M&S Marble Arch branch demolition likely to get final go-ahead

By Sandra Halliday - 13 April 2022

Campaigners had hoped to prevent the demolition of the Marble Arch, London, branch of M&S, but the plan is set to be given the final go-ahead after London mayor Sadiq Khan referred it back to the local council.

The London Evening Standard reported a spokeswoman for Khan saying: “The mayor can only intervene in council planning decisions where the proposed scheme does not conform with the London Plan. After a thorough assessment of this proposal, including the total carbon footprint involved, it was determined that grounds did not exist to allow the mayor to intervene. It will therefore remain with Westminster City Council to determine the application.”

That means Westminster is likely to stick to its original plan to approve the demolition.

The historic store that's close to Selfridges is already a giant building, but M&S wants to replace it with a 10 storey building that will feature a smaller retail space than it currently has, as well as plenty of office space, a gym and a brand-new pedestrian arcade.

Campaigners had been unhappy both on the grounds of the demolition of a historic building, but also because they questioned the eco-credentials of knocking something down and completely replacing it.

The Greater London Authority's carbon adviser had issued a report saying demolition was counter to City Hall’s focus on retaining and adapting older buildings.

The decision of the mayor suggests he supports the M&S contention that the carbon footprint of demolition and rebuilding had been considered and dealt with at all stages in the formulation of the plans.