



The award-winning York Handmade Brick Company has been awarded a grant to improve its energy efficiency and reduce carbon emissions.

York Handmade, which is based at Alne, near Easingwold, has successfully applied to the “game-changing” Industrial Energy Transformation Fund (IETF) for £38,800 to pursue its sustainability agenda.



Managing director Guy Armitage explained: “We are completely committed to improving the energy efficiency of our factory site at Alne and are currently undertaking a detailed techno-economic feasibility study. This extremely welcome grant minimises the cost and risks of the study and of any subsequent capital investment.

“I would like to thank Industrial Energy Pioneers (IEP) Ltd, who were instrumental in identifying and then obtaining the IETF grant for us. The grant is awarded on a competitive basis and IEP have a 100 per cent success record in helping their clients to get the funding. “

A spokesperson for IEP Directors explained: “The special project aims to improve the energy efficiency of the site by capturing the high-grade (high temperature) waste heat from the kilns and utilising it in the dryers. This will offset/replace the need for gas-firing in the dryers and lead to significant energy, carbon and cost reductions.

“The kilns operate at high temperatures (up to about 1100 degrees C) and the exhaust gases from the kilns carry substantial amounts of heat which is currently being wasted. The solution involves installing a heat exchanger in the exhaust stack of each kiln to capture this heat into high pressure hot water or thermal oil.

“This hot water/oil will then be stored in a thermal battery. The thermal battery can then provide heat to the brick dryers using a radiator system on demand and allow the operations of the kilns and dryers independent of each other.”

“Sustainability is extremely important for energy intensive businesses like York Handmade who are seeing an 8-fold increase in their energy costs. The government has already announced withdrawing financial support for industry with energy bills and many similar businesses are facing existential threats due to high energy costs, inflation and reduced spending power of their customers.

“The government’s commitment to net zero by 2050 will require industry emissions to reduce by nearly 90% from the present value. The government has adopted a carrot and stick approach for this drive and has direct financial and legal implications for business.”

The feasibility study project will officially be completed by August 2023. However, York Handmade will have a reasonably good understanding of the outcome well before the completion. The intention is to help YHMB apply for a deployment grant in the future.

Guy Armitage concluded: “We have been building on our green credentials by launching a series of eco-friendly initiatives during the past couple of years. The threat to our environment is one of the great challenges of the 21st century. It is essential that manufacturers such as ourselves do our bit to help to preserve our precious and fragile world. This grant has helped us too exactly that.”

For further information visit www.yorkhandmade.co.uk