wrong players, being largely irrelevant to the better players and merely making life difficult for the mid to high handicappers.



BEFORE - The par 5 17th before the re-design work. The bunkers did little to test the better players and simply caught the poorer shots of the weaker players.

BUNKERING - KEDLESTON PARK



AFTER - A diagonal line of bunkers is created across the fairway with a narrow throat through which the ball can be laced by the accurate players of all length. It is a much stronger hole , both strategically and visually.

BUNKERING - DELAMERE FOREST

Delamere Forest in Cheshire had seen its bunkers slide out of play for the better players and lose their shape through bunker edging. A programme was drawn up to reshape all bunkers, fill and relocate others and add some new bunkers. This was done over two winters and the work is now well established, giving the Club what looks like a new course without the cost, disruption and pain associated with green reconstruction.



BEFORE - The bunkers on the short par 4 14th had lost their shape. One of the bunkers on the right of the approach was found to have been filled in at some point and it was felt that its re-opening would be beneficial.

BUNKERING - DELAMERE FOREST



AFTER - Old photos were used to understand more about the historic bunker shapes and the bunkers were reshaped in a style inspired these old pictures.

TREE MANAGEMENT

TREE MANAGEMENT

It is understood that the Club is proud of the trees that it is establishing and rightly so. They add something to the course, but trees also require management. They can also do real harm to the turf and gradually can cause real problems to the way the holes play. That has already started to happen.

The worse example of this is the present 2nd green where the trunks of the trees are only 2 or 3 m from the putting surface. These trees will become bigger and bigger and their roots will extend further and further under the green, sucking out nutrients and water. Decompaction work becomes impossible before long and reconstruction of the green will be the only option. Having trees so close to the green surface is also a thoroughly bad golfing feature. A ball can just fall off the back of the very narrow green, leaving players with unplayable lies. Significant tree removal is required. There are other examples such as the 3rd where the trees are blocking the line of play.

The tree planting programme has been a real success. They have now entered a new phase where they need to be actively managed to make sure that the Club ends up with good, healthy trees and not blocks of thin, weak over-crowded trees that will never establish properly. The life of the trees will be massively reduced. That is not what the people who planted the trees want. They want beautiful trees that live for as long as possible.

The average club member in any country does not like tree removal and simply does not understand why it is needed. It is really important that the reasons for the tree removal are fully explained. In fact, it is much better to create a Tree Management Plan that sets agreed goals for the trees which is then adopted by the membership.

That then gives the greenkeeping team the authority to manage the trees properly for the long term health of the trees and the turf. After all, golf is played on grass and not on trees. The priority must be to grow good grass where needed.



There are examples of trees growing so close to green surfaces. These must be removed.

It is also good to start to think about what tree species to have in different areas in the future. The Populus trees establish well but their roots are shallow and they block up drains incredibly quickly. They are good as nurse species to allow other trees to establish, but they are being used in blocks on their own with nothing to take over in time. It is certainly something to consider on holes like the present 7th.

Another point that must be considered is to make sure that the tree planting is not allowed to block the views out to the mountains. It is something that can happen gradually but it would be a step backwards if the views of the mountains were hidden in 30 or 50 years time. Who knows how well the trees will do?

The recommendation is therefore to make sure that the Club thinks hard about what it wants from its trees. They do not look after themselves and a planned and structured management plan is essential to make the best of what you have. The people who planted the trees had the vision and the next generation has the responsibility to make sure that the vision is fulfilled by looking after them properly.



The 3rd is becoming overgrown. The trees on the left are already obscuring the view of the left of the green and block the teeshots for the players who can only hit the ball left to right. There is even a tree right on the line of play. This has to be brought under control.

Layout Recommendations

LAYOUT RECOMMENDATIONS

LAYOUT RECOMMENDATIONS

The Strengths and Weaknesses highlighted the relative weakness of some of the par threes and also that the 7th is a really poor and enormously long hole. The major layout recommendation therefore addresses this. It is hardly an act of design genius to suggest dividing the 7th hole into two and it is understood that it has been discussed before, but sometimes doing the simple thing is the best. In this case, it is recommended that a par three is added after the 6th which plays back towards the 6th tee, but with the green set into the slight hill. This resolves the current safety issue with the 6th tee being in the firing line from the 7th tee. It also creates room for the 6th back tee to be taken back further and to the left increasing the number of club options from the tee for the longer players, which will make a really good hole even better.

The remainder of the present 7th then becomes a long par four and the green is well suited for that length of shot, although the surrounds are too uniform and rounded - some adjustment would make them look more natural and less machine finished along with re-bunkering to make the approach shot more attractive. The tees will be on the left of the fairway and the landing area will be in the area of the fairway bunkers. It follows that the present 8th hole is then dropped out and could be used as an extra hole. The 9th then becomes a par five, playing to a green that is about 30m short of its present position.



The proposed 18th (present 9th) green has to move towards the tee by 30m to create room for the new 1st tee and to move it away from the new 10th (present 1st) tee.

Proposed hole numbers have been mentioned yet because it is suggested that the nines are reversed, so the present 9th becomes the 18th. It is felt that with the present 5th and 6th as the new 14th and 15th, then the new par 3 as the 16th, the long par four as the 17th and the present 9th as a par five that this represents an excellent run of finishing holes. The challenge is then to reduce the congestion in the area of the 9th and 18th greens. The best way to do that is to slide the present 9th green back towards the tee by 30m and the present 18th left by 10m to create room for the 1st hole to play from the rocky outcrop.

The new opening teeshot will play over the rock ridge and, with the beautiful mountain backdrop, it is the best view to start the course. Similarly, the proposed 18th will be an excellent par 5 with an interesting green position with the rocks left and behind the green. During the briefing with the committee, it was suggested that the present 9th green should be retained but, on reflection, it has to move to make the present 1st tee safer and to create room for the new 1st tee location. The new green will be raised to about the same level and will be connected into the rock outcrop on the left, so the character of the new green should be similar to that of the present one. There is nothing wrong with finishing with a par three and the reversal of the nines is optional, but it does seem to make sense.

One concern with this is that players may try to play the wrong way down the new 18th from the new 1st tee, so it is proposed to design the new 1st green so that it slopes away from this line of approach making it extremely difficult to gain advantage by playing the hole in this way, especially as the approach will be blind.



This is a lovely opening teeshot that gives a brilliant first impression of what is a truly beautiful course.



The proposed 17th (present 7th) becomes a long par four with another wonderful backdrop that the current numbering does not give.

LAYOUT RECOMMENDATIONS

Bunker 17th green more boldly to make this a more appealing approach shot.

The 17th (present 7th) is played as a long par four from back tees. It can either be played as a mid-length four or as a short par five from the middle and forward tees, but that would mean closing with two back to back par fives.

Add some additional length to the new 7th (present 16th) if the land can be made available. Raise the tees to make the landing area more visible. It is a good teeshot but players cannot see what they are doing which is a weakness.

The 8th can be rebuilt and used as an extra hole if there is need for that.

18th played as a par five rather than a long par four which is a much more fun finishing hole.

The new 15th (existing 6th) can be extended by 15m approximately. The tee is now much safer than it currently is in relation to the present 7th tee.

Create a wetland area in the carry to take water away from the fairway on the 18th.

Raise the landing area on the 18th to improve drainage and break up the flatness.

Create a hill alongside the 2nd tee (present 11th) to push the 18th fairway over, away from the tees and to create some variety in height in this flat area of the site.

New Par 3 16th to replace the 8th hole. This breaks up the 7th into two and creates a par three on land that is not flat as is the case with the 8th.

Slip the new 18th (present 9th) green back towards the tee by a full green length but keeping the elevated character of the green and tying the new shapes in with the rock outcrop on the left. This makes the 1st and 10th tees much safer.

New 9th (current 18th green) is moved 15m left to create space between the 9th and 18th greens for the new 1st teeshot.

During the clubhouse redevelopment, try to remove the original clubhouse block to allow the new 10th (present 1st) tee to be moved left to reduce the angle of the dogleg and add a few metres.

New 1st tee set on top of the rock outcrop. Forward tees will be raised so that they do not leave a blind teeshot.

PROPOSED 1ST HOLE



VIEW BEFORE: The bunkers are unattractive and lack impact.

PROPOSED 1ST HOLE



VISUALISATION: The green is expanded and sloped to be receptive from the fairway. The bunkers are made more attractive and prominent.

PROPOSED 2ND TEESHOT



VIEW BEFORE: The bunkers are poorly placed and can hardly be seen.

PROPOSED 2ND TEESHOT



VISUALISATION: There are fewer bunkers and the sand area is reduced significantly, but the visual impact of the bunkers is much better.

PROPOSED 4TH APPROACH



VIEW BEFORE: The approach bunker is completely out of view.

PROPOSED 4TH APPROACH



VISUALISATION: The approach bunker is moved into view and set into the face of the hill. The greenside bunker is more attractive as well.

PROPOSED 9TH TEESHOT



VIEW BEFORE: The green needs to move to the left to create room for the new 1st teeshot.

PROPOSED 9TH TEESHOT



VISUALISATION: The green is moved over to the left by 10m to free room for the 1st teeshot.

DETAILED LAYOUT RECOMMENDATIONS - 1ST TO 9TH

DETAILED LAYOUT RECOMMENDATIONS - 1ST TO 9TH

Circulation Around 1st and 10th Tees and 9th and 18th Greens

The movement of the proposed 18th green (present 9th) also takes play away from the proposed 10th tee (present 1st). Players coming from the 9th green (present 18th) will exit the green on the left and walk around the back of the 1st tee, which should work well.

New 1st (Present 10th)

The additional length makes quite a big difference to the teeshot, as the water becomes harder to reach for many players which is no bad thing. The green will be designed in a way that it is receptive to shots coming in from the fairway and anyone playing in from the left (either by accident or deliberately) will find it very difficult to judge the shot accurately with little or no view of the green.

New 2nd (Present 11th)

The drive bunkers are invisible from the tee and the left ones should be brought forward, building them into the existing hill. The ones on the left should be set into a new hill so that, as a set, they frame the teeshot and make sure that all players have to think their way down the hole.

New 3rd (Present 12th)

Retain the double green as it is an interesting feature, but increase the overall surface area of the combined green to increase the buffer between the greens and allow interesting rolls and contours to be created in the putting surface while leaving enough pin positions.

New 4th (Present 13th)

An excellent short par 5. Look at the possibility of adding a back tee on the left side of the drainage ditch to angle the teeshot more for the best players. Adjust the bunkers so that the approach bunker is set into the hill on the approach and make the greenside bunker more visible.

New 5th (Present 14th)

The bunker shapes are a little weak and hole lack spice as a result.

New 6th (Present 15th)

An excellent hole, but it would be improved further by improving the quality of the grass on the green surrounds, so



The double green is retained and will be expanded and enhanced to become a distinctive feature of Leynir.



The re-numbering means that the course starts and finishes with the magnificent mountains fully in view on many of the holes.

that there is more variety of recovery shots around the green.

New 7th (Present 16th)

Another good par 5 which makes good use of the natural features at the green. The left bunker at the green could be turned into a grassy hollow, as it is blind from the fairway.

The tees feel too low and the teeshot would certainly be improved if they were raised to make the landing area more visible. Some additional length could be added as well. The final point is that the mounds left of the drive landing area look too sharp and artificial and should be softened off.

New 8th (Present 17th)

There are two points here. The first is to make the left greenside bunkers more visible by lowering the ground short of them and the second is that the hills around the back of the green are unattractive and artificial in appearance. They rise too quickly from the edge of the green and should be reshaped and softened.

New 9th (Present 18th)

The green is moved over by 10m to create room for the new 1st teeshot, but otherwise the hole will seem the same. It is better as a 9th than an 18th hole because it is not an outstanding par three. The new 18th will be a much better hole and the closing run of holes makes much better use of the mountain background.

LAYOUT RECOMMENDATIONS - PROPOSED 13TH (PRESENT 4TH HOLE)

Use the back tee only for elite events. This is a hole which is much better played a little shorter, as it gives more players a chance of getting safely onto the green.

Expand this tee making the hole shorter and much more playable for many players at around 430m.

New wetland area to define the hole better and to improve the drainage of the hole.

Remove the pond and re-route the stream so that players have the option of approaching the green from the left.

Abandon the main tee and move it over to the left, taking play away from the 12th tees.

New hills built using material from the wetland. Bunkers are set into the hills to make them visible from the tee. These bunkers will define the right of the hole.

Plant new trees and remove the inside ones to create more room for the par 3 tees which are too small and cramped.

Widen out the fairway closer to the green to allow shorter players to play closer to the green before playing across the water.

PROPOSED 13TH TEESHOT



VIEW BEFORE: The teeshot on this par five is poorly defined and extremely wide and flat.

PROPOSED 13TH TEESHOT



VISUALISATION: The teeshot is much more interesting with the wetland area on the left and the bunkers on the right much more visible.

PROPOSED 13TH APPROACH



VIEW BEFORE: The pond has lost its water source and is a very severe hazard for the weaker players on a hole of this length.

PROPOSED 13TH APPROACH



VISUALISATION: A left route to the green is opened up by removing the pond, creating the a way to approach the green from the left.

PROPOSED 17TH APPROACH



VIEW BEFORE: The hole would be improved by bunkering it more attractively.

PROPOSED 17TH APPROACH



VISUALISATION: The green is bunkered more attractively.

PROPOSED 18TH APPROACH



VIEW BEFORE: The present green is in a good position, but it is close to the 1st tee.

PROPOSED 18TH APPROACH



VISUALISATION: The green is moved forward and to the left to free space for the proposed 1st and 10th tees.



Leynir Golf Club

Scale
0 40 80 120 160 200 Metres
Scale 1:2000 @ A1

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DETAILED LAYOUT RECOMMENDATIONS - 10TH TO 18TH

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New 10th (Present 1st)

With the proposed re-development of the clubhouse, it would be good to remove the original clubhouse where the toilets are now so that the sharpness of the dogleg can be reduced. This would also allow some additional length to be added. This will create a better hole.

New 11th (Present 2nd)

The trees immediately behind the green are a bad feature and need to be removed. There will be more on trees later.

New 12th (Present 3rd)

The trees are becoming a real problem and they block the view of the green, the water hazard and the line of play. They must be brought under control.

New 13th (Present 4th)

See separate page.

New 14th (Present 15th)

Investigate creating a back tee offset to the left so the teeshot is angled to the line of play more.

New 15th (Present 6th)

With the new par 3 16th, the safety issue in relation to the tee on this hole is removed. The tee can, in fact, be taken back and should be raised as well to make the best of this excellent hole. The aim of adding length is to offer more variety of clubs from the tee.

New 16th to 18th

These have already been discussed.



The present 1st becomes the new 10th and if it is possible to remove the original clubhouse, then the tee can be moved left creating a straighter hole and adding some length. The removal of the present 9th green will make this area safer as well.



The new 11th (present 2nd) is becoming overgrown with trees, especially at the green. It is not the only hole where that is happening.

CONCLUSION

Leynir is another Icelandic golf success story. It has had its difficult periods, but it is a fantastic example of golf as a community sport and, with its excellent practice facilities and short course, it is a great place to start the game. The development of the course over the years has been done well, with the remaining holes to be redeveloped being the area of the original course. This work can be done in a way that allows a further move forward in the right direction, allowing the Club to achieve its goal of remaining firmly in the Top 5 courses in Iceland.

The proposals are not especially radical but they do tackle some of the weaker areas of the course. The 7th is split into two holes, breaking up an extremely monotonous hole. The 4th is revamped to make it a fairer hole for the average player.

A series of minor adjustments is recommended on many holes that will all add up to real improvement without having to re-invent the wheel.

The nines are swapped over so that the stunningly beautiful mountain backdrop dominates the opening and closing holes. This configuration works well with the present clubhouse arrangement and keeps options open for clubhouse relocation or renovation.

This may sound complicated, but it is a logical approach. All of the greens and tees are down to be rebuilt in the next phase of the work, so the costs are not increased. In fact, the construction of the new par three 15th can be done without interfering with play too much, allowing the 8th to continue to be used, reducing disruption. The present 9th would have to be played to a temporary green while the new green is establishing.

MACKENZIE & EBERT

INTERNATIONAL GOLF COURSE ARCHITECTS