

M&S Starts Generating Renewable Energy from UK's Largest Roof Mounted Solar Array

Tuesday 3 March, 2015

Marks & Spencer (M&S) has completed the installation of the UK's largest single roof mounted solar panel array on its East Midlands distribution centre in Castle Donington.

With the final panel laid and the system fully commissioned, the solar PV array will span the site's 900,000 sq ft roof and will generate over 5,000 MWh of electricity per year, the equivalent amount of energy to power 1,190 houses.

The 24,272 PV panel structure, which would cover 25 miles if the panels were laid end to end, will lower M&S's carbon footprint by 48,000 tonnes over 20 years. The energy generated will provide nearly 25% of the energy required for the fully automated distribution centre, which is big enough to hold 11 football pitches.

The record-breaking PV array will help M&S maintain its commitment of sourcing 100% of its electricity for UK and Ireland buildings from renewable sources, with 50% sourced from small scale renewable sources by 2020.

Hugo Adams, Director of Property at M&S, said:

"The completion of this project is hugely exciting for everyone at M&S. It is the first significant step in a number of solar energy initiatives we are planning this year. The scale of the project demonstrates our ambitious goals and long term commitment to onsite renewable energy."

Amber Rudd, Minister for Energy and Climate Change, said:

"There is massive potential to turn our large buildings into power stations – and this is a great example of how businesses can reap the benefits.

"More rooftop solar means more jobs - and will also help deliver the clean, reliable energy supplies that the country needs at the lowest possible cost to consumers."

The project is the first of a number of onsite renewable initiatives set to be rolled out this year by M&S, and is another step on the retailer's carbon reduction journey. Since the launch of Plan A in 2007, M&S has lowered its carbon emissions by 37% and is carbon neutral across its worldwide operations.

M&S has agreed a Power Purchase Agreement with leading international infrastructure specialist Amber Infrastructure, which has funded, supplied and installed the 6.1MWp solar panel array. The agreement runs for 20 years, with commitment from M&S to purchase all the electricity generated by the solar panels.

- Ends –

Notes

Marks & Spencer Engineering Manager Paul Millard will be delivering a seminar titled "Commercial rooftops – practical implementation case study" at Ecobuild on Wednesday the 4th March. The session will explore how solar can best be deployed on commercial rooftops.

About Plan A

Plan A is Marks & Spencer's 100 commitment eco and ethical programme that tackles both today's and tomorrow's sustainable retail challenges. Launched in 2007, the plan has helped M&S send no waste to landfill, become carbon neutral and win 190 industry awards. Organised around four pillars – Inspiration, In Touch, Integrity and Innovation – it aims to make M&S the world's most sustainable major retailer. To find out more please visit the Plan A website - <http://corporate.marksandspencer.com/plan-a>.

For further information on M&S, please contact:

Corporate Press Office

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Amber Infrastructure

Amber Infrastructure Group (Amber) is a leading international infrastructure specialist, providing asset management and investment advisory services in respect of over £4 billion of assets in the UK, Europe, Australia and North America. Amber's core business focuses on sourcing, developing, advising on, investing in and managing infrastructure assets within the utilities, PPP, transport, renewable energy and regeneration sectors. Amber provides investment advisory services to FTSE listed International Public Partnerships Limited as well as private investment funds, specialising in urban regeneration and energy efficiency, under the specialist brand Amber Green. Amber is headquartered in London with offices in Edinburgh, Munich, Sydney, Melbourne and San Francisco.

Berry Yirrell

Corporate Press Officer

Corporate Communications

DL: +44 208 718 0758

M: +44 776 9362 993

E: Berry.Yirrell@marks-and-spencer.com

Company Contact:

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E. [support\[@\]pressat.co.uk](mailto:support[@]pressat.co.uk)

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