

NATIONAL MARITIME MUSEUM BRITISH GAS MILLENNIUM PARTY CONDITION AND REINSTATEMENT OF GROUNDS JANUARY 2000

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1. Introduction

1.1. The British Gas Millennium Party was held on the 31st December 1999/1st

January 2000 at the National Maritime Museum at Greenwich. The

outdoor event featured internationally known artists such as Eurythmics,

Lesley Garrett, Martine McCutcheon and Simply Red. The event was

shown on National Television and was extremely well supported.

1.2. The weather during the preparation period leading up to, and

subsequent to the event, was extremely wet; fine rain also fell during the

celebrations.

1.3. As a consequence of the weather, the lawns became extremely wet and

soft. Therefore, the volume of visitors and the site clearance have

caused damage.

2. The Brief

2.1. PBA Consulting was instructed to prepare a report on the condition of the

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grounds following the Millennium Party and make recommendations

concerning reinstatement.

3. The Site

3.1. The National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, London, is a museum of

maritime history. Model ships, navigational instruments and other

artefacts are exhibited and preserved there. It is situated on the south

bank of the River Thames and was established in 1934. The buildings

date back to the 17th and 18th century.

3.2. The buildings are surrounded by extensive lawns; Plane and Lime trees

grow along the boundaries with Romney Road and Park Row. The lawns

are a feature of the site providing a dramatic setting for the historical

buildings.

3.3. The British Gas Millennium Party was held on the lawns to the front

(north) of the National Maritime Museum and the Queen's House. The

lawns to the rear (south), being used for fire works and hospitality tents,

from which the general public was excluded.

4. The Survey

4.1. Robin Middleton of PBA Consulting took photographs of the lawns during

the break down of the event and Peter Barton carried out a full survey of

the damage; recorded by video camera and photographs on the 10th

January 2000. A photographic record is given at Appendix A, the video

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record will be provided under separate cover.

5. Findings

5.1. The wet weather before and after the event created extremely wet areas

of turf and as a result the lawns have suffered damage in various forms

as follows: -

• Trampling of the turf by the volume of partygoers attending the event,

compacting the grass surface.

Litter, including plastic glasses and party poppers being trampled into

the turf surface.

Rutting and damage to the lawns caused by vehicles during

dismantling of the event.

Protective tracking sinking under load into the soft turf.

Water collected in low areas, particularly at the junction of lawns and

roadways consequently passing vehicles reduced these areas to a

sea of mud.

5.2. The majority of the damage has occurred to the lawns to the north of the

main buildings. Due to the exclusion of members of the public, there has

been limited rutting and damage to the lawns to the south. However, in

this location, the setting up of fireworks caused some surface holes.

Approximately 30-40% of the grass areas have been severely damaged and will

require re-turfing to bring the site up to condition. As the remainder of the grass

areas have suffered from trampling by partygoers and or compaction by

protective tracking etc, renovation will be required including the forking out of

ruts etc. Given the weather conditions it is remarkable that a larger area of turf

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has not been damaged.

5.3. What is often not fully appreciated is the insidious effect compaction can

have on the turf and trees. If compaction is not remedied, there will be a

steady decline in their condition, due to the lack of oxygen in the root

zone.

6. Recommendations

6.1. To bring the lawns up to the condition they were in prior to the event and

to the level expected of the high prestige site, the following work is

recommended: -

Harrow the whole site to loosen debris trod into the surface and

remove debris by mechanical and/or hand means.

• Cut out and remove severely damaged turf removing de-structured

soil and replace it with approved topsoil and re-turf.

• Deep aerate the site using specialist equipment i.e. vertidrain which

will penetrate the turf to the depth of 300mm and gently lift the turf and

help restore levels. Light rolling should follow this operation.

Inspect the site following the above works and by hand fork out any

indentation and ruts, filling holes with approved fine topsoil.

In March, carry out fertilising treatment to encourage re-establishment

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of existing turf, followed by over seeding 14 days later with approved

grass seed mixture to thin and bare areas.

7. Long Term Strategies

7.1. Much of the damage to the edge of the lawns and roads would be

reduced if ponding water were prevented. It is recommended that a

survey is carried out of the falls and levels of these areas to enable the

roads and path edges to be reconstructed to ensure water is shed

effectively into the surface drainage system. This would drastically

reduce the amount of mud developing adjacent to and on the road and

path surfaces during future events.

7.2. Consideration should also be given to replacing the current fragile timber

edging with a more permanent solution able to withstand vehicles used

in setting up of major events. It is important that the finish to the roads

and paths are compatible to the historic buildings and is approved by

English Heritage.

7.3. If the number of events are liable to increase, consideration should be

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given to replacing the existing turf and growing medium with specialist

turf growing on engineered free draining sand base that is able to

withstand traffic.

APPENDIX 1

PHOTOGRAPHS



North West Main Lawn

An overview of damage

North East Main Lawn

An overview of damage





Main Lawns North of Queens House

Removal of main staging

Lawns in front of Queens House

General view of activities



Lawn adjacent to Anchor Display

View of damage and structure

Lawn East of entrance to Neptune Court

Wet conditions and the need to remove units off of unprotected grass - a cause of rutting etc.





Lawns adjacent to Romney Road

Rutting and compaction of soil over the root zone of lime trees

North East Main Lawn

Damage adjacent to protective trackway





<u>Lawn, West of entrance to Neptune</u> Court

Ruts and litter

North West Main Lawn

Extensive rutting





North East Main Lawn

Mud at junction of lawn access road

View of Main Access Traversing the Site
Anchor Gate to Neptune Court

Ruts and Mud at junction of lawn



Lawn to the North of East Collinade

Damage to Lawn caused by tracking sinking into the soft turf

Lawn adjacent to East Wing

Damage to Lawn caused by tracking sinking into the soft turf





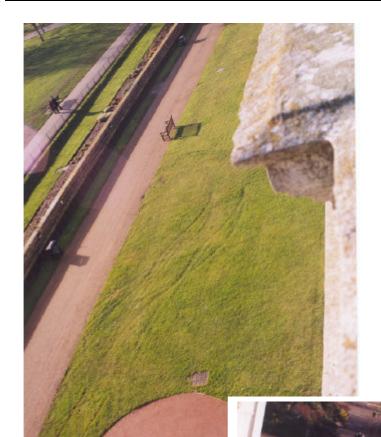
Whole Site North Side

Broken pieces of plastic beer glasses

Area adjacent to the Anchor Display

Rutting has caused roots to be exposed





South West Lawn

An overview of damage

South East Lawn

An overview of damage





South Side Lawn adjacent to Rose Bed

Minor rutting damage

Lawn on corner of East wing

Minor rutting and scuffing





South East Lawn

An overview of damage

South West Lawn

Damage caused by fireworks



APPENDIX 2

SITE DRAWING