

Press Release
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Massive soakaway speeds into Manchester's MMU

Groundworkers in Manchester have been surprised and clearly delighted at how fast a Tubosider soakaway the size of a football pitch could be installed – even as part of the biggest water management system they've ever handled.

The large stormwater system is part of the final stage of a £350m investment in new campus facilities for Manchester Metropolitan University – one that will see a new academic building, multi-storey car park and energy centre at Birley Fields in Hulme.

Working with main contractors Sir Robert McAlpine, Hillstreet Construction are specialists in deep drainage, and have installed many attenuation systems, Tubosider among them. But construction manager Wes Butterworth rates this latest job among the best.

"MMU has been a tight operation, and this was a very nice job, amazingly quick, making efficient use of the team we have. The first two tanks were in within a week," he says.

"What's more, contracts these days are a lot about costing, and Tubosider scores here too. We've worked widely – other universities, hospitals and the rest – and Tubosider is definitely on the rise, with growing interest in their systems."

Arriving at the best solution, not least a soakaway in urban Manchester, meant considerable discussion between Tubosider and civil engineers Capita Symonds. An interim survey seemed to imply that a smaller system might be sufficient, but Tubosider's expertise in the area pointed to the solution adopted, based on a 2 metre diameter soakaway.



Construction at Birley Fields started in summer 2012 and will last for approximately 24 months. It is the largest construction project in MMU's 10-year plan to consolidate from seven campus locations to two (Manchester and Cheshire) by 2014.

The academic building will provide a superb learning and teaching environment for more than 6,000 students, including lecture theatres, specialist teaching accommodation and social learning areas.

It will also be the location for around 500 academics, researchers, technical and support staff. The ground floor will be open to the public, with a sports hall, performance spaces, treatment centres, cafes and informal meeting areas available for community bookings.

The campus's pioneering energy centre will be constructed using the most advanced technology and design. It will generate combined heat and power with bore holes



providing natural, untreated water to heat and cool the buildings and supply the campus. The multi-storey car park will provide up to 400 car parking spaces for MMU staff.

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