An aerial, black and white photograph of a golf course. The image shows a clubhouse building on the right side, surrounded by trees and a parking area. A road or path runs through the center of the course. The overall scene is a mix of open grassy areas and wooded sections.

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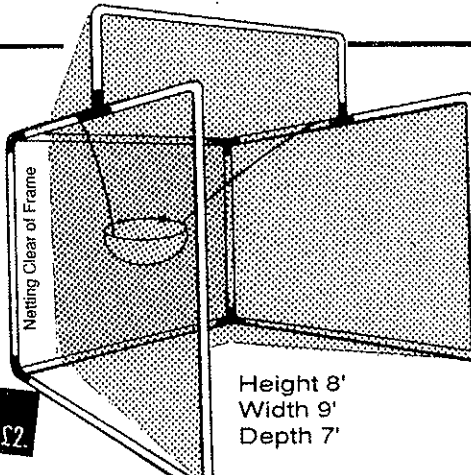
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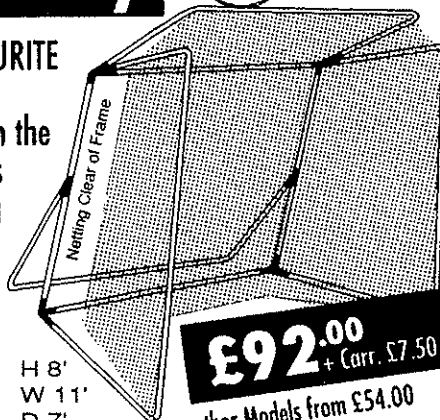


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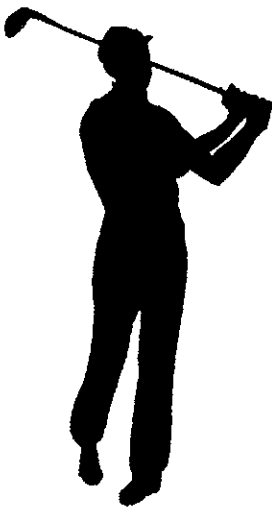
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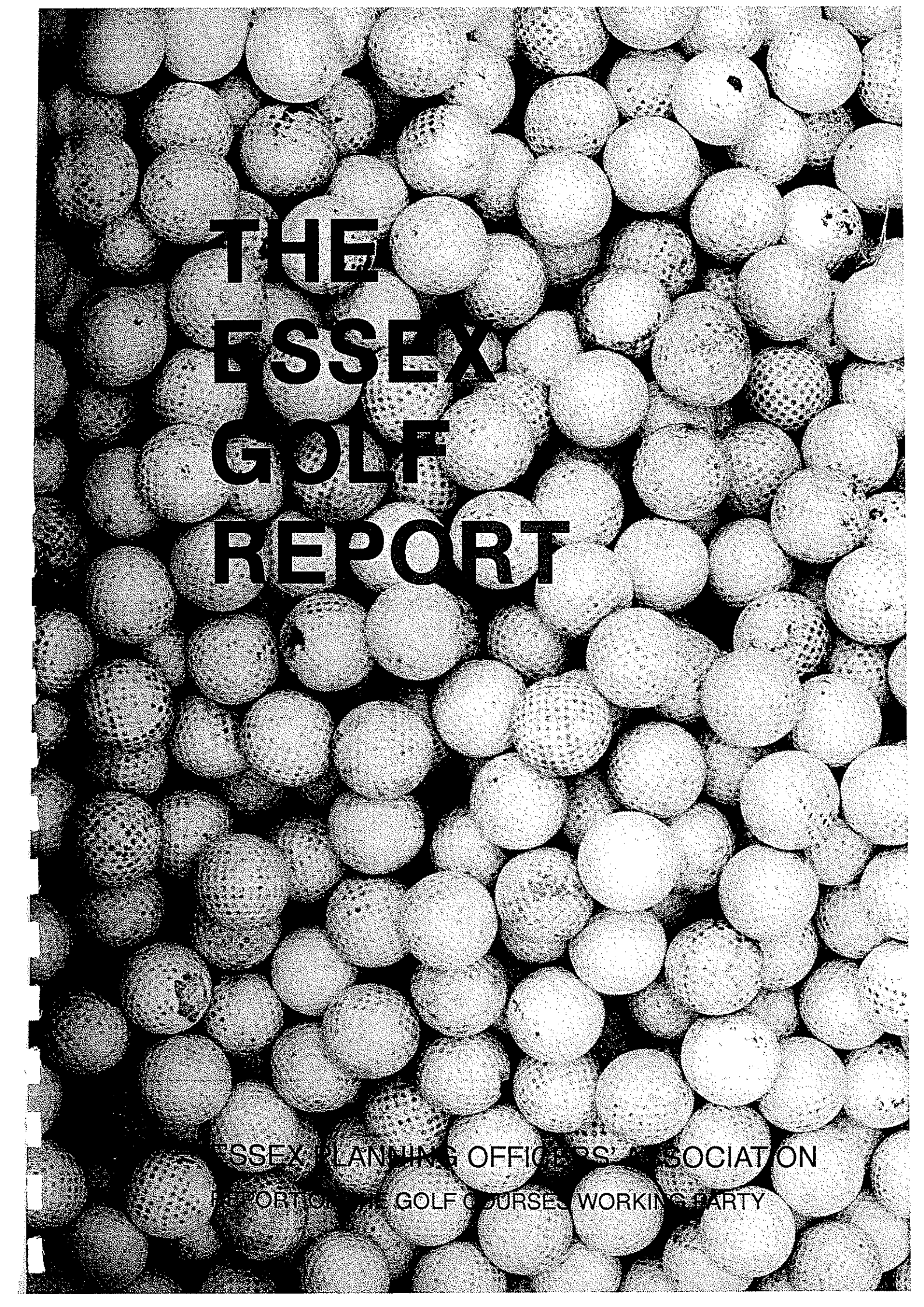
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ESSEX PLANNING OFFICERS' ASSOCIATION
REPORT FOR THE GOLF COURSES WORKING PARTY

"The suburbs of London stretch west and south and even west by north, but to the northeastward there are no suburbs; instead there is Essex. Essex is not a suburban county; it is a characteristic and individualised county which wins the heart . . . Essex is so much more genuinely Old England than Surrey say or Kent . . . Half their (Surrey's) soil is hard chalk or a rationalistic sand only suitable for bunkers and villa foundations. And they play golf in a large, expensive, thorough way because it's the thing to do . . . Now here in Essex we're as lax as the eighteenth century. We hunt in any old clothes. Our soil is a rich succulent clay; it becomes semifluid in winter - when we go about in waders shooting duck. Our roses and oaks are wonderful; that alone shows that this is the real England. If I wanted to play golf - which I don't, being a decent Essex man - I should have to motor ten miles into Hertfordshire..."

*Extract from "Mr. Britling Sees It Through"
by H.G. Wells 1916.*

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Warning on boom in golf courses

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Golf and new hotel plan

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Demand for more golf courses

How golf drives into the rough

Cash crop for farmers

Golfing boom brings a crop of problems

Council urged to curb 'explosion' of golf courses

Fears over too many golf courses

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OF the de could be forever as h to turn s into golf experts rldy. or that s may es" hid- or hotels



Warning off for a glut of new golf courses

MARKLAND SITES FACE THREAT FROM GOLFING BOOM

Fear over Golf course on fall application

Warning on boom in golf courses

MARKLAND SITES FACE THREAT FROM GOLFING BOOM

John Young reports on a dispute between a parish council and golf developers that might help to clarify waiting interests in the countryside

More farms reap 'green' payouts

Worries over traffic demands at golf course

Hard-hit farmers turn pastures into yet more golf courses

Preface

The large number of planning applications being submitted for golf courses, together with the Royal & Ancient's forecast in "The Demand for Golf" that almost 700 additional 18 hole courses were required in England and Northern Ireland in the period up to the end of the century, caused the Essex Planning Officers' Association to consider the adequacy of policy guidance for the determination of applications for golf courses and ancillary development. In short, the Essex Structure Plan and District Local Plans, although protective of most aspects of the rural environment and supportive of "the open use of land for sport and recreation" were for the most part non-specific in their policies and guidance for the consideration of planning applications for golf courses and associated development.

The First Edition of "The Essex Golf Report" was published in October 1990 and was written as guidance to the Golf Industry as to the form and location of acceptable proposals. Its intention was to give a clear statement of that guidance as a recommendation to all Essex Planning Authorities with the aim of achieving a consistent approach across the county in the determination of such applications.

The fact that some 700 copies of the report were sold indicated the extent of the need for guidance, not only in Essex but across the country, where many such similar guidance documents have now been produced. Hopefully the Essex Planning Officers' report has also been of assistance to other authorities. Quite deliberately the document was not copyrighted.

Throughout Essex all local planning authorities take account of the report and its guidelines. Some authorities have incorporated its main points in their local plans, others propose so to do. (Refer Appendix V).

At this time, the media was publicising many alarmist reports (Page (vi)), and some amenity groups were beginning to adopt stances against further permissions for golf courses because of their perceived damaging effect on the rural environment. (The C.P.R.E. had calculated that the R & A's forecast of 700 new courses (x 60 hectares each) meant that 42,000 hectares of the country would be likely to be turned over to golf courses - an area equal to the size of the Isle of Wight.) The first report received a generally favourable reaction from golf course developers, who found its guidance constructive. Nevertheless a number of suggestions have been made as to areas which were either omitted completely or not covered in adequate depth in the original report. The Working Party identified yet further areas worthy of inclusion in this, the Second Edition of "The Essex Golf Report".

GOLF COURSES WORKING PARTY

Essex Planning Officers' Association

ORIGINAL TERMS OF REFERENCE (1990)

- (a) To consider the need for golf courses and allied facilities in Essex and their most appropriate locations in relation to the requirements to safeguard the character and appearance of the countryside.
- (b) To suggest appropriate planning guidance for the consideration and determination of applications for such development.

EXTENDED TERMS OF REFERENCE (1991)

- (c) To consider also updated DoE guidance, the Eastern Council for Sport & Recreation's "The Future for Golf", Historic Landscapes, The English Heritage Report, Ancient Landscapes, the protection of Coastal Areas, Rights of Way, Mineral Deposits, and Water Supply and to provide more specific guidance on Golf Driving Ranges.

1.00 Areas of Concern

1.10 The Working Party came into being as a result of concern at *inter alia* the number of proposals for golf courses and associated development. The areas of concern considered by this report are:

- i) the extent of need for further courses,
- ii) the consequences of an overprovision of golf courses,
- iii) the effect on the appearance of the countryside generally,
- iv) the effect on the special landscapes of the county - the A.O.N.B., the Coastal Areas, and Historic Landscapes, etc.,
- v) the scale of the built development involved, and the effects of golf driving ranges,
- vi) the possible effect on the ecology of the area,
- vii) the loss of high quality agricultural land,
- viii) the effect on mineral deposits,
- ix) the effect on archaeological sites,
- x) the effect on rights of way,
- xi) the need to safeguard rivers, floodplains etc.
- xii) the water demands of a golf course, and
- xiii) the suitability of access roads and traffic generation.



Fig (ii) Early morning play at Belfairs Golf Club, Leigh-on-Sea

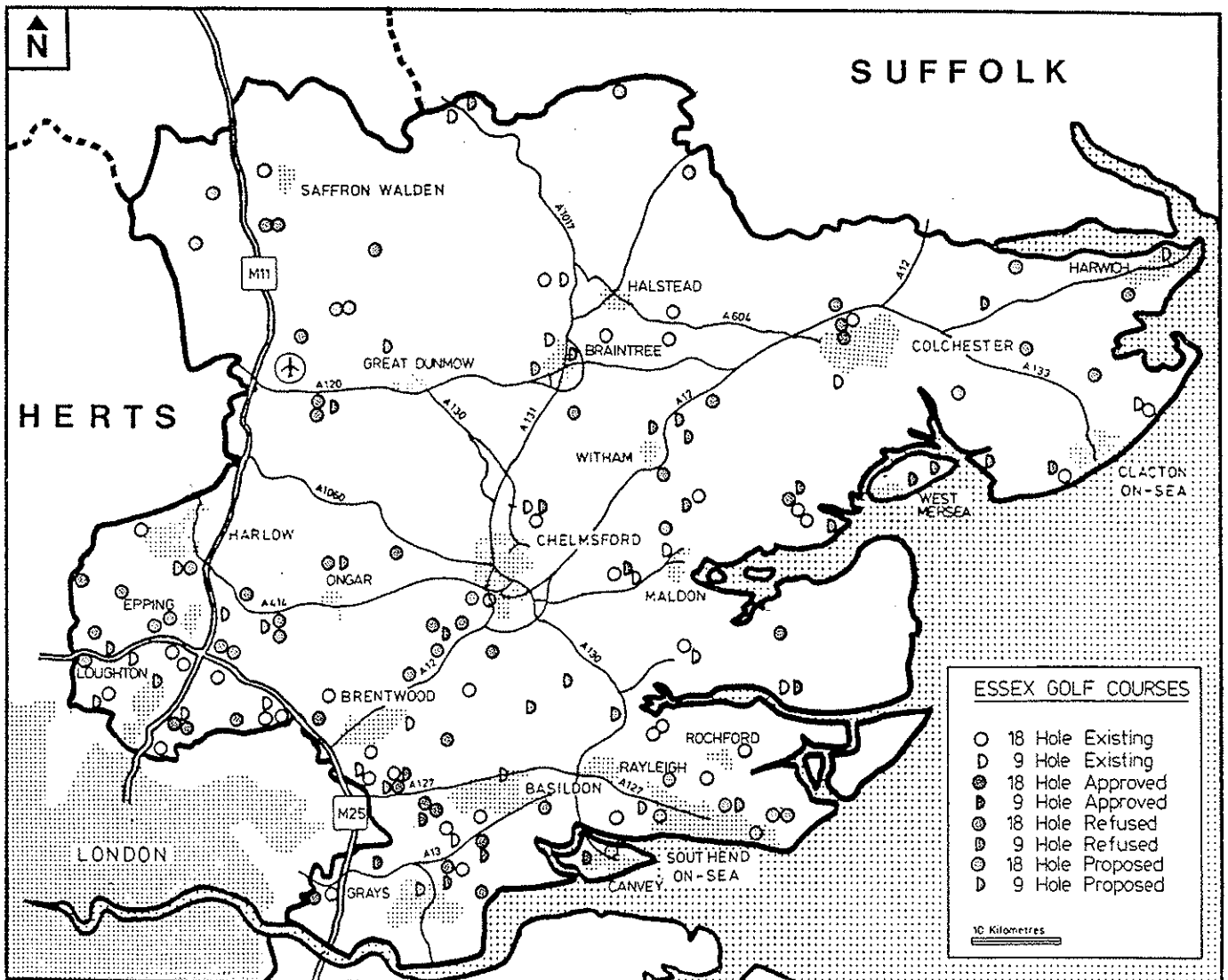


Fig (iii) Existing and Proposed Golf Courses

2.00 The Demand for Additional Facilities

- 2.10 There are about 2,350 courses in the UK of which 1,900 are private-member courses, the rest being municipal courses or privately owned mainly "pay and play" facilities, the vast majority of the latter being in Scotland. Currently Essex has 64 golf courses comprising 39 x 18 hole courses and 25 x 9 hole courses. Golf clubs in Essex vary from 1 x 9 hole to 2 x 18 hole plus 1 x 9 hole. There are 49 Golf clubs in the county and 15 driving ranges. (Refer Appendix I).
- 2.11 A survey carried out by Sports Marketing in 1991 showed that throughout the UK around one million golfers play at least once every week and up to two million more play once a month. In addition there are thought to be up to a further two million occasional golfers and approximately 8 million users of golf driving ranges, pitch and putt and par 3 courses. Allowing for a degree of double counting, there are in the UK probably about 10 million adults who are golfers to some degree. Put another way, for every man, woman and child in the country 1 person in every 6 is a golfer, of sorts, whether or not he/she plays on a regular or occasional basis or merely uses the local pitch and putt course once or twice a year.
- 2.12 Over recent years there has been a major increase in the number of planning applications for new golf courses and other developments in the country, the majority being in the South East. Since 1988, 450 planning applications for golf courses have been made in the South East. By the beginning of 1992, 160 had been approved, 60 refused, and the remainder were awaiting determination. In Essex the proportion of applications approved to those refused was far more evenly split, probably as a consequence of the expeditious production of the original report. This is reflected in Fig (iv) which also refers to the number of revised applications. Only a small percentage of permissions granted were actually being implemented. (Refer Para 11.42).
- 2.13 In Essex, by March 1992 planning permission has been granted for an additional 53 golf courses and 9 golf driving ranges. (Refer Appendix II). Fig (iii) shows existing golf courses, approved new courses including extensions to existing ones, applications refused and current applications (March 1992). Fig (viii) on page 21 shows existing and proposed golf driving ranges.

	18 hole	9 hole	Driving Ranges
EXISTING COURSES	39	25	15
PROPOSED COURSES:			
Under construction	2	1	-
Approved applications	26	11	5
Awaiting finalisation of S.106 agreements	8	4	3
Applications not yet determined	10	8	2
Appeal Allowed	1	-	1
Appeal Pending	5	-	1
Refused applications (1989/91)	29	12	14
Appeal Dismissed	4	-	3
Applications Withdrawn	5	2	2
Applications lapsed (deemed refused)	3	-	-
In the period 1989/91 there were also 17 revised applications and 2 duplicate applications.			

Fig (iv) Table of Existing and Proposed Golf Courses and Driving Ranges in Essex (January 1992)

2.14 The main reason for the major increase in the number of proposals for golf courses during the late 80's and early 90's primarily relates to the vast increase in demand for facilities as more and more people either wish to take up the game for the first time or return to it after a previous lapse of enthusiasm.

The reasons why the sport has become so attractive over recent years are as follows:-

- (a) As a nation we are becoming more health conscious. Many people take up golf as an appealing form of physical exercise, yet one which is not over-demanding for the less fit.
- (b) Increased media coverage of championship matches, especially through television, including satellite television with channels specifically dedicated to sport. Many turn to the game wishing to emulate Seve Ballesteros, Nick Faldo, Ian Woosnam, or Laura Davies - such golfers having become celebrities in their own right.
- (c) Leisure time is increasing and retirement is creeping earlier for many. Even redundancies whether voluntary or compulsory are creating more time for sport.
- (d) "Pay and play" golf courses, now supplementing the municipal courses, have made golf more affordable. This crucial area has had a major part to play in breaking the social and economic barriers which have kept so many from the sport. Golf is no longer exclusively a rich man's sport and today is pursued by a wider band of socio-economic groups than only 5 years ago, with a big reduction

in the percentage of those in the higher social groups. The game is also appealing to a younger age range. Stephen Proctor of Sports Marketing Surveys Ltd states that the average age of the golfer of 5 years ago was 40, whereas the average age of the "new" golfer is 26.

2.15 By an incredible stroke of synchronization this increase in demand has coincided with other factors which have made the development of golf courses attractive - apart from the increased demand for the facilities:

- (a) The encouragement given by the Royal & Ancient's report forecasting the need for 700 additional golf courses by the year 2000.
- (b) The all time down-turn in agriculture has many farmers looking to more profitable uses of land. A planning permission for a golf course has an instant added value to the land in question, probably two or three times its agricultural value.
- (c) Related to this is Britain's over-production of food. As a nation we can no longer consume all we produce from our farmland. Thus the Ministry of Agriculture's introduction of "set-aside" grants to take land out of food production. Farmers can expect to receive £222 per hectare for setting aside 20% of their land for up to 5 years.
- (d) The prospect of the potential developer using the golf course proposal as the "sheep's clothing" to cover the "wolf" of large scale built leisure and hotel developments in the countryside, for which planning permissions would not usually be granted.

2.16 A further factor is the degree of use of existing courses many of which have long waiting lists. Such limitation of use of a course, translated into a restriction as to the total membership of a members' or private club, is necessary to ensure the use of the course is not spoilt by overcrowding.

2.17 Glebe Consultants, in their report to the Royal and Ancient, identified three damaging effects to existing golf courses as a result of overcrowding:

- i) The course deteriorates as its greens, tees, fairways, walkways and other parts are over-used and have insufficient time to recover.
- ii) Etiquette goes by the board, bunkers are not raked, divots are not replaced etc.

The milder winters experienced over recent years have extended the time courses have been playable and this has obviously added further to the wear and tear of courses.

- 2.18 Of the 49 Essex golf clubs approached at the end of 1991, questionnaire replies were received from 41. Club membership ranged from 250 to over 1500 averaging at just over 645. In 1990, 8 of the county's private clubs indicated they had no waiting lists to join the club as opposed to only 4 in 1991. Nationally, Cobham Resource Consultants' research shows that 93% of clubs have no vacancies for men (full membership).
- 2.19 The size of waiting lists has changed little overall in the last 12 months although they vary enormously between clubs from "0 to 300 people", or between "0 and 10 years". However the average length of waiting for consideration for club membership in Essex has fallen from 3½ years in 1990 to a little over 2½ years at the end of 1991. Nationally 57% of clubs have waiting lists for full male membership of 3 years or more. (Cobham's).
- 2.20 The use of waiting lists as a primary indicator of demand is however flawed as potential members can join two or more waiting lists. One club indicated that as many as 50% of those on waiting lists do not ultimately accept membership when offered as they had by then joined another club.
- 2.21 Many clubs have "social members" which unduly inflates the figures of total membership. "Social members" can make up as much as 25% of the total membership although the average is nearer 8%. Females are poorly represented in club memberships and although one Essex club has a membership containing 35% females, the average is nearer 19%.
- 2.22 Although the majority of members' clubs allow non-members to play on their course, this is often restricted to weekdays, and to players with a handicap. Some clubs also insist on the visitor being a member of another club. This restricts newcomers to the sport who will fail to qualify on both counts. Some clubs do, however, allow non-members to play at weekends and charge a higher green fee.

- 2.23 One public Essex club having a membership of 900 requires bookings 8 days in advance. The course is usually fully booked within half an hour of opening and the club states that, with up to 274 players per day, teeing off takes place every 7 minutes.
- 2.24 From the 1991 questionnaire returns it would appear that on average an 18 hole course in Essex hosts 30,300 rounds per annum whilst a 9 hole course hosts 11,600 rounds per annum. This compares with figures five years ago which were 25,500 rounds and 9,000 rounds respectively. However, individual courses vary greatly with some only hosting 10,000 rounds per annum while others host 60,000 rounds per annum.
- 2.25 With the present high demand for golfing facilities, the Working Party found it hard to believe that any club could be only patronised to the extent of 10,000 rounds per year by golfers' choice and concluded that some clubs were imposing excessive limitations on membership in the interests of maintaining the quality of the play.
- 2.26 In 1990 many clubs referred to their hopes of extending their courses by 9 or 18 holes and in fact a number volunteered their opinion that more courses were needed in the county. In the latest survey some clubs were still expressing an interest in expanding although others were concerned about the prospect of an over-provision of golf courses and getting into a situation whereby the stronger clubs were able to survive whilst others go out of business.
- 2.27 A municipal golf club at Southend refers to the desperate need for more courses in the area and states that people travel to play from south of the Thames, Bromley and Dartford and from Hainault as well as Basildon and Canvey. Play starts at 4.00am in the summer and 5.00am in the winter. (Fig (ii)).
- 2.28 At the opposite end of the spectrum, one club indicated in the 1991 survey, a decline in enquiries about club membership. The Working Party felt that it would be dangerous to draw any particular conclusions from this but felt that the likely causes could be related to the present downturn in the economy or as an indicator of an approaching equilibrium between supply and demand.

3.00 Forecast Standards of Need & Current Supply of Golf Courses

- 3.01 According to an article in "The Observer" (June 1991) there is 1 golf course per 30,615 population in the U.K. as a whole, however, this figure includes the much higher standard of provision in Scotland where there is 1 course per 12,739 people. By contrast the south east region has 37.1% of the population yet only 24.1% of the golf courses in the U.K. In 1990, 59 new courses were opened in the British Isles and 67 were opened in 1991.
- 3.02 The Royal & Ancient Golf Club of St. Andrews in their publication, "The Demand for Golf", suggested that nearly 700 additional 18 hole golf courses were required in England and Wales to meet demand up to the year 2000. This figure, in fact, represents about half the level of provision currently available in Scotland. It is based on a derivative standard of 1 x 9-hole unit per 12,500 people, and attempts to strike a balance between realistic levels of provision in areas such as Scotland and Australia, where demand and supply are in equilibrium, and the feasibility of actually providing this level of facility.
- 3.03 The English Golf Union (EGU) looked at the waiting lists of existing clubs and forecasted a need for a further 600 courses, representing a ratio of about 1:30,000, however, the weaknesses in their predictions were the possibility (if not probability) of many people being on more than one waiting list and the lack of assessment of latent demand.
- 3.04 The Professional Golfers' Association (PGA) has not as yet produced any guidelines on standards for golf courses or public accessibility but have recently established a joint company to advise on matters relating to golf course design, construction and management of completed projects.
- 3.05 Strutt & Parker's view (expressed in "Facing up to the Golf Course Challenge II") is that, if the 140 consents for 18 hole equivalent golf courses granted in the south east over a recent 2 year period are extrapolated over the rest of the country, it is possible that the target of 700 further courses has already been exceeded. This assumes, however, that all permissions are implemented and it is acknowledged that a high percentage will not.

- 3.06 In the United States, the National Golf Foundation monitors the number of players, courses and their capacities and identifies changing trends in the sport. There does appear to be a need for close monitoring of the supply and demand situation on a national scale in the U.K. The work currently being undertaken on behalf of the Sports Council should be of value to this end.
- 3.07 In March 1991 the Eastern Council for Sport and Recreation (ECSR) revised its recommended minimum requirements in terms of golf course provision. The new interim guideline for Essex and Hertfordshire stated in "The Future for Golf" was a minimum of 1 x 18 hole course per 20,000 population. This is the highest standard of provision in the Eastern Region if not in the country, and was derived on the basis of waiting lists, normal activity rates and demand from within the county and from the Metropolitan area. The recommended provision for Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire is 1 x 18 hole course per 22,500, whereas the lowest recommended provision is 1 x 18 hole course per 25,000 in Norfolk and Suffolk.
- 3.08 The ECSR forecast a need throughout the six Eastern Region counties for a further 19 courses from waiting lists alone, and at normal activity rates a further 76 courses is forecast, however, account also needs to be taken of demands from the Greater London area. The requirement in Essex is a reflection of the current demand expressed in terms of both the pressure for golf course development and proximity to the metropolitan area, with its high population but limited scope for golf course provision.
- 3.09 The total additional requirement for the region up to 1993 is estimated by ECSR in "The Future for Golf" to be 92½ x 18 hole courses. The ECSR's previous minimum provision of 1 x 9 hole course per 20,000 population was based on data collected during the late 1970's.

3.10 Taking the county as a whole, a total of 78½ x 18 hole course units would be required by 1993 for the ECSR's guideline to be met. (See Fig (v) below.) There are, at present, only 51½ x 18 hole equivalent courses operating, however, a further 2½ are already under construction and 41½ more have planning permission or are awaiting the finalisation of Section 106 Agreements. Only 4 of the 14 Districts in Essex currently meet the ECSR's new minimum guideline, these being Epping Forest, Braintree, Brentwood and Maldon, although if all the permissions granted were to be implemented, the guideline would be more than adequately met across the county.

Existing Courses	1993 requirement	Under Construction	Current Shortfall
51½	78½	2½	24½

Fig (v) Overall Need for New Courses in Essex

These figures relate to 18 hole courses or equivalent and represent the forecast need to serve an estimated 1993 population of 1.56 million.

3.11 There is clearly no doubt, from the size of waiting lists for membership at most of the county's golf clubs and by the demand for new courses as reflected by the number of planning applications received by Essex Planning Authorities, that the existing provision of golf courses in the county is inadequate. The consideration of an appropriate guideline for the provision of courses in relation to population is examined in some detail in Chapter 5.

4.00 Types of Golf Facilities

4.01 This chapter seeks to define the many and varied types of courses and related facilities which can be broadly identified as falling within the following categories:

- "Championship" courses
- Members' Clubs
- Public or municipal courses
- "Pay & Play" courses
- Par 3 courses
- Pitch & Putt
- Simple Courses
- Golf Academies
- Golf Driving Ranges

4.10 "Championship" Courses

4.11 Many potential developers of golf courses describe their proposals as being for the creation of "Championship" or "International" courses. Generally this implies that the applicant has aspirations of attracting one or more of the prestigious and highly lucrative National or International Championship events such as the Ryder Cup, The Open or the World Matchplay by the provision of lavish accommodation with indoor swimming pools, sports complexes, banquetting suites, health and beauty parlours etc., etc...

4.12 Newly formed "Championship" courses are in direct competition with other established venues such as Wentworth, St. Andrews or The Belfry. Throughout the UK there would appear to be far more possible venues for such matches than there are matches seeking venues.

- 4.13 A "Championship" facility usually has at least 2 x 18 hole courses of 6,000m or more in length and is usually characterised by a high degree of difficulty and may incorporate extensive water features and bunkers. Such courses generally include a hotel of at least 100 bedrooms and substantial associated leisure and social facilities, and are often supplemented by conference suites to further the viability of the hotel throughout the year. As such centres, on an event day, can attract spectators in the order of 10,000 plus, they need to be well related to the main lines of communication and have the capacity for extensive areas of car parking. Fairways on the club's second course often serve for this purpose.
- 4.14 In Essex an example of a proposed "Championship" course is Hatfield Park, near Takeley, which includes a 150 bed hotel, conference and leisure facilities. That proposal also made provision for an extensive "tented village" which will include a range of facilities under canvas, such as hospitality tents, trade accommodation etc. It was made clear at the outset that the development was intended to create a regional facility in Essex to rival the Belfry in the Midlands and where Ryder Cup matches could be played in 10 years time. That course is due to open in 1994. The "Quietwaters" golf and leisure complex near Maldon is an example of a developed "Championship" course which also comprises extensive built development.
- 4.15 In Planning terms an application to build a "Championship" course is invariably a euphemism for a golf course with a substantial built development of hotel, conference centre, indoor sports halls, banqueting suites etc. This is often the "wolf" disguised under the "sheep's clothing" of the golf course proposal.
- 4.16 Over the last three years departures from policy have accepted the following three such courses in Essex:
- i) "Hatfield Park", Takeley. 2 x 18 hole courses, a 150 bedroom hotel, conference centre and extensive indoor sports and leisure facilities. Development not yet commenced.

- ii) "Quietwaters Golf Club", Salcott/Tolleshunt d'Arcy near Maldon. 3 x 18 hole courses, a 9 hole "Academy" course, a 54 bedroom hotel, extensive indoor sports and leisure facilities and 6 timeshare units. The existing course is being extended and the built development is substantially completed.
- iii) "St. Clare's Hall", Stanford-le-Hope. 1 x 18 hole course with hotel, size unspecified. Outline planning permission only, details being pursued currently. (April 1992).

4.17 Other proposals which have included hotels have been: Webbs Farm, Margaretting near Chelmsford, the British Telecom Site at North Weald, land north of Bournes Green, Southend, and at Shortgrove Park, Newport near Saffron Walden. (Refer Appendix II).

4.18 Frequently an applicant seeking permission for a "Championship" or other large scale golf course will include a hotel within his proposals on the grounds of its necessity to establish the commercial viability of the scheme. This aspect was examined by ECSR in "The Future for Golf" in which they come to the following conclusion:

"Given the demand for golf and the types of facilities which are likely to best satisfy this demand, it is clear that in general, and until such time as the supply/demand equation alters significantly, free-standing golf courses are commercially viable and provide a sufficient return to make their development attractive to a range of providers. The greatest commercial potential in the future lies with the provision of proprietary courses operated either as "pay and play" or members' facilities, or possibly a combination of both. Private members' clubs are more marginal as in general, higher quality courses are required to attract an exclusive membership, but high fees and prestige value can underwrite profitability. The extension of existing members' clubs on to adjacent land, where development costs can be kept low, offers their greatest scope for expansion. At the other extreme of provision, simple courses can produce a commercial return, if not because of high margins, then because the expectation of farmers and others is not so high as the commercial leisure provider. The simple course also offers the possibility to build and develop the course in stages, and to improve facilities as resources permit.

"In particular circumstances, developers may wish to integrate golf course provision with more commercially attractive leisure ventures. There is no evidence to suggest that this is universally necessary in order to underwrite a golf facility, and special justification will be required both in terms of need for the ancillary facilities and planning requirements. Where these criteria can be met, opportunities should be taken to permit widespread community access to the additional facilities."

4.20 Private Members' Clubs

4.21 Private Members' Clubs comprise the majority of golf course provision in the county. Membership is applied for and may require applicants to have obtained a specific handicap, and in Essex invariably involves joining a waiting list of up to 10 years.

4.22 Golf is undoubtedly an expensive sport for those wishing to join a private members' club. The questionnaire returns received from Essex clubs indicated that annual subscriptions range between £77 and £800 although the average is £381 for a club with an 18 hole course and £194 for one with a 9 hole course. In addition new members can expect to pay a joining fee which can be as much as one year's annual subscription. Often annual subscriptions are lower for female members than male.

Some new private courses have raised some of their finance by selling debentures to new members and such debentures can run into several thousands of pounds.

Although club membership usually entitles members to use of the club course, not all clubs own the associated course and therefore members of these clubs will have to pay a green fee, in the same way as a visitor would, in addition to their club membership if they wish to play golf.

Accepted visitors can expect to pay green fees of between £10.00 and £50.00 a round (average fee £23) or between £18 and £35 a day, for an 18 hole course.

Rates are usually cheaper on a weekday than at weekends, and in addition there is often a seasonal variation in rates.

4.23 In sharp contrast to private course fees, the popularity of public courses is not surprising with players being required to pay only a fee which is usually between £5.70 and £14.50 for 18 holes. (Average £9.00). (Refer 4.30 below.)

4.24 The "Protect Britain's Golf Heritage" (PBGH) campaign is concerned at the failure of provision of facilities for new golfers who are coming into the game in increasing numbers only to find they have nowhere to play due to the length of waiting lists or clubs not accepting further members on their waiting lists. The PBGH campaign in 1990 expressed the view that new developments taking place in golf course construction are unlikely to ease the burden. More recent developments have, however, begun to redress this imbalance.

4.25 Nevertheless, on any golf course within a rural location, built development must be restricted to those facilities essentially required to serve the course as referred to in Section 9.90. Preference should be given to the conversion of suitable existing redundant agricultural or other buildings as opposed to the erection of new buildings.

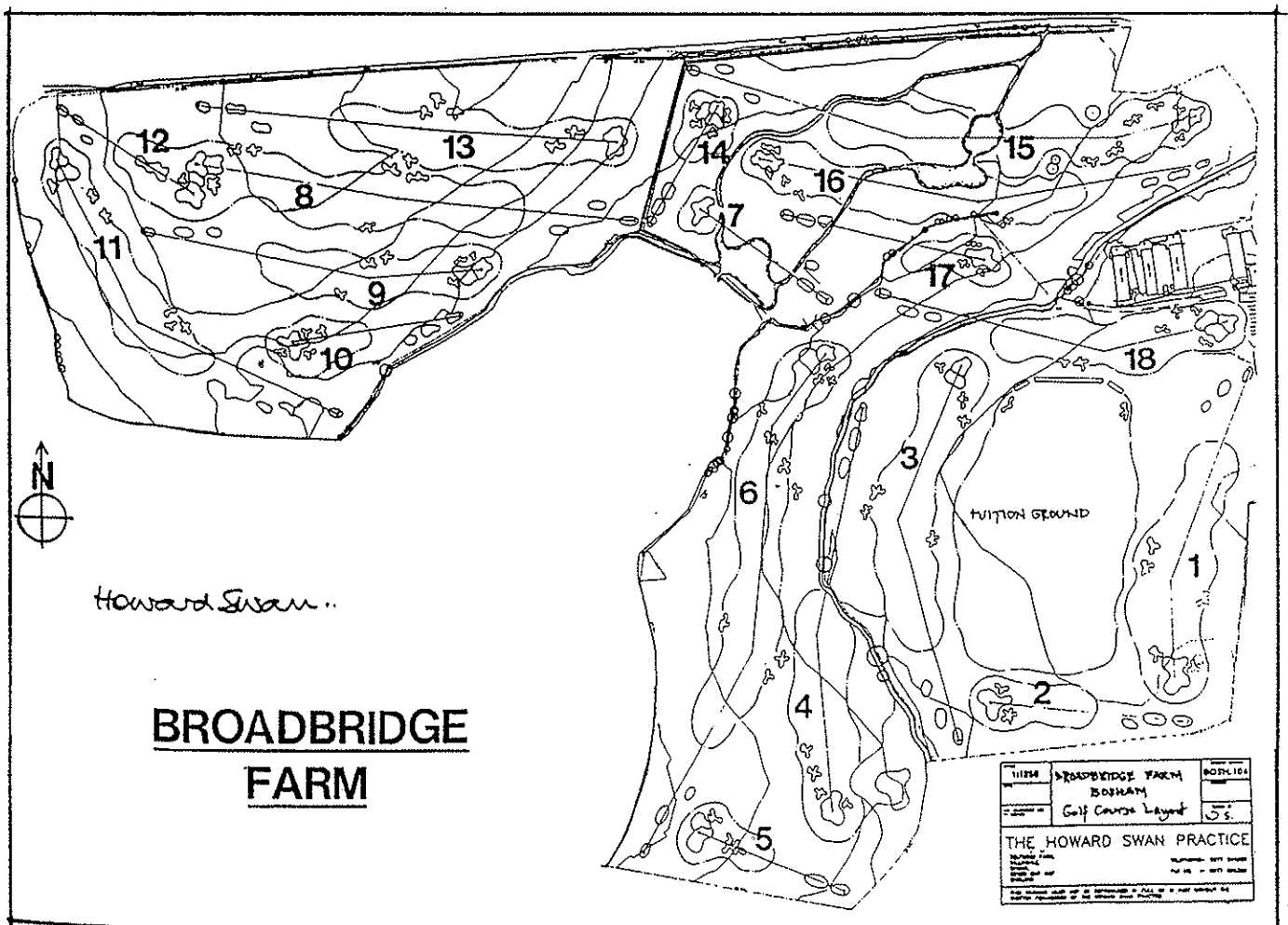


Fig (vi) A Typical 18 hole course

4.30 Public or Municipal Courses

- 4.31 Traditionally it has been the municipal course of whatever size which has provided "affordable" golf and opportunities for the beginner to learn the game. These are the ever popular and frequently over-used local authority golf courses providing "pay and play" facilities without the payment of expensive joining fees and annual subscriptions. Indeed it is often only the large through-put of golfers paying their green fees of between £5.70 and £14.50 for an 18 hole round, which ensure their viability. These courses also offer concessions to OAPs, local residents and children.
- 4.32 The Hon. Sec. of "Belfairs", a municipal golf club at Leigh-on-Sea near Southend, referred to the value of municipal courses as a source of revenue to local authorities and to the desperate need for more such courses to cater for the increase in the numbers taking up the sport. "It is not normally possible to join a private course without a handicap and these can only be allocated by a golf club which is affiliated to the English Golf Union and the Essex County Golf Union. Thus there is also a need for clubs who are private members' clubs but are willing to accept beginners and allot first time handicaps under the rules of golf". Such clubs can teach newcomers the etiquette of the game and provide organised golf and competition.
- 4.33 Observations are also made that private clubs are tightening up their membership and allowing fewer visitors to play. "The end product is that the private clubs are becoming even more expensive and thus exclusive as their existing members demand more for themselves on the principle of we are paying - we want the benefits". Concern is raised that the new era of country club type of golf establishments with wide ranging sports and leisure facilities are catering for a discreet membership rather than for the general player.
- 4.34 At the previously mentioned "Belfairs Golf Club" the Green Fees office opens for bookings for eight days ahead at 4.00 a.m. in the summer and 5.00 a.m. in the winter. Demand is such that golfers regularly spend the night in their cars waiting for the office to open to make their advance booking. The club plays about 80,000 rounds a year, with early morning play often starting before dawn.

4.35 Valuable as such facilities are, it is likely that the financial constraints on local authorities' capital spending and the need for Compulsory Competitive Tendering will cast a shadow on their future provision and will put greater emphasis on the role of "pay and play" courses provided by the private sector (Refer 4.40 below). However, joint ventures between local authorities and the private sector may result in the provision of new courses.

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* Man blames fate for most accidents but claims personal *
* responsibility when he makes a hole in one. *
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* * * * *

4.40 "Pay and Play" Courses

4.41 This facility is the natural successor to the municipal course. Nationally almost 80 "pay and play" courses have been opened in recent years. Their increasing popularity, especially for newcomers to the sport, is the avoidance of long waiting lists for club membership and restrictions imposed by private clubs. Fees for "pay and play" courses vary between £3 and £8.50 for 9 holes (average £5.60) and £9 and £18 for 18 holes (average £13.60).

4.42 Richard Jenkins, author of "Golf Course Developments in the U.K." estimates that about 900,000 private member golfers play on 85% of golf courses, leaving some 1.6 million players to play on the remainder. He commends the provision of further "pay and play" facilities especially in the form of "rough" or "simple" courses close to urban areas as a major contribution to the provision of new facilities.

4.50 Par 3 Courses

4.51 The Par 3 course, often scorned by the experienced golfer, can be the learning ground so essential for the newcomer to the sport. These facilities are the usual progression from municipal pitch & putt courses and are normally provided with no bunkers or water features and few areas of rough. By their limited challenge, they are particularly popular with a wide range of novices, youngsters, women golfers and those seeking to improve their performance without the need for a full 18 hole round.

4.60 Pitch & Putt

4.61 Pitch & Putt courses along with Putting Greens form the beginning of many future golfer's introduction to the game. They are mostly fun facilities usually found at coastal resorts and often provided by local authorities in most larger urban areas. The courses are usually flat with short mown grass often enhanced by a degree of cosmetic landscaping.

4.70 Simple Courses

4.71 The "simple" or "rough" course is the most crucial category of golf facility. Ideally 9 holes in length, this type of course is invaluable to the "progressive" beginner, particularly as the player moves on from the Par 3 standard. Most courses are short to medium in length, and are usually devoid of bunkers and extensive water hazards. The Meadows course, at Gosfield Lake near Braintree, is a good example of a simple course.

4.72 Simple courses should comprise mainly par 3 and par 4 holes up to 350 metres in length, however, one par 5 hole could be included to allow the full range of shots to be practised. The course should be relatively open with few hazards such as bunkers, water features or rough. Greens and tees should be prepared, though they can be inexpensively built. Vegetation should be incorporated more for its landscape value than as a test for the golfer. The land taken for a simple 9 hole course would not be expected to exceed 20 hectares.

4.73 Associated built development can be limited to a small building such as a wooden pavilion housing an administrative area, changing rooms and a small social/ refreshment area.

4.74 Due to the nature of these courses, their impact on the landscape will be minimal with existing meadow or pastureland being suitably mown. Parkland and other grassland would also be suitable.

4.75 Simple courses can often be accommodated on multi-use recreational sites, including playing fields where individual holes may be designed and maintained by greenkeeping to fit around existing pitches. Whilst safety margins must be considered, hitting distances are usually less, although not necessarily more accurate. Such courses can be efficient users of spare areas of open space and existing facilities.

4.76 A 9 hole simple course with a small clubhouse could be provided for minimal costs, although obviously subsequent improvements and modifications in the course will increase its cost.

4.77 Such courses are particularly attractive to existing land owners especially farmers looking for alternative uses for their land without high investment costs. Many of the costs including land can be absorbed, whilst much of the construction work can be undertaken in-house using basic agricultural techniques and machinery under expert supervision.

4.80 Golf Academies

4.81 The golf academy provides custom design and build facilities for the tuition of the game, both on and off the golf course. They have been successfully built and run particularly in America and Southern Europe. The design of the practice area must present the feeling of a golf course yet retain a formal atmosphere in order that the professional golfers are able to teach pupils of all levels of ability.

4.82 Tees, bunkers etc. need to be large enough to host multiple classes of golfers during formal tuition. Teeing areas will be required for shots with woods i.e. to a distance of 250 metres plus and intermediate tees for iron play. Special areas for chipping and bunker play may also be provided. In addition large putting facilities are also required for practice.

4.83 Tuition facilities with a golf academy should include indoor teaching bays with video and computerised swing analysis equipment. A classroom is required to show golf videos and allow the teaching of the principles and rules of the game, aspects of greenkeeping and etiquette and behaviour on the course.

4.84 An academy may form an integral part of a golf complex with practice holes, a short 9 hole beginners' course or par 3 course and a full 18 hole golf course depending on the location and the extent of the area available for development.

4.85 The golf academy is essentially a formalised and interesting practising facility which is non-residential. It can be seen as an important training facility for the game which is currently under-provided for.

4.90 Golf Driving Ranges

- 4.91 The popularity and number of golf driving ranges has been another of golfing's major growth areas. Nationally there are about 250 driving ranges in Britain. More-over, Blades Research have identified a remarkable 33% increase in the two years 1988/90. Sports Marketing Surveys Ltd suggest that over 2 million adults used a driving range during 1990.
- 4.92 The primary value of driving ranges is as one of the options available for training and improving golf technique, be it for the experienced player or the novice. A range is also useful for those having insufficient time to complete a round of golf. It would appear from research published by Sports Marketing Surveys that on average 60% of driving range users are regular players and members of golf clubs, whilst the remainder are beginners new to the game. However, in urban areas devoid of golf courses, a new driving range will attract a much higher proportion of beginners.
- 4.93 A driving range generally consists of a single storey open fronted building with a minimum height of 4 metres and depth of 6 metres, usually curved and aligned northwards to face away from the sun. For safety and operational reasons, the range should be 250-300m long and 100-150m wide, occupying an area of 3-5 hectares (7.4-12.3 acres). If fences are required they need to have a maximum 1" wire mesh and be up to 8 metres high for safety and management purposes. Where a driving range is provided in isolation, a pay desk, toilets and possibly refreshment facilities will also be required.
- 4.94 Driving ranges however are of a more "urban" character than a golf course, often requiring fencing, covered booths and floodlighting as well as attracting an intensive degree of usage. The covered booths of the driving range and the floodlighting of the target area enable the facility to be used in all weathers and after dark. (Refer also Chapter 10.)

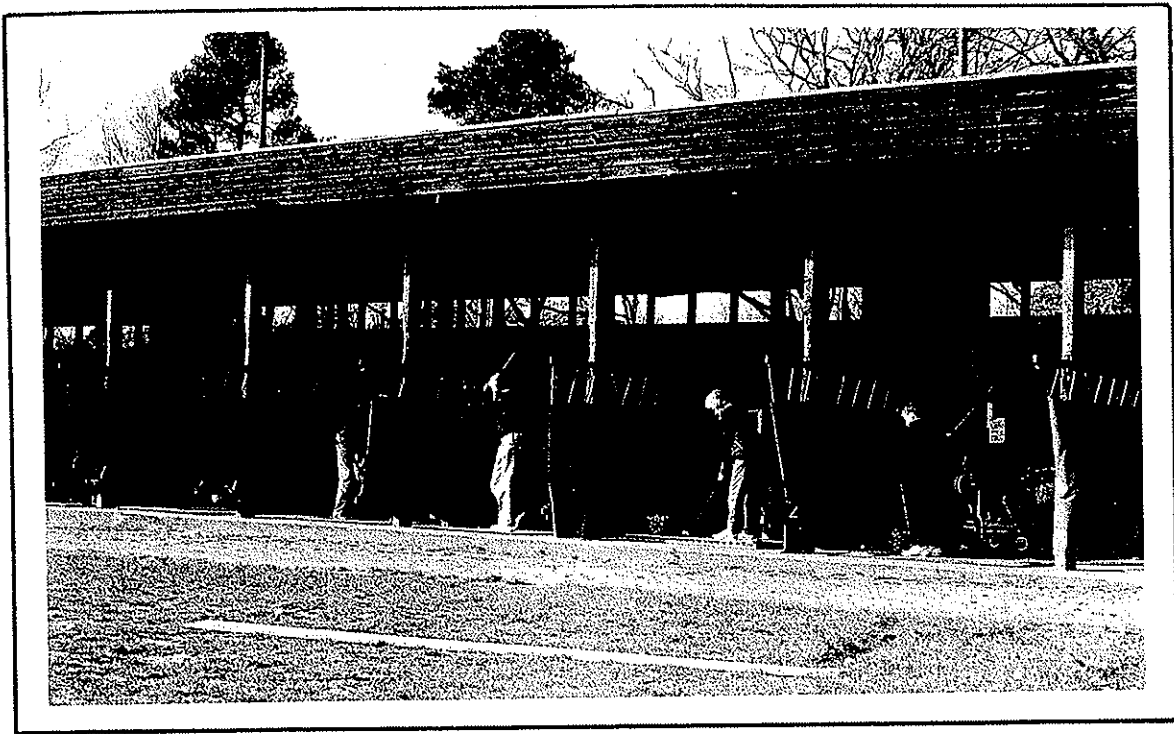


Fig (vii) Golf Driving Range, Brentwood Park

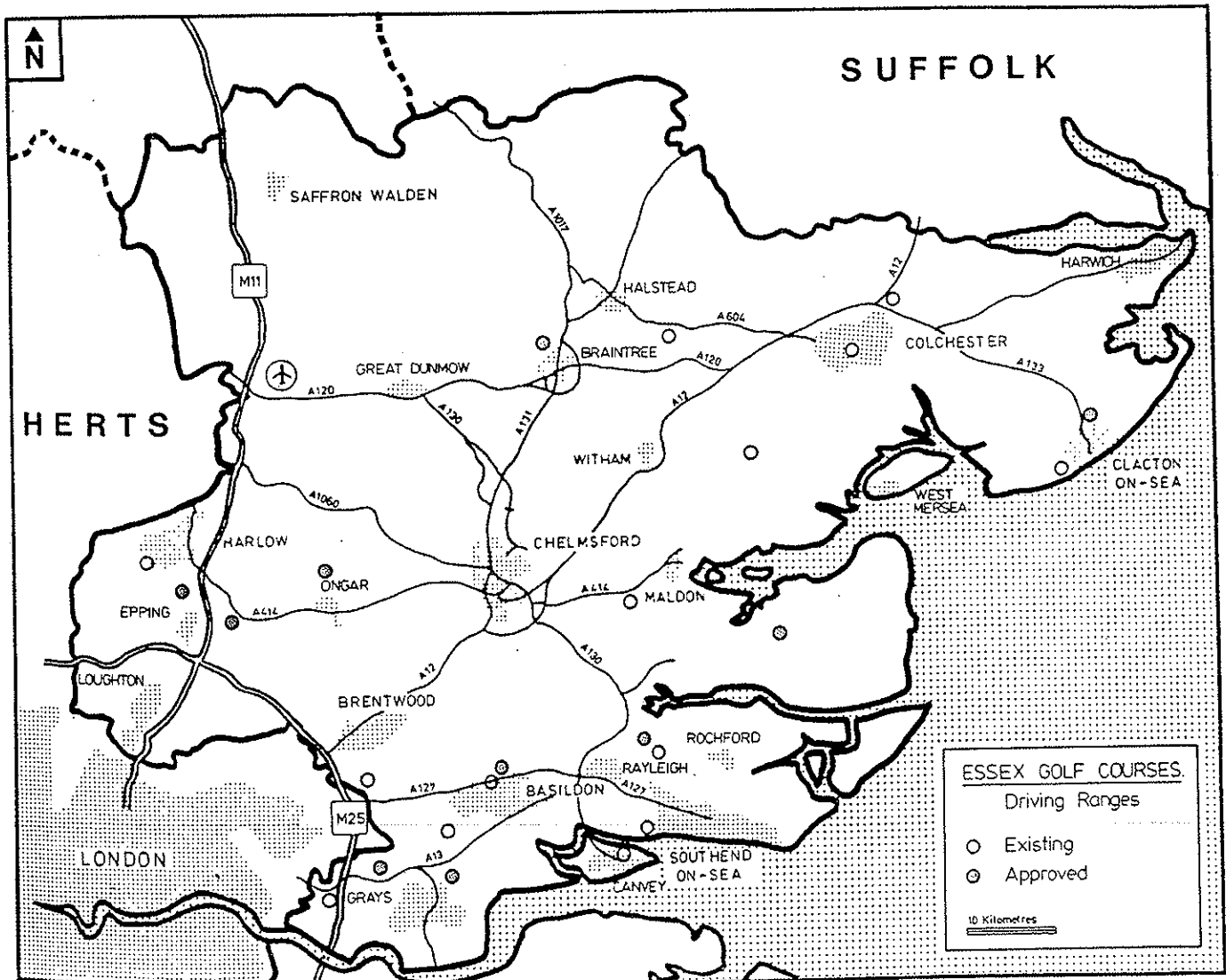


Fig (viii) Map of Existing and Proposed Golf Driving Ranges

5.00 The Need for Additional Facilities

- 5.10 In general terms it is apparent that the existing number of courses cannot cope with the demand put on them both by experienced golfers and the many newcomers to the sport. Most existing courses are becoming too crowded at peak, and even off peak times. Nationally some private member clubs positively discourage new players and visitors and many have closed their waiting lists. A number have banned all guests or green fee paying visitors at weekends.
- 5.11 As was apparent from Chapter 3, predicted "standards" of need vary considerably from the EGU's 1 x 18 hole course: 30,000 population, and the R&A's 1 x 18 hole course: 25,000, to the currently highest officially claimed guideline for Essex and Hertfordshire produced by ECSR namely 1 x 18 hole course: 20,000.
- 5.12 The Working Party sought to devise their own suggested standard albeit in full cognition of the inevitably amorphous nature of their conclusions due to the many variables needing to be taken into account.

The following were nevertheless assessed:

- the county's present population of golf playing age;
- the extent of catchment population drawn from adjacent counties and the degree to which golfers from within the county play elsewhere. Despite H.G. Wells' opinion as expressed through the character of Mr. Britling (Frontispiece Page (i)) it was considered that as many golfers from Hertfordshire (and Cambridgeshire and Suffolk) motor into Essex to play golf as vice versa;
- the extent to which golfers from the adjacent London Boroughs travel into the county to play, as reflects the physical limitation to the provision of courses within the metropolitan area;
- the extent of existing provision within the county. (Approvals for new courses not developed were ignored in that they are clearly not yet a facility serving the population.)
- the extent of provision within the adjacent London Boroughs.

- the extent of latent demand in the county (and adjacent London Boroughs) taking into account the rate at which the sport is growing nationally, a figure of 2% of the total population is felt to be not unreasonable. This figure is also that concluded by Cobham Resource Consultants in a survey of latent demand assessed from an extensive Home Interview Survey in 1990. This percentage excludes those on waiting lists. Cobham's calculate that 2% of the adult population of the country represents more than 500,000 people who, if they were to play 30 times a year, would fill over 300 new courses to capacity.
- the extent of waiting lists at existing clubs reduced by a factor of 20% allowing for those registered on more than one club's waiting list.

The Working Party concluded that an appropriate guideline for Essex was the provision of 1 x 18 hole golf course for 20,000 catchment population. This degree of provision, as recommended by ECSR, is therefore endorsed.

5.13 If all the planning permissions granted over recent years were implemented, the provision of courses in the county would be more than doubled. On the face of it, this would appear to satisfy the present demands for facilities, as well as meeting the minimum guideline for provision recommended above.

However, as the assessment of need for golf courses is directly related to the demand for facilities, which is itself variable, the prospect of imposing a general embargo on the provision of additional golf courses in Essex is impractical and is not recommended. (Refer also 7.39). Generally, market forces will play a major part in determining which proposed courses, of those granted permissions, will actually be constructed.

Planning permissions alone do not provide an increase in golf facilities and merely indicate the planning authorities' willingness to co-operate in the provision of those facilities. Many aspects determine whether the potential developer proceeds to implement his proposals. In the meantime, whilst the need for facilities on the ground remains, further planning applications are inevitable.

5.14 Essex Planning Authorities may wish to consider the value of formulating pro-active policies for inclusion in their Local Plans in respect of any or all of the following aspects:

- (a) Identified "areas of search" for future golf courses.
- (b) Defining criteria for the location of additional courses.
- (c) Referring to a general preference for the location of new courses in accessible urban fringe areas.
- (d) Encouraging planning obligations for the creation of "pay and play" and "simple" courses.

5.15 The Working Party were firmly of the opinion that there was no over-riding need for the establishment of the extensive ranges of built development which accompany applications for would-be venues for "Championship" events that would justify any further departures from planning policies. Current Structure Plan and Local Plan policies are designed to restrict built development in the countryside to that essentially required for agriculture, mineral extraction, forestry or small scale facilities for outdoor participatory sport or recreation.

Sports and leisure facilities which require substantial buildings need to be concentrated in urban areas.

5.16 If golf is to widen its appeal, there can be no doubt that more provision is needed for courses with more "affordable" public access. This can be by public courses or private golf clubs where membership is either not required or, is not essential and a "pay and play" use is accepted. In marked contrast to provision in the U.K., 61% of golf courses in France are public, (albeit the total provision of courses in France is far less than in this country).

5.17 The "pay and play" sector of golfing provision is widely recognised as the primary area of need which can be met in a variety of ways either by the public sector, joint ventures between public and private sectors, private "pay and play" courses, or increased public (non-member) access to private golf clubs. The financial constraints on local authority expenditure are likely to preclude the prospect of many new municipal courses being constructed in the foreseeable future, unless in partnership with the private sector.

5.18 There is a particular need for simple courses operating on a "pay and play" basis in order to attract more participants into the game, especially women and young people, the ECSR's main current target groups. These enable the basic skills to be developed, but are not too long or difficult to deter relative beginners.

In contrast to the high construction costs of free standing, expansively developed courses with lavish water features, bunkers, etc., simple "pay and play" facilities formed from the existing landscape, close to the urban areas they are to serve, are inexpensive to construct and, with an acknowledged high demand, have the best possible chance of economic survival. Methods of reducing the front loading burden of such a course could be by a joint project with the landowner or obtaining a long lease for the site rather than purchasing it outright. Such clubs do not essentially need full built club facilities from Day One. Emphasis needs to be on the development of the course with basic changing rooms etc. The Six Hills Golf Practice Range in Leicestershire was established with a £50 Portacabin serving as its clubhouse.

In their advice to the Sports Council, Cobham Resource Consultants identify a need for new "pay and play" complexes to offer a mix of facilities based on the following:

- one good standard 18 hole course, of around 6000-6500 yards in length;
- a second course, probably of 9 holes, more suitable for beginners, and possibly linked to the 18 hole course to give the flexibility of a 27 hole layout;
- practice and tuition facilities, including a general practice area, covered and lit driving range, and indoor facilities including video;
- as the complex develops, social facilities of bar and family catering and services such as a golf shop and satellite TV.

5.19 In their conclusions in "The Future for Golf" ECSR recommend:

"There should be a special emphasis on "pay and play" courses, for which there is a particular demand, and local planning authorities should consider the use of Section 106 agreements to secure this form of management, when determining planning applications."

That recommendation is endorsed by the Working Party.

5.20 Multiple use of Land

5.21 In addition to the specific golfing facilities referred to above, there also exists the opportunity to provide facilities on areas of land used primarily for other purposes. One such example is the Royal Norfolk Showground near Norwich incorporating a 9-hole course on its car park for use throughout the year. Permanent tees and greens are set out and are protected from damage by vehicles who park on the remainder of the course (fairways and light rough), for a week every year while the Show is under way.

5.22 Some short courses are also built around other public amenities. At Bisham Abbey National Sports Centre, in Berkshire, a 9-hole short course uses land skirting existing sports pitches.

5.23 There are also examples of golf courses built on common land, to which the general public has access for walking, riding and other activities. Elsewhere, golf courses are accommodated on pasture land where sheep and cattle graze at the same time as play continues. Greens are protected by stock proof fencing.

5.24 The use of existing areas of open land should be considered for short courses, practice areas or driving ranges, as an inexpensive means of developing new opportunities, especially for beginners. Care must be taken to ensure that safety factors are incorporated by means of good design, separation, orientation, etc. and adequate car parking, access and other planning considerations should apply.

5.25 Whilst any open area of grassland has a potential for golf practice, school playing fields have considerable potential, invariably lying within or adjacent to substantial areas of population, having good access and adequate parking with hard play areas supplementing the formal car parking areas. Frequently school playing fields remain unused during evenings and at weekends.

5.26 Schools, through their Board of Governors, wishing to pursue the development of practice areas or driving ranges need to ensure that any necessary planning permissions are obtained from their local planning authority. At a time when most schools are experiencing financial restraints, the setting up of such facilities could be a useful supplementary source of income. Advice on the establishment of informal practice areas/driving ranges will be found in Appendix VIII.



Fig (ix) Golf Practice Area

6.00 Appraisal of Existing Policies

6.10 Structure Plan

- 6.11 There are a large number of generalised policies in the Approved First Alteration to the Essex Structure Plan relevant to the determination of golf course applications as listed in Appendix III; probably the most relevant two are:

POLICY L18

THE DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT OF AN APPROPRIATE RANGE AND STANDARD OF SPORTS FACILITIES WILL BE ENCOURAGED.

POLICY L19

SPORTS FACILITIES WHICH REQUIRE SUBSTANTIAL BUILDINGS, OR WHICH CONFLICT WITH COUNTRYSIDE CONSERVATION POLICIES, WILL NOT NORMALLY BE PERMITTED IN THE COUNTRYSIDE.

- 6.12 Other policies relevant to golf course applications are those relating to the Green Belt, the protection of open countryside, the re-use of disused airfields, the encouragement of tourist and recreation facilities, the use of derelict or despoiled land for recreation facilities, traffic generation and effect on highways, landscape, the protection of the undeveloped coastline, sites of ecological value and archaeological sites and the safeguarding of mineral deposits.

6.20 Local Plans

- 6.21 Most Essex Districts' local plan policies are generally similar to those of the Structure Plan, however, the new generation of local plans are producing more specific policies in relation to golf courses. Some examples are given in Appendix IV and address such issues as the visual impact on local residents and the landscape including encouraging proposals which would achieve an improvement in the appearance of derelict land. They also refer to the protection of minor roads and protected lanes, minimising the impact on wildlife, the need and scale of the proposed facility, and directing proposals to sites adjoining built-up areas. Some refer to opposing the over-provision of courses.

6.30 DoE Guidance

6.31 Until recently the DoE had been particularly silent in the issue of golf courses. Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) Note 2 issued in January 1988, "Green Belts" refers to recreation in a general sense:

"Green Belts also have a positive role in providing access to open countryside for the urban population. Such access may be for active outdoor sports or for passive recreation. Outdoor leisure pursuits are likely to occupy an increasing proportion of the Green Belts if, as currently expected, the land needed for food production decreases."

6.32 PPG17 "Sport and Recreation" which was published in September 1991 concedes that the sport can have a significant impact. Golf courses, it says:

"should be located and designed to ensure harmony with the surrounding countryside and to conserve the natural environment. Each proposal should contain full details of the site and the impact of the development proposed, including the effect on public rights of way. Any significant developments, such as hotels, should be considered on their own merits. Special care should be taken in considering applications in areas such as national parks, AONBs, sites of special scientific interest, green belts, historic landscapes and the heritage coast."

6.33 PPG7 "Countryside & The Rural Economy" published in January 1992 states that:

"It is the Government's policy that the countryside should be safeguarded for its own sake and that non-renewable and natural resources should be afforded protection. Over the past 50 years, there have been unprecedented pressures on traditional landscapes and wildlife habitats. Some of these pressures have been due to development; others have come from changes in farming and forestry."

The PPG acknowledges the planning system as the principal means of regulating the rate at which land is transferred from agriculture, forestry and other such uses to urban forms of development although the need to retain as much land as possible in agricultural use no longer has the priority it had. Instead diversification of the rural economy is the Government's priority.

6.34 Para 2.4 of PPG7 states,

"When preparing their development plans and deciding applications for planning permission, local planning authorities should take account of any special designation...and then weigh the following factors:

- the need to encourage rural enterprise;*
- the need to protect landscape, wildlife habitats and historic features;*
- the quality and versatility of land for use in agriculture, forestry and other rural enterprises....;*
- the need to protect other non-renewable resources.*

In assessing these factors, local planning authorities should bear in mind that once agricultural land is developed, even for "soft" uses such as golf courses, return to best quality agricultural use is seldom practicable; once any land is built on, the restoration of semi-natural and natural habitats and landscape features is rarely possible and usually expensive."

6.35 PPG16 "Archaeology and Planning" (November 1990) sets out the Secretary of State's policy on archaeological remains on land, and how they should be preserved or recorded. The document stresses that there should be a presumption in favour of the preservation of important archaeological sites and their settings. The importance of early consultation between developers and planning authorities is also emphasised. Where it is suspected that important remains may exist, local authorities can require prospective developers to arrange for the carrying out of an archaeological field evaluation. This should be carried out prior to the determining of the planning application. Where preservation *in situ* is not feasible, the Secretary of State considers it reasonable for developers to pay for the investigation and recording of sites in advance of destruction.

7.00 Relevant Appeal Decisions

7.10 Introduction

7.11 Since 1983 over 70 appeals have been determined countrywide involving golf courses and driving ranges varying from 9-hole courses to major developments including retirement homes, housing developments, hotels, and industrial or business parks. Appeal decisions on these have been evaluated in detail mainly for the years 1990 and 1991. The specific cases are referred to by number in the text and are listed at the end of this chapter. Whilst it is difficult to draw general conclusions of trends with any degree of certainty, a number of issues can be identified from the cases examined.

7.20 Golf Courses

7.21 From a policy viewpoint, Inspectors appear to accept that golf courses conform to the kind of open recreational developments which might appropriately be provided within Green Belts, Areas of Special Landscape Value and Conservation Areas (21). One Inspector in determining an appeal for an 18-hole golf course, believed that the proposal would be in accordance with the positive role of Green Belts of providing access to open countryside for the urban population while allowing for the possibility of reversion to agricultural use if circumstances changed in the future. (20)

7.22 Whether or not a site is appropriate will be determined on its individual locational characteristics. It is clear that prominent appeal sites within areas "forming traditional features of arable fields, small woods, hedgerows and country lanes" (1), or "flat grazing marsh land" (2) with few features are generally sites which are unlikely to be appropriate to golf courses. In the former cases Inspectors have considered that the introduction of "scenic softening, changes in scale and the loss of the variety of field use provided by crop rotation would create artificial pockets of countryside, thereby devaluing the existing landscape". (1)

In another appeal the Inspector stated "... the scheme would involve a series of holes running parallel to the vertical and horizontal field boundaries. This would be interspersed with new planting and enhancement and thickening of existing hedgerows. The pattern that resulted would be

a series of thick clumps or strips of trees laying between the straight or dog-legged holes which would appear, throughout the year, as long verdant stretches bordered by areas of rough. The pattern would, to my mind, be alien to the remainder of the surrounding agricultural land with its regular field boundaries and with relatively sparse planting in them. The colour and the texture of the new landscape would be in stark contrast to the agricultural scene at all times of the year". (3)

The use of grazing marshes for golf courses has been held to be materially harmful to nature conservation and ecological interests and associated golfing activities including use of fertilizers and pesticides would be disturbing and harmful to wildlife". (2) (Refer also Para 8.65).

7.23 Golf courses have been accepted on appeal where the layout would not be in marked contrast to the pervading agricultural setting and existing and proposed landscaping and topography would restrict the extent to which the sites could be seen from public highways or private properties. In such cases differential grass cutting would be noticeable outside the site but only as "filtered glimpses through wooded areas". In addition more positive management regimes could provide benefits to ecological and landscaping improvements. (4)

7.24 Inspectors have accepted that golf courses can be compatible with the countryside and may possibly improve its appearance. Caution has been expressed on the possible adverse impact of golf course buildings, car parking and associated structures on the appearance and character of the area, particularly where they are open to long views. At one appeal the Inspector considered the proposal would provide opportunity and incentive to plant more hedges and trees and to manage the landscape more positively than was the case at present. In addition the proposal would entail the replacement of the existing unattractive buildings on the site by a building or buildings of greater quality with a consequent improvement to the appearance of that part of the conservation area. Restrictions on the size and scale of the other buildings with lighting used discreetly and restricted to around the clubhouse and car park should ensure that they would have no adverse impact. (20)

- 7.25 However at another appeal the Inspector considered the site to be "more than usually prominent and in view from the main A21 London-Hastings Road and the upper slopes of the Greensand Ridge". The layout put forward at the Inquiry would open the area up and there would be views into the site which would make evident its use as a golf course. The Inspector thus concluded that the probable adverse effect of the golf course and buildings on the appearance and character of the surrounding area outweighed the need for a golf course on the appeal site. (21)
- 7.26 One Inspector accepted that the change of use would result in a change in the character of the land because the fields had been used for agricultural purposes and appeared as a natural landscape around the village. The golf course would replace that "natural" landscape with a landscape including fairways, greens and bunkers which was distinctively a man-made landscape. However, the locality was not part of an area of outstanding natural beauty (A.O.N.B.) nor designated as having some special landscape interest and the conclusion reached was that no compelling reason existed for the preservation of the landscape of the appeal land. (22)
- 7.27 "The Essex Golf Report" was specifically mentioned by the Inspector in an appeal in respect of a golf course proposed in the Essex/Suffolk border near Sudbury. The Inspector said that although the Report did not enjoy the statutory status of the Structure and draft Local Plans it "clearly is widely recognised as a useful source of planning guidance on golf courses". He treated the Golf Report as supplementary planning guidance which he took into account in making his decision. (23)
- 7.28 The Inspector in the same case heard evidence of the visibility of the landscape but because of the effects of intensive arable farming which had resulted in the removal of many hedgerows, trees and copses did not oppose the principle of a golf course as "the presence of greens of various shades, hedgerows and copses and spinneys of broad leafed trees would be a pleasant contrast to the rather overworked landscape which exists at present".

- 7.29 He did nevertheless dismiss the appeal on the basis of the unacceptable visual impact on the area of the clubhouse, car park and access road and expressed the opinion that even the low key use of the clubhouse envisaged would be very much at variance with the tranquil rural character and remoteness of the particular part of the site and was contrary to the countryside and landscape policies of the Structure Plan and Local Plans and the guidance of "The Essex Golf Report". (23)
- 7.30 Although appeals have been dismissed in the past on the grounds of loss of agricultural land, more recent ministerial advice has decreased the emphasis on its protection and consequently in recent appeals, Inspectors have not considered the potential loss of agricultural land as significant. (21) Inspectors have considered golf courses to be reversible development should the land be required for agriculture in the future.
- 7.31 Arguments in support of golf courses on the basis of local employment generation/revitalisation and benefits to tourism have not been of sufficient weight in themselves to outweigh other material planning considerations. However, where it has been concluded that the golf course is acceptable in its own right, Inspectors have acknowledged these other benefits that would flow from a favourable decision.
- 7.32 Two recent appeals were dismissed solely on highway grounds and two others included highway reasons for refusal. The reasons for refusal included the inadequate network of country roads in terms of width and alignment leading to the proposed golf sites, substandard junctions to main roads and inadequate visibility splays. (1, 2, 5 and 6.)
- 7.33 An additional four proposals for "pay and play" courses were all dismissed on highway grounds with one additionally rejected on conservation and ecological grounds. One Inspector stated that he considered that public courses have a greater turnover than one restricted by club membership. (1, 4, 5 and 6.)

- 7.34 At one appeal the Inspector assessed a reasonable maximum of 55,000 rounds per year with groups of golfers playing 18 holes averaging about 8 per hour maximum. He estimated that on average it would generate 20 vehicle movements per hour with a maximum unlikely to exceed 30 movements per hour. The additional traffic was likely to be carried by the local roads outside the week-day peak periods. It was not thought that noise, disturbance or danger likely to be caused by traffic generated by the development was sufficient to override the need for that development. (21)
- 7.35 At another appeal it was estimated that the additional traffic attributable to the golf course would vary between daily figures of 35 to 120 vehicles. The Inspector adopted the highway authority's figure of about 86 vehicles a day each involving 2 journeys giving 172 vehicle trips/day as the additional traffic including service vehicles. Increased use of the course at weekends might result in higher figures of private car traffic but that would to some extent be offset by a reduction in commercial traffic. The appellant's figure for the increase of vehicular traffic was substantially lower. (17)
- 7.36 The immediate highways were thought by the Inspector to be country lanes of sub-standard width and alignment when compared with present day design standards for new roads. The traffic flows on the roads were light and consisted mainly of private vehicles but with some heavier vehicles and plant equipment predominantly involving agricultural interests. It was not contended that the additional traffic generated would be beyond the capacity of the existing roads but rather that the additional traffic would give rise to additional hazards. The Inspector concluded that taking into account that it would be a 9-hole course and after making a small allowance for non-playing members and service vehicles the peak-hour maximum generation of some 30 vehicles/hour may occur, i.e one vehicle every 2 minutes on average added to the surrounding highway network. The limited additional traffic should disperse with distance from the golf course and be absorbed fairly readily. The Inspector was not convinced that the country routes would be unreasonably affected to an extent which would justify refusal of the proposal. (17)

7.37 Except for one dismissed appeal where the ecology issue was of major importance, this matter has not generally been an issue. In allowing appeals, Inspectors have acknowledged that positive benefits can be obtained by new planting and provision of lakes etc. At one appeal the Inspector said the golf course could be expected to create improved opportunity for management of a woodland alongside a brook and the large amount of new planting proposed would be unlikely to have any adverse effects in the long term ecology of the area. (20)

The presence of archaeological remains on three sites were not regarded as presenting obstacles to golf course development, and the Inspectors considered appropriate safeguards could be achieved by conditions. (1, 3, 4, 13 and 18.)

7.38 Although the effect on local residents has been raised at a number of appeals, in the absence of strong supporting evidence this has not generally been considered sufficient to justify refusal.

Inspectors have accepted the need to maintain unobstructed use of public footpaths and golf course layouts should be designed accordingly. In addition it has been stressed at appeal that these are legally secured under other legislation. (17)

In one case, the Inspector accepted that the use of clubhouses should be restricted until at least 9 holes of the proposed course had been completed. (20)

In another appeal, the Inspector considered that the Planning Authority had been unable to support the following reasons for refusal:

- (i) that the appeal site would be better kept in agricultural use,
- (ii) that the proposed development would have a detrimental effect on the amenities of neighbouring properties, and
- (iii) that the development would have a detrimental effect on users of public footpaths and the adjacent railway.

In the absence of their justification for those reasons, the Inspector awarded partial costs against the Planning Authority. (22)

- 7.39 Appellants have generally been able to demonstrate the need for the proposed facilities. At one appeal the Inspector considered that the question of need was a matter for commercial judgement and not a planning reason for refusing permission. (22) However, Inspectors have considered that the probable adverse effect of a golf course and buildings on the appearance and character of the surrounding area outweighed the need for a golf course. (21) If planning authorities are going to argue that the appropriate provision of golf facilities has been provided, the Local Plan will have to identify the needs of the district, supported by a detailed analysis of facilities required and how these have or will be catered for.
- 7.40 Driving Ranges
- 7.41 The sample examined included 13 appeal decisions of which 10 were dismissed.
- 7.42 The question of whether driving ranges are indoor or outdoor recreation facilities has been considered. One Inspector concluded that they were a hybrid of both elements, each of which was an essential part of the whole. However a driving range has, because of the large area of essentially open land, been regarded as a predominantly outdoor facility which should be determined on its individual merits. (7)
- 7.43 In another case the Inspector concluded that the proposal represented a form of development normally regarded as appropriate within the Green Belt but whilst the proposals might not prejudice the purposes of the Green Belt they should not impair the visual amenities of the area by reason of siting, materials and design (PPG2 para 14). (8)
- 7.44 The loss of agricultural land has been raised as an issue although no appeal has been dismissed on this basis, with one Inspector acknowledging driving ranges as "reversible" development.
- 7.45 The acceptability of golf driving ranges depends on their impact on the countryside. The three that were allowed were regarded as not intruding into the rural scene and in one case the existing landscaping and topography of the site ensured the floodlights and fencing would not be obtrusive in the area. (9)

- 7.46 The majority of the driving ranges have been dismissed on appeal as being essentially urban in character, out of keeping with the surrounding rural areas and appearance of the countryside by reason of their greater degree of built form and car parking areas, attendant structures such as fencing, floodlights and distance markers and intensity of use. (8 and 10.)
- 7.47 A large number of the proposals were found to be unsatisfactory because of their close proximity to residential properties and were found to be unacceptable by reason of noise nuisance from traffic to and from the range, the use of the range and the annoyance from floodlighting. (11)
- 7.48 In one case where driving bays and floodlights were not proposed and the use would be low key in terms of buildings, fences and access it was considered that it would not be possible to assimilate the proposed use into the landscape without serious detriment to the special character of the land (North Kent Marshes). Buildings, fences, flags, signage and commercial character, mounding and landscaping would be alien to the open nature of the area. Further it was considered that to approve the range would make it difficult for the Local Planning Authority to resist sheltered tees and floodlighting in the future when faced with such proposals and the long term viability of the driving range might rest upon their provision. (12)
- 7.49 Although the need for driving ranges has been accepted by Inspectors it has not been regarded as sufficient reason for ignoring the locational characteristics of an appeal site. (8 and 11.)

7.50 Schedule of Appeal Decisions Examined

- (1) Clavering Farm, Langley, Uttlesford. (T/APP/C1570/A/91/176495/P5)
Application Number: UTT/1057/90, Uttlesford District Council.
- (2) Land south of A13 road, Pitsea, Basildon.
(T/APP/V1505/A/90/163786/P5)
Application Number: BAS/722/90, Basildon District Council.
- (3) College Farm, Ascott-under-Wychwood, West Oxfordshire.
(T/APP/D3125/A/88/099047/P5)
Application Number: 1597/87, West Oxfordshire District Council.
- (4) Foxhunt Green, Waldron, Wealden. (T/APP/C1435/A/89/142930/P3)
Application Number: WD/89/1247/P, Wealden District Council.
- (5) Harleston, Near Chillington, Kingsbridge, Devon.
(T/APP/K1128/A/90/155384/P5)
Application Number: 9/19/0138/90/4, South Hams District Council.
- (6) Kents Hill, Park Lane, Ramsden Heath, Chelmsford.
(T/APP/W1525/A/91/175177/P5)
Application Number: CHL/1212/90, Chelmsford Borough Council.
- (7) Redbrow Lane, Daresbury, Kirklees. (T/APP/Y0625/A/89//134315/P7)
Kirklees District Council.
- (8) Pontey Farm, Meltham Road, Honley, Halton.
(T/APP/Z4718/A/90/171535/P3)
Kirklees District Council.
- (9) Deanery Hill, Braintree. (T/APP/Z1510/A/90/160297/P2)
Application Number: P/BTE/105/90/OBN, Braintree District Council.
- (10) Paradise Farm, Hamlet Hill, Roydon. (T/APP/J1535/A/90/164545/P5)
Application Number: EPF/1828/89, Epping Forest District Council.
- (11) Outward Common Road and Outward Farm Road, Billericay.
(T/APP/V1505/A/91/176617/P3)
Application Number: BAS/790/90, Basildon District Council.
- (12) The Old Tip, Thanet Way, Whitstable, Kent.
(T/APP/J2210/A/90/161820/P5) Canterbury City Council.
- (13) Rhydyglafes Farm, Cynwyd, Corwen. (P14/355)
Application Number 16/10/25, Glyndwr District Council.
- (14) Court Lodge Farm, Bletchingley, Surrey. (APP/M3645/A/86/051869)
Application Number: 85/P/1004, Tandridge District Council.
- (15) Land between Tye Common Road, Laindon Common Road and Wiggins Lane,
Billericay.
(T/APP/V1505/A/90/154883 and T/APP/V1505/A/90/154898/P3)
Application Numbers: BAS/1292/89 and BAS/1293/89, Basildon District
Council.
- (16) Poplar House Farm, Dunkeswick. (APP/N4720/A/90/164348)
Application Number: 90/30/00143, Leeds City Council.

- (17) Manor Farm, Leese Hill, Kingstone, Uttoxeter.
(T/APP/B3410/A/90/156909)
Application Number: CU 19400/01, East Staffordshire District Council.
- (18) Old Town Farm House, Bishops Itchington. (T/APP/J3720/A/89/135083/P3)
Application Number: S89/0644, Stratford-on-Avon District Council.
- (19) Applebury Barn, Hardwick. (T/APP/H2835/A/90/163934/P7)
Application Number: BW/90/0283, Wellingborough Borough Council.
- (20) Land between Middle Street and Back Lane, Nazeing, Essex.
(APP/J1535/A/88/109250/P2) Application Number: EPF/1319/87, Epping Forest District Council.
- (21) Land at Panthorst Farm, Sevenoaks, Weald.
(T/APP/G2245/A/86/046196/P5)
Application Number: SE/85/988 & SE/85/989, Sevenoaks District Council.
- (22) Land at Station Road, Barlaston, Nr Stoke-on-Trent.
(T/APP/1/3425/A/90/151766/P2)
Application Number: 24350, Stafford Borough Council.
- (23) Wrights Farm, Middleton Hall, Sudbury. (T/APP/Z1510/A/91/188682/P5)
Application Number: BTE/1371/90, Braintree District Council.

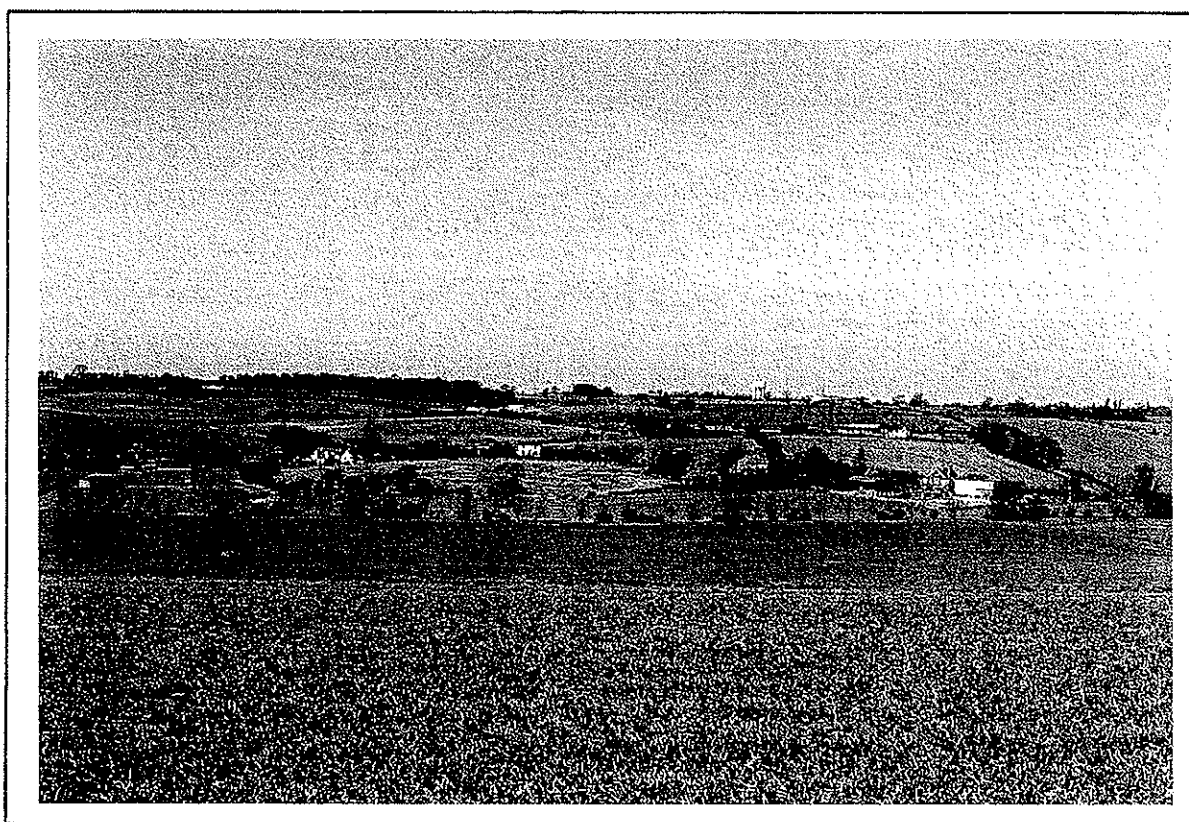


Fig (x) Traditional Agricultural Landscape (Para 8.13 refers)

8.00 Effect on the Appearance of the Countryside

8.10 Essex Landscape (General)

- 8.11 The "open" use of land for golf, whether that land lies in the Green Belt or rural areas beyond, is acceptable in principle, however, much concern has been expressed nationally by Government bodies, amenity groups and planning authorities about the potentially intrusive effects of the impact of golf course design and construction upon the landscape generally. This chapter examines the general landscape issues that need to be taken into consideration across the county to reduce the adverse impact of golf course development in the countryside. The guidance of this chapter is supplemented by specific advice contained in subsequent sections on the additional considerations which apply within certain categories of landscape designations. If sensitively treated, then golf courses may well be considered as an enhancement to various landscapes and not harmful.
- 8.12 Golf courses originally evolved on land such as dune systems, heathland and commons where casual grazing was the traditional land use. The landscape created the game rather than the game the landscape. In the 19th century new golf courses of a different nature started to evolve in parkland settings, often again on grazing land of lesser agricultural value, and features from the seaside courses like sand traps and certain plant species such as sea buckthorn, gorse and heather were introduced.
- 8.13 Essex is primarily a productive working landscape. The traditional pattern is one of arable fields interspersed with small woods, hedgerows, ditches and lanes. Agricultural intensification has resulted in a deterioration in the quality of this landscape but the variation in colour and texture of arable rotations clearly defines a rural landscape. By their size and nature, golf courses can appear alien in this landscape, unless well sited and designed. The suburban quality of closely mown grass, a linear fairway pattern, extensive water features and amoeba shaped bunkers will often appear out of place and the introduction of pine trees, flowering cherries, rhododendron bushes and other flowering shrubs can look incongruous in the Essex landscape.



Fig (xi) Non-indigenous Planting Can Appear Ludicrous in the Landscape.



Fig (xii) The Imposition of an Alternative Alien Landscape Form.

8.14 Anna Pavord of "The Independent" on March 28th 1992 wrote, "All golf courses, wherever they are, try to look like Scotland. Landforms heave like schools of whales across lowland pasture, trying to pretend they are the Cairngorms. Conifers are planted in landscapes that, left to themselves, would not touch a Scots pine with a bargepole." The principles and philosophies of good golf course design must take into consideration the full use of the existing and natural features and contours of any piece of land.

~~The layout should be based on a thorough survey and analysis of the selected site.~~

A preponderance towards massive earth movement, wholesale destruction of tree belts and important hedgerows or inappropriate planting are not the way forward, nor consistent with these principles and philosophies. The

site chosen for the course is usually chosen for its particular landscape qualities and suitability for the proposed course. It is those very qualities that must be respected in the design of the course.

- 8.15 The landscape element of a new golf course, given the areas of land involved, is a major part of the application. (Most 18 hole courses take up 40-60ha/100-150 acres).

The layout of the course, the siting and size of its buildings, car parking and a landscape scheme should be submitted as part of the planning application and not treated as a reserved matter for later approval. Landscape schemes should be designed in character with context using primarily indigenous plant species. Applicants should be able to demonstrate that the proposal is based on a thorough appraisal of all the site's existing features and context in the surrounding landscape.

- 8.16 The design of golf courses, including the position of internal features, must be such that their visual impact on the surrounding countryside shall be minimized.

The aim should be to ensure that from outside the site the course should represent only an intensification of the traditional indigenous landscape pattern, as opposed to the imposition of an alternative alien landscape form. Features alien to the landscape context such as bunkers, surfaced trolley or buggy tracks, artificial mounding, and exaggerated water features should be so designed so as to minimise their visual impact from beyond the limits of the course.

- 8.17 Planning Policy Guidance Note No. 17 states that golf courses:

"should be located and designed to ensure harmony with the surrounding countryside and to conserve the natural environment. Each proposal should contain full details of the site and of the impact of the development proposed..."

- 8.18 Where the landscape is identified as having a special sensitivity, as set out in the following sections, the impact of the proposal on that landscape will need to be carefully assessed. In such cases the local planning authority may request the submission of an Environmental Assessment (E.A.) under the Town & Country Planning (Assessment of Environmental Effects) Regulations 1988.

- 8.19 In terms of location, there needs to be a presumption against the development of the most visible elements of the landscape, such as prominent sites on scarp slopes, valleys, exposed plateaux and ridges.

Flatter areas, not conspicuous from distant views or areas contained by natural landform and vegetation can better accommodate new courses.

Alternatively sites adjacent to the main centres of population are considered to be particularly appropriate.

New golf courses should preferably be established in the urban fringe where the suburban quality is more appropriate and they can offer an excellent buffer zone between town and country. Such locations have the added benefit of good accessibility to the greatest number of people and avoid the need for unnecessary traffic movements within the rural areas.

8.20 Assessment of Landscape Quality

- 8.21 In design terms the most important principle is that the layout of the course should be based on a thorough survey of the site's existing features, character and condition including its landscape quality, ecology and landscape history. The problems and opportunities brought to light in this process should then be analysed and an impact assessment made to indicate how these factors have been taken fully into consideration. English Heritage state:

"Once these assessments have been made and agreed, the golf course layout can be addressed taking these matters and any other constraints into consideration from the outset rather than attempting to adapt a layout retrospectively to deal with particular problems."

- 8.22 In this way the layout will respect the existing landscape pattern and quality. The British Institute of Golf Course Architects (BIGCA) advises the working and re-working of the proposed layout plan for the course to avoid the sensitive areas, keeping holes within natural internal boundaries such as hedgerows, minimizing tree clearance and preserving all of the natural features of the site. (Refer to BIGCA Guidelines - Appendix VII.)

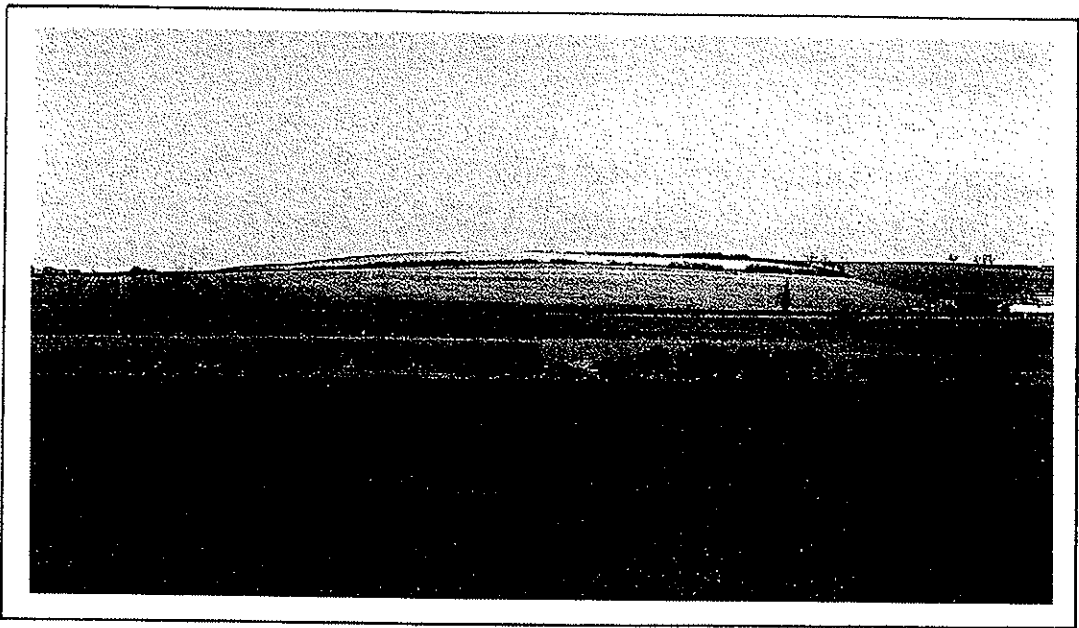


Fig (xiii) The Need to Avoid Developing the Most Visible Landscapes

- 8.23 Even where the submission of a formal Environmental Assessment (EA) is not sought, applicants are advised to produce landscape impact assessments voluntarily to avoid repeated requests for further information or refusal on the basis of insufficient information.
- 8.24 The full extent of the matters to be addressed in this statement should be agreed between the advisers for the local authority and the developer in advance of a layout being fixed and should comprise: a field survey to identify the site's existing features, character and condition, a description of the site's interest from the historical record, an assessment of the site's historical importance, an assessment of the proposal's impact on any historic features and character, and an assessment of the opportunities presented by the development and a summary assessment.
- 8.25 It is essential that these considerations are fully taken on board by the golf course architect and his client before any definitive layout and design is produced during the preliminary stages of the golf course proposal.
- 8.26 It should be noted that in preparing the appraisal of the existing vegetation and the visual aspects of the site, the English Nature Phase I Survey List may be helpful, and the draft English Nature Management Plan proposals may also be of use in providing the maintenance programme.
- 8.27 The visual impact of the built elements of the course, including the club house, ancillary buildings, car parking and maintenance buildings, is of primary concern. Applications should show that these elements have been located and laid out in a manner which reduces their impact to a minimum. Any landscape treatment proposed to reduce this impact, in the form of ground modelling or screen planting, must be indicated.
- 8.28 These steps in the approach should be detailed to this level, and are considered to be an appropriate and highly necessary requirement to accompany any application for a new golf course. It is the intent at every stage, to retain and enhance the existing landscape features of the site, particularly in ancient and historic landscape environments, where the historic features, which may have been lost, may be thoroughly researched and, if considered appropriate, reinstated and restored to the project.

8.30 Environmentally Sensitive Areas

8.31 Environmentally Sensitive Areas are referred to in PPG7 as follows:

"Environmentally Sensitive Areas are designated by agriculture departments in England and Wales under the Agriculture Act 1986 and particular policies and programmes apply within them. ESAs are areas of special landscape, wildlife or historic interest which can be protected or enhanced by supporting specific agricultural practices. Designation as an ESA does not affect the status of the area in terms of national planning policies or development control regulations. However, the features which contributed to the designation of the area as an ESA may sometimes also be important features in local countryside planning policies and development control decisions."

8.32 There are only 11 designated ESA's in England and Wales. In Essex parts of the Stour Valley in the Districts of Braintree, Colchester and Tendring are included in the Suffolk River Valleys ESA. A further 12 are proposed for designation, which include the Essex Coast, adding to the Government's recognition of the need to ensure their protection from inappropriate development. Within the Suffolk River Valleys and the Essex Coast ESA's the Essex Planning Authorities may seek the submission of an Environmental Assessment for any proposal for golf development.

8.33 The ecological sensitivity of these areas is such that Government encourages the adoption of traditional farming techniques. Whilst Planning cannot prescribe the use of organic as opposed to chemical fertilizers or prohibit the use of specific pesticides, any application for a golf course within an existing or proposed ESA should demonstrate by its Ecological Statement and a management plan the means whereby the sensitivity of the area would be safeguarded.

8.40 Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty

- 8.41 A clear statement of Government's attitude to Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (A.O.N.B.'s) is to be found in PPG7 "The Countryside and the Rural Economy" from which the following is extracted:

"There are 39 designated A.O.N.B.'s in England and Wales, covering a total of 20,400 square kilometres - around 13 per cent of the total land area. The primary objective of designation is conservation of the natural beauty of the landscape. This objective should be reflected by local authorities in their preparation of structure and local plans and exercise of development control. A.O.N.B.'s differ from National Parks in that the promotion of recreation is not an objective of their designation, though these areas should be used to meet the demand for recreation so far as that is consistent with the conservation of natural beauty and the needs of agriculture, forestry and other uses.... In general, policies and development control decisions affecting A.O.N.B.s should favour conservation of the natural beauty of the landscape. In all cases the environmental effects of new proposals will be a major consideration, though it will also be appropriate to have regard to the economic and social well-being of the areas."

- 8.42 Essex has only one A.O.N.B. namely the Dedham Vale which follows the River Stour along the Suffolk border from Manningtree and Mistley through the attractive Constable Country of Dedham, through Boxted, and Little Horkesley as far as Wormingford. The A.O.N.B. was designated in 1970 by the Countryside Commission in recognition of its distinctive character and natural beauty. The Stour Valley is also classified as an Environmentally Sensitive Area by the Ministry of Agriculture whereby farmers are encouraged to retain traditional grazing methods in the Dedham Vale.

- 8.43 The First Alteration to the Structure Plan states:

POLICY NR11

"NO DEVELOPMENT SHALL TAKE PLACE IN THE DEDHAM VALE AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY WHICH CONFLICTS WITH CONSERVATION OF THE AREA AND MEASURES FOR ITS MANAGEMENT AND ENHANCEMENT."

8.44 Most of this scenically attractive river valley is exposed from the adjacent countryside and has a special quality which includes extensive areas of water meadows backed with pollarded willows within the area of the Stour. Accordingly:

There needs to be a general presumption against the development of golf courses or driving ranges in the A.O.N.B., or on adjacent land which could adversely affect the visual appearance of the A.O.N.B.

This view is supported by the Countryside Commission in their Position Statement of January 1992.

8.50 Special Landscape Areas

8.51 Structure Plan Policy NR12 requires any new development, by its location, siting, design and landscaping, to accord with the character of the area. The County's Special Landscape Areas (S.L.A's) are defined as being:

<i>Stour Valley</i>	<i>Colne Valley</i>
<i>Hamford Water</i>	<i>Pant Valley</i>
<i>Walden Uplands</i>	<i>Blackwater-Colne Estuary</i>
<i>Upper Blackwater</i>	<i>(Including the Roman</i>
<i>Stort Valley</i>	<i>River Valley)</i>
<i>Chelmer Valley</i>	<i>Hatfield Broad Oak</i>
<i>Chelmer-Blackwater Ridges</i>	<i>Terling</i>
<i>Epping Ridges</i>	<i>Can Valley</i>
<i>Highwoods-Hanningfield</i>	<i>Roding Valley</i>
<i>Dengie Marshes</i>	<i>Woodham Escarpment</i>
<i>Cam Valley</i>	<i>Weald</i>
<i>Childerditch</i>	<i>Upper Crouch</i>
<i>Crouch-Roach Marshes</i>	<i>Hockley Woods</i>
<i>Mar Dyke</i>	<i>Langdon Hills</i>
<i>Stour Coast</i>	<i>Hadleigh Marshes</i>

8.52 Many of these areas are so designated because of their scenic qualities - river valleys, ridges, escarpments etc. and many, but not all, form, to varying degrees, highly visible landscapes. Unlike the A.O.N.B.s, however, there is seen to be no justification for a total embargo on golf courses in such areas. Nevertheless it is likely that the local planning authority will be particularly concerned at the visual impact of the proposed course in such areas.

- 8.53 Golf driving ranges on the other hand, by the inevitable nature of their design, will have a greater intrusive impact on the character of such areas and there needs to be a presumption against them.

Golf driving ranges will generally not be accepted within the Special Landscape Areas.

8.60 **The Coastal Protection Belt**

- 8.61 Although golf originated in the sand dunes and adjacent heathland of the coastal areas, the question needs to be raised as to the suitability of the rural coastal areas for golf development.

- 8.62 In the mid 1960's, following pressure from the National Trust in their "Enterprise Neptune" campaign, Government produced two Circulars 56/63 "Coastal Preservation and Development" and 7/66 "The Coast" which urged authorities to produce appropriate policies to protect the special coastal areas from all but essential development.

- 8.63 In October 1966, Essex County Council adopted an Interim Coastal Protection Policy which was eventually superseded in 1984 by the adoption of The Essex Coast Protection Subject Plan which formally mapped the area of rural coastline and estuaries, to which Policy NR18 of the Approved Essex Structure Plan relates. This strongly worded policy states:

"THERE SHALL BE THE MOST STRINGENT RESTRICTIONS ON DEVELOPMENT ON THE RURAL AND UNDEVELOPED COASTLINE OUTSIDE BUILT UP AREAS AND ANY DEVELOPMENT WHICH IS EXCEPTIONALLY PERMITTED SHALL NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT THE OPEN AND RURAL CHARACTER OR WILDLIFE".

Subsequent District Local Plans have carried forward this policy of protecting the Coastal Belt.

- 8.64 The Essex Coast is a finite resource which includes within it, extensive areas of marshland, mudflats, and saltmarsh which are not only attractive to man by their appearance but valuable as a habitat for the breeding and wintering of birds, for vertebrates and invertebrates and, especially in the marshes, for plants many of which are found only within such areas. 100 miles of the Essex coast and estuaries are given the special protection of SSSI's and much is of national and international importance. Much of the coast, including the Stour estuary, Hamford

Water, parts of the Colne and Blackwater estuaries, Dengie Marshes, Foulness Island and Abberton Reservoir are included in a list of internationally important wetland sites. As the list includes a total of only 201 areas in the whole of Western Europe the significance of the Essex coast is clear.

- 8.65 The Coastal Protection Belt extends up the Thames as far as the Tilbury Marshes. The fact that 65% of the Thames Estuary grazing marshes were lost between 1935 and 1985 contributes to one's appreciation of the need for a most restrictive policy being applied within the county's coastal and estuarine areas.

An appeal (T/APP/V1515/A/90/1637686/P5) in respect of a golf course proposed partially within the Coastal Protection Belt at Pitsea was dismissed with the Inspector stating,

"I was persuaded that the loss of another 60 acres of grazing marsh, although they are not included in an SSSI or special landscape area, would be materially harmful to nature conservation and to the ecological interests of the grazing marsh as a whole I consider there would be a substantial risk that the activity on the proposed playing area would be harmful to the grazing marsh. That harm would consist, in part, of the disturbance of wildlife through noise created by a combination of people playing golf and machinery (however light) used for mowing fairways and greens. It would also consist of the risk to wildlife and plants from the running off of pesticides and fertilisers that would be applied to greens. I am not convinced that an agreed scheme for preventing such occurrences (depending as it would upon human vigilance for its implementation) would be a sufficient safeguard for the grazing marsh which I am satisfied is an important and disappearing national asset".

- 8.66 Whilst Policy NR18 seeks to deflect pressure for inappropriate development away from sensitive coastal areas towards coastal towns and holiday areas or further inland, it needs to be recognised that there already exists a range of recreational facilities, including golf courses, adjacent to coastal towns which contribute to the existing open character of the Essex coast as well as satisfying the needs of tourism for golf adjacent to those towns. A delicate balance therefore needs to be struck in the sensitive provision of further golf courses in such areas.

8.67 There are large tracts of Essex coastline which primarily, for landscape reasons, or because of nature conservation considerations, would be totally unsuited to golf course development, however, there may well be a limited number of localities where a sensitively designed golf course could be accommodated. It is considered that it would be unrealistic to seek to ban golf course development totally from the Coastal Protection Belt but golf course development needs to be channelled to the most suitable locations.

8.68 **New golf courses in the Coastal Protection Belt should be restricted to sites that:-**

- a) are already affected by development including existing towns and holiday areas;
- b) have scope for visually accommodating development by reason of land form or vegetation without detriment to the ecology of the area;
- c) would not be visually inappropriate from significant vantage points;
- d) do not further reduce or place at risk the extensive open tracts of Essex marshland which represent a valuable yet finite resource in nature conservation and landscape terms.

The value of these areas as interrelated habitats has been recognised by Government through both the Local Plan procedures and the planning appeal process.

Golf driving ranges will generally not be accepted within the Essex Coastal Protection Belt.

8.69 Additionally, since planning policy recognises the undeveloped rural coastline as an important natural resource to be conserved:

Particular care needs to be exercised over the design of golf courses in the Coastal Protection Belt. The visual impact of built development must be minimised to safeguard the open rural character of the coastal landscape. Similarly car parking must be carefully sited and screened to avoid the visually intrusive element of reflected sunlight from cars and their windscreens.

8.76 When the application is assessed, the key historical question about which the Planning Authority will want to satisfy itself, is whether the proposal enhances the meaning and value of the historic landscape overall. Does it avoid the loss of key features and essential character, whilst putting the protection, management and repair of the historic landscape on a more assured footing ?

It is recognized that whilst golf course construction may be damaging, it can also bring benefits in the repair of previously damaged features, management improvements, land reassembly and public access. Restoration should not be seen as the saving grace of a fundamentally flawed scheme. It may be better that a park languishes in neglect for a little longer rather than lose its essential character.

8.77 English Heritage suggests the following aspects need covering by planning conditions or Section 106 agreements in respect of any permissions granted:

- * *construction, such as the protection of certain features during earthmoving and the use of heavy machinery generally;*
- * *landscape management, such as mowing regimes and the planting and clearance of trees and shrubs;*
- * *agreements to prevent fragmentation by the separate disposal of land and buildings;*
- * *the protection of trees, perhaps backed up by a Tree Preservation Order;*
- * *the use and repair of historic buildings;*
- * *notification and approvals by the local planning authority of alterations to the course;*
- * *prohibition on the carrying out of works until opportunity is given for excavation, and access to the site by archaeologists during works;*
- * *the restoration of a designed landscape through replanting, repairs to structures and roadways and maintenance procedures;*
- * *public access and interpretation;*
- * *timing and phasing of all of the above;*
- * *agreement on limitations on future development such as driving ranges and installation of lighting.*

Golf courses and driving ranges will not be permitted in locations which would detract from the appearance or setting of ancient monuments, listed buildings or historic landscapes or features of such landscapes.

Areas of high intrinsic or landscape quality, whether parkland, the grounds of mansions or areas of historic hedgerows or woodlands will warrant the most sensitive design treatment in respect of the maintenance of their integrity.

- 8.78 The methodology proposed by English Heritage for historic landscapes is one which could equally be applied to other landscape and ecological issues. The process of site survey and impact assessment prior to any layout being prepared is fundamental to any large scale landscape planning exercise and is one which has particular relevance to golf schemes.

Landscape management agreements and long term monitoring would be a useful means of ensuring that initial intentions are adhered to and the proposed landscape treatment is achieved in a satisfactory manner.

8.79 The Examination of a Case Study:

The design of a golf course within an area of historic landscape is a specialist undertaking. The site of this proposed 9 hole course is at Daws Heath between Rayleigh, Thundersley, Hadleigh and Southend-on-Sea. The application was made by Nathaniel Lichfield & Partners on behalf of British Airways and an Ecological Statement was produced by the Colson Stone Partnership. Their leisure consultants were N.W. Leisure.

The site contained two ancient woodlands and a wealth of ancient hedgerows. The woods were traced by Dr. Oliver Rackham ("The Woods of South East Essex") back to a reference in the fourteenth centuryoucher book in which the monks of Westminster Abbey kept details of their Essex estates. Tile Wood (East) with its original Anglo-Saxon name of tilhurst (hyrst) was already an ancient wood in 1315. The archaeological evidence was that the original ancient wood extended westward to take in Tile Wood (West) and Starvelarks Wood. (See Fig (xv) opposite.)

~~Ancient hedgerows containing an abundance of mature trees represent the almost intact ancient agricultural field system and the south west corner of the site contains an area of unimproved grassland.~~

A part of the boundary to Rayleigh Park (first recorded 1274) is preserved in hedgerows and woodland margins on this and the similar site to the east. The scheme proposes the creation of fairways out of the existing grassland and that adjacent land is to be managed as flower rich meadows. Two ancient tracks cross the site, one forming a green lane through Starvelarks Wood and the other an old tree lined sunken trackway in the south west corner. Both are unaffected by the proposals. Two public footpaths cross the site, one following the green lane through the wood, which is unaffected, whilst the second is proposed for diversion on a route broadly parallel with the old trackway.

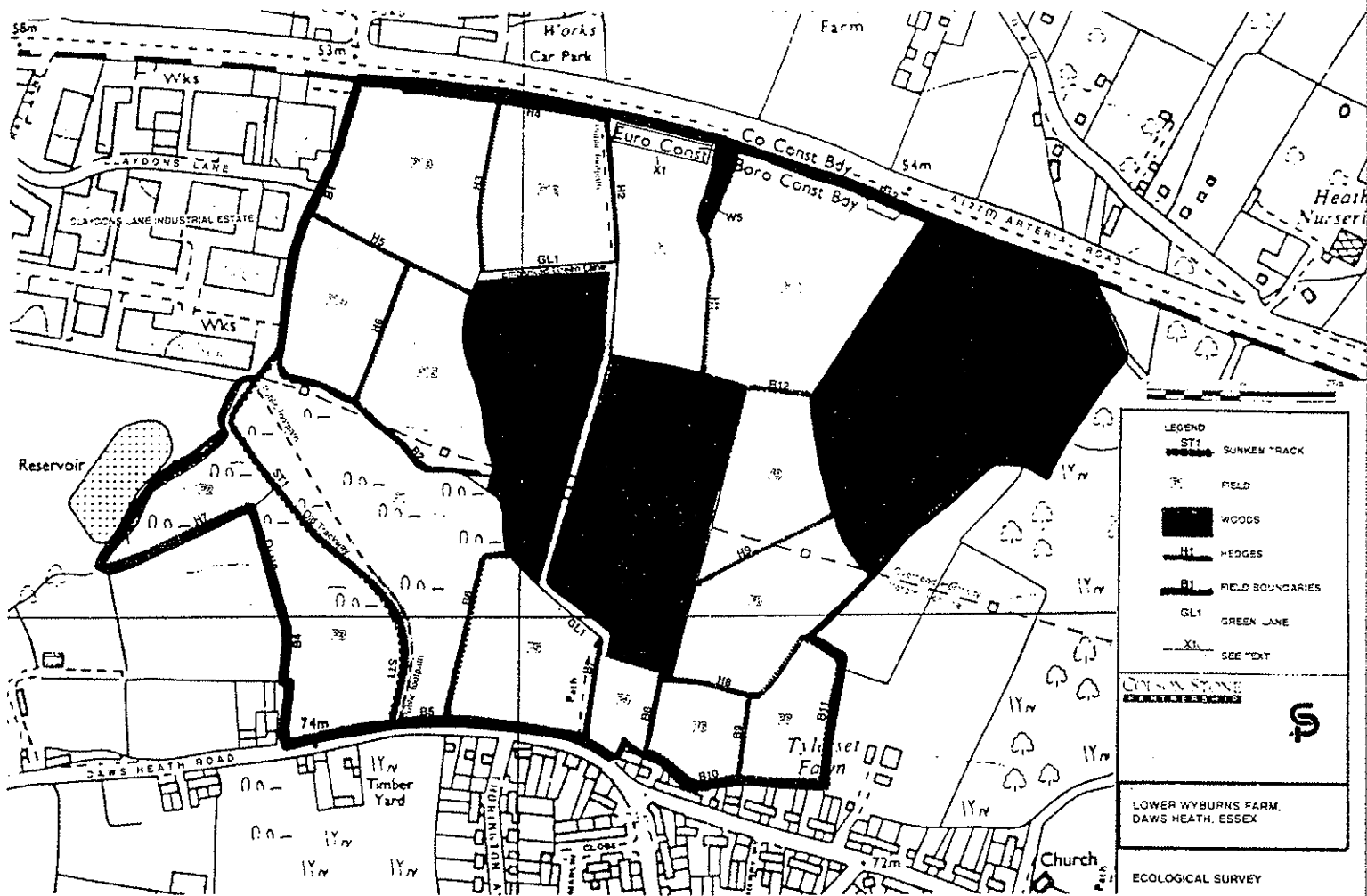


Fig (xv) Daws Heath, Ecological Survey Map

The Ecological Statement disclosed a full understanding of the site's historical significance and of its considerable and varied habitats, the future safeguarding and maintenance of which are likely to be ensured by a Section 106 Agreement. The course is designed as a clockwise circuit around Starvelarks Wood with the fairways being formed within the existing field pattern.

It is extremely difficult to accommodate a golf course into ancient landscapes dissected by historic hedgerows especially when traversed by rights of way and containing a wealth of wildlife habitats. This proposal (Refer Fig (xvi) below) demonstrates that with sensitivity it can be done, although the proximity of the A127(T) to the north requires recognition by the proximity of the driving range and the layout of the fairway serving hole No. 4.

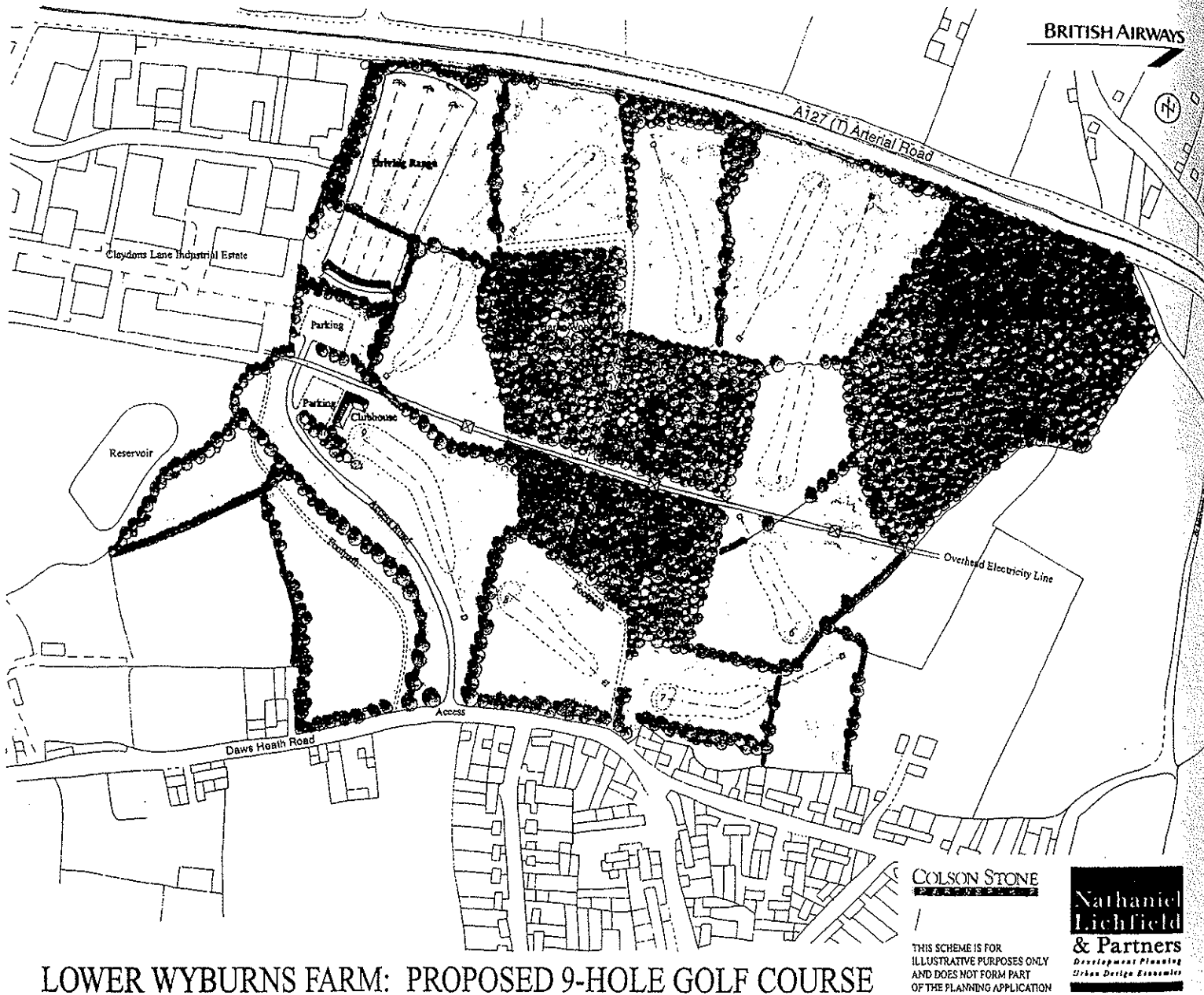


Fig (xvi) Daws Heath, Planning Application

8.80 Landscape Enhancement

8.81 In many parts of the county the intensive use of farmland has resulted in the grubbing out of hedgerows and small coppices to create an often almost prairie-like landscape devoid of ecological diversity. This effect has been accentuated by the loss of trees from Dutch Elm disease. A well laid out golf course in such areas has the potential to make a valuable positive contribution to the appearance of the countryside, especially where sensible indigenous tree planting is undertaken and new hedges, copses and small ponds are formed. Such planting will also assist the re-establishment of habitats lost as a result of intensive farming. The addition of such natural features will also add to the appearance of the course and its attraction to golfers and in turn is likely to enhance returns on the investment as reflected by club membership.

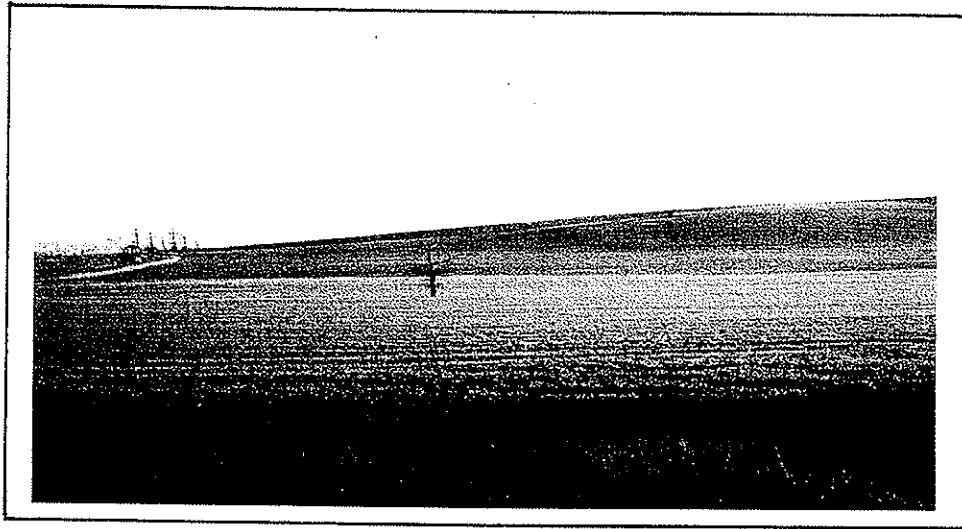


Fig (xvii) Prairie-like Landscape Devoid of Ecological Diversity.

8.82 The Countryside Commission in their Position Statement of policy relating to new golf courses (January 1992) said that there should be a preference for locating new golf courses where they can make a positive contribution to landscape enhancement, for example within degraded landscapes such as those affected by mineral working or where intensive agriculture has damaged the landscape. They also consider that the requirement to enhance the quality of the landscape should be built into the design brief and, where planning consents are given, appropriate management of retained and created habitats and landscape features should form part of planning conditions.

8.83 Potential developers and their design consultants are advised to seek discussions with their District Planning Officer prior to the submission of formal planning applications to agree what are likely to be the important issues which need to be addressed in the application.

8.84 Good golf course design can be used to restore landscape character and diversity in damaged landscapes but this should be seen as a subsidiary benefit and not a primary locational criterion.

"Set-aside" is a transitory scheme and is not likely to remain a permanent element in the landscape and similarly should not provide a precedent for golf. The introduction of the Countryside Premium scheme encouraged more beneficial use of "set-aside" land, and better alternatives for landscape management are appearing in the Countryside Stewardship scheme.

8.90 Improving the Landscape on Existing Courses

8.91 Many existing courses have been planted in a way which appears alien in the Essex landscape either by the use of non indigenous species or by the way the landscape of the course is managed.

Opportunities should be sought to encourage the restructuring of layouts by additional planting or altering management priorities, to encourage the development of grassland communities and natural regeneration of woody vegetation.

Local authorities and possibly other interest groups could seek to become involved in management agreements to encourage the long term development of courses to increase ecological diversity and to improve landscape character to agreed ends.

8.92 County Council Landscape Conservation Programme grants may be available for planting and certain other landscape elements which enhance or preserve the natural beauty of the countryside where it is visible to the public. Grants are not available where planting fulfils a planning condition. Further information and advice is available from the Countryside Section of the County Council's Planning Department.

8.93 In addition where there is room for larger areas of planting the Forestry Commission's Woodland Grant Scheme may be appropriate. To qualify the area involved must be at least 0.25 hectares in area, 15 metres wide and planted at a density of 1100 trees a hectare.

8.94 Many sources of advice on landscape management, conservation and enhancement exist. The local authority is the best starting point.

9.00 Other Areas of Concern

9.10 Ecological Interests

- 9.11 Principal areas of high conservation value such as woodland, wetlands, hedgerows, grassland, ponds and streams should be protected from any development which threatens their ecological viability. Ancient Woodlands will need special protection although, depending on the layout of the course, can co-exist.
- 9.12 Although all existing areas of nature conservation value need to be safeguarded, there is a potential to enhance existing habitats and to create new ones. The British Institute of Golf Course Architects (BIGCA) recognises that the philosophy of golf course design is naturally adapted to the ethic of conservation.
- 9.13 Grassland in particular is an increasingly rare habitat in Essex and substantial areas of rough, if sown with appropriate species and managed in a suitable way, can both provide new habitats and at the same time enhance the character of a course. Similarly as stated above new areas of woodland, scrub, ponds, hedgerows and other features can be created. What is most important is that full succession rather than "monocultures" are created by variations in grass and woodland management. Similarly water areas should be designed to have deeps and shallows to support appropriate plant and animal/fish species.
- 9.14 The Golf Industry can justifiably argue that the potential of protecting existing habitats and creating new ones on and adjacent to golf courses is as great if not greater than occurs on land under agricultural production. The ecological value of a field of wheat is minimal other than for field mice, and other rodents, which are hardly welcomed by the farmer. The habitats on farmland lie primarily within the uncultivated areas - the hedgerows, copses, woodlands, ponds and streams. Likewise the value of the fairways, tees and greens of a golf course are of limited ecological value other than for moles, voles and as a source of earthworms for rooting out by any badgers in the locality. The rough areas, the retained or planted areas of hedgerow, copses and water features can have a considerable value as habitats for a variety of flora and fauna.

Proportionately the vast majority of a farm's holding will be in agricultural production whereas, of a 56 hectare golf course, only 1 hectare is likely to comprise greens and tees and 11 hectares fairways whilst 44 hectares is likely to be roughs and out of play areas.

Doctor Anne-Marie Brennen of Kent University calculates that farmers apply over 25 times as much nitrogen to their land than a golf course operator. Nevertheless golf course operators need to be sparing in their use of sulphates and phosphates. Many courses are over-fertilized.

- 9.15 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (S.S.S.I.'s) are designated by English Nature and the Countryside Council for Wales under Section 28 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, and cover 6.5% of England and Wales. At January 1992, 4,300 sites had been designated covering a total of 9,750 square kilometres. As stated in PPG7:

"Sites are identified on the basis of published scientific criteria and their designation is intended to protect the nature conservation interest of the site. Some SSSI's are also subject to an additional designation in recognition of their special nature conservation interest: National Nature Reserves, designated by the nature conservation agencies under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, are reserves considered to be of national importance; "Ramsar" sites, selected by the agencies and designated by the Secretary of State, are wetlands of international importance, especially for waterfowl, under the Ramsar Convention of 1971; and Special Protection Areas, also selected by the agencies and designated by the Secretary of State, are areas for the protection of rare and migratory birds under the European Community Wild Birds Directive (79/409). Advice on planning and nature conservation is provided in DOE Circulars 27/87 and 1/92".

- 9.16 **Golf courses and driving ranges will not be permitted within Sites of Special Scientific Interest nor adjacent to such areas where their character is likely to be adversely affected.**

Although new golf courses will not be accepted within S.S.S.I.'s, the living proof of the potential ecological value of golf courses is the fact that half the top 50 courses in the U.K. now contain Sites of Special Scientific Interest.

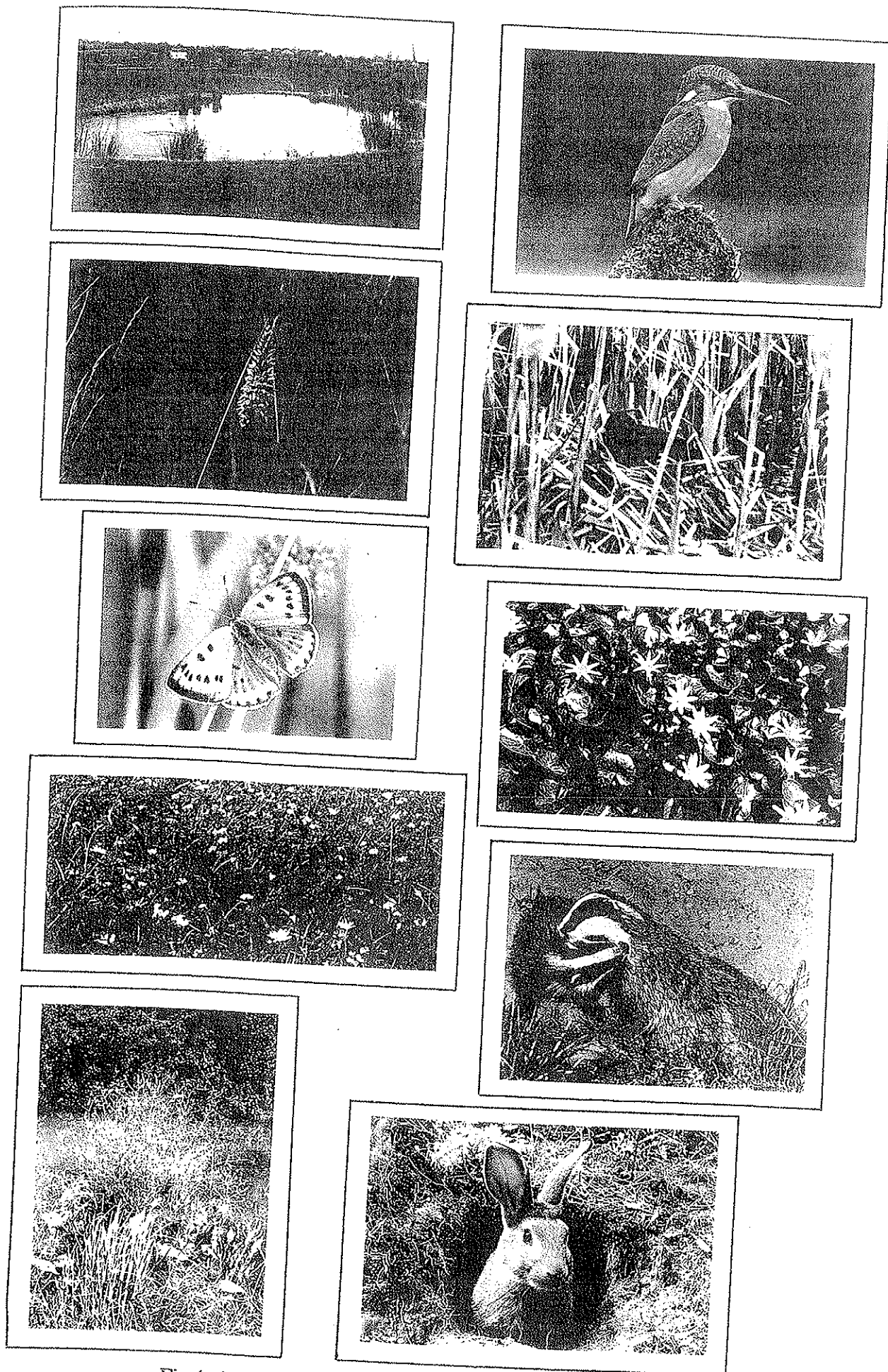


Fig (xviii) Wildlife and Habitats on Golf Courses

9.17 It is essential that careful consideration is given in initial layouts to providing the scope for habitat development as it will be extremely difficult to apply it at a later date. It is in the applicant's interest to design the course in accordance with ecological principles, i.e. with, rather than against, nature. Usually this will be found to be cost effective in establishment and certainly in management terms. The successful development of a course in ecological terms, however, primarily depends on its management, which can best be secured by Section 106 agreements or planning obligations concerning the drawing up and operation of management plans. The ecologically aware developer should be prepared to enter such an agreement thereby availing himself of a wealth of advice from the expertise available from District and County Planning Authorities, English Nature and the Essex Wildlife Trust, all of whom will co-operate in advising as to the formulation of efficient and effective habitat protection and/or creation and management plans. Furthermore a club's "green" commitment in this regard is most likely to have spin-offs in the appeal of the course for members and visitors alike.

9.18 Planning applications need to be accompanied by Ecological Statements which will demonstrate that existing ecological features and habitats are fully safeguarded by the proposals. Planning Authorities need to encourage applicants to provide opportunities for the creation of new habitats within their layouts. New planting needs to be ecologically congruent with the site and its environs and designed to create a wide variety of habitats by variation of species, grouping and densities. Ecological Statements also need to indicate, notably by a management plan, how the course is expected to develop with time.

The Golf Course Wildlife Trust (GCWT) state that such a plan is needed especially for all out-of-play areas and roughs and should be seen as an integral component of the entire estate management which could also consider the possibility of public access, together with educational and research opportunities.

9.19 There is some evidence to suggest that insect populations may be adversely affected by artificial outdoor lighting notably from driving ranges. Advice therefore ought to be sought from English Nature for proposals which involve strong outdoor lighting in close proximity to important wildlife habitats e.g. Ancient Woodlands and S.S.S.I.'s. With regard to the impact on birds and mammals, although behavioural changes have been observed when species are exposed to outdoor lighting no adverse effects on population have been recorded, although strong lighting on the coast can change migration paths of birds. (Refer also Para 10.25).

9.20 Need to Safeguard Rivers, Banks & Flood-Plains

9.21 River Corridors and their associated flood-plains must be treated as special areas. There may be special environmental areas where the diversity of habitat associated with river corridors should be protected or enhanced. The design of tees, greens and general layout must be carried out with due respect to the natural flood plain of adjacent watercourses. Surface water from large complexes can cause additional flooding problems and must be considered at an early stage and consultation with the National Rivers Authority, (NRA), Thames and Anglia Regions is strongly commended.

9.22 Damage to river banks resulting from heavy machinery working too close can lead to instability, slumping and erosion. Furthermore destruction of marginal and bankside vegetation can occur in association with such operations. Trees and shrubs are often cut down and removed to facilitate clear sighting of tees etc. This leads to further bank instability and a decrease in shade and cover affecting fisheries and wildlife interests in the channel (eg. increased temperature, and decreased dissolved oxygen). It is therefore recommended that an 8-10 metre strip be left adjacent to any watercourse as a natural undisturbed corridor, where pesticides and artificial fertilizers are not used. Larger areas may require designation if the natural land drainage situation requires it.

9.23 Increased surface water run-off due to removal of vegetation, improved drainage under greens, irrigation etc. could affect the hydrology and as well as causing localised erosion could lead to flooding problems downstream. (This depends on the location of the golf course in the catchment e.g. headwaters or in flood-plain downstream). New landscaping can affect the catchment boundaries which may also increase run-off etc.

Where the flood-plain is affected, flood compensation measures such as providing compensatory excavations adjacent to the filled area to maintain the *status quo* should be incorporated.

- 9.24 Loss of flood-plain storage and flood flow routes due to landscaping etc. can cause upstream and downstream flooding and the use of balancing ponds is recommended to delay surface water discharge.
- 9.25 The culverting of minor ditches and streams can have a number of implications, including the loss of the pool-riffle sequence and natural river bed which is likely to increase the speed of water flow and may cause erosion downstream. Marginal and aquatic vegetation will be lost and the diversity of species of fish and other wildlife reduced through loss of vegetation and natural habitats. The loss of aquatic vegetation can also result in a deterioration of water quality. Culverts can give maintenance problems and give rise to a blockage in the flow of water and can be a potential danger to young children. Upstream and downstream flooding can occur.
- The amenity value of streams and their contribution to the local landscape is such that generally every effort needs to be made to incorporate them into the design of the course for their landscape as well as ecological value and thereby avoiding the creation of the above problems.
- 9.26 Construction causes temporary problems such as siltation, local ponding and flooding. Dewatering may have pollution control implications, which must be discussed with the NRA before works commence.
- 9.27 Water features such as on-stream lakes lead to widening and excavation of the river bed which can have adverse consequences such as habitat destruction, the deterioration of water quality during construction, due to suspended solids, or after the works due to siltations, algal blooms, low oxygen levels and the possible loss of plants. It is therefore recommended that all water features created on the course should be unconnected to the main river flow i.e. "off line".
- 9.28 No structures should be installed within the river in that if they are, the free movement of fish is likely to be obstructed. Siltation is also likely to occur upstream of the structure and erosion downstream.

The design of golf courses needs to have special regard to the protection of rivers, river banks and floodplains and to the source of water for irrigation. Prior to the submission of a planning application, consultation needs to take place with the NRA.

9.29 The use of fertilisers especially nitrates on land likely to drain to watercourses can lead to eutrophication problems i.e. algal blooms. Similarly the use of various pesticides in such areas or the adding of blue colour dyes to lakes can have water quality implications. Whilst Planning has no control over such matters the use of fertilisers and pesticides in watercourses or on land likely to drain to those watercourses is to be strongly discouraged. Discussions between golf course developer and the NRA are recommended to safeguard and/or enhance the natural ecology and water quality on any wet areas within or adjacent to golf courses.

9.30 Archaeological Interests

9.31 Golf courses present two particular problems with regard to assessing their potential threat to archaeological sites. Firstly, they require large areas of land which increases the likelihood that archaeological and historic landscape features will be affected. Secondly, as the actual degree of ground disturbance is not normally specified over the whole site, it is difficult to assess the exact effect courses will have on archaeological sites and deposits. However, as there is flexibility in the layout of a course, consultations with the County Archaeologist including notification details of the proposed extent of ground disturbance should be made as early as possible to avoid or minimise disturbance to known archaeological features.

9.32 The large scale of many schemes also means it is likely that hitherto unknown archaeological sites will be disturbed. In the past, fieldwork done prior to the redevelopment of large areas of historic landscape has shown that in addition to the known sites recorded on the Sites and Monuments Record, fieldwalking and field surveys produce approximately one new site every $\frac{1}{4}$ mile. This possibility should be considered and it may be appropriate for the developer to set aside a contingency sum to provide for the investigation of new sites. An archaeological field evaluation, involving fieldwalking and/or trial excavation, may be requested where it is suspected that important archaeological remains are present, prior to a planning decision being made.

9.33 There needs to be a presumption in favour of the preservation of archaeological sites. Where appropriate, golf course applications should include an archaeological impact statement demonstrating how archaeological sites will be protected and enhanced, and that provision will be made for archaeological investigation and recording. Where preservation *in situ* is not possible, the funding of such work needs to be met by the developer.

9.34 Refer also to Para 6.35 in respect of PPG16 "Archaeology and Planning".

9.35 PPG7 "The Countryside and the Rural Economy" also includes the following reference to archaeology:

"The countryside is also rich in the remains of human activity over thousands of years. Some archaeological remains or sites of national importance are designated by the Secretary of State as scheduled monuments under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979. Any works which might damage them require the prior consent of the Secretary of State. The desirability of preserving an ancient monument and its setting is a material consideration, whether or not that monument is scheduled".

9.40 Golf and Access to the Countryside

9.41 Rights of Way & "Ways Through Essex"

Essex has a fine heritage of public footpaths, bridleways and green lanes. The network is not uniform and, in some parts of the county, it makes a dense web of paths. Many of these survive from landscape texture long gone in field amalgamations and changes of crop. What had been headland paths may now be in fields of cereal where they mark lost hedgerows. Former diagonal paths made over meadows are now more often under oilseed. When the finger posts are missing, the presence of some little used paths may remain unnoticed and the elaborate, legal network on the maps may not be apparent on the ground.

Many forms of development have reduced the rights of way lattice but, with only some exceptions, most development has been by growth of towns and villages into their surroundings. The suburbs have pushed out over the paths and bridleways, sometimes absorbing them as town paths leading outward to connect with the countryside at the edge of the built up area.

In response to increasing public demand, and with support from the Countryside Commission, the County Council has established a "Ways Through Essex" project which aims at improving access to the countryside by, amongst other things, the creation of new footpaths and bridleways. The creation of links between existing routes is seen as being an important objective for the improvement of circular routes and important linear walks.

The development of any new golf course is a potential ally to the "Ways Through Essex" team's campaign to add new rights of way to the Essex network. Any new course, even if it does not affect an existing way, may present an opportunity for making new connections. In the last three years, the team has shown mineral working operators and road builders how small changes in proposed development can create significant benefits for access to the countryside.

Landscape alterations to suit changed farming practices have not in general been advanced as reasons in themselves for diversion of public rights of way. There have been some changes to the network but, in general, farming has co-existed with countryside access. It should be possible for golf to do the same.

9.42 Need for new attitudes

Golf in this country has had the unfortunate image of being an elitist if not introspective sport. Many golfers are prepared to travel considerable distances to pursue their sport but with a minimal relationship with the adjacent local community or the non-playing public at large. Fortunately that image is gradually changing primarily due to the greater public accessibility provided by daily fee paying ("pay and play") courses which are attracting all sectors of the community including the countless newcomers to the sport.

It is, however, not only the enhanced access to golf which is important for the future development of the sport but physical access to golf courses which are developing as an ever-increasing land use in the countryside. This means a change to the customary semi-automatic reaction of the potential golf course developer to seek the diversion of all footpaths crossing the proposed course.

An area of Essex countryside as large as a golf course is quite commonly dissected by public rights of way, even while intensively used for food production. Even if not dormant, the significance of such public access rights may not be immediately clear to golf course developers, some of whom may share the erroneous belief that planning permission extinguishes them. The existence of public rights of way needs to be taken into account by developers, as failure to do so can lead to a refusal of planning permission. As stated in Para 2.14 of P.P.G.7:

"When deciding planning applications, authorities should take account of the effect of the proposed development on public rights of way. Footpaths and bridleways increase opportunities to enjoy the countryside".

Even if permission is granted, applications for orders to alter paths to enable the development to be carried out may still be frustrated by objections by the public leading to non-confirmation of diversion orders thereby preventing the development proceeding in its original form.

Although golf courses require a large area of land, their careful design should allow many rights of way to remain where they are and diversions should be made sparingly.

There has traditionally been an uneasy relationship between the Golfer and the Walker both of whom often regard the activity of the other as a prime detractor from his own enjoyment of his recreation. This distinction between "them" and "us" is emphasised by the contrasting specialist clothing worn by both groups.



The countryside, and indeed any golf course, is large enough to accommodate both and changes of attitude are long overdue with mutual respect of the activities of both. Neither Golfer nor Walker need exclusive rights on land traversed by rights of way, in fact one could say that both groups' primary enjoyment is gained from a walk in the countryside, the one lumbered with his bag of clubs, the other with his back-pack.

*
* "Golf is a good walk spoiled". Mark Twain *
*

Rather than seeking to divert footpaths the golf course designer needs to consider the means whereby they can be retained and to consider the potential for creating new footpaths or bridleways especially where they can create a link to existing rights of way and thereby further the possible achievement of circular routes. There have been successful negotiations with several golf course developers such as that at Bulphan, where the diversion of a footpath also provided a bridleway in the corridor where a vital connection in the strategic riding network of South Essex is being pursued.

9.43 Family Golf Centres

Hopefully the golf course developer/operator can accede to the above advice and accept the walker as a fellow participant in the open space and fresh air of the golf course in the countryside. The further development of this attitude could be for the design of the course to accept within it other elements of both accessibility and recreation. Redundant farm buildings and yards could be converted to stables, and nature trails, picnic areas, public parking and toilet areas, refreshments facilities, field study centres, etc. could also be provided in a properly integrated golfing scheme. The financial return would be higher and indeed, the inclusion of such elements could be persuasive to the local planning authority's consideration of a planning application.

If golf is to attract the general public, there is a need to cater for the non-playing members of the family, or those who only wish to use the driving range, pitch and putt or par-3 courses or just have a drink. People are likely to enjoy increasing leisure time in the future and will turn primarily to the countryside to meet this need. To create family golfing centres with ancillary recreational facilities may be one way of meeting this need in the future and would certainly follow Government's advice in aiding agricultural diversification.

One such proposal is The Village Club at Willingale at which existing farm buildings are being converted and extended to form a clubhouse, the facilities of which will include a creche/playroom for young children. As well as a Par 72 "Village Course", a practice ground and a 9 hole "Foundation Course" for beginners are proposed. Designated nature trails are planned throughout the entire area to broaden the club's appeal.



9.44 Diversion of Rights of Way

In some instances the design of a course and the safeguarding of all existing rights of way may be incompatible or appear to be so to the designer. Early discussions with the Ramblers Association, The British Horse Society, Essex Bridleways Association, the local Parish Council and the "Ways through Essex" team are strongly recommended. In some cases a diversion will be considered necessary and application will need to be made to the local planning authority. Generally Councils will not favour proposals which mean diverting:

- (a) direct routes especially where in regular use;
- (b) interesting routes which take in features of visual interest whether natural or man-made;
- (c) ancient or historic routes whose existence have spanned the ages.

9.45 Safety Considerations

Safety to walkers from guided or sometimes misguided missiles is a matter of obvious concern and the layout of the course must respect this aspect.

Having said that the Ramblers Association themselves are unclear as to whether it is better for footpaths to cross a fairway "thus getting the danger over and done with quickly, or to route them parallel with the fairway, thus somewhat reducing the angle or likelihood of impact, but prolonging the apprehension." It is sometimes the fear more than the effect that causes the concern. Although probabilities of collision might be small, trepidation may be large in the minds of both players and passers-by.

Generally speaking, a footpath within a course will have implications for landtake and the following factors need to be taken into account in the interests of the safety of persons and animals having a right of way across a golf course:-

- (a) Where possible the layout should avoid fairways crossing rights of way.
- (b) Where possible greens should be positioned away from public rights of way although tees can be sited up to 10m from a right of way providing the fairway runs at an angle away from the right of way.
- (c) Depending on the size and configuration of its layout, where the crossing of a public way by a fairway is unavoidable:
 - (i) the fairway should be designed such that the "landing area" lies well short of the right of way;
 - (ii) the right of way needs to be physically identified on both sides of the fairway by coloured marker posts in a position to be visible from the approach tee if possible.

- (d) In any other identified risk area to walkers or riders the use of dense shrub and tree planting needs to be considered.
- (e) Information as to the location of all rights of way needs to be displayed in the clubhouse and where crossing, or in the vicinity of, fairways, should be indicated at the tee and on score cards.
- (f) All golfers need to be aware of their responsibilities of not endangering any person using a right of way. Refer Para 11.22 for general safety considerations in relation to the design of the course.

It is essential that, in his planning application, the potential golf course developer demonstrates, by layout and landscaping, the manner in which he will protect any rights of way which cross the proposed course. **The safety of users of those rights of way must be fully demonstrated.** Subject to the observations made in this chapter, the diversion of rights of way will only be accepted where unavoidable or where significant benefits can be demonstrated. Prior discussions with the Ramblers Association and other interest groups are recommended.

Existing footpaths and bridleways shall be safeguarded unless acceptable diversions are agreed, and the provision of extensions to and links between existing footpath and bridleway networks is to be encouraged.

9.46 The Law and Rights of Way

Land proposed or in use as a golf course may be crossed by three types of right of way i.e. footpaths, bridleways (which may be used by people on foot, horseback or bicycle) or byways, often under-used roads which may also be used by vehicles.

Public rights of way are recorded on the definitive map which can be inspected at County Hall, Chelmsford and on request at those offices of District Councils which keep the extracts for the Districts and at the place where the Parish Clerk keeps the Parish copy.

Unless the width of a right of way is recorded there is no hard and fast rule for the width of footpaths and bridleways but there should at least be room for two walkers (or horses) to pass each other.

Byways or bridleways may be hedged lanes. Generally all of the ground between the hedges constitutes the highway not simply the strip used and it is an offence to interfere with any of it.

For new or diverted footpaths the County Council generally requires 1.25m for a footpath or 2m where contained between physical boundaries. A width of 3m is generally required for new or diverted bridleways or 4m where so contained.

A right of way merely gives the public the right to pass along a way across the land on a fixed route, however, the members and visitors to a golf club and maintenance staff may carry on activities on or across that right of way and play across it providing it is not obstructed or put into an unacceptable condition.

Obstructions and intimidation are covered in law. The latter is a criminal offence, as it is also an offence to display a false or misleading notice likely to deter the use of a public path. Although it is doubtful whether it is a criminal offence to hit a ball across a public way nevertheless to do so might make the golfer or the club liable in damages for any injury caused.

In the case of *Castle v St Augustine's Links* 1922 where slicing the ball had often happened, the club were held liable to pay damages to a passing motorist hit by a ball but "occasionally hitting a cricket ball across a highway may be a minor inconvenience to users". (*Stone v Bolton* 1949). Even where the club may be able to show that it had itself taken all reasonable precautions, the golfer himself must be sure that he had also done so.

The potential danger to a walker can be minimised in the design of the course as referred to above. However, use of a path or loitering on it expressly for the purpose of preventing or hindering the authorised use of the land amounts to trespass and the golf club could take legal action against anyone deliberately seeking to disrupt play.

The law therefore pursues a general common sense approach much as is advocated throughout this chapter. Golfers and walkers can co-exist with mutual respect of each other's rights, and by considerate design, possible problems can be avoided.

9.50 The Protection of High Quality Agricultural Land

- 9.51 The Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (MAFF) policy with regard to golf courses is very much influenced by the ALURE package of proposals put forward by the Government early in 1986. The Department of Environment Circular 16/87 formalised this philosophy in terms of planning guidance and introduced the concept of "reversible" development. Where it remains feasible to return land to agricultural use at some future date, development proposals need not be rejected on agricultural grounds. PPG7 confirms that "the best and most versatile agricultural land", (classed as Grades 1, 2 or 3a in the MAFF Agricultural Land Classification system), is a national resource for the future and considerable weight should be given to protecting it from development. Once agricultural land is developed for golf courses its subsequent return to best quality agricultural use is seldom practical. The views of MAFF need to be sought by planning authorities in respect of all applications which would involve the loss of 20 hectares or more of high quality agricultural land or in respect of a smaller area which is likely to lead to further losses which cumulatively would amount to 20 hectares or more.
- 9.52 Some golf course proposals include items of non-reversible development such as hotels, other recreation facilities and sometimes residential development. In the unlikely event that these "hard" developments amount to 20 hectares or more(!) of high quality agricultural land, the Ministry may object to the whole proposal. In addition, MAFF are concerned that where substantial earth movement is proposed, for instance in the case of a "Championship" standard course, where significant earth contouring and the creation of large water features are proposed, the land could never be returned to its original grade. It is likely that MAFF will oppose such applications where they are being put forward on high quality land on the grounds that they are not reversible.
- 9.53 PPG7 makes it clear that when a subsequent planning application is submitted for "hard" development on former agricultural land of Grades 1,2 and 3a quality, which has previously been developed for a golf course then MAFF would wish to be consulted by the Planning Authority.

9.54 As PPG7 states:

"The increasing efficiency of agricultural producers and changes in agricultural policy mean that retaining as much land as possible in agricultural use no longer has the same priority. The priority now is to promote diversification of the rural economy... In considering planning applications, authorities should take account of the quality of any agricultural land that would be lost through development proposals. Land of moderate or poor quality (grades 3b, 4 and 5) is the least significant in terms of the national agricultural interest. In making the assessment recommended ... (Refer Para 6.33) little weight need normally be given to the loss of such land, except in areas such as hills and uplands where particular agricultural practices themselves contribute to the quality of the environment, or to the rural economy in some special way."

9.55 The ALURE package encouraged farmers to develop alternative sources of income by diversifying away from agriculture. Where such enterprises take substantial areas of land out of farming it also helps the Government's and European Community's policy of reducing surplus food production.

9.56 In summary, given the provisos mentioned above, if there is sufficient demand and other planning considerations are favourable, MAFF would generally see golf courses as an acceptable form of land use at the present time in Essex.

9.57 Given the eroding visual impact of land "set-aside" from active agricultural production, for the most part development of farmland for golf purposes must be seen as a significant benefit in the maintenance of the Essex landscape. Hopefully "set-aside" is a transient agro-economic situation which will be replaced by alternative methods of more effectively relating food production to consumer needs in Europe in the not too far distant future.

9.58 **There shall be a presumption in favour of the development of golf courses in areas of derelict or despoiled land and in areas where intensive farming practices have damaged the landscape through the removal of trees and hedgerows, providing the design of the golf course would result in a material improvement in the appearance of the landscape and where this does not adversely affect the established ecological value of such land.**

9.60 Safeguarding of Mineral Deposits

9.61 Essex has extensive mineral resources which are of national economic importance, and are essential to the continuing community needs of the county and the region. Minerals dug in Essex supply the building and civil engineering industries with their raw materials and, therefore, the whole process of development and change governed by Structure and Local Plans has consequences for mineral working.

9.62 Chalk is quarried in the north west of the county for agricultural purposes.

Clay quarried in South Essex is used primarily by the cement industry with slurry being piped under the Thames to cement producing installations in Kent.

The small-scale brick and tile making industry in Essex obtains its supplies of mineral from the south east and north east of the county and supplies of material for existing operations are secured for the reasonable future. However, the brickearth soils in the south east comprise the highest quality of agricultural land found anywhere and loss of this scarce and irreplaceable resource for making bricks must be avoided. At present the industry successfully seeks to restore land to its original quality.

9.63 Despite the present slump in the housing industry, the demands of an increasing population with aspirations for higher living standards over the last thirty years have resulted in vastly increased building activity. This has required raw materials of which the largest in quantity is natural aggregate. In the South East of England, the principal locally available aggregate is sand and gravel. Minerals can only be worked where they occur and, whilst areas of the South East of England contain deposits of sand and gravel, their workability is affected by many factors, such as thickness of the deposit, its quality and the depth of overburden. Essex has for some years had the highest total production of sand and gravel of any county in the country.

9.64 The Essex Structure Plan First Alteration states:-

POLICY NR20

"WHEREVER POSSIBLE, POTENTIALLY WORKABLE MINERAL DEPOSITS WILL BE SAFEGUARDED FROM SURFACE DEVELOPMENT THAT WOULD STERILISE THE MINERALS OR PREJUDICE THEIR WORKING. IF, IN THE OPINION OF THE COUNCIL, SURFACE DEVELOPMENT SHOULD BE PERMITTED, CONSIDERATION WILL BE GIVEN TO THE PRIOR EXTRACTION OF THE MINERALS TO THE EXTENT THAT SUCH EXTRACTION WOULD NOT BE LIKELY TO RENDER THE SITE UNSUITABLE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT PROPOSED."

9.65 The Minerals Subject Plan identifies preferred sites for the working of sand and gravel which provide the resources for the establishment of a landbank of permitted reserves, which must be sufficient for at least 10 years' working.

The development of golfing facilities will not be allowed on land included as "Preferred Sites" identified for mineral extraction in the Mineral Subject Plan nor in respect of approved but unworked sites which contribute to the landbank of approved reserves.

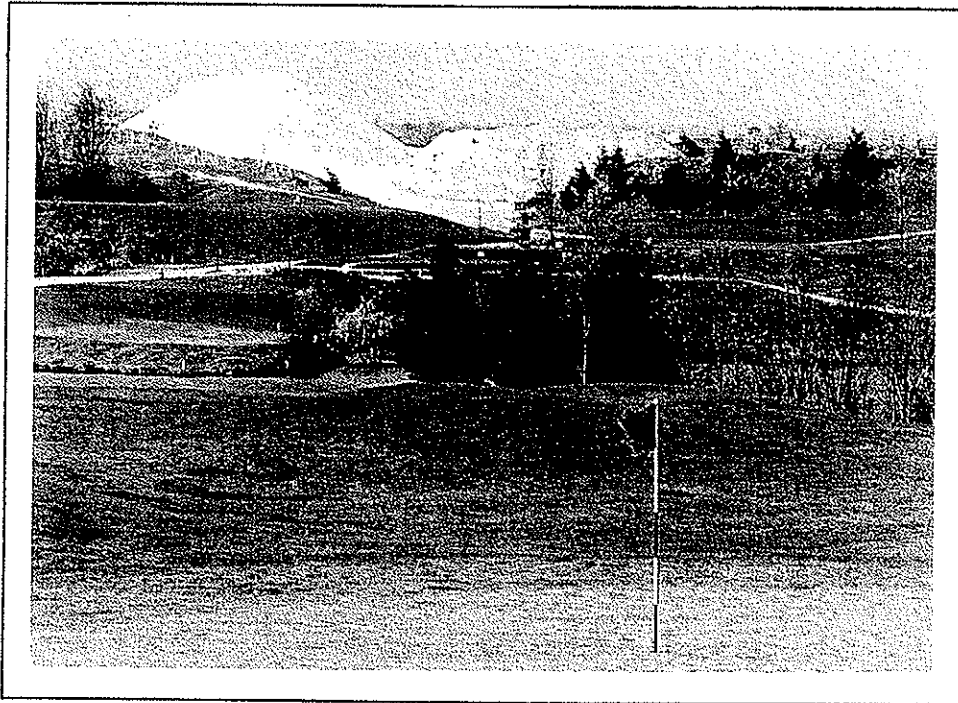


Fig (xix) Channels Golf Club, Chelmsford on Former Mineral and Landfill Site, complete with ubiquitous conifers.

9.66 In cases where the development of a golf course is opposed on the grounds of Policy NR20, as it would effectively sterilize a valuable mineral deposit, consideration needs to be given to the prior extraction of the

mineral to the extent that such extraction would not be likely to render the site unsuitable for the development proposed. The prior extraction of those deposits can be turned to the developers' benefit by "pump-priming" the project through the receipts of the sale of the mineral. It is essential that specialist advice is obtained prior to sand and gravel being extracted to ensure the adequate drainage of the land is achievable subsequently.

9.67 In the development of a golf course it is therefore necessary to ensure that the extraction of deposits of sand and gravel, clay, chalk or brickearth is not prejudiced. Unlike built development the change in the use of land to golf course will not prevent the long term extraction of mineral resources in physical terms subject to no permanent change being permitted to the land form nor substantial development taking place on it.

9.68 In areas of known mineral deposits where there is no objection on the grounds of sterilization, golf courses may be allowed providing:

- no built development of clubhouses, equipment, stores etc. is proposed;
- no earthworks in the form of remoulding of the landscape nor planting is proposed which would disturb or sterilize the deposit;
- no major water features are created.

9.69 In an area of suspected mineral deposits as indicated by the various mineral assessment reports and geological survey maps covering the County (as listed below), or in a "Mineral Consultation Area", borehole data will be required by the Planning Authority to ensure that viably workable deposits are not prejudiced by any major earthworks or construction of clubhouse or other built development. The primary sources of geological survey information for Essex are as follows:

- * British Geological Survey of Great Britain 1:50,000 series maps and accompanying reports.
- * British Geological Survey's Regional Study of sand and gravel resources in Essex and South Suffolk with maps of 1:100,000 scale.
- * The Institute of Geological Science's Mineral Assessment Reports and 1:25,000 maps.
- * The 1843 Ordnance Survey's Geological Survey maps of England and Wales at a scale of 1" to 1 mile.

9.70 Effect on Water Supply

9.71 The abstraction of water from inland waters or underground strata is controlled by a system of licences issued under the provisions of the Water Resources Act 1991 by the National Rivers Authority (NRA). The licensing system has been in operation since the 1960's and the NRA has been responsible for it since 1989. The NRA may refuse to grant a licence if the abstraction would cause derogation to existing users, or environmental damage, or if the required quantity is considered inappropriate for the use to which the water is to be put. Each application for a licence must be considered on its merits on a "first come, first served" basis whether application is sought from farmer or golf club operator.

9.72 In terms of water consumption an 18 hole golf course, irrigated by an automatic sprinkler system to greens and tees, and perhaps approaches, may consume up to 68,000-77,000 litres (15,000-17,000 galls.) per cycle. Throughout an average British summer, some 60 continuous days' irrigation may be considered likely. This would use a total of 5 million litres (over 1 million galls.) of water. Quite clearly, drought conditions over recent years have meant much higher consumption.

If a fairway irrigation system is included then water consumption over say 25 hectares rather than 2.5-3.5 hectares for green, tees and approaches is massively increased with up to 1 million litres (220,000 galls.) of water being used per day/night irrigation cycle. An 18 hole course could use up to an astounding 60 million litres (13.2 million gallons) of water in 60 days.

9.73 The need to secure an adequate source of water of acceptable quality and quantity is of critical importance to any club and water abstraction is the obvious first choice with adequate pumping and storage on site. Existing ditches and ponds may suffice as the source, but more often new lakes, which may form an integral part of the golf course design, act as reservoirs. In such cases, the drawing down of water during summer months for irrigation must not create unsightly mud holes if infill volumes are insufficient. Even where a club has its own irrigation lake, licences for abstraction for spray irrigation needs to be obtained from the NRA. Preference is given to winter abstraction with summer storage, and all year round licensing is less commonly granted.

9.74 Irrigation needs to be part of an overall water management policy for the whole of a water course, the valley that contains it and the ground water regime beneath it. This is the NRA's responsibility and individual golfing developments should agree with the Authority that a proposed irrigation scheme fits in with their policy for a particular watercourse. The golf course owner can then call in a well-drilling contractor, but not before extensive surveys are undertaken by consultant experts in hydrogeology to determine the potential for obtaining water and how it would affect other abstractors.

(Courtesy of Texas Water Commission.)

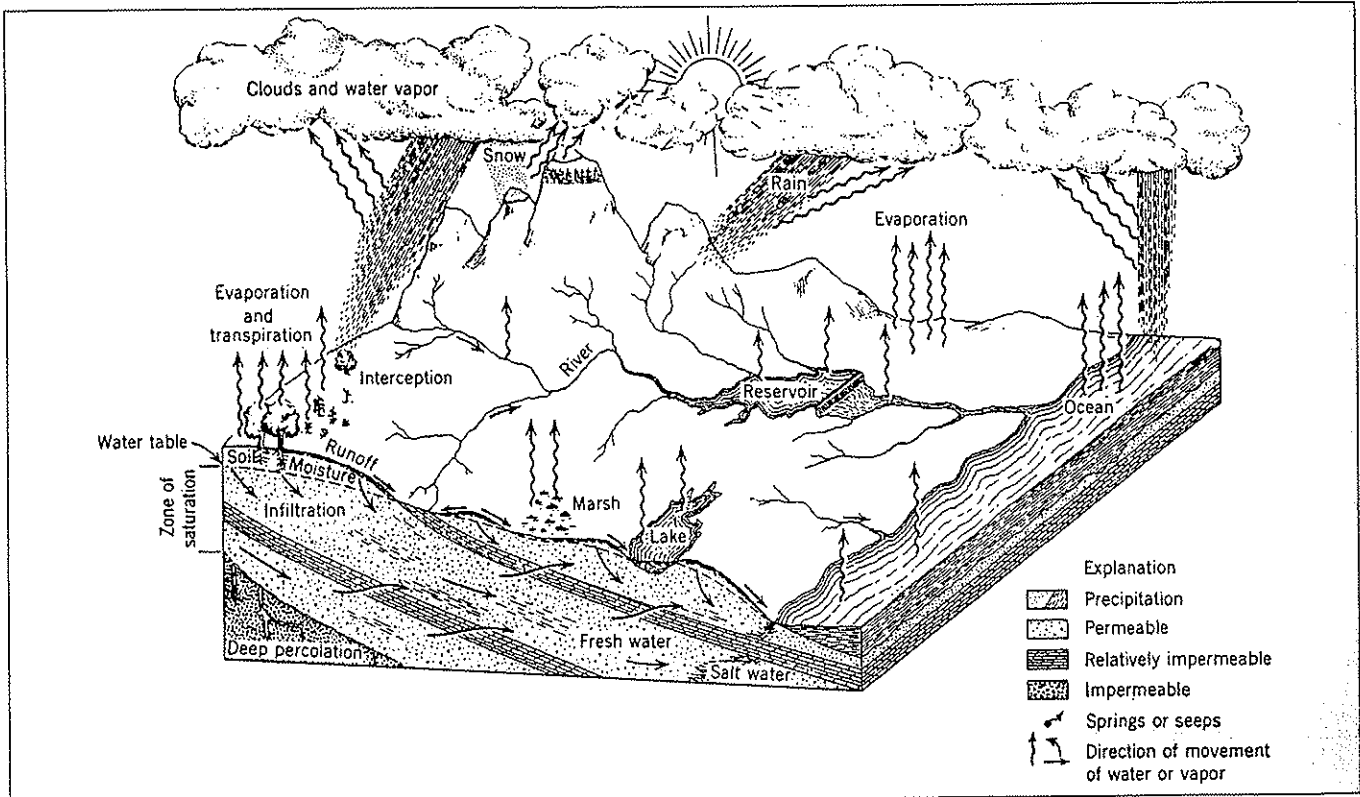


Fig. (xx) The Hydrological Cycle

9.75 Once in place, a well and its pumping gear can be totally inconspicuous, apart from some form of manhole chamber and cover to give access for maintenance. Whether the water source is from a well or lake, the water provided will enhance the appearance of the course, extend the period over which it can be played at its best and attract a membership that would make the investment in a properly designed irrigation scheme well worthwhile.

9.76 The provision of "off course" reservoirs is important in such cases. These need to be adequately landscaped and blended into their surroundings. Whatever type of abstraction is considered, whether it be from a borehole or from existing or new water courses, care must be taken to safeguard both site and neighbouring aquifers, and sourcing arrangements. There is no doubt that, as water becomes a more scarce and more valued commodity, attention needs to be drawn to other sources of irrigation water. The use of tertiary treated effluent should be an important consideration in the years to come as is the prospect of water being collected by buried membranes beneath greens and tees and recycled.

9.77 When commenting on planning applications for golf courses, the NRA will always ask that the applicant be informed of the requirements under water resources legislation and in cases where raw water could be scarce this will always be raised as an issue. The NRA does not, however, have the power to restrict the use of mains water for this, or any other purpose, since this is the responsibility of the private water companies.

9.78 In times of drought, when the domestic consumer's use of water in the garden is prohibited by the imposition of a hosepipe ban by the water company concerned, this does not affect golf clubs as they are commercial undertakings. When denied an abstraction licence, the golf club operator can simply turn on the mains tap and use purified drinking water for irrigation, (providing he can afford the considerable expense this will incur,) if he is to maintain his desired standard of irrigation. One cubic metre of water (1,000 litres/220 galls) currently costs 69p., therefore depending on the extent of its irrigation system an 18 hole golf club could expect to pay anywhere from £3,500 to water greens and tees to £41,400 if approaches are also to be watered during a 60 day drought period.

9.79 As golfers increasingly expect higher standards, so the demand for water will go up and mains water can be a club's only alternative to a lack of natural water sources. Golf clubs are entitled, within the law, to use tap water at the very time water companies are extolling the general public to minimise their use of what in the eastern region is becoming a scarce resource. The Working Party were astounded at this situation and felt strongly that the time was ripe for a review of the law concerning the commercial use of mains water if Government are not to be obliged to impose a Drought Order in the region. The Institute of Hydrology and the



Fig (xxi) A golf course can use up to a million litres a day



Fig (xxii) The golfer's expectation of green courses

British Geological Survey state that the drought in the English Lowlands is "without modern parallel" with the past 2 years (March 1990 to March 1992) showing the lowest rainfall in England and Wales since records began in 1767.

Possibly from the Golf Industry's point of view a change of attitude is needed by clubs and players alike. For too long the golfer has had an expectation of green grass and requires this to be maintained throughout long hot summers although resigned to his own domestic lawn turning brown. Brown grass is not dead - merely dormant and can still be played on.

Refer also to Section 11.15 "Water Supplies".

* * * * *
* The uglier a man's legs are *
* the better he plays golf. *
* It's almost a law. *
* * * * *
* H.G. Wells, *Bealby*, 1915 *
* * * * *

9.80 Traffic Generation

- 9.81 Studies carried out by Essex Council Council reveal that a typical private 18 hole golf course generates an average of 300 vehicles per day. This figure roughly equates to the traffic generated by forty houses, although unlike residential development, a golf course generates a steady flow throughout the day, rather than traffic peaks.
- 9.82 Although the County Surveyor considers that most major Essex roads have the physical capacity to accommodate this additional traffic, where golf courses are proposed in rural locations removed from urban centres, vehicles may well be routed along narrow "protected" lanes and other unsuitable country roads. Such traffic could also pass through small villages detracting from their character and causing a loss of amenity to local residents which could warrant a reason for refusal of planning permission on amenity grounds whether or not the Highway Authority oppose the proposal on road safety grounds.
- 9.83 The type and standard of a golf course will also affect traffic levels, e.g. higher standard courses which involve large built development including hotels, sports complex etc., will generate additional traffic. Public courses, being more used than private ones, naturally tend to generate more traffic.
- 9.84 Although Golf Championships will only occur once or twice a year, they will attract large numbers of spectators, for example Championships at Wentworth generate approximately 10,000 traffic movements a day. In Essex this is the sort of level to be expected if major tournaments are held at Hatfield Park or Quietwaters. Prior to the granting of permission for such a scale of proposal, a Section 106 Agreement is necessary to ensure appropriate traffic management schemes are agreed in advance with the Highway Authority and the Police and that the cost of such measures is met by the golf club in question.

9.85 Depending on the location of the course and its type in relation to the strategic road network, the Highway Authority may require a Traffic Impact Statement to assess the acceptability of the proposal. Most consultants have the "TRICS" database and it would be appropriate to refer to this in any statement, following consultation with the Highway Authority.

9.86 Because of the shorter length of game a 9 hole course is likely to generate more traffic than an 18 hole course. Nine hole Municipal courses and "pay and play" courses are probably the highest traffic generators of any "regular" golfing facility.

9.87 Golf courses, whether or not accompanied by leisure centres and other associated facilities, need to be located in such a position that convenient connection can be made to the main road network without the need for traffic to be routed along narrow country lanes and/or through villages.

9.88 Access to a golf club will not be permitted directly from a trunk road nor would it normally be permitted from a principal traffic route. Access should be taken from a side road having an acceptable junction with the main road and having adequate sight lines which meet the County Surveyor's current design criteria for road junctions. The access to the golf course from that adjacent road will also need to meet current highway standards regarding its design, visibility splays etc. Within the site, lengthy access roads to the car park should be avoided where possible.

Detailed design requirements can be obtained by discussion with the District Planning Officer in conjunction with the County Surveyor, prior to the submission of a formal planning application.

9.89 Traffic generation levels for golf driving ranges will clearly vary with the number of bays provided. Daily/hourly levels will again depend on the opening hours of the range and whether or not it is free-standing or provided as a component of other golf/recreational facilities. Hourly flows are likely to increase from low levels in the morning, to medium intensity in the afternoon, with peak use in the evenings. As a rule of thumb, a peak trip generation (combined in and out movements) of 3 vehicles per hour per bay may be assumed, down to 1.5 trips per hour per

bay at low levels of usage. Whilst these levels may well be acceptable on more heavily trafficked roads, as a proportion of overall flows, they will not necessarily be acceptable on quiet country lanes or where traffic is drawn substantially through villages/residential areas as per golf courses. (Refer Para 9.82 above.)

New golf courses should preferably be established in proximity to the major urban areas they are to serve. Subject to considerations of local landscape and amenity and the adequacy of the highway network, urban fringe locations are considered the most preferable.

Proposals for golf courses and driving ranges need to be located so that safe and convenient access can be made to the route hierarchy. Proposals which rely on access via long stretches of narrow lanes and pass through small settlements will not normally be acceptable.

Car parking for both golf courses and driving ranges need to be provided at a minimum level of 1 space for every 2 people to use the facility at any one time. In practice, this will need to make allowance for overlap between users, plus staff.

N.B. The County Surveyor has a limited amount of "TRICS" data on traffic surveys undertaken at a variety of golf courses and driving ranges. For further information contact The County Surveyor, County Hall, Chelmsford, Essex, CM1 1QH.

9.90 Scale of Built Development

Generally built development proposals comprise the essential elements of clubhouse and maintenance buildings but may also include proposals for shop and staff accommodation and may even suggest other forms of related or unrelated residential or holiday accommodation including hotels, major leisure and recreational developments. In rural locations built development needs to be restricted to that which is considered essential to serve the proposed golf course.

On any golf course within a rural location, built development must be restricted to those facilities essentially required to serve the club namely clubhouse, including changing rooms, office, bar, refreshment facilities and staff accommodation where considered essential and associated maintenance buildings.

The impact of such built development as is accepted can be minimised by careful siting.

Buildings and car parking need to be provided in areas well screened from the adjacent countryside by existing or proposed landscaping or earthforms.

9.91 Use of Existing Buildings

The site for a proposed golf course will often contain some existing buildings relating to its former agricultural use, such as a farmhouse, a country house or barns. The merits of retaining existing buildings for re-use, instead of providing accommodation in new buildings should always be examined. Where buildings have no intrinsic value and are inappropriate in the landscape, then their removal is clearly desirable. There will be a most strong presumption, however, in favour of the retention of any buildings included on the List of Buildings of Architectural or Historic Interest, or forming part of the setting of such a building, or because of their character contributes positively to the local environment. There are also likely to be many non-listed buildings of traditional Essex character which are also worthy of retention and re-use.

It is important to identify what appropriate use can be made of such buildings and how each can be adapted to the new use without adversely affecting its architectural integrity or setting. For example, a country house may well offer potential for adaption to a club house, whilst a barn could be used for storage of the groundsman's equipment.

The re-use and adaption of rural buildings is supported by the Secretary of State in PPG7. *"There are often opportunities for re-using or adapting existing rural buildings for new ... recreational uses. Such re-use or adaption can help to reduce demands for new building in the countryside.... There should generally be no reason for preventing the re-use or adaption of agricultural and other rural buildings for new uses, provided their form, bulk and general design are in keeping with their surroundings. Proposals for conversion of existing buildings may be more acceptable if they respect local building styles and materials."*

(Further advice is contained in Annex D of the PPG.)

The conversion of a country house to golf clubhouse is a popular course in that the building gives the club an air of "instant respectability",

steeped in tradition, however, whether listed or not the conversion of such buildings must be done with care and sensitivity.

A presumption will be given in favour of those applications which propose the conversion of existing suitable buildings for golf purposes and/or the removal of existing unsightly structures. Any new buildings must be well designed in themselves and constructed of appropriate vernacular materials.

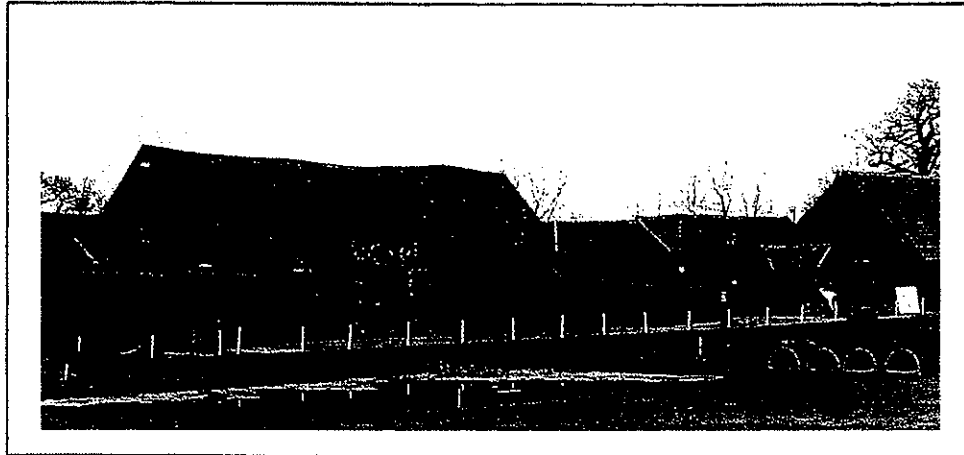


Fig (xxiii) Conversion of Existing Buildings, Stapleford Abbots Golf Club.

Proposals for an extension to a retained building will be considered on their merits. However, substantial extensions can devalue the architectural integrity of the existing buildings. Whilst good design and landscaping can militate against this problem, it is likely that large extensions to listed buildings will be refused. In such cases the provision of additional floorspace in a new building well related to the retained building may be a preferred option.

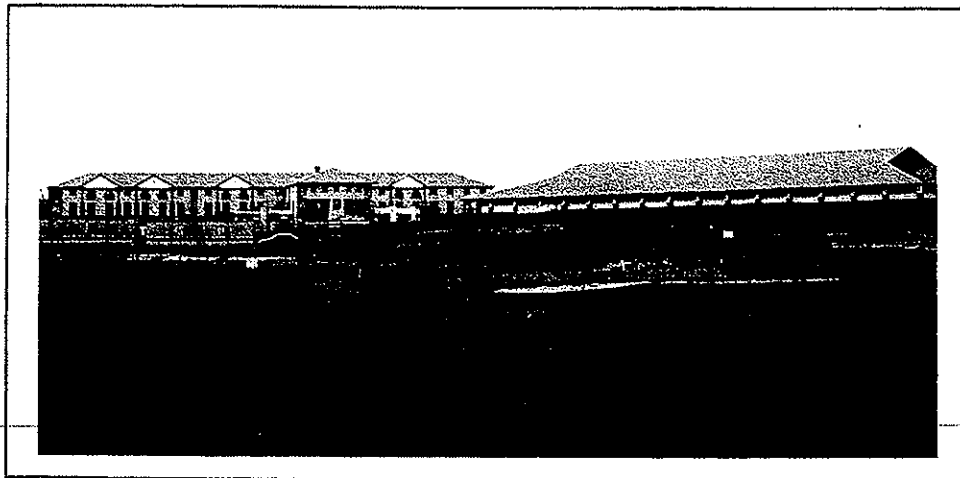


Fig (xxiv) Large Scale Hotel and Leisure Complex Quietwaters Golf Club.

Applications should be accompanied by drawings of a standard clearly showing how retained buildings are to be adapted including any changes in floorplan, elevational treatment and full details of any extension. The submitted plans should also include details of the related car parking, service areas, hard and soft landscaping so that the full impact of the proposed development on the retained building and its setting can be assessed by the planning authority.

9.92 The Clubhouse

The size of clubhouse needs to be kept to the minimum necessary to serve its function; for example a basic wooden pavilion would be adequate for an individual pitch and putt course. As the standard of courses increases so changing rooms, office, pro' shop, bar and refreshment facilities will need to be provided. For a "new-build" proposal a clubhouse within the range of 500m² to 800m² will generally be acceptable.

It is preferable if an existing building e.g. traditional barn, or other suitable redundant farm building, could be converted for this purpose, as referred to above. Subject to the local planning authority being satisfied as to the nature of the component uses of a former agricultural building, the size of such buildings may be larger than the range suggested for a new building.

The refreshment facilities within a clubhouse may be in the form of a modest sized restaurant for the use of club members and their guests. Proposals for the inclusion of public restaurants unrelated to the club are unlikely to receive planning permission.

If a new building is necessary it should be single or one-and-a-half storey, and built in a vernacular style with pitched roof and in indigenous materials. From an operational point of view, the clubhouse should ideally be located close to the 1st and 10th tees and 9th and 18th greens, the car park and, if possible, the course entrance and be carefully sited so as not to appear conspicuous in the landscape. Car parking for between 100 and 150 cars is required for 18 hole courses.

9.93 Professional Shop

A pro' shop is a generally acceptable element within the clubhouse. The size of the pro' shop should reflect the standard and size of the club. The shop should form part of the clubhouse complex and quite often can double as a reception and payment area for visitors especially at a smaller club. Pro' shops are not usually considered appropriate on pitch and putt courses.

9.94 Maintenance Buildings

There is a recognised need for undercover storage for machinery, which need not be located near the clubhouse complex. Preference will be given to the re-use of redundant farm buildings. Again it is essential that if new buildings are required they should be vernacular in design and materials. Generally a maintenance building will need to be in the order of 300m².

9.95 Staff Accommodation

Although many existing golf clubs incorporate accommodation for a Steward or Greenkeeper, Planning Authorities will need to be convinced that there is an essential need for such accommodation associated with any new development. Where new accommodation is permitted it should be small scale and preferably incorporated within the clubhouse complex. It will also be necessary for the Planning Authority to restrict the occupancy of any accommodation provided to persons in the employ of the club.

9.96 Hotels

The main justifications usually made for hotel development is that they are necessary to serve a "Championship" course and also that they are a financial necessity due to the high cost of laying out golf courses, the length of time for implementation and the relatively slow return on the investment. Such arguments should not be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. This aspect is examined in greater detail in Section 4.18 above.

There needs to be a strong presumption against large scale buildings in the countryside not essentially related to the use of the land for golf purposes e.g. hotels, conference centres, sports halls, large scale restaurants, health and beauty parlours, etc.

9.97 Sports & Leisure Development

A number of applications for golf courses have been accompanied by proposals for unrelated developments such as saunas, independent restaurants or banqueting suites, pool/snooker rooms, table tennis rooms, a choice of bars, shops, health and beauty salons, swimming pool, indoor bowls, indoor tennis courts, conference centres and sports centres. These are not essential to the operation of a golf course, are invariably contrary to policy and thus should not be permitted. Arguments of alleged necessity on grounds of viability should not sway Planning Authorities to accept what are primarily urban forms of recreational and leisure developments in the countryside.

9.98 Residential and Time-share Units

Several planning applications have included elements of residential development whether purely speculative, "gate houses" or "lodges", "executive housing" or "time-share" accommodation. Such proposals for private residential development or holiday accommodation in rural areas should be opposed on policy grounds despite claims that they are essential to ensure the economic viability of the project.

The ongoing pressures of development within Essex from the adjacent metropolitan area, adjoining counties and exacerbated by the county's enhanced communication network of M25, M11, A13, A12, A120 etc. fully justify increased vigilance in the resistance of non-essential housing development in the countryside.

9.99 Golf Villages

The concept of residential golf villages has its origins in the United States but many have also been developed in Spain and Portugal. The first such project in the U.K. was probably that proposed by D. Y. Davies Associates which formed a £75 million European Land scheme at Arcot on the edge of Cramlington, Northumberland. That project was based on 400 houses but also incorporated ten acres of office and commercial space.

Golf villages in Essex are rejected on the same grounds as hotels, residential and time-share units postulated as an essential supporting factor for golf courses. Although the training of newcomers to the sport is fully supported no justification is seen for free standing settlements within the Green Belt or rural areas contrary to the housing proposals of the Structure Plan and Local Plans.

Proposals for private residential development, golf villages, time-share units or other holiday accommodation in association with golf courses in the countryside must be firmly resisted on policy grounds.

Throughout Essex the only justification for a free standing settlement would be in reference to a major growth factor such as Government's requirement for housing to meet the developing needs of Stansted Airport.

If, however, a housing project was proposed on land allocated for such in a Local Plan and incorporated a golf course on suitable adjacent land then such a proposal would be more likely to be considered favourably by the local planning authority.

At North Weald Airfield in Epping Forest District, the Planning Brief for the airfield incorporates a suggested Sports Village on land adjacent to an existing housing area. Although that project was conceived as a means of promoting the training of athletes and gymnasts on adjacent land and within buildings on the airfield, the District Council would need to consider the relevance of that proposal to golf related residential development. The scale of any development on the airfield would, however, be considerably restricted by its Green Belt location.

10.00 Golf Driving Ranges

10.10 By their need for covered bays, floodlighting, high fencing and intensity of activities, golf driving ranges generally have a greater visual impact on their surroundings and have a far greater urban character than most other golfing facilities. Great care is therefore needed to assimilate the impact of their operations, be they in open countryside or within an urban area. Skilful location, siting and design of buildings are also required to minimise their impact on adjacent residential properties.

10.11 Planning for golf driving ranges is thus a microcosm of the essential balance to be struck between ensuring the provision of recreational facilities, and the protection and conservation of both rural and urban amenities.

10.12 A driving range can be freestanding, or form part of a wider "golf academy" facility, or be attached to a golf course. Where the range is freestanding, a pay desk and toilets will be required. It is also likely that refreshment facilities will be sought, and a pro' shop is not unusual. A maintenance/equipment store and adequate car parking will be needed. Ideally the range should face north to avoid driving into the sun.

10.13 The areas of greatest concern to the Planning Authority due to their urban impact are the covered driving bay, the high fencing and the floodlighting. The driving bay is almost invariably required, for simple safety reasons, if not for "all-weather" play. The design of these buildings varies greatly, as does their size. Although usually single storey in Britain, there are a few recently accepted multi-tier developments of the type usually associated with Japan. Twenty to twenty-four bays is the normal provision, but this may vary from 10 to 30. Bays will normally be 3m wide. Whilst there is a policy desire to see golf-related accommodation provided within existing, converted structures, the difficulties with driving ranges are obvious.

10.14 The traditional driving range might be expected to be fenced at its boundaries to a height of anything up to 8m. Even with integral hedging or tree planting, these will be most difficult to conceal. The possibility of doing without the fencing is worth considering although this may give rise to management problems. Examples of unfenced ranges

are not common, although arguably if a site is large enough, it should be possible. The need to ensure public safety will require a good safety margin. On a golf course, where there is a greater expectation of golf balls in the air, the need for fencing may be reduced.

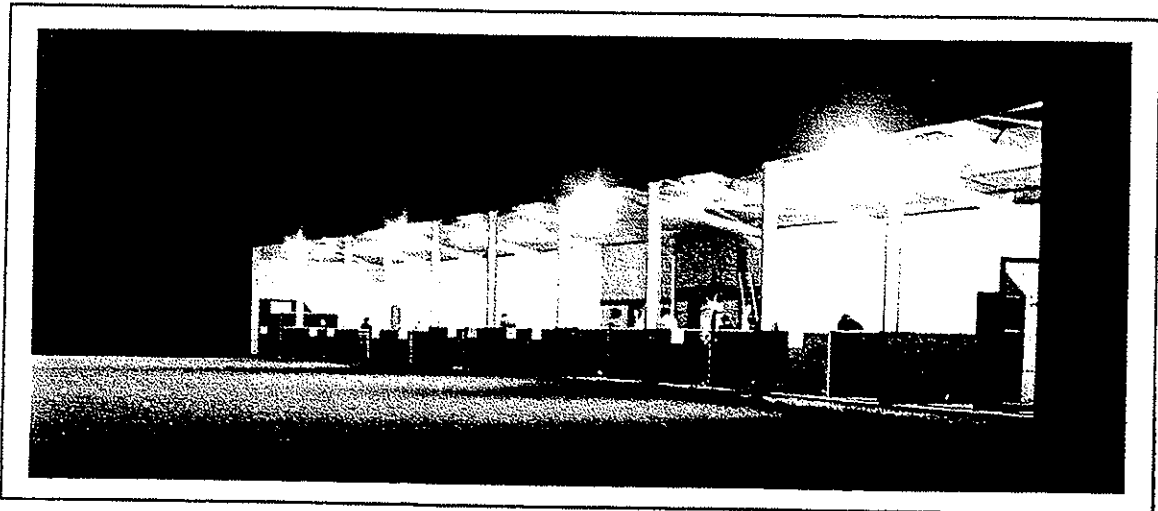
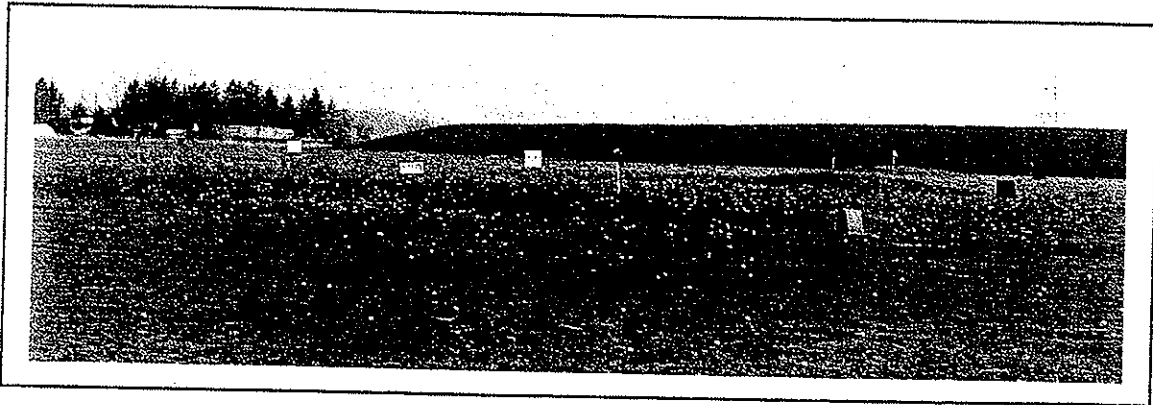
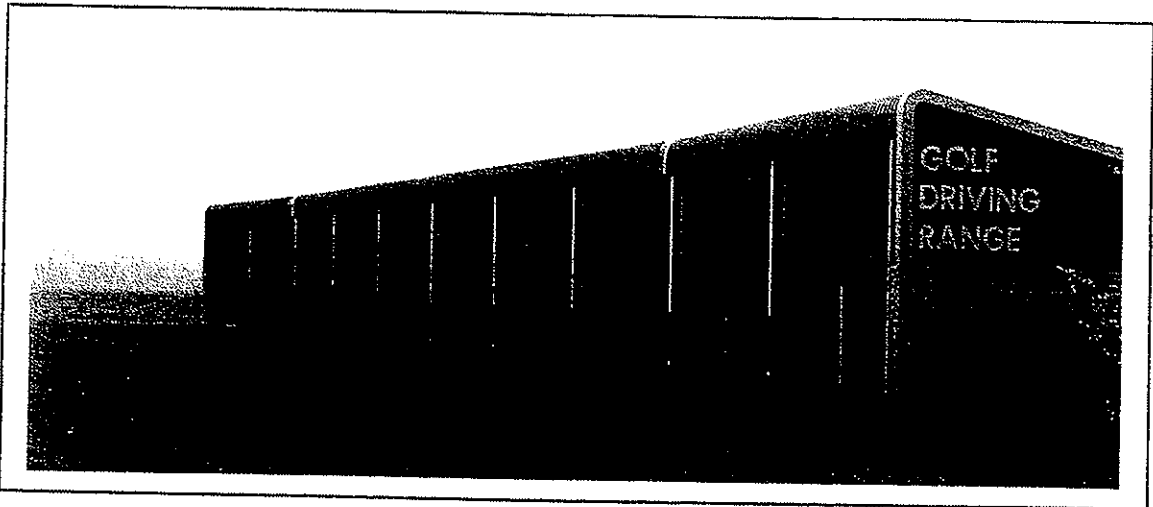


Fig (xxv) Golf driving range, Earls Colne Golf and Leisure Centre.

10.15 Of equal if not greater concern than the impact of fencing is the effect of lighting. Whilst it is clearly possible to develop an unlit range, this will, to an extent, negate the very flexibility the driving range offers as an evening/winter golfing facility. Even Inspectors on appeal have expressed scepticism that a proposal for an unlit range would remain that way - the viability case would inevitably arise later. (Refer Para 7.48).

- 10.16 When lighting a range it is a necessary for the player to be able to follow the full flight of the ball through the air and down the range and to discern its landing. To accomplish this, two styles of range lighting are used. Horizontal lighting mounted on the roof of the range bays and vertical, mast mounted, illumination. Both of these systems perform adequately for the player, are financially viable, but cause significant light contamination of the area discernable by the characteristic "aura" of light associated with floodlit sports facilities. The light from most driving ranges is visible for several miles around.
- 10.17 The intrusive lighting pollution in the countryside tends to favour sites closer to urban areas, or the metropolis, where there is an existing glow from street lighting, etc, although it is here that by definition there will be a greater likelihood of impact on residential areas. In turn this underlines the locational difficulties of golf driving ranges. Account should be taken of not just the local impact of lighting, but its impact from long-distance views.
- 10.18 A potentially attractive option, which could resolve the visual impact problem is that of the disused gravel or chalk pit. There was previously, just such a range near Saffron Walden. The supply of suitably sized and accessed pits is constrained but their after-use in this way is nevertheless worth considering.
- 10.19 As to lighting levels, the Chartered Institute of Building Services (CIBSE) Lighting Guide (LG4) recommends an illuminance minimum of 50 Lux per m^2 , measured vertically at ground for all distance markers.
- 10.20 Traditionally the most economical source of light is by use of high pressure sodium (50n/t) bulbs. These produce a warm golden/white light which has a sufficiently broad spectral distribution to render colours visible. The colour identification can be enhanced by the use of metal halide bulbs (HP1/T) whose cool white light renders colour well.
- 10.21 In order to achieve a 50 lux per m^2 at a distance of 250m by 150m it is recommended that a minimum of one 400w lamp per driving bay is used, producing an average of 170 lux m^2 measured vertically at 100m from the luminair.

- 10.22 The teaching range main floodlighting is unlikely to provide sufficient illumination of the tee areas. Open air tees may be adequately illuminated from additional low powered floodlights mounted on the main floodlighting columns and directed at these areas.
- 10.23 Golf teaching ranges with covered booths will require separate lighting within the booth, usually from fluorescent luminaires suitable for outdoor use.
- 10.24 Glare to the surrounding neighbourhood is probable and difficult to avoid when lighting up to a height of 25 metres to allow for the trajectory of a golf ball. There is no practical advantage to be gained from using high level downward lighting, but significant reduction in light contamination outside the site can be achieved by careful consideration and choice of equipment.
- 10.25 Golfers generally have a high expectation of illumination at driving ranges and the Working Party felt there would be benefit in a practical experiment in reducing lighting levels below the above recommended standards in any area where potential lighting pollution of town or country posed a serious problem. Concern was also expressed at the possible ecological consequences of high levels of illumination in the countryside which would have the effect of "hoovering" light-seeking insects from the surrounding area and presumably similarly attracting the birds that feed on those insects. Concern was also raised at the possible effect of night-time illumination on nocturnal birds and animals e.g. badgers, owls, and bats whose activities could be confused by the extended duration of "daylight". This aspect is one which might warrant studying by English Nature or the Essex Wildlife Trust.
- 10.26 The dazzling effect of unscreened low level lighting must also be considered where adjacent to any highway where directional illumination could be a serious hazard to road users. This thought is promulgated in the knowledge that golfers have been known to play in the dusk, dawn and indeed through the night, sometimes with the assistance of luminous golf balls. ~~The use of hoods and cut-off louvres around lights is worthy of consideration possibly in conjunction with high efficiency 400 watt high pressure sodium SON-XL lamps fitted to horizontally mounted "area flood" luminaries.~~

10.27 The brilliance of the lighting of driving ranges should be limited to the minimum functional level, unless the site is exceptionally well-screened. Sites need to be screened by existing topography or landscaping, or both. The greater concentration of activity, built form and development, when compared with a golf course, suggests particular care needs to be paid to the effects of general disturbance on surrounding residential areas.

10.28 Sites in open, relatively flat countryside are unlikely to be appropriate for golf driving ranges. Sites generally need to be concealed, so that the necessary buildings, nets and other development will not dominate. Planting and earthmoulding can alleviate impact, but will not be sufficient unless they are working in conjunction with a good initial degree of natural screening; indeed, in an open landscape they are quite likely to be unacceptable in their own right. Buildings should be built of natural, traditional materials.

10.29 All buildings, car parks and the range itself must be sited to minimize noise and disturbance to nearby residential areas. It would be unwise, generally, to seek to reduce potential impact by restricting evening usage, since this, commercially, is likely to be the most popular time and there would be the risk of the pressures referred to at Para 10.15 above arising.

10.30 The preferred location for driving ranges is seen as:

- a) Urban Fringe - subject to safeguarding of amenities of residential areas from possible adverse effects of noise, general disturbance, traffic generation, and to the careful control of the size and siting of buildings and fences, the degree and direction of lighting and highway safety.
- b) Rural areas - in conjunction with an existing golf club and preferably sited in proximity to the clubhouse, subject to the general safeguards listed in Chapter 8.
- c) Former mineral workings - Where the floor level of a former mineral working has not been restored to original ground levels such an area is likely to be particularly suitable for use as a driving range, subject to the general safeguards referred to above.

10.31 Golf driving ranges will generally not be accepted within the Coastal Protection Belt or Special Landscape Areas.

11.00 The Practical Issues

11.01 Introduction

- 11.02 Although the primary purpose of this document is to provide planning advice to authorities and those considering seeking permission for a golf course or related development, the Working Party acknowledge that Planning is but one step in a fairly complicated path towards achieving development on the ground.
- 11.03 Unless the would-be applicant has satisfied himself as to the physical suitability of the land on which he proposes to develop his course and of its soil characteristics, drainage etc. then the submission of a planning application could be a waste of his time and money. A permission obtained without such an appraisal could prove so prohibitively expensive to implement that the project becomes unviable.
- 11.04 It is also necessary, at the outset, to be satisfied that the proposed course, driving range etc. is going to be commercially viable in that particular location in relation to not only existing facilities but also such others that have planning permission which have not yet been developed.
- 11.05 This chapter looks at such issues and the rudiments of preparing an outline Business Plan in respect of development costs and profit and loss projections. It also contains elements of practical advice on construction.
- 11.06 The design of a golf course is a specialist undertaking and needs to be entrusted to appropriately experienced and qualified practitioners such as members of the British Institute of Golf Course Architects.

11.10 The Physical Suitability of Land for Golf Courses

11.11 Size

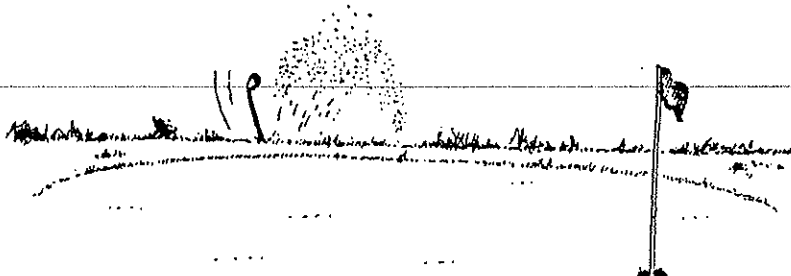
The size of the site required for a golf course is basically dependent on the physical characteristics of topography, vegetation and shape and is also related to the type of golf course which is envisaged.

In general terms an 18 hole course will require between 40 and 60 hectares (approx 100 to 150 acres) although, there are examples in Essex of considerably smaller areas of land being used for shorter golf courses. Not every course needs to be 6,500 yards plus, and the availability of these smaller parcels may allow simpler and shorter and even par 3 courses to be provided. A daily fee golf course will need wider fairways, less rough and hazards between fairways, than on a tighter proprietary or members' club where the calibre of golfer and the standard of golf is generally better. The simple course will not need water and bunker hazard features.

A 9 hole par 3 course can be anywhere between 10 hectares and 25 hectares (25 to 62 acres) with a full standard 9 hole course requiring 20 to 30 hectares (50 to 70 acres).

11.12 Topography

Topography is a major consideration in the design and layout of a golf course. Gently rolling contours are ideal although flat sites may be adapted sympathetically to provide adequate interest for a less exciting golf course yet one which is equally attractive to the younger and more novice player. Steepness of slope is a problem and hills having a gradient steeper than 1 in 12 for a fairway should be avoided as they will diminish the quality of play as a result of excessive ball roll. Steep slopes are also undesirable in terms of monotony of appearance, and general aesthetic quality.



The design of a golf course should take due regard of existing topography and not, as a matter of principle, disregard it by proposing significant contour changes in the provision of the 18 holes. It is important to recognise this principle and to take some trouble to identify naturally occurring sites for greens, tees and turning points, so that excessive ground modelling is avoided, and disturbance to the existing landscape is minimised.

Commendable as is the development of golf courses on reclaimed mineral extraction or tipped sites they clearly do present special problems in terms of construction and are a topic almost of their own whereby special precautions need to be taken, particularly on sites where domestic waste has been tipped and surfaced capped and methane control emission measures are required. Discussions with the County Council's Trading Standards Officer is recommended at an early stage in considering the possible development of such a site.

11.13 Soil Conditions and Types

The oldest of our golf courses were a result of the evolution of the change of use of links land around the coast of Scotland, thereafter Wales, Ireland and England. The substrates on these courses was entirely sandy, which suited the wiry fescues and bents. Drainage was ideal, although the ability to retain verdant pasture on the golf course was very difficult in terms of water retention, if natural irrigation was lacking. As the development of golf courses moved inland and the game became more popular, heavier soils were encountered and the majority of our golf courses these days are to be found on silt and clay loams where infiltration and percolation rates, and those of hydraulic conductivity, are exceptionally low. In terms of the modern day intensity of golf, they cause severe problems of compaction and poor drainage.

Equally so, highly acid soils or highly alkaline soils, do cause agronomic problems, as might soils which are sodic or saline because of their natural location. All might need treating with special green keeping operations to ensure that a satisfactory sward is provided, which can withstand the demand golfers place upon it.

11.14 Drainage

Poor drainage is perhaps the biggest problem on golf courses in the United Kingdom. In a survey carried out in 1980 by the Sports Turf Research Institute, a significant proportion of golf courses were shown to be closed on a large number of days, entirely because of poor drainage to either green, tees or fairways. Considerable advances have been made over recent years in the techniques of sports turf drainage and these have been applied to the golf course situation quite successfully.

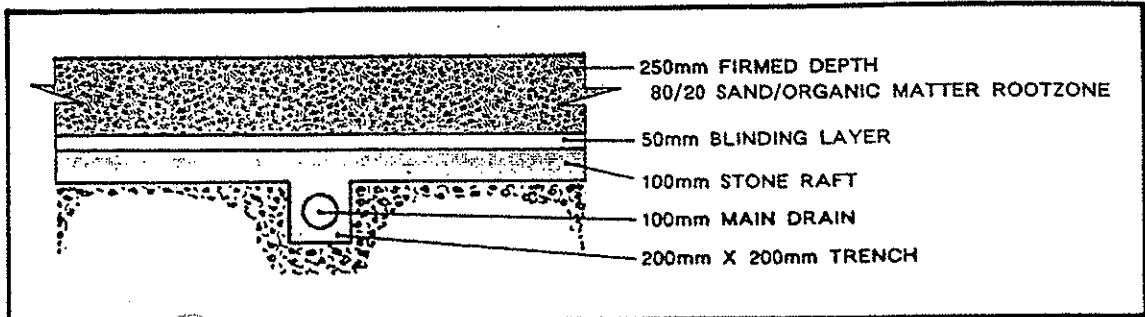


Fig (xxvi) Typical Section through Putting Green

Putting surfaces must be drained well, and are therefore generally constructed to a high performance specification incorporating a piped sub base, drainage layers of stone and coarse sand, and the provision of a root zone mix which will provide at least a 150mm per hour initial infiltration. This rate, is significantly reduced by the provision of a turf surface, either by turfing or seeding, and will inevitably become further reduced over the years by a preponderance of high demand play.

* The difference between the words PUT and PUTT is that PUT means to *
* place something where you want it whereas PUTT is merely a vain *
* attempt to do the same thing. Anon. *

Tees may well be constructed on the same intensive specification although it is often considered to be over-elaborate and cheaper construction profiles are often followed. This is often a mistake, as on many courses, particularly those with daily fee operations, tees are expected to withstand the greatest wear and tear and traffic of almost any part of the golf course.

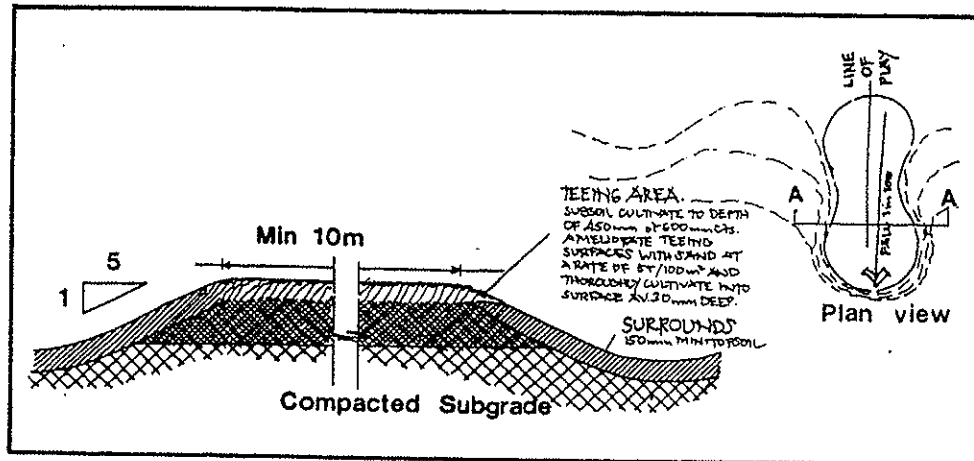


Fig (xxvii) Tee Construction Detail Section A-A

The nature of the native soil will dictate how much drainage might be required on the large areas which are not accommodating greens, tees or bunkers on the new golf course. Clearly, areas of sufficient slope tend to be subjected to surface water run-off and this may only require strategically placed catch-water drains to make the soil and grass perform adequately. On flatter sites however, and particularly on low lying sites, significant plastic piped land drainage may be required at varying intensities, sometimes as close as 45 metres in lateral pipework with adequate outfalls to existing water courses, ditches or, occasionally, rising mains and pump chambers may be required.

On reclaimed sites, it may not be possible to install pipework because of the intrusion into the capping, or the likelihood of collapse of pipelines. Slit drains, as well as sand carpets may be required.

 * The Coarse Golfer: one who has to *
 * shout "Fore" when he putts. *
 * Michael Green, *The Art of Coarse Golf.* *

11.15 Water Supplies

Irrigation has always been an integral part of the design and construction of a new golf course. In the absence of regular natural watering by precipitation, artificial watering systems need to be used. These normally consist of a series of underground plastic pipes, with electric valving and pop up sprinklers to green, tees and sometimes approaches, and more rarely fairways, and powered by an electric pump located close to the green-keeping facilities. Greens, tees and sometimes approaches are usually watered automatically by such systems. The suction arrangements and water sourcing of such a system vary greatly from site to site but are dependent upon either a mains supply of water, or abstraction from a natural or artificial source, either by pumping from a lake, from an impounded stream or from a borehole.

The summers of 1989 to 1991, which have been devoid of rainfall, have provided golf courses with severe problems in irrigation terms both in water sourcing and in the maintenance of adequately performing swards particularly on fairways. Many golf courses have experienced fairways of such poor quality that prolonged periods of "winter rules" and "pick up and place" have been experienced, as well as large areas of ground under repair. Quite clearly, this is unacceptable. As a result, there has been a preponderance for new golf courses to have more sophisticated and larger irrigation systems than before which might stretch to cover selected landing areas on par 4 and 5 holes as well as to fairway areas in some cases.

In these latter instances, the reliance of increased water usage is significant and not always has adequate thought been given to the sourcing of water in such volumes. In these times when general water consumption is causing the natural resourcing of supplies significant troubles, then the need for golf courses to look to alternative sources of water is important. (Refer 9.70 - "Effect on Water Supply"). It has been the case in America for some time, and is now becoming increasingly more frequent in southern Europe, that effluent water either from industrial waste, or from sewage treatment plants is used for golf course irrigation, given that it is adequately treated to a tertiary stage. It may well be that in the United Kingdom, particularly in the eastern and south eastern regions, this may become the norm in the not too distant future.

11.20 The Design of the Course

11.21 ECSR's "The Future for Golf" gives a concise guide to the designing of golf courses and the desired safety margins from which the following has been interpolated:

Variety is the most important factor in course layout and this should encompass orientation of holes with regard to the sun and prevailing wind, relationship to contours, landscape features, length and width of fairways. The objective on a well designed full-length course is to ensure that a player has the opportunity to use all clubs during a round.

The siting of the clubhouse is crucial to the design of the course. This will be determined in part by access, availability of services, planning constraints and existence of buildings, but wherever placed, the clubhouse must be the focus of the site, even if it is not situated in the geographical centre. The ideal configuration of the course is in loops of 9 holes and a typical 18-hole course might have concentric loops, reverse loops or a figure of eight arrangement. This layout permits flexibility in operation of the course.

Although the land will dictate the layout and type of holes, ideally, an 18-hole course should comprise the following holes:

- * 4 par-3 holes of differing lengths.
- * 10 par-4 holes of varying characteristics.
- * 4 par-5 holes.

A par-72 course of about 5500-5800m, with two equally balanced 9-hole loops, is ideal for club play, though obviously the precise length depends on site constraints. Tournament play generally requires 6100m, and a ladies' course is typically about 5000m long.

11.22 Other players, pedestrians and equestrians on rights of way on the course or adjacent to it and vehicular traffic on adjacent roads need protection from the potential hazard of flying golf balls. Internal and external safety margins are necessary and the following are intended as basic guidelines:

- * 60m between the centre lines of adjacent fairways.
- * 30m between greens and following tees.
- * 60m minimum between fairway centres and sensitive external boundaries (e.g where abutting housing).
- * 100m minimum between fairway centres and adjacent main roads and motorways.

Holes running alongside important external boundaries should be arranged clockwise, so that boundaries are kept to the left. The danger from badly hit golf balls is worst when the ball is sliced to the right and this arrangement ensures that poor shots from right handers (the majority of players) land within the course. However, the interests of left-handers should not be ignored, when establishing safety margins.

11.23 As well as the basic 18-hole course, a golf development should also comprise a pitch and putt course, a par-three course, a 9 hole short course and basic ancillary facilities. The site area will be determined by these requirements and by the proximity of houses, roads and other land uses.

11.24 Ideally an area of 3.5 hectares is required for a driving range, and fencing and floodlighting are likely to be needed for operational reasons.

11.25 Adequate car parking, for both normal and overflow usage, must be provided. This will depend on the size of the course and the range of ancillary facilities. A normal 18 hole course requires 100-150 car parking spaces. From a survey of some 75% of English members' clubs, Cobham Resource Consultants concluded that the average number of car parking spaces provided by those clubs was 127 for 18 hole courses and 67 for 9 hole courses.

11.26 Landscaping

The importance of using existing vegetation and its enhancement is crucial to the landscape quality of the golf course.

All care should be taken to incorporate into the layout as much as possible of the vegetative features which exist on a site both in terms of grass, scrub and understorey, hedgerows, trees and woodland belts.

Where possible, careful appraisal should be made of the landscape features and the aspects of historical and ancient woodland be avoided at all costs in planning holes on the new golf course. The "instancy" of a new golf course may be lessened by cutting a swathe through woodland or forest, providing such trees are not the subject of a Preservation Order, however, such a possibility needs to be pursued sparingly if the positive advantages of such instant maturity are not outweighed by the disadvantages of the destruction of a natural habitat.

- 11.27 All new planting needs to be of indigenous species and planted to accord to the general fabric of existing hedgerows and tree groupings. Any ancient woodlands need to be fully safeguarded and the integrity of their form respected by the avoidance of any new planting immediately adjacent to them.
- 11.28 Planting should be designed to reflect and complement the landform and any variation in soil types. A clear structure should be created using woodland blocks, hedges, more open scrubland areas and other landscape and habitat types. Indigenous species of plant material should be used in mixtures and proportions which are likely to simulate natural models. A degree of ecological diversity is also to be encouraged both to create a good range of habitat and provide a range of seed sources for subsequent natural regeneration. This diversity should be reflected in a variety of planting mix types (not in a single mixture), containing numerous species used throughout. The selection of species mixtures can be critical and the following guidelines, based on experience of management problems in semi-natural plantings, should be noted.
- A. One or two dominant species should be selected for each area.
 - B. The selecting of tree species as a nurse should be avoided. Use additional shrub species such as *Acer campestre* or *Crateagus*.
 - C. If a tree nurse species is required to create "high forest" the use of *Betula* or *Alnus* to a maximum of 20% is recommended.
 - D. The mixing of *Salix* or *Populus* directly with other tree species should be avoided. (Their vigour will create problems of competition).

- E. The use of non-indigenous conifers of conical or columnar form and flowering shrubs and trees should be avoided in rural locations.
- F. The major part of any mixture should comprise a limited number of species, but smaller amounts of numerous other species may be added to provide a seed source from which they can find their own population levels.
- G. A clear view is needed as to the extent to which any mixture is likely to develop over time and how it might be managed in the future to achieve a desired result.

Proposals for after use and management of the site must be clear from the outset and should be included in the original submission. Even if full details are not required by the Planning Authority a statement of principle should be provided.

11.29 In "The Way Forward", the Royal & Ancient's panel criticized the obsession with year round bright green turf that "is a far cry from the original concept of sparse vegetation which produced such a good, affordable, year round golfing challenge in decades past". David Stubbs, conservation officer of the Golf Course Wildlife Trust states that the most appropriate management of golfing turf should require little, if any, spraying, the traditional and best turf being composed of fine-leaved fescues which thrive only on a nutrient-poor, well-drained soil. Festuca (fescue) and Agrostis (bent) are types of grassland which require little water or fertilizer. They grow on dry soil and don't cause soggy fairways and greens and as a consequence can extend the usable playing time of the course during the year. The Old Course at St. Andrews plays 70,000 rounds a year and comprises fine fescue/bent turf maintained by an annual expenditure of only £350 on fertilizers and requires minimal watering.

Grass seed mixtures, appropriate for the climate, environment and purpose need to be carefully selected for each area. A typical selection of seed mixtures for putting surfaces, teeing surfaces and greens is as follows:

* Putting Surfaces

80% Chewings Fescue cv. Frida
20% Agrostis Tenuis cv. Highland
(Seeding Rate: 50gms/m²)

* Teeing Surfaces

40% Chewings Fescue cv. Frida
40% Creeping Red Fescue cv. Dawson
20% Browntop Bent cv. Highland
(Seeding Rate: 35gms/m²)

* Greens, Surrounds, Tees, Embankments

20% Chewings Fescue cv. Frida
40% Creeping Red Fescue cv. Boreal
30% Creeping Red Fescue cv. Dawson
10% Browntop Bent cv. Highland
(Seeding Rate: 25gms/m²)

11.30 Checklist for Applicants

11.31 The amount and type of information expected with any application will depend on the location and nature of the site. Applicants are advised to discuss the matters that need to be addressed in any application with the appropriate District Planning Officer prior to submitting an application. It is also advisable to obtain the advice of suitably qualified and experienced consultants to carry out much of the work. Generally the same matters will need to be addressed at outline and full application stage, a greater degree of detail being required as the application progresses. The following checklist is included for general guidance:

- A. Plans indicating the location and size of the course, with the position of any built facilities and car parking, and the means of access.
- B. A survey of the existing land use, topography and features including vegetation on the site and in the immediate vicinity and giving an indication of plant species, structure, age and condition.

- C. A visual appraisal of the site in its setting indicating the views into the site from the public domain, and how the appearance of the landscape is likely to change.
- D. Where applicable, an assessment of the historic value of the site.
- E. An appraisal of the nature conservation value of the site in the form of an ecological impact statement should also be included, together with details as to the manner in which this will be developed as the proposal is implemented.
- F. A layout plan of the course indicating the features that are to be retained or created, the planting structure, the range of landscape types that are intended and the fairway routing.

11.32 At full application stage the same issues outlined above will need to be addressed but will be expected to be covered in more detail. The following items will be specifically required:

- A. A detailed vegetation survey at 1:2500 minimum with individual trees identified indicating the vegetation to be retained and removed.
- B. Details and layout of all buildings together with the layout of car parking areas and associated planting proposals which should be at a scale of 1:200 at minimum.
- C. Contour and planting plans for the course layout in general at a scale of 1:1250 or 1:500 according to the size and complexity of the site. Representative details at an enlarged scale of all planting areas showing the plant species, mixtures by percentage, the size of stock, spacing and planting techniques.
- D. Details of maintenance methods for the establishment period i.e. the first five years, to cover the management of existing and new vegetation, grassland and other features. An outline of longer term management objectives should also be included.

11.33 This latter aspect of a maintenance and management plan for the landscape on a new golf course may well form part of a Section 106 agreement. It is necessary during the formulation of this management regime, that there is adequate access given to the Local Authority by the applicant for the periodic review of the scheme and the appraisal of its appropriateness and performance over a five year term, with regular, (at least annual) liaison with the developer.

11.40 The Business Plan

11.41 Introduction

It is common sense that, in any development, golf related or otherwise, the economics of the proposal are thoroughly considered, researched and appraised before any development is embarked upon. It is regrettable, however that in the case of many new golf courses, often this does not seem to be the standard practice.

11.42 Viability Appraisal

A viability appraisal needs to assess the potential competition to the proposed development by considering the existing clubs which are currently serving the intended patrons of the proposed new course. Consideration needs to be given to the number of such clubs, their accessibility to the "target market", the extent of facilities they offer, the type of course/courses and the extent of any waiting lists. More difficult becomes the assessment of latent demand in the area, by considering the number of people who do not at present play golf, yet who could be attracted so to do by the new facilities. This again emphasises the value of courses designed for newcomers to the sport.

Having evaluated the present competition it is necessary to look at the potential competition by checking the extent of planning permissions for similar facilities already approved within the targetted catchment area. Whilst Appendix II contains a schedule of proposed new courses in Essex, this position is constantly changing and an examination of the register of planning applications in the offices of the local planning authority is strongly recommended.

Once the extent of planning permissions granted in the area in question has been established, the next and more difficult task is the judgement as to which of those permissions are likely to be taken up.

Graham Wason, partner of Greene Belfield-Smith, the specialist leisure division of DRT International, criticised the development of many new courses by the comment that, "Many new golf courses have been developed without a proper analysis of competitive supply and potential demand. The number of advertisements for golf courses for sale is indicative of the problems encountered as a result of this."

Many planning permissions for golf courses are not implemented. A survey of 31 applicants was undertaken in Essex during 1990 to ascertain the position in respect of their approved proposals. Replies were received from 21 and are summarised below:

Golf course had been completed.	2
Golf course under construction.	2
Work on golf course about to start.	2
Section 106 Agreement as yet unsigned.	2
Details yet to be agreed with local planning authority.	3
Awaiting restoration of mineral working.	3
Seeking agreement with third party.	1
Revised application submitted.	1
Financial constraints preventing commencement.	2
No plans to build golf course.	2
Site sold to third party to develop.	<u>1</u>
	<u>21</u>

Fig. (xxviii) Extent of Take-up of Planning Permissions

This return is hardly large enough to draw any major conclusions from, but, on the assumption that where land changes hands with its permission for a golf course, i.e. at its enhanced value, the purchaser is more than likely to implement the permission, it is apparent that less than a third of permissions are likely to be taken up in the near future. Glebe Consultants inform that surveys in Surrey and Kent showed that only 20% of permission for golf courses were being implemented. Other estimates of take-up across the country vary from 10 to 15%.

The most likely reasons why a higher percentage of planning permissions are not resulting in golf courses being constructed are seen as being:

- Permissions sought prior to soil surveys being undertaken resulting in an under appreciation of high drainage and irrigation costs.
- Owner, often a farmer, merely sought permission as a means of enhancing the value of his land.
- Land with permission offered for sale without interest due to the surfeit of permissions in the area and/or the present economic recession.
- The belated drawing up of an assessment of the capital costs for the construction of the course indicated a shortfall of financial resources.
- Anticipated bank loans did not materialise.

Alan Plumb, head of Savills' rural leisure division, said there were now too many golf planning consents, often in poor locations and with grandiose over-expensive plans. Most schemes now proceeding were a joint venture between landowner and developer, he said, involving lower gearing and less exposure to interest rate and capital value fluctuations. Mr Plumb stressed the supply of golf courses on to the market was still very low. The heady days of 1989/90 when £10m or more was being paid for Home Counties 18-hole golf courses had nevertheless given way to figures of £3m to £5m, or less for provincial courses.

An optimistic viability appraisal can be financial suicide and it must be compiled realistically excluding all elements of wishful thinking.

11.43 Construction Costs and Profit & Loss Projections

It is not a difficult task to create a spreadsheet analysis of the costs of the operation of a golf facility of whatever design or type, and to appraise the developments costs, the programming, together with the funding requirement over such a period to ensure that there is a full understanding of the liabilities of the operation to play, and thereafter. This is assessed against the projected revenue of the project.

11.44 The Business Plan

The Business Plan should include:-

1. A programme of the envisaged development period.
2. The development costs in total, as well as in the cash flow analysis of expenditure over the development period. This should include all aspects of construction of both golf course and clubhouse and ancillary facilities and car parking, together with all professional and design fees.
3. A projected revenue analysis over 5 years.
4. Emanating from this a profit and loss analysis over a 5 year period, giving all direct and indirect costs of the operation of the facility.
5. A cash flow analysis of the operation of the facility, taking into consideration the periods of payback of debt or equity finance.
6. An analysis over a 5 year period of the capital investment required as an on-going necessity for the operation of the facility ie. repairs and renewals, amortization and replacement of greenkeeping machinery etc.

Such an appraisal as this must include the necessary understanding of the funding arrangements with an agency, whether it be a bank, a merchant bank or the venture capitalist, over the relatively limited period of exposure.

Whilst it is appreciated that the provision of a Business Plan is not mandatory in any planning application, it is to be encouraged in that such evidence of the soundness of approach in commercial realisation and awareness will demonstrate the seriousness of the application and the likelihood of implementation and successful development operation thereafter.

11.45 Construction and Operating Costs

A general indication of likely construction and operating costs is given by the Eastern Council for Sports and Recreation as follows:

1. The major capital costs of a golf facility include land, construction, clubhouse and other facilities. The total costs will depend on the type of course and method of operation, but the majority of 18 hole courses will cost between £1.1m and £2.9m to develop. A simple 9-hole course with limited construction and small clubhouse can be provided for £150-£200,000.
2. The major components of the running costs are course and clubhouse maintenance, administration and capital machinery replacement. A typical cost range is £150-£180,000 per annum, though a simple course could be run for as little as £75,000.
3. Income is primarily derived from membership joining fees, green fees, professional's shop, bar and restaurant. Total income is likely to be between £330,000 and £490,000 per annum, or £120,000 for a simple course.
4. It should be possible to generate a substantial surplus, before finance costs or tax, from a wide range of course types, including a simple course, private club or public/proprietary "pay and play" course.
5. In general, free-standing courses of a variety of types, are commercially viable and should provide a sufficient return to make their development attractive to a range of providers. There is no evidence to suggest that hotels and other commercial land uses are universally necessary to underwrite the provision of a golf facility, (Refer Para 4.18), though these may be acceptable in certain locations for other reasons.

11.50 The Management Plan

It is important at the earliest stage to recognise the need to organise the operation of a golf facility correctly. Once the design and planning is in place, it is important that the physical management of the clubhouse and course are identified, and structured thoroughly.

Each area of operation, the clubhouse, golf course, range and practice area if relevant, and golf play all need managing in their own way. Relationships within these sectors, as well as between them need to be defined and developed, and from these administrative budgets derived and agreed.

Initial marketing strategy also needs to be developed, with a programme of action and events, and a realistic budget established to meet the objectives of the promotion in the establishment phase, as well as in the ongoing operation.

General overheads, including rates, utilities, communication and taxation items should also be included in the management plan.

Planned improvements, additions and modifications, as well as other capital ventures are also essential parts of the plan.

11.60 The Construction of the Golf Course

11.61 It is the responsibility of the golf course architect to produce a number of technical documents for the construction works; viz:

- *Conditions of Contract*
- *Specification*
- *Bills of Quantities*
- *Programme*
- *Layout Plan*
- *Topographical Drawings*
- *Green Detail Plans*
- *Tee Detail Plans*
- *Construction Profiles*
- *Irrigation/Drainage Detail and Plans*

- 11.62 From these, contractors may be selected on a competitive or negotiated basis to carry out the specified works.
- 11.63 Given that the golf course architect has followed the principles and practices embodied in the landscape chapter of this report, the extent of the construction works may be limited, particularly in terms of earthworks. Notwithstanding this a thorough and comprehensive method of working is required to ensure that the golf course performs under the pressure of the demand from golfers of all capabilities.
- 11.64 On public or "pay and play" courses, there is a clear need to ensure that workmanship is to the highest standards, and that the specification is of a high quality.
- 11.65 Putting surfaces need to be built to ensure controlled drainage performance. (Refer Para 11.14.) It is now an adopted norm that a shaped subsoil formation is intensively drained, has a 150mm layer of 10mm gravel over it, and a blinding layer of fine grit or coarse sand overlies this. A rootzone mix, usually of sand and peat in which the grass will grow, some 300mm deep is the most critical sector of any green's construction, and its material content is extremely important. The use of incorrect components can spell disaster to the future performance and can easily be avoided by careful selection and laboratory testing.
- 11.66 Tees, often underspecified, are subject to great wear and tear, particularly on high demand courses, and need to be built to comprehensive, well drained profiles.
- 11.67 In most cases fairways and rough will need some form of drainage, in varying intensities, using piped and stoned trenches, slit drains, french drains and in some cases sand layers, although these are particularly expensive.
- 11.68 Special design and installation skills are required, for the necessary irrigation system and sympathetic understanding of plant requirements, and appropriate management of this crucial resource is needed to ensure that the golf turf is well maintained.

11.69 Ideally, construction begins in the Spring with seeding in the Autumn and the course opening between 12 and 18 months later. With good weather and an intensive work programme opening may be brought forward somewhat but the premature use of a new course will usually result in high remedial costs.

* The least thing upsets him on the links. He misses short putts *
* because of the uproar of the butterflies in the adjoining *
* meadows. P.G. Wodehouse, "The Clicking of Cuthbert". *

12.00 The Overprovision of Golf Courses

12.10 The Consequences

12.11 The primary adverse consequence of an overprovision of golf courses is the possibility that an existing club could become uneconomic through insufficient support. The high investment necessary to form a new golf course will inevitably involve detailed scrutiny of the financial viability of its operations and future development. To some extent therefore market forces will influence which of the many approved courses are built. That same competition, however, could result in a new club, with lower fees and/or more extensive facilities taking membership from existing established clubs in the area thereby rendering those clubs non viable.

12.12 Should this happen the maintenance of the course itself would cease and the land will soon become overgrown and the buildings unused. Planning can do little to ensure the maintenance or cultivation of open land. The Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food's "set-aside" policy is itself producing areas of overgrown land although such land is required to be trimmed once a year. The more serious problem is the future of redundant golf club buildings with the inevitable pressures for alternative uses whether for residential, offices or other uses inappropriate in a rural location.

12.13 Although this aspect is one of serious concern to the Working Party they accepted that competition exists as an inevitable factor in any area of commerce and applies equally to the recreation and tourist industries. Planning cannot and should not attempt to eliminate competition between rival establishments. The countryside of Essex nevertheless warrants the most serious protection and non-essential built development must be strictly opposed.

12.14 Safeguards are needed against the eventuality of a developer constructing his clubhouse and associated facilities and being unable to construct his course owing to financial difficulties and thereby establishing a free standing leisure complex in the countryside unrelated to golf.

The Working Party recommend that planning authorities, by condition and S.106 Agreements, ensure that at least the first 9 holes of a course are formed and necessary landscaping undertaken prior to occupation of the clubhouse.

12.15 The factors considered above make it imperative that criteria are devised and in sufficient detail to restrict the development of any further golf courses in Essex to appropriate locations, and of such form, that the protection of the countryside is ensured. Built development must be restricted to those facilities essentially required to serve the club as described in Para 9.90 above.

12.20 Limiting the Number of Courses

12.21 In view of the possible adverse consequences of overprovision, the Working Party considered the prospect of devising criteria to control the number of golf courses in a particular area and hence minimise the potential problem. It is theoretically possible to restrict development to a maximum number of courses considered necessary to meet the estimated need in a particular area on the basis of an assumed ratio of golf courses to population, i.e. 1 x 18 hole course to 20,000 population.

12.22 There are, however, problems in applying such an approach in that:-

- 1) Any assumed ratio cannot be regarded as a standard to achieve, because:-
 - a) it may not be a true reflection of the actual demand;
 - b) standards are derived from surveys which are limited in scale and scope;
 - c) any assessment of latent demand must, by definition, be somewhat tenuous.

- 2) The demand for courses in any particular local authority area is a reflection of its accessibility rather than the resident population. The potential catchment of population is therefore invariably far greater than the local population. This applies particularly to rural districts on the edge of conurbations.

12.23 Take-up of Planning Permissions

The imposition of a limit on the number of golf courses to be developed in any area would involve taking into account the number of outstanding planning permissions for golf courses in determining any subsequent applications. This would entail assuming either:-

- all permissions will be implemented - which is not realistic and therefore unlikely to be sustainable; or
- a certain percentage of permissions will be implemented which will vary according to the state of the market.

12.30 Conclusions

12.31 In view of both the uncertainties involved, and the difficulties this would present in successfully defending a refusal based on need, it is concluded that it is not practical to seek to place a limit on the number of golf courses in a particular area.

12.32 The Working Party concluded that Planning was not in a position to prevent the possibility of an overprovision of courses (and the equal likelihood of a number of those courses subsequently failing) by the withholding of planning permissions. Planning applications must be judged on their merits and, in the absence of any demonstrable harm, usually identified by a proven conflict with planning policy, permission will normally be granted.

12.33 A full assessment needs to be undertaken by the potential developer of the viability of his project at the outset as stated in Para 11.42. Planning authorities, by the granting of planning permissions are making no judgement on that viability but the need for a most careful commercial assessment prior to development cannot be over-stated.

13.00 Guidelines for the Location & Design of Golf Courses and Associated Development

- 13.01 The following Guidelines need to be read in conjunction with the Policies of the Essex Structure Plan First Alteration and District Local Plans. The inclusion of the Guidelines as appropriate within the current review of Local Plans and/or acceptance as supplementary planning guidance is recommended.
- 13.02 With provisos, primarily concerning the safeguarding of landscape and ecological interests, it needs to be acknowledged that golf courses are an appropriate land use in the countryside, whether Green Belt or the rural area beyond.
- 13.03 The appropriate guideline for the provision of golf courses in Essex is 1 x 18 hole course per 20,000 catchment population.
- 13.04 Although sufficient planning permissions have been granted to satisfy the above guideline this is not seen as a reason to withhold consents for additional new courses, the applications for which need to be judged on their merits in relation to the following guidelines.
- 13.05 Applications for the renewal of planning permissions for golf development granted prior to the publication of the First Edition of this Report in October 1990 need to be determined in accordance with the Guidelines of this report. It would be unwise for an applicant to assume that an earlier lapsed permission will automatically be renewed.
- 13.06 The primary need in the county is seen as being for "pay and play" courses and simple courses not over-complicated by bunkers and extensive water features.
- 13.07 Potential developers of golf courses and their design consultants are recommended to seek discussion with their District Planning Officer prior to the submission of formal applications.

13.10 The Location of Golf Courses and Driving Ranges

- A1 There shall be a presumption against the development of golf courses in highly visible countryside, e.g. prominent sites on scarp slopes, valleys, exposed plateaux and ridges.
- A2 There shall be a strong presumption against the development of golf courses and driving ranges in the Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty or on adjacent land which could adversely affect the appearance of the A.O.N.B.
- A3 Golf course developments in the Coastal Protection Belt need to be restricted to sites that:-
- (a) are already affected by development including existing towns and holiday areas;
 - (b) have scope for visually accommodating development by reason of land form or vegetation without detriment to the ecology of the area;
 - (c) would not be visually inappropriate from significant vantage points;
 - (d) do not further reduce or place at risk the extensive open tracts of Essex marshland which represent a valuable yet finite resource in nature conservation and landscape terms.
- A4 There shall be a presumption in favour of the development of golf courses in areas of derelict or despoiled land and in areas where intensive farming practices have damaged the landscape through the removal of trees and hedgerows, providing the design of the golf course would result in a material improvement in the appearance of the landscape and where this does not adversely affect the established ecological value of such land.
- A5 Golf courses and driving ranges will not be permitted within Sites of Special Scientific Interest nor adjacent to such areas where their character is likely to be adversely affected.

- A6 The development of golfing facilities will not be allowed on land included as "Preferred Sites" identified for mineral extraction in the Minerals Subject Plan nor in respect of approved but unworked sites which contribute to the landbank of approved reserves.
- A7 New golf courses should preferably be established in the urban fringe, in proximity to the major urban areas they are to serve. Subject to considerations of local landscape and amenity and the adequacy of the highway network, urban fringe locations are considered the most preferable.
- A8 Golf courses and driving ranges will not be permitted in locations which would detract from the appearance or setting of ancient monuments, listed buildings or historic landscapes or features of such landscapes.
- A9 Proposals for golf courses and driving ranges need to be located so that safe and convenient access can be made to the route hierarchy. Proposals which rely on access via long stretches of narrow country lanes and pass through small settlements will not normally be acceptable.
- A10 Because of their potentially intrusive impact, golf driving ranges need especially careful siting preferably in the following locations:
- (a) Urban fringe - subject to safeguarding of amenities of residential areas from possible adverse effects of noise, general disturbance, traffic generation, and to the careful control of the size and siting of buildings and fences, the degree and direction of lighting and highway safety.
 - (b) Rural areas - in conjunction with an existing golf club and preferably sited in proximity to the clubhouse, subject to the general safeguards listed in Chapter 8.
 - (c) Former mineral workings - where the floor level of a former mineral working has not been restored to original ground levels such an area is likely to be particularly suitable for use as a driving range, subject to the general safeguards referred to above.

A11 Golf driving ranges will generally not be accepted within the Coastal Protection Belt or Special Landscape Areas.

A12 Where a golf course is proposed on high quality agricultural land there shall be a strong presumption against substantial earth movement and the creation of water features which could prevent the land subsequently reverting to agriculture if required.

13.20 The Design of Golf Courses

B1 The layout of the course, the siting and size of its buildings, car parking and landscape scheme should be submitted as part of the planning application and not treated as a reserved matter for later approval. (Refer Appendix X).

B2 The layout should be based on a thorough survey and analysis of the selected site. Landscape schemes should be designed in character with context using primarily indigenous plant species. Applicants should be able to demonstrate that the proposal is based on a thorough appraisal of all existing site features and the site's context in the surrounding landscape. As many as possible of the existing landscape features - hedgerows, woodlands etc. should be retained and incorporated into the design of the course. From outside the site the course should represent only an intensification of the traditional landscape pattern. Buildings and car parking need to be provided in areas well screened from the adjacent countryside by existing or proposed landscaping or earthforms. Environmental Assessments may be requested in respect of proposals within Special Landscape Areas.

B3 Features alien to the landscape context such as bunkers, surfaced trolley or buggy tracks, artificial mounding, and exaggerated water features should be designed so as to minimise their visual impact from beyond the limits of the course.

- B4 Particular care needs to be exercised over the design of golf courses in the Coastal Protection Belt. The visual impact of built development must be minimised to safeguard the open rural character of the coastal landscape. Similarly car parking must be carefully sited and screened to avoid the visually intrusive element of reflected sunlight from cars and their windscreens.
- B5 Areas of high intrinsic or historic landscape quality, whether parkland, the grounds of mansions or areas of historic hedgerows and woodlands will warrant the most sensitive design treatment in respect of the maintenance of their integrity. Formal Environmental Assessments may be requested, but, even where they are not, planning authorities will require impact statements in justification of the proposal.
- B6 Planning applications need to be accompanied by Ecological Statements which demonstrate that existing ecological features and habitats are fully safeguarded by the proposals. Applicants should be encouraged to provide opportunities for the creation of new habitats within their layouts. New planting needs to be ecologically congruent with the site and its environs and designed to create a wide variety of habitats by variation of species grouping and densities. Ecological Statements also need to indicate, notably by a management plan, how the course is expected to develop with time.
- B7 The design of golf courses needs to have special regard to the protection of rivers, riverbanks and floodplains and to the source of water for irrigation. Prior to the submission of a planning application, consultation needs to take place with the NRA.

- B8 There shall be a presumption in favour of the preservation of archaeological sites. Where appropriate, golf course applications should include an archaeological impact statement demonstrating how archaeological sites will be protected and enhanced and that provision will be made for archaeological investigation and recording where preservation *in situ* is not possible, the funding of such work to be met by the developer.
- B9 Existing footpaths and bridleways shall be safeguarded unless acceptable diversions are agreed, and the provision of extensions to and links between existing footpath and bridleway networks is to be encouraged.
- B10 The layout of the fairways shall be such that no danger is likely to occur to users of the adjacent highway and rights of way and any which cross the course nor to adjacent residential properties by stray golf balls. The use of high fencing shall be avoided wherever possible.
- B11 In areas of known mineral deposits, where there is no objection on the grounds of sterilization, golf courses may be allowed providing:
- a) no built development of clubhouses, equipment stores, etc is proposed;
 - b) no earthworks in the form of remoulding of the landscape nor planting is proposed which would disturb or sterilize the deposit;
 - c) no major water features are created.

13.30 Built Development

- C1 On any golf course within a rural location, built development must be restricted to those facilities essentially required to serve the club namely clubhouse, including changing rooms, office, bar, refreshment facilities and staff accommodation, where considered essential, and associated maintenance buildings.

- C2 A presumption will be given in favour of those applications which propose the conversion of existing suitable buildings for golf purposes and/or the removal of existing unsightly structures. Any new buildings must be well designed in themselves and constructed of appropriate vernacular materials.

- C3 There needs to be a strong presumption against large scale buildings in the countryside not essentially related to the use of the land for golf purposes e.g. hotels, conference centres, sports halls, large scale restaurants, health and beauty parlours, etc.

- C4 Proposals for private residential development, golf villages, time-share units or other holiday accommodation in association with golf courses in the countryside must be firmly resisted on policy grounds.

- C5 The brilliance of the lighting of driving ranges should be limited to the minimal functional level unless the site is exceptionally well screened.

- C6 Car parking for both golf courses and driving ranges needs to be provided at a minimum level of 1 space for every 2 people who use the facility at any one time. In practice, this will need to make allowance for overlap between users, plus staff.

13.40 Planning Agreements & Obligations

13.41 Background

Government advice is found in DoE Circular 16/91 and P.P.G.1.

Circular 16/91 sets out five tests of reasonableness for planning agreements or obligations under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as substituted by Section 12 of the Planning and Compensation Act 1991).

The test of the reasonableness of seeking a planning obligation from an applicant for planning permission depends on whether what is required:

- 1) *is needed to enable the development to go ahead, for example the provision of adequate access or car parking; or*
- 2) *in the case of financial payment, will contribute to meeting the cost of providing such facilities in the near future; or*
- 3) *is otherwise so directly related to the proposed development and to the use of the land after its completion, that the development ought not to be permitted without it, e.g. the provision, whether by the applicant or by the authority at the applicant's expense, of car parking in or near the development, or reasonable amounts of open space related to the development or of social, education, recreational, sporting or other community provision the need for which arises from the development; or*
- 4) *is designed in the case of mixed development to secure an acceptable balance of uses; or to secure the implementation of local plan policies for a particular area or type of development (e.g. the inclusion of an element of affordable housing in a larger residential development); or*

5) *is intended to offset the loss of or impact on any amenity or resource present on the site prior to development, for example in the interests of nature conservation. The Department welcomes the initiatives taken by some developers in creating nature reserves, planting trees, establishing wildlife ponds and providing other nature conservation benefits. This echoes the Government's view in "This Common Inheritance" (Cm. 1200) that local authorities and developers should work together in the interest of preserving the natural environment.*

The provisions of the Planning and Compensation Act 1991 are designed to ensure that the Secretary of State will have the ability to give regard to an undertaking offered by a developer at a planning inquiry and a developer may, by way of a unilateral undertaking, create an obligation without receiving the agreement of the local planning authority. Such obligations are nevertheless enforceable by the local planning authority.

13.42 Planning Practice

In practice many planning agreements go beyond the so called tests of reasonableness set out in Circular 16/91 and in some cases benefits may be considered excessive or their link with the development tenuous.

However, there is widespread acceptance among developers, politicians and planning authorities that major development should contribute, not only to the necessary physical infrastructure and means of ameliorating the impact of development, but also to meeting social needs indirectly related to the development.

The following factors have influenced this process:-

- i) Local authorities are often forced to seek ways of implementing wider social and economic objectives at a time of tightly controlled public spending.
- ii) Private development can bring with it public costs such as road congestion, etc. Community benefits can "soften" such impact and produce a balance of advantage for the development.

- iii) The increasing relevance of the local authority's role as "enabler" rather than provider.
- iv) Planning agreements are voluntary and if a developer feels that a local authority's demands are too great he can appeal to the Secretary of State or make a unilateral undertaking.
- v) The opportunity should be taken in Development Plans to ensure that appropriate policies covering planning obligations are incorporated.

13.43 Planning Agreements for Golf Courses

The need for daily fee or "pay and play" courses is referred to in this report and by the ECSR in "The Future For Golf" who state that 80% of all courses are private and estimate that the current shortfall requires an additional 13 x 18 hole "pay and play" courses in Essex. Given the restricted ability of the public sector to meet this deficiency it would be appropriate to secure, where possible, the agreement of developers to make this provision.

Planning agreements should also make provision for ensuring that at least the first 9 holes of a course are formed and necessary landscaping undertaken prior to occupation of the clubhouse.

This will ensure that the clubhouse is not first constructed and the developer, in financial difficulties, fails to construct the course and is left with a substantial building in the countryside which he then is likely to want to use for a purpose unrelated to golf.

Planning conditions can also be used for this purpose and improved enforcement powers in the Planning and Compensation Act 1991 enable a breach of condition notice to be served as from July 1992. The owner has no right of appeal in these cases.

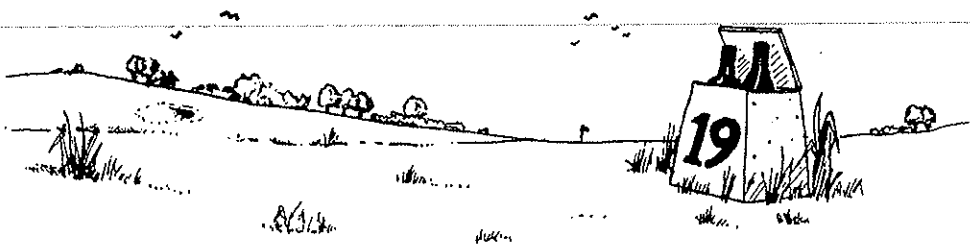
Whilst it is appropriate to ensure that the environmental implications of golf development are adequately considered by the submission, with a planning application, of an impact statement dealing with such matters as traffic generation, archaeology, ecology, landscape analysis etc, it may be necessary to ensure that the management of such matters is dealt with by way of a planning agreement.

In particular, the agreement could relate to the following areas:-

- i) The submission, approval, implementation, maintenance and management of detailed landscape schemes.
- ii) The investigation/preservation of archaeological remains (or their identification/ exposure if unavoidable).
- iii) A scheme to maintain and/or create habitats and prepare a full ecological management plan including provision for educational and research opportunities and the training of golf course staff in the ecological aspects of their work.
- iv) Provision for public access and rights of way - including diversions, creation orders etc, or access to ecological/ archaeological features where appropriate.
- v) Construction phase liaison to ensure that existing features are adequately protected.
- vi) Restrictions on further development such as non-golf related or substantial buildings or large extensions to existing facilities.

Although planning conditions can be used to control many of these matters, their effectiveness can be limited even when streamlined enforcement powers are introduced.

By using planning agreements, strengthened powers are available and should be sought whenever possible. It is nevertheless a matter for each Planning Authority and developer to decide whether this is appropriate or whether reserved matters are to be preferred in the circumstances.

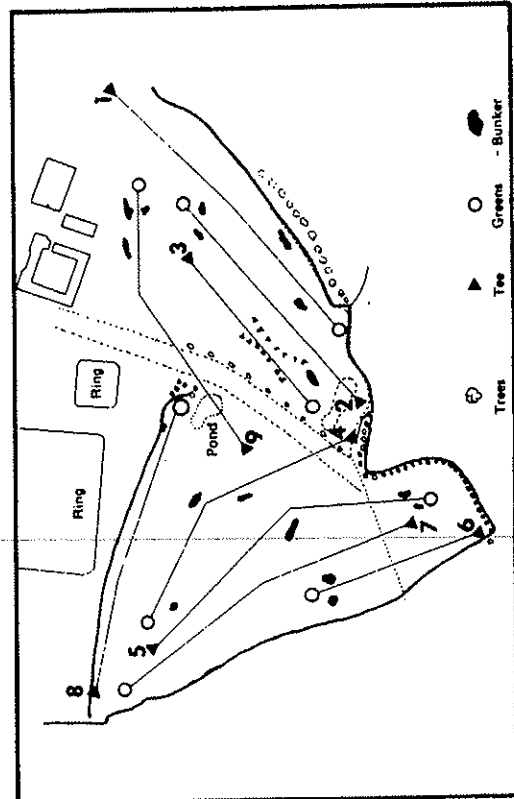
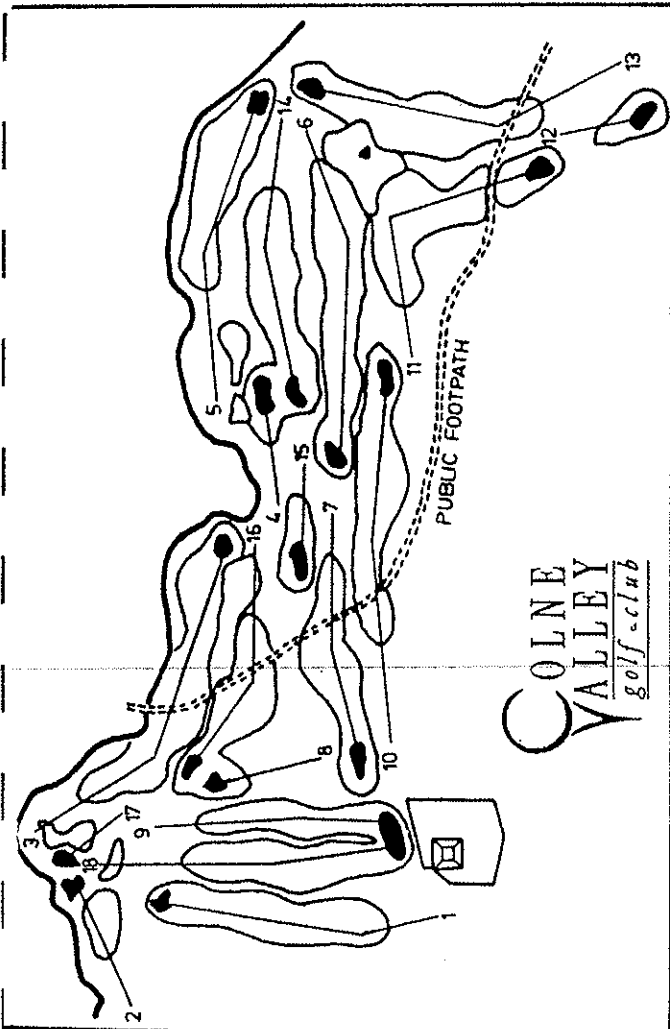
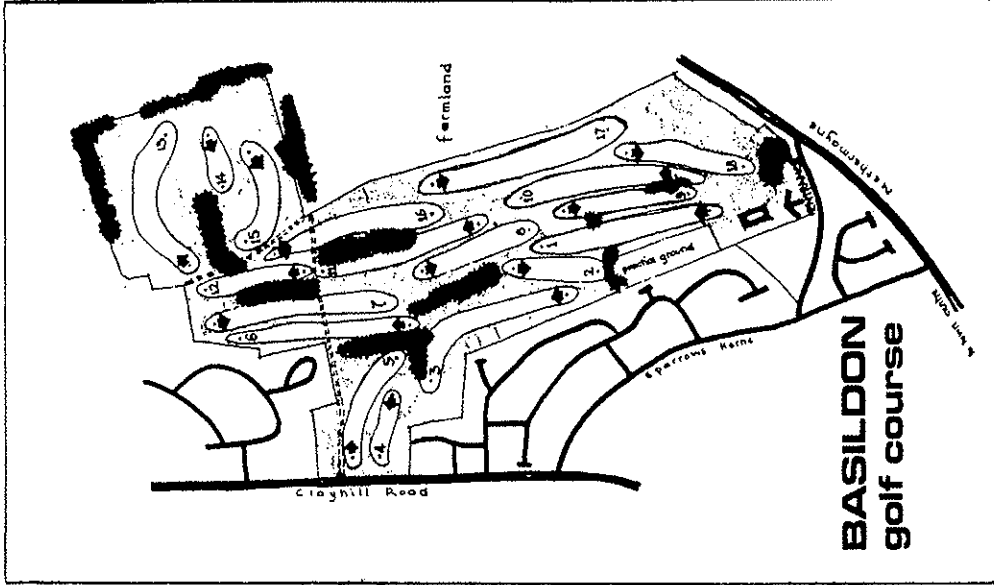
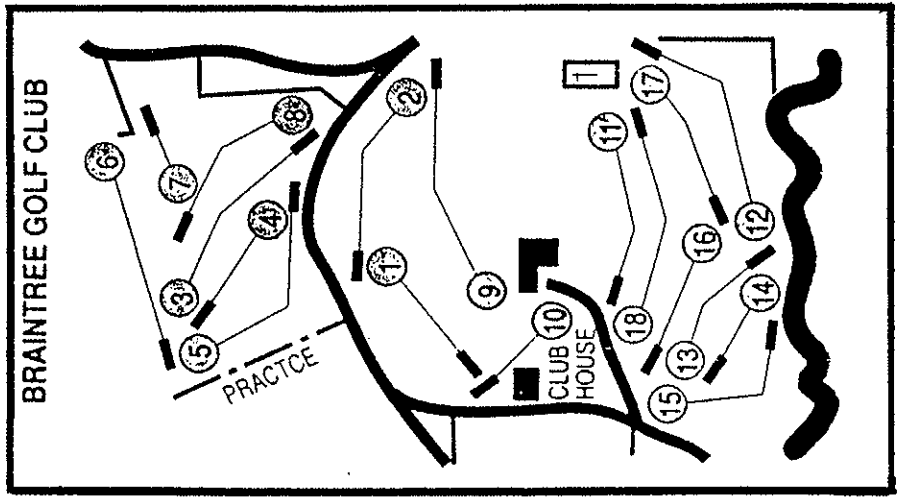


ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The assistance of the following bodies in the supplying of information used in this report is acknowledged by the appreciation of the Working Party:

The Royal & Ancient Golf Club
The Professional Golfers' Association
The British Institute of Golf Course Architects
The Golf Course Wildlife Trust
The "Protect Britain's Golf Heritage" campaign
English Nature (Formerly N.C.C.)
The Ramblers Association
The County Surveyor
The County Archaeologist
The Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries & Food
English Heritage
The Countryside Commission
National Rivers Authority
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Mr Adrian Marsh for hydrological aspects.
Essex Golf Clubs whose questionnaire responses aided the appreciation of the extent of existing facilities and of waiting lists for membership.
Various informative articles in the national press, and the golfing press.

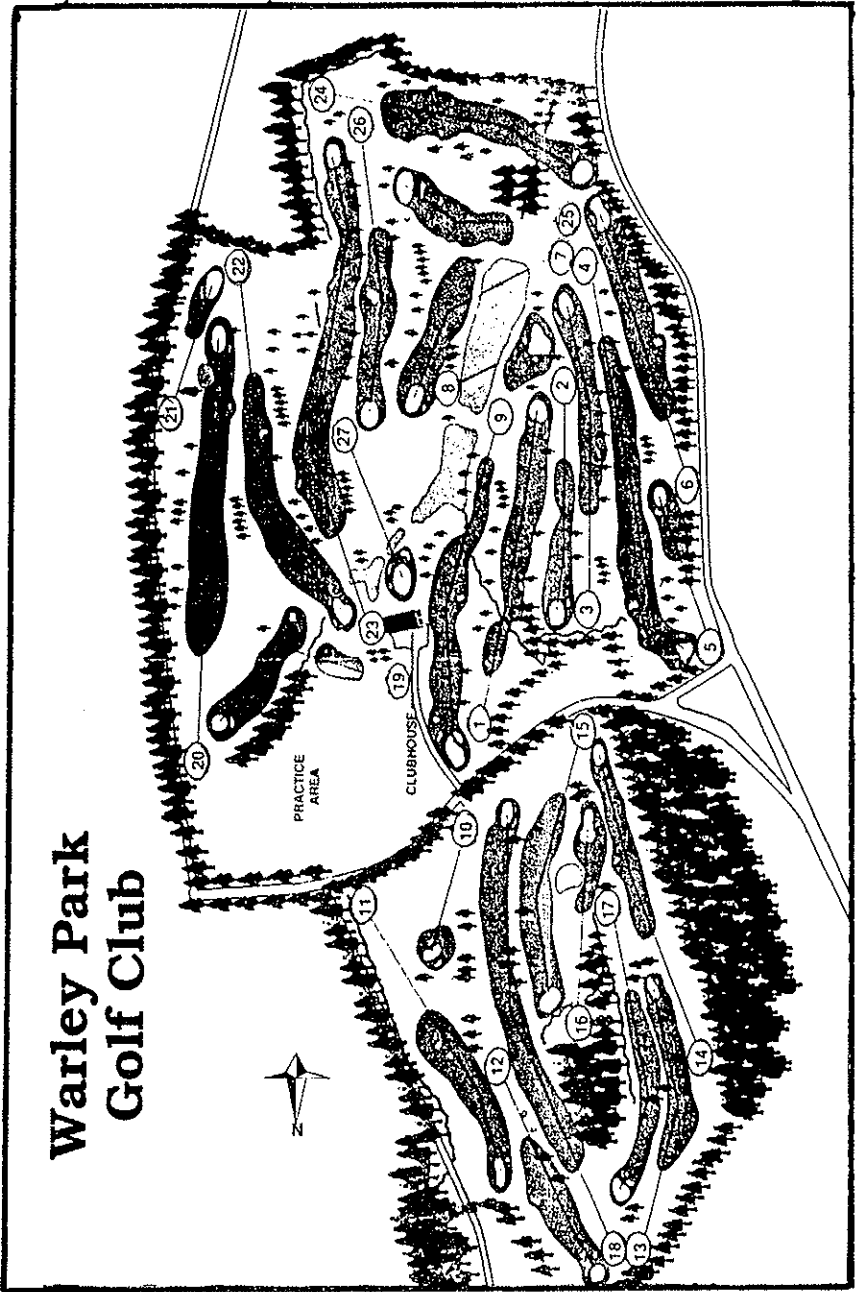
Existing Essex Golf Clubs, Courses and Driving Ranges



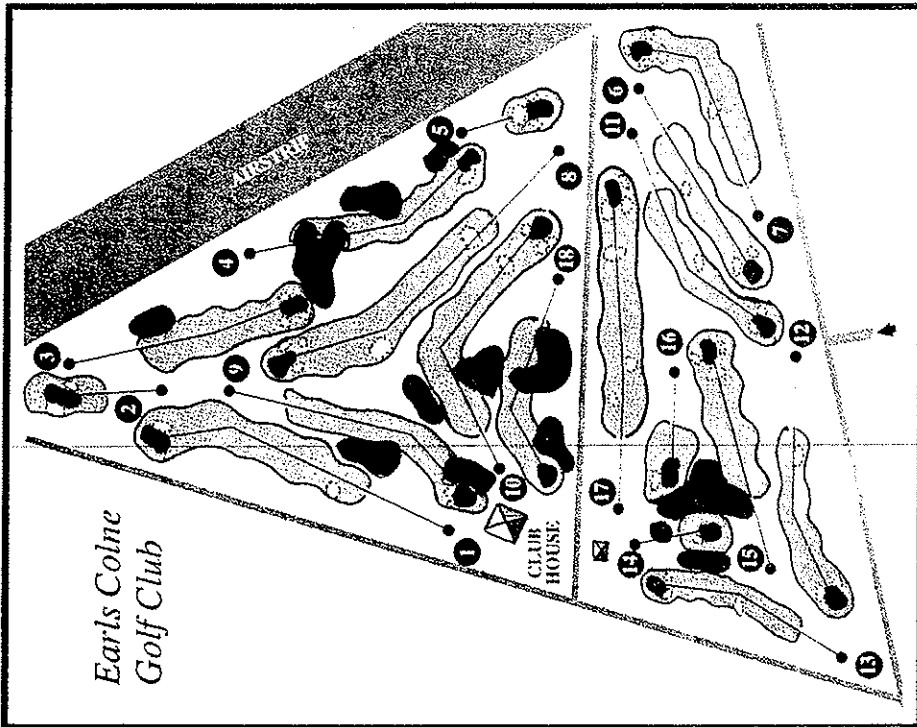
TOWERLANDS GOLF CLUB

EXISTING ESSEX GOLF CLUBS, COURSES AND DRIVING RANGES					
Application Number	Name & Location	Description	Grid Ref.	Area	Comments
BASILDON DISTRICT					
BAS/1716/86 also see CHL/1858/86	Pipps Hill, Cranes Farm Road, Basildon.	9 hole course & driving range.	TQ71187Z		Public, pay and play.
	Basildon Golf Club, Kingswood, Basildon.	18 hole course & practice area.	TQ708901		Owned by Basildon District Council, run as "pay and play" course. There is a private golf club affiliated to this course.
	Stock Brook Manor, Golf and Country Club, Billericay.	18 hole & 9 hole course, 4 practice holes & 2 putting greens, clubhouse.	TQ681973		Approved 4/87 and recently built. Hoping to open Spring 1992 as a private members club. Non-members with handicap certificates will be allowed to use the course.
BRAINTREE DISTRICT					
BTE/1349/83	Towerlands Golf Club, Panfield Road, Braintree.	9 hole course & 1 practice hole.	TL75025Z		Established 1985. Proprietary Members' Club with pay and play.
BTE/0645/86 BTE/1433/90	The Manor House, Gosfield.	18 hole course (Lakes) & 9 hole course (Meadows).	TL769300		Proprietary Members' Club with "pay and play".
	Braintree Golf Club, Kings Lane, Sisted.	18 hole course.	TL796248		Private Members' Club, non-members can use the course every day except Sunday, Friday and Saturday, a handicap certificate is required.
BTE/406/89 BTE/1102/86 BTE/1103/86 BTE/2179/89	Colne Valley Golf Club, Colne House, Station Road, Earls Colne.	18 hole course.	TL854293	57 ha	Private Members' Club. Non-members can use the course.

Warley Park Golf Club

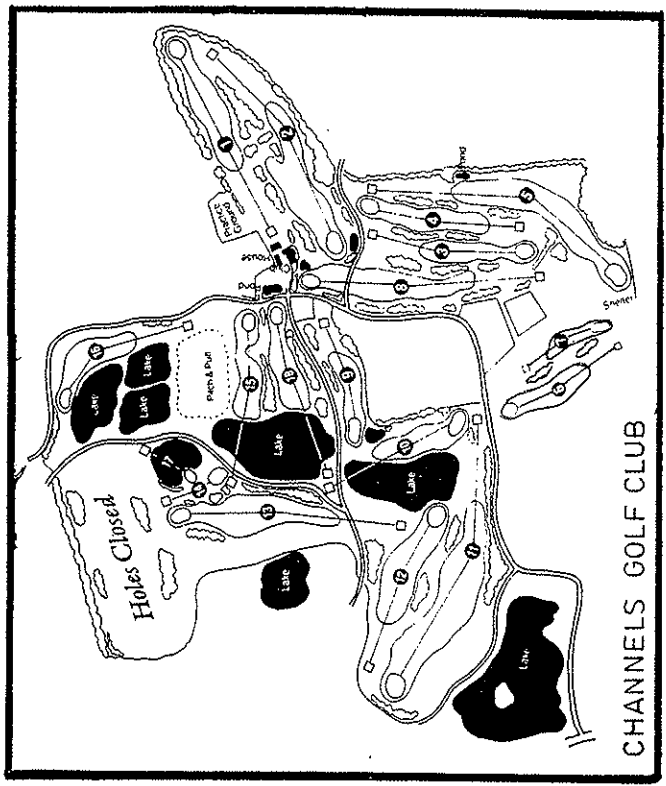
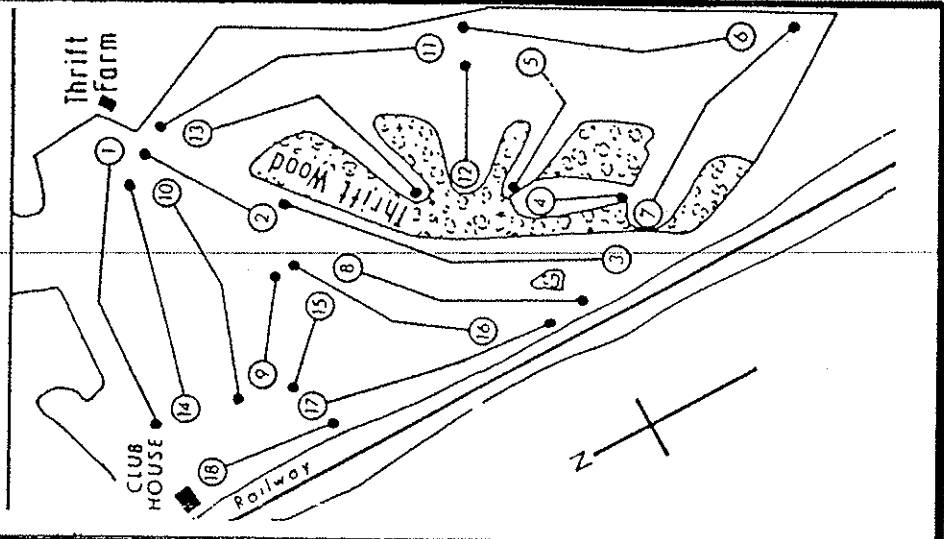


Earls Colne Golf Club

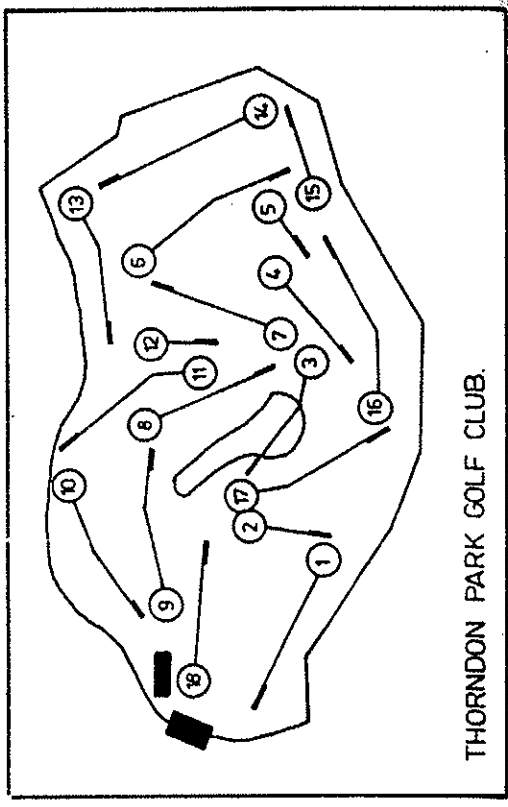


EXISTING ESSEX GOLF CLUBS, COURSES AND DRIVING RANGES					
Application Number	Name & Location	Description	Grid Ref.	Area	Comments
BRAINTREE DISTRICT (Cont'd)					
HALR/170/72 BTE/303/90	Woodlands, Coupals Road, Sturmer.	9 hole course.	TL690445		Private Members' Club. Approved application to extend by 9 holes on 25 ha.
BTE/863/89	Earls Colne Airfield, Golf Club, Earls Colne.	18 hole course, 9 hole course, 4 practice holes, 24 bay driving range and clubhouse	TL853294	48.5 ha	Proprietary - "pay and play".
BRENTWOOD DISTRICT					
	Bentley Golf & Country Club Ltd., Ongar Road, Bentley.	18 hole course, practice area and clubhouse.	TQ571971		Established 1972. Private Members' Club. Non-members can use the course weekdays only, but must observe club dress rules and may be required to produce a handicap certificate.
BRW/613/88 BRW/853/89	Stapleford Abbots Golf Club, (formerly Skips), Navestock	2 x 18 hole courses (Stapleford Abbots and Navestock Park) and a 9 hole (par 3) course	TQ522951		Established 1973, and since extended. Proprietary members' club.
	Hartswood Golf Club, Ingrave Road.	18 hole course and clubhouse	TQ603921		Established 1967. Owned by Brentwood District Council. "Pay and play" course with private club attached.
BRW/923/74	Warley Park Golf Club, Magpie Lane, Little Warley, Brentwood.	18 hole course & 9 hole course practice field and practice hole	TQ597900		Established 1975. Private Members' Club. Non-members can use the course if they follow club rules.

CHELMSFORD GOLF CLUB



CHANNELS GOLF CLUB



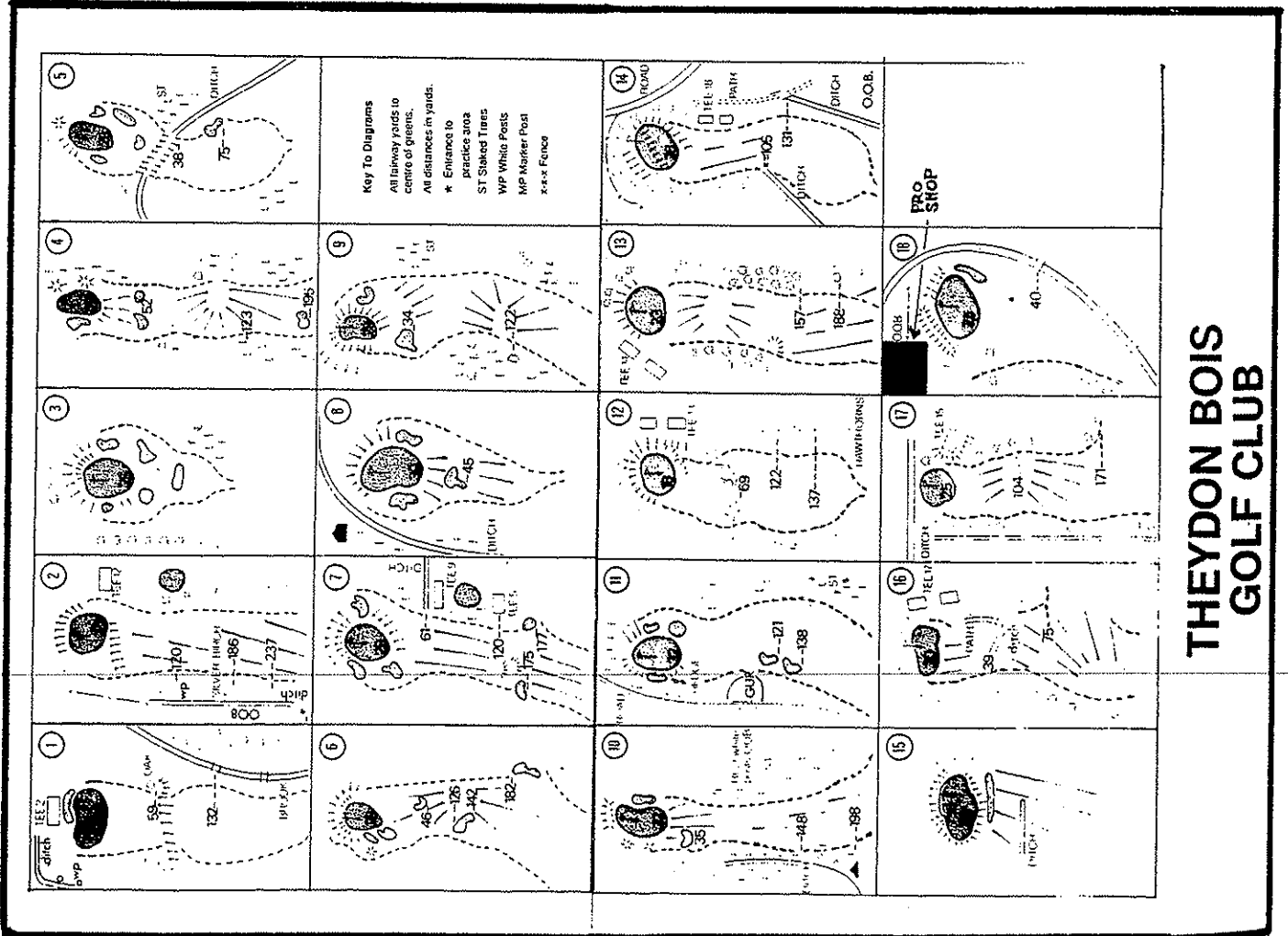
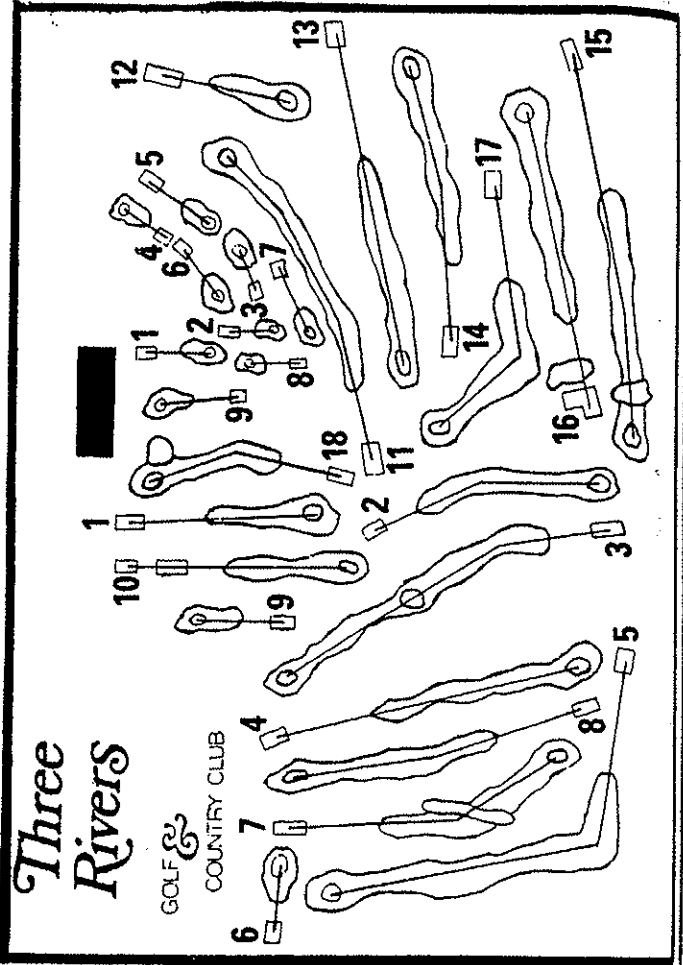
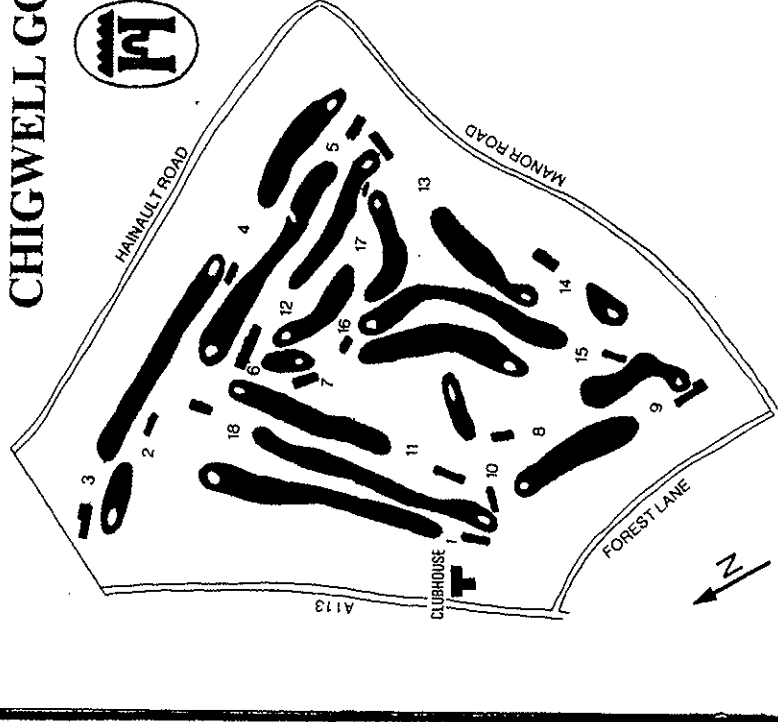
THORNDON PARK GOLF CLUB.

EXISTING ESSEX GOLF CLUBS, COURSES AND DRIVING RANGES					
Application Number	Name & Location	Description	Grid Ref.	Area	Comments
BRENTWOOD DISTRICT					
	Thorndon Park Golf Club, Ingrave Road, Ingrave, Brentwood.	18 hole course & clubhouse.	TQ625906		Established 1920. Private Members' Club. Non-members can use the course if they are a member of another club and hold a handicap certificate.
BRW/109/79	Adj. Hutton House, Rayleigh Road, Hutton.	9 hole (par 3) course.	TQ634949		Private for the use of employees of Hambros Bank only.
BRW/727/71	Brentwood Leisure Centre, Holdens Wood, Wartley Gap, Brentwood.	Driving Range.	TQ587907		
CASTLE POINT BOROUGH					
CPT/33/85 CPT/393/90	Castle Point Golf Club, (Waterside Farm), Somnes Avenue, Canvey Island.	18 hole course, driving range and golf shop.	TQ782870	56.25 ha	Public "pay and play".
	Boyce Hill Golf Club, Vicarage Hill, S. Benfleet.	18 hole course & clubhouse.	TQ781850	40 ha	Established 1928. Private Members' Club. Non-members can use the course on weekdays if they hold a handicap certificate.
CHELMSFORD BOROUGH					
	Chelmsford Golf Club, Widford, Chelmsford.	18 hole course, 1 practice hole and clubhouse.	TL698048		Private Members Club. Non-members can use the course if member of another club and hold a handicap certificate.

EXISTING ESSEX GOLF CLUBS, COURSES AND DRIVING RANGES					
Application Number	Name & Location	Description	Grid Ref.	Area	Comments
CHELMSFORD BOROUGH (Cont'd)					
CHL/963/69	Channels Golf Club Ltd., Belstead Farm Lane, Little Waltham, Chelmsford.	18 hole course & 9 hole (Par 3) course	TL728109		Established 1974. Proprietary run as both membership club and pay and play. Further 18 holes proposed once gravel works have been reinstated.
CHL/670/79					
CHL/1428/79					
CHL/1038/86	Webbs Farm, Margaretting.	18 hole course.	TL676027	66.5 ha	Approved June 1988. Application for associated hotel withdrawn. Previous application on the site refused. Aim to create an international golf course. Under construction.
COLCHESTER BOROUGH					
	Birch Grove Golf Club, Layr Road, Kingsford, Colchester.	9 hole course	TL979215		Established 1971. Private members and 'pay and play'.
	Colchester Golf Club, Braiswick.	18 hole course	TL980276		Established 1909. Private members' club. Non-members can use the course if they hold a handicap certificate.
COL/278/75	Part of Abbey Fields, West Colchester.	Driving Range	TL993241		
COL/235/86	Newbridge Road, Tiptree.	Driving Range	TL911161		Approved October 1986.

EXISTING ESSEX GOLF CLUBS, COURSES AND DRIVING RANGES						
Application Number	Name & Location	Description	Grid Ref.	Area	Comments	
EPPING FOREST DISTRICT						
	Theydon Bois Golf Club, Theydon Road, Epping.	18 hole course, practice hole and clubhouse.	TL449001		Established 1897. Private Members' Club. Non-members can use the course if accompanied by a member or if they hold a handicap certificate.	
EPP/1167/82	Abridge Golf Club, Stapleford Tawney, Abridge.	18 hole.	TQ486987		Private Members' club. Non-members can use the course on weekdays if they hold a handicap certificate.	
EPP/1181/84	N. Weald Golf Club, Between Epping Rd & Railway, N. Weald.	9 hole (par 3) course.	TL485038		Pay and play.	
	Loughton Golf Club, Clays Lane, Loughton.	9 hole course.	TQ435979		Members' club and pay and play.	
	High Beach Golf Club, Wellington Hill, High Beach, Loughton.	9 hole course.	TQ407988		Private Members' club.	
EPP/63/74	West Essex Golf Club, Stewardstonebury, Chingford.	18 hole course & practice area.	TQ392965	20.23 ha	Established 1900. Private Members' Club. Non-members can use the course if they hold a handicap certificate.	
EPP/1542/76	Epping Forest Country Club, Woolston Hall, Abridge Road, Chigwell.	9 hole (par 3) course.	TQ457956	10.70 ha	Proprietary, part of Country Club.	

CHIGWELL GOLF CLUB



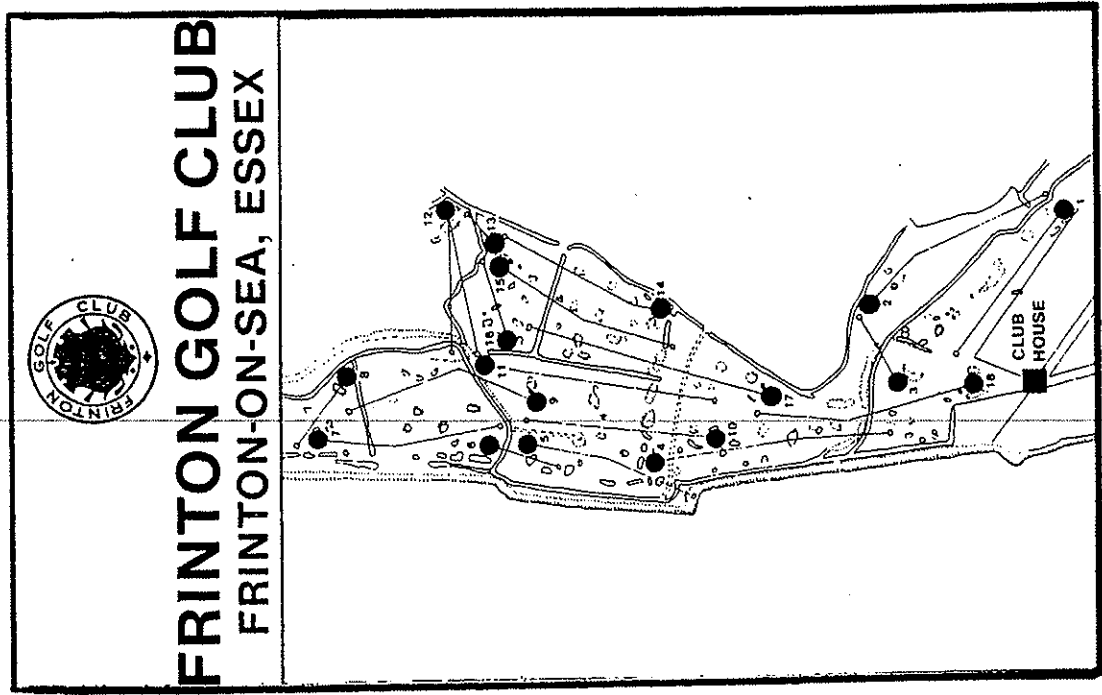
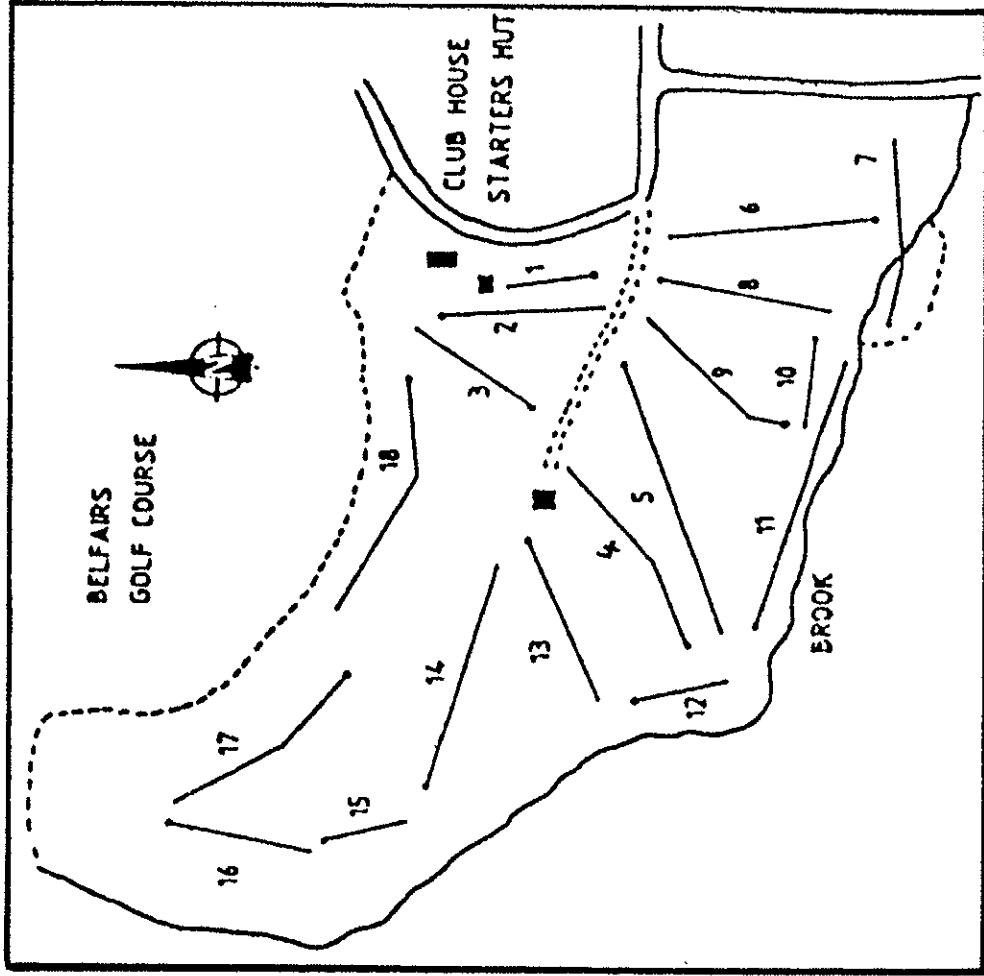
THEYDON BOIS GOLF CLUB

PRO SHOP

EXISTING ESSEX GOLF CLUBS, COURSES AND DRIVING RANGES					
Application Number	Name & Location	Description	Grid Ref.	Area	Comments
EPPING FOREST DISTRICT (Cont'd)					
	Chigwell Golf Club, High Road, Chigwell.	18 hole course and 1 practice hole.	TQ436925		Private Members' Club. Non-members can use the course weekdays only if accompanied by a member or hold a handicap certificate.
EPF/1351/89	Blakes Farm, School Road, Toot Hill, Stanford Rivers.	18 hole course & clubhouse.	TL516016	48.5 ha	Approved March 1990 with conditions, following appeal decision Aug. 1989. Built to open September 1991, as a private club.
EPF/1387/90	North Weald Airfield.	Driving range and pitch and putt.	TL494048	9.0 ha	Approved May 1991. Currently under construction to open May 1992.
HARLOW DISTRICT					
	Canons Brook Golf Club, Elizabeth Way, Harlow.	18 hole course.	TL429104		Private Members' Club. Non-members can use the course weekdays only.
	Four Provinces, Parsloe Road, Harlow.	Driving Range.	TL438070		Approved 5/90. Range closed at the end of 1991.
MALDON DISTRICT					
	Three Rivers Golf Club, Stow Road, Cold Norton, Purfeigh.	18 hole course & 9 hole course.	TL841000		Established 1973. Proprietary Members' Club. Non-members can use the course if hold a handicap certificate.
	Burnham-on-Crouch Golf Club Ltd., Ferry Lane, Creekssea.	9 hole course & 1 practice hole.	TQ930969		Private Members' Club. Non-members can use the course if accompanied by a member or if hold a handicap certificate. Currently extending by 9 holes to open mid-1993.

EXISTING ESSEX GOLF CLUBS, COURSES AND DRIVING RANGES					
Application Number	Name & Location	Description	Grid Ref.	Area	Comments
MALDON DISTRICT (Cont'd)					
	Maldon Golf Club, Beeligh, Langford.	9 hole course.	TL841079		Established 1891. Private Members' Club. Non-members can use the course weekdays if hold a handicap certificate, and at weekends if accompanied by a member.
MAL/751/85	Woodham Mortimer.	Driving Range.	TL811044		
	Bunsay Downs, (Hawkins Farm), L1 Baddow Road, Woodham Walter, Maldon.	9 hole course & 9 hole (par 3) course.	TL800065	47 ha	Established 1983. Proprietary, members and "pay and play".
MAL/784/80 MAL/751/85 MAL/285/90	The Waitren Golf Club, Hawkins Farm, Woodham Walter.	18 hole course & 1 practice hole & clubhouse.	TL803074	48 ha	Established 1932. Proprietary, Members' Club. Non-members welcome on certain weekdays if hold a handicap certificate.
MAL/654/86	Forrester Park Golf Club, Beckingham Road, Gt Totham.	18 hole course & practice area.	TL863114		Established 1972. Proprietary Members' Club. Non-members can use the course on weekdays and afternoons at weekends.
MAL/519/87	Braxted Park Golf Club, Great Braxted, Witham.	9 hole course.	TL853157		Proprietary "pay and play". Closed at weekends.
MAL/867/87 MAL/481/88 MAL/1255/88	Quietwaters Golf Club, Colchester Road, Tolleshunt D'Arcy.	2 x 18 hole courses. Clubhouse, 58 bed hotel and sports and leisure complex.	TL952135	55 ha	Established 1974. Proprietary, members and "pay and play". Players must follow dress code.

EXISTING ESSEX GOLF CLUBS, COURSES AND DRIVING RANGES					
Application Number	Name & Location	Description	Grid Ref.	Area	Comments
ROCHFORD DISTRICT					
ROC/805/76 ROC/522/80	Rochford Hundred Golf, Club Hall Road, Rochford.	18 hole course & clubhouse	TQ870900		Established 1893. Private Members' Club.
	Ballards Gore Golf Club, Apton Hall Road, Canewdon.	18 hole course & clubhouse	TQ900930	45 ha	Established 1981. Proprietary Members' Club. Non-members can use the course weekdays only, and must hold a handicap certificate or be accompanied by a member. Numbers are limited.
ROC/243/89 ROC/438/89 ROC/368/90	Hanover Golf Club, Hullbridge Road, Rayleigh. Hockley Golf Driving Range.	2 x 18 hole courses & clubhouse Driving Range	TQ810935 TQ830921	78 ha	Allowed on Appeal January 1990. Opened Summer 1991 Proprietary Members' club. Pay and play.
SOUTHEND BOROUGH					
	Thorpe Hall Golf Club, Thorpe Hall Avenue, Thorpe Bay.	18 hole course & clubhouse	TQ830672		Established 1907. Private Members' Club. Non-members can use the course if accompanied by a member or hold a handicap certificate.
	Belfairs, Leigh-on-Sea.	18 hole course & pitch & putt	TQ908853		Established 1926. Belfairs Golf Club is a private club which uses a course owned by Southend Borough Council. Course is a "pay and play" facility.
	Leigh Marshes Golf Centre.	Driving range	TQ824856		Proprietary "pay and play".



EXISTING ESSEX GOLF CLUBS, COURSES AND DRIVING RANGES					
Application Number	Name & Location	Description	Grid Ref.	Area	Comments
TENDRING DISTRICT					
	Frinton Golf Club, 1 The Esplanade, Frinton-on-Sea.	18 hole course, 9 hole course, practice area and clubhouse.	TM230186		Established 1896. Private Members' Club. Non-members can use the course if hold a handicap certificate. Golf societies restricted to Wednesdays and Thursdays.
	Harwich & Dovercourt Golf Club, Parkston Road, Harwich.	9 hole course.	TM232318		Established 1906. Private Members' Club. Non-members can use the course if hold a handicap certificate.
	Clacton Golf Club, West Road, Clacton-on-Sea.	18 hole course.	TM157138		Established 1892. Private Members' Club. Non-members can use the course if hold a handicap certificate.
TEN/939/74	The Crown House, Ipswich Road, Ardleigh.	Driving Range.	TM023292		"Pay and play".
TEN/70/91	Corner of Rush Green Road/ Jaywick Lane, Clacton.	9 hole course and 10 bay driving range.	TM155144	21 ha	Approved April 1991. Under construction. Driving range to open April 1992 and golf course to open spring 1993.

EXISTING ESSEX GOLF CLUBS, COURSES AND DRIVING RANGES					
Application Number	Name & Location	Description	Grid Ref.	Area	Comments
THURROCK BOROUGH					
	Orsett Golf Club, Orsett.	18 hole course, practice hole & clubhouse	TQ661806		Established 1898. Private Members' Club. Non-members can use the course if hold a handicap certificate.
	Belhus Park Golf Club, Aveley.	18 hole course & driving range	TQ571812		Owned by Thurrock Borough Council. "Pay and play".
	Blackshot, Thurrock.	9 hole Pitch & Putt course	TQ630798		Public, "pay and play".
THU/82/288	SIS Golf Schools, Little Malgrave Farm, Lower Duntun Road, Bulphan.	18 hole course, 9 hole course, 3 practice holes, driving range & clubhouse	TQ662865	83 ha	Established 1989. Proprietary Members' Club.
UTTLESFORD DISTRICT					
	Saffron Walden Golf Club, Windmill Hill, Saffron Walden.	18 hole course	TL529389	75 ha	Established 1919. Private Members' Club. Non-members can use the course if holders of a handicap certificate.

Proposed Golf Courses and Driving Ranges

PROPOSED GOLF COURSES AND DRIVING RANGES					
Application Number	Name & Location	Description	Grid Ref.	Area	Decision (+ reason for refusal if applicable)
BASILDON DISTRICT					
BAS/1831/87	Crays Hill, Billericay.	Driving Range.	TQ708913		Approved 1987.
BAS/1292/89 BAS/1293/89	Land between Tye Common Rd, Laindon Common Rd and Wiggins Lane, Little Burstead, Billericay.	18 hole course & clubhouse.	TQ662936	50 ha	Refused. Appeal allowed December 1990.
BAS/501/90	Blunts Hall Road, Basildon.	Driving range.	TQ663942		Refused - Green Belt.
BAS/722/90	Land south of A13, Pitsea, Basildon.	18 hole course & clubhouse.	TQ745875	105.2 ha	Refused - Highways grounds and contrary to Structure Plan Policies NR6, NR18, NR8. Appeal dismissed December 1990.
BAS/790/90	Land east of Outwood Common Rd, Basildon.	Driving range & golf shop.	TQ691941	2.2 ha	Refused - Green Belt, loss of amenity, out of character. Appeal dismissed April 1991.
BRAINTREE DISTRICT					
BTE/1254/83	Straits Mill, Bocking, Braintree.	9 hole course & clubhouse.	TL772246	20 ha	Approved March 1984 (Note BTE/5/86 approved agriculture restoration of site).
BTE/873/88 BTE/874/88	Land south of Halstead Road, High Garret.	Driving range.	TL772772		Appeal dismissed.

PROPOSED GOLF COURSES AND DRIVING RANGES						
Application Number	Name & Location	Description	Grid Ref.	Area	Decision (+ reason for refusal if applicable)	
BRAINTREE DISTRICT (Cont'd)						
BTE/477/89	Land south of Benton Hall, Witham.	18 hole course & clubhouse.	TL838128	41 ha	Approved 1989, proposed "pay and play", part in Maldon District. Some preliminary work has been done. Refer BTE/171/92 and MAL/949/91.	
BTE/105/90	Deanery Hill, Braintree.	Driving range.	TL258752	8.90 ha	Refused. Allowed on appeal May 1990.	
BTE/303/90	Woodlands, Coupsals Road, Sturmer.	9 hole course.	TL684448	13.76 ha	Extension to existing 9 hole course approved May 1990.	
BTE/1032/90	Stubbles Farm/ Stanton Farm, White Notley.	18 hole course & clubhouse.	TL200773	54.2 ha	Approved.	
BTE/1521/90	Wrights Farm, Middleton.	18 hole course & clubhouse.	TL865383	68 ha	Refused. Contrary to Structure Plan Policies NR10, NR12, highways, draft district Local Plan. Appeal dismissed March 1992.	
BTE/1345/90	Bower Hall, Pentlow Cavendish.	18 hole course & clubhouse.	TL798453	60.7 ha	Refused. Contrary to Structure Plan Policies NR10, NR12 and the draft district Local Plan. Appeal lodged.	
BTE/467/91	Land east of Forest Road, Witham.	9 hole (pitch & putt) course.	TL830165	48 ha	Approved subject to Section 106 Agreement.	
BTE/789/91	Prested Hall, Feering.	18 hole course, clubhouse & 42 bed hotel.	TL879200		Approved September 1991 subject to Section 106 Agreement, as yet unsigned, part in Colchester Borough. See COL/854/91.	

PROPOSED GOLF COURSES AND DRIVING RANGES						
Application Number	Name & Location	Description	Grid Ref.	Area	Decision (+ reason for refusal if applicable)	
BRAINTREE DISTRICT (Cont'd)						
BTE/844/91	Homefield site, London Road, Kelvedon.	9 hole course, pitch & putt.	TL856179		Refused.	
BTE/1406/91	Rayne Hall Farm, Rayne, BRAINTREE.	9 hole course.	TL731228	30 ha	Withdrawn. See BTE/334/92 proposed "pay and play".	
BTE/171/92	Land south of Benton Hall, Witham.	18 hole course & clubhouse.	TL838128	41 ha	Current application. Refer BTE/477/89 and MAL/949/91.	
BTE/334/92	Rayne Hall Farm, Rayne, BRAINTREE.	9 hole course.	TL731228		Current application. Refer BTE/1406/91.	
BRENTWOOD DISTRICT						
BRW/293/89	Land between A12 Ingatestone Bypass, New Road & Little Hyde Lane, Ingatestone.	18 hole course & clubhouse.	TL659001	63 ha	Approved subject to Section 106 Agreement.	
BRW/838/89	Little Hyde Farm, Ingatestone.	18 hole course & clubhouse.	TL656005	63.1 ha	Refused October 1989 on access grounds.	

PROPOSED GOLF COURSES AND DRIVING RANGES					
Application Number	Name & Location	Description	Grid Ref.	Area	Decision (+ reason for refusal if applicable)
BRENTWOOD DISTRICT (Cont'd)					
BRW/631/90	Dunsteads Farm, Trueloves Farm, Fryerning, Ingatestone.	18 hole course & clubhouse.	TQ648993	60 ha	Refused.
BRW/855/90	Cow Farm, Kelvedon Hatch.	Driving range.	TQ5759892	12 ha	Refused: Building unacceptable, Green Belt impact intensity of use, formation and illumination of access.
BRW/872/90	Grove Farm, Brook Street, South Weald.	Driving range, clubhouse & hotel.	TQ564926	12.17 ha	Refused.
BRW/351/91	Little Dytchleys & part of Frieze Hall, Coxtie Green, Brentwood.	18 hole course, clubhouse & 2 dwellings.	TQ553958	52 ha	Refused: 1. Traffic. 2. Visual impact of car park. 3. Possible need for fencing. Also see BRW/758/91.
BRW/758/91	Little Dytchleys & part of Frieze Hall, Coxtie Green, Brentwood.	18 hole golf course and use of existing buildings as clubhouse and shop.	TQ553958	52 ha	Approved subject to Section 106 agreement.

PROPOSED GOLF COURSES AND DRIVING RANGES

Application Number	Name & Location	Description	Grid Ref.	Area	Decision (+ reason for refusal if applicable)
BRENTWOOD DISTRICT (Cont'd)					
BRW/107289	Dunsteads Farm, Trueloves Farm, Fryerning, Ingatestone.	18 hole course & clubhouse.	TQ648993	24.3 ha	Refused January 1990:- 1. Green Belt 2. Siting of clubhouse 3. Access 4. Parking.
BRW/49/90	Land to west of A128 and north of A127, Ingrave, Brentwood.	9 hole course.	TQ648999		Refused April 1990. Also BRW/50/90.
BRW/50/90	Cockriddden Farm, Land to east of A128 and north of A127, Ingrave, Brentwood.	18 hole course.	TQ645889		Refused April 1990. Also see BRW/49/90 & BRW/281/90.
BRW/239/90 (BRW/1175/88)	Dunton Hill Farm, South Dunton Hills, Tilbury Road, West Horndon.	2 x 18 hole courses & 9 hole.	TQ648882	108 ha	Approved April 1989 and July 1990. Construction likely to commence shortly.
BRW/281/90	Cockriddden Farm, Land east of A128 and north of A127, Ingrave, Brentwood.	27 hole course & clubhouse.	TQ645899	102 ha	Approved June 1990. Details as yet to be agreed.

PROPOSED GOLF COURSES AND DRIVING RANGES					
Application Number	Name & Location	Description	Grid Ref.	Area	Decision (+ reason for refusal if applicable)
CHELMSFORD BOROUGH					
CBC/CHL/2352/85	Hylands Park, Writtle.	18 hole course & clubhouse.	TL685047	56.6 ha	Application superceded. See CBC/CHL/471-476/88.
CBC/CHL/471-476/88	Hylands Park, Writtle.	18 hole course & clubhouse.	TL685047		Called in by DoE. Proposed use of Grade II listed buildings as clubhouse. Withdrawn. See CBC/CHL/2352/85.
CHL/1194/90	Newland Hall, Roxwell, Chelmsford.	18 hole course ancillary to existing facilities.	TL636097	56 ha	Approved December 1990.
CHL/1212/90	Kents Hall, Park Lane, Ramsden Heath, South Hanningfield.	9 hole course.	TL660030	80 ha	Refused November 1990. Appeal dismissed June 1991.
CHL/1813/90 CHL/1814/90 CHL/1815/90	Coptfold Hall Estate, Coptfold Hall Drive, Margareting.	18 hole course and 9 hole course, clubhouse and leisure centre.	TL705945	144.5 ha	Approved September 1991.
CHL/493/91	Brock Hill, Wickford.	Driving range, 9 hole course, putting green, golf shop.	TQ741960	5.9 ha	Refused - visual impact - highway - S9 Green Belt Appeal pending.
CHL/859/91	Crondon Park, Stock.	19 hole course, driving range, clubhouse, car park, pro-shop, and practice area.	TL688998	176 ha	Approved January 1992. Under construction.

PROPOSED GOLF COURSES AND DRIVING RANGES						
Application Number	Name & Location	Description	Grid Ref.	Area	Decision (+ reason for refusal if applicable)	
CASILE POINT BOROUGH						
CPT/1058/89	St Michaels Road & A127, Daws Heath, Benfleet.	Driving range	TO819880		Refused: - Green Belt - Highways	
CPT/728/90	Waterside Farm Playing Field, Waterside Farm Sports Centre, Somnes Avenue, Canvey Island.	9 hole pitch and putt		5.25 ha		
CPT/139/91	Lower Wyburns Farm, Daws Heath.	9 hole course, driving range & clubhouse	TO819880	17.84 ha	Refused: - Ancient Monument - Highway - Effect on site of ecological interest See CPT/370/91	
CPT/370/91	Lower Wyburns Farm, Daws Heath.	9 hole course, "pay and play" & clubhouse	TO819814	32 ha	Current application. See CPT/139/91	
CHELMSFORD BOROUGH						
	Channels Golf Club, Belsteads Farm Lane, Little Waltham.	18 hole course.	TL724109		18 hole extension to existing course proposed once gravel works have been reinstated.	

PROPOSED GOLF COURSES AND DRIVING RANGES					
Application Number	Name & Location	Description	Grid Ref.	Area	Decision (+ reason for refusal if applicable)
COLCHESTER BOROUGH					
COL/676/86	Lexden Lodge Farm, Spring Lane, Colchester.	18 hole course.	TL873259	71 ha	Approved 1986. Land now owned by Colchester B.C. as farmland/countryside access.
COL/576/89	Wash Farm, Halstead Road, Fordham.	Driving range.	TL917273	3.45 ha	Refused August 1989.
COL/726/89	St Botolph's Bridge, Bakers Lane, Colchester.	18 hole course.	TL972270	76.5 ha	Approved March 1990.
COL/1944/90	Land Grove Farm, West Bergholt.	18 hole course.		60 ha	Approved December 1991, subject to Section 106 Agreement.
COL/37/91	Land east of Cross Lane, West Mersea.	9 hole course.	TM039139	32.7 ha	Renewal of consent granted under COL/987/86.
COL/148/91	Land off East Road, East Mersea.	9 hole course.		44 ha	Refused May 1991: within countryside conservation area and highway safety.
COL/337/91	Cooper Beach Caravan Park, East Mersea.	18 hole course.	TM055142		Withdrawn.
COL/608/91	Land at Fourways Farm Barnhall Road, Tolleshunt Knights.	Part of 18 hole course.			Approved June 1991, large part in Maldon District. See MAL/433/90.
COL/654/91	Prested Hall, Feering.	Part of 18 hole course.		3.04 ha	Approved October 1991 subject to Section 106 Agreement. Mainly in Braintree District. See BTE/789/91.

PROPOSED GOLF COURSES AND DRIVING RANGES					
Application Number	Name & Location	Description	Grid Ref.	Area	Decision (+ reason for refusal if applicable)
EPPING FOREST DISTRICT					
EPF/1423/86	St. Vincents Farm, Epping Road, Broadly Common, Nazeing.	Driving range.			Appeal dismissed July 1987.
EPF/1319A/87	Land between Middle Street and Back Lane, Nazeing.	18 hole course & clubhouse.	TL411055	70 ha	Approved with Conditions March 1990, (following appeal decision July 89).
EPF/153/88	Lee Valley Regional Park, land to north of Nazeing Road Broxbourne.	18 hole course, 18 hole (Par 3) course, driving range.	TL383064		Approved subject to Section 52 Agreement. Only partly within Essex.
EPF/975/88	British Telecom Site North Weald	18 hole course and 9 hole course 600 houses etc.	TL499040	60.7 ha	Refused October 1988. See EPF/719/50.
EPF/1067/88	Land adj. Par 3 Course Epping Road North Weald	Golf teaching area.	TL483085		Approved with Conditions November 1988.
EPF/1748/88	New House Farm Vicarage Lane North Weald	Driving range.			Refused December 1988. Appeal dismissed June 1989.
EPF/1892/88	Copped Hall Epping	18 hole course.	TL431012		No decision. (Lapsed).

PROPOSED GOLF COURSES AND DRIVING RANGES					
Application Number	Name & Location	Description	Grid Ref.	Area	Decision (+ reason for refusal if applicable)
EPING FOREST DISTRICT (Cont'd)					
EPF/916/89	High House Farm, Stapleford Road, Stapleford Abbots.	18 hole course.	TQ499952		Approved with Conditions May 1991.
EPF/920/89	Fyfield Hall, Willingale Road, Fyfield.	Driving range.	TL573071		Approved with Conditions September 1991.
EPF/1358/89	Carolls Farm, Bury Road, Sewardstonebury, Waltham Abbey.	9 hole course.	TQ389966		Refused January 1990. See EPF/1086/90.
EPF/1406/89	Great Gregories Farm, Theydon Bois.	12 acres for golf practice area.	TL451003		Approved June 1990. Section 106 Agreement yet to be signed.
EPF/1650/89	Galley Hill Farm, Galley Hill Road, Waltham Abbey.	18 hole course.	TL391023	70.2 ha	Approved with Conditions February 1990. Extension approved January 1991. (Application No. EPF/1030/90). No plans to build at present, details yet to be agreed.
EPF/1709/89	Southend Farm, Southend Lane, Upshire, Waltham Abbey.	9 hole course and practice range.	TL400999		Refused April 1990: 1. Access 2. Required for P.O.S. 3. Landscape Quality 4. Piecemeal Development.
EPF/1744/89	Little Weald Hall Farm, Cranes Lane, North Weald.	18 hole course.	TL498038	75 ha	Approved with Conditions March 1990.

PROPOSED GOLF COURSES AND DRIVING RANGES						
Application Number	Name & Location	Description	Grid Ref.	Area	Decision (+ reason for refusal if applicable)	
EPPING FOREST DISTRICT (Cont'd)						
EPF/1828/89	Paradise Farm, Hamlet Hill, Roydon.	Driving range.			Refused March 1990.	
EPF/62/90	Land south of Hill Hall adj. to M25 Motorway, Theydon Mount.	18 hole course.	TQ466991		Withdrawn June 1990.	
EPF/172/90	Upper Clapton Rugby Grounds, Upland Road, Thornwood.	Driving range.	TL460050		Approved April 1990.	
EPF/233/90	Lea Valley Nursery, Crooked Mile, Waltham Abbey.	Driving range.	TL381010		Refused September 1990.	
EPF/374/90	Hill Farm/ Diggers Farm, Willingale.	18 hole course and 9 hole course.	TL582065		Approved with Conditions May 1991 subject to 106 Agreement.	
EPF/484/90	Blunts Farm, Coopersale Lane, Theydon Bois.	18 hole course & clubhouse.	TQ462992	52 ha	Approved with Conditions January 1991.	
EPF/598/90	Broad Oaks, High Road, Chigwell.	18 hole course.	TQ446945		Refused November 1990. 1. Access 2. Traffic - deterioration of efficiency & through road 3. Car park prejudice to amenity trees. Appeal dismissed 4/11/91.	

PROPOSED GOLF COURSES AND DRIVING RANGES					
Application Number	Name & Location	Description	Grid Ref.	Area	Decision (+ reason for refusal if applicable)
EPHING FOREST DISTRICT (Cont'd)					
EPF/566/91	Land adj. Woolston Hail, Abridge Road, Chigwell.	Extension to approved 18 hole course.	TQ457956		Approved. Section 106 agreement yet to be signed.
EPF/595/91	Copped Hall Estate, Epping.	2 x 18 hole courses & clubhouse.			Current application.
EPF/791/91	Royal Ordnance Factory Site, Waltham Abbey.	18 hole course & clubhouse.	TQ382990		Current application.
MALDON DISTRICT					
MAL/322/89 MAL/84/90 LB/MAL/85/90	Highlands Farm, Highlands Hill, Mayland.	18 hole course & driving range, putting green, 4 cottages & clubhouse.	TL928090	62 ha	MAL/322/89 refused MAL/84 & 85/90 approved June 1990.
MAL/285/90	Burnham-on-Crouch Golf Club, Ferry Lane, Creeksea.	9 hole course.	TQ930970		Current application for extension to existing course.
MAL/285/90	The Warren Golf Club, Hawkins Farm, Woodham Walter.	9 hole course.	TL802062		Extension approved for existing course.

PROPOSED GOLF COURSES AND DRIVING RANGES						
Application Number	Name & Location	Description	Grid Ref.	Area	Decision (+ reason for refusal if applicable)	
EPPING FOREST DISTRICT (Cont'd)						
EPF/642/90	Woolston Hall Farm, Abridge Road, Chigwell.	18 hole course and 9 hole course.	TQ457956		Approved with Conditions March 1991.	
EPF/719/90	British Telecom Site, North Weald.	2 x 18 hole courses, 9 hole course 2 clubhouses & hotel.	TL499040	221.7 ha	Refused May 1991. Proposed golf course in Epping & Ongar Local Plan (See EPF/975/88).	
EPF/1086/90	Carrolls Farm, Sewardstonebury. (Duplicate application).	9 hole course.	TQ389966		Current application. Also see EPF/1087/90 Duplicate application.	
EPF/1174/90	Dorrington Farm, Rye Hill, Thornwood.	18 hole course and 9 hole course and teaching facility and clubhouse.	TL452069		Current application.	
EPF/1194/90	Newland Hall, Roxwell, Willingale.	18 hole course.	TTL6189095		Approved with Conditions December 1990.	
EPF/1497/90	British Telecom Site, North Weald.	2 x 18 hole course, 9 hole course 2 clubhouses & hotel.	TL499040	221.7 ha	Refused May 1991 duplicate application. (see EPF/719/90).	
EPF/709/91	Peakes Farm, Mount Road, Theydon Garmon.	18 hole course.	TL485001		Withdrawn October 1991.	
EPF/148/91	Land adj. 1 Bentons Cottage, Middle Street, Nazeing.	Driving range.	TL407052		Refused July 1991.	

PROPOSED GOLF COURSES AND DRIVING RANGES						
Application Number	Name & Location	Description	Grid Ref.	Area	Decision (+ reason for refusal if applicable)	
MALDON DISTRICT (Cont'd)						
MAL/470/90	Langford Hall Farm, Langford.	18 hole course.	TQ844081	48.5 ha	Refused: 1. Rural Area 2. Landscape Value 3. Access 4. Prematurity 5. Appearance of Countryside.	
MAL/433/90	Whitehouse Hill, Tolleshunt D'Arcy.	18 hole course and 9 hole course.	TQ928969	50 ha	Approved March 1991.	
MAL/969/90	The Yacht Harbour, Woodroffe Farm Lane, Tolleshbury.	9 hole course.	TL968098	12.8 ha	Refused 1990.	
	Land south of Benton Hall, Wickham Hill, Wickham Bishops.	18 hole course.			Approved 1989. Part in Braintree District. See BTE/477/89 and BTE/171/92. Also see MAL/949/91	
MAL/139/91	Quietwaters Golf Club, Salcott.	Building for golf tuition.	TL940134		Refused April 1991 Reasons: Contrary to Structure Plan Policies S10, L19.	
MAL/415/91	Quietwaters Golf Club, Salcott.	Building for golf tuition.	TL940134		Refused July 1991 Reasons: Contrary to Structure Plan Policies S10, L19.	
MAL/584/91	Quietwaters Golf Club, Salcott.	Golf practice area.			Approved October 1991.	
MAL/949/91	Land south of Benton Hall, Wickham Hill, Wickham Bishops.	18 hole course & tuition facilities.			Current application - Part in Braintree District. See BTE/477/89 and BTE/171/92	

PROPOSED GOLF COURSES AND DRIVING RANGES

Application Number	Name & Location	Description	Grid Ref.	Area	Decision (+ reason for refusal if applicable)
MALDON DISTRICT (Cont'd)					
MAL/166/92	Tideway Farm, Steeple Road, Latchingdon.	Driving range and 3 hole golf academy.	TL904009		Current application.
ROCHFORD DISTRICT					
ROC/554/89	Land adj. A130 by Old Chelmsford Road, Rawreth.	Driving range.	TQ784921	2.2 ha	Withdrawn.
ROC/945/89	Gusted Hall Golf Club, Gusted Hall, Rochford.	18 hole course.	TQ838905	67 ha	Refused: 1. Alien landscape 2. Disturb landscape with Conservation Area 3. Highways 4. Listed building
ROC/187/90	Blue House Farm, Chelmsford Road, Rayleigh.	Driving range.	TQ784926	2.2 ha	Refused: 1. Impair appearance of open rural countryside on prominent roadside site. 2. Highways 3. Listed buildings in part.
ROC/429/90	As above	Driving range.	TQ782923	2.2 ha	Withdrawn.
ROC/146/91	As above	Driving range.			Approved subject to Section 106 Agreement.
ROC/630/91	Land adj. to Chichester Hall, London Road, Rawreth.	9 hole course.	TQ780920		Refused March 1992: 1. Highways 2. Harmful to wildlife habitat.
ROC/829/91	Gusted Hall, Hockley, Rochford.	18 hole course.	TQ840909	87 ha	Current application.

PROPOSED GOLF COURSES AND DRIVING RANGES						
Application Number	Name & Location	Description	Grid Ref.	Area	Decision (+ reason for refusal if applicable)	
SOUTHEND BOROUGH						
SOS/1016/90	Land located south of Southend Road and north of Bourmes Green Chase, Southend-on-Sea.	2 x 18 hole courses, 2 clubhouses, tennis centre, 150 bed hotel, conference and health facilities etc.	TQ923868	131.5 ha (Now 77.5 ha)	Current application. Revised application now reduced to one eighteen hole course with two practice areas. Southend Borough Council has accepted the principle of development subject to a Section 106 Agreement.	
SOS/1035/91	Part of Fox Hall & Shopland Hall Farm & Francis Sports Ground, Eastern Avenue, Southend-on-Sea.	18 hole "pay & play", 9 hole pitch & putt, 40 bay driving range, and clubhouse.	903880	78.4 ha	Current application.	
TENDRING DISTRICT						
TEN/1726/88	Great Oakley Hall, Great Oakley.	18 hole course, 80 bed hotel & leisure centre.	TM205285	60.7 ha	Approved subject to Section 106 Agreement, yet to be signed.	
TEN/1880/88	Point Clear Holiday Park, St Osyth.	9 hole course.	TM100165	22.25 ha	Withdrawn - see TEN/1605/90.	
TEN/2088/88	Church Farm, Alresford.	18 hole course & clubhouse.	TM063211	48.39 ha	Approved December 1988. See TEN/1207/91.	
TEN/616/89	Gurnham Farm, Church Road, Tendring.	18 hole course, clubhouse & sports facilities.	TM125240	49.8 ha	Approved December 1990, subject to Section 106 Agreement yet to be signed.	

PROPOSED GOLF COURSES AND DRIVING RANGES						
Application Number	Name & Location	Description	Grid Ref.	Area	Decision (+ reason for refusal if applicable)	
TENDRING DISTRICT (Cont'd)						
TEN/1204/89	Little Bromley Hall, Little Bromley.	9 hole course	TM092278	17.4 ha	Approved February 1990.	
TEN/489/90	Oak House Farm, Thorpe Road, Clacton.	Driving range	TM180185	1.87 ha	Approved 1990.	
TEN/923/90	Ford Farm/ Dairy House Farm/ Dove House Farm, Mistley, Manningtree.	18 hole course & clubhouse	TM119312	69.4 ha	Current application.	
TEN/1050/90	Thorpe Hall, Thorpe-le-Soken.	18 hole course, clubhouse, 100 bed hotel, sports complex, restaurant	TM179220	50 ha	Approved 1991 subject to Section 106 agreement.	
TEN/1605/90	Point Clear Holiday Park, St Osyth.	9 hole course	TM100165		Refused June 1991. See TEN/1880/88.	
TEN/207/91	Church Farm, Alresford, Clacton.	18 hole course & clubhouse	TM063211	48 ha	Current application to renew TEN/2088/88.	
THURROCK BOROUGH						
THU/199/83	Buckles Lane, South Ockendon.	9 hole course & driving range	TQ599817	5.74 ha	Approved May 1986 - lapsed. See THU/623/91.	

PROPOSED GOLF COURSES AND DRIVING RANGES					
Application Number	Name & Location	Description	Grid Ref.	Area	Decision (+ reason for refusal if applicable)
THURROCK BOROUGH (Cont'd)					
THU/987/87	St Clares Hall, Stanford Road, Stanford-le-Hope.	18 hole course & hotel.	TQ674819	50 ha	Approved 1989 Section 52 Agreement signed. See THU/496/91.
THU/1238/88	Mucking Marshes, Mucking.	18 hole course.	TQ695805	60 ha	Approved on reinstated mineral workings - March 1990.
THU/1042/89	Heath Place, Orsett Heath.	18 hole course and 9 hole course, driving range, clubhouse & hotel.	TQ647804	66.72 ha	Refused. See THU/539/90.
THU/1095/89	Davey Down, Stifford.	Driving range.	TQ591800	4 ha	Proposal involves the removal of 4400m ³ of sand and gravel - refused.
THU/539/90	Heath Place, Orsett Heath.	18 hole course and 9 hole course, driving range & clubhouse.	TQ647804	66.72 ha	Approved 1990 subject to Section 106 agreement. See THU/1042/89.
THU/53/91	Moor Farm, Aveley.	18 hole course & driving range.	TQ550556	82 ha	Current application (only small part in County) Havering B.C. currently awaiting further information.
THU/496/91	St Clares Hall, Stanford Road, Stanford-le-Hope.	18 hole course & 9 hole course, 82 bed hotel & clubhouse.	TQ674819	87 ha	Current application. See THU/987/87.
THU/623/91	Land north & south of Buckles Lane, South Ockendon.	Golf course, driving range & clubhouse.	TQ6602817		Approved subject to Section 106 agreement as yet unsigned. See THU/199/83.
THU/751/91	Whitcroft, Stanford-le-Hope.	30 bay driving range.			Application withdrawn.

PROPOSED GOLF COURSES AND DRIVING RANGES					
Application Number	Name & Location	Description	Grid Ref.	Area	Decision (+ reason for refusal if applicable)
UTILESFORD DISTRICT					
UTT/1400/87	Elsenham Sand Quarry, Elsenham.	9 hole course.	TL546263	28 ha	Approved May 1988. Restoration of ex-mineral workings. See UTY/1774/90, and UTT/0984/91.
UTT/0984/88	Hatfield Park, Takeley.	2 x 18 hole courses with new clubhouse, 100 bed hotel including conference and leisure facilities.	TL565205	138 ha	Approved September 1988. Section 106 Agreement covering access etc. completed. Commencement likely 1992. Opening not before April 1993 - see UTT/0229/91 and UTT/1260/91.
UTT/0993/90	Goddards Farm, Thaxted.	18 hole course with clubhouse in converted farm buildings.	TL613325	71.6 ha	Approved November 1990. Section 106 Agreement covering revised access, improvements being negotiated. Decision expected shortly.
UTT/1057/90	Clavering Farm, Langley Upper Green/ Elmdon.	18 hole course with new clubhouse.	TL452354	80 ha	Refused September 1990. Reasons: Access, effect on neighbours and visual grounds. Appeal dismissed on landscape and highway grounds.
UTT/1285/90	Hill Green Farm, Clavering/Arkesden.	18 hole course with new clubhouse & staff flat.	TL486329	63 ha	Refused November 1990. Reasons: Newbuild clubhouse detrimental to rural environment and contrary to interim criteria for golf developments. Revised application submitted. See UTT/0158/9.
UTT/1290/90	Shortgrove Park, Newport, Saffron Walden.	3 x 18 hole courses & 150 bed hotel, clubhouse, sports and leisure facilities & residential development.	TL528345	270 ha	Refused December 1990. Reasons: Contrary to local plan policy and interim criteria re. golf developments, newbuild hotel detrimental to rural environment and contrary to interia criteria, highway dangers. Revised application submitted. See UTT/0589/91.
UTT/1774/90	Elsenham Sand Quarry, Elsenham.	Golf driving range, associated car parking and altered access.	TL546263	3 ha	Approved April 1991. Adjoins UTT/1400/87 above and superseded by UTT/0984/91 below. Part of ex-mineral working.

PROPOSED GOLF COURSES AND DRIVING RANGES					
Application Number	Name & Location	Description	Grid Ref.	Area	Decision (+ reason for refusal if applicable)
UTTLESFORD DISTRICT (Cont'd)					
UTTY0039/91	Gladwyns Farm, Hatfield Heath.	Driving range & ancillary practice area.	TL51343	5 ha	Refused April 1991. Reasons: Detrimental effect on open Green Belt countryside and neighbours; highway dangers.
UTTY0077/91	Easton Glebe, Little Easton.	9 hole course (Par 3).	TL402239	10 ha	Refused April 1991. Reasons: Access via narrow country lanes to remote location.
UTTY0158/91	Hill Green Farm, Clavering/Arkesden.	18 hole course with new clubhouse & staff flat.	TL486329	63 ha	Refused April 1991. Revised application also refused for same reasons. See UTTY1285/90.
UTTY0222/91	Hatfield Park, Takeley.	2 x 18 hole courses and 1 x 9 hole course with new clubhouse, 201 bed hotel including conference and leisure facilities.	TL565205	190 ha	Refused April 1991. Revised application. See UTTY0984/88. Reasons: Extra 100 hotel bedrooms contrary to policy. Revised application now submitted. See UTTY1260/91.
UTTY0589/91	Shortgrove Park, Newport.	2 x 18 hole courses with clubhouse, residential accommodation, new access and 150 bed hotel including sport and leisure facilities.	TL525354	270 ha	Approved November 1991. Revised application. See UTTY1290/91. DoE did not call in Section 106 Agreement to cover public access, restoration of parkland etc.
UTTY0876/91	Chickney Hall Farm, Broxted.	2 x 18 hole courses with new clubhouse.	TL545260	55 ha	Refused November 1991. Reasons: Detrimental effect on landscape, church setting and access. Appeal lodged.
UTTY0984/91	Eisenham Hall, Eisenham.	18 hole course.	TL545260	55 ha	Approved October 1991. Revised application to replace UTTY1400/87, UTTY1774/90. Eisenham Hall LB to be restored and converted to 35 bed hotel in association with golf course. No new buildings required.

PROPOSED GOLF COURSES AND DRIVING RANGES

Application Number	Name & Location	Description	Grid Ref.	Area	Decision (+ reason for refusal if applicable)
UTILESFORD DISTRICT (Cont'd)					
UTT/1260/91	Hatfield Park, Takeley.	2 x 18 hole course & 1 x 9 hole course with new clubhouse, 150 bed hotel including conference and leisure facilities.	TL56S205	190 ha	Approved December 1991. See UTT/088/88, UTT/0229/91. Condition so that extra 50 beds can only be begun after July 1996 as A120 completed.

Essex Structure Plan First Alteration Policies

The principal Structure Plan policies relevant to the determination of applications for golf courses and golf driving ranges are as follows:-

POLICY S9

WITHIN THE GREEN BELT PERMISSION WILL NOT BE GIVEN, EXCEPT IN VERY SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES, FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF NEW BUILDINGS OR FOR THE CHANGE OF USE OR EXTENSION OF EXISTING BUILDINGS (OTHER THAN REASONABLE EXTENSIONS TO EXISTING DWELLINGS), FOR PURPOSES OTHER THAN AGRICULTURE, MINERAL EXTRACTION OR FORESTRY, SMALL-SCALE FACILITIES FOR OUTDOOR PARTICIPATORY SPORT AND RECREATION, INSTITUTIONS REQUIRING LARGE GROUNDS, CEMETERIES OR SIMILAR USES WHICH ARE OPEN IN CHARACTER. DWELLINGS FOR AGRICULTURAL WORKERS MAY BE PERMITTED IN CONJUNCTION WITH FARMS IF IT CAN BE SHOWN THAT THE WORKER MUST BE RESIDENT ON THE AGRICULTURAL HOLDING. ANY DEVELOPMENT WHICH IS PERMITTED SHALL BE OF A SCALE, DESIGN AND SITING SUCH THAT THE APPEARANCE OF THE COUNTRYSIDE IS NOT IMPAIRED.

POLICY S10

WITHIN THE RURAL AREAS NOT INCLUDED IN THE GREEN BELT, THE COUNTRYSIDE OUTSIDE EXISTING SETTLEMENTS DEFINED IN LOCAL PLANS WILL BE PROTECTED FROM DEVELOPMENT AND THE EXISTING USES OF LAND SHALL REMAIN, FOR THE MOST PART, UNDISTURBED. PERMISSION WILL NOT NORMALLY BE GIVEN FOR DEVELOPMENT IN THE RURAL AREAS OUTSIDE DEFINED SETTLEMENTS UNLESS THE PROPOSALS ARE RELATED TO AGRICULTURE, MINERAL EXTRACTION, FORESTRY OR APPROPRIATE OUTDOOR RECREATIONAL USES OR SIMILAR USES OF AN OPEN CHARACTER COMPATIBLE WITH THE RURAL AREAS. DWELLINGS FOR AGRICULTURAL WORKERS MAY BE PERMITTED IN CONJUNCTION WITH FARMS IF IT CAN BE SHOWN THAT THE WORKER MUST BE RESIDENT ON THE AGRICULTURAL HOLDING. ANY DEVELOPMENT WHICH IS PERMITTED SHALL BE OF A SCALE, DESIGN AND SITING SUCH THAT THE APPEARANCE OF THE COUNTRYSIDE IS NOT IMPAIRED.

POLICY S11

THE NEW USE OF FORMER AIRFIELDS AND THEIR BUILDINGS SHALL BE RESTRICTED TO USES RELATED TO AGRICULTURE AND ANCILLARY PURPOSES, RECREATION, OR EMPLOYMENT GENERATING USES WHICH WOULD BE COMPATIBLE WITH THE RURAL AREA. THE ERECTION OF NEW BUILDINGS, OR THE EXTENSION OF EXISTING BUILDINGS, ON DISUSED AIRFIELDS WILL NOT NORMALLY BE ALLOWED UNLESS PROVIDED FOR IN LOCAL PLANS.

POLICY L1

PLANNING PERMISSION WILL NORMALLY BE GRANTED FOR TOURIST AND RECREATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS, AND ENCOURAGEMENT GIVEN TO THE SAFEGUARDING AND IMPROVEMENT OF EXISTING TOURIST ATTRACTIONS AND FACILITIES. IN ASSESSING PROPOSALS FOR TOURIST AND RECREATIONAL DEVELOPMENT, ACCOUNT WILL BE TAKEN OF ACCESSIBILITY OF THE FACILITIES, THEIR IMPACT ON LOCAL AMENITIES AND ON POLICIES FOR COUNTRYSIDE CONSERVATION, THE EFFECT OF INCREASES IN TRAFFIC AND DEMAND FOR CAR PARKING, THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL CONSEQUENCES FOR THE LOCAL COMMUNITY, AND OTHER POLICIES IN THE PLAN.

POLICY L6

THE PROVISION OF RECREATIONAL FACILITIES WITHIN AREAS OF DERELICT OR DESPOILED LAND WILL BE FAVOURABLY CONSIDERED PROVIDING:

- (i) THE USE IS COMPATIBLE WITH ADJOINING USES;
- (ii) THE VISUAL APPEARANCE OF THE AREA IS ENHANCED;
- (iii) THE ECOLOGICAL VALUE OF THE AREA IS NOT IMPAIRED;
- (iv) THE TRAFFIC GENERATED BY THE PROPOSED USE CAN BE ACCOMMODATED BY THE ADJOINING ROAD NETWORK IN BOTH PHYSICAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL TERMS.

POLICY L18

THE DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT OF AN APPROPRIATE RANGE AND STANDARD OF SPORTS FACILITIES WILL BE ENCOURAGED.

POLICY L19

SPORTS FACILITIES WHICH REQUIRE SUBSTANTIAL BUILDING, OR WHICH CONFLICT WITH COUNTRYSIDE CONSERVATION POLICIES, WILL NOT NORMALLY BE PERMITTED IN THE COUNTRYSIDE.

POLICY T4

PROPOSALS FOR DEVELOPMENT AFFECTING HIGHWAYS WILL BE CONSIDERED IN RELATION TO THE ROAD HIERARCHY, TO REDUCING AND PREVENTING HAZARDS AND INCONVENIENCE TO TRAFFIC, AND TO THE EFFECTS ON THE TRANSPORT SYSTEM INCLUDING THE PHYSICAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL CAPACITY TO ACCOMMODATE THE TRAFFIC GENERATED.

POLICY NR1

THERE WILL BE A GENERAL PRESUMPTION AGAINST DEVELOPMENT CAUSING THE STERILISATION OR DISRUPTION OF COMMERCIAL FARMLAND AND, WHERE POSSIBLE, LAND UNSUITABLE FOR PRODUCTIVE AGRICULTURAL USE SHOULD BE DEVELOPED INSTEAD.

POLICY NR6

THERE WILL BE A PRESUMPTION AGAINST ANY DEVELOPMENT WHICH WOULD ADVERSELY AND MATERIALLY AFFECT DESIGNATED NATIONAL NATURE RESERVES AND SITES OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST.

POLICY NR8

DEVELOPMENT PREJUDICIAL TO THE RETENTION AND MANAGEMENT OF IMPORTANT WILDLIFE HABITATS AND THEIR INTER-RELATIONSHIPS WILL NORMALLY BE REFUSED.

POLICY NR9

THERE WILL BE A PRESUMPTION AGAINST ADDITIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN COUNTRYSIDE CONSERVATION AREAS OTHER THAN THAT ESSENTIAL TO AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY OR RECREATION. THE CO-OPERATION OF THOSE WITH INTERESTS IN LAND IN THE AREA WILL BE ESTABLISHED BY CONSULTATION ARRANGEMENTS.

POLICY NR10

THE NATURAL BEAUTY, AMENITY AND TRADITIONAL QUALITY OF THE ESSEX LANDSCAPE WILL BE PROTECTED, CONSERVED AND ENHANCED. THERE WILL BE A PRESUMPTION AGAINST DEVELOPMENT WHICH WOULD CAUSE PERMANENT LOSS TO, OR DAMAGE TO, THIS LANDSCAPE.

POLICY NR11

NO DEVELOPMENT SHALL TAKE PLACE IN THE DEDHAM VALE AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY WHICH WOULD CONFLICT WITH CONSERVATION OF THE AREA AND MEASURES FOR ITS MANAGEMENT AND ENHANCEMENT.

POLICY NR12

WITHIN SPECIAL LANDSCAPE AREAS, IN ADDITION TO OTHER POLICIES SET OUT ELSEWHERE IN THIS STATEMENT, THERE WILL BE A PRESUMPTION AGAINST DEVELOPMENT UNLESS ITS LOCATION, SITING, DESIGN, MATERIALS AND LANDSCAPING ACCORD WITH THE CHARACTER OF THE AREA IN WHICH THE DEVELOPMENT IS PROPOSED.....

POLICY NR15

IN PROPOSALS FOR DEVELOPMENT, EXISTING WOODS, TREES AND HEDGEROWS SHOULD BE RETAINED WHEREVER POSSIBLE AND NEW PLANTING OF APPROPRIATE SPECIES WILL NORMALLY BE REQUIRED TO REPLACE ANY LOSSES RESULTING FROM DEVELOPMENT.

POLICY NR16

EXISTING WOODLANDS SHOULD BE RETAINED WHEREVER POSSIBLE WITH MANAGEMENT APPROPRIATE TO AGE, USE, LOCATION AND SCIENTIFIC INTEREST.

POLICY NR18

THERE SHALL BE THE MOST STRINGENT RESTRICTIONS ON DEVELOPMENT ON THE RURAL AND UNDEVELOPED COASTLINE OUTSIDE BUILT-UP AREAS AND ANY DEVELOPMENT WHICH IS EXCEPTIONALLY PERMITTED SHALL NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT THE OPEN AND RURAL CHARACTER OR WILDLIFE.

POLICY NR20

WHEREVER POSSIBLE, POTENTIALLY WORKABLE MINERAL DEPOSITS WILL BE SAFEGUARDED FROM SURFACE DEVELOPMENT THAT WOULD STERILISE THE MINERALS OR PREJUDICE THEIR WORKING. IF, IN THE OPINION OF THE COUNCIL, SURFACE DEVELOPMENT SHOULD BE PERMITTED, CONSIDERATION WILL BE GIVEN TO THE PRIOR EXTRACTION OF THE MINERALS TO THE EXTENT THAT SUCH EXTRACTION WOULD NOT BE LIKELY TO RENDER THE SITE UNSUITABLE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT PROPOSED.

POLICY C4

DEVELOPMENT WHICH WOULD SUBSTANTIALLY AND ADVERSELY AFFECT AN AREA OR SITE OF OUTSTANDING ARCHAEOLOGICAL INTEREST WILL NOT NORMALLY BE PERMITTED.

POLICY C5

IMPORTANT ARCHAEOLOGICAL AREAS AND SITES IN THE COUNTY WILL BE PROTECTED AND CONSERVED WHEREVER POSSIBLE.

POLICY C6

APPLICATIONS FOR PLANNING PERMISSION FOR DEVELOPMENT AFFECTING SCHEDULED ANCIENT MONUMENTS AND OTHER IMPORTANT ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES WILL NORMALLY BE REFUSED IF THERE IS AN OVERRIDING CASE FOR PRESERVATION. WHERE THERE IS NO OVERRIDING CASE FOR PRESERVATION PLANNING PERMISSION WILL NORMALLY BE GRANTED PROVIDED ADEQUATE OPPORTUNITY IS GIVEN FOR THE RECORDING AND, WHERE DESIRABLE, THE EXCAVATION OF SUCH SITES. IN SOME CIRCUMSTANCES, DEVELOPMENT MAY BE PERMITTED SUBJECT TO CONDITIONS AFFORDING REASONABLE ACCESS TO THE SITE TO CARRY OUT AND OBSERVE EXCAVATIONS, AND RECORD FINDS, BOTH BEFORE AND DURING DEVELOPMENT.

A Sample of Current Local Plan Policies

Braintree District Local Plan, Deposit Draft, October 1991

Golf Course Policy

BDP (Para 10.14)

IN CONSIDERING PROPOSALS FOR GOLF COURSES THE DISTRICT COUNCIL WILL HAVE REGARD TO THE SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE ON LOCATION AND DESIGN AS SET OUT IN THE ESSEX GOLF REPORT. IN PARTICULAR THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA WILL BE APPLIED:

- (1) THERE WILL BE A PRESUMPTION AGAINST THE DEVELOPMENT OF GOLF COURSES IN HIGHLY VISIBLE COUNTRYSIDE SUCH AS PROMINENT SITES ON SCARP SLOPES, VALLEYS, EXPOSED PLATEAUX AND RIDGES.
- (2) GOLF COURSES WILL NOT BE PERMITTED WITHIN SITES OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST.
- (3) GOLF COURSES WILL NEED TO BE LOCATED SO THAT SAFE AND CONVENIENT ACCESS CAN BE MADE TO THE ROUTE HIERARCHY WITHOUT THE NEED TO USE LONG STRETCHES OF UNSUITABLE RURAL LANES AND PASS THROUGH SMALL SETTLEMENTS.
- (4) ON GOLF COURSES WITHIN A RURAL LOCATION BUILT DEVELOPMENT WILL BE RESTRICTED TO THOSE FACILITIES ESSENTIALLY REQUIRED TO SERVE THE CLUB. THE CONVERSION OF EXISTING BUILDINGS WILL BE PREFERRED. THERE WILL BE A STRONG PRESUMPTION AGAINST OTHER LARGE SCALE BUILDINGS IN THE COUNTRYSIDE NOT ESSENTIALLY RELATED TO THE USE OF LAND FOR GOLF. PROPOSALS FOR RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT AND HOLIDAY ACCOMMODATION IN ASSOCIATION WITH GOLF COURSES IN RURAL AREAS WILL BE FIRMLY RESISTED.

Draft Brentwood Local Plan February 1991

Golf Courses

GB30

CHANGES OF USE TO GOLF COURSES WILL NORMALLY ONLY BE ALLOWED WHERE EXISTING BUILDINGS ARE AVAILABLE WITHIN THE SITE FOR CONVERSION FOR CLUBHOUSE AND OTHER DIRECTLY RELATED PURPOSES OR WHERE ANY NEW BUILDINGS WOULD REPLACE EXISTING STRUCTURES AND WHERE THE CRITERIA IN POLICIES GB28 AND GB29 ABOVE ARE MET. THE OWNER SHOULD BE WILLING TO OFFER A SECTION 106 AGREEMENT TO PROVIDE FOOTPATHS AND BRIDLEWAYS, WHERE APPROPRIATE, AS PART OF THE GOLF COURSE LAYOUT.

Review of Adopted Colchester Borough Local Plan - Deposit Draft, May 1991

8/R14

When considering proposals for golf courses, golf-driving ranges, pitch and putt courses and putting greens, the following will be taken into account:-

- (a) there will be a presumption against granting permission on land of good agricultural quality (Grades 1, 2, 3A);
- (b) the impact on sites of nature conservation importance and the landscape.

When considering the establishment or extension of clubhouses in association with golf uses, the criteria listed on Policy 8/R12 will be taken into account.

When such activities are to be located in the countryside, planning permission may be given for an associated dwelling, where the Borough Council are satisfied that there is a proven need.

Thurrock Borough Local Plan - Consultation Draft June 1991

LR14 Golf Courses and Golf Driving Ranges

THE COUNCIL WILL OPPOSE THE OVER-PROVISION OF GOLF COURSES AND DRIVING RANGES IN THE BOROUGH, PARTICULARLY IN RESPECT OF PROPOSALS WHICH WOULD NOT PROVIDE FACILITIES FOR USE BY LOCAL PEOPLE.

IN ASSESSING PROPOSALS FOR GOLF COURSES IT WILL BE NECESSARY TO CONSIDER THE SITING, LAYOUT AND LANDSCAPING OF THE COURSE TOGETHER WITH SIZE AND LOCATION OF ASSOCIATED BUILDINGS WITH REGARD TO THE POLICIES OF THE PLAN, PARTICULARLY THOSE RELATING TO GREEN BELT, LANDSCAPE AND NATURE CONSERVATION.

Chelmsford Borough Plan - Consultation Plan March 1992

Golf Courses and Driving Ranges

POLICY REC10

IN ASSESSING PROPOSALS FOR GOLF COURSES AND GOLF DRIVING RANGES IT WILL BE NECESSARY TO BALANCE THE LEVEL OF LOCAL DEMAND FOR THE FACILITY WITH THE EXISTING AND PROPOSED PROVISION AND WITH THE POLICIES OF THE PLAN AND IN PARTICULAR WITH THE CONSIDERATIONS STATED IN PARAGRAPH 6.41.

N.B. In all cases the supportive text of Local Plans carries further explanations and in some cases more detailed criteria for the consideration of proposals, for golf courses and related facilities.

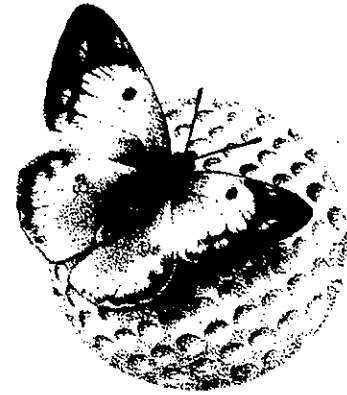
Appendix V

EXTENT TO WHICH THE GUIDELINES OF THE ESSEX GOLF REPORT (FIRST EDITION) ARE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT BY ESSEX PLANNING AUTHORITIES

District	Guidelines are taken into account when determining golf course applications	Report Approved by appropriate Committee as supplementary planning guidance	Guidelines referred to in forthcoming Local Plan or review of Local Plan	Appropriate policies derived from guidelines incorporated in forthcoming Local Plan or review	Guidelines incorporated in		Appropriate policies derived from guidelines incorporated in	
					Draft Local Plan	Adopted Local Plan	Draft Local Plan	Adopted Local Plan
Basildon	•		•		•			
Braintree	•	•	•		•			
Brentwood	•	Some amendments •			•			
Castle Point	•			•			Being Considered	
Chelmsford	•		•	•	•			
Colchester	•				•		•	
Epping Forest	•	Some amendments •		•				
Harlow	•	•	•					
Maldon	•	•	•	•	•		•	•
Rochford				•				
Southend-on-Sea	•		•	•				
Tendring	•	•					•	
Thurrock	•			•			•	
Utlesford	•	•					•	

The Golf Course Wildlife Trust

Environmental Guidelines for Golf Development



The development of all golf projects should take full account of ecological factors in the following sequence.

1) Appraisal

Environmental appraisal report:

- Evaluation of ecological and nature conservation significance of site based on contemporary field survey, supporting documentary information and discussions with appropriate statutory and local conservation organisations. Consultations may also be required with appropriate specialists in forestry, agriculture, water supply, archaeology and landscape under a general environmental review.
- Appraisal of ecological implications of golf course development, identifying the particular constraints on an Environmental Sensitivity Map, and outlining the potential opportunities for ecological enhancement.

Preliminary design liaison:

- Close liaison between all members of project team to ensure the effective integration of all significant environmental factors affecting project feasibility and design briefs.

2) Planning

Detailed design liaison:

- Close consultation between ecologist and golf course architect to harmonize golf play areas with those of ecological importance. Other environmental constraints such as topography, drainage, hydrology, archaeology and landscape must also be accommodated during the design process.
- Further liaison with planning authorities and appropriate local conservation organisations and specialists.
- Siting of infrastructure and any built development must also be finalized in accordance with the environmental constraints.

Impact assessment:

- Preparation of statement on environmental impact for the entire development scheme (including any associated hard development), indicating potential conservation gains and losses. Include outline proposals for enhancement of site and measures taken to avoid or limit environmental damage.

3) Post-planning

Conservation management plan:

- Preparation of conservation management plan for the whole development area, including all golf play areas and roughs. It may be appropriate to co-ordinate this through a "Conservation Management Advisory Group", bringing together the environmental and golfing interests. The management plan should also address matters of public access, educational and research opportunities, and provide for training greens staff in the ecological aspects of their work.

Site preparation:

- Consulting ecologist and golf course architect to review staking out of golf course route to determine any final design modifications prior to construction work commencing.
- Marking out and fencing no-go areas for construction vehicles, to ensure that key habitats are protected on the ground.
- Briefing of site engineer on environmental factors highlighted during study phase.

Construction supervision:

- Regular on-site supervision of construction work to ensure protection of sensitive areas.
- Initiate first phases of management plan, while equipment and labour are on site.

4) Mature operation

- Implementation of conservation management plan, with provision for monitoring during establishment period, and regular review as golf play areas mature.

British Institute of Golf Course Architects' Guidelines

The British Institute of Golf Course Architects (BIGCA) recognises that the philosophy of golf course design is naturally adapted to the ethic of conservation and offers the following guidelines.

1. SURVEY

A thorough survey of a new site is essential. Sensitive plant and animal communities need identification and expert assistance should be sought.

2. SITE EVALUATION

The question must be asked whether in view of any survey information the site is really suitable for the client's needs. There is little point in pursuing a public course on sensitive heathland, unless the whole area can be spared, and thereby setting in motion a long and angry debate for many years.

3. IDEOLOGY

Defuse the ideology. Organise meetings before any planning application to weigh opinions, and defuse the notion that golf is anti-conservation.

4. SPACE

Reserve as much space for the golf course as possible. Far less conflict exists when the site is generous and the two parties can cohabit peacefully. Forty hectares gives little or no margin; 60 hectares gives considerable margin.

5. LAYOUT

Work and re-work the layout plan for the golf course to avoid the sensitive areas, to keep holes within natural internal boundaries such as hedgerows, to minimise tree clearance and preserve all of the natural features of the site. Leave natural, man-made archaeological relics which give both character and history to the site. Take account of the survey information but do not disregard the possibility of using a sensitive area or wetland as forced-carry rough with a path to one side.

6. DRAINAGE AND IRRIGATION

Take special care in draining sites. Nothing changes a habitat more than a change in moisture condition. The main playing areas have to be dry but ditches and outlets should take account of important wetlands. New ponds can be introduced if soil conditions are appropriate. In dry climates, design the irrigation carefully to avoid overwatering natural rough or trees and shrubs adapted to hot climates.

7. ROUGH

There is no need to design the rough at the outset. Golf and nature should be allowed to settle down for a while. There is no point in narrowing down the fairway with a long rough on each side: the golfer will quickly destroy it by trampling. Nevertheless the pattern of trampling will soon become evident and dictate a sensible shape for the rough.

Golf Practice Areas at Schools

The following should be taken as general guidance and most aspects of layout and design are variable depending on space availability, and/or the degree of informality the particular governing body might wish to maintain.

LAYOUT The area needs to be up to 300m long x up to 150m wide preferably facing north (to avoid sun glare). The tees should be 3m apart arranged in a concave arc aimed at a central point 150m from the centre tee.

It is important that the selected playing area will not cause danger by way of stray golf balls to users of the school, adjacent properties or any adjacent highway or footpath. Adequate space is needed on either side for safety reasons. Alternatively 8m high close mesh fencing would be required.

The target greens would be 100m, 150m and 200m from the tees.

TEERING AREA Grass abutting a hard area or playground may be sufficient if useage is to be unintensive or if rotation of the area being used is possible, otherwise tee mats of link rubber with brush or synthetic grass inserts should be used. The mats should be able to be laid on the edge of the adjacent hard area. If not, some form of solid, possibly wooden base would be desirable.

Tees should preferably be separated by a barrier or netting for safety reasons, and some form of shelter over the tees would extend the playing time into inclement weather. Such a shelter would add considerably to the costs, however, and could reduce the versatility of the use of the area in question.

OPERATION The more golf balls which are available the greater the potential use of the facility and the less need to halt play for ball retrieval. A fully developed facility with maximum useage could require as many as 4,000 balls. In setting up a new facility one might wish to start with say 500. The balls would need to be specially marked range balls to reduce theft. Containers/buckets would also be needed for dispensing the balls.

There are systems of machine retrieval of balls which are expensive and initially any facility could be developed on the basis of manual retrieval. As the profits from such a venture would be for the benefit of the school in question, possibly pupils could be recruited to assist in ball collection.

ANCILLARY FACILITIES A room or outbuilding adjacent to the playing area would be needed for storage of balls and clubs and for its management, bookings and fee collection. Parking areas are essential but the use of hard play areas can supplement the main parking provision at most schools.

PLANNING PERMISSION The question of planning permission for the use of the school playing field for golf practice would need to be pursued with the District Council concerned. Depending on the scale of activities some may regard the activities as incidental to the primary use of the playing field for recreational purposes, but a specific planning application might be required in certain cases.

HOURS OF OPERATION The use of facilities would need to be restricted to outside school hours to avoid conflict with the educational interests of the premises. It is also recommended that either no artificial lighting be provided or a very low level of lighting be accepted in order to safeguard the amenities of adjacent housing areas.

Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in Essex

Audley End, Saffron Walden, Grade I	Uttlesford District
Belchamp Hall, Belchamp Walter, Grade II	Braintree District
Belhus Park, Aveley, Grade II	Thurrock Borough
Blake Hall, Bobbingworth, Grade II	Epping Forest District
Boreham House, Boreham, Grade II	Chelmsford District
Braxted Park, Gt. Braxted, Grade I	Maldon District
Bridge End Gardens, Saffron Walden Grade II*	Uttlesford District
Copped Hall, Epping Upland, Grade II*	Epping Forest District
Colchester Castle Park, Colchester Grade II	Colchester Borough
Danbury Park, Danbury Grade II	Chelmsford Borough
Down Hall, Hatfield Broad Oak Grade II	Uttlesford District
Faulkbourne Hall, Faulkbourne, Grade II	Braintree District
Glazenwood, Bradwell Grade II	Braintree District
Gosfield Hall, Gosfield, Grade II	Braintree District
Hatfield Priory, Hatfield Peverel, Grade II	Braintree District
Hill Hall, Theydon Mount, Grade II	Epping Forest District
Hylands Park, Writtle Grade II	Chelmsford Borough
Langleys, Great Waltham, Grade II	Chelmsford Borough
Layer Marney Tower, Layer Marney Grade II	Colchester Borough
The Maze, Saffron Walden, Grade II	Uttlesford District
New Hall, Boreham, Grade II	Chelmsford Borough
Quendon Park, Quendon, Grade I	Uttlesford District
Riffhams, Danbury, Grade II	Chelmsford Borough
St Osyth Priory, St Osyth, Grade II	Tendring District
Saling Grove, Great Saling, Grade II	Braintree District
Saling Hall, Great Saling, Grade II	Braintree District
Shortgrove Park, Newport, Grade II	Uttlesford District
Spains Hall, Finchinghamfield, Grade II	Braintree District
Terling Place, Terling, Grade II	Braintree District
Thorndon Park, Brentwood, Grade II*	Brentwood District
Thorpe Hall, Thorpe-le-Soken, Grade II	Tendring District
Warley Place, Great Warley, Grade II	Brentwood District
The Water Gardens, Harlow, Grade II	Harlow District
Weald Park, Brentwood, Grade II	Brentwood District
Wivenhoe Park, Wivenhoe, Grade II	Colchester Borough

For further information contact :

The County Planner, County Hall, Chelmsford, Essex, CM1 1LF or

The Historic Buildings & Monuments Commission, 23 Saville Road, London W1X 2HE

The Need for L.P.A.'s to Formally Request More Detail Before Considering Golf Course Applications

There has been much confusion as to the appropriate fee to be charged for applications for golf courses, some authorities treating them as "change of use" or "full" applications whilst others treat them as "outline" applications as buildings are invariably proposed. The Department of Environment acknowledge that an application to establish a golf course, for example on agricultural land, is essentially a change of use, however, it is likely that far more than a simple change of use will be involved in that landscaping and a car park and clubhouse are also likely to be proposed. The DoE therefore consider that the fee should reflect these individual operations and be charged in the amount prescribed in paragraph 15 of Part I of Schedule I to the Town & Country Planning (Fees for Applications and Deemed Applications) Regulations 1991 which refers to applications for "mixed developments".

If any buildings are involved, the application needs to be treated as one for outline planning permission whereby any permission granted would require the subsequent approval by the local planning authority of the "reserved matters".

As stated in this report, however, there are certain essential elements that are too fundamental to be left for subsequent submission and will be a major influence on the planning authority's assessment as to the acceptability of the application. The following elements must therefore be submitted with the outline application:

- (a) course layout;
- (b) siting and size of clubhouse and car park;
- (c) landscaping scheme, in sufficient detail to demonstrate how the proposed course can be integrated into the existing landscape;
- (d) and ecological statement.

Where an application is made without the above essential information, (the worse case being the "red edge" application which merely identifies the site), then the local planning authority will be unable to adequately assess the proposal and its possible impact. In such cases the authority will need to notify the applicant within the period of one month from the receipt of the application that it ought not to be considered separately from the above matters and that unless these details are submitted the authority will be unable to determine the application. Authority for this action is given in respect of "outline" applications by virtue of Article 7(2) of the Town & Country Planning General Development Order 1988 and, in respect of applications other than "outline" applications, by Regulation 4 of the Town & Country Planning (Applications) Regulations 1988.

Should the applicant fail to submit the requested information the application will not be determined. The applicant is entitled to lodge an appeal to the Secretary of State under Section 78(2) of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 on the basis that the planning authority has failed to determine the application within the statutory 8 weeks and may lodge such an appeal within 6 months of the notice served on the applicant in accordance with Article 7(2) that they require further information. It is to be noted that amongst the documents needing to be submitted to the Secretary of State for such an appeal is all correspondence with the authority relating to the application, which would include the Article 7(2) notice or direction under Regulation 4 and any subsequent correspondence.

Clearly at the inquiry the planning authority will seek to establish the reasonableness of the case as justified by this report. In so doing they are likely to demonstrate the unreasonableness of the applicant's appeal and could well seek costs against the appellant in accordance with the advice contained in Circular 2/87.