

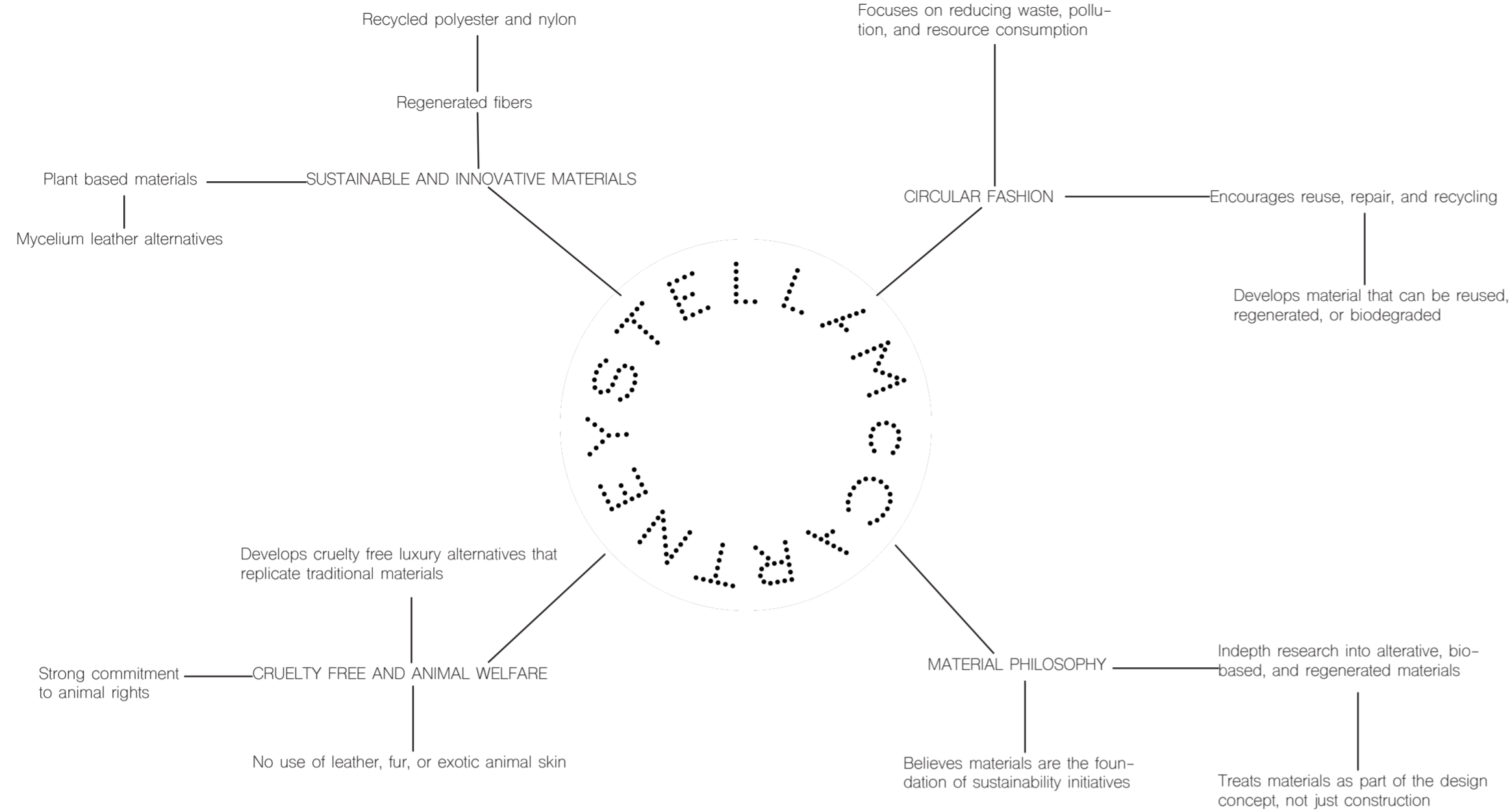
STELLA McCARTNEY STORE



Mycelium and Beyond explores how regenerative biomaterials and adaptive reuse can redefine the future of luxury retail environments. Inspired by Stella McCartney's commitment to ethical fashion and material innovation, the project transforms an existing retail building in central London, retaining embodied carbon while introducing a new material language centred on mycelium. In contrast to the increasingly carbon intensive model of online retail, the proposal advocates for the continued relevance of experiential shopping environments. Located within an existing retail infrastructure served by public transport, cycling routes and walkable streets, the project promotes sustainable urban consumption by enabling customers to physically experience products, make informed purchasing decisions and participate in a richer social and sensory retail experience. Through the design, fabrication and testing of be-spoke mycelium components, the project investigates how biodegradable materials can become architectural elements, display systems and immersive spatial experiences. Combining circular design principles, material research and technical experimentation, the proposal demonstrates how retail interiors can move beyond consumption to become environmentally responsive, materially innovative and socially responsible spaces.

BRIEF:

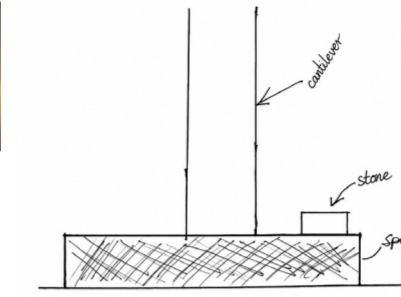
In this project, we are repurposing the existing Urban Outfitters building to create a sustainable retail environment inspired by the interior design language of Stella McCartney stores. The proposal focuses on transforming the current space into a contemporary luxury retail experience that reflects Stella McCartney's strong commitment to sustainability, innovation, and ethical design. The design combines environmentally conscious materials, organic forms, and refined minimalist aesthetics to create an immersive and sophisticated shopping environment. Existing architectural elements of the building are retained and adapted where possible in order to reduce waste and preserve the structure's embodied carbon, reinforcing the project's sustainable approach. Inspired by Stella McCartney's flagship store interiors, the material palette incorporates timber, recycled terrazzo flooring, recycled fabrics, and brass, reflecting both the brand's aesthetic and environmental values. Together, these materials create a warm, tactile, and contemporary atmosphere that enhances the customer experience. The overall aim of the project is to merge sustainable design principles with high end fashion retail, creating a space that is both environmentally responsible and visually engaging.



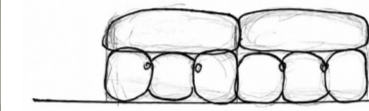
STELLA MCCARTNEY EXISTING INTERIORS



The seating in the Stella McCartney store is designed to feel sculptural instead of just functional. The curved bench wraps around the exposed concrete column and follows the circular shape of the staircase, helping create a smooth flow throughout the space. The main materials used are raw concrete and soft upholstered seating, which creates a strong contrast between industrial and comfortable textures. The seating was likely made using a timber or plywood structure with padded upholstery fixed over the top to create the curved form. I would use this type of seating in my own design because it becomes part of the architecture rather than just furniture. I like how the curved form helps guide movement around the space while also softening the harshness of the concrete. The mix of industrial and soft materials creates a balanced atmosphere that feels modern, welcoming, and more immersive.



This seating was second hand, which relates to Stella McCartney's sustainable values and focus on reusing materials rather than creating unnecessary waste. The pink colour also reflects her personal branding and feminine aesthetic, as pink is often associated with many of her store interiors and collections. By adding this seating into my store, it will help communicate ideas of sustainability, comfort, and identity while also making the space feel more playful, welcoming, and visually engaging.

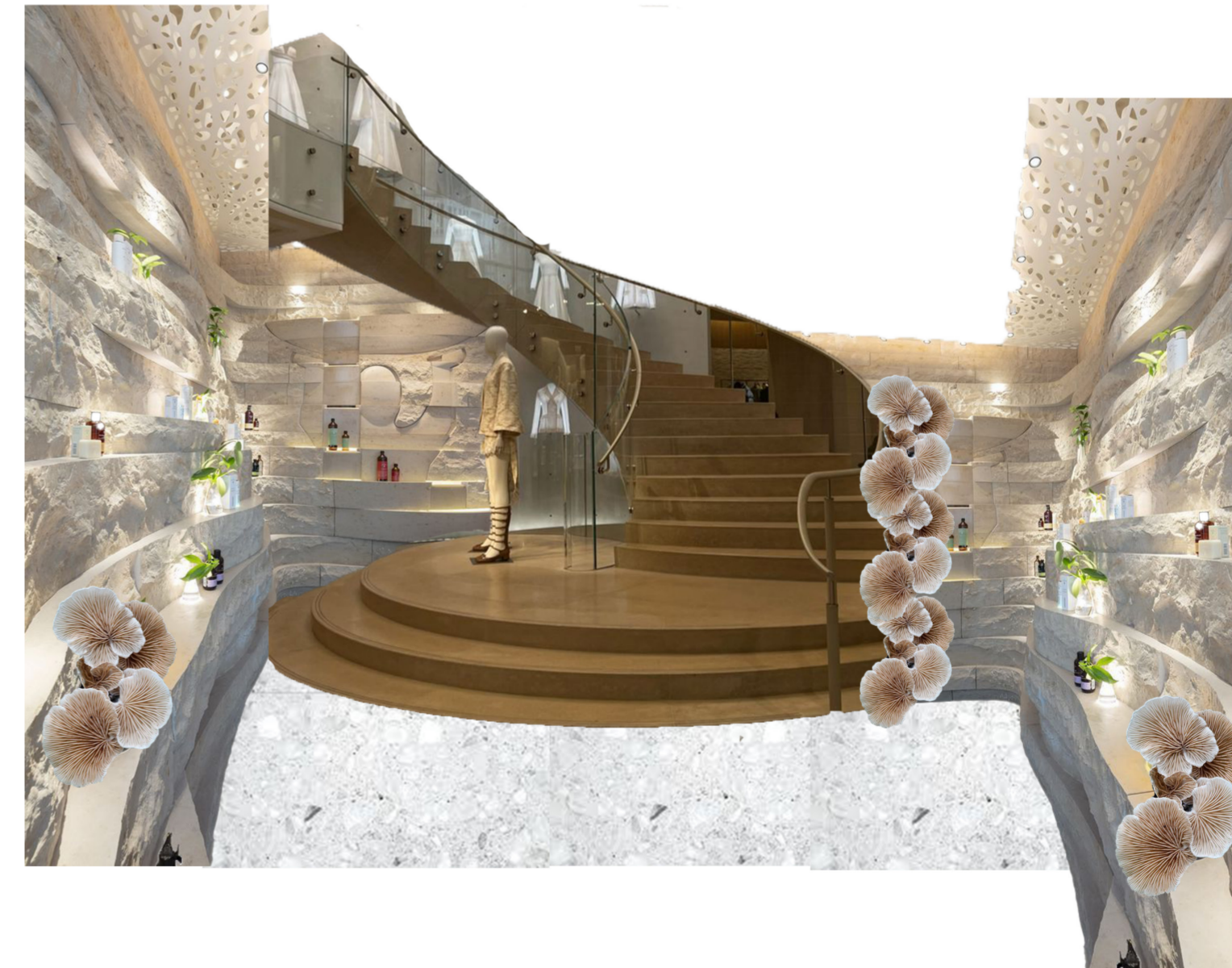


MATERIAL MOODBOARD

- 1. Timber**
Timber was chosen because it is a natural and renewable material that can be sustainably sourced. It has a lower environmental impact compared to many manufactured materials and can also be recycled or reused. Within the space, timber helps create a warm and calming atmosphere while still connecting to the sustainable values of Stella McCartney.
- 2. Mycelium**
Mycelium is one of the most sustainable materials used within the project because it is biodegradable, renewable, and grown naturally from fungi roots. It requires very little energy to produce and creates minimal waste during manufacturing. I selected mycelium because it reflects Stella McCartney's innovative approach towards sustainable fashion and environmentally conscious design.
- 3. Clear Bio Resin**
Clear bio resin was chosen as a more sustainable alternative to traditional plastics and resins. It is partly made from natural plant based materials, reducing the use of fossil fuels. The transparent finish also helps the space feel more open and minimalist while still keeping a modern and sophisticated appearance.
- 4. Recycled Brass**
Recycled brass was selected because it can be reused multiple times without losing its quality. Using recycled brass reduces waste and lowers the environmental impact caused by mining new metals. The warm metallic finish also adds a luxury feel to the interior while still supporting sustainable design choices.
- 5. Pink Naturally Dyed Wool Felt**
Pink naturally dyed wool felt was chosen for its durability, soft texture, and sustainable qualities. The natural dyeing process reduces environmental impact, while the soft pink colour introduces a feminine feel to the interior, reflecting Stella McCartney's brand identity. The material helps create a warm, elegant, and welcoming atmosphere, adding softness to the space and balancing the harder architectural materials used throughout the store.
- 6. Orange Hemp Fabric**
Orange hemp fabric was chosen for its sustainability, durability, and natural texture. As an environmentally friendly material, hemp requires less water and fewer pesticides than many conventional textiles. The warm orange colour creates a welcoming atmosphere, while the fabric's natural appearance reflects Stella McCartney's commitment to sustainable and responsible material choices.
- 7. Pink Painted Wood/ Farrow & Ball – Setting Plaster No.231**
The pink painted wood connects to the soft colour palette often seen within Stella McCartney stores and fashion collections. It adds a playful but refined element to the interior while helping the space feel more creative, modern, and visually engaging.
- 8. Terrazzo**
Terrazzo was chosen because it is a durable and sustainable material that can be made using recycled materials such as glass, marble, quartz, and plastic chips. Using recycled terrazzo helps reduce waste while still creating a high quality and long lasting finish. Within the space, terrazzo adds texture and visual detail without overpowering the minimalist design. The soft neutral tones and subtle coloured fragments also connect to Stella McCartney's modern and sophisticated aesthetic, while the polished finish helps the interior feel more luxurious and contemporary.

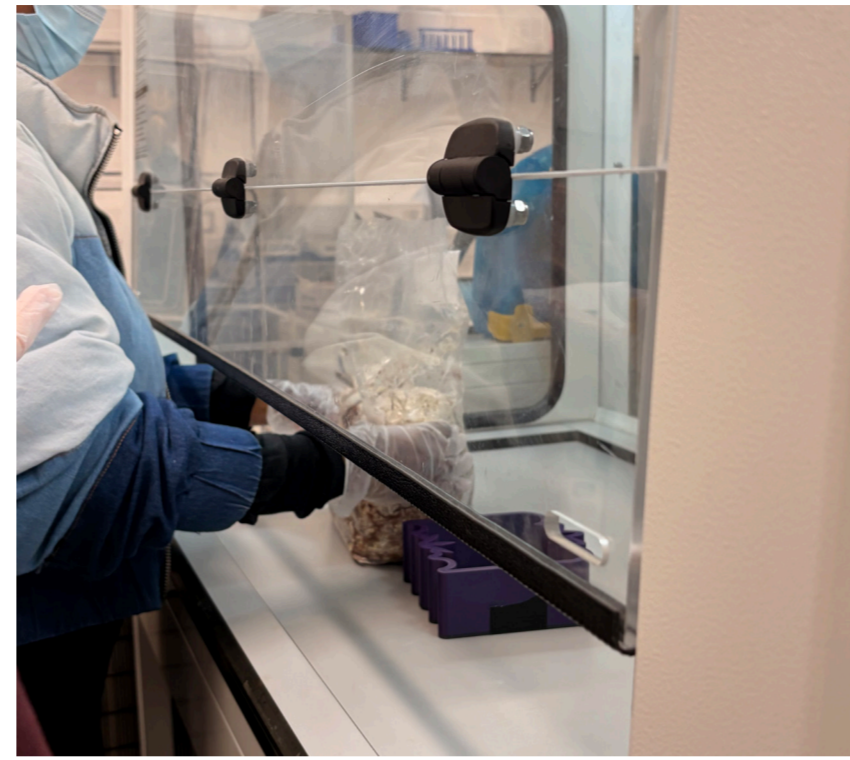


MATERIAL COLLAGE



This collage is a representation of the materials I might use in my design. The mushroom symbolises the mycelium I will use for the shelving, while the rock displayed on the side shows how the mycelium could be shaped and formed into more solid, sculptural structures. The curved staircase represents the use of timber, bringing a natural and flowing material into the space. The mannequin placed beside it indicates that I will include a mannequin display near the stairs to create visual interest and draw attention to that area. The terrazzo represents the type of flooring I intend to use, adding texture and durability while maintaining a contemporary, sustainable feel. Overall, the collage brings together natural, recycled and sculptural materials to create a cohesive design concept.

MYCELIUM WORKSHOP

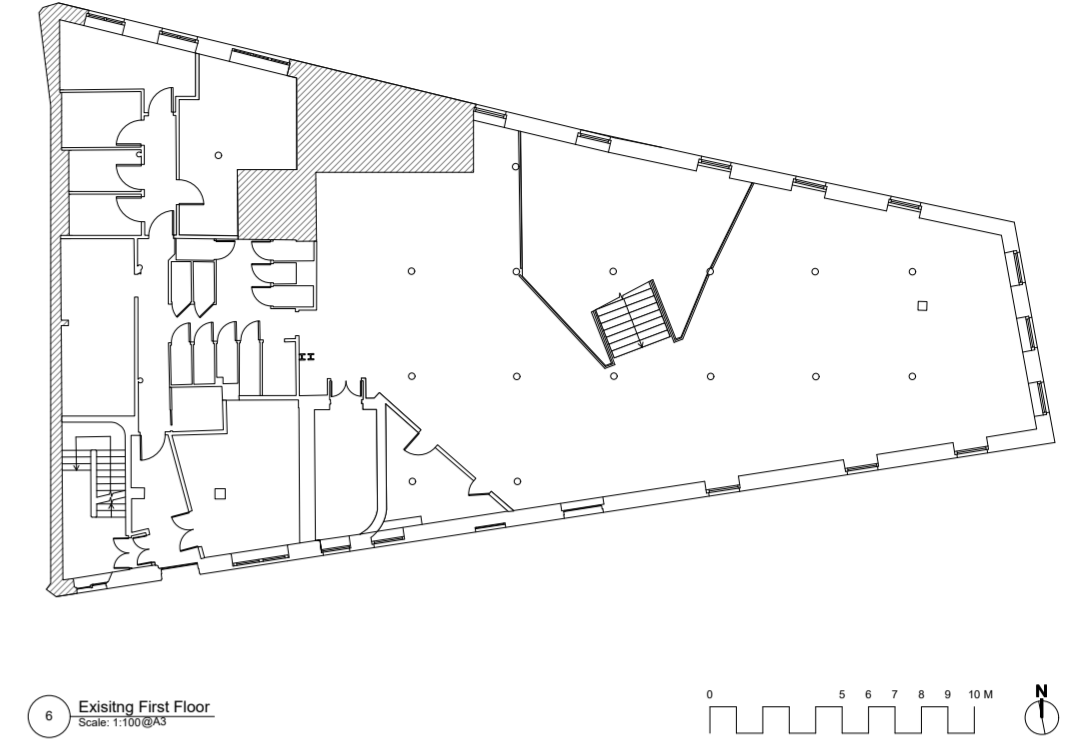
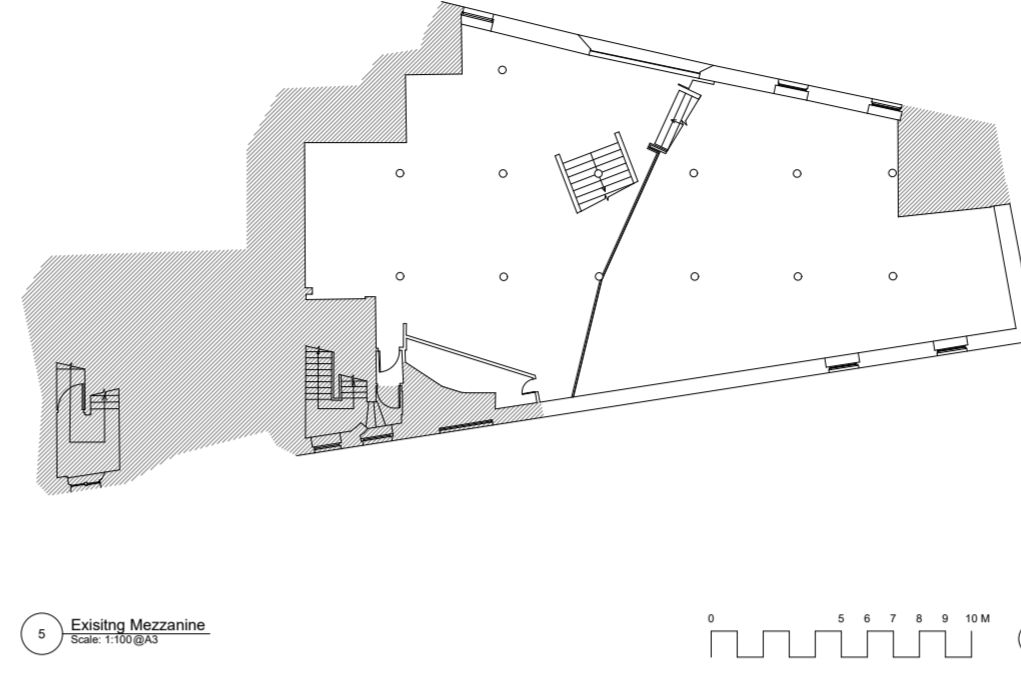
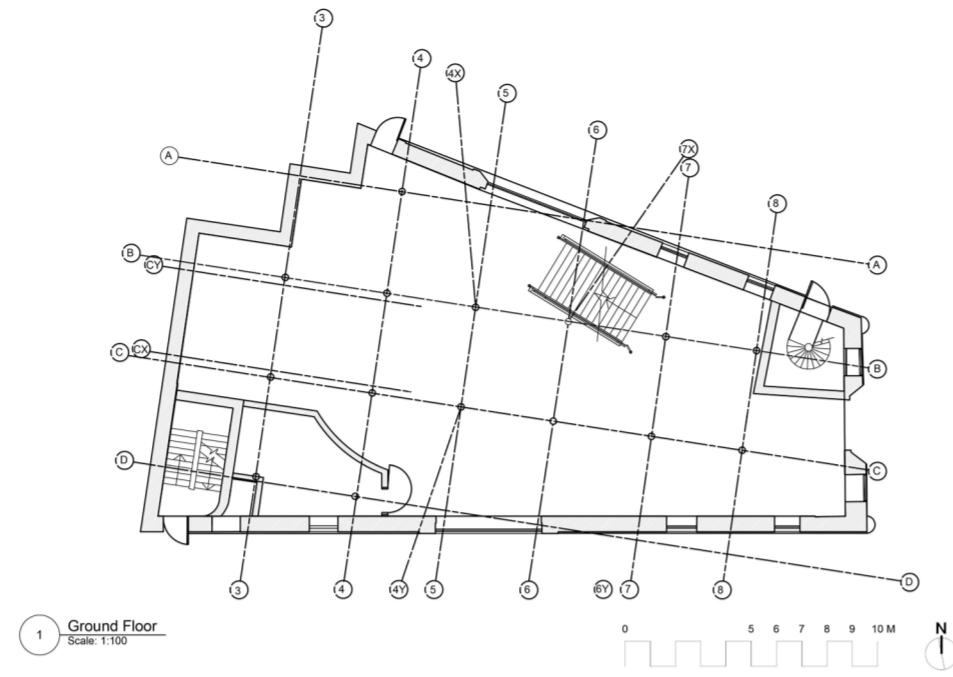
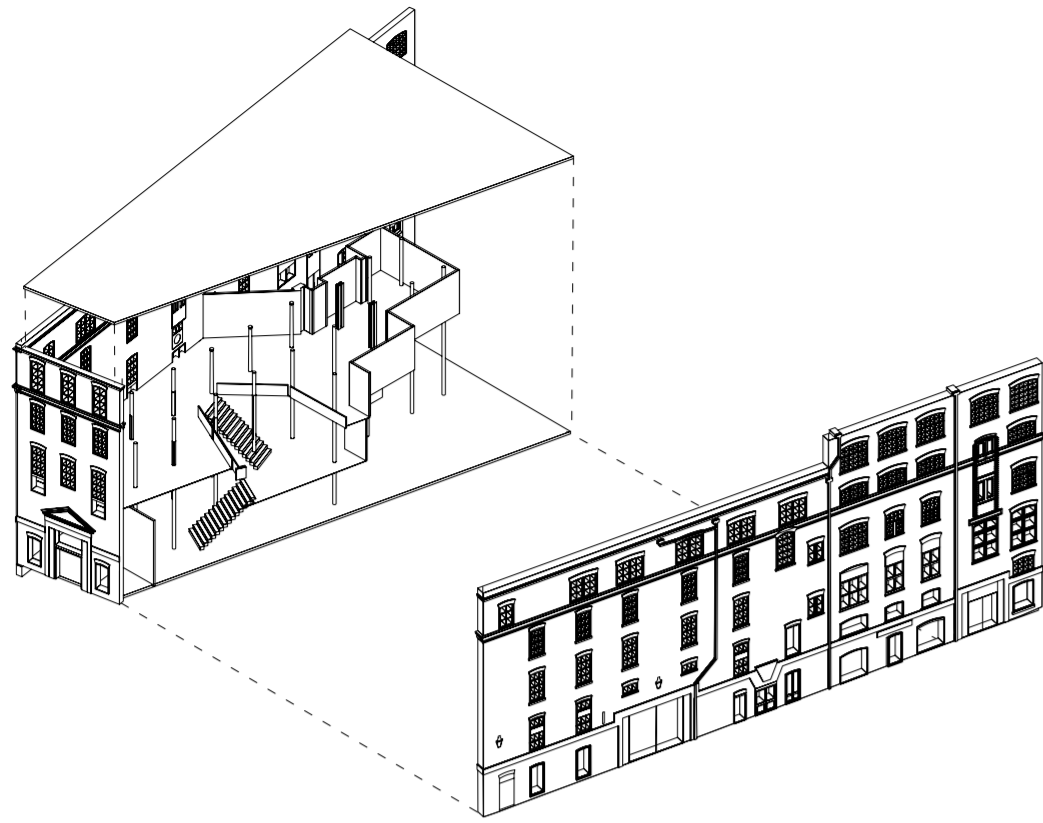


First, we started by cleaning the moulds with alcohol to make sure they were sterile and free from any contamination. This step is important because any bacteria or mould can affect the growth of the mycelium. Next, I broke up the mycelium in the bag into smaller pieces to help it spread more evenly and encourage consistent growth. I then packed the mycelium into the mould, pressing it down firmly to compress it and remove any air gaps, which helps it bind together properly. After that, I tightly wrapped the mould in cling film to maintain humidity and protect it from contaminants. Finally, I left it in a cool, stable environment for about a week to allow the mycelium to grow and take the shape of the mould.

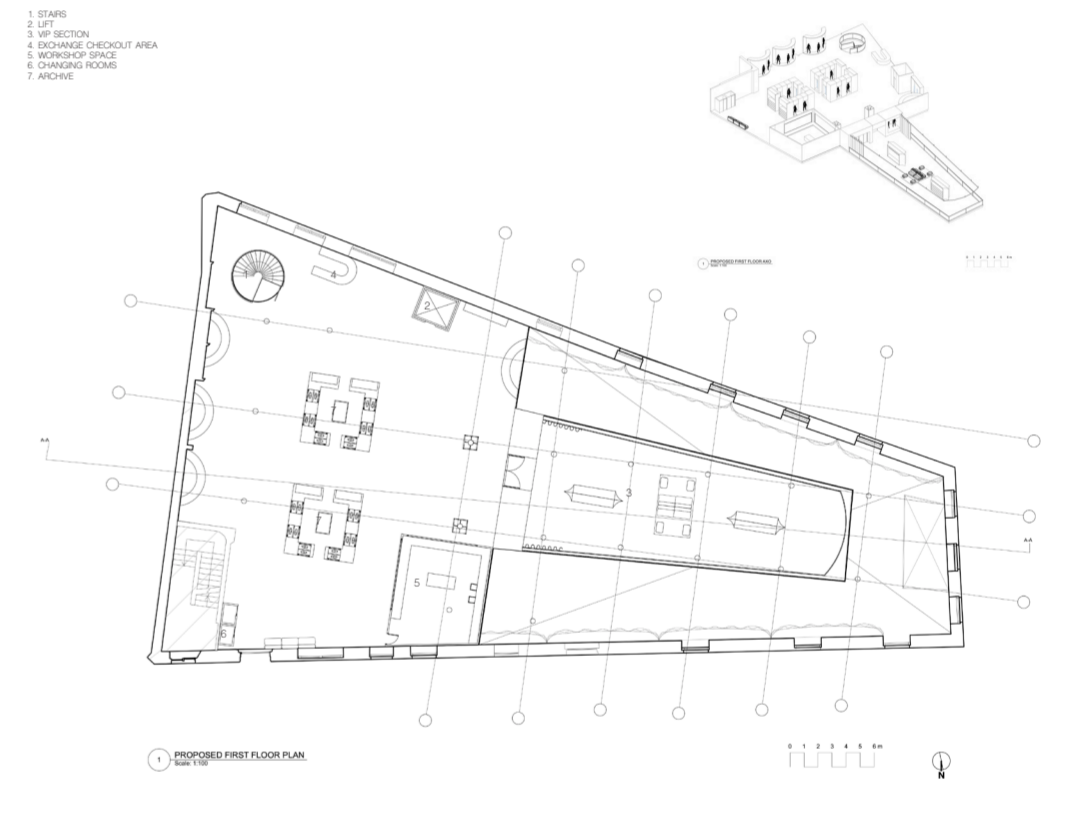
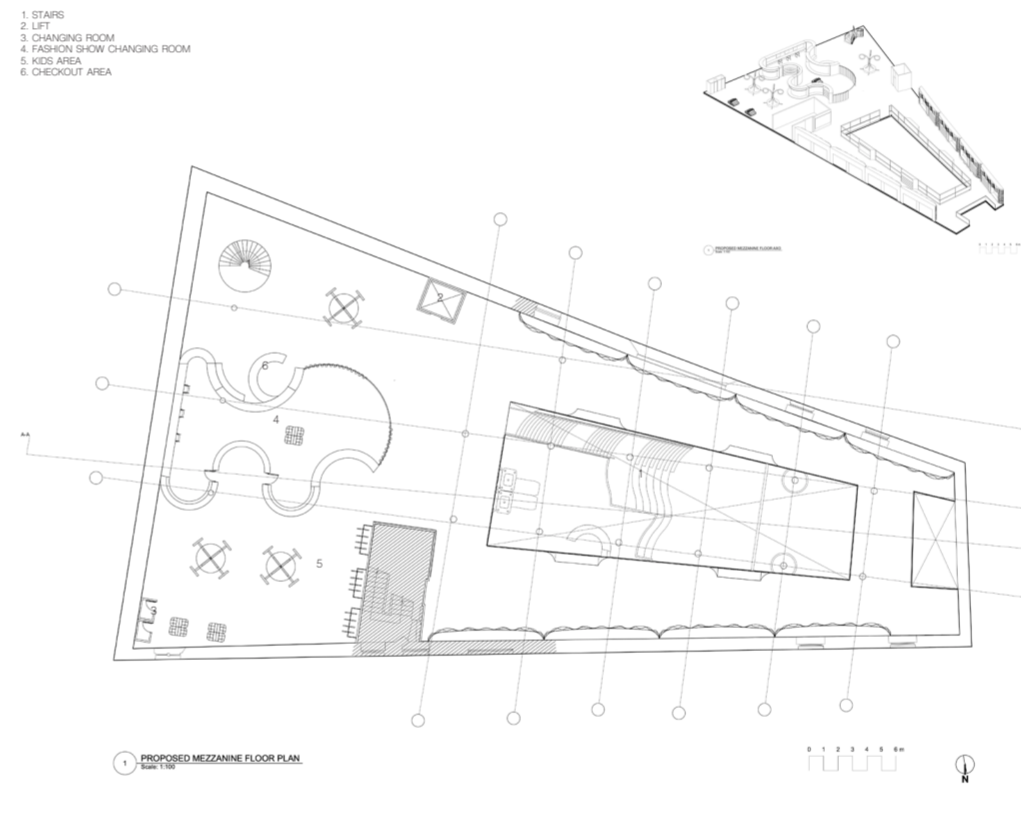
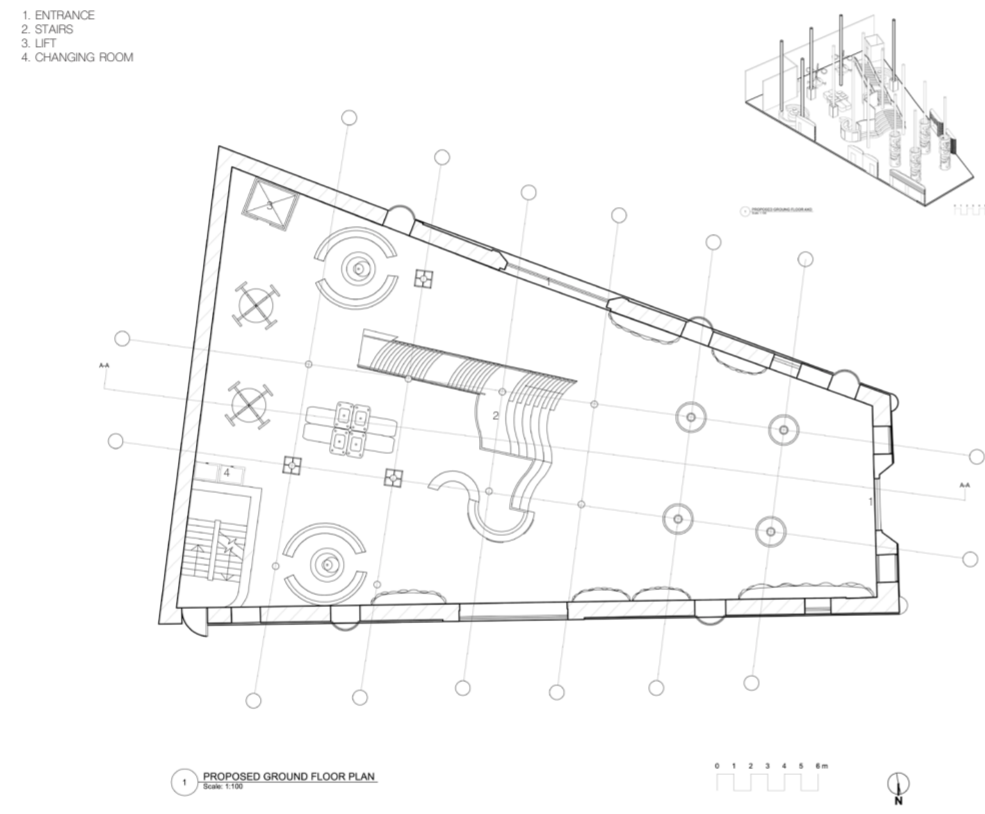
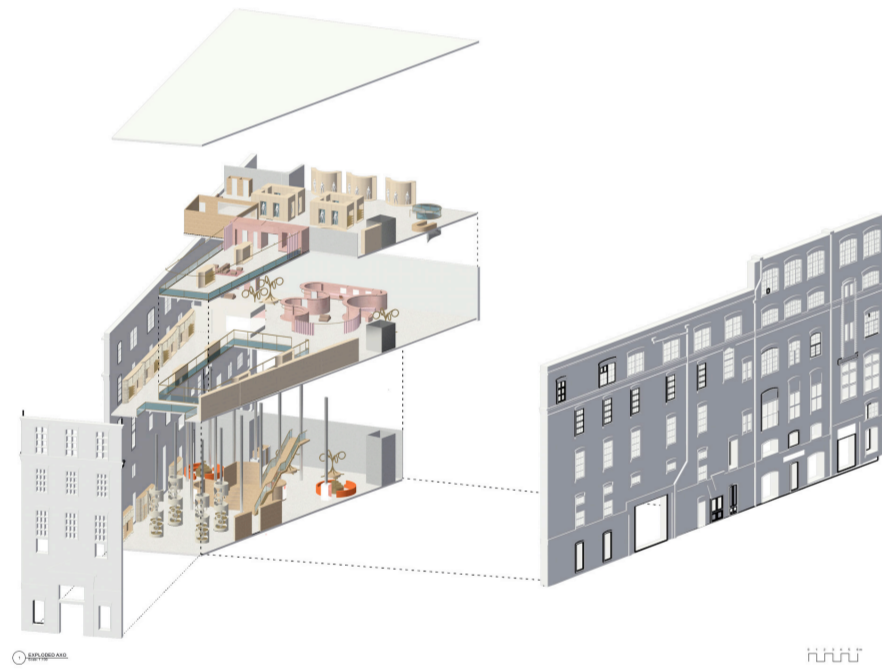


The mould came out very well overall. Although a few small pieces broke off around the edges, the damage was minimal and did not affect the overall form. Considering the mould included several shaped and detailed edges, it successfully retained its intended design and closely matched the original mould shape. After demoulding, it was placed in the oven for 24 hours to fully dry and stop any further mycelium growth. This process helped harden the material and allowed it to set into its final form, resulting in a strong and successful outcome.

EXISTING BUILDING



PROPOSED BUILDING



This exploded axonometric illustrates the transformation of the existing Urban Outfitters building into a Stella McCartney flagship store. The floors were first separated and repositioned to align with the existing window openings, allowing natural light to be maximised throughout the interior while working within the constraints of the existing structure. Each floor was then developed with a specific function to support the customer journey and overall retail experience. As part of the adaptive reuse strategy, the existing building fabric was retained where possible to reduce construction waste and preserve embodied carbon. A cement based finish was applied over the existing brickwork to create the clean, minimal aesthetic associated with Stella McCartney's store interiors while maintaining the character of the original building beneath.

For the ground floor, I extended the rear of the existing building and removed the internal partition walls, retaining only the existing exterior walls and structural columns. The material palette for this floor includes timber, recycled brass, mycelium, and orange hemp fabric, all of which were selected to reflect Stella McCartney's commitment to sustainability and innovative material use. The ground floor was designed to draw customers deeper into the store through the use of large sculptural circular columns and an open circulation route. The stepped seating area provides a space for educational talks and events, allowing visitors to learn more about Stella McCartney's designs, sustainability initiatives, and material innovations. Towards the rear of the space, the atmosphere becomes more relaxed, with orange hemp fabric seating creating a comfortable area where visitors can sit, socialise, and engage with the fashion pieces on display.

For the mezzanine floor, I extended the rear of the existing structure to create a larger and more functional floor plate. An opening was introduced into the floor to accommodate the main staircase and maintain visual connections between levels. Located at the rear of the mezzanine are a series of curved walls that form the fashion show changing rooms. These spaces include two exit doors and a large curtain, allowing models to move easily and efficiently between the changing area and the catwalk. This arrangement enables the mezzanine floor to be transformed into a flexible catwalk space for fashion shows and events. The material palette on this floor includes mycelium, recycled brass, clear bio-resin, pink painted timber, and Stella McCartney inspired recycled sofas, creating a vibrant yet sustainable environment that reflects the brand's identity and values.

The first floor consists of an archive, a VIP area, and a clothing workshop. This floor allows customers to bring in their old Stella McCartney garments and exchange them for a discount on other Stella McCartney merchandise, encouraging circular fashion and reducing textile waste. The VIP area is enclosed by a pink curtain made from naturally dyed wool felt, which can be opened or closed depending on the guests' preferences or whether a fashion show is taking place. The floor void has been strategically positioned to overlook the mezzanine level, allowing VIP guests to view fashion shows and events from above. The clothing workshop provides a dedicated space where garments can be cleaned, repaired, and revitalised, extending their lifespan and supporting Stella McCartney's commitment to sustainability. The material palette for this floor includes timber, pink painted timber, recycled brass, and naturally dyed pink wool felt, creating a warm and sophisticated environment that reflects the brand's sustainable values and luxury aesthetic.

