STRI

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Deeside Golf Club

Report on the golf course incorporating programme performance testing

Report date: 26th September 2025

Consultant: Gary Smith

Date of visit: 29th August 2025

Visit objective: To carry out STRI surface performance tests on nominated greens and appraise the wider courses as required.

Visit summary

- This annual visit is designed to confirm the greens surface quality and appraise the course in readiness for the off-season challenges. The course was on this occasion still in the recovery of a drought/dry period and has been under huge environmental pressure, despite this set of circumstances the maintenance team are providing the highest possible standards in golfing conditions for the members on both courses and will continue to do so as the weather conditions return to a more supportive outcome.
- On the day of the visit the weather was dry and sunny with a temperature of 15 degrees, an average canopy temperature of 17 degrees and an average rootzone temperature of 16 degrees. Neil McLauchlan – Course Manager accompanied Gary Smith –|Senior Consultant Agronomist at STRI.
- The new constructions such as the swales and bunkers throughout the course are an outstanding success already and highlights not only the architects vision but the skills set within the on-site team at the club. A success story not often replicated in similar circumstances – well done the team.
- The greens are in excellent condition despite higher than anticipated organic matter accumulations, a national trend due to very challenging rootzone conditions impacted from unique localised weather patterns and in this instance a reduced top-dressing dilution input, an easily reversed outcome during this off-season period.
- Signs of a low volume pathogenic attack were visible, but expertly managed by the maintenance team and should result in a further reduction in activity going forward and without any surface grass loss.
- Small volumes of surface Algal bloom were expressing. Mainly on high wear sections and are in no-way a concern other than the negative effect on potential new seedlings germination and subsequent plant growth outcomes growth and canopy development expectations. A situation that can be remedied and will be by the on-site team.
- The greens surrounds and approach sections are outstanding in their quality, and the regularly applied wetting agents, physical and nutritional inputs should be continued throughout this off-season and all of 2026.
- Woodland shade remains a concern across the site with a notable and increasingly obvious drip line damage and soil changes due to woodland detritus, Lack of grasses cover is a concern generally as are the surface roots, although much work has been carried out to reduce the volume of visible surface roots, there remains a number of potentially damaging buttress roots across both courses.
- The incidence and aggression in surface wear, due to high traffic, has become more evident and visible across the courses, although this is due to an obvious ever increasing demand to play and is a direct result of the superior quality turf and course standards that the in-house maintenance team produce, a development of pathways (natural or manufactured) and surface reinforcement must be planned for in the coming seasons.

Record of site conditions

Photo 1: Ongoing construction is outstanding in design and superior in build quality across all areas.

Photo 2: Ref photo 1.

Photo 3: The surrounds are much improved in prestation and plant health outcomes due to the additional inputs from the team this year.

Photo 4: Ref photo 3.

Photo 5: Ref photo 3.

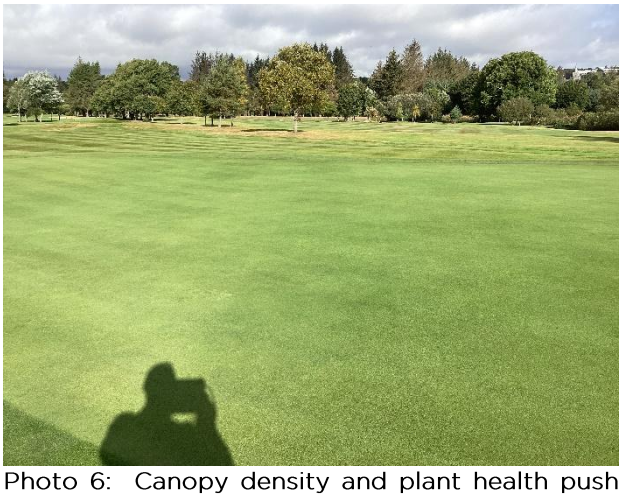


Photo 6: Canopy density and plant health push the greens surfaces to a superior standard, outstanding.

Photo 7: At a low volume, but pernicious Basidiomycete fungal activity exists.

Photo 8: Ref photo 7.

Photo 9: Shade still remains a negative abiotic stress on too many sections of the course.

Photo 10: Overhanging woodland requires continued crown/canopy thinning or a complete removal.

Photo 11: Ref photo 10.

Photo 12: Blairs greens and surrounds are gradually catching up to the qualities of the Houghton course. However, much work still requires to be done to achieve these evident higher standards.

Summary of performance and testing

Greens set up: Houghton (HOC – 3.8mm, cut prior to tests)

Measurement	Average	Target range
Soil moisture (%) Green 3	28.9 %	15-30%
Green 16	16 %	15-30%
Green 18	29.3 %	15-30%
Hardness (gravities) Green 3	101g	85-120g
Green 16	104g	85-120g
Green 18	97g	85-120g
Smoothness (mm/m) (mean)	19.6 mm/m	<25 mm/m
Trueness (mm/m) (mean)	7.8 mm/m	<10 mm/m
Green speed (mean)	9ft 2in	8ft - 10ft
Green 3		
Organic matter 0-20mm (%)	13.7%	3-6%
Organic matter 20-40mm (%)	3.7%	<4%
Organic matter 40-60mm (%)	2.4%	<4%
Organic matter 60-80mm (%)	1.8%	<4%
Green 16		
Organic matter 0-20mm (%)	11.4%	3-6%
Organic matter 20-40mm (%)	5.9%	<4%
Organic matter 40-60mm (%)	3.8%	<4%
Organic matter 60-80mm (%)	3.3%	<4%
Green 18		
Organic matter 0-20mm (%)	11.9%	3-6%
Organic matter 20-40mm (%)	4.7%	<4%
Organic matter 40-60mm (%)	2.9%	<4%
Organic matter 60-80mm (%)	2.4%	<4%
Soil pH (mean)	5.3	5.0 - 6.5
Available Phosphate (P_2O_5) (mean)	1.8 mg/l	>10 mg/l
Available Potash (K_2O) (mean)	48mg/l	>30 mg/l

Key:

In target
Marginal variance
Out of target

Greens set up: Blairs (HOC - 3.8mm, cut prior to tests)

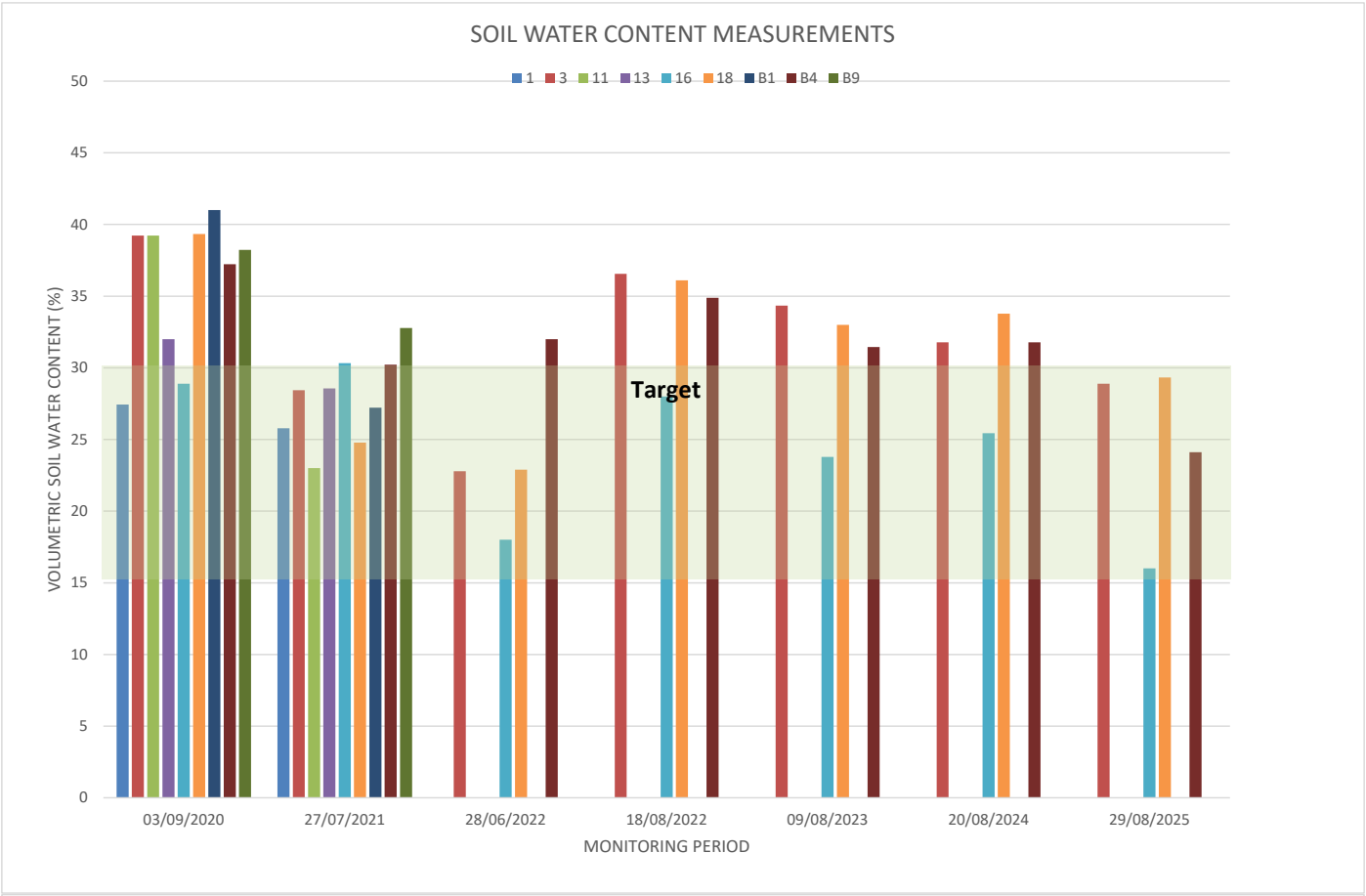
Measurement	Average	Target range
Soil moisture (%) Green 4	24.1 %	15-30%
Hardness (gravities) Green 4	106g	85-120g
Smoothness (mm/m)	20.5 mm/m	<25 mm/m
Trueness (mm/m)	8.8 mm/m	<10 mm/m
Green speed	8ft 8in	8ft - 10ft
Organic matter 0-20mm (%)	9.2%	3-6%
Organic matter 20-40mm (%)	4.8%	<4%
Organic matter 40-60mm (%)	2.6%	<4%
Organic matter 60-80mm (%)	2.7%	<4%
Soil pH	5.2	5.0 - 6.5
Available Phosphate (P_2O_5)	0.9 mg/l	>10 mg/l
Available Potash (K_2O)	41 mg/l	>30 mg/l

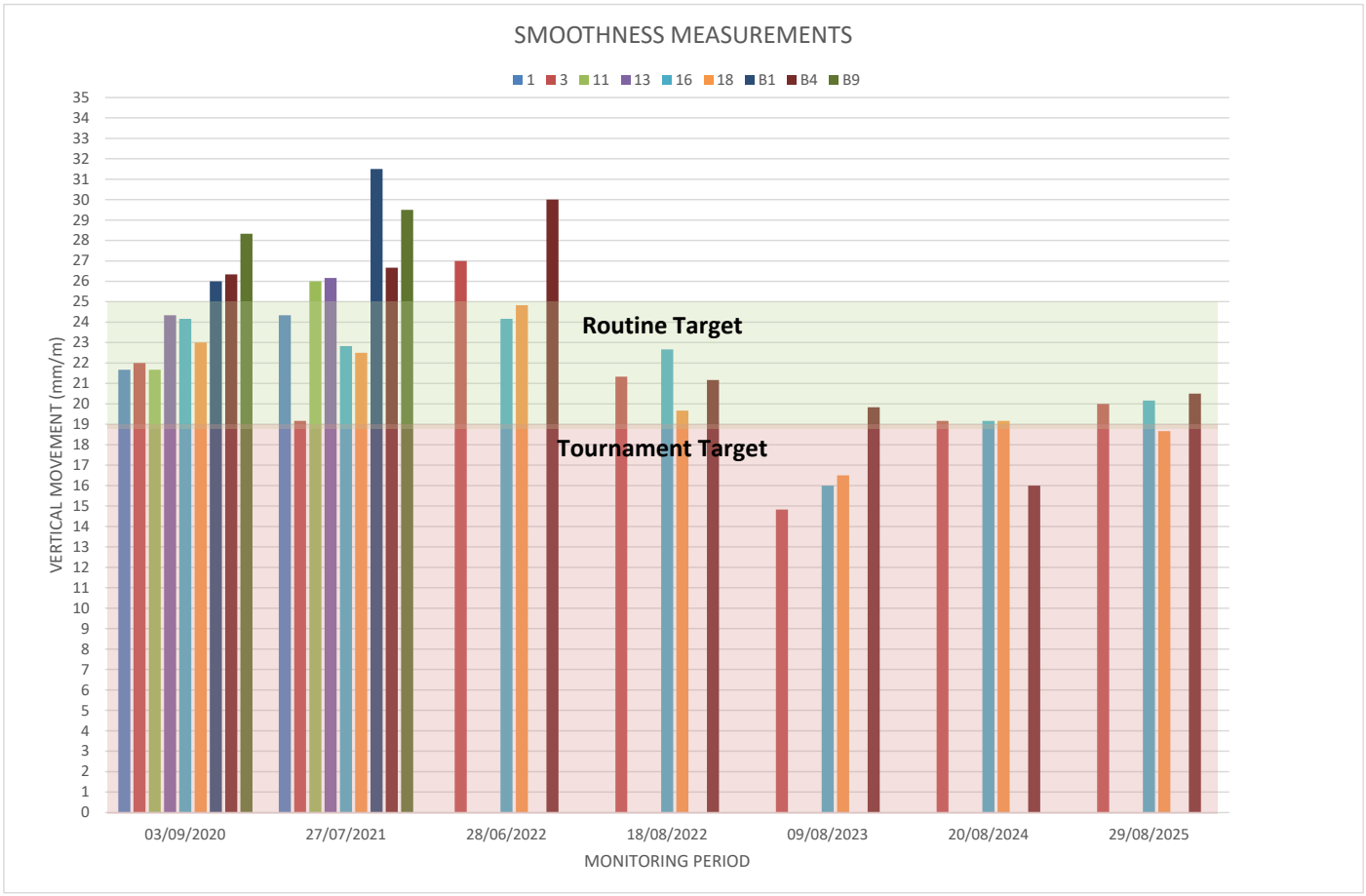
Key:

In target
Marginal variance
Out of target

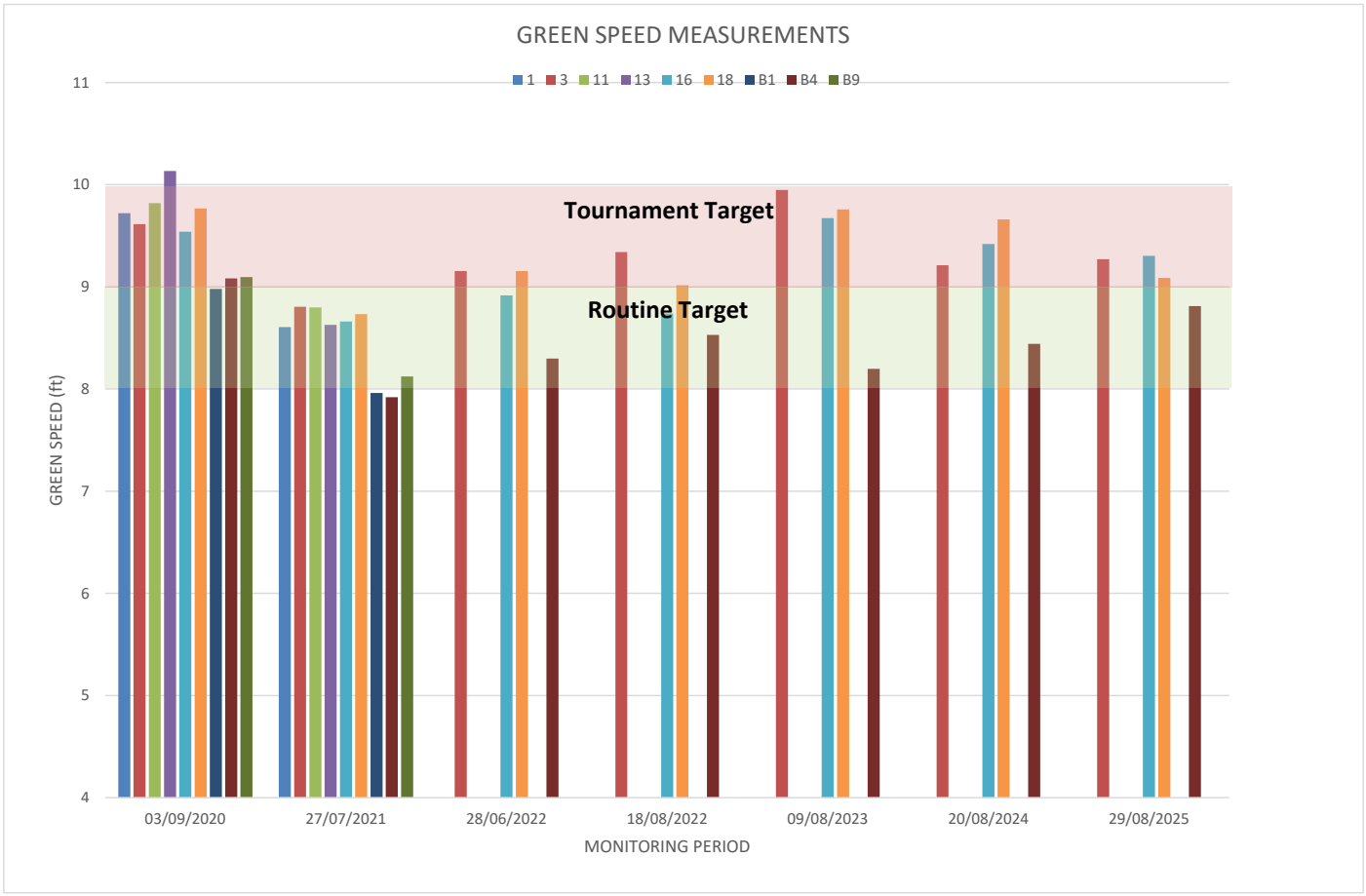
Graphs and commentary of performance data and soil testing results

Performance data

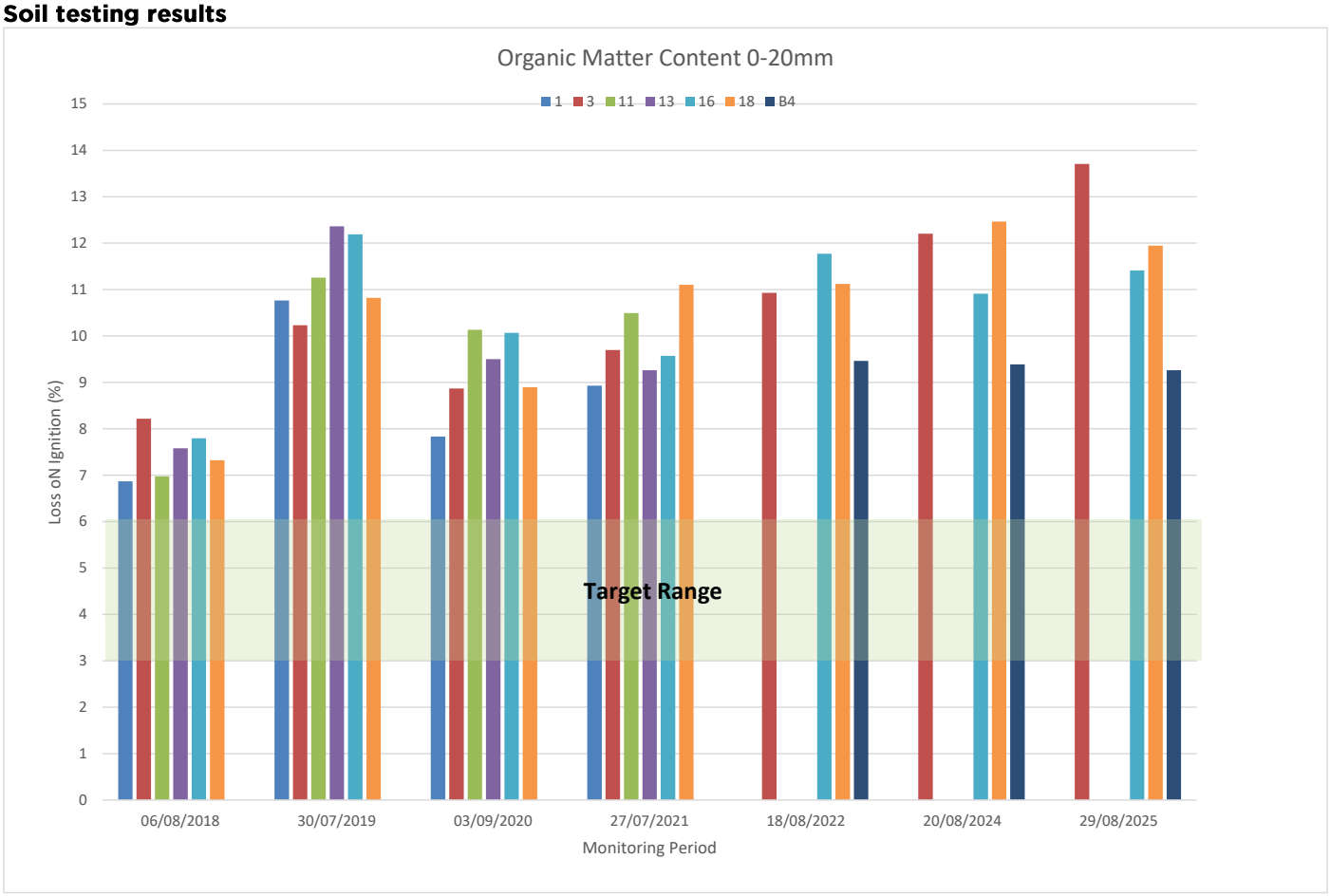


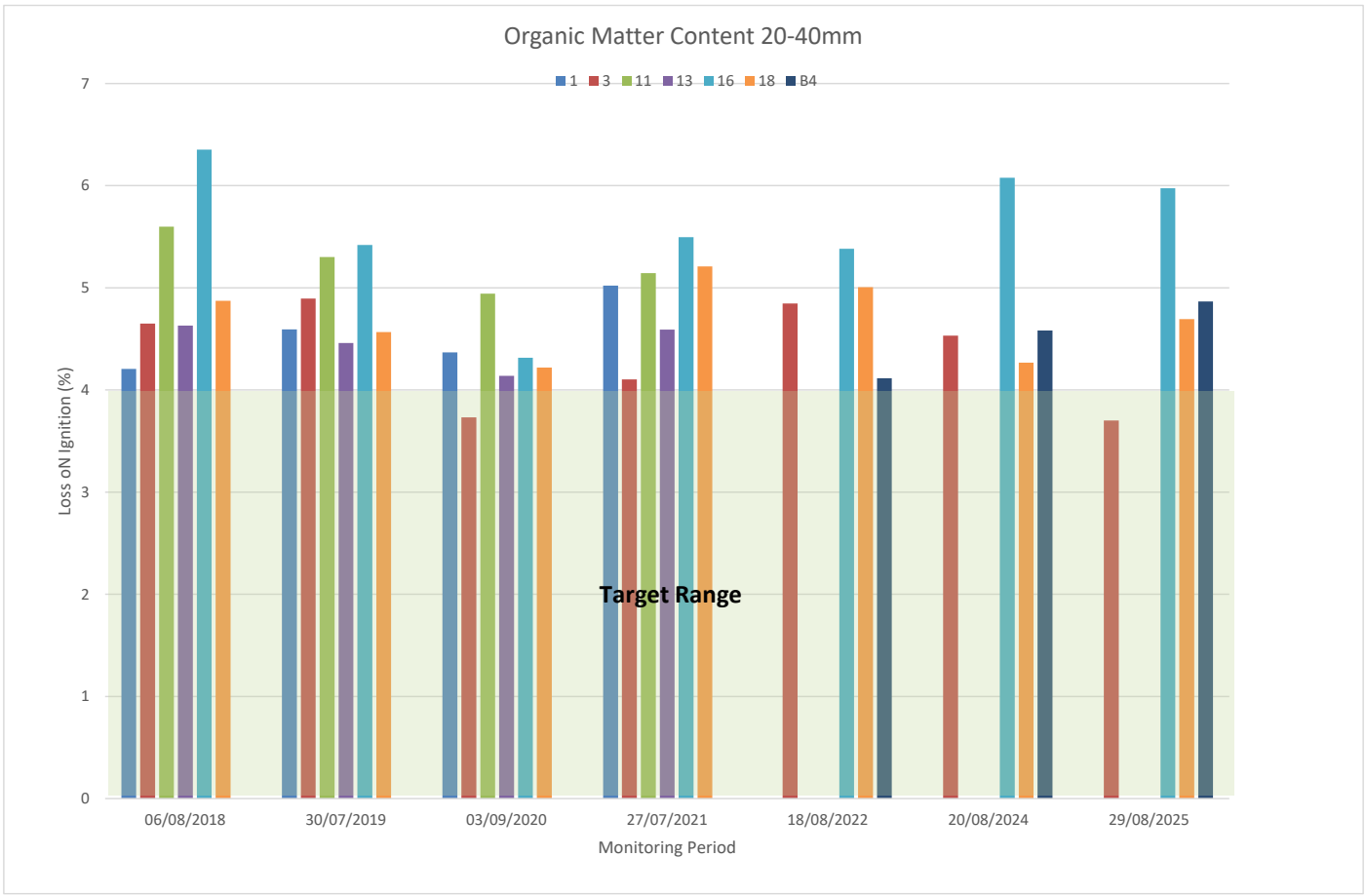

SMOOTHNESS MEASUREMENTS
1 3 11 13 16 18 B1 B4 B9
VERTICAL MOVEMENT (mm/m)
Routine Target
Tournament Target
03/09/2020
27/07/2021
28/06/2022
18/08/2022
09/08/2023
20/08/2024
29/08/2025
MONITORING PERIOD

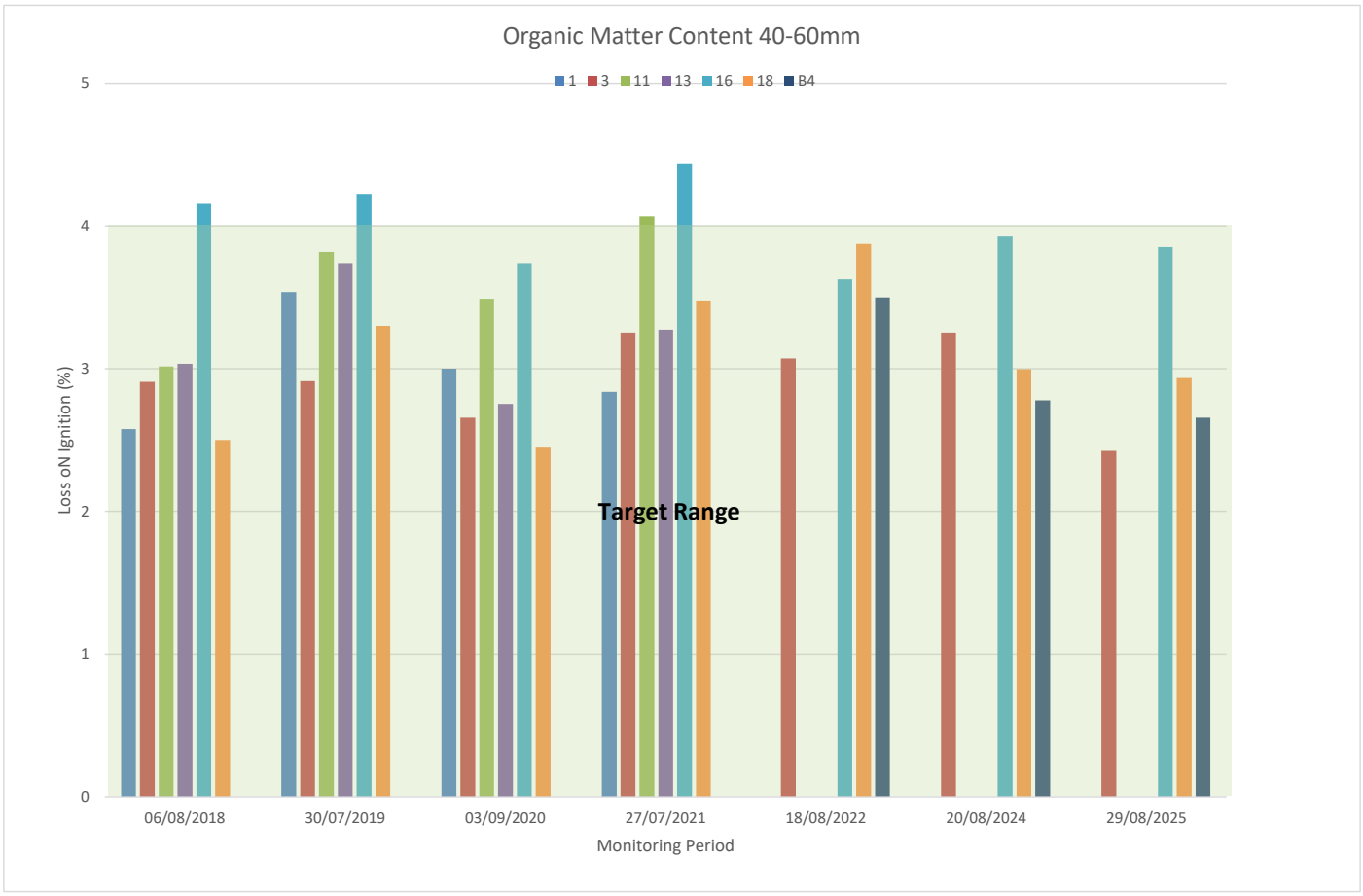

TRUENESS MEASUREMENTS
1 3 11 13 16 18 B1 B4 B9
LATERAL MOVEMENT (mm/m)
Routine Target
Tournament Target
03/09/2020
27/07/2021
28/06/2022
18/08/2022
09/08/2023
20/08/2024
29/08/2025
MONITORING PERIOD

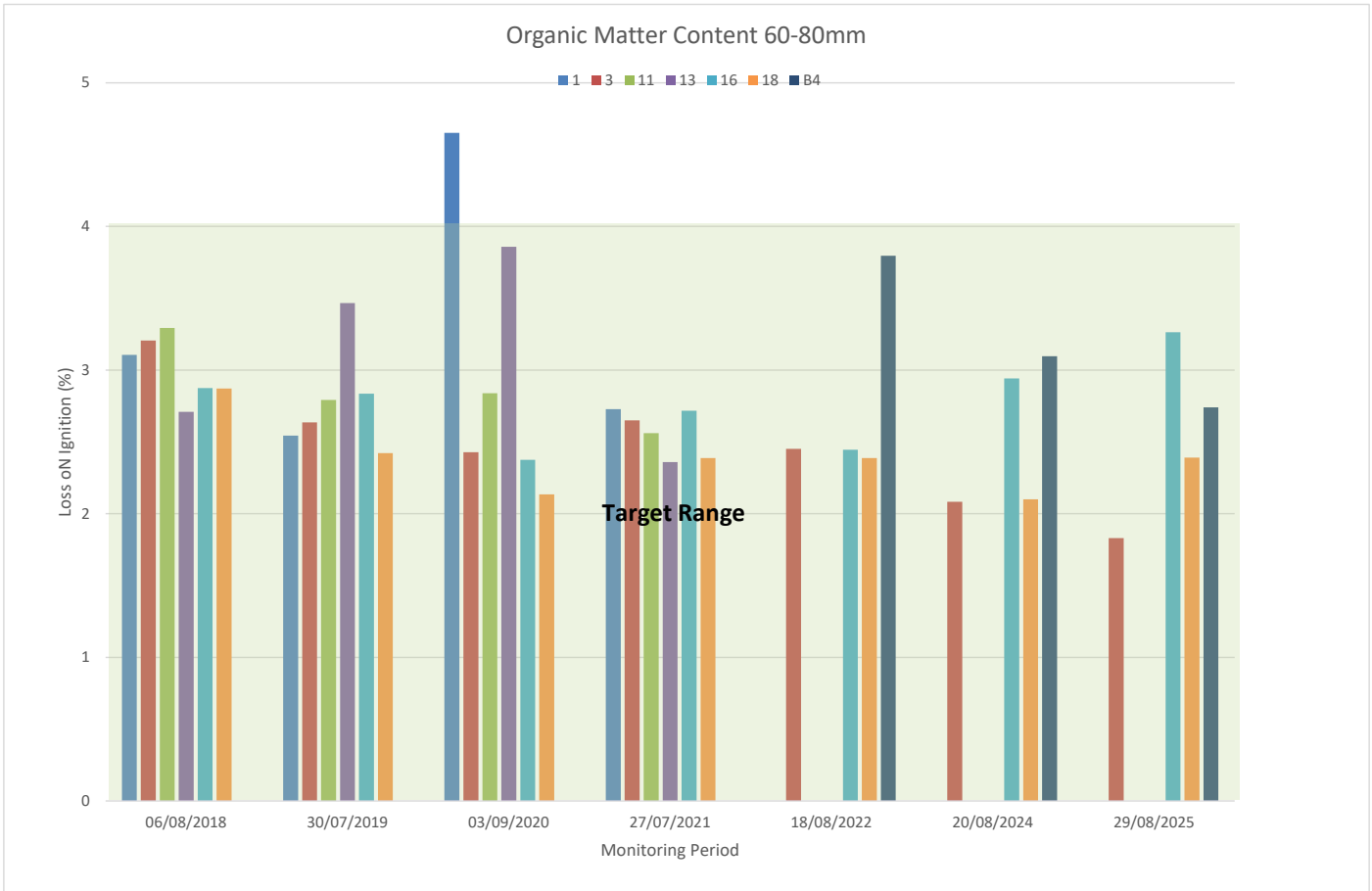

GREEN SPEED MEASUREMENTS
1
3
11
13
16
18
B1
B4
B9
Tournament Target
Routine Target
GREEN SPEED (ft)
11
10
9
8
7
6
5
4
03/09/2020
27/07/2021
28/06/2022
18/08/2022
09/08/2023
20/08/2024
29/08/2025
MONITORING PERIOD

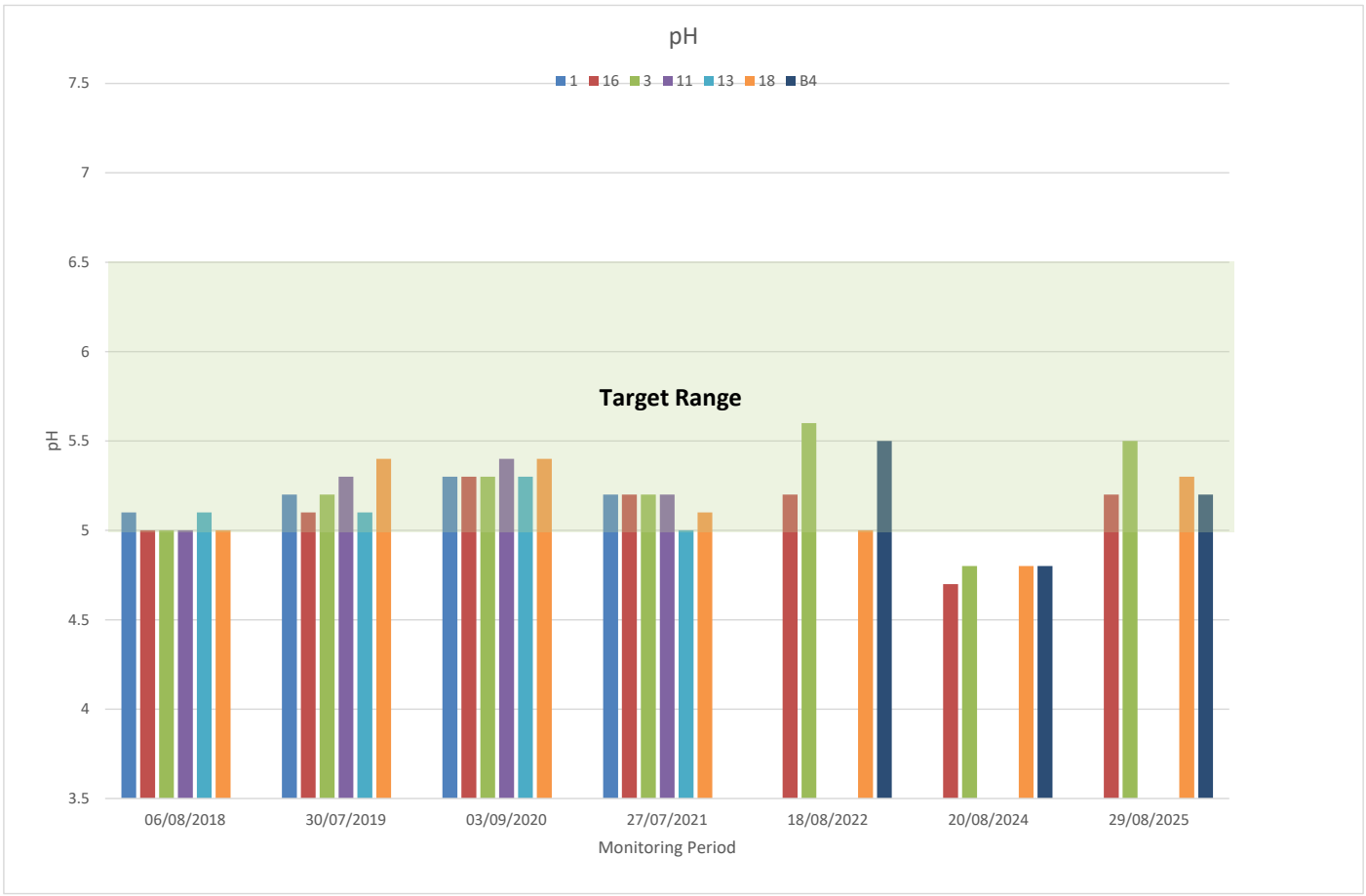
Soil testing results






Organic Matter Content 40-60mm
1 3 11 13 16 18 B4
5
4
3
2
1
0
Loss oN Ignition (%)
Target Range
06/08/2018
30/07/2019
03/09/2020
27/07/2021
18/08/2022
20/08/2024
29/08/2025
Monitoring Period


Organic Matter Content 60-80mm
1 3 11 13 16 18 B4
5
4
3
2
1
0
Loss oN Ignition (%)
Target Range
06/08/2018
30/07/2019
03/09/2020
27/07/2021
18/08/2022
20/08/2024
29/08/2025
Monitoring Period


pH
1
16
3
11
13
18
B4
7.5
7
6.5
6
5.5
5
4.5
4
3.5
pH
Target Range
06/08/2018
30/07/2019
03/09/2020
27/07/2021
18/08/2022
20/08/2024
29/08/2025
Monitoring Period

Discussion and Recommendations

Greens and Surrounds

- Organic matter levels require an increase in regular scarification and additional top-dressing dilutions, with regularity the key is not aggression. Aim to scarify on 2- 4 occasions between now and the spring of 2026 at depths that suit local conditions at the time of planned operation from 5 – 15mm, likewise apply top-dressing aggregates (weather and flooding permitting) on a weekly basis at 3 tonnes per hectare on all greens and the same on all approaches and surrounds sections. if weather allows carry these aggregate inputs out twice each week.
- The VGR TopChanger or GKB topmaker, although very different in application will also support the underpinning of elevated volumes of organic matter removal and rootzones oxygenation resulting in even firmer surfaces and improved plant health outcomes. Use either or both at intervals and in weather conditions that will support only positive surface outcomes.
- Micro tine the greens and surrounds on two occasions throughout the off-season months with a 6 - 8mm diameter tine and plan to Sarel roll all of these areas on a weekly basis if other forms of aeration are not being carried out due to local conditions.
- Continue with the surfactant application programme and plan to apply every month throughout all of next year and review these chemical inputs in January 2027. Reducing Basidiomycete hydrophobicity remains a primary agronomic target at this prestigious club.
- Continue with plant growth regulation programmes, particularly those intended for Poa annua seeding control.
- Nutritional inputs are robust and disciplined in strategic applications, it is recommended that an additional low volume @5kg per hectare of phosphate is added either at the spring inputs or the autumnal inputs to heighten the plants ability to function and uptake all available nutritional rootzone borne elements as required.

Fairways

- As part of the agronomy inputs the club should adopt a strategic fairway/large area turf iron programme to elevate the already very good standards of the fairways, regular brushing and regular ironing/rolling alongside surface scarification is and will continue to become the industry standards at all higher-end golfing facilities and Deeside should adopt all of these suggested inputs as soon as time and fiscal power allows.

Other Areas/Discussion Points

- Woodland shade and the below canopy and drip line damage require some tough decisions to be made in the coming seasons. The superior turf quality and presentation standards being produced across the courses are increasingly highlighting the challenges in grass canopy cover in these areas and addressing this issue is now critical for future standards to be maintained and elevated.

Signed

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ORGANIC MATTER CONTENT

CLIENT:	DEESIDE GC	DATE RECEIVED:	08/09/25
ADDRESS:	GOLF ROAD BIELDSIDE ABERDEEN ABERDEENSHIRE AB15 9DL	DATE REPORTED:	10/09/25
		RESULTS TO:	GS
		TEST RESULTS AUTHORISED BY:	
CONDITION OF SAMPLE UPON ARRIVAL:	MOIST	Michael Baines, Laboratory Manager	

SAMPLE NO	DESCRIPTION		LOSS ON IGNITION (%)*
A21304/1	3	0-20 mm	13.71
		20-40 mm	3.70
		40-60 mm	2.42
		60-80 mm	1.83
A21304/2	16	0-20 mm	11.41
		20-40 mm	5.98
		40-60 mm	3.85
		60-80 mm	3.26
A21304/3	18	0-20 mm	11.94
		20-40 mm	4.69
		40-60 mm	2.93
		60-80 mm	2.39
A21304/4	BLAIRS 4	0-20 mm	9.26
		20-40 mm	4.87
		40-60 mm	2.66
		60-80 mm	2.74

* ASTM F1647-11 (2018) Standard Test Methods for Organic Matter Content of Athletic Field Rootzone Mixes (Method A)

ACCREDITED
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THESE RESULTS PERTAIN ONLY TO THE SAMPLE(S) SUBMITTED AND TESTED

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SOIL CHEMICAL ANALYSIS

CLIENT:	DEESIDE GC
DATE RECEIVED:	08/09/2025
RESULTS TO:	GS

Lab No.	Source	pH	P_2O_5 (mg/l)	K_2O (mg/l)
A21304/1	GREEN 3	5.5	3	54
A21304/2	GREEN 16	5.2	1	33
A21304/3	GREEN 18	5.3	1	58
A21304/4	BLAIRS 4	5.2	1	41

Mr M A Baines, Soil Laboratory Manager

THE RESULTS PERTAIN ONLY TO THE SAMPLE(S) SUBMITTED AND TESTED.

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