



**DRAFT** **Marlay Park**  
**SITE ANALYSIS**

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# 1.0 INTRODUCTION

To facilitate the on-going development of Marlay Park in a holistic manner avoiding a piecemeal approach to development. In recent years, the park has become intensively used for active recreation, in particular running and jogging. With the new park facilities in place, visitor numbers have also steadily risen. In 2007, it was estimated that there were approximately 1 million visits to Marlay Park whereas in 2016, the estimate is approximately 2.5 million visits. The Masterplan is now being reviewed and updated to reflect these changes and to solve a number of on-going logistical challenges.

The following aims and objectives are being used to formulate the Marlay Park Masterplan;

- 1. To put in place a long term vision for Marlay Park that arranges the elements into a logical order to maximise the parks amenity value within the context of the historic landscape.
- 2. To protect and enhance the natural heritage, the flora and fauna of the site.
- 3. To conserve and protect the built heritage and provide suitable, sympathetic and sustainable uses for the properties in the setting of the historic landscape.
- 4. To ensure the park is designed to cater for existing and future needs of its users while recognising its limitations as a resource.
- 5. To develop high quality active recreation facilities, available to a wide range of the population in order to encourage a more active lifestyle.
- 6. To provide high quality passive recreational facilities including rest and relaxation spaces in appropriate locations.
- 7. To ensure a suitable and appropriate level of visitor facilities are provided throughout the park.
- 8. To ensure suitable number and varied type of events are provided at appropriate stages throughout the year.
- 9. To provide a high quality level of horticultural display at appropriate scale and locations.
- 10. To use smart technologies throughout the park in order to improve visitor facilities and uses.
- 11. To encourage community participation and education throughout the park.
- 12. To encourage the use of sustainable energy sources throughout the park.
- 13. To ensure the final adopted Masterplan is used in its entirety for the development and conservation of Marlay Park without significant amendment.
- 14. To acknowledge the size and scale of the park through strategic interventions that will also benefit the broader county.
- 15. To maximise the biodiversity and pollinator potential of the park through sustainable maintenance policies that seek to minimise or eliminate the use of herbicides.



## 1.1 SITE LOCATION & CONTEXT

At approximately 100 Hectares Marlay Park is the largest regional park managed by Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Council.

It lies at the foothills of the Dublin Mountains and is easily accessed from the M50 motorway at Sandyford/Ballinteer and Firhouse exits. It was acquired in 1972 by the former Dublin County Council and opened as a public park in 1975.

It is one of Dun Laoghaire Rathdowns most popular Flagship Parks and boasts a wide range of visitor facilities. It lies in the townland of Rathfarnham and is surrounded by the residential areas of Rathfarnham, Whitechurch, Ballinteer, Broadford and Pine Valley. Its southern boundary lies adjacent to College Road, which runs parallel to the M50 motorway.





*Restored walled garden with thatched arbour, Marlay Park*



*Regency planting, Marlay Park*



*Restored Regency garden and Ornamental pool, Marlay Park*

## 1.2 GENERAL OVERVIEW OF MARLAY PARK

The Park today consists of mature woodland, extensive informal lawns – laid out for playing pitches and passive recreation areas, sporting facilities, ponds, streams, paths and acres of recreational land with uninterrupted views of the distant mountains. Marlay Park contains many of the landscape features associated with 18th and early 19th century Parks. These features include the substantial boundary wall, gate lodges, ornate iron entrance gates and pillars, walled garden, ponds, waterfalls, bridges, ha-ha ditch.

Some of the major projects undertaken in the park since its purchase by Dublin Corporation in 1972 (passed to Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council in 1994) include;

- The continued restoration and conservation of Marlay House and outbuildings.
- The introduction of an informal path network.
- The introduction of new car parking at both College Road and Grange Road and adjacent to the playground
- The introduction of an avenue through the park to the south west section of the park.
- The introduction of new pedestrian and vehicular entrances.
- The restoration of the formal walled gardens.
- The provision of parks depots and works yards with staff welfare, office facilities and public toilets.
- Works to facilitate the park as a concert venue.
- The installation of a model railway facility.
- The construction of public toilets.
- The introduction of lighting and security system around Marlay House & Courtyard.
- The construction of tennis courts and a modest clubhouse.
- New boundary treatment to the southern boundary to facilitate the M50 and College Road construction.
- Restoration and conservation of the lodges and other built heritage including Bolands for use as a cafe and Laurelmere Cottage.
- The construction of playgrounds including a regional playground.
- Installation of sculptural mounding and sculpture at locations in the park.
- The introduction of a dogs-off-leash area.
- The provision of car parking in the small walled garden space.
- Planting of trees and woodland areas.
- The installation of new boundary treatments to the park at its western boundary (alongside Grange Golf Club) and southern boundary (to facilitate the M50 and College Road).
- The construction of an all-weather pitch and temporary pre-fabricated buildings.
- Construction of a 9 hole golf course and recent upgrade works including a new golf pavilion.

2.0

## COUNCIL POLICY AND STRATEGY

- 2.1 Planning Context & Objectives
- 2.2 Relevant Policies
- 2.3 Green Infrastructure
- 2.4 Transport Links

## 2.1 PLANNING CONTEXT AND OBJECTIVES

### 2.0.1 Land Use Zoning Objective

Marlay Park is zoned 'F' with a stated objective 'To preserve and provide for open space with ancillary active recreational amenities'.

Uses Permitted In Principle:  
*Community Facility(g), Cultural Use(g), Open Space(g), Sports Facility(g), Travellers Accommodation.*

### 2.0.2 Uses Open For Consideration:

Allotments, Car park(g), Cemetery, Craft Centre/ Craft Shop(f), Childcare Service(f), Crematorium(g), Education(g), Garden Centre/Plant Nursery(g), Golf Facility(g), Guest House (f), Place of Public Worship(g), Public Services, Tea Room/Café(g).

**f:** In existing premises

**g:** Where lands zoned F are to be developed then: Not more than 40% of the land in terms of the built form and surface car parking combined shall be developed upon. Any built form to be developed shall be of a high standard of design including quality finishes and materials. The owner shall enter into agreement with the Planning Authority pursuant to Section 47 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, or some alternative legally binding agreement restricting the further development of the remaining area (i.e. 60% of the site) which shall be set aside for publicly accessible passive open space or playing fields. Said space shall be provided and laid out in a manner designed to optimise public patronage of the residual open space and/ or to protect existing sporting and recreational facilities which may be available for community use.

### 2.0.3 Specific Local Objectives

Map No. 5, SLO NO. 23:

To progress the Masterplan for Marlay Park with a focus on the conservation of the heritage of Marlay Park, the provision of quality recreational facilities, maintaining the highest standard of horticultural and landscape presentation and increasing accessibility of the Park, Marlay House and its amenities.

### 2.0.4 Other Objectives identified on Map 5

There is an objective 'To protect and preserve trees and woodlands'.

There are two Protected Structures within Marlay Park - Marlay House, which includes the stable-yard / craft area. Laurelmere House is also a Protected Structure.

The Wicklow Way traverses the Park.

There is an objective along Grange Road for a Quality Bus / Bus Priority Route.



Beginning of the Wicklow Way, Marlay Park

### 2.0.5 Flooding

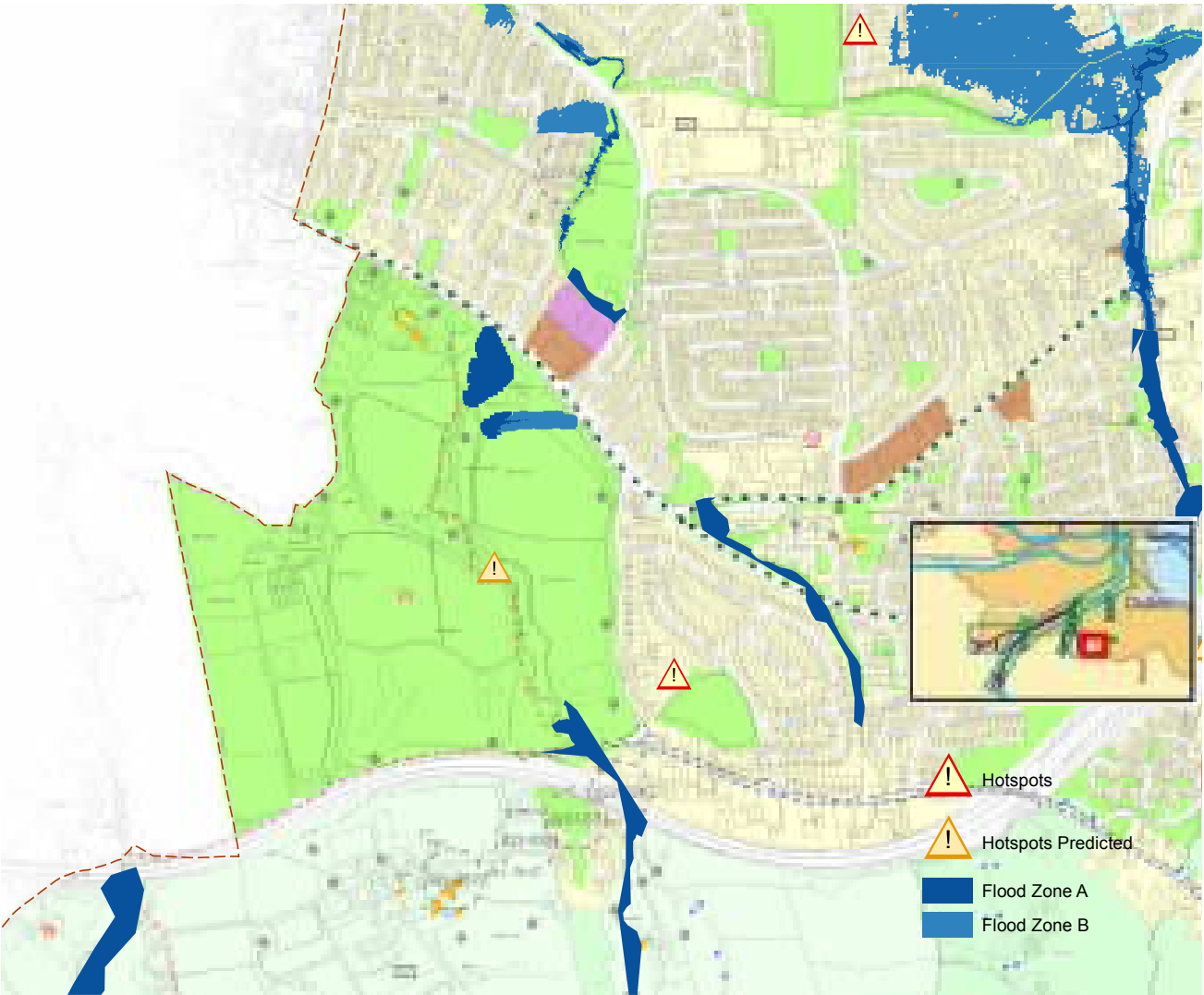
The Little Dargle rises at Two Rock Mountain at an elevation of approximately 520mOD. It flows in a northerly direction through Ballinteer, Churchtown and Marlay Park before joining the River Dodder Main Channel in Rathfarnham. The stream is approximately 8.5km in length, falls at an average gradient of 1 in 17 and drains a catchment of approximately 8.3km<sup>2</sup>

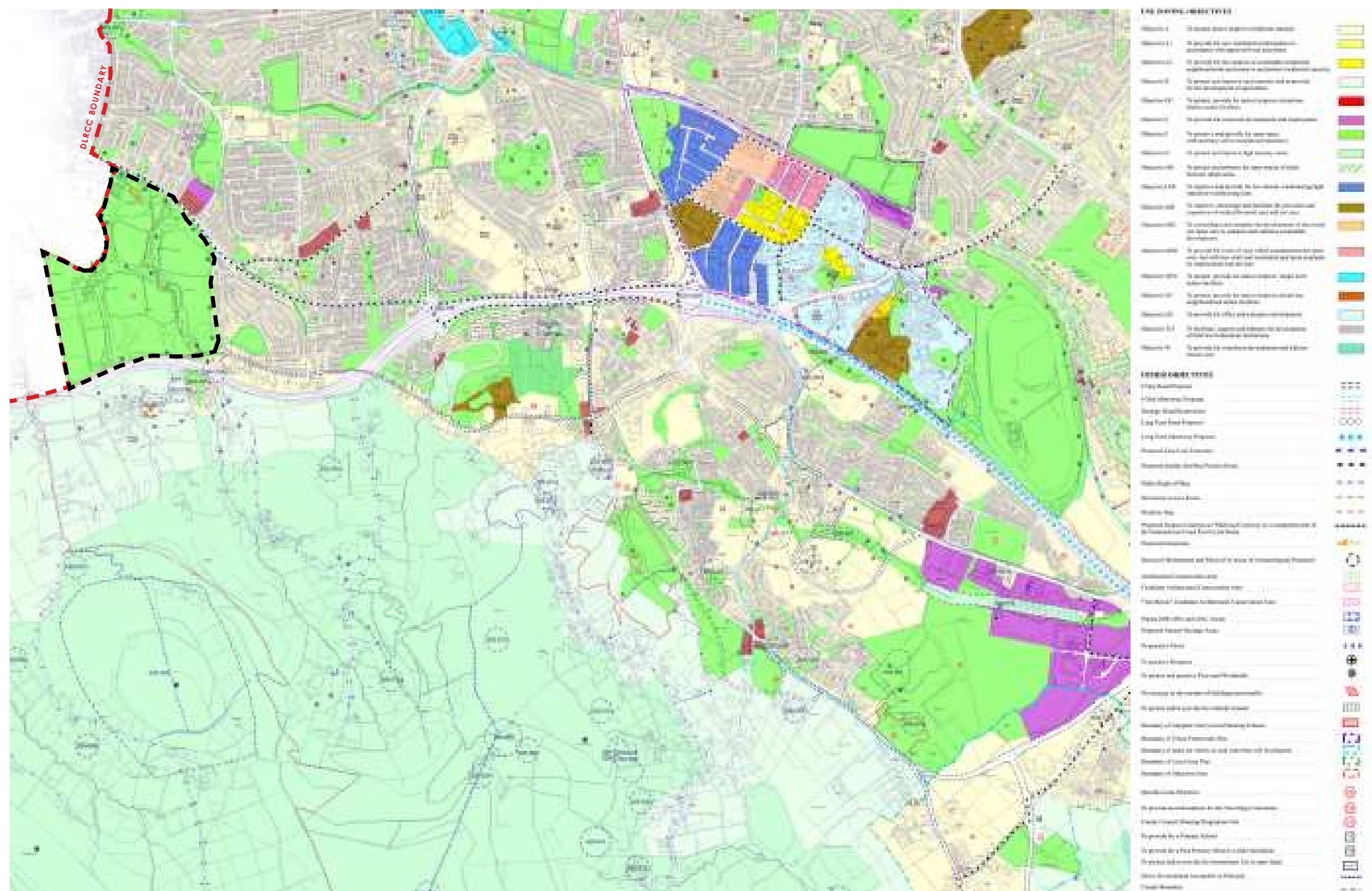
The bounds of Marlay Park lie within the historic flooding zones A & B.

The River Dodder is renowned for its quick catchment response and flashy characteristics. Factors contributing to this flashy nature include;

- Large rainfall events in the mountainous part of the river catchment;
- Large catchment area compared to river length;
- Geology and canalisation of upper catchment gives large percentage runoff.

Flood Zone Map 5 (below) shows that parts of Marlay Park are within Flood Zones A and B.







## 2.2 RELEVANT COUNCIL POLICIES

The site analysis and feasibility study of Marlay Park will tie in with the relevant national and regional policy as outlined in the County Development Plan 2010-2016 as well as the following specific policies;

### Section 4.1.2.1 Policy LHB2: Preservation of Landscape Character Areas:

It is Council policy to continue to preserve and enhance the character of the County's landscapes in accordance with the recommended strategies as originally outlined in the landscape Character Assessment (2002 and since updated), in accordance with the 'Draft Guidelines for Landscape and Landscape Assessment' (2000) as issued by the Department of Environment and Local Government, in accordance with the European Landscape Convention (Florence Convention) and in accordance with 'A National Landscape Strategy for Ireland – Strategy issue Paper for Consultation' 2011.

### Section 4.1.2.5 Policy LHB6: Views and Prospects:

It is Council policy to protect and encourage the enjoyment of views and prospects of special amenity value or special interests.

### Section 4.1.2.16 Policy LHB17: Trails, Hiking and Walking Routes

It is Council policy to promote the development of regional and local networks of hiking and walking routes and trails.

### Section 4.1.3.1 Policy LHB19: Protection of Natural Heritage and the Environment

It is Council policy to protect and conserve the environment including, in particular, the natural heritage of the County and to conserve and manage Nationally and Internationally important and EU designated sites - such as Special Protection Areas, candidate Special Areas of Conservation, proposed Natural Heritage Areas and Ramsar sites - as well as non-designated areas of high nature conservation value which serve as 'Stepping Stones' for the purposes of Article 10 of the Habitats Directive.

### Section 2.1.1.5 Policy LHB25: Rivers and Waterways

It is Council policy to maintain and protect the natural character and ecological value of the river and

stream corridors in the County and where possible to enhance existing channels and to encourage diversity of habitat

### Section 4.1.3.3 Policy LHB21: Biodiversity Plan

It is Council policy to implement the provisions of the County Biodiversity Plan 2009-2013 and to produce a second Biodiversity Plan which will be set within the context of the second National Biodiversity Plan, 'Actions for Biodiversity, 2011 – 2016' prepared by the Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands

### Section 4.1.3.7 Policy LHB25: Rivers and Waterways

It is Council policy to maintain and protect the natural character and ecological value of the river and stream corridors in the County and where possible to enhance existing channels and to encourage diversity of habitat

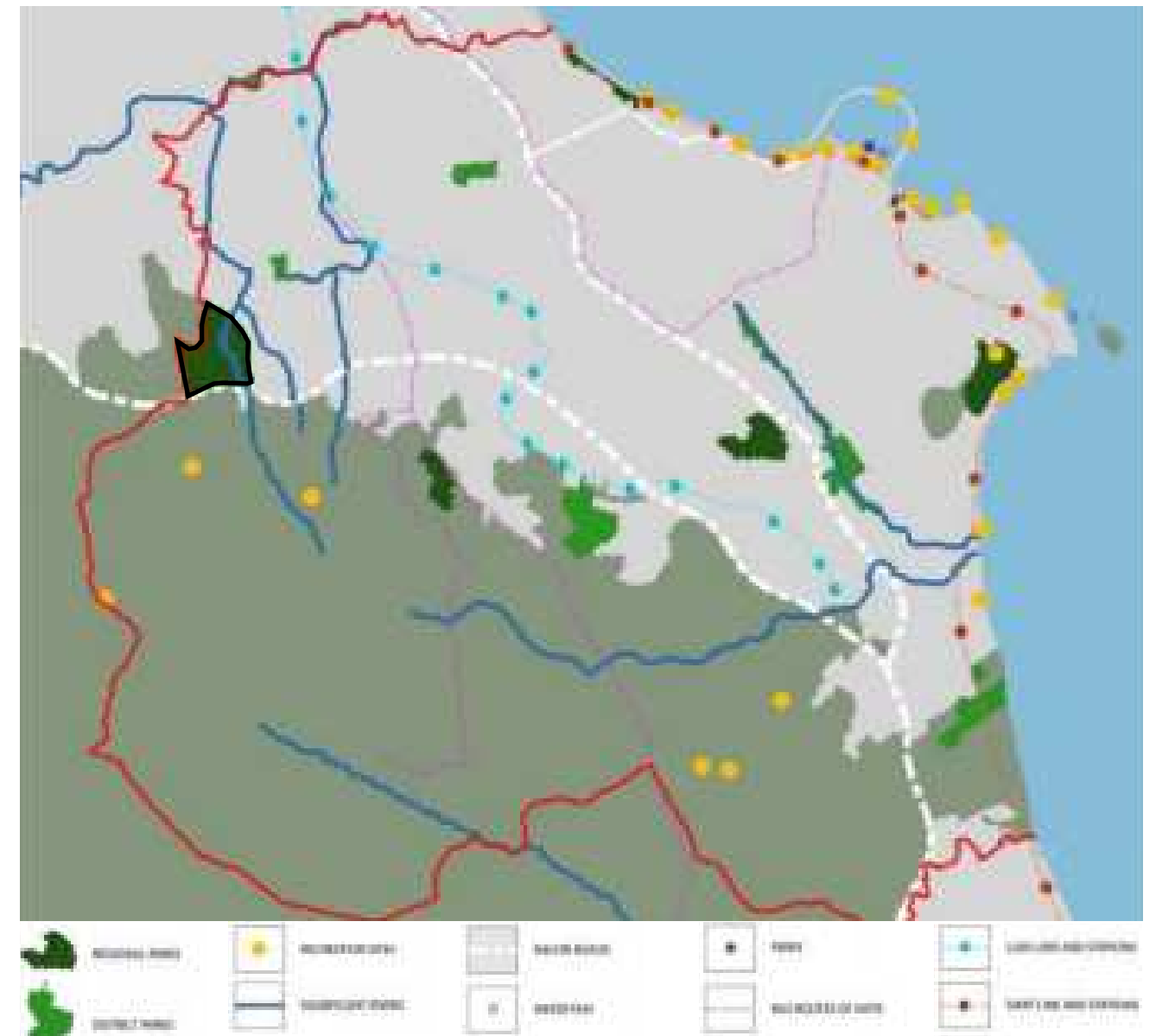
### Section 4.1.4.3 Policy LHB32: Historic Parks and Gardens

It is Council policy that historic Parks and gardens have been identified and protected to reflect and acknowledge their significance as part of the National Heritage.

The following houses and gardens are protected: Cabinteely House, Marlay House, Fernhill and Old Conna.

### Section 4.2.1.1 Policy OSR1: Green Infrastructure Strategy

It is Council policy to protect existing green infrastructure and encourage and facilitate, in consultation with relevant stakeholders, the development of new green infrastructure, recognising the synergies that can be achieved with regard to the following, sustainable transport, provision of open space amenities, sustainable management of water, protection and management of biodiversity and protection of cultural and built heritage.



Marlay Park in relation to other regional parks in Dun Laoghaire Rathdown

### Section 4.2.2.1 Policy OSR2: Open Space Strategy 2012-2015

In 2009 the Council prepared a comprehensive audit of the existing and proposed open space provision in Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown. This culminated in the publication of the Open Space Strategy for the County, for the period 2012-2015. The actions and recommendations detailed in the Strategy will be implemented as appropriate and as resources allow.

### Section 4.2.2.2 Policy OSR3: Hierarchy of Parks and Open Spaces

It is Council policy to provide a hierarchy of quality parks and public open spaces which vary in size and nature and are designed to serve the needs of all members of the community, including people with mobility impairments, by being readily accessible and at a convenient distance from their home and/or places of work.



View of Dublin Mountains from Marlay Park



Playground, Marlay Park



Tea rooms, Dún Laoghaire People's Park



Cabinteely House, Cabinteely Park

#### **Section 4.2.2.3 Policy OSR4: Future Improvements**

It is Council policy to continue to improve, landscape, plant and develop more intensive recreational and leisure facilities within its parks and open spaces insofar, as resources will permit, while ensuring that the development of appropriate complementary facilities does not detract from the overall amenity of the spaces.

#### **Section 4.2.2.6 Policy OSR7: Trees and Woodland**

It is Council policy to implement the objectives and policies of the Tree Strategy for the County – 'dlr TREES 2011-2015' - to ensure that the tree cover in the County is managed and developed to optimise the environmental, climatic and educational benefits which derive from an 'urban forest'.

#### **Section 4.2.2.7 Policy OSR8: Greenways Network**

It is Council policy to develop a comprehensive network of County Greenways linking parks and public open spaces and to liaise with adjoining local authorities and other stakeholders to achieve and improve wider external linkages and corridors.

#### **Section 4.2.2.9 Policy OSR10: Provision and Promotion of Recreational Facilities**

It is Council policy to provide sporting and recreational amenities of both an indoor and outdoor nature. It is the policy of the Council to promote participation in sport and leisure activities among all residents of the County. The Council will endeavour to promote the increased use of these facilities and of the excellent natural resources located throughout the County. The

Council will endeavour to promote the increased use of these facilities and of the excellent natural resources located throughout the County. The Council will endeavour to ensure access to sporting infrastructure to meet the needs of the community in any major new residential developments.

#### **Section 4.2.2.13 Policy OSR14: Play Facilities**

It is Council policy to support the provision of structured and unstructured play areas with appropriate equipment and facilities throughout the County and to ensure the needs of all age groups and abilities - children, teenagers, adults and older people - are facilitated in the public parks of Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown.

#### **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.

#### **Section 6.1.3.3 Policy AR3: Protected Structures and Building Regulations**

It is Council Policy to protect the character and special interest of Protected Structures when considering or carrying out intervention to comply with the requirements of the Building Regulations – with particular reference to Part B and Part M.

#### **Section 6.1.3.5 Policy AR5: Buildings of Heritage Interest**

It is Council policy to:

- i. Retain where appropriate, and encourage the rehabilitation and suitable reuse of existing older buildings/structures/features which make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of a streetscape in preference to their demolition and redevelopment and to preserve surviving shop and pub fronts of special historical or architectural interest including signage and associated features.
- ii. Identify buildings of vernacular significance with a view to assessing them for inclusion in the Record of Protected Structures.

#### **Section 6.1.3.6 Policy AR6: Protection of Buildings in Council Ownership**

It is Council Policy to continue to demonstrate the best practice with regard to Protected Structures, Recorded Monuments and often elements of architectural heritage in its ownership and care.

#### **Section 6.1.3.7 Policy AR7: Energy Efficiency of Protected Structures**

It is Council Policy to have regard to the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government's publication on 'Energy Efficiency in Traditional Buildings' and any future advisory documents in assessing proposed works on Protected Structures.

#### **Section 6.1.3.9 Policy AR9: Protection of Historic Street Furniture**

It is Council Policy :

- i. Preserve the retention of historic items of street furniture where these contribute to the character of the area including items of vernacular or local significance.
- ii. Promote high standards for design, material and workmanship in public realm improvements within areas of historic character.

## 2.3 GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

The Green Infrastructure (GI) Strategy, Appendix 14 of the Development Plan(2), seeks to provide a vision and a framework to help identify, protect, promote and enhance the GI assets in the urban, rural and coastal environments of the County, and is intended to guide key aspects of planning policy and County and local level.

The benefits of GI are recognised as being many, such as improving health and wellbeing through new and improved recreation and better local walking and cycling connections; enhancing social cohesion; protecting, managing and enhancing biodiversity; reinforcing sense of place, and improving water quality and management. GI can also provide potential economic benefits through enhanced opportunities for tourism and local business activities.

The spatial framework identifies Marlay Park as forming an integral part of two GI corridors, linking the mountains, urban area and the coast and providing one of several strategic 'gateway hubs':

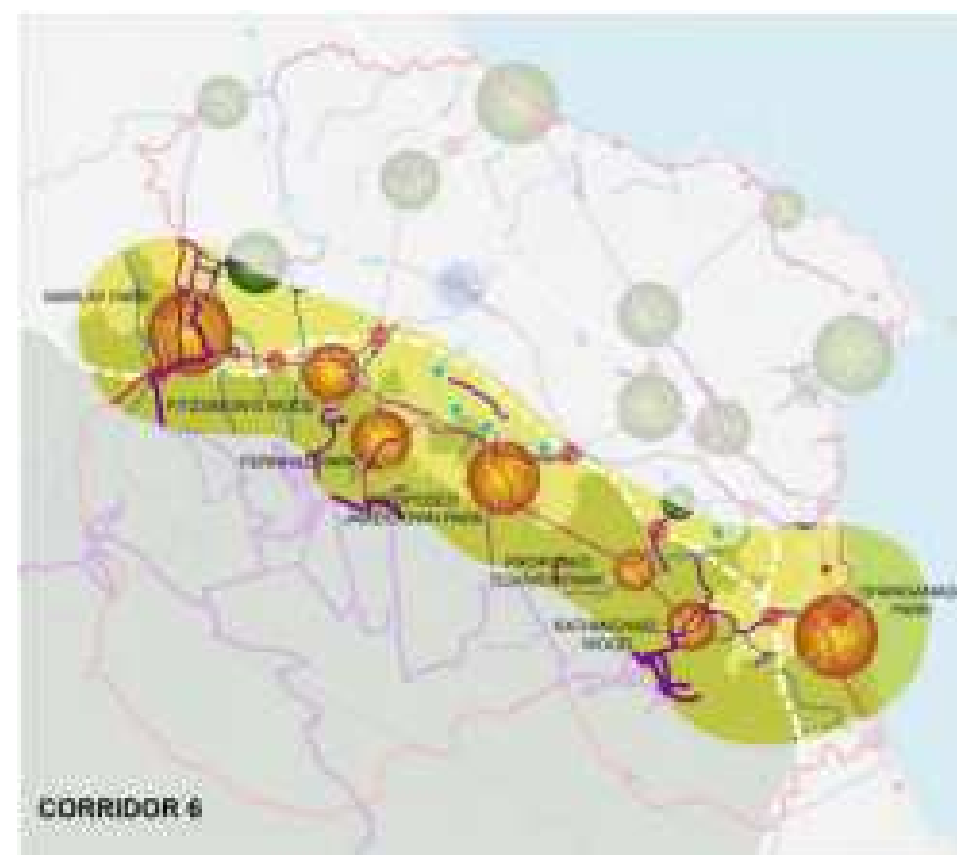


### **Corridor 2 - River Dodder to the Mountains** **River Dodder – Marlay Park – rural hinterland (Stepaside, Kilternan, Ballycorus)**

The Dodder Valley Linear Park connects from the Dublin City Council area into Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown. Marlay Park is a regional park that is a key gateway park for access to and from the mountains. This corridor is partially established with the Dodder Valley Linear Park, and cycle networks and Greenways. This corridor also has Greenway links to Dundrum town centre. This corridor has the potential to be enhanced to provide multi-functional benefits, and provide a complete Green Infrastructure corridor.

#### **Objectives**

1. To provide a multi-functional GI corridor connecting the mountains, urban area and coast.
2. To link the County's flagship green space at Marlay Park with adjacent urban areas and strategic sustainable transport nodes.
3. Enhance the habitats alongside the river corridors as a part of an integrated GI corridor, and seek opportunities for attenuation of flood waters



### **Corridor 6 - Gateway Parks** **(Marlay Park – FitzSimon's Wood – Fernhill Park – proposed Jamestown Park – proposed Ticknick Park – Rathmichael Wood – Shanaganagh Park)**

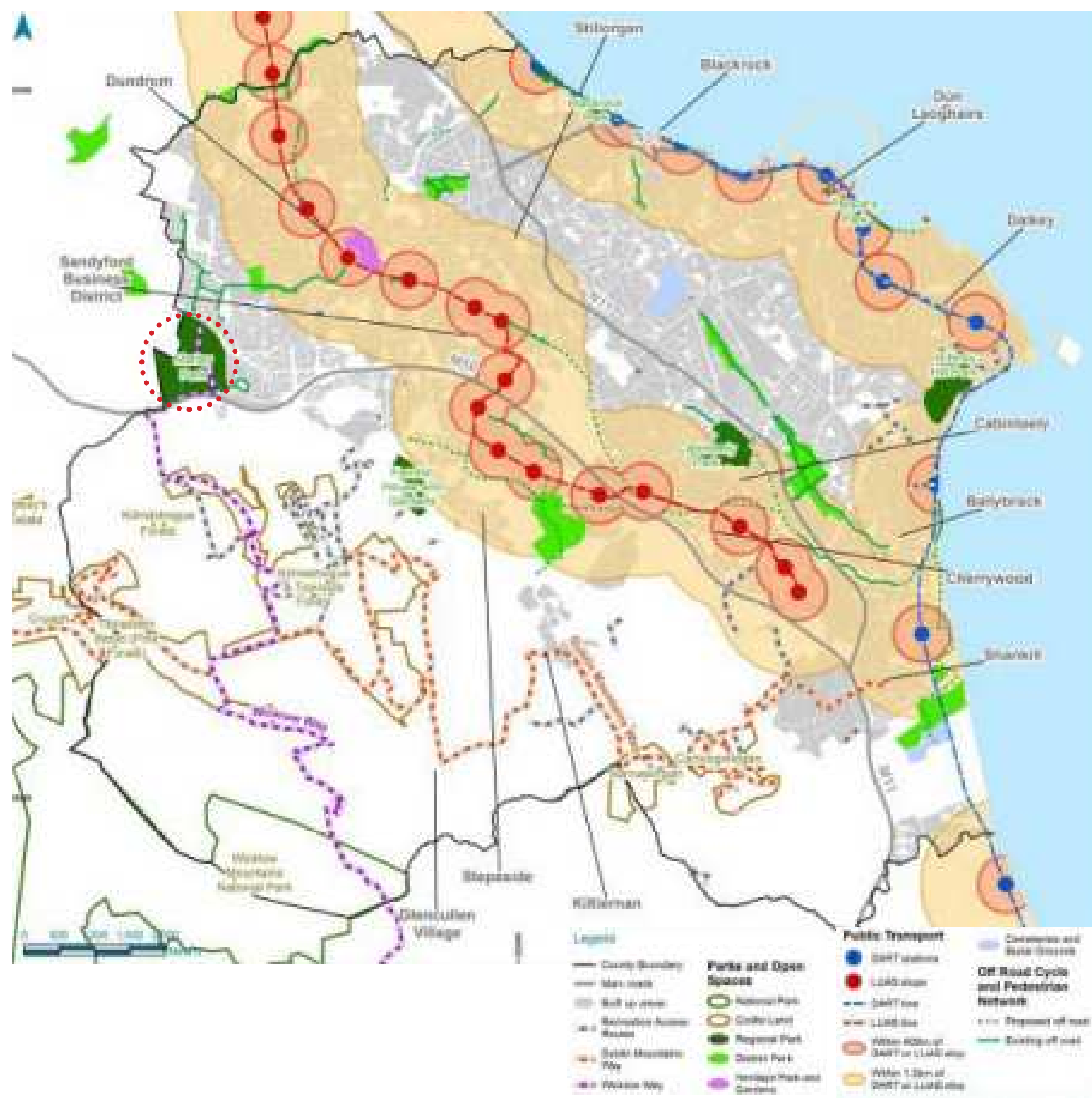
These enhanced parks and links act as a transition between the rural and urban landscapes. They are made of 7 parks or transitional open spaces. This is an ambitious but exciting Green Infrastructure corridor. Significant enhancement and development of existing and proposed parks are a feature of this corridor. Similarly Greenways identified in the Cycle Network Plan will need to be brought forward in order to complete the corridor and link these transitional parks.

The transitional or Gateway Parks are to provide access points to and from the mountains and open space above the urban area of the County. Linkages to other main GI corridors also ensure that sustainable travel options are available for those who want to venture beyond the 'park' environment not only from within the County, but from a wider regional catchment. These gateway parks will have formal and informal spaces, less managed but habitat rich areas and then access onto the mountains for those who are prepared for a longer recreational activity.

#### **Objectives**

1. To provide transitional gateways to the mountains and open spaces from the urban areas of the County.
2. Ensure that sustainable travel options are supported by the wider GI network.
3. To connect a chain of existing and proposed parks and open spaces along the urban fringe, providing variety of recreational and visitor experiences.
4. Ensure the cultural heritage assets are incorporated in the GI assets associated with these gateway parks.
5. To develop Fernhill Gardens into a Gateway Park/Regional Park.





## 2.4 TRANSPORT LINKS

### Site Catchment

Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County is located between the outer suburbs of Dublin City and the Dublin/Wicklow Mountains. Its population is 206,261 (2011 Census).

The Marlay Park is located within the Electoral Area Boundary of Glencullen-Sandyford, with a population of 36,465 and containing both city and rural areas - Sandyford, Stepaside, Kiltiernan, Glencullen, Leopardstown and parts of Cabinteely, Ballinteer and Dundrum. According to Population Change between 1991-2011, the area is identified as subject to High Growth (+100-300%). The current population within a 1km radius of the site is estimated at 3,440.

Within 0.5km to 1.5km distance of the demesne (approx. 5-20 minutes walking distance) are both established and new residential areas, as well as the outdoor recreation opportunities of the Dublin Mountains.

### Bus

The Ballinteer, Marley Grange areas are serviced by several bus routes running to and from the city centre. Routes 14, 14a, 48a and 75 all serve Ballinteer Shopping Centre and the Grange Road Marlay Park pedestrian entrance is a short walk from this bus stop.

### LUAS

Dundrum is the closest light rail stops within walking distance of Marlay Park. Bus services from Ballinteer Shopping Centre also serve the Dundrum and Balally LUAS stops.

### Roads

The Park is well positioned in relation to this network. The M50 extends along the southern boundary of the park with and a short drive from junction 13/14 of the M50 motorway.

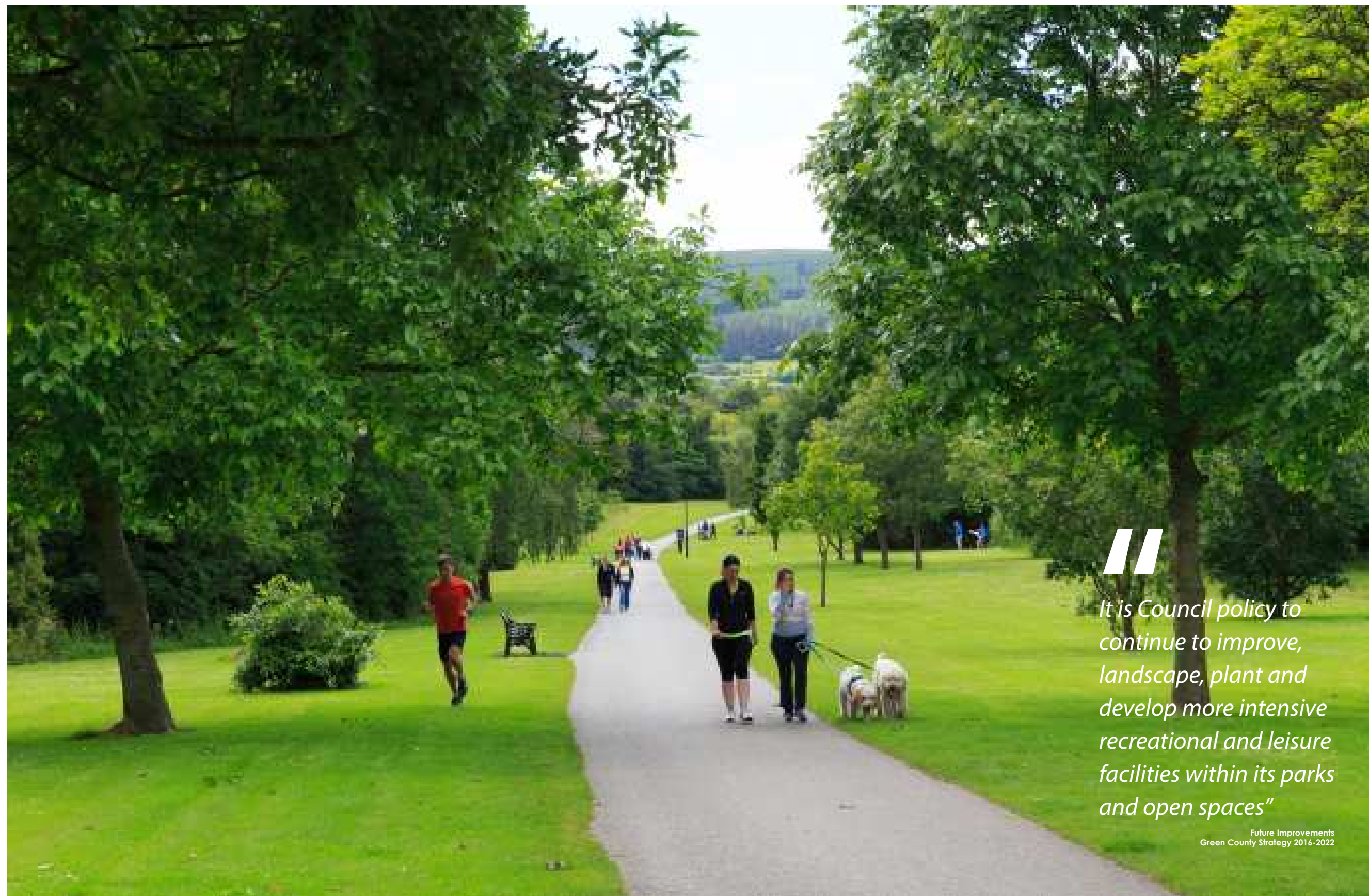
### Pedestrians and Cyclists

Marlay Park is accessible to both pedestrians and cyclists. The north on the Park along Grange Road is serviced with regular traffic lights and crossing points for pedestrians with designated cycle lanes provided along this route also.









“

*It is Council policy to continue to improve, landscape, plant and develop more intensive recreational and leisure facilities within its parks and open spaces”*

Future Improvements  
Green County Strategy 2016-2022

# 3.0

## SITE APPRAISAL

- 3.1 Site History
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### 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.

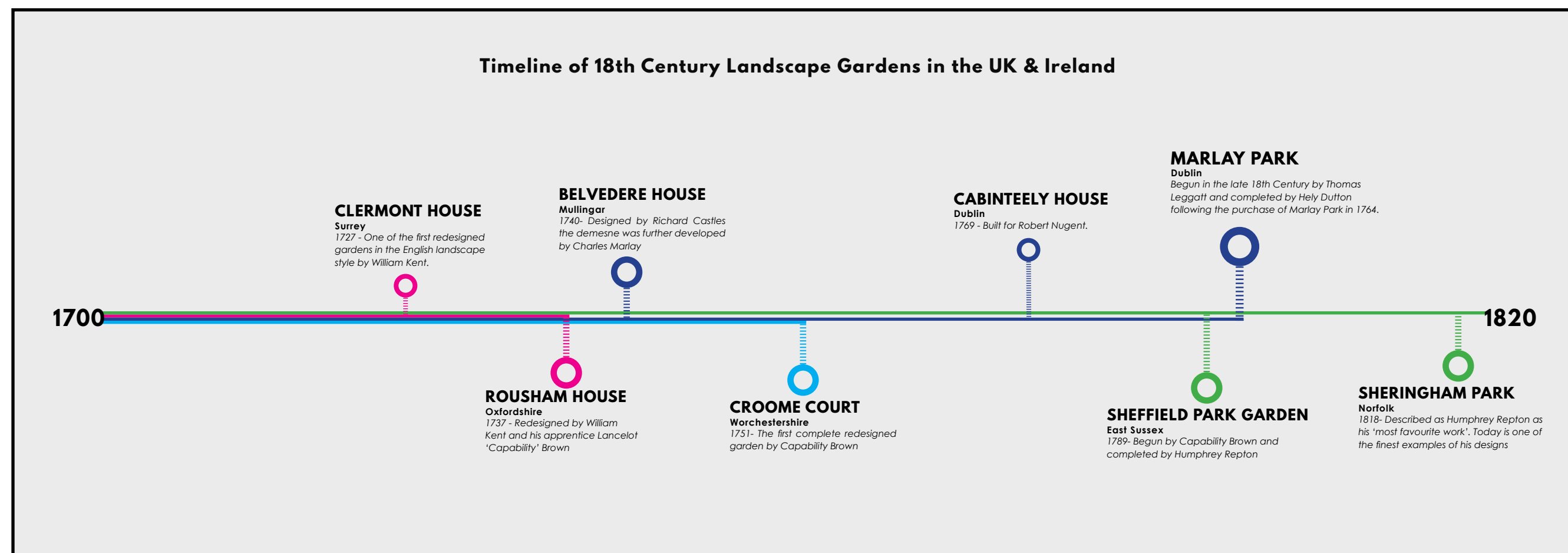
In 1764 the estate was purchased by David La Touche, of French Huguenot origin, who was a member of parliament and first Governor of the Bank of Ireland. He was succeeded by his son and grandson. The La Touches developed the property, rebuilding Marlay House and outbuildings and enlarging the extent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

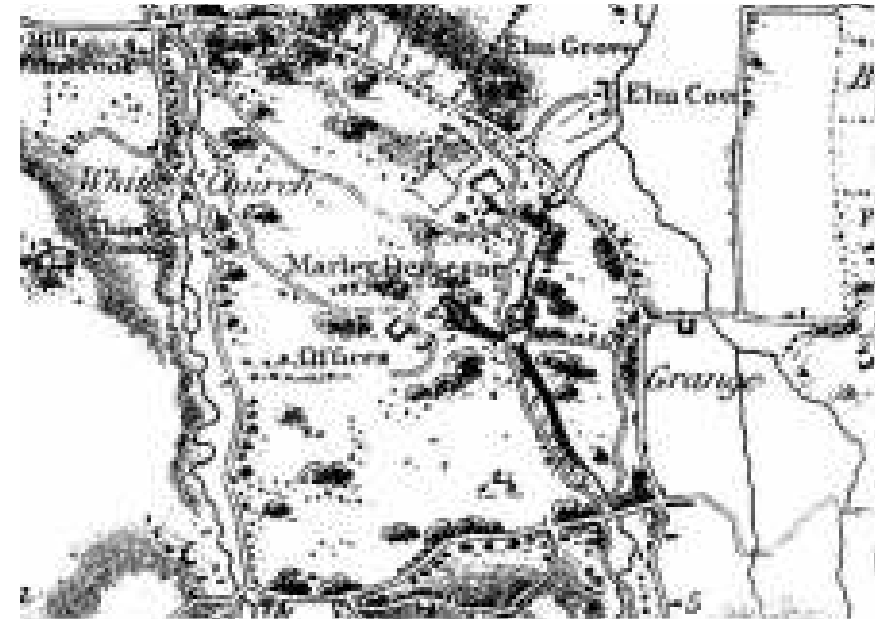
John Taylor's map of 1816 shows some similarities with Rocque's map of more than fifty years earlier. The house and the outbuildings to the west are similar, complete with an avenue leading westwards. Gone are the fields and formal garden and in their place are abundant trees. There is still no sign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

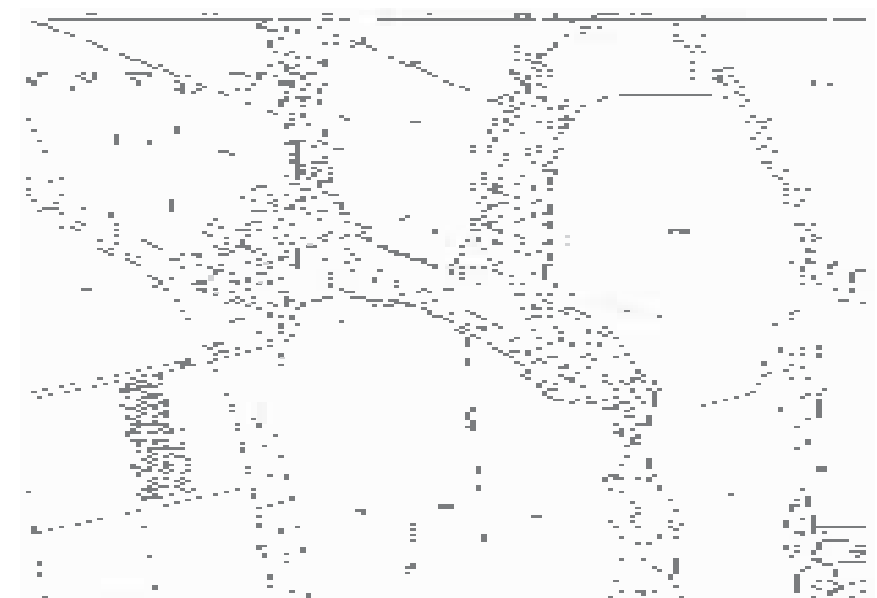


*Detail of Second Edition Ordnance Survey Map 1864*

### **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

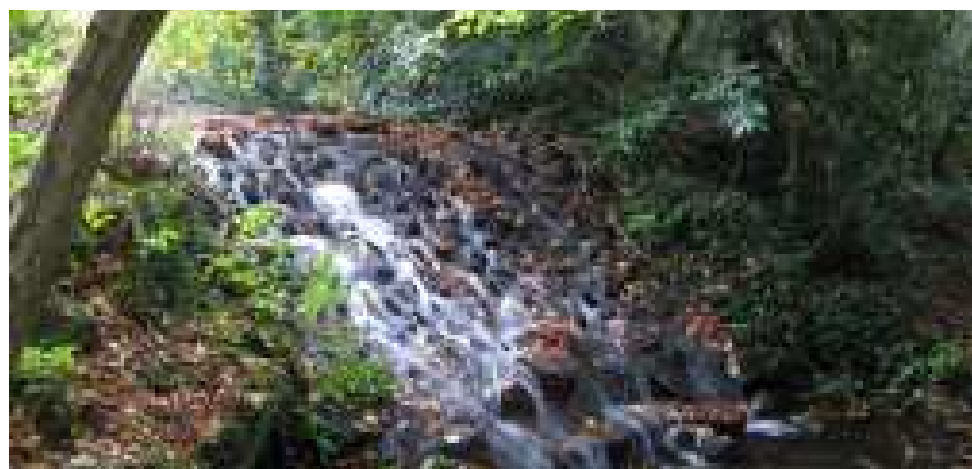
It is Council policy to:

- 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

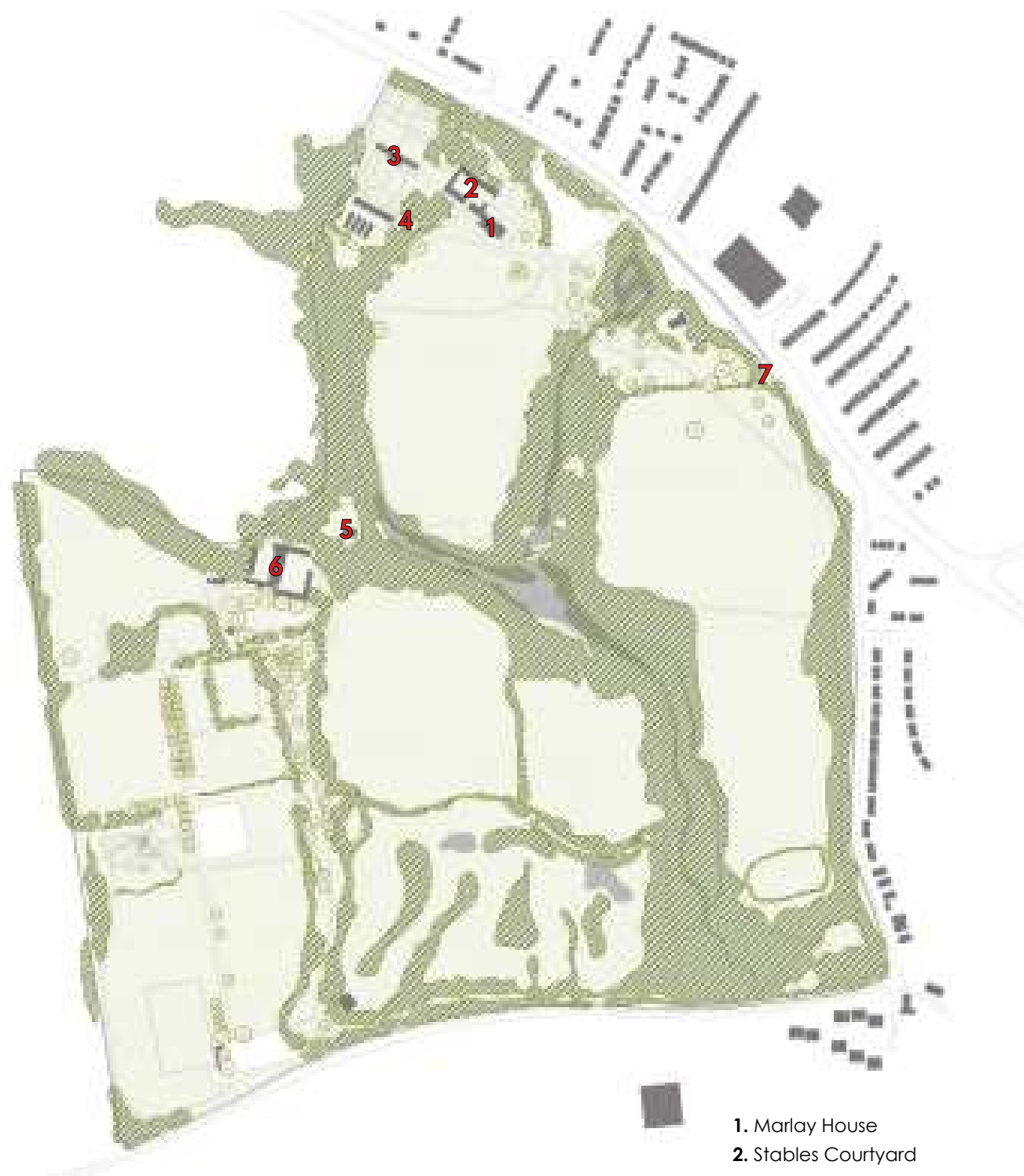


Restored Regency garden and Ornamental pool, Marlay Park



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.

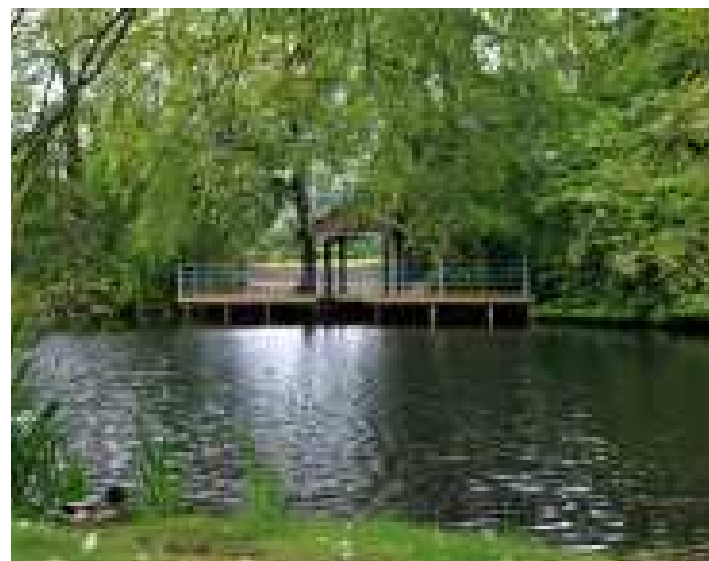
### **Gate Lodge**

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.

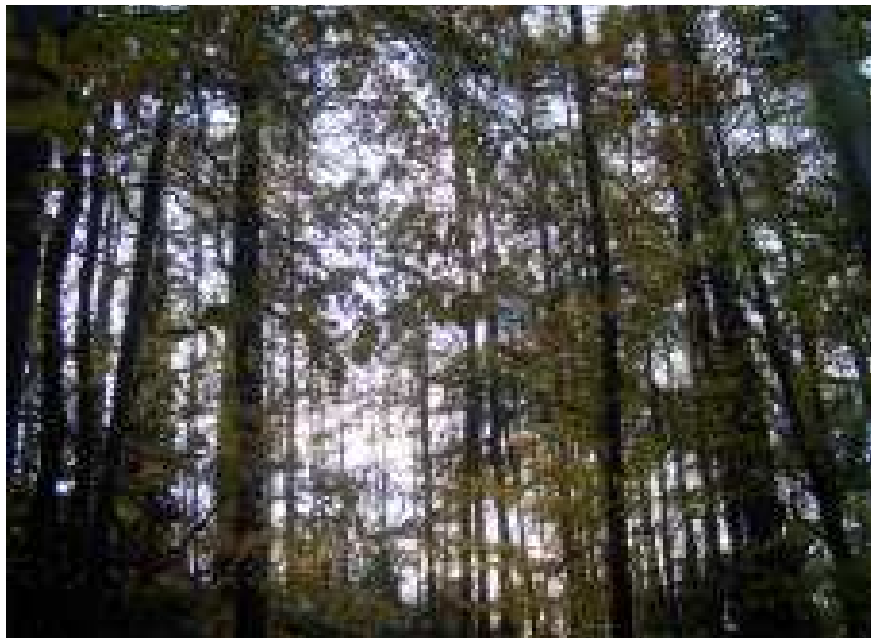
The Little Dargle River, which originates in the Dublin Mountains to the south of Marlay, runs through the lands and is artificially split into sections within the park. Waters from the Little Dargle have been dammed within the park to create three ponds.

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*).

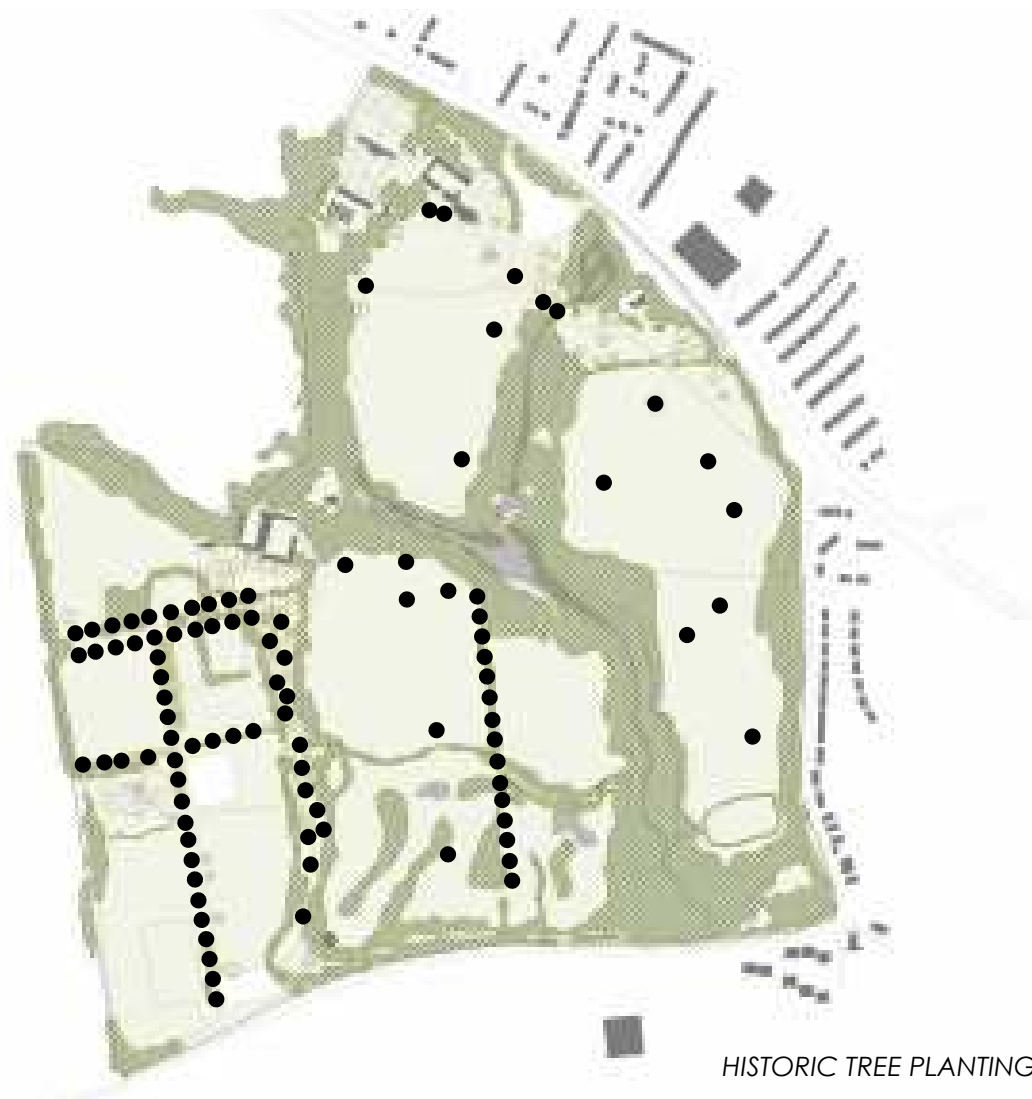
The acquiring of a vast variety of exotics and a range of interesting evergreen specimen trees in private demesnes increased through the 18th and 19th centuries. This design style increased in popularity among the wealthy who traveled extensively to obtain exciting new species to be planted and shown 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'.

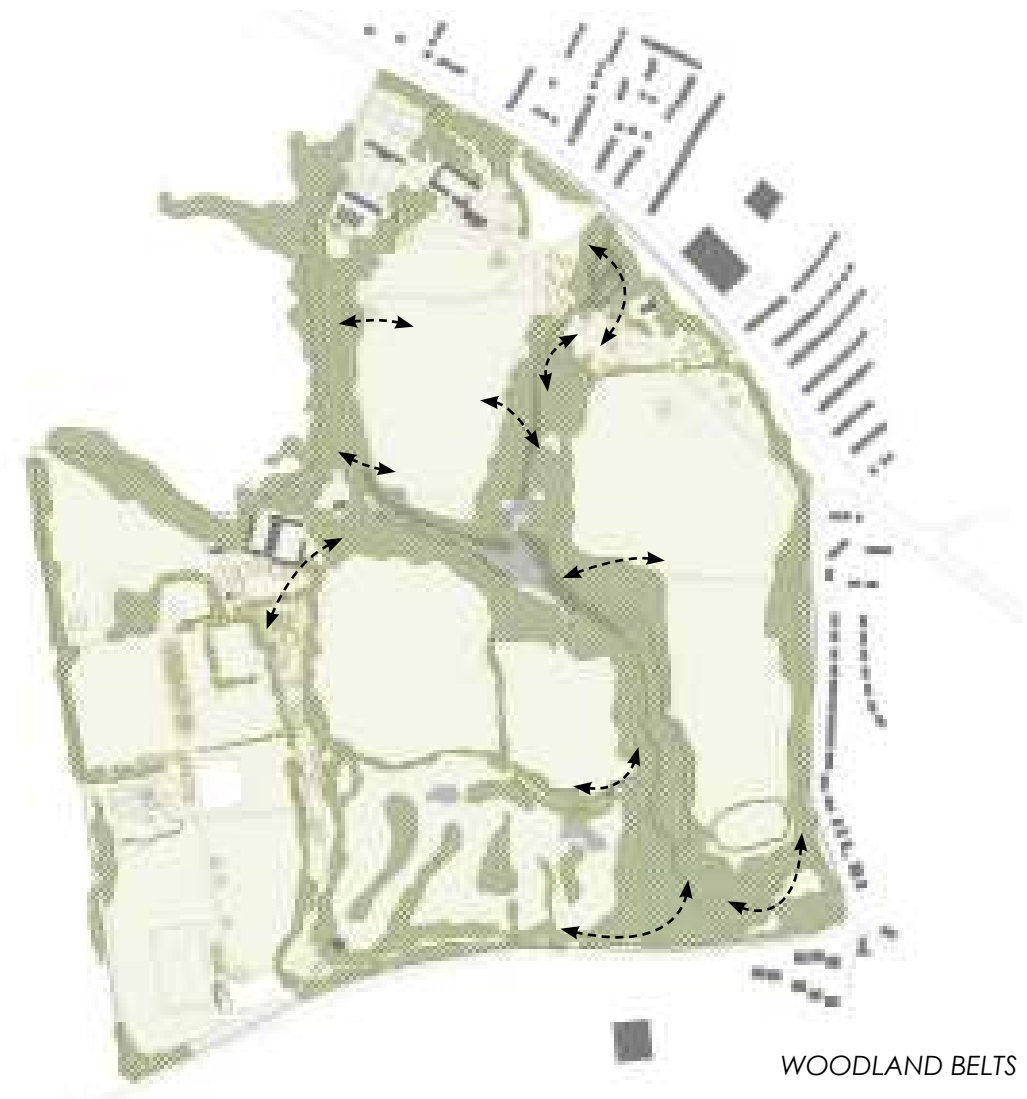
The hedgerows within the Park provide important, established habitats for numerous species of invertebrates, birds and small mammals. Some of the hedges are at least 150 years old and provide vital migration corridors.



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.

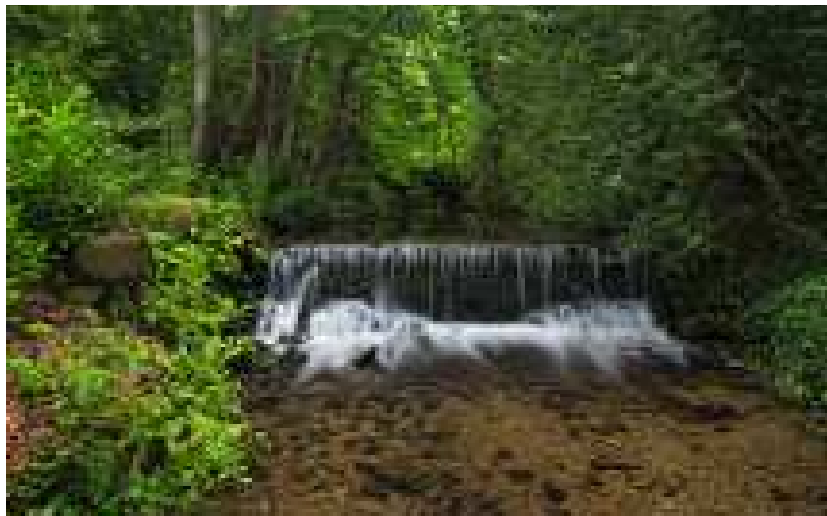


**Key Challenges - Masterplan:**

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

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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)



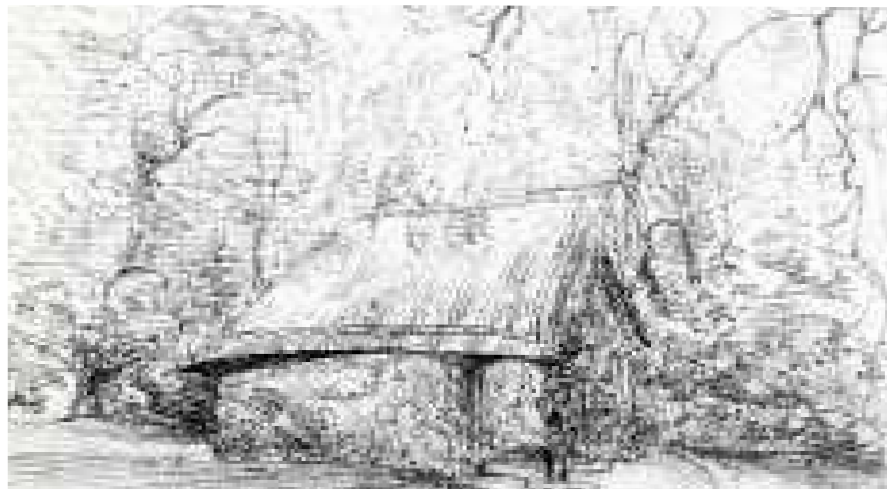
View of Marlay House and ha-ha field while on cottage walk (1840)



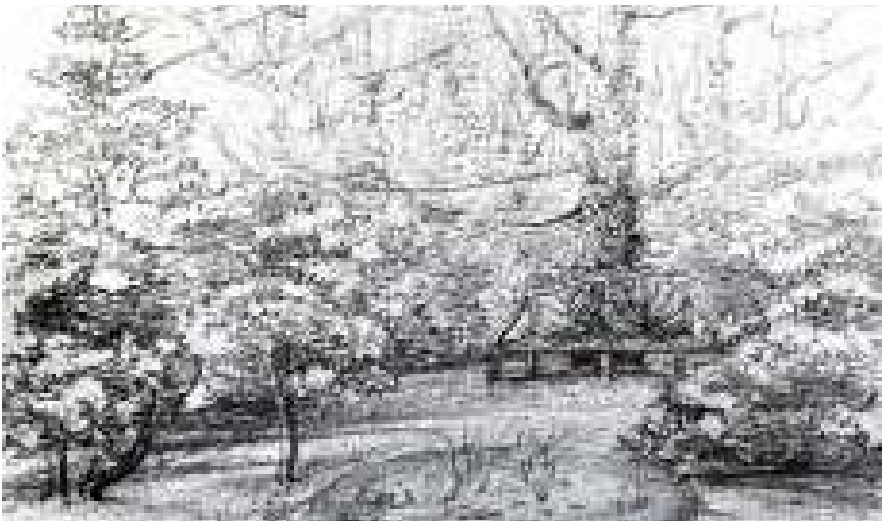
View of Marlay House (1839)



View of Cottage Orneé (1834)



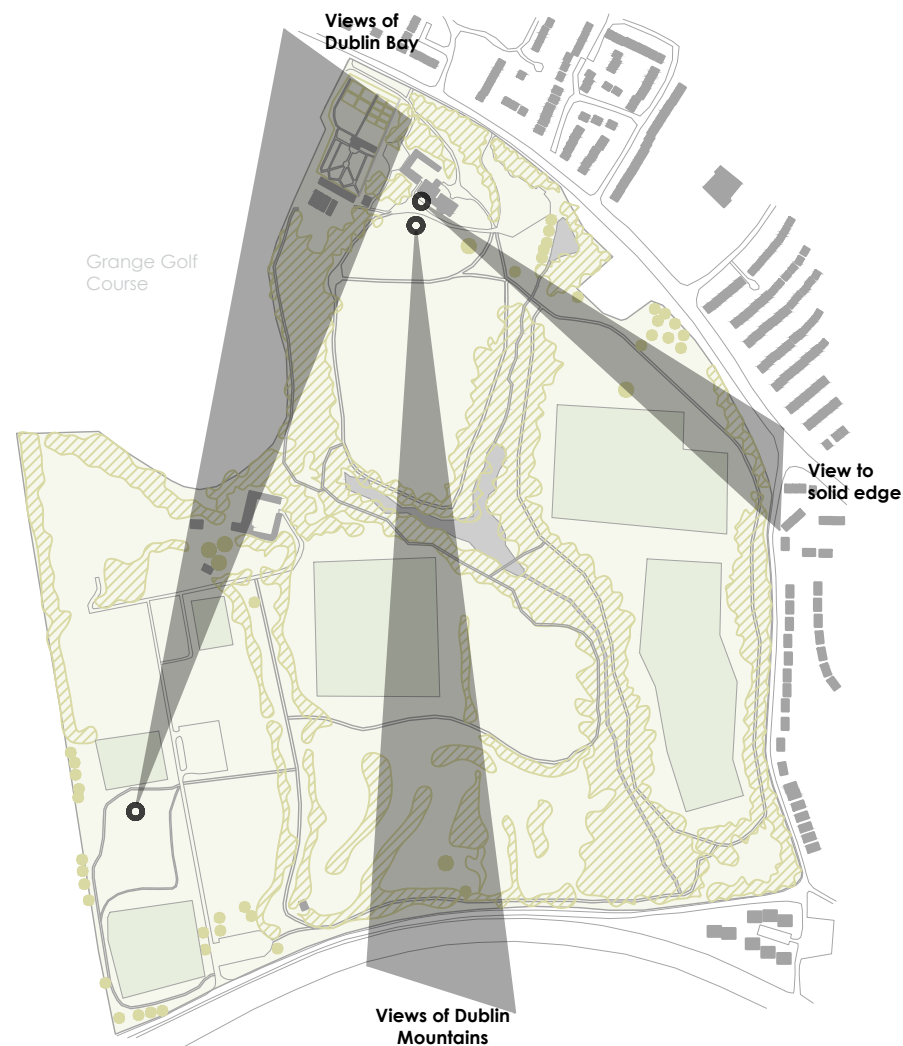
View of Marlay Garden House (1833)



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.

### Issues - 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 some 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 bringing continuity through the park.





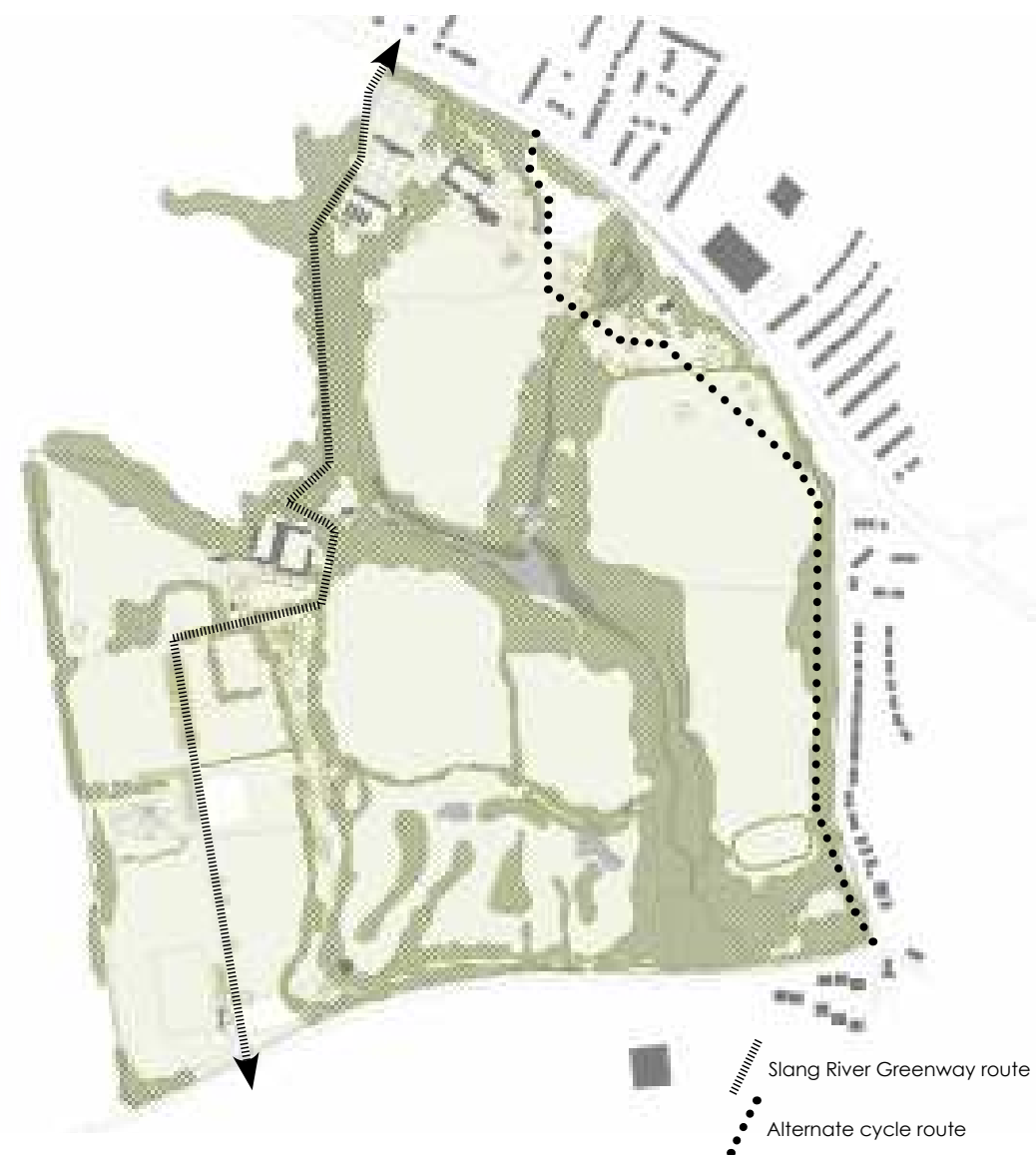
### 3.7 PATHS, CIRCULATION & PERMEABILITY – PEDESTRIANS & CYCLISTS

#### 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

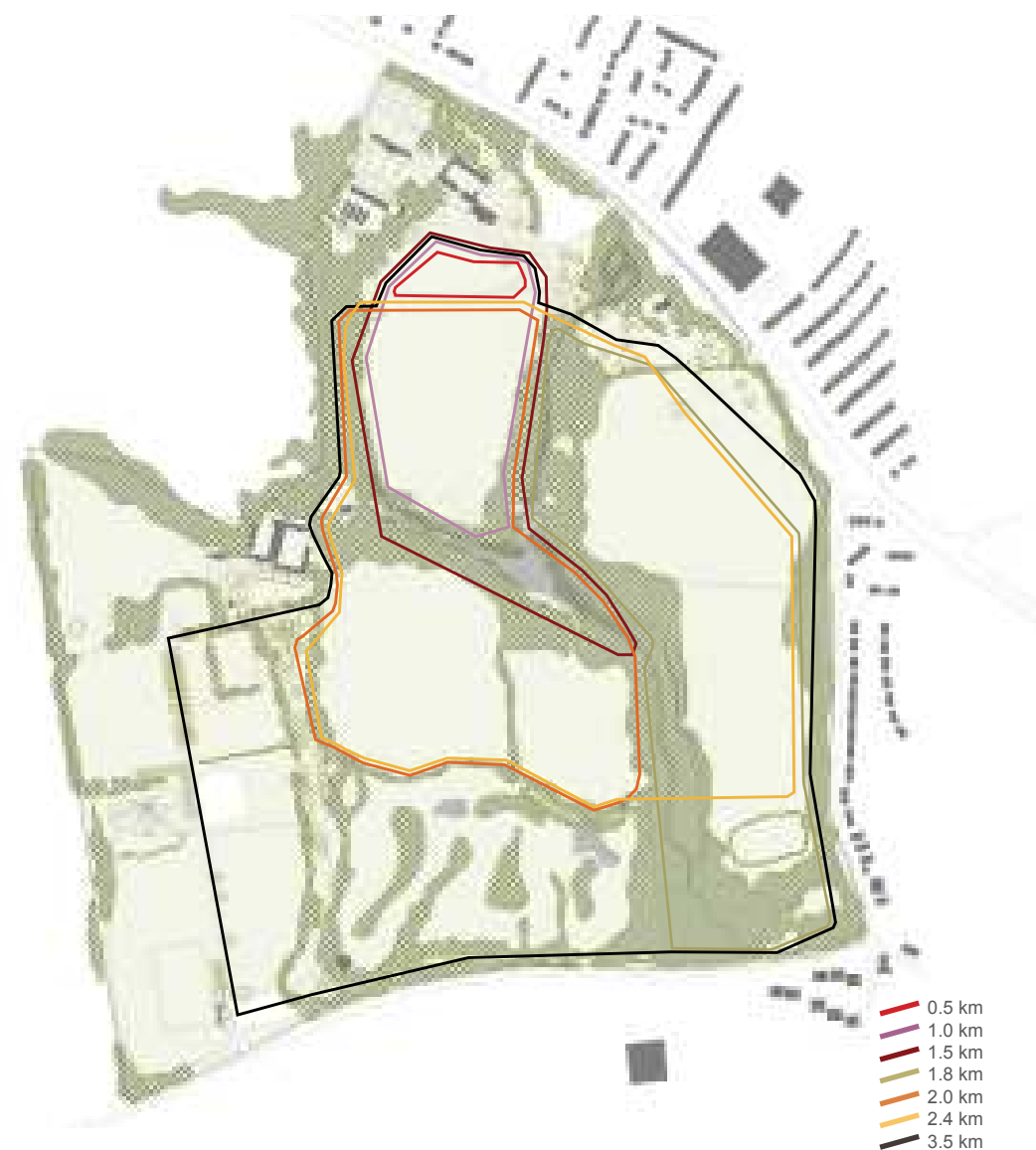
Since the purchase of Marlay Park in 1972 many works have been carried out to improve and enhance the user experience in the park. This includes the introduction of additional informal paths some of which are at a sufficient width to cater for events in the park. In general, the pedestrian circulation 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

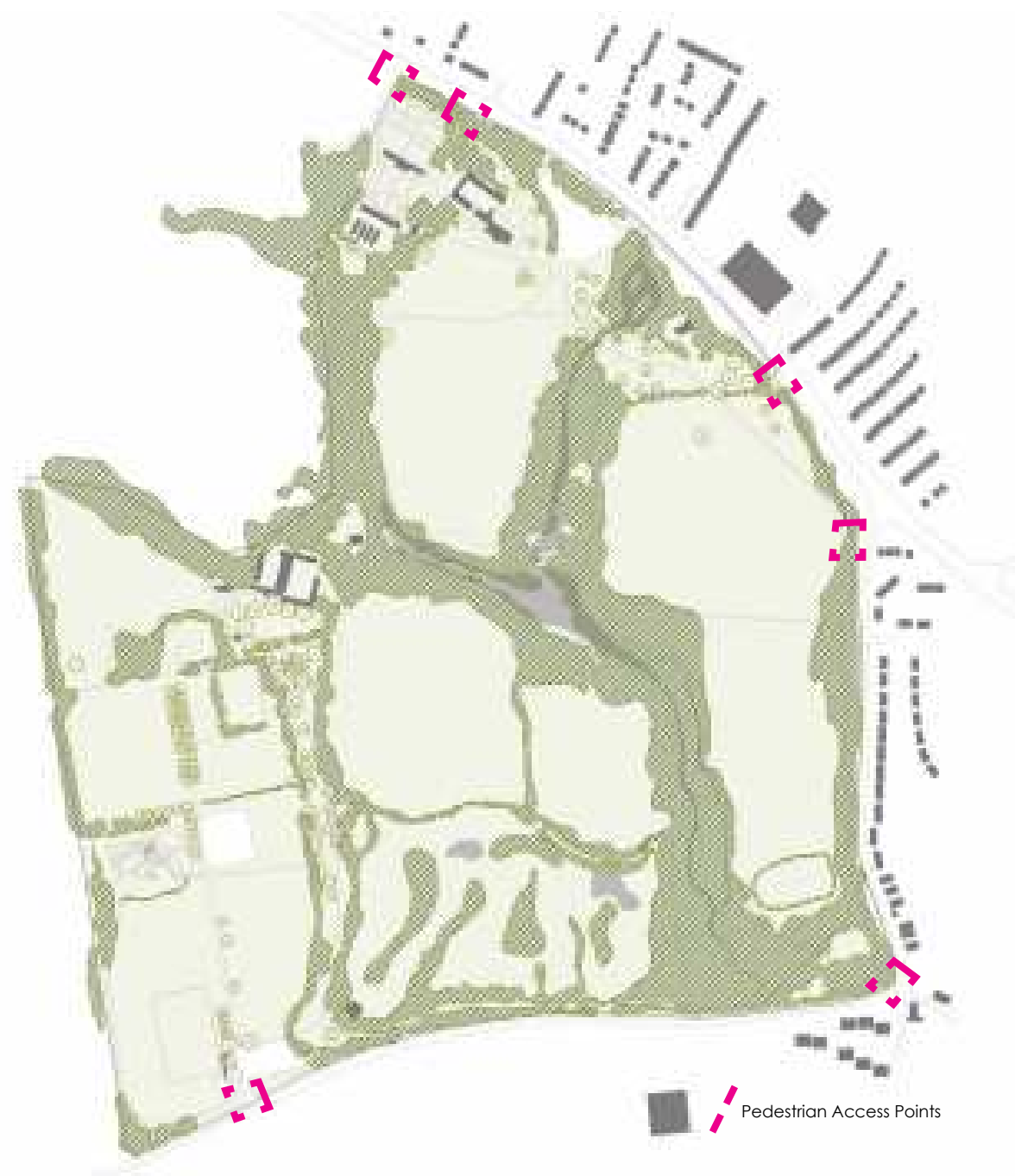
DLRCC is committed to improving facilities for cyclists. The adoption of the County Cycling Policy in conjunction with the Smarter Travel, Better Living (STBL) strategy in 2010 focused on developing cycle friendly infrastructure and on the promotion of cycling. The 2011 Census indicated that over 5% 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*

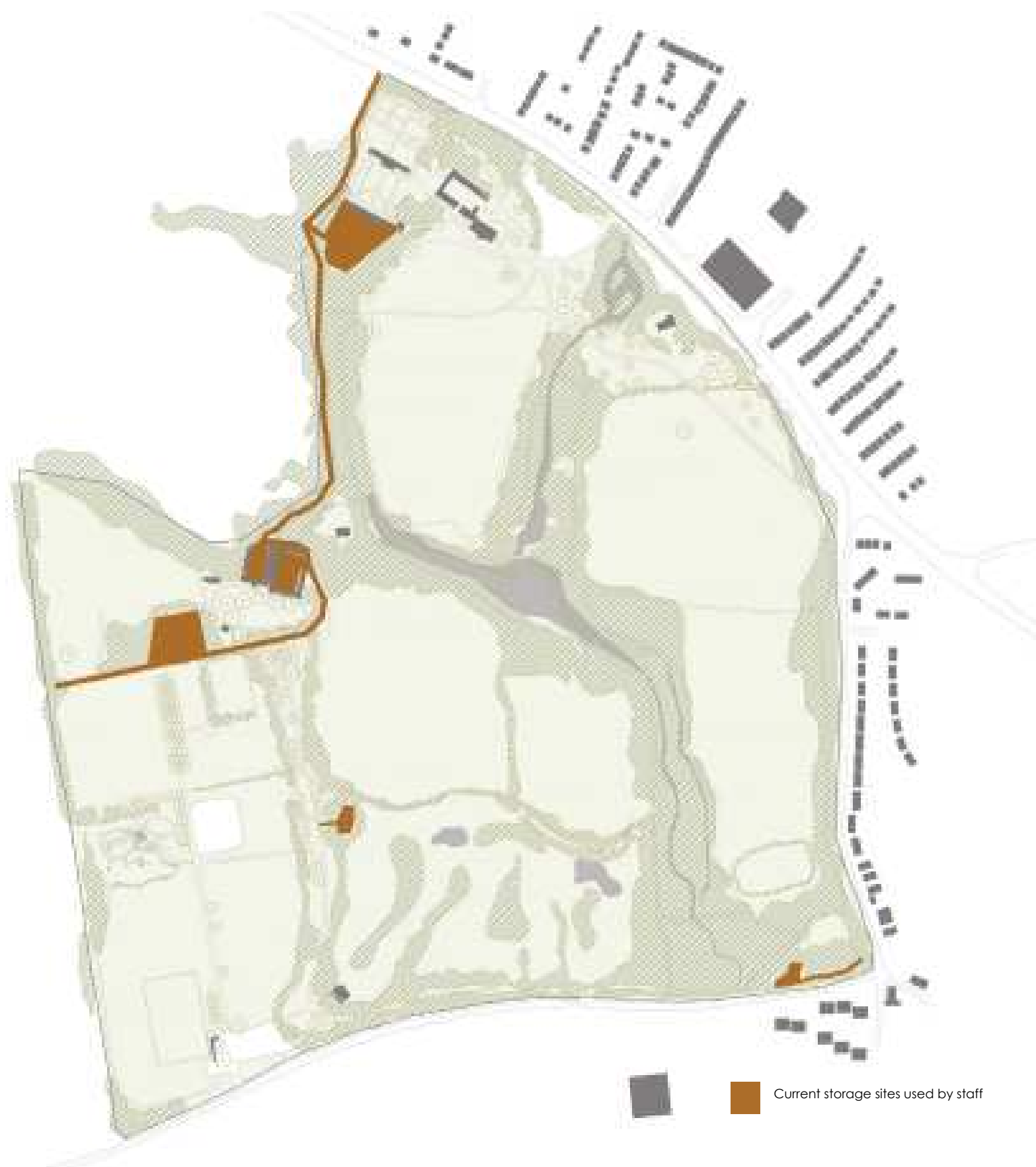


*New Pedestrian Access at College Road of similar design*



#### **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:**

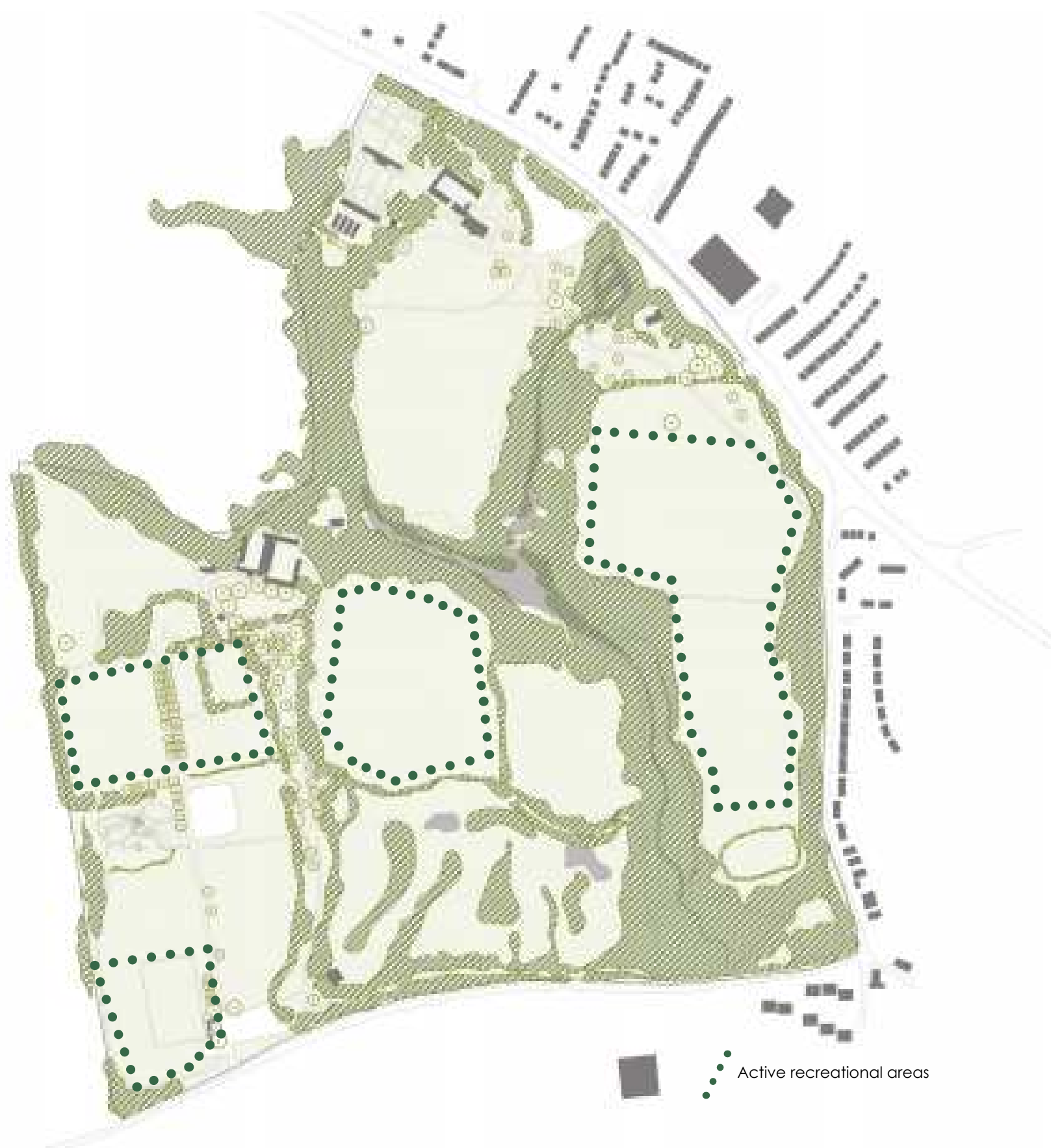
The maintenance zones and yards have also evolved and spread out into various sections of the park throughout the years. At present the main service area is located in the centre of the park at the old stables and is accessed by a through road which extends from the entrance at Grange Road to College 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	Spaces per ha
Wurruy	120	600	5,000	40
Coonahy	15	750	6,000	40
Fogarty	1.5	75	600	40
Blackmore	12	60	480	5
Kilmer	45	85	680	18



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.

# 4.0

## CONSERVATION STRATEGY

- 4.1 Introduction and Significance
- 4.2 Vulnerabilities and Opportunities
- 4.3 Policy and Protection

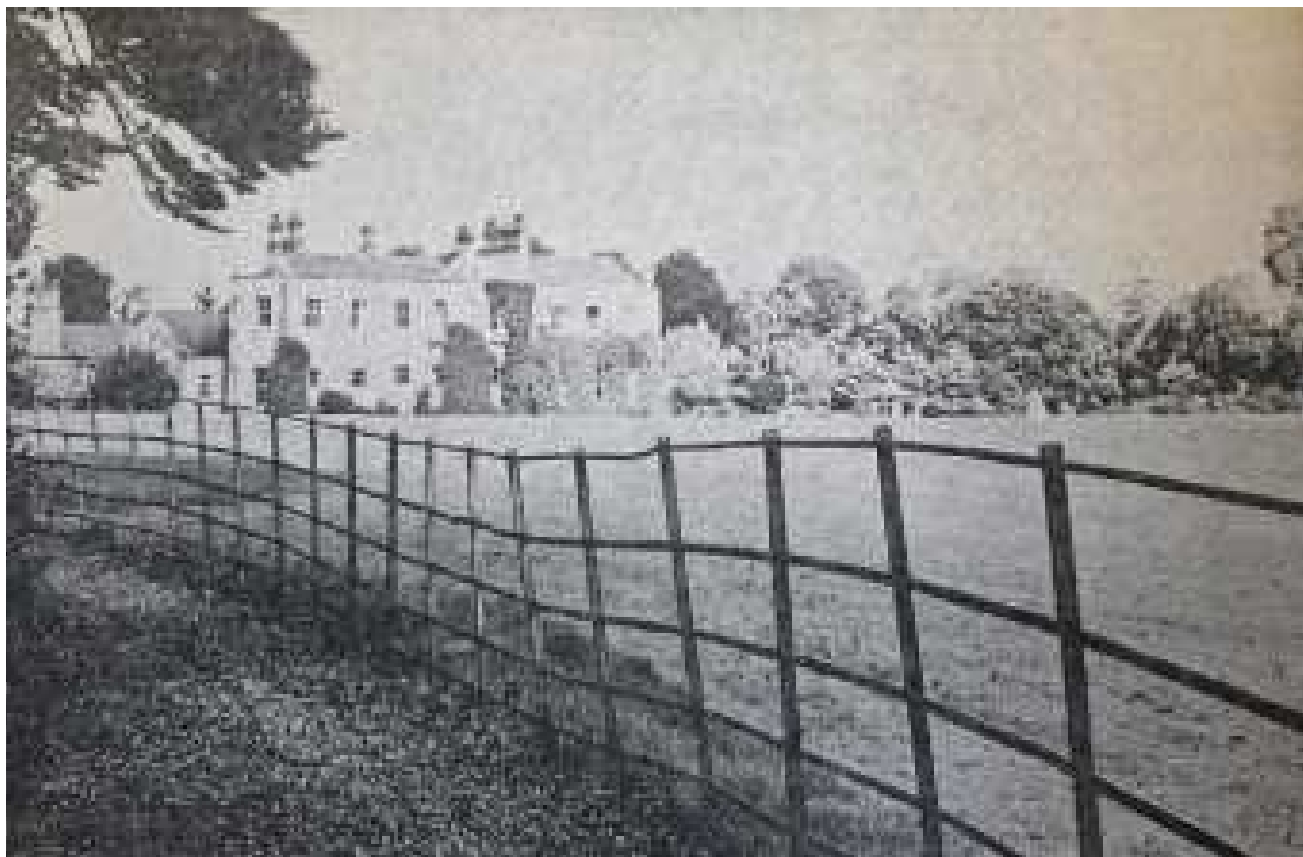
## 4.1 INTRODUCTION AND SIGNIFICANCE

### Introduction

Since its acquisition in 1972, the local authority has maintained the historic estate as a public park. It is recognised as a unique resource within Dún Laoghaire Rathdown under the designation of a Regional park. DLRCC has actively sought to conserve and manage the historic fabric of the park, with restoration works previously carried out on structures including; Marlay House, Laurelmere, the Craft Courtyard and the Walled Garden. It is recommended that additional structures within the park be preserved to secure the historic fabric and, where applicable, a new use sought for them. Overall, the park is a fine example of a picturesque 18th century landscape design. The ponds, bridges, weirs, ha-ha and surrounding demesne wall form the architectural character of the site and require regular maintenance.

The planting within the park has evolved through self-seeding and insensitive alterations which have the potential to put the historic arrangement at risk. Going forward, a management plan will inform and guide the removal of invasive and inappropriate planting without impacting the character of the established plantations.

The underlying principles for the Masterplan within Marlay Park focus on conservation, protection, and enhancement. The Masterplan aims to find the balance between conservation and development. It is essential that the intrinsic qualities of the park are maintained and restored where required while managing the ever increasing visitor numbers and pressures for facilities. Through the site analysis, the key attributes of this 18th century landscape park have been identified. As part of the Masterplan, the Council seeks to implement a co-ordinated, heritage-led approach to the management and development of the park.



View of ha-ha field and Marlay House (1978), Marlay Park



View of Dining Room, Marlay House (1966), Marlay Park

### Significance:

Marlay Park is the last remaining intact landscaped garden set out by renowned landscape designer Thomas Leggett in Ireland. Section 3 of this document includes an analysis of the history, the built and natural heritage of Marlay Park. It is clear from this analysis that Marlay Park has considerable significance as a historic landscape allied with its strategic importance as an amenity. Many of the structures within Marlay Park have Regional Heritage Significance including Marlay House, many of the lodges and cottages, the courtyard and farm yard, much of the demesne wall, some gates and piers, the lakes and some bridges. The natural and cultural history of the park should be easily accessible to the general public to improve understanding and appreciation of this attractive public amenity.



## 4.2 VULNERABILITIES / THREATS

### Vulnerabilities

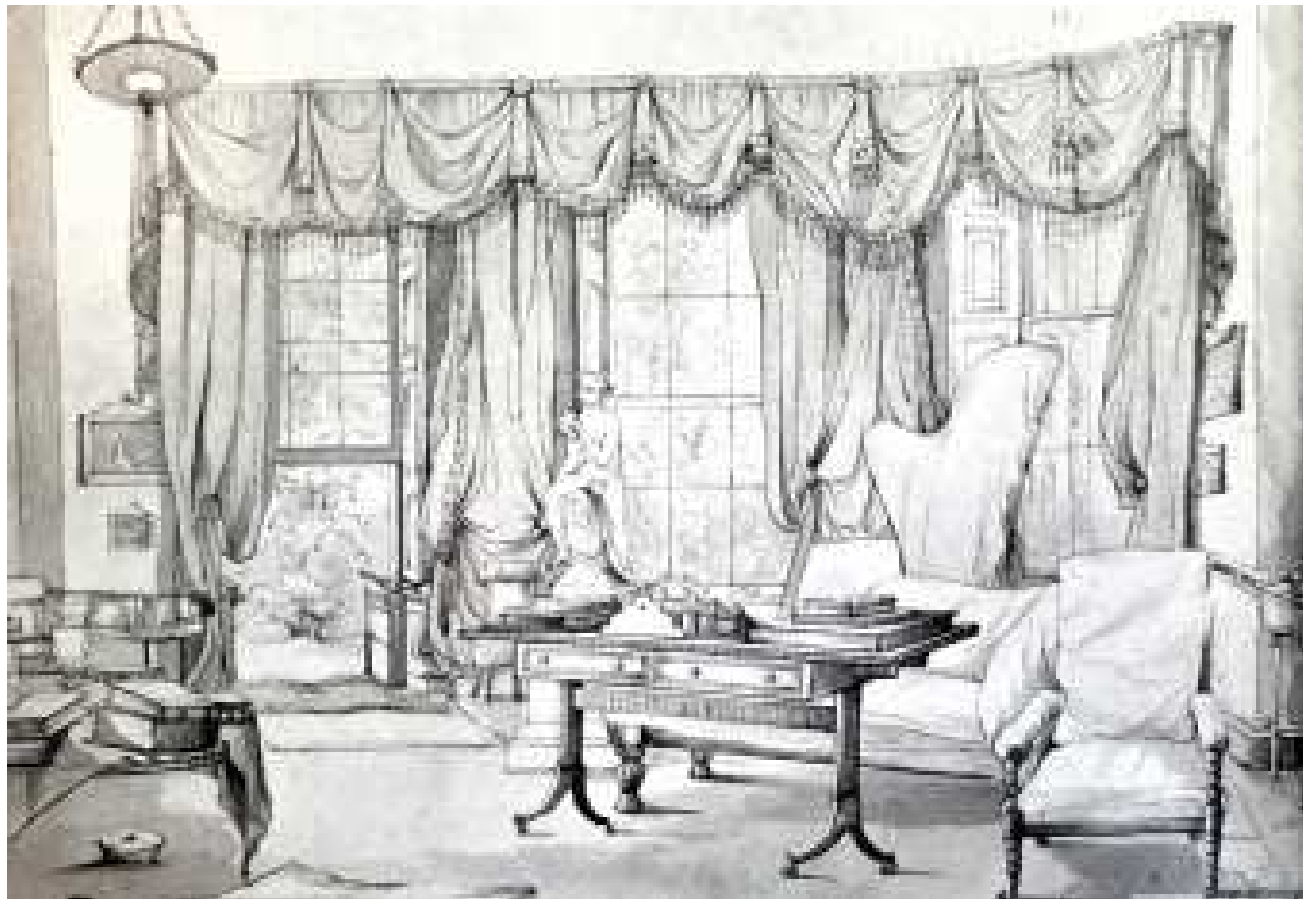
The vulnerabilities and threats to Marlay Park include the following;

- Awareness & Education: – general public, staff
- Events – wear and tear
- Overdevelopment – demand for further development/facilities within Marlay Park
- Urban sprawl - Re-zoning of lands to the south of Marlay Park may have a significant impact on the Historic Landscape.
- Accessibility: – general public

### Aims & Objectives:

There are 15 aims and objectives outlined in Section 1 of this document. The following aims & objectives relate to the conservation strategy;

1. To put in place a long term vision for Marlay Park that arranges the elements into a logical order to maximise the parks amenity value within the context of the historic landscape.
2. To protect and enhance the natural heritage, the flora and fauna of the site.
3. To conserve and protect the built heritage and provide suitable, sympathetic and sustainable uses for the properties in the setting of the historic landscape.



*The Book Room by Anne LaTouche (1839), Marlay House*



*View of Marlay House (1966), Marlay Park*

With these overarching aims & objectives in mind, the following strategic conservation aims & objectives have been developed;

- To commit to the protection, conservation and enhancement of the historic character of the park.
- To seek to ensure any new developments will not adversely affect the amenity and value of the park.
- Historic views and vistas are to be preserved from obstruction, and reinstated where applicable. Plantations to screen intrusive external developments are encouraged.
- To provide for the effective maintenance of the park and its associated structures.
- To protect, conserve and enhance the plant and animal habitats within the park.
- Ensure succession planting management, using appropriate species.
- To promote awareness of the history of the site and its importance in the landscape historically, culturally, architecturally and its biodiversity value through permanent exhibitions.
- Ensure suitably qualified professionals are present to direct required repairs on associated historic structures, informed by current best practices in conservation and the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government (DEHLG) Conservation Guidelines.
- To seek the restoration and repair of structures within the park and provide suitable uses for them, where applicable, which will not detract from their architectural character.
- To improve and enhance pedestrian access and safety for all without adversely impacting the historic character of the park.
- To promote the park as a cultural asset and public amenity

## 4.3 POLICY AND PROTECTION

### Built Heritage

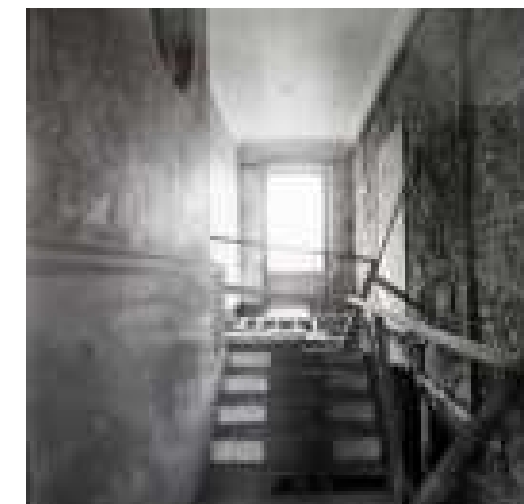
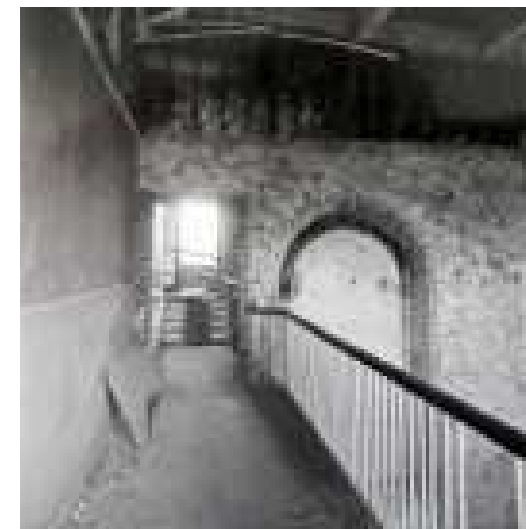
The architectural heritage within the park should be retained and repaired wherever appropriate. It is preferable to oppose the loss of any historic fabric unless a comprehensive, compelling proposal is put forward to suggest otherwise. Often, minor alterations to the fabric of protected structures can impact on their character and special interest. To ensure the right balance is struck between the changing demands and the continued use of the buildings, it is vital that proposed works be thoroughly assessed and evaluated prior to implementation.

Repairs to enhance the built heritage in Marlay Park should be carried out to the highest conservation standards, and should avoid over restoration making them materially unidentifiable from the original. The interventions should be simple in nature and easily reversible using similar methods and materials. Where new interventions are proposed they must be sympathetic to their surroundings while representing quality modern design ideals and standards.

When undertaking any works to protected structures or heritage structures as identified in the Built Heritage Inventory, the following steps will be undertaken;

- Prepare an outline brief/user requirements for the proposed change and state why it is considered necessary.
- Prepare a photographic and measured survey of the section of the building or its curtilage that is the subject of the proposed changes.
- Undertake opening up works as required under the supervision of a suitably qualified professional such as a conservation architect.
- Undertake historic research as required and report on the findings.
- Analyse the desired change and examine how it might be achieved in the most sensitive and appropriate manner, in accordance with good conservation practice.
- Prepare drawings of the proposed alteration/intervention together with a method statement setting out how it is going to be carried out.
- Assess the impact of the proposed changes on the character of the protected structure.
- Carry out an internal review of the material listed above, evaluating the proposed changes and determine if the changes are in accordance with good conservation practice utilising the guidance given in DEHLG "Architectural Heritage Protection - Guidelines for Planning Authorities" for assistance. There are 3 possible outcomes to the internal review -
  - o the proposals are considered not to materially affect the building and therefore are not required to undergo the Part VIII procedure
  - o the proposed works are considered to have an impact upon the architectural significance of the building or the proposals do not adhere to good conservation practice, then the proposal should be re-examined; allowing a suitable and creative solution to be explored.
  - o the proposals are considered to materially affect the building (either in a positive or neutral manner) and are therefore required to follow the Part VIII procedure.
- Keep a record of the approved changes.
- Implement the changes and on completion keep a building record on file.

All development proposals potentially impacting on Protected Structures shall have regard to the Department of the Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht 'Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines for Planning Authorities' (2011). All works should comply with BS 7913



Interior views of Marlay House (1990), Marlay Park



Interior views of Marlay House restoration works (2000), Marlay Park



### Tree Protection Orders (TPOs)

There are currently no Tree Preservation Orders within Marlay Park. However all work undertaken on trees on site requires the approval of management.

### Wildlife Act

The Department of Culture, Heritage and Gaeltacht, through the National Parks and Wildlife Service, are responsible for the designation of natural conservation sites within Ireland. Areas listed as the directives below are given statutory protection.

- Statutory Nature Reserves
- Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)
- Natural Heritage Areas (NHA)
- Special Protection Areas (SPA)

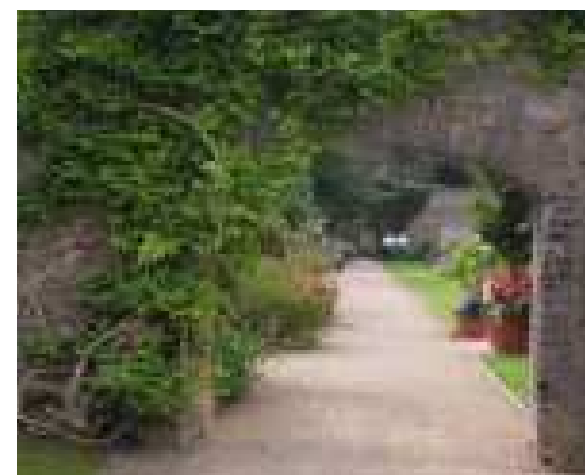
At present, there are no statutory nature conservation designations within Marlay Park, although individual species within the park are protected.

### Statutory Protection

All development proposals potentially impacting on Protected Structures and places designated as Architectural Conservation Areas and candidate Architectural Conservation Areas shall have regard to the Department of the Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht 'Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines for Planning Authorities' (2011). Much of Marlay Park and its heritage structures are protected through policy of the County Development Plan 2016-2022. Many of these are outlined in Section 2 of this document.

Listed within the Record of Protected Structures, as set out in Appendix 4 of the Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Development Plan 2016-2022 are Marlay House and Courtyard and Laurelmere cottage. Structures put forward for consideration by the Department of Culture, Heritage and Gaeltacht to be placed under statutory protection following a survey by the NIAH are:

- Stable Complex (Regional) 60220012
- Walled Garden (Regional) 60220013
- Head Gardener's Cottage (Regional) 60220014
- Farmyard Stables/Staff Depot (Regional) 60220016
- Gateway on Grange Road (Regional) 60220017
- Gateway on Grange Road (Regional) 60220019
- Gate Lodge on Grange Road (Regional) 60220020
- Gate Lodge on Grange Road (Regional) 60220021



**Relevant charters, legislation, designation and conventions:**

ICOMOS – The International Council on Monuments and Sites (Florence Charter, 1981)

The Florence Charter sets out the practical guidelines for the protection of historic parks and gardens. It defines them as architectural compositions and recommends their preservation as living monuments. The Charter sets out a framework to allow the custodians of these sites to make sound decisions on their maintenance strategies, restoration and conservation.

The following articles are contained within the ICOMOS Florence Charter and are relevant to Marlay Park:

- Art 1:** An historic garden is an architectural and horticultural composition of interest to the public from the historical or artistic point of view. As such, to be considered a monument.
- Art 2:** The historic garden is an architectural composition whose constituents are primarily vegetal and therefore living, which means that they are perishable and renewable.
- Art 4:** The architectural composition of the historic garden includes:
- i) Its plan and topography
  - ii) Its vegetation, including its species, proportions, colour schemes, spacing and respective heights.
  - iii) Its structural and decorative features.
- Art 5:** As the expression of the direct affinity between civilisation and nature, and as a place of enjoyment suited to meditation or repose, the garden thus acquires the cosmic significance.
- Art 10:** In any work of maintenance, conservation, restoration or reconstruction of an historic garden, or any part of it, all its constituent features must be dealt with simultaneously. To isolate the various operations would damage the unity of the whole.
- Art 11:** Continuous maintenance of historic gardens is of paramount importance. Since the principal material is vegetal, the preservation of the garden in an unchanged condition requires both prompt replacements when required and a long-term programme of periodic renewal (clear felling and replanting with mature specimens).
- Art 19:** By reason of its nature and purpose, an historic garden is a peaceful place conducive to human contacts, silence and awareness of nature. This conception of its everyday use must contrast its role on those rare occasions when it accommodates festivity.
- Art 20:** While historic gardens may be suitable for quiet games as a daily occurrence, separate areas appropriate for active and lively games and sports should also be laid out adjacent to the historic garden, so that the needs of the public may be satisfied in this respect without prejudice to the conservation of the gardens and landscapes.
- Art 21:** The work of maintenance and conservation, the timing of which is determined by season, and brief operations, which serve to restore the garden's authenticity, must always take precedence over the requirements of public use.
- Art 22:** If a garden is walled, its walls may not be removed without prior examination of all the possible consequences liable to lead to changes in its atmosphere and to affect its preservation.
- Art 25:** Interest in historic garden should be stimulated by every kind of activity capable of emphasising their true value as part of the natural heritage.

The European Landscape Convention (Florence Convention)

This European convention, of which Ireland is a signatory, came into force in March 2004. It provides a unified framework for the conservation, planning and management of European landscapes. Ireland's commitment to the convention was ratified in the National Landscape Strategy (2015-2025) which provides measures for the protection, management and planning of the landscape.

Additional conservation designation which are relevant to the management and conservation of historic landscape sites include; The Venice Charter (1964) and The Burra Charter (revised 1999).



## 4.4 OPPORTUNITIES

### **Further Protection:**

There is an opportunity to include the 2018 Marlay Masterplan as a specific objective of the Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Development Plan as part of the 2022 plan.

### **Historic Planting**

Generally, Marlay Park is well maintained, with seasonal planting displays and manicured areas around the park, however, given its scale it would benefit from an overall planting management plan that focuses on the removal of invasive and overgrown plantations, and the sympathetic replanting of historic trees and plant species.

### **Views and Prospects**

The park is of a predominantly gently sloping southerly aspect, laid out with sweeping lawns and framed views of the Dublin Mountains. These views form an essential aspect of the park, providing a sense of space, scale and visual interest.

Any proposals for the park must ensure the landscape character and topography of the site is protected and enhanced while facilitating suitable high quality new additions to the park for the benefit of the public. There is an opportunity to include the protection of the view from Marlay House in a southerly direction towards the Dublin Mountains in the Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Development Plan as part of the 2022 plan.



### **Access:**

At present, vehicles within the park share a surface with pedestrians which present risks. Any decision to improve universal access and public safety for all within the park needs to be balanced with the preservation of its historic value. As per Section 29 of the Disability Act 2005

"As far as practicable, ensure that the whole or a part of the heritage site in its ownership, management or control to which the public has access is accessible to persons with disabilities and can be visited by them with ease and dignity"

This policy shall not apply if its application:

- (i) Has a significant adverse effect on the integrity of the heritage site, or
- (ii) Could compromise the characteristics of the site.

### **Interpretation and Signage:**

Although there are some display panels on the perimeter of the park with information on the site, users of Marlay Park would benefit greatly from the provision of a more in-depth knowledge of their surroundings. As part of the SMART park initiative, the provision of digital information and unified signage within the park will provide a platform to bring awareness and educate on the rich history of the park, its groups and events.



### **Education:**

The staff managing Marlay Park should be made aware of all the heritage features within the park. Guided walks provided by the garden school, as well as independent parties interested in the natural and built heritage of the site. Encourage involvement from local schools and youth organisations and educational walks providing information on the history of the area and landmarks along the route.

### **Promotion:**

There is an opportunity to promote the natural and built heritage of Marlay Park further and the craft work being undertaken in the craft courtyard.

### **Health & Safety**

Marlay Park presents potential risks to public safety along its riparian corridors and shared use access roads. However, a measured approach to improved safety is needed to conserve the historic natural and built environment within the park.

### **Events:**

There may be an opportunity to put more stringent conditions on event organisers to ensure the protection of Marlay Park.

### **Links:**

Links with other similar sites should be explored for sharing plants, knowledge, etc

# 5.0

## SITE COMPARISON

- 5.1 Site Evolution and Comparison
- 5.2 Precedent Images of Tree Formations  
in 18th Century Parks



## 5.1 SITE EVOLUTION & COMPARISON

### 5.1.1 Significance and Evolution:

Our heritage is a unique resource, an irreplaceable expression of the richness and diversity of our past. Structures and places can, over time, acquire character and special interest through their intrinsic quality, continued existence and familiarity. This heritage consists not only of great artistic achievements, but also of the everyday works of craftsmen.

Ireland has many examples of this through well-preserved 18th century gardens including; Cabinteely House Co Dublin, Belvedere House Co Westmeath and Russborough House Co Wicklow. The vast majority of these historic parks, including Marlay were built during the Golden Era of prosperity from the early eighteenth century. From the mid-1850s, as the economy recovered from the Great Famine, many landlords indulged in remodeling their existing houses and surrounding grounds.

In its inception, Marlay Park benefited from a new 'naturalistic' approach to garden design. Gone were the structured lines of the 'jardin à la française' style, replaced with rolling hills, lakes, woodlands and pastured land right to the doorstep. Strategic avenues and clusters of 'champion' trees were planted; revealing views and vistas when traveling through the Park.

From the late 1880s the decline of the landlord class coincided with the rise of the Land League and the Home Rule movements. The arrival of the Long Depression and increased land taxes led to a further decline in income for the elite. This increasing debt forced many landlords to begin selling their estates or portions of their estate. It was during this period Marlay Demesne sold its first section of land to the Grange Golf club.

From 1903, the Wyndham Land Act promoted the sale of landed estates through its generous terms, this coincided with the additional acquisition of land by Grange Golf Course to construct their 18-hole golf course.

Today, the Irish government through its participation in the ICOMOS Florence Charter concerning the protection of historic gardens, and the Granada Convention concerning the protection of the architectural heritage of Europe which was ratified by Ireland in 1997 recognises it is the duty of the state to preserve, conserve and transmit this heritage to future generations. Today, Marlay Park is a finite resource in terms of historical importance and recreational green space. Parks such as this form an important part of our cultural heritage.

**SITE COMPARISON (continued)**

**5.1.2 Comparison:**

Marlay Park forms an important component of the historic landscape on the fringe of Dublin City. The character of the Park display much evidence of a private garden designed during the height of the landscape garden movement. The arrangement of the site includes a southern facing house towards the distant mountains through carefully choreographed views, woodland walks, open pastures, manipulated water courses, bridges, a regency walled garden and gate lodges. Since opening to the public in 1975 Marlay Park has been a very successful recreational area. Today it accommodates various large and small scale events and public activities.

As part of the site analysis, a wide number of parks similar in terms of layout, era and character were reviewed and compared to Marlay Park. There was also extensive research undertaken on best practice design and development of similar 18th century gardens. This will be further discussed in the conservation section of this report.

Regional Parks are recognized as premier parks that provide a host of attractions and amenities for passive and active recreation. Regional Parks have a unique character which provides attractions for visitors and tourists alike. To achieve the designation of Regional Park it must include a range of high quality attractions and facilities in a unique setting, including play areas, toilets, parking and where feasible they may also include cafés, markets and the ability to host additional functions and leisure activities. Below are a select number of parks which are compared to Marlay Park.

**St Anne's Park**

As the second largest park in the Dublin municipality, built 40 years after Marlay Park, St. Anne's is a Regional Park that hosts a variety of similar intensive recreational activities including 35 playing pitches; hard-surfaced tennis courts a par-3 golf course and converted outbuildings to host markets and events.

Built in 1835 for the affluent Guinness family, the original house overlooked Dublin Bay on an estate that was in excess of 500ares. It contains many special landscape character features similar to Marlay that were common in 18th century gardens including; bridges, hillocks, aquatic features and a walled garden. Similar to Marlay Park, St. Anne's was purchased by the Dublin City Corporation and opened to the public.



Birkenhead Park, Merseyside, UK



Cabinteely Park, Co Dublin



St Anne's Park, Dublin



Marlay Park, Co Dublin





Cabinteely Park



St. Anne's Park



Birkenhead Park



Birkenhead Park

## SITE COMPARISON *(continued)*

### **Birkenhead, Merseyside UK.**

Birkenhead Park was the first publicly funded park in the world. Located in Liverpool, close to the Mersey River its 226 acres were designed by Joseph Paxton in 1847.

After decades of falling into disrepair Birkenhead Park acquired the appropriate funding to reinstate the park in 2006; restoring original features including ponds, ornate bridges, boathouses and lodges and elevating the status and character of the park as a premier tourist destination. Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Council share similar aspirations for Marlay Park.

Birkenhead has seen a large surge in footfall since conservation works were completed, a success they also attribute to an increased social media presence for events in the park. However, the park has struggled to accommodate the 30,000+ visitors which have descended on the park for large events, with particular reference made to insufficient facilities, including toilets and parking.

### **Cabinteely Park**

Cabinteely Park comprises an 18th century Park house, just off the N11 dual carriageway, set in parkland of 45 hectares which is a fine example of the less formal 18th Century Landscape style.

The House is available for guided tours and corporate or community events. Within the courtyards, a former grain store has been refurbished and is now used for the promotion and development of Youth Arts in the County, while the stables have been converted tea rooms with an adjoining Japanese-style garden.

Within the expansive grounds, there is a multi-use adventure playground, playing pitches and a trim trail.

5.2 PRECEDENT IMAGES OF TREE FORMATIONS IN 18TH CENTURY PARKS



Russborough House and Gardens, Co Wicklow



Avenue of pines, Cabinteely Park, Co Dublin



Tree clusters in Chatsworth, designed by Capability Brown, Norfolk, UK



Great Cedar of Lebanon, Painshill, UK



## MAP 1 - EXISTING SITE FEATURES

### Public Realm

The park is permeable to the public within designated hours. Marlay Park is an enclosed garden park with entrances located in the north, south and east of the park.

### Distinctiveness

The built heritage and curtilage of Marlay Park lends a strong sense of history and identity to area. It is a premier destination for passive and active recreation and forms part of a transitional gateway to the Dublin Mountains.

### Dog Walking

A designated area for dog without a leash area that caters for both large and small breeds.

### Landscape and Ecology

Marlay Park is a great example of a late eighteenth century garden. It enjoys expansive views of the distant mountains, man-made ponds, a rich variety of trees and shrubs and a functional walled garden for growing exotic plants, fruits and vegetables.

### Marlay Railway

Operating on Tuesdays and Saturdays, the Dublin Society of Model and Experimental Engineers (DSME) have enjoyed the use of the model railway lines since 1981.

### Art

A sculptural mound created by Agnes Conway is in reference to The Celestial Mountain. The sculpture is at a high elevation adjacent to the all-weather pitches to the south of the park and features winding paths. From this location you can have uninterrupted views of the Dublin Mountains and Dublin Bay.

### Access

To accommodate the needs of pedestrians, particularly children, persons with impaired mobility and the elderly, are accorded particular importance, as are measures to facilitate cyclists. The Council aims to review the quality of the access routes as part of the masterplan

### Parking Areas

Car parking is provided at the Grange Road and College Road entrances. In response to the demand of increasing visitors to the Park, the Grange Road parking facilities were extended. Additional parking is provided adjacent the playground area accessed via the College Road entrance. The Council recognises the dangers that surround car movement around areas of play and plan to address the availability of more suitable and discreet parking facilities in the masterplan.

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