

# PROPOSALS FOR RENEWAL OF MARBLE HILL PLAY CENTRES BUILDINGS AND LANDSCAPE

## Landscape Statement

### Introduction

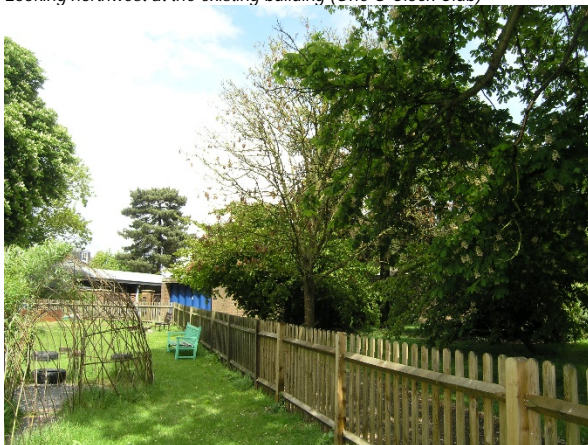
The site is set in Marble Park and is run as existing playcentres, a much valued and popular local facility, however the built form is a former maintenance premises dating from the 1960's and needs urgent renewal.



Looking northwest at the existing building (One O'Clock Club)



Looking south at the existing building (Adventure Play facility)



Looking northeast to the Marble Hill Park maintenance compound



Looking south east at the vegetation on the western end of the site against the car park

The site is split into three external areas: Adventure Play (to the west of the site) for older children; Mandarin Ducks Nursery (to the north of the site) and the One O'clock Club to the east of the site. The providers of the facilities also make use of the wider park throughout the day. The playcentres have no dedicated parking, but the Marble Hill Park car park lies to the immediate west of the site.



Looking southwest at the One O'Clock Club external space



Looking east across the Adventure Play facility



Looking southwest at the Mandarin Ducks Nursery external space



Area to immediate south of the Playcentres

## Proposals

The intention of the proposals is to replace the 'not fit for purpose' existing built form with a new purpose built complex to house the existing users and offer space to additional users. The layout externally will be reconfigured, reusing elements of the much loved and characteristic equipment, but also introducing new equipment and a reconfiguring of internal boundaries to spaces.

## Supporting surveys and reports

- The proposals are based on a topographic survey of the site and its immediate curtilage.
- An arboricultural survey has been undertaken by Bernie Harverson (Arboricultural Consultant) which identified 26 trees with the potential to be affected by the proposals, of which 8 are Grade A (high quality), 12 are Grade B (moderate quality), 7 are Grade C (low quality) and 1 Grade U (unsuitable for retention). Tree protection in accordance with BS 5837 (2012) will be implemented throughout the construction period.
- A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal has been undertaken by The Ecology Co-op which identified the need for a Dusk Emergence Bat survey which has been carried out. Findings are summarised as *'The proposed development lies entirely within an area of land that is heavily disturbed and no notable protected species constraints have been identified. The hard standing, amenity grassland and buildings present across the majority of the site have an inherently low ecological value and it is proposed that all trees present will be retained through the development process. The buildings were assessed to have 'low' potential to support roosting bats. In line with best practice guidance, a dusk emergence survey was recommended to confirm presence/likely absence of roosting bats and was carried out in August 2019, during which no bats were seen to emerge from the buildings.'*
- A Landscape and Visual Impact Appraisal (LVIA) also accompanies the application. This concluded that whilst there were some significance visual effects in the construction phase, landscape and visual effects in the operational phase were all beneficial.

## Landscape strategy

The aim of the landscape proposals are to provide a robust and suitable landscape setting for the new buildings, with alterations to the wider external areas. The intention is to upgrade the outdoor play offer, with some minor rationalisation of internal boundary lines.

The landscape masterplan provides an indicative layout for the external spaces; the intention is to develop this further with a specialist play designer at detailed design stage.

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2070-TF-00-00-DR-L-1001



## Access and circulation

The existing car park lies outside the site area and will remain as existing, with minor alterations to two bays in the north east corner to enable these to be accessible parking bays linked to the existing footpath.

The majority of playcentre users are pedestrians approaching across the park or directly from Richmond Road. The existing pedestrian path running along the south of the site is retained, with pedestrian access for all users to an entrance on the southern façade of the building linking through to all internal areas. There will also be gated pedestrian access in the eastern boundary with a separated path across the northern area of the site allowing access to dedicated entrances to ensure complete flexibility in accessing options whether some facilities are closed and others functioning. Facility users will be wholly segregated from the north maintenance road and compound by a protecting fence.

## Play equipment

The intent is to re-use the existing play equipment where appropriate and possible, but also to provide new equipment and dedicated areas for different activities such as waterplay, kinetic play, sensory gardens, outdoor play kitchen and storytelling areas. Adapted equipment to enable accessibility to all will also be included. The emphasis of the provision of new play equipment is to provide a 'natural timber play' offer where possible, with reuse of timber from Marble Hill Park if available.

The layout shown on the landscape masterplan has been developed with the playcentre staff and gives an indicative idea of the proposals. The intention is that a firm layout will be developed with a specialist play designer as part of the detailed design stages.



Adventure play structures retained



Existing boat retained



Indicative ideas for play

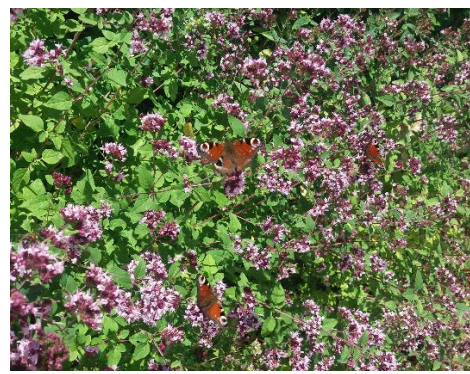
## Soft landscape proposals

Trees and other areas of new planting are shown on the indicative landscape masterplan. The intention is that a detailed planting scheme will be developed as part of the detailed design stages.

The planting will be designed to bring visual and sensory interest throughout the seasons for users to the scheme; sound of movement, scent and texture may all be of interest. Plant selection will also be carefully considered to ensure suitability for the users; colours and scent may be overstimulating for some users with more complex or conditions. New tree planting is incorporated in to the proposals to provide shelter and shade, as well as contributing to the green infrastructure of the area and biodiversity.

Plant selection will include species that contribute to local biodiversity and, where appropriate native species will be specified. Where appropriate plant species will be selected that provide food and shelter for birds and that encourage a diverse range of insect species.

Selection will also consider avoidance of plants known to be the most toxic (eg Daphne, Digitalis, and Euphorbia) as well as those with large thorns and prickles. It should be noted however that there are very few cases of poisoning from plants per year: The Playcentres area also a nut-free environment, so species such as Walnut and Hazel will be avoided.



## Hard landscape proposals

Areas of hard surfacing, mainly associated with the building façade and wet play areas, are shown on the indicative landscape masterplan. The intention is that a detailed surfacing scheme will be developed as part of the detailed design stages.