

A New Beginning for Scone Golf Course.

Re-development of the Scone Golf Course in the Upper Hunter Valley of NSW will begin in September this year and should be completed by the middle of 2018. The re-development is necessary as Roads and Maritime Services (RMS) require a substantial portion of the existing course for construction of the Scone heavy vehicle by-pass.

Funding for the re-development of \$3.8m will come from the RMS. Upper Hunter Shire Council has provided additional land immediately to the south of the existing course for the re-development to occur. The Golf Course is owned by the Council and managed by Scone RSL under a lease agreement. The Scone Golf Club is a sub-club of the RSL

An on-going consultative process was held during the design stage involving RMS, RSL management and Golf Club members. Tenders were issued in June. The tendering process is now complete. The successful tenderer is McMahons Pty Ltd who have been engaged in Sporting Field, Golf Course and Race Track construction for the past twenty years. Notable recent projects of theirs include the Ocean Dunes course on King Island and the new course at Kalgoorlie. Phil Ryan from Pacific Coast Design is the architect for the final design. Mark Wylie from Weidlich Golf Design will project manage the course construction for Upper Hunter Shire Council.

The re-designed course as with the existing course will have nine holes and eighteen tees. Course length and slope rating will be similar. From the blue markers the new course will be 6038m (v 5993m) and from the red markers will be 5002m (v 5238m). It has a par of 72.

Upper Hunter Shire Mayor Wayne Bedggood said "The new course will be professionally designed and constructed with an automated irrigation system using grey water. It will be as challenging as the existing course so members shouldn't expect any improvement in handicaps".

Scone is renowned as the Horse Capital of Australia. The existing course dates back to 1946. The original Scone race course which ran through the golf course dates back to 1944. In 1994 the race track re-located to become part of the Scone Race Track and Equine complex on the edge of town. With the race track gone the existing course was significantly improved.

For the re-development mature trees, mostly River Red Gums will be retained to provide shade and be part of the design features. Existing gullies and dams will be incorporated into the design and there will be the opportunity to better shape the new fairways for drainage and provide improved greens.

Gordon Halliday, Chair of the Golf Committee said "The existing course will leave many happy memories for those who played it over the years. The new layout will ensure the future of golf in the Upper Hunter and will retain Scone Golf Club's standing as equal to the best nine-hole courses in New South Wales".

There will be a last opportunity to play the existing course at a 'wake' to be held in early September for members, past and present and visitors. Details will be on the Scone Golf Club web-site.