

Marble Hill House and Park,
London
Conservation Management
Plan
Volume 2: Gazetteer

January 2017



Built Heritage
Consultancy

Marble Hill House and Park, London

Conservation Management Plan Volume 2: Gazetteer

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The Gazetteer is the second volume of the Conservation Management Plan by the Built Heritage Consultancy, which was commissioned by English Heritage to inform discussions over future works to Marble Hill House and Park. It forms a companion to Volume 1 of the Plan, and is intended to give more detail on the history, appearance and issues relating to each building and the spaces within them. The Gazetteer is intended to act as a reference tool which gives ready access to information on every part of the asset, dealing with its physical and heritage attributes, and highlighting relevant issues and policies. It has been designed to be capable of expansion in the future, to take account of further developments.

This document contains detailed entries for all the rooms within Marble Hill House, the Stable Block and White Lodge. The remaining buildings and structures are covered by outline descriptions. Where possible, roof spaces and exterior elevations have also been assessed. The entries contain photographs and a physical description of all elements of interest, together with notes on the history of the fabric, significance, policies and opportunities for enhancement. There is also a section considering the various views to and from the House and other buildings on the site.

Much of the information presented in this document has been gathered from a number of professional reports carried out in the past for English Heritage, as acknowledged below in the bibliography. The taking of photographs, visual assessment, and the writing of descriptions were carried between December 2015 and May 2016.

GUIDE TO USING THE GAZETTEER

The Gazetteer has several main sections covering the components which make up the asset under consideration. Each one of these is briefly described at the beginning of each section; for more detailed information on the history and significance see the main Conservation Management Plan (Volume 1).

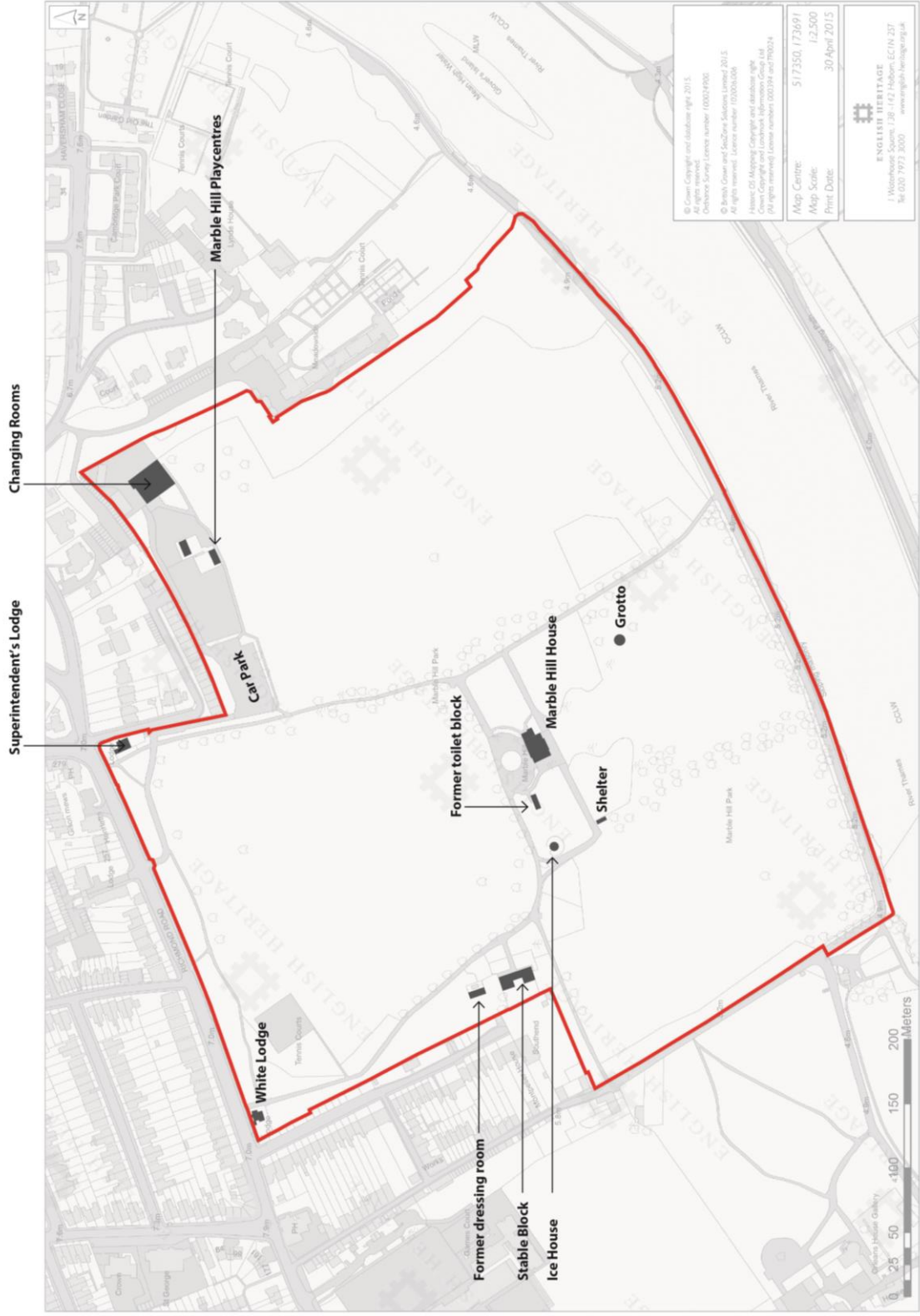
Within each section, the elevations, rooms or spaces are described individually, with notes on their significance. The Gazetteer summarises the main points of interest and acts as a reference guide for those involved with managing and conserving the asset. Policy recommendations, including guidance on management and conservation, and suggested opportunities for enhancement, are set out in Chapter 4.0 of Vol. 1. Additional information on the rooms in Marble Hill House is available from the room data files held by English Heritage - they contain much information on their history, fabric and conservation, and are a valuable source that should be consulted in addition to this gazetteer. Smaller buildings in the grounds and structures such as boundary walls are dealt with more briefly.

The final chapter deals with the main views of the House and buildings from their surrounding landscape. These have been assessed in line with English Heritage's guidance *Seeing the History in the View* (1998), so as to identify and record the nature of the main views in 2015, prior to any subsequent changes.

The Research Archive provided separately on disc contains images of archive materials consulted during the preparation of the Conservation Management Plan and Gazetteer.

The disc also includes an appendix containing all the photographs of the buildings and interiors taken during the compilation of the Gazetteer, whether or not they are included within the entries in the published document. They are arranged in separate folders by component, and then by elevation or floor and then room number.

Marble Hill
Site
Orientation



Designations

- Listed at Grade I as Marble Hill House, list entry number 1285673
- Feature within a Grade II* listed park and garden

Summary history

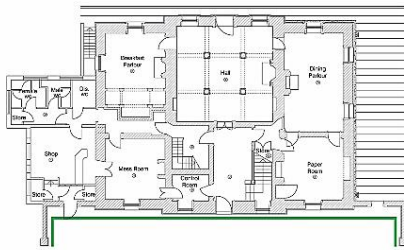
Marble Hill House was commissioned by Henrietta Howard (1688-1767), Countess of Suffolk and onetime mistress of the Prince of Wales (later George II), on an estate which was created late in 1723. That year the Prince had made Howard a large settlement, including £11,500 of stock, jewels, plate and furniture, and Archibald, Earl of Ilay (1682–1761) purchased several parcels of land on her behalf. The eleven and a half acre-site of the house itself was purchased in 1724. Construction commenced that year and was completed in 1729, with a hiatus around the accession of George II in 1727 that separated the completion of the shell and the fitting out of the interiors. The builder was Roger Morris but the architect has not been conclusively identified. A design very close but not identical to Marble Hill for ‘a house in Twittenham’ appears in Vol. III of Colen Campbell’s *Vitruvius Britannicus* of 1725 and a sketch elevation and plan of a house from his office – again, similar in many features but by no means identical - survives at Wilton House. But on the basis of a drawing by him showing the alcove in the Breakfast Parlour, Henry Herbert, ninth earl of Pembroke and sixth earl of Montgomery (c.1689–1750), gentleman-architect and collaborator with Roger Morris, has also been suggested as the designer. In 1750 architect Matthew Brettingham and joiner Charles Ross carried out alterations, including the removal of a vaulted compartment to create a Dining Parlour on the ground floor, the replacement of balconied doors on the south elevation with windows and repairs and modifications to the (now lost) service wing. Following Howard’s death, Marble Hill was occupied by her nephew, the second Earl of Buckingham, between 1769 and 1793. He carried out alterations including the division of the second-floor Gallery into two and the creation of an extra bedroom on the north side. After the Earl’s death Marble Hill passed to Henrietta Hotham, who let it to a series of tenants. During this period a number of alterations were made, such as the downward extension of the windows on the first floor of the south front to the platband, probably also the addition of cast iron balconies. Following Hotham’s death the property was sold to various owners before being purchased in 1825 by Lieutenant General Jonathan Peel (1799-1879). After his widow died in 1887 her effects were sold and the house remained empty for several years. In 1903 the Marble Hill Estate was purchased from the Cunard family, who had owned it from 1898, by a consortium including the London County Council, local authorities and private individuals, in order to save it from residential redevelopment. In 1909 the service wing was removed: the above-ground section was demolished and the lower storey buried when the adjacent basement-level courtyard was filled in. It was replaced with a much smaller single-storey extension that now houses the shop and visitor toilets. In 1951 restoration work was carried out on the exterior, and in 1955 some of the floors that had been damaged by dry rot were replaced. In 1965-1966 a comprehensive internal and external restoration was carried out by the Greater London Council to return the house to its condition of 1750, as a result of which most of the additions and alterations made after that date were removed or reversed. Following transfer to English Heritage in 1988 representations of original interiors have been created in some of the rooms.

Brief description

The house is a three-storey Palladian villa based on an oblong plan. This is orientated southwest-northeast along its longer axis - for the sake of simplicity in this gazetteer it will be deemed to run due east-west. It is a single, compact, tautly articulated mass. The north front – the entrance front - faces the Great Lawn while the south front faces the gardens and the River Thames. Two walls running north-south divide the interior into thirds of unequal width: the central portion is the widest and contains the entrance vestibule, main stair (which rises only to the first floor), the service stair (which rises all the way to the attic), the Hall and cube-shaped Great Room. The lost service wing was L-shaped in plan and extended out from the east elevation. There is a basement storey under the eastern third and 1909 extension. There are garret rooms in the roofspace, which accommodated a Housemaid’s quarters and storage space.

Significance: Exceptional

MARBLE HILL HOUSE – Exterior



Location: North front

Date(s): 1724-9, 1909, 1965-6

Significance: High

Brief description: This is the entrance front of the mansion and the most ornately treated of any of its elevations. It is five bays wide and three storeys high. The ground floor is treated as a basement in architectural terms – the windows have no architraves - with the *piano nobile* occupying the first floor above. A thick platband marks the division between the ground and first floors, and a thinner one runs above it at the level of the first-floor window sills. The windows have moulded architraves; those of the central bay have lugs (the central window at first-floor level has a pediment as well) to give them greater emphasis. The wall surface is, in fact, almost uniform: the rusticated base of the attached, tetrastyle giant order ionic portico is created by thickening the middle three bays of the wall. The portico has an entablature with a pulvinated frieze and a cartouche in the middle of the pediment. There is a lead-clad blocking course. To either side of the front are screen walls, whose cornices are extensions of the lower plat band, with returns terminating in rusticated piers carrying stone spheres. Both screen walls have doorways with rusticated surrounds. The north door now opens into the shop and serves as the visitors' entrance, while that to the west opens into the terrace by the west elevation. Lower, curved extensions run out from the end piers of both screen walls to create a cour d'honneur. These have rusticated intermediate piers and rusticated end piers crowned by stone spheres. A low, unmoulded stone plinth runs continuously the whole length of the screen walls and the whole width of the north front.

Notes: The modillions are made of fibreglass and were introduced during the 1965-6 restoration, replacing concrete predecessors which had been introduced in a restoration of 1951 and were incorrectly spaced. At the same time the pediment cartouche was renewed in fibreglass. The design of the fanlight is crude, lacking any mouldings, and it looks as though it may be a C20 replacement.

Element	Description (including history)
Walls	Brick, finished in painted stucco, with stone dressings
Windows	Hornless 6-, 9-, and 12-pane sash windows
Doors	A six-panel door with raised and fielded panels and fanlight; six-panel doors with sunk beading to doorways in screen walls
Features	Glass clerestory roof of the 1909 extension visible above the east screen wall

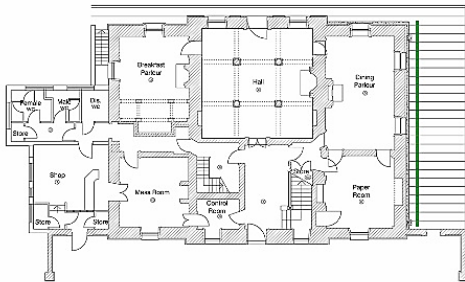


MARBLE HILL HOUSE – Exterior

Location: West elevation

Date(s): 1724-9, 1750

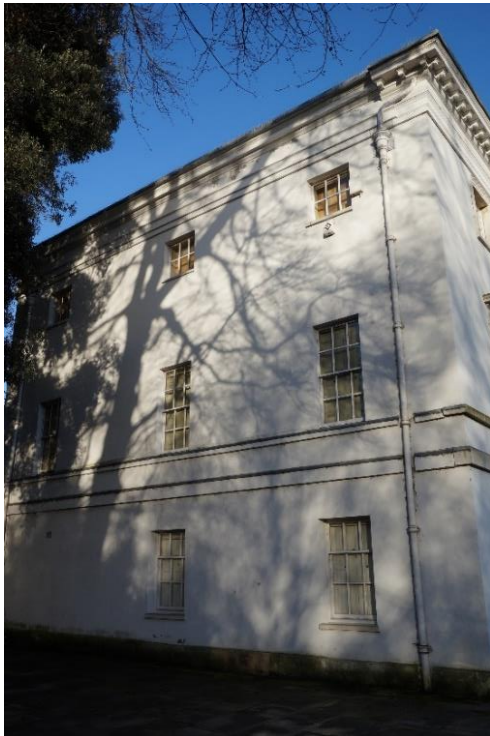
Significance: High



Brief description: The three-bay side elevation of the mansion forms the shorter side of the oblong. The plinth, platbands and cornice are carried round from the north front and at the southern end a short section of the modillion cornice from the south front is also carried round, but otherwise this elevation is very plainly treated. It is adjoined by a paved area.

Notes: The completely plain rear side of the west screen wall can be seen here. As built, there was a Palladian window at ground floor level, removed by Matthew Brettingham in 1750 when the Dining Parlour was created. Traces of it were discovered during the 1965-6 restoration.

Element	Description (including history)
Walls	Brick, finished in painted stucco, with stone dressings
Windows	6-, 9- and 12-pane hornless sash windows
Doors	None
Features	Two cast-iron downpipes serving gutters running behind the cornice

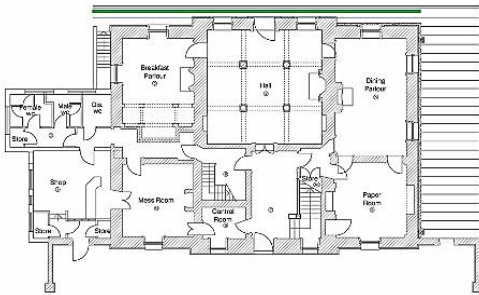


MARBLE HILL HOUSE – Exterior

Location: South front

Date(s): 1724-9, 1909, 1965-6

Significance: High for C18 fabric; south elevation of 1909 extension has some significance



Brief description: This is the 'mirror image' of the north front and, like it, is three storeys high and five bays wide. As built, it overlooked the formally planned Pleasure Ground and, seen from the river terrace, was framed by groves of trees running down either side. The plinth, platbands, cornice and blocking course are carried round from the other elevations. Rustication is confined to the surround of the central doorway, giving access from the Hall, and so the ground floor windows have architraves with proper sills and prominent keystones. The south elevation lacks the portico of the north front but here the central three bays actually break forward. The pattern of the first- and second-floor windows is identical to the north front, but here the middle second-floor window has two pairs of lugs, not one. The central three bays are crowned by a pediment identical in design to that on the north side although here its modillions extend to the flanking sections of cornice. The brick south wall of the 1909 extension is mostly hidden by a hedge.

Notes: The middle three second-floor windows are glazed but effectively dummies since the coving of the Great Room runs continuously behind them and they are not visible from the interior. This front was much altered, probably in the 1810s, when the first floor windows were all extended downwards to the lower platband. The end first-floor windows – i.e. those lighting Lady Suffolk's bedchamber and the Dressing Room – were also widened. Thick mullions and margin lights were inserted and pediments added above. All these changes were reversed in the restoration of 1965-1966 when the pediment cartouche was also renewed in fibreglass. During this restoration traces of cut-back corbels for galleries at second-floor level were discovered.

Element	Description (including history)
Walls	Brick, finished in painted stucco, with stone dressings
Windows	Hornless 6-, 9-, and 12-pane sash windows; the 1909 extension has metal casement windows arranged in a continuous strip.
Doors	A six-panel door with raised and fielded panels and fanlight; the 1909 extension has a central doorway with a simple planked door.
Features	Delicate, presumably metal glazing bars to the fanlight

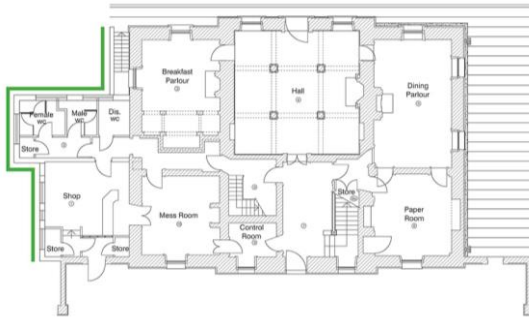


MARBLE HILL HOUSE – Exterior

Location: East elevation

Date(s): 1724-9, 1909

Significance: High for C18 fabric; east elevation of 1909 extension has some significance; external stairs to basement neutral



Brief description: The three-bay side elevation of the mansion forms the shorter side of the oblong. The plinth, platbands and cornice are carried round from the north and south fronts and at the southern end a short section of the modillion cornice from the south front is also carried round, but otherwise this elevation is very plainly treated. It is adjoined by the 1909 extension, which likely includes fabric from the historic service wing.

Element	Description (including history)
Walls	Brick, finished in painted stucco, with stone dressings
Windows	Sash windows
Doors	One, in the doorway to the basement
Features	Stairwell providing external access to the basement; two cast-iron downpipes serving gutters running behind the cornice

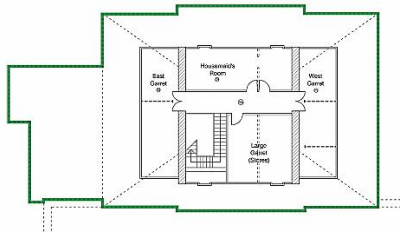
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MARBLE HILL HOUSE – Exterior

Location: Roof

Date(s): 1724-9, 1909, 1965-6

Significance: High



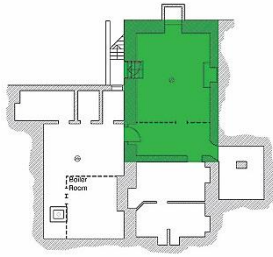
Brief description: The roof is pyramidal in form and covered in black-glazed pantiles, which were introduced in the 1965-1966 restoration. At its summit is a lead-covered finial, consisting of a cuboid with a sphere on top surmounted by a gilt wind vane. Short sections of roof run out north and south to meet the two pediments, which are slated up to the point where they meet the lead-covered blocking course. Pairs of dormers, which light the garret rooms, emerge from the north and south slopes. These have pitched roofs terminating in pediments echoing those to each of those elevations. The roof of the 1909 extension is finished in rolled and battened lead and hidden from view by a parapet from ground level. Over the shop there is a metal-framed glass clerestory: the sides have louvered openings, the roof is glass and hipped at both ends. There is a modern stainless steel vent adjacent to it.

Notes: Old photographs show that the chimney stacks once had tall pots, removed when they were rebuilt in the restoration of 1965-1966.

Element	Description (including history)
Walls	Chimney stacks are finished in stucco and have stone platband cornices
Windows	Six-pane casements to the dormers
Doors	None
Features	Four chimney stacks emerge from the east and west slopes of the roof. They are aligned with the north-south walls and serve flues running up through them.



MARBLE HILL HOUSE – Basement



Room: 1

Name: None

Date(s): 1724-9, C20

Significance: Some significance; area with stone flags to floor moderately significant; possible former fireplace neutral

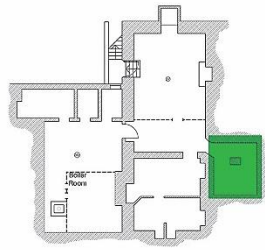
Brief description: This room is directly beneath the Breakfast Parlour and contains the entrance to the basement, accessed by five steps down from a stairwell adjoining the east elevation. It provides access to all the other basement rooms. The original function is unknown.

Notes: This room was formerly divided in two by a partition wall. This has been removed although the difference in flooring materials between the two spaces – stone flags to the north, concrete to the south- is still evident.

Element	Description (including history)
Walls	Plaster, large sections of which have fallen off
Floor	Stone flags and concrete
Ceiling	Segmental barrel vault running north-south
Joinery	Door to exterior: six panels, four glazed and the two lower ones louvered
Features	Chute from outside at south end, blocked with later brickwork; pipework with lagging, suspended from ceiling; area of recent brickwork in west wall, perhaps repairs to a former fireplace



MARBLE HILL HOUSE – Basement



Room: 2

Name: Plant room

Date(s): 1724-9

Significance: Some significance

Brief description: A small room reached from Room 2 by a curious oblique opening in the northwest corner of the latter. It is directly beneath the ground-floor landings of the service stair, which is approached by a similar opening. The original function is unknown.

Notes: This room now houses the intakes and control boards for the various utilities and plant equipment

Element	Description (including history)
Walls	Painted brick
Floor	Brick paving
Ceiling	Brick barrel vaults, two running longitudinally and one running laterally, supported on a square pillar
Joinery	None



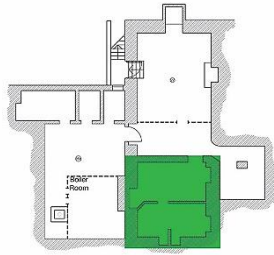
MARBLE HILL HOUSE – Basement

Room: 3

Name: Wine cellar

Date(s): 1724-9

Significance: Some significance; section to north of partition wall moderately significant



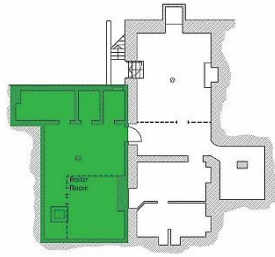
Brief description: This is a northward continuation of Room 1, divided from it by a thick brick wall. It has been divided in two by a partition wall only one brick thick with diamond-shaped groups of vents running through it. This must be secondary as it bisects an arched opening piercing the vault on the east side and then runs into it at an angle. Bins at the north end formed of stone slabs laid on brick walls suggest that this area was once used for storing wine and beer barrels.

Notes: Part of this room is used for storing doors and various items of historic joinery. There is a pile of flint nodules in the split recess on the east side, perhaps from the Grotto.

Element	Description (including history)
Walls	Brick, painted and also plastered in some places
Floor	Brick paving
Ceiling	Segmental barrel vault running north-south
Joinery	None
Features	Segmental arched recesses in the west wall; segmental arched opening in north wall with stepped sill, now split by a secondary brick partition but perhaps originally a window opening into a lightwell; pipework with lagging, suspended from ceiling;



MARBLE HILL HOUSE – Basement



Room: 4

Name: Boiler room

Date(s): (?)1724-9, 1909

Significance: Some significance

Brief description: This is the largest space in the basement and is directly beneath what is now the shop and toilets. In its present form it must date from 1909 although there are clearly several phases of brickwork and it may incorporate one of the subterranean spaces of the lost Service Wing. There are three compartments at the south end, one of which extends east beyond the line of the east wall of the main space. The openings have concrete lintels. The original function of this room is unknown.

Notes: This room now houses the boiler and associated pipework and controls.

Element	Description (including history)
Walls	Brick
Floor	Brick paving and stone flags
Ceiling	Concrete slabs reinforced by steel girders
Joinery	None
Features	



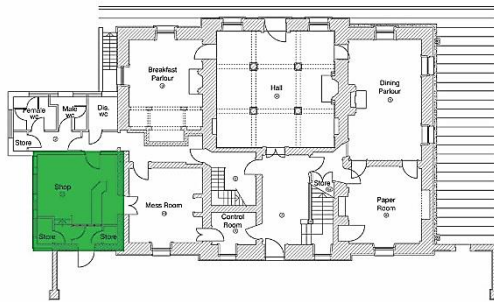
MARBLE HILL HOUSE – Ground floor

Room: 1

Name: Shop

Date(s): 1909, late C20

Significance: Neutral



Brief description: This is the largest room in the 1909 extension and is entered through the door in the north screen wall (see entry on North Front). It is now the English Heritage ticket office and shop, and therefore the first part of the interior seen by visitors.

During the second half of the 20th century the room functioned as a male toilet and stores. There was a door through to the house (present Mess room). The threshold from this doorway became rotten and was replaced c.1984. At the same time nos.2 reinforced concrete lintels were inserted. From the mid-80s the space was divided by partition walls to create a shop. Since 1994 the room has remained in its present use combining shop, lobby and store with a door through to the Mess Room behind the counter.

Notes: There are two steps up from the draught lobby, through which the shop is entered from outside.

Element	Description (including history)
Walls	Plastered and painted. The north wall of this room, which forms part of the exterior east curved screen is possibly a remnant of the service wing – it is thicker than the walls of the 1909 extension.
Floor	Carpet
Ceiling	Plaster
Joinery	Skirting, doorways, doors, windows, glazed draught lobby to door to exterior
Features	Flat skylight slightly recessed into ceiling beneath clerestory roof, which is glazed with frosted and wired glass; modern counter and display stands for shop, some of which run across the windows in the east wall; modern lighting, some of it suspended, radiators



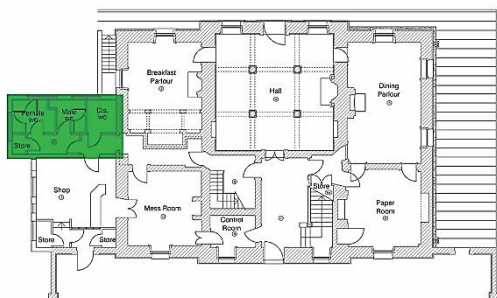
MARBLE HILL HOUSE – Ground floor

Room: 2

Name: Visitor toilets and corridor

Date(s): 1909, late C20

Significance: Neutral



Brief description: This is the rear section of the 1909 extension, which houses the gentlemen's and ladies' toilets and a wheelchair-accessible toilet. It forms part of the visitor entrance route.

Notes: The partition walls are recent - they do not line up with the windows in the south wall and the door in this elevation had been blocked and covered over internally in the gents' toilets.

Element	Description (including history)
Walls	Plastered and painted, tiling to sill height in toilets
Floor	Carpet in corridor, tiling in toilets
Ceiling	Plaster
Joinery	Skirtings, modern architraves and six-panel doors (based on historic examples but clearly recent)
Features	Modern cubicles and sanitary ware in toilets



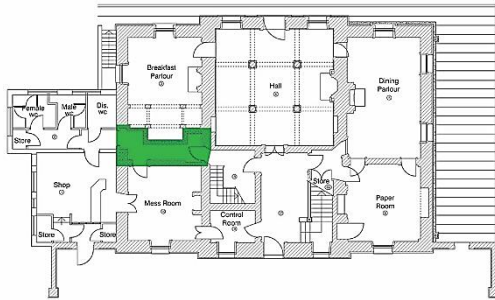
MARBLE HILL HOUSE – Ground floor

Room: 2a

Name: Service corridor

Date(s): 1724-9

Significance: Neutral



Brief description: This former service passage connects the corridor in Room 2 to the Service Stair (Room 8) and Entrance Hall (Room 7), meaning that it is now the visitor entrance route. It follows the line of the outer wall of the alcove of the Breakfast Parlour (Room 6) so doglegs and has an alcove in the south wall

Notes: Originally this passage opened onto an external staircase which descended past the kitchen into the sunken courtyard of the service wing.

Element	Description (including history)
Walls	Plastered and painted
Floor	Carpet
Ceiling	Plaster, no cornice
Joinery	Skirtings, architraves to doorways and doors
Features	Arched doorway in east wall marking the division between the 1720s fabric and 1909 extension; modern fire door in doorway to Room 8; obtrusive modern light fittings



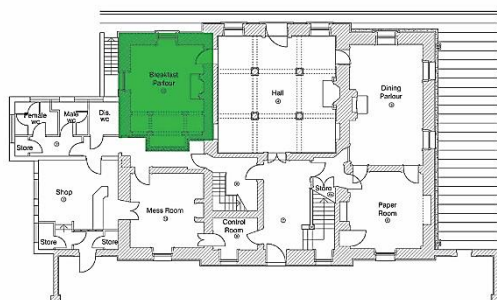
MARBLE HILL HOUSE – Ground floor

Room: 3

Name: Breakfast parlour

Date(s): 1724-9

Significance: High



Brief description: Probably originally built as a Dining Parlour – it was formerly adjacent to the Service Wing - this room changed its function when that role was assumed by the new Dining Parlour on the opposite side of the building after that portion of the ground floor was remodelled in 1750. It is dual aspect, looking south towards the river and east towards the site of the service wing. At the north end is a large, tripartite alcove with two doors flanking a central buffet niche. All but one opening is arched and the soffits of the arches and the central flying cornice are moulded in plaster with Greek frets or rosettes in recessed square panels. The central opening to the main room also has pairs of consoles in the upper corners, set at right angles to each other.

Notes: The doors in the alcove are now purely cosmetic as there is no longer any access from the Service Corridor (Room 2a) on the other side of the wall; indeed, one of them may always have been so. The shutters have metal sheeting on the inner face and swinging bars so that they can be locked shut. The fireplace appears to be a vent for a hot air central heating system. In 1950, the room was used described as a “tea room”.

Element	Description (including history)
Walls	Plastered and painted. Wallpaper in the alcove is a replica of the C19 wallpaper, its remnants found during the 1960s restoration. There are exhibition boards fixed to the east and west walls. Drawings from the 1940s show the niche adjacent to the corridor blocked with a partition wall (with no access).
Floor	Boards with vents at the alcove end. Plans from 1905 show a new floor on the south side of the room.
Ceiling	Plaster with elaborate frieze in the main part and the central bay of the alcove; plain plaster in the buffet niche; groined plaster vaults in the side bays of the alcove
Joinery	Skirtings, architrave and lining to door, six-panel door in opening to Room 4 and in the alcove, shutters and window linings, nine-pane sashes. In the mid-C20 there was a counter inserted between the columns of the screen. In 1964, both windows received new timber sashes.
Features	Elaborate chimneypiece fitted to a box-like construction with mouldings and panels against the east wall with a shelf on top. There is a lugged marble surround to the opening with a moulded edge and a prominent mantelpiece with sections breaking forward to the sides which are carried on brackets. Chandelier. Plans from 1905 indicate that there was a sink in this room which was then relocated to the Dining Parlour.

