

Sewer Improvements for Grange

Grange Now was invited by Project Manager Paul Romanko to the Memorial Playing Fields to see the progress made so far in this £5.1m United Utilities Sewer Improvement Scheme. It may appear nothing very much seems to be happening but Mr Romanko explained a lot of preparation work had to be done first, since they came on site in September last year. There was some delay just before Christmas concerning Network Rail but those issues have now been resolved.

Nearby residents have already been warned about a 'trial blast' to crack the rock that was carried out as Grange Now went to press. The trial blast will provide much information regarding depth and density of the layers of rock and soil for when work on the underground chamber begins in the near future. The trial blast was carried out during a lull in train movement (as will the main blasting, proposed to be limited to one or two days weekly at most, over a 10 week period). A siren will sound just before blasting with an 'All Clear' afterwards. Firing will only be carried out by appointed specialists. Those in the vicinity will hear a dull thud or succession of thuds and possibly a slight vibration depending how near they are to the site. Vibration monitoring equipment has been installed along the railway line,

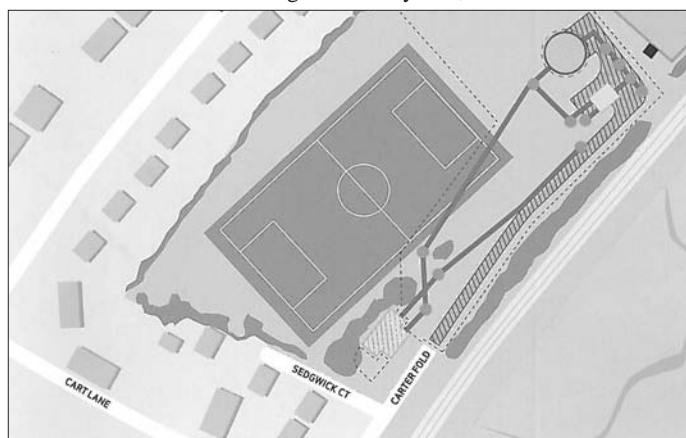
around the site and surrounding area. Although not a requirement, residents in the near vicinity have had surveys carried out on their properties with a second survey when the blasting work has been completed. Mr Romanko is confident there will be no changes related to the work. "It is a small scale cracking of rock and we are working to a three times higher safety standard than we would normally use," he said.

The Sewer Improvement Scheme is required to increase capacity during storm overflows. Grange like many places in the north-west has a combined sewer system, when, apart from wastewater, rainwater running off roads, pavement and roofs is also collected. The existing pumping station, (which remains unchanged), by the path to the prom from Cart Lane, was constructed at a natural low point, as, thanks to gravity, everything apparently flows in this direction! From here wastewater is pumped to Grange treatment works near Humphrey Head to be returned safely to the environment. During heavy rainfall there was a frequent problem of untreated sewerage escaping into the bay. This won't happen again with the new holding tank. Cylinder shaped, its circumference is about the size of the centre circle on a football pitch and is approximately 19m

deep. When constructed and the site is returned to normal only a small monitoring hut will be visible on the surface. Apart from the holding tank, new (1 metre diameter) sewer pipes are being laid to the pumping station – see the plan on this page – once a storm subsides wastewater and rainwater will be pumped automatically back into the sewer at the pumping station.

United Utilities will have completed the work by the end of September but work to landscape the playing fields will take until 2013 to complete. A track from the pumping station to the holding tank for maintenance vehicles will be laid at the bottom of the field and a small car park by the monitoring hut will be constructed, using those special grassy blocks to prevent any impact on the landscape. The main impact during construction work will be traffic movement. Twenty tonne wagons will be arriving and departing to take away the excavated limestone. It will be in rockery size pieces and is usually made available free of charge to National Parks or the National Trust, or other similar bodies.

There will be an opportunity for residents to see the work in progress during the spring or early summer and Mr Romanko has promised to keep Grange Now informed



Plan of site above, holding tank top right. Right pic black posts show surface area of tank.



Back to the drawing board for Berners

The development by Berners Vision Partnership is officially over. SLDC Cabinet has broken off formal negotiations and only the Health Centre part of the plan will go ahead. The 'vision' of a Hotel for the Elderly (this was later changed to a Care Home) a new pool, a new use for the old pool and a development of affordable homes has vanished. After five time-wasting years Grange is back to where it started with two derelict pools.

Our spy at the Cabinet meeting who was the only soul in the public gallery, tells us that it appeared under Agenda the aptly numbered item 13. After an overview of the situation taking less than 15 minutes members learnt that the original plans, approved in 2007 with the concurrence of Grange residents, have been so revised that they bear little resemblance to what was originally approved. The withdrawal of Russell Armer moved it even further onto the backburner (we do like our puns) and it was proposed and passed that SLDC put forward fresh invitations to interested developers to prepare plans and bids. Cllr Tom Harvey suggested that in any upcoming negotiations Grange residents should have an earlier input than occurred in 2007. We shall see what transpires.

Evening Parking result

Following the news about SLDC imposing an evening parking charge in last month's Grange Now – charging up to £4 a night – commonsense has prevailed slightly. There is now to be a 12 month trial period charging £1 to park from 6-8pm in all SLDC car parks.

It seems a pointless exercise. Evening parking is unlikely to increase the coffers at SLDC after administration costs and increased wages (at double time?) for their enforcers has been taken into consideration. See Cllr Tom Harvey's District Report regarding realistic charging during the day. Grange Now agrees with him. A thousand people buying a 50p ticket bring in more than two hundred or paying £2.



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