Habitat Network

The proposed planting aims to make connections between and enhance existing wildlife habitats whilst being mindful of retaining habitats that currently work well for important species, such as song thrush. The woodland area to the north-west of the site adjacent to the Sweet Walk will be retained and managed as song thrush habitat. Similarly, two areas of the southern Woodland Quarters surrounding Marble Hill House will be protected with new fences and hedging to preserve the internal area of habitat, as noted in item 4 on the opposite diagram. These areas will under-go a longer term process of woodland management to ensure habitats are retained and undisturbed so wildlife can adapt whilst other areas of new tree and understorey planting establishes.

The expanded areas of tree planting and understorey tall grassland to the perimeter of the park and between the Pleasure Ground avenues will provide wider and better connected flight paths for commuting bats. The species-rich grassland below will also attract a greater number of insects, providing enhanced foraging potential for bats and birds. This will also benefit mammals such as badgers, hedgehogs and mice, the latter of which will attract larger birds of prey to the park, such as tawny owl, known to nest in Marble Hill Park.

In the northern Woodland Quarters the habitat will be diversified with the re-introduction of shrub understorey and nectar-rich ground flora into the areas of thicket and providing new areas of grove trees with meadow understorey. The flower-rich meadows will attract a wider range of pollinating insects such as bees, butterflies and hoverflies, providing a food source for birds which can seek cover in the adjacent dense thicket.

The dense nature of the thickets also offer the opportunity to include dead wood habitats where they are less likely to be disturbed; an important habitat for attracting stag beetles.

KEY:

- Existing Woodland and inear tree corridors
- Proposed thicket planting below existing trees
- Areas of Woodland Quarter with no works proposed as part of this application
- New Orchard and Grove trees with meadow understorey

01 Expanded tree planting and tall grassland understorey to provide connected bat foraging routes and larger areas of cover for wildlife commuting and foraging

02 New avenue tree planting to connect bat foraging routes

03 Existing area of woodland and known song thrush habitat to remain unchanged

04 Area of Woodland Quarter to remain unchanged to retain existing habitats and undergo a longer-term programme of woodland management

05 Proposed areas of understorey shrub and groundcover planting below existing trees, with new tree inter-planting

06 Proposed areas of new grove tree planting with meadow understorey

07 Proposed area of new orchard tree planting with meadow understorey

08 Proposed Flower Garden with shrub and herbaceous perennial planting

Diagram of proposed habitat network

3.8 TREE PLANTING PALETTE

New tree planting and species selection aims to re-interpret the historic structure of the c.1749 plan, although where once it is thought avenues of Horse Chestnut would have been planted, the proposals are mindful of contemporary biosecurity issues and climate change adaptation. More appropriate species have been selected which, although may not be true to what was planted historically, still invoke the spirit and structure of the historic landscape design.

Many of the propsed tree species comprise native species or those with known wildlife value producing a variety of fruits and flowers. Elms, including wych elm, english elm and the Dutch Elm Disease-resistant varieties of Ulmus hybrids, will be utilised to support the Priority Species of butterfly the white-letter hairstreak, who's caterpillars feed on elms. The new tree avenues running north-south in the Pleasure Grounds will encourage new bat flight lines and sheltered foraging opportunities. Further tree planting is proposed within the extended bands of semi-improved grassland in the East Meadow.

Alnus glutinosa — HE
Alder — WQ

Betula nigra — HE
Black birch — WQ

Betula pendula — HE
Silver birch — WQ

Carpinus betulus — HE
Hornbeam — WQ

Corylus avellana — HE
Hazel — WQ

Fagus sylvatica — HE
Beech — WQ

Maloideae — WQ
Apple sub family

Malus spp — WQ
Apple

Malus sylvestris — WQ
Crab apple

Pinus sylvestris — WQ
Scots pine
Evergreen

Platanus x hispanica — WQ
London plane

Populus tremula — SW
Aspen

Prunus avium — HE WQ
Wild cherry

Prunus padus — HE WQ
Bird cherry

Quercus ilex — WQ
Holm Oak
Evergreen

Quercus robur — AV SW
English oak

Robinia pseudoacacia — SW
False acacia

Salix pentandra — SW
Bay willow

Sorbus aria — HE WQ
Whitebeam

Sorbus aucuparia — HE WQ
Mountain ash

Sorbus intermedia — HE WQ
Swedish whitebeam

Taxus baccata — SW WQ
Yew
Evergreen

Tilia x europaea — AV SW WQ
Common lime

Tilia cordata — GR WQ
Small leafed lime

Ulmus lutece — AV SW
Elm

Site location key

AV - Avenues

HE - Habitat edges

SW - Sweet Walk

WQ - Woodland Quarters (Orchard, Palisade & Specimen trees)

GR - Groves