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# CASE STUDY

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## New M&S Given Go-Ahead Following Call-Inquiry

**Client:** Marks & Spencer and Simons Developments Limited

**Location:** Cheshire Oaks, Ellesmere Port



The Secretary of State has granted planning permission for what will be the second largest Marks & Spencer's store in the country, following a call in inquiry held in June 2009. Plans for the 18,115 sqm (195,000 sq ft) development, which will be located at Cheshire Oaks in Ellesmere Port, were submitted by HOW Planning.

Acting on behalf of Marks & Spencer and Simons Developments, HOW Planning submitted the application in July 2008 and were successful in securing permission from Ellesmere Port & Neston Borough Council (now the new unitary Authority of Cheshire West and Chester), but due to the size of the project the scheme was called in for inquiry.

The decision is significant in the context of national retail policy. Whilst the store is not in a town centre and is in policy terms out of centre, the decision reaffirms one of the fundamental principles of good planning, that the Development Plan is the starting point with other material considerations weighed in the balance. In this case these were the major regeneration and employment benefits it will bring to the area.

The store represents a major investment for Marks & Spencer in Ellesmere Port and one of their biggest projects to date, second only in retail floorspace to its flagship store at Marble Arch in London. It will create up to 460 jobs, many of which will be sourced from the most deprived wards in the Borough in consultation with the Council and other stakeholders and community groups. Plans incorporate a fully sustainable store encompassing a range of low energy initiatives and renewable energy measures to meet Marks & Spencer's aspiration to be carbon neutral.