



M&S Oxford Street plan given government approval Free 030125

Description



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Deputy Prime Minister Angela Rayner has granted permission for Marks & Spencer to demolish and redevelop its flagship London store.

Rayner approved plans to flatten and rebuild the retail giant's Marble Arch store in Oxford Street.

M&S previously took legal action against the Conservative government in the High Court over its "unusual" decision to refuse permission for the scheme.

M&S CEO Stuart Machin said he was delighted at Rayner's decision, adding that the company would "move as fast as we can" to make progress.

"After three unnecessary years of delays, obfuscation and political posturing at its worst under the previous government, our plans for Marble Arch – the only retail-led regeneration proposal on Oxford Street – have finally been approved," he said.

"We can now get on with the job of helping to rejuvenate the UK's premier shopping street."

Mr Machin said the shop would support 2,000 jobs.

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Westminster City Council [originally approved M&S's plans](#) to tear down Orchard House, an Art Deco building, and replace it with a modernised shop featuring a new café, offices and a gym in 2021.

But Michael Gove, then communities secretary, launched an inquiry and eventually blocked the proposals.

However, the High Court ruled that Mr Gove had misinterpreted the national planning policy framework and "erred in law".

Adam Hug, leader of Westminster City Council, welcomed the approval, adding: "This scheme has significant implications for the future of the West End and it was right to consider the detail carefully."

Charles Begley, chief executive of the London Property Alliance, said the uncertainty had damaged growth.

"The fact that the property industry had been waiting the outcome of this case for clarity is clearly a failure of national policy," he said.

"The application itself had unfortunately become a lightning rod for the 'retrofit v redevelopment' debate.

"But we need to recognise that a more nuanced approach is needed."

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Date Created

03/01/2025

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