

Impact Assessment



Assessment of: Zero Carbon Buildings

Service: Planning, Transportation and Environment

Head of Service: Dave Black

Version / date of sign off by Head of Service: 25 October 2021

Assessment carried out by (job title): Corporate Energy Manager

1. Description of project / service / activity / policy under review

Zero Carbon Buildings project is the retrofit of Great Moor House, Taw View, Abbey Rise and St Michaels. The buildings will have a range of works completed to reduce the buildings' energy consumption and increase the use of renewable energy in the form of power or heat. The measures will improve the thermal performance of the buildings helping them keep warm in the winter and cool in the summer. There will also be improvements to the buildings ventilation systems.

2. Reason for change / review

Devon County Council is aiming to be net zero carbon by 2030 and this project is an important step in that journey by demonstrating how building retrofits can deliver carbon-savings as well as non-energy energy benefits such as improved working environments and demonstration of new types of low carbon heating.

3. Aims / objectives, limitations and options going forwards (summary)

The project aims to retrofit four corporate estate buildings to improve the building fabrics thermal performance and move to renewable heating technologies.

4. People affected, diversity profile and analysis of needs

The project will directly affect DCC staff using the buildings within the project.

5. Stakeholders, their interest and potential impacts

Regional public sector organisations: demonstration of the low carbon retrofit of public buildings and their potential impact could be through wanting to view the finished works.

Citizens: demonstration of Devon County Council's commitment to be net-zero carbon by 2030 and potential impact could be in terms of wanting the council to go further.

6. Additional research used to inform this assessment

No additional research conducted.

7. Description of consultation process and outcomes

We have consulted with service leads of relevance to the teams working in the buildings and made sure they are aware of the proposed works. We will be conducting a survey of building users after the works to help determine project benefits.

8. Equality analysis

Giving Due Regard to Equality and Human Rights

The local authority must consider how people will be affected by the service, policy or practice. In so doing we must give due regard to the need to: eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, and victimisation; advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.

Where relevant, we must take into account the protected characteristics of age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, sexual orientation, race, and religion and belief. This means considering how people with different needs get the different services they require and are not disadvantaged, and facilities are available to them on an equal basis in order to meet their needs; advancing equality of opportunity by recognising the disadvantages to which protected groups are subject and considering how they can be overcome.

We also need to ensure that human rights are protected. In particular, that people have:

- A reasonable level of choice in where and how they live their life and interact with others (this is an aspect of the human right to 'private and family life').
- An appropriate level of care which results in dignity and respect (the protection to a private and family life, protection from torture and the freedom of thought, belief and religion within the Human Rights Act and elimination of discrimination and the promotion of good relations under the Equality Act 2010).
- A right to life (ensuring that nothing we do results in unlawful or unnecessary/avoidable death).
- The Equality Act 2010 and other relevant legislation does not prevent the Council from taking difficult decisions which result in service reductions or closures for example, it does however require the Council to ensure that such decisions are:
 - Informed and properly considered with a rigorous, conscious approach and open mind, taking due regard of the effects on the protected characteristics and the general duty to eliminate discrimination, advance equality and foster good relations.
 - Proportionate (negative impacts are proportionate to the aims of the policy decision)
 - Fair
 - Necessary
 - Reasonable, and
 - Those affected have been adequately consulted.

This project has chosen the buildings involved by selecting the estates four largest buildings. This rationale was used as these are the biggest carbon emitters within the estate and therefore offer the biggest carbon reduction potential. We hope this is that start of the retrofitting of all estate buildings as and when finances allow.

The project benefits will affect all users of the buildings over the measures lifetime with no discrimination over one member of staff or the other. On a wider scale, the project will benefit all Devon citizens through a reduction in carbon emissions, improvement in energy efficiency which will mitigate the buildings impact on the energy grid freeing up capacity for other energy users and help to reduce the cost of energy.

Characteristics	Potential or actual issues for this group. [Please refer to the Diversity Guide and See RED]	How will the project / service / policy / activity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> eliminate or reduce the potential for direct or indirect discrimination, harassment or disadvantage, where necessary. advance equality (meet needs / ensure access, encourage participation, make adjustments for disabled people, 'close gaps'). foster good relations between groups (tackled prejudice and promoted understanding), if relevant? <p>In what way do you consider any negative consequences to be reasonable and proportionate in order to achieve a legitimate aim?</p> <p>Are you complying with the DCC Equality Policy?</p>
All residents (include generic equality provisions)	Residents not able to access buildings	Project does not impact on aspects detailed above.
Age	Certain age groups may be more sensitive to extreme temperatures and the transmission of pathogens through ventilations systems	Improved working conditions, buildings should become more thermally efficient and comfortable as well offering greater levels of ventilation with filtration to remove pathogens
Disability (incl. sensory, mobility, mental health, learning disability, neurodiversity, long term ill health) and carers of disabled people	Certain disabilities may be more sensitive to extreme temperatures and the transmission of pathogens through ventilations systems	Improved working conditions, buildings should become more thermally efficient and comfortable as well offering greater levels of ventilation with filtration to remove pathogens
Culture and ethnicity: nationality/national origin, ethnic origin/race, skin colour, religion and belief	Project does not relate to this characterisation	Project does not impact on aspects detailed above.

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Sex, gender and gender identity (including men, women, non-binary and transgender people), and pregnancy and maternity (including women's right to breastfeed)	Certain genders may be more sensitive to extreme temperatures and the transmission of pathogens through ventilations systems	Improved working conditions, buildings should become more thermally efficient and comfortable as well offering greater levels of ventilation with filtration to remove pathogens
Sexual orientation and marriage/civil partnership	Project does not relate to this characterisation	Project does not impact on aspects detailed above.
Other relevant socio-economic factors such as family size/single people/lone parents, income/deprivation, housing, education and skills, literacy, sub-cultures, 'digital exclusion', access to transport options, rural/urban	Project does not relate to this characterisation	Project does not impact on aspects detailed above.

9. Human rights considerations:

The project will be run in compliance with DCC's policies that related to human rights.

10. Supporting independence, wellbeing and resilience. Give consideration to the groups listed above and how they may have different needs:

In what way can you support and create opportunities for people and communities (of place and interest) to be independent, empowered and resourceful?

We will be producing case studies of each building's retrofit and publishing these to encourage others to start conducting their own low carbon retrofits.

In what way can you help people to be safe, protected from harm, and with good health and wellbeing?

The measures can help to deliver built environments which are more comfortable to work and support positive mental health.

In what way can you help people to be connected, and involved in community activities?

We will be carrying out building user surveys once the works have been completed and communicating the results.

11. Environmental analysis

An impact assessment should give due regard to the following activities in order to ensure we meet a range of environmental legal duties. The policy or practice does not require the identification of environmental impacts using this Impact Assessment process because it is subject to (please mark X in the relevant box below and proceed to the 4c, otherwise complete the environmental analysis table):

Devon County Council's Environmental Review Process	
Planning Permission	
Environmental Impact Assessment	
Strategic Environmental Assessment	

	Describe any actual or potential negative consequences. (Consider how to mitigate against these).	Describe any actual or potential neutral or positive outcomes. (Consider how to improve as far as possible).
Reduce, reuse, recycle and compost:	The Construction phase will produce waste but we will be encouraging contractors to recycle or reuse as much material as possible	The project is demonstration how retrofit of buildings can deliver a range of benefits to eliminate the need for demolishing and rebuild.
Conserve and enhance wildlife:	Works will be halted if protected species are found in building voids	Reducing carbon emissions and air pollutants has a positive effect for wildlife.
Safeguard the distinctive characteristics, features and special qualities of Devon's landscape:	Buildings' external fabric may change due to the installation of insulation, but the buildings are not within conservation areas.	Any distinctive characteristics will be preserved
Conserve and enhance Devon's cultural and historic heritage:	Buildings' external fabric may change due to the installation of insulation, but the buildings are not within conservation areas	Any distinctive characteristics will be preserved
Minimise greenhouse gas emissions:	The project will be using virgin materials with embodied carbon emissions.	The project will deliver substantial carbon reductions which should mitigate the embodied carbon emissions.

Minimise pollution (including air, land, water, light and noise):	<p>Manufacture of materials and works may result in pollution but this will be mitigated by the regulations which the contractors will have to operate within.</p> <p>Air Source Heat Pumps will be installed which emit noise when in operation but this is regulated.</p>	<p>Measures will increase insulation aspects of building fabric which will reduce noise emissions.</p> <p>Measures will reduce the consumption of fossil fuel which will reduce the emissions of NOx and particulate matter.</p>
Contribute to reducing water consumption:	N/A	N/A
Ensure resilience to the future effects of climate change (warmer, wetter winters; drier, hotter summers; more intense storms; and rising sea level):		The project will deliver thermal improvements which will make the buildings more resilient to the effects of climate change.
Other (please state below):		

12. Economic analysis

	Describe any actual or potential negative consequences. (Consider how to mitigate against these).	Describe any actual or potential neutral or positive outcomes. (Consider how to improve as far as possible).
Impact on knowledge and skills:		The learning from these retrofits will be turned into case studies to be shared with other organisations. This will contribute to accelerating retrofit and the local supply chain and skills necessary to do so.
Impact on employment levels:		See above
Impact on local business:		See above

13. Describe and linkages or conflicts between social, environmental and economic impacts (Combined Impacts):

None

14. How will the economic, social and environmental well-being of the relevant area be improved through what is being proposed? And how, in conducting the process of procurement, might that improvement be secured?

The procurements process will take account of companies that aim to minimise their carbon and make use of local labour.

15. How will impacts and actions be monitored?

The buildings will be monitored once retrofitted to understand the extent of the benefits and users' experience of using the buildings.