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Heineken says its Manchester brewery cut CO_2 emissions 42% after a £28.2 million heat pump retrofit.

The brewer said the fully integrated system cut on-site natural gas use 33% at a plant producing 2.5 million pints a day.

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Heineken UK said its brewery in Manchester has cut CO_2 emissions by 42% and reduced on-site natural gas use by 33% after fully integrating a large heat pump network into the plant’s production system.

The company said the project cost £28.2 million and was originally installed in 2023. The new figures reflect the system’s performance after it was fully embedded across the brewery’s industrial processes, rather than its impact at the moment of installation.

The Manchester site is one of Heineken’s largest breweries in Britain. It produces about 2.5 million pints of beer a day, including Foster’s, Amstel, Red Stripe, Cruzcampo and Heineken. The scale of the plant means the results will be closely watched by other brewers and manufacturers weighing similar investments in lower-carbon equipment.

Heineken said the heat pump system was supplied by GEA and has changed how heat is produced and used at the brewery. By replacing part of the site’s gas demand with heat recovered and upgraded through the pump network, the company said it has lowered its dependence on fossil fuels for on-site heating.

The reduction also matters beyond emissions. British manufacturers have faced sharp swings in gas prices in recent years, and a lower need for natural gas can reduce a plant’s exposure to energy market volatility. For large industrial users, that can be as important as the climate benefit when deciding whether to invest in electrified heating systems.

The company did not publish its total energy use, total emissions or monetary savings in absolute terms. That means it is not possible to calculate a payback period for the £28.2 million investment from the information released. Heineken also did not break out how much of the reported change came strictly from the heat pump technology and how much may have been affected by any shifts in production volumes or operating patterns.

Even with those limits, the data offers a rare public look at the operational effect of a large decarbonization project at a major brewery. Industrial heat has been one of the harder areas to decarbonize because many processes still rely on direct combustion of gas. Brewing depends heavily on heat for stages such as mashing, pasteurization and

cleaning, making it a sector where replacing fossil-fuel heat can be technically difficult and expensive.

Chris Kerr, supply chain director at Heineken UK, said the project had affected “every part of our operations from inception to launch” and called it “transformational for one of the largest breweries in the UK.”

“Decarbonising a brewery requires a combination of technology and skill, and is a complex challenge facing our industry,” Kerr said. He added that the Manchester team had adapted operations while continuing production and had kept optimizing the system for the brewery’s needs.

Kerr said the company was confident in the system’s continued performance and that the installation was already achieving, on average, 80% of the estimated on-site gas reduction. He described the Manchester project as a model for wider brewing and manufacturing, saying it showed how low-carbon technology can bring environmental gains while improving long-term operational resilience.

The project is part of Heineken’s broader effort to cut emissions from beer production and support its global goal of reaching net zero across its value chain by 2040.