



# The 'Next' Tale Of A Garden

*Next, a British brand with a history of 32 years, is one of the leading retailers in the UK in men's, women's and kids' fashion as well as the homeware segment. All in all, Next stores aim at being one-stop shop destinations. The Next Home and Garden store, recently opened at Hedge End, Hampshire, the UK, brings to the fore new design elements and a garden centre with traces of it racing throughout the store.*

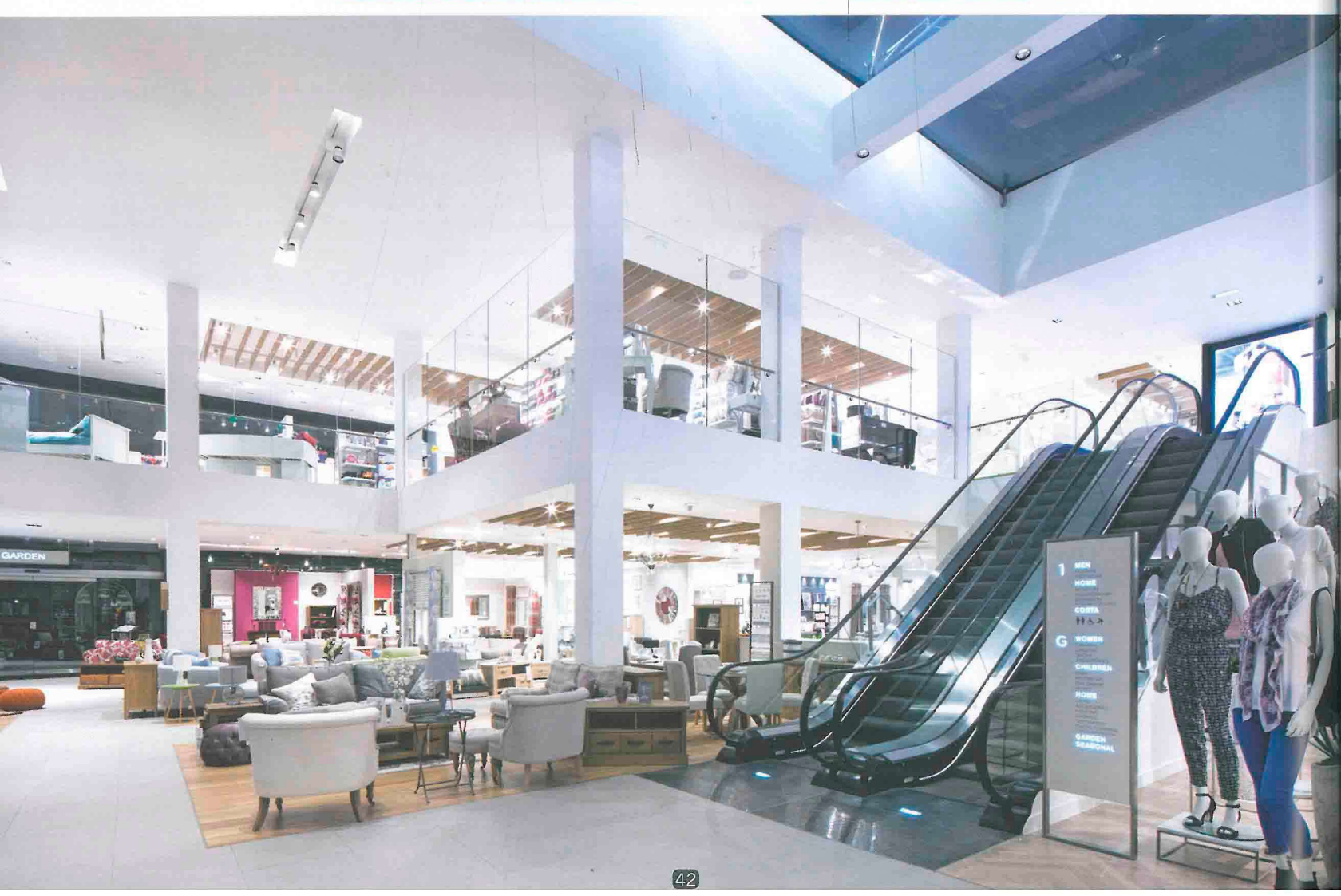
**T**he new store with a booming 50,000 sq. ft of space brought to life by Dalziel & Pow presents the brand in a refreshed avatar, yet maintaining the look derived over the years. An association of identity is very important to create customer connect. The lifestyle-led merchandising approach draws the customer to the store and unveils the new concept feel to him/her. The extravagant store-front itself is a trailer of the experience to be indulged in. The all glass façade concept reveals the store's magnificence through its transparencies. The entire appeal of the front façade takes the architecture of Next as a brand to a new level. This identity has been developed by Dalziel & Pow in association with Stanton Williams Architects.

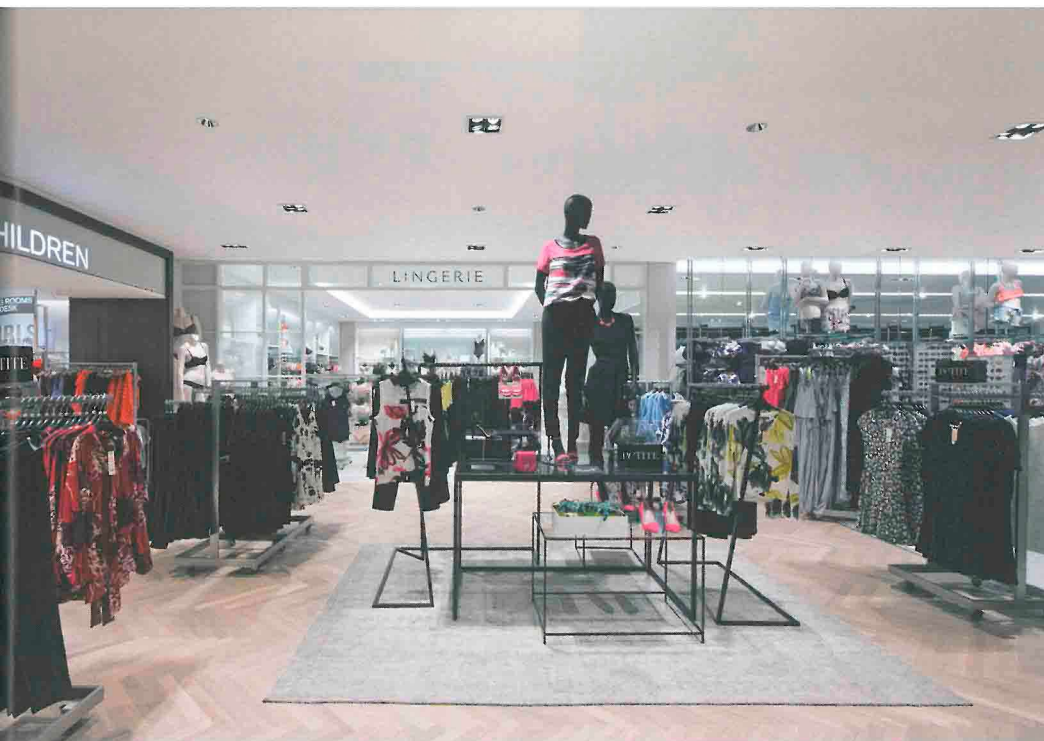
The store features a garden centre and the architecture of the space has been devised accordingly. A garden theme runs cross-category through the store. The garden centre is sheltered in an architectural continuum of the store which has distinctive properties that resemble a nursery. Its open to air nature might give a feel of stepping out of the store but the elements running through it and the

design language adopted keep the identity intact as a part of the store itself.

Although a retail space, the Next Home and Garden store is rendered with striking architectural features which can be felt as a design language before one enters the store. The façade design itself gives away the mass void plan of the store. "The architectural design developed in association with Stanton Williams Architects breaks from the generic 'shed' structures usually associated with out-of-town retailers. Clad in natural limestone, the building has a premium, contemporary aesthetic and distinctive, ownable architectural identity," says David Wright, Group Marketing Director, Dalziel & Pow.

The movement through the store is guided by an architectural language which the customer may not distinctly notice but can feel it in the various sections of the space and the integration of the zones. A coffee house powered by Costa also occupies a space in the store for the customer to indulge in a break on his long journey of retail therapy.





As soon as the customer enters the store, he/she is met with all options of further exploration- vertical as well horizontal circulation from that point on. The horizontal exploration moving into the depths of the space leads to divulging the extravagance of the home department that Next is known for. A seamless yet distinct transition flows towards the women's wear section which now dons a new identity with this store. A bespoke ceiling installation crafted out of suspended acrylic rods calls for quite some attention.

A transition from the closed to open space towards the garden centre gives a versatility to the quality of space and emphasises the importance of treating different zones differently. A new identity to be revealed, architectural expertise showcased and the brand image of a lifestyle dictated experience, all pieces hook up to complete the jigsaw. The space serves to be quite a paradise for the DIY lovers and garden enthusiasts.



Moving on to the top floor, an aura of luxury oozes through the men's wear department and a continuation of the home department from the ground floor professes. In the men's wear section, the division of displays and the central wooden herring-bone flooring are indicators of direction of movement intended by the design.

Right at the end of the escalators, a digital screen - which is not a novelty anymore - separates the home section from the men's. In fact, with most brands now, the presence of a digital screen which may be interactive or non-interactive is quite a common practice.

A tone of VM accents runs through the store which adds to the elegance and an attitude of distinct personality for each zone. How each zone can form its own identity amidst a common brand language prevailing in the store is made quite evident. Material finishes, colour coding, type of fixtures and most importantly, amount and style of merchandise exposed to the customer's eye at a given point are well-thought of features,

This new concept and attitude hosts a preview to the scale and quality of upcoming stores. ●

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