



Meeting Title	Play Consultation Meeting
Date	Saturday 14 April
Location	Great Room - Marble Hill House

Item	
1. Site visit	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Attendees visited play area opposite the café. JLG, landscape architect for the Marble Hill Revived project, had marked the proposed boundary change of the play area with flags.
2. Comments made at Play Area	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> This area was fenced in the 1970s to create a dog-free, safe play area for small children and their carers. It is important to retain a designated space for the very young ones There is a need for a few more benches, especially for pregnant mums.
3. Comments made during introductions in the Great Room	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> If play equipment is to be introduced anywhere, it should be outside the play area. Park boundaries are neglected; these should be thinned out to allow the introduction of play incidents around the park. Possible temporary events in the play area - a petting zoo and storytelling. Parents want unstructured play provision Parents want children to be able to climb trees. Age-range for play area to be 0-5 years.
4. Presentation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> JLG introduced types and themes of play during presentation Brilliant Play showed pictures from Gunnersbury Park. These included low level mazes with planting used to create pathways and texture. No safety surface used. Seating natural and wooden. Storytelling space provided.
5. Comments made after presentation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> It was suggested that a Borough Walk might be a good idea to see how Marble Hill Park links up with other play sites. There used to be a Borough wide play map and play strategy. It would be good to see Marble Hill in the context of the wider offer. Could mums have a play area clear of apparatus? Could climbing or more adventurous opportunities be scattered elsewhere in the park? This could include <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - natural play - Eco play - A storytelling space could be used to tell the heritage stories of the site as well as other uses. - Children should have the chance to have unstructured play and tree climbing. Why is EH moving the play area? Group then discussed proximity to the café.

	<p>EH responded that they would like create more direct lines of sight between the café and the play area.</p> <p>Other comments:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. If introduced play equipment in the play area should be low level (height) to maintain views and connection to the rest of the park. 5. Happy for play area to be extended but must keep the east boundary unchanged. Moving the east boundary west, will create an unusable area of grass that will be destroyed when used as a cut-through. 6. If the play area were extended, low-level play equipment, mazes or texture planks could be introduced to the extension. The original section to be kept as is. 7. Entrance to café and play enclosure should not be directly opposite each other as this would cause congestion. 8. There should only be one entrance into the play enclosure for security reasons. 9. It was suggested that EH could introduce a second play enclosure, with play equipment much closer to the café (i.e. to the left of the existing picnic benches, where the double gates are. This would be in front or to the side of the proposed new build café's accessible courtyard) 10. If the area in front of the house (the pleasure garden) were fenced off, parents would be happy to lose the play area altogether or to have larger play equipment installed there. 11. Parents would be happier with more equitable use of the park for the different user groups. <p>Historic Provenance</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 12. The Love Marble Hill group stated that their research concluded that Nine-Pin alley has no historic provenance. 13. This is not a view shared by EH because archaeological investigations have confirmed its existence. <p>Post meeting note – On the 17th of April the Love Marble Hill group were invited to present their research findings at the Garden History Symposium in June. EH welcomes any research that improves our understanding of the park.</p> <p>Post meeting note – Historic England archaeologists worked to uncover the hidden landscape gardens dating from the 18th century at Marble Hill, as shown by a plan of about 1752. Read more about their findings: https://historicengland.org.uk/research/support-and-collaboration/research-and-english-heritage-trust/marble-hill-excavations/</p> <p>Non-play comments</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 14. Cafe – the café should sell ice-cream 15. The Love Marble Hill group stated that EH propose to reintroduce a Ha Ha to Marble Hill Park. EH responded that this was not the case; re-introducing a Ha Ha has never been part of any proposals for the Marble Hill Revived project.
6. Plenary : Conclusions from each table	
Table 4	1. Would be comfortable with introduction of low-level structures or low-levels features to the play area.

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Keep the play enclosure simple. 3. Maintain existing sight lines. 4. Possibly make benches moveable 5. Have a play trail running along the perimeter of Marble Hill Park: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o This would include den building next to the ETRT kitchen garden, logs, trees, swings and a storytelling area 6. Allow small scale events to be held in the play area
Table 5	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Nature and eco play preferred 2. Encourage adventure play- locomotive and social play- tactile and sensory experiences 3. Prefer play area to remain unchanged (i.e. do not introduce play equipment) 4. Could introduce play equipment/incidents along the perimeter of the play area for children with autism etc. 5. Extend play area instead of repositioning the eastern fence line. 6. There should only be one entrance into the play enclosure. 7. Like the idea of creating a storytelling area 8. Would like an art area on the Terrace 9. Would like space for den building 10. Would like an ecology area 11. A box of outdoor games could be kept in the café- foam balls etc. for use in the play area 12. Don't want any play incidents/equipment in sweet walk because of disturbance to Montpellier Row. 13. With natural materials a creative play area could be made in the wider Park 14. Join up with other play facilities in the area. Have a Borough Walk for play facilities in the area 15. Allotments in the garden <p>Non-Play comments:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 16. There should be more/better interpretation throughout the landscape. 17. A picnic area between the rugby field and the Pleasure Ground was suggested.
Table 3	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Eco and natural play preferred. 2. Eco and natural play should be incidental within the wider park and can tie in with history of the park. 3. There shouldn't be any big play structures – children should 'come across it.' There should be carving along the trail. 4. Keep the play area where it is (i.e. do not change boundary). 5. Leave play enclosure unchanged if possible. 6. If play area is extended, could have low level wooden structures, tactile play elements added to perimeter or extension. 7. Have an additional play area in front of the café so parents and carers can watch older children play – perhaps with a climbing tree. To incorporate lots of ideas around logs, as the children already love and play with fallen logs in the park. Log trails and dens 8. Support the idea of trails through the park 9. Like the idea of dens <p>Non-play comments</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 10. Would like a potable water fountain introduced (drinking and hand-washing facilities) near the play area (Some suggested one outside the MH Play Centre as well.)
Table 1	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Natural play in the form of fallen logs – things that would be naturally occurring – is preferred.

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. No fixed equipment in play enclosure 3. Monitor demand before bringing in additional benches. 4. The play area should stay where it is- if it gets busier maybe a slightly larger area 5. It would be good to have blankets for hire and a box of outdoor games (foam balls, skittles) that can be brought into play area. 6. Tree climbing should be available. 7. There was concern that a trail along the park perimeter could affect biodiversity. EH to consider losing sport pitch/es to remove conflict. 8. Introduce ecology center near Marble Hill Play Centre 9. KG – meeting AS to discuss how MHPC and EH can work together 10. Upgrade MHPC to improve offer to 2-5 age group 11. There is no provision for older children who actually need a place to go for safe congregation. <p>Non-play comments</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 12. Add traditional fence/ropes around cricket pitch. 13. Would like wildlife species signposts around the park. 14. Will EH be bringing their park rules in line with the Borough to limit commercial dog walkers to 4 dogs at a time? 15. Dog mess around the park is problematic. How will EH encourage/enforce responsible dog-owner responsibility?
Table 2	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Eco and natural play preferred. 2. Leave play area as it is. 3. If play area were extended, can introduce low level play opportunities like the grass mazes and textured play. 4. Would like to see introduction of bug hotel in Woodland Quarters and just off the paths separating the Woodland Quarters. 5. Like idea of hollow logs. 6. At Kew gardens there is a wood walk, a texture walk, a story circle and themed benches. 7. We would like a dog free area on the Pleasure Ground. <p>Non-play comments</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. Information boards focusing on biodiversity would be good. 9. Unhappy about dog mess; <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Would like EH to create a larger fenced off areas for families b. Provide more dog bins c. Charge dog walkers 10. Dog mess; if overgrown areas were thinned out and managed better, this might induce better behavior from dog-walkers who are currently not picking up dog mess. 11. More managed approach to dog mess.
7. Discussion about dogs	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Dog mess problematic to many park user groups (e.g. parents of small children, sports and exercise users) 2. It was stated that 90% of dog owners are responsible. That it would be unfair to punish the majority because of the irresponsible 10% who were identified as commercial dog-walkers. 3. In response, another attendee advised that she had witnessed a dog-walker and parent (non-commercial dog-walker) with their child leaving dog mess in the park and didn't therefore believe that the dog-mess issue could only be attributed to commercial dog-walkers. 4. Another attendee gave examples of puppies bounding onto babies during an exercise session. Whilst the puppy is being friendly, this is distressing for

	<p>mother and potentially dangerous for baby.</p> <p>5. There was a difference of opinion about whether dogs are a nuisance to non-dog groups such children/babies, elderly, sports and exercise users.</p> <p>6. EH urged to reduce the number of dogs that commercial dog-walkers can bring into park at any one time, in line with the London Borough of Richmond.</p>
8. Thanks and close 1.10pm	Meeting closed.