

This is my response to the consultee letter of 13/11/18 from Christopher Lane of Historic England.

Dear Mr. Laine,

With reference to your letter of 14 November on the LBRUT Planning portal, It is disingenuous of you to claim that "the specified sizes and generous spacing of this new tree planting should enable retention of the existing generally open character and views between the Pleasure Grounds and the East and West meadows." In reality a reduction in the number of tall trees will make little or no difference because it is the ranks of staggered small trees at head height that will do the worst damage. English Heritage's own image (Fig. 8 below) says it all. If the plan were ever to be carried out, this fact will be visible for all to see. And the damage to the landscape will get steadily worse every year. The fact is any number of trees across the centre of what is a "Capability" Brown style panoramic vista will ruin the landscape.

English Heritage's narrative for Marble Hill is basically as follows: a garden plan dated no earlier than c.1748/49 (Fig. 3) was actually implemented in the 1720's, i.e. when the house was built, and over time this landscape has "deteriorated" until it reached its current state. This is an astonishing claim that is not substantiated by the evidence. My attachment addresses this issue. I won't dwell on the 18<sup>th</sup> century pictorial evidence, except to say that of the various options, EH's theory summarised above is the least plausible.

For the current purpose, the most important image is the 1869 OS map (Fig. 5). This shows for the first time a west-east orientation on the south lawn. The north-south fence to the east was probably a post-and-rail fence that would enhance the vista, not block it. Has no one in English Heritage or Historic England noticed this? Jonathan Peel (resident from 1825 to 1879) is known to have had an Italianate garden immediately in front of the house. Marble Hill had evidently become a typical Victorian garden with a formal garden area beside the house and an informal Brownian landscape beyond.

It is Marble Hill Park and its beautiful vistas as they stand that are our heritage, not some unprepossessing garden design that was consigned long ago to the dustbin of history.

Ron McEwen  
(local historian).

7 December 2018

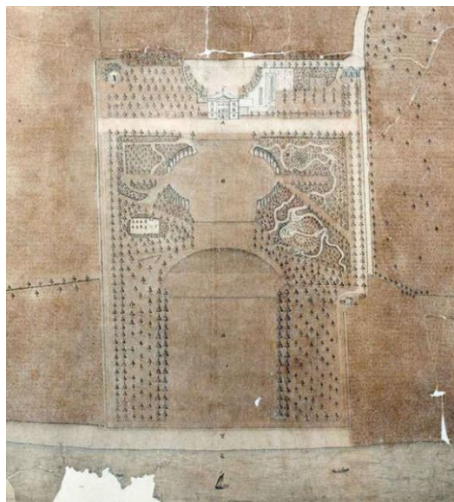
## MARBLE HILL 1741-1869



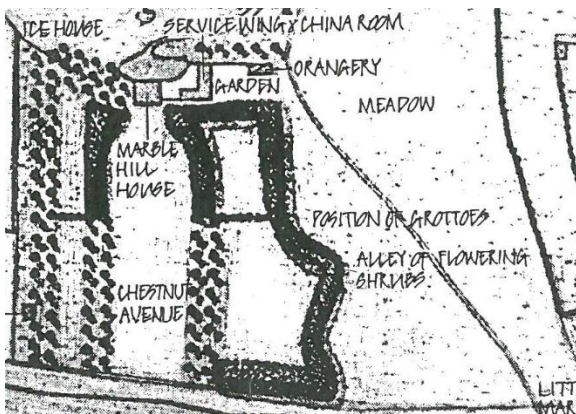
1. Roque map 1741/45.



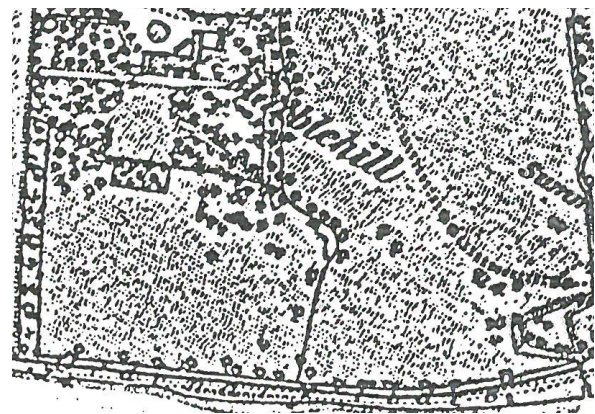
2. English Heritage 1989, based on Heckel sketch 1748.



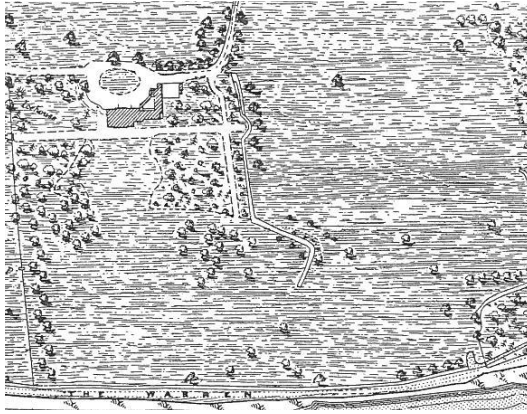
3. 1748/49 map (garden plan a later addition?)



4. Sauthier map 1786-87.



5. Ordnance Survey map 1869.



6. 1903. West-east vista in now public park.



7. West-east vista today



8. Marble Hill Revived plan.