

3.0

SITE APPRAISAL

- 3.1 Site History
- 3.2 Built Heritage
- 3.3 Natural Heritage
- 3.4 Trees and Woodlands
- 3.5 Rivers and Streams
- 3.6 Landscape Character
- 3.7 Paths and Circulation
- 3.8 Maintenance Zones & Access
- 3.9 Sports and Recreation
- 3.10 Vehicle Access
- 3.11 Events in Marlay
- 3.12 Visitor Facilities
- 3.13 Marlay House and Courtyard

3.1 SITE HISTORY

Marlay Park 's 100 hectares of remnant estate land offers a rich heritage, outstanding scenery and a place for active and passive recreation.

The history of the estate lands can be traced back to Anglo-Norman times. During the Tudor era King Henry VIII confiscated the lands then owned by St. Mary's Abbey, during the dissolution of the monasteries. These lands known then as Harold's Grange were granted to Barnaby Fitzpatrick, Baron of Upper Ossory. The land prior to this was known as 'Grange of the March' meaning 'Farmhouse of the Border' because the boundary of the Pale ran across the mountains to the south.

Towards the end of the 17th century, Thomas Taylor acquired the about 12 hectares and built a house, which was called "The Grange", and farmed the land. It is unlikely, however, that any remnants of this phase of the occupation of the property are to be seen around the park, though there may be some early fabric surviving within the main house and possibly in some of the outbuildings close by.

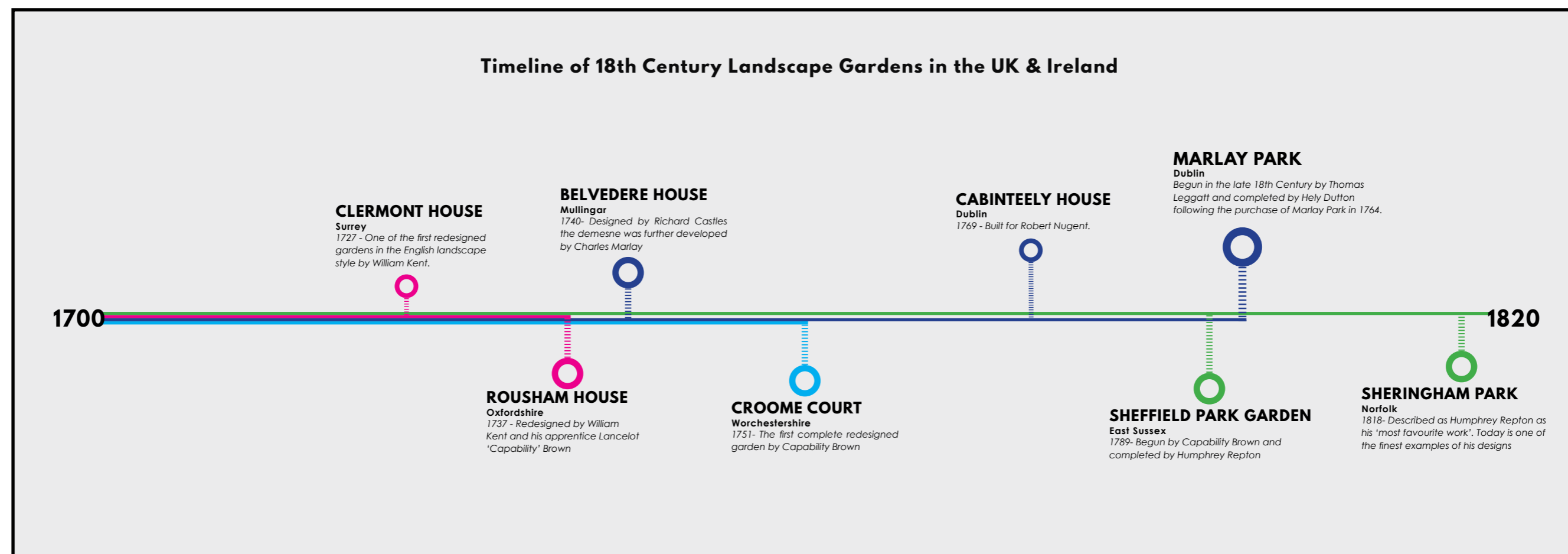
In 1764 the estate was purchased by David La Touche, of French Huguenot origin, who was a member of parliament and first Governor of the Bank of Ireland. He was succeeded by his son and grandson. The La Touches developed the property, rebuilding Marlay House and outbuildings and enlarging the extent of the demesne by

acquiring adjoining land in 1776, 1777 and 1785. At its greatest extent the demesne amounted to 158 hectares spread over the five townlands of Clarkstown, Haroldsgrange, Kilmashoge, Taylorsgrange and Whitechurch.

The first attempt to sell the property was made by David Charles La Touche in 1853, however only a small tract of land at Kilmashoge was sold at auction. The demesne was eventually sold under the terms of the Landed Estate Court at an auction held on the 29th November 1864 to Robert Tedcastle, a coal merchant, he and his family resided there until 1925.

In their time at Marlay they sold a wedge of land on the north-west corner of the estate and the adjoining 'Marlay Grange' was built on the site by the Honourable Hercules Rowley. A portion of this section was later leased to the newly formed Grange Golf Club in July 1910.

Following the death of Robert Tedcastle, Robert Ketton Love, a market gardener then acquired the estate. He was the largest tomato producer in Ireland at that time and a successful race-horse breeder. His son, Philip Love was the last private owner of the estate until his death in 1970. Negotiations with the Love family saw the sale of a subsequent tract of land to Grange Golf Club before its purchase in the region of £500,000 by the old Dublin Corporation in 1972.



3.1.1 Historical Development of Marlay Park

Rocque's Map 1760

John Rocque's map of County Dublin, published in 1760, shows Marlay as it was prior to the acquisition by the La Touches. The property was known as Grange at that time and the house is seen with the old-style formal garden of parterres and geometrical lines, including an alée extending westwards from the house. The Little Dargle is seen passing through the property, but without any lakes or division into channels. To the south-west of the house is a group of buildings labeled "Clarks Town". This group may be close to the present farmyard at Marlay, but has its own access from Whitechurch Road and no obvious pathway linking it with the property at Grange.



Detail of John Rocque's Map of 1760

Taylor's Map 1816

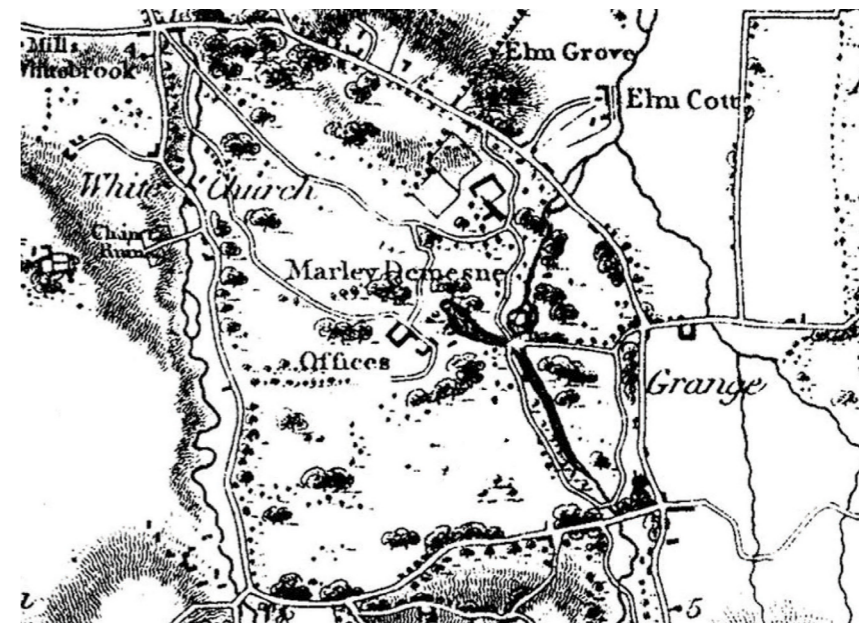
John Taylor's map of 1816 shows some similarities with Rocque's map of more than fifty years earlier. The house and the outbuildings to the west are similar, complete with an avenue leading westwards. Gone are the fields and formal garden and in their place are abundant trees. There is still no sign of any alteration in the river and no lakes or channels may be seen.



Detail of John Taylor's Map of 1816

Duncan's Map 1821

The contrast between John Taylor's map and that produced by William Duncan is striking. Gone is the straight path westward of the house and the rectangular enclosure to the east. The farm buildings are marked as "offices" and are more recognisable as a yard of buildings. The Little Dargle was been altered significantly, with the introduction of lakes. The trees are shown on this map to be placed in more obvious belts and groups to enclose land in visual compartments and there are a larger number of paths.



Detail of William Duncan's Map of 1821

Setting out the Park from 1764

The acquisition of the property by David and Elizabeth La Touche in 1764, shortly after their marriage, brought the immense wealth of this banking family to bear on the development of the lands and brought the name, Marlay being Elizabeth La Touche's family name.

This great expansion of the La Touche property coincided with the arrival in Ireland of the landscape gardener, Thomas Leggett, who advertised his services in January 1781. Leggett, a former foreman for renowned landscape designer, William Emes in England, was a well-respected designer who was responsible for the work at Stillorgan Park. Both he and another principal landscape designer, Hely Dutton, helped to shape the lands at Marlay following their work at Mountbellew Demesne, Castleblakeney, Co Galway.

Their naturalistic design for Marlay Park was popularised by the prolific landscape gardener, Lancelot Brown, whose name is most usually associated with this approach to the 'English Landscape'. This style was a rejection of the formal approach of French and Italian garden, with exception to the walled gardens, and opted instead for a naturalistic design of curved belts of woodland enclosing substantial areas of parkland, often with carefully choreographed individual specimen trees or clumps of trees. This picturesque, natural appearance was in fact a deliberate aesthetic created to give the grounds depth and perspective as in a landscape painting. Over the next three generations the La Touche family the grounds were laid out with lakes, cascades, bridges and walks, in addition to which more than 300 types of shrubs and trees were planted covering approximately 30 hectares of the demesne.

First Edition Ordnance Survey Map 1843

The Ordnance Survey's first edition six-inch map, published in 1843, shows in detail paths, trees and shrubs, the various channels in the river, the lakes, the farm buildings and so forth. The map confirms the new layout of the Little Dargle that was shown on Duncan's map; however, the river is not shown as having more than one channel.

In the belt of planting that runs alongside the Little Dargle to the north of the lakes a building is shown on the map. There is no indication as to what the building is, whether it's a house or garden pavilion, or some other type.

To the west of the ponds the farm yard is shown with two courtyards separated by a range of building. The southern end of the larger farmyard is open, as is the northern end of the eastern side. A roadway runs northward from the farmyard and a pathway crosses it a little way along its length. To the east of this, between the farmyard and the lake a building is shown in the planted area.



Detail of First Edition Ordnance Survey Map 1843

Second Edition Ordnance Survey Map 1864

The house and walled garden are seen with one gateway, with a gate lodge, immediately to the east of the walled garden. The Little Dargle is shown running in a straight line, unabridged, to reach the demesne boundary at Grange Road.

The southern section of Marlay Park is shown to have a significant change since the 1843 edition. The southern part of the river is no longer as broad or as sinuous and it has been split into two channels, with a new one running to the east of the original alignment, from a point close to the southern boundary right through to the northern part of the park, when it turns to join the original channel. Other notable features include the appearance of a mausoleum, in ruins, to the east of the central lake. No building appeared in this location on the earlier map. The building that had been shown in the woodland to the north of the lake on the 1843 map was now partly in ruins.



Detail of Second Edition Ordnance Survey Map 1864

Ordnance Survey Map 1937

Following the purchase of Marlay Park by 1919, the tomato producer Robert Ketton Love felled a large area of trees to the south of the farm buildings and turned this area of land into a working farm. All ruins within the woodland area, including the mausoleum are no longer registered on the map.

Following the sale of land to the Grange Golf Club some of the linkages, such as that with Moravian Cemetery and the old post office to the west of the site and the tunnel bridge close to the farm buildings were broken. The layout of the Park remained almost unaltered until its purchase by Dublin Corporation.



Detail of Ordnance Survey Map 1937

Key Challenge - Masterplan:

The historic landscape consisting of the Brownian style landscape with borrowed views to the Dublin Mountains is one that requires special attention during the design process.



Marlay House



Stables Courtyard



Boland's Cottage



Laurelmere Cottage

3.2 BUILT HERITAGE

Marlay demesne is the largest 18th century park to remain intact in Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown.

With this knowledge; existing built fabric, particularly surviving historical fabric, should always be treated with respect, and should be retained and repaired wherever possible. There should be a general principle opposing the loss of existing fabric, unless a compelling, beneficial and well-argued case is put forward to support such an action. Works carried out by Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Council on the historic built fabric within Marlay Park has been conservative in nature – striving to avoid the appearance of over-restoration. Works have been carried out to the highest conservation standards using materials of suitable or matching quality.

Once restoration works on these buildings has been completed DLRCC has assigned appropriate uses to them for the public to use and appreciate.

Section 6.1.3.1 Policy AR1: Record of Protected Structures

It is Council policy to:

- i. Include those structures that are considered in the opinion of the Planning Authority to be of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, technical or social interest in the Record of Protected Structures (RPS).
- ii. Protect structures included on the RPS from any works that would negatively impact their special character and appearance.
- iii. Ensure that any development proposals to Protected Structures, their curtilage and setting shall have regard to the Department of the Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht 'Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines for Planning Authorities' (2011).
- iv. Ensure that new and adapted uses are compatible with the character and special interest of the Protected Structure.



Gate Lodge at Balinteer Avenue, Marlay Park



Weir, Marlay Park



Bell tower, Marlay Park

BUILT HERITAGE *(continued)*

The Park has its origins in the early eighteenth century, when Thomas Taylor acquired about 12 hectares of land and built a house. It is unlikely, however, that any remnants of this phase of the occupation of the property are to be seen around the park, though there may be some early fabric surviving within the main house and possibly also in some of the outbuildings close by.

An inventory of the various structures within Marlay Park carried out by Historic Building Consultants, sought to identify their regional and local significance, commencing with the walls and gates that surround the park, followed by other gateways, the buildings, bridges, weirs and other structures.

The gates include those around the perimeter wall, or park wall and also include gateways within the park, dating from the eighteenth or nineteenth centuries.

There are several water courses and ditches in Marlay Park, giving the park a varied collection of bridges of local and regional value. Some are simple concrete platforms, others are of timber, while many are of stone, at least in their outward appearance. Some of these were constructed during the time that the house and Park were in private ownership, while others were built in the late twentieth century to increase the permeability through the park. The majority were built to a good aesthetic standard to fit in well with the park.

There are several weirs along the streams that run from south to north through the Park. These were constructed in the eighteenth and nineteenth century to provide the ponds, to divert the waters and to create waterfalls.

Combined with this are the more ornamental parts of the park, consisting the artificial ponds and waterfall features, the bridges, the ha-ha and the kitchen garden, which physically and visually link the buildings and historically relate to their immediate setting. The designed landscape associated with the protected structures form an intrinsic part of the original design concept of Marlay Park and, as such, is inseparable from.



Granite bridge, Marlay Park



Restored Regency garden and Ornamental pool, Marlay Park



Infilled under passage walkway, Marlay Park



1. Marlay House
2. Stables Courtyard
3. The Orangery
4. Boland's Cottage
5. Laurelmere
6. Depot Courtyard & Bell Tower
7. Gate Lodge

BUILT HERITAGE *(continued)*

Based on a historical review of Marlay Park, documented in the 'Built Heritage Inventory of Marlay Park' document by Historic Building Consultants it is evident that the protected structures, the ancillary buildings of the farmyard, the former gate lodges, the regency walled garden and the boundary wall were developed together and form an integral part of a whole...

Marlay House

The original house, known as 'The Grange' is over 300 years old and was built by the Taylor family. It was incorporated into the new Marlay House by David LaTouche in 1794 as part of his new demesne. The house has corner fireplaces, narrow stairways and numerous odd-shaped rooms. The largest room is the one-time ballroom with its three full length Windows facing the mountains, immediately adjacent to which is the uniquely oval music room. Separated from the latter by a small hallway is a room known as the Studio which was in later years used by Evie Hone, the celebrated stained glass artist.

The plan of Marlay is similar in its components to that of Mount Kennedy, Lucan and several other houses of the period. However, this is the only house which is entered through the Hall at 90° from its central axis, this is most likely the result of 'The Grange' being already in existence.

The Georgian façade is in a simple rendered finish with parapets and granite quoins. The dressings around the windows are granite with Portland stone columns framing the main entrance.

Courtyard Stables

The courtyard beside Marlay House has been home to five craft workshops for many years. In 2017 the southern wing of the courtyard was faithfully refurbished by DLRCC. There are now sixteen craft units available to crafts people who offer high quality, handcrafted products, produced and retailed onsite, which will fit with the overall Marlay ethos in terms of the use of this Heritage Building. The renovation of the western wing is currently underway and is due for completion mid-2018 and will include new public toilets to replace those adjacent to the Grange Road car park. The toilet facility will include a "Changing Places" facility including shower, toilet and hoist facilities.

Laurelmere

Within the woodland of the Park lies Laurelmere Cottage. Constructed in the early eighteenth century it was remodeled as a Victorian 'cottage orne' with Tudor style windows and bargeboards. Architectural conservation works were carried out to restore it by Dún Laoghaire Rathdown and it now used by the RHSI.

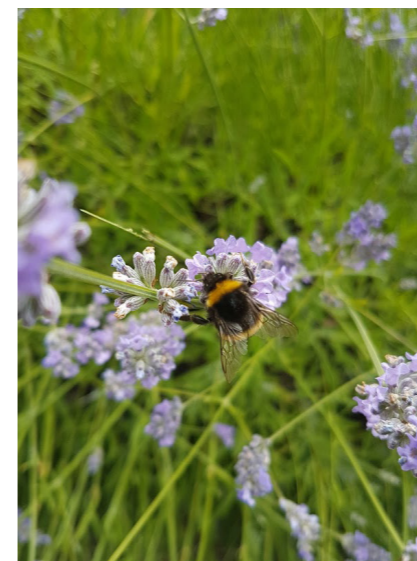
Gate Lodge

Located at the Balinteer Avenue entrance this three-bay, two-storey lodge is built in a Tudor style. The ground floor level is set back and the overhang is supported by a cast iron beam supported on two quatrefoil-section cast iron columns.

Many of the other original lodges of the periphery of the demesne including Eden, now lie on neighbouring lands while other buildings such as Grange House and Highfield have since disappeared.



Wildflower meadow, Marlay Park



3.3 NATURAL HERITAGE

Marlay Park, as a large suburban public park, comprises a variety of ecological features including areas of grassland, wildflower meadows, woodland, streams and lakes. All of these areas are home to flora and fauna that contribute to the overall value of the park for ecology and for humans.

The woodlands within the park are mainly mixed broadleaved woodland dominated by beech. The understorey is generally dominated by holly, and some invasive species such as cherry laurel and winter heliotrope. Tree lines and hedgerows, composed of native and introduced species including Hawthorn, Wych Elm and Horse Chestnut.

The Little Dargle River, which originates in the Dublin Mountains to the south of Marlay, runs through the lands and is artificially split into sections within the park. Waters from the Little Dargle have been dammed within the park to create three ponds.

Bird species that have been recorded in the park or surroundings include common resident species along with other important species such as Sky Lark, Kingfisher, Teal, Swift, Tufted Duck, Common Linnet, Mute Swan, House Martin, Barn Swallow, Coot, House Sparrow, Cormorant, and Little Grebe.

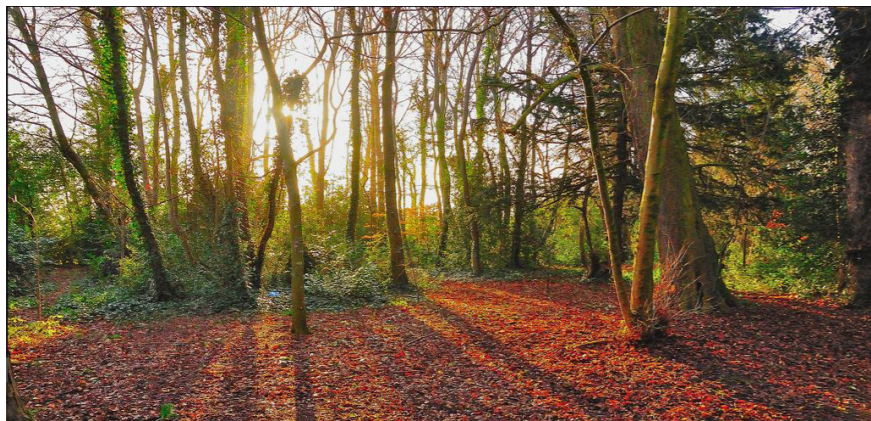
Marlay Park supports several bat species and otter, both of which are listed in Annex IV of the EC Habitats Directive. Other terrestrial mammals such as badger, fox, rabbit, rats and grey squirrel which is an invasive species also occur in the park.

Key Challenge - Masterplan:

The awareness and education around the natural heritage of Marlay Park will be strongly considered during the design process and in the formulation of a management plan. The natural areas of Marlay should be considered for additional resting and passive recreation.



Beech canopy, Marlay Park



Woodland path, Marlay Park

3.4 TREES AND WOODLANDS

Marlay Park provides large aspects of dense woodland that allow visitors to enjoy a very natural setting in an urban environment

During the construction of 18th century landscape gardens, carefully selected trees were strategically located to orchestrate views and screen visual intrusions. A favoured tree was the Cedar of Lebanon (*Cedrus libani*). With their distinctive horizontal shape, these evergreens were a popular imported tree in the 18th century. Today, within the Park, the Cedar of Lebanon (*Cedrus libanii*) is an exceptional example of a specimen tree with a height of 30m and a girth of 5.42m. Other signature trees are the large-leaved London plane (*Platanus × acerifolia*) and evergreen oaks such as the Cork Oak (*Quercus suber*).

The acquiring of a vast variety of exotics and a range of interesting evergreen specimen trees in private demesnes increased through the 18th and 19th centuries. This design style increased in popularity among the wealthy who traveled extensively to obtain exciting new species to be planted and shown off among fashionable society. The Tulip tree (*Liriodendron tulipifera*), Atlantic Blue Cedar (*Cedrus atlantica glauca*) and Walnut (*Juglan regia*) featured prominently, and in this respect Marlay is no exception.

Marlay Park displays evidence of this within its dense woodland area and planted avenues where trees such as the Kashmir Cypress and Magnolias can be found. Beech is the most commonly planted trees and although not native to Ireland it was planted extensively by landowners during the 18th and 19th centuries. Today some of Marlay's beeches are more than 250 years old.

The mixed woodland within the park was originally planted as an oak woodland in the 1700s, today this area is a now characterised by a mix of tree species including Sycamore, Ash and Yew.

Another key criterion in gardens of this era involved the retention of the ancient and veteran trees. Landscape designers favoured retaining all trees including those that were dead as they believed they were still critical to the surrounding aesthetic and biodiversity. In his *Observations on the Theory and Practice of Landscape Gardening* (1803) Humphry Repton stated that 'The man of science and of taste will... discover the beauties in a tree which the others would condemn for its decay'.

The hedgerows within the Park provide important, established habitats for numerous species of invertebrates, birds and small mammals. Some of the hedges are at least 150 years old and provide vital migration corridors.



HISTORIC TREE PLANTING

The horticultural history of Marlay Park can be considered in terms of five time periods: pre-1764 with a modest garden laid in the French formal garden style of parterres and geometrical lines; 1764 - 1864 development of the demesne under the stewardship of the La Touche family; 1864-1925 the reduction in the scale of the demesne; a period tree felling to accommodate working farmland during the early to late twentieth century and: 1972 to the present day when some significant new planting took place in association with National Tree Week and other events and management under the guidance of Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Council.

Generally the woodlands are well maintained, however, the maturing of the woodlands has led to reduced visibility in terms of vistas and avenues and therefore the historic landscape has been lost in some instances. Some of these areas would benefit from more robust and strategic management, particularly where historic planting has become overgrown.



WOODLAND BELTS

The park is heavily planted with a very wide variety of trees which range in age from approximately 300 years to recently. The woodlands are planted largely with Beech trees and help form good shelter and transition zones between areas of activity. Most recently, the southern boundary of the park was planted with native trees *Quercus petraea* (Sessile oak), *Quercus robur* (Pedunculate/Common Oak) and *Fraxinus excelsior* (common ash). In time this will establish to create a woodland edge along College Road.

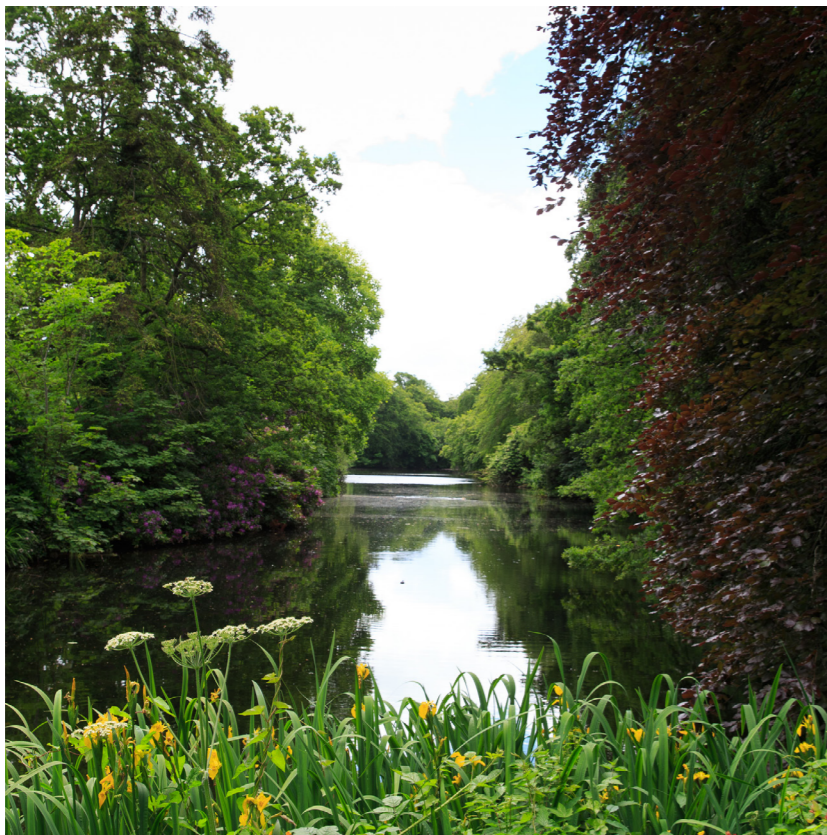
Marlay Park displays traditional Landscape design with strategically located trees, both in solitary and clumped form throughout the park to help create vistas and enhance views. To enhance these characteristics; the Eastern boundary of the Park would benefit from additional tree planting to provide screening from the adjoining developed lands and contribute to the atmosphere and character of the park.

Key Challenge - Masterplan

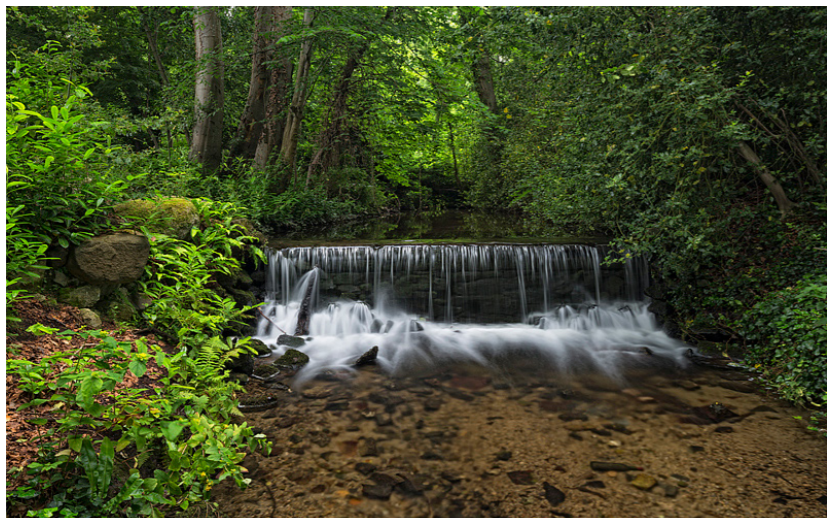
The historic views and vistas will be considered during the design process to ensure the conservation of the historic landscape. The historic tree planting will be reviewed and reinstated where appropriate to the use of the park as well as succession planting in the existing woodlands.

Key Challenges - Masterplan:

The central pond, rivers and streams can form tranquil and relaxing spaces for park users. These areas will be explored during the design process to make them more accessible and attractive to the public for relaxation purposes.



Central pond, Marlay Park



3.5 RIVERS AND STREAMS

The lands acquired by the La Touches when expanding Marlay Park crossed a tributary of the River Dodder, the Little Dargle river, which rises on Two Rock mountain and runs northwards through Marlay, later splitting into two streams. One of these runs eastwards to join the Slang river at Dundrum, while the other continues northward to flow into the Dodder at Rathfarnham. This river enters Marlay Park near the south-eastern corner of the park and continues northwards, to run across Harolds Grange Road about 150 meters to the east of the main house. There is also a small watercourse that runs into the park from College Road, further to the west and close to the present car park on College Road.

Today, Marlay Park is host to a series of waterways consisting of streams and ponds that increase the amenity wealth of the park. Within the bounds of the park the ponds and cascades were constructed during the early 19th Century through a series of weirs, similar to the irrigation works carried out by designers Leggett and Dutton at Mount Bellew Demesne, and remain largely intact to form an important aspect of the park from an ecological perspective. The Council recognise the importance of these waterways as buffer zones and 'linkages' between formally designated ecological sites. There is one Natura 2000 site within 5 kilometres of Marlay Park (Wicklow Mountains SAC) and three Natura 2000 sites (Dublin Bay) with hydrological links.

The waterways that traverse Marlay Park form part of the green corridor linking the mountains and sea. The waterways that traverse Marlay Park form part of the Green corridor linking the mountains and sea.

- There are three ponds within the bounds of the Park:
- Central Pond (south end of the ha-ha field)
 - Wildlife Pond (adjacent to Grange Road carpark)
 - Woodland Pond

The parks water supply comes from a tributary of the River Dodder, the Little Dargle River. A hydrological analysis of the river as part of The River Dodder Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management Study (CFRAMS) identified that the probability of flooding occurs at the Grange Road car park under the Grange Road as the culvert has insufficient capacity to convey the higher probability event flows resulting in predicted flooding in the area during peak fluvial events. This is a potential hazard for the public or emergency vehicles entering/exiting the park during significant flood events.

The OPW Flood Hazard Mapping Website is a record of historic flood events over the last 120 years. This database indicates that there was a single incident of flooding reported in the vicinity of Marlay Park. The event reported is dated November 1982, and concluded that substantial flooding occurred upstream of the road culvert on Grange Road on the Little Dargle stream. One of the main reasons for this flooding was the choking of the culvert with miscellaneous debris. The Woodland Pond and a section of the Central Pond where water flow reduces have become heavily silted creating terrestrial areas. As a result of the M50 construction, the volume of water entering these streams and ponds has also been reduced. In certain instances the riparian corridors of the ponds and streams are bare due to the wear and tear of walkers and joggers. Some paths were also constructed very close to the streams which resulted in hard edges.

Existing County flood plain management policy seeks to limit development in identified floodplains and to preserve riparian corridors. Development proposals in riparian corridors will be considered providing they:

- Have no negative effects on the distinctive character and appearance of the waterway corridor and/or the characteristic and landscape elements of the specific site and its context.
- Do not impact on important wetland sites within river/stream catchments which provide an important function in terms of regulating the flow of water in these catchments and often support habitats and species of high nature conservation value.
- Take cognisance of any adverse impacts on the populations of protected species including otters and bats. Rivers and Waterways are very important assets of Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown. The Council shall consult, as appropriate, with Inland Fisheries Ireland in relation to any development that could potentially impact on the aquatic ecosystems and associated riparian habitats and/or salmonid waters. Any works which will impact on a watercourse must adhere to best practice guidelines as outlined in the ERFB's 'Requirements for the Protection of Fisheries Habitat During Construction and Development Works at River Sites'. Riparian corridors, defined as those areas that are physically or visually linked to the waterway, are multi-functional in nature.

3.6 LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

Dún Laoghaire Rathdown contains significant areas of landscape importance. The retention and protection of these areas is particularly critical given the established built up nature of the majority of the County and the continuing pattern of densification and intensification. There is a clear presumption in favour of conserving, maintaining and enhancing the landscape character to enable those living and working within and those visiting to reap the benefits of the high quality environment and the leisure and recreation amenities which this landscape facilitates and offers.

As the largest regional park in the Dún Laoghaire Rathdown, Marlay Park is an ever more important green space for the hinterland and well as providing a pedestrian linkage to the Wicklow Way.

The Park contains many of the features associated with 18th and early 19th century demesnes. These include the lakes, cascades, bridges, substantial boundary walls, gate lodges, ornate iron entrance gates, walled garden, circuitous approach road to the house, ha-ha ditch and informal tree planting.

The informal tree arrangement at Marlay which includes groves and sweeping, boundary planting was a carefully choreographed layout common in estate lands of the time. This picturesque, natural appearance was in fact a very deliberate aesthetic created by the original owners of the Marlay demesne. It involved ground shaping and strategic planting of trees to create depth and perspective as in a landscape painting.

The style, made famous by the landscape architect Capability Brown which tended to incorporate or 'borrow' the surrounding wider landscape so that it appears to be part of the garden. In this instance Marlay Park appears visually linked to the Dublin Mountains and to be part of the wider landscape.

To best safeguard the design and maintenance of the park it is appropriate to understand the aesthetic of the park when it was first completed. The following extracts give insight to the newly redesigned Marlay Park:

The Gardeners Magazine Vol 1 by J.C Loudon 1826 p 262

"Marlay, the residence of La touche, Esq., is delightfully situated at the foot of the range of hills, which from this side form the background to the environs of the city. The gardens and pleasure- grounds were, till of late years, in great repute. We understand that the late Mr. Leggett, a landscape gardener of original talent, laid out the grounds. He has evinced considerable taste in the management of the mountain rivulet, which is conducted through the demesne. By many, the cascades are considered too numerous, causing in some places a greater degree of placidity than is consistent with the character of the stream."



Front Entrance to Marlay House (1966), Marlay Park

3.6.1 Early Drawings

Historic evidence of the original layout of Marlay Park can be seen in the drawings completed by Anne LaTouche during her residence there. It is evident that many of the mature trees were retained during the development of the Park which were supplemented by a wide range of new trees and shrubs. These drawings dating from 1834 give insight into the original layout and form of Marlay House and the surrounding demesne.

The front out the house was austere in both finish and planting layout. This may have been due to the aspect of the facade which did not lend itself to the ornate planting often seen with 18th Century demesnes.

3.6.2 Marlay Park Today

The Park as found today is largely intact and unaltered from its original landscape character, aside from some loss of definition in the planting following decades of growth and the introduction of new facilities to meet the parks users demands.

The park retains most of its original demesne wall, which lines the boundary along Grange Road. The extent of the original demesne wall can be seen along Whitechurch Road. The southern boundary of the Park was demolished during the construction of the M50.

Several of the buildings listed as ruins on the 1867 map of Marlay, including a mausoleum no longer stand, as well as several gate lodges, however the majority of dwellings from the La Touche era remain, these include, Laurelmere, the Stableyard buildings, Marlay House, the Orangery, walled garden and the Boland's cottage.

Within the Park some modern twentieth century buildings and facilities have been added over the years to facilitate public needs; including a 9-hole golf course, café, changing room facilities, public toilets, playgrounds, model railway and car parking.

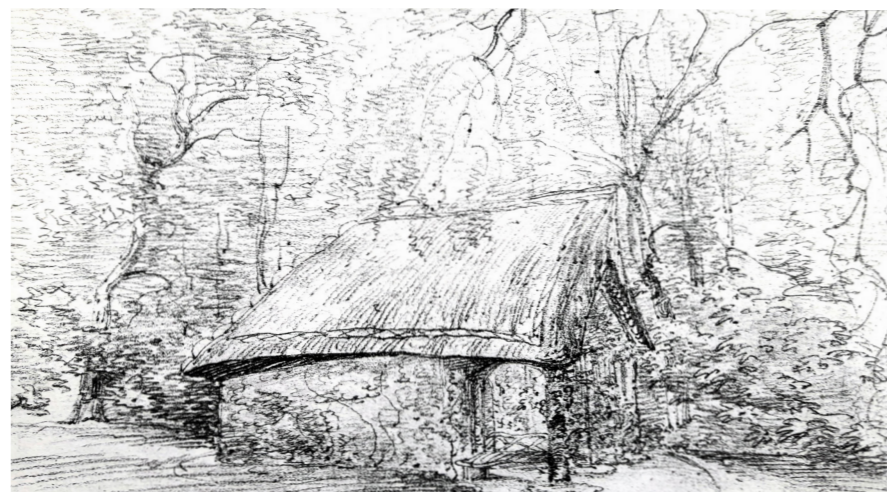
Early Drawings of Marlay Demesne by Anne La Touche



View of Marlay House and gardens (1839)



View of Marlay House (1839)



View of Marlay Garden House (1833)



View of Marlay House and ha-ha field while on cottage walk (1840)



View of Cottage Orneé (1834)



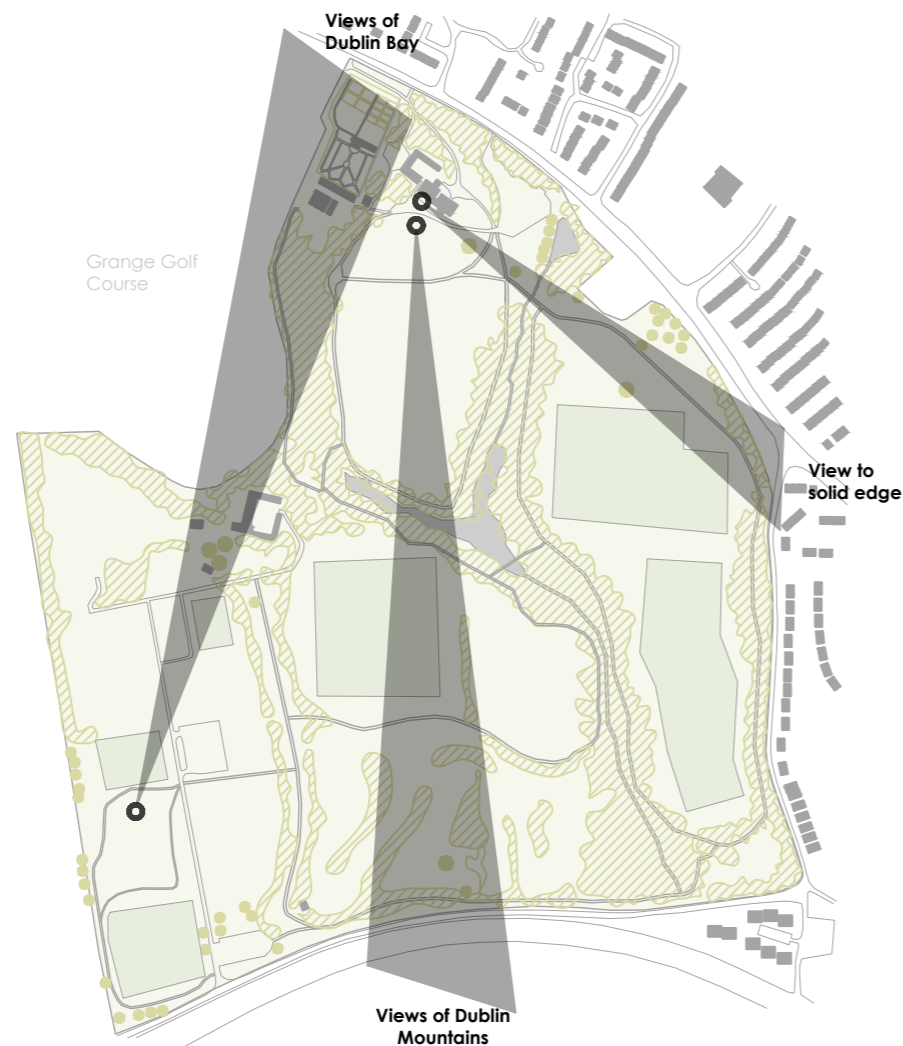
View of the garden (1832)

//

Marlay, the demesne of the Right Hon. David La Touche. The house is extremely elegant, and the farmyard and offices very commodious; the gardens are handsome and extensive, and contain a great deal of glass; the whole abounding with a variety of fruit, &c. The demesne consists of upwards of 300 acres, and is beautifully laid out with fine walks, well wooded, remarkably well watered, and skilfully planted, and the whole well enclosed with a good stone wall."

Lieutenant Joseph Archer

Statistical Survey of the County Dublin
with Observations on the Means of
Improvement, 1801



PROSPECTS AND VIEWS

The special visual character of Marlay situated on the metropolitan fringe of Dublin City allows for uninterrupted southern facing views of the Dublin Mountains. The view from Marlay House takes in the open fields, presumably once for livestock, beyond the haha and serpentine pond toward the denser forest in the background and gradually toward the distant Three Rock Mountain and Kilmashogue Mountain.

These views were important in 18th century garden designs. They were created so the viewer could not distinguish where the garden ended and the countryside began. Today these prospects are preserved as areas of visual significance.

This is one of a group of municipal parks that was designed by one of the most important landscape gardeners of the period. There is no doubt that the park is a place of cultural significance, and should be given special protection to ensure that its features are not lost to neglect or over-development.



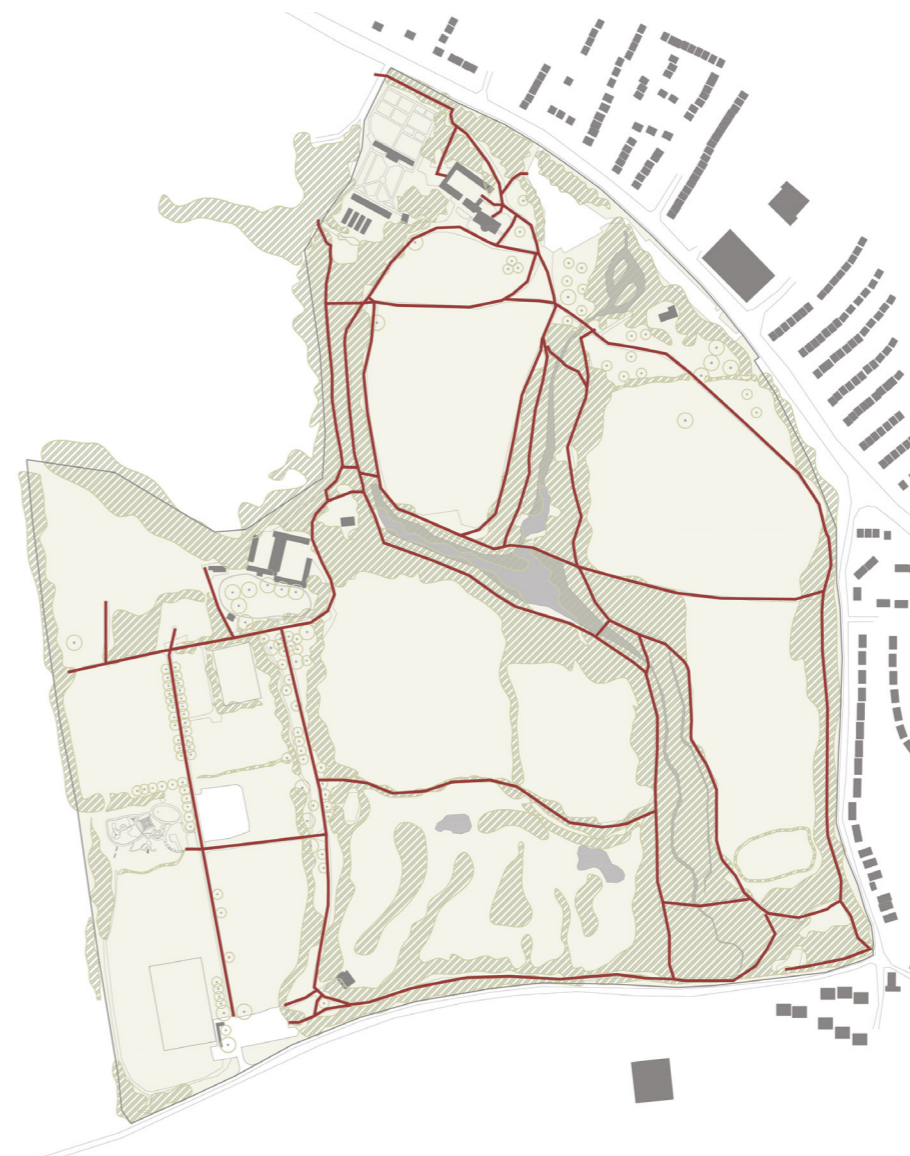
LARGE OPEN SPACES

The majority of Marlay Park is made up of grassland areas for both passive and active recreation. This includes 10 dedicated pitches, a par-3 golf course and a cricket ground. Located adjacent to the cricket ground in the centre of the park lies the meadow area. This fallow grassland area is grown over the summer months to provide necessary protection, shelter, food sources for pollinators and improved biodiversity.

The largest area of passive recreation within the park is the lawn to the rear of Marlay House. This back lawn stretches from the House to the central pond and is divided by a ha-ha wall. This area is south facing and serves as an informal seating and picnic area, particularly when there are market stalls are open.

Key Challenges - Masterplan:

The character of Marlay Park has been altered in some instances over the past century. There is also a lack of uniformity throughout the park which is evident in the materials, street furniture and finishes generally. In certain instances, this leads to lack of cohesion and confusion for park users. This will be addressed during the design process with a view to conserving the historic landscape and



3.7 PATHS, CIRCULATION & PERMEABILITY – PEDESTRIANS & CYCLISTS

3.7.0 HISTORIC PATH NETWORK

The original path network of Marlay Park has remained largely intact, overlaid with additional pathways as the park evolved. Landscape gardens of the 18th Century typically contained a collection of pathways with a subtle hierarchy. These private estates were the pleasure grounds for their wealthy owners. The paths were configured so that the landscape could be experienced in multiple permutations. The pathways were deliberately located to the periphery so that uninterrupted views of the space could be maintained. Grandiose, formalised avenues were avoided in favour of circuitous routes in which the landscape was slowly revealed.

3.7.1 EXISTING PATH NETWORK & CIRCULATION

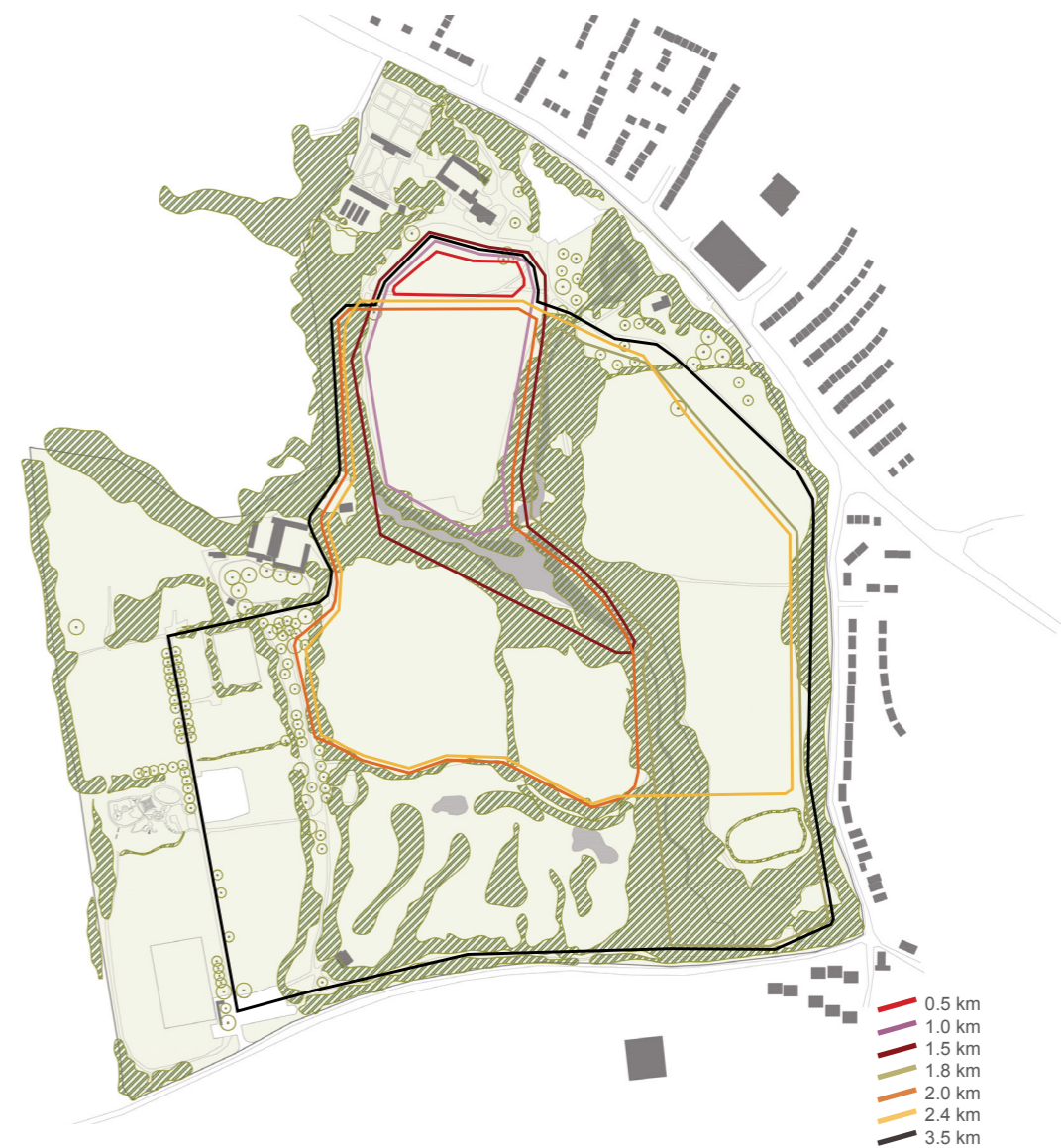
Since the purchase of Marlay Park in 1972 many works have been carried out to improve and enhance the user experience in the park. This includes the introduction of additional informal paths some of which are at a sufficient width to cater for events in the park. In general, the pedestrian circulation network provides good access and connections to the main park facilities and attractions. In some instances, there may be too many paths particularly those running parallel to one another creating some wide junction points/nodes. There is also additional hard surfacing in place where previously used for large scale events. Currently there is a large variation in the width and surface finishes of the paths in Marlay Park which has diminished a sense of hierarchy and way finding.



Cycling Routes

DLRCC is committed to improving facilities for cyclists. The adoption of the County Cycling Policy in conjunction with the Smarter Travel, Better Living (STBL) strategy in 2010 focused on developing cycle friendly infrastructure and on the promotion of cycling. The 2011 Census indicated that over 5% of all trips to work, school or college in the County were by bike, one of the highest cycle mode shares in Ireland.

To encourage access and connectivity to Marlay Park through sustainable means of travel the Council created Greenway cycling routes throughout Dún Laoghaire Rathdown. The Park forms part of the Slang River Greenway, connecting Marlay Park to Foxrock. This is a relatively flat route on a good surface along a shared pedestrian/cycle route and partly through residential estates with low traffic volumes. Around the bounds of the Park, the original 18th century networks of roadway present challenges for cyclists and pedestrians alike.



Jogging Routes

Marlay Park provides the ideal setting for recreational joggers of every level. It hosts weekly Park Runs and annual events such as the Reindeer Run, Wild Air run, Darkness Into Light. With its large variety of paths, the Park provides walkers and joggers of varied ability to choose a route suited to them.



Pedestrian Permeability:

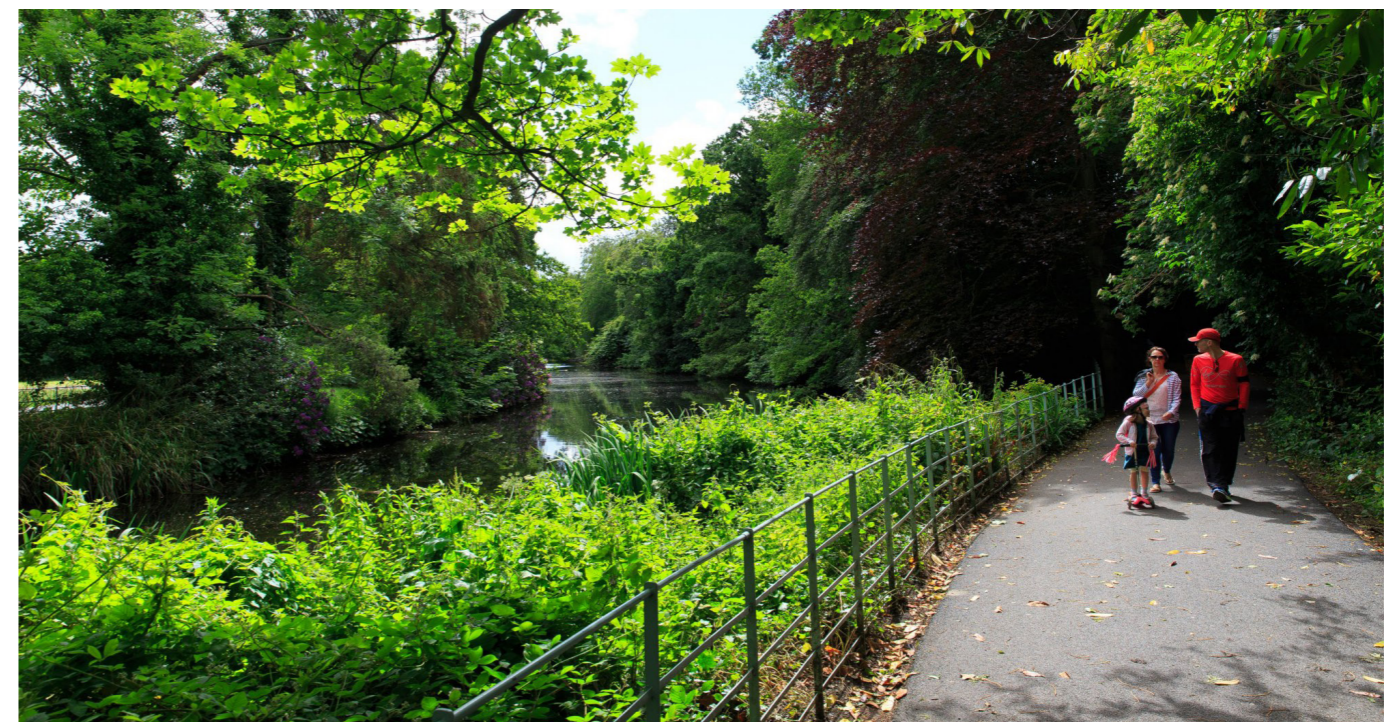
Pedestrian permeability has vastly improved in recent years with the introduction of a pedestrian gate at the junction of Grange Road and College Road. Currently pedestrian permeability in a north westerly manner is of a good quality with two pedestrian entrance points. Pedestrian permeability in a due north and north easterly direction is poor with the current access to the car park dominated with vehicular movements.



Pedestrian Access at Grange Road

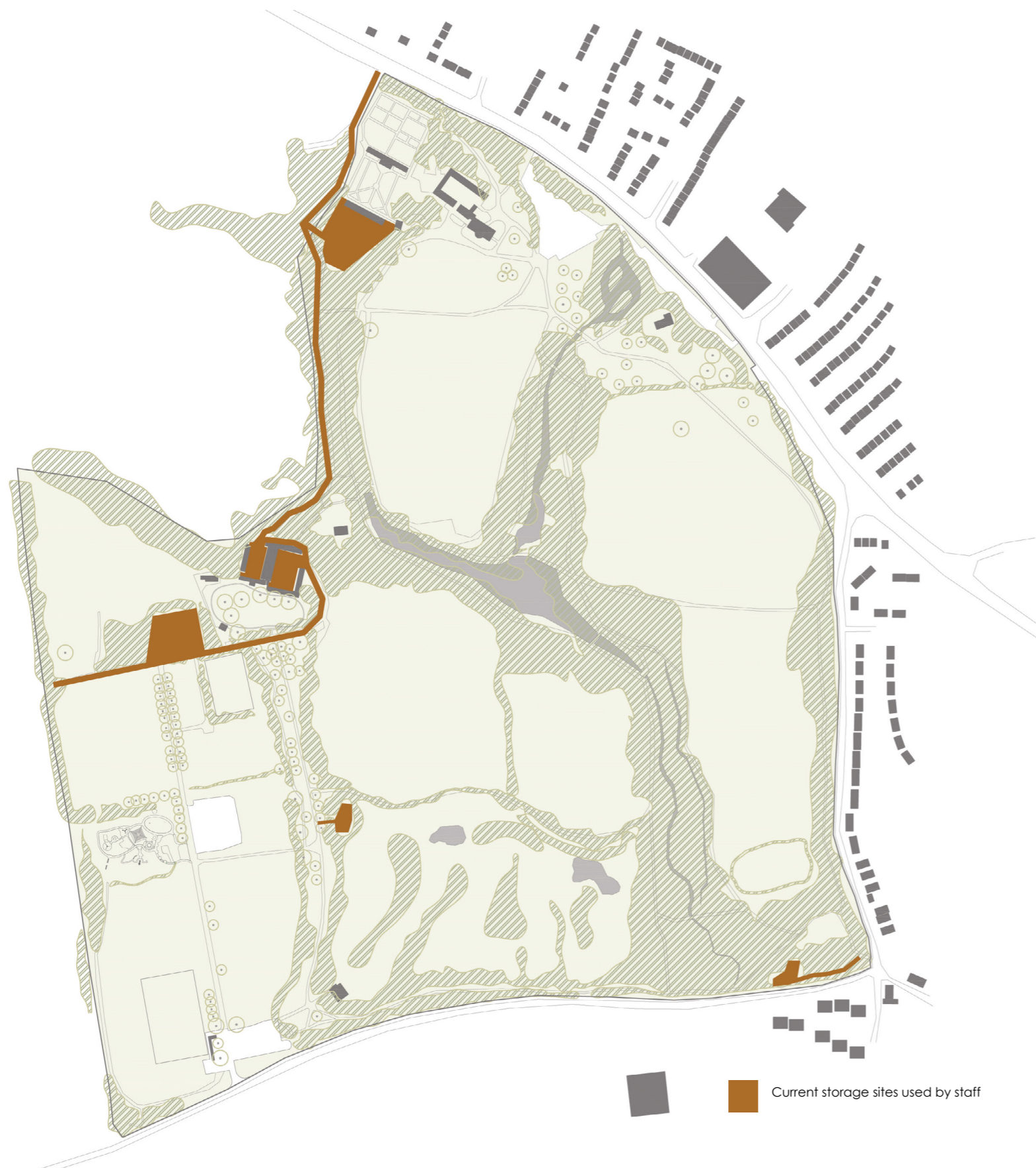


New Pedestrian Access at College Road of similar design



Key Challenge - Masterplan:

As part of the design process, the scale and scope of walkways within the park will be reviewed in particular alongside rivers and in the woodlands. A hierarchy of paths will be considered with a uniform set of materials in order to give the park a stronger identity and improve wayfinding. Jogging routes will be reviewed and distances mapped. Permeability for cyclists and pedestrians will be reviewed with new entrances considered. With the current number of vehicles using Marlay Park, pedestrian and cyclist safety will be reviewed with a view to consolidating maintenance facilities and reducing cars driving into the park.



3.8 STAFF FACILITIES & MAINTENANCE ZONES

Staff Depot:

Staff welfare facilities have evolved using existing buildings in the centre of the park. As the park has developed an increased demand has been placed on the number of staff required to maintain it. In many instances, the facilities being provided are low quality and require upgrading.

Machinery Depot & Yards:

The maintenance zones and yards have also evolved and spread out into various sections of the park throughout the years. At present the main service area is located in the centre of the park at the old stables and is accessed by a through road which extends from the entrance at Grange Road to College Road or along a perimeter routes alongside the western boundary to Grange Road. Its location brings increased vehicular movement into the Park which presents potential hazards to the public. There are also additional maintenance zones located in various locations in the park mostly in the south westerly section of the park.

Key Challenges - Masterplan:

As part of the design process, staff welfare facilities will be considered with a view to upgrading them. Consolidation of staff facilities/maintenance zones as well as reducing vehicular movements into the centre of the park are potential goals.



Staff Depot, Marlay Park



3.9 SPORTS AND RECREATION

Sport and active recreation is an integral part of Marlay Park since it was opened as a public park. The playing pitches and major sports facilities are generally located outside of the historic landscape in order to protect the views and vistas and encourage passive recreation in these zones. The park facilitates a lot of groups engaging in physical activity, from community groups on days out, to schools having their sports days to groups organising fun runs.

There are currently five grass GAA pitches consisting of two senior full size pitches and three junior pitches. All of these grass pitches are located along the eastern edge of the Park. These pitches are licensed annually to a local club who have a clubhouse just outside the Park on the Grange Road. This club has a direct access to the Park via a gate between the two properties.

The park has five full size grass soccer pitches, one of which is located at the eastern edge, another in the central part of the park with the other three located in the south western section of the park. The soccer pitch at the eastern edge is used by a local club which is a short distance to their existing clubhouse. The other four pitches are used by local clubs with a variety of different age groups using the pitches on a weekly basis. There are currently no clubhouse or changing facilities available to serve the four grass pitches at the central and south western parts of the park. There is also a cricket pitch consisting of a synthetic crease and maintained grassland in the central part of the park which is used by a local cricket club. A storage container and practice crease are located on the edge of this field.

A soccer size all-weather synthetic pitch equipped with floodlighting and fencing is located at the south western entrance off college road close to existing car parking. This facility is a soccer sized pitch but is suitable for GAA, rugby and soccer training. This is currently used by nine different clubs. There are a number of temporary pre-fabricated units located adjacent to the all-weather pitch consisting of two changing rooms, an office, a toilet and a referee's room. Six tennis courts are located in the south western section of the park which are used by the general public. At certain times of the year, the courts are used by groups and commercial operators for coaching and classes. A modest sized clubhouse is located adjacent to the pitches. country. As a result, there is a need to optimally use existing facilities and to develop facilities that can be used more intensively in order to encourage a more active lifestyle for the citizens of the County.

A 9 hole par 3 golf course is located at the southern part of the park. In 2011, there was a significant upgrade of the course undertaken in order to improve the quality of facilities being provided for in the park. Synthetic tees and greens have also been installed as part of the upgrade. A modern building was constructed here in recent years to serve as an additional café and for the operation of the facility. Outdoor exercise equipment is located at different locations around the park. This is used by running groups, fitness classes and the general public.

Additional sports which avail of the facilities in the park include: Tag-rugby, Athletics, softball, Parkrun and Junior Parkrun. Parkrun has become a very popular weekly activity with on average, in excess of 500 people running the 5km on a weekly basis. A local athletics club has been using Marlay Park for running and training for many years.

There are constraints to the development of new facilities in Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council due to the density of population and high local land values. There is increasing pressure on individual clubs to cater for an ever growing population. Census Figures from 2016 show that Dun Laoghaire Rathdown saw 5.3% population growth since 2011, the fifth fastest in the country. As a result, there is a need to optimally use existing facilities and to develop facilities that can be used more intensively in order to encourage a more active lifestyle for the citizens of the County.

The past ten years has seen a vast increase in the amount of active recreation in Marlay Park. This is particularly evident from the wear and tear visible along the existing paths through the woodland and shelterbelts and on the grass playing pitches as a result of running/jogging.



Tennis Courts, Marlay Park



Park Run, Marlay Park



Cricket crease, Marlay Park

Key Challenges - Masterplan:

Throughout the design process, the use of the park for joggers and runners will be considered and suitable routes upgraded/developed. The potential for re-using existing buildings for changing rooms will be reviewed as well as options for constructing stand-alone facilities. The number of temporary changing/storage facilities in the park to cater for sporting use will be reviewed and removed where possible. The re-ordering and upgrading of existing sporting facilities will be considered in order for these to be used in a more intensive manner as well as the provision of new suitable sporting facilities. A wider review of local club facilities and plans will also be undertaken in order to ascertain what facilities are required in Marlay Park and what can be provided in partnership with local clubs.

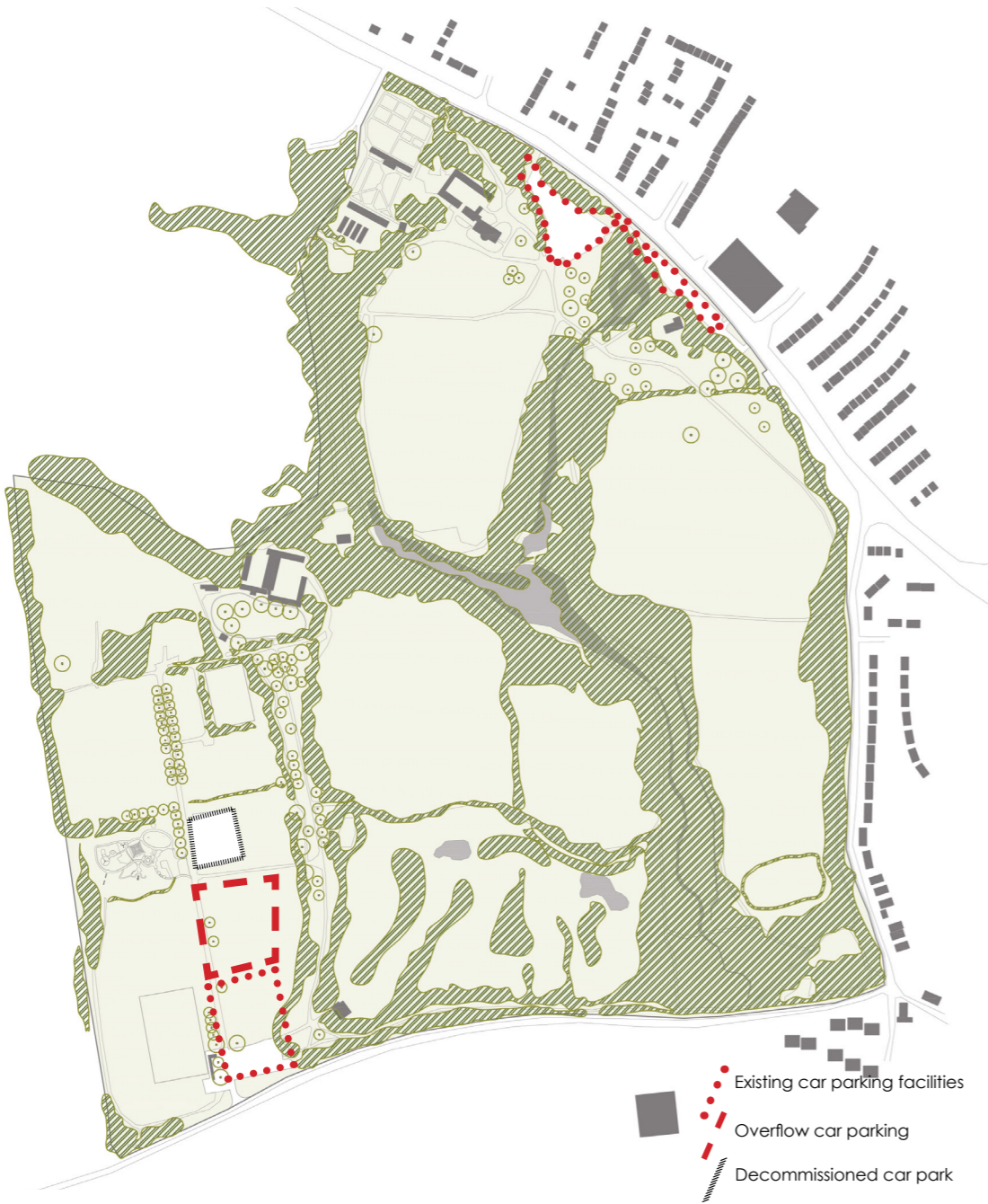


Marlay Golf Pavilion



All-weather pitch, Marlay Park

3.10 VEHICULAR ACCESS AND CAR PARKING



Key Challenges - Masterplan:

It is Council policy to promote the use of sustainable transport, such as walking, cycling and public transport to reduce the vehicular demand on the park. This will be addressed by upgrading entrances and providing additional pedestrian entrances as required. Controlling and reducing the number of vehicles' entering the park and conflicts with pedestrians will be addressed in order to enhance pedestrian safety and enjoyment. Clear wayfinding and clarity for public access to Marlay Park will be addressed. Screening of car parking from key locations will be addressed during the design process. The requirement for the existing poorly surfaced car park at College Road will be reviewed.

Vehicular Access:

The main vehicular access and egress at Grange Road is through two sets of pedestrian gates fitted to granite piers. This point of access/egress becomes very congested at certain times due to the volume of traffic on the Grange Road and the number of vehicles using Marlay Park. This is particularly noticeable during events or on busy days where egress from the park can be very slow. This entrance has no pedestrian access point and is uninviting for pedestrian movements. A pedestrian path and cycle lane run around the perimeter of the park at this location and vehicles using Marlay Park must traverse the pedestrian and cycle paths here.

Additional vehicles access is provided at the north west of the park. This gate is used by those parking in the craft courtyard car park, those living and using facilities in the centre of the park and council maintenance vehicles. On occasion, the public mistakenly use this entrance and drive through the park until they reach a car park.

Vehicular access at College Road is good with generally little to no congestion for vehicles entering or existing at this point. However, the width of the entrance and set-back may be excessive and does not lead to a strong sense of arrival at a destination.

There is also an access road from the College Road entrance which runs centrally through the space and services the cluster of facilities in the middle of the park. The public can use this road as far as the car park adjacent to the childrens playground. This road is regularly used by staff vehicles.

Car Parking:

Car parking at Grange Road which has recently been extended in a north easterly direction has capacity for +100 cars. This car park has been designed in an efficient manner thus there is an expansive area of hard surfacing. Direct views of this car park can be seen from the Ha-Ha Field and around Marlay House.

Very recently, works were undertaken to construct a new car park at the south westerly entrance nearest College Road and has capacity for 290 number cars. This car park will also facilitate coach parking for large scale events as required. This car park is strategically located to serve the golf course, pitches, all weather pitch playground and tennis courts all in close proximity.

Recently, in the interest of pedestrian safety and enjoyment the car park in the south western section of the park adjacent to the children's playground has been closed. This is currently poorly surfaced with no line marking leading to haphazard car parking and cars spilling out to the grass areas.

Parking capacity of the Regional Parks in DLRCC

Park	Area (ha)	Parking Spaces	Persons by car ⁽¹⁾	Spaces per ha
Marlay	100	600	1,176	4.9
Cabinteely	45	210	504	4.7
People's	1.6	-	NA	NA
Blackrock	12	22	53	1.8
Killiney	46	85	204	1.8



Longitude Festival, Marlay Park



Books In the Park, Marlay Park



Samhain, Marlay Park



Weekly market, Marlay Park



3.11 EVENTS IN MARLAY PARK

As the largest Regional Park in Dún Laoghaire Rathdown, Marlay Park's location and facilities make it a popular destination for event organisers and participants.

The Park accommodates a food and craft market each weekend and the cafe/tea rooms are open daily. There is also a craft courtyard adjacent to Marlay House where craft goods are produced and sold.

Additional events that take place include open-air movies in the summer, the weekly Park Run, the Samhain event for families as well as other charity (the Reindeer Run) and sports participation events (Wild Air Run). The Park is made available to local residents associations to hold gatherings; to schools to hold sports days and charity walks; for the Bark in the Park and the Darkness into Light charity walks and for the Vintage Car Rally. These events can range in size from less than a hundred participants to several thousand.

The Walled Garden has been used for concerts and is made available for small gatherings of local residents associations. The Orangery within the Walled Garden has been used on occasion for art exhibitions and small parties.

Marlay House plays host to concerts and talks as well as an annual Christmas craft fair. Tours of the House are also offered through the year. The House is also in demand from film production companies for the filming of advertisements and TV/cinema features.

A fee is charged for commercial events. The Council does not levy a fee for other events.

The largest events to take place in the Park are the annual summer concerts, normally held during July. In 2017, this comprised of the three day Longitude Festival.

In the past, the park has been somewhat altered to cater for events in a piecemeal manner. This has resulted in some overly hard surfacing in sensitive parts of the park.

Key Challenges - Masterplan:

The integrated design for events and markets will be carefully considered during the design process in order to facilitate these in a deliberate but sensitive manner without reducing the amenity value of the park.

3.12 VISITOR FACILITIES

An abundance of strategically located facilities are provided to meet the requirements of the park users. For the most part these are consolidated close to the Grange Road and College Road entrances.

Cafés

There are two cafés within the park. Located close to the College Road entrance, The Wicklow Way Café provides a seated viewing platform over the par-3 golf course. A second café is situated within the refurbished Head Gardeners Cottage, close to Marlay House with access to a seating area within the Walled Garden

Playgrounds

A major regional playground was constructed in Marlay in 2009 closest to the College Road entrance. This is a major attraction and is very heavily used throughout the year. It is suitable for toddlers and older children. A further toddler playground is located close to the Grange Road/College Road pedestrian gate.

Toilets

There are two main sets of public toilets in Marlay Park. There is an outdated building which houses male and female toilets very close to the main Grange Road vehicular entrance. This location is not ideally suited for park users. There are also public toilets in the centre of the park located within the courtyard. The cafes all have customer toilets and the playground and all weather pitches have temporary buildings used for toilets.

Wifi & Smart Park Facilities

Some infrastructure has been put in place to turn Marlay Park into a smart park with free wifi to be available for users.

Dog walking

A dogs-off-leash enclosed dog walking area is provided close to the Grange Road/College Road pedestrian gate which caters for large and small animals. This is extensively used all year around.

Markets

A weekend market is located within the craft courtyard and in front of Marlay House. Vendors include hot and cold food and craft options among other things.

Craft Courtyard

The refurbished courtyard beside Marlay House hosts a variety of artist and crafts people studios. The Council promotes the use of these facilities as an area of design production which are sold to the public.

Key Challenges – Masterplan:

The current park facilities will be reviewed in terms of quality and suitability with a view to upgrading these where required and providing new suitable and sympathetic facilities where appropriate. This will includes a review of the public toilets throughout the park to ensure the locations and standards meet the demands of the park users and are suitable for persons of all ages and abilities. The use of smart technologies will be considered to ensure they are catered for in an integrated yet user friendly manner.

Regional Parks		Marlay Park	Cabinteely Park	People's Park	Blackrock Park	Killiney Park
General	Size (ha)	100	45	1.6	12	34
	Parking (approx.)	600	210	-	22	85
	Toilets	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Coffee/Tea Shop	✓	✓	✓	-	✓
	Playground	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Walking paths	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Dog runs	✓	✓	-	-	-
	Cycle Paths	✓	-	-	✓	-
	Trim trail	✓	✓	-	✓	-
	Miniature Railway	✓	-	-	-	-
	Historical features	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Sporting Facilities	GAA pitches	✓	✓	-	-	-
	Soccer pitches	✓	✓	-	-	-
	All-weather pitch	✓	-	-	-	-
	Tennis Courts	✓	-	-	-	-
	Cricket ground	✓	-	-	-	-
	Dressing rooms	✓	-	-	-	-
	Golf	✓	-	-	-	-
Events/Functions	Wedding receptions	✓	-	-	-	-
	Outdoor market	✓	-	✓	-	-
	Outdoor concert	✓	-	-	-	-
	Indoor venue	✓	-	-	-	-



3.13 MARLAY HOUSE & COURTYARD

Marlay House and Courtyard are protected structures that are significant in the context of the demesne. Although Marlay Park was purchased by Dublin City Council in 1972, restoration works did not begin on Marlay House until 1992.

The restoration of the house, a seven bay Georgian design of two storeys over basement was carried out by Local Authority staff and over 350 FAS trainees.

The exterior of the house is refined in design with ornamental design reserved for the portland stone columns framing the front door and urn bearing the La Touche arms on the parapet of the façade. The neoclassical interior is more decorative and defined by a simple spaciousness augmented by high quality detailed plaster work, possibly from James Wyatt.

Since opening to the public Marlay House has become an integral part of the seasonal heritage programs. The house hosts a variety of events; including daily free guided tours, lectures, school tours, valuation days, exhibitions and recitals.

The restoration of the Courtyard was completed in 2017. Consisting of more than 20 individual units and a new exhibition area Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Council presents a significant opportunity for artists and crafts people to set up business in Marlay Park.