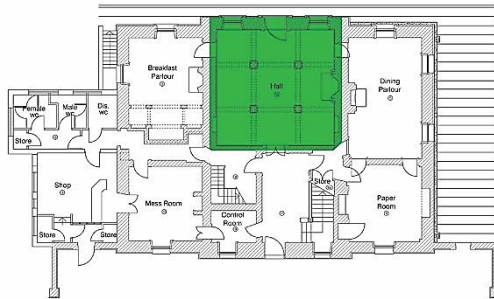


MARBLE HILL HOUSE – Ground floor



Room: 4

Name: Hall

Date(s): 1724-9

Significance: High

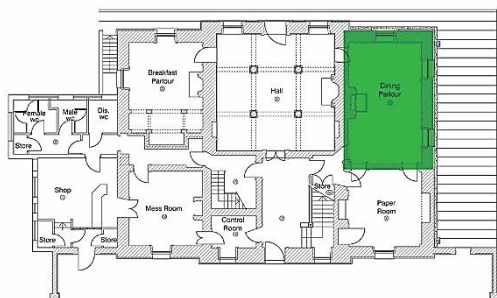
Brief description: This is the largest room on the ground floor and faces south with a central door leading out to the Pleasure Grounds. The layout of the room with the four central columns mapping out a square alludes to the *impluvium* at the centre of a Roman villa and Palladio's interpretations of it. Guests arriving by water would originally have been received here although at the time of Henrietta Howard's death it was used for dining and games. For an unknown period in the pre-war years after the commencement of public ownership it was used and fitted out as a visitors' café, as shown in photographs dated 1926 and 1938.

Notes: The doors in the northernmost bays of the east and west walls are dummies and are there purely for the sake of symmetry. The shutters have metal sheeting on the inner face and swinging bars so that they can be locked shut. The cast iron grate decorated with depictions in relief of griffons, dated 1811, was purchased in 1981 and is therefore a later insertion.

Element	Description (including history)
Walls	Plastered and painted
Floor	Paved in square stone flags with diamond-shaped (?) slate inserts at interstices
Ceiling	Plaster, with simple stepped cornice and no frieze, unmoulded ceiling beams
Joinery	Dado rail, nine-pane sashes, architraves and linings to windows and doors; arched surround to door from Room 7 with three-panel double doors and two-light overlight, perhaps a later alteration
Features	Four Ionic columns of stone supporting the junctions of the ceiling beams; stone skirting; stone chimneypiece against west wall with consoles, a lugged surround to the opening and sections of the cornice breaking forward and carried on brackets; hexagonal lantern with brass frame; oval medallions with relief portraits in profile over the doors in the east and west walls.



MARBLE HILL HOUSE – Ground floor



Room: 5

Name: Dining parlour

Date(s): 1724-9, 1750-1, 1955, 2006

Significance: Moderate

Brief description: This room was created in 1750-1751 by throwing into one a small, square room – perhaps the original breakfast parlour – and an adjacent pantry. In 1755 Henrietta Howard had the room hung with sixty two sheets of Chinese wallpaper by workmen under William Hallet the Younger (c. 1730-1767), who had made furniture for Horace Walpole’s Strawberry Hill in 1754/1755. For some of the twentieth century this room was in use as a visitors’ café with a counter running across the northern end. The paved floor was introduced in 1955 to check an outbreak of dry rot. The existing hand-painted Chinese wallpaper is a modern reproduction that was introduced during a restoration of 2006.

During the C20 the use of the room has evolved: in 1926 the room was referred to as the Refreshments Room with a server across the north end of the room in use as a snack bar. By 1950, the room is referred to as the Tea Room (drawings at this time show a single, centrally positioned, door to the Paper Room. By 1964, during restoration all remaining café service equipment was removed.

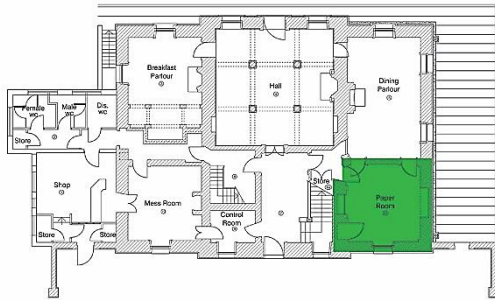
The windows have changed during the C20: in 1905 the south-west door was a French door; during restoration in 1964, a new sash was fitted to the south-east window; the openings in the west wall have since been converted to French Doors; in 1994, the south-west French door was converted to a window.

Notes: The architraves to the two doors to the Paper Room have are an ovolo profile with large, slightly coarse egg and dart mouldings; those of the other two doors show greater finesse in design and execution. The chimneypiece is supposedly a catalogue item, sold ready-made by London tradesmen.

Element	Description (including history)
Walls	Plastered and painted to dado height, wallpaper (see above) mounted on battens above. In 1926 an opening was created to the north of the fireplace on the east wall. In 1926, room records indicate that there were no doors between the Paper Room and Dining Parlour.
Floor	Portland stone paving, marble hearth
Ceiling	Plaster with simple moulded cornice – the latter dates from 1955 and is based on that in the staircase hall
Joinery	Dado rail; four six-panel doors with their architraves and linings; three windows with linings, shutters and nine-pane sashes
Features	Chimneypiece with lugged marble surround to opening and split pediment mounted on a projection from the chimney breast on the east wall; bust in centre of pediment; cast-iron grate; modern audio-visual equipment



MARBLE HILL HOUSE – Ground floor



Room: 6

Name: Paper Room

Date(s): 1724-9

Significance: High

Brief description: This room is named the Paper Room in the inventory carried out in 1767, the year of her death, and one suggestion is that the room owes its name to the business papers held there - it is thought the Estate Steward used it as his office. Its position near the north entrance would have suited it to this role.

Notes: The Paper Room is not open to the public, it is currently used for storage. In 1926, records indicate that it was used as a kitchen and store. By 1962, drawings indicate that all kitchen furniture and partitions have been removed. The 1964 restoration included the removal of all remaining kitchen equipment, storage racks and M&E services. In 1987, it is recorded as being the “custodians room”. In 1994, it is recorded as being used as an office / control room.

Element	Description (including history)
Walls	Plastered and painted. At the start of the C20, there were no door linking the Paper Room to the Dining Parlour, with these being created in c.1953. IN 1964, a new door formed to the cupboard to the north of the fireplace.
Floor	Carpet
Ceiling	Segmental groin vault, plastered and painted; it springs from pillars partly buried in the corners with thick platbands to the top and bottom, like much simplified paraphrases of classical orders
Joinery	Nine-pane sash window; six-panel doors with architraves, those leading to the Dining Parlour larger and more elaborate than the others
Features	Stone skirtings; fireplace with segmental arch flanked by pillars with broad platbands to top and bottom carrying a cornice that follows the line of the arch; cupboard to north of fireplace lined with modern tiling; arches recess in thickness of north wall; modern security shutters



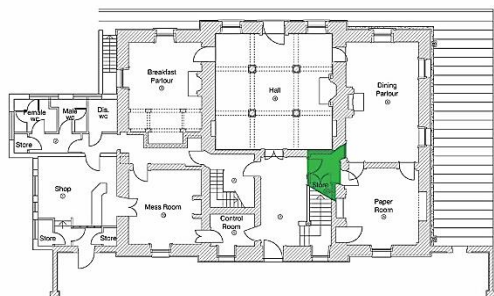
MARBLE HILL HOUSE – Ground floor

Room: 6a

Name: Storeroom and passage under stairs

Date(s): 1724-9

Significance: High



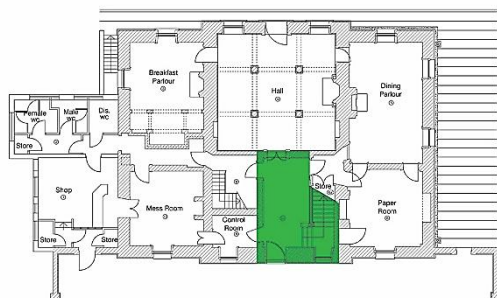
Brief description: This is a curiously-shaped space beneath the second half landing of the main stair. Doorways running through the wall at an angle open into it from the Dining Parlour and the Paper Room, another doorway provides access from the Entrance Hall. The cramped proportions and simple finish suggest that this was a service passage.

Notes: The space beneath the lower flight of the main stairs is now used to house a server and electrical services. The door to the Dining Parlour is currently out of use. This space is not open to the public.

Element	Description (including history)
Walls	Plastered and painted
Floor	Stone flags
Ceiling	Plaster, no cornice
Joinery	Doorframes, doors – that to the Paper Room is modern and that to the Main Hall has been split and the front appears to have been renewed.
Features	Modern lighting unit mounted on ceiling



MARBLE HILL HOUSE – Ground floor



Room: 7

Name: Staircase Hall

Date(s): 1724-9

Significance: High

Brief description: This is a double-height space that contains the entrance hall for visitors arriving through the north entrance. It provided a grand entrance to the Hall beyond (Room 4) and houses the main staircase, providing access to the piano nobile. The staircase dominates the space - although the doors from the exterior and to the Hall are aligned with the central north-south axis of the building, they are offset within the room itself. The staircase rises through three flights to a first-floor landing running along the east and north walls. That space is dealt with below (see entry for Room 15).

Notes: Staircase probably carved by James Richards, Master Sculptor and Carver in Wood to the King (successor in that post to Grinling Gibbons) and his assistant Ralph Kite. There are records of payments to Richards for work at Marble Hill and he and Kite produced a similar staircase at Houghton Hall in Norfolk for Sir Robert Walpole in 1729-1730. Both are the earliest examples of the use of structural mahogany.

In 1957, records indicate that a new ceiling was installed to the area under the landing and 3 new newels added to the start of second flight of stairs. Works during the 1964 restoration included removing cupboards under the stairs. During the early 1990s, a shop was located in the hall.

Element	Description (including history)
Walls	Painted flat plaster to the north, east and south walls at ground floor level
Floor	Paved in square stone flags with diamond-shaped (?)slate inserts at interstices, centre replaced; mahogany boards to treads of stair. Records indicate that the hall was repaved during the 1964 restoration.
Ceiling	Flat plaster with moulded cornice beneath landing; the bottoms of the newel posts protrude below the line of the plaster surface and carry carved ornament
Joinery	Doors (that to the Service Stair is a fire door), architraves, door linings, overlight to door to Hall, fanlight to north door, nine-pane sash in north wall with shutters, raised and fielded panelling enclosing space below stairs
Features	Picture rail on east wall; frames with moulded plaster borders on the west wall, the lower part of a larger scheme extending to first floor level; fixings for stair rods; modern grills in east wall



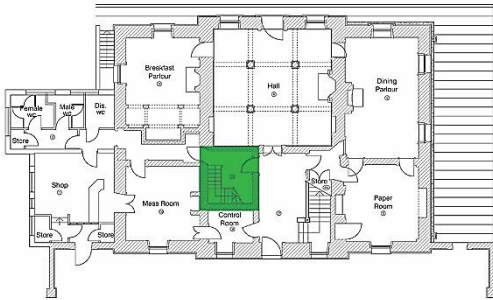
MARBLE HILL HOUSE – Ground floor

Room: 8

Name: The Stone Staircase

Date(s): 1724-9

Significance: High



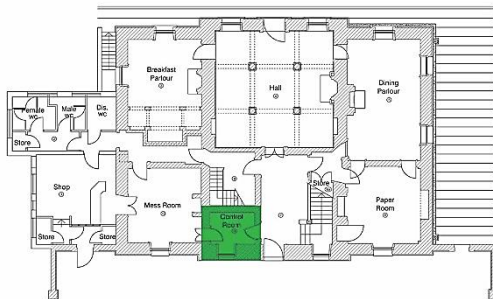
Brief description: This is the bottom landing of a cantilevered stone staircase that rises the full height of the building. The banister is supported on square-section iron stick balusters. Historically it was a service stair since it starts from the passage that formerly led to the service wing and rises to the garret, which was also formerly service accommodation, but the middle section would also have been used by family and close friends as it is the only means of access to the second floor with its 'polite' rooms.

Notes: The swell in the iron banisters may have been intended to accommodate wide dresses. In 1964, works were undertaken to increase the fire resistance to the door through to the south Hall and a door created to the corridor to the east (removing 4.5" wall, provide new door and frame without lock). In 1975, the banister railing was overhauled and stone treads made good where necessary, and corner ducts were added on all levels.

Element	Description (including history)
Walls	Plastered and painted with stone skirting
Floor	Stone flags and stone treads to stair, the latter incorporating new fabric inserted to replace worn sections
Ceiling	None
Joinery	Handrail to banisters
Features	Heating unit against west wall added in 1964



MARBLE HILL HOUSE – Ground floor



Room: 9

Name: Control Room

Previous name: Housekeeper's Bedchamber

Date(s): 1724-9

Significance: Some significance

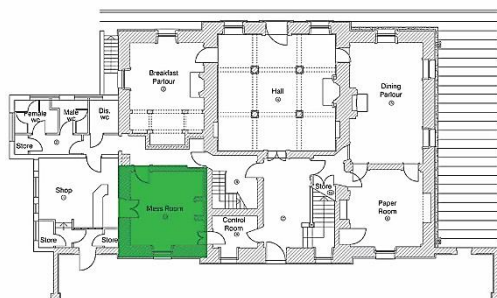
Brief description: A small room immediately to the north of the Stone Staircase this was originally service accommodation, this space now accommodates the control and observation point for the CCTV, heating, lighting etc. As such is it not accessible to the public.

Notes: Some of the equipment is mounted on a board fixed to the south wall. The historic panelling continues behind it. Between 1905 and 1994, records indicate that the room was used as a toilet and cloakroom with no door through to the Mess Room to the east. In 1994, the current Control Room was created and an access provided through to the Mess Room.

Element	Description (including history)
Walls	Panelled throughout – the panels are sunk and the mouldings to the arrises have a simple profile
Floor	Carpet
Ceiling	Plaster
Joinery	Panelling, skirting, doors, nine-pane sash window, door and window linings, shutters (historic security shutters with a metal lining)
Features	Large historic strap hinges to door to Mess Room



MARBLE HILL HOUSE – Ground floor



Room: 10

Name: Mess Room

Previous name: Servants' Hall

Date(s): 1724-9

Significance: Moderate

Brief description: A large room with a northern aspect that on plan is the western counterpart of the Paper Room.

Notes: For the majority of the C20 there was not doorway linking the Mess Room with adjacent Control Room. By 1950, records indicate that access had been created linking the Mess Room through the fireplace to what was a toilet block (but is now a shop). In 1952/3, the Mess Room was used as a dressing room and the door currently linking the Mess Room with the corridor was blocked. In 1960s, the room is referred to as the Housekeepers Bedchamber. At the time of the 1964 restoration, the room was referred to as the Dressing Room and instructed works included: "take out borrowed light and build up" in S-W corner; take off lock and catch; add two tower bolts"; corridor outside: block all openings to the toilet block and cupboard-like niche in the N-E corner; strip plaster to partition wall with Bkfst Parl and build 4.5" brick wall."

By 1987, the room was referred to as a men's changing room with a door through to the present shop. The door to the stone staircase is blocked and the area in the corridor outside the Mess Room is divided by a partition, with western section used as a store.

By 1994, the room is referred to as the Mess Room but with no door through to the Control Room, as found now. The blocked corridor outside had been returned to its historic passageway function.

Element	Description (including history)
Walls	Plastered and painted
Floor	Carpet
Ceiling	Plaster
Joinery	Skirting; architraves; panelled double doors in doorway leading to Control Room, with overdoor cupboard having panelled doors and narrow margin panels – all this is mirrored by the cupboard on the opposite side of the fireplace, which forms a symmetrical composition with it; lining to window, historic security shutters and nine-pane sash window; doors to Shop; historic six-panel door to Room 2a, the former Service Passage.
Features	Fireplace in west wall with veined marble surround; cupboard in recess to south of fireplace; double doors in east wall communicating with Shop; the shutters retain historic 'H'-hinges

