EWIPRO
Render Solutions

EXETER FUTURE SKILLS CENTRE
EWI PRO

2023 WINNER INCA AWARDS
NSAI Agrément
ISO 9001
BBA APPROVAL INSPECTION TESTING CERTIFICATION
RIBA Architecture.com
Insulation Assurance Authority

www.ewipro.com

1 large training facility - Steel frame superstructure, screened facades, scaffolding, 3 mock “assets”

Phase One up to £150k, Phase Two up to £800k

To reach net zero by 2030 the South West must train:
• Over 10,000 extra solid wall insulation installers by 2028
• Over 17,500 extra heat pump engineers by 2027

The Exeter Retrofit Skills Centre is strategically positioned to play a pivotal role in the DESNEZ proposal for Local Net Zero Hubs. By bringing together diverse local stakeholders—including local authorities, housing providers, businesses, and training providers—the Centre acts as a crucial coordination point. This synergy is essential for developing and successfully implementing a robust retrofit skills plan within the designated time frame of 4-6 months for planning and subsequent phases for execution.

Phase 1 - Plan Development:
In the initial phase, the Centre utilises the funding provided to develop a comprehensive retrofit skills plan tailored to the area’s specific needs. This involves detailed assessments of current capabilities and identifying gaps in skills and infrastructure. The Centre’s existing ties with local educational institutions and industry leaders facilitate gathering critical insights necessary for a well-informed plan.

Phase 2 - Implementation:
Subject to a successful plan, further funding will be allocated to implement the identified measures. The Exeter Retrofit Skills Centre is prepared to lead this phase, leveraging its established training programs and facilities to quickly begin training on critical skills like solid wall insulation installation and heat pump maintenance. This phase aims to enhance local capabilities and directly translate educational achievements into practical, measurable outcomes in the community.

The Centre’s programs are designed to provide bespoke solutions that address the unique supply chain issues encountered in the South West. By focusing on the challenges faced by areas delivering government-funded retrofit schemes, such as the Sustainable Heat Distribution Fund (SHDF) and Home Upgrade Grant (HUG), the Centre ensures that its training programs are relevant and urgently needed.

The planning and implementation processes foster improved collaboration between various sectors. The Centre is dedicated to enhancing this collaboration by:

- Building upon existing Local Skills Improvement Plans to ensure comprehensive coverage of retrofit skills needs.
- Supporting small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in their growth and upskilling efforts, which in turn improves their competitiveness and capacity.
- Developing targeted campaigns to re-engage a broad spectrum of stakeholders, ensuring that future steps in developing the supply chain are well-supported by past learnings and new strategic insights.

By aligning its efforts with the DESNEZ proposal, the Exeter Retrofit Skills Centre aims to fill immediate training gaps and prepare the regional workforce for future demands. This approach ensures that the training provided is theoretical and has direct applications, enhancing the overall effectiveness of local and national environmental initiatives.

The Exeter Retrofit Skills Centre exemplifies insulation and solar energy innovation through its comprehensive and forward-thinking training programs. These programs are tailored to address the pressing needs of the building industry, with a particular focus on sustainability and energy efficiency.

The Centre provides a diverse range of insulation training, including External Wall Insulation (EWI), Internal Wall Insulation (IWI), floor insulation, loft insulation, and draft proofing. Each type of insulation training is not merely about installation techniques but also focuses on understanding the material properties, energy efficiency benefits, and appropriate application scenarios. This ensures that the workforce is skilled in installation and selecting the right insulation solutions for different building types and climates, which is critical for maximising energy conservation and reducing carbon emissions.

Furthermore, the Centre emphasises the importance of cutting-edge approaches, such as integrating smart technologies with traditional insulation methods. This includes using advanced materials and techniques that enhance the thermal properties of insulation and contribute to the overall energy performance of buildings. The Centre prepares installers to meet the increasing demands for high-performance buildings by training on these innovative methods.

The Centre's programs cover installing and maintaining solar PV systems, providing trainees with hands-on experience and a deep understanding of photovoltaic technology. This includes training on the electrical aspects, safety standards, and the latest solar technology advancements. The Centre also addresses integrating solar systems with other renewable energy sources and building management systems, preparing a workforce that can implement complex multi-technology solutions.

Additionally, the Centre is proactive in teaching about solar energy's sustainability impacts, such as reducing dependence on fossil fuels and decreasing greenhouse gas emissions. Trainees learn the technical skills and the environmental and economic impacts of their work, aligning with broader sustainability goals.

A unique aspect of the Centre's approach is its focus on multi-skills development. This is crucial in a rapidly evolving sector where the lines between technical disciplines are increasingly blurred. Trainees are encouraged to develop skills across insulation and solar energy fields, ensuring they are versatile and adaptable to various roles within the industry. This holistic approach enhances individual career prospects and comprehensively addresses the skill gaps in the retrofit and renewable energy sectors.

By integrating these innovative practices into its curriculum, the Exeter Retrofit Skills Centre prepares its trainees for current industry standards and future developments in sustainable construction. This approach ensures that the workforce is ready to contribute effectively to the UK's ambitious energy efficiency and net-zero targets.

Specialised training in heat pumps, including F-Gas regulations and Daikin standard installations, alongside comprehensive retrofitting courses, ensures a well-rounded educational offering. These programs support the urgent need for over 17,500 new heat pump engineers by 2027, directly aligning with DESNEZ objectives to tackle unemployment through skills training.

The Centre's approach to developing retrofit skills deeply integrates with local needs, enhancing collaboration across various sectors. This includes building on Local Skills Improvement Plans, supporting SME growth, and enhancing links with educational institutions. These efforts ensure that training meets current needs and is poised to address future demands.

In line with the DESNEZ expectations, the Centre is committed to developing robust retrofit installation supply chain plans. This includes addressing procurement, accessing funding for SMEs, identifying local skills needs, and improving training infrastructure. The engagement strategy with local authorities, chambers of commerce, and social housing providers ensures a comprehensive and inclusive approach to workforce development.

With its proactive training initiatives, the Centre supports ambitious regional and national environmental targets. By providing clear pathways to employment and addressing the skills gap in the retrofit sector, the Centre contributes substantial economic benefits, including potential contributions of £21.7 billion in GVA by 2050.

Our involvement as EWI Pro includes providing industry knowledge. One of our directors, Nick Miles, has been a part of the Green Construction Advisory Panel, which allows him to significantly influence the direction of sustainable construction policies and practices. This panel is at the forefront of advocating for green building standards, adopting eco-friendly materials, and encouraging innovation in sustainable design and construction techniques.

We are also committed to providing the materials required for the classes and courses. This includes providing a large amount of insulation, basecoat, mesh, fixings, render, and a comprehensive range of tools. We recognise the importance of upskilling the potential workforce and raising awareness about the benefits of the retrofit industry.

Social Involvement

The centre's training equips local workers with essential skills that are in high demand within the green economy. By developing a skilled workforce capable of implementing energy-efficient and sustainable solutions, the Centre helps to stimulate local economic growth. This, in turn, attracts investments and creates jobs in the retrofit and renewable energy sectors, contributing to the community's economic resilience.

The Centre actively engages with schools and colleges to inspire and educate younger people about the importance of sustainable building practices and renewable energy technologies. By providing pathways into careers in these fields, the Centre helps younger individuals understand the role they can play in tackling climate change, thus fostering a sense of responsibility and involvement in their communities.

Through its focus on upskilling and re-skilling, the Centre provides opportunities for individuals from various backgrounds, including those unemployed or looking for a career change. This is particularly impactful in areas with high unemployment rates, offering residents not just jobs but sustainable and future-proof careers, contributing to a decrease in social inequality.

The Centre collaborates with local businesses, housing providers, and local authorities to ensure that the training programs are aligned with local needs and opportunities. This collaboration helps create tailored solutions that address specific community challenges, such as energy poverty and housing quality, which directly benefits local residents.

By providing training that covers a range of skills from basic to advanced levels, the Centre ensures that it is accessible to a wide demographic, including those without prior experience in construction or engineering. This inclusive approach helps to diversify the workforce, bringing different perspectives and ideas into the retrofit and renewable energy sectors.

The Centre promotes a culture of sustainability and awareness of environmental issues in the community. This educates the public about the importance of reducing carbon footprints and energy consumption and encourages them to participate actively in sustainability initiatives, creating a more engaged and informed community.

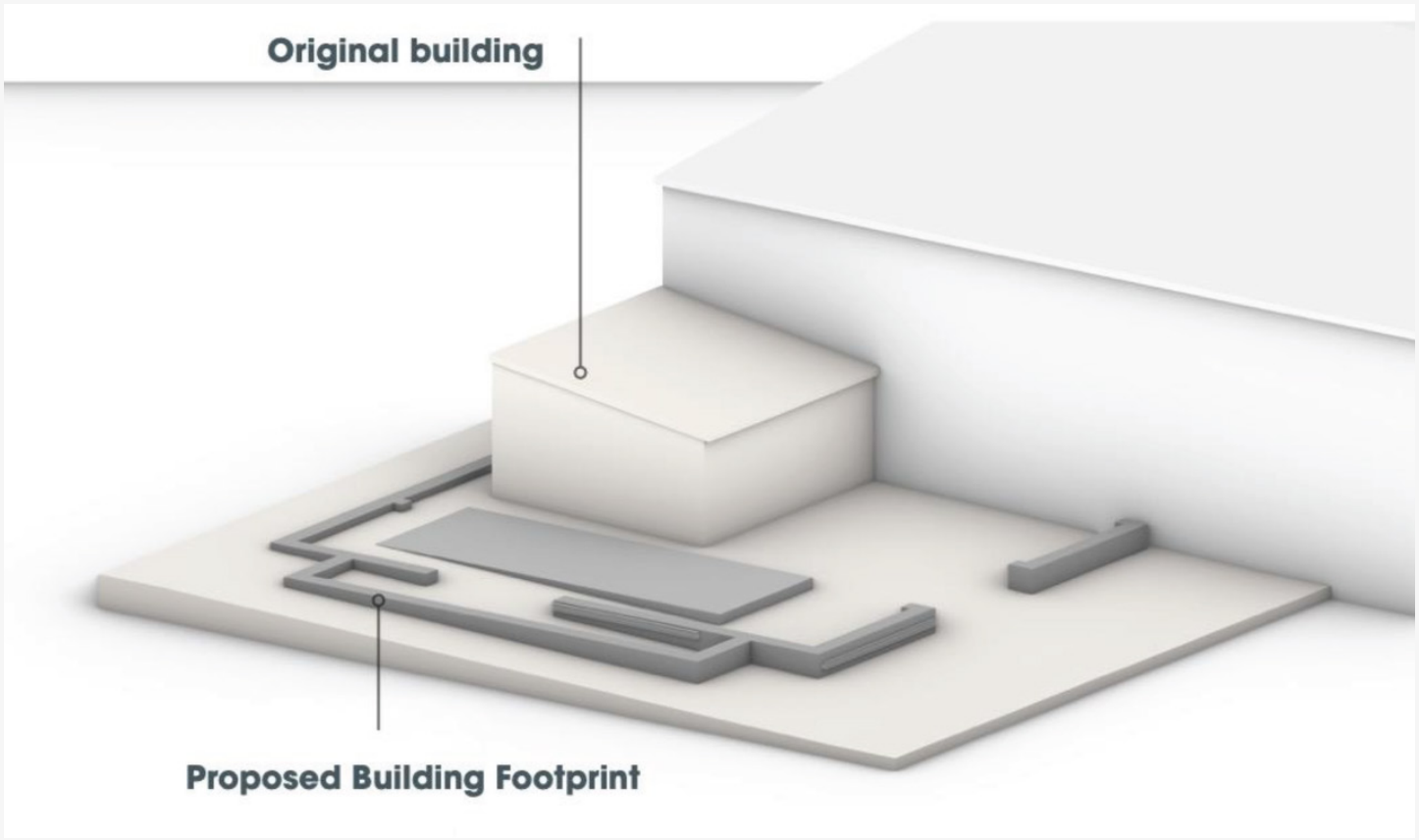
By engaging with employers and community members to gather feedback on training effectiveness and evolving skills needs, the Centre remains adaptable and responsive to changing industry trends and community needs. This continuous dialogue ensures that the Centre's offerings remain relevant and beneficial to the community and the industry.

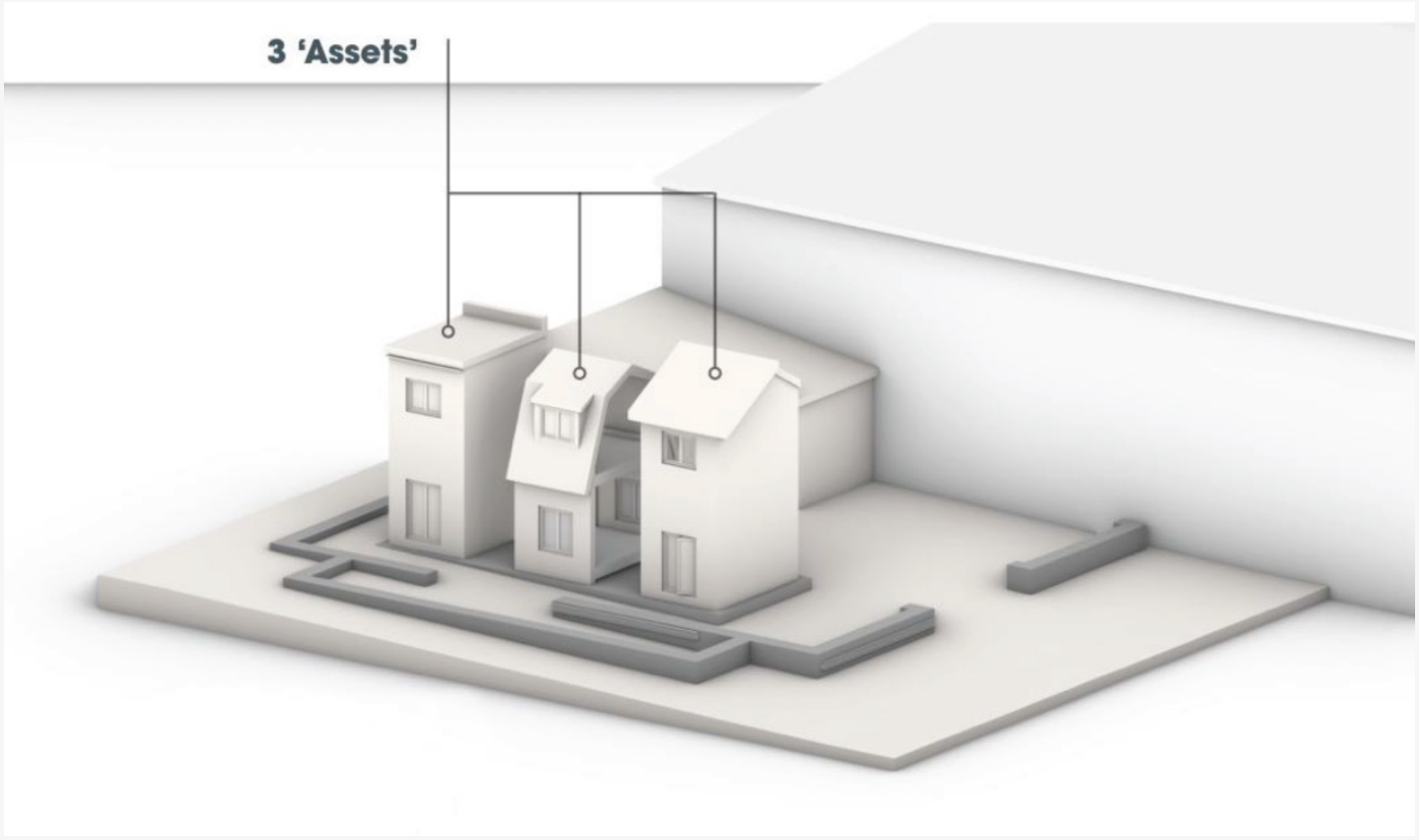
Testimonial from Exeter College (Luke Moss)

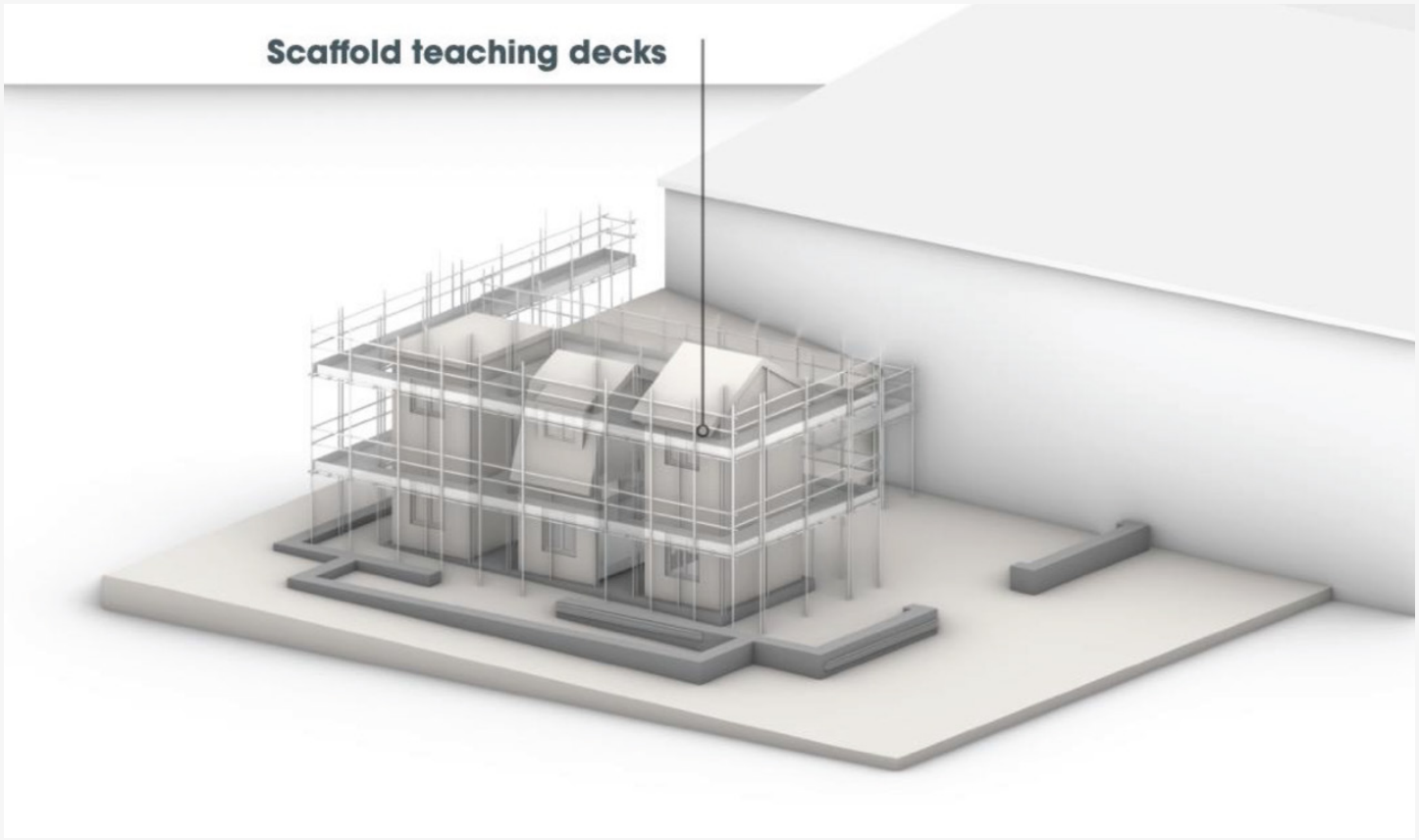
EWI Pro has been an invaluable partner to Exeter College throughout the planning, development, and construction phases of our new Retrofit Skills Centre. Led by Nick and his team, EWI Pro's industry expertise and guidance have been instrumental in ensuring that the build aligns with the needs of both current and future students, as well as the existing workforce.

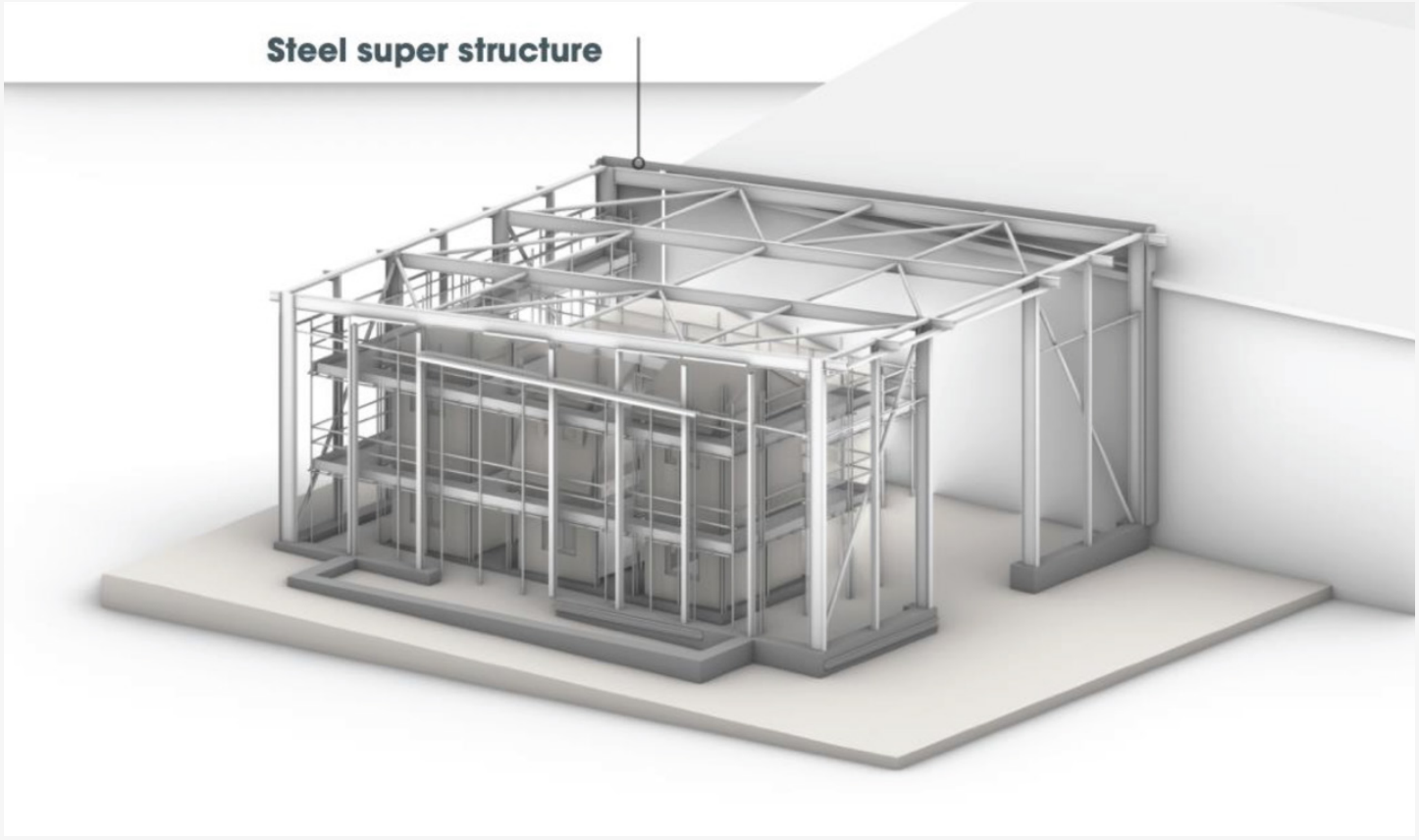
Through seamless collaboration and partnership, EWI Pro has played a pivotal role in promoting the fabric-first approach, utilising donated materials and resources to enrich the knowledge, understanding, and skills of the insulation sector. Their contribution has been integral to the design and implementation of the UK's inaugural competency-based training program for existing installers of External Wall Insulation, setting a precedent for the industry.

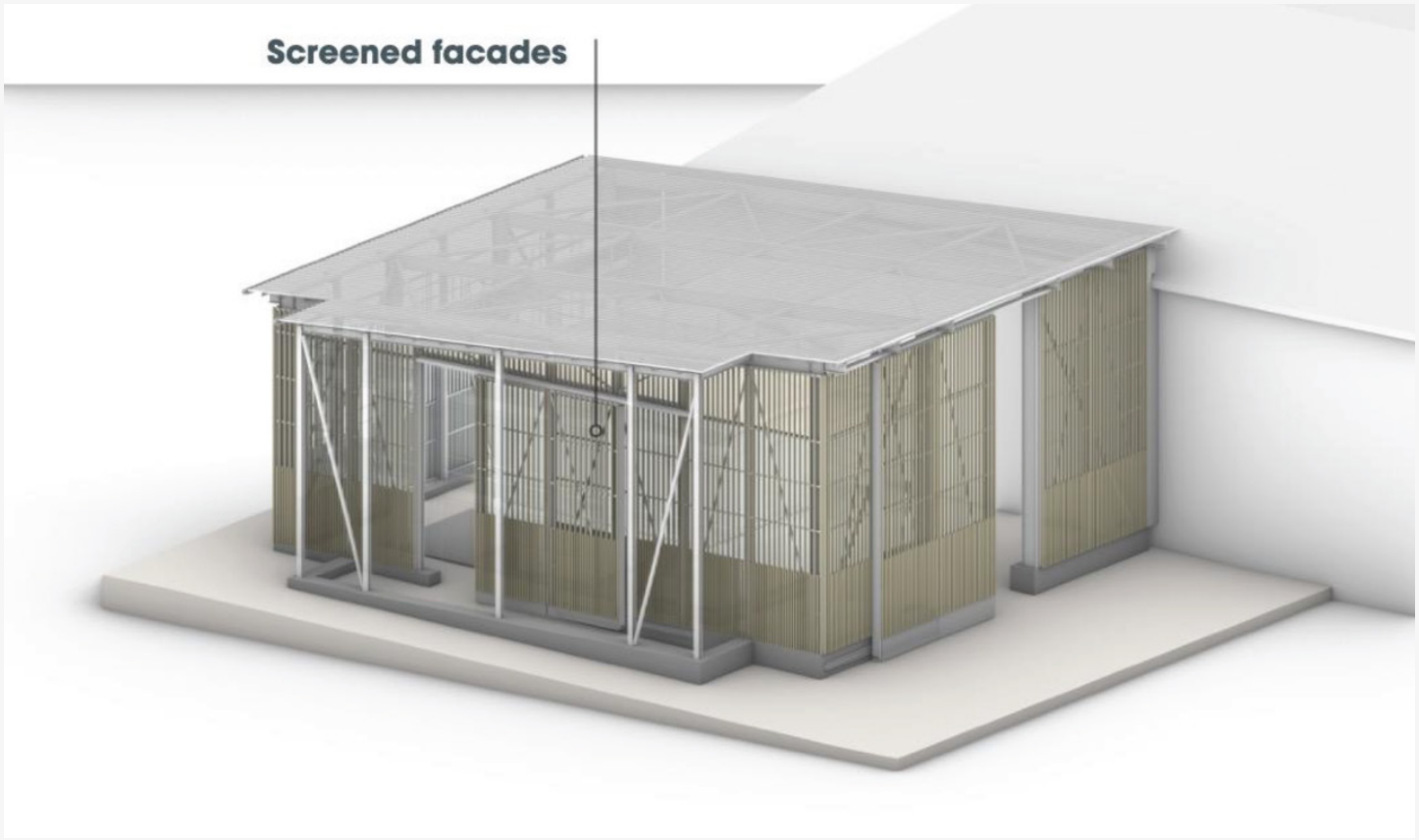
Thanks to the concerted efforts of EWI Pro and Exeter College, students, staff, and the broader local workforce now have access to essential skills-based training in renewable technologies, along with the opportunity to attain industry-recognised accreditations. This initiative not only enhances career prospects but also elevates the insulation sector, paving the way for a more sustainable future and reinforcing the significance of the South West's first Retrofit Skills Centre.


Original building
Proposed Building Footprint


3 ‘Assets’


Scaffold teaching decks


Steel super structure


Screened facades

ABOUT PRO

EWI Pro sports a four-pronged approach to delivering market-leading services to our customers. Our Technical Team offer advice and mentoring through site visits and the Training Academy. Our specially designed Materials Calculator is on hand to accurately evaluate and spec every project. Crucially, all of our technical guidance is compiled in a vast Resource Library, available to every customer.Our Technical team is available on the phone to assist with all job specification requests; whether you need pull out tests or U-Value calculations for your project, our Business Development team will be happy to visit the site!

NATIONWIDE OPERATIONS

TRAINING CENTRES

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