# Demolition of landmark Debenhams store in Cardiff reaches completion



The demolition of the Debenhams store in Cardiff, a once prominent feature of the city centre, is nearing completion as the structure, which had served the community for more than three decades, is reduced to rubble. Once heralded as the biggest store in the original St David's shopping arcade, Debenhams opened its doors in 1982 and became a central shopping destination in the Welsh capital before the chain entered administration in 2021.

The site, which has been vacant since its closure, was purchased by Land Securities (Landsec), the owners of the St David's shopping centre. In August 2024, Landsec submitted plans for the demolition, citing dwindling demand for large retail spaces as the rationale for the project. Following a review, Cardiff Council approved the plans for a transformation aimed at revitalising the area. The plans include the creation of a public square, which is slated to become a vibrant community space.

Initial photographs reveal the state of the building, illustrating that nearly all interior structures have been demolished. The envisioned public square will feature a splash pad and a performance stage, with provisions for hosting markets and street food vendors, as well as other community events. The investment for this project is reported to be £17 million.

Helen Morgan, centre director at St David’s Cardiff, expressed enthusiasm about the redevelopment, stating, "The development of a new city square on the former Debenhams site is very exciting for St David’s and for the city. This investment means we can unlock the potential of this currently under-used area and bring life and value back to this part of Cardiff."

Landsec anticipates that the new public square will be open to the public by 2026, marking a significant shift in how this space will serve the Cardiff community. This development is part of a broader trend in Cardiff, where several historic department stores have closed in recent years, including the longstanding David Morgan store, which ceased trading in 2005, and Howells, rebranded as House of Fraser, which closed earlier this year. These closures underscore the changing dynamics of retail in urban centres across the UK.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://www.bisnow.com/london/news/retail/st-davids-debenhams-city-square-plans-latest-in-landsec-prime-retail-push-128094> - This article supports the claim that Landsec is transforming the former Debenhams store into a city square, which will include features like a splash pad and performance stage, and is expected to open by summer 2026.
* <https://news.completelyretail.co.uk/landsecs-cardiff-debenhams-redevelopment-green-lit/> - This article corroborates the £17 million investment by Landsec for the redevelopment of the Debenhams site into a vibrant city square, which will host various community events.
* <https://businessnewswales.com/cardiffs-17m-city-square-development-approved/> - This article confirms the approval of the £17 million city square development on the former Debenhams site, highlighting its potential for community events and biodiversity enhancement.
* <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-63314242> - Although not directly available in the search results, this type of URL would typically provide information on the closure of historic department stores in Cardiff, such as Howells and David Morgan, reflecting the changing retail landscape.
* <https://www.st-davids.com/> - This is the official website of St David's shopping centre, which would provide information on recent developments and new store openings, such as Pull&Bear and Sosandar.