

# No. 28

Cradle Boutique Hotel: Infinity Decking and Lifespan Architectural Beams

Cradle of Humankind, Kromdraai, 2022

*Infinity*

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## PROJECT DETAILS

### Project Name

Cradle Boutique Hotel

### Project Type

Hospitality

### Description

Exterior

### Date of Installation

Phase 1: Started 2022

Phase 2: Completed 2024

### Main Contractor

Dale Fogg, DMF Designs

### Size

1108m<sup>2</sup>

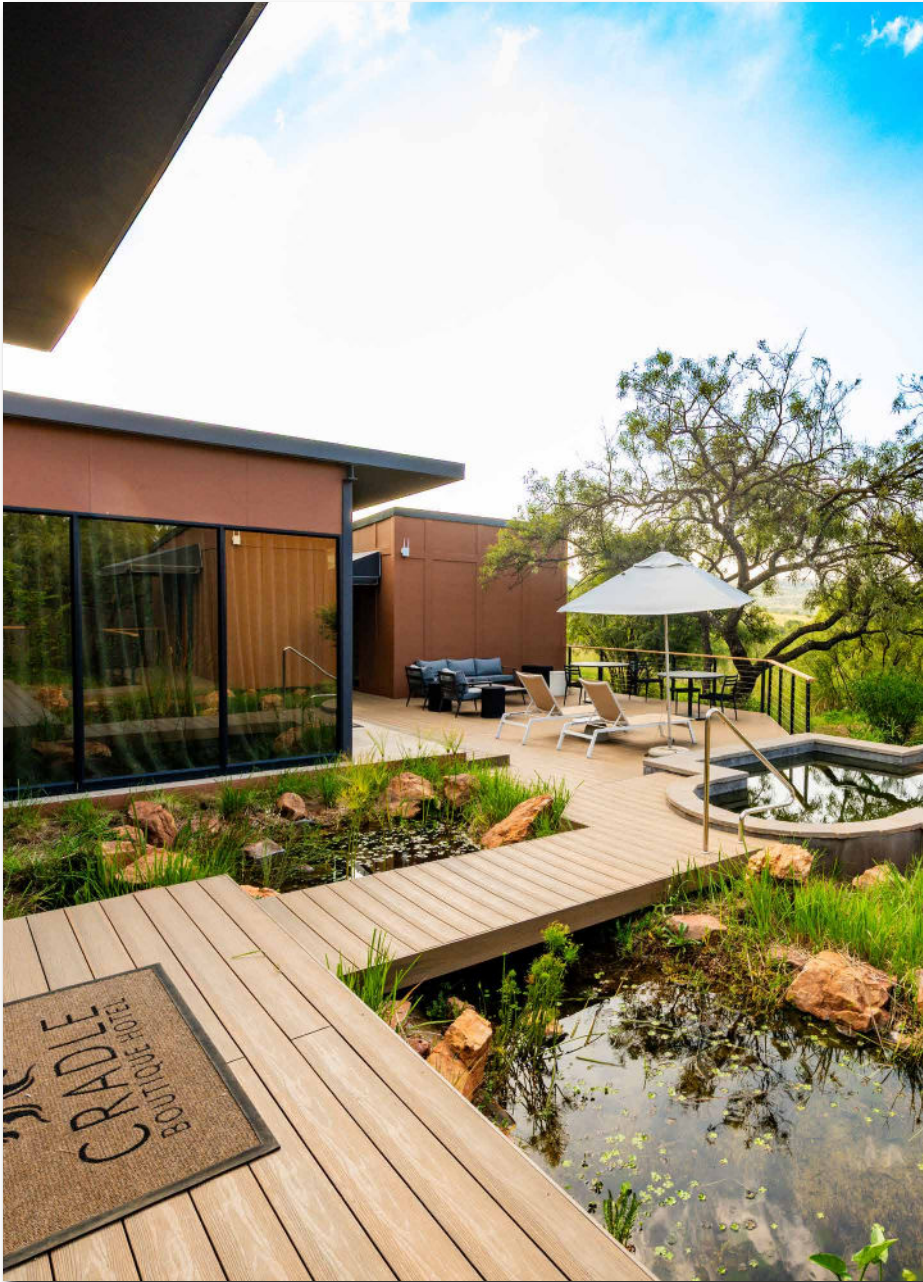
### Project Location

Cradle of Humankind,  
Kromdraai

### Product Used

Infinity decking in Swiss Oak and  
Lifespan architectural beams in Savanna





## CRADLE BOUTIQUE HOTEL, CRADLE OF MANKIND, KROMDRAAI, SOUTH AFRICA

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The Cradle Boutique Hotel is a popular ecotourism destination providing a scenic gateway into an ancient landscape renowned for its Paleoanthropological significance. As the largest privately owned nature reserve situated within the Greater 'Cradle of Humankind' outside Johannesburg, the 9 000-hectare reserve was declared a UNESCO World Heritage site following the discovery of early hominid and animal fossils thought to reveal the origins of man – including the famous 'Homo Naledi'.

The venue offers gorgeous natural bushveld scenery, exclusive eco-friendly accommodation and amenities including a private lodge, hotel, restaurant, spa, wedding and conference centre, and museum, as well as a pavilion that can host up to 3 000 guests who all come to enjoy the reserve's natural unspoilt heritage.

The challenge was to enhance the aura and grandeur of the site's unique fauna and flora, while creating an authentic African experience designed for durability and minimal maintenance over time.



## ENHANCING THE ENVIRONMENT

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Dale Fogg of DMF Designs was appointed to construct and manage the upkeep of the establishment's extensive facilities to enhance the natural environment.

Just as Homo Naledi stood the test of time, Fogg's task was to select durable materials that would enhance the visual appeal, structural safety, and functionality of the facilities while withstanding high footfall and demanding weather conditions.

30 upmarket rooms – each with a private viewing deck or veranda – invite guests to immerse themselves in the fauna and flora of the African savannah while experiencing the tranquil passing of time. 24 sustainably built timber and thatch chalets on stilts offer unparalleled views, while six sumptuous 'sky rooms' are nestled on the hillside to echo safari style sophistication.

A remote five-bedroom private lodge tucked away within the estate – the Riverhorse Lodge – offers complete seclusion and privacy.





An expansive deck pavilion with a natural wetland pool invites visitors to cool off or catch some sun, creating a classy entertainment venue that's ideal for memorable events such as weddings, birthdays and other outdoor gatherings.

The Pavilion with a capacity of 3 000 people, caters to large conferences or events, such as international press conferences for important archaeological findings, combining luxury business and leisure activities for visitors to the site.

A world-class restaurant offers organic, gastronomic delights and sunset cocktails on the durable bamboo composite deck blending seamlessly with the sprawling game-filled valley below.

The serene Inyala Spa invites guests to rest and rejuvenate alongside a natural echo-pool.



These decks are subjected to the harsh African sun and typical Highveld thunderstorms and need to withstand the constant expansion and contraction of the deck boards resulting from the temperature changes and exposure to damaging UV-radiation. Splinters, cracks, warping or lifting become unattractive and unsafe on a conventional deck over time, which is non-negotiable for a luxury lodge where understated luxury and effortless style is paramount.

What's more, all the exterior deck surfaces, particularly of the pool deck and pavilion, need to exhibit outstanding wear characteristics able to withstand abuse or abrasion as guests spill drinks or drag sun loungers to various vantage points, and walk barefoot, often with oily feet. Frequent sanding, smoothing, or varnishing would inconvenience guests, and regular repair or replacement might not be cost-effective or desirable for a premium-priced establishment.





## UNEARTHING THE KEY TO LONGEVITY - AN EVA-LASTING COMPOSITE

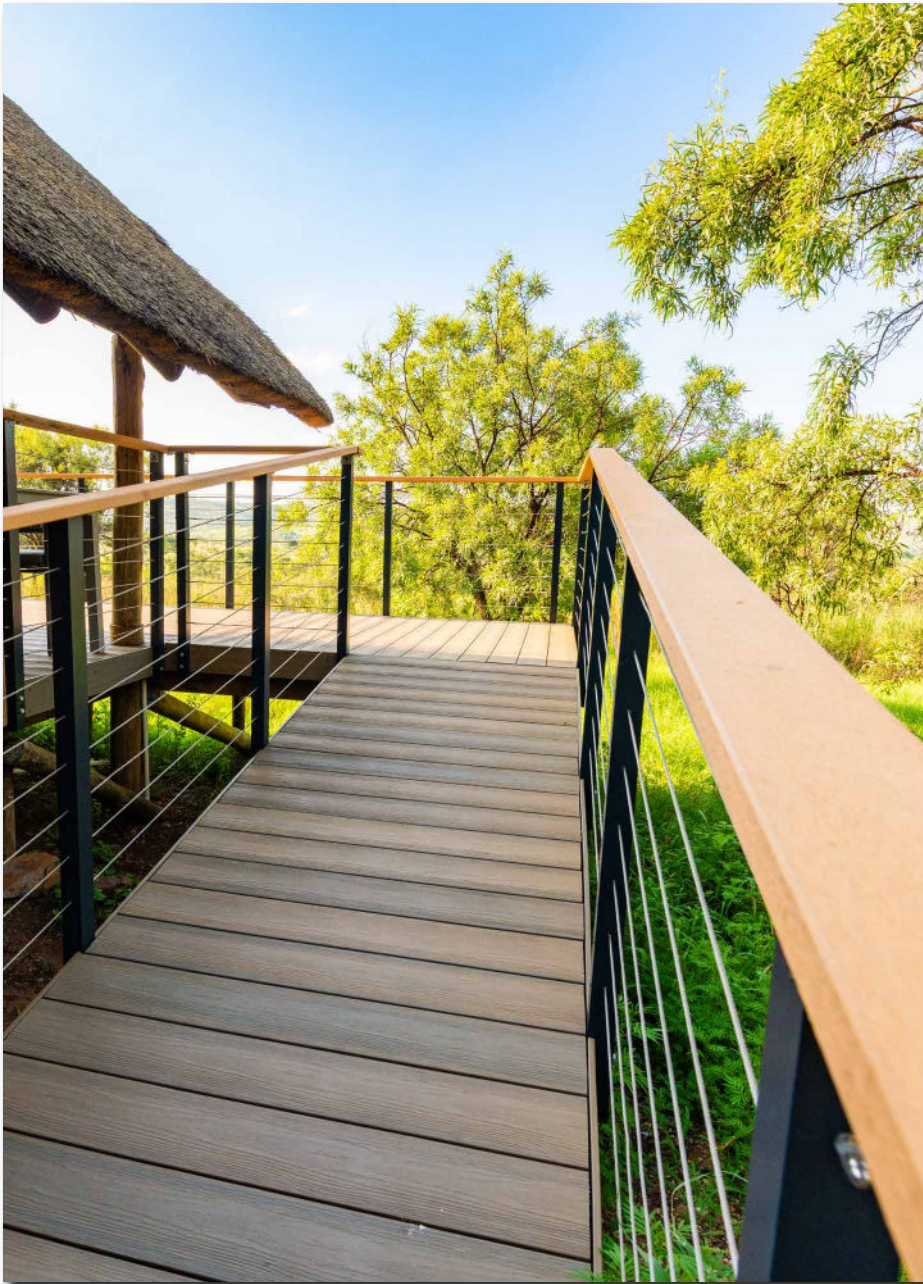
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DMF Designs opted for the guaranteed durability and convenience of Eva-Last's Infinity bamboo composite decking in Swiss Oak for the decks and Lifespan's lightweight aluminium beams for the handrails.

"We're systematically upgrading the decks and handrails around the resort in the off seasons," explained Fogg, who has overseen the replacement of 18 of the 30 patios at the hotel, as well as most of the outdoor entertainment areas including the conference room, restaurant and Pavilion.

Not only does Infinity's colour-streaked surface technology embody the essence of timber – in this case Blonde Oak – to complement the natural surrounds, its protective polymer capping also prevents scratches, fading, mould and mildew, providing the desired low maintenance, good looks, and durability.

"We opted for Eva-Last given my experience with them on other projects," commented Fogg, "I've just never had a problem."



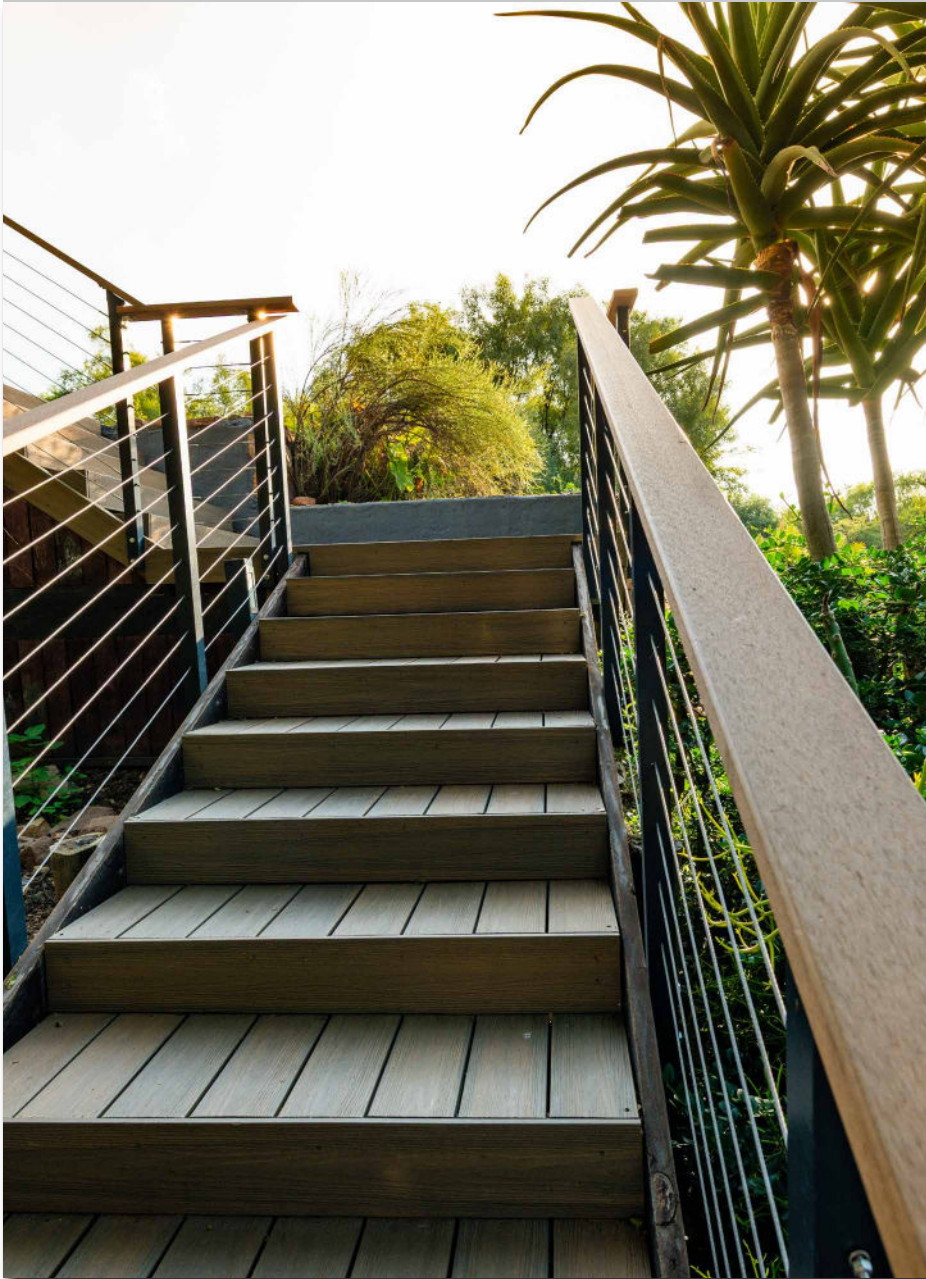
As one of the toughest co-extruded composites available, Infinity offers decay and weather resistant decking in convenient, lightweight I-series profiles. The smart-shaped channels of each board are deliberately designed to use less material while providing the dimensional strength and stability necessary for extended spans such as those at the pavilion and the restaurant deck.

"We also made our own handrails using Lifespan to continue the wood-look aesthetic with stainless steel cabling," Fogg explained.

Lifespan's hollow-aluminium composite beams and posts – with the same Infinity composite technology – used on the various handrails for all the decks around the complex, continued the low-maintenance, light timber colour scheme and appearance, while ensuring guests safety and security.

"Eva-Last decks and Lifespan beams are really easy to work with and could be assembled off-site. This made for a fast, efficient installation. Best of all, the beams are easy to manoeuvre or replace in the unlikely event of damage from, for example, oils that haven't been cleaned off the pool deck," Fogg added.





## KEY INFLUENCER QUOTE

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## SUMMARY

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Eva-Last's toughest co-extruded composite decking Infinity and lightweight Lifespan beams were selected for the Cradle Boutique's premium luxury resort. Infinity's authentic timber tones and texture reflects the World Heritage site's natural fauna and flora, while the low maintenance performance characteristics of the composite polymer guarantees guests' comfort and convenience without compromise.





## **ABOUT US**

Eva-Last is a globally reputable brand that utilises a solution driven business model to create innovative, sustainable building materials and systems that add value to customers' lives. At the heart of Eva-Last is a team of highly capable, creative specialists united by a passion to promote environmental consciousness through eco-friendly building products and operations. By embracing low environmental impact manufacturing and cutting-edge composite technology, Eva-Last is revolutionising how building can be done. We design and deliver beautiful, long-lasting green alternatives that make our customers' lives easier, healthier, and just plain better.







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