

M&S

EST. 1884

20th June 2018

Nick Hurd MP
House of Commons
London SW1A 0AA

Waterside House
35 North Wharf Road
London W2 1NW

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Dear Mr Hurd,

Thank you for the letter dated 11th June to our Chairman Archie Norman regarding the closure of the M&S Simply Food store in Ruislip. I have been asked to reply.

I can assure you we fully understand your disappointment and that we are very aware of the impact of these decisions on local communities and residents.

The commercial context is the acceleration of our transformation programme, which is focused on delivering a more profitable and sustainable M&S store estate in the UK. As you will be aware the retail market is currently extremely challenging and highly competitive. Shopping habits are changing and more customers are choosing to shop online and increasingly opting for home delivery. This means that, regrettably, we require less trading space in certain locations and that the business must be more agile in modernising our store estate so that it is fit to meet these challenges.

In the case of Ruislip, the decision to close the store has not been taken lightly and all possible avenues have been carefully explored before committing to it. Unfortunately, the performance of the store has not been strong enough in recent years for us to believe we could trade profitably into the future, hence the difficult decision we have taken not to renew the lease.

We have also considered local developments in Ruislip, and whilst the high street is in healthy shape, the small format of the store, property costs including the rent and business rates, lack of dedicated customer parking and strong competition from other supermarkets locally meant that the conclusion was to proceed with the closure.

However, we are confident that when the store closes later this summer we will be able to redeploy the 35 colleagues currently working in Ruislip to nearby M&S stores, including those in Uxbridge and Pinner.

We recognise that you will have been hoping for a different response, but we remain convinced that the store closure decision is the right way forward for M&S. However, please contact me again should you have any further queries.

Yours sincerely,



Sacha Berendji
Retail, Operations and Property Director

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