

PARAGON CONCEPTUALISES WORKPLACE DESIGN SOLUTION FOR DELOITTE

When global professional services firm Deloitte decided to consolidate its offices into a new African headquarters, bringing together 3 700 employees in a custom-designed building geared for future expansion, it turned to Paragon to conceptualise the workplace design solution. The architecture and interior architecture company clinched the bid for the project at the end of 2018, just when it was completing its award-winning fit-out of Discovery's head office in Sandton.



CLAIRE D'ADORANTE
Director at Paragon

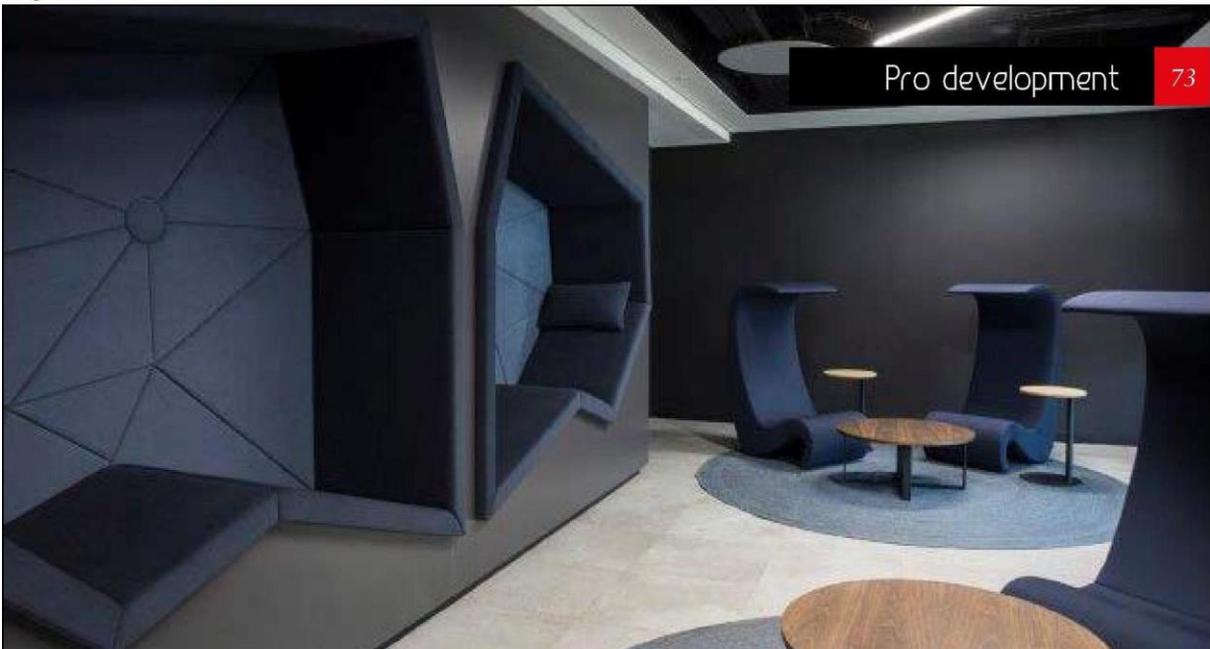
The 42 500m² Deloitte development in Waterfall City in Midrand is known as River Creek. It is a 50/50 joint venture between Attacq and Atterbury. River Creek comprises a ground floor, six office-space storeys and four basement parking levels with almost 2 000 parking bays. “As a large single-tenant facility, this fully digital, connected, ‘smart’ building has been designed to enable a dramatic cultural shift for this progressive organisation,” says Paragon Director Claire D’Adorante.

The aesthetic interior design concept conceptualises a distinct and identifiable Deloitte brand experience through extensive and deliberate use of its primary and secondary brand colours. Balanced with warm timbers and the extensive use of planting, a natural and inviting indoor environment flooded with natural light from the central atrium has been created.

The six levels of workspace incorporate a dramatic cascade of colour, representative of the Deloitte brand colours, which enhances the overall brand experience of the facility and provides a distinct way-finding mechanism. Large open floorplans with no cellular offices allow the multiple business units to easily share working spaces and building facilities, as well as enabling interaction, collaboration and social engagement.

To offset the loss of traditional offices, a variety of cellular and open-plan collaborative spaces have been provided to address the need for quiet spaces as well as group working spaces.

The ground floor has been designed to create a seamless client experience, and to be open and welcoming for the client-facing meeting and training rooms, in addition to providing all the shared lifestyle facilities.

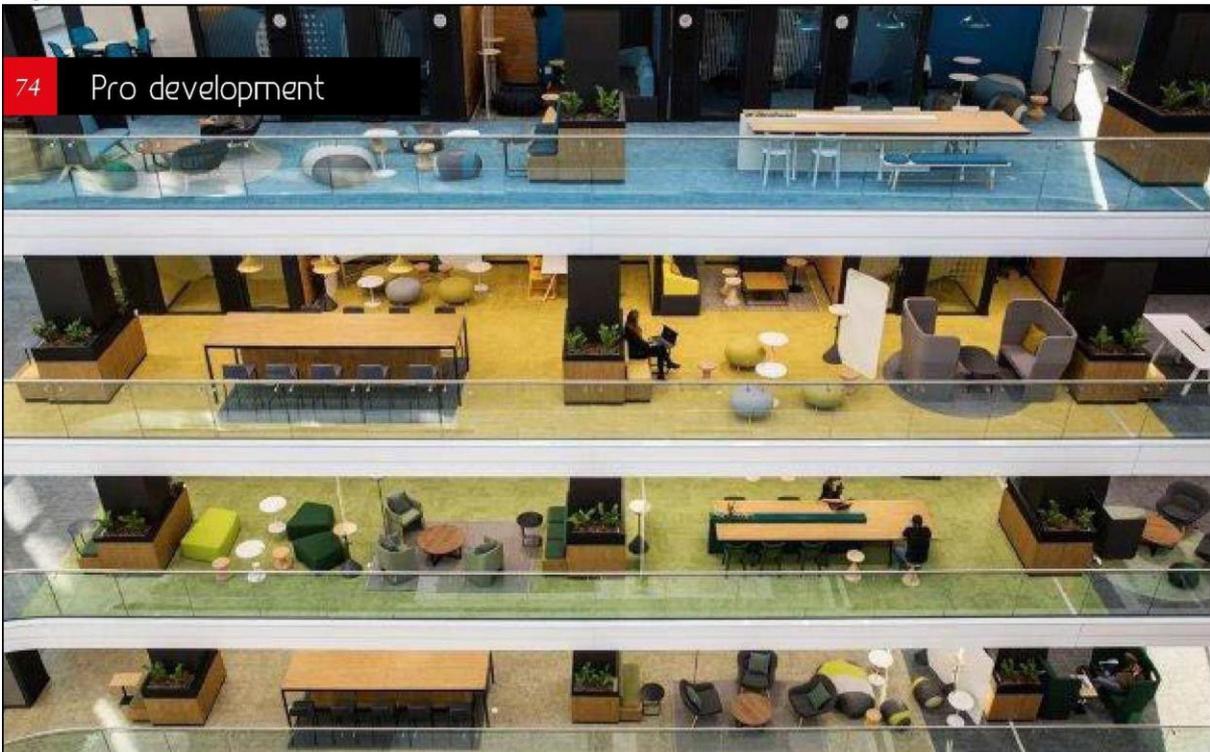


DALE FRIEDMAN
Associate at Paragon

A coffee shop, a restaurant, a pub and an external pizza oven complete the overall employee experience.

The ground floor is also home to Deloitte's new Xcelerator experience, comprising eight distinct and unique spaces that offer clients a range of hi-tech opportunities and digitally immersive experiences to conceptualise breakthrough solutions.

The workplace strategy was conceptualised around the concepts of "neighbourhood" and "energy", explains Paragon associate Dale Friedman. Zones of higher energy – which are linked to louder and more active environments – are located closer to the primary



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circulation routes and zones of intersection. This ensures that these spaces are always active, and that they promote collaboration and interaction.

The lower-energy functions, which need greater focus and a quieter space, are located further away from the central core to aid in the focused work required here. Each neighbourhood has exactly the same collaboration areas, which allow for the varied task-based functions required. The atrium edge has also been activated through the incorporation of an agile and task-based workspace

corridor affectionately known as the “race track”, and connected by the link bridges.

As the staff at Deloitte work mainly on laptops, these shared collaboration spaces enable them to work where they feel most comfortable, based on the task at hand. The multi-generational make-up of the workforce also meant from the get-go that a “one-size-fits-all” design principle would not work. “Everyone can find a type of setting that is best suited to them and their task, which results in happier staff members who enjoy their working environment,” says Friedman.

Technology was the next important element. It is critical that someone can sit down anywhere and have all the necessary tools at hand.

“Often, technology can be challenging to use, frustrating people when they struggle to connect easily,” says Friedman. “Therefore, ensuring that the technology became a seamless support for its users became an important driver.”

A custom-designed iconographic signage system with integrated QR codes, developed specifically for Deloitte, provides users with information about how to use each agile workspace, and is linked to the “smart” building system.

The QR codes allow users to easily find out more about the workspace, including information about the particular etiquette for the quieter spaces and the more collaborative settings, as well as how to connect to the technology and log any faults that users may experience.

Paragon’s Waterfall project for Deloitte was a finalist in the Office Design category at the 2020 Society of British & International Interior Design Awards, one of the most prestigious interior design Awards on the global design calendar.



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