
Agenda Item: West Witney Projects - Energy Efficiency Measures

Meeting Date: Tuesday, 9 September 2025

Contact Officer: Compliance and Environment Officer

At the Climate Action Working Party meeting held on 22 July 2025, Members raised enquiries regarding the carbon neutrality of the forthcoming capital works at West Witney. In response, the Project Officer has provided an update to the Committee outlining the status of the West Witney Projects, including the integration of energy efficiency measures within the project specification.

Background

West Witney Sports and Social Clubhouse

The clubhouse was built in 1950's and has heartily served the local community for generations. The clubhouse needs major refurbishment to maintain the integrity of the building, prolong its life expectancy and improve the energy efficiency and experience for users of the facility.

New Depot

The Courtside project at The Leys has commenced which has resulted in the operational team vacating the Leys Depot into temporary accommodation in Witney whilst the Council planned the creation of a new depot at West Witney Sports Ground.

Current Situation

The Project Officer, in collaboration with the Council's appointed Construction Consultants, has incorporated the relevant items into the project specifications. A project update, including a timeline, will be prepared and presented by the Project Officer to the Council for Members' information.

Energy Efficiency Considerations

New Depot:

1. Solar Photovoltaic (PV) Panels

- Install solar panels to generate electricity on-site.
This is included within the specification.
- Can be combined with battery storage to increase self-consumption.
This is included within the specification.

2. Solar Thermal Systems

- Use solar energy for heating water, reducing gas or electric heating needs.

Roof space to be used for PV – PV more efficient and valuable based on 100% electricity energy needs.

3. Heat Pumps (Air Source or Ground Source)

- Efficient heating and cooling systems powered by renewable electricity.
Not an efficient means of heating habitable areas of unit – high upfront cost and Non-Material Amendment required for install from West Oxfordshire District Council.
- Often supported by UK government schemes.
Yes, grant schemes contribute £7,500 but install costs can run in excess of £30k.

4. Green Roofs and Walls

- Improve insulation, reduce heat island effect, and manage rainwater sustainably.
Not viable for this project as all buildings are pitched roof and we require clear panels for lighting.

5. High-Performance Insulation & Airtightness

- Not renewable energy per se, but essential for reducing energy demand.
Yes insulation, air tightness is in scope for this building.

6. Energy Recovery Ventilation Systems

- Recover heat from exhaust air to pre-heat incoming fresh air.
Not considered – Construction Consultants not familiar.

7. Rainwater Harvesting & Greywater Recycling

- Reduce water use, indirectly reducing energy required for water treatment.
Yes, this in within specifications and drainage strategy.

8. Smart Metering and Energy Management Systems

- Optimize energy use, integrate with renewable generation.
This is within the specification – contractor will provide a Mechanical & Electrical plan that will show how PV will generate and harvest electricity and use efficiently. Remote access is also in scope within specification.

West Witney Sports and Social Club Refurbishment:

1. Retrofitting Solar Panels

- If the roof and structure allow, add solar PV.
Yes, this is within specifications with battery storage.

2. Upgrade to Heat Pumps

- Replace fossil fuel heating systems with electric heat pumps.
A better solution could be aircon which provides heat – runs off PV/batteries and will not require a Non-Material Amendment.

3. Improving Insulation and Draft Proofing

- Upgrade loft, cavity wall, or solid wall insulation to reduce energy loss.
Wall render, cladding and windows will be thermally efficient at required rating – loft insulated.

4. Install Solar Thermal for Hot Water

- Where feasible, add solar water heating.
Not in scope as PV preferred.

5. Replace Old Windows with Double or Triple Glazing

- Reduces heat loss, improves energy efficiency.
Yes, double glazing throughout – at required thermal rating.

6. Smart Controls and Thermostats

- Allow better energy use monitoring and efficiency.
Smart meters and remote access controls to be used.

7. LED Lighting and Efficient Appliances

- Lower electricity consumption.
Yes, this is within specification.

Following a detailed review by the Council's appointed Construction Consultants in conjunction with HVAC (Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning) specialists, it has been determined that air source and ground source heat pumps are not suitable for installation in either of the proposed buildings. This conclusion is based on the specific usage profiles of the facilities, with particular emphasis on the Clubhouse, where irregular and sporadic operating hours significantly reduce the efficiency and viability of heat pump systems.

IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

The Town Council has a duty to consider the effects of its decisions, functions and activities on equality, biodiversity, and crime & disorder. Consideration should also be given to effects on the environment, given the Council's Climate Emergency declaration in 2019.

- a) Equality – equal impact on all services provided by the WWSSC and staff as there is shared benefit and inclusivity from the project.
- a) Biodiversity - no implications directly resulting from this report.
- b) Crime & Disorder - no implications directly resulting from this report.
- c) Environment & Climate Emergency - The project specifications will include energy efficiency initiatives.

Risk

In decision making Councillors should give consideration to any risks to the Council and any action it can take to limit or negate its liability.

A risk register for this large project will be opened by the officers. There are clearly many risks which could lead to delay, poor or non-delivery. These risks are managed by competent staff, the employment of specialists as appropriate and Council scrutiny.

Social Value

Social value is the positive change the Council creates in the local community within which it operates. The West Witney Project will add social value through improved leisure and sporting facilities and gives the scope for further improvements in the future.

Financial implications

There are no financial implications arising directly from this report as the Council has already agreed the budgets for this Project.

Recommendations

Members are invited to note this report.