Case Study | Place Farm Low Carbon Farming Scheme

OASTHOUSE VENTURES

"It's testament to the team's hard work and enthusiasm for this exciting project that we've been able to maintain pace despite these challenges [of COVID-19].

To be named as one of the key suppliers on these innovative projects has been both rewarding and challenging. Both the design and build are progressing to programme and it has been a pleasure to work on such a collaborative project."

Denver Knight, Senior Contract Manager

Background

The UK imports more than 80% of its tomatoes, 75% of cucumbers, and 90% of its peppers, some from European countries facing water shortages. Whereas free movement of people and goods was once easy, challenges of Brexit and COVID-19 have raised potential concerns about the UK's ability to sustainably fulfil its need for fresh produce.

This low carbon farming initiative aims to make the UK increasingly self-sufficient through a world-first renewable heating system, using waste energy from a local Water Recycling Centre to heat a 12.7-hectare greenhouse development at Place Farm.

Solution

The Place Farm greenhouse (along with its sister greenhouse at Crown Point, Norwich) is designed to provide 10% of the UK's homegrown tomato crop, along with peppers and cucumbers. The overall system will use ten times less water and produce a 10-fold bigger yield in comparison to traditional farming techniques.

Clancy acted as Principal Contractor, constructing the Heat Exchange Building, as well as the pipework and final effluent connections with Anglian Water WRCs, including all up to front co-ordination and liaison with Anglian Water representatives and other stakeholders.

Benefit

Clancy's long standing and established relationship with Anglian Water was invaluable to the project. Clancy provided a central role at design meetings, suggesting and implementing innovative engineering solutions on several aspects of the design. Examples include using trenchless techniques (i.e. horizontal directional drilling) to avoid rivers and protected vole habitats, and using caisson shaft techniques for wet well construction to reduce construction cost and duration, increasing sustainability and decreasing cost. Our team acted as Principal Contractor and this complex, multi-faceted project achieved an exceptional safety record.

20
FOOTBALL PITCHES OF GREENHOUSE GROWING SPACE

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