**Lidl Ireland Invests €1 million in the Installation of Solar panels at 8 new and reconstructed stores**

* **Lidl invests €130,000 in energy saving solar technology at its Birr store**
* **Lidl’s solar panels will reduce electricity usage equivalent to that of 28 Birr homes**
* **Over 25% of Birr’s Lidl energy requirements now comes from solar energy, saving almost 1,000 tonnes of carbon over the next 25 years**

Lidl has completed the installation of energy-saving solar panels at its Birr store adding a further investment of €130,000 in renewable energy. The newly installed solar panels will produce 120,000 kilowatt hours of energy from a sustainable resource annually which is equivalent to meet the electricity requirements of 28 homes and reduces the store’s carbon output by some 40 tonnes annually. As a result of the investment over one quarter of Lidl’s energy requirements at its Birr store will now be generated by solar power. The investment in Birr is part of an ongoing €1 million commitment by Lidl to install solar panels at eight new and reconstructed stores. The solar panels are supplied by Cavan-based Kingspan, which are mounted on roof panels constructed in Kingscourt.

Increasing consumer awareness of sustainability is an in important element of the project; a display screen at the entrance of the store inform customers visiting the store of how much energy has been generated and the amount of CO2 emissions saved.

The focus on sustainable energy at Lidl’s Birr store has ensured that it complies with a best-practice international energy efficiency standard, ISO50001, which is independently audited, along with all its 158 stores nationwide. Other initiatives include: high performance glass fronted façade to maximise natural daylight entering the building; sensor controlled exterior sun blinds to reduce unwanted heat from the sun; waste heat recovery ventilation systems and LED lighting; high insulation with external cladding; and lighting sensors to conserve energy where it is not required.

**Speaking after switching on the solar panels in Lidl Birr, Eamonn Fitzgerald Project Manager said:** "Lidl is rooted in communities throughout Ireland and wants to ensure our business is operated in a way that is as sustainable as possible with the least impact possible on the environment. We were very clear when building the Birr store in 2018 that we would integrate the latest sustainability innovations that will generate ongoing energy savings. The newly installed solar panels will make a big impact in increasing our energy from sustainable resources by generating over 25% of our Birr store’s energy needs annually."

This latest investment is just part of a range of sustainability initiatives being introduced by Lidl in the coming months. In addition to the solar installations Lidl is rolling out recycling bins in store to allow customers leave unwanted packaging behind.

**ENDS**

Note for editors:

* Lidl is a member of the Bord Bia Origin Green Programme. Origin Green is a sustainable Development programme, developed for the Irish food industry. To become a member of the programme, Lidl has committed to a five-year sustainable development plan with numerous targets that Lidl reports on each year.
* In 2017, Lidl achieved ISO5001 certification across all stores. Lidl has an ambitious strategy aimed at reducing carbon emissions, minimising energy consumption and improving sustainability. The ISO 50001 standard is a globally recognised energy management system developed to continually improve the energy performance of buildings, optimise their use and reduce their operating costs.
* Lidl’s new concept stores are built using a range of strategies to reduce environmental impact. These include:
* High performance glass fronted façade to maximise natural daylight entering the building
* Sensor controlled exterior sun blinds to reduce unwanted heat from the sun
* Waste heat recovery ventilation systems and LED lighting
* High insulation with external cladding
* Lighting sensors to conserve energy where it is not required
* Lidl also provides the Lidl office-based team with electric carpooling vehicles for business trips.