

Pub chain tries out a round of renewables to cut energy bills

JD Wetherspoon is trying a host of renewable energy products at a pub in Leicestershire to ascertain which micro technologies to use in future.

Wetherspoon, which opens 30 pubs a year, said the Melton Mowbray test is "more than a pilot" and that renewables will be adopted elsewhere.

"We don't mind being seen as green but that is not why we are doing it," said a spokesperson. "If these things save the company money we'll do them."

The new pub, handed over last week, features the first ever roof-mounted quietrevolution wind turbine, PV roof tiles as well as solar water and ground source heat pump systems.

Performance will be closely monitored. Design and project management was carried out by Essex-based RJD.

RJD chief designer Andrew Witcomb is

already working on other similar projects for the pub chain. "We've worked for Wetherspoon for 15 years and like all big companies they try to keep costs down," he said.

"The client has to be sure there is payback, even if it is PR payback, from making a big statement like with the quietrevolution."

Witcomb painted a stark contrast between solarcentury's PV panels, which were installed in under half an hour, and the ground source heat system installation. The latter ran to six months with installers on-site to the very last day.

The Wilo manufactured heat pump, based on six 100m boreholes, supplies both heating and cooling.

The pub, which opens later this month, also features energy saving measures and is expected to use 50% less energy than a similar-size Wetherspoon outlet.



Good head on the glass: Wetherspoon expects payback from the installation of the first ever roof-mounted quietrevolution wind turbine

Photo: RJD

New turbine steps into ring without spar

Vertical axis wind turbine manufacturer quietrevolution has installed and commissioned its first Mark 1.2 machine at its manufacturing site in Berkshire.

The qr 5 model is the first installation of a turbine manufactured without a 'spar' protecting the helical blades from bending inwards, a feature of the 1.1 machine.

Commercial director

Julia Groves said the unit would act as fleet leader, always having more hours on the clock than forthcoming installations.

The spar was dropped from the design after testing satisfied engineers that inward bending was not a risk.

The turbine was manufactured at quietrevolution's Membury manufacturing base where production is currently being phased

out as operations are moved to Pembrokeshire in Wales.

An important hurdle in this move was cleared a few weeks ago when business agency Finance Wales finalised a grant and finance deal with the company.

Groves said the new facility will have a production capacity of around 30 new turbines a month by next summer, up from 10 a month in Membury.

Briefs

• Installation work for 850kW wind turbines at two separate Tesco depots in Daventry has been pencilled in for the summer of 2008.

Partner TNEI has obtained planning permission for the Project Unity Depot in Crick and is preparing another application at a second depot in the same area in Northamptonshire.

Separately, screening and scoping for three 850kW turbines has

begun at a distribution site in Magor, south Wales. A planning application could be submitted next spring.

• Danish small wind turbine manufacturer Gaia-Wind has installed and commissioned its first unit in the UK.

The 11kW turbine stands on a lattice tower on a test site south of Glasgow.

The company expects to install at least five more machines in the UK

before the end of the year.

• Irish newcomer Imperative Energy, a biomass joint venture between construction giant Bowen and Ireland's largest private forestry management outfit Green Belt, will offer turnkey installations and Esco contracts.

• East Midlands Airport has applied to North West Leicestershire

District Council to erect four wind turbines.

If given the go-ahead the 31m-high machines, expected to generate 10% of the airport's energy use, will be installed by Lancaster company Wind Direct by spring 2008.

• Leading architects will explain how they have approached on-site renewable energy targets in new developments in a conference to be held

later this month. Architects' Journal 'Designing with Renewable Energy 2007' will also feature key microgeneration speakers.

www.ajrenewables.co.uk

• Canadian solar cell manufacturer Arise has invested €50 million in a new facility in the East German town of Bischofswerda in the Toronto company's first foray into the European market.